

Advice on the Development of a Protocol for Fair Compensation



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Advisory Report by the NCEA

Title Advice on the Development of a Protocol for Fair Compensation

Request by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In the framework of the DGIS - NCEA cooperation, DGIS asked the NCEA for a so-called 'independent sustainability advice' on the possible development of a compensation protocol (from now on 'the protocol') in the case of legitimate land expropriation.

This request is made against the background of the LANDdialogue¹, which is hosted by DGIS. The LANDdialogue is a multi-stakeholder platform aiming to improve land governance in Dutch interventions. One of the key issues highlighted by stakeholders is the provision of adequate compensation to land owners and users negatively affected by projects and interventions. Therefore, in 2016 the Organising Committee of the LANDdialogue commissioned a study to investigate the need to develop a protocol on fair compensation in cases of legitimate land tenure changes, with a focus on expropriation. This study was carried out by a consortium under the management of True Price² and in collaboration with the University of Groningen (RUG)³. The result was a report called 'Towards a protocol on fair compensation of legitimate land tenure changes. Input document for a participatory process' in 2016 (from now on the 'input document'). By contextualizing the issues and identifying key challenges, the input document aimed at helping in selecting the specific goal and scope for the envisaged protocol.

Building on this input document, in 2018, True Price and RUG submitted a proposal to LANDdialogue to develop a protocol. Aim of this protocol is to provide an internationally accepted and expert validated guidance on fair compensation for legitimate land expropriation, mainly in the context of the global south. Primary focus is to address challenges related to development projects in developing countries where rural and peri–urban land is expropriated by the government for a public purpose.

This NCEA advice is meant to serve as input to the LANDdialogue in their decision whether and in what form to (financially) support the development of this protocol.

1.2 Request to the NCEA

DGIS requested the NCEA to:

- Added value: assess the need for, and the added value of, developing a protocol for fair compensation of legitimate land expropriation, vis à vis existing international standards.
- Stakeholder needs: review to which extent the project proposal and the suggested outline for the protocol addresses relevant issues and stakeholders' needs.
- *Process and next steps*: advise on the process and further steps that need to be taken, in case there is enough ground to develop the protocol.

¹ Before: Dutch Land Governance Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue.

² True Price is a social enterprise with a mission to contribute to an economy that creates value for all.

³ Particularly the group 'Rethinking Expropriation Law' hosted by RUG. A platform of law scholars from around the world.

1.3 Approach, limitations and scope

Approach: to follow up DGIS' request, the NCEA formed a working group of a technical secretary and two experts with relevant background and knowledge on the topic under review. The working group carried out a desk study through analysing the proposal and the input document ⁴ and several leading international standards and guidelines. One of the experts and the technical secretary also attended a meeting that was held on 23 October 2018 between representatives of the LANDdialogue and the proposal writers. During this meeting, the NCEA shared and discussed the preliminary findings of its advice. The draft advice was also discussed with representatives from LANDdialogue on 31 January 2019.

<u>Limitations</u>: it should be noted that the NCEA did not review international standards and guidelines extensively. The question what type of protocol would add value to existing international standards and guidance is a question that requires a much larger effort than the mandate of the NCEA allows for. The same is true for the question to which extent the project proposal and the suggested outline for the protocol addresses relevant issues and stakeholders' needs. These needs and what is considered as being of added value are context specific, and should be determined through stakeholder consultations.

<u>Scope:</u> for the above reasons this NCEA advice focuses mainly on the degree to which the proposal substantiates that a new protocol will add value to international standards and address stakeholders' needs.

The report is structured as follows. In chapter 2 the conclusions are presented, first by giving a summary of main conclusions (section 2.1), then an elaboration in following sections. In chapter 3 recommendations are made on next steps.

2. Conclusions and argumentation

2.1 Conclusions

Added value

The NCEA recognises that the rapid development and industrialisation of the global south can come with problems related to fairness in land expropriation and compensation, which can lead to human rights abuses. The NCEA is of the opinion that in general there appear to be sufficient international standards and guidelines that can help manage land expropriation and compensation processes.

At the same time, it is also of the opinion that:

- gaps could exist in their definition or operationalisation;
- even though standards and guidelines exist, stakeholders may not be sufficiently aware of their existence;

⁴ True Price and Rethinking Expropriation Law (2018) Towards a protocol on fair compensation for legitimate changes of land tenure. Project outline submitted to the LANDdialogue, including 2 annexes. True Price and Rethinking Expropriation Law (2016) Towards a protocol on fair compensation in cases of legitimate land tenure changes. Input document for a participatory process.

- the political will to enforce or the capacity to implement these standards may be lacking;
- the discrepancy between national legal frameworks on expropriation and international standards could be leading to challenges on the implementation or alignment with the latter.

By understanding and addressing these lacunas and problems, a protocol for fair compensation could potentially add value. However, as currently presented, the proposed protocol does not provide sufficient argumentation that such added value would be created. For this, the proposal should more clearly specify:

- the main lacunas in the formulation or operationalisation of international standards;
- the key problems in implementing existing standards.

Stakeholder needs

The same is true for the extent to which the proposed protocol addresses stakeholders' needs. In principle, a new protocol has the potential to do so, but the proposal does not yet provide sufficient evidence how the proposed protocol would address these needs. For this, the following would be needed:

- a more in depth analysis of stakeholders' needs, including indigenous groups and community representatives from the global south, showing genuine stakeholder demand for a new protocol;
- engagement of all relevant stakeholders, in particular international and financial institutions that have their own standards. This is crucial for the acceptance of a new protocol. From the proposal it cannot be concluded whether all important stakeholders have been consulted, including representatives of local communities, national authorities from the global south, international CSOs and institutions and private sector representatives across sectors;
- a more specific prioritization and selection (and a justification why this selection is made)
 of the gaps in international standards and stakeholder issues that will be tackled by a
 new protocol;
- provision of a rationale justifying that the protocol is the right instrument to address stakeholders needs.

Proposed process

The proposal outlines a process to develop the proposed protocol. The NCEA concludes that at this stage it is too early to judge the quality and adequacy of this process, as this will depend on the results of a *scoping* stage that will clarify demand, rationale, focus and content of the protocol as discussed above.

Such scoping is planned for in the proposal during the preparation phase. The intended process for this scoping, however, is not yet clearly delineated, nor sufficiently concrete in terms of which stakeholders to include and their level of engagement. In particular, it is not clear whether and how local community representatives, civil society organizations, practitioners and national government's will be engaged.

2.2 Argumentation

2.2.1 Added value of the protocol vis à vis international standards

Various international standards, guidelines and references deal with fair compensation as defined in the proposal. As examples, several prominent ones are listed in Annex 1. Also the input document provides a good overview of standards and guidance, analysing the degree to which these deal with 'due process', 'public purpose' and 'fair compensation'. The NCEA notes that the analysis (input document section H.1) could be expanded by a) additional standards from international financial institutions⁵ and b) a specification of the indicators used to assess genuine public purpose, due process and fair compensation.

The NCEA is of the opinion that the existing laws, standards and references provide sufficient guidance to facilitate fair compensation in case of expropriation, primarily through requirements for amongst others:

- the right to collective property and the recognition of all tenure rights, including unregistered lands, users without formal rights and customary claims;
- avoidance principle; demonstrating that all efforts have been made to avoid or to minimize displacement of people;
- adequate, timely and sufficient engagement and consultation with project affected people, including indigenous groups and users without formal rights;
- · addressing the needs of vulnerable groups;
- identifying people eligible for and providing just compensation and livelihood restora-
- implementing effective grievance mechanisms and guarantee access to remedy;

The listed documents (in input document section H.1) are intentionally kept principle based and general because there is no one size fits all solution to determine fair compensation. When applied by committed and competent agencies, these standards and guidelines make a positive difference in outcomes of expropriation and compensation. Therefore, developing a new protocol, as outlined in the proposal, that 'addresses the whole continuum of land rights and aims to provide users with universal guidance' would seem to be a repetition of what already exists.

Nevertheless, a *more focused* protocol could have added value. Particularly if it would focus on the lacunas in international standards or their application such as a) defining specific elements in fair compensation; b) guiding stakeholders in applying these standards or; c) constraints stakeholders face in implementing standards. The input document outlines some gaps and problems and recommends as next step that 'a decision should be taken about the extent to which the protocol must give guidance around its prerequisites of purpose and process of land tenure changes. In particular, the question must be answered to which degree the protocol should provide new guidance compared to what already exists'. The NCEA notes that the proposal does not answer this question. Also, it does not clarify in what ways the protocol shall complement existing standards and guidance. A quick rough analysis by the NCEA shows some areas (See Table 1) where a protocol perhaps could play a complementary role, even though this overview is not exhaustive or complete.

⁵ E.g. African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, European Investment Bank, New Development Bank and Inter-American Development Bank.

The input document identifies that there is no internationally accepted definition of what constitutes public purpose. It is also acknowledged that this is a contested issue and it is a challenge to subjectively *define* what constitutes genuine public purpose. Given the complexity, sensitivity and the context specificity of the topic, it is questionable whether a universal protocol would be the right instrument to this end. Even if the protocol would come up with a definition of public purpose, the question remains how much leverage it could have at national levels, where there are disagreements on this point.

Table 1 - Examples of gaps that a protocol could address:

- Difficulties that practitioners face in *valuing* unregistered land tenure rights and need for valuation guidelines.
- Difficulties in *determining* compensation when land is held communally or recognizing eligibility to compensation of people who only have user rights to land or other natural resources.
- Various standards refer to 'market value' to determine compensation (for instance IFC PS 5 guidance note 5). However, the lack of active land markets in some countries, the potential variety of land types and land right use claimants renders the calculation of market value and full replacement costs often difficult. Determining compensation is further complicated by cases where there are non-market value of tenure rights on lands, fisheries and forests. Dealing with non-market value losses such as cultural, social and spiritual values may be required in international standards and national laws, but they are seldom implemented.
- Challenges in ensuring that budget cycles of public sector projects are adapted to make compensation money readily available for prior and prompt payment of affected people.
- Even though standards and guidance exist with good intentions, shortcomings can be observed in their *implementation*. Practitioners particularly face problems in dealing with addressing impacts on communal and collective lands and communities, in dealing with indigenous peoples and effectively restoring livelihoods.
- One factor that often hampers the (adequate) application of standards and guidelines is *national expropriation laws and regulations* which can sometimes be inadequate to deal with actual challenges. Shortcomings and discrepancy between national laws and international standards and human rights is particularly seen in relation to:
 - o Providing a clear definition and conditions to determine public purpose for compulsory land acquisition. This hampers people to challenge and seek legal redress when public purpose is doubted. National authorities might need guidance in organizing a process at their own level, to come up with a broadly shared definition and conditions for public purpose.
 - o Identifying rights of informal settlers, squatters and users of the land and resources holding informal rights;, such as women, and providing adequate compensation for such rights.
 - Recognition of communal / collective land rights, dealing with traditional communities and indigenous peoples.
 - o Compensation for loss of (access to) communal and collective lands and other resources.
 - o Identification of impacts on livelihoods and support for livelihood restoration.
 - o Special consideration and support to vulnerable groups.
 - o Sufficient and adequate engagement of affected community stakeholders.
 - o Loss of access to communal and collective lands.
- Important to compensation are the process, the expertise of valuers and opportunities to negotiate and to come to an agreement with affected parties. The limited political will and *capacity of stakeholders* are often considered as key constraints. The current practice seen regularly is that compensation rates are determined without (adequate) involvement of affected stakeholders, with limited awareness among stakeholders about their rights, without sufficient expertise of valuers and without grievance mechanisms in place.

2.2.2 Addressing stakeholders' needs

The intended *users* of the protocol are *actors involved in expropriations and negotiation of fair compensation arrangements and delivery of compensation: policy makers and legislators at various levels, the private sector (investors and private companies) and donors.* The NCEA has the following observations:

- The proposal does not give a clear justification why these actors were selected, and why
 others, such as local community representatives and civil society organizations, were left
 out.
- There is no analysis of what the selected target users need and how that relates to a lack of guidance. Such analysis should typically to be done through direct consultations with the people concerned.
- The list of consulted stakeholders is limited in terms of number and scope as compared to the targeted users of the protocol. Important stakeholders seem not to be having consulted such as:
 - o representatives from the global south, for example governments, CSO's, (land) valuers, practitioners guiding land acquisition procedures and projects, communities, international CSO's, international (finance) institutions such as the World Bank and the FAO.
- It is therefore not clear to which extent a new protocol would meet the needs of the targeted users. The limited stakeholder consultation undertaken by the proposal writers also contradicts the intention to develop an internationally accepted guidance. It is not clear how institutions that have their own standards perceive the problems and whether they will get on board. Engaging these institutions as early as possible and getting their support is necessary to prevent that the protocol is considered as a duplication of what already exists.
- The selected group of target users for the protocol is broad, with each user playing a different role in expropriation and compensation procedures. These stakeholders probably will have different views and needs, which do not necessarily coincide and which at times even may contradict. The question is then how one protocol will be able to address these varying needs.

2.2.3 Proposed process

As stated under 2.1, the NCEA concludes that in order to be able to design an appropriate process for the development of a protocol, it is first important to organize a scoping process that will provide a comprehensive overview of challenges related to expropriation and compensation, clarify demand, rationale, focus (scope) and content of such protocol. The outcomes of the scoping phase will then determine need and – if need would exist – subsequent process and contents of the protocol. This is illustrated with some examples in Table 2.

Table 2 – Fictive examples to illustrate how the results of the scoping phase could lead to differences in the type of instrument and the process of developing a suitable instrument.

Example 1. In the scoping phase, stakeholders decide that the inadequate valuation and compensation of losses of communal lands and user rights for common natural resources deserves priority attention. They decide that manuals should be developed to valuate and compensate for communal lands, user rights on lands, fisheries and forests. The manuals are meant to support those responsible for expropriation and compensation, to valuate (monetary and nonmonetary values) of losses, determine adequate compensation for such losses and to effectively engage affected stakeholders in this valuation. Before developing these manuals, first an analysis will be needed to understand problems related to valuation and compensation of communal lands and user rights of lands and other resources. In the process of developing the manuals, engagement of community representatives and land valuers would be key. Due to the focus on valuation, the concepts of public purpose would probably not play a prominent role in the protocol, while guidelines and good practices for valuation and compensation will have the key focus. The manuals would be continuously adapted based on feedback from affected communities.

Example 2. In the scoping phase, stakeholders decide that outdated national legislations is a priority issue to be tackled. Hence, they decide to develop an instrument that will support national legislators in aligning expropriation laws with human rights and international standards. For the process, this would imply further analysis of the problem (gaps and contradictions in national legislations, institutional set ups) and close engagement of relevant stakeholders (national legislators, politicians, legal experts) and field testing by using the instrument in cases of legal reforms. The instrument will eventually summarize and explain relevant parts of binding human rights conventions, international standards and international jurisprudence.

3. Recommendations for next steps

Complement the ground work and conduct pre-scoping

As one of the first next steps, the NCEA recommends the proponents of the proposal to further delineate the target users and aims for the protocol. This should ideally take place through selecting specific gaps in international standards and stakeholders' needs and priorities. In this sense, the questions on the added value of the protocol and on stakeholders' needs are interrelated: possible gaps in international standards will only be considered as problems, if these are perceived as such by stakeholders. This delineation could take place through additional activities such as:

- Conducting a stakeholder mapping and analysis to identify all stakeholders, their interests in and influence over the expropriation process.
- Prioritise key stakeholders to be considered and consulted and develop a plan outlining different stakeholders' engagement⁶.
- Consulting the different stakeholders by interviews, questionnaires, workshops. This could first take place with different types of stakeholders separately to collect their views and priorities with regards to potential aims. The input document for example refers to different directions such as (quote):
 - o promote legal change;
 - o operationalize existing standards;
 - o develop guidance for compensation;
 - o set out more ambitious requirements for the future.

These consultations will show where the views, needs and priorities of different stake-holders converge or diverge.

- Subsequently, workshops and discussions could be organized in multi-stakeholder settings. Discussions could focus on issues and potential aims for a protocol, where stakeholders seem to share views and (some degree of) consensus. These discussions could result in the selection of the aim and target users for the protocol.
- After selecting the specific aim and target users, a plan can be made for the further scoping process and a plan to select and engage relevant stakeholders throughout the whole process.

⁶ Consider a) representatives from relevant government authorities responsible for regulating and implementing expropriation, b) representatives from affected communities, including indigenous peoples, women and youth c) international finance institutions d) private companies e) practitioners who are engaged at different stages of land expropriation and compensation in the global south e) International and national CSO's f) representatives from different sectors like infrastructure, transport, agriculture, forestry, extractives, conservation etc.

Further scoping

Once the aim and target users are set, further scoping is required to determine the depth of guidance that a protocol will provide. The input document gives useful recommendations and questions to this end. For scoping, in-depth analysis needs to take place to understand problems and the contexts and solutions in relation to the selected aim and target users. This analysis could be done through the foundational research and scoping workshops as already planned in the proposal. The analysis needs to clarify what the root causes of problems are and whether a protocol provides the right solution. It should also give insight in the question as to how a new protocol could be effective in contexts where there is a lack of transparency, lack of (political) consensus and willingness, a lack of resources and poor land governance and land conflicts. How will the protocol deal with context specificity of the issues?

Development of a protocol

If during scoping it is concluded that a new protocol or other instruments aimed to improve and support good practices of fair compensation should be developed, the NCEA recommends to take into consideration the following:

- The importance of human rights is acknowledged in the proposal. The NCEA recommends to clarify how this intention will be put into practice: how will human rights be systematically built into the protocol or any other instrument to be developed?
- In discussing fair compensation, it is relevant to put enough emphasis on the *non-mone-tary components of compensation*. Particularly as to cultural, social and spiritual values, there are risks in monetizing these. It is important that these risks are explicitly considered and addressed when developing the protocol.
- The principle of 'avoidance' is widely acknowledged, i.e. that all efforts have been made to avoid or minimize displacements. This principle implies that compulsory land acquisition and displacement should only be used as a last resort in very specific situations where a compelling public purpose is at stake. This implies that alternatives for the project have been studied. The NCEA recommends that this principle is underlined and put into action in the development of a protocol or any other instrument.
- In cases of compulsory land acquisition, it is widely acknowledged that negotiated solutions work better. The NCEA recommends that the protocol or any other instrument to be developed, provides clear guidance in applying negotiated solutions.
- For the application of existing international standards, the capacity of communities is crucial to meaningfully engage in processes of expropriation and compensation and to restore livelihoods. It is important to pay attention to this aspect, when developing a new protocol.

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⁷ For inspiration, see for example: van der Ploeg, L., & Vanclay, F. (2017). A human rights based approach to project-induced displacement and resettlement. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal,* 35(1), 34–52. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2016.1271538

- It is recommended that the timeframe for the planned field tests is reassessed. Land acquisition processes can last several years. Therefore a field test of 14 days in 1-2 locations aimed at validating a protocol to be applied worldwide would not seem to be sufficient.
- The steering group and external reviewers' group could have a broader stakeholder representation, by including practitioners involved in expropriation and compensation, government agencies, and representatives from the global south such as affected communities, indigenous people, practitioners and interest groups.

Annex 1: Useful references to guide expropriation and fair compensation

Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and the Office of the United National High Commission for Human Rights (2013). The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. A Manual for National Human Rights Institutions.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Resettlement Guidance and Good Practice Handbook:

https://www.ebrd.com/news/2017/ebrd-launches-new-resettlement-guidance-and-good-practice-publication.html

European Investment Bank (EIB) Environmental and Social Standards (Standard 6): http://www.eib.org/attachments/strategies/environmental_and_social_practices_hand-book_en.pdf

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO):

- Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of land, fisheries and forests (VGGT): http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf.
- VGGT Technical Guides: http://www.fao.org/tenure/resources/collections/governance-of-tenure-technical-guides/en/.
- · Valuing Land Tenure Rights
- · Improving ways to record tenure rights
- Creating a system to record tenure rights & 1st registration
- Responsible governance of tenure and the law
- Improving governance of pastoral lands
- Governing Tenure Rights to Commons
- Responsible governance of tenure: a technical guide for investors
- Safeguarding land tenure rights in the context of agricultural investment
- Respecting Free Prior and Informed Consent
- Improving Governance of Forest Tenure
- Governing Land for Women and Men

FAO Land Tenure Studies 10: Compulsory acquisition of land and compensation: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i0506e.pdf.

Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) 2018 Valuation of Unregistered Lands:

http://www.fig.net/resources/publications/un/2018_GLTN-FIG-Guide_Valuation_unregistered_land.pdf.

International Finance Corporation (IFC):

IFC Performance Standard 5 Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement:

https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/sus-tainability-at-ifc/policies-standards/performance-standards/ps5

IFC Performance Standard 5 Guidance Notes:

https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/4b976700498008d3a417f6336b93d75f/GN5_Eng-lish_2012.pdf?MOD=AJPERES.

IFC Handbook for Preparing a Resettlement Action Plan (2002):

https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/sustainability-at-ifc/publications/publications_handbook_rap_wci__1319577659424.

RICS (2018) Determining the value of unregistered land: Examples from around the world: https://www.rics.org/fr/news-insight/latest-news/news-opinion/determining-the-value-of-unregistered-land-examples-from-around-the-world/.

UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011): https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/GuidingPrinciplesBusinessHR_EN.pdf.

UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, Section III on Principles relating to protection during displacement (2004):

https://www.unhcr.org/protection/idps/43ce1cff2/guiding-principles-internal-displace-ment.html

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)

United Nations Human Rights (UNHR) Land and Human Rights Standards and Application: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Land_HR-StandardsApplications.pdf

World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 5 and draft guidelines: http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/839341509484071335/DraftESS5GuidanceNoteForBorrowersForPublicComment-Nov1-2017FV.pdf

Further reading:

African Development Bank (2015). The African Development Bank's involuntary resettlement policy: Review of implementation.

AngloAmerican (2012), SEAT Toolbox.

Blackmore E., Bugalski N., Pred D. (2015). Following the money: an advocate's guide to securing accountability in agricultural investments. IIED/IDI, London/Asheville

Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (2018). Governing Land Investments. Do governments have legal support gaps?

Inclusive Development International and Equitable Cambodia (2017). Avoiding Forced Displacement. A Community Guide to Negotiation and Advocacy.

International Association for Impact Assessment (2015). Key Citations Project-Induced Displacement and Resettlement.

International Council on Mining and Metals (2015). Land Acquisition and resettlement: Lessons learned.

Inter-American Development Bank (2013). Environmental and Social Safeguards including Gender Policy. Background Paper.

Lindsay, J.M. (2012). Compulsory Acquisition of Land and Compensation in Infrastructure Projects. PPP Insights, Vol. 1, Issue 3.

Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman (2008). A Guide to Designing and Implementing Grievance Mechanisms for Development Projects.

Office of the Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman (2016). Grievance Mechanism Toolkit. A practical guide for implementing grievance mechanisms in different sectors.

Perera (ed). 2014. Lose to Gain. Is Involuntary Resettlement a Development Opportunity. Asian Development Bank: Manila.

Reddy G. Smyth E., Steyn M. (2015) Land Access and Resettlement. A guide to best practice. Routledge. https://www.routledge.com/Land-Access-and-Resettlement-A-Guide-to-Best-Practice/Reddy-Smyth-Steyn/p/book/9781783532131

Salcedo-La Vina, C. and Morarji, M. (2016). Making women's voices count in decision-making on land investments. World Resources Institute.

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World Resources Institute (2009). Breaking Ground. Engaging Communities in Extractive and Infrastructure Projects.