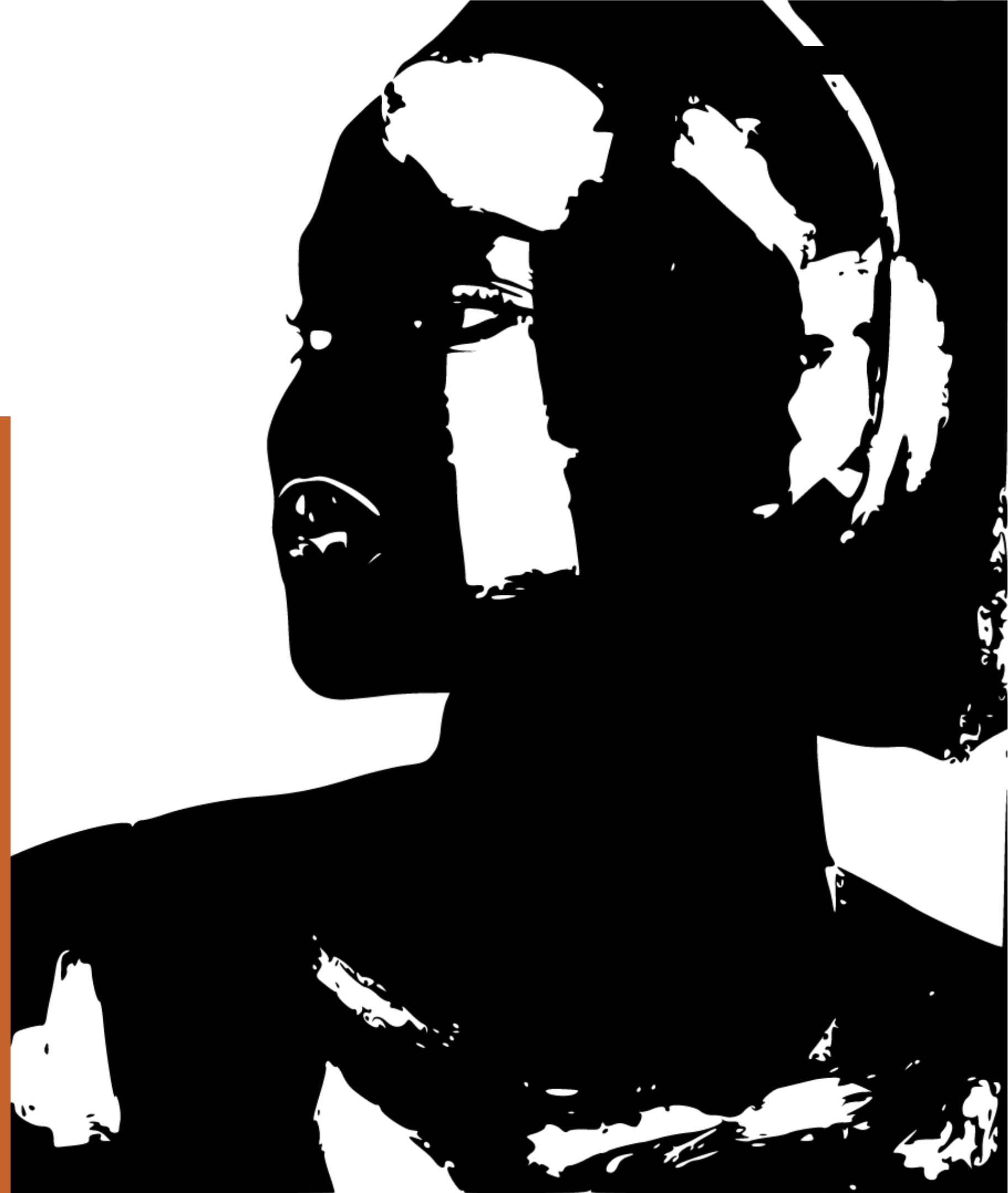




**KENYA LAND ALLIANCE**

# **IMARISHA WAJANE**

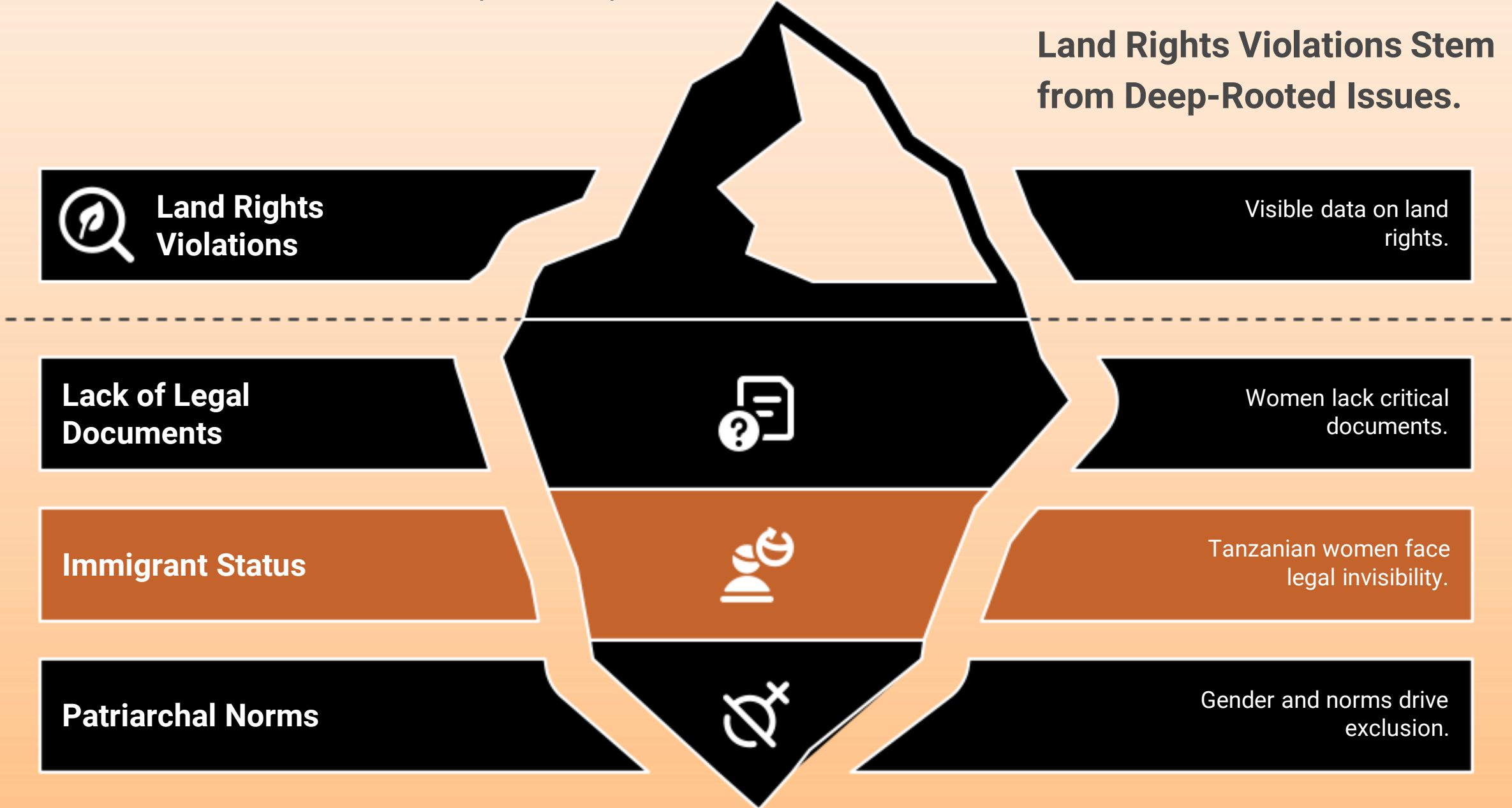
**Baseline Findings on Women's Land  
Rights in Taveta, Kenya**



# Introduction

Citizen-generated data, as collected through the **Haki Ardhi App** between 2023 and 2024, provides vital insights into land rights violations and the systemic exclusion faced by women in Taita Taveta County. Approximately **30% of women** in the region lack the basic identification and legal documentation necessary for land acquisition, succession, and economic participation..

This form of administrative exclusion intersects with gender-based violence, discriminatory legal frameworks, and entrenched patriarchal systems. The situation is particularly dire for Tanzanian immigrant women, who face legal invisibility that denies them inheritance rights, land ownership, and access to justice mechanisms.



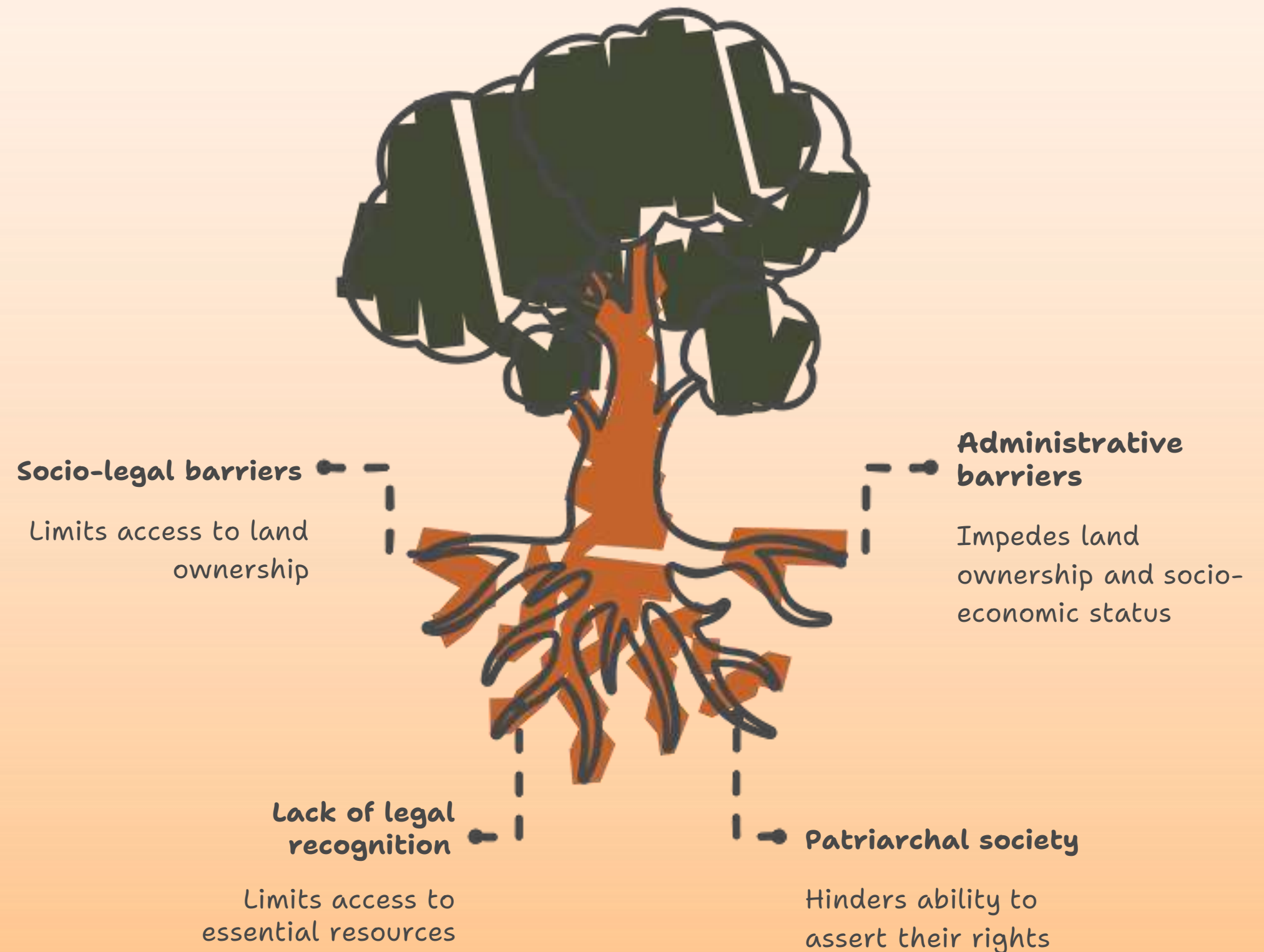
# Study Objectives

The main objective of this study was to undertake action-based research that would assess the land rights and economic empowerment status of women in Taveta, with a particular focus on undocumented Tanzanian immigrants.

The research sought to understand the challenges posed by a lack of legal documentation and explore how these challenges inhibit women's access to land and financial inclusion.

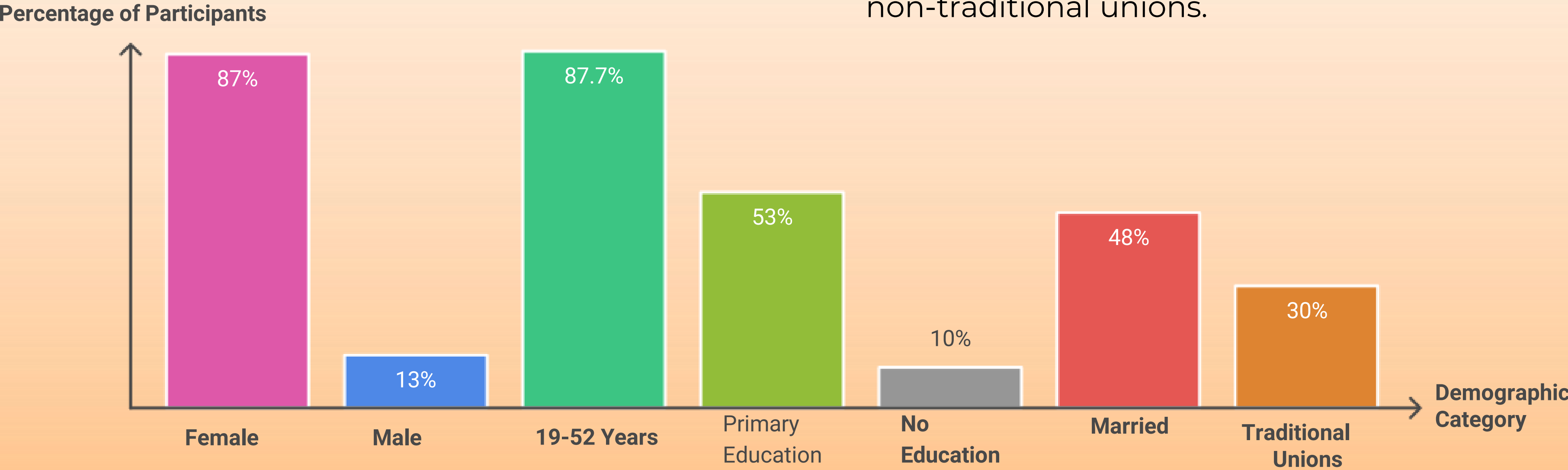
Additionally, the study aimed to gather evidence that could support legal aid interventions and inform advocacy around land justice using the Haki Ardhi App.

## Undocumented women struggle to secure Land Rights



# Respondent Demographics

- 1. **Gender:** 87% female, 13% male.
- 2. **Age:** Majority (87.7%) aged 19–52 years.
- 3. **Education:** 53% primary, 10% no education.
- 4. **Marital Status:** 48% married, 30% in non-traditional unions.



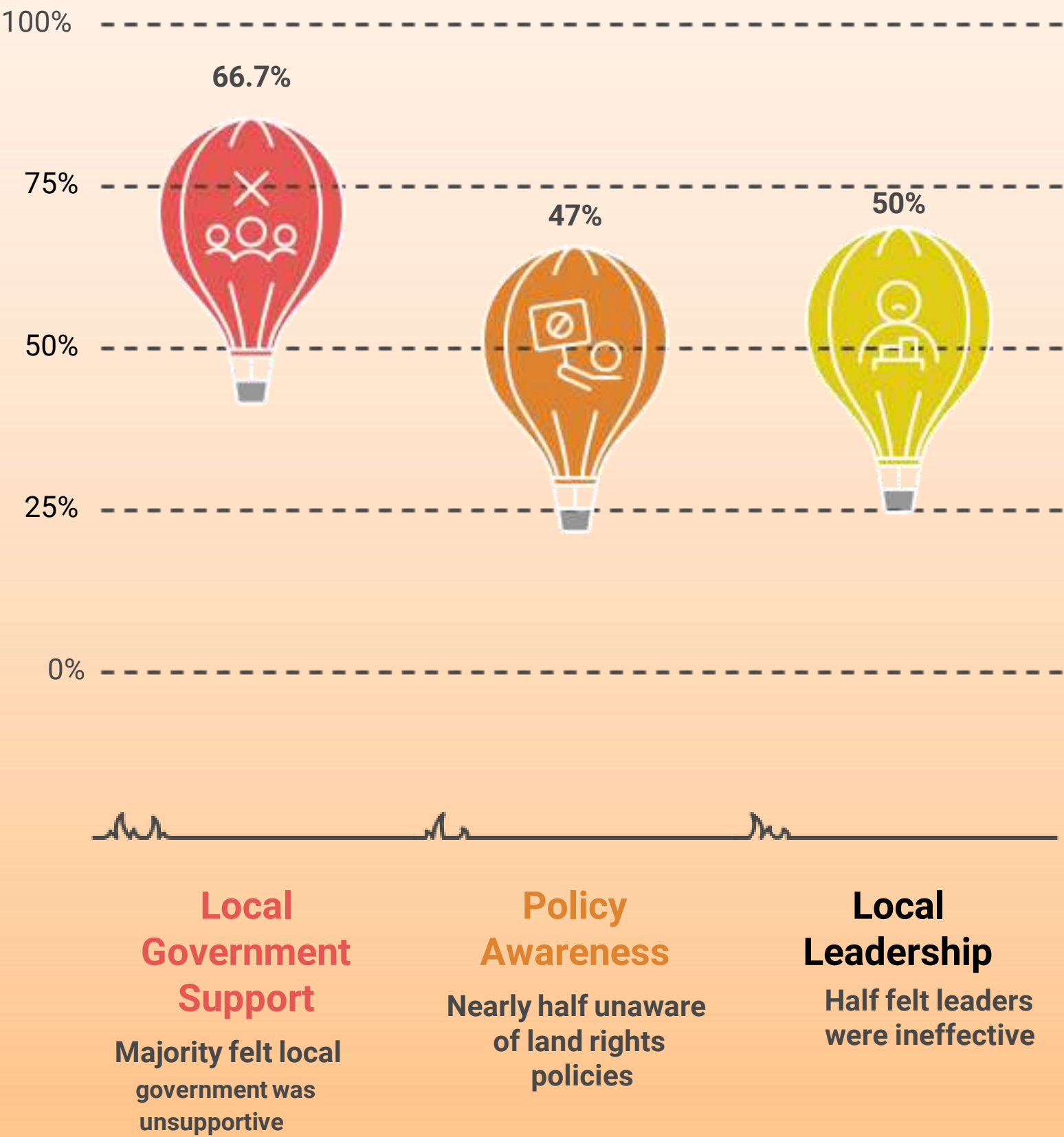
Demographic distribution of survey participants

# Barriers to Land Rights

**Local Government Support:** 66.7% found it unsupportive.

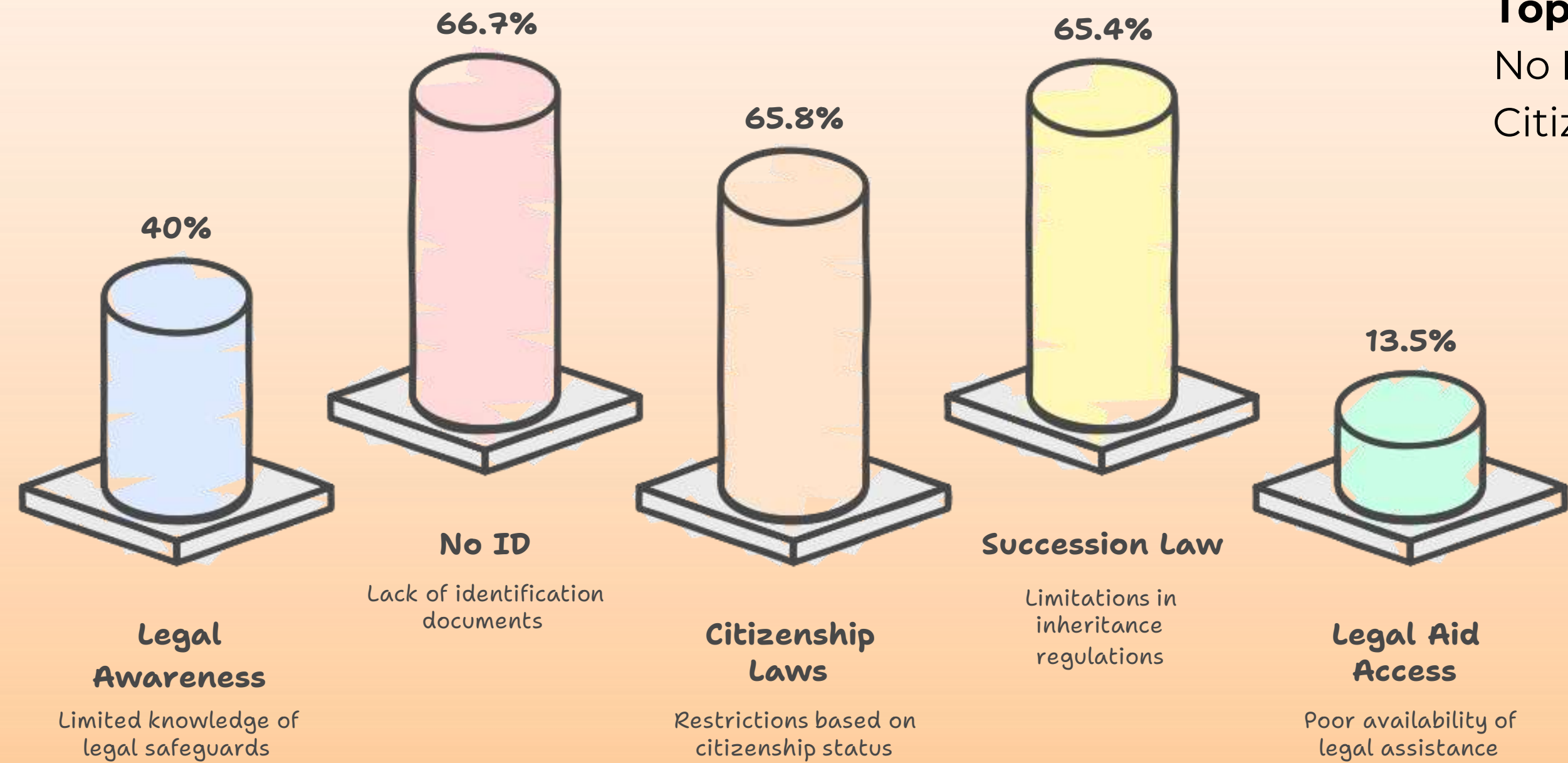
**Policy Awareness:** 47% unaware of any land rights policies.

**Local Leadership:** Over 50% felt leaders were ineffective.



Community Perceptions on Local Governance

# Legal and Structural Challenges



Only 40% aware of legal protections.

**Top barriers:**  
No ID (66.7%)  
Citizenship laws (65.8%)

Succession law restrictions (65.4%)

Legal aid access remains low (only 13.5% access legal aid).

Awareness and Barriers to Legal Protections

# Economic Empowerment Insights

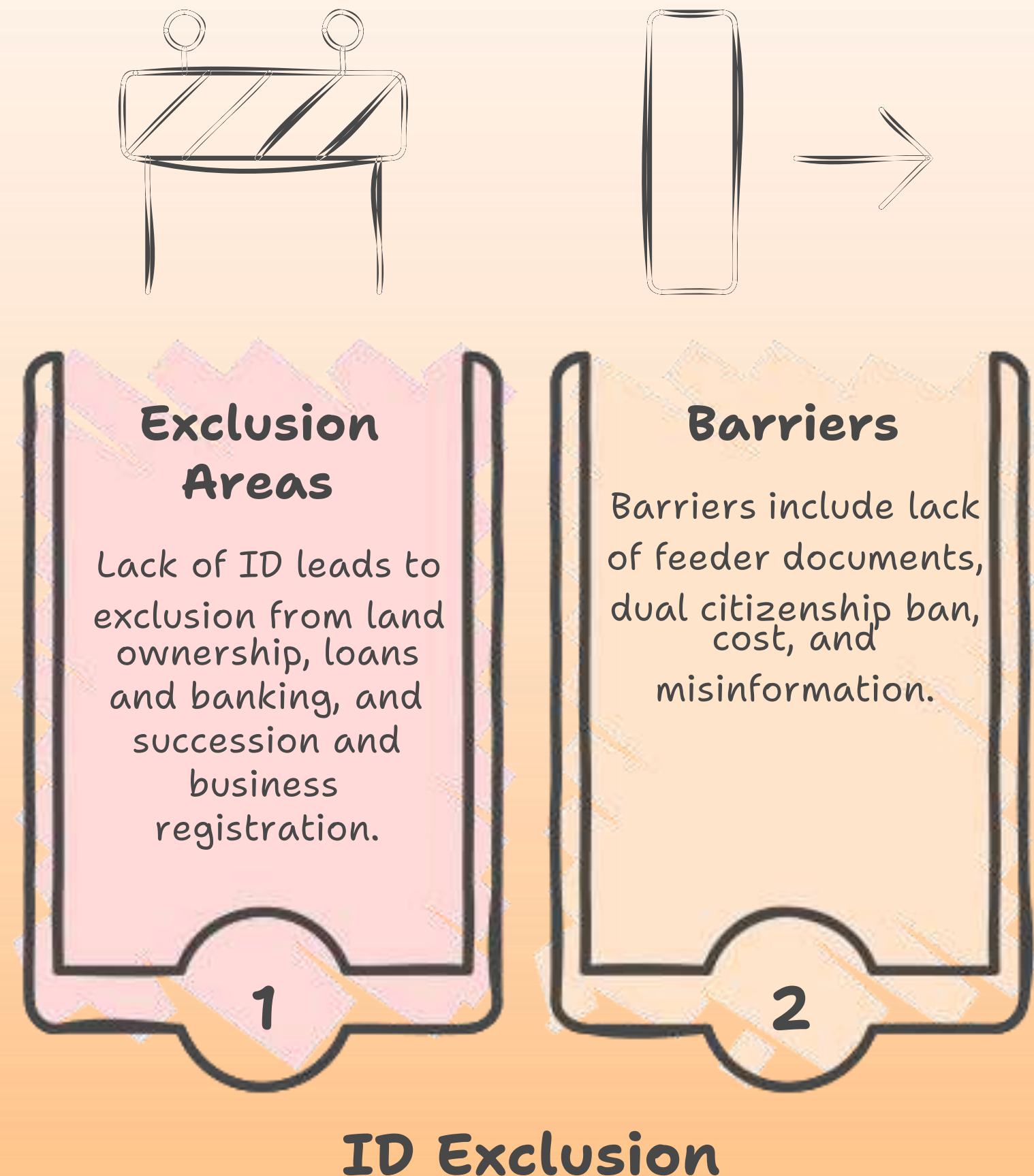
Economic empowerment remains a major challenge for women in Taveta. Over half of the respondents described their access to financial services as poor or very poor, indicating systemic financial exclusion. Despite these challenges, a majority agreed that land ownership is critically important for women's empowerment and poverty reduction. Due to their lack of land rights, cross-border women tend to avoid long-term agricultural investments and rely heavily on subsistence farming, which further entrenches their economic vulnerability.



Key Challenges in Rural Development

# Documentation Hurdles

The absence of national identification documents emerged as a major obstacle preventing women from owning land, registering businesses, opening bank accounts, or participating in succession processes. Respondents noted that without IDs, it is virtually impossible to engage with formal institutions. The barriers to obtaining documentation included lack of feeder documents, expired or irregular travel papers, misinformation, illiteracy, prohibitive costs, and the impact of Tanzania's ban on dual citizenship. These challenges combine to render immigrant women invisible in legal and economic systems.



# Key Recommendations

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1. Policy advocacy is vital in advancing a much-needed positive social change in Taveta. This can be achieved by engaging duty bearers and decision-makers to get their buy-in the conceptualization, adoption and enforcement of the requisite policies that address key needs in the society thus improving people's lives.

2.) The County administration level administrators can be trained to become effective agents of change and offer support to the immigrant widows.

3. Collaborative advocacy involving both State and Non-State actors would go a long way in addressing the challenges faced by immigrant women due lack of proper information and documentation.

4. “Nothing about us without us”

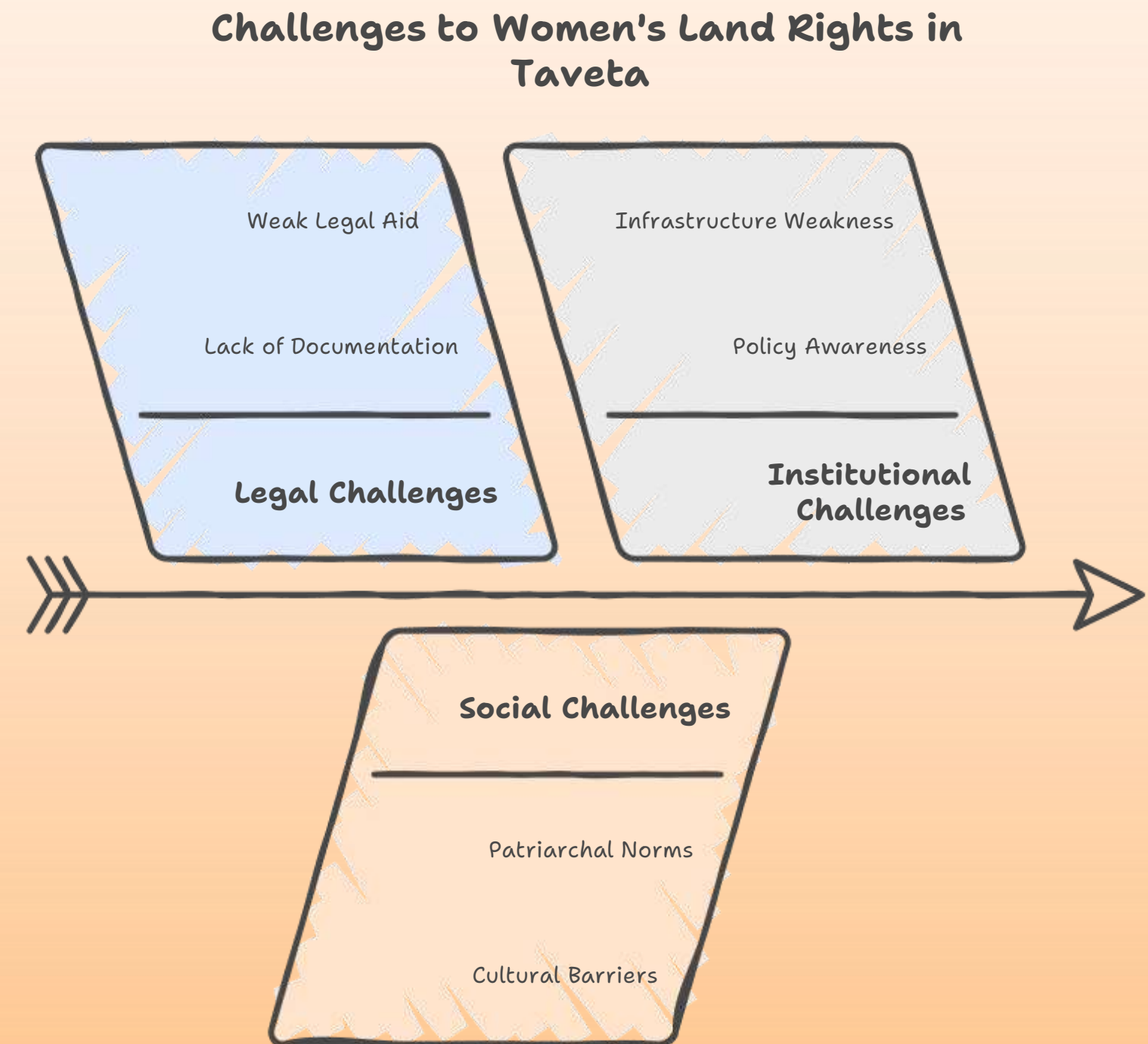
Local women should be encouraged to own their struggles as well. To understand their rights and claim them vehemently thus entrenching the practice of involvement of women in decision making processes, more specifically in regards to the women land and property rights conversation.

## Conclusion

The findings underscore a complex web of legal, social, and institutional challenges that continue to deny women, especially Tanzanian immigrants and their rightful claim to land in Taveta.

Lack of documentation, low awareness of relevant policies, patriarchal cultural norms, and weak legal aid infrastructure collectively disempower women and perpetuate poverty.

Addressing these issues through targeted legal reforms, improved documentation pathways, and community-level awareness efforts is essential for realizing women's land and economic rights in the region.



**THANK YOU**

