



STRENGTHENING NON-STATE MECHANISMS FOR LAND TENURE IN DARFUR TO ACHIEVE PEACEFUL AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Land ownership and rights to tenure and utilization of resources have been at the core of conflict in Darfur for decades. The formalization of the land laws in the 1970s, in which all unregistered land became the property of the state, ignored the traditional systems in place for centuries and weakened the native administration that governed land use. The violent conflict that arose in 2003 displaced a large number of rural communities and the newly vacated land was often occupied, and in places resettled, by nomadic groups. The subsequent peace deals, both the Darfur Peace Agreement and the subsequent Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, recognized the importance of not only returning the land to the original owners, but of developing a system of land tenure that secures the land use for future generations in an equitable manner. Such a system should acknowledge and incorporate the informal traditions within the formal registration system. Against this background, this European Union-funded FAO project aimed to strengthen non-state mechanisms for land tenure to achieve peaceful and sustainable development, and to support the Government of Sudan to reform its land laws to develop practical solutions to secure access to crop land and livestock routes, among others.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

Significant results were achieved, enabling the improvement of land management in line with FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) principles on land tenure in Darfur Region. As a result of targeted capacity-development activities, the confidence and trust of stakeholders was enhanced on the use of VGGT principles and tools in relation to responsible land tenure governance. The project initiated first-time agricultural land registration for small customary landholders in 20 targeted localities and five return sites, and 12 334 heads of households formally secured their tenure rights. In addition, 400 households completed agricultural land registration processes in four return sites for IDPs. Based on the findings of a legal assessment on Sudanese land laws, continued capacity development provided on gaps in the legal framework on land equipped communities and their leaders to vocally articulate their demands for recognition of customary land tenure rights in various policy decision-making forums. In addition, the project introduced an innovative community-based approach to land use planning, which invested in community knowledge and experiences in managing divergent uses of land resources and guided land disputes resolutions among users, benefiting about 2 000 households.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
EUR 3 000 000

Duration
May 2016 – March 2022

Resource Partner
European Union

Beneficiaries
Darfur Land Commission (DLC); Darfur Regional Authority (DRA); Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission (VRRRC); state MoPERS; state Ministries of Animal Resources; state Ministries of Physical Planning Housing and Public Infrastructure, state Ministries of Local Governance; state Ministries of Justice; and Forests National Corporation (FNC); locality level, customary institutions (native administrations), and community groups; conflict-displaced communities, including small-scale rural farmers, pastoralists and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Greater Darfur region

IMPACT

The project interventions succeeded in changing the perception of state-level stakeholders and communities in the targeted localities to collectively and individually address land resources management using VGGT implementation principles. The project also contributed to reducing the displacement of people from their lands, as well as facilitating returns in selected return sites, and securing land tenure rights of returnees through formal agricultural registration. In addition, the establishment of community land use plans (CLUPs) in targeted localities contributed to reducing conflict between direct and indirect users, especially in the agriculture and pastoral sectors.

ACTIVITIES

- Capacities of 440 stakeholders enhanced through 41 training events, in addition to 16 community-awareness gatherings.
- Organizational and individual capacities of land service providing institutions assessed, and laws governing tenure rights in Sudan reviewed against VGGT standard procedures, and variations, overlapping, and contradictions identified in existing laws.
- Coordination within state institutions and between the five Darfur states improved through exchange visits undertaken by Technical Advisory Committee members in South and West Darfur states.
- Average of 1 000 households initiated process of securing agricultural land tenure rights through formal registration.
- Community-based conflict resolution and community negotiation mechanisms assessed in 11 and 10 villages in Zalingie and Nartati localities respectively; 126 core stakeholders trained to facilitate community negotiations on land occupation, crop destruction, closure of migratory routes, prevention of customary tenure insecurity, deforestation and land degradation, and insecurity.
- Two companies selected to supply two oil pressing machines, one grinding mill machine and a generator, 16 irrigation pumps, and 300 knapsack sprayers (targeting 100 women and 200 men), and 128 beneficiaries supported with 16 irrigation units.
- Land Tenure Governance Institute in University of Khartoum established.

Partners

Darfur Land Commission (DLC); state Ministries of Production and Economic Resources (MoPERs); Mamoun Beheiry Centre for Economic and Social Studies and Research in Africa (MBC); Catholic Relief Services (CRS); Rural Development Network (RDN); Future for Community Development Organization (FCD); Sahari Organization for Development (SOD); International Socio-Economic Development Organization (ISDO)

Project Title

Promoting the provision of legitimate land tenure rights using Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forest in the Context of National Food Security for conflict displaced communities, including small-scale rural farmers, pastoralists and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Greater Darfur region of the Sudan - VGGT

Project Code

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