

# LANDESA IN CHINA



**Our world is encountering challenges of scale and complexity greater than ever.**

**Climate change** threatens the lives and livelihoods of billions worldwide.

**Gender inequities** persist in social norms and economic opportunity.

**Rural poverty** remains entrenched across the globe.

With a robust economy and the largest population in the world, China holds profound power to confront these challenges.

The challenges of climate change, gender inequity, and poverty are interwoven.

But the solutions too share a common thread: **LAND**.



China is home to immense natural capital, including farmer-managed forests that sequester carbon. Securing equitable legal rights to this land encourages farmers to care for the trees, helping to **slow climate change**.



Land is a key building block for **gender equity**. When women have stronger land rights, a cascade of benefits follows. Women's increased control over land leads to greater investment in land, increased spending on education, and stronger food security, as well as lower levels of malnutrition and gender-based violence.



In rural China, land is an unrivaled **economic asset**. Smallholder farmers depend on their land to grow food and earn an income. Likewise, farmers who migrate to the city continue to hold land rights as a safeguard against economic shocks, allowing them to more confidently pursue new opportunities in cities.

For over three decades, Landesa has offered input to Chinese policy makers on a range of land issues. Our recommendations are informed by thorough analysis of national laws and policies alongside discussions with farmers to understand challenges in accessing and using land.

Through the **power of land**, we are helping to lay the foundation for **peaceful, sustainable, and equitable development**.

## THE GREATEST POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAM IN HISTORY

In 1979, rural families in China began to receive tenure rights to small plots of land. The results were dramatic: in just the first decade of reform, annual grain production increased by 8 percent, annual rural income grew by 11 percent, and **poverty declined by more than half**.

China's central government has since increasingly recognized secure land tenure as a powerful tool to address the fundamental cause of rural poverty and revitalize rural development. At the request of the Chinese government, Landesa has worked in China since 1987, supporting government efforts to advance reforms that lay the foundation for sustained, broad-based rural development and a more equitable and stable society.

### OUR IMPACT IN CHINA OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS



**460 million women and men** in China saw strengthened land rights from **4 policy changes** that Landesa supported.



**324 million women and men** in China received formal land rights from government programs supported by Landesa.

### HIGHLIGHTS

To date, Landesa has supported the work of Chinese policy makers who have enacted progressive legislation, including that which:

- extends the duration of farmers' tenure on the land
- helps to protect farmers from confiscatory land expropriation
- secures farmers' land rights as property rights
- requires the inclusion of women's names on land certificates

Landesa also conducted **farmer surveys** and **field research** across 17 provinces to aid Chinese officials and leaders to further improve and more fully implement progressive laws and policies.



**LANDESA** is an international non-governmental organization that fights rural poverty and provides opportunity and security for women and men through the power of land rights.



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