



To RSVP, or for more information, please contact:

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*****MEDIA ADVISORY—FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY*****

Dialogue Event on Land, Conflicts, and Investment Risks in India

12:00 PM IST, Thursday, 3 September 2015 at The Claridges, NEW DELHI

Can India Achieve its Economic Potential Without Major Social Upheaval?

Event will explore investment risk caused by conflicts over land use, and why the stability of India's financial system requires a transformation in how land is developed

Senior Government officials and regulators, financial analysts, private sector leaders and researchers to attend

The Indian government has set an ambitious economic development agenda that defines growth as the nation's foremost priority. Under this model, it is clear that land is needed as a prerequisite. But in India, as in most of the world, people live on the lands targeted for development projects, triggering waves of local unrest across the country when community consent for new projects is not acquired. Many of these social conflicts exist in commonly held rural land in regions where the rights of tribal and other local communities are not recognized.

This unrest is an underestimated source of investment risk for India's financial sector, which currently holds non-performing assets and at-risk loans valued at [₹5.5 trillion](#) (US\$84 Billion). A study by Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) in April 2015 called for an evaluation of underlying conditions where development projects are planned so that investments that trigger more social conflict can be avoided.

Seizing this critical moment for India's economic progress, on Thursday, 3 September, 2015, RRI and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) will host an unprecedented Dialogue on "Land, Conflicts, and Investment Risks in India." The event will explore these issues with senior government officials, investors, private sector leaders, financial analysts, and researchers. Presenters at the Dialogue will share results from geospatial analyses of the investment risks associated with land rights conflicts in emerging markets, and new approaches to analyze these risks. They will also present local empirical evidence explaining India's most pervasive land conflicts, and lay out concrete recommendations to help the Government of India as well as the private sector pursue an inclusive and sustainable path to economic development.

WHO:

- **Dr. K.P. Krishnan**, Additional Secretary, Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India

- **Surinder Singh**, Economic Advisor, Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India
- **Deepak Sanan**, Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Himachal Pradesh
- **Shreya Deb**, Principal, Investments, Omidyar Network India Advisors Private Ltd.
- **Dr. Chris Andersen**, Principal, Yirri Global LLC (formerly with Rio Tinto PLC)
- **Lou Munden**, Founder, TMP Systems (formerly known as The Munden Project)
- **Ashwini Chhatre**, Senior Research Fellow, the Indian School of Business (ISB)
- **Shekhar Shah**, Director-General, National Council of Applied Economic Research
- **Arun Agrawal**, Professor, University of Michigan School of Natural Resources & Environment
- **Arvind Khare**, Executive Director, Rights and Resources Initiative
- **Kundan Kumar**, Director, Asia Program, Rights and Resources Initiative

WHAT:

“Land, Conflicts, and Investment Risks in India,” a dialogue event involving investors, private sector leaders, financial analysts, regulators, and government institutions.

WHY:

India’s increasing energy, industrial, and development needs are impacting millions of customary users of its land. Yet, it has not been able to address the challenges arising out of these transformations, as indicated by an increasing number of land related conflicts that affect nearly a quarter of its districts. A central theme in these conflicts is the lack of secure land rights, specifically on almost 100 million hectares of “state owned lands” which, while uninhabited on paper, actually have both customary rights and usage rights exercised by millions of people.

In the absence of legal rights to land, the much-required projects of mining, infrastructure development, and power plants often push tribal and other local communities aside. These developments damage both the landscape and the economic prospects of those who invest in the land as well as those who once lived off of it. Social conflict, for example, led to the closing of Vedanta’s bauxite mine in Odisha. The mine was scrapped in January 2014 after more than a decade of planning and after a companion refinery was constructed nearby. Despite such cases, the critical aspect of land tenure risk remains largely absent in the appraisal of investments by investors and banks, and has also been ignored by regulatory institutions, as evidenced in an RRI [study](#) in April 2015.

The Dialogue will establish a link between land conflicts and the instability of India’s development aspirations reflected in commercial, industrial and infrastructure projects, combining global and national level analysis. It will also explore how the health of Indian banks has been affected by Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) as well as “restructured loans” in the infrastructure sector, where issues of land availability remain a major bottleneck. It will highlight the importance of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for obtaining private and common lands, and show how the absence of a “social license” can lead to conflict and risks to investments.

WHEN:

12:00 PM IST to 07:00 PM IST, Thursday, 3 September 2015 [A reception will follow]

WHERE:

The Claridges, 12 Aurangzeb Road, New Delhi, India (For attendance, RSVP is required).

To schedule an interview with a speaker at the Dialogue, contact:

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Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) is a global coalition of 13 Partners and over 150 international, regional and community organizations advancing forest tenure, policy and market reforms. RRI leverages the strategic collaboration and investment of its Partners and Collaborators around the world by working together on research, advocacy, and convening strategic actors to catalyze change on the ground. RRI is coordinated by the Rights and Resources Group, a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC. For more information, visit www.rightsandresources.org.