

**Together Women Rise  
Transformation Partnerships Grant - Year 1 Report  
(January – December 2023)**

**Catalyzing Gender and Climate Justice from the Ground Up**

**To achieve both gender and climate justice, Landesa starts with land.** With more than 50 years of global and localized expertise grounded in the land rights sector, we know that secure rights to land is one of the most important assets in the Global South, and a critical driver of poverty alleviation, food security, and gender equality. Insecure land rights leave many communities and households vulnerable to exploitation, displacement, and violence - particularly for women and young girls. As demand for land rises across the Global South, land tenure security becomes a more pressing gender equality challenge.

Women disproportionately experience poverty and marginalization in the context of land. Worldwide, women are the primary producers of food, holders of traditional ecology and medicinal knowledge, and guardians of complex ecosystems. And when **women hold rights over land, oppressive and unequal power dynamics between women and men are transformed**, enabling women to claim agency and rise as potent leaders within households, communities, and societies, shifting the needle toward gender justice. Stronger land rights for women increases their decision-making power and is associated with more investments in families' health, education, and human capital. Yet, the discourse on women's human rights often neglects the pivotal issue of land rights, and gender justice often lacks adequate investment in the land, Indigenous rights, and climate action fields.

As a **leading global NGO working at the nexus of land rights, gender equality, and climate justice, we take an ambitious and innovative approach** to addressing deep-rooted, complex challenges faced by the world's most marginalized and vulnerable. Gender and social inequalities blunt crucial leadership and violate human rights. Increasing women's control over land increases their decision-making ability and challenges patriarchy at its root, by fundamentally changing women's economic, social, and political status, thus supporting and enabling their leadership. Women's land rights contribute foundationally to achieving gender and climate justice.

**The Landesa [Center for Women's Land Rights](#) collaborates globally to elevate and catalyze the voices and leadership of grassroots women and women-led organizations who are driving the movement on land rights at local and national levels to realize both gender and climate justice.** Under our Transformation Partnerships grant with Together Women Rise, in 2023 the Center carried out activities detailed in this report to help reach our **goal of achieving long-term, systemic gender equality impact.**

We are honored to partner with Together Women Rise and share our successes and learnings this year under two key objectives: Movement Building and Storytelling. The remainder of this report describes our activities for 2023 under these objectives, and includes a set of global metrics we have developed to measure the outcomes of our work as we continue forward. For several of these metrics, we will begin gathering data in early 2024. However, we have included examples of work relevant to each metric.

## Objective 1, Movement Building

The Center prioritizes deep collaboration with the broader gender equality and climate action movements, with the recognition that land is key as a foundation for both. We partner with a broad network of global, national, and grassroots actors to accelerate effective action by governments on gender equality and climate action through the realization of women's rights to land in practice. A key aspect of the Center's leadership in the women's land rights space is via facilitation of the Stand for Her Land (S4HL) campaign, which the Center leads on behalf of Landesa. At the global level, S4HL is facilitated by a Steering Committee of seven global organizations committed to the implementation of women's rights to land globally (see more detail on S4HL in the following section).



Women of the “Escuela Feminista” in Zambrano, Colombia demonstrate the percentage of the population that owns different parcel sizes of land. Escuela Feminista launched in early 2023 as part of the Colombia S4HL coalition.

**Stand for Her Land (S4HL) is a global advocacy campaign focused on securing women’s rights to land in practice at the grassroots level:** Recognizing the cross-cutting importance of women’s land rights for achieving gender equality, climate action, and food security, leaders across the globe have made formal commitments to secure these rights, and have incorporated international standards and commitments into national legal and policy frameworks. But even when laws are equitable, deeply entrenched patriarchal social norms and a lack of investment often result in weak implementation. S4HL exists to support millions of women around the globe to claim equal footing in a fast-moving world through the transformative power of land rights. The Center leads S4HL for Landesa, in coordination with global, national, and grassroots organizations, driving implementation of women’s rights to land in practice.

Currently, S4HL has six country coalitions in Bangladesh, Colombia, Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda, each comprised of local grassroots organizations, national civil society

organizations, and other non-state actors working towards the shared goal of stronger women’s land rights. Led by a local coordinating organization, these coalitions partner with and catalyze other key stakeholders, including government agencies and civil society, to realize women’s land rights through supporting implementation and reform of laws and policies, shifting discriminatory social norms, and building awareness of women’s land rights for the general public to enable women to claim their rights.

### S4HL Country Coalitions (click each Coalition to learn more)

[Bangladesh Coalition](#): 9 Member Organizations

[Colombia Coalition](#): 6 Member Organizations

[Ethiopia Coalition](#): 17 Member Organizations

[Senegal Coalition](#): 11 Member Organizations

[Tanzania Coalition](#): 25 Member Organizations

[Uganda Coalition](#): 29 Member Organizations

**97 Member Organizations and counting!**

A crucial component to our S4HL work involves capacity-building and trainings. We support grassroots women<sup>1</sup> to be present in global venues by providing training on how to engage with government officials and how to navigate advocacy processes within these venues. The goal is to empower grassroots women to have the agency and confidence to voice their priorities for themselves. Women often face social, cultural, and resource barriers to access and be heard in decision-making spaces – we work to support them in overcoming these barriers and gain the confidence to stand for their interests and rights, and serve as a voice for their communities.



*Speakers at Women Deliver in July 2023, with participation of Lipi Rahman- Badabon Sangho sharing the experiences of grassroots work of women in Bangladesh.*

Approximately 70% of grant funding currently supporting five of the six S4HL Coalitions is funneled directly to Coalition members for their respective advocacy activities. Each Coalition sets their own criteria for how they manage their collaborations and local agendas. Landesa works with Coalition lead organizations and partners to support smaller organizations’ capacity to pursue, secure, and manage funding independently.

***Metric:*** Landesa actively tracks the number of S4HL Country Coalitions that are leveraging international or sectoral norms, standards, frameworks, or goals to influence revisions to or implementation of national frameworks.

S4HL is working with all six S4HL Country Coalitions to leverage international norms such as treaty-body standards, Rio Convention standards, and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as regional norms such as those set by the African Union for women’s land rights implementation by aligning advocacy activities with these norms in engagements with government agencies and public awareness.



*S4HL Coalition members in Senegal*

<sup>1</sup> S4HL prioritizes the leadership of women who advocate for and from the communities in which they live across the rural to urban continuum, as their perspectives and work are at the heart of transforming gendered and economic power dynamics. “Grassroots women” includes those advocating both inside organizations and as individual activists.



In 2023 a global advocacy strategy was developed to increase the visibility of the S4HL campaign and particularly the work of the Coalitions; elevating the voices of grassroots women, linking Coalitions' advocacy objectives to global advocacy arenas, and further positioning and linking women's land rights to key thematic areas such as gender-based violence, climate change, women's economic empowerment, and food security.

The strategy was developed through a series of consultations with national coalitions and partners. Five thematic focus areas emerged for 2023 Advocacy Activations:

- 1) Gender-based violence and its connection to securing land tenure.
- 2) Addressing inequalities in inheritance rights, especially land and property inheritance.
- 3) The impact of women's land rights on climate mitigation and adaptation.
- 4) How securing land rights enables gender equality and women's economic empowerment.
- 5) Food security and its connection to women's tenure security.

**Metric:** Number of people attending trainings conducted by implementing members of the S4HL Steering Committee. Trainings may be technical, programmatic, or operational in nature.

- In February 2023, Landesa trained members of the Bangladesh S4HL Coalition in developing a communications strategy during a National Communications Workshop attended by 33 individuals.
- In May 2023, Landesa worked with Equal Measures 2030 (EM2030), in partnership with ARROW, GROOTS Kenya, and La Ruta Pacifica de las Mujeres, to organize a webinar for all six S4HL Country Coalitions. This session introduced the EM2030 Sustainable Development Goal Gender Equality Index as an advocacy tool that Coalitions could use in their own work.
- In November 2023, Landesa participated in the last lesson module of the Colombia Coalition of Caribbean Women for Land and Territory's School, *Weaving Knowledge, Defending Autonomy*. This module focused on research and communication and participants discussed what it means to do research and be a researcher, participatory action research and framings, and previous research experiences.



*Landless women of Dinajpur working with the Bangladesh Coalition show their "Landless certificates" received, which is the 1st step applying for "khas" (public land)*

**Metric:** Proportion of S4HL monies directly funding national-level and subnational-level women's land rights practitioners and activists.

Since the inception of S4HL in 2018, \$2,540,880 has directly funded national-level and subnational-level women's land rights practitioners and activists. Landesa also supports S4HL Coalition members in capacity-building partnerships. As an example, in the Fall of 2023 Landesa and a Tanzania S4HL Coalition member [Pastoral Women's Council](#) jointly applied for and were awarded a \$25,000 grant from Lever for Change, a nonprofit affiliate of the John D.

and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Over the next year, Pastoral Women’s Council and Landesa will conduct a gender equity-focused research project in Embaash and Enkikaret villages of Longido District, Arusha, to increase understanding around the challenges and limitations faced by Tanzanian pastoralist women in accessing, owning, and controlling communal land, while exploring potential benefits and outcomes that arise from securing and strengthening women's land rights and participation in decision-making within land management structures. More than 80% of the grant funds are directed to Pastoral Women’s Council on this project.



**Driving changes to and implementation of international standards:** Globally, 3.5 billion people are affected by land degradation; it threatens food security and livelihoods, drives migration, and raises the risk of gender-based violence. Landesa partners with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to support governments to strengthen tenure rights as a basis for combatting land degradation while ensuring gender justice and social inclusion. This [awareness raising guide](#), presented at the UNCCD Conference of the Parties in May 2022, provides a framework for these efforts.

The Ethiopia S4HL Coalition is utilizing this framework to advance both UNCCD goals on land restoration and tenure security for women. Ethiopia is severely impacted by land degradation, with 85% of its land area degraded. Ethiopia is also located within one of the world’s most food-

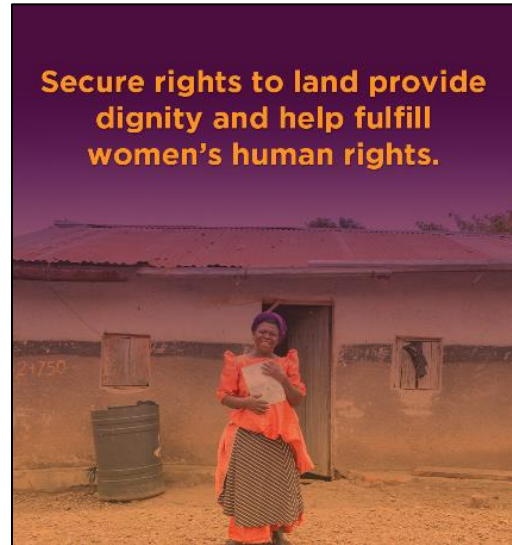


*Beth Roberts (right), Landesa’s Center for Women’s Land Rights Director, presents on gender and land rights at the Gender Caucus meeting of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) alongside Karen Bernard (left) of the UNCCD Secretariat at the UNCCD implementation conference in November 2023. Landesa was able to recommend specific language on gender and land tenure to all 197 governments that are party to the Convention.*

insecure regions, compounding the effects of land degradation, which impacts women and girls disproportionately. The Government of Ethiopia has been allocating land to women and youth in support of and in tandem with their land restoration programming (e.g., tree planting, agroforestry, sustainable soil management). This has increased women’s tenure security and agency, agricultural productivity, and increased employment for women and youth, alleviating poverty and improving food security. These programs can go further with greater advocacy, support, and resources.

The Ethiopia Coalition, with support from Landesa, is conducting legal and policy analysis to provide the Government of Ethiopia with recommendations for integrated land restoration and gender-equitable land rights programming. The Coalition will include the recommendations and process of advocacy in a case study to be shared with the UNCCD in March 2024, supporting governments and civil society globally to replicate these crucial approaches for women’s agency, leadership, and livelihoods in the context of climate action.

In collaboration with our Climate Change Program and S4HL, the Center for Women’s Land Rights works closely with the Secretariats and gender caucuses (and broader civil society advocacy groups) of all three [Rio Conventions](#) to integrate women’s land rights more deeply in the climate action, land restoration, and biodiversity agendas, including the Gender Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the UNCCD, and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Both within Landesa programs and S4HL Coalitions, we also support integrated implementation of women’s land rights and Rio Convention, human rights, and [Sustainable Development Goal](#) commitments in collaboration with civil society and government partners. As Landesa is present across all these agendas, we are uniquely placed to explore ideas and provide support to global and national actors to strengthen implementation frameworks, leveraging transformative impact for women across the world.



Landesa has also worked for many years with key partners to support the development and adoption of the [Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment No. 26 on Land](#). This is the first comprehensive statement from a human rights treaty-monitoring body on land as a human right. Landesa is now continuing this work with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and civil society partners to identify how this new standard can be implemented, particularly how it can be leveraged in advocacy with governments to implement women’s land rights, and how civil society can leverage it to support increased awareness of human rights standards on land.

**Metric:** *Number of changes to international or sectoral norms, standards, frameworks or goals, influenced by Landesa and/or S4HL, to protect or strengthen land rights, and percentage of these that expressly protect women, youth, indigenous peoples, and/or communal land rights.*

- Landesa has had this metric in place for several years, and has seen enormous success, in collaboration with partners (e.g., the General Comment on Land, the establishment of a [“Collective Women’s Land Rights Commitment”](#) within the Generation Equality Forum Framework, UN Women’s initiative to accelerate gender equality, and the UNCCD’s adoption of two decisions on land tenure). We are predominantly focused now on implementation of numerous international norms that guarantee women’s land rights, although there is still significant space for advocacy for improved frameworks related to women’s land rights, particularly in the climate action realm.



**Metric:** Number of countries in which Landesa and/or S4HL is leveraging international or sectoral norms, standards, frameworks, or goals to influence revisions to or implementation of national frameworks.

We are leveraging international norms and standards in all six S4HL countries: Bangladesh, Colombia, Ethiopia, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda. Please see description above on page 3.

**Formal partnerships and network building:** These are key pathways by which Landesa and S4HL are able to build collective strength across a variety of entry points to bolster women’s land rights as an issue central to gender equality, to collaborate with other key actors in the gender equality, women’s rights, and feminist spaces, and to connect actors across the global, national and grassroots sectors. One key example includes our partnership with UN Women for S4HL that included joint engagement at COP28, promoting the centrality of women’s land rights in climate action. Within the climate crisis, we are making a strong case for resources and attention to be turned more towards women as change agents in the climate action movement.



*Hindou Omarou Ibrahim, President of the Association for Indigenous Women (left) speaks with Beth Roberts, Director of the Landesa Center for Women’s Land Rights (right) at COP28*

Landesa collaborated with several other S4HL partners at the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP28) in Dubai in December 2023 to support greater awareness of and action on women’s land rights by governments, UNFCCC actors, and civil society partners. Landesa and other S4HL partners supported members of the Bangladesh and Senegal Coalitions to attend COP28 and to share about their work with key stakeholders and during events.

Landesa also partnered with UN Women for several events focused on women’s land rights, including one event in partnership with the COP

Presidency and featuring the Feminist Action for Climate Justice (FACJ) Action Coalition, one of six formal coalitions under the UN Women-led Generation Equality Forum, which accelerates progress toward gender equality in accordance with the Beijing Platform for Action, and links to other international frameworks (the Sustainable Development Goals, human rights, climate action). Landesa is part of the leadership of FACJ, which has helped to elevate women’s land rights as central to both gender and climate justice. COP28 is also a key venue to deepen relationships with the Women and Gender Constituency and the Indigenous Peoples Caucus, two official constituencies of the UNFCCC with which Landesa has worked for several years and through whom we strengthen advocacy efforts on land tenure and gender justice globally.

**Metric:** Number of formal partnerships with global and regional organizations.

- We currently have formal Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) in place with four global partners, and are in process with another four. Current partners are the International Federation of Surveyors, Global Land Alliance/Prindex, the International Senior Lawyer’s Project, and Land Bridge. MOUs are underway with Land Portal, the International Development Law Organization, the UNCCD, and UN Women.

**Metric:** Number of organizations added to the women’s land rights Platform.

Building on previous women’s land rights stakeholder mapping work, in 2023 Landesa created a database of organizations working on women’s land rights and on the intersection between climate and land rights. The database includes information on each organization’s description, type, focus areas, location, and contact information. Thus far, 214 women-led grassroots organizations from nearly 50 different countries have their work registered on our new **Women’s Land Rights Platform (map pictured below)**, creating a growing, powerful network of women-led movements to connect and share their missions with the world.



**Global convenings, conferences, and events** are a crucial platform for championing women’s land rights, connecting with diverse actors from allied arenas (gender equality, climate action) and mobilizing diverse audiences (heads of states, grassroots activists, CSOs, and other key influencers). As such, we measure this as part of our movement-building work as well as our storytelling work.

**Metric:** Number of publications, presentations on women’s land rights produced, organized, or presented by Landesa

- While we are not officially reporting on this metric yet, we have examples of publications produced by S4HL and Landesa over 2023. In April 2023, S4HL launched an online campaign to raise awareness of the situation of inheritance rights in S4HL focus countries and its long and short-term impact on women’s economic empowerment. Rowshan Jahan Moni from the Association for Land Reform and Development in Bangladesh and Landesa’s Beth Roberts co-authored [a blog on inheritance rights](#) as part of the kickoff for this activation.
- In October 2023, the Center for Women’s Land Rights published “[Land Empowers](#): A life-cycle look at how women’s and girl’s relationship to land can lead to transformation or discrimination.” This piece covers the lifecycle from before birth to death and demonstrates how women and girls face discrimination regarding land, and how changing the gendered narrative as well as implementing gender-transformative interventions can support women and girls’ to live equal, empowered lives.



**Metric:** Number of presentations with a global event audience featuring voices of grassroots women.

While we are not officially reporting on this metric yet, we have several examples where the voices of grassroots women were featured in global speaking events throughout the year.

- *67th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women:* In March of 2023, Landesa and several members of the S4HL Steering Committee (International Land Coalition, the Huairou Commission, Habitat for Humanity, and the World Bank) attended the 67th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67). The priority theme for this year's CSW was "innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls," and the review theme was "challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls."

CSW is a crucial space for women's land rights advocacy, as it brings together state agents, development partners, advocates, and activists from around the world to reflect on progress and share practices in empowering women and girls and realizing their human rights. It is a key opportunity to highlight and promote the issue of women's land rights as a women's and human rights issue, and to elevate grassroots voices from the campaign as well as build strategic partnerships.

Our engagement at CSW resulted in key outcomes:

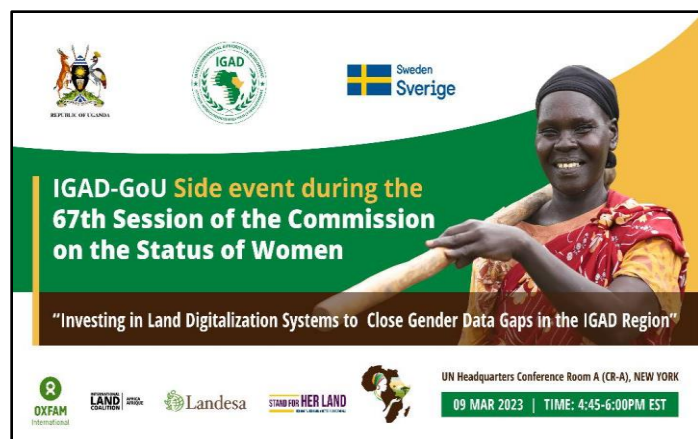
- S4HL confirmed the development of a formal partnership with United Nations Women (UN Women).
- We explored the expansion of S4HL into additional Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) countries, in alignment with their women's land rights strategy and in furtherance of campaign partnership with them.
- We deepened partnership with International Development Law Organization (also exploring formal partnership for S4HL); exploring partnership with UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

Landesa also led five events at CSW to elevate the women's land rights movement within the women's rights and gender equality arena, to elevate the voices of grassroots women:

- *"Data and Dirt: Innovations in Land Rights for Gender Equality"* (Online Parallel Event): Members from the Colombia, Bangladesh, and Uganda S4HL Coalitions represented and shared how S4HL leverages innovative approaches to bridge the gap between law and practice to realize women's rights to land, food, housing, and natural resources. They shared how different Coalitions use a combination of digital media, participatory data gathering, social norms and behavior change approaches, and weave the results of these approaches into public and policy advocacy to build political will for action on gender justice and climate justice related to land and natural resources.



- *“Innovation and Digital Technology: Facilitating Women’s Secure Land Tenure for Climate Resilience and Sustainable Development for All”* (High-Level Event): This event was co-hosted by the Kenyan government, UN Women, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Landesa, Feminist Action for Climate Justice, Economic Justice and Rights, International Land Coalition, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and the International Federation of Surveyors. Speakers featured Dr. Jemimah Njuki from UN Women and Maite Rodriguez Blandon from the Huairou Commission (a S4HL network). Landesa presented on S4HL as an innovative approach for accelerating implementation of WLR. The event highlighted innovative and grassroots-led uses of digital technology to further women’s leadership in land administration and tenure security, including the use of drones in Guatemala to support geospatial mapping (noted by Huairou Commission), and identified next steps for greater gender equity in the use of digital technology in the land sector.
- *“Bold Actions Beyond the Talks: Realizing Rural Women’s Land Rights and Tenure Security”* (High-Level Event): This event was sponsored by the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and co-sponsored by the United States Department of State, UN Women, International Land Coalition, Intergovernmental Authority on Development. The event was a roundtable focused on highlighting the transformative agenda for women’s land rights and what is needed to realize it. Speakers from UN Women, International Fund for Agricultural Development, GROOTS Kenya (a grassroots ally of S4HL), the German government (permanent mission to the UN), and Landesa explored existing commitments and challenges, and the shared commitment to resource the women’s land rights movement. Landesa gave a call to action, referencing the Women’s Land Rights Collective Commitment housed under the Generation Equality Forum.
- *“Investing in Land Digitalization Systems to Close Gender Data Gaps in the IGAD Region”* (High-Level Event): This event was co-sponsored by the Government of Uganda, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, International Land Coalition, and Oxfam, and focused on Uganda’s transition to a digital land registry, and the challenges and opportunities for stronger governance and the implications for women and other marginalized groups. The discussion centered on the strategy for and need to strengthen women’s land rights in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development region, and the role the S4HL campaign could play in supporting building political will for governments, supporting civil society calls for change, and shifting attitudes towards women’s land rights.
- *“Rural Women’s Rights and Technology”* (Side Event): Sponsored with the government of Tanzania, this event showcased the work of the S4HL campaign and Landesa Tanzania in securing women’s legal rights via advocacy efforts with the Government of Tanzania to implement women’s land rights, and paralegal support via the Sheria Kiganjani (“Law on Your Palm”) app, which allows women to access information and legal assistance to support their land rights claims.



*Women Deliver:* Women Deliver is a global flagship event for gender equality and women's rights. Held in Kigali, Rwanda in July 2023, Women Deliver brought together over 6,000 activists, policymakers and change makers from around the world. Landesa and S4HL co-convoked a one-day pre-conference session on climate change, and co-led a panel on the role of women's land rights in addressing climate crises. Additionally, members of S4HL participated in three side events, providing grassroots women and civil society organizations implementing the campaign the opportunity to speak on various panels. Landesa also hosted a S4HL booth featuring the campaign's work in all six countries.



*Dr. Monica Mhoja, Landesa Director of Outreach, Africa (center) shares information about gender equality and women's land rights at Women Deliver.*

## **Objective 2, Storytelling**

Land rights are integral to women's rights and advancing gender equality. **We work to make the women's land rights movement more visible, as women's rights to land contribute powerfully to healing our relationships with each other and with our planet.** When women, men, communities, nations, and the world -- hear and can act on this understanding, we all have a brighter future. The Center for Women's Land Rights is helping to amplify the hopeful, transformative story of the power of land rights to achieve gender justice.

**In July 2023, Landesa launched a [women's land rights story-telling platform and map](#).** The platform offers a space for women around the world to share their stories as a powerful tool for change, and for organizations to make their work on women's land rights more visible on a global stage. Women's diverse experiences and perspectives are a valuable part of the larger narrative of the push for women's land rights. All story contributions help ensure that women's voices are heard and can inform policies and programs that promote gender equity and justice. The map demonstrates where women and grassroots women's land rights organizations are working to advance gender equality around the world.

**Metric:** *Number of women's stories shared on the women's land rights platform.*

Since the launch of the story-telling platform in July 2023, 59 women from 27 different countries have shared their stories on the women's land rights platform, and these numbers are growing. Furthermore, 214 women-led grassroots organizations have registered their work on the platform, creating a growing, powerful network of women-led movements to connect and share their lived experiences and missions with the world. **We invite you to visit the platform linked above and learn more about this powerful network and their stories!**

One such story that demonstrates the deeply embedded social norms and gender stereotypes that discriminate against women in land is from Ms. Susan Bakita of Kamuli, Uganda.



## Susan Bakita of Kamuli, Uganda

Bakita inherited two acres of land from her father but unfortunately people claiming to be the true owners started alleging ownership.

“Dad had given me all the documents to show that he had given me the land but before he died. However, my father was too sick, scrupulous people lured him into signing a fake document indicating that he had given the land to him but thank God I had the original documents,” said Ms. Bakita.

She says the people claiming ownership of the land were using police to torture them and try to forcefully take the land.

“They beat and tortured my mother who was staying on this land. They arrested her for three months, stole all our household items. They even burnt all the sugarcane we had planted on the land,” said Ms. Bakita.

She says the case was later taken to court and with the help of a female lawyer and a former minister, and after two years of continued physical violence and harassment, they managed to win the case.

Bakita is appealing to women’s organizations to continue empowering grassroots women to know their land rights so that in future they do not have to struggle and feel it is wrong to own land.



*“Because of the bad experience we endured with my mother to reclaim our land, some women in our district started fearing owning land, even me myself at one point I felt bad and prayed I had a brother who would have inherited my father’s land. I have however attended many training sessions by women groups like UCOBAC and the Stand for Her Land campaign in Uganda so I know I have a right to own land.”*

**Publications and informational communications** involving grassroots voices are crucial to driving national, regional, and global attention to the importance of women’s land rights and the gender equality movement – increasing awareness, understanding, and advocacy. The Center works to publish blogs, articles, videos, webinars, social media, podcasts, and presentations that shift narratives, social behaviors, and norms.

**Metric:** *Number of publications and informational communications pieces shared, and estimated number of views.*

- While we are not officially reporting on this metric yet, we share examples of publications produced by S4HL and Landesa in 2023 above on page 8, and below in shared resources.

**Metric:** *Total estimated reach of S4HL social media campaign.*



- From January 1, 2023-December 18, 2023, S4HL social media reached 9.8 million people. In 2024, Landesa will be able to report on the reach of media mentions as well. Beyond social media outreach, Landesa Center and S4HL increased awareness on the importance of women’s land rights and the gender equality movement through various media engagement activities shared below.

Landesa and S4HL coalitions organized a global webinar on June 27, 2023. The webinar “*Stand With Us – A call to action for women's land housing and property rights for people and planet*” had almost 200 attendees and 500 registrations, and brought together representatives from the six established S4HL Coalitions to share achievements to date and a vision for the



campaign moving forward with a broad audience. The webinar also featured representatives from development, intergovernmental, and national government partners, including the Secretary’s Office of Global Women’s Issues of the US Department of State, GIZ, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, UN Women, and a representative from the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development in Uganda. These partners underscored the role women’s land rights plays in accelerating gender equality and sustainable development and why collective advocacy is crucial to strengthen women’s land rights. The webinar served as an entry point for S4HL to support actors and allies of the movement who have not previously been engaged with or aligned with the campaign.

In 2023, Landesa collaborated with the S4HL Bangladesh coalition working to close the gap on women’s land rights by documenting one woman’s journey to access her land rights. Monoara Begum is a divorced mother of two, who left an abusive marriage – and with it, her home and access to land to earn a living. In that moment, her father made a choice to give her a piece of family land to build a home, and another plot of farmland. The decision defied social norms in Bangladesh that favor men in land and inheritance rights. When asked about his decision, Monoara’s father laughed at the idea that he had gone against social customs and insisted that his daughter should have her right to land. It was an inspiring choice, and a surprising one in a country where less than 5 percent of land in Bangladesh is held by women, despite the fact that women constitute nearly 3 out of every 4 of the country’s farmers.



[Click here to watch “A Daughter’s Right”](#)

A unique form of storytelling is exemplified by the Bangladesh S4HL Coalition as well. They partnered with a local folk group called *Rupantar* to record a folk dance performance and song used to educate communities about women’s land rights, which was screened in local communities throughout the year. [Click here to watch.](#)

**In 2023, Landesa was also the proud recipient of a Skoll Foundation-supported initiative from the [@VideoConsortium](#) that connects local filmmakers and social innovators to produce solutions-focused short documentaries that catalyze positive change.**

**Our short film shares the story of Imelda, a farmer in Mufindi District in Tanzania's Southern Highlands who was able to secure her land thanks to Landesa's Land Use Planning project work in the country.**

## *Imelda*

*(click on Imelda’s photo to view her powerful story!)*

As a farmer in a small village in Mufindi District, a forested area along Tanzania’s Southern Highlands with an economy rooted in land, Imelda grows staple crops like corn, potatoes, and vegetables, and keeps a small flock of chickens on her land. **As a widow, Imelda also knows the fear of having her land taken away.**



Discriminatory customs often dictate that only men can own land, ignoring the tremendous labor women put into planting, tending, and harvesting crops. **After Imelda’s husband passed away, she faced pressure from in-laws to vacate her land—an all-too-common experience for widows whose rights to land are not secure.**

Today, her fears have been lifted, thanks to a Landesa program in Imelda’s community. Our Land Use Planning project convened community members to map plots of land within their village. **Crucially, the process ensured women had a seat at the table.**

**“The education we’ve received from Landesa has really helped us learn about the environment,”** Imelda notes as she explains the vital adaptations she and her community in southern Tanzania have made to protect their environment and sustain their livelihoods.

“We are now knowledgeable, and this has helped women to believe in themselves through land ownership,” declared Imelda.



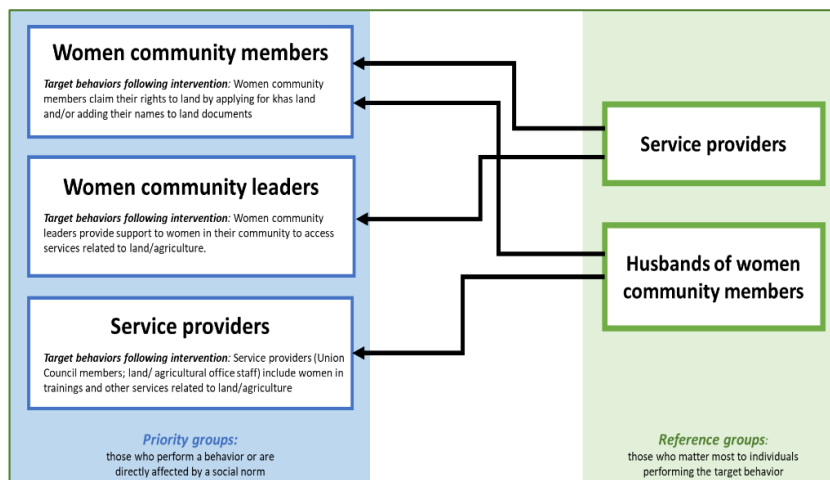
**Storytelling is strengthened when grounded in evidence**, including women’s experiences. We have a global dearth of data on women’s secure and equitable land tenure, women’s power and priorities in land and natural resource governance, and progress towards those priorities. In developing and communicating evidence-centric advocacy messages, Landesa works to complement and strengthen ongoing efforts to improve the evidence base and available gendered data, including through participatory and grassroots-led data gathering.

**Metric:** *Number of publications, panels, trainings, and social media efforts related to data production, leveraging, dissemination, or capacity sharing to address data gaps on women’s land rights.*

In close collaboration with all global programming, Landesa’s Research, Evaluation, and Learning (REL) team supports evidence-based decision-making by working side-by-side with project teams and partners to assess social, environmental, and tenure-related gendered impacts of our programming and communicate evidence-based, good practices to practitioners and policymakers. Through participatory, gender-responsive and socially inclusive research methods, Landesa works to build local and global evidence that enables a nuanced, intersectional understanding of land rights and uses and how they can improve women’s empowerment, climate outcomes, livelihoods, and governance of what interventions work, where, how, and for whom. In 2023, Landesa’s REL team published an 5-page [Evidence Brief on the Links between Women’s Land Tenure Security and Climate Action](#).

As an example of community trainings that are informed by evidence, in early 2023, Landesa and the Association for Land Reform and Development in Bangladesh (a S4HL Coalition member) gathered and analyzed data on knowledge about women’s land rights, and the Association for Land Reform and Development used this information to inform the design of a land literacy training. To gather the data, we worked with Capacity Building Service Group (CBSG) to conduct a baseline survey in three districts of Bangladesh- Faridpur Sadar under Faridpur District, Dinajpur Sadar under Dinajpur District, and Bauful under Patuakhali District. Across the three districts, CBSG surveyed 602 people (311 women community members, 215 of their husbands, 48 Union Council members and land and agricultural staff, and 28 women leaders). The results provided baseline information regarding demographics, knowledge and

attitudes about women’s land rights and gender equality, perceptions of social norms, agency, social sanctions and rewards, women’s mobility, knowledge, and skills to perform each target behavior, behaviors and intention to perform them, tenure security, experience with land and agricultural services, and climate change. The figure to the left demonstrates the behaviors that we hope to change for each priority group as a result of this project.



In another training example related to data dissemination, on May 31, 2023, Landesa and S4HL held a webinar to provide information on the index specific to women’s land rights and how the index can be used in service of advocacy. There is a common appreciation in and beyond the women’s land rights field that a lack of adequate, quality, and diverse data has contributed to minimal progress to close gender equality gaps, particularly gender gaps related to land rights. S4HL partners with entities within the data ecosystem to advance sex and gender disaggregated data on land, housing, and property rights, including [Equal Measures 2030 \(EM2030\)](#). In collaboration with EM2030, S4HL convened the webinar to introduce Coalition members to EM2030’s gender equality index, a tool for tracking progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The webinar provided information on the index specific to women’s land rights and how the index can be used in service of advocacy. EM2030 also invited other partners who have leveraged their index for advocacy to share examples of success in generating community driven data to contribute to the data ecosystem needs. S4HL is interested to continue collaborating with EM 2030 and others, building on this webinar to advocate for increased uptake of land indicators, and increased investment in community-driven data gathering work among S4HL Coalitions. This partnership will complement both Landesa’s broader engagement with EM2030 (supporting measurement of women’s land rights within their index) and S4HL’s efforts with ongoing data initiatives, including those supporting delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Generation Equality Forum.

### *Looking Forward – Our 2024 Priorities*

- Update the global S4HL website to reflect stories and outcomes from all Coalitions.
- Support new S4HL Coalitions in Tunisia, Libya, Lebanon, and Pakistan (when launched in February 2024) to be connected and visible at the global level.
- Host learning sessions between Coalitions to identify and disseminate lessons learned.
- Draft and disseminate a “Coalition Toolkit” to capture lessons learned from the process of S4HL Coalition advocacy.
- Increase the number of grassroots women who are present in and able to advocate effectively for women’s land rights in national, regional, and global venues.
- Support S4HL Coalitions to add at least 10 stories each to the Women’s Land Rights Platform; add at least 100 additional organizations to the platform; add a “resources” section to the platform to allow for sharing of key publications and data related to women’s land rights.
- Hold national level dialogues with decision-makers in at least four countries on key priorities for law and policy reform or implementation.
- Complete case study on women’s land rights and land restoration in Ethiopia for the UNCCD; support dissemination to other Parties under the UNCCD to support gender-transformative work on land restoration and stronger land tenure.



### **Quick-Link Resources:**

[Landesa Summer 2023 Impact Report: Strengthening Land Rights for Women and the World](#)

[Land Empowers: A life-cycle look at how women's and girls' relationship to land can lead to transformation or discrimination](#)

[Evidence Brief on the Links between Women's Land Tenure Security and Climate Action](#)

[Women-Led Collective Advocacy for Climate Action in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Maldives](#)

[Women & Dirt: Confront the Climate Crisis, Uproot Gender Inequality](#)

[Women's Land Rights Storytelling Platform](#)

[Stand for Her Land](#)