

# UK Land Policy Forum X

Closing meeting: Learnings and Implications for DFID

December 2019

This report was produced by the Knowledge Management team under the DFID-funded Land: Enhancing Governance for Economic Development programme (LEGEND)



# 1 Introduction

The tenth and final meeting of the UK Land policy forum was held on December 10<sup>th</sup> 2019 at ODI. The Forum is an initiative under DFID's LEGEND programme, convened by ODI as part of DFID's core land support team (CLST) secretariat.

The purpose of the forum is to provide a focus for debate, information and lesson sharing amongst UK stakeholders to inform DFID and wider UK policy and programming for strengthening of land governance and land rights protection. Participants included CSOs, practitioners, academic researchers, professional and private sector organisations concerned with land, including the Knowledge Management alliance and other consortium members that make up CLST,<sup>1</sup> and DFID representatives.

## 2 Summary of the discussion

### Background

LEGEND's Core Land Support Team will come to a close on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, bringing to an end five years of work to enhance land governance for economic development. The 10<sup>th</sup> and final UK Land Policy Forum provides an opportunity to reflect on key achievements and learnings, and openly discuss DFID's past, present and future programming around land.

The Forum reflected on the most important findings from the past five years of the LEGEND programme, focusing particularly on progress on responsible land investment.

The half-day event also allowed policymakers, researchers, CSOs and private sector partners to find out more about DFID's future plans on programming around land, as well as a chance to debate on and feed into that process.

### Key messages from presentations

The forum was centred around two presentations. The first covered lessons on responsible land investment (RLI) from CLST's experience of the Challenge Fund pilot projects and various other outputs. A second presentation gave an updated overview of DFID's land portfolio and the present status of its interventions. Both presentations were followed by ample time for open discussion and feedback to CLST and DFID.

The DFID portfolio consists of three main categories:

- DFID's core land portfolio consists of recently-completed projects in Tanzania (LTSP), Nigeria (GEMS-3) and Mozambique (CLUF/MOLA) as well as two ongoing, large-scale land tenure regularisation and support programmes in Rwanda (LTR) and Ethiopia (LIFT);
- DFID-programmes that are not primarily concerned with land tenure or governance but contain land-related elements. These are predominantly forestry governance or forest tenure programmes (e.g. FGMC, ILLUCF, P4F), but also programmes aimed at the legal empowerment of vulnerable groups, corruption, supporting the implementation of the VGGTs, irrigation or urban issues. These programmes are largely focussed in sub-Saharan Africa (24 countries), but also cover other geographies, including Latin America, South Asia and Southeast Asia.

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<sup>1</sup> The CLST comprises KPMG as programme manager, the Land KM Alliance members including ODI, NRI and IIED.

- Groundwork or scoping on the potential for strengthening land tenure in various countries, primarily led by DFID country offices, including in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique, Myanmar, Palestine, Senegal, St Helena, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

### **Key points of discussion from Q&A**

The discussion revolved around two principal questions:

1. Where do you see the main opportunities and priorities for DFID's future work on land, building on LEGEND and recent land portfolio?
  2. What are the strategic policy issues or gaps in the global land governance agenda that DFID should consider in future work?
- **How can DFID scale up and integrate LTR learnings?** There was general agreement in the room on the main lessons drawn from a report on securing land rights at scale, which drew on the experience of DFID's core land portfolio. These lessons include supporting sustainable land administration (based on developments in Rwanda), supporting LTR with complementary reforms (using Ethiopia's dual focus on registration and credit access as an example) or recognising that LTR does not have to be the same in every context, as demonstrated by DFID's large and diverse portfolio. There is confidence that DFID now has the knowledge and experience to know how to go about policy reform. For instance, it was widely agreed that gender equality should remain high on the policy agenda. However, programme design around monitoring and evaluation will need to be improved in order to better measure outputs, outcomes and impact. There were also concerns raised about the capacity of 'implementors', including DFID project partners, the private sector (who often commit to FPIC without really understanding what it means at an operational level) or CSOs (e.g. land rights defenders).
  - **How can DFID overcome the barrier of 'closed doors' (lack of political will or opportunity) to instigate reform?** Of course, none of these learnings can be implemented if opportunities do not arise. Windows of opportunity are either non-existent or very narrow. There is a desire to make efforts to bridge the gap between political economy analysis and practice and thereby open up more opportunities. Generating demand for land reform can involve building legitimacy by working through DFID country offices, or through civil society and other grassroots organisations. Donors can also coordinate to provide a flexible 'strike fund' to take advantage of opportunities when they emerge. Alternatively, rather than an opportunistic or reactionary approach, DFID can also work 'backwards' and strategically to identify policy priorities within target countries and explain how land governance can help achieve those priorities, rather than spearheading land reform itself.
  - **How can the impact of outputs and outcome be best measured?** Perceived tenure security can be used to look at effect of interventions on behavioural changes. However, qualitative data is also needed, as the case of Mozambique demonstrated. In Malawi, there was also a need to take a deeper look at matrilineal families and power relations even though data initially looked fine.

