*Total’s response*

*Business and Human Rights Resource Centre invited Total to respond to the following article:*

* *"Oil and gas hosting communities threaten to sue govt.”, Maria Wamala, New Vision, February 09, 2018* [*https://www.newvision.co.ug/new\_vision/news/1470797/oil-gas-hosting-community-threatens-sue-govt*](https://www.newvision.co.ug/new_vision/news/1470797/oil-gas-hosting-community-threatens-sue-govt)

*Total provided the following response:*

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to the "Oil and gas hosting communities threaten to sue govt.”, paper from Maria Wamala, New Vision, dated February 09, 2018.

We would like to provide the following clarifications:

-          In order to standardize the approach to long-term land acquisition and resettlement in the project areas, the three Joint Venture Partners, Total, Tullow and CNOOC, of petroleum fields to be developed in the Albertine Graben region of Uganda, in collaboration with the local authorities, have formulated a Land Acquisition and Resettlement Framework (LARF). This LARF document proposes a voluntary and consistent approach that is compliant with national legislation, international standards and in particular the International Finance Corporation’s (IFC) Performance Standards 5 on Involuntary Resettlement and Land Acquisition, and best practices to further safeguard against social risks. The document consolidation was facilitated by establishing the first inter-ministerial Resettlement Advisory Committee (RAC)

-          In October 2016, prior to its endorsement, the draft LARF as amended by the RAC was disclosed to the affected Districts, to the local leadership and traditional authorities, as well as to civil society organizations. Communication materials such as posters and leaflets were specifically developed and designed to be used at village level and translated into the four local languages to ensure widespread outreach

-          Following the endorsement of the final LARF in December 2016, the RAC is monitoring and advising the partners on the development of projects.  The LARF is publically available on the internet at the following links:

o   <http://ug.total.com/en/land-acquisition-and-resettlement-process>

o   <http://petroleum.go.ug/uploads/resources/Jan2017FinalLARFEndorsed.pdf>

-          In compliance with the LARF, for each project component, the Licensee is developing a specific Resettlement Action Plan, and local resettlement committees are set-up at district and village levels in order to build capacity and enhance a participative approach at all levels

-          Please note that with regards to permanent land acquisition: as of mid-February 2018 no land has been effectively acquired yet by the TILENGA project.As per the commitments made by the operator in the final Resettlement Action Plan (RAP1) report, which was approved by the Government of Uganda in January 2018, land for the project will be acquired **once compensation has been effected**. Following its approval, the implementation of RAP1 started on January 15th 2018, and is currently underway. To date, as of February 12th 2018 (after 1 month of work), the RAP implementation team has achieved the following:

1.      Over 1000 persons have undergone Financial Literacy Training

2.      Over 150 land user compensation agreements have been disclosed and signed by the Project Affected Persons

3.      Around 50 persons  have already been compensated

-          As per the LARF which was endorsed by the Government and the JV partners in December 2016, all of the land for petroleum project is being acquired by the Project on behalf of the Government of Uganda, and the ownership will be immediately transferred to the Government of Uganda.

At Group level, please also note that in July 2016, Total issued its first Human Rights Briefing Paper based on the United Nations Guiding Principles Reporting Framework where we identified our Salient Human Rights Issues, including access to land. We are currently updating this report for 2018. <https://www.total.com/sites/default/files/atoms/files/total_human_rigths_briefing_paper_july_2016_0.pdf>