



The power of people against poverty

## **GROW**



# Murder and eviction: the global land rush enters new more violent phase

Published: 26 September 2016

Millions of people face being displaced from their homes as [new data shows land sales covering an area the size of Germany are now under contract](https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/custodians-land-defenders-our-future) (<https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/custodians-land-defenders-our-future>), warns Oxfam.

Seventy-five percent of the more than 1500 land deals sought over the last sixteen years now have contracts and their intended projects are getting up and running, according to new research shared with Oxfam by the watchdog group Land Matrix Initiative.

Of these deals, up to 59 percent cover communal lands claimed by indigenous peoples and small communities, whose traditional ownership is rarely formally recognized by governments. Only a small fraction involved real dialogue with communities. Murder and the aggressive eviction of entire villages are an ongoing issue, and it is getting worse.

**Winnie Byanyima, Oxfam International Executive Director, said:** "We're entering a new and even more dangerous stage of the global land rush. The frenzied trade in millions of hectares of forests, coastlines and farmlands has led to murder, eviction and ethnocide. Land contracts are being signed and projects are breaking ground without the full consent of the communities living there. Conditions are ripe for increasing conflict in the years ahead if land rights are not better protected now."

Half the world's land is inhabited by 2.5 billion women and men belonging to indigenous groups or local communities, but they formally own just one fifth of it.

"Depriving millions of their ancestral and community lands is the single biggest assault on people's identity, dignity, safety, and the environment today. Securing their land is vital to tackling hunger, inequality and climate change. We need political leadership now," **Luca Miggiano, Oxfam's land rights expert said.**

In a new report, "[Custodians of the land, Defenders of our future](https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/custodians-land-defenders-our-future) (<https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/custodians-land-defenders-our-future>)," Oxfam reveals fresh data on the global land rush and profiles six cases where lives have been shattered by threats to their land.

- Despite the brutal murder of the indigenous leader Berta Caceres in **Honduras** in March, the country's authorities have done little to push forward her cause.
- In **Peru**, the Quechuas of the Amazon are waging a legal war to regain control of their lands that have been wrecked by years of oil drilling.
- In **Sri Lanka**, hundreds of people have been internally displaced after the government evicted them to make way for beach-front hotels.
- In **Australia**, Aboriginal people in the Kimberley region are pushing back against a regional government more interested in profits from mining and conservation projects than the well-being of their people.

Oxfam's report also details what governments must do to protect these and other people, and the environment. Defending land rights is inextricably linked to protecting the earth's natural diversity and the fight against climate change. Oxfam's report is part of

**We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience**

By clicking any link on this page you are giving your consent for us to set cookies.

OK, I agree

See Privacy Policy

- Read [Oxfam's media briefing \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/custodians-land-defenders-our-future\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/custodians-land-defenders-our-future) on the new campaign.
- Read the Land Rights Now kick-off report, "[Common Ground \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/common-ground\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/common-ground)".
- [Take action and ask the governments \(https://www.standforlandrights.org/\)](https://www.standforlandrights.org/) of Peru and Sri Lanka to defend the rights of their communities.
- The full [Land Matrix \(http://www.landmatrix.org/\)](http://www.landmatrix.org/) report is set to be released on October 4.

## Contact information

---

**Simon Hernandez-Arthur** in Washington

[simon.hernandezarthur@oxfaminternational.org](mailto:simon.hernandezarthur@oxfaminternational.org) (<mailto:simon.hernandezarthur@oxfaminternational.org>)

+1 585 503 4568

[@SimonHernandez](http://twitter.com/simonhernandez) (<http://twitter.com/simonhernandez>)

For updates, please follow [@Oxfam](http://twitter.com/Oxfam) (<http://twitter.com/Oxfam>).

**Tags:** [land rights now \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/land-rights-now\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/land-rights-now) | [indigenous peoples \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/indigenous-peoples\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/indigenous-peoples) | [land \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/land\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/land) | [murder \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/murder\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/murder) | [evictions \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/evictions\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/evictions) | [land grabs \(https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/land-grabs\)](https://www.oxfam.org/en/tags/land-grabs)

Permalink: <http://oxf.am/Z6hM> (<http://oxf.am/Z6hM>)

---

Join **Oxfam International** on social media:

Join **Oxfam Germany** on social media:

View Oxfam's worldwide channels: [Show all](#)

**We use cookies on this site to enhance your user experience**

By clicking any link on this page you are giving your consent for us to set cookies.

OK, I agree

See Privacy Policy