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LAND IN POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA:

GOOD REASONS TO ENGAGE ON LAND IN THE POST-2015 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Context

Land is fundamental to address **urban and rural** challenges and it cuts across all sectors. These include dealing with governance and legislation, city extension, densification, urban policy, housing, food security, slum upgrading and prevention, economy through land-based financing, water and sanitation, infrastructure, urban mobility and transport, planning, public space, municipal finances, employment and job creation, safety and security as well as dealing with post-conflict and post-disaster contexts, gender, youth and human rights issues. This resonates with “**The Future We Want.**”

In the UN Secretary General's report to the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly on the progress in the implementation of the MDGs until 2015 and recommendations for further steps to advance the United Nations Development agenda beyond 2015, he states:

“The common ground in these contributions far outweighs any differences. Indeed, it is possible to see the emerging outlines of a new sustainable development agenda: universal in nature yet responsive to the complexities, needs and capacities of individual countries and regions; bold in ambition but simple in design; combining the economic, social and environmental dimensions while putting the highest priority on ending poverty and reducing inequality; protective of the planet, its biodiversity, water and land; rights-based, with particular emphasis on women, young people and marginalized groups; eager for new and innovative partnerships; and supported by pioneering approaches to data and rigorous accountability mechanisms. Guided by this far-reaching vision, a limited set of goals with sustainable development at the core, as called for at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, could be constructed to encapsulate current challenges and the priorities of the new agenda and to guide the transformation we need.”

The **Rio + 20 outcome** document stresses the importance of developing ‘*goals, targets and indicators, including where appropriate gender-sensitive indicators, that are valuable in measuring and accelerating progress*’. The resolution also calls for embarking on capacity-building, extension training programmes and scientific studies and initiatives aimed at deepening understanding and raising awareness of the economic, social and environmental benefits of sustainable land management policies and practices in respect to land management and tenure security. An important contribution to the implementation of Rio+20 outcome will be to design a framework for collecting and monitoring tenure security.

The **Global Donor Working Group on Land**, a network of 37 bilateral and multilateral donors, international financing institutions, intergovernmental organizations and development agencies in its platform Policy brief acknowledges that: following a spike in the global interest in land and learning the lessons from the broadly successful MDGs, the international community is now increasingly recognizing how central the responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources is for sustainable development. This was reaffirmed through the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) as the first ever globally agreed standards for the responsible governance of tenure of land.

The **Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure of Land Forests and Fisheries** serve as a reference and provide guidance to improve the governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests with the overarching goal of achieving food security for all and to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. These Guidelines are intended to contribute to the global and national efforts towards the eradication of hunger and poverty, based on the principles of sustainable development and with the recognition of the centrality of land to development by promoting secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests¹. At the regional level the **Land Policy Initiative** (LPI) developed the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa as a framework to strengthen land rights, enable productivity and secure livelihoods.

The **High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda** agreed in 2013 that the world's foremost goal post-2015 should be the eradication of extreme poverty. People who live in poverty are always on the edge, vulnerable to shocks and losing their assets. The HLP report proposes a target on *"secure rights to land, property, and other assets"* as a building block for people to lift themselves out of poverty. It emphasizes land and property rights for women, with a second land target under a gender equality goal².

The Report of the **Sustainable Development Solutions Network** stresses the need to improve agricultural systems and to increase rural prosperity while eliminating the discrimination of women in land rights.

The **UN Global Compact** equally proposes a target on *"full and equal access of women to ownership, property rights and land titles"*.

¹ UNFAO (2012) Ibid
² Global donor Platform for Rural Development Policy Brief No 9 of 2013.

The G8 2013³ committed to support greater transparency in land transactions including at early stages, responsible governance of tenure of land, and increase capacity in developing countries; and to releasing data for improved governance – share expertise and be transparent about data collection, standards and publishing processes. Its Lough Erne Declaration 7 states that:

“Land transactions should be transparent, respecting the property rights of local communities.”

It is against this background that the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII) is working towards the inclusion of land in the Sustainable Development Goals.



What is the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII)?

The Global Land Indicators Initiative is a collaborative and inclusive process for the development of the Global Land Indicators Initiative started by the Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC), UN-Habitat and the World Bank (WB), facilitated by Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)⁴. This initiative has now grown to include over 30 institutions around the world ranging from UN Agencies, Inter-governmental Organizations, International Non-governmental Organizations, Farmer Organizations and the Academia.

In 2012, the GLTN took the initiative to organize an Expert Group Meeting for the development of annually reported global land indicators. The EGM met in April 2013, November 2013 and March 2014. The EGM participants are developing a list of 8-10 land indicators that will complement the Post-2015 development agenda as well as contribute to monitoring the UNFAO Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance on Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries and the African Union Land Policy Initiative/Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa.

The Global Land Indicators Initiative aims at building consensus around a common framework. This framework will allow to leverage and piggyback (e.g. with a couple of agreed questions) on on-going land monitoring initiatives either at agencies level (e.g. World Bank's LSMS/Doing Business Survey, LPI land policy monitoring, Landesa women's right indicators, UN-Habitat tenure security indicators and Global Urban Observatory, etc), project levels (e.g. MCC, IFAD projects), national level (e.g. National Population Censuses - implemented every 10 years-, and the Sample Surveys that the National Statistical Offices - implement at different periodicity-).

Once an agreement is reached, there are a range of methods and tools that can be used to collect land-related indicators.



8 Reasons to engage on land in the Post-2015 Development Agenda?

1

Good land governance is central to ending poverty as it enables efficient and effective appropriation and use of land, regulating land concentration, fragmentation and expropriation and through this guaranteeing tenure security and **enhancing the productive** use of land for **poverty reduction**. 75 percent of the world's poorest people, thus 1.4 billion women, children, and men, live in rural areas and depend on agriculture and related activities for their livelihood⁵; the poverty line in urban areas is on average about 30% higher than in rural areas. The **livelihoods** of many urban and rural poor, are based on secure and equitable access to and control over land.

Contributes to SDG focus area 1 (as of OWG10). Poverty eradication, building shared prosperity and promoting equality

Proposed Target in the SDGs:

Target f: ensure equality of economic opportunity for all women and men, including secure rights to own land, property and other productive assets and access to financial services for all women and men.



Harvest laborers in Xieng, Laos © Flickr/Photasia

⁵ FAO Addressing Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises 2010

2

Land is central to **food security** and **nutrition**. Land is the source of food and shelter. Approximately one in eight people in the world are estimated to be suffering from chronic hunger, regularly not getting enough food to conduct an active life. Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five - 3.1 million children each year. That is 8,500 children per day. A third of all childhood death in sub-Saharan Africa is caused by hunger. 66 million primary school-age children attend classes hungry across the developing world, with 23 million in Africa alone⁶. The eradication of hunger and poverty, and the sustainable use of the environment, depend in large measure on how people, communities and others gain access to land.

Contributes to SDG focus area 2 (as of OWG10).
Sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition
End hunger and improve nutrition for all through
sustainable agriculture and improved food systems

Proposed SDG target:

Target: all countries have in place sustainable land-use policies by 2020, and all drought-prone countries develop and implement drought preparedness policies by 2020.

3

Equal rights to land, assets and other productive resources will **reduce violence against women and enhance economic wellbeing** by giving them control over assets and productive resources. Women produce 70% of the world's food and yet constitute 60% of the world's hungry⁷. This is because they do not control access and proceeds from land and productive assets. Equal rights between men and women to land, assets⁸ and other productive resources will change the gendered face of poverty.

Contributes to SDG focus area 5 (as of OWG10). Gender
equality and women's empowerment
Attain gender equality and women's empowerment
everywhere

Proposed SDG target:

Target e: by 2030 ensure equal access to, and control of, assets and resources, including natural resources management.

⁶ World Food Program Hunger Statistics 2013
⁷ State of food Security in the world 2013
⁸ The Africa Union (2009) Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa

4

Land is an **engine for growth and prosperity**, enabling the sustainable symbiotic coexistence of the urban and rural inhabitants. For resource dependent communities, land is a factor of production and sustains their livelihoods creating markets through growing urbanization. For the urban dwellers, land provides the basis for human settlements and the growing urban farming as a livelihood option, promoting agricultural value chains, and thus strengthening the interdependence of the urban and rural inhabitants. Planning for urban growth and working to provide land, infrastructure, and services for the poor is the basis for economic transformation and growth.

Contributes to SDG focus area 10 (as of OWG10).
Sustainable cities and human settlements
Build inclusive, safe and sustainable cities and human settlements

Proposed SDG target:

Target c: enhance capacities for integrated urban planning and management.

5

By 2030, 60% of people will live in urban areas with 32% of the world's urban population currently living in slums⁹. In both low and middle income countries, poverty itself is also taking on an urban character, and cities are becoming sites of extreme and chronic vulnerability to poverty, crime and violence. Tenure security is at the centre of stabilizing and developing **healthy cities, managing city extension and intensification** critical to managing human settlements.

Contributes to SDG focus area 10 (as of OWG10).
Sustainable cities and human settlements
Build inclusive, safe and sustainable cities and human settlements

Proposed SDG target:

Target a: by 2030, ensure universal access to adequate and affordable housing and basic services for all, and eliminate slum-like conditions everywhere.

6

Land is the backbone for **conservation and ecosystems management**, critical to combating the adverse effects of **climate change**. Inadequate and insecure tenure rights increase vulnerability, and can lead to environmental degradation when competing users fight for control over land. Resource tenure security is critical to the continued existence and sustainable development of planet earth¹⁰.

Contributes to SDG focus area 14 (as of OWG10).

Ecosystems and biodiversity

Protect and restore terrestrial ecosystems and halt all biodiversity loss

Proposed targets in the SDGs:

Target d: by 2030, ensure sustainable management of all forests and mountain ecosystems, halting deforestation and increasing reforestation by x%.

Target e by 2030, achieve a land degradation neutral world.

7

Land plays a central role in the political, social and economic life of every citizen in the world. It is the basis of human identity, dignity and existence. The governance of tenure is a crucial element in determining if and how people, communities and others are able to acquire rights, and associated duties, to use and control land. It also guarantees their protection against arbitrary dispossession and expropriation. The right to land and property is central to promoting sustainable management, **democratic and peaceful societies**, and a conducive environment for inclusive economic growth.

Contributes to SDG focus area 16 (as of OWG10).

Peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law and capable Institutions
Peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law and capable institutions

Proposed SDG target:

Target b: by 2030 provide equal access to independent and responsive justice systems including related to property and tenure rights, employment, business, taxation, trade and finance.

8

Ill-managed land and natural resources are a source of conflicts around the world and almost one third of the world's population live in conflict-affected low income countries¹¹. Often the most immediate and visible cause of rural to urban forced migration is conflict. Global trends show a dramatic increase in societal conflict, with intrastate conflicts having been the most prevalent form of armed conflict between 1950 and 2005¹². The changing nature of warfare has resulted in millions of people being internally displaced, as local battles spill over into civilian areas¹³. There is therefore a strong convergence between security, land governance and development. Therefore, land is critical for **peace and security**.

Contributes to SDG focus area 16 (as of OWG10).

Peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law and capable Institutions Peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law and capable institutions

Proposed SDG target:

Target b: by 2030 eliminate discriminatory laws, policies and practices,166 empower marginalized groups,167 in the social, political and economic fields.

Target c: by 2030 establish inclusive, participatory decision-making,168 including at local governments,169 taking into consideration the interests of future generations.



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¹¹ Institute of Development Studies, <http://www.ids.ac.uk/idsresearch/conflict-violence-and-development>

¹² Human Security Center, (2006). Human Security Brief 2006, (University of British Colombia, Canada), p. 8.

¹³ UNHCR (2008) New Issues in Refugee Research. Research Paper No. 161

Who and how can one participate?

GLII is a multi-stakeholder group embracing the participation of all actors on land.

GLTN/UNHABITAT is facilitating the Global Land Indicators Initiative. Through its website, <http://www.gltn.net/index.php/our-news/gltn-news/363-the-global-land-indicator-initiative>, information is made available for broader engagement. Subscribe to receive updates and know when and where events will be taking place.

The Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) provide platforms for engagement. These take place twice every year around global events. Information is available through the website.



Institutions that have participated and contributed to the GLII:

Multilateral/Bilateral Organisations		Non State Actors	
Africa Union Commission (AUC)	UNECA/LPI	ActionAid - Rome	Uganda Land Alliance
DFID	UN-Habitat	CNRS Technical Committee Land and Development	UK Rainforest Foundation
European Commission	USAID	Earth Security Institute	World Vision
FAO	World Bank	FIAN	Farmers Organisations
German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	Academia / Professional Bodies	GROOTS - Kenya / Huairou Commission	AIAB
GLTN/UN-Habitat	American University	Habitat for Humanity International	Asia Farmer Association (AFA)
GIZ	Federation of Surveyors International (FIG)	Huairou Commission	CNOP-CAM / PROPAC
IFAD	Institute for Advanced Sustainability Germany	IFRIS postdoctoral researcher INRA-Sens / Université Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée	COPROFAM
Millennium Challenge Cooperation (MCC)	Kadaster NL	International Indian Treaty Council, Panama	CROCEMA/ IPC
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France / World Bank - French	Lantmaeteriet Sweden	International Land Coalition (ILC) Secretariat	Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFf)
Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	University of Calgary	International Union for Land Value Taxation	IPC / CROCIM
Overseas Development Institute, UK	University of Greenwich	Landesa	La Via Campesina
Permanent Representative of Brazil to FAO, WFP & IFAD in Rome, Italy Alternate Permanent	University of Twente	Land Research Center - Palestine	PAKISAMA, Asia Farmer Association (AFA)
Permanent Representative of The Republic of Colombia to FAO, WFP & IFAD in Rome, Italy	Xavier Science Foundation	Omidyar	
Representative of The Republic of Uganda to FAO, WFP & IFAD in Rome, Italy		OXFAM	
Swiss Development Cooperation - SDC		Rights and Resource Initiative	
UNDP		Tetra Tech	

To know more Visit the GLII page:

<http://www.gltn.net/index.php/projects/global-land-indicator-initiative>

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May 2014

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