

**OUR FIELDS,  
OUR FIGHT:  
TOGETHER FOR LAND RIGHTS  
STORIES**



**OXFAM**

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# « LAND OWNERSHIP MEANS EQUALITY AND SECURITY »

## FREDINA: land mobiliser and entrepreneur

After our country gained independence, many villages didn't have mapped out boundaries. There used to be many conflicts over land use, people taking each other to court every year. This was a waste of time.

OXFAM worked with the Government Land Department to fix this, training women like me to become land mobilisers and support others to obtain their land titles.

To me land ownership means equality. It is necessary. Especially for women who need to feed their families all year round, pay for school fees and invest in their farming activities to prepare for drought.

Without a land title women are prisoners. Before my training, I didn't realise that I wasn't free at all.

We created a local group to help women start their own business. As well as farming, we also work together to make carpets and natural products that we sell at the market to earn additional income.





## TANZANIA



Carpet-making: Women from the local group support each other's businesses.



Esther, from Lamwo, shows off the produce she sells to support her children.

When her husband died, she was a victim of land grabbing but won her fight.

**UGANDA**

# « CO-OWNERSHIP WITH MY HUSBAND PROTECTED ME AFTER HIS DEATH. »

**ESTHER: farmer and land owner**

After my husband's sudden death in a car accident, his relatives tried to violently chase me and my seven children off the property. They threw all our belongings out of the house. But I didn't move.

Land grabbing is very common in our communities. Traditionally, land is handed down to sons and if a man has no son, any other male relative can take it. But this is not legal.

I had bought the land jointly with my husband so I got help from a women's advocacy group to mediate with my husband's family. Thankfully, my children and I were able to stay and they also had to give me access rights to one and a half acres of land to cultivate.

Now, I advise and help women who suffered like me. I tell them: «Do not fear, be brave ».

Joyce with the Certificate obtained for the land she inherited from her father.



**TANZANIA**

**« I USE THIS LAND  
AS I WANT BECAUSE  
IT BELONGS TO ME »**

**JOYCE: farmer and land owner**

My father gave me this land but when he died my uncle came to claim it. I said: «Why didn't you come to claim it when he was still alive? ».

Bertha, a land mobiliser trained by OXFAM, supported me through every step of obtaining a Certificate: filling in the forms, greeting the land expert, and attending the village meeting where everyone goes to agree the new plans.

Since receiving my land title I have had no conflicts. I built a house, planted maize, rice... I can rent it out to women who need it. I use this land as I wish, because it's mine. I have legal ownership. I'm free.



# « WE MUST BREAK THE SILENCE AND CLAIM OUR RIGHT TO LAND »

**PACEGO WOMEN CLUB** was founded in 1990 as an organisation run by women for women.

In Uganda, land rights and violence against women are intertwined. Women are now breaking the silence to report violations. The barriers to land rights are many: polygamy, cultural traditions, and male inheritance, which means sons and male relatives inherit land before wives even have a say.

Under the 2004 Land Act, any woman can buy or own land jointly with her husband, and her consent is required for land transfers. But these laws are not enforced in reality.

PACEGO supports women to have these rights respected.



Beniga, Chair of Pacego  
Women Club, Pakwash  
District, Uganda.



**UGANDA**

# MEMO

## **BENIGA EXPLAINS THREE TYPES OF LAND RIGHTS:**

- ✓ ☒ The right to access means making use of it. A woman can use land for productive activities or for putting up structures.
- ✓ ☒ The right to control means you have a say over that land. For instance if you are using it to cultivate but the owner wants to sell it.
- ✓ ☒ The right of ownership means you have it as your own, fully, it is your land.

# ACTIVITIES

Complete alone or with a group, with or without a facilitator.

## THE KEY WORD

Answer each question with a single word.

### 1ST ROUND

What do land rights mean to you?

**SAFETY**

**EQUALITY**

**TRADITIONS**



### 2ND ROUND

Name one barrier to land rights you face?

### 3RD ROUND

Name a solution to that barrier.



## GRACE'S PATH



Grace, senior member of the Pacego Women's Club

**« BELIEVE IN YOURSELF,  
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE! »**

I've experienced many conflicts, my husband's death, my children leaving home. But my life didn't stop. Today, I'm a role model in my village because I bought land alone and now show other women how to do it. This is possible in Uganda.



# WHAT'S YOUR PATH?

Draw or write in the spaces below.



## 1. MY PROJECT

My dreams? My family's needs?

## 2. MY PATH

The steps I need to take to achieve this?



Join a women's group...



## 3. MY SUPPORT

Ask those around you for advice.





Thanks to land ownership Catherine was able to build a dam to ensure her fields are irrigated in times of drought, which are increasing in the region.

**TANZANIA**



# « MY LAND CERTIFICATE IS A WEAPON I AM PROUD OF »

**CATHERINE: farmer and land owner**

My husband left 20 years ago. After suffering violence from his family I returned to my parents. They lent me land to farm but refused to give me any. One year I farmed one piece of land and the next year another. So I couldn't invest in it long-term.

This is when I realised the difficulties faced by women to own and use land freely.

After two years, I joined an Oxfam project and little by little I started buying land. Finally I could provide for my family and lift myself out of poverty. I was able to invest and build a dam to ensure my fields are irrigated even if the rain doesn't come.

My community is impressed. As a single parent, I sent all my children to secondary school. I would probably be roaming the streets homeless if it wasn't for land ownership.

Catherine at work in  
one of her rice fields.





Martha watches over her pasture animals grazing on the land she owns with her husband.

**TANZANIA**

## « LAND IS YOUR BASIC RIGHT »

**MARTHA:** farmer, pastoralist and land owner

Since convincing my husband to sign our land title in co-ownership at the land registry many problems have stopped.

I now have three acres of land, where I have planted maize, cotton, groundnut, rice and I can look after my pasture animals. I can send all my children to school and my oldest is even going to highschool. Finally I can apply for a loan to develop business activities with the local women's group.

My family is proud of me. My husband says I am a confident woman capable of doing anything.

# « MY LAND ALSO BELONGS TO MY WIFE AND CHILDREN »

## UGANDA

**PATRICK:** male champion and land co-owner

If I die, my wife will still be here. So the land should provide for her and our children.

I've been laughed at for helping my wife to prepare food and look after the children. I even beat sorghum and traditionally that is a woman's responsibility.

Our ancestors looked down on men helping their wives, but women have a lot of responsibilities and these days we need to work together if we want to live better.

Patrick beats sorghum outside his home. He shares land ownership with his wife and helps with the daily chores.



# OUR FIELDS, OUR FIGHT: TOGETHER FOR LAND RIGHTS

Congratulations on your  
certificate of co-ownership!



HAHA  
HAHA!!!



Laugh if you want,  
I choose to help  
my family....

Better harvests,  
children in school...  
Working together  
is a success!



With co-ownership  
I no longer fear for  
the future

If I die, my wife  
will not be chased away  
from her home



**PATRICK**  
**MALE CHAMPION**  
**LAMWO, UGANDA**



**OXFAM**



# OUR FIELDS, OUR FIGHT: MY CAMPAIGN POSTER

## MAKE YOUR OWN LAND RIGHTS CAMPAIGN POSTER.

Based on real life stories  
around you, draw and/or write  
a dialogue and create your own  
slogan to raise awareness  
in your community.





Chief Obony, Lamwo, believes that whether they are elderly, widowed or divorced, women should always be involved in land matters.

**UGANDA**

# « WOMEN SHOULD ALWAYS BE INVOLVED IN LAND MATTERS »

## CHIEF LUKA OBONY: Clan Chief

During my time as a Clan Chief I've seen land rights and the role of women in our communities change for the better. When a husband dies, a woman should be given land and the chance to talk so she can carry on living.

Women, including those elderly, widowed and divorced, should always be involved in land matters. The community is now understanding this because it helps prevent many conflicts and violence between families and neighbours.

The importance of girl's education is now also being understood. Educated women are employed and in our district more and more women are working in politics or as heads of communities.



Sarah is a women's councillor for her district of Kitgum : « Women are taking up leadership positions in the local council, and this is helping the fight for women's rights. »

## UGANDA

# « I AM NOT A WITNESS! »

## SARAH: Women's Councillor

When I bought some land with my husband, at first he wanted me to sign the documents as a witness. This happens a lot. But I said: « No, I am not a witness! We will jointly own this land and I will sign as co-owner. »

We, the women, contribute to our families and the development of this country. When we were trained on land rights, we understood the importance of standing up and defending our rights. Women are now taking leadership positions in the local council. This really helps to improve women's land rights and change mentalities.



## TANZANIA

Fatuma's farm is in Kishapu District, Tanzania. The stability provided by her land title enabled Fatuma to build a greenhouse where she grows tomatoes.





# « OWNING YOUR LAND IS INVESTING IN TOMORROW »

## FATUMA: land mobiliser and entrepreneur

Land ownership Certificates helped me to build a greenhouse: I can now farm all year round whether it rains or not. Our community formed local groups and encouraged other women to secure their land. With the money we make, we're helping young people to buy their own land.

I was on the front-line going door to door telling people about land rights. I explained that land titles reduce conflict. In the event of your husband's death no one can take the land that you legally own and the fields you are cultivating. They will remain there for you, your community, and one day your children.



Now, Fatuma produces goods she can sell at the local market all year round.

# MEMORY GAME

Connect two words to each photo.



**ESTHER**



**FATUMA**



**JOYCE**



**PATRICK**

X EQUALITY

X WIDOWHOOD

X INHERITANCE

X RENTAL

X BUSINESS

X SCHOOL FEES

X CO-OWNERSHIP

X SUPPORT GROUP



# SCREEN & DISCUSS

Use the questions below to discuss the films from the series **OUR FIELDS, OUR FIGHT**.

- 1 Which story touches you the most? Explain why.
- 2 The women and men in the films identify several barriers to women's land rights. Can you think of any others?
- 3 Our film in Uganda includes interviews with men who champion women's rights in their communities. Do you know any?
- 4 The films also look at women's groups and how women should be united. Do you agree?
- 5 The process for obtaining a land ownership Certificate is different in each country. What are the steps in your country?

Bertha is a land mobiliser trained by Oxfam and partners. She explains to Joyce how to obtain a land ownership Certificate and will support her every step of the way.





Fredina holds up her land Certificate:  
« To me, land ownership means  
equality and security ».

# « SUPPORT A WOMAN AND YOU HELP THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY »

FREDINA, land mobiliser  
Lakes Region, Tanzania

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Films For All  
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