Raising awareness using multiple channels

Public information and awareness (PIA) activities play a major role in REILA and are crucial to increasing people’s understanding of their rights and the importance of second-level land certification (SLLC). PIA activities are based on a strategy, which takes into consideration history, concerns of the people and other specific issues of the respective area, tailoring the PIA campaign and messages accordingly.

Given socio-cultural diversity and low levels of literacy, PIA activities especially at the kebele level concentrate on face-to-face communication, focus group meetings, and delivering messages through key information agents. Community activities are usually complemented by radio broadcasts and recorded audio messages distributed to remote rural areas in their respective local language. For decision-makers, especially government personnel, printed media is used in the form of desk calendars and articles in regional newspapers. The PIA team also trains land sector experts, legal aides and judges. In depth PIA information is also incorporated in the curriculums of vocational and masters level land administration degrees.

Using data to correct course

In phase two of the project, REILA is monitoring gender disaggregated results at kebele level on a monthly basis to apply corrective measures when needed. A major challenge has been to strengthen capacity of regional and woreda staff to carry out the PIA activities themselves. By monitoring results of the land registration corrective measure can be applied if for example women’s share is decreasing.

Female-headed households form 24% of all land holders that have been processed and given land holding in the SLLC process. In Ethiopia, such results can be gained because formal gender equal land, marriage and inheritance laws are in place and form a foundation for PIA activities.

Maintaining focus to maintain results

SLLC has yielded some good results in terms of gender equality. However, the results can be lost if gender equality is not pursued also in subsequent registration processes. This requires addressing the intersection between land and family law in connection with inheritance, dissolution of marriage, and land rights registration of women in polygamous marriage arrangement. Whereas SLLC is often accepted as an official government process, subsequent registration (e.g., inheritance and divorce) are often seen as internal family affairs. In coming years, REILA will also develop PIA approaches to increase gender equality in subsequent registration processes.
Land registration in practise

W/ro Waga Alebachew is a 50-year-old woman who lives together with her 45-year-old sister, Muchit Alebachew in Jangua kebele, West Dembia woreda, Amhara National Regional State. Before 1989, W/ro Waga lived in the house of Yehualashet, a priest, as a domestic servant. Even though she was a servant she was counted as a family member, which can be the case in Ethiopia. The priest held a significant amount of land. While living there, W/ro waga gave birth to a child (Gebrie Atinafu, now age 30), whose father was the priest’s son Atinafu Yehualashet. Later, after the priest died, W/ro Waga and her young child were expelled from the household, despite that the child was the priest’s grandson. After that, she went to another area and started her life again as a domestic servant.

In 2004 there was a negotiation within the village the elders, and as a result W/ro Waga got 0.75 hectares of the deceased priest’s land because she was counted as a family member. Despite this fact, she was actually only able to use 0.25 hectares as the rest were utilised by the descendants of the deceased priest.

When SLLC came into force in 2015, W/ro Waga learned that she was entitled to the remainder of her land from the Kebele Land Administration Committee. She went to the REILA field team leader and presented the facts, after which all of the 0.75 hectares were registered for her. Now W/ro Waga is using the total 0.75 hectare of land.

“Land is life: thanks to second-level land certification, I have more confidence in my land holding.”

W/ro Waga Alebachew
REILA beneficiary

Land registrations disaggregated by household types

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Woreda</th>
<th>Married couples</th>
<th>Female Headed HH</th>
<th>Male headed HH</th>
<th>Polygamous HH</th>
<th>Orphans</th>
<th>Held by disabled</th>
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<td>Parcel</td>
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HH: households