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# LAND CORRUPTION TOPIC GUIDE

Compiled by the Anti-Corruption Helpdesk

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# LAND CORRUPTION

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING LAND CORRUPTION

Effective and transparent land management and secure and equitable land rights are crucial to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) since land is at the heart of poverty eradication, food security, gender equality, water management, decent work, sustainable cities, ending climate change and protecting biodiversity.<sup>1</sup> Land rights determine women's empowerment and the survival or destruction of indigenous cultures. Carbon stored on the land will define the evolution of climate change. Land use and the exploitation of natural resources will affect energy supplies. Land use practices will determine the survival or extinction of millions of species. And land management in urban areas will affect how inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities are. Hence, corruption in land governance has significant social costs.

### Poverty and hunger

Corruption in land administration can increase levels of poverty and hunger because it reduces access to land and damages the livelihood of small-scale producers, agricultural workers and landless rural and urban poor. In rural areas, corruption in land title and tenure prevents small-scale producers to improve their food security and increase their productivity. The impact of corruption is especially significant in developing countries due to the large number of small-scale landholders in these nations, many of whom are extremely poor. In sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, for instance, 80 per cent of the farmland is managed by smallholders, who provide up to 80 per cent of the food supply in those regions.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the economic viability of small-scale farmers is threatened by unsustainable international competition, decline of agricultural prices and corruption in the allocation of government-subsidised credit, in government contracts or licences for agricultural supplies,<sup>3</sup> which often subjected to bribes unaffordable by poor farmers.

The rise of rural poverty and the deregulation of agricultural policies have led to an exodus from rural areas towards the cities.<sup>4</sup> Slums swelling in the big cities are a dramatic expression of the poverty in urban areas. Around a billion people in the world live in slum conditions.<sup>5</sup> Corruption and poor land administration and the use of urban land for political patronage keep most slum dwellers with no security of tenure and in highly precarious conditions under the threat of eviction. In 2001 it was estimated that 924 million people were living without secure tenure in unauthorised settlements in urban areas of developing countries. The projection is that this number will increase to 1.5 billion by 2020.<sup>6</sup> Excluding a significant proportion of the urban population from legal shelter reduces the

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<sup>1</sup> Sachs, 2017. *Land and the SDGs*: <https://landportal.info/blog-post/2017/09/land-and-sdgs>

<sup>2</sup> FAO, 2012. *Smallholders and Family Farmers*:

[http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability\\_pathways/docs/Factsheet\\_SMALLHOLDERS.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability_pathways/docs/Factsheet_SMALLHOLDERS.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Fink, 2002. *Corruption and the Agricultural Sector*: [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/Pnact873.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnact873.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Momagri: <http://www.momagri.org/UK/agriculture-s-key-figures/With-close-to-40-%25-of-the-global-workforce-agriculture-is-the-world-s-largest-provider-of-jobs-1066.html>

<sup>5</sup> UN Habitat. *Slum Almanac 2015/2016*: [https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02-old/Slum%20Almanac%202015-2016\\_EN.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02-old/Slum%20Almanac%202015-2016_EN.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> UN Habitat, 2004. *Urban land for all*: [mirror.unhabitat.org/pmss/getElectronicVersion.aspx?nr=1706&alt=1](http://mirror.unhabitat.org/pmss/getElectronicVersion.aspx?nr=1706&alt=1)

prospects for economic development.<sup>7</sup> UN Habitat points out that the fear of eviction may prevent people to operate to their maximum potential or invest in their neighbourhoods, this in turn reduces the revenue from taxes and services charges, and the uncertainty associated with insecure tenure may hinder external investments and the improvement of services such as water and sanitation.<sup>8</sup>

Bribery is another way in which land corruption affects poverty. Studies show how the poor are more vulnerable to bribery and, therefore, more likely to pay bribes.<sup>9</sup> In Africa, poorer people were almost three times as likely to pay bribes as wealthier people.<sup>10</sup> This is, in part, down to their dependency on government services. This vulnerability to bribery can increase poverty in two ways: i) the payment of bribes can account for a considerable proportion of a poor household's income – in Sierra Leone the poor pay 13 per cent of their income on bribes, compared to 3.8 per cent paid by high-income households;<sup>11</sup> and ii) the corrupt character of land services might discourage poor people from regulating their own land, putting them in a position that might compromise their future land entitlement and livelihood.

## Economic inequality

Land corruption can indirectly affect economic inequality in positive and in negative ways by facilitating investment in land and extractive activities. According to the World Bank, large-scale land acquisitions for agricultural investments can have a positive impact on the economy through: the creation of employment, generating higher incomes and local savings; attracting people to the area, creating business opportunities for small local business; and through the development of infrastructure.<sup>12</sup>

However, if not managed responsibly, these investments can also harm local communities and increase economic inequalities. The presence of large investments can lead to a rise in the prices of products and of land, increasing the local cost of living without necessarily improving incomes.<sup>13</sup> In addition, those investments might imply the displacement of people, which are not always compensated in a fair manner. Contrary to the World Bank's findings on employment, studies on Latin America show that extractive activities generate very little employment due to the replacement of labour with technology. They also show that the work they create is low-skilled, seasonal, poorly paid and often in conditions that violate labour legislation on minimum wages, forced labour, child labour, health, safety and social protection.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, to attract foreign investment, some governments in Latin America may have offered incentives and tax breaks that exacerbate inequality and divert resources from the public fund. In some cases, governments in the region have reduced their regulatory intervention to prevent land grabs and abandoned public investment in small-scale farming, increasing inequalities.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Peiffer and Rose, 2016. *Why are the poor more vulnerable to bribery in Africa? The institutional effects of services*; Justesen and Bjørnskov, 2012. *Exploiting the poor: Bureaucratic corruption and poverty in Africa*.

<sup>10</sup> Justesen and Bjørnskov, 2012. *Exploiting the poor: Bureaucratic corruption and poverty in Africa*, p. 18.

<sup>11</sup> World Bank, 2017: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/governance/brief/anti-corruption>

<sup>12</sup> World Bank, 2016. *The impact of larger-scale agricultural investments on local communities: Updated voices from the field*, p. 31-33.

<sup>13</sup> World Bank, 2016. *The impact of larger-scale agricultural investments on local communities: Updated voices from the field*, p. 34.

<sup>14</sup> Oxfam, 2016. *Unearthed: Land, power and inequality in Latin America*: [https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file\\_attachments/bp-land-power-inequality-latin-america-301116-en.pdf](https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/file_attachments/bp-land-power-inequality-latin-america-301116-en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

## Gender inequality

Corruption in land administration impedes women's access to land ownership and affects their use of and control over land. This exacerbates gender inequality because it limits the power of women to decide on land use, and it prevents women benefitting from the economic opportunities brought by the security of tenure. In Africa, for instance, corrupt practices in the context of large-scale land-based investments contribute to the unauthorised conversion of customary land to commercial land.<sup>16</sup> This usually happens to the detriment of poor rural women's access and land use rights because commercialisation concentrates land in the hands of those who can assert ownership, usually community leaders and male household heads.

Despite comprising around 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force, with variations across countries and regions, women consistently own less agricultural land than men.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, land held by women tends to be smaller and of lower quality soil than that held by men.<sup>18</sup> The female individual landownership in Uganda in 2011, for example, accounted for 14 per cent of landownership, whereas male individual landownership accounted for 46 per cent. In Senegal, only 5 per cent of women individually owned land, compared to 22 per cent of men in 2010-11.<sup>19</sup> The same pattern can be seen in Latin America where the percentage of farms run by women in Guatemala was only 8 per cent in 2003, 20 per cent in Uruguay in 2011 and 30 per cent in Peru in 2012. A lack of land ownership puts women in a situation of vulnerability because decisions over land are made by men without the participation of women. Moreover, the lack of statutory rights over land, and therefore of secure access to productive resources to guarantee delivery of a flow of produce, excludes women from farming business opportunities. Large contract-farming schemes involving many thousands of farmers in China, for instance, involved men exclusively. In Senegal, only one out of the 59 contracted farmers in the French bean export sector is a woman.<sup>20</sup>

Even if land reforms and laws in some countries recognise women's equal rights of ownership, informal social norms and local practices often exclude women from land ownership. Land corruption tends to reinforce this tendency following customary norms rather than modern law on land. In general, customary laws link women land rights to their relationship with men,<sup>21</sup> which are often deeply rooted in patriarchal logics such as male inheritance preference and a lack of recognition of women's contribution to family wellbeing and national development.<sup>22</sup> Frequently, family lands are registered under the male relative's name, and widows and daughters are left out when it comes to land inheritance.<sup>23</sup> Sometimes social institutions, such as the *levirate*, by which a widow is expected to marry a brother or close relative of her husband, or the fulfilment of the widow's obligations through her participation in traditional practices, would preserve widows' access to land.<sup>24</sup> However, widows are often thrown out of their homes, are disowned or are victims of violence by their relatives in the context of land and inheritance disputes.<sup>25</sup> Studies show that, beyond customs, other factors that sustain land gender discrimination are land scarcity, the

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<sup>16</sup> African Union, African Development Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2014. *Guiding principles on large scale land based investments in Africa*, p. 17.

<sup>17</sup> FAO, 2011. *The role of women in agriculture*, p. 1.

<sup>18</sup> SOFA team, 2011. *Gender differences in assets*, p. 8.

<sup>19</sup> Doss et al., 2013. *Gender inequalities in ownership and control of land in Africa. Myths versus Reality*, p. 18.

<sup>20</sup> SOFA team and Doss, 2011. *The role of women in agriculture*, p. 26.

<sup>21</sup> Morrow, 2004. *Women's inheritance rights in Africa: the need to integrate cultural understanding and legal reform*, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Oxfam, 2016. *Unearthed: Land, power and inequality in Latin America*, p. 27.

<sup>23</sup> Transparency International, 2017. *Gender-responsive work on land and corruption. A practical guide*, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup> Villareal, 2006. *Changing customary land rights and gender relations in the context of HIV/AIDS in Africa*, p. 3;

Morrow, 2004. *Women's inheritance rights in Africa: the need to integrate cultural understanding and legal reform*, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Morrow, *ibid*, p. 6.

continued existence of laws asserting male superiority in household matters, the privatisation of land, and the social and economic effects of HIV/AIDS, among others.<sup>26</sup>

In cities, the impact of urban land corruption on women is closely related to the conditions of poverty and discrimination in which many women live. In theory, urban areas offer better long-term prospects for securing housing for women because cities offer greater economic opportunities, and because urban land is more often acquired through the market than through inheritance.<sup>27</sup> However, a survey in low-income urban communities in Ghana, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Sri Lanka, Colombia and Costa Rica shows that just one-third of owner-occupiers were female.<sup>28</sup> Studies show that women renters may be discriminated against by the stigma of HIV/AIDS, single women because of the absence of male “guardians”, as in southern India, or lesbian women because of their sexuality as happened in Quito, Ecuador.<sup>29</sup> Women’s limited access to stable employment and earnings is a frequent explanation of the gender inequality in accessing housing. In turn, the lack of employment and of collateral impedes many women to get mortgages or loans. Legal housing becomes unaffordable, which pushes them to illegal housing cooperatives that are often characterised by high risk (a number of women in Zimbabwe have been swindled by these cooperatives) and corruption.<sup>30</sup>

Discrimination against women also takes place when it comes to bribery in land administration. Women are especially vulnerable to pressure to pay bribes. They may face sexual harassment, violence and extortion, or be forced to give up their rights. Women also have difficulties in receiving compensation in land acquisition. Certain actions regarding investments in land presuppose compensation to the displaced original inhabitants of those lands; however, the payments are often gender insensitive. In Ghana, for example, the payment of compensation by the state for the acquisition of land for the Tamale Airport reinforced existing culture-induced gender biases and unequal power relations, tending to offer protection to the more powerful of the society to the detriment of those more vulnerable, including women.<sup>31</sup> Most women could not ask for compensation because they lacked documentation to prove their land ownership acquired through customary male relations.

## Human and collective rights

Corruption in land management and governance can lead to serious violations of fundamental human rights. The anti-trafficking community has identified several industries potentially derived from land deals, including agriculture, construction and mining, where there can be slavery.<sup>32</sup> By facilitating land deals for the establishment of these industries, corruption enables fundamental violations of human rights. Similarly, land evictions, displacements, forced relocations, and state and corporate violence against indigenous groups are measures often taken to support infrastructure development or extraction of natural resources on communal land.<sup>33</sup> Displacement of indigenous communities in favour of commercial investments not only damages people’s livelihoods and the environment they live in, it also has a profoundly negative impact on cultural

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<sup>26</sup> Polavarapu, 2011. *Procuring meaningful land rights for the women in Rwanda*, p. 131; Villareal, 2006. *Changing customary land rights and gender relations in the context of HIV/AIDS in Africa*, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> UN Habitat, 2013. *State of women in cities 2012-2013. Gender and the prosperity of cities*, p. 28.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>30</sup> Mutondoro and Chiweshe, 2016. *Impact of urban land corruption on women: the case of illegal housing cooperatives*.

<sup>31</sup> Yeboah et al, 2017. *Women, land and corruption in Ghana. Findings from a baseline survey*, pp. 18, 19.

<sup>32</sup> Liberty Asia, The Freedom Fund (no year). *Modern slavery and corruption*, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations, 2009. *State of the world’s indigenous peoples*.

identity and community life due to the attachment of indigenous identities to their ancestral land. Even though the International Labour Organization's 169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO C169) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognise indigenous peoples' rights to prior consultation, participation and consent,<sup>34</sup> governments and companies do not always respect them or will subvert them through lack of transparency and imbalanced power relations during negotiations, bribing of community leaders, and impeding fair and equitable agreements.<sup>35</sup>

## Land conflict

Corruption in land administration leads to a high number of conflicts all over the world.<sup>36</sup> One type of conflict facilitated by corruption is the allocation of same land parcels by the land registration office due to the acceptance of fake titles. The "grabbing" of land is also the cause of social and political conflicts. In Cambodia, for example, it is estimated that, since 2003, land grabbing has affected 400,000 people, raising social protests. In 2012, the government arrested more than twice as many people during land disputes than the previous year; and in 2013, land disputes were at the top of the country's general election issues.<sup>37</sup>

## THE LANDSCAPE OF CORRUPTION

A complete and accurate picture of the extent of land corruption is very difficult, if not impossible, to get due to the hidden nature of corruption. Nevertheless, from the data available, it is possible to get a partial, yet informative, idea of some tendencies and regions most affected. Land corruption takes many forms and faces specific challenges in rural and urban areas.

### Rural land corruption

Regarding rural land corruption, the literature points to large-scale land deals and land administrative services as scenarios prone to corruption.

#### Large-scale commercial land deals

Over the last decades, there has been a significant increase in large-scale land deals in developing countries with abundant natural resources, land suitable for cultivation, extractive activities, timber concessions and/or infrastructure projects.<sup>38</sup> The food crisis in 2007 and 2008 and the need for investors to look for new opportunities to face the global financial crisis are among the main motivators of the "land rush".<sup>39</sup> Besides the presence of natural resources, Africa has become increasingly attractive for investors due to the abundance of cheap agro-ecologically suitable land and its increasingly liberalised economies.<sup>40</sup> Data provided by Land Matrix<sup>41</sup> reveals that between

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<sup>34</sup> International Labour Organization's 169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention: [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C169](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C169); [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Due Process of Law Foundation, Oxfam America (no year). *The right of indigenous peoples to prior consultation. The situation in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru.*

<sup>36</sup> Wehrmann, 2008. *Land conflicts. A practical guide to dealing with land disputes*, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> McInnes, 2015. *Land in life: an analysis of the role 'grand' corruption plays in enabling elite grabbing of land in Cambodia*, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> De Schutter, 2016. *Tainted lands. Corruption in large-scale land deals*, p. 8.

<sup>39</sup> Oxfam, 2011. *Land and power. The growing scandal surrounding the new wave of investments in land*, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Owen, Duale and Vanmulken, 2015. *Land and political corruption in sub-Saharan Africa*, p. 6.

<sup>41</sup> Land Matrix: <http://landmatrix.org/en/>



2000 and August 2017 an estimated of 1,347 transnational deals have been concluded, covering more than 49 million hectares, with the largest share in Africa (557 documented deals), followed by South-East Asia (337 documented deals). African land has often become a patronage tool that maintains political allegiance of powerful groups since the introduction of multiparty systems and the consequent decrease of traditional patronage opportunities.<sup>42</sup>

High levels of corruption and poor governance is another characteristic of countries that attract land investors, contrary to what the specialised literature argues regarding the importance of the business climate.<sup>43</sup> Weak governance and corruption can facilitate quick and cheap deals, maximise profit and minimise red tape; all reasons why investors might be attracted to those contexts. According to Oxfam, “over three-quarters of the 56 countries where land deals were agreed between 2000 and 2011 scored below average on four key governance indicators [voice and accountability, regulatory quality, rule of law, control of corruption]”.<sup>44</sup> For example, Indonesia – the country with the highest number of deals (122) according to Land Matrix – scored 37 in the Corruption Perception Index 2016 (0 considered highly corrupt and 100 very clean); Cambodia – with 107 deals – scored 21; and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) – the country where the most hectares were sold (7,054,831 ha) – scored 21.<sup>45</sup>

Studies show that the relationship between levels of corruption and land deals can take different forms. Using data for 156 countries from 2000-2011, Bujko et al. provide evidence that large-scale land deals occur more frequently in countries with higher levels of corruption.<sup>46</sup> The authors conclude that corruption leads to more land deals. Nevertheless, corruption is not consistently associated only with the likelihood of land deals, but also with their size. The authors show that higher levels of corruption control are associated with smaller sized land deals and with lower likelihood of the materialisation of any land deal.<sup>47</sup>

#### Land administrative corruption:

Besides commercial land deals, corruption is often a common practice in every day land administrative services. In some countries, like Kenya, Uganda and Burundi, land services are among the worst performing.<sup>48</sup> In Mexico, land services rank among the top 10 administrative sectors with more bribery,<sup>49</sup> and in Bangladesh land services is one of the top three institutions with the worst rates of bribery and with the highest cost of bribes.<sup>50</sup> Corruption in land administration can take different forms, such as the payment of bribes for registering property, changing land titles, acquiring information, processing cadastral surveys and generating favourable land use plans.<sup>51</sup> Complicated and expensive processes and a lack of information, exacerbate bribery in land services. As a consequence, people who cannot afford those bribes are excluded. Bribery also discourages the fulfilment of land laws, leaving citizens unprotected and vulnerable to abuse.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Arezki, Deininger and Selod, 2012. *The global land rush*, p. 49.

<sup>44</sup> Oxfam, 2013. *Poor governance, good business. How land investors target countries with weak governance*, p. 1.

<sup>45</sup> Transparency International, *Corruption Perception Index 2016*:

[https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption\\_perceptions\\_index\\_2016](https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2016)

<sup>46</sup> Bujko et al., 2015. *How institutions shape land deals: The role of corruption*, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> Bujko et al., 2015. *How institutions shape land deals: The role of corruption*, pp. 7, 8.

<sup>48</sup> Transparency International Kenya, *The East African Bribery Index 2013*: tiuganda.org/wp-content/uploads/east-africa-bribery-index-2013.pdf

<sup>49</sup> Transparencia Mexicana, 2011. *Indice Nacional de Corrupcion y Buen Gobierno 210*.

<sup>50</sup> Transparency International Bangladesh, 2010. *National Household Survey 2010 on Corruption in Bangladesh*.

<sup>51</sup> FAO, Transparency International, 2011. *Corruption in the land sector*, p. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

## Urban land corruption

### Urban land markets

In the cities, land corruption takes place in a context of rapid urbanisation, the increase in demand and value of land resources, loose laws and poor urban land governance. The competition for an increasingly scarce resource and the consequent rise in price offers great opportunities for public revenue and private enrichment.<sup>53</sup> In this climate of economic opportunity, urban land has become an object of financial speculation, both in developed and developing economies. It is estimated that 60-70 per cent of banking activity in advanced economies is based on speculative land and real estate deals among financial institutions.<sup>54</sup> These conditions present specific corruption challenges in urban areas. Corruption risks take place mainly in urban land markets and in land management. Land and real estate transactions and urban development projects often serve for patronage and money laundry.

The fact that, in some countries, including those with some of the most active property markets such as Australia, UK, the US or Canada, real estate agents are not required by law to identify the real persons behind transactions, and this facilitates the domination of the state market by shell companies and anonymous owners, which impedes money laundering investigations. In the UK, for example, over £180 million worth of property has been brought under criminal investigation as the suspected proceeds of corruption since 2004, and over 75 per cent of those properties make use of offshore corporate secrecy to hide their owner's identities.<sup>55</sup>

### Urban development

Corruption in urban development is conducted through bribing politicians to obtain development projects, the manipulation of land registries by developers to evict people and grab land, and subsidising housing to patronage political supporters, among other practices. Loose laws and a lack of transparency also facilitates similar forms of land corruption in, for example, coastal land, where the urbanisation and opportunity for profit attracts many investors in places as diverse as California, Spain and Lebanon. In Lebanon, for example, around 170 km of its 220-km coastline has been turned into private property, private resorts and commercial beaches among accusations of corruption.<sup>56</sup>

## AREAS OF CORRUPTION

Corruption can take place at different levels of land governance: policy making, legal processes and administrative processes.

### Policy making

Corruption at this stage of land governance takes the form of political or grand corruption and state capture.<sup>57</sup> Grand corruption takes place at the high levels of the political system, and it is often

<sup>53</sup> Zinnbauer, 2015. *Towards an urban land resource curse? A fresh perspective on a long-standing issue*, p. 6.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Transparency International UK, 2015. *Corruption on your doorstep. How corrupt capital is used to buy property in the UK*, p. 3.

<sup>56</sup> Cusack, 14 October 2016. 'Corruption on the coast: Lebanon for sale', *The New Arab*.

<sup>57</sup> Transparency International defines political corruption as any contribution, made in cash or in kind, to support a political cause, for example gifts of property or services, advertising or promotional activities endorsing a political party, and the purchase of tickets to fundraising events. Grand corruption is defined as the acts committed at a high level of government that distort policies or the central functioning of the state, enabling leaders to benefit at the expense of the public good. The definition of state capture is a situation where powerful individuals, institutions,

linked to money laundering schemes. Political corruption, as a form of grand corruption, can be expressed in favouring investors that have financially contributed to a political party or campaign. The state can be captured by individuals, families, groups or even commercial companies who influence public policy to satisfy their private interests. For example, in controlling the policy-making process, they can make legal unfair land redistribution practices, influence demarcation processes or change land use that cannot be justified on objective grounds.<sup>58</sup>

Corruption can also take place in the design and implementation of laws regarding issues such as inheritance, access remedy in land grabs and obtaining fair compensation for damages. The capture of the judicial system by political elites would prevent the impartial scrutiny by the courts of land deals of interest to the ruling elites, as well as the acknowledgement of rights. Corruption in policy making can also involve bribing judges to make preferential decisions concerning land issues, or to influence the police to intimidate and restrain those with complaints of corrupt land governance.

## Legal systems

In societies where formal and customary laws and rights coexist, corruption might occur in the legal gaps created by the disconnection between the two legal systems. The lack of recognition by the judiciary of customary laws, for instance, regarding laws that protect indigenous rights over their community land, increase the opportunities for abuse and for corruption regarding that land. At the same time, legal definitions of bribery as a criminal offence sometimes refer only to public officials, and ignores community chiefs or traditional authorities – not recognised as having the same level of importance as public officials by formal law – even though they make ownership decisions on communal land.<sup>59</sup>

Corruption also takes place in the implementation and enforcement of laws protecting land rights, facilitated by factors such as police discretion. Finally, the lack of related anti-corruption laws to guarantee transparency and access to information, or the complexity of some legal systems and regulations, can also facilitate wrongdoings and corrupt activities.

## Land administration

The areas vulnerable to corruption in land administration are:

### Demarcation and titling of land

Usually the demarcation of land is a necessary requirement for titling a property, and the process may encourage forms of petty corruption, such as bribery, during demarcation or when individuals seek to have their land registered.

### Identification of the land according to state categories

Governments hold a powerful tool in being able to define land as “unused”, “underutilised”, “vacant”, of “public interest” or of “public purpose”. When land is used intermittently for activities that support the livelihood of local communities, such as hunting or collecting firewood, is officially often considered “unused”. The category of unused is often employed to facilitate elite capture for

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companies or groups within or outside a country use corruption to shape a nation’s policies, legal environment and economy to benefit their own private interests. Transparency International, 2009. *The Anti-Corruption Plain Language Guide*, pp. 23, 34, 43. [https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/the\\_anti\\_corruption\\_plain\\_language\\_guide](https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/the_anti_corruption_plain_language_guide)

<sup>58</sup> Palmer, Fricska and Wehrmann, 2009. *Towards improved land governance*, p. 11; De Schutter, 2016. *Tainted lands. Corruption in large scale land deals*, p. 24.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p. 28.

personal gain.<sup>60</sup> Authorities might also define land as “vacant” or “available for investors” when it is being used regularly but the community does not have a title recognised by the government.

There is no consensus about the definition of “public interest” and “public purpose”; confusion that authorities can easily use to their own advantage, such as for the expropriation by governments of privately-owned land. Nevertheless, there is an understanding that these categories should be defined and used in relation to development and the realisation of human rights since it should involve the promotion of a general welfare. The word “public” indicates that expropriation should never involve solely private or commercial interests.<sup>61</sup>

### Planning and zoning

Planning and zoning processes are employed to regulate the use and development of land. These processes are vulnerable to corruption since decision makers are required to balance competing interests of various stakeholders by placing limits on landowners’ rights on urban land use and their discretion to construct buildings.<sup>62</sup>

### Land valuation

The valuation of the land is the process in which the value of a plot of land is decided. To undervalue or overvalue the land can be a powerful tool of coercion and subject to bribery.

### Land sales and leasing

In selling or leasing land, especially for commercial purposes, public officials or community representatives may be subject to bribery by investors. Bribery can take place to speed up the process, to unblock the obstruction of the deal by officers, or during the price negotiation. Political corruption might also occur when politicians or high-level public officials favour certain investors because they contributed financing their political party or campaign.<sup>63</sup>

### Enforcement of land rights

In land deals, rights may be perceived as an obstacle and therefore they might become an excuse to bribe, for example, to favour men over women or to circumvent unwanted regulations. Rights can become a political currency of exchange when governments grant or ignore land rights to gain political support.

### Remedies and compensation

When individuals or communities are evicted from their land due to its sale to a corporation or appropriation by the government, they should be compensated either financially or with an alternative place to live. This process may be circumvented by officials pocketing some or all the compensation, or through the payment of bribes to officials to secure higher compensation rates.<sup>64</sup> When there is no will to pay compensation, the intervention of the judicial system might be necessary, which, if the judicial system is captured by political elites, might create more opportunities for corruption.

### Monitoring investors’ obligations

Sometimes the implementation of land investment projects involves certain conditions imposed to benefit local communities, such as the creation of employment opportunities or sourcing certain

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid, pp. 25, 26.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>62</sup> Lee-Jones, 2017. *Good practices in preventing corruption in planning and zoning at the local level*, p. 2.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 28.

<sup>64</sup> Wheatland, 2016. *Corruption risks and mitigation measures in land administration*, p. 3.

supplies from local producers. Corruption may inhibit the willingness of authorities to monitor compliance with such conditions.<sup>65</sup>

## COUNTERACTING LAND CORRUPTION

Among drivers of land corruption are weak land administration systems, limited legislation, weak institutions, lack of transparency, lack of effective oversight institutions and reduced social participation. Improving land governance is a necessary first step to address land corruption, and needs to be applied at the policy, legal, institutional and administrative levels with the objective of making them more transparent, efficient and participatory.

### Comprehensive legal and institutional frameworks

The disconnect between related policies, laws and institutions might bring confusion and contradictions that could, in turn, lead to corruption and irregularities. In Africa, for example, many countries adopted a wide range of new laws and institutions related to environmental governance but did not harmonise them with existing land laws and institutions. This created confusion, duplication of authorities and conflict between central and local governments.<sup>66</sup> A comprehensive governmental approach is necessary to consolidate related policies, legislations and institutions and connect them to a unique strategy for them to support each other in achieving their mission.

### SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN BOLIVIA

The anti-corruption policy of Juan Del Granado, mayor of La Paz, Bolivia, from 1999 to 2010, represents a successful example of a comprehensive approach to address corruption. Del Granado's anti-corruption policy had three main objectives: rigorous prosecution of corrupt acts, economic recovery and regaining the trust of the citizens in public institutions. This triple mission determined the compliance with the laws and the institutional reform undertaken by the municipal government. Part of the institutional reform was the creation of units of transparency, with various mechanisms for reporting allegations of corrupt acts, and continuous improvement units oriented to improve the performance of a bureaucracy widely regarded as inefficient and corrupt.

Zúñiga, N. and Heywood, P. 2015. 'Cleaning up La Paz. How Bolivia's biggest city freed itself from a ubiquitous culture of corruption'. *Foreign Policy*

A sound legal framework should include a clear definition, recognition and enforcement of the different types of land users' rights, including individual, secondary, usufruct, customary and other types of group rights.<sup>67</sup> It should also include safeguards to ensure the protection of those rights,

<sup>65</sup> De Schutter, 2016. *Tainted lands. Corruption in large-scale land deals*, p. 29.

<sup>66</sup> African Union, African Development Bank, Economic Commission for Africa, 2010. *Framework and guidelines on land policy in Africa*, pp. 20, 21.

<sup>67</sup> Deininger, Selod and Burns, 2012. *The land governance assessment framework. Identifying and monitoring good practice in the land sector*, pp. 28, 29.

provisions regarding evictions, ensure fair and open auctions for land sales, eliminate direct negotiations, and extend the application of the law to companies and their activities overseas. Land legislation should be accompanied by anti-corruption legislation with clear definitions of corruption and what the sanctions for corrupt actions are.

International governmental and non-governmental organisations have developed several conventions, normative frameworks and policy guidelines for improving land administration and to tackle corruption. These tools provide definitions, establish internationally accepted standards, and offer guidelines to improve land administration practices. Institutions such as the World Bank, the United Nations, the Committee on World Food Security and the African Union, among others, have issued a number of guidelines and policies to promote responsible large-scale agricultural investments and mitigate their negative impact. The key common principles that these instruments promote to address land corruption challenges are the promotion of effective, well-resourced and transparent governance structures and processes, inclusive stakeholder participation and equitable benefit sharing.<sup>68</sup>

## Organise land management

Even if not necessarily an anti-corruption mechanism, a well-defined and efficient land management system is a key condition to prevent corruption. Good practice in the reform of land management is to simplify the administrative system, reducing steps and preventing opportunities for corruption.

Land management can acquire three different forms – centralisation, decentralisation and privatisation. In turn, each of these forms present their own corruption challenges. Centralised land management services can be appropriate when demands for services are homogenous and beneficiaries are distributed across wide geographical areas.<sup>69</sup> Decentralisation should be considered when local demands vary throughout the country. This form of management requires strong and efficient local institutions, and it is more flexible in adapting processes to local characteristics and traditions. Experience from Africa, for example, offers two models in which the decentralisation of land administrative tasks can be done: one enhances the role of new local-level institutions and the other increases the role given to traditional institutions, such as customary chiefs, especially in land conflict management.<sup>70</sup>

Each of these administrative systems present corruption challenges and anti-corruption potential. The small discretionary power of public officials in a centralised system might help to control the opportunities to develop corrupt behaviour. Nevertheless, centralised systems face other challenges and internal accountability is costlier. A decentralised model is often characterised by unclear or overlapping functions which increase transaction costs and can create opportunities for discretion

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<sup>68</sup> UNCTAD and World Bank, 2014. The practice of responsible investment principles in larger-scale agricultural investments: implications for corporate performance and impact on local communities: [http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wb\\_unctad\\_2014\\_en.pdf](http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wb_unctad_2014_en.pdf); Committee on World Food Security, CFS, 2014. Principles for responsible investment in agriculture and food systems: [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1314/rai/CFS\\_Principles\\_Oct\\_2014\\_EN.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1314/rai/CFS_Principles_Oct_2014_EN.pdf); African Union, African Development Bank, Economic Commission for Africa, 2014. Guiding principles on large scale land based investments in Africa: [https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/guiding\\_principles\\_eng\\_rev\\_era\\_size.pdf](https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/guiding_principles_eng_rev_era_size.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> Wheatland, 2016. *Corruption risks and mitigation measures in land administration*, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup> African Union, African Development Bank, Economic Commission for Africa, 2011. *Framework and guidelines on land policy in Africa*, p. 24.

and corruption that can push users into informality.<sup>71</sup> However, in a decentralised system, officials might be held accountable for their actions in order to maintain a good reputation in a small community, which can inhibit corrupt behaviour. A third option is the privatisation of land services, which can be convenient for countries with complicated and inefficient government bureaucracies as it frees the provision of land services from these bureaucracies to improve their efficiency and reliability. The corruption challenge in this case is the potential for the allocation of contracts to private companies on the basis of personal interests rather than on competency.

## SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN THAILAND

The Thai government increased the efficiency of land registration procedures by establishing a daily standard time to register property transactions. The staff is instructed not to leave the office until all the registration applications submitted in a given day are completed. To avoid work overflow, the number of staff needed is calculated by the average number of transactions, and each land office is limited to 100,000 titles. If the number of land titles exceeds that number, a new office is created.

Zakout et al., no date. *Good governance in land administration. Principles and good practices.*

### Increase transparency

Transparency is key to prevent corruption and to hold authorities and institutions to account. It should be present in the formulation of land policy to help minimise ambiguities and misinterpretations. Land policy should articulate clear goals, identify institutional responsibilities, assess the resources needed for effective implementation and define ways to measure progress.<sup>72</sup>

Transparency is achieved by full public disclosure of documents around investment deals (final contract, bids at land auctions, changes in land usage plans) and land title certificates. It should be promoted by allowing public access to land administration documents, such as maps, land and urban plans, and to the findings of accountability institutions.<sup>73</sup> Information on how decisions are made in land allocation deals and the price paid should also be available to the public. Registration systems would reduce the danger of concentrating land in the hands of powerful elites by including ways to inform potential claimants about the processes and criteria used to decide between competing rights.<sup>74</sup> A state land inventory, to inform every citizen which land belongs to the state and the institution that controls its use, is a way to ensure that public land is used for the benefit of society.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Deininger, Selod and Burns, 2012. *The land governance assessment framework. Identifying and monitoring good practice in the land sector*, p. 30.

<sup>72</sup> Deininger, Selod and Burns, 2012. *The land governance assessment framework. Identifying and monitoring good practice in the land sector*, p. 30.

<sup>73</sup> Wheatland, 2016. *Corruption risks and mitigation measures in land administration*, p. 8.

<sup>74</sup> Deininger, Selod and Burns, 2012. *The land governance assessment framework. Identifying and monitoring good practice in the land sector*, pp. 29, 30.

<sup>75</sup> Zakout et al., no date. *Good governance in land administration. Principles and good practices*, p. 15.

## SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN ALBANIA

Albania established a system to increase transparency in the process of transferring state public land to local governments. The local government must first present to the Council of Ministers a list of properties that they want to have transferred. The council will react with a preliminary decision including conditions and restrictions. The local government has a three-month period to appeal the decision. After that, the council will decide on the property transfer.

Zakout et al., no date. *Good governance in land administration. Principles and good practices.*

### Ensure accountability

Accountability in land administration would improve service delivery and ensure the integrity of government actions. One way to increase accountability is by including strong and effective oversight institutions, such as parliamentary committees, anti-corruption commissions and law enforcement bodies.<sup>76</sup> Ensuring accountability also requires strong institutional accountability measures, like financial inspections and independent audits of land surveyors, as well as public reviews of compensation plans by independent committees.<sup>77</sup> A third form of accountability is social accountability, highly valued in recent years as a complement to top-down accountability to curb corruption. Understood as the capacity of citizens to hold governments accountable, it can be especially beneficial in countries with a systematic problem of corruption and a weak institutional system.

## SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN INDIA

The anti-poverty policy Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), in India, contains strong transparency mechanisms, like mandatory social audits. The implementation of the monitoring and auditing process has only been successful in Andhra Pradesh. What explains this success is effective legislative measures like the Right to Information Act, transparency and accountability measures, such as the disposal of all information about the MGNREGA on line in real time, and the fact that social audits are regularly conducted. Another key aspect is that they are run by an independent body, the Society for Social Audit Accountability and Transparency (SSAAT). Even though the SSAAT receives funding from the government, the entire staff comes from civil society or from families that are MGNREGA beneficiaries. The backing of the state authority has also been crucial in at least two ways: it ensures that the auditors have access to the necessary documentation and it guarantees their safety, unlike in other states where they are sometimes victims of violence or even killed.

<sup>76</sup> Transparency International and FAO, 2011. *Corruption in the land sector*, p. 6.

<sup>77</sup> Wheatland, 2016. *Corruption risks and mitigation measures in land administration*, p. 7.



## Ensure participation

Increasing the participation of political parties and citizens in land governability would improve the compliance of those actors with the policy. Land sectors will gain legitimacy if the policy is backed by political and social consensus rather than being perceived as captured by interest groups.<sup>78</sup> The affected population should be involved in the identification of land parcels and their demarcation.<sup>79</sup> Social participation should also be promoted in land administration deals and in decisions over compensation and resettlement.<sup>80</sup> In the case of indigenous peoples, to guarantee free, prior and informed consent of the inhabitants of the land considered to be sold or exploited, it is not only a recommendation but a right, recognised by a binding document – International Labour Organization C169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (1989) – for the countries that have ratified it. For indigenous peoples to have fair consultation and participation, some measures must be considered: guarantee equal bargaining power free from threats and manipulation, and to provide all the information, with enough time for the community to study it, and in a language understood by the community. Another way to promote social participation is through client surveys, to gain insights into the performance of land services and the degree of client satisfaction. Hotlines and mailboxes can be used as anonymous methods of reporting corruption and lodging formal complaints. These options should be clearly communicated to the citizens, and systems should be established to respond to the public and to follow up on the complaints.

### SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN INDONESIA

In the reconstruction process after the tsunami in Indonesia in 2004, the identification of boundaries and property claims was left to the community, with the help of some NGOs, in a process called “community land inventory”, to ensure transparency, prevent corruption and protect the rights of the people. The completion of the community mapping and inventory required the signed agreement of the community. Once signed, it was sent to the national land agency to legally survey each land parcel and prepare cadastral maps with land adjudicators and for lawyers to confirm and legalise the ownership. To ensure good governance, all land registration was free of charge.

Zakout et al., no date. *Good governance in land administration. Principles and good practices.*

## Improve human resources management

Even if establishing certain conditions and systems can reduce the potential for corruption in government, ultimately demanding or receiving a bribe is an individual decision. Some measures can be implemented to discourage corrupt activity. One is to produce and disseminate institutional codes of conduct and ethics. The existence of guidelines and staffing procedures can help to guide civil servants on how to make decisions in difficult situations. A clear establishment of sanctions and

<sup>78</sup> Deininger, Selod and Burns, 2012. *The land governance assessment framework. Identifying and monitoring good practice in the land sector*, pp. 30.

<sup>79</sup> Zakout et al., no date. *Good governance in land administration. Principles and good practices*, p. 17.

<sup>80</sup> World Bank, Embassy of Denmark, Embassy of Sweden. 2010. *Assessing risk factors for corruption in land management*.

rewards can help influence behaviour. Education in values and the promotion of integrity in public administration not only helps to prevent corruption but it also reduces society's tolerance of corruption. Finally, the selection of personnel on a meritocratic basis, and the removal of nepotism, might facilitate an institutional culture around the public interest and away from the individual interest that motivates corruption.

## SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN NEPAL

Since 2014, the NGO Accountability Lab Nepal has run a popular contest, Integrity Idol, to publically reward public officials who have stood out for their integrity and service to the society. Every year, volunteers travel across the country to collect nominations of good civil servants from the citizens. From those candidates, independent panels of experts choose five nominees. The nominees are filmed and their videos are shown on TV and played on radio for a week. Citizens can vote for their favourites through text messages and online. The winner is awarded in a public ceremony in the capital. Even if it is not necessarily focused on land, Integrity Idol has been successful in promoting integrity among public officials through public recognition and reward. In 2014, there were 303 nominees and more than 10,000 Nepalese voted; in 2016, there were 850 nominations and around 100,000 votes. Due to their success in Nepal, the experience is now being implemented in Pakistan, Mali and Liberia.

## Gender-sensitive approaches

It is difficult to find specific gender-sensitive anti-corruption approaches related to land corruption. However, due to the greater impact of land corruption on women, a variety of approaches should be taken to include a gender perspective in land governance to achieve gender equality in land issues and reduce the vulnerability of women to land corruption.

The inclusion of a gender perspective should occur on two levels. One is the diagnosis of the problem of land corruption to make the distinctive impact of land corruption on women visible. This can be achieved by, for example, collecting gender disaggregated data on access to land and security of tenure,<sup>81</sup> and by distinguishing how land corruption is experienced by men and women.<sup>82</sup> However, one of the main challenges for communities and anti-corruption organisations is the risk involved in collecting data and evidence of corruption. Initiatives like This is My Backyard (TIMBY) are trying to overcome this challenge through different channels, among them building a digital platform, increasing digital literacy in the communities and including women in decision making.<sup>83</sup>

The other level is the inclusion of gender-sensitive measures in the design and implementation of policies, laws, assistance, messages and procedures regarding land.<sup>84</sup> In this sense, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) has developed "gender evaluation criteria" to assess whether tools to promote general land rights are sensitive to gender. The criteria are: participation (equal

<sup>81</sup> UN Habitat et al., 2013. *Tools to support transparency in land administration*, p. 24.

<sup>82</sup> Transparency International, no year. *Gender-responsive work on land and corruption*, pp. 2-3.

<sup>83</sup> For more information about TIMBY and other developing responses to land corruption affecting women see TI, 2018. *Women, land and corruption. Resources for practitioners and policy-makers*.

<sup>84</sup> FAO, CFS, 2012. *Voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security*, pp. 8, 14.

participation by women and men and gender-responsive governance), capacity building (empowerment of both men and women to use and benefit from tools related to land), legal and institutional considerations (protection of legal rights reducing discriminatory prejudices and practices against women), economic impact (issues regarding the access of men and women to land), and scale and sustainability impact to reach more women than men.<sup>85</sup>

## SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN BRAZIL

Since 2009, Espaço Feminista, a feminist NGO based in Recife, Brazil, has been using the gender evaluation criteria as an advocacy tool to secure tenure for the communities of Ponto do Maduro, an informal settlement with 8,000 low-income households. Through their work they managed to obtain a public commitment to the use of a gender-sensitive approach throughout the land regularisation process. To oversee the regularisation process, a local committee was created in which Espaço Feminista plays a critical role.

GLTN, 2011. *Designing and evaluating land tools with a gender perspective*.

## Complaints mechanisms

Complaints mechanisms can be a helpful tool to increase accountability and to detect corruption in land administration since they empower citizens to provide feedback on the quality and quantity of the services they receive and to submit complaints about wrongdoings.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, user complaints can contribute to identifying sectors or areas particularly vulnerable to corruption.<sup>87</sup>

## SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE IN PAKISTAN

In 2013, the local government of Lahore, Pakistan, established a complaint mechanism within the land registry service, known for having significant problems with corruption and employee misconduct. With this mechanism, as part of completing official forms for land registry, citizens could opt to receive a text message or call to their personal phone to provide feedback. Citizens were encouraged to report problems of corruption and name the officials they dealt with, while keeping the information anonymous. The government used that information to map out sections where there were problems and began addressing them as soon as the programme was launched. About 1 million people were contacted through text messages and calls, and about 175,000 citizens responded to the survey. Of these, 6,000 reported corruption. The government acted on those complaints and produced investigative reports into those allegations.

Albisu, 2014. *Local-level complaint mechanisms in developing countries*.

<sup>85</sup> GLTN, 2011. *Designing and evaluating land tools with a gender perspective*, p. 51.

<sup>86</sup> Chêne, 2013. *Good practice in community complaints mechanisms*.

<sup>87</sup> Albisu, 2014. *Local-level complaint mechanisms in developing countries*.

Independently of their form and channels for handling complaints, these mechanisms should be transparent, independent, accountable, accessible, safe and easy to use.<sup>88</sup> It is also important to make them accessible to marginalised populations, for example, by adapting to the local context, taking into account cultural norms and values, level of literacy, phone coverage and social patterns, among other aspects.<sup>89</sup> To elaborate appropriate culturally sensitive and context-specific responses, beneficiaries should be consulted in the design of the complaints mechanism.<sup>90</sup>

## Technology

The use of technology can improve the effectiveness of land administrative procedures, making processes simpler, cheaper, faster and more transparent. Technology can also standardise processes, removing opportunities for human discretion and, thus, decreasing corruption risks. Besides e-governance measures like the digitisation of land records, there are other helpful technologies for the land sector. Global positioning systems (GPS), for example, can be useful to automate land surveys and demarcation, and geographical information systems (GIS) can be used for cadastral and land use mapping.<sup>91</sup> In Tanzania, coarse images combined with ground-truthing helped reveal that up to 60 per cent of properties in secondary cities were not on the tax roll.

However, there is still a significant digital divide between and within countries that prevents many people, especially women in rural areas, from benefitting from the use of technology in the land sector, especially considering that 6 billion people worldwide are without broadband, 4 billion without internet and 0.4 billion have no digital signal.<sup>92</sup> In addition, without accountability, the potential benefits of technology can turn into greater state control and elite capture.<sup>93</sup>

## Collaboration with stakeholders

Land reform and the fight against corruption require significant investment from governments, especially in developing countries, and stakeholders such as international donors, businesses and NGOs can play a crucial role in helping governments succeed in doing so.

International donors can support governments both in land reform and in general anti-corruption efforts. The responsibility for reducing land corruption lies with domestic governments, and donors' priority should be to support governments in their own initiatives and efforts,<sup>94</sup> not to lead the change. If the governments are involved in land corruption, international donors can still work on the following areas: analysing the political economy of land administration in the country, identifying, among other aspects, who owns that land, which actors may be benefitting from corruption and what compromises can be made; mitigating the negative impact that donor supported projects might have on land corruption; increasing information and transparency by supporting information gathering, data generation and dissemination of information as well as the transmission of information through media and informing citizens through financing awareness campaigns; exploiting international

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<sup>88</sup> Chêne, op. cit.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> More information on specific technological innovations can be found in:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2015/07/20/land-and-poverty-conference-2016-scaling-up-responsible-land-governance>

<sup>92</sup> Hasnain, March 2016. *Bridging the digital divide: Key messages from the 2016 WDR*. Paper presented at the Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Wren-Lewis, 2008. *Corruption in land administration: Roles for donors to minimise the problem*, p. 2.

connections to create frameworks to ensure clean and transparent international acquisitions of land; and to publicly share information on successes and failures in addressing land corruption.<sup>95</sup>

Financial institutions can play a key role in preventing corruption, human rights violations and money laundering by conducting on-going due diligence on the business relations and scrutiny of transactions to ensure that the funds do not have an illicit origin.<sup>96</sup>

The collaboration with NGOs can also bring useful results in fighting land corruption. In Pakistan, for example, a small-scale land owner succeeded in preventing the usurpation of his land with the assistance of the local chapter of Transparency International. The presence of an NGO with international links prompted the land grabber into returning it. Moreover, there are inspiring multi-stakeholder initiatives with great potential to combat corruption. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), for example, launched in 2003, brings together many NGOs working on improving transparency in natural resources exploitation.<sup>97</sup> In EITI participating countries, companies publish what they pay to governments, and governments what they receive from the companies. The purpose is to ensure that revenue from the exploitation of oil, gas and minerals is used for the benefit of the population and not pocketed by the authorities. Another major multi-stakeholder initiative is the Open Government Partnership (OGP), launched in 2011, which brings together governmental representatives and civil society organisations to support transparent, open and accountable government.<sup>98</sup>

## RESOURCES

### Background studies

#### ***Gendered Land Corruption and the SDGs.* Transparency International. 2018.**

(Forthcoming)

This position paper examines the connection between gender, land and corruption in the frame of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The paper analyses three key areas in which land rights and corruption overlap: land administration, land management and management of land-based investments. In its final part, the paper provides key policy messages with gender-sensitive recommendations to the protection of land rights and to ensure good land governance at the international, regional, national and local levels.

#### ***Women, Land and Corruption.* Transparency International. 2018.**

(Forthcoming)

This report analyses the effects of gender (defined as the social and cultural assumptions attached to being male or female) on land allocation and corruption. In particular, it focuses on how the traits associated to women affect women's access to land, how corruption is reported and stigmas surrounding corruption based on societal expectations of women and men. The report presents gender-related evidence on how women are affected by land corruption compared to men, and it offers responses and solutions tailored to the needs of women in order to address gender

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid, pp. 2-4.

<sup>96</sup> De Schutter, 2016. *Tainted lands. Corruption in large-scale land deals*, p. 69.

<sup>97</sup> <https://eiti.org>

<sup>98</sup> <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/>

inequalities regarding land use in Africa.

***Corruption Risks and Mitigation Measures in Land Administration.* Wheatland, B. 2016.**

Transparency International Anti-Corruption Helpdesk Answer 2016:5

[https://www.transparency.org/files/content/corruptionqas/Corruption\\_risks\\_in\\_land\\_administration\\_2016.pdf](https://www.transparency.org/files/content/corruptionqas/Corruption_risks_in_land_administration_2016.pdf)

This text provides a summary of key corruption risks and potential mitigation measures in land administration. It points out areas of land administration vulnerable to corruption and describes different forms of land corruption, including petty corruption, patronage, rent-seeking, state capture and gender specific corruption. The author addresses the main drivers of land corruption, such as legal and institutional limitations, capacity challenges, lack of transparency and of effective oversight institutions, and limited public participation. In its final section, the author develops the following mitigation measures: land administration legislation, accountability, land management bodies, changes at the staff level, transparency, public consultation of local communities and indigenous peoples, equality of women's land rights, the use of technology, international tools and guidelines, and the role of donors.

***Tainted Lands. Corruption in Large-Scale Land Deals.* De Schutter, Olivier. International Corporate Accountability Roundtable, Global Witness. 2016.**

<http://www.ideaspaz.org/tools/download/74371>

This report presents the findings of the Tainted Lands project launched in 2015 by the International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR) and Global Witness with the objective of examining the risk of grand corruption and petty bribes in large-scale land deals. The main purpose of the report is to raise awareness about the effects that corruption in large-scale land deals has on human rights around the world. In its first part, the report assesses the phenomenon of large-scale land deals and examines structural obstacles faced by efforts to regulate those deals. The second part is devoted to corruption as a major obstacle to improving the protection of local communities and indigenous peoples whose livelihoods depend on land. In the third part, the report explores existing legislation and initiatives aimed at addressing corruption in land rights issues. The report finishes by providing recommendations to investors, financial institutions and governments to prevent the violation of human rights in the context of corruption and land.

***How Institutions Shape Land Deals: The Role of Corruption.* Bujko, M. et al. 2015.**

CESifo Working Paper 5178

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307873072\\_How\\_Institutions\\_Shape\\_Land\\_Deals\\_The\\_Role\\_of\\_Corruption](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307873072_How_Institutions_Shape_Land_Deals_The_Role_of_Corruption)

This working paper explores the connection between large-scale land acquisitions and corruption-friendly contexts caused by weak institutional frameworks. The authors argue that corrupt elites exploit poor institutional setups characterised by corruption to strike land deals. Using panel data for 156 countries from 2000 to 2011, they provide evidence that large-scale land deals occur more often in countries with higher levels of corruption. They find that improvements in corruption control mainly benefit (in terms of fewer land deals) countries with high levels of corruption in the first place; and it brings less benefit to countries with strong institutions. Based on these findings, the authors suggest that land deals can be reined in by institutional improvements that reduce corruption, particularly when institutions are poor.

***Land and Political Corruption in sub-Saharan Africa.* Owen, T., Duale, G. and Vanmulken, M.**

**LSE, Transparency International. 2015.**

<http://corruptionresearchnetwork.org/courses-trainings/land-and-corruption-in-africa>

This report examines the nature of political corruption in illegitimate land acquisition and allocation in three African countries: Kenya, Ghana and Zambia. The authors look at how the type and recognition of land tenure regimes, rules and processes in land administration, and accountability mechanisms, cause variation in how illegitimate land acquisition and allocation is manifested across the three countries. The analysis uses a case study approach based on available policy documents, academic literature and country specific research. The authors conclude on the necessary but insufficient character of having a strong legal base to protect communities and individuals from illegitimate land appropriations in contexts where legal manipulations occur, and they highlight the importance of accompanying the legal framework with strong mechanisms to hold authorities accountable.

***Corruption in the Land Sector.* Transparency International, FAO. 2011.**

Working Paper 4

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/am943e/am943e00.pdf>

This working paper addresses the connection between land, governance and corruption. It tests the relationships between petty and grand corruption in land, and between corruption in land deals and variables such as corruption perceptions in the public sector, income, human development, agricultural production and investment (the data analysis is further explained in an annex). In addition, the paper provides an overview of actors, risks and forms of land corruption. It illustrates administrative and political corruption with concrete examples. It also includes a section devoted to measures and responses with ideas on how to tackle corruption in relation to land governance improvement.

## Standards and guidelines

***Gender-Responsive Work on Land and Corruption. A Practical Guide.* Raab, M. Transparency International. 2017.**

[https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/gender\\_responsive\\_work\\_on\\_land\\_and\\_corruption\\_a\\_practical\\_guide](https://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/gender_responsive_work_on_land_and_corruption_a_practical_guide)

This guide is a product of Transparency International Women, Land and Corruption in Africa project implemented by Transparency International chapters in Ghana, Uganda and Zimbabwe between 2014 and 2016. The guide shows the differences in how land corruption is experienced by men and women, and highlights the importance of incorporate a gender-sensitive approach to the work on land and corruption. It is intended to serve researchers and activists who want to ensure that their work on land corruption responds equally to the needs and interests of both men and women. The guide provides practical and concrete content on how to do research on land and corruption with a gender perspective, how to plan and implement advocacy that works for women and men, and how to develop gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation practices.

***Corruption in Land Administration: Roles for Donors to Minimise the Problem.* Wren-Lewis, L. 2013.**

U4 Brief March 2013:1

<http://www.u4.no/publications/corruption-in-land-administration-roles-for-donors-to-minimise-the-problem/downloadasset/3005>

This document provides recommendations on how international donors should respond and what they can do regarding corruption in land administration. The author describes four roles: undertake analysis of the political economy of land, reduce the impact of international donors' own projects on land corruption, help increase transparency and exploit international connections.

***Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2012.***

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>

The aim of these voluntary guidelines is to improve governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests with the goal of achieving food security for all. They provide guidance and information on international accepted practices regarding the rights to use, manage and control land, fisheries and forests. First, the document addresses aspects of tenure of land, fisheries and forests regarding rights and responsibilities; policy, legal and organisational frameworks and delivery of services. In the later parts, it covers aspects such as the legal recognition of tenure rights of indigenous peoples and other customary tenure systems and informal tenure rights, as well as the allocation of tenure rights owned or controlled by the public sector; transfers and other changes to tenure rights and duties; administration of tenure; and responses to climate change and emergencies. Throughout its different parts, the document calls states and non-state actors to prevent corruption and lists several ways on how to do it.

***Guiding Principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments in Africa. African Union, African Development Bank, Economic Commission for Africa. 2014.***

[https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/guiding\\_principles\\_eng\\_rev\\_era\\_size.pdf](https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/guiding_principles_eng_rev_era_size.pdf)

These guidelines follow the Nairobi Action Plan adopted by member states of the African Union in 2010 with the purpose of developing appropriate African instruments to guide the design and implementation of responsible large-scale land investments. The structure of the guidelines is divided according to a fundamental set of principles to consider when it comes to large-scale land investments: respect the human rights of the communities, contribute to national plans for sustainable agricultural development, good governance, the benefit and rights of women, minimising risks and maximising benefits. Within good governance, the principle of "effective, transparent and well-resourced mechanisms for prevention and settlement of land disputes and corruption" is included. The document includes chapters on the collaboration and mutual accountability of stakeholders and the operationalisation of the guiding principles.

***Good Governance in Land Administration. Principles and Good Practices. Zakout, W. et al. World Bank, FAO. (no date).***

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-ak375e.pdf>

This document draws attention to the negative impact of weak governance in land administration and points out the benefits of good governance in the protection of property rights and the development of land markets. The report provides principles of good governance and good practices in land administration from all around the world. Those good practices are concrete examples in the areas of service delivery standards, counter offices, client surveys, web-based land information systems, transparency, and people's participation. It finishes with key questions useful in any country to evaluate governance in land administration.



***Towards Improved Land Governance. Palmer, D., Friccka, S. and Wehrmann, B. FAO, United Nations Human Settlements Programme. 2009.***

Land Tenure Working Paper 11

<http://www.fao.org/3/a-ak999e.pdf>

This working paper addresses land governance from a governance and political economy perspective. There are three characteristics that distinguish this work from other similar ones on the topic. One, the authors propose a holistic approach to concepts and issues of land administration more appropriate to face the challenges and complexities that characterise land administration. Two, they give the same importance to the process as to the content of land sector reforms, pointing to the importance of paying attention to the implementation of the reform. Three, they think of land sector reform in terms of the context. The challenges and successes in land reform implementation are illustrated with examples of country experience. The authors suggest that a more flexible and long-term strategy, in which the distinction between reform design and reform implementation is blurred, may be more appropriate for reforms in the land sector.

## Practical insights: handbooks and toolkits

### **The Global Land Tool Network.**

<http://www.gltln.net/index.php/about-us/about-gltln>

GLTN is an alliance of global, regional and national partners working on poverty alleviation through land reform, improved land management and security of tenure through the elaboration of pro-poor and gender-sensitive land tools. The tools are designed to put principles, policies and legislation into effect. In order to benefit the poor and the disadvantaged, the tools are affordable, equitable and gender responsive. They take into account governance aspects such as how decisions are made and implemented, and conflict resolution. They respond to local situations and needs, are able to be implemented into the future, capable of being used at a large-scale, and they take the needs of the poor into account, giving them voice. There are 18 tools under development and they are embedded in five general themes: access to land and tenure security, land administration and information, land-based financing, land management and planning, land policy and legislation. The tools are not conceived to be taken in isolation but in a holistic way that responds to the identification of eight cross cutting issues: capacity development, conflict/disaster, environment, gender, grassroots, Islamic aspects, land governance and youth.

### ***A Toolkit. Systematic Property Registration: Risks and Remedies. World Bank, Government of Japan. 2016.***

<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/870621470748209208/FINAL-WEB-Title-Registration-Toolkit.pdf>

This toolkit identifies problems that can be encountered during a systematic registration of property programme, and lists actions that could be taken at the design, preparation and implementation stages. The document is divided into four parts: design, implementation, owners and legal aspects. The problems it addresses include: lack of documents establishing rights; taxes; dispute resolution mechanisms; informal buildings; elite capture; subsequent registration system; communication and engagement; effective public display; staff instructions and training; failure to capture all rights and holders; state land; women, minorities and children; constitutional concerns and the legislative basis; and legal aspects of boundaries. In the implementation phase, the authors make a specific mention

of corruption and undue influence.

***Tools to Support Transparency in Land Administration. UN Habitat, ITC, GLTN. 2013.***

<https://mirror.unhabitat.org/pmss/getElectronicVersion.aspx?nr=3491&alt=1>

This training toolkit is, together with a trainers' guide, part of a training package on tools to support transparency in land administration. The aim is to provide practical information and tools to support and strengthen transparency in land administration. The toolkit has been elaborated from reviews of publications on land governance and administration, corruption and transparency, land information, ethics and integrity, and institutional land reforms. It also draws from the implementation of training courses on transparency and land administration in sub-Saharan Africa, South and South-East Asia. The toolkit includes: background information on the impacts of corruption and the assessment and benefits of transparency in the land sector, flexible tools to support transparency and accountability, with real life case studies. The document also includes specific tools to improve access to information, improve transparency through public participation, and for promoting ethics and integrity.

***The Possible Shape of a Land Transparency Initiative. Lessons from Other Transparency Initiatives. Locke, A. and Henley, G. ODI. 2013.***

<https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8599.pdf>

This work addresses transparency in land acquisition for agricultural investment. It analyses and draws lessons from five voluntary transparency initiatives: the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative, the International Aid Transparency Initiative, the Open Contracting Partnership, and the Making the Forest Sector Transparent. These initiatives share the belief that placing information in the public domain in a consolidated and standardised format set by an international institution should reduce opportunities for corruption. The authors identify three main issues that these initiatives try to solve: lack of information in the public domain, domination of policies by elites that do not represent land users, and lack of consolidated and standardised data. According to these initiatives, there are three pathways for effective change: providing information, strengthening civil society engagement, and building and effective institutional framework to implement the initiative. The authors finish with five lessons and recommendations drawn from the analysis of those five initiatives: transparency is a means to an end; indicators of success and monitoring systems should be established from the beginning; consultation and participation are key; data should be high quality, available and accessible; a clear institutional structure should be established with distinct roles and mandates at international and national levels.

***Handling Land. Innovative Tools for Land Governance and Secure Tenure. UN Habitat, IIRR, GLTN. 2012.***

[https://www.gltn.net/downloads/GLTN%20Documents/handling\\_land\\_eng\\_2012\\_.pdf](https://www.gltn.net/downloads/GLTN%20Documents/handling_land_eng_2012_.pdf)

This report expands on GLTN practical tools to solve problems in land administration and management. The tools range from a simple checklist for conducting a survey to the use of software or more sophisticated protocols and guidelines. There is an emphasis on the practicality of the tools. The report accentuates aspects like gender-responsiveness, affordability, grassroots and youth engagement. The text addresses the challenges that urbanisation poses to the availability of land, and of globalisation to small-scale farmers. There is a section devoted to dealing with corruption in land administration.

***Tool for Designing, Monitoring and Evaluating Land Administration Programs in Latin America.* World Bank, FAO.**

<http://www.fao.org/in-action/herramienta-administracion-tierras/home/en/>

This tool was created after the implementation of more than 20 years of land administration programmes (LAP), and it responds to two needs: the need to exchange knowledge and working methods regarding monitoring and evaluation systems of the programmes; and the need for the FAO and the World Bank to standardise the experience of LAP and seek a common framework of evaluation. The aim is to provide methodological and instrumental frameworks for assessment of the impact of LAPs on land administration institutions and their users, on territorial entities like indigenous communities, and on households. It also contains financial and economic information on LAPs. The online platform has several resources: conceptual frameworks, systematisation of experiences, methodological guides, and technical and factsheets.

## Assessment tools and databases

***Handbook on Land Corruption Risk Mapping. How to Identify and Tackle Corruption Risks in Land Governance.* Tump, R. et al. SLE, Humboldt Universität. 2017.**

[https://www.sle-berlin.de/files/sle/auslandsprojekte/2016/Handbook\\_SLE\\_270-2\\_online.pdf](https://www.sle-berlin.de/files/sle/auslandsprojekte/2016/Handbook_SLE_270-2_online.pdf)

This handbook provides a land corruption risk mapping instrument that enables users to identify, analyse and assess potential corruption risks in land governance processes and to develop counter-measures to address those risks. The instrument is designed to be helpful to a wide range of users, the cost of its application is fairly low, and it is designed in a user-friendly way. The main part of the handbook is devoted to three phases – research, workshop and strategy development – and it outlines the different steps in each phase. It also includes conceptual definitions and a summary of the initial testing of the instrument in four scenarios in Kenya: urban land conflicts, role of indigenous communities in land registration, land rights for women and large-scale land acquisitions. The annex has templates of tables and charts necessary for the application of the instrument. The instrument can be used for different purposes such as: systematically getting information on corruption risks, promoting sustainable reforms in land governance, identifying and promoting best practices, and monitoring, evaluating and assessing projects to reduce incidences of corruption.

***Land Governance Assessment Framework. Identifying and Monitoring Good Practice in the Land Sector.* Deininger, K., Selod, H. and Burns, A. World Bank. 2012.**

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/2376/657430PUB0EPI1065724B09780821387580.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

The Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF), developed by the World Bank, is designed to assess the status of land governance at the country or sub-national level against global good practices using a common framework. The areas covered by the LGAF are: legal and institutional framework; land use planning, management and taxation; management of public land; public provision of land information; and dispute resolution and conflict management. The document includes a chapter devoted to the methodology for applying the LGAF, conceived to be a six to nine months participatory and technical process of assessment involving all relevant stakeholder groups. There is an implementation manual available too at:

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLGA/Resources/LGAF\\_Manual\\_Oct\\_2013.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLGA/Resources/LGAF_Manual_Oct_2013.pdf). The final chapter has evidence from five pilot cases of application of the LGAF in Peru, Kyrgyz Republic, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Indonesia.

## **Global Open Data Index**

<https://index.okfn.org/>

This Global Open Data Index (GODI) is an independent assessment of open government data publications from a civic perspective. The Open Knowledge Network runs the initiative. The index allows stakeholders to track governments' progress in open data release, and allows governments to get feedback from data users. GODI only covers the publication of data, leaving aside other dimensions regarding open data, such as context, use or impact. It is possible to compare countries, but the data is not comparable over time since the methodology has changed, especially between 2015 and 2106. The index gathers information on 15 indicators, one of which is land ownership. Here, GODI looks at maps of land displaying parcels' boundaries and land registry with information on registered parcels of land. The index assesses open land tenure data, describing the rules and processes of land property. The following characteristics are expected to be included in cadastral and registry information submitted: parcel boundaries, parcel ID, property value (price paid for transaction or tax value), and tenure type.

## **Selected actors and stakeholders**

### **Open Data Charter**

<https://opendatacharter.net>

The Open Data Charter was founded in 2015 as a collaboration between governments and experts working on open data and on how governments should be publishing information. More than 70 governments and organisations joined the movement. On the web page, they offer resources like the *Open Up Guide: Using Open Data to Combat Corruption* in response to the understanding that open data by itself does not reduce corruption. This guide provides governments that want to use open data to combat corruption an overview on the topic, cases and methodologies, 30 datasets, and data standards on how the information should be published. Another resource available on the website is *Connecting the Dots: Building the Case for Open Data to Fight Corruption*, which is an assessment of the implementation of the G20 open data anti-corruption principles by five G20 countries. The purpose of this report is to make the case for using open data to strengthen anti-corruption efforts.

### **Cadasta Foundation**

<http://cadasta.org/>

Cadasta Foundation develops digital tools and technology to help partners document, analyse, store and share critical land and resource rights information. The purpose is to support the documentation of land and resource rights to build stronger and more sustainable communities by democratising access to innovative tools even in the most remote locations. They offer free technological and analytical support to collect and interpret data with a variety of tools, from mobile applications to the use of satellites or drone imagery. Once the data is collected, it is stored in the platform with the privacy settings chosen by the partner, who remains at all times the owner of the data. The platform also offers the opportunity to share the data when, how and to whom the partners decide. Since its foundation in 2014, Cadasta's digital tools have been used by organisations in Indonesia, Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania, Haiti, Nepal, Myanmar, Kosovo and the United States.

### **Land Portal Info**

<http://landportal.info/>

Land Portal Info is an online source of information, data and knowledge exchange on land governance issues. Its purpose is to ensure responsible land governance and secure land rights for the world's poor and vulnerable. The portal is divided into three sections: the Land Library gives access to over 35,000 open access publications, laws, regulations and multimedia items from over 1,000 different sources; Land Book provides country and thematic portfolios and pages with over 480 land-related indicators from 25 different datasets, as well as detailed country and thematic narratives, and access to relevant publications, news, blogs, organisations and events; Land Debate provides a platform for online discussions on land governance issues. There is information available in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese.

### **Global Witness**

<https://www.globalwitness.org/en/>

The international NGO Global Witness works to expose the links between demand for natural resources, corruption, armed conflict and environmental destruction. Their two main activities are to undertake investigations to expose the abuses taking place in those links, and to campaign for change. Regarding land, they have published reports and campaign on land deals, in particular on the pressures that the high demand for food, fuel and other commodities is having on a land sector that remains largely unregulated. Other related campaigns are on forests, oil, gas and mining, conflict minerals, and corruption and money laundering.

### **LEGEND**

<https://landportal.info/pt/partners/legend>

LEGEND: Enhancing Governance for Economic Development is a global programme, promoted by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), to mobilise knowledge and the capacity to improve land governance as an essential and inclusive basis for economic development, and to strengthen land and property rights at scale. They aim to improve the quality and impact of land investments while safeguarding rights and opportunities for poor people in rural and urban areas, especially women, by building policy coherence globally and stimulating innovation across civil society and the private sector at national and local levels. Among their outputs are analytical papers and briefing papers on land corruption in developing countries and legacy land issues in agribusiness investments.

### **International Land Coalition**

<http://www.landcoalition.org/>

The International Land Coalition is a global alliance of civil society and intergovernmental organisations working together to put people at the centre of land governance. To realise this goal, they have defined 10 commitments: secure tenure rights, strong small-scale farming systems, diverse tenure systems, equal land rights for women, secure territorial rights for indigenous peoples, locally managed ecosystems, inclusive decision making, transparent and accessible information, effective actions against land grabbing and protected land rights defenders. Their actions are oriented to fulfil three purposes: to connect members with each other and with other relevant actors beyond the coalition; to mobilise and strengthen members by providing them with knowledge, capacity and opportunities; and to influence decision makers, governments and corporate actors.

### **PRIndex, The Global Property Rights Index**

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

PRIndex is an indicator of citizens' perception of the security of property rights. The initial phase took place in 10 countries (Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Greece, Nigeria, Peru and Tanzania) during 2016 and 2017. After the development phase, the index is intended to be globalised through the Gallup World Poll. The purpose of the dataset is to monitor and encourage good governance of property rights. PRIndex is the first initiative in collecting perceptions of security of tenure at the global level, which is information required to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries.

### **FAO E-learning Course**

<http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/VG9>

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has several e-learning courses on issues related to land, food security and agriculture. The courses concerning land cover themes such as responsible governance of tenure and geospatial data for land monitoring. The course "Addressing land corruption in the tenure of land, fisheries and forests" provides an overview of corrupt practices in the tenure sector; analyses the drivers and impact of corruption on the livelihoods and food security of poor and vulnerable people; and introduces options and tools that key players (states, organisations and citizens) can use to identify, assess and tackle corruption.

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