

## Supplemental Resource

# Leveraging Land Investment Committees

## How to Use this Resource<sup>1</sup>

Phase 1 of the Model Guidebook for Communities discusses how a community can assess its existing community governance structures and land governance rules to evaluate the strengths of current systems and safeguards in place to support responsible investment.

In Phase 1, Task 1, Step 3 the community may have decided based on that governance assessment that it should establish a new body to be in charge of helping the community prepare for prospective investment and engage with companies when the community receives an investment proposal. The community will also be developing new or revising existing rules on prospective investment as part of this process; these rules are called *community by-laws for responsible investment*.

The guidebook discusses how external experts can help the community through the process of strengthening community systems and safeguards for land investments. External experts may be useful to

### Potential Roles of External Experts in Establishing a Land Investment Committee:

- Work with community leaders and members to spread news about the public community meetings to elect/select Committee members.
- Support the participation of all major stakeholder groups in the community. Support the development and implementation of vulnerable groups' empowerment or participation strategy.
- Contribute to community decisions on the suggested roles and responsibilities of the Committee.
- Encourage the community to select member criteria and representation options that support diverse and fair representation.
- Serve as a facilitator during community meetings by contributing to structuring the meeting and supporting community brainstorming and decision-making.
- Serve as an outside observer during the selection/election process to support a fair and transparent process. If the process appears to have been co-opted by community elites, the expert can support community members to request a new election.

supporting the community to set up the Land Investment Committee by bringing comparative experiences and helping ensure all stakeholders are included in the process, by bringing in an outside, unbiased perspective. See the side bar for more ideas on how an external expert can help.

## What is the Land Investment Committee?

The Land Investment Committee's purpose is to:

- Prepare the community for developing its by-laws for responsible investment. This may include working with local CSOs or legal experts to deliver legal literacy training to community members.
- Inform community members about the by-law process and get many people to participate in meetings.
- Hold meetings with community members to get input on the by-laws.
- Draft the community by-laws.
- Obtain the input of outside legal experts, government officials and customary leaders on the draft by-laws.
- Hold an adoption ceremony to vote on the final by-laws.
- Support the community to elect permanent Committee members.

## How to Select the Land Investment Committee

**Step 1: Determine Duties of the Committee.** The community should hold a public community meeting to confirm and write down the intended roles and responsibilities of the Committee. The community can use the findings of its governance assessment and the suggested roles described above as a starting point.

**Step 2: Determine Committee Member Requirements.** In the same public community meeting, community members should brainstorm a list of criteria for Committee members. Based on the list generated, the community should decide upon a list of what types of people should be on the Committee.

**Step 3. Determine Representation.** The community should also decide how many members will be on the Committee and how different groups within the community will be represented in the meeting. This is a critical decision and should be made carefully. Make sure that all major stakeholder groups in the community are represented – any

group that is left out or not adequately included might undermine the process. The process could also result in the establishment of a body and rules that hurt some community members if it is not representative. The community should consider representatives from:

- Different spatial or sub-units within the larger community (such as wards or zones).
- Different demographics, such as women, youth, people who practice specific livelihoods, minority ethnic groups, religious groups, etc.

#### **Step 4: Determine Selection Process.**

How a community chooses to select or elect its permanent Committee members will depend on how it has defined the criteria for committee representation in Step 3. Once a representative structure (by ward and/or by characteristics like age/gender/religion/ethnic group/profession, etc.) is agreed upon, each defined “group” may need to gather as a small group to decide who would best represent them. The groups should be given time to discuss outside of the meeting. The meeting should close with a decision to hold a follow-up community meeting to complete the election or selection process. Community members should be encouraged to invite friends, family and neighbors to attend the follow-up election/selection meeting.

#### **Sample Committee Criteria:**

- Experience shows committees typically work best with 10 to 15 members.
- Committees should include a quota to ensure women are represented. One third is a good starting point.
- Committees should be demographically representative of the community and its different sub-units.
- Members should be respected and trusted by community members. They should have integrity and be considered honest and transparent. They should be role models who can demonstrate the path forward by example.
- Members should be hardworking, determined and reliable.
- Members should have effective leadership abilities. This includes good mediation and conflict-resolution skills.
- Members should be good communicators and have a basic level of literacy.
- Members should not be afraid to have tough conversations and address challenging issues.
- Members should be able to work well with others, especially other community leadership and government officials. A good leader knows how to share leadership.
- Members should know how to listen and foster collaboration and consensus-building.

**Step 5: Complete Election or Selection.** In a separate public community meeting, the community should complete the chosen election or selection process. In this meeting, the roles, responsibilities and criteria established in the first meeting should be read aloud again, any remaining questions answered, and then the process carried out.

---

<sup>1</sup> The roles and duties described here are adapted with permission from Namati's experience working with interim coordinating committees as part of community land governance protection efforts. See Namati, *Community Land Protection Facilitators Guide* 85-96 (2017).