



Collections of contributions received for the on-line discussion

Using online platforms to increase access to open data and share best practices of monitoring women's land rights

Discussion No. 10 from 6-20 February 2013

Synthesis and more info on www.landportal.info

The on-line discussion has been coordinated by the Land Portal and facilitated by the International Land Coalition Secretariat with the collaboration of Wikigender, e-agriculture, AIMS, FSN-Forum and the Open Development list offer service.



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Concept and questions

Given the rapid expansion of the internet and the increasing number of users, including in the global South, the full potential of online platforms for promoting inclusive consultation of issues of high global interest is certainly not yet realised. An online discussion is being organised to share views and perspectives on how online platforms could be used more creatively and effectively to share experiences on a key area where information and lessons learned through various interventions from around the world are generally dispersed, that is the area of monitoring women's land rights.

The objective of the online discussion is therefore twofold: (a) engage a collective reflection on ways of optimising the use of online platforms in efforts to promote equitable and sustainable natural governance and social justice; and, (b) to share experiences on approaches to monitoring women's land rights.

We invite participants to answer one or more of the following questions:

- What **concrete example of monitoring women's land rights** would you like to share that other might find useful? What have you learned from your **successes or mistakes** that you would like to share with others in a land governance on-line community?
- **Have you used collaborative online platforms to help promote equitable access to land and natural resources?** Can you share with us an example?
- To what extent can **collaborative online platforms contribute to the opening of data?** Can you share with us an example?
- Can you share with us any examples on how can they contribute to **increasing transparency in land and natural resource governance?**
- For the collaborative online platforms you have used, what have been the **advantages and drawbacks?** What suggestions do you have to improve them?

How Can I Participate?

You can type your comment below and answer one or more of the suggested questions in English, French, or Spanish. If you have any questions feel free to contact us at hello@landportal.info

The discussion is running in parallel on the following partner on-line platforms: Wikigender, E-agriculture; AIMS; Open-Development list

Background information

Over the past decade, there has been a growing understanding of how ICTs, in particular the Internet, can be a powerful instrument for advancing economic and social development and enhancing networking, participation and advocacy. ICTs also have the potential to improve

interaction between different stakeholders. The rise of the Internet and online platforms have changed the ways in which people connect, exchange ideas and build knowledge. Open, collaborative and user-driven online platforms encourage dialogue and the sharing of information and good practices around critical issues and have a good potential for generating new knowledge and increasing transparency – and, ultimately, to improve social equity and strengthen democracy.

The Land Portal is a good example as it acts as an online hub for sharing information and fostering dialogue on land related issues. This is accomplished through a user driven platform which allows users to share information by uploading content, commenting and rating existing information, and retrieving information using specific filters.

The Land Portal enthusiastically advocates for open-data and open knowledge, believing that open and transparent information is the key means to achieving sound and sustainable land governance. The Portal also provides a forum for dialogue, recognising online discussions as a means for bringing people from different countries and different sectors together around pertinent issues. These two functions- data aggregation and stakeholder dialogue- provide the framework for new partnerships by empowering land-concerned individuals, communities, organisations, practitioners, and policy makers to share perspectives and best practices, and to collaborate strategically.

Alongside the Land Portal, platforms such as Wikigender, e-agriculture, AIMS, FSN-Forum and the Open Development list offer services including list serves, communities of practice and knowledge sharing platforms on the issues of natural resource governance and/or gender equity.

This discussion aims to bridge institutional, academic and community experiences in using online platforms and monitoring women's land rights, collecting contributions from grassroots organisations, civil society, IGO's and governments.

The discussion will be facilitated by the International Land Coalitions (ILC) and will take advantage of ILC expertise in monitoring land processes in collaboration with ILC members and other Land Portal partners.

Results of the discussion are to be analysed and synthesized into a synthesis report/policy brief to be distributed across all platforms, as well as into a more in-depth paper to be presented at the annual World Bank Land and Poverty Conference, to be held in Washington DC from April 8-11 2013.

Contributions

1. Candy Schibli, WRI, received through the Land Portal

WRI along with Landesa have developed a platform for to promote equitable access to land for women, www.focusonland.com. Each country that is represented has or will have a lesson solely devoted to women's issues in land tenure and with property rights. The distribution of this information to the rights hands is a main concern. Identifying partners with field experience that want to share their successes and failures is one way that we think will add not only to this platform but to the land discussion. We have also identified mobile devices as another way of distributing information and are working to place this information in a format suitable for cell sized screens. But are these being used to access and push information in the field in gender projects? If so, in what countries, what types of information? And where are there information gaps? I am curious as to who else is also working on such activities and how they have pushed for wider user and distribution.

2. Gaby Gomez García, Independent Consultant, received through the Land Portal

Como ejemplos concretos de vigilancia de los derechos de la mujer a la tierra que podría compartir son:

- Uno de los más importantes es el involucramiento de la mujer durante el proceso del saneamiento de la propiedad agraria. El problema es ¿cómo hacerlo?, ¿cómo garantizar esto? Los y las que trabajamos en estos temas, sabemos que en Latinoamérica vivimos en sociedades patriarcales y la "diversidad cultural" muchas veces sirve para anular los derechos logrados a favor de las mujeres, principalmente en las áreas rurales.

Por tanto, la participación e involucramiento de las mujeres en el proceso de saneamiento de la propiedad agraria, no es algo sencillo y es importante tomar algunas previsiones:

- Es importante saber que no es suficiente que éste derecho esté establecido en las leyes.
- También se debe considerar que la institución a cargo del saneamiento, no siempre define indicadores que garanticen la participación e las mujeres (aunque la Jefa sea mujer).
- Lo más importante es asumir que las mujeres, no actúan de la misma manera en todas las áreas.

Lo que ha dado mucho resultado para ayudar a abrir espacios de participación de las mujeres en los procesos de saneamiento de la propiedad agraria, fueron los avisos en la radio, cuadernillos didácticos que presentan la importancia de la participación de las mujeres para titularse a la tierra. Y, algo muy importante, fue el diálogo con los líderes de las organizaciones sobre la importancia de que ellos puedan garantizar que las mujeres estén presentes y participen.

Diez años después de haberse titulado algunas áreas, demuestra que, la incidencia de la participación de la mujer en los procesos que conducen a la titulación de la tierra, permite a las mujeres apropiarse de sus derechos y empoderarse de los mismos. De estos procesos han surgido lideresas que han abierto espacio al reconocimiento de los derechos de otras mujeres en sus comunidades. Las mujeres que participaron en procesos de saneamiento de la tierra, desde mi punto de vista, son las semillas más fuertes que tienen las mujeres en la tierra de sus comunidades, para que puedan ejercer su derecho y usar la tierra.

Si me dan tiempo, podría escribir ejemplos concretos y maravillosos, sobre el proceso de acceder a la titulación de algunas mujeres.

Espero sea de utilidad.

SOBRE LAS SIGUIENTES OTRAS PREGUNTAS, me permito responder lo siguiente:

¿Ha utilizado colaboración plataformas en línea para ayudar a promover el acceso equitativo a la tierra y los recursos naturales? ¿Puede compartir un ejemplo con nosotros?

En mi experiencia de trabajo, las mujeres que pueden acceder a plataformas en línea son principalmente las mujeres líderes en las organizaciones. Cuando terminan su periodo de liderazgo, algunas mujeres, no vuelven a sus comunidades y se quedan en centros poblados intermedios.

Cuando las mujeres líderes, que vuelven a sus comunidades, son las semillas más importantes para que otras mujeres ejerzan su derecho a la tierra.

Pero, las mujeres de base, las que viven en la tierra y las que trabajan junto a sus parejas o solas, difícilmente pueden acceder a plataformas en línea, muchas no saben leer y con suerte pueden firmar.

Un nicho importante para acceder a este medio son las mujeres jóvenes, y hay muchas formas de llegar a ellas. El problema, es que las jóvenes, no siempre piensan en quedarse a trabajar la tierra.

¿Hasta qué punto puede la colaboración plataformas en línea contribuir a la apertura de los datos? ¿Puede compartir con nosotros un ejemplo?

Con la organización matriz de los Pueblos Indígenas de las Tierras Bajas de Bolivia, la Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia (CIDOB), se podía intercambiar información permanente y actualizada sobre el avance del proceso de saneamiento. Esta información era proporcionada por el propio gobierno y contrastada con la información e los líderes responsables que acompañaban el proceso de saneamiento de la propiedad agraria.

La década de los noventa fue muy valiosa en el avance participativo del reconocimiento de los territorios indígenas.

Actualmente, las organizaciones campesinas y de colonos están cooptadas por el gobierno y en informe de resultados de la titulación de la tierra, tiene un enfoque más político.

¿Puede compartir con nosotros algunos ejemplos de cómo las plataformas en línea contribuir a aumentar la transparencia en la gobernanza de la tierra y los recursos naturales?

Las plataformas en línea muestran datos fríos de un proceso que si no se comprende, no son de mucha utilidad. Es necesario el control social, que permite la apropiación y el manejo y comprensión de la información que se puede acceder.

Para las plataformas de colaboración en línea que han utilizado, ¿cuáles han sido las ventajas y desventajas? ¿Qué sugerencias tiene para mejorarlos?

Desde mi punto de vista, es importante comprender que para organizaciones indígenas, es un encuentro con la “modernidad”, no solo la tecnología, sino el lenguaje técnico (abstracto), las cifras y cómo se presentan.

Por su parte, la “modernidad”, no siempre hace el esfuerzo por comprender los ojos que verán y las formas diversas de interpretación.

Con todo respeto, creo importante reflexionar sobre “el choque con la MODERNIDAD”, como un espacio necesario, pero a su vez perverso.

PERDÓN POR EL INGLÉS

SORRY FOR MY ENGLISH

As concrete examples of monitoring women's rights to land that could share are:

- One of the most important is the involvement of women in the process of consolidation of land ownership. The problem is how to do it, how to ensure this?

The and we work on these issues, we know that in America we live in patriarchal societies and "cultural diversity" often serves to override the rights made in favor of women, especially in rural areas.

Therefore, the participation and involvement of women in the process of clearing of land ownership, is not easy and it is important to make some predictions:

- Importantly, it is not enough right is established in law.
- One should also consider that the institution in charge of sanitation, not always define indicators to ensure the participation and women (though the Chief is a woman).
- The most important thing is to assume that women do not act the same way in all areas.

The result has given much to help create opportunities for women's participation in the reorganization of land ownership were the radio ads, educational booklets presenting the importance of the participation of women to graduate to land . And, importantly, was the dialogue with the leaders of the organizations of the importance that they can ensure that women are present and participate.

Ten years after being called some areas, shows that the incidence of female participation in the processes leading to land titling, allows women to seize their rights and empower thereof. Of these processes for have a title of land, have emerged women leaders, this women have opened space to recognize the rights of other women in their communities. Women who participated in reorganization of the land, from my point of view, the seeds are stronger than women have in the land of their communities, so they can exercise their rights and land use.

If I get time, could write specific examples and wonderful about the process of accessing the degree of some women.

Hope this helps

3. Kunuthur Srinivasa Reddy, received through the Land Portal

Land rights to women have to go in succession among women members of the family only in order to empower them through their generations. Further, land should be supported by water invariably as land and water are the core principles of life on Earth. Minus assured water, land remains barren and difficult for growing crops and animals for livelihood of women all over the world.

4. Henri Ligot, received through the Land Portal

In the Philippines, the systems are being put in place, but we're not there yet. It's common knowledge that our country in recent years has been making up for legislative neglect for women's rights in the past by putting together the building blocks for more lasting solutions to address gender inequality. The priority, so far, seems to be protection of women from violence and promotion of gender equality in the workplace, although the laws are there (Family Code, Republic Act 9710 (magna carta for women enacted 2009-10)), building up on findings from some keynote projects (like the WBs 2001 LAMP) on women's land rights.

To date, we're at the legislative (setting-up and enabling gender sensitive monitoring systems in the government bureaucracy), educational (informing women of their land rights), and communication (informing financial institutions, businesses, and communities of the tremendous economic potentials when women exercise their land rights) stages, and once these three interventions create a critical mass, we'll notice some big changes.

I'd like to find out by way of this forum, though, whether successful systems are already in place, and hopefully to share other experiences on this topic.

4b. Henri Ligot, received through Wikigender

Hi! I'm Henry Ligot of the UPOU and UA&P in Manila. This topic is appropriate especially in the Philippines, where the farming population is dwindling, and the average age of male farmers, I learned in a meeting last week, is between 55-60 years. Empowering women to understand, claim and guarantee land rights would help arrest the decline of the farming population by building the capabilities of a new agricultural manpower resource

As far as I know, the systems are being put in place, but we're not there yet. It's common knowledge that our country in recent years has been making up for legislative neglect for women's rights in the past by putting together the building blocks for a more lasting solution. The priority, so far, seems to be protection of women from violence and promotion of gender equality in the workplace, although the laws are there (Family Code, Republic Act 9710 (magna carta for women enacted 2009-10)), building up on findings from some keynote projects (like the WBs 2001 LAMP) on women's land rights. So far, we're at the legislative (setting-up and enabling gender sensitive monitoring systems in the government bureaucracy), educational (informing women of their land rights), and communication (informing financial institutions, businesses, and communities of the tremendous economic potentials when women exercise their land rights) stages, and once these three interventions create a critical mass, we'll notice some big changes. I'd like to find out by way of this forum, though, whether successful systems are already in place, and hopefully to share other experiences on this topic.

4c. Henri Ligot, received through E-agriculture

We're not there yet...but getting closer!

Someone asked if systems are already in place in the Philippines to monitor women's land rights. Here's my response:

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My sister-in-law's experience with land rights

Anent my first post, computerization of land titling made it convenient for my US-based sister-in-law to check and sell a parcel of conjugally-owned land in the mountains south of Manila (Tanay) when my eldest brother passed away last year. I learned about and taught her how to use the A2A (Anywhere-to-Anywhere) and PVS (Parcel Verification Service) services of the Land Registration Authority. She used the A2A to request for the official land title and used the PVS to get a computer printout, which she then used to sell the land for funeral and living expenses they needed back in the US. It saved her time and additional expenses, and a lot of grief. It was also a good way to convince the buyer that the land she was getting was legitimate, properly and correctly titled. In our country where the life expectancy of men is shorter than women's, educating women to use ICT-enabled services is a very good way to ensure women's understanding, claiming and guaranteeing of their land rights when their husbands, fathers or older brothers (in our country, land ownership is normally granted to the eldest male of the family) move on.

Computerized Land Titling in the Philippines

Since 2008, the country's Land Registration Authority (LRA) has been implementing a Land Titling Computerization Project (LTCP) to make available online as many land titles as possible. To date, over 114 Registries of Deeds (offices for land title registration and verification) are "on-live" operations, computerizing all records, converting these records into the LRA database. Land Title and Deeds transactions are processed and registered using the automated Philaris system. One problem in the Philippines is the profusion of fake land titles, resulting in over-lapping of titles (common for huge tracts of land) or in the so-called multi-level land-titling practice, where a single parcel of land would have 2 or more titles. With computerization, those wishing to lease or own land for residential, commercial, industrial or agricultural purposes can be certain that they are getting real land and dealing with the real owner.

Here's an interesting link on a speech given by the Chairperson of the PCW during the International Rural Women's Day last October 2012 on women's land rights. She is leading the efforts of PCW and the Department of Agrarian Reform, and other government offices, to do something about this important concern.

The link: <http://pcw.gov.ph/article/rural-women's-land-rights-key-food-security>

Comment from Sabine Pallas, International Land Coalition, received through Wikigender

Dear Enrique,

I am interested in finding out more about the Philippines, in particular about the legislative, educational and communication activities you describe as already ongoing. How exactly are these gender-sensitive monitoring systems in government being set-up? What do they contain?

How about educating women about their land rights? Is this something the Ministry of Education is promoting? How is this taking place exactly?

I am particularly interested in how (government, I assume) is raising the awareness of financial institutions, businesses, and communities of the potential of women's secure land rights.

Please share more information if you have it!

4d. Henri Ligot, received through Wikigender

As far as I know, the systems are being put in place, but we're not there yet. It's common knowledge that our country in recent years has been making up for legislative neglect for women's rights in the

past by putting together the building blocks for a more lasting solution. The priority, so far, seems to be protection of women from violence and promotion of gender equality in the workplace, although the laws are there (Family Code, Republic Act 9710 (magna carta for women enacted 2009-10)), building up on findings from some keynote projects (like the WBs 2001 LAMP) on women's land rights. So far, we're at the legislative (setting-up and enabling gender sensitive monitoring systems in the government bureaucracy), educational (informing women of their land rights), and communication (informing financial institutions, businesses, and communities of the tremendous economic potentials when women exercise their land rights) stages, and once these three interventions create a critical mass, we'll notice some big changes. I'd like to find out by way of this forum, though, whether successful systems are already in place, and hopefully to share other experiences on this topic.

5. Fladej, received through Wikigender

In Mexico, students and a Mexican researcher from the MIT created a system that enables farmers to find the price of corn and tomatoes via a text message (SMS). Before having the system on-line, farmers received in their villages the intermediaries (those who buy the crops from the farmers and then re-sell it to the final consumers) and farmers had to accept the price offered to them because they had no information to compare if the price was fair or not.

The project was baptized with the name of "Zaca", referring to the location where the project began, and as for two years from its implementation, it has been improving the main income resource in rural livelihoods: the sale of crops, having a direct impact in farmers of the region.

With "Zaca", a technology platform is provided so farmers may have access to information about global production and market costs in real time, improving and balancing the sales process and negotiation of the farmers' products. It is planed to expand the service to other states of Mexico and other developing countries in Africa and Asia. The project was even featured in CNN Expansion - <http://bit.ly/UApV1Y>

Synthesis contributions received February 6-9 (Luca Miggiano, International Land Coalition)

Here it is a synthesis of the very first three days of discussion. As you know, the debate is taking place on five different on-line platforms and tries to bridge ICTs and land rights expertise, to explore the potential of e-communities to promote inclusive land governance, with a special focus on women's land rights. And we are getting the first very interesting contributions! Keep posting!

On how collaborative online platforms can contribute to transparency and informed debate in natural resources governance:

- A first comment comes from Candy Schibli, from the World Resource Institute, who presented FocusonLand (WRI and Landesa). Candy raises important questions on how the information produced can reach the very people able to make change on the ground (i.e. mobile devices?); how the right partners can be involved; how can we better identify the existing information gaps. All these questions go directly at the heart of our discussion: how existing platforms can improve and have an higher impact on the ground? I look forward to hearing the reactions from other participants! Candy, would you like to elaborate more on challenges you experienced?
- Gaby Gomez Garcia raises important - and in many ways similar - issues too: how can information contained in on-line platforms reach rural women, if many of them are illiterate and lack of land literacy? How information can become meaningful on the ground? Women leaders

and young women have more opportunity to access IT, but often land data are “cold” and land processes underneath the data are not explained in a practical, easy way. Nonetheless, she gives an interesting example on how on-line platforms contributed in the past to the monitoring of land registration programs in Bolivia, by providing data, which were discussed and often contested by leaders and activists.

- Fladei, who participated on Wikigender, introduces us to a very interesting project, developed by MIT in Mexico, that enabled farmers to find the price of corn on tomatoes via text message (sms) so as to better negotiate with the market, and avoid price distortions created by intermediaries. Are there further examples of platforms used to bridge such critical information gaps?

As you know, to explore more in depth a specific field of land rights, we also asked participants to share some examples - on this on-line platform - on monitoring women’s land rights:

- Gaby Gomez Garcia confirms that adequate women’s representation and participation in land processes is key to transform laws and regulations in reality - and monitor these processes - together with the need to identify measurable indicators. The use of media, like radio and booklets, can spread more easily tools for ensuring and monitoring women’s land rights in rural areas.
- Enrique Ligot, who participated on the Land Portal as well as on Wikigender, drawing from the experience of the Philippines, points out the need to put in place a critical mass of tools to make monitoring women’s land rights possible, including gender-sensitive monitoring systems – very interesting! Let us know more! – informing women of their land rights, so that they can themselves critically monitor what happen, and informing other actors. And also cites the Land Titling Computerization Project (LTCP) as example of platform that aims at providing more security to land rights – It would be very interesting to know also from others their views on this project, and if it is worth-replicating in other contexts. What are the challenges you experienced? How did you address for example land conflicts? Or how did you document overlapping and shifting land rights?

Look forward to receiving more contributions!

6. Lucas Charles Mkwizu, received through the Land Portal

Land ownership is very sensitive issue in different areas example here in Tanzania, the cultural values and norms of different communities in women to own land is different while most of them residing women groups and prefer men as a key people in owning the land.

This bring to large extent gender inequality and exploitation of women rights in ensuring that they have enough security in land ownership.

In Countries Like KENYA where the land ownership is highly in the hand of minority, because of the land laws which allows the one person to own a big piece of land, but the issue here is how women are considered when land is divided or leased.

There should be greater efforts to enable all the people to own land and therefore to benefit from the fruits in terms if agriculture development, settlement and even access loans from the financial institutions, this can help to reduce poverty within the community.

7. Neil Sorensen, International Land Coalition, received through the Land Portal

I'm really impressed with Open Development Cambodia's online platform, which among other things, brings together laws and regulations on land, land concession maps for all resource categories and news and a blog that puts all of this information in a context. It is also a useful tool that includes information on stock markets and industries, so that in the sensitive political context of Cambodia, they really manage to bring together a complex set of components that it helping people step-by-step:

<http://www.opendevdevelopmentcambodia.net/>

In terms of collaborative open data projects, I really like Open Corporates:

<http://opencorporates.com/>

It has put together information on 51,112,973 companies by open participation, and one can only imagine what can be done with such information. I recently came upon open data and visualization groups on meetup.com:

<http://www.meetup.com/The-Visual-ly-Data-Visualization-Meetup/>

<http://www.meetup.com/Open-Data-Bay-Area/>

Most of these groups seem to be in California or Silicon valley, but they represent the cutting edge of these kinds of communities. One observation that I have is that these platforms seem to work on a local or national level, if the country is small enough. There really needs to be a targeted group of users that stand to benefit in some way by using the platforms and participating in the discussions.

On an international level, there needs to a different element that motivates people to participate, perhaps prestige and visibility for their professional career. E-agriculture has seemed to reach the critical mass of contributors and interest in the topic.

I suspect it would be useful to connect women's cooperatives, functioning economic groups, together with groups working on land rights, and create the types of platforms that offer these groups not only the chance to discuss, but to access services, etc. serve as a useful everyday tool. The ILO and Coop Africa produced a publication in 2010 about some of the interesting women's cooperative groups and the work they are doing:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/ent/coop/africa/download/wo...>

We should ask ourselves if we are we bringing the rights groups together.

8. Gonzalo, received through the Land Portal

¿Cuáles han sido las ventajas y desventajas que encuentra en las plataformas colaborativas en línea que ha utilizado? ¿Qué sugerencias tiene para mejorarlas?

En el proceso de consulta sobre la agenda de de desarrollo post 2015 en Peru, se ha consultado a través de talleres presenciales a mujeres líderes amazónicas en varias ocasiones. Si bien se ha utilizado encuestas en línea para otros grupos, para este no ha sido útil.

Como consultor de ONU, he constatado que el tema de la tierra y la propiedad de la misma ha surgido como una prioridad de desarrollo, pero lamentablemente el acceso a Internet es bajo, y de baja calidad, en las zonas de mayor interés. Por ahora, sería imposible realizar una consulta representativa de líderes de la sociedad civil sobre temas de tierra en las zonas más relevantes basándose en plataformas web.

Pero sería muy valioso para el diálogo inclusivo sobre la tierra que mejorara el acceso y calidad de los servicios de telefonía e Internet en zonas rurales. Las dificultades para transportarse a hasta los

centros de reunión para talleres consultivos ha sido evidente, y ha limitado la disponibilidad de las mujeres para dar sus opiniones, ya que frecuentemente debían sacrificar tiempo para las labores del hogar y de carácter agrícola para dedicar unas horas al diálogo.

9. Chris Baulman, Landrights4all, received through the Land Portal

Any on-line platform is going to depend on literacy and internet connection, so we are assuming both in this discussion. It does seem to be the case that the internet is pretty available now (smartphones) and will only become rapidly more available, so access may not be a problem for much longer. Hopefully voice typing and reading will soon become reliable too - the voice typing I use is pretty good already.

The real challenge I see is the nature of the platform itself.

Mostly platforms support conversation well enough - many even have good conversation thread features by which you can "file" different conversations, or even create "subfolders" for aspects of conversations. In conversation forums, links to any amount of information, photos and video is made possible. But that is about as far as platforms have gone - they don't actually encourage or support you to go beyond conversation.

Turning conversation into action then depends on "leadership" that may or may not arise from the conversation, and effective leadership depends on great dedication and skills. Even if such leadership arises, we know burnout, resentment and the disempowerment of "followers" are all major issues - little wonder when only the most able groups succeed at anything.

Extremely able people are generally able to look after themselves, yet these are not the groups most in need of empowerment here. Successful managers are then often quickly snapped up by commercial interests, leaving the community even poorer.

If action does result from conversation and a leader does arise, current processes quickly move the group from conversation into positions in a management hierarchy.

There is plenty of support for management and hierarchy process available on the net, but to my knowledge there has been no platform with inbuilt protection and encouragement for a collaborative cooperative process. Only such a process can encourage engagement, personal empowerment, consensus and responsibility. Only such a process can break the corrupting power grip which hierarchy encourages and rewards.

The ultimate reward bestowed on the empowered in that system is land ownership, through which they can control the lives of the landless and make them servants in exchange the food and shelter which relies on land access. This is a process calculated to enrich the rich at the expense of the poor.

If anyone reading this post knows of an integrated free internet platform that walks people step by step through conversation, visioning and goal setting, task identification, task scheduling and accountability would you please contact me as it is an application I am currently drafting and trialing.

@landrights4all

Chris Baulman

10. Tim Davies, Open development, received through the Land Portal

Open data and land

The dialogue asks about how online platforms are contributing to the opening of land data. There are three broad sources of data I can see:

Official data – where governments have well managed land ownership databases then as part of national open government data programmes citizens may be able to secure the ongoing publication of this data in open forms. In the United Kingdom we've recently seen the Land Registry place data online, detailing land sale transactions in CSV and linked data; and a publicly owned land is a commonly featured dataset on local open data portals in the UK. However, this data itself may be tricky to use directly, and intermediaries are needed to make it accessible. In Kirklees, the Who Owns My Neighbourhood presents an interesting approach to using official data, and combining it with social features for citizens to input local knowledge and news about publicly owned plots of land: making official land data more 'social'.

Crowdsourced data – in many cases there may not be an official source for the data activists want, or there may be limited prospect of getting access to the official data. Here a range of 'crowdsourcing' approaches exist. The LandMatrix approach uses researchers, and works to verify reports before sharing them. There may be other approaches available that use tools like pybossa to crowdsource extraction of structured information from semi-structured documents, or to split analysis of records into micro-tasks. The Open Street Map platform may also be able to act as source of data, allowing tags to be applied to land. Tools like CrowdMap (based on the Ushahidi platform) make it possible to collate reports submitted on a range of platforms including phone, and to verify reports, although the challenge with any crowdmap project is recruiting people to submit data.

Inferred data – at one of the RHOK Hack Days I took part in at Southampton I was interested to hear about a groups project using satellite data to work out crop types on plots of land. I suspect there are ways this data could be used to detect changes in land use that might indicate also changes in ownership – and the conversion of land from multiple crops to large agribusiness.

Using land data

Having open data on land ownership and land rights is only one part of the story. As the Bhoomi case illustrates, the regulatory framework around the data matters: is a dataset taken as authoritative, or are documents or other customary practices able to override the descriptions held in data? Does the data model through which land ownership and rights are described capture the subtlety and nuance of land use practices (see Srinivasan's field note for a discussion of the need to mash-up multiple schemas of data to get a view of complex land practices)? And what intermediaries are active to help citizens mobilise land records to secure their rights, rather than those records being only truly accessible to private actors with technical and financial capital?

In the on-going Land Coalition dialogue I'm interested to learn more about the cases of how data on land rights is being mobilised to create change: whether at the level of global advocacy, where big numbers may matter most; or at the level of individual struggles over ownership, access and rights, where detailed, accurate and timely data on particular plots is likely to be most important.

Open data and women's land rights

I will admit to knowing very little about the specific issues around women's land rights. However, in making the connection between open data and women's land rights I did want to briefly explore whether a focus on digital platforms and open data introduces any particular gender issues. For example, whilst statistics on mobile phone penetration in developing countries suggest widespread

access to mobile devices, there is a significant gender gap in mobile ownership and access, with women much less likely to have control of a handset than men. Gender issues may also arise in relation to the culture and practices around open data.

In a recent First Monday article, Joseph Reagle suggests that the ‘free culture’ movement associated with open source software and open knowledge products like Wikipedia possess a gender gap that is potentially even greater than the very gender unequal general computing culture from which it arose. Reagle argues that the ideas of ‘openness’ current in these communities can be used to dismiss concerns about gender gaps, and paint them as an issue of choice, rather than highlighting the wider structural factors that lead to the massive underrepresentation of women in online free software and open knowledge construction. For example, Reagle points to the “double shift” of women’s time, and the ways in which the ‘free time’ used to contribute to creation of open culture, whether through evenings away from work, or hack-days and other events, is unequally distributed between women and men.

Does this critique carry across the open data? It is apparent that the open data field is far from gender equal – at least in terms of advocates for open data, and the creators of tools, platforms and analysis built upon data – although whether it is male dominated to the extent that other fields such as open source contribution are is yet to be measured. In part any gender imbalance may be attributed to the connections between the open data community and the open source and free culture communities, which are already have a significant gender imbalance. However, we should also be open to deeper issues of epistemology: whether the very notion of resolving questions of ownership or fact through datasets, rather than through processes of dialogue, is itself gendered. How far advocacy to open up datasets moves into advocacy for the primacy of data over other ways of knowing, and how data is used and interpreted, has a bearing on whether gendered systems of power are being reinforced or challenged.

11. Jesse Duncan, foodgovernance.org, received through the Land Portal

A platform to collectively promote equitable and sustainable governance and social justice and strategies for monitoring women’s land rights has a great deal of potential value. However, a number of questions arise when we start to think about the implication, applications and utilizations: who is participating/contributing? who is accessing the information? how is the information collected? how can/will the information be used? how can such a tool account for multiple languages and cultural specificities and nuances?

Tim brings up the need to think of a regulatory framework for data which is obviously in many ways a contradiction to open-source knowledge sharing but given the sensitivity of land tenure issues and women’s access, this is a necessary step.

Tim also usefully identified three broad sources of data. I would add to crowdsourced data a focus on participatory mapping processes that give women the space and the tools to reflect on their relationship to land, their resources and their rights. This usefully complements the more legal tools and provides perspective. This is normally a very non-technical process (maps drawn on large pieces of paper, or in the sand). These can be translated into more technical formats or pictures with descriptions uploaded. However, this often relies on a field worker, an academic, or a facilitator doing the work and committing to the process of sharing information.

This links us to the issue of over-saturation of information and overworked people: there are numerous portals, networks, platforms, wikis, blogs, websites, listservs and many are operating with similar principles, goals and a great deal of member overlap. The implications of new resources that require contributions can be simply more stress on already stressed workers to contribute and share information that has been shared elsewhere.

We must remember that online tools can be highly political, especially as they are likely to completely bypass the women whose land rights they are seeking to strengthen by virtual of limited connectivity and low levels of literacy. Chris gets to this point in his post.

My experience with collaborative platforms relates to working with a platform host and communities to try and ensure relevant and reliable content makes it to the platform. I have yet to see this approach work successfully in areas where there is low literacy and low connectivity to existing online platforms. The communities see no value in the platform and the onus to add content falls to NGO staff or academics working in the community. This is not necessarily a bad thing as the tools are likely most relevant to their work.

With an NGO in Gujarat, India, we are designing a programme built around mobile phones: a technology that has far more reach in the communities where land rights and land tenure are increasingly an issue. We are working to create a formalized call-centre/ kiosk that will share information out (through voicemail to ensure that those with low literacy are kept informed) and to accept calls in. An online platform would not be a tool that could be used widely amongst those most affected. Smartphones would not be useful in this context because of issues of literacy, connectivity and cost. There are no best practices as the project is being developed but there could be a way to link the data collected through the call centre to an online platform. The issue would again be the capacity of staff.

The issue of communication and support through such platforms is addressed by Chris but I want to emphasise that there is often the need for facilitators to push the conversations forward and to find links across the platform which may be missed by participants. There is a need to recognise that participating in these conversations, and therefore making the platform dynamic, takes time and adds to the workload of already time-poor people. This means that for the platform to remain dynamic and active there needs to be a benefit for people: the outcomes have to come fast, or they will not dedicate time to it.

Neil Sorensen (see above) provided the example of Open Development Cambodia which I agree is a good example and is perhaps functional because it is limited in scope to one country. This makes it manageable and it also means that it can emerge as the “go to” site for information about development for Cambodia which will encourage participation and engagement from actors across multiple sectors in the way that a global platform for women’s rights around the world, simply can’t.

To sum things up, a collection of best practices and tools for monitoring women’s land rights would of course be valuable but I am not convinced that we need another online collaborative platform at the global level.

Summary of points:

- Need to consider broad implications and applications
- People are overworked and have limited time to share information with a site that does not give them immediate benefits
- Such platforms are exclusionary (language, connectivity)
- Benefits of narrowing down to geographic area to attract people from diverse sectors with interest in the region

Synthesis contributions received February 10-14 (Sabine Pallas, International Land Coalition)

Dear all – thank you so much for your continued interest in the discussion.

This week we had some very thought-provoking contributions that raise fundamental issues about use of ICTs, gender and power! I'll make an attempt at synthesising some of the points that resonated strongly for me, rather than summarising all contributions.

This discussion assumes both an internet connection and literacy as starting points. However, a good point was made by Chris on new technologies being developed to overcome the literacy hurdle, for instance, by using smartphones with voice recognition programmes. Technology develops quickly, so access may get better sooner than we think!

Tim raised some interesting questions on the gendered nature of ICTs: statistics exist on the gender gap in mobile ownership, to name one example, but there may be gender issues with respect to open data also. Partly, this is due to a “very unequal general computing culture” (please do join this debate, female IT professionals!), partly due to the idea of ‘openness’ that obfuscates that there is an underrepresentation of women in the open data movement that may be due to the same factors as underrepresentation of women in public spaces in general: i.e. the double (or triple) burden on women’s time and their lack of ‘free time’ to spend in open-data related events. Add to this the over-saturation of information and overworked people made by foodgovernance.org and the disconnect between scarce time available and a plethora of tools to use becomes even more marked!

What data are we talking about? There were a number of contributors who discussed types of data: official data, crowdsourced data (for instance, via a wiki) which has the advantage of being diverse, or inferred data (i.e. using proxies). And is advocacy for open data also advocacy for the primacy of data over other ways of knowing reality?

The challenges noted by Chris on the nature of online platforms, how exclusive they can be and how far they can go to translate conversation into action without creating hierarchies of leaders over followers also addresses a similar question of power. Are there online platforms with “inbuilt protection” for collaborative processes? Do we need such regulation or is it contrary to the spirit of ‘openness’? Chris, do let us know how you are getting on in your endeavour!

Some of the key issues discussed on the effectiveness of online platforms are:

- the level at which platforms work: local/national, with a targeted group of users seems to be more effective than a global platform, as shown by the example of Open Development Cambodia
- the incentive to use the platform: what benefit does participation bring for users in an era of information overload? Prestige, visibility? Access to other people? Access to services?
- who is participating/contributing? who is accessing the information? how can/will the information be used?
- How much facilitation is needed? To provide summaries, provide cross-references, making the platform dynamic?
- Platforms need resources (financial and human) even if using web 2.0 tools
- How much quality control is necessary? is it ok to edit contributions to online platforms, for instance?

The challenges discussed this week relate to the above questions, one of the most important ones, in my opinion, is that women in communities may see little or no value in online platforms and that these this bypass the very women whose land rights are under threat. The example Gonzalo gives from Peru shows both the limit and potential of using online platforms – they can exclude due to limited connectivity and low literacy of the women that were to be consulted I this case, but they also have a potential to involve many more people without the need for large sums of money to

arrange for transport and venues – not to mention the time women may not be free to sacrifice to travel to a meeting . Foodgovernance.org makes an excellent point about the onus of adding content and sharing information via online platforms may fall to NGO staff or academics working in a community – this might be a mutually beneficial way of using online platforms?

Two contributors emphasised the importance of looking at how internet and telephone services can be brought to remote areas where land rights are a key issue, foodgovernance.org gave us the example of a programme now being designed in Gujarat around mobile phones – which are already available widely - by setting up a call centre to share information through voicemail and offering a call-in service. This is definitely one to watch out for!

I hope there are others out there who can share concrete cases, whether it's about online platforms already used, or cases of how data on land rights is being accessed, at what level, and how it can be used to promote change.

Have a lovely weekend and keep the comments coming!

12. Chris Baulman, landrights4all, received through the Land Portal

In the development of a platform I have been working on I am forced to recognise that it is futuristic – it is an idea evidently ahead of its time.

I am not sure it can achieve its purposes until the internet is as easy and natural, and even more useful to people than the telephone became. Even in Australia where I am developing the platform for the empowerment of the landless poor here, most people have internet access and are adequately literate, I am finding that their participation is determined by the question raised by Sabine in

“what benefit does participation bring for users”

(immediate benefit being an important adjective, not futuristic theoretical benefit) and by the point made by Jess in

“...the need for facilitators to push the conversations forward and to find links across the platform which may be missed by participants”

(although, I would see all people remaining as participants to avoid setting up a hierarchy from the outset)

I have worked off the idea that it is important to go even more local than what Jess seems to have had in mind in the comment about the “benefits of narrowing down to geographic area to attract people from diverse sectors with interest in the region”, or perhaps even more local than Sabine in saying that “a targeted group of users seems to be more effective than a global platform.”

My theory has been that by letting people anywhere set up their own “Village” at the click of a button, and seeding the platform with immediately useful local information, people might also discover the potential for collaboration on local ambitions and would find themselves supported by the features in the platform to even go from local interests to more political issues - but it requires constant seeding to keep the information fresh and interesting, and who knows how long it will be before the platform is the first thing locals think of for their local information, let alone as a tool for their empowerment! This is reflective of Sabine’s comment that “women in communities may see little or no value in online platforms and that these by pass the very women whose land rights are under threat.”

I had thought that seeding the platform would start a flurry of interesting input from locals, and I thought that the Neighbourhood Centre would also want to use the platform as part of its outreach

for neighbourhood building – instead they just cherry picked the idea & publicised their own local activities on their own site. In case you are wondering why, and why I thought anything different would be better, for legal and insurance reasons the neighbourhood centre felt the need to run its own show and control all postings on its site. Of course the way I see it is that puts the power in their hands (the NC, the lawyers and the insurance business) rather than in the hands of the people, which rather defeats the purpose of empowering the landless to increase their control. I do believe “regulation .. is contrary to the spirit of ‘openness’”, but worse still it is disempowering.

I think the participation of the neighbourhood centre in my platform as with academics and the NGO's interested in women's' land rights could indeed be “a mutually beneficial way of using online platforms” as Sabine says. If funding of these services is increasingly to be justified by “social outcomes” analysis, NGO's etc will need to “prove” their input and effect in ways they have never measured before. Their “virtual” participation through the internet might be the only cost efficient way to demonstrate their value.

In the platform I am working on, for a possible solution to “regulation” of “collaboration” I have used a control template. This doesn't mean people can't say whatever they want, but it does help them follow a tried and true format for communication of their ideas. The template also invites, but “controls” feedback. The template means that readers can easily hone in on any aspect of relevance or concern to them in a conversation and can easily identify and ignore off topic ramblings – that is what I meant by “inbuilt protection” in the platform in preference to facilitation/ moderation/quality control.

13. Sabine Pallas, International Land Coalition, on behalf of Gine Zwart, OXFAM Novib, received through the Land Portal

This morning I had a conversation with Gine Zwart from Oxfam-Novib, and I am making this post on her behalf.

Gine was in charge of organising Oxfam's global online policy discussion on the Future of Agriculture and shared some lessons from that experience with me. This discussion, which took place on ten days in December 2012, was intended to explore four key issues, one of which was women's land ownership, and was based on essays by key experts posted every day that people visiting the page could then comment on.

“In the Future of Agriculture debate there was quite a lot of participation, but it was incredibly labour-intensive to get this. It was a global discussion, with more than 4000 visitors on the website during most days of the discussion and announcements on more than 35 other websites worldwide. Many people knew about it and respected that Oxfam organised something like this, but still the hurdle to actively post a comment is enormous. Still, we got 300 comments, which is not bad, but for something rolled out globally, we expected a bit more.

One major lesson was that the content of the discussion was too dense. On LinkedIn, for instance, you sometimes get a statement and people react to it, which can be really lively. We had essays by experts, which probably hundreds, maybe thousands of people read, but few commented. People think about and have ideas about such essays but might not share their ideas.

We did get comments from all corners of the world and got comments from people who would never ever be in a meeting with some of the people who wrote the essays – like for instance, the Director General of FAO – and could comment directly. Some authors were active in reacting again, but not all.

What might be of more interest to a bigger audience will be the synthesis report which Oxfam will put out together with all the essays.

We also realised that relationships matter, so people in an inner circle know you and are more likely to react than those in an outer circle. We saw this very clearly, Oxfam has a good network in the Netherlands of agriculture experts and those were quite active in the debate. In other countries they might have networks but these were not as engaged, or maybe are networks that are not as relevant to such a debate.

On the technical side, one limitation was that we could not make it a real discussion, we had essays and you could comment under the essay, with someone else then commenting again. The way we set it up, 2-3 essays were slightly opposing each other to stimulate debate, but there was no real space for debate as essays were not all in one place. Comments were on each individual essays, so it was more like someone addressing an audience in a conference, with people commenting the presentation.

We had this in three languages with brief summaries for the next day, a recommendation we have for such a debate is to have it first in English for two weeks, then hand over lead to a French-speaking Oxfam, then run it for two weeks, then hand it over to a Spanish-speaking Oxfam to run it in Spanish. That would probably work much better, with less pressure to translate quickly and various language participants benefiting from previous comments.

A big question related to online platforms is: what is in it for you as a commenter? On LinkedIn, for instance, you see that consultants are very active in such debates, probably for the visibility (for professional purposes). There may be other reasons, but the important thing is to bear in mind what is in it for those whose participation you want.”

Thanks to Gine for sharing her thoughts!

14. Tim Davies, Open Development, received through the Land Portal

This is a really interesting post - and sparks a few thoughts and questions:

1) What's the right timescale for an online dialogue? Face to face conferences take place over a very short period of time because of practical requirements, and it's easier to build rapport face to face; online communities discuss issues with discussions that can spread out over months, taking advantage of online rapport and relationships that build up more slowly, but can be equally as rich as face to face relationships; online dialogues often opt for a 2 - 3 week timescale - which means they can work with neither the intense pressure of very short face to face events, nor the relationship building of a long-term event.

2) Modes of interaction - I've experimented quite a lot with allowing paragraph-level or direct annotation commenting on stimulus documents. Just using Google Docs or other tools to get people to add comments to a text can be an interesting way of stimulating dialogue. I've also seen some very interesting 'twitter chats' that take place over the course of a set two hour period with people following and discussing on a particular hash-tag.

I wonder how a dialogue can bring in a number of different modes of interaction.

3) Confidence to comment - a lot of people don't have the confidence, familiarity, or ability within organisational culture, to comment online - as the post above highlights. Encouraging people to act as intermediaries, bringing the voice of others into the debate can be useful. I wonder if the consultants and others amongst us who can make time in our days, and feel less pressure from organisational cultures etc. not to post publicly online, can be encouraged to play more of an intermediary role in bringing voices into online dialogue.

Online is effective to join up disparate conversations - but that joining may still need intermediaries to act as conscious bridges between different offline or local discussions.

4) Building to what? It can help perhaps if the end point of a dialogue is more visible, and has a clearer 'climax' than just the end of discussion. Whether it's from seeing a report being drafted as the dialogue takes place (using online documents), or with the promise of a response to the discussion from a senior figure at the end. I was struck reading this week about the 'UK Citizens' community organisers process, where they build up to a 'Citizens Assembly' where citizens who have been discussing an issue get to put it directly to a politician - about the importance of a really clear ceremony or culmination point to help focus dialogue and discussion.

15. Amy O'Donnel, FrontlineSMS, received through the Land Portal

Hi there,

I work for FrontlineSMS - a free open source platform which assists with the management of text messages and support projects in the design of initiatives using mobile. ActionAid ran an interesting campaign on last year's world food day connecting online/offline communities in Kenya, The Gambia and Nepal on land rights issues. Read more at <http://www.actionaid.org/2012/10/our-sms-land-campaign-world-food-day-2012>

Otherwise we have some interesting case studies about monitoring Palm Oil extraction in Indonesia <http://www.frontlinesms.com/2012/05/08/mobile-networks-and-citizen-journ...> and Forestry in Cambodia <http://www.frontlinesms.com/2012/02/20/monitoring-conservation-via-sms-p...>

I'm interested in the conversations above about access and ownership of mobiles, and agree that effective program design is needed for sustainable adoption of technologies. Mobile is worth considering in certain contexts as a way to reach people who may not have internet access. Happy to continue conversations - you can reach me on amy at frontlinesms.com

Many Thanks, Amy

16. Sandra Apaza Lanyi, International Land Coalition – América Latina y el Caribe, received through the Land Portal

Hablar de uso de plataformas online para el intercambio y el impulso de acciones en torno al monitoreo de derechos de las mujeres a la tierra implica varias cuestiones. Una primera pregunta que se viene a mi mente es quiénes están participando y/o tienen el potencial de participar en las plataformas online sobre este tópico.

Brecha de género en el acceso y uso de la tierra - y también en la arena Online

Si bien es cierto que el trabajo sobre los derechos de las mujeres a la tierra importa tanto a hombres y mujeres por las implicancias que tienen – vínculos con la seguridad alimentaria, con la reducción de la pobreza, por un tema de reconocimiento y derechos, etc. – creo que es importante promover y facilitar la activa participación de mujeres/organizaciones de mujeres en iniciativas online vinculadas a este tópico.

Así como la data desagregada por género en cuanto al acceso y uso de la tierra es escasa, también lo es a nivel de acceso y uso de Internet. Si bien es cierto que el uso de Internet está incrementándose en los países en desarrollo, debemos recordar que aún persisten brechas significativas. De acuerdo a un estudio reciente llevado a cabo por Intel en consulta con ONU Mujeres, World Pulse y el Department's Office of Global Women's issue de los EE.UU sobre usos de la web por parte de mujeres en países en desarrollo, se calcula que el porcentaje de mujeres en línea es 25% menor (¡lo que equivale a aprox. a 200 millones de mujeres!) que el de sus pares varones, brecha que se

agudiza en regiones como África Subsahariana, en donde la brecha alcanza un 40%. Más allá de las cifras, se sostiene que no todos los acceso a Internet –y por ende a las comunidades en línea– promueven en igual medida el empoderamiento de las mujeres, en tanto que un involucramiento pleno implica sentirse familiarizado/a a diferentes niveles: saber qué se está buscando, cómo buscar la información y cómo hacer uso y/o aprovechar las redes que se gestan en la web, el conocimiento y los servicios que se encuentran en línea.

La brecha de género digital –que abarca además del acceso los usos y habilidades relacionadas situaciones de desigualdad por razones de género– sigue siendo una limitante para las oportunidades que ofrece el Internet y las plataformas en línea para el empoderamiento, la participación y el activismo de las mujeres en torno a temáticas clave como la tierra. Esta brecha es un reflejo de las desigualdades por género que imperan en las distintas sociedades y puede dar lugar, en ciertos casos, a que las desigualdades se amplíen. Esto, en tanto que las mujeres que no están conectadas corren el riesgo de ser más marginadas, mientras que aquellas que sí lo están pueden contribuir de forma activa al flujo de información y la incidencia a favor de los derechos de las mujeres. Además, es importante anotar que la brecha digital se acrecienta justamente en el sector de las mujeres rurales y que las desigualdades entre los diversos ámbitos tienden a retroalimentarse.

En suma, las desigualdades por género afectan potencialmente la aplicación y el uso que se puede dar a las plataformas colaborativas en línea. Es importante entonces impulsar mecanismos que permitan incorporar los conocimientos, perspectivas y capacidades de las mismas mujeres y sus organizaciones en estas plataformas, así como la participación de otros actores clave.

Finalmente, comentar que tras revisar el perfil de participantes en un foro en línea realizado sobre mujeres y acceso a la tierra, encontré por ejemplo que el número de participantes varones superaba de largo al número de mujeres. Al impulsar estas plataformas participativas, conviene entonces preguntarnos quiénes están participando y qué mecanismos se están adoptando para asegurar el diálogo y la participación inclusiva (si se está facilitando también la participación de mujeres, participantes de distintas zonas –incluyendo el Sur–, facilidades idiomáticas, entre otros).

Otra pregunta obligada es la orientación de este tipo de plataformas:

Plataformas en línea para trabajar el tema de los derechos de las mujeres a la tierra ¿para qué y cómo?

Las plataformas en línea colaborativas son herramientas con diversos y ricos potenciales para los y las interesadas en promover una gobernanza de la tierra inclusiva y con enfoque de género. Los aspectos que se pueden destacar de estas herramientas son varios y mayormente conocidos: permiten compartir información sobre lo que está pasando con la tierra, conocimiento y buenas prácticas en torno a los procesos que afectan (positivamente o negativamente) los derechos de las mujeres a la tierra; facilitan el trabajo en red/networking; permiten que personas y organizaciones interesadas en esta temática se conecten y potencia colaboraciones, entre otros.

El involucramiento de mujeres en estas plataformas permite que participen activamente en la producción de conocimiento sobre un tema tan central como es el acceso y uso de la tierra y otros RRNN, lo que favorece que la información que se recoge y se produce contemple una dimensión de género. Estas plataformas, además, tienen un potencial para fomentar relaciones/ estrategias y labores de incidencia por parte de las OSC y son un recurso valioso para los/las que abogan por una mayor igualdad en el acceso a los recursos.

Actualmente existen plataformas online muy interesantes que se vinculan a labores de monitoreo y vigilancia de los derechos a la tierra y la Apertura de Datos (Open Data). Una de ellas es la Land Matrix, una base de datos en línea sobre adquisiciones de tierra que permite a los usuarios contribuir con el mejoramiento de los datos sobre dichas adquisiciones y visualizar la data.

Otro proyecto en línea vinculado es el Observatorio de Adquisiciones de Tierra (Observatorio de la tierra/Land Observatory), una plataforma interactiva en línea a lanzarse próximamente que permitirá a individuos y organizaciones proveer información, generar información espacial y propiciar diálogos políticos sobre los procesos que afectan los derechos a la tierra de los/las más vulnerables. Estas dos iniciativas contemplan métodos de Crowdsourcing, una metodología que puede ser clave para mejorar la información vinculada a la tenencia de la tierra, en tanto que permite a los ciudadanos/as aportar directamente información sobre afectaciones a sus derechos respecto a la tierra y otros.

Ambas plataformas colaborativas permiten recoger valiosa información relacionada a los derechos de las mujeres rurales, por ejemplo aprender más sobre cómo los procesos comerciales están impactando de forma diferenciada a las mujeres. Aun cuando el recojo de esta información puede ser desafiante, resulta fundamental que estas plataformas incorporen en su diseño la variable de género para contar con más elementos para la defensa de los derechos de las mujeres rurales ante la falta de información existente.

17. Ruth Meinzen-Dick, IFPRI, received through the Land Portal

Open access data, but also good data

I agree in principle with the value of open data sources and platforms for discussion, but at the same time, we need reliable data. So much of what we see about the amount of land that women “own” is not clear where the data come from, or even what is meant by “ownership”. I’m afraid that crowdsourcing without clear guidelines, definitions, and quality control could generate some very misleading numbers.

As part of our Gender, Agriculture, and Assets Program (GAAP) we have put together a “toolkit” of qualitative and quantitative methods for looking at all kinds of assets (see <http://gaap.ifpri.info/gender-and-assets-toolkit/>)

Of the resources we have found, the Gender Asset Gap Project’s to be especially valuable. <http://genderassetgap.iimb.ernet.in/>. In particular, they have a paper on how different ways of asking the question gives different results.

In terms of crowdsourcing, we have developed a “Gender Mapper” <http://gender.mappr.info/explore.php> to invite people to put in information on basic gender patterns of farming systems (whether they are male-dominated, female-dominated, joint male-female, or men and women have separate holdings) as a way to help target interventions. We have received some submissions, but are now looking at how we can use large nationally-representative data sets like LSMS, DHS, or agricultural censuses to do this instead. (But contributions are still welcome!). Thanks to the ILC for stimulating this discussion.

18. Chiara Kovarik, IFPRI, received through the Land Portal

To add onto Ruth’s comment, IFPRI is also currently working on a paper analyzing women’s land ownership in Sub-Saharan Africa, using both nationally-representative datasets like the LSMS-ISA and the DHS, as well as surveys undertaken by IFPRI. This paper, which will be coming soon, will display statistics on ownership levels across different countries in SSA and will demonstrate the importance of collecting data both on plot ownership as well as on plot operation/decision-making/control. Thank you to the ILC.

19. Natalia Vaccarezza, World Bank, received through the Land Portal

How do we bridge the digital divide and tap into the broad reach and greater accessibility of mobile technologies?

Various people have flagged the issue of lack of access to computers and the internet, particularly for women in the Global South. This is undoubtedly a primary limitation for using online platforms to promote inclusive consultations on land governance and other issues impacting poverty and development. At the same time, the full potential of mobile phones and text messaging as means for sending and receiving information - given their wide-scale prevalence and lower costs – has not been reached.

There is an interesting example of using Twitter for improved city governance. In 2009, the city of San Francisco established the Twitter account @SF311, through which residents can communicate with the city and submit service needs. The advantages of this approach are many, in that it offers a simple, immediate, direct and very public channel for communication with the local government. Could twitter or other technologies similarly be used to increase transparency and accountability on land governance – perhaps by allowing people to communicate through SMS, and by bringing these interactions into a public space? The fact that twitter can be accessed using SMS leads me to consider how this technology could be better utilized as a communication tool on land governance.

20. Angela Hariche, OECD, received through Wikigender

There is a tremendous lack of data available today in some poor countries (and rich!). The data that is available is sometime of uneven quality at best. Statistics coming from national statistics offices (NSOs) are the official data and secondary sources are only recently being considered. There is quite a bit of data that isn't considered official and that is the data if harnessed and recognized could make a real change in the quality of data available.

Participatory online platforms like wikis for example are a good way of crowd sourcing quality. With many eyes looking at a problem via these platforms, the diversity of content alone will contribute to solutions. The same can be said for opening data. If the data is freely available and sharable, then the methodologies are more likely to be challenged and improved. Transparency of measurement methodologies and citizen choice of indicators are key elements to progress. With demand for more data around the post-2015 debate, participatory online platforms could aid in assessing the quality of data and offer solutions with fewer resources.

21. Salema, received through Wikigender

I work on the Wikiprogress Platform and the lessons learned for us are:

- Collaborative online platforms take work and money. When you open your platforms up for contribution, partnerships and programmes are necessary;
- Online discussions are a very good way of getting users to contribute to discussions;
- Web 2.0 is cheaper than many other option but still costs money - while wiki's can be termed as "plug and play" or "off the shelf", your communities will have demands that need to be met. So, strong technological staff needs to be in place;
- Quality assurance. There is a perception that participatory platforms might not produce articles of good quality. While we feel that diversity and inclusion are two key elements to "good

quality”, the Wikiprogress team does a light post facto review of articles submitted. This process has worked well.

That is not to take away from the fact that wiki's in collaboration with good communication tools are a great way to share information, data and ideas in an open, inclusive and transparent way. Salema

22. Estelle Loiseau, Wikigender, received through Wikigender

Access to open data should be a right in itself, especially in the reality we live in today. For example, we often talk of the lack of gender-disaggregated data to build the evidence base and promote gender equality; likewise, women themselves should have access to the data they need in their everyday life. For example, in Uganda, women are increasing their incomes by using mobile phones to learn about plant diseases and get the latest updates on market prices (see this infographic: <http://www.gatesfoundation.org>.... Women can access such data because it is available on mobile phones - the easiest technology for them to successfully combine their household and work responsibilities. If we make sure that most online platforms are also available on mobile phones (for example as apps), we can reach a wider population.