

World Bank Land and Poverty Conference 2017
March 24, 2017 Master Class

Govind Kelkar and Shipra Deo

Subject:

The Culture of Land Ownership: Women's Claim making Strategies

Goal of the session:

To engage participants into a discussion on the social norms that lead to women's denial of landownership rights; to establish the need to address social and cultural constraints as much as the policy issues relating to women land rights.

Context

The structural causes of gender-based discrimination result in high inequalities for women in social, political and economic spheres. In Agricultural Census of India 2011, approximately 13 percent of operational holders are women, while 79 percent of women workforce is engaged in agriculture. The fact that women do not have rights to land is largely due to the interaction between the state institutions and the socio-cultural norms which usually have their origins in patriarchal values and practices.

The state institutions, which are responsible for policy making, grapple between equality-based discussions and their own cultural beliefs that are supported by the political elite (who themselves are nurtured with gendered norms of power). As a result the policies turn ineffective in ensuring land rights to women.

Landesa's work shows that attaining gender equality in land rights is as much dependent on overcoming social and cultural constraints on laws and policies for women's secure rights to own and manage land and property.

Learnings from the Master Class:

- The socio-cultural norms and practices in the emerging economies that define patriarchal dominance in the state and community institutions.
- Various ways in which women have claimed their rights to land and assets, despite social norms and their impacts on policies and laws.
- Positive outcomes coming up as a consequence of various interventions by Landesa and Landesa-supported strategies.

Moderator

Jolyne Sanjak , Chief Program Officer, Landesa

Presenters

Govind Kelkar, Senior Advisor, Landesa

Shipra Deo, State Director, Landesa

Discussion flow

1. Introduction by participants
2. About Landesa's work and objectives of the Master Class - **Jolyne Sanjak**
3. Social Cultural Norms and Practices and their relationship with land rights in an institutional framework. This involves sharing of actual examples from field followed by a participatory enquiry on cultural norms that surround the entire life cycle of a woman. The interface of women's aspirations for landownership and the barriers of social norms and policies. – **Shipra Deo**
4. Women's strategies of claims-making to ownership rights of land. There will be a presentation and discussion on movements by women of implicit and explicit defiance of social norms and development of claims-making strategies that women have used to challenge norms related to landownership. – **Govind Kelkar**
5. Video Screening on Women Land Rights
6. Open Session