



Securing tenure rights to increase food security



Meeting the challenge

Tenure rights are crucial to the livelihoods of people as they define who can use which natural resources, for how long, and under which conditions. Tenure of natural resources is also essential for environmental sustainability and increased resilience and for enabling farmers to access other services. As the world population continues to grow and climate change reduces the **availability of natural resources**, increasing **conflicts** over land, and **land deterioration** are negatively affecting rural livelihoods on an unprecedented scale. In particular, **women often have much weaker tenure rights than men**, and they suffer discrimination by social customs, as well as by legal systems.

The Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure (VGGT) are globally recognized as a reference for practices regarding the responsible governance of tenure. The urgent need to scale up the implementation of the VGGT to achieve food security for all was reaffirmed in 2022 on its 10th anniversary, while recognizing the centrality of land for development.

In action

FAO promotes VGGT-based policies to improve **equitable access to land and to secure tenure** rights, as well as to incentivize **rural people** to invest in sustainable land management.

FAO supports countries to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of public services in their **land administration** and management systems.

Together with other partners, FAO have launched the **Global Land Observatory** (GLO) to generate and make available data, evidence and analysis on the state of land tenure and governance issues. The GLO serves as a reference for governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), the private sector and universities regarding their respective actions necessary to achieve the objectives set in the international agreements of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Looking at the evidence

The pressures on **land-resources** are undermining the wellbeing of **3.2 billion** people.¹



More than **360 million** Indigenous Peoples and local communities inhabit existing **protected areas**.²



Men have greater **ownership** or more secure tenure rights over agricultural land than do women in **40 of 46** countries for which data is available.³



50% of countries for which data is available have weak legal **protections** for **women's** land rights.⁴



Comparative advantage

FAO has strong and widely recognized technical expertise on land tenure with a range of capacities and hands-on experience ranging from land administration, land valuation and land consolidation to cadastral and topographic surveys and mapping, geospatial technologies and spatial data infrastructures. Thanks to the strong relations with state and non-state actors built in rural areas of low-income countries, FAO strives to achieve the 2030 Agenda to **eliminate poverty, reduce inequalities, and promote inclusive economic growth and rural transformation**. Furthermore, the Organization effectively supports the creation of new land reform programmes and policies based on the VGGT, as well as the creation of improved land policies and programmes in rural areas. Additionally, FAO has the capacity to effectively support land administration investment projects, and to scale up capacity-building through the **GeoTech4Tenure** programme.

“ Thanks to FAO’s support, we were able to move the process of the public consultation hearings forward and analyse the data collected to inform the new land policy. ”

Dr Eduardo Chiziane
*Mozambique’s Commission
for the Land Policy Revision*

Best practices and results

- 1 FAO assisted the creation of **multi-stakeholders platforms on tenure governance in 16 countries** at local, national and regional levels (i.e. **National Platform on the VGGT in Senegal**) and supported more than **10 tenure reform processes** in Africa and the Balkans.
- 2 FAO produced capacity development tools and training programmes based on the VGGT, such as **e-learning courses** and the **GeoTech4Tenure** programme.
- 3 FAO provided technical assistance to investment projects for land administration and spatial data infrastructures in Guyana, Türkiye and Uzbekistan.

Expected results

- Support to the implementation of **land reform in at least 20 countries** in Africa and Latin America, by engaging with parliamentarians, in assessments of legal frameworks, formulation of land policies and building of multi-stakeholder processes for inclusive policy dialogue and support to reform proposals.
- Provide guidance to increase **tenure access to the most vulnerable** with the aim to reduce social inequalities, and to ensure that the right of **Indigenous Peoples** over their land, territories and resources is respected.
- As the custodian agency for SDG 5.a.2, provide continued support to the collection of information and data evaluating the progress on assessing **women’s equal rights to land ownership and/or control to land**.
- **Mainstream land tenure** in the implementation of the United Nations system’s work on natural resources preservation and climate change, such as the three Rio Conventions.
- **Prepare a periodical report** for documenting the state of land tenure and governance in the world.

Contact

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Contribution to the SDGs



Partnerships to scale up impact

- ministries of land;
- the United Nations system (the International Fund for Agricultural Development [IFAD], the World Bank, UN Habitat, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification [UNCCD]);
- civil society organizations and intergovernmental organizations (the International Land Coalition [ILC]);
- not-for-profit organizations (the Global Land Alliance);
- academia and research organizations (the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development [CIRAD]); and
- foundations (the Land Portal).



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