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# Land Tenure and Food Security

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18 February 2014



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## *Food security defined*

“When all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life.”

- Is adequate food available?
- Do people have access to food?
- Knowledge of basic nutrition and access to complementary resources?



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## ***Land-related risks contribute directly to...***

- Food price volatility/strong demand for farmland
- Population growth/urbanization
- Climate change pressures
- Conflict
- Competing uses of rural lands  
(extractives/conservation)



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## *How land tenure impacts food security...*

- Tenure rules/norms impact access
  - To land, water, pastures, forests
- Tenure rules/norms impact productivity/availability
  - By creating incentives
- Tenure rules/norms can impact poverty
  - By creating/limiting economic opportunities



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## *It's not just about inputs, institutions matter*

Food security is intimately tied to the institutional environment, land governance systems are part of that environment.

- If these systems are weak access/productivity/poverty alleviation are negatively impacted
- Smallholders may, or may not, have tenure security
- Legal pluralism can compound problems
- As does lack of capacity



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## *Linkages*

- Secure rights create incentives to invest/conserv
- Investment can increase productivity
- Can improve/expand market opportunities
- Can improve opportunities to trade rights
- Can improve resilience & reduce vulnerability



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## ***Women face particular constraints***

- Substantial gender asset gaps persist
- Unique role producing food; unique role supporting families
- Improving access to land (credit, inputs) can have powerful, positive impact
- Working with & within customary systems, with men & boys is critical



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## ***Why integrate land tenure into food security programming?***

- Create a stronger foundation: land governance is an important part of the enabling environment
- Number of households w/ formalized land (rights) is a common FTF indicator tracked annually
- Locally appropriate efforts to formalizing rights for women and men and can help achieve FTF objectives
- But formalizing alone isn't enough ...



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## ***Other important considerations***

- Sometimes customary systems are secure enough
- Private sector investors can bring benefits, but they (and you) need to understand tenure risks
- Land rights violations may be new human rights frontier
- Communities can partner with investors, resource rights can be their assets
- Participatory processes need to be strengthened



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## ***Some questions to ask***

- When land is identified for a project, ask who traditionally has been living on & using these resources (land, water, pastures, forests)
- Which rights have groups & individuals traditionally held?
- Are these rights recognized/formalized?
- If not, how will local be affected by project?
- If so, are they adequately enforced?
- Who may oppose formalization?
- Has the host government acceded to the VGGT?