



# Land tenure and development

A COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF DECISION-MAKERS, EXPERTS AND RESEARCHERS PROVIDING INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR LAND POLICIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

[www.foncier-developpement.org](http://www.foncier-developpement.org)



**LandTenure**&Development







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## Land tenure is a key aspect

**of economic development and environmental protection in developing countries, and in ensuring social peace in their rural and urban communities.**

The “Land Tenure and Development” Technical Committee has spent nearly 15 years working on land policy formulation in order to help secure the land rights of the most vulnerable citizens in developing countries. A wide range of approaches, disciplines and skills are deployed by the thirty or so members of this committee, who are drawn from major research bodies, teaching institutions and specialist development agencies working on land tenure and related issues in a variety of countries and continents:

- ADEF, Land Tenure Studies Association;
- AFD, French Development Agency;
- AGTER, association to contribute to improve the Governance of Land, Water and Natural Resources;
- ASP, Agricultural Services and Payments Agency;
- CIRAD, Centre for International Cooperation in Agronomic Research for Development;
- CNRS, French National Centre for Scientific Research;
- CSN, High Council for the Notarial Profession;
- ESGT, College of Land Surveyors and Topographers;
- FIEF, French International Federation for Land Studies;
- GRET, Professionals for Fair Development;
- IAMM, Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier;
- IGN, National Geographic Institute of France;
- Iram, Institute for Research and Application of Development Methods;
- IRD, Institute for Development Research;
- LAJP, Department of Legal Anthropology, Paris-1 Sorbonne;
- MAEE, French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs;
- Montpellier Centre for Research on Rural Land Tenure in Developing Countries.

### Regular meetings and exchange

Members meet once a month to reflect and work on land tenure and related issues **under the auspices of the French Development Agency and Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.**

The technical committee also works with technical assistants in post or supporting ongoing reforms in developing countries (Rural Hub in Dakar, National Land Programme in Madagascar, Rural Code in Niger), and receives secretarial and administrative support from GRET (meetings, electronic forums, “Land tenure and Development” website).

### An extended network of international actors

These exchanges are not limited to French experts, as **other national and international actors are invited to annual presentations on the work done by the Technical Committee**, to enable them to work in synergy on land issues and new problems arising from interventions in this arena. They include the World Bank, the Department for International Development (DFID), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the International Land Coalition (ILC), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), UN-Habitat and representatives of or-

ganisations in developing countries (Landnet West Africa, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Madagascar National Land Programme).

### Monitoring developments in the sector

One of the Committee’s tasks is facilitating access to reliable, up-to-date information on the sector. In order to do this, it supports and promotes existing **observatories** (Madagascar) or those under construction (World Agriculture Observatory, West Africa Observatory); and uses the Land Tenure and Development website to send **newsletters** to over 600 subscribers around the world (decision-makers, elected officials, professionals, researchers and so on).

## Supporting and promoting new knowledge

**The Committee functions as a learning community that discusses, structures and publishes new knowledge on land and land tenure.** The aim of these publications is to open up debate, clarify changes in land management regulations and allow the broader public to learn about an important aspect of development.



### Publishing specialist studies and research findings

The Committee has helped produce numerous publications on land and land tenure, based on studies and joint research initiatives involving francophone and anglophone specialists from developed and developing countries (IIED publications, French Development Agency study

reports, publications by Karthala). The catalytic Land Policy Support project has also provided a framework for research on land dynamics and transactions and land policy formulation processes in South Africa, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Haiti, Mali, Senegal, Tunisia and Vietnam. These publications will be made available on the Internet and in the FDA's "focal" series.

## Guiding policy choices and contributing to international debates

**The Committee acts as a hub for new synergies between researchers, experts, decision-makers and operators.**

The French Cooperation supports the implementation of national policies and strategies concerned with land and land tenure in countries such as Mali, Senegal and Niger.

The Committee provides support and guidance in this field, and is also called upon to assist other international authorities in formulating related strategies (European Union Guidelines, World Bank Policy Research Report, FAO Voluntary Guidelines).

### TWO EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS BY THE COMMITTEE

#### French Development Cooperation White Paper

##### "Land governance and security of tenure in developing countries"

This White Paper is the culmination of an immense collaborative writing process. Drawing on the accumulated experience of Land Tenure and Development Committee members, it presents an analysis of contemporary rural and urban land issues in developing countries, and suggests strategic themes for French Cooperation support. Land governance and security of tenure are key aspects of land policies intended to combine economic efficiency with equity, and to rebuild citizenship. Implementing such policies will require open procedures that recognise the diversity of both land rights and their holders, and offer flexible mechanisms for securing these rights. The full version of this White Paper was published in French and English in 2009; a synthesis is also available in Portuguese and Spanish.



#### Supporting the French position on large-scale land appropriations

In 2008 the Committee set up a working group to look into the issues associated with large-scale land appropriation. Run in association with GISA, the French inter-ministerial food security group, and actors from French civil society (CCFD, Oxfam, Peuples solidaires), this working group is committed to ensuring that the rights of land users are respected, and reconciling private investments with the general interest. It has produced two documents:

- a working paper assessing the situation and identifying future courses of action: **"Analysis and proposals regarding large-scale appropriation of land around the world"**;
- a paper on the French position in international debates: **"Large-scale land appropriation and responsible agricultural investment. An approach to securing human rights, food security and sustainable development"**.

In addition to this, the Committee has also been asked by the French Prime Minister to participate in and contribute to thinking by the Centre for Strategic Analysis.





# Supporting land policy actors

In 2006 the Committee began piloting the **Land Policy Support Project**, which is funded by the French Development Agency and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. This project has financed the production of information and training tools, and research operations and initiatives to build on experience already gained in this arena.

## Actions implemented in the context of the Land Policy Support Project

In addition to the White Paper, support for the French position on large-scale land appropriations and research work, the project has initiated the following activities:

- a Land Tenure and Development **website**: [www.foncier-developpement.org](http://www.foncier-developpement.org)
- an **assessment of the legal and institutional frameworks** for land tenure, natural resource management and decentralisation in 23 African countries;
- an **international workshop** to discuss practices to secure land tenure at the municipal level (Cotonou, Benin, 20<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> October 2008);
- **teaching materials** on key aspects of land issues in West Africa, to help different categories of actor

define their position in the debates on land tenure (decision-makers, officials from the public and private sectors, project and PO staff);

- a **training needs assessment** for the land reform in Madagascar;
- a **cycle of training** on the theme "Land governance and natural resource use" in Tunisia;
- participation and contributions by Committee members at **international events**;

Full versions of all the documents produced in the context of these actions are available on the Land Tenure and Development website:

[www.foncier-developpement.org/vie-des-reseaux](http://www.foncier-developpement.org/vie-des-reseaux)



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