



Global Donor Platform  
for Rural Development

## Global Donor Working Group on Land

13<sup>th</sup> Physical Meeting, FAO, Rome, Italy

29 March 2019, 9:00 – 15:20h

### Minutes

#### **Participants:**

Chris Penrose Buckley (DFID, chair), Bernard Zaugg and Peter Sidler (SDC, vice-chair), Francesca Romano (FAO), Jorge Muñoz, Mika Torhonen, Wael Zakout and Harris Selod (WB), Oumar Sylla (UN-Habitat), Jennifer Lisher and Jill Pike (MCC), Caleb Stevens and Emily Weeks (USAID), Miha Isoi and Suzuka Sugawara-Sato (JICA), Amy Regas (Omidyar Network), Frits van der Wal (MFA-NL), Pim Kieskamp (Netherlands Enterprise Agency), Fritz Jung (BMZ), Christian Graefen and Dominik Wellmann (GIZ), Adriana Romas (Global Affairs Canada), Maria Marealle (AfDB).

**Invited guests:** Chloe Ginsburg (RRI), Doug Hertzler (Action Aid), Mike Taylor (ILC), Shona Hawkes (Oxfam Australia)

#### **Platform secretariat:**

Romy Sato and Laura Barrington

#### **Agenda:**

1. [Welcome](#)
2. [Exchange](#)
  - 2.1. [Work plan 2018-2020 reminder](#)
  - 2.2. [Roundtable of focused feedback/updates](#)
  - 2.3. [Deep-dive presentations](#)
3. [Coordination](#)
  - 3.1. [Code of conduct in partner countries](#)
  - 3.2. [Dragon's den on new large-scale programmes](#)
  - 3.3. [GDWGL project pipeline spreadsheet - proposal](#)
4. [Protection of HR/land rights defenders - discussion with INGOs](#)
5. [Global advocacy](#)
6. [AOB, wrap-up and closing](#)

### Summary of decisions/agreements:

- SDG monitoring initiatives – proposal to / organise a call to take stock and clarify complementarity of different initiatives
- WB Land Conference – organise a call to discuss how to improve the conference and send suggestions to the World Bank
- Donors’ code of conduct at country level – collect further feedback and publish in the GDWGL webpage
- Spreadsheet of projects in the pipeline – revisit proposal and agree on how to share
- Human rights/land defenders – Bernard Zaugg (SDC) to be the GDWGL’s focal point on this issue; organise a discussion to follow up on suggestions made by INGOs; agree to hold exchanges with CSOs more often
- State of Land Report – Oumar Sylla (UNH) to share a concept note and further discussion to be organised
- Engagement in (high-level) events: propose sessions at CFS and Land Policy Conference in Africa

## 1. Welcome

Chris Penrose-Buckley (DFID) welcomed the participants to the meeting, who approved the agenda for the day without any remarks.

## 2. Exchange

### 2.1 Work Plan 2018-2020 reminder

The chair reminded participants about the priorities in the [Work Plan 2018-2020](#). They focus on the functions of the Group, namely, knowledge exchange, coordination and global advocacy, and provide the agenda structure for this physical meeting.

### 2.2 Roundtable of focused feedback/updates

Members exchanged on major take-aways from the World Bank Land Conference 2019 and on key developments in their programmes/organisation. For more details on the latter, please consult the Donor ‘Tweet’ Updates from March 2019, circulated prior to the meeting (or contact the Secretariat).

**World Bank:** highlighted the launch of the Global Campaign on Women’s Land Rights on 28 March, as well as the increasing attention to forest land tenure in the conference, which is particularly important for indigenous rights. WB’s work on land has been approved to be presented by UN Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) Congress, due in April 2020. The Bank is conducting a viability assessment for private sector participation in land registry, planning consultations in different regions (one in Europe) over the year. A flagship initiative was launched in the MENA region to assist in economic impact, property rights of refugees and women’s land rights – feedback and exchange on this initiative are welcomed. Mika Torhonen (WB) flagged that the largest land programmes with governments are in climate change context, however, they are not aware of the VGGTs and the SDG targets (except Nepal).

**BMZ:** has seen in this year’s conference more concrete and promising initiatives compared to previous years, when the discussion was more conceptual. However, the conference is still quite large and the benefits of land governance for other sectors incl. forests (nexus thinking) still need more attention.

**AfDB:** the conference was great to expose women’s land rights, however, missed out the youth part and its relationship to employment, which is particularly important for Africa. Interactions during the sessions were also good for coordination and exchange on work on the ground. AfDB just completed land tenure studies for 8 countries, incl. Ivory Coast, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Senegal, Nigeria; now implementing the [Feed the Africa Strategy](#) in these counties.

**UN-Habitat:** the conference was good to align initiatives around the SDGs and to highlight women's land rights. UNH has established an agreement with BMZ to support the land initiative in the Arab region with capacity building, knowledge management, networking and support to the Arab land conference. GLTN had its Steering Committee Meeting in Sweden in February, where it reviewed the implementation of GLTN phase 3 strategy focusing on achieving SDG land targets considering women and youth. UNH is currently conducting activities in Syria, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Uganda and South Sudan.

**JICA:** major take aways from the conference were the rapid development of technologies for land tenure security, how to strengthen the links with local communities and the complexity of customary rights and women's land rights. The challenge now is to feed this into JICA activities. The organization does not have a strategy on land, but it is developing capacity for staff and as part of some projects (e.g. Indonesia). It is also supporting regulations on land registration and land use in Cambodia and Vietnam respectively.

**MCC:** interesting conference sessions on urban land and the development of geospatial information. This is particularly important because the data we are getting in the field are not enough to report on impact. Also noted nuances on how to support land tenure in relation to urban markets and agriculture. Finally, with IFAD and GLTN, MCC published the [Guidelines for Impact Evaluation of Land Tenure and Governance Interventions](#).

**Omidyar:** reported on a project to support the documentation of land rights in Colombia based on for-profit model. Omidyar's activities in land are focusing on innovative finance mechanisms and on geospatial technologies.

**Global Affairs Canada:** gender is the main pillar of Canada's development strategy, so noted particularly the sessions and events related to women's land rights. Youth and land is also a topic of growing interest for Canada. There were interesting talks in the conference about innovative customary systems for communal land. GAC's food systems group continues to look for a high-impact entry point into land

**MFA-NL and Enterprise Agency:** noted the increasing attention in the conference to the role of technologies, data and urbanization, though the Dutch consider that people and their communities should still be the focus and not data for the purpose of data. The conference has grown a lot in the last years, though not necessarily the quality of the sessions. MFA has a new minister and, for the first time, there is a specific section in the strategy on land, as enabler for the SDGs. Women's land rights are high in their agenda, as well as the challenges and opportunities of infrastructure for land tenure security.

**FAO:** after having promoted the VGGTs as the main framework under which the land community should work, FAO was concerned that the VGGTs were rarely mentioned in the conference. The existence of the SDGs should not reduce the need for the VGGTs and the fact that governments are accountable for them. The VGGT project in Sierra Leone is coming to its end. The project was very successful as it managed to involve several sectors at the same time. Currently, FAO is mainstreaming the VGGTs in pastoral setting (a workshop with ECOWAS is planned) and working with agribusiness to align with the VGGT.

**GIZ:** Noted the very good workshop on impact evaluation (organised by IFAD, GLTN and MCC). The conference has become too overstretched, with too short discussions, disparity in the quality of papers and presentations. Number of sessions could be reduced. The conference organisers and the land community in general could be more innovative on presentations – we should use the very technologies we are promoting in our projects. The conference remains great for coordination meetings, but it means there is no time for the sessions – how can we combine better, separate coordination meetings from conference themselves? Women's land rights is a strategic area where we should all invest in. The attendance of private sector is very low and a point of concern, to improve our approach to companies in mid and large sized countries.

**Secretariat Donor Platform:** a lot of talk on urban issues in the conference, which connects very well with many donors' championing territorial approaches in development programmes. The conference is a good event to put these ideas in practice, embedding land in other sectors' work

**DFID:** agrees with GIZ on conference's value in creating a space for coordination meetings, but need better balance with sessions. Also noted growing focus on urban land and women's rights including launch of Women's land rights campaign (suggest to engage more strategically and possibly invite campaign representatives for a presentation to the Group). DFID LEGEND partner TMP Systems has launched LandScope, a tool to assess tenure risk in any geographic location. This is targeted at companies and investors to make a case on due diligence. Currently in talks with Citibank, Bloomberg etc. On SDGs, UK stats office will use Prindex data to report on 1.4.2 for UK Government, but also encouraged DFID to work with other UK agencies to insert the module in a national survey. DFID's Rwanda programme evaluation to be completed April – highlighted challenges doing impact evaluations if not planned from start.

**SDC:** noted a large variation in the quality of presentations in the conference. Though there is criticism on the number of parallel sessions, SDC reminded this is a rare opportunity for many participants from developing countries to exchange on their work. The sessions on monitoring of land initiatives were good, but coordination on M&E at the country level is quite complex. The conference also does not allow an overview over progress or state of global / regional land governance quality. A 'Global Land Report' to also be presented at the conference could, thus, be a great way forward. In addition, the conference could benefit from more official development partners / practitioners-focused sessions such as the GDWGL policy session.

**USAID:** for USAID's bureau of food security, the areas of interest (and prioritized in the conference) were resilience and water. Pastoralism could be more highlighted, but great to see the importance given to women's land rights in the conference. The exchange on the SDGs was a useful part of the conference. Facilitators could be better prepared, peer-review of papers could also be improved.

In summarizing the Group's feedback on the conference, the chair noted the desire to allocate more time for strategic discussions on global land priorities and coordination among stakeholders, for which a whole day or 1 ½ days could be set aside. Suggested to organize a conference call to discuss suggestions to improve the conference more in depth.

### **2.3. Deep-dive presentations**

#### **Prindex new set of data – by Amy Regas, Omidyar Network**

Prindex provides people centered data to support better land based policies. Based on surveys managed by Gallup, it interviews people on their perception of land tenure security. Prindex was not developed to monitor SDGs, but can support monitoring of progress. The latest data collection took place in 18 countries, increasing to 33 countries for which data are available. The key finding is that one in four people interviewed feel insecure about their land and property, i.e. 178 million adults in 33 countries think it is 'likely' or 'very likely' that they will lose their home against their will in the next five years. West and Central Africa has the highest regional average rate of tenure insecurity while Latin America continues to have the lowest regional average rate. Women are 12 points more likely to lose land. Renters (*versus* owners) also presented higher risk rates, as well as individuals located in urban areas. Data collection for 107 countries is to be completed in the fall, data to be available in early 2020.

#### **Update on SDG indicator 1.4.2 – by Klaus Deininger and Thea Hilhorst, World Bank**

First results available from inclusion of SDG land module in the Zambia labour force survey, covering documented land rights, right to transfer and bequeath, perceived tenure insecurity, and demand for title and willingness to pay. Initial results show high tenure insecurity and a large majority with

documentation in urban areas (68% versus 13% in rural areas), and over 10% of households has formal title. The World Bank noted differences with the Prindex data, including lower perception of tenure insecurity in the Prindex Zambia survey. Klaus raised questions about robustness of Prindex data, but admitted he had not looked at Prindex methodology in detail. Chair explained different tenure insecurity scoring system (a balanced scoring with 2 levels of security and 2 insecurity) in Prindex (vs a 4 insecure and 1 secure in WB survey) and inclusion of renters was likely the cause of discrepancy in the results, not robustness of methodology.

Members requested the World Bank to share the data sets as they are highly helpful for the design and follow up of donor programmes in partner countries. They agreed that the difference between Prindex and LSMS survey data needs to be analysed further, but that both data sets are valuable. DFID emphasized that Prindex was not created to compete with LSMS and it is up to NSO to define which methodology they will use and which data set they will present in the official reporting. The World Bank reminded that by February 2020, the custodians of 1.4.2 need to show clear progress to qualify for Tier I, otherwise the indicator will be removed from the framework.

The chair recalled that custodians have presented a proposal of what resources are still missing to be able to achieve Tier I and called GDWGL members to consider once again this request. Members agreed to organize a call to take stock of the different monitoring initiatives on indicator 1.4.2.

#### **New Technical Guide on ‘Tenure and Regulated Spatial Planning’ – by Francesca Romano, FAO**

This Technical Guide (to be published in mid-2019) focuses on the practical challenges of implementing spatial planning objectives and the corresponding regulatory consequences when considering peoples’ tenure over land, fisheries and forests. The Technical Guide takes a human-rights based approach to spatial planning in aim of strengthening civic space and encouraging spatial planning processes in line with the objectives set out by the VGGT. It targets state authorities, non-governmental actors, communities affected by spatial planning and the private sector.

It was suggested to FAO to integrate this and other similar guides into training programmes, within a coalition of partners that conduct capacity building.

#### **UN Secretary General Guidance Note on Land and Conflict – by Oumar Sylla, UN-Habitat/GLTN**

Developed under the leadership of the GLTN and UN-Habitat in collaboration with a Core Group of other UN agencies, the [Guidance Note](#) aims preventing, mitigating and resolving land conflicts. It will be applicable to all UN agencies, from global to local level. It builds on global and regional frameworks such as the VGGTs, the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa; and draw lessons from practical experiences from the field in the context of land and conflict. It will help UN Agencies focus on interventions that drive change as well as strengthen partnerships and capacity across the UN system to comprehensively deal with land as a driver of conflict. The next step will be the implementation of the Guidance note based on joint framework with the core group already established, which includes: DESA, DPPA, DPO, FAO, OHCHR, PBSO, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR and UN-Women.

FAO informed that Guidance Note will be a priority for FAO, but not yet clear how this will be rolled out in coordination with all UN agencies. UN-Habitat clarified that a meeting is taking place next week in NY to discuss how to move forward (FAO included). On the costs of rolling out this guide, UN-Habitat replied that it will be costly because of mediation issues, capacity development and other elements. They estimate 5 years to implement this guide appropriately, while raising funds to support countries in conflict.

#### Action points:

- WB Land Conference – organise a call to discuss how to improve the conference and send suggestions to the World Bank
- SDG monitoring initiatives – proposal to / organise a call to take stock and clarify complementarity of different initiatives

### 3. Coordination

#### 3.1 Code of conduct in partner countries

The chair presented a proposal for member's consideration. In the proposal members commit to:

1. Proactively share strategic information on national policy engagement, policy developments and relevant research
2. Work towards closer sequencing and complementarity of our national programmes
  - a. Timely peer review of all land programmes [>\$10m]
  - b. Share basic info on programme pipeline on internal database
  - c. Regularly update land governance map
3. Actively support and champion local mission/office engagement in relevant coordination groups

#### Suggestions:

- Encourage peer review and joint appraisal missions, as done already by GIZ and the World Bank
- Sharing of assessment reports conducted by individual programmes

Members were asked to send further feedback per email. A new draft will be shared soon for review.

#### 3.2 Dragon's den on new large-scale programmes

##### **DFID's Africa Land Facility – by Chris Penrose Buckley**

The objective of this Facility (still in the pipeline) is to accelerate sustained land reform and support better governance of land investment. This will be a multi-country programme that will pool risk of individual DFID country offices investing in new land programmes and also expertise and learning. It will be an adaptive programme, with no pre-determined outputs and flexible delivery, to be applied in 5+ countries in Africa (4-5 years in each), with a total budget of ca. £30m.

#### Discussion

UN-Habitat suggested Uganda as a 'low-hanging fruit' and potential candidate since it has a strong legal framework and other projects by BMZ, GIZ, NL etc. already operating there. Other questions included: how to overcome the challenge of operating a programme from the headquarters level, and who would be the beneficiaries (governments, CSO, academia etc.). DFID explained that Uganda, Ghana, Sierra Leone are amongst potential focus countries, and that Northern Africa is not excluded. In terms of implementers, preference will be given to consortiums of organisations that would deploy teams on the ground.

##### **MFA-NL's new global [LAND-at-scale programme](#) – by Frits van der Wal**

This programme, to be launched next week, emerged of a coalition within the Dutch government with several ministries contributing to the budget. It is in many aspects very similar to DFID's Land Facility in so far as budget (€32m), no rigid upfront framework and somewhat central management. The programme will not issue 'calls for proposals' – instead, it will be a 'call for ideas', to evaluate proposals. They should come from the Dutch Embassies located in different countries globally (not only Africa), however anyone is welcome to submit their ideas to the Embassies. Besides Embassies, a consortium of

multi-stakeholders can implement the projects.

### Discussion

Members praised the flexible approach in both the Dutch and British new programmes. Country partners in the land sector are overburdened in countries and a central drive may ease the pressure. MFA-NL clarified that UN Agencies may also participate (by submitting ideas to the Dutch Embassies)

### **3.3 GDWGL project pipeline spreadsheet - proposal**

A proposal drafted by DFID was shared with members (in PPT) and included the tracking of:

- Country-level implementation (not global initiatives)
- Scale: >\$2m per country (??)
- Any work with government
- Anything 'strategic' where coordination is key

### Suggestions

- Consider reviewing the scale of projects (>\$2m would exclude many interesting projects)
- Add column on procurement sensitivities

Members were asked to send further ideas/comments per email. A new draft will be shared soon for a next round of discussion, incl. how to share this resource.

#### **Action points:**

- Donors' code of conduct at country level – collect further feedback and publish in the GDWGL webpage
- Spreadsheet of projects in the pipeline – revise proposal and agree on how to share

## **4. Protection of HR/land rights defenders - discussion with INGOs**

Representatives from INGOs (see invited guests) provided a brief account of the threats posed on Human Rights/land defenders worldwide. They referred to cases in highly disputed forested areas, and some of them including sexual abuse as mechanism of pressure. According to evidence, women's rights are not protected, even where enforced by law.

ILC pointed to the need of support beyond land registration as 40-50% of the world's land surface are claimed by people with customary tenure. It suggested that more progress could be achieved if rights are first recognized at the community level and then broken down to individual registration. ILC also suggested linking up work on mapping initiatives, and working with the private sector through the Interlaken group, e.g. by committing to zero HR violations in their value chains.

The group of speakers recalled the CFS as an important space to support the defense of communities, calling for example for community-based decision making, the need to formally register disputes etc. Additionally, as a good practice they noted the case in Guatemala where the Swiss Embassy facilitated discussion with local authorities and helped raising awareness to the growing killing of HR defenders.

### Discussion

GDWGL members need specific actions that could be communicated to ministers, for example, to support HR/land defenders. One of the challenges for the donor community is the silos – land separated from forestry, which prevents violations of HR to be tackled more systematically. Donors clarified that they support communal land rights with growing interest in mixed, demand-driven systems.



#### Further points/suggestions made by guest speakers:

- Deaths of land rights defenders is at one end of the spectrum; we need to look at what can be done before it gets to this. Contacting the HR Rapporteur for overview of the situation in specific countries
- Establish cooperation with donor countries' Embassies, to raise awareness to HR violations, as in the case of the Swiss Embassy in Guatemala
- Promote due diligence in companies of donor countries
- Appoint a focal point in the GDWGL to continue dialogue on violence against HR/land defenders

#### **Agreements/Action points:**

- Bernard Zaugg (SDC) to be the GDWGL's focal point on this issue
- Organise a discussion to follow up on suggestions made by INGOs, incl. linking donors' initiatives more systematically to human rights reporting
- Agree to hold exchanges with CSOs more often

## **5. Global advocacy**

### **Reflection on the GDWGL policy session at the WB Land Conference and GDWGL advocacy efforts**

- GDWGL policy session was appreciated for being strategic, well-moderated and engaging – good reference format for the future
- On the issue of alignment: 'our diversity as donors is also our strength', alignment will not always be possible, but dialogue, exchange is essential
- How to elevate the land agenda at a high level? Starting a movement on land rights? Other sectors seem to be performing better, e.g. SUN network or other SDG goals (e.g. the champions of 12.3 on food waste).
- The flagship report on the state of land sector is one resource (UN-Habitat to share again the proposal incl. costs).
- Another is Landex, launched the previous night by ILC – it already brings together data by different initiatives. In both cases, donors have the possibility to commit funds to further support

There was broad interest in exploring the feasibility of a 'Global Land Report' as proposed in different forms by some members already. UN-Habitat to share an initial outline or concept note with Chair for further elaboration and then presentation to the group.

### **Review of key events and GDWGL engagement**

The chair called for ideas on engaging at strategic and high level events. At CFS, any high level meeting needs to be organised as soon as possible (FAO to check whether this is possible). There is need to re-elevate the VGGTs in the CFS. At the HLPF (NY), UN-Habitat to share entry points/opportunities for a session focusing on land rights. There is also opportunity to organize high-level meetings at the Land Policy Conference in Africa (conference is being supported by BMZ's NELGA programme).

#### **Action points:**

- FAO to contact CFS Secretariat and learn about possibilities to hold high-level meetings
- UN-Habitat to inform about possibilities to hold sessions at the HLPF in NY
- UN-Habitat to re-share the proposal on a global report on the State of Land



## 6. AOB, wrap-up and closing

- WB requested the GDWGL to endorse the Global Campaign on Women's Land Rights
- Next conference call of Group: to take place between late April/early May
- Members expressed particular appreciation for more opportunities for in-depth exchange on programmes (e.g. deep dives and dragon's den) in the physical meeting – format to be pursued.