



# GUIDELINES FOR IMPACT EVALUATION OF LAND TENURE AND GOVERNANCE INTERVENTIONS

*DEVELOPED THROUGH A JOINT INITIATIVE OF GLTN AND IFAD*

*FOR A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE ENJOYS SECURE LAND RIGHTS*

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## PREFACE

The Guidelines for Impact Evaluation of Land Tenure and Governance Interventions (“the guidelines”) has several purposes: to serve as a tool for both researchers and land sector experts in the design and conducting of land impact evaluations, and ultimately to broaden the evidence of what measures work to improve land tenure and governance, which do not, and why. The overall objective is to inform and strengthen the design and implementation of future land tenure and governance interventions to best support lasting tenure security and achieve related impacts on poverty, food security, gender equality, environmental sustainability, peace and stability.

It is important to note that these guidelines focus on impact evaluation of land tenure and governance interventions (“land impact evaluation”). The guidelines do not cover general statistical principles as there is an existing wide body of literature covering these basics.<sup>1</sup> Rather the guidelines endeavour to summarize in one document the existing evidence and gaps, propose an overall theory of change based on existing evidence and theories, highlight evaluation lessons learned and suggest best practices for effectively designing and implementing land impact evaluations moving forward. The guidelines focus particularly on experimental and quasi-experimental designs.

The guidelines are the result of a partnership by IFAD and GLTN, and in consultation with the Global Donor Working Group on Land (GDWGL), to improve the tools to evaluate land tenure and governance interventions.

The guidelines are based on a desk review of land evidence and in-depth consultations with evaluation experts, insights from stakeholders from GLTN and GDWGL, researchers who have conducted land impact evaluations and the author’s experience overseeing the land monitoring and evaluation portfolio of the United States’ Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC).

GLTN and IFAD sincerely thank Jennifer Witriol Lisher for successfully facilitating the development of this guideline. We appreciate the contribution of members of the land research community, the GDWGL and GLTN partners who graciously provided their wealth of knowledge and insights, including Cloudburst, Habitat for Humanity, International Land Coalition (ILC), Land Alliance, Landesa, the MCC, Michigan State University (MSU), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Oxfam, United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank. Not to forget members of the Technical Review Committee, including Thea Hillhorst of the World Bank, Everlyne Nairesiae of the Global Land Indicator Initiative (GLII), Jolyne Sanjak of Landesa, Oumar Sylla of GLTN and the IFAD team: Harold Liversage, Elisa Mandelli, Andrea Wyers and Daniel Higgins for their support and guidance throughout the development of the land impact evaluation guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Annex A provides a list of resource manuals on impact evaluation from the World Bank for those interested in gaining a better understanding of general evaluation principles.

## ACRONYMS



|            |  |
|------------|--|
| FAO        | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  |
| GDWGL      | Global Donor Working Group on Land   |
| GLII       | Global Land Indicators Initiative  |
| GLTN       | Global Land Tool Network:  |
| IFAD       | International Fund for Agricultural Development  |
| LSMS       | Living standards measurement study   |
| MCC        | Millennium Challenge Corporation   |
| RCT        | Randomized controlled trial  |
| UN-Habitat | United Nations Human Settlements Programme   |
| USAID      | United States Agency for International Development   |
| VGGTs      | Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security |



## KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

**Land:** As used in this paper, the term “land” refers to land and all related property and natural resources associated with that land (e.g. water, forests, and minerals).

**Land governance:** In Land Tenure Working Paper 11,<sup>2</sup> UN-Habitat and FAO define land governance as that which “concerns the rules, processes and structure through which decisions are made about access to land and its use, the manner in which the decisions are implemented and enforced, the way that competing interests in land are managed”. This includes governance of the use, allocation of, access to, control, ownership, management and transfer of land, including related property (buildings and structures) and natural resources found on the land. Land governance systems include state organizations that deal with land, such as ministries of land, land registries and cadastral services, and courts. Informal land governance systems include customary (informal) institutions that develop land-use rules, allocate land and resolve disputes related to land. Effective land governance includes legislation recognizing a variety of rights of existing land resource users, clear land resource management and administration responsibilities, streamlined operations and systems, sustainable technology use, clearly understood and accessible conflict-resolution mechanisms, up-to-date land-use plans, an accessible and accurate supply of land and property information, and legislative and regulatory provisions enabling land markets.

**Land tenure:** The FAO defines land tenure as “the relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land (for convenience, “land” is used here to include other natural resources such as water and trees). Land tenure is an institution, i.e., rules invented by societies to regulate behaviour. Rules of tenure define how property rights to land are to be allocated within societies. They define how access is granted to rights to use, control, and transfer land, as well as associated responsibilities and restraints. In simple terms, land tenure systems determine who can use what resources for how long, and under what conditions.” Land tenure rights can include private, group, communal, open access or state rights.

**Perception of tenure security:** The level of certainty a person has that their land rights will be recognized and protected, especially against the encroachment or loss of use rights over the land. Perception of tenure security can be high even though the land is not recognized in the statutory system, such as when there is an effective land governance system in place under customary law. Similarly, the perception of tenure security can be low even if a parcel has a freehold title or leasehold, or another form of written documentation, due to a weak land governance system or perhaps intrahousehold dynamics that lead to a de facto weak perception of tenure by some members of the household.

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<sup>2</sup> Palmer, David, Friccka, Szilard and Wehrmann, Babette (2009). Land Tenure Working Paper 11: Towards improved land governance. FAO and UN-Habitat. Available at: [www.fao.org/3/a=ak999e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a=ak999e.pdf)

**Impact evaluation:** A study assessing expected project impacts through the use of a counterfactual, or without project scenario, which allows the evaluation to attribute outcomes to the intervention. An impact evaluation compares the group who received the intervention (treatment group) with those who did not receive the intervention (control/comparison group). The difference between these two groups can be attributed to the intervention. Impact evaluations can be either experimental via a randomized controlled trial (RCT) or quasi-experimental where the observable characteristics of the intervention treatment groups are then compared with those of a similar comparison area that is established.

**Outputs:** The direct result of an intervention. For example, the output of teaching children the alphabet is the number of children trained.

**Outcomes:** Refers in these guidelines to a result or group of results linked to an output. Outcomes can be realized in the shorter-term, medium-term or longer-term. For example, a shorter-term outcome from teaching children to read could be increased literacy. A related medium-term outcome could be higher levels of reading and knowledge of the population. A related longer-term outcome could be higher salaried employment.



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