



Transformative Land Investment



Background

Since the food and energy price crises of the mid 2000s, many developing countries have witnessed unprecedented interest in their agricultural land. This has attracted much public scrutiny, with commercial land investment widely viewed as detrimental to smallholder livelihoods. In response, governments and multilateral organizations have started introducing measures to protect community rights, avoid involuntary displacement and strengthen local benefit capture. Intergovernmental consensus was also reached on common land governance and responsible agricultural investment principles, with the Committee on World Food Security member states endorsing the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure (VGGT) in 2012 and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture

and Food (CFS-RAI) in 2014. Despite establishing an important foundation for more responsible land-based investment (LBI), few investors have integrated such principles into their business strategies and practices. As voluntary principles that have yet to fully inform public policy and value chain standards, the incentive and regulatory structures are generally lacking. In addition, only doing less harm will not radically transform global land-based production systems. For LBIs to meaningfully contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), they need to provide more substantial benefits to smallholders, ecosystems, and host countries' economies. This requires more than just regulations and incentives, including innovative cross-sector partnerships to bridge the resource and capability gaps facing most LBIs.



About TLI

Transformative Land Investment (TLI) is a project funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and is commissioned to a consortium consisting of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), the Dutch Development Agency (SNV), Land Equity International (LEI) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF). During the first phase of this initiative (2022-2025), the consortium will operate across five countries (Myanmar, Lao PDR, Ethiopia, Ghana and Mozambique) that succeeded in attracting considerable LBI in recent years.

TLI focuses on supporting LBI to become more economically, socially and environmentally advantageous by integrating inclusive development, sustainable food systems and agroecology principles, into their practices, policies and business models. In the prioritized countries, TLI contributes to:

"Enhanced land and ecosystem health, with equitable and gender-transformative improvements in food and tenure security, livelihoods and resilience"

Approach

The project adopts an integrated and holistic approach involving coordinated actions that (a) **prevent** negative LBI impacts; (b) **manage** how impacts play out; (c) **incentivize** LBI adoption of better business models and practices and (d) support LBIs **improve** their business models and their implementation.

This will be achieved by:

- 1) Out- and up-scaling TLIs that avoid negative societal impacts and contribute towards more inclusive and resilient food systems.
- 2) Establishing country-level policies and supportive regulatory frameworks, laws and incentive schemes that enable investor adoption of TLI principles.
- 3) Establishing global and regional agreements, commitments and guidelines that more effectively promote TLI.

Project activities

Scaling transformative investment	Transformative investment ecosystems	Global alignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop user-friendly tools that help predict and anticipate future social and environmental impacts of agricultural land developments.• Offer technical support to site selection, design of appropriate mitigation strategies and VGGT-consistent corporate policies.• Establish TLI Innovation Labs offering technical and partnership brokering services to LBIs committed to integrating TLI and gender-transformative principles into their business models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish multi-stakeholder platforms that co-develop strategies for aligning existing institutional and regulatory structures with TLI principles.• Provide technical and mediation support to help stakeholders deliver on co-developed strategies.• Create a co-learning space for civil society organizations to strengthen collective organization and action and harmonize complementary interventions.• Offer trainings to government and civil society organizations that enhance capacity to engage investors more effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transform project implementation learnings into practical tools, guidelines and frameworks with impacts global applicable.• Host international seminars and roundtables to identify pathways for integrating TLI principles and approaches into global frameworks, funding strategies and agreements.• Strengthen linkages and collaboration between the five target countries through South-South exchanges.• Identify, create and exploit opportunities for improving coordination and collaborative action between stakeholders championing tenure security, food security, inclusive business development and supply chain sustainability.