

LARRI NEWSLETTER

The Land Rights Research Initiative



Newsletter Theme

In LARRI Newsletter No. 6 we pay particular attention to some recent events, reports and other activities which have as a common denominator a focus on forests and other off-farm community land resources. The latter constitute vital resources for the food security and livelihoods of the rural poor in many developing countries. While often used in integrated ways by local communities under communal customary arrangements these lands are however often formally classified as public property by the state. Unclear ownership rights therefore make these resources and associated livelihoods particularly vulnerable in the current context of increased competition for land, something which needs to be better recognized and articulated in discussions on land rights and responsible land investments. Moreover, securing local communities' rights to their forest resources is also important from a climate change mitigation perspective.

LARRI News & Events

LARRI-RRI Seminar on Forest and Community Land Rights

On the 10th of September LARRI hosted in collaboration with Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) a full-day seminar at the University of Gothenburg with the title "Securing Forest and Community Land Rights: Challenges, trends and ways forward". The event, which was a co-arrangement with SIANI-Focali and Sida, gathered more than 80 participants from academia, Swedish government authorities, the private sector, and civil society. International land rights experts from RRI made presentations which were followed-up by panel discussions and questions and comments from the audience.



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All the presentations as well as the panel discussions were recorded on video and can be downloaded via LARRIs website. You can also find the detailed agenda and a summary report from the seminar on our website.

[Find LARRIs website here...](#)



What is RRI?

Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is a global coalition of 14 Partners and over 150 international, regional and community organizations working on advancing forest land tenure. Together, we work closely with governments and progressive private enterprises in Asia, Africa, and Latin America to encourage reforms in forest land tenure and policy. RRI believes that when all key stakeholders with an interest in land and resources come together, greater cooperation, understanding, and respect lead to solid progress on the recognition of rights of the rural people who live on contested lands. RRI leverages the strategic collaboration of its Partners and

Collaborators around the world by working together on research, advocacy, and convening strategic actors to catalyze change on the ground. It is coordinated by the Rights and Resources Group, a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC.

Sida has been an important supporter and donor of RRI since its inception in 2006, most recently becoming the very first sponsor of the RRI-initiated International Land and Forest Tenure Facility—an independent institution intended to substantially advance land and forest tenure reform processes in the world. More details on the Facility are provided under Related News below.

Related Events

World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty

The World Bank announces that the 16th Annual World Bank Conference on Land and Poverty will be held from March 23 – 27, 2015 at the World Bank Headquarters in Washington D.C. Participants include leaders and professionals from across governments, civil society, academia, the private sector and partners to interact and discuss innovative approaches to improving land governance. Last year's conference attracted more than 1,000 participants from 101 countries; 60 percent of participants were from developing countries, and about a fourth representing government officials and another fourth from international organizations.

The theme for 2015 is *Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity*. The topic highlights that while land tenure affects the distribution of assets between men and women, generations, and social groups, patterns of land use will have far-reaching implications for welfare and other socio-economic outcomes at household, community, or landscape level.

[Read more about the conference here...](#)

Related News

New Funding Mechanism for Land and Forest Tenure

A new mechanism, called "The International Land and Forest Tenure Facility" is being organized on the initiative of RRI with partners with the objective of providing financial and technical support for selected tenure reform projects as well as serving as an international platform for strategic coordination and exchange of experiences.

What distinguishes this initiative from other already existing international organizations in the sector is the novel manner in which it seeks to involve representatives from Indigenous People's and civil society organizations as well as from public and private sector institutions in its operations.

The facility is for the moment in an inception phase and plans to begin regular implementation in July 2015. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida, has recently decided to support the Facility contributing with more than SEK 100 million for a 5-year period.



Photo courtesy FAOALC
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[Read more about the facility here...](#)

FAO Working Paper

A new working paper, prepared by Jesper Karlsson, describes challenges, opportunities and determinants of foreign investment in developing country agriculture for sustainable development. The paper also discusses options and good practices promoting the generation of mutual benefits and the prevention and mitigation of risks.

Jesper Karlsson is an engaged member of the LARRI network working for FAO in Rome.

[Read the working paper here \(13 pages\)...](#)

Principles for Responsible Investments in Agriculture and Food Systems

After almost two years of consultations and negotiations, the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems were endorsed on the 15th of October by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Regarding rights to land and other natural resources these principles refer to the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Governance of Tenure that were endorsed by the CFS in 2012 after a lengthy consultation process worldwide.

[Read the principle here \(16 pages\)...](#)



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Can Community Forest Rights be a Strategy to Mitigate Climate Change?

A new report released by the World Resource Institute and RRI in August 2014 argues that strengthening land and resource rights of Indigenous people is not only a question of equity and rights - it can also be a successful strategy in combating climate change. The report is analyzing a large body of scientific work linking community

forest rights with healthier forests and lower carbon dioxide emissions from deforestation and forest

degradation. This attempt to gather existing research enables this report to have global reach. It includes field studies of 80 forest areas in ten countries including Nepal, Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Niger etc. The report concludes that in these cases, a positive forest outcome is reached when Indigenous People enjoy legal recognition over their land with positive government action on the strengthening of these rights.

[Read the report in here \(56 pages\)...](#)

Global Call to Action

A group of international non-governmental organizations (RRI, The International Land Coalition – ILC, Oxfam, IUCN and Helvetas) realizing the need for scaling up efforts to secure community and resource rights, recently launched a "Global Call to Action on Community Land and Resources" aiming, among other things, at the United Nation's Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. This initiative in turn is an offshoot from an International Conference on Scaling up Strategies to Secure Community Land and Resource Rights that took place in 2013 at Interlaken in Switzerland.

[For more information read here...](#)

ILC Global Research Project on Land Rights and Family Farming

In the context of a wider commitment to promote the 2014 International year of Family Farming, the International Land Coalition (ILC) has coordinated seven country level research activities that focus on the intersection between land rights and family farming, and the role played by farmers and small-scale food producers in people-centred land governance. The reports from the project can be accessed via ILCs website.

[Find ILCs website here...](#)

This newsletter has been compiled by:

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Engage in LARRI

If you have any news, such as publications and upcoming events that you would like to share through the LARRI newsletter, please send your suggestion to the LARRI coordinator. In addition, we welcome suggestions of collaborations, seminars etc. Finally, if you are planning or currently conducting a study or research about related issues, feel free to share this information with LARRI. Perhaps you want others to know about your work, or need assistance during the process or to share your findings. LARRI aims to be a platform where collaborations between different individuals, sectors and disciplines can emerge.

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LARRI - The Land Rights Research Initiative

is a platform for discussion and collaboration among researchers, students and others interested in land rights issues in the context of global change. LARRI is hosted by GCGD - The Gothenburg Centre of Globalization and Development at the University of Gothenburg: www.gcgd.gu.se

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