

CREATE a RIPPLE EFFECT



Landesa
Rural Development Institute

LANDESA

We empower millions of people worldwide with land rights—a powerful tool that breaks the cycle of poverty and delivers transformative change.

100+

global land
EXPERTS

50+

COUNTRIES
with demonstrated
success

550M

PEOPLE
with secure rights
to their land

Landesa is the recognized global leader in advancing land rights for the world's poorest women and men.

- 2017 LUI Che Woo Prize, Betterment of the Welfare of Mankind
- 2015 Hilton Humanitarian Prize
- 2012 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship, Skoll Foundation

Our work to ensure that the world's rural poor have secure land rights creates opportunities for women, improves environmental stewardship in the face of climate change, and spurs lasting economic growth.

Landesa's work on land rights creates a wave of impact, starting with people who have the least access to power and rippling outward to communities, to countries, and across the globe.

What are land rights? Land rights are a legal and social guarantee to manage, use, and inherit land, through ownership or long-term tenure rights. More than a billion people lack rights to the land they use to survive, causing cycles of poverty to persist over generations.



“The world needs Landesa so everyone can have the chance to better themselves and their families, on their own. Landesa provides the starter kit. People take it and soar.”

—**REBECCA KENNEDY,**
Donor



Secure land rights are a legal and social guarantee of ownership of or long-term claims on land. When honored by both law and practice, land rights allow people to plant crops, knowing they will be able to harvest them. And, it enables them to make other investments—like building sturdier homes, installing irrigation, or planting trees—with the certainty that they can reap the benefits of their investments for years to come.

THE MOST POWERFUL TOOL

Land rights are fundamental to fighting poverty and addressing serious global challenges.

One billion people experiencing poverty and living in rural areas are denied a vital source of income, security, and opportunity—rights to their land. The consequences are severe and far-ranging:

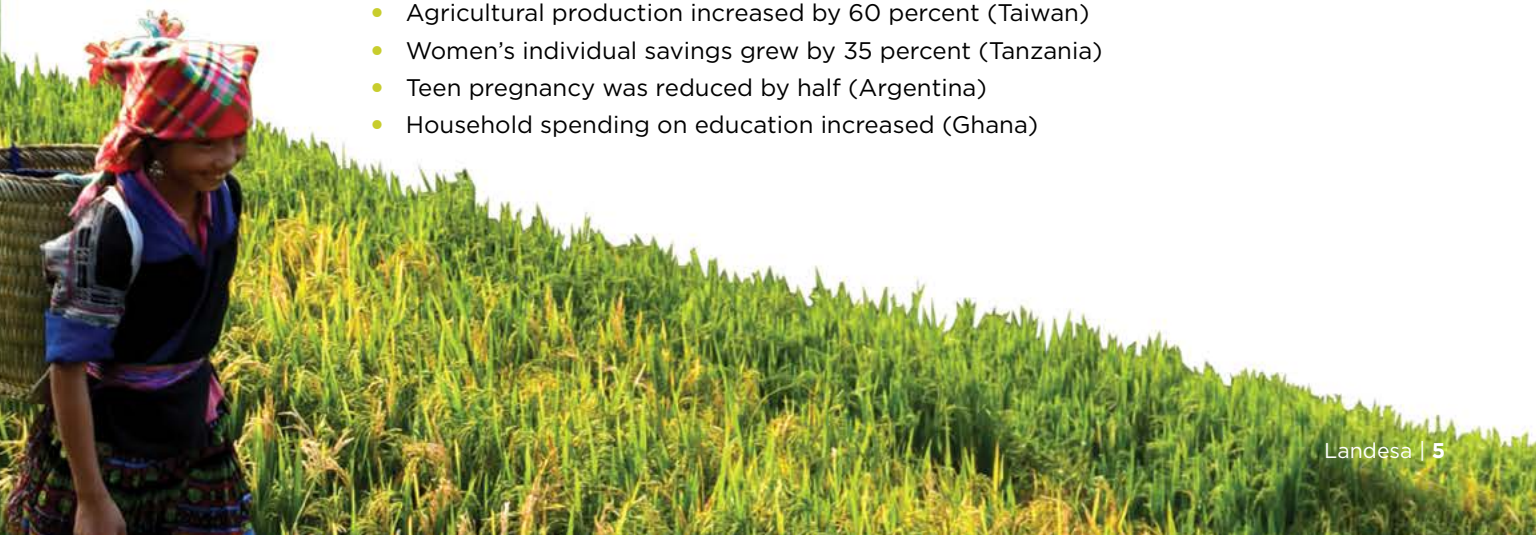
- Poor health and nutrition
- Entrenched gender inequality
- Greater exposure to the dangers of climate change
- Political instability

Few other strategies are as effective at improving the lives of the rural poor.

Secure land rights lay the foundation for families to climb out of poverty, and for entire communities to flourish, by sparking long-term investments in health, education, economic growth, and the environment. And, they help bring stability and prosperity to the most challenging regions of the world by strengthening the rule of law.

Establishing secure land rights has powerful impacts around the world:

- Agricultural production increased by 60 percent (Taiwan)
- Women's individual savings grew by 35 percent (Tanzania)
- Teen pregnancy was reduced by half (Argentina)
- Household spending on education increased (Ghana)



OUR STRATEGY

We deliver change at scale by working side by side with governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and partners from global to local levels.

The path to land rights often begins with small voices for change and an authority ready to hear them. Since our founding, we have supported and trained land rights advocates working within governments, companies, and communities to be those voices. When homegrown demand is sufficiently strong, those advocates reach out to Landesa.


The journey to securing land rights requires years of change to political and economic systems. **Landesa's multiple roles on this journey—advisor, expert consultant, trusted partner, advocate—spur change in law, policy, and social norms from the top down and the bottom up.**

- **We build evidence.** In a country ready for change, initial assessments identify gaps in existing laws, policies, and cultural conditions at community and country levels to help provide direction for reform.
- **We collaborate on reform.** Our experts work closely with public officials to craft, refine, and pass pro-poor land laws and policies.
- **We support access to justice.** When new land laws are in place, we train government staff, local leaders and advocates on how to implement these laws and support communities in accessing their new rights.
- **We evaluate impact and build local capacity.** Once reforms have been passed and women and men begin to access their new rights, we shift to a focus on sustainability. Success stories with real data help communicate to those in power the expanding benefits of land reform. And by building in-country capacity around legal and behavioral aspects of land reform, we help to ensure that land rights will endure.

"Landesa demonstrates the leveraged power of the law as a tool for social and economic progress."

—BILL GATES, SR.,
Attorney and Philanthropist





*Landesa's advantage
is our people.*

Drawn from the places where we work, our team of experts—in law, gender rights, agriculture, economic development, and more—are immersed in local policies and customs. They tailor strategies to local conditions, resulting in effective and long-lasting systemic change. And the benefits ripple outward for generations to come.

A man with dark hair, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt under a dark vest and dark trousers, is crouching on a dirt ground. He is smiling and gesturing with his right hand towards the camera. Behind him is a wall made of reddish-brown bricks. To the left of the man, there are several large stacks of flat, rectangular stone tiles or bricks, some of which are bundled together with straw. A wooden pole is leaning against the wall behind the stacks of tiles.

STORY OF IMPACT

One Billion Rising

Starting in 1979, rural families in China were given tenure rights to small plots of land. The results were dramatic: grain production increased by 8 percent per year, rural income grew by 11 percent annually, and poverty declined by more than half. It is often **called the single biggest poverty reduction effort in history.**

Landesa has been working in China since the 1980s. We have successfully advanced many additional reforms, such as extending the duration of farmers' tenure on the land, and we are helping the Chinese government further strengthen land rights for more than 200 million rural farming families.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Landesa is helping to grow economies, reduce poverty, and stabilize countries through land rights.

Land rights are an economic engine: they power sustainable growth for families, communities, provinces, and even entire countries. In the second half of the 20th century, the “Tiger” economies of Asia all deployed land reform strategies that favored small farmers. From this foundation, many countries in East Asia were able to achieve broad-based economic growth with astonishing speed. Landesa is at work in China today, reinforcing and building upon China’s historic reform to land rights in the 1980s that helped 850 million people out of poverty.

Women and men with rights to their land have the ability to build wealth for themselves. That wealth ripples out to strengthen local economies, raise per capita income, and increase national GDP. We can count the benefits:

- Stronger land rights are associated with a **5 percent increase in GDP** (across 30+ countries)
- Per capita **income increases up to 14 percentage points faster** (across 100+ countries)
- **Land with title and registration is worth 30 percent more** (Nicaragua)
- Farmers with land certificates **increased farm productivity by as much as 45 percent** (Ethiopia)



A photograph of two women working in a vast field of large-leafed green plants, likely cabbages. The woman on the left is wearing a red top and a colorful patterned sari, while the woman on the right is wearing a dark patterned top. They are both focused on their work, surrounded by rows of healthy plants under bright sunlight.

Stand for Her Land

Landesa is a leader of the *Stand For Her Land* Campaign, a new collaborative advocacy campaign to empower women around the world to access their land rights. The campaign aims to close the gap between laws and practice, so that millions of women can realize the benefits of land rights in their daily lives and around the world.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Landesa is an unparalleled voice for gender-equal land rights, catalyzing prosperity for women around the world.

In half the world's countries, established laws and customs deny women rights to land, leaving them to experience the harshest forms of poverty and exclusion. In fact, less than 15 percent of rural women have secure rights to the land they work to sustain their families.

When women gain land rights, it initiates a cascade of benefits, from greater decision-making power to economic gains. Research shows that women with secure land rights:

- Have been 44 percent **more likely to play a role in deciding** which crops to grow (Ethiopia)
- Can experience up to **3.8 times higher earnings** (Tanzania)
- Can be less likely to experience gender-based violence (India)

Women who have secure land rights are better able to provide nutritious food and access to education for their families. The research shows:

- Children were 33 percent **less likely to be underweight** (Nepal)
- Household **food insecurity decreased** by 36 percent (Ethiopia)
- A greater percentage of **household budget was dedicated to education** (Ghana)

Our commitment to gender-equal land rights is embodied by Landesa's Center for Women's Land Rights. This team of attorneys, sociologists, and development and gender experts champion solutions that level the field, strengthening women's land rights and improving outcomes for women, their families, and whole communities.



CLIMATE CHANGE

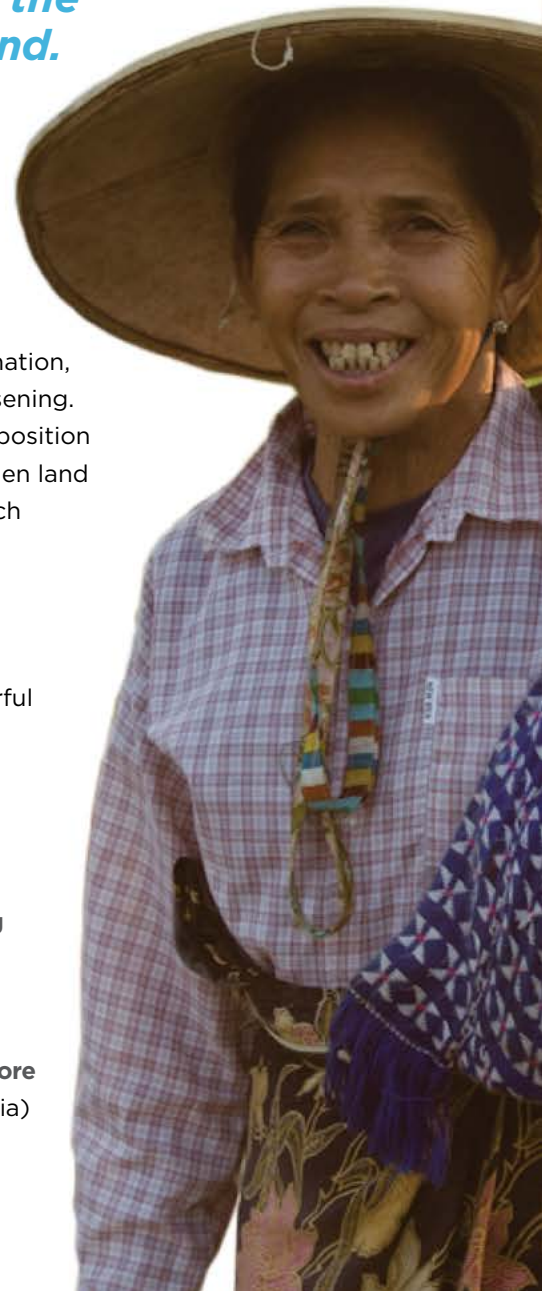
Landesa supports communities in fighting climate change, protecting themselves from its impacts, and sustaining the ecosystems on which we all depend.

The people least responsible for climate change and ecological damage are often the most impacted. Natural resources and land are critical to survival in many poor communities. Today, those resources are at risk.

One and a half billion people are directly affected by degradation of lands, from soil erosion, deforestation, salination, and other impacts, while extreme weather events are worsening. When communities have rights to their land, they are in a position to care for it and prepare for changing conditions. And when land remains productive, people are not forced to migrate, which improves the civic and political stability of entire regions.

Secure land rights enable communities to fight climate change and steward natural resources. When people can make decisions to invest in their land, it unleashes a powerful ripple effect. They are more likely to restore soil health, plant trees, stabilize slopes, and engage in other activities that preserve ecosystems, soak up carbon, and help slow climate change.


- Titling of indigenous land **reduced forest clearing** by more than 75 percent (Peru)
- Small farmers with stronger land rights were 39 percent **more likely to plant trees** (Ghana)
- Farmers with secure land rights were 60 percent **more likely to invest in preventing soil erosion** (Ethiopia)





STORY OF IMPACT
*Protecting
Indigenous
Land Rights*

Indigenous and local communities play a critical role in safeguarding more than half the world's land. Indigenous and local community-managed forest lands represent a globally important carbon sink, holding at least 22 percent of the total carbon stored in tropical forests worldwide. Research shows that while indigenous communities spend less per hectare on conservation measures than governments, donors, and foundations combined, they are able to achieve equivalent, if not greater, conservation outcomes. Ensuring that indigenous peoples have secure, legal rights to steward their forest lands is not only essential to their human rights, but also paramount to protecting the planet.

A close-up portrait of a smiling woman with dark skin. She is wearing a bright green headwrap with a red and yellow patterned band. She is also wearing a brown sweater with horizontal blue stripes. The background is a blurred natural setting with green leaves and brown tree trunks.

“Arguably no other organization of our generation has had more impact than Landesa.”

—**BILL MEEHAN,**
*Donor, Stanford Graduate
School of Business*

CREATE A RIPPLE EFFECT

Join us.

As the world works to eliminate global poverty and address the impacts of climate change, the need for effective, collaborative, and innovative solutions is crystal clear.

Land rights for the poorest people can address some of our planet's greatest challenges—from gender inequality to conflict, poverty to climate change.

Landesa is leading the way on land rights. The time to accelerate is now.

And with your support, we will:

- Create opportunity for millions of women and their families
- Help improve environmental stewardship and address climate change
- And spur sustainable, lasting economic growth.

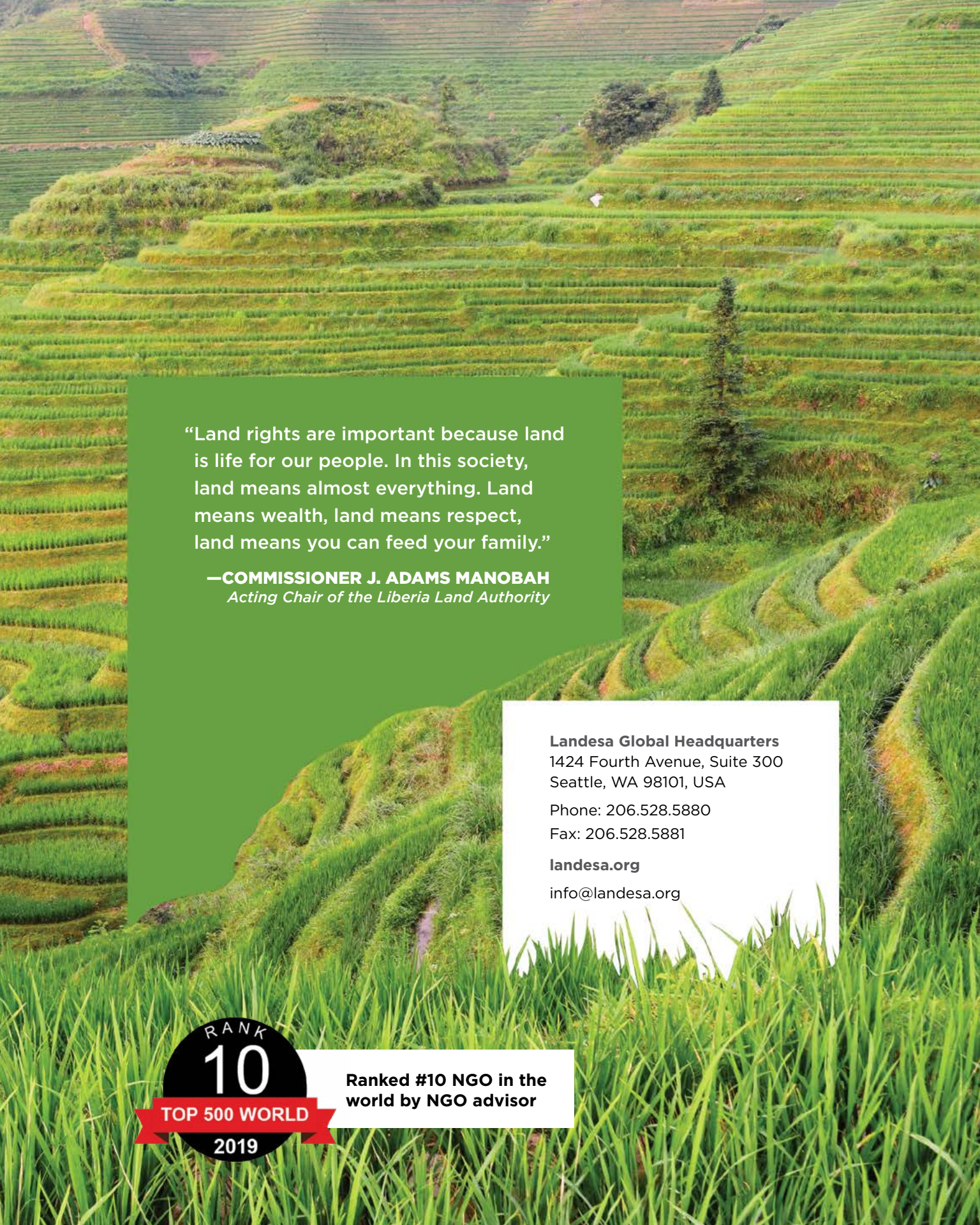
***Invest in our shared future.
Invest in Landesa.***

Contact us to discuss the ripple effect you'd like to create.

give@landesa.org

206-257-6104

landesa.org

A photograph of terraced rice fields on a hillside, with a green rectangular box overlaid on the left side containing text.

“Land rights are important because land is life for our people. In this society, land means almost everything. Land means wealth, land means respect, land means you can feed your family.”

—**COMMISSIONER J. ADAMS MANOBAH**
Acting Chair of the Liberia Land Authority

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Ranked #10 NGO in the
world by NGO advisor