

FROM REACH TO TRANSFORMATION:

Leveraging the RBET Framework to
Secure Women's Land & Resource Rights



Larson, A., Meinzen-Dick, R., Trautman, S. with Atmadja, S., Cronkleton, P., Elias, M., Gallagher, E. J., Garner, E., Morgan, M., Paez-Valencia, A. M. (2024). From Reach to Transformation: Leveraging the RBET Framework to Secure Women's Land and Resource Rights. Global Initiative for Gender Transformative Approaches for Securing Women's Resource Rights (WRR). Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF), Bogor and Nairobi.

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ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

SECURING WOMEN'S RESOURCE RIGHTS THROUGH GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES

In 2020, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) invited a consortium of the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) to work with selected IFAD projects to promote and strengthen women's land rights through the integration of gender transformative approaches (GTAs) in rural development interventions by improving policies, tools and practices.

<https://www.cifor-icraf.org/wlr/>

https://www.ifad.org/en/gender_transformative_approaches

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RBET

The **Reach, Benefit, Empower** framework has been invaluable in guiding gender considerations in programming, ensuring that projects carefully consider their goals, and then move from ambition to implementation to evaluation.

The framework makes it easier to see how projects claiming to “empower” women may only manage to “reach” them, such as through training, without actually verifying if the activities benefit or empower them.

The addition of “**Transform**” to this framework (**RBET** for short) emphasizes the need for deeper structural or normative changes to create more equitable systems.

In this brief we explore how to get the most out of the RBET framing in relation to securing women’s land and other resource rights.

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE APPROACHES DEFINED

Gender transformative approaches (GTAs) aim to elevate the ambition from empowering individual women to catalyzing broader, more lasting changes in women’s rights.

This involves changing underlying systems, structures, institutions, and norms that perpetuate discrimination.

These approaches require processes that enable those targeted by initiatives (for example, grassroots women and their allies) to lead or be equal partners in defining the changes sought and accompanying strategies.

LINKING AND ADAPTING KEY FRAMEWORKS FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS

This brief combines three established frameworks to translate the concept of transformation regarding women's land and resource rights into practice.

1. THE GENDER@WORK FRAMEWORK

The **Gender@work framework** uses two scales (informal to formal and individual to systemic) to think about the four main arenas necessary for addressing gender discrimination. Each of the resulting quadrants highlights the aspects that need transformation regarding women's land rights:

- ✓ **Formal-systemic:** State recognition of women's land rights in policy and law and considerations of equity in formal decision-making institutions
- ✓ **Formal-individual:** Women's individual access to opportunities and control over land and resources
- ✓ **Informal-individual:** Local/ individual behaviours and attitudes regarding women's land rights and women's individual capacities and knowledge
- ✓ **Informal-systemic:** Societal rules and norms regarding women's land rights and women's collective influence on decision making

Though some topics overlap across quadrants, the way they manifest and the methods to measure change differ.

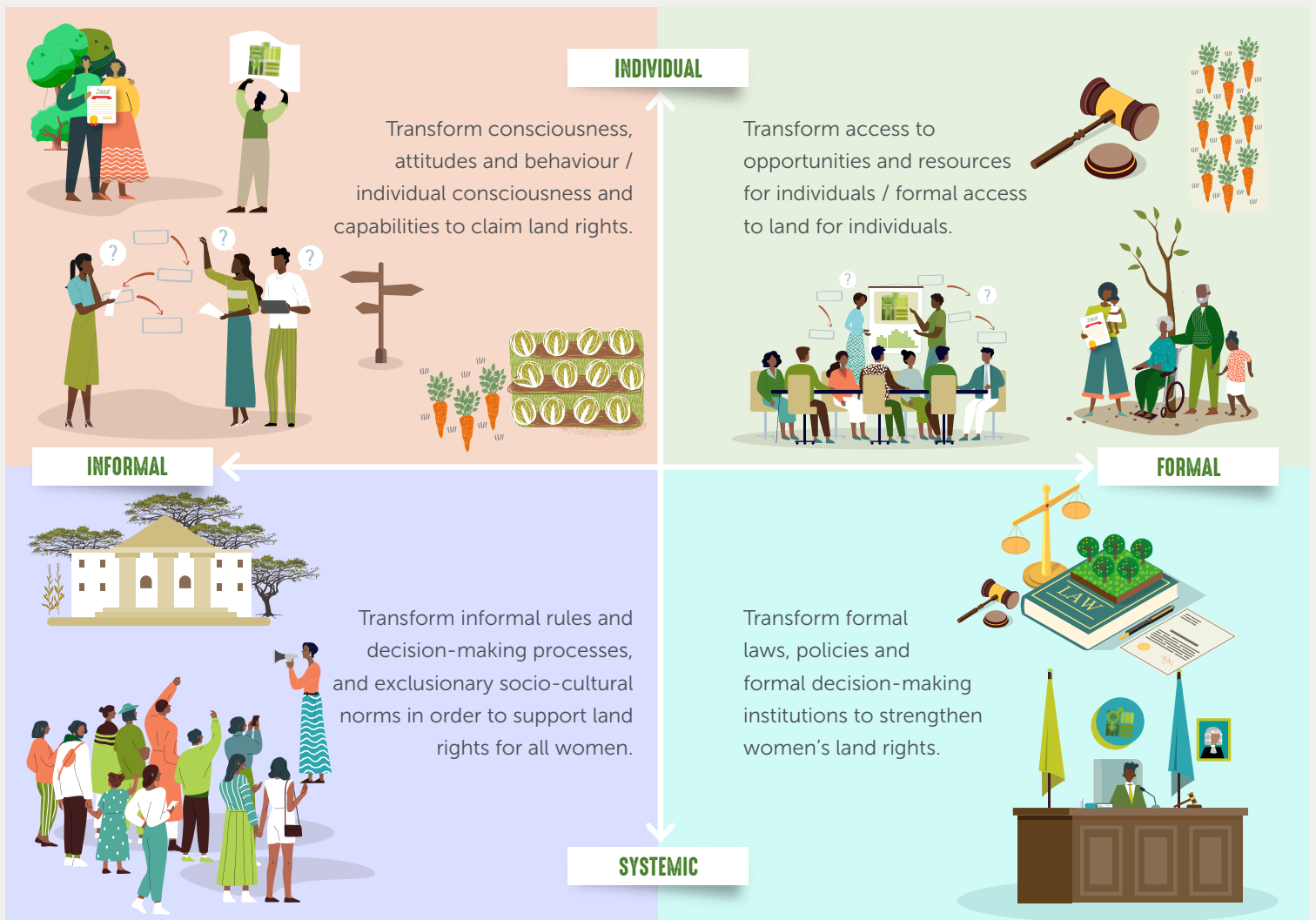


FIGURE 1 Gender@Work Framework (From Morgan et al. 2023)

2. EXPANDED GENDER@WORK FRAMEWORK

The second framework incorporates additional spheres of influence, from the household to communities, subnational and national arenas, and society at large. This ensures consideration of the multiple scales of interaction affecting women’s rights, also emphasizing the role of the community in collective or customary land tenure systems. The impact areas outlined reflect the topics in each quadrant as outlined above but are more detailed. They reflect key points for consideration and can be broken down across the RBET scale.

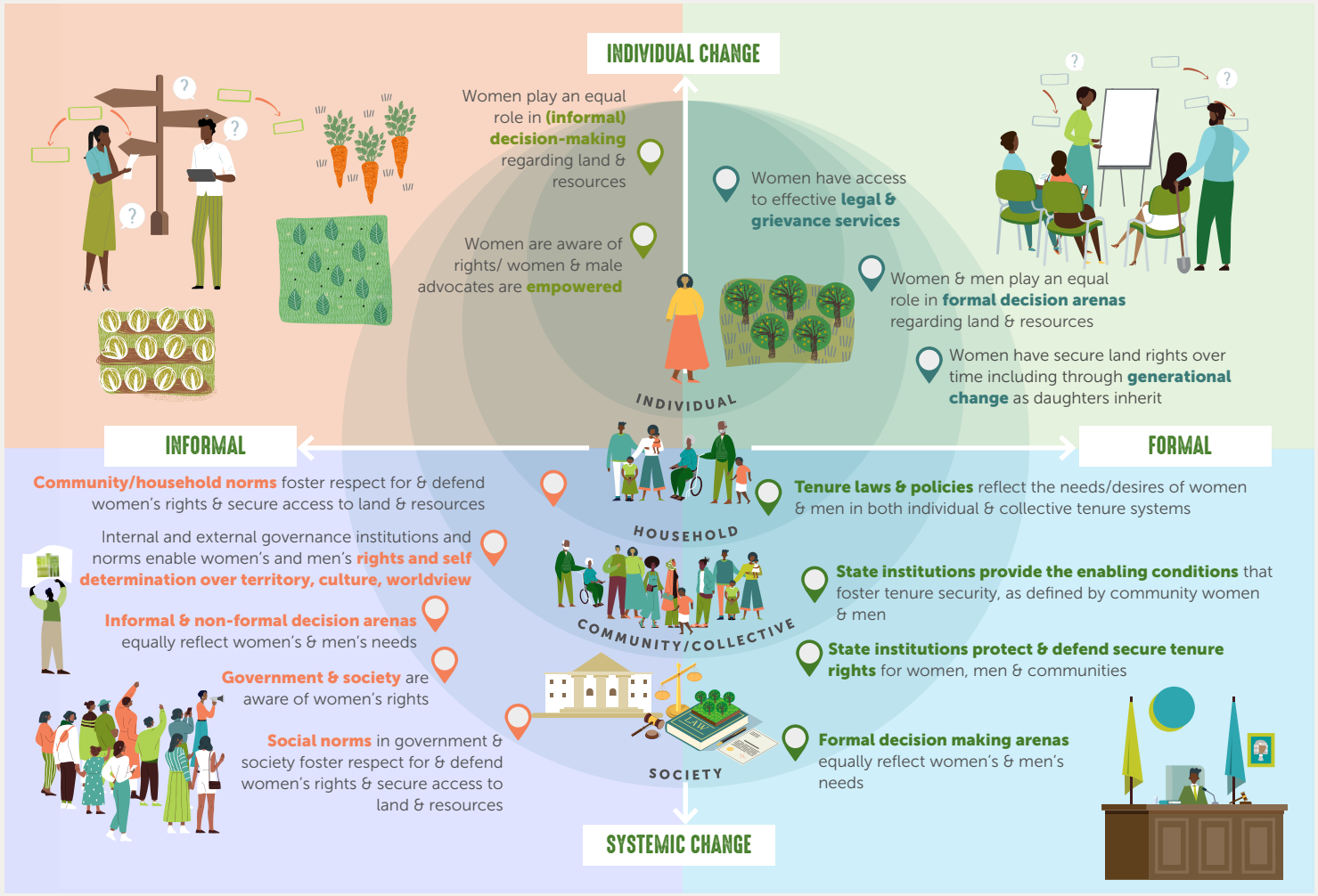


FIGURE 2 Expanded Gender@Work Framework (from Morgan et al. 2023)

3. RBET FRAMEWORK APPLIED TO WOMEN’S LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS

We apply the RBET framework to women’s land rights to identify goals, specific actions, and corresponding indicators along this scale. Although the scale is not entirely linear, it helps us think about what would constitute reach, benefit, empower, or transform with regard to women’s land rights.

While the Reach, Benefit, Empower framework guided the development of the project-level Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (**pro-WEAI**) as a tool for impact assessment, that tool does not address the transformative aspects, nor is it designed specifically with land rights in mind. By integrating RBET with the conceptual framework shown in Figure 1 and 2, we ensure coverage of the four quadrants (rows) across the RBET scale (columns), as outlined in the adapted RBET framework for women’s land and resource rights that follows on page 5-8.

PURPOSE OF THE RBET FRAMEWORK ADAPTED TO WOMEN'S LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS

The adapted framework guides us in distinguishing between different levels of impact for various goals and activities. **It challenges us to consider if our actions are merely reaching or benefiting women or if they are genuinely empowering or transformative.** If they are empowering, are they only empowering for individual women, or are they building the foundation for collective change? **This reflection helps us envision more substantial impacts and understand what it takes to elevate our level of ambition.**

ILLUSTRATIVE INDICATORS

The adapted RBET framework for women's land and resource rights presents illustrative indicators for measuring changes in women's land and resource rights. The framework is not a universal guide but, rather, a starting point, providing examples that can be adapted to different contexts. Additional rows and goals can be added as needed, and the specifics in each column might vary depending on the context.

The Guidelines for Measuring Gender Transformative Change in the Context of Food Security, Nutrition and Sustainable Agriculture¹ offer detailed examples of indicators for each RBET objective.² These guidelines can further inform the use of the RBET framework.

¹ FAO, IFAD, WFP & CGIAR GENDER Impact Platform, 2023

² 2 Additional indicators on gender and tenure can be found on the Gender Equality in Agrifood Systems: Indicator List (GEASIL) (Mora et al. 2023), under the 'Productive Autonomy' dimension (pgs 3-5).

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The adapted RBET framework specifically for women's land and resource rights helps differentiate activities based on their potential for change. It helps identify an appropriate level of ambition that aligns with the context, ensuring that efforts are not only realistic but also impactful. The entries in the framework are only examples, which need to be adapted to each project.

Projects striving to adopt gender transformative approaches can use the RBET framework to initiate discussions on achievable goals and what constitutes transformative change in their context. By doing so, they can:



Spark dialogue on the desired level of impact.



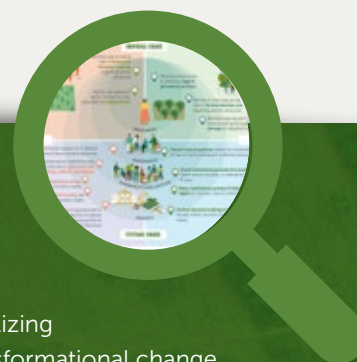
Identify actions that truly empower and transform rather than merely reach or benefit.



Encourage stakeholders to think deeply about structural changes needed to support women's land rights.



Foster a shared understanding of terms, goals, and indicators of success.



The RBET framework, when combined with the Gender@Work framework and expanded spheres of influence, offers a comprehensive approach for conceptualizing change in women's land rights and for co-creating strategies and achieving transformational change.

By clearly defining goals, activities, and indicators - from reach, to benefit, empower, and transform—initiatives can agree with local women on the most appropriate strategy for each relevant context. This approach encourages clear visualization of different options and can foster a higher level of ambition and a deeper commitment to structural change, leading to lasting and equitable outcomes for women's land rights.

In the following visualization of our adapted framework, we zoom in on each quadrant of the Gender@Work framework (informal-individual, formal-individual, informal-systemic, and formal-systemic), while the columns correspond to the different stages of the RBET framework. This layout clarifies how specific goals, activities, and indicators progress from merely reaching women to ultimately transforming their land rights.

INDIVIDUAL



Reach



Benefit



Empower



Transform

WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING

	Reach	Benefit	Empower	Transform
Goals	GTAs and other training programmes promote women's decision-making regarding land.	Women's increased decision-making at the household level results in greater income under their control.	Women take decision-making and leadership roles in household and community organizations.	Women play an equal role in (informal) decision-making regarding land and resources. Men recognize the value of empowered women making decisions and taking leadership roles.
Activities	Conduct training sessions and workshops.	Provide financial literacy and management training.	Encourage and support women's leadership initiatives. Work with men to support women's right to decision-making.	Promote gender equality and women's empowerment through household and community programs.
Indicators	Number of training sessions and workshops held.	Number of women receiving financial literacy and management training.	Women's decision-making scores from WEAI or pro-WEAI. Number of women in leadership roles in community organizations.	Community attitudes and norms relating to women's decision-making roles (measured through surveys).

KNOWLEDGE OF WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS

Goals	Legal literacy programs teach women about their land rights.	Greater knowledge of land rights provides women with greater tenure security.	Women advocate for stronger land rights at household, community, and national levels.	Women and men are aware of and advocate for equitable women's land rights.
Activities	Develop and deliver legal literacy curricula.	Conduct educational campaigns on land rights.	Train women in advocacy and public speaking.	Implement continuous awareness-raising and advocacy training with women and men.
Indicators	Number of women participating in legal literacy programmes.	Number of educational campaigns conducted.	Number of women trained in advocacy and public speaking. Number of women advocating and speaking publicly/ leading organizations for women's land rights.	Number of women and men advocating and speaking publicly for women's land rights.



INFORMAL

INDIVIDUAL



Reach



Benefit



Empower



Transform

WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING

	Reach	Benefit	Empower	Transform
Goals	Women are invited to meetings	Women benefit from engaging in meetings/ participatory processes; their choices, suggestions, and votes are taken into consideration.	Women take decision-making and leadership roles in formal organizations and processes.	Women and men play an equal role in formal decision arenas regarding land and resources.
Activities	Ensure inclusive meeting invitations and participation.	Facilitate inclusive decision-making processes.	Provide leadership training and support.	Promote gender equality in decision-making bodies at all levels.
Indicators	Number of women invited to and attending meetings.	Percent of time women versus men speak in meetings. Number of women's suggestions and votes recorded in meetings.	Number of women in leadership roles in formal organizations.	Gender ratio in formal decision-making bodies, including of highest level positions, and over time

SECURITY OF WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS

Goals	Women are informed through formal communication of their rights and mechanisms to claim rights.	Women can use information to claim and defend their rights.	Women organize and work strategically to claim and defend their rights.	Women have secure land rights over time, including through generational change as daughters inherit.
Activities	Use formal communication channels to disseminate information.	Provide legal aid and support services.	Support the formation of women's advocacy groups.	Support advocacy and negotiations for and implementation of equitable inheritance laws.
Indicators	Number of women reached through formal communication channels.	Number of women using legal aid and support services.	Number of women's advocacy groups formed and active. Proportion of women reporting security of land rights.	Number of inheritance cases where daughters inherit land. Portion and quality of land inherited by daughters compared to sons



FORMAL

INFORMAL



Reach

Benefit

Empower

Transform

WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING

Goals	Interventions encourage women to become involved in community-level decision-making.	Involvement of women in decision-making at the community level strengthens the acceptability of women claiming tenure rights.	Women leaders and women's organizations occupy decision-making roles in communities and other relevant (informal, customary) decision arenas.	Internal and external governance systems and norms enable both women's and men's rights and self-determination over territory, culture, and worldview.
Activities	Design and implement community engagement programmes.	Promote inclusive community decision-making practices.	Support and mentor women leaders and organizations. Work with male leaders to support and mentor women leaders and organizations.	Support the enabling conditions for systemic changes in governance and norms.
Indicators	Number of women involved in community decision-making.	Number of community decisions influenced by women.	Number of women leaders and organizations in decision-making roles. Leadership self-assessments.	Assessment of norms and governance arrangements in support of women's decision making.

SECURITY OF WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS

Goals	Interventions promote the importance of women having secure tenure rights.	Community members are supportive of women's land tenure security.	Women leaders and women's organizations work strategically to support women's land tenure security.	Community/ household norms foster respect for and defend women's rights and secure access to land and resources.
Activities	Increase awareness and understanding of women's tenure (in) security.	Conduct community sensitization campaigns.	Provide strategic support to women's organizations.	Promote gender-equitable norms and practices through community engagement.
Indicators	Number of women involved in awareness programs.	Number of women reporting improved land tenure security.	Number of women's organizations / activities supporting women's tenure security.	Number of communities adopting gender-equitable norms and practices.

WORKLOAD

Goals	Programmes promote equitable sharing of domestic labour.	Men help with domestic labour. Labor-saving technologies reduce women's labour burdens.	Women are able to advocate for technologies and changes in household distribution of labour in ways that reduce their workloads.	The accepted norm is for domestic and other unpaid labour to be fully recognized, accounted for, and shared equally by men and women.
Activities	Raise awareness of gendered workloads among women and men.	Introduce and distribute labour-saving technologies. Conduct workshops and awareness campaigns to encourage men to participate in domestic labour.	Provide training to women and men on technology use and household management.	Advocate for the recognition and equitable distribution of unpaid labour.
Indicators	Number of people participating in programs.	Reduction in women's workloads, e.g. as measured in pro-WEAL.	Number of women and men advocating for trained labour saving technology use and equitable distribution of household labour. Number of women who report increased control over their time.	Changes in community norms regarding the sharing of domestic labour (measured through surveys).

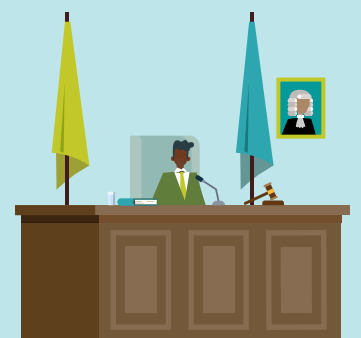


SYSTEMIC

	Reach	Benefit	Empower	Transform
STATE RECOGNITION OF WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS				
Goals	Provide information about (multiple) options for registration or securing tenure to IPs, LCs, farmers, including targeted information for women.	Women are granted greater rights in law. Women's names are included on titles.	Enable conditions that support women to define the ways in which they want their tenure rights recognized. Women organize to secure their tenure rights.	Legal-institutional changes ensure recognition of women's rights in all relevant tenure regimes, based on their own definitions, customs, and history. Tenure laws and policies reflect the needs/desires of women and men in both individual and collective regimes.
Activities	Disseminate information through workshops, pamphlets, and media campaigns.	Implement legal reforms and update registration processes.	Support women's organizations and provide training on tenure rights and advocacy.	Support advocacy and negotiations for, and implementation of, comprehensive policy and legal reforms that support women's land rights.
Indicators	Number of informational materials distributed and workshops conducted.	Number of women's names included on land titles.	Number of women organized/ women's organizations advocating for tenure rights on their own terms.	Review of legal frameworks shows they reflect women's demands for land rights.
SECURITY OF WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS				
Goals	Women's land tenure security is identified and analyzed as distinct from men's or collective security. Opportunities to support greater security for women are identified.	Specific efforts increase women's land tenure security.	Women are aware of their rights and the processes they need to follow to increase tenure security and have the agency to do so.	State institutions provide the enabling conditions that foster land tenure security, as defined by community women & men. State institutions protect & defend secure land tenure rights for women, men & communities.
Activities	Conduct assessments and research studies.	Implement targeted programmes and initiatives to increase women's land tenure security.	Provide education and legal training on tenure security and advocacy.	Support advocacy and negotiations for and implementation of legal frameworks and the institutions that guarantee tenure security as defined by community women and men.
Indicators	Number of assessments and research studies conducted.	Number of women whose tenure security increases.	Number of women organized/ women's organizations advocating for tenure security.	Number of legal frameworks and institutions established to enforce rights. Number of times rights are defended and enforced by the state.

SYSTEMIC

Note: Some specific activities, such as improving women's land tenure security, may "benefit" or "empower" depending on the context and should thus be placed accordingly.







INITIATIVE CONSORTIUM



The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF) envision a more equitable world where trees in all landscapes, from drylands to the humid tropics, enhance the environment and well-being for all. CIFOR and ICRAF are CGIAR Research Centers.



Climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, and malnutrition. These four interconnected global crises have put at stake the wellbeing of our planet for years. Fueled by COVID-19, their impact on agriculture, landscapes, biodiversity, and humans is now stronger than ever. Reversing this negative trend is a challenge, but also an opportunity for bold choices and integrated solutions. Established in 2019, the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) was created to address these four crises, maximizing impact for change at key points in the food system.



The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) provides research-based policy solutions to sustainably reduce poverty and end hunger and malnutrition in developing countries. Established in 1975, IFPRI currently has more than 600 employees working in over 50 countries. It is a research center of CGIAR, a worldwide partnership engaged in agricultural research for development.

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