

Land Tenure Security to Address Loss and Damage

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SUMMARY

Impact of the climate crisis on the land is immense and diverse, and access to mechanisms to address loss and damage to land largely depends on land ownership. Loss and damage is strongly concentrated in lower-income countries and poorer populations who often lack formal ownership of land and are more likely to live in marginal locations which have high exposure to climate hazards, making them extremely vulnerable. Loss and damage to land has aggravated already alarming levels of land inequality. Wealth and income inequality intersect with race, gender and ethnicity to create even greater vulnerability to climate impacts.

Oxfam's research in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste found that land tenure security is an important factor that determines the eligibility of people to receive compensation and support to overcome loss and damage. Similarly, land ownership gives access to mechanisms such as farmer societies through which government extension services relating to climate adaptation and mitigation as well as climate finance are channelled to communities. Secure land tenure was found to be an important factor that enabled communities to avoid, minimize and address loss and damage and to increase their climate resilience. Where such existing community level structures are used to for delivery of resources to address loss and damage, ways of overcoming these challenges must be found to ensure that funding reaches everyone who suffers loss and damage irrespective of their land ownership status. Lack of land ownership should not prevent communities from accessing loss and damage finance.

Land tenure security is a key factor that determines the sustainability and success of actions aimed at addressing loss and damage. The longevity and sustainability of these actions depend on the

length of their operations which largely depends on the continued availability of the lands on which they are implemented.

This paper will draw from the research conducted by Oxfam in the above mentioned countries and will present the key findings on the importance of ensuring land tenure security to improve climate resilience of local communities and access to climate finance. It will highlight the stories from the ground to showcase approaches that need to be adopted to ensure climate responsive land governance systems.

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