

ROSA Newsletter



OPERATIONAL FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

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SUMMARY: Voluntary Guidelines for responsible governance of land tenure regimes
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IEWS ON CURRENT ISSUES



Voluntary Guidelines for responsible governance of land tenure regimes: Major progress but important challenges remain

The Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests were endorsed last May by the 38th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). This agreement is the result of an extensive process of consultation launched in 2009 by FAO and intergovernmental negotiations conducted by the CSA. In this interview, Mr. Madiodio Niasse, director of the International Land Coalition (ILC) welcomes the adoption of this framework that sets global benchmarks of land governance. He talks about the contribution of the ILC, the participation of the civil society in this process and the challenges that lie ahead.

● **What lessons can be learned from the elaboration process of the Voluntary Guidelines, in particular from the participation of civil society? Does this inclusive process ensure a strong commitment and broad support of all stakeholders? What were the limits?**

First of all, I think it is important to congratulate the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) for the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines (VGs). Although they are “voluntary”, therefore not binding, the VGs enjoy strong political support and a substantial level of legitimacy, key elements for enabling their operationalisation.

We participated in the FAO-led consultation on the Zero Draft of the Voluntary Guidelines in April 2011. Our aim was to support our member, the FAO, in widening the dialogue over such an important document. We consulted our network and received 36 contributions from ILC members, experts, organisations and individuals. These contributions explained some critical gaps that needed to be filled in order to improve the VGs’ ability to protect those that rely on land and other natural resources for their livelihoods, and to give them the legal and regulatory means for social, cultural and economic emancipation. We synthesised the feedback received from members and partners in a report, which we made available to the FAO, government delegations, civil society and other participants of the CFS.

The ILC is a global alliance of IGOs and CSOs. Consequently, we did not take part in the negotiations. However, the ILC Secretariat was invited to participate as an observer, which gave us a valuable opportunity to act as a resource organisation during the long, complex and sometimes difficult negotiations. We also supported ILC members participating in the negotiations, namely IFAD and the World Bank among IGOs, and Marag (India), the Uganda Land Alliance (Uganda), Ekta Parishad (India) and Oxfam among CSOs.

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The Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) of the CFS represents an important innovation in the United Nations system, giving civil society organisations a strong role alongside governments and other stakeholders in the formulation of the Guidelines. CSOs have no voting rights, but nonetheless concretely contributed to the discussion. Such an inclusive process is a key component of the strong political support the Voluntary Guidelines have gained, but this process needs to be consolidated.

As we all know, civil society is often used as a catch-all term to capture very different organisations, ranging from NGOs, to producers' organisations, social movements, and trade unions, to research institutes. Within this extremely diverse group of organisations, the perspectives on very critical issues can differ substantially and even diverge. This is what I would consider as the first challenge, especially when a uniform CSO voice is expected, as opposed to multiple voices.

The second related challenge is about "representation". Can there be a clear and commonly accepted mechanism for identifying the representatives of such a diverse group of actors? Sooner or later, this issue will have to be dealt with, although no one should be expecting perfection.

A third challenge relates to the need to invest in the preparation of CSOs before they engage in complex and sometimes highly technical policy processes and negotiations. Let me say that that this is a challenge that should receive more attention in the future. For the VGs process, the CSM did an admirable job, and deserves to be congratulated.

● **The Voluntary Guidelines provide a framework to guide governments and other stakeholders in strengthening land governance. What are the main improvements in the text endorsed last May? What are the main areas that would require further improvement?**

As I said before, the Voluntary Guidelines represent a remarkable step towards more people-centred land governance.

The VGs clearly refer to food security and poverty eradication as paramount objectives. They highlight the significant role played by small-scale food producers and the need to promote their participation and consultation on land governance, with an important reference to territorial development. It contains rather progressive provisions on areas such as access to justice and transparent information, women's land rights and gender equality, ancestral domains, non-state actors' responsibilities, etc. Several norms in these areas are likely to represent a benchmark for people-centred land governance in the future. The VGs also stress the need for national and international land governance monitoring.

One of the areas where the VGs could have been more audacious relates to the need for a stronger State role in correcting inequities in access to and control over land. In the context of very high land concentration resulting in rampant landlessness, the State has role to play in land redistribution, and the VGs should have insisted on that. As a negotiated document among governments (from the North, the South, developed and developing) with active input from CSOs, the adopted VGs is simply an outstanding achievement.

What is really important is that the VGs create conditions for revisiting, updating and upgrading existing national land-related legal frameworks in light of the emerging values and norms. The actual outcomes of such processes will depend, however, on the power relationships that prevail at the national level. This is why it is again important to support CSOs in their engagement in land policy processes at national level.



- **What actions need to be taken to ensure effective implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines?**

As affirmed in the Voluntary Guidelines, in accordance with their voluntary nature, governments have the responsibility to implement, monitor and evaluate. States are also encouraged to set-up multi-stakeholder platforms to enhance dialogue with a variety of actors, including civil society.

Whilst a strong leadership by States is critical, these tasks also need a great amount of efforts and resources from the land-concerned organisations and positive collaboration between IGOs, CSOs and governments. The International Land Coalition is ready to support its members and work FAO (an ILC member) and other organisations to achieve this goal.

AGENDA



Past events

- **CFS Inter-governmental working group meeting (27-29 June 2012):** This working group convened last June to review Draft Two of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF). Revised version has been prepared by the CFS Secretariat based on the results of consultations on the first draft between March and May 2012, including multi-stakeholder discussions at the FAO Regional Conferences and an online consultation. The working group worked on the text of the First Version of the GSF to be submitted to the CFS Plenary in October. **Read the draft 2 of the GSF and a background note for the OEWG meeting in June, outlining the process so far and next steps.** [>>>](#)

- **High-level meeting on the Sahel food crisis (Brussels, 18 June 2012):** High-level representatives of the countries of the Sahel, regional organisations, multilateral development and humanitarian aid agencies, non-governmental organisations, donor governments and the European Parliament met in Brussels at the invitation of the European Commission to discuss lasting responses to the recurrent crises that hit the Sahel. Participants agreed to launch a Partnership for strengthening resilience of the most vulnerable populations. The AGIR-Sahel (*Alliance globale pour l'Initiative Résilience*) initiative aims to be a vehicle for close coordination among donors and existing initiatives with a view to improving sharing of information and analysis, facilitating alignment of aid strategies, strengthening the link between emergency response and development, and ensuring aid effectiveness in programming. [>>>](#)

Upcoming events

23 July: Course on "Changing nutrition ideas, policy and outcomes" - Brighton (UK) [>>>](#)

15-17 October: 16th Annual Chatham House Conference "Climate change: security, resilience and diplomacy" - London (UK) [>>>](#)

15-20 October: 38th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) - Rome (Italy)

16-17 October: European Development Days "Supporting inclusive and sustainable growth" - Brussels (Belgium) [>>>](#)

29 October-1 November: Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development (GCARD) - Punta del Este (Uruguay) [>>>](#)

December: 28th Annual RPCA (Food Crisis Prevention Network in the Sahel and West Africa) meeting - Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)

More information: [Upcoming events](#)

EC's latest news

- **Increased emphasis on social transfers in the EC's response to food and nutrition insecurity:** The 2010 EU policy framework on food security¹ makes it a priority for the EU and its Member States to support countries in establishing and operating targeted and flexible social transfer policies. This recognises the role that social transfers can play in promoting food security, primarily in supporting the access pillar but also in improving access to nutritious food. In line with this framework, EuropeAid launched in 2010 a participatory process to develop a reference document to support the practical integration of social transfers into programmes addressing food insecurity in development cooperation. Published in April 2012, this document is based on a review of the international literature on social transfers, food security and social protection, as well as a number of case studies based on current EU Delegation and EU Member States' interventions on social transfers. Read the reference document and related documents. >>>

Following up on these efforts, EuropeAid launched in January 2012 an Advisory Service in Social Transfers (ASiST) to support partner countries and EC staff (in headquarters and delegations) in the use of social transfers as a response to food and nutrition insecurity. ASiST technical support is expected to: i) raise awareness of the factors that contribute to increased impact, quality, coverage and sustainability of social transfers, ii) promote quality by providing practical guidance in terms of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to strengthen and promote sustainable national social transfer schemes for food and nutrition security; and, iii) share lessons learnt among development partners and support the EC in actively participating in discussions on social transfers at the international level. Read more about the Advisory Service in Social Transfers. >>>

ROSA NEWS



New online resources

Social transfers

- **Control and accountability in conditional cash transfer programs in Latin America and the Caribbean, World Bank, October 2011:** This paper presents tools and good practices to oversee the control and accountability systems of the CCT programmes. It reviews main findings and recommendations from several previous reports that have documented these mechanisms, identified risks, and analysed areas for improvement. >>>
- **Food aid and food assistance in emergency and transitional contexts. A review of current thinking, ODI, Humanitarian Policy Group, June 2010:** This report presents the findings of a review of changes that have taken place in food aid and food assistance policies in recent years. It also provides an overview of the current state of debates around key issues relating to food assistance. It was commissioned by the German government to inform the revision of its food assistance policy in emergency and transitional contexts. It was based on review of recent literature on food aid and interviews with a representative selection of donor governments, UN agencies, major NGOs and the Red Cross Movement. >>>



¹ An EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges. Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament COM (2010) 127 final, March 2010.

Nutrition

- **Accelerating reductions in undernutrition: What can nutrition governance can tell us?, IDS, April 2012:** This policy briefing is based on a study that compares the formulation and implementation of government nutrition strategies in six countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Peru and Zambia). To identify the drivers of governance, the authors used a framework which focuses on four key factors: intersectoral cooperation, vertical coordination, sustainable funding, and monitoring and advocacy. It helps to identify key aspects of effective nutrition governance and how it contributes to accelerating undernutrition reduction. >>>



- **Our global efforts to prevent malnutrition during the first 1000 days. Final report of the IYCN Project, March 2012:** Launched in 2006, the Infant & Young Child Nutrition (IYCN) Project was the flagship programme of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This five-year project aimed to prevent maternal and child malnutrition focusing on interventions during the critical 1000 day window of opportunity (from conception until a child's second year of life). Three core principles underline the project's approach: i) focus on prevention, ii) community involvement in addressing malnutrition and iii) strengthening health systems to improve services for mothers and children. >>>

- **Sector budget support: Objectives, funding, arrangements and conditions for disbursement. Analysis of a non-traditional sector, Vagn Mikkelsen, April 2011:** This brief paper analyses three recent sector budget support operations funded by the European Commission in the food and nutrition security sector in lower middle-income countries in Latin America. Two of the operations (Peru and Guatemala) were funded through the main EU geographic development cooperation financial instrument, while the Bolivia operation was funded under the EU food facility. >>>

External resources and links

- **Pledges, principles, and progress: Aid to agriculture since L'Aquila. Action Aid, May 2012:** This briefing paper examines trends in aid to agriculture since G8 leaders pledged increased support for agricultural development at the G8 summit in l'Aquila, Italy (2009). It examines the progress made by key donors in increasing aid to agriculture and support of country investment plans. The report provides a case study of best practices since L'Aquila and provides recommendations for the G8 summit (May 2012).

Read the publication: <http://www.actionaid.org/usa/publications/pledges-principles-and-progress-aid-agriculture-laquila>



- **The food and nutrition crisis in the Sahel: Urgent action to support the resilience of vulnerable populations. Strategic framework for regional response (translated title), June 2012:** The FAO, in support of national governments and in collaboration with humanitarian aid agencies in West African and the Sahel, prepared a strategic framework for regional response to the 2012 crisis aiming to improve the nutrition and food situation for vulnerable populations in the Sahel. Its specific objective is to protect and restore resilient livelihoods of population. The measures announced (5 areas) rely on emergency relief, rehabilitation and development programs implemented in recent years, and are designed to meet immediate needs for the present year by providing emergency assistance to vulnerable.

Read the publication in French: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/sahel/docs/Cadre%20strat%C3%A9gique%20Sahel%20juin%202012.pdf

● **Global monitoring report 2012: Food prices, nutrition, and the Millennium Development Goals. World Bank and International Monetary Fund, April 2012:**

The rapid increases in world food prices since 2005 have raised widespread concerns about their possible impact on poverty, undernutrition and general progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. This year's report summarises the short- and long-term impact of food prices on several MDGs, explores future trends, and review policy responses (from domestic policies such as social safety nets, nutritional programs and agricultural policies, to regional trade policies to support by the international community). The Global Monitoring Report is prepared jointly by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, with consultations and collaborations with regional development banks and other multilateral partners.

Read the publication: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1327948020811/8401693-1327957211156/8402494-1334239337250/Full_Report.pdf

Overview in French: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGLOBALMONITORING/Resources/2184066-1320776649786/8253445-1320776701110/Concept-Note_French.pdf

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This bulletin was written by the GRET team in charge of animating ROSA.

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The points expressed do not reflect the official position of the European Commission.

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