



Policies against Hunger 2013: Land ahead!
**Applying the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance
of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, 10- 12 June 2013**

SUMMARY

by the Conference Chair Maryam Rahmanian

Secure tenure of land, fisheries, forests and water resources is the foundation of local and global food security. The Policies against Hunger 2013 conference provided an important opportunity for exploring how to transform the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security from paper to practice. The active engagement of 220 participants from 46 countries, including government, civil society, private sector and academics was testimony to the growing sense of common ownership of the Guidelines. The importance of the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) as the foremost intergovernmental global governance space on food and agriculture issues was underlined, as well as the fact that the Tenure Guidelines were the first and still most important outcome of the CFS.

Recognizing that the Guidelines offer important opportunities to States to address frequent conflicts over access to land and natural resources in order to promote political stability, some of the key conference recommendations included:

- 1. National processes:** States should establish inclusive, participatory national multi-stakeholder platforms, with the active involvement of small-scale food producers, for implementation and monitoring. The Guidelines should be incorporated into national law and policy, including complaint mechanisms. Strong cross-sectoral and inter-ministerial collaboration should be promoted.
- 2. Monitoring:** Monitoring is key to ensuring accountability and implementation. The CFS has an important role to play in implementation, monitoring and assessment of impact of the Guidelines. It should play a lead role as the international forum for exchange of best practices, including through the development of quantitative and qualitative indicators that are human rights based and gender sensitive. The approach should be short-, medium- and long-term and include case studies from different stakeholders and contexts in order to foster learning by doing.
- 3. Investments:** Investments are needed, but must be regulated. Control of land and natural resources should remain with the local tenure rights holders. The ongoing process of developing principles for responsible agricultural investments in the CFS should build on VG and not reopen discussion on land issues. They should also recognize that smallholders are the biggest group of investors whose role should be strengthened by public investment.



4. **Countries of origin of investments:** The standards of the Guidelines should serve as a prerequisite when cooperating with partner countries and private investors. Governments of countries of investors' origin should establish monitoring and complaint mechanisms. This initiative could be launched by G8 or G20 or a similar body. The links between investment agreements, extraterritorial obligations and safeguards regarding human and tenure rights need to be further investigated.
5. **Capacity building:** Capacity building is needed with regard to information on national laws, rights, awareness raising on the Guidelines, and monitoring.