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RÉPUBLIQUE TOGOLAISE

# *Third Regional Meeting of the African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights*

Lomé, Togo | 12–14 October 2021



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## Workshop Summary

African governments and regional institutions are increasingly recognizing Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land tenure security as an engine of social peace and sustainable economic development.

To this aim, in July 2009, the Commission of the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, and the African Development Bank developed a framework for and directives on land tenure policies to connect land tenure reforms with the aim of protecting tenure rights and improving the productivity and life conditions of the majority of people on the continent. Since adopting these agreements, various laws and proposals have emerged. These laws and proposals are key opportunities for governments and the private sector to change the reality of the reform process regarding land tenure in Africa.

Progress made since 2009 would not have been possible without the participation of ministers, high-level government officials, donors, and representatives from Africa's national land institutions. However, despite best efforts, there continues to exist few opportunities for debates or peer-to-peer exchanges for national land institutions. To fill this gap, in 2017 in Accra, Ghana, Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) and the Africa Land Policy Center (ALPC), in collaboration with the Ghana government, convened the first-ever regional meeting of national land institutions regarding community land tenure in Africa with a commitment to meet again every two years. In May 2019, in Antananarivo, Madagascar, RRI similarly co-organized the second regional meeting with the International Land Coalition (ILC) and the Malgache government.

The Third Regional Conference of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa took place at the Sarakawa Hotel in Lomé, Togo from October 12–14, 2021. RRI and ILC co-organized the meeting in collaboration with the Togo Republic's Ministry of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform (MUHRF) with support from the non-governmental organizations Rural Self-Promotion for Sustainable Human Development (ADHD) and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS).

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## Regional Meeting Goals

The overall objective of the meeting was to create a space for government land institutions and agencies in charge of land management, as well as their partners and other key actors, to exchange and share information on the different national contexts and good practices for responsible land governance that recognize customary management practices.

The meeting had four interrelated objectives:

1. To develop strategies to broaden Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' land rights;

2. To reflect not only on the roles and functions of national land institutions, but also on obstacles and opportunities to implement reforms in the decade 2020–2030;
3. To measure progress toward the commitments made by African governments in the development and implementation of land policies in their respective countries, as well as the impacts of the implementation of action plans proposed in Antananarivo in 2019; and
4. To develop a new roadmap among the members of the African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights (ALIN) to promote their agenda at regional and national levels.

## **Participants**

In addition to general administration representatives, local authorities (mayors), the judiciary, professional association representatives, traditional chiefs, members from the private sector, and civil society from the five economic regions of Togo, the multi-day convening was attended by experts from 12 African nations, including Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. Regional and sub-regional representatives from various international organizations were also in attendance, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Six meetings held across four days were preceded by an opening ceremony.

## **Opening Ceremony**

Chaired by Dr. Koffi Tsolenyanou, Togo's Minister of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform, the opening ceremony began with four speeches preceded by a presentation by Patrick Kipalu, RRI's Africa Program Director, who introduced the purpose and historical context of the workshop. Mr. Tagba Ataféyinam Tchelim, Acting Secretary General of the Greater Lomé Autonomous District, also warmly welcomed participants on behalf of the host district.

Audace Kubwimana, ILC's Africa Regional Coordinator, stressed that community land tenure rights are one of the most important issues on ILC's agenda. ILC's global coalition works through multi-stakeholder platforms at national, regional, and global levels to promote land security for Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and women. He emphasized that land should be at the center of any socio-economic development process and that land tenure security for Indigenous and local communities is important for the protection of the environment and the fight against climate change.

Dr. Solange Bandiaky-Badji, Coordinator of RRI and President of Rights and Resources Group (the coordinating mechanism of RRI), introduced RRI as a global coalition of more than 150 organizations dedicated to advancing the collective land and forest rights of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, local communities, and the women within these groups. RRI's approach is to promote collaboration between unlikely allies in the development and implementation of land laws and policies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

In her speech, Dr. Bandiaky-Badji cited Togo as a success story of land reforms in Africa. Articles 6

and 28 in the country's legislation recognizes customary and community rights, and particularly women's land rights, for participatory and inclusive land governance. Renewing her thanks to the Togolese government for hosting this regional workshop despite the health challenges due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, she stressed that the partnership between RRI and Togo is only in its infancy and is already materializing real change on the ground. In 2021, RRI's Strategic Response Mechanism (SRM) funded a project, implemented by ADHD, to secure the customary tenure rights of the Bato community in Togo, estimated at more than 4,000 hectares, leading to the strengthening of local land governance and community livelihoods.

Taking the floor to deliver the official opening speech of the workshop, the Minister of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform conveyed warm and fraternal greetings to the President of the Republic, His Excellency Mr. Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, and Togo's Prime Minister and Head of Government, Mr. Victoire Tomegah Dogbe, who both invested in the convening of this workshop. In Togo, securing rural land rights is one of the government's priorities for 2020–2025. He noted that Togo's selection to host the third edition of the African Land Institutions Network workshop is a reason for exaltation and recognition of the constant efforts undertaken to secure the land rights of its citizens.

The Togolese government, under the impetus of the Head of State, remains committed to pursuing reforms in the land sector. Both short- and medium-term projects include: i) elaboration and adoption of the law on the *agro-foncière* reform; ii) facilitation of land access; iii) securing of rural land rights by the establishment of pilot sites in each region of the country; iv) securing land for agricultural productivity within the framework of the Threshold Program of the Millennium Challenge; and v) launching a national multi-purpose digital land registry. These projects reaffirm that securing community rights is currently the anchor of multiple cross-sectoral issues in Togo and elsewhere in Africa, and the Togolese government is counting on the contributions of participants so that controversies related to land in general, and community land rights in particular, are no longer difficult to identify. On this note of hope, Dr. Koffi Tsolenyanou officially declared the Third Regional Conference of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa has begun.





*From left to right: Patrick Kipalu, RRI's Africa Program Director; Dr. Solange Bandiaky-Badji, RRI Coordinator; Dr. Koffi Tsolenyanou, Togo's Minister of Urban Settlements, Habitat and Land Reform*

### **Progress of the Working Sessions**

The three-day workshop was divided into six working sessions, including an introductory session. Each working session was further broken down into topic meeting sequences followed by knowledge exchanges, round tables, and working groups.

#### *Working Session 1: Introduction Meeting*

The introduction meeting was broken down into three topics: i) national multi-actor and civil society platforms in Togo and their contribution to the recognition and securing of community land rights; ii) community land rights as the key to peace, security, sustainable development, and the fight against climate change; and iii) the results of the implementation of national engagement strategies on land

governance in 13 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

a) National Multi-actor and Civil Society Platforms in Togo and their Contribution to the Recognition and Securing of Community Land Rights

The first working session was presented by Mr. Frédéric Djinadja, Executive Director of ADHD. In his presentation, he shared information about Togo's National Engagement Strategy (NES) platform, the Synergy of Civil Society Organizations on Land Tenure (SOFT) platform, the role of the Land Advisory Council, and the important contributions NES and SOFT have made toward recognizing and securing community land rights in the country.

Mr. Djinadja shared that the NES platform, which was created in 2012 with technical and financial assistance by ILC, brings together almost 60 actors from all economic regions involved in land tenure in Togo, including representatives from civil society, ministries, traditional chiefs, farmer organizations, the media, and the professional association of extractive industries of Togo. The platform's vision is *a just, equitable, poverty-free Togo in which land rights are guaranteed* with a mission of working together to place human beings at the heart of land governance. The objective of the platform is to establish participatory land governance that serves human well-being on a national scale, one that meets the needs of the people living on the land and protects their rights at the same time.

Similarly, the SOFT platform was formed to bring the positions of civil society organizations on land tenure governance into the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Land Tenure Reform (CIRFD), which is still in the process of being created, as well as the Land Consultative Council. SOFT is registered and recognized by the Togolese state as a CSO network.

b) Community Land Rights as the Key to Peace, Security, Sustainable Development, and the Fight Against Climate Change

Dr. Bandiaky-Badji's presentation highlighted the fact that at the global level, more than 50 percent of the land is used and/or customarily claimed by Indigenous Peoples or local communities. However, less than 20 percent of this land is recognized as belonging to these groups. Similarly, just 8 percent of public land is intended for use by Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Dr. Bandiaky-Badji also mentioned that 14 countries globally have introduced at least one legal framework (community land tenure system) recognizing Indigenous Peoples and local communities as forest owners or designated rights holders since 2002 (Angola, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Guyana, India, Kenya, Lao PDR, Liberia, Mongolia, Thailand, Togo, Vietnam, and Zambia). Since 2013, an additional five countries have passed new national legal frameworks recognizing Indigenous Peoples and local communities as forest owners (Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, and Zambia).

It should be emphasized that RRI's mission is to encourage greater awareness and scale up action to secure the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, especially the women within these groups, to forestland and natural resources. It advocates for the recognition

of at least 50 percent of all forests in low- and middle-income countries as belonging to or designated for use by Indigenous Peoples and local communities by 2030. Achieving this goal requires new international instruments to strengthen commitment and action on community land rights.

c) Results of the Implementation of National Engagement Strategies on Land Governance in 13 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

The third and last presentation of the introductory session was given by Mr. Kubwimana. He specified that ILC is a global coalition of civil society organizations that work together to put people at the center of land governance. As of 2021, it had 252 members worldwide, including 76 organizations based in sub-Saharan Africa. Its vision is to achieve *a just, equitable, and inclusive world in which land rights are secured and poverty is eradicated* with a mission to work for people-centered land governance. Its theory of change is based on three concepts, namely to foster learning, mobilize people, and influence where change is needed.

At ILC, two main mechanisms are used to achieve the organization's objectives: multi-stakeholder platforms and NES, of which there are 13 national engagement strategies in Africa, including one in Togo. The results of selected national engagement strategies involving community land rights in Kenya, Liberia, and Madagascar were also presented.

*Working Session 2: The 2018 Togo Land and Property Code and the Securing of Community Land Rights in Togo*

Working Session 2 focused on Togo and included two topics and one round table, including: i) law n°2018-005 on the land and property code of Togo for innovations, progress, and perspectives of implementation; ii) the Togolese land and property code and women's access to land; and iii) a roundtable on land conflict resolution and the preservation of community land rights in Togo.

a) Law n°2018-005 on the Land and Property Code of Togo: Innovations, Progress, and Perspectives of Implementation

Mr. Koffi Kouma Dakey, Director General of Urban Settlements, and Housing at the Ministry of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform, shared the context that prevailed during the adoption of the law marked by: i) the numerous institutions set up to supervise land management; ii) the existence of setbacks in spite of this institutional framework due to the dispersion of information in the different institutions involved and the lack of synergy in their actions; iii) lack of knowledge of the texts and procedures for governing land tenure by most of the general population; iv) lack of discipline in the ranks of the professional bodies involved; v) obsolescence of certain provisions of the national land tenure system; and vi) a significant increase in the population.

In order to overcome these shortcomings, it was necessary to draft and adopt a new law that was liberal, easy to understand, and in line with custom as a source of law and instrument of justice. The law created institutions in charge of land reform and management and advocates for the systematic



identification of all land properties and the holders of existing rights (i.e., the establishment of a computerized multi-purpose digital cadaster) and takes into account the recording of customary land rights.

A land tenure office has been operational for two years and three application texts for the law have been adopted. For next steps, the law on *agro-foncière* reform will be drafted and (hopefully) adopted.

b) The Togolese Land and Property Code and Women's Access to Land

The Togolese 2018 Land and Property Code has enshrined women's rights to land through gender equity in land matters in Articles 8.8, 13.2, 14, and 628. In accordance with these Articles, Mr. Maurice Kossivi Gblodzro, Coordinator of Togo's National Office, shared that the Konrad Adenauer Foundation has carried out actions for the promotion of women's land rights by implementing the project "One World Without Hunger: Women's Land Rights in West Africa" in 2016–2022. The main results achieved, among many others, are:

- The signing by 20 traditional leaders of a Community Charter for the promotion of women's land rights in the project areas;
- The creation of 12 local committees for the monitoring of women's land issues (CLSPFF) in 12 communes;
- The training of 420 women from agricultural cooperatives and groups on their land rights, opportunities in the agricultural sector, the management of cooperatives, agricultural value chains, the management of developed areas, and the search for financing and markets;
- Capacity building of 15 prefects, 12 mayors, and 30 councilors and municipal agents on women's land rights;
- Training of 230 leaders and religious authorities on women's land rights;
- Training of 120 traditional leaders on women's land rights; and
- Development and dissemination of an information, sensitization, and orientation manual on the issue of women's access to land in Togo.

These results have enabled more women in the targeted communities to assert their rights regarding land access and use. Now, in the planned agricultural development zones in Togo, 30 percent of land is reserved for women. Regarding women's access to land, participants at the workshop recalled that the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), FAO, and ILC have all proposed future tools to expand these achievements.

c) A Roundtable on Land Conflict Resolution and the Preservation of Community Land Rights in Togo

The roundtable was composed of Togolese actors working for the protection and preservation of community land rights:

- Mr. Amogou Atiodes Sita, Mayor of Tchamba Commune 2
- Mr. Edorh Gbeboumey, Magistrate, Director of Legislation at the Ministry of Justice
- Dr. Okai Adadie Mensah, Notary
- Mr. Togbui Kpegba Tegli III, Chief of Danyi Canton

Discussions at this roundtable focused on understanding how community land rights are connected to the traditional land tenure of a community or family line, not to be alienated, bought, or sold. However, sometimes these lands are registered in the name of a community representative, and this is where the seeds of land conflicts are often sown.

From the discussions, it emerged that even if land title acts as a tangible proof of ownership, community lands can be secured by other acts such as the land booklet provided for in the land and property code of Togo or the Tribal Certificate in Liberia.

*Working Session 3: Developing Strategies for Recognition, Expansion, and Strengthening of Community Tenure Rights*

Working Session 3 aimed to propose strategies to promote the recognition of community land tenure rights and included topics on: i) challenges and opportunities for innovation and identification of community land rights in Africa since the 2017 Accra conference; and ii) the roles, functions, obstacles, and opportunities of national land institutions and the promotion of community land rights in the implementation of land reforms by 2030.

a) Challenges and Opportunities for Innovation and Identification of Community Land Rights in Africa Since the 2017 Accra Conference

During this presentation, Mr. Kipalu shared that at RRI, one of the coalition's Secretariat's primary functions is to carry out global land tenure analyses to monitor the status of Indigenous Peoples' and local communities' forest and land tenure rights. Statistics show that only 13 percent of the land in 19 countries in sub-Saharan Africa is owned by or designated for Indigenous Peoples and local communities, compared to 18 percent globally. These statistics show that there is an even greater gap in forest ownership for Indigenous Peoples and local communities on the continent when compared to Asia or Latin America.

In terms of the implementation of reforms to secure community land rights in Africa, the following observations have been made:

- Some progressive reforms have been initiated in Benin, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, and Togo, but there is a lack of investment for implementing effective long-term reforms;
- Lack of capacity and law implementation is widespread, where although approximately 35 new laws have been passed in the last 50 years in Africa, more than 50 percent of these laws are not implemented; and
- There is an absence or scarcity of opportunities and frameworks for collaborative

knowledge sharing.

Some of the challenges of land tenure reforms include:

- The struggle to implement reforms;
- The non-harmonization of reform processes;
- Individual titling as a threat to the security of community tenure rights;
- Slow decentralization, inaction by the state, lack of preparation by the communes, and lack of technical skills; and
- Slow progress in passing statutory laws to secure women's land rights.

Mr. Kipalu also noted that the majority of the countries assessed in Sub-Saharan Africa do not recognize women's inheritance rights in consensual unions, which is a significant barrier to their tenure security. Globally, African countries tend to grant Indigenous and rural women the lowest inheritance rights at the community level. Countries should engage in legal reforms in relation to international agreements to improve the living conditions of women across the continent.

b) The Roles, Functions, Obstacles, and Opportunities of National Land Institutions for the Promotion of Community Land Rights and the Implementation of Land Reforms by 2030

Dr. Alain Christian Essimi Biloa, land governance specialist at ILC, shared some of the key findings from his paper on national land institutions. The paper and his presentation defined a national land institution as any structure, organization, or state agency that has the mandate and skills to think, develop, support, and implement in an inclusive manner public policies on land governance. It can take several forms depending on the context, but some of the main challenges he identified include:

- Lack of technical capacity and financial resources;
- Differences in perspectives among government agencies;
- Changes in political vision; and
- Lack of regular peer-to-peer learning exchanges.

Some of the opportunities that exist for national land institutions include the commitment by countries to introduce more reforms. More reforms mean more opportunities to secure community land rights. The African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights offers a unique opportunity to promote regional exchange and mutual support for community-based reforms in Africa.

*Working Session 4: Three Roundtable Panel Discussions on the Roles, Functions, Obstacles, and Opportunities of National Land Institutions in the Implementation of Reforms in the Decade 2020–2030*

Working Session 4 allowed each participating country's delegation to present the role of their national land institution, its achievements in promoting community land rights, any obstacles encountered, as well as opportunities and challenges. The presentations were executed in a

roundtable format, divided into three separate panels:

- Panel 1: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Senegal
- Panel 2: Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, and Tanzania
- Panel 3: Ghana, Mali, South Africa, and Uganda

Mr. Kipalu moderated the working session. The following elements have been synthesized from the presentations and discussions:

- In most of the participating countries, national land institutions are scattered with divergent agendas without synergy of actions between them;
- Land policies and legislation that promote community land rights do exist but there is a need to accelerate actions for the protection and preservation of community land rights;
- Civil society organizations are playing an outsized role in the recognition of community land rights;
- The majority of land in the participating countries is under customary and rural tenure regimes;
- National land institutions continue to have weak technical capacity and are unable to steer national land policies;
- There are insufficient financial resources for the implementation of reforms, policies, and legislation;
- The general population holding customary and rural lands have little knowledge of current land policies and legislation, which does not favor the securing of community land rights; and
- The persistence of land grabbing and land conflicts.

The discussions coming out of this working session also gave the country delegations the opportunity to review the implementation of the action plans outlined during the second edition of the African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights in Antananarivo in 2019.

*Working Session 5: Experiences on the Implementation of Securing Community Land Rights, the Status of Land Legislation in Participating Countries, Understanding the Level of Implementation of Action Plans Developed in Antananarivo in 2019, and Sharing Lessons Learned*

The purpose of this session was to give an account of the commitments made by the country delegates in Antananarivo in 2019 but also to identify obstacles, challenges, and lessons learned. The session was moderated by Dr. Essimi Biloa and was divided into two panels:

- Panel 1: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mali
- Panel 2: Liberia, Malawi, Senegal, and Tanzania

All in all, we note that advances vary from one country to another. Community land rights are recognized in all countries but to varying degrees. In most countries, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the implementation of actions. The fundamental challenge remains the

implementation of concrete actions for the recognition of community land rights beyond policies and legislation.

To address this challenge, Mr. Raymond Samndong, a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist at the Tenure Facility, shared his organization's experiences supporting the implementation of community land rights in Africa. The Tenure Facility is a funding mechanism for Indigenous Peoples through the mobilization of donors. It aims to secure Indigenous Peoples' land and forest rights by supporting rural land mapping. The Tenure Facility's ambition is to secure 500 Mha of land over five years globally. Currently, four projects are being implemented in Africa in Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mali, and Mozambique.

It should be noted that the Tenure Facility operates in countries where land policies and legislation recognize community land rights. As such, it was indicated that Togo, the host country of the workshop, is indeed eligible. Moreover, the Tenure Facility does not support governments but rather local communities. It ensures that governments promote dialogue between different actors for the recognition of community land rights.

*Working Session 6: General Discussion on Recommendations and Commitments for Securing Community Land Tenure in Land Laws, Policies, and Regulations at Regional, Sub-regional, and National Levels Based on Shared Experiences*

Dr. Samuel Nguiffo, Secretary General of the Center for Environment and Development (CED), and Mr. Blaise Yoda, Burkina Faso's Director of Rural Land Tenure at the Ministry of Agriculture both facilitated the working session. Discussions focused primarily on identifying the beginnings of the recommendations that should contribute to the adoption of the final declaration of Lomé (attached in Annex 1).

Summary of the main points arising from the discussions:

- Progress is acknowledged in the recognition of community land rights since the first regional conference of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa in Accra in 2017;
- Increased commitment by various African states through the passage of national land policies and legislation;
- Commitment of technical and financial partners must be aligned with national priorities;
- The need to accelerate securing community land in the face of extreme pressure on rural land through the implementation of pilot projects;
- Divergence in progress due to the complexity of customs in certain countries;
- Increased creation of multi-actor platforms at the national level to promote the recognition of community land rights;
- Increased "opening up" of states to civil society actors working in the field of land tenure, which should be capitalized to strengthen future collaboration;
- The need for more peer-to-peer knowledge sharing;



- The need to support states in the implementation of land information systems;
- The need to increase financial resources for the development and implementation of national land policies and legislation;
- Low interest of local communities in identifying and/or registering and/or licensing their land, possibly due to lack of information or slow decentralization process in certain countries; and
- The need to strengthen the human and technical capacity of national land institutions.

The session was followed by group work where each country delegation developed an action plan for the next two years (2021–2023). Furthermore, the participants unanimously and by acclamation adopted a final communiqué in which they reaffirmed the commitment of national land institutions to promote the securing of community land rights and formulated recommendations to achieve this objective.



*From left to right: Angeliqe Mbelu, Rainforest Norway, DRC Office; Albert Katako, Civic Response, Ghana; Blaise Yoda, Director of Rural Lands, Burkina Faso's Ministry of Agriculture*

## **Closing of the Workshop**

The closing of the workshop took place in two phases:

First, participants devoted time to reading and adopting the final communiqué. The reading was done by Dr. Bobobate Blaodekissi, Cabinet Attaché of the Minister of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform.

The second phase was marked by three focused interventions:

Mr. Kubwimana expressed his satisfaction with the rich exchanges that took place during the workshop that show the importance given to community land rights. ILC is committed to accompanying the implementation of the land and property code in Togo with the support of the country's multi-actor platform. The regional coordinator of ILC Africa closed his speech by inviting participants to the land forum to be held online from October 26 to 28, 2021, of which Togo's Minister of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform is the guest of honor. He thanked the Togolese government and all of the actors who contributed to the success of the workshop.

Dr. Bandiaky-Badji shared that the objectives of the workshop were achieved as a result of the fruitful exchanges that generated opportunities for promoting community land rights across the continent. The Coordinator of RRI indicated that the workshop offered a unique opportunity for RRI and the Tenure Facility to collaborate with the government of Togo, which is eligible for the implementation of a project to contribute to the large-scale securing of community land in the country. For this, discussions will be held with the government and the country's multi-stakeholder platform. Furthermore, she specified that an evaluation of the three editions of the workshop held between 2017–2021 will be conducted to be taken into consideration when RRI develops its next five-year strategic plan, to be launched in early 2023. She thanked all actors who contributed to the success of the workshop.

In his closing speech, Dr. Komlan Edoh, Director of Cabinet representing the Minister of Urban

Settlements, Housing and Land Reform, expressed the Minister's gratitude to the participants for the extreme richness of the exchanges and discussions. He underlined that the work has considerably advanced reflections on the actions needed to secure community land rights and promote sustainable land governance. He also added that Togo will spare no effort for the appropriation of the final declaration resulting from the workshop. Honoring the fact that Togo hosted this workshop, he noted that it is a mark of confidence and recognition for the actions led by the highest authorities of the country.

Reiterating his gratitude to all, he declared the third regional workshop of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa officially closed.

Lomé, Togo on October 14, 2021, and signed by the workshop participants



## **Annex 1: Final Agreement in Lomé**

We,

Participants in the third regional workshop of National Land Institutions on Securing Community Land Rights in Africa, co-organized by the Ministry of Urban Settlements, Housing and Land Reform of the Republic of Togo, the Rights and Resources Initiative, and the International Land Coalition, in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung and Rural Self-Help for Sustainable Human Development,

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

Note the following observations made since the Ghana workshop in 2017:

- 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 land rights in accordance with African Union decisions 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 of the use by the STC of the Guiding Principles for Large-Scale Land Investments in Africa to, among other things, protect 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 the sub-regional instruments of ECOWAS, SADC, IGAD, ECCAS, and COMESA;
- Recognizing also 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 instruments but also through recognized and accepted practices;
- Noting the beginning of the implementation of community land rights security through pilot projects in select locations; and
  - Noting that challenges still need to be addressed, including: mobilization of financial resources, capacity building, and the harmonization of cross-sectoral reforms that take into account gender and social inclusion aspects and vulnerability.

The workshop participants make the following recommendations:

- Strengthen the means of sharing information and experiences between countries for the promotion of community land rights;
- Support institutions in the establishment and operationalization of land information systems that contribute to securing rights for communities;
- Maintain efforts to identify, recognize, and protect the land rights of communities, including the most vulnerable (youth, women, nomads, people with disabilities, and others);
- Strengthen land tenure security for women, youth, and vulnerable groups to enable their effective participation in processes and efforts to achieve and sustain the SDGs;
- Advocate with states and key actors, including communities and their representatives and technical and financial partners, to bring to a successful conclusion of ongoing land reform processes, and accompany them in the implementation of land laws and policies;
- Assume and ensure the financing of the elaboration and implementation of participatory land policies and laws while taking into account community land rights by the states;
- Prioritize the strengthening of human, financial, and technical capacities of institutions in charge of land tenure by the states;
- Advocate for an effective decentralization of land management;
- Energize the African Land Institutions Network for Community Rights (ALIN) through monitoring, learning, and peer accountability; and
- Encourage coordination and collaboration among land governance actors through multi-stakeholder platforms.

Lomé, Togo on October 14, 2021, and signed by the workshop participants



## About the Rights and Resources Initiative

The Rights and Resources Initiative is a global Coalition of 21 Partners and more than 150 rightsholders organizations and their allies dedicated to advancing the forestland and resource rights of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant Peoples, local communities, and the women within these communities. Members capitalize on each other's strengths, expertise, and geographic reach to achieve solutions more effectively and efficiently. RRI leverages the power of its global Coalition to amplify the voices of local peoples and proactively engage governments, multilateral institutions, and private sector actors to adopt institutional and market reforms that support the realization of their rights and self-determined development. By advancing a strategic understanding of the global threats and opportunities resulting from insecure land and resource rights, RRI develops and promotes rights- based approaches to business and development and catalyzes effective solutions to scale rural tenure reform and enhance sustainable resource governance.

RRI is coordinated by the Rights and Resources Group, a non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit [www.rightsandresources.org](http://www.rightsandresources.org).

### Partners



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