

UK Land Policy Forum

Summary of the UK Land Forum meeting held on 4 November 2015

December 2015

1 Background:

DFID presented an overview of DFID's aims and activities on land, and the objectives of LEGEND. CLST gave an overview of the knowledge management and other technical support activities provided. See copies of the slides presented for details.

2 Key challenges in land governance for economic development:

Breakout groups identified challenges falling into eight thematic clusters that provide potential focus for debate, dialogue and lesson sharing by the Forum and the LEGEND Knowledge Management Team (full details attached as Annex 3):

- The political economy of land
- Land investment and investors
- Legal empowerment and human rights
- Land registration, titling and beyond
- Land valuation and taxation
- Data accountability and transparency
- Urban land
- Land Governance and sustainable development

3 Proposed aims and objectives:

- Constitute a broad grouping of land experts seen to take objective views on land to interact with DFID and inform its policy focus and programme approach on land.
- Provide a forum for critical debate, and exchange of ideas, perspectives and information.
- Strengthen networking to build a UK stakeholder community of expertise on land and engage with other non-UK fora and stakeholders.
- Act as a mechanism for applying and showcasing "best of British" expertise on different aspects of land governance.
- Provide a mechanism for capturing lessons from DFID programs and from broader international experience.

DFID welcomes the forum as a standing UK advisory resource and expert network but is also happy for UK stakeholders to take the initiative to develop it.

4 The French Technical Committee experience is a good reference point, combining broad stakeholder interest in findings with active engagement of French Cooperation (AFD) as the ultimate "customer" of the Committee's work and outputs. An initial focus on knowledge generation and sharing

was later balanced with operational issues and inclusion of professional and civil society organisations alongside researchers. The committee retains strong analytical capacity spanning perspectives from sociology, anthropology, political economy and economics, that feeds operational and policy discussion. This approach took time to evolve.

5 Outputs of the UK Land Forum: Participants agreed that forum should work to achieve actionable outcomes in land policy and programming, based on open discussion. Potential outputs include:

- Discussion papers to stimulate fresh perspectives and develop stronger understanding in Government, civil society and private sector on land-related policy, legal and technical questions.
- More definitive position papers, reflecting analysis and deliberations of the forum or specific groupings of experts and stakeholders within it.
- Principles and operational guidance for land programming, based on experience of lessons learned and analysis.

6 Geographical focus: mainly, but not exclusively, on sub-Saharan Africa, in line with DFID's operational focus, with potential relevance to the African Land Policy Initiative. However, the lessons of land reforms and land governance approaches from S.E. Asia, Latin America, Europe and other regions should not be excluded.

7 Forum meetings: these could be both face- to face and on-line with scope to organise short, focused debates on particular themes engaging with specific target audiences in addition to standing or regular participants. A meeting of some sort should be held every three months to maintain momentum. Meeting venues can rotate with participant organisations hosting some meetings (RICS offered to host a next meeting).

Before the next meeting in February 2016, the CLST will propose what sort of meeting cycle to have. e.g.:

- Every six months face-to-face full “assembly” to debate a key cross cutting theme, update and feedback on developments and help decide on forum direction and plans.
- More specialised, online thematic meetings every three months on, e.g. private investment, IFCs, land administration systems.

8 Participation: the Forum should combine representatives of interested organisations and people with relevant skills and expertise, emphasising the latter. Good continuity of representation is important. A balance between continuity in representation, or standing expert membership of the forum, and flexibility to invite and engage wider target audiences, including DFID and other UK government representatives; CSOs; developing country governments and land officials; private sector, in particular participants in land-relevant global debates. Thought is needed about how to effectively engage the private sector.

9 Resourcing: the scope of forum activities needs to be commensurate with resources available. It is presently resourced by LEGEND for two meetings and two wider events each year, up to September 2019. Depending on scope and levels of ambition, additional funding may be needed.

10 Thematic focus: on specific, substantive and actionable issues, related to the 8 topics identified. Participation and discussion should be managed to facilitate coherent UK to emerging questions on ways forward on land governance and administration. The next meeting could combine a more elaborated vision and development plan for the Forum (e.g. to 2020) with one or more specific themes. Suggested themes were women's land rights, urban land issues, and corruption in land (theme of a current CLST analytical paper and related to the potential UK corruption summit in May 2016).

Annex 1. Agenda of the Land Policy Forum meeting held on 4 November 2015

Time	Theme	Presenter/Chair
13:00-13:30	Welcome, aims & proposed outputs of workshop & UK policy forum (<i>10 min</i>) Introductions from forum participants (<i>20 min</i>)	Iris Krebber, DFID, Acting Head – Agriculture Team & Senior Land Policy Lead Melinda Bohannon: DFID, Head of Growth and Resilience Department
13:30-14:30	Introduction - UK government ambition and activities on land (<i>10 min</i>) - Introduction to LEGEND & CLST (including wider partners) (<i>10 minutes</i>) Overview of KM activities (10 minutes) Feedback and discussion (30m)	Chair: Matthew Glanville, KPMG Iris Krebber, DFID Julian Quan, NRI Anna Locke, ODI
14:30-15:25	Open discussion (55 minutes) - Focus: key land governance issues - Issues arising - Opportunities for collaboration, coordination & synergies	Chaired/facilitated by Ian Scoones, IDS
15:25-15:35	Coffee Break (<i>10 minutes</i>)	
15:35-16:15	Ideas for a UK Land Forum (<i>40 minutes</i>): Discussion on aims and structure of the forum, drawing on experience of other fora	Chair: Anna Locke
16:15 - 16:25	Next steps & future meetings (10m)	
16:25-16:30	CLOSE	Julian Quan (CLST) and Iris Krebber(DFID)

Annex 2. Land governance challenges as identified by Land Forum meeting breakout groups

Political economy of land: Understanding historical and political contexts is essential in any land work, making political economy analysis central to knowledge management and for operational planning. There is an opportunity to apply DFID's broader work on 'thinking politically' in relation to land. Central to this is to understand and challenge the narratives that orient perspectives on land governance, including how land investment, land rights, land access land availability, and common or communal property are understood in different contexts.

Investment and investors: Much debate has centred on large scale commercial investments in land, prompted by concerns about 'land grabbing' on the one hand and by demands for FDI on the other. While this remains important in many places, economic development trajectories involve different types investor, including domestic and foreign companies, development finance institutions, national elites, local entrepreneurs and small-scale producers. A more rounded, variegated view of investment interests and needs for land and land services is essential for land governance, as investor responses to regulation and incentives will differ, and land governance needs to be attuned to all.

Legal empowerment and defending human rights: Building stakeholder capacity to make rights real, and apply voluntary principles and statutory regulations to land governance and land investment is a central challenge. This requires identifying capacity needed in different contexts for both defenders of land and human rights defenders (in civil society, in the bureaucracy and in the legal system) and for corporate actors in moving towards responsible investment. There are particular challenges for fair and effective dispute resolution in conflict-affected regions, and following conflicts.

Beyond land registration and titling: Much effort has been invested in land registration and titling programmes, focused on securing property rights. But this is only one part of wider land governance challenges which require focus on improving and sustaining land administration systems and services as a whole, particularly in resource poor settings.

Land valuation and taxation: are key components of effective land administration systems Enhance public revenues from land taxes can be used to support better land administration and land use planning, and valuation systems can also provide the basis for fair compensation when land is expropriated for development purposes. Valuation methodologies can be contentious, and appropriate systems are needed that reflect real user interests in land in contexts where formal land markets are absent or limited.

Data, accountability and transparency: Good data (on land occupation, rights held, land allocations, investment contracts for investment, land registration data etc.) including spatial data, is needed for effective land administration. Applying new technologies effectively can help with data capture and management, but there are wider questions about transparency and how open data can be used to strengthen accountability, achieve more responsible investment, and reduce corruption. There are potential trade-offs between improved data availability and transparency on the one hand, and protecting individual and community rights and avoiding conflict, on the other (for example under weak land tenure and administration systems, fully transparent data might lead to aggressive land appropriation by outsiders, and open up land conflicts.

Urban land: Many issues related to rural land also appear in urban contexts, particularly in peri-urban settings where pressures on land are intense. Policy debate spanning rural and urban settings is essential, although they may be governed by different institutions and regulatory frameworks.

Land governance and sustainable development: Overall, there is a need to avoid ghettoised land policy debate, and link land issues across a range of core development concerns. The case for improved land governance is relevant to economic development and poverty reduction, women's empowerment, corruption and good governance, climate change and environmental management, food security and nutrition, amongst other issues. Across the proposed post-2015 development goals, land is central.

Annex 3. Participants list

Organisation	Name
Global Justice Now	Aisha Dodwell
Human Rights Watch	Clive Baldwin
Global Witness	Julian Oram
Christian Aid	Kenneth Boyce
Transparency International	Mona Niemeyer
University of Manchester	Phil Woodhouse
WWF-UK	Richard Perkins
Mokoro	Robin Palmer
ICAR	Sara Blackwell
French Technical Committee on Land Tenure and Development	Mathieu Boche
AgDevCo	Alex Simuyandi
DAI	Richard Baldwin
DAI	Felicity Buckle
	Camilla Toulmin
Cloudburst	Karol Boudreaux
Geoffrey Payne and Associates	Geoffrey Payne
Oxfam	Ross Clarke
DFID	Melinda Bohannon
The Munden Project	Benedick Bowie
Oxford Brookes University	Beacon Mbiba
Friends of the Earth	Kierra Box
RICS	James Kavanagh
UK Land Registry	Sue Knowles
Ordnance Survey International	John Kedar
UK Food Group	Jean Blaylock
Overseas Development Institute	Helen Hynes
KPMG	Nathan Hill
Overseas Development Institute	Anna Locke
Overseas Development Institute	Giles Henley
DFID	Iris Krebber
International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	Philippine Sutz
International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)	Lorenzo Cotula
KPMG	Matthew Glanville
IDS	Ian Scoones
NRI (University of Greenwich)	Julian Quan

About us:

Land: Enhancing Governance for Economic Development (LEGEND) is a DFID programme that aims to improve land rights protection, knowledge and information, and the quality of private sector investment in DFID priority countries. It includes the development and start-up of new DFID country land programmes, alongside knowledge management activities, a challenge fund to support land governance innovations, and management of complementary DFID grants, MoUs and contracts, and supported by a Core Land Support Team.

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To find out more about LEGEND and its partners please visit landportal.info.

