



Landesa™
Rural Development Institute



IMPACT REPORT

Summer 2019



Dear Friends,

I am thrilled to share with you the inaugural edition of Landesa's Impact Report, a regular publication where we will highlight exciting developments and program updates from our work around the globe. This is a rewarding season for Landesa - one in which we are seeing the effects of decades of hard work come to fruition, creating opportunity and promise for millions of rural families through the power of land rights.

In China, after many years of advocacy and partnership with the Chinese government, key Landesa-championed provisions were officially adopted into a new wide-sweeping land law. This law has the potential to strengthen land rights for 240 million households. In Liberia, Landesa played a critical role in the passage of the Liberia Land Rights Act. We are now using our local, on-the-ground operations to educate the Liberian public, particularly those in rural, poor communities, about the Act's groundbreaking implications. Landesa's commitment to rural families is also being championed forward through our Stand for Her Land Campaign, an exciting global advocacy campaign focused on women's land rights.

Thank you for your partnership in this important work. I look forward to sharing more stories and successes with you.

Chris Jochnick
Landesa President & CEO

IMPACT by the NUMBERS



+307 Million

Number of people in 2018 whose land rights were strengthened through programs influenced or supported by Landesa.



4,836

Number of government officials, practitioners, and key influencers in 2018 whose ability to promote land rights have been enhanced by Landesa.

SPOTLIGHT

Mrs. Ghadai lives in Odisha, India with her husband. They are members of a Scheduled Caste family, the lowest caste group in India.

Through Landesa's land and livelihood programs, she received crop resources and training to maximize garden production on her land.

Now, Mrs. Ghadai grows potato, cucumber, pumpkin, and brinjal in her backyard garden. These vegetables provide food for her family as well as financial support through her selling efforts at the local market.





“One of the stories was a woman who had a land title - who was then able to feed her children, buy clothes for them, send them to school - all because of the garden they planted.

They thrived.

It increased their standard of life and her goals for her children a thousand fold by that simple act of a piece of paper with their names on it.

These stories are unique to each person - and there are millions of them.”

Jill Ruckelshaus

2019 Roy L. Prosterman Awardee

THE POWER of LAND RIGHTS



In Nepal, children whose mothers own land are up to

33% less likely to be severely underweight



In Tanzania, women with strong property and inheritance rights earn up to

3.8x more income



In Ethiopia, farmers with secure rights to land are

60% more likely to invest in soil erosion prevention

NEW LAWS IN CHINA CHANGE LANDSCAPE



In the most significant reform to Chinese land laws in more than fifteen years, in early 2019 the Chinese government adopted several Landesa-championed amendments to its Rural Land Contracting Law.

Landesa has advised the Chinese government on land reform for decades. Since 2014, when the revision process for the 2002 Rural Land Contracting Law began, Landesa has actively engaged with the government on the law's process, including generating and disseminating a research paper to legislators, conducting private briefings to discuss Landesa's recommendations with key decision makers, and providing feedback on the legislative drafts. The new Amendment aligns with several important recommendations made by Landesa, including:

Registering women's names on land certificates for the first time. Previously, only the head of household, which was typically a male, was listed on the land certificate. This change will reinforce women's rights to land, creating an avenue for social empowerment and a stronger voice in decision-making.

Amendments championed by Landesa have the potential to strengthen land rights for

 **240 million** CHINESE HOUSEHOLDS

Specifying the equal rights of both women and men members to household landholdings. In China, where it is customary for a newlywed woman to move into her husband's village, women are often at risk of being denied their rightful share of land in their new household. The equal rights amendment in the law guarantees women an equal share of their household land, and ensures they will retain those rights in the event of divorce.

Prohibiting taking back of farmers' land rights when they move to cities. Under the new law, urbanized farmers are able to preserve their land rights no matter where they live, or are free to transfer rights in order to fund their urban endeavors. With China rapidly urbanizing, this new legal change ensures that the 200 million Chinese farmers now living in cities, and any who are considering a move to an urban area in the future, can do so without fear of losing their land rights.

LIBERIA'S LAND RIGHTS ACT

Liberia passed the long-awaited Land Rights Act in September 2018 – a watershed moment for land rights across Africa – extending land rights to millions of rural Liberians for the first time. The Act was a major step forward for the land rights of all Liberians. Under the previous land law, as much as 80 percent of Liberians lived without legally recognized rights to land.

Landesa worked closely with the Liberian government throughout the law's process, providing inputs and key gender questions on the initial Land Rights Policy and subsequent Land Rights Act. Liberia's Land Rights Act ensures that the land rights of all rural Liberians are recognized, protected, and guaranteed by law. The Act includes stronger protections for women's land rights, including provisions for women's participation on local land management committees. The law also provides spouses with equal rights to be members of land owning communities, an important safeguard for women.

Now, alongside local partners, Landesa is spreading awareness and education about the new law, and its implications to all Liberians, through radio programming, educational dramas, and local community gatherings.



“For men and women alike, land is the foundation for security, shelter, and livelihood – land supports women’s dignity and creates pathways to empowerment and economic opportunity.”

— Karol Boudreaux, Landesa’s Chief Program Officer



STAND FOR HER LAND ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN



In March, Landesa officially launched the Stand for Her Land Campaign, an exciting multi-year global advocacy campaign aimed at closing the critical implementation gap between law and practice to ensure millions of women can realize land rights in their daily lives.

Women still encounter persistent barriers to realizing their rights to land – despite laws and policies that enshrine those rights – in half the countries around the world. Landesa is leading this effort as the secretariat of a global coalition of campaign partners, which include Habitat for Humanity, The World Bank, Global Land Tool Network, and the Huairou Commission.

The main objective of the campaign is to drive real change on the ground, channeling resources, tools, and support for national and local advocacy efforts in focal countries. Stand for Her Land is the first advocacy campaign of its kind to merge global and local efforts to strengthen women's land rights from the ground up.

Learn more at www.standforherland.org



**WOMEN ARE
<15%
OF LANDHOLDERS
WORLDWIDE**

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Landesa is partnering with Mercy Corps to strengthen the gender and land tenure components in Mercy Corps' FARM program in North Kivu Province as well as completing an analysis of the DRC's legal framework governing women's land rights.

INDIA

Through Landesa's programs, 266,570 women received land literacy trainings in the Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, and Karnataka states. Additionally, government officials received training on women's land rights, including 33,396 elected representatives in West Bengal and 97 in Uttar Pradesh.

MYANMAR

The Myanmar government has allocated land benefiting more than 150,000 of the poorest community members with Landesa support. Landesa also worked with the Myanmar government to identify 2.8 million acres of land for further allocation to landless families, including more than 650 specific sites.

ZIMBABWE

Landesa prepared a comparative land dispute resolution report for the Zimbabwe Land Commission that will help guide a Landesa-led land conflict resolution training for Government of Zimbabwe staff members.

TANZANIA

Landesa's Tanzania Program Director, Monica Mhoja, was selected as one of five activists from around the globe to receive an inaugural fellowship position through the Bertha Foundation. Over the next year, Bertha fellows will focus on the nexus between property, profit, and politics contributing to land and housing injustice.

***“Seasons do not matter –
now we have plenty of food throughout the year.”***

- Indira, land allocation beneficiary in Odisha, India

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT SUPPORTING OUR PROGRAMS?

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