

Draft Report: CSD Workshop on Land – 9 May 2008

Introduction

In May 2008, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) opened its 16th Session, with the focus of its 2008-2009 cycle on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. The CSD annual session brought together representatives from government, NGOs, social movements, international agencies and the private sector to address progress made toward implementing global commitments in relation to these themes. Taking place against the backdrop of growing concerns over rising food prices, climate change and land degradation, the CSD session marked an important opportunity for governments and international bodies to consider approaches to improve secure land access by the poor as part of the global sustainable development agenda.

Land tenure security and equitable access to land and natural resources are central – yet often neglected – aspects of sustainable development and poverty reduction. Land is one of the most important assets that poor men and women have, and provides a basis for livelihoods, a safety net from extreme poverty and a basis for social and economic relations in a society.

Many poor families and communities, however, lack clear and legally enforceable tenure over the land upon which their livelihoods depend. In both rural and urban societies, the landless and near landless and those with insecure land tenure often constitute the poorest and most vulnerable social groups. The ability to access land is closely connected to power relations within a society, and the inability for vulnerable groups to maintain secure land rights is an expression of wider social and political dynamics that contribute to their marginalization and exclusion.

Rapidly developing global trends, such as increasing commodity prices, agrofuel cultivation and climate change mitigation, are already creating new demands on land and natural resources and are poised to have far-reaching impacts on efforts to promote equitable land distribution and sustainable land use. Addressing the land access and tenure security needs of poor households and communities is an increasingly critical challenge faced by governments and other development institutions, particularly as competing pressures for land and natural resource use continue to grow.

During opening week of the CSD session, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the International Land Coalition (ILC) organized a workshop focused on the theme: “Land and Vulnerable People: Towards and Action Agenda to Strengthen Poor People’s Access to Land.” This activity sought to: (a) review current trends that are affecting land tenure security throughout the world, (b) map out how organizations are responding to these trends, in different

areas of work, and (c) identify opportunities for linking initiatives or undertaking collective action, including through the CSD process.

The workshop was part of a broader initiative by IFAD and ILC to strengthen a community of interest and action on land rights and tenure reform, including through a stocktaking of current knowledge and experience on improving land access by the poor. This initiative seeks to support collaboration among organizations working on land access and tenure, including rural people's associations such as farmers' organizations, producers' networks and indigenous peoples' and pastoralist associations.

Review of Current Trends

The recent public attention to rising food prices and climate change underscores the timeliness of the 2008-2009 CSD agenda, and presents an opportunity to generate actions and commitments related to land access. The current CSD cycle also provides a framework for global collective action to improve land access and tenure security by the poor. In the initial session of the workshop, panelists and participants identified key global trends that are impacting land access and tenure security:

- What is now being expressed as a food price crisis is not only rooted in food commodity markets, but also structural forms of exclusion and poverty that are related to decreasing land access by the poor.
- Commercial demands and other pressures for land and natural resource use are increasing in scale and globalizing in nature, making it both more necessary – while also more challenging – to document and quantify the impact on land access and tenure security. The effects of new drivers of commercial land use, such as for agrofuel production, need to be assessed more closely.
- Changes in use and management of the commons, including forest areas and rangelands, are occurring rapidly but are largely not being connected to policy debate and dialogue concerning land tenure reforms. Community-based tenure is increasing, but so is privatization of the commons.
- Violence and forced displacement are increasingly reported in relation to landlessness and insecure tenure and often have disproportionate impact on the poor. This is among the motivations of popular resistance to state and commercial use of natural resources.
- The roles of social movements are expanding, particularly in connection to establishing land claims and demanding resource rights, but these are not consistently included in policy processes that address land tenure.

The attention being given to these trends and their impact on key development priorities is generating new opportunities for governments and intergovernmental bodies to address land access and tenure reform, including through UN forums such as CSD. Greater participation by organizations of the poor in such forums will be critical to ensuring that the concerns of vulnerable groups – such as smallholder farmers, forest communities, indigenous peoples and women-headed households – will be reflected by decisions made and actions taken.

Responses to Threats and Challenges

The review of trends summarized above served as the background for the first workshop group activity, in which participants discussed how their organizations and other institutions are responding to the kinds of threats and challenges that were identified. Participants addressed these responses from three different perspectives: (1) research and analysis, including use of data and indicators; (2) policy and advocacy initiatives; and (3) capacity-building, institutional support and up-scaling of pilot initiatives.

Each working group was asked to make an inventory of organizations working in these three areas, activities and initiatives underway, issues and challenges faced, and key events or processes on the horizon. Each identified a headline that captured its assessment of current efforts in the area it addressed. (See Annex A for the detailed lists compiled by each working group.)

Group 1: Research, Analysis, Data and Indicators. This group noted the importance of research and analysis to inform political decisions and policy implementation, and particularly to bridge knowledge with actions, as reflected in its main message of “research community unites, provokes decisions.” Fragmentation of research and gaps in knowledge are two key issues that need to be addressed.

Group 2: Policy and Advocacy Initiatives. Participants in this working group highlighted an urgency to focus on immediate challenges and opportunities, through bridging local initiatives with policy processes. It recognized the key roles of both national governments and community-based efforts in reform processes. At the global level, efforts to increase visibility of land rights and tenure reform face are still dispersed, and this fragmentation should be addressed in order to increase effectiveness of policy and advocacy work.

Group 3: Capacity-Building, Institutional Support and Up-scaling Pilot Initiatives. Participants in this group identified a central message of “rights secured and resources regenerated for sustainable livelihoods.” This reflected a general concern that capacity-building better support to poor households and communities to claim or defend their rights to land. Approaches to land rights organizing, such as community mapping and literacy, can be linked with

increased accessibility to information and state land administration processes, so as to increase the capacity of both land users and land tenure institutions.

Opportunities for Collective Action

Following the presentations by the workshop groups, participants considered opportunities for follow-up by their own organizations, as well as actions that they could undertake collectively, and each noted 3-4 activities that could follow the meeting. In reviewing the proposed activities, participants grouped them into several categories:

- Engagement with the UN System
- Advocacy
- Information Clearinghouse
- New Approaches to Funding
- Media (including use of New Media)
- Networking
- Analysis and Collecting New Information

A number of participants proposed to work together following the meeting in preparation for CSD-17, in order to strengthen the information and analytical base on land issues, and to use this to engage government representatives and CSD major groups so that land access and tenure security are highlighted in the outcome statement. Several other UN-system processes, such as the FAO High-level Summit on Food in June 2008, were identified as potential windows for advocacy and organizing around land rights.

The recommendations also suggested needs for more thorough information collection and analysis of how global trends are impacting land tenure and land access; the impact of agrofuels on land access was raised as a particular concern in this regard. A number of participants indicated that they would participate in follow-on work to collect and assess land tenure information in a systematic manner, either in preparation for CSD-17 or as a broader effort on monitoring land access and tenure security.

One key recommendation for advocacy and networking was to highlight the discussions at CSD-17 with national organizations following the meeting's completion. Growing concerns about the food crisis and proposed responses to climate change were identified as potential entry points for bringing land into national policy discussions, and for raising it as a public issue through the media. More generally, it was recommended that more support be given to people's organizations so they may participate directly in forums such as CSD in the future, as it was noted that most of the participants in this workshop did not directly represent land rights constituencies. (See Annex B for a detailed list of activities proposed during this workshop session.)

Next Steps

As part of the final workshop exercise to group together potential follow-on activities, participants identified activities for which their organization could provide leadership. IFAD and ILC will facilitate communication among these focal point organizations, and will organize a listserv for participants to keep in contact electronically following the completion of CSD.

One important focus for joint action will be the preparation for CSD-17, so that participants' organizations could better influence the outcomes through collective action. Participants agreed that this work should emphasize greater participation by grassroots organizations and representatives of land rights communities, and that the groundwork for this could be laid now, upon return home from CSD-16. It is expected that there will be regional CSD consultations later in 2008, which is one potential entry point for participants to ensure that land access and tenure security are on the agenda of CSD and its member states.

Annex A: Outputs from Group Work on Thematic Areas

Group 1: Research, Analysis, Data and Indicators

Organizations and Institutions

- CGIAR system (e.g., ICRAF, CAPRI)
- UN agencies (e.g., DAO, UN-Habitat)
- World Bank
- International networks and initiatives (e.g., ILC, RRI)
- Regional networks (e.g., Africa Land Care Network)
- SARD-Kenya Working Group on Livestock
- CSOs (e.g., CEPES, Heifer International, Grupo ALLPA)
- Bilateral agencies (e.g., USAID)
- National research associations (e.g., SEPIA)

Issues and Concerns

- Land rights for pastoralists, and conflicts related to mobility and pasture access
- Increasing land use for agrofuel and its impact on livelihoods
- Links between conservation and poverty reduction – conservation as an obstacle (denial of people's rights)
- Lack of access to titles for peasant communities and smallholders; their land access needs and rights more broadly
- Value-chain development to improve equity for pastoralists and livestock producers
- Use of marginal lands
- Tenure and land-use policies
- Effective ways to share good practices and solutions
- CSO input into Africa-wide guidelines on land policy
- Pro-poor land policy and implementation

Resources

- Tools and materials on conflict management and negotiation (e.g., FAO)
- GLTN
- Websites – source for policy briefs, analysis, research papers, etc. (e.g., SARD, CAPRI, CEPES)
- Livestock field schools
- Research networks
- Strong and trained community groups
- Study on land concentration in Peru (Grupo ALLPA)

Activities and Upcoming Events

- Community exchange visits
- Dialogues with policy-makers and forums to increase community voices in policy-making
- Land indicators work (e.g., WB, UN-Habitat, Land Watch Asia, etc.)
- Collaboration with government agencies
- CAPRI/RRI consultative conference
- Research and advocacy on women's access to land in East and Southern Africa (ILC)
- June 2008: biennial meeting of IASC (International Association for Study of the Commons) – UK
- Mid-2008: workshop on biofuels impact (CEPES/SEPIA – Peru)
- Sep 2008: Land Care conference in Southern Africa
- March/April 2009: ILC Global Assembly - Nepal

Group 2: Policy and Advocacy

Organizations and Institutions

- Local authorities and locally elected councils
- Traditional and customary institutions
- Social movements and people's organizations (e.g., Via Campesina, ROPPA, ACIOFOC, FECOFUN, WAMIP)
- Government ministries (e.g., Ministry of Land)
- Regional bodies (e.g., African Union, ECA, SADC)
- UN agencies (e.g., FAO, IFAD, UN-Habitat, DESA) and bodies (UNFF, UNFCCC)
- Global networks and institutions (e.g., ILC, GLTN, WISP, IUCN)
- World Bank
- Private foundations (e.g., Rockefeller)
- Sustainable agriculture and development NGOs
- Global campaigns (e.g., One Campaign)
- Human rights organizations (e.g., Human Rights Watch)
- Private sector (e.g., World Business Council for Sustainable Development)

Issues and Concerns

- Recognition of community-based rights and customary tenure
- Commons management and pluralistic tenure regimes
- State sovereignty over land
- Recognition for environmental services (water, biodiversity, fire suppression)
- Linking land-use efficiency with food production, energy and local economic development
- Rights of urban slum dwellers and eviction rights
- Need for land policies and commitments to land rights before investments via MFIs or conservation initiatives
- Tourism and land access
- Land-related conflicts
- Lack of voice from CBOs, communities and CSOs in decision-making forums, at all levels
- Registration and spatial planning
- Gender and land rights
- Resilience and responses to natural disasters

Resources

- Community-based organizations
- Experts in the field (e.g., African Task Force on Land)
- Sources of financing (e.g., UN Development A/C, national budgets, SADC and other regional bodies, bilateral and multilateral partners)
- Celebrities for generating public attention
- Global initiatives and networks (RRI, GLTN)
- IFAD land access indicators in Rural Sector Assessment
- GLTN publication on access to land for poor
- UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- World Development Report 2009 – urban/rural linkages
- Databases on land information
- Public support and attention
- Existence of best practices / national case studies (e.g., Rwanda, Ethiopia)

Activities and Upcoming Events

- UN SG Task Force on Food Crisis – producing a comprehensive framework for action
- Development of indicators and monitoring initiatives (e.g., World Bank, UNECA, ILC)
- ICARRD follow-up process
- Development of land policies and laws at national level
- FAO – promotion of participatory territorial development activities
- ECOSOC and GA sessions -SG reports to the bodies
- Support to organizations of the poor (e.g., producers' orgs)
- Advocacy and issue -raising during election and campaign periods
- Decentralization processes underway (in some countries)
- June 2008: FAO Food Summit (Rome)
- Sep 2008: High-Level Meeting on MDGs and African Development Needs
- Climate summits
- World Urban Forum – UN-Habitat
- ITTO sessions (International Tropical Timber Organization)
- World Conservation Congress (WCC) – Barcelona

Group 3: Capacity-Building, Institutional Support and Upscaling

Organizations and Institutions

- UN-Habitat and partners, e.g., COHRE, Huairou Commission, GRET, ILC, Hokjami
- National CSOs (e.g., WEP-Nigeria)
- Regional networks (e.g., ANGOC, GROOTS, Land Care Africa, Terrafrica)
- People's organizations (e.g., Maasai Women's Development Organization)
- UN agencies (e.g., IFAD, FAO)
- International organizations (e.g., FIG)
- Legal aid associations and other technical-oriented CSOs (e.g., mapping)
- Government agencies
- World Heritage Committee
- African Center for Holistic Management

Issues and Concerns

- Increased skills for collecting and analyzing information
- Make grassroots movements more visible
- Lack of understanding on land laws and rights
- Strengthening people's organizations to document land claims and advocate for recognition of land rights
- Scaling-up useful tools, e.g., GLTN land tools
- Increasing community participation, especially women and youth
- Lack of links between government and civil society experiences
- Land grabs and evictions
- High level of legal disputes involving land
- Strengthening legal institutions
- Encouraging good grazing and sustainable livestock management
- Women's rights to land, particularly land inheritance
- Urban land for the poor, and access to water and sanitation
- Lack of legal frameworks to support land access
- Appropriate land registration approaches and transparency in land administration
- Land-use policy

Resources

- Pastoral value-chain field school – SARD Kenya, Heifer-Kenya
- Pilot cases for carbon sequestration and good rangeland management
- Planned grazing initiatives for collective land management
- Funding for pilots and up-scaling (e.g., Misereor, Irish Aid, UN-Habitat, GLTN)
- Information – reports, newsletters, videos, etc.

Activities and Upcoming Events

- Community-based training and grassroots academies
- Literature review on up-scaling grassroots tools
- Increasing participation of women in decision-making
- Paralegal training (community-based)
- Community mapping
- Radio shows and media outreach
- Revolving land funds
- Watchdog activities
- Documentation and publication of successful pilot cases
- Action research with community members
- Community mobilization, movement-building, lobbying and advocacy
- Fundraising
- UN Forums (e.g., CSD, CSW, ECOSOC)
- Global conferences on HIV/AIDS
- World Urban Forum
- May 2008: ECOSOC special session on food crisis
- June 2008: Regional workshop on women's land rights (ALRD - Bangladesh)
- Oct 2008: Grassroots Women's International Academy

Annex B: Outputs from Group Work on Opportunities for Collective Action

Engagement with UN System

- Draft a declaration to address bio-fuels and food crisis
- Develop strategy and message for joint engagement in CSD 17, and work with governments to provide input to CSD-17 outcome document
- Integrate land access and theme in the next UN DPI/NGO conference and other related initiatives (e.g., Unlearning Intolerance)
- Generate commitment (e.g., resolution) from ECOSOC and/or UN General Assembly on secure land rights by poor households and communities
- Link with UN Peacebuilding Commission on land issues
- Ensure land issues are addressed by UN Secretary General's task force on the food crisis
- Identify how land access is related to other CSD themes (e.g., drought, desertification) and strategically participate in events linked to decision-making on other themes related to land
- Raise land issues with CSD Major Groups' focal points – use existing process for building consensus (e.g., position papers, SG report)
- Establish mechanisms for sharing information before CSD 17 next year
- Participate in and contribute to FAO High-level Summit on Food (June 2008)

Advocacy

- Make the food crisis (including land dimension) a top priority of incoming US government so that it enters into CSD 17 with transformed commitment
- Prepare tool kits for policy-makers on how to transform policies into actions
- Strengthen support mechanism for making civil society voices stronger and better reflected in national and global processes
- Increase grassroots women's visibility in policy and advocacy arenas, including events and dialogues
- Establish or strengthen national coordination on land issues among organizations and networks
- Draft urgent statement on land issues for wide endorsement
- Have statement on land adopted by CONGO (Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with UN) in 2008-2009

Information Clearinghouse

- Compile existing information, activities and data, starting with outcomes from today's workshop
- Share and aggregate data on who "owns" the land, and contributions of small-scale land users to the economy, environment and social well-being
- Catalog key land issues facing different regions and of organizations involved in land-related work, including grassroots organizations

- Commission a stocktaking paper to map existing and anticipated impacts of global trends on land rights

New Approaches to Funding

- Support up-scaling of community and territorial mapping (in short-term)
- Develop programs and projects for selected countries, including securing funds needed
- Alternative fund structure for REDD/CC that is controlled and managed by developing countries
- No more reports – identify concrete and workable solutions, and take action

Media (including Use of New Media)

- Contact UN Correspondents Association (UNCA)
- Link to current news
- Provide inputs to online NGO report to SG, via www.climatecaucus.net
- Organize high-impact media events (involves serious investment)
- Organize a special issue of UN Chronicle
- Develop electronic community of practice for information exchange and networking, leading to CSD 17
- Start thematic pages on social networking platforms to share information
- Journalist training on land issues, e.g., in conjunction with Reuters and IUCN
- Media training on effective messages and influencing public opinion

Networking

- Collaborate and coordinate with our own governments and other national organizations
- Up-scale concrete local activities and land tools through pilot projects
- Increase support for dialogues between women, grassroots community members and local authorities
- Use social bookmarking tools to share resources
- Participants share updates among each other on progress made following the CSD
- Map what each institution or organization is doing as a basis for development of concrete partnerships
- Enhance communication and networking efforts, e.g., identify clear points for collaboration

Analysis and Gathering New Information

- Identify good practices for piloting and learning
- Work out concrete measures to address perceived land problems

- Collect information about areas with biofuel crops in each country and share among ourselves
- Develop White Paper on high food costs and poor people's lands; use findings to generate news coverage
- Research on land consolidation for biofuel, shrimp culture, etc. – break down by country / region
- Compile cases on land and conflict to demonstrate scope of the challenge
- Compile extensive collection of cases that offer promising approaches
- Collect and document lessons learned and best practices that can inform the different intergovernmental processes
- Document best practices and disseminate or share with all regions
- Issues-based research for information and data generation – targeting for use in CSD 17
- Compile cases and evidence on the impact of biofuels on land and livelihoods

Annex C: List of Participants

Name	Affiliation
Rowshan Jahan Femie Duka	Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD-Bangladesh) DAMPA – Philippines / Huairou Commission
Lisa-Anne Jensen	FAO
Sally Bunning	FAO Land and Water Division
Violet Shivutse	Groots Kenya / Huairou Commission
Laureano del Castillo	Grupo ALLPA
Terry Wollen	Heifer International
Jim C Hoey	Heifer International
Constance Neely	Heifer International
Michael Haddigan	Heifer International
Arthur Getz	Heifer International
Nicole Ganzekaufer	Huairou Commission
Joseph Tanui	ICRAF / AHI
Harold Liversage	IFAD
Cheryl Morden	IFAD
Xenia von Lilien-Waldau	IFAD
Stephan Dohrn	IFPRI / CAPRI
Richard Jordan	International Council for Caring Communities
Linda Elswick	International Partners for Sustainable Agriculture (IPSA)
Michael Taylor	International Land Coalition (ILC)
Esupat Ngulupa	Maasai Women Development Organization
Kaganda Noel	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Govt of Tanzania
Charles M Ufwenuka	Ministry of Lands, Govt of Zambia
Augusta M Molnar	Rights and Resources Initiative
Michael Kibue	SARD – KLWG
Mikael Atterhog	Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
Sarah Anyoti	UNDP / DDC
Joan Kagwanja	UNECA
Clarissa Augustinus	UN-HABITAT
Carol Kramer LeBlanc	US Department of Agriculture
Joyce Turk	US Agency for International Development (USAID)
Achakpa Priscilla	Women Environmental Programme (WEP-Nigeria)
Mary Rose Kaczorowski	Women's Major Group
Tim Ogborn	World Hunger Year (WHY)