



# Land Governance in Tanzania: What to Know, and What to Do

## Tanzania's New Directions in Land Policy

When President Nyerere left power in 1985, the government of President Mwinyi began to chart new directions for Tanzania's economy and society away from African socialism. The government prepared Tanzania's first National Land Policy in 1995, which led to the enactment of the Village Land Act and the Land Act in 1999. The Policy argues that procedures for obtaining title to land should be simplified, that land administration should be transparent and further, it recognizes that secure land tenure plays a large role in promoting peace and national unity. In 2005 the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Land Laws (SPILL) was prepared and revised in 2013. The Plan seeks to ensure that land law and governance better supports the current and future social, economic, and environmental development of the country, which will be crucial to the success of Tanzania's ambitious Five Year Development Plan 2011-2016 focusing on priority areas, such as urban development, infrastructure, Information and Communication Technology,

agriculture investments, mining, livestock and fishing, forestry and wildlife, and land and housing at the regional level. Despite the progressive provisions of customary land rights and decentralization under the Village Land Act of 1999, land law has not yet been effectively integrated into the land governance framework: village authorities often lack the financial and human resources to effectively perform their duties. Overlapping decision making and weak governance in land administration pose major concerns in terms of delivering land rights in an efficient and equitable manner. Land insecurity in rural areas is still high among small landholder farmers, pastoralists, and women. In urban areas nearly 60 percent of urban dwellers live in informal settlements and lack tenure security. With demands for resource exploitation expanding, the government needs to address how to handle competing demands for land to help mitigate or avoid conflicts over increasingly scarce land.

**VGGT** – The *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security* (FAO, 2012) are an internationally negotiated instrument that governs rights to land, fisheries, and forests. The Guidelines constitute an unprecedented international consensus on tenure; they are voluntary and do not replace laws and treaties, however they outline principles and practices to which governments can refer when making laws and administering land, fisheries and forest rights. The Guidelines are primarily directed at governments, but also address the private sector and other groups, such as civil society and academics. They can be used to assess laws and systems, to find guidance or direction when the laws and practices of a country are not clear, and to advocate and educate on tenure rights and good land governance.

**Donors in Tanzania** – **Donors with active land programs** in Tanzania include the European Union, Denmark, Germany, IFAD, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States and the World Bank.

**Webinar** – Join us to learn more about land governance in Tanzania, the VGGT, and how you can program successful land interventions – **Wednesday, 24 May 2017, at 8:00 AM EDT / 15:00h Tanzania**