Seminar: Investments and Land Rights –
the role of the private sector in ensuring responsible governance of tenure

FoHRC- Food, Human Rights and Corporations, and FIAN Norway are happy to invite you to a seminar on investments and land rights.

Time: Monday 13 June 09:00 - 15:30
Where: Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), Cort Adelers gate 30, Oslo

The roaring food prices in 2008 led to an increase in agricultural investments worldwide. In states with weak protection mechanisms and unclear tenure arrangements, there are serious concerns on how this affects people’s rights and the environment. Addressing such concerns, the Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT), adopted by the UN Committee on World Food Security in 2012, have been widely recognized as a major step towards a human rights based governance of natural resources.

One group working with the VGGT in relation to business is the Interlaken Group, which consists of large global companies, well-respected NGOs, as well as the International Finance Corporation and the UK’s development cooperation agency DFID, among others.

The Interlaken Group has developed a toolkit – Respecting Land and Forest Rights: A Guide for Companies – to help companies align their operations with the VGGT. It guides companies on how to approach tenure questions and map existing legitimate tenure claims, emphasising the need to make sure that communities’ voices are heard, with special attention to indigenous peoples, women and the disadvantaged. However, concerns have been raised over how companies are encouraged to take a leading role in ensuring clarity on tenure questions, as supposedly neutral facilitators, when companies themselves often find themselves to be part in tenure conflicts.

The morning session will address the work of the Interlaken Group and the role of companies in implementing the VGGT. The afternoon session will provide case studies on land acquisitions, with focus on the need to involve local people. Free, prior and informed consent - FPIC is a key concern in this regard.

You are welcome to join us for the full day, or for either session. Please let us know by filling out the registration form at the bottom of the page.

PROGRAMME:

09:00-12:15  Morning Session, moderated by Aksel Tømte, NCHR/FoHRC:
When states fail to provide adequate rights protection to farmers and forest-dependent communities, should companies be encouraged to take on that role?

09:00-11:00  Welcome by Wenche Barth Eide, FoHRC Coordinator
Aksel Tømte, NCHR/ FoHRC:
Introduction to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT) and the role of the private sector

Keynote speaker: Andy White, Coordinator of the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) and Co-chair of the Interlaken Group: Working with the private sector to respect local land rights: RRI’s approach and the role of the Interlaken Group
Henry Thomas Simarmata, La Via Campesina:  
*The Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure at a crossroads*

Poul Wisborg, Noragric, Norwegian University of Life Sciences:  
*Large-scale land acquisitions and the interdependence of rights*

Others to be confirmed

Panel discussion

11:00-11.20  Coffee/tea

11:20-12:15  Plenary discussion

12:15-13:00  Lunch

13:00-15:30  Afternoon Session, moderated by Kristin Kjærnet, Former Executive Director of FIAN Norway:  
*The impact of land and land forest investments on food security and small-scale farmers - how to ensure meaningful consultation and participation?*

13:00-14.15  Hans Morten Haugen, VID Specialized University:  
*Consultation and participation by affected groups - a wider application of the principles of ‘Free, Prior, and Informed Consent’ (FPIC)??*  
Elin Cecilie Ranum, The Development Fund:  
*Large-scale investments, land ownership, and food security in Central America*  
Frankie Abreau, Tenasserim River and Indigenous River Network (TRIP NET), Myanmar:  
*Threats to Karen land and food Security in Tanintharyi, Myanmar*

Q&A

14:15-15:30  Representative from the private sector tbc  
NORAD tbc

Discussion

Summary and closure

Link to our Facebook-event [here!](#)

We will offer coffee/tea and lunch.

The seminar is open for everyone, but requires registration. Please sign up here by Tuesday 7 June:

---

**FoHRC** is an interdisciplinary research and action network, with representatives from the University of Oslo, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, FIAN Norway, and Redd Barna. FoHRC’s institutional home is the Norwegian Centre for Human Rights.

**FIAN Norway** is part of **FIAN International** - a human rights organization advocating for the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition.