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NES Mongolia: Empowering marginalised groups through dissemination of inclusive land governance practices

Securing land rights is the key to end poverty and build peaceful and just societies. However, land governance is complex and deeply rooted in unequal power relations. To those working to secure land rights, it is clear that this cannot be addressed in isolation. That is why the International Land Coalition (ILC) has been building and strengthening partnerships based on trust to solve land governance challenges. National Engagement Strategies - "NES" – are multi-stakeholder platforms led by national actors that simplify and unpack land governance complexities, using ILC's 10 commitments to people-centred land governance as their compass, while promoting the Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure (VGGT).



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Based on **collaboration and evidence-based policy dialogue**, NES platforms set priorities and design legitimate solutions to the most challenging land-related issues in a country. NES platforms include ILC members and non-members and aim at **bridging the gap** between national and local government, international agencies, and civil society, providing a space to share knowledge and complement each other to improve land governance. In 2019, NES Mongolia piloted LANDex, the global land governance index, to monitor land governance and track progress on land-related indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Government officials are interested in using LANDex for data collection.

NES Mongolia is interested in exploring together how donor institutions and strategic partners can engage in this partnership between civil society and government to complement and link our efforts to reach the **Sustainable Development Goals** by securing land rights.

Major land governance challenges in Mongolia

Poor availability of pastureland, land grabbing, and overlapping claims overgrazing and mining lands are some of the major challenges in the country. Although the current conflict resolution system is relatively clear, access and treatment is not fair and equal for all, and pastureland legislation in particular offers only weak protection against evictions and exclusions. Widespread unsustainable use of pastureland, without customary mobility and seasonal rotations, has led to land degradation, and the current commons use regime has resulted in a few wealthy herders, the urban rich and companies expanding their control over grazing lands at the expense of medium and small herders, thus increasing social inequality. Moreover, pastureland has been converted into other uses such as mining, infrastructure, and tourism.

The overarching objective of NES Mongolia is to secure land rights for marginalized and vulnerable communities including herders, low-income urban population, ethnic minorities, and women by:

1. capacity building on securing land rights for pastoral herder households, marginalized and vulnerable groups of settlements and local government officers;
2. enabling policy and social atmosphere to formulate and implementing pro-people land and development policies and programmes;
3. lobbying MPs and influential government executives to push forward the drafting and debates on legislation to secure equitable and sustainable rights to pasture land.



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The priorities for NES Mongolia are to:

- Establish and strengthen the platform by increasing outreach to key stakeholders
- Empower primary stakeholders (marginalized social groups and women) to access and utilize knowledge and good practices for improved governance of land resources
- Advocacy and lobbying for inclusive, equitable and gender-sensitive land legislation
- Monitoring allocation of land/mineral resources using LANDEX (including assisting relevant government institutions in adopting LANDEX)
- Replicate NES Mongolia-piloted responsibility and accountability mechanisms and strengthen the institutions of herding communities
- Expand the reach of NES Mongolia activities to more rural herding communities and pre-urban marginalized groups

ILC members involved:

Center for Policy Research (CPR), Environment and Development Association (JASIL), Mongolian Land Management Association (MLMA), and the National Federation of Pasture User Groups (NFPUG).

Other actors involved:

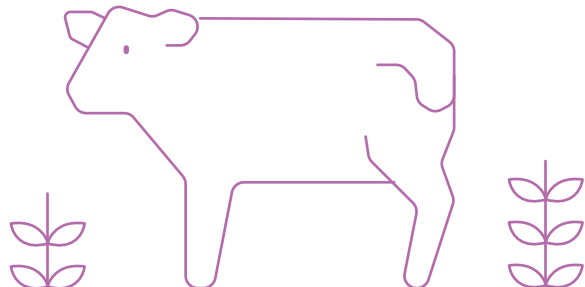
FAO, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MOFALI), Agency of Land Affairs, Geodesy and Cartography (ALAGAC), Ministry of Environment and Tourism Development (METD), National Statistical Office (NSO), People Centered Conservation (PCC), Bayan-Ovoo *soum* of Khentii *aimag*, Ulziit and Tsenkher *soums* of Arkhangai *aimag*, Governor's office of Tuv *aimag*, Governor's office of Khan-Uul district of the city of Ulaanbaatar, and CSOs like Mongolian Wool and Cashmere Association, Mongolian Yak Breeders' Union, Khangardi TV studio and herder NGOs in the two target *soums*.

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 www.nesmongolia.org



STRATEGIC PARTNERS AND CORE DONORS



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