

NES Kyrgyzstan: Sustainable land governance and forest and pasture users' rights



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Securing land rights is the key to end poverty and build peaceful and just societies. However, land governance is complex and deeply rooted in unequal power relations. To those working to secure land rights, it is clear that this cannot be done in isolation.



That is why the International Land Coalition (ILC) has been building and strengthening partnerships based on trust to solve land governance challenges. National Engagement Strategies - “NES” – are multi-stakeholder platforms led by national actors that help unpack land governance complexities, using ILC’s 10 commitments to people-centred land governance as their compass, while promoting the Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure (VGGT).

Based on **collaboration and evidence-based policy dialogues**, NES platforms set priorities and design legitimate solutions to the most challenging land-related issues in a country. NES platforms include ILC members and non-members and aim at **bridging the gap** between national and local government, international agencies, and civil society, providing a space to share knowledge and complement each other to improve land governance.

Major land governance challenges in Kyrgyzstan

The land governance system in Kyrgyzstan has changed dramatically since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Kyrgyzstan had no private ownership of land, while the ethnic Kyrgyz had a culture of nomadic herding. In 1991, the Kyrgyz government adopted a package of laws regulating land relations, defining the legal, organizational and economic aspects of agricultural enterprises, from collective and state farms to ensuring full ownership for farmers. However, this has also led to a fragmentation of agricultural land into small-scale holdings that farming households cannot derive sufficient income from.

Kyrgyzstan faces many challenges: the development and implementation of state and regional programs for the consolidation of small land plots; the development of legal and economic mechanisms for the protection of particularly valuable agricultural land from fragmentation and use for non-agricultural purposes (settlement, factories, processing facilities etc.); the fight against land degradation and desertification.

The priorities for NES Kyrgyzstan are to:

NES Kyrgyzstan aims to **promote safe and equitable access to vital natural resources for local communities** through advocacy, dialogue, exchange of knowledge and experiences, and capacity building in the context of climate change.

The platform works to improve forest and pasture users’ capacity in community-based joint management of natural resources, using this mechanism as a means to increase the visibility and space of forest and pasture users in their dialogue with the government.

In addition, NES aims to improve the regulatory framework on land governance, natural resources use and management by advancing the rights of communities in the current legislation.



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ILC members involved:

Kyrgyz Association of Forest and Land Users (KAFLU); National Union of Water Users Association (NUWUA); Rural Development Fund (RDF); National pasture users' Association of Kyrgyzstan "Kyrgyz Jayty" (AKJ)

Other actors involved:

Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Land reclamation, State agency of Environmental Protection and Forestry, State Registry Service, National Statistic Committee, Local Government Bodies, State Forest Units, Pasture Unions, IFAD, FAO, World Bank national projects, Mountain Partnership, Agriculture Project Implementation Unit (APIU), Agency for Development Initiative (ADI), Climate Network and over 20 national and regional based NGOs

NES Kyrgyzstan is interested in exploring together how donor institutions and strategic partners can engage in this nationally-led partnership between civil society and the government to further strengthen the platform and support CSO initiatives. The platform seeks to promote equitable, sustainable and efficient agro-pastoral and forest resource governance, and increase communities' resilience against climate change - with the ultimate goal of including rural communities in decision-making.

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 NES Kyrgyzstan



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