



**LAND  
TENURE**  
JOURNAL

REVUE DES  
**QUESTIONS  
FONCIÈRES**

REVISTA SOBRE  
**TENENCIA DE  
LA TIERRA**

*Call for abstracts*

## Addressing land conflicts and disputes

in the present context of increased and evolving pressures  
and renewed thinking around dispute management and mitigation

### Context

Disputes springing from increased pressure on land due to population growth, climate change, migration, and conflict are increasingly recognized as an urgent problem across the globe. Elevated levels of land disputes can be disruptive and can impede development, peace and security. They can stifle investment, decrease agricultural production, and may adversely affect disputants' food security. Particularly when they overlap with ethnic divisions and their build-up coincides with economic, political, or demographic shocks, they can also contribute to the outbreak of larger scale conflict.

Over the past decades, many governments have sought to address these problems as part of broader initiatives to improve land governance. This work, often undertaken with technical and financial support from development partners, typically includes the review of legal frameworks, the adoption of land policies, the strengthening of land administrations and, notably, the formalization of tenure. This responds to the lack of formal recognition of land rights of a large share of the world's population. This lack of recognition creates uncertainty over ownership, which may result in disputes between neighbors and within families and can expose legitimate owners to claims by powerful community members, government officials, or companies. Formalizing land rights by giving clear proof of ownership can prevent such uncertainty and disputes. More recently, thinking around dispute management and mitigation has evolved considerably in past decades. State centric approaches, characterized by a focus on formal institutions, have given way to greater emphasis on access to justice, involvement of civil society and legal empowerment. In many countries, this has also led to more appreciation of the role of customary and informal justice systems and alternative dispute resolution.

Yet land dispute resolution, specifically, suffers from its location at the crossroads between different sectors, as defined by governments and donors, such as justice, peacebuilding, agricultural development, and environment. Policies and programmes in these various sectors relating to land disputes will often have a narrow focus and are rarely implemented in effective coordination with land-related reforms or initiatives in other sectors. Moreover, lessons learned do not easily travel between these sectors. In addition, whilst there are indications that formalization can indeed lead to a reduction in land disputes, the issue remains understudied and the evidence that is available is far from conclusive. And, critically, even with formalization and other improvements in land governance, it is clear that land disputes will not disappear. This is because many potential drivers of land disputes, such as land scarcity, population pressure, inequality, climatic conditions, and the availability of off-farm income-generating opportunities, are not affected by improvements in land governance. This is particularly the case in a context of increased pressure on land.

As the pace of climate change accelerates, inequality continues to rise globally, the number and intensity of state-based conflicts increases, and the world maintains its path to reach a population of 10 billion in 2050, it is critical to expand our knowledge and open up new perspectives on effective and comprehensive ways of managing and mitigating land disputes, by identifying best practices and lessons learned garnered at local and national levels around the world.

## Objective of the call for papers

In accordance with Chapter 2 of the VGGT “Resolution of Dispute over Tenure Rights”, the *Land Tenure Journal* aims to compile a new issue featuring a diversity of actions undertaken to resolve existing and evolving land disputes and conflicts, in the present context of increased and evolving pressures and renewed thinking around dispute management and mitigation. The objective is to bring together good practices and successful experiences in the implementation of concrete mechanisms that could be useful to a range of actors involved in disputes. These include political, administrative and judicial authorities responsible for resolving disputes and conflicts, international organisations, local communities, traditional authorities, development practitioners, private national/international companies, and others.

Among other subjects, contributing papers could highlight:

- Innovative conflict resolution and mitigation mechanisms undertaken to resolve existing and evolving land disputes and conflicts, in the present context of increased and evolving pressures and renewed thinking around dispute management and mitigation
- the results achieved in resolving land disputes through the implementation of multi-stakeholder platforms and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in diverse environments (pastoral, sedentary agriculture, forestry, fisheries, irrigation, housing, land grabbing for tourism, conservation, humanitarian or post-disaster contexts, and others).
- the crucial role of customary authorities in the resolution of disputes and conflicts, noting the role of women, youth, and marginalised peoples in maintaining community dialogue.
- experiences of informal mediation that takes into account the local political economy.
- other measures applied to mitigate emerging conflicts during the implementation of development projects, or private investments.
- the efficiency of local and global monitoring tools of conflicts, and how they empower vulnerable populations, strengthen the capacity of judicial systems or the role of paralegals, and/or support the implementation of transparency mechanisms within land administration systems.
- alternatives to registration/formalization to prevent disputes and strengthen tenure security.

## Who should contribute?

This call for papers is broadly and non-exclusively addressed to all development practitioners, private companies, academics, political and civil society actors, and land tenure professionals (lawyers, notaries, cadastral surveyors, registrars, valuers, developers and others). Interested authors are invited to submit a proposal for an article in the form of an abstract of no more than one page. It is also possible to submit several papers by different authors on a given topic (e.g. dispute/conflict resolution in pastoral environments, dispute resolution between host populations and refugees).

## Timeline

Deadline for submission of abstracts: 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Final validation of abstracts: until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Submission of authors' papers: 15 July 2024

## Contact

Send abstracts and proposals to: [Land-Tenure-Journal@fao.org](mailto:Land-Tenure-Journal@fao.org)

## References

FAO, 2006. Land Tenure Alternative conflict management, FAO Land Tenure Manual 2, Rome. <https://www.fao.org/publications/card/fr/c/08e12454-e458-5e08-8ac0-d6b2b3d7d554/>

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USAID, 2022. Land and Conflict. A Toolkit for intervention 2.0. <https://www.donorplatform.org/best-practice/usaids-land-and-conflict-a-toolkit-for-intervention-2-0/>

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## Guidelines for authors

Please follow the guidelines below when writing your article. All articles are first reviewed by the editorial team and must be in line with the proposal submitted by the guest editors. Accepted papers are selected by internal or external reviewers selected using a blind peer review. The final decision on the publication of articles will be made by the editorial team.

### *Language*

Authors are invited to submit papers in English, French or Spanish. Papers will be published in their original language.

### *Summary and keywords*

An article should include an abstract that summarises the most important results (maximum 1 200 characters with spaces). Authors are encouraged to provide three or four keywords that best define their paper.

### *Item length*

The maximum length of submitted papers is 30 000 characters with spaces, including the abstract and excluding endnotes and references..

### *Format and layout*

Articles should be submitted by email to [Land-Tenure-Journal@fao.org](mailto:Land-Tenure-Journal@fao.org). Preferred formats are Microsoft Word (.doc, .rtf) and Open Office (.odt).

Text should be single-spaced and use Times New Roman or Calibri 12 point font. The use of italics is encouraged, rather than underlining.

Articles may be structured by subheadings at a maximum of two different levels.

All figures and tables should be cited in the text and numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals. They should be placed in the text at appropriate points, rather than at the end. A title and a legend explaining any abbreviations used should be provided for each figure and table.

The use of footnotes is not recommended. They should be incorporated into the text.

Authors are encouraged to highlight key phrases in their manuscripts. These can be used by the editor as "call outs" in the final layout.

### *Visuals*

Infographics can be useful for explaining complex concepts or data. They are not an alternative way of redrawing a simple table, but a specific communication medium that emphasises visual elements to support complex information. Simple data should be represented visually in graphs.

Authors are also encouraged to send the editor 1-3 digital photos related to their article, with photo credits and a short description/caption for each. Captions should be brief, explanatory and refer to the country.

When selecting photos, please consider the following:

- Relevance to the text and the topic.
- Potential political and human sensitivities (no child labour, animal cruelty, discrimination, etc.).
- The balance of photos in the publication in terms of ethnicity, gender, professional roles, activities and geographical regions.
- Respect for the people in the image.
- The expression and attitude of people.
- Do not make any substantial changes to the image, but only slight alterations (e.g. contrast, lighting).
- Avoid collages, cut-outs and compositions; a single effective image is more powerful.

## **References**

Authors should provide their full name, affiliation, organisation and email address.

All references should be cited in brackets in the text by author and year, for example (FAO, 2007). An alphabetical bibliography should be provided at the end of the article. Full bibliographic details should be given so that readers can easily find the sources they wish to consult. The list of references should only include works cited in the text that have been published or accepted for publication.

*Example of reference for books:*

author(s). year of publication. full title of the book. publisher, place of publication. number of pages in the book.

(FAO. 2007. Good Governance in Land Tenure and Administration. FAO Land Tenure Studies No.9, Rome. 57p.)

*Example of reference for articles :*

the author(s). the year of publication. the full title of the article. the full title of the journal, volume and journal number. the page numbers of the article.

(FAO. 2007. Sample article. Land Reform, Land Settlement and Co-operatives, no. 1, pp. 21-30).

## **Checklist for preparing the submission**

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check that their submission complies with all of the following points. Submissions may be returned to authors who do not adhere to these guidelines.

- Manuscripts have not been previously submitted to or published in another journal in the same or similar form. Manuscripts previously published in a workshop, symposium or conference may be submitted for consideration provided that the authors inform the editor at the time of submission.
- The submission file is in Microsoft Word, or OpenOffice format. The content, including the abstract, is less than or equal to 30 000 characters with spaces, and the file size is less than 4 MB.
- Where possible, the URLs of the references have been provided. All URLs in the text are activated and ready to be clicked on.
- The text is single-spaced, uses a 12-point font (Calibri or Times New Roman), uses italics rather than underlining (except for URLs), and all illustrations, figures and tables are placed in the text in the appropriate places, rather than at the end.
- The text meets the stylistic and bibliographic requirements set out in the Guidelines for Authors.

- The manuscript is ready for the blind peer review process. Please ensure that the authors' names and affiliations are removed from the submission file.

### ***Instructions for submission***

Proposals and papers should be submitted by e-mail to [Land-Tenure-Journal@fao.org](mailto:Land-Tenure-Journal@fao.org).

### ***Disclaimer of liability***

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