



3rd Regional Conference of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa

From October 12-14, 2021 – Lomé, Togo

Final Declaration

We, the participants of the 3rd Regional Conference of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa, co-organized by the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) and the International Land Coalition (ILC) Africa, and co-hosted by the Togolese Ministry of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform (MUHRF) and the civil society organization for Rural Self-Promotion for Sustainable Human Development (ADHD) in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Representing land institutions and similar organizations carrying out land reforms in countries such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, and Uganda:

Noting the progress made since the Ghana workshop in 2017 to date;

Taking into account the diversity of our local contexts, policies, regulatory frameworks, and communities;

Recognizing that securing community land rights is crucial for poverty reduction, sustainable development, achieving climate goals, and promoting social peace;

Recalling our determination to contribute to securing community lands in line with the African Union's decision on land governance and management, including the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa (2009), which endorses the implementation of the Framework and Guiding Principles on Land in Africa; the resolution of the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and the Environment which recommends that states allocate at least 30 percent of land to women; and the endorsement by the STC of the Guiding

Principles for Large-Scale Land Investments in Africa for, among other things, protecting community land rights;

Reaffirming the commitment of the African Union Member States, under the umbrella of the platform, to recognize the human, social, economic, and cultural rights of local communities, women, and Indigenous Peoples, including Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Maputo Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women, and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, as well as sub-regional instruments of ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, ECCAS and COMESA;

Recognizing that these African instruments also take into account commitments, initiatives, and instruments at the international level, including the 2012 FAO Voluntary Guidelines, the 2018 UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other Rural Workers, the International Bill of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Framework of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change;

Noting the significant progress in the recognition of community land rights by some countries through various instruments using recognized and accepted practices;

Noting the start of the implementation on securing community land rights through pilot projects;

Noting that challenges still need to be addressed, including mobilization of financial resources, capacity building, and harmonization of cross-sectoral reforms while taking into account gender and social inclusion aspects and vulnerability.

We recommend:

- 1. Strengthening the means of sharing information and experience between countries** in the region for the promotion of community land rights;
- 2. Supporting institutions in the establishment and operationalization of Land Information Systems (LIS)** that contribute to securing rights for communities;
- 3. Maintaining efforts to identify, recognize, and protect the land rights of communities**, including the most vulnerable (youth, women, nomads, people with disabilities, and others);
- 4. Strengthening land tenure security for women, youth, and vulnerable groups** to enable their effective participation in processes and efforts to achieve and sustain SDGs;
- 5. Advocating with governments**, technical and financial partners, and key stakeholders, including communities and their representatives, to achieve success in ongoing land reform processes and supporting them in the implementation of land laws and policies;

6. **Taking responsibility and ensuring funding for the development and implementation of participatory land policies and laws** that take into account community land rights by states;
7. **Prioritizing the strengthening of human, financial, and technical capacities** of institutions in charge of land tenure by states;
8. **Advocating for effective decentralization of land management;**
9. **Revitalizing the African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights (ALIN) through monitoring, learning, and peer accountability;**
10. **Encouraging coordination and collaboration** between land governance actors through multi-stakeholder platforms.

Written in Lomé, the 14th of October 2021

The Participants