



REILA deliverable: Women's land rights

KEY SUCCESSSES

- + A high percentage of registrants in REILA's second-level land certification scheme were female-headed households
- + REILA was instrumental in raising issues of women's land rights in polygamous marriage arrangements

24%

of all registrants in REILA's SLLC were female-headed households

50,3%

proportion of females enrolling in TVET programme on rural cadaster and land registration

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.



In Benishangul-Gumuz, REILA was instrumental in raising the issue of women's land rights in polygamous marriage arrangements to the degree that a regulation improving the land rights of these women was enacted.

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 serves as a base for food production, income generation, collateral, social asset, and political power. Women's land ownership increases agricultural production and food security, reduces domestic violence, and ensures larger shares of household resources go to family welfare, children's education, and nutrition.

Photo: Gladys Savolainen

"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

Woreda	Married couples		Female Headed HH		Male headed HH		Polygamous HH		Orphans		Held by disabled		Others		Total	
	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel	# of HH	Parcel
Amhara Region																
Mecha	8 328	42 648	3 505	12 270	1 831	6 275							413	999	14 077	62 192
BahirDar Zuriya	12 712	65 846	5 861	19 767	4 115	14 546							1 024	3 373	23 712	103 532
Fogera	3 426	23 454	1 797	7 804	1 444	6 305							518	832	7 185	38 395
Gonder Zuriya	2 377	8 042	1 210	3 062	894	2 349							56	123	4 537	13 576
Libo Kemkem	4 795	23 601	2 335	7 851	1 574	5 462							444	694	9 148	37 608
Dembiya	2 966	13 801	1 288	3 968	824	2 426							79	200	5 157	20 395
North Achefer	9 048	46 246	3 657	10 077	2 364	6 276							521	830	15 590	63 429
South Achefer	7 900	35 684	3 343	10 112	2 387	6 935							160	293	13 790	53 024
Total Amhara	51 552	259 322	22 996	74 911	15 433	50 574							4 011	7 344	93 196	392 151
%	55%	66%	25%	19%	17%	13%							0	0	100%	100%
BG Region																
Bambasi	2 251	8 543	683	2 141	453	1 406	22	83	4	3	1	2	41	176	3 455	12 354
AssosA	1 085	6 127	417	1 827	337	1 231	14	59	5	13			68	380	1 926	9 637
Kamashi	84	142	5	44	50	86	0	0	0	0			17	91	181	363
Pawe	2 002	7 176	892	2 712	574	1 641	0	0	2	4			120	201	3 590	11 734
Bullen	1 374	2 706	294	633	133	175	35	98	4	6			43	479	1 883	4 097
Belojiga	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			0	0	164	409
Total BG	6 796	24 694	2 291	7 357	1 547	4 539	71	240	15	26	1	2	289	1 327	11 199	38 594
%	61%	64%	20%	19%	14%	12%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	3%	100%	100%
Reila Total	58 348	284 016	25 287	82 268	16 980	55 113	71	240	15	26	1	2	4 300	8 671	104 395	430 745
Trial Sites	0	0	885		2 272		0						0	0	3 157	10 226
Grand total including trial sites	58 348	284 016	26 172	82 268	19 252	55 113	71	240	15	26	1	2	4 300	8 671	107 552	441 031
%	54%	64%	24%	19%	18%	12%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%	100%	100%

HH: households