

Key messages "The 10th anniversary of the VGGT in times of multiple crises: Securing Food through Land Rights", panel discussion on 30.11.2022 and workshop on 28.11.2022

Jann Lay, GIGA, Berlin and Hamburg, 2.12.2022

(1) The many crises of our day affect us here in Germany and they affect the people in the "Global South", who often have far fewer opportunities to cope with such crises. These global interdependencies have their dark sides, as is shown again and again in connection with large-scale agricultural investments. Yet, global cooperation also holds the promise of agreeing to respect human rights. And the VGGT are a good example of this. They are a **central, negotiated and recognised global reference framework and thus a starting point for further agreements** such as the CFS-RAI and national reforms and rules. To put it in the words of Michael Windfuhr: "The VGGT are a great text" that describes what states can do to behave in a human rights-compliant manner. And numerous examples, for example from Liberia and Sierra Leone, show that they are indeed helpful for practical work "on the ground".

(2) The VGGT thus keep that promise, but there is still a long way to go - despite some progress. There has been some movement in the **implementation of national legislation**, for example in Liberia and Sierra Leone, both of which now have progressive land legislation based on the VGGT. However, we also know about the **problems of effective implementation of** new national rules, especially regarding communal land rights and local governance (role of traditional authorities). At the events, it was often and rightly suggested to look for starting points for implementation that may lie outside the land sector (**Get out of the silo land policy!**). Issues such as inequality, human rights due diligence in global supply chains, but also land for a just global energy transition can become important levers for an effective implementation of the VGGT. Keep going! Implement! But also assert - because the **land question is also a question of power** - were recurring calls of the evening.

(3) It is precisely the link to debates on sustainable supply chains that is crucial: even if more sustainable food systems are likely to be less global and thus more local, we will still have trade in agricultural goods and food. In a sustainable (and more local) food system, smallholder structures and thus smallholder land rights have a central role to play. Trade and the activities of multinational companies and investors must continue to be scrutinised. And the **VGGT are an important element in achieving a more sustainable food system and more sustainable global supply chains** that respect human rights.

Thanks on behalf of the organisers (ILC, WHH and GIGA/Land Matrix) to

- Panellists: Berns Komba Lebbie, Ellen O. Pratt, the Mathias Mogge, Swantje Nilson and Renate Künast and Ward Anseeuw.
- Mike Taylor for his KeyNote and Michael Windfuhr for his input
- FriEnt. the Working Group on Peace and Development, and TMG Research
- German Theatre and Translators
- Miriam Harteisen, Anna Schreiber, Christoph Kubitzka, and Alain Christian Essimi Biloa for the great organisation
- the audience