



LAND GOVERNANCE FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Including local communities in multi-stakeholder processes

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On March 23rd, at the World Bank's Land and Poverty Conference 2018 in Washington D.C., LANDac hosted the Master Class *Land governance from the bottom up: including local communities in multi-stakeholder processes*. With the Master Class, LANDac aimed to build on discussions held during the World Bank Annual Conference that often highlighted the need for policymakers, academics and practitioners to better adapt interventions around land governance to the local context and situation. However, less discussed during the conference were practical ways, methods and tools to do that. Guided by presentations from two ongoing LANDac research programmes (Scaling women's land rights and the Learning Platforms) the Master Class focused on practical tools that are used to ensure that the priorities of local women and men are put first in decision making processes and implementation strategies around land governance. Following the presentation of the programmes, a lively discussion took place amongst the 25 participants of the Master Class. This report shares some of the main discussion topics.

Scaling Women's Land Rights

The Master Class kicked off with a brief presentation of the programme, 'Securing women's land rights in Africa: Scaling up impact in Senegal Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique', given by Program Coordinator Michelle McLinden Nuijen. The programme builds on successful initiatives of local partners at the grassroots in scaling up women's land rights and strengthening their position in decision-making processes. Following the introduction, Clemente Ntauazi, Advocacy and Policies Officer at ADECRU and Nzira de Deus, Executive Director of Forum Mulher presented how their organisations worked together to use video recordings and documentaries as a tool for women in Mozambique to voice their demands and priorities. The videos, made by women themselves, illustrate the challenges women are facing in accessing and benefitting from land. Nzira added: "It is not common for women in my country to speak up. By making video recordings together with women, we are able discuss with them how important land is and how it is sometimes taken away. By speaking up on video, women are exercising their rights and they are an example for other women." El Hadji Faye, Program Coordinator at Enda

Pronat in Senegal emphasized that in Senegal, land access for women is not a legal problem, but a problem at village level, which is where change is needed. In the scaling program, Enda Pronat works with local animators: individuals within the community, very often traditional or religious leaders trained by Enda Pronat. These leaders are often the first point of contact for women and are often key decision makers with significant influence. In cooperation with Enda Pronat, they conduct workshops for women and men that build their capacity and knowledge on the law and the importance of women's access to land.

"It is not common for women in my country to speak up (...) But on video, women are exercising their rights and they are an example for other women." – Nzira de Deus, Forum Mulher (Mozambique)

Building on the work of the Women2Kilimanjaro movement (W2K), Philip Kilonzo shared the efforts of ActionAid Kenya in the development of a Women's Land Rights Charter in which women demand equal rights and access to land and natural resources through 10 principles. Together with local women, ActionAid Kenya is now also developing a set of tools which will allow



Land mapping by local women (left) and the development of the Women's Land Rights Charter (right) in Kenya

women to take control of the progress and track the implementation of the Charter. Philip was followed by Fridah Githuku from GROOTS Kenya, who, also closely involved in the W2K and the Women's Land Rights Charter, developed tools for women to track and map access, control and ownership of land. The generated data builds consciousness among both men and women about access to land but furthermore empowers women: "The woman in the picture, who does the mapping, is not in the kitchen, she is out there, mapping and influencing decision makers." The data also reveal discrepancies between information held by the Kenyan government and feeds into the tracking and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals 1 and 5 and indicators relating to gender and land (1.4.2 and 5.a.1-a.2). After the pitches from program partners explaining their tools, Patricia Chaves, Director of Espaço Feminista in Brazil, noted that all of the initiatives being discussed in the Master Class are taking place in Africa, yet: "We are not going to influence the global agenda if we don't work in other regions as well."

"We are not going to influence the global agenda if we don't work in other regions as well." – Patricia Chavos (Espaço Feminista, Brazil)

"The woman in the picture who does the mapping is not in the kitchen: she is out there, mapping and influencing decision makers." – Fridah Githuku (GROOTS Kenya)

Learning Platforms

After the presentation of the tools used by grassroots organisations that work together with LANDac on women's land rights, Gemma Betsema, coordinator for the Dutch LANDdialogue, briefly presented LANDac's work on the Learning Platforms in Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda that started early 2017. The programme is based on bottom-up research and feeds this information into multi-stakeholder platforms where business representatives join together with community representatives to align large-scale, land-based investments and business activities with local priorities. Each platform meeting started with a presentation of the empirical findings on local realities and the diversity of communities. Combined with a strong representation of community members and investors at those meetings, participants felt empowered to express their views on ways investment benefits can be shared. The reason according to Gemma: "It's not enough to think of challenges and what to do about it,



The making of video recordings in Mozambique (left) and local animators in action (right)

but also to understand other people's viewpoints and situations." As a result, ongoing discussions generated under the programme were translated into concrete action plans and the collected data was taken seriously by participating companies. By close monitoring and follow-up, the project was able to track results and see which plans have really translated into action. One example was the increased productivity and income in villages in Tanzania, following increased training of small farmers directly instead of through their associations, as well as the establishment of formal a producer association in Mozambique, responding to critiques that the company was only working with a selected few local farmers. After the presentation, several questions were asked and answered including: Why weren't some issues, such as land scarcity, not picked up by the companies? How did you select the companies and where are they from? Were any rights of local people violated? Gemma elaborated on these questions by providing further details about the process. One of the reasons that some of the more structural issues were not taken up by the companies was that such solutions require a longer-term engagement and trust building; the Learning Platforms also showed that companies seem to become more conservative and less inclined to think out-of-the-box when criticism emerges.

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How to talk about land

Going back to the methods and tools that are designed to better involve or hand over data

collection to local men and women to influence decision-making processes, a discussion started based on the experiences of participants. Rene Claude (University of Leuven) kicked-off the discussion by pointing out what is often missing at higher levels of governance: "Looking back at the World Bank Conference, we have spent much time on innovation and high tech-talk. We brought many people here who *think* about land, but where are the people who *feel* land? This is a gap this Master Class fills." In the discussion that followed, participants came forward with the challenges they have encountered when talking about land issues with men and women on the ground. Land is becoming an increasingly sensitive topic and land rights defenders have been among the most targeted activists in the world. Given the risks and sensitivity of the topic, people on the ground are not always eager to talk about land issues in community settings. To tackle this, Rene Claude elaborated on one ice-breaker method they use: "We use applied theatre and start with fiction. This way people are brought to talk about it. Also, we use simulation games like Monopoly and the [Land Rush Simulation Game](#) to highlight power relations. We use it as an entry point to talk about the reality on the ground." In addition, the discussion revolved around a point raised by Ekow Edzie (The Fletcher School) who stated that many tools are about building data and how valuable data is, but we need tools to collect data, and also to promote effective communication.

Perceptions of land tenure security

The last part of the discussion revolved around the different perceptions people hold about security of land tenure and property rights. For Patricia Chaves (Espaço Feminista), appropriately handling disappointments at the local level was a concern: "Some people have a perception of security despite the fact

that they do not have any documents. Are we going to inform them about their vulnerability and take away the belief that they have security? What do you do as an organisation?” In answer to this question, Winrose Nyagithi, a women’s land rights champion who represents grassroots women in Kenya alongside GROOTS Kenya, shares her experience: “So many people say that they have so many acres and feel secure but, in the end, they have no papers. In cases of widows ‘sitting’ on the land, it happens a lot that they are driven off their land by family members. Our role is to create awareness about this and inform them.” Adding to this, Fridah Githuku pointed out that even the possession of a land title may not provide absolute security. Nzira then raised the issue of security where individual titles may not be applicable. Her concern: securing community land for everyone’s benefit. According to Nzira: “Whenever a company comes they can still borrow the land for 50 years and a woman without money could accept this. Then the next generation has no land. We have to demarcate community land properly and find ways to engage everybody in the process, women and peasants.” (Nzira de Deus, Forum Mulher)

Trent Larson (DeSoto Inc.) suggested that technology might help to increase tenure security, such as pictures of past years that serves as proof of use or ownership to which Michelle replied that tools are needed and powerful – however, we must take care that they are not used to heighten tenure insecurity at the local level through misuse; it is important that tools fit the local context, including tools that can be used by women to claim their rights but also generate empowerment and ownership over data.

Continuing the discussion

The Master Class concluded by raising some final questions: What is the role of the government in the discussion about tools and land tenure security? And what is the experience with the influence of religious leaders? And how exactly do we identify issues of gender? As a closing remark, Patricia urged the group by stating: “Gender bias is a huge problem and is embedded in institutions. We cannot wait for governments to do things. It is up to us to build movements across issues. Change happens at the local level!”. The session concluded with a mention about the upcoming LANDac Annual International Conference where the bottom-up approach to land governance will also be a central theme. The conference takes place on June 28 and 29, 2018 in Utrecht, the Netherlands. To register for the conference, visit our website: www.landgovernance.org



Clemente Ntauazi, Nzira de Deus and El Hadji Faye at the Masterclass



This is a report by LANDac, the Netherlands Land Academy on land governance for equitable and sustainable development. For more information on the masterclass or our work, please contact LANDac's coordinator Marthe Derkzen: m.l.derkzen@uu.nl or visit our website: www.landgovernance.org
