

ENGAGE

The formal and customary frameworks for land tenure governance contain provisions which, if properly applied, could significantly improve women's land tenure security. Often, however, ignorance of what those rights entail under both the formal and customary systems, as well as resistance on the part of some men and local leaders, prevents these protections from being realized in practice. Women, communities and leaders may be uncertain about what rules apply concerning land, and many who may think they are applying customary rules correctly are not. To overcome these obstacles, the Model empowers women to understand and resolve their land issues through supported engagement with their families, communities and the formal and customary institutions for resolving land issues.

PLAN FOR ENGAGEMENT

1. Assess
2. Validate
3. Create Action Steps
4. Design curriculum/Plan
5. Equip the team

ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUPS

1. Equip
2. Converge
3. Act
4. Record

ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIVIDUALS

1. Support
2. Facilitate
3. Refer

ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

1. Identify
2. Train
3. Meet
4. Mentor
5. Community Awareness Raising

STEP ONE: ASSESS

You have already defined your overall project goal- the project aims to strengthen women's land tenure under custom. But as we know, insecure land tenure is a complex issue, and the root causes can be found in family relationships, rules about inheritance and marriage, weakened institutions, lack of awareness, and many other factors. It is easy to see that there is a problem, but it is less obvious how to understand and deal with the problem in practice.

In this step, you will define, with as much detail as possible, the particular challenges that women face in your target community. Understanding these challenges will allow you to refine your specific project objectives and develop a more concrete plan of action for work with women's groups. Specific and well-defined objectives help to clarify what exactly it is you're working to accomplish, gives your team a common language to discuss progress and issues, and helps you to track how well you are doing. Without objectives, it is very difficult to know when you have succeeded, and when you are drifting off-course. The Women's Land Tenure Security Framework (discussed in more depth on the following pages) can be a good way to organize your assessment efforts, and to ensure that you begin your work with women's groups understanding the full spectrum of tenure security issues.



TOOLBOX

SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BASELINE ASSESSMENT



REVISITING THE WOMEN'S LAND TENURE SECURITY FRAMEWORK

In the Introduction, we presented the Women's Land Tenure Security Framework, and discussed how it can provide a nuanced foundation for assessing and addressing women's land tenure security. Now, it is time to use this Framework to break down the big-picture issue of women's insecure land rights in your region into specific elements. From these elements, you will next need to assess:

- Which of these elements is relevant to your situation?
- Which ones are you able to deal with given your capabilities, opportunities, and constraints?

The Framework provides a foundation from which you can build your assessment tools, metrics, and – ultimately – your strategies to meet the needs that you identify in this step.

HOW DOES THIS WORK? Let's use an example.

In the framework, we identified five dimensions to assess the security of women's land tenure

A woman's land rights become more secure when:

- 1) Her land rights become more legitimate; or
- 2) Her land rights become less vulnerable; or
- 3) Her land rights are more easily enforceable; or
- 4) For fixed-term rights, her rights are granted for a longer period; or
- 5) She is able to exercise her land rights without engaging in layers of consulting and approval that are not required of men.

As you evaluate the needs and opportunities in your target area, use these elements to derive your lists of questions. For example, to understand whether a source of insecurity among your project participants is a lack of enforcement of their rights, you can ask a number of questions:

- Are women in this area facing a problem enforcing their rights?
- Are they aware of what their rights are so that they can identify a potential "issue"?
- Do they know where to present land rights issues when they experience problems?
- Are they able to access these places? Do they have confidence that they will be treated fairly if they take their issues to these forums?
- If they receive a favorable decision, what happens? Are decisions enforced?
- Do they experience more problems at home if they 'win' a case?

For each of the elements of secure rights, the answers to these questions will help you to define strategies and activities to address the needs that you encounter.

APPLYING THE FRAMEWORK

A WOMAN'S LAND RIGHTS BECOME MORE SECURE WHEN...

...HER LAND RIGHTS BECOME MORE LEGITIMATE

PROFILE: PROJECT PARTICIPANT,
PURANGA SUB COUNTY

"I am a widow. I bought land with my late husband in Puranga trading center when he was still alive. Now that he has died, my in-laws have taken the land. They say that all of their brother's land belongs to the family, and they say that no woman have control over land. They are saying this even though it is not customary land - we bought it together with our own money so that we could have land to grow on for many years to come. How can I realize my right to this land?"

...HER LAND RIGHTS BECOME LESS VULNERABLE

PROFILE: PROJECT PARTICIPANT, AGED 43,
PURANGA SUB COUNTY, NORTHERN UGANDA

"I came from Gulu district, and I am married into a clan here in Puranga. My brother-in-law has grabbed away our family land. He came and fenced off our land, claiming that he bought it from people who have since died. There is no witness to the purchase he claims, and says the witnesses are people who have died a long time ago. He keeps destroying our crops whenever we plant on the land. We heard he even surveyed the land. Clan elders invited him several times to settle the dispute but he refused to appear, saying that he was a very high ranking government official who could not appear before a mere clan. We took him to Local Council 2 court but he refused to appear. Instead he took the matter to High Court in Gulu. We can't afford to travel to attend the hearing from Gulu. What can we do?"

...HER LAND RIGHTS ARE MORE EASILY ENFORCEABLE

PROFILE: PROJECT PARTICIPANT, AGED 67,
LIRA PALWO SUB COUNTY, NORTHERN UGANDA

"I was married in 1965, and my husband died in 1992. The year after the death of my husband, my brother-in law took away the land I had been cultivating with my husband. I resisted. But my brother-in law took me to court, claiming that I had no right over that land. I won the case. Later on, his younger brother filed a fresh suit against me over the same land. I won the case again. Later, another brother-in law took me to court again, but the court was in Gulu. I cannot afford to travel with my witnesses to Gulu. The court stopped me from using the land (through an injunction). Now I have to rent land from neighbors for my survival as the case is still unresolved. What should I do?"



...FOR FIXED-TERM RIGHTS, HER RIGHTS ARE GRANTED FOR A LONGER PERIOD

PROFILE: PROJECT PARTICIPANT, AGED 32,
PURANGA SUB COUNTY, NORTHERN UGANDA

"I got married, but separated with my husband because he was mistreating me. I returned to my parental home. Now my brother is chasing me away, claiming that I do not have rights over our parental land. He cut my daughter with a machete, and set my hut ablaze in order to force me to vacate the land. Yet I am the one who took care of him from child hood. What should I do?"

...SHE IS ABLE TO EXERCISE HER LAND RIGHTS WITHOUT ENGAGING IN LAYERS OF CONSULTING AND APPROVAL THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED OF MEN.

PROFILE: PROJECT PARTICIPANT, AGED 48,
PURANGA SUB COUNTY, NORTHERN UGANDA

"My husband died before I went to the camp. That was during the war. After they closed the camp, I came home to live again on our land. My neighbors started extending the land boundary, knowing that I was a woman alone and have no one to support me. I called the clan members but they ignore me and will not listen to my dispute. I don't know what I can do now to be able to live peacefully on my land and support myself."

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Once women have joined the project, a more in-depth assessment of their specific needs and issues can be carried out. This will form the foundation for planning project activities: the women, CBFs and Project Officer will choose from the range of possible methods to address the priorities and needs identified in the assessment. This assessment should include: additional key informant interview, a women's land rights needs assessment, and a baseline survey.

METHOD 1: CONDUCT ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Interviews with key informants are a quick way to gather information that provides a high-level picture of the current systems, keys issues, and entry points. In addition, these interviews offer an important opportunity to sensitize key stakeholders with respect to the project's aims, activities, and processes.

METHOD 2: BASELINE SURVEY

The baseline survey is conducted as a census involving all participants. In the survey, women are individually interviewed to objectively and subjectively assess land tenure security issues pertaining to individual women, their households, and other women in their communities. The baseline identifies the primary sources of insecurity for project participants, and assesses the women's aspirations with regard to their land tenure situation. The baseline helps to identify risks and opportunities, and shapes the development of implementation plans that are tailored to the project area.



METHOD 3: WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The needs assessment can be conducted after the enrollment process and after the administration of the individual baseline survey questionnaire. Women should be asked questions in their respective groups. These focus group discussions can be facilitated by a third party, or by your project team.

THE AIMS OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT ARE TO:

- Understand and identify the participants' barriers and aspirations for their land rights; and
- Map out community dynamics and stakeholders' roles in impeding or supporting women's land rights.



STEP TWO: VALIDATE

To make sure that the conclusions that your team draws from the assessment activities accurately reflects the issues and hopes that the women expressed through their responses, the results of these activities should be presented to, and validated by, project participants in addition to CBFs and all project partners.



SAMPLE ONE-PAGER FOR VALIDATION WITH WOMEN

TOOLBOX



CASE
STUDY

During our implementation in N. Uganda, these needs assessment activities highlighted the key issues, risks, and aspirations relevant to women's land rights. These findings were presented to, and validated by, project participants. The most important findings included:

INSECURE LAND RIGHTS

- Land insecurity issues are driven mostly by family members;
- Experience of eviction threats is common;
- There is a lack of knowledge of the logical steps to take when land rights are challenged; and
- There is a need to understand the limits of women's own influence within and outside the family.

SECURE LAND RIGHTS ASPIRATIONS

- These varied among respondents. Common themes included a desire to:
- Access more land for cultivation;
- Have children inherit land without problem;
- Have place to sustain themselves when marriage fails;
- Change from "user rights" to "owner or co-owner rights"; and
- Have rights recognized more in the family than outside the family.

Following the validation of these findings by the participant groups, each CBF facilitated the groups to develop action points to address each of the issues identified, as well as any additional problems raised in discussion with CBFs and the Project Officer.

STEP THREE: CREATE ACTION STEPS

In the previous steps, you analyzed the local context, identified needs and opportunities for strengthening women's land rights, and you made sure that the women in your project agreed with your understanding and analysis of their situations. You framed this analysis in terms of the elements of secure land rights provided in the Framework, and have a clear understanding of the specific challenges, threats, and sources of insecurity that women face.

IN THIS STEP, YOU WILL ACCOMPLISH TWO IMPORTANT AIMS:

1. You will engage women to think actively and critically about their problems, and support them in brainstorming solutions that they want to pursue to address those problems; and
2. Using their ideas, you will develop clear steps for the project to implement with participant groups.

WOMEN-LED SOLUTIONS: CREATING ACTION STEPS

Using the results of the baseline and needs assessment, CBFs will facilitate a discussion with their groups in which they will identify the causes of each problem, and potential solutions that they think are possible and that will be effective in their communities.



TIP

Sometimes, the action steps identified by women and CBFs – though important – will fall outside the scope of your project. For example, one potential action point could be to provide materials or monetary support to help them build a structure on land, or seeds and plows to help them make use of land. These are good ideas, but they may not be feasible within the parameters of your project.

It helps to have clear limits, and to clearly define how you will engage so that you can keep your project to a manageable and achievable size. Clarity about what you will and will not do in the project will help to set realistic expectations among the group.



STEP FOUR: DESIGN CURRICULUM/PLAN

The development of the implementation plan will flow out of the action steps above, and will be informed by the CBF and women's assessment activities, Stakeholder Analysis, baseline and other assessment activities. The development of the implementation plan should be focused on the objective of empowering women, improving community awareness and support of women's land rights, and participating in broader advocacy efforts aiming to influence the policy and practice on women's land rights under formal and customary rules.

The implementation plan should identify concrete ways to engage with the various key stakeholders that surfaced during the Stakeholder Analysis. These will likely be: the formal and informal institutions, structures, and individuals within the local community. Engaging these stakeholders throughout the project will lead to more secure resource rights for women, their families, and their communities, and will support understanding and awareness of women's rights and the means and mechanism for realizing those rights.

“When I wear my t-shirt in the community, people respect me because it is a sign that I have been taught about women’s land rights. I find that many women reach out to me with questions about their land rights.”

- Project Participant, Lanyiriniri Parish,
Lira Palwo Subcounty

STEP FIVE: EQUIP THE TEAM (LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES IN PLACE)

A variety of methods can be employed to provide support and guidance to CBFs throughout implementation.

METHOD: QUARTERLY CBF REVIEW MEETINGS

Quarterly review meetings are an important mechanism for exchanging information with the CBFs about challenges and successes they are experiencing, to assess and reinforce good practices and insights among the CBFs, and to provide information and planning support about upcoming events, changes, and expectations. They are especially important for exchanging information about how the project design is working on the ground, and for adjusting the implementation activities in response to new situations, strategies that are found to be especially important or effective, and emerging opportunities.



TOOLBOX

QUARTERLY REVIEW MEETING AGENDAS



TIP

Small things mean a lot. Providing gumboots and plastic (rain-proof) folders for materials, good quality bicycles, reference materials for CBFs help reinforce them as valued project team members and community resources with the tools to do their work.



METHOD: SMALL CBF GROUP MEETINGS

Regular meetings of small groups of CBFs are a good way of providing support to CBFs on their daily challenges. Groups of four to six CBFs should meet regularly to share experiences and information, and to discuss solutions to common problems and challenges encountered through the project. The Project Officer can also attend these meetings when his or her schedule allows to reinforce good practices and to provide additional support.



CASE STUDY

In the Northern Uganda project, dirt roads and heavy rains during the wet season made the issue of transportation especially challenging. We decided to buy a dedicated motorcycle for the Project Officer to use to get to and from the target communities. CBFs were given bicycles to help them travel to the Trading Center for project training and meetings, and to move around the villages and among the homesteads where the project participants – women, leaders, and other stakeholders – lived. CBFs who carried out their duties for the entire project were allowed to keep the bicycles, providing an extra incentive to these key volunteers.

CBFs and the Project Officer were also given gumboots to help them do their work in the rain and mud.

Besides making it possible for CBFs to travel among villages to carry out their work in a range of weather conditions, these supplies gave CBFs an important sense of being valued, appreciated, and supported in their difficult work.

METHOD: ONGOING TECHNICAL & LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AND MENTORING

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, CBFs and the Project Officer should be in regular communication via phone and in person to discuss and resolve issues as they arise. The Project Officer should establish a rotation schedule to ensure that he reaches each of the parishes to check in and observe the groups during their regular meeting times.

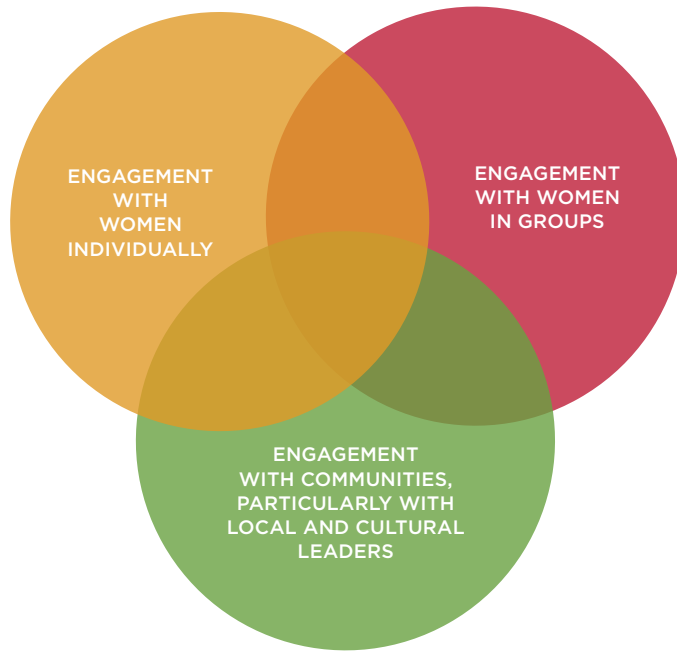
TEAM | LOGISTICS AND EQUIPMENT

In addition to your personnel support, you will need to equip your team with the materials and tools that they will need to do the work. Taking time to realistically consider the activities that you have planned, and what your team will need to accomplish them is an important step that will help your project implementation to go more smoothly.

Above, we outline several activities that will require that your staff can travel to the communities where the CBFs are working on a regular basis. Transportation is a challenge in most rural settings: how will your Project Officer get to the villages for meetings? How will the CBFs get to the homesteads where the women and their families live? How will the women get to the meeting points for the project activities? Though the answers to these questions will vary, the issue of viable transport is important in any intervention and should not be overlooked.

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER INCLUDE:

1. **THE WEATHER:** Do CBFs need special clothes or equipment (gumboots, raincoats)?
2. **PRINTED MATERIALS:** Does your team need printed materials (laws, for example) to refer to in their work? Do they need notebooks, pens, and folders in order to conduct their activities in an organized and professional way?
3. **COMMUNICATION:** How will CBFs communicate with your Project Officer? Do they have cell phones?
4. **INCENTIVES:** One way to motivate CBFs is to provide a small stipend to support their efforts. How will they be paid? Will they require bank accounts? What incentives might be needed to keep them engaged in the project?



ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUPS

Group engagement forms the core of project activities. Supported by Community Based Facilitators, women work together to identify specific challenges to women's land rights in their communities, and to develop plans to resolve them through customary, formal, and alternative processes. Community Based Facilitators play a crucial supportive role to the women, many of whom may be speaking up in their own defense for the first time in their lives. Key components of group engagement include: building women's capacity through training; facilitating weekly group meetings; and organizing and supporting group activities in their communities that promote awareness and discussion about women's land rights issues, and addresses specific barriers that the women are experiencing.

THE PROJECT ENGAGES AT THREE LEVELS:

- Engagement with project groups;
- Individual engagement with project participants; and
- Engagement with the communities, particularly with local and cultural leaders.

STEP-BY-STEP: ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUPS

1. EQUIP
2. CONVERGE
3. ACT

STEP ONE: EQUIP

The first steps in empowerment are building women's knowledge of their land rights under customary and formal rules, building their awareness of processes and support structures that are in place to help them when they have a problem, and building their capacity and confidence that they need to realize their rights. Overcoming the barriers of ignorance, misunderstanding, and cultural norms that prevent women from speaking up lays the foundation for empowering women.

Though the particular needs of a community may vary, there is a core curriculum of information on women's land rights issues that you can use as your starting point. This curriculum provides the substance, the tools, and a forum for empowering women to improve their land tenure security.





TRAINING MODULE 1: WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS TRAINING PART ONE

The purpose of this training is to promote women's awareness of their land rights under custom, and thereby to strengthen their capacity to participate in securing their land rights in the community to which they belong. After this training, women will better understand their rights, and the available resources and options that they have to exercise those rights (the substance of empowerment).

Specifically, the training aims:

- To provide specific knowledge about land dispute resolution processes within the local cultural context;
- To widen women's awareness on their land rights;
- To give insights to women into how the traditional structures have isolated them from land ownership and control, and how they can address this barrier; and
- To enable women understand how changes in status (for example, marriage, separation, divorce, death of a partner or spouse, remarriage, and motherhood) relates to land rights in the customary system.

CONTENT:

The training will cover key areas relevant to women's land rights and address the barriers and aspirations identified in the baseline assessment. These include:

- The project overview (goal, objectives, target, expected benefits and women's roles in the project);
- Women's land rights under customary and formal rules;
- Traditional structures for land disputes;
- Alternative land conflict resolution options (appropriate channels to informally resolve land conflict); and
- Property rights and rights of married and unmarried women under customary law.

TRAINING MODULE 2: WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS TRAINING PART TWO

The second general land rights training deepens women's knowledge about their land rights, and addresses potential points of vulnerability identified through the engagement with the women through the project. Potential areas to cover include rules and concepts of property rights; fixed term rights; and "land grabbing" issues and responses.

EXAMPLE TOPICS:

1. Building knowledge on the concept of human rights and women's land rights;
2. Overview of the formal land tenure system;
3. Land rights of women and other vulnerable people under customary laws;
4. Overview of referral pathways for land disputes under the customary structure;
5. Review of customary and formal land administration institutions;
6. Risks and responses to land grabbing at the local level; and
7. How to assert land rights within the customary framework.



These are the tools of empowerment: the confidence, techniques, and ability to speak effectively as an individual and in support of others.

TRAINING MODULE 3: ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING

In many communities, women are not accustomed to speaking in front of other people, and are particularly reluctant to do so in front of leaders and groups of men. Women's silence is a barrier to their ability to realize their rights.

Assertiveness training is designed to overcome this barrier, and to empower women by giving them the tools they need to speak up in defense of women's rights in any setting (in the home, in public meetings, group or club meetings, or family meetings). These are the tools of empowerment—the confidence, techniques, and ability to speak effectively as an individual and in support of others.

Many women will approach this activity with more than a small amount of uncertainty, so it is important to conduct the activity in a small and safe environment where the women feel comfortable. The weekly group meeting location is a good option for holding the training; this will also help to keep the training group numbers low so that everyone has a chance to learn and practice speaking. Following the training, the weekly meetings provide an ideal opportunity to reinforce the training, and women should be encouraged to practice speaking in front of the group during these meetings.



POWER OF PUBLIC SPEAKING AS A WAY TO EMPOWER WOMEN

Our experiences with the assertiveness training showed that this activity holds great potential for unlocking women's ability to see themselves as powerful agents of change in their own lives.

Our Project Officer remarked:

From their initial shyness and reluctance to speak in front of the group, the women built their confidence in speaking, and now profess confidence that they will be able to negotiate for their land rights at the clan structure even without support from the CBFs. This will reduce the workload of CBFs, and will help to promote the sustainability of the project since these women will be empowered enough to voice their problems on their own.

One lesson that we learned was that some women took to public speaking quite naturally, while others were shy. To address this, those who were shy were identified and given special assignments to make presentations before the group, and also to make good use of non-verbal signs while speaking in public.

Following up on the training itself, CBFs incorporated practice sessions into weekly meetings to build women's confidence in public speaking and assertiveness. This practice centered on making presentations on land issues.

Some project participants reported that after the assertiveness training, they were able to pass on the knowledge they acquired to other people in their communities, some had their problems actually resolved, while others reported that they have confidence to approach authorities.



CASE
STUDY



TOOLBOX

SAMPLE ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING CURRICULUM

TRAINING MODULE 4: DRAMA TRAINING

This training provides one forum in which women can strengthen their rights. By identifying priority issues that the women face, and then developing a drama program for women to carry out in their community to raise awareness about these issues, drama training reinforces the women's self-awareness as active and empowered agents working to improve their situations, while effectively expanding the reach of the project to the communities in which the women live.

The purpose of the drama is to raise community awareness and to encourage the community to reflect on women's rights to land - what they are, how to protect them, major challenges, and how to support women in realizing their rights. The drama should be formulated in a way that shows women's land rights issues, and that demonstrates how customary and formal rules can help address those issues. It should also highlight women's feelings, attitudes and concerns about the issues presented, and should illustrate how things change for the better for the whole community when women's land tenure is strengthened. Drama can be an effective tool to communicate abstract ideas about rights in more concrete and relatable terms. It can also help members of the community empathize with women's land rights challenges in a non-confrontational setting, giving them the space to re-examine their biases on the subject without forcing them to take any immediate action to address a particular real-life problem.



CASE STUDY

After learning about women's land rights, and about the customary and formal systems for land administration and dispute resolution, women in the Northern Uganda project were extremely eager to share their knowledge with others in their communities, and in neighboring villages. They requested training in drama, and said that drama was their preferred method for conducting outreach and raising awareness in their communities.



TOOLBOX

SAMPLE DRAMA TRAINING CURRICULUM



STEP TWO: CONVERGE

Providing a safe and supportive environment in which women can meet to discuss their challenges and strategies to overcome the barriers that they face is an important part of the Model approach to empowering women. In many cases, these weekly group meetings are the first, and only, opportunity women will have to talk to other women about land issues, and about their perceptions and problems with land. With the support of the CBFs, women begin to see their situations in a broader context, one in which they have rights that they understand, and in which there is a structure and a support system to help them to realize their rights. Through the group work, they come to see themselves as agents of change in their own lives, and the women work together to identify problems and come up with action plans to solve them.

Group meetings are held regularly and are typically facilitated by CBFs and attended by women in the project. Each group determines how frequently and where to meet. The following key activities take place during each meeting:

1. CBF facilitates learning/training based on group action points and emerging issues that may arise in the course of their discussion. In some cases, the CBF may ask women to facilitate the training in order to encourage them to share their insights, and to ensure that they remain invested and active in the project whether they have a personal land issue or not; and
2. During the meeting, women share their experiences, progress, and challenges with their land issues.
 - Individual women share their current challenges, and the group supports her by brainstorming strategies and next steps that she or the group can take to help her overcome her particular struggle. Facilitating group meetings based on individual issues that emerge during the meetings helps to keep all participants engaged – whether they have a current problem or not. The entire group becomes invested in the well-being of each member, and the women are able to identify similar problems that they are facing when they hear their colleagues talk about them.
 - Group meetings also give women an opportunity to practice their public speaking skills, and CBFs may ask less talkative women to lead a discussion to ensure that all women are able to actively participate.
 - Rehearsal of assertiveness skills.
 - Reinforcement of curriculum on customary rules and the legal curriculum (statutory land laws).



TIP

The ultimate determinant of how often your groups should meet will be the women themselves. Past experience implementing the model shows that meeting less than once per week tends to slow progress, and prevents the group from developing momentum or a sense of shared effort. Once or twice per week – particularly during the first year of activities – is ideal.



TOOLBOX

FORMAT FOR MEETING MINUTES

STEP THREE: ACT

Having activities that bring the group into engagement with communities is an important part of empowering women to realize their rights, and raising awareness in the community about women's land rights issues. In developing their action steps, project participants and CBFs listed what types of activities they are interested in pursuing. In Step Three, CBFs will discuss these potential strategies with the women in their groups, and the group as a team will decide how they want to engage.

[For more details about the methods for group engagement with communities, see Community section.]

CBFs should record and report on these activities so that all partners are aware of what the groups are doing, and so that the monitoring and evaluation team can assess the effectiveness of each activity.



CBF REPORTING FORMAT

TOOLBOX



SAMPLE ACTION POINTS FOR WOMEN'S GROUPS

TOOLBOX



Land can be a volatile and contentious issue. Consider women's safety and confidentiality in project design and implementation. Ask them what they prefer and what feels safe and comfortable to them.

TIP



ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIVIDUALS

In addition to group activities, CBFs engage with women at an individual level. Individual-level engagement supports group activities by providing support to individual women with their specific land challenges, and by providing a confidential setting in which women can discuss their problems and develop a plan for resolving them. CBFs act as case counselors to women, providing advice and supporting women as they take action to resolve their land issues. Because they are tailored to individual women's problems and aspirations, the activities for individual engagement will vary.

STEP-BY-STEP: ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIVIDUALS

1. SUPPORT
2. FACILITATE
3. REFER



For a woman's land rights to be secure in the customary setting, her family must recognize and support her rights.

In Northern Uganda, one family head whose wife was a project participant said, "I have learned a lot about women's land rights from my wife — now my entire family recognizes and respects women's land rights."

STEP ONE: SUPPORT

In this step, you will adopt methods to support women's efforts to resolve their land issues. CBFs are now equipped to support women as they work to address their specific land issues. This direct support will likely take many forms, and will be determined by each woman in coordination with the CBF working with her. Whatever method is adopted, it is important that each woman feels comfortable with the activity: she is the person who is best able to identify possible risks and negative consequences that could arise from an activity that is inappropriate to her situation.

METHOD: CBFs FACILITATE RESOLUTION OF LAND ISSUES

Create a template for tracking land issues.

A major strength of the Model Approach to engaging in the local communities is that it works to utilize, strengthen, and hold accountable the existing structures of leadership and land administration at the local level. In assessing each individual's particular land issue, you may find that mediation, informal meetings with clan or family heads, or customary dispute resolution are the best way to proceed. In such cases, CBFs play an important role in helping each individual woman reach the appropriate forum, and facilitate the mediation or meeting by playing a supportive role to her. CBFs do not themselves conduct mediation, but instead help to move the process forward by helping to arrange the necessary meetings, and serving as an advocate for each woman through the proceedings.

By using the existing, legitimate customary structures, this method can reduce resistance to the CBF's involvement, and can result in more enforceable, respected, and sustained outcomes for the women. At the same time, it reinforces the positive rules and institutions that exist within the customary context. The purpose of this step is to ensure proper record keeping of quantitative data on issues which concern project participants. This monthly tracking tool will be used to track information about:

- Numbers of women issues resolved within a given month;
- Names and location of project women whose land issues are resolved;
- Means through which the issue was resolved;
- Name(s) of people who assisted in the resolution of the case or who helped to resolve the issue;
- Techniques (good practices) used to resolve the issue;
- List of project women whose land issues are still ongoing.



LAND ISSUE TRACKING TEMPLATE

TOOLBOX



METHOD: HOUSEHOLD VISITS

Many land disputes affecting women occur within the household. One way to address this barrier to women's security on their land, and to raise the level of knowledge about women's land rights on the part of families and household members, is to carry out household visits. This meeting forms the basis for learning at the family and household level, and is designed to be responsive to people's attitudes and perceptions towards women's land rights. By giving the family members the opportunity to ask questions, listen to the response, and reflect on their biases and perceptions about women's land rights that influence decisions, household visits can be a powerful way to help family members understand one another, and to understand the importance of women's land rights to the family.

The specific discussions that take place during these household visits will vary from household to household. Before each visit, the CBF will meet with the woman and discuss the issues at play, and the outcome she is hoping to achieve. They will decide together what approach they should take during the household visit. In some cases, the Project Officer or others from the community may be called to join in the visit.

By bringing the family together, the CBF can help to soften the edge of entrenched disputes, and can help to forge a common understanding. The woman and her family can then work together to decide how they want to proceed, whether in follow up visits by the CBF, or by meeting with the clan, etc.

STEP TWO: FACILITATE

METHOD: FACILITATE MEDIATION

Mediation is one approach to resolving conflicts that can be supported through the project. It is important in planning mediation to understand who already has a role in mediating land issues within the community, and within the customary structure. It is unlikely that a new, external mediation will be as effective as one that is already used and supported by the community and the parties to the mediation. An additional consideration is CBF capacity— the training of CBFs may introduce principles of mediation, but is not likely to be sufficient for CBFs to be competent mediators on their own.

CBFs are well-situated, however, to facilitate women who wish to take their issues to mediation, by providing information about the process, setting up the meeting itself, and (if needed or if allowed) sitting with the woman to provide support in her mediation procedure.

Mediation of land cases should be carried out by customary leaders with the assistance of local officials as deemed appropriate to the local context. Mediation should only be done with the consent of the two conflicting parties. In case one party refuses to participate in the mediation, the selected mediator should not force the process.



TIP

Use traditional or existing structures to mediate conflicts (rather than creating a new alternative dispute resolution (ADF) system that is unlikely to be upheld or enforced).



STEP THREE: REFER

METHOD: CONNECT WOMEN TO APPROPRIATE RESOURCES

Many women may have a pending case in a local or district court. Commonly, women may think that they have an active case, but they do not know for certain, and their confusion about the status of their case may be preventing them from using their land. Though direct legal support is outside the scope of the model, one important way to empower women in this situation is to connect them to local support structures that can provide the help that they need. This critical function of making women aware of resources, and helping them to connect with them, is an important way to empower women.

METHOD: FOLLOW UP SUPPORT

It is very important that CBFs follow up with women on their individual cases, and that they seek guidance and input from the Project Officer if they find that they do not know how to handle a case.

The Project Officer will also review the women's journals in order to track women's progress, and to identify concerns or potential issues requiring additional support.

CASE STUDY: ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL LAND CASES FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION

In Northern Uganda, our local partner hired a legal consultant to conduct a legal aid clinic for project groups. This lawyer held legal training, and registered women's information, including the status of their issues and the relevant details of the dispute. Over fifty-one land cases were registered. The lawyer then analyzed the cases to assess the current status of each issue, and found that of the fifty-one land cases, forty-two could be handled through mediation, while only nine cases required legal representation in court. Our local partner then worked with their consultant to plan how these cases should be handled in light of the resources available.



CASE STUDY



ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

STEP-BY-STEP: ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

1. IDENTIFY
2. TRAIN LEADERS
3. MEET
4. MENTOR
5. COMMUNITY AWARENESS RAISING



STEP ONE: IDENTIFY

The stakeholder analysis conducted early on in the project will provide information about the structures and important individuals that are relevant to the project, and will provide insights that will allow the team to develop an engagement strategy to work with those stakeholders appropriately. However, additional information will be required to link these strategies to the actual individuals who occupy those roles within the local and cultural leadership structures. To accomplish this, CBFs should identify the individuals and fill out their respective stakeholder list. This will allow the project team to engage with the leaders, to invite them to training and other events, and to carry out other activities with these stakeholders.



TOOLBOX

SAMPLE LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

Many land conflicts occur within the household and within the community itself (i.e. not between outsiders). Community outreach should target the extended family and specific villages to enhance participation and empowerment of women enrolled in the project.



INSIGHT

STEP TWO: TRAIN LEADERS

Local and cultural leaders are critically important to supporting and enforcing women's land rights. Limited awareness and understanding among leaders of the formal law, how it relates to customary rules and how those two systems combine to create protections for women's land rights, is a common barrier to realizing women's rights in practice. Targeted trainings to raise leaders' awareness of, and capacity to enforce, women's land rights is therefore a critically important part of the Empowerment Approach.

Because there are often many types of leaders playing a range of roles within the many institutions dealing with land, the sheer number of leaders that are important to women's land issues – and to the success of your project – can be overwhelming. The stakeholder analysis is an important tool that can help you to identify the most important leaders who should be prioritized for training.

Bringing together leaders from across the range of formal and informal structures, from different localities, and from different levels of each respective hierarchy of authority, can provide an important opportunity to cross-pollinate ideas, and to challenge misguided notions about women's land rights.



TIP



It is likely that there may be far more leaders than you can train through your project activities. If this is the case, consider providing training to a smaller group of leaders. In this Training of Trainers (TOT), leaders will be trained on the substance of women's land rights, and will also receive instruction and support to enable them to train their peers and communities. In this way, you can reach a greater number of leaders, and training recipients will play an active role that will encourage them to engage with the issue of women's land rights.

It is also likely that more than one training will be necessary to cover the substance of women's land rights and the techniques for peer training.



INSIGHT

Leaders are hungry for information, and once they know what the rules are, they will try to uphold them. "Now that I have been trained [by the project] I also initiate individual visits to families that do not recognize women's land rights and sensitize them about women's rights to land." [Clan leader, Parwec Parish, Northern Uganda]

Leaders are the key to the project success. Helping stakeholders acknowledge the overall problem of women's insecure rights to land, and gaining their support for the project should be a central focus of your work. As one clan leader told us: "Since the project has included us, we now recognize and work to promote land rights not only in the cultural context but also the statutory context."

METHOD: TRAINING OF TRAINERS

The aim of this training is to strengthen the capacity of leaders to conduct effective training of their peers and lower level leaders. The training will cover basic human rights concepts; methods of acquiring land; administration of land (formal and informal); women's land rights under customary and statutory laws; issues of land grabbing; and mediation skills training.

Following this training, leader trainees should receive follow-up support, in order to help them to plan future trainings of lower level leaders, and to provide an opportunity for leaders to share their various experiences handling land issues since the time of their initial training.

The trainer-leaders can then carry out training on the subjects of:

- Introduction to the concept of rights/human rights;
- Land tenure systems and methods of acquiring land;
- Management/administration of land;
- Women's land rights (Formal and informal laws);
- Court procedures; and
- Mediation and conflict mitigation.

The Project Officer and the CBFs should follow-up with these leader-trainers to ensure that they deliver effective training to the target leaders. These trainers should also be provided with enough reading materials to allow them to properly quote the correct sources of information (i.e. laws, rules, customary principles).

Examples of issues covered during this training include:

- Discussion and clarification of the concept of rights (Human rights, women's rights);
- Women's land rights under custom and statutory laws;
- Administration of land justice (formal and informal);
- Court justice system (how it works, challenges and solution);
- Alternative dispute resolution (mediation);
- Will writing and (the ideas behind a will) and sale agreements;
- Legal requirements for; renting land, borrowing land, selling/ buying land; and
- Advocacy skills (how to advocate for women's land rights).



FACILITATING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN WOMEN AND LEADERS

Engagement meetings were among the strategies employed in Northern Uganda, in an effort to forge and strengthen positive relations between women and their leaders.



CASE
STUDY

MEETING AGENDA:

1. Short prayer
2. Introduction
3. Overview of the project, purpose and how the meeting will proceed
4. Discussion of challenges women face while attempting to resolve their land matters
5. Reactions by leaders
6. Discussion of way forward
7. Closure

During the meeting, women were given a chance to share the challenges they had experienced while trying to work with their leaders. Leaders also had an opportunity to respond and share their thoughts about what would work better to attain land justice for women.

Key issues raised by women centered on: the protection of children born out of marriage (illegitimate children); widows; and divorced women.

The women asked, “If all the clan leaders are aware of the land rights of women, why is it that divorced women and widows are suffering?”

Such a meeting is offers a rare opportunity for women and leaders to meet and openly discuss their perceptions and concerns.

Many people may confuse the concept of rights and authority or responsibility. Clarifying language, and making sure that translation of terms accurately reflects the intent of ‘rights’ (as opposed to ‘dominion’ or ‘control’) is important, and can help to break down negative perceptions of women’s rights.

Changing perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs, and supporting women’s rights in traditional contexts can take a long time. Think of these dialogues as just the beginning of a longer-term process of changing mindsets.



INSIGHT



TRAIN WOMEN LEADERS

Women leaders are important, though often-overlooked, stakeholders. In many cultures, women leaders play a special role, often representing women's interests in the traditional leadership, and sometimes having specific roles in adjudicating land boundaries or supporting the use of land for particular functions. Identifying these leaders, developing their capacity and supporting them as they fulfill their traditional roles in the customary structure, can be a powerful way to support women's land rights in your implementation area.

Often, these leaders will require the same level of training as the women beneficiaries (women's land rights training and assertiveness training), as well as additional training on mediation, leadership, or other skills. These leaders should also be oriented to the project.

Follow-up meetings and support is one way of strengthening the capacity of these women leaders to work on women's land rights issues, and to collaborate with the project in their communities. The training and follow up engagement can help these leaders to develop their skills and interest in mediation, household mentoring, community dialogues and engagement meetings with the women's groups. The leaders can also provide important insight to the project team about appropriate and effective engagement with the leadership structures.

TRAINING WOMEN LEADERS TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS

In our pilot project in Northern Uganda, we realized through the stakeholder analysis that within the Acholi clan structure there are Rwot okoro (or Lawi mon me dogola) (head of women at family level) and Lawi mon me kaka (head of women at clan level). These leaders directly represent women to chief of clan or sub-clan, and their inclusion in the project has the potential of easing the coordination with the clan structure.

The project team decided to prioritize training of these cultural women leaders, focusing on three key themes: orientation to the project; public speaking; and general women's land rights (customary & statutory laws). Following the training, the rwot okoro immediately began to actively engage in their communities, undertaking a range of activities, including:

- Mediation of land cases;
- Follow-up on cases and support at the household level;
- Community dialogue facilitation; and
- Coordination of project activities with cultural leaders.

Within the three months they reported that over 40 land cases has been mediated and resolved through their efforts. They stated that some of these cases did not involve serious mediation, but were just a negotiation within the families. They added that with the same strategy they will be able to carry out additional mediation and negotiation at the household and family levels.

LESSONS LEARNED:

Some women leaders are very influential and eloquent - when given knowledge on land matters they can be a bridge to the customary system for vulnerable women in the community.

Two days of training was not adequate enough— further engagement and support of these leaders is needed to enhance their learning on land matters and their effectiveness as advocates and intermediaries for women in their land issues.

The use of visual aids was effective for training adult learners— participants were more active when the facilitator presented issues with the aid of diagram or pictures or when he was associating learning with objects. They also learn more when fully involved in the discussions.

Linking CBFs to women leaders enhanced project effectiveness —including the CBFs in the training with the women leaders gave them the opportunity to get to know them better. The women leaders made commitment to work with the CBFs in addressing women's land rights.



CASE STUDY



STEP THREE: MEET

METHOD: ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS

The purpose of engagement meetings is to break down the divide between women and their leaders, so that women can consult and discuss their land issues more freely with the leaders. In this activity, key leaders are selected from among the local and cultural leaders trained through the project, as well as other key leaders identified by the project team. The meeting provides as an opportunity for women to air out their land issues to their leaders, and also to understand leaders' thoughts about women's land rights.

STEP FOUR: MENTOR

METHOD: MODEL LEADERS

Model leaders can communicate positive ideas about women's land rights in a way and in situations that the project may not otherwise be able to reach. Integrating these leaders into the project strengthens interaction of the project within the community. These model leaders disseminate information on women's land rights within their areas of jurisdiction, and help coordinate project activities (e.g. mediation) and work as community focal persons on issues of land for the purpose of this project. These leaders are selected from among the participants in the leaders training on the basis of their neutrality, diligence, and good faith, and with the consent of each women's group and selected community members.

STEP FIVE: COMMUNITY AWARENESS RAISING

METHOD: COMMUNITY DIALOGUES

The purpose of community dialogues is to generate and build awareness, and improve attitudes and perceptions on women's land rights within the engagement communities.

The dialogue should target the categories of leaders identified in the stakeholder analysis, and should include a spectrum of leaders and community members to allow for a cross-pollination of ideas.

For this activity each CBF should select a set number of participants from the identified stakeholder groups. The dialogue is facilitated by the Project Officer, and focuses on the key concepts of women's land rights within the customary and formal frameworks, as well as fundamental human rights principles.

Results:

- When men understand the concept of rights, their negative perceptions towards women's land rights can change;
- Increased knowledge of participants on women's land rights; and
- Some elders can be extremely resistant to accepting women's rights. Nevertheless, community dialogues can bring about some slight changes in their attitudes towards women's land rights.



METHOD: RADIO DIALOGUE

Radio is a powerful medium in many rural areas, and is an effective way to engage the community so as to increase community knowledge on women's land rights, and to strengthen the capacity of the women to speak in public. Communities are informed about this dialogue one week in advance for effective participation. During the Radio Dialogue, volunteer participants from the women's groups and from the leaders training engage in a dialogue with the community members. The aim is to help clarify any misconceptions about women's land rights, and CBFs and project participants can determine what topic should be discussed. The dialogue is announced by the radio host, who records and broadcasts the dialogue on the radio.

METHOD: RADIO MESSAGING

Radio messages – short public service announcements – can be an effective way to highlight women's land rights issues. The local partner, with input from the women and the CBFs, can develop the key issues to be broadcast.

Example subjects discussed in the messages include:

- The Meaning of rights and women land rights;
- Legal and customary rules about women's land rights (access, control, and ownership); and
- Recognition, enforceability, and protection of women's land rights by households, families, clans, communities and leaders,

Engagement with communities accomplishes more than just conveying messages to a passive audience: these activities are designed to initiate a dialogue on women's land rights issues that will continue well after the day's events have concluded. In Northern Uganda, for example, following each drama outreach event, community members would come to CBFs to ask for help with specific land rights challenges. CBFs then referred these community members to women leaders and community support resources. In this way, the impact of the project extends beyond the relatively small number of group participants, and reinforces the positive structures that exist in each community to reduce and address land issues at the local level.



INSIGHT



TOOLBOX

TOOLBOX: SAMPLE RADIO MESSAGE

METHOD: DRAMA EVENTS

Most likely, the populations in your target will be predominantly illiterate people whose main occupation is farming. These characteristics limit the communication strategies that you can use to reach a broad audience to raise awareness of often-complex and sensitive issues related to land. Presenting your message through drama can be a powerful and effective way to reach your target communities. These events serve the dual purpose of entertaining and educating the audiences. Land conflicts – for men and women – are a major concern and a source of tension among many rural communities. Dramas are designed to focus attention on the scenarios and consequences of women’s land rights struggles so as to stimulate community discussions and raise awareness, without necessarily assigning blame or elevating the existing tension in the community.

Many rural areas have trained drama groups that are available for hire. To create an effective drama on women’s land rights issues, you will need to work with the groups to develop appropriate themes and scripts for the target community. CBFs or the Project Officer should work with these groups to ensure that the performance is appropriate and well-rehearsed.



TIP

You may find that your project participants want to perform the drama themselves, as a way to raise awareness and share the knowledge that they have acquired through the project. In the Northern Uganda project, women in some of the project groups were enthusiastic about performing dramas themselves. For these groups, drama became a central focus of community outreach activities. Women stated that they felt they had learned so much about land that they felt a duty to share their knowledge with others. This motivated them to focus on drama.





CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

Case Study: Using the Framework to Assess Women's Needs in Northern Uganda

Case Study: Public Speaking as a Way to Empower Women

Case Study: Assessing individual land cases for appropriate action

Case Study: Facilitating Connections between Women and Leaders

Case Study: Training women leaders to support women's land rights

ENGAGE CHECKLIST

Complete the following:



CHECKLIST

PLAN FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Review the Women's Land Tenure Security Framework
- Apply the Framework to your context
- Conduct additional key informant interviews
- Conduct a Baseline Survey
- Conduct Women's Land Rights Needs Assessments
- Validate your findings
- Create Action Steps
- Design your curriculum
- Equip the Team
- Hold Quarterly CBF Review Meetings
- Hold Small CBF Group Meetings
- Provide Ongoing Technical and Logistical Support and Mentoring

ENGAGEMENT WITH GROUPS

- Train women in groups
- Hold regular group meetings
- Support group activities

ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIVIDUALS

- Support women in carrying out action steps
- Facilitate resolution of land issues
- Carry out household visits
- Refer women to appropriate resources
- Provide follow up support

ENGAGEMENT WITH COMMUNITIES

- Identify key leaders
- Provide Training of Trainers to Leaders
- Provide Training to Women Leaders
- Facilitate Engagement Meetings with Leaders
- Mentor Model Leaders
- Carry out Community Awareness Raising Activities
- Community Dialogues
- Radio Dialogue
- Radio Messaging
- Drama Events