



# Annual Report 2017

[www.landportal.org](http://www.landportal.org)

## OUR MISSION

To build an information ecosystem for land governance that supports better informed decision and policy making at national and international levels.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

To improve documentation, mapping and monitoring of land governance issues through the provision of a widely used platform which includes structured information, tools and services.

Promote, inform and enrich global debate and practice on key land issues while providing further awareness on selected thematic areas of central importance to land governance.

Raise awareness on Open Data principles, support the creation of a solid data infrastructure and build the capacities of information providers, in order to strengthen the flow of land governance information at all levels.



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### **Message from the Chair of the Board**

2017 marks the 4th year since the establishment of the Land Portal Foundation as an organization. We remain a young organization, but we can no longer be considered a startup. I am proud to say that the Land Portal is now a well-established entity in the land governance community and among donors that is seen as having a significant impact on making land governance information much more accessible and visible. One compliment we received from a leading figure is that we are “punching above our weight” as an organization. This is a compliment we greatly appreciate.

We strive to be a lean and efficient organization that uses financial resources effectively. Our small but dedicated Team, distributed around the world, has worked in an indefatigable manner to ensure the success of our organization.

I would also like to recognize our excellent members of the Board, who have demonstrated an utmost commitment to providing solid practical and strategic guidance to the Land Portal Foundation, which has set the organization on a path towards longevity. They are a diverse group of experienced land governance experts from around the world who voluntarily devote their time and effort to help the organization thrive.

The nature of the work of the Land Portal Foundation requires both a dedicated Board and Team. We also rely on the support of policy and technical advisory groups, and we are grateful for their continuous support. We are partnering with organizations throughout the world, from local to global, to build an effective land information ecosystem that supports better informed policy and decision making at national and international levels. We can be judged by the results of our work and our outcomes. This report demonstrates that 2017 was a banner year for the Land Portal Foundation on all accounts.

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our donors, which has made our work possible.

*Sincere regards,*

**Leon Verstappen**

### **Message from the Land Portal Team Leader**

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) for their enduring support of the Land Portal Foundation. Their renewed commitment to our work ensures that that we will be able to pursue our work for the coming three years.

We also appreciate the support of the Omidyar Network, which enabled us to demonstrate our ability to connect and visualize information about land and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in an innovative and useful way, and also to improve the overall branding and structure of the Land Portal itself.

I want to also thank our Team for their steadfast commitment to our mission and goals. The excellent results that you will read about in this report could only be made possible through their dedication and hard work.

We have realized over the past several years the critical importance of partnerships and collaboration in our work. The Land Portal Foundation is absolutely committed to working with anyone in the land community in a synergistic and complementary way to bring attention to land issues and to contribute positively to the work of others. We strive to raise the bar on what is achievable, to work better and take advantage of every opportunity to promote the excellent work our partners in the land governance community.

With regard to land and the SDGs, land rights now have global attention, and numerous indicators in the SDGs have driven those working on land governance to get aligned on land monitoring practices. At the Land Portal Foundation, we endeavor to take advantage of this opportunity and build on the unprecedented momentum around land issues to push it high in the global development agenda. We will work together with partners to coordinate efforts to increase access to data and information and build an ecosystem on land information ecosystem, which will in turn support better policies for surrounding land and gender, indigenous and community land rights, urban tenure, land investments and other critical issues.

We look forward to continuing to collaborate with you. We invite you to explore our work and get involved in helping to build a land information ecosystem that contributes to securing land rights for all.

*Kind regards,*

**Laura Meggiolaro**

# Improving access to land information

Improved access to land and data is pivotal for the promotion of land governance reform as well as the fulfillment of human rights and sustainable development. With access to reliable data and information, informed decisions regarding land and property rights can take place.

Yet, in many parts of the world, data and information on land remains scattered, fragmented, inaccessible, expensive, and poorly organized. Practitioners and organizations in the land sector commonly view the inaccessibility of land information as a key impediment to the promotion of policies and practices that ensure responsible land governance. Poor visibility of what is being done to advance land rights at the country level, coupled with a lack of synergy and coordination among stakeholders, has slowed the progress of the land governance agenda.

In 2017, the Land Portal Foundation and its partners helped address these challenges by ensuring broad access to data and information that can be effectively used to promote responsible land governance and secure land rights for poor and vulnerable groups.

We empowered local organizations across the Global South, particularly those in East Africa, India, the Mekong Region, and Latin America, to enhance their use and management of land information and contribute to a land information ecosystem. Through well-planned curation and dissemination of land governance data and information, the Land Portal Foundation accelerated the development of a more inclusive, friendly and accessible information landscape that ensures widespread access to information for all land governance stakeholders, especially those in the Global South.

## **Building an information ecosystem on land**

The Land Portal is based on open sources, open data and open content, and promotes open approaches with partners, seeking to catalyze and support greater sharing, collaboration and innovation in the land governance community.

The Land Portal website gathers information from a broad range of information providers and is organized and visualized in ways that are intuitive and usable for researchers, private sector actors and policy makers at global and local levels. This information strengthens research, advocacy, and policy-making efforts by enabling a better understanding of land governance issues affecting various countries and regions.

Information available on the Land Portal is enriched according to internationally recognized open data standards and principles. By linking local and global online databases together, the Land Portal is supporting the development of an 'information ecosystem' that eliminates information 'silos' that store information that is disconnected and inaccessible.

The Land Portal supports land-focused organizations around the world to adopt open data standards and principles. These standards include **LandVoc**, a standardized vocabulary on land that is part of AGROVOC, the multilingual agricultural thesaurus of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The Land Portal continuously enriches concepts included in the vocabulary based upon feedback and review from constituents, especially those in the Global South, who provide insight regarding culturally-specific synonyms and other land-related terms.

The Land Portal currently hosts 29 datasets from local and global information providers, including 584 different indicators. This includes a wide variety of land-related information that is visualized on countries and thematic portfolios. All of the data and metadata for these datasets are available as open data and can be downloaded in a range of formats.

The Land Portal will continue to work together in partnership with organizations around the world to increase the capacity of institutions and organizations to make land-related information available as open data and to make this information accessible on the Land Portal.

## FEBRUARY

### Open Data Festival and Regional Capacity-building Workshop in Myanmar

The **Open Data Festival and and Workshop on Enhancing Open Access to Knowledge, Information and Data in the Mekong** took place in Yangon, Myanmar brought together dozens of participants from local and international organizations to explore the challenges, needs, opportunities and technologies related to Mekong countries becoming leaders in the effective use of data to support development. Government officials from Myanmar, Vietnam and Laos participated in an in-depth training on land and open data, resulting in a community of practice leading towards the adoption of open data policies and practice across a range of institutions and ministries in the region.



## MARCH

### Land Portal Foundation and the Columbia Center on Sustainable Investment (CCSI) Launch Thematic Portfolio on Land & Investments

The **Land & Investments** portfolio provides a detailed narrative on land and investments written by CCSI and includes overview of the relationship between land tenure and land investments, the international standards on land investments, the ongoing challenges associated with ensuring responsible investment, as well as ongoing initiatives aimed at increasing investment transparency.



### Open Data and Land Governance: Moving Towards an Information Ecosystem

Land Portal and Cadasta Foundation co-hosted a workshop in Washington, D.C. with representatives from a broad range of land organizations to discuss ways of making land-related data and information more open, transparent, and accessible. The result of the workshop was the **Land Information Ecosystem Declaration** to promote and bolster data-sharing efforts within the land sector, with the hope that such action will catalyze positive changes in the area of land governance and lead to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).





## JULY

### Country Portfolio on land issues in India launched by the Land Portal Foundation and India-based NRM Center for Land Governance

The **India** country portfolio showcases a comprehensive narrative on land governance issues in India and brings together key land governance indicators, as well as the latest news, blogs and events relating to land issues in India. Moreover, the portfolio provides direct access to more than 1280 publications related to land issues in India.



### Land Portal Foundation and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launch thematic portfolio on land conflicts

#### Thematic Portfolio on Land Conflicts

addresses and comprehensively documents pervasive impacts of land conflicts, providing extensive access to information.



## SEPTEMBER

### Land and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) platform launched

**Land & SDGs platform** in September 2017 in collaboration with GLTN-GLII. The platform contains infographics that enable users to understand the SDG reporting process and the steps that need to be taken for land-related SDG indicators. The collaborative activities linked to the platform were instrumental in raising awareness and consolidating data and information relevant to the SDG reporting process. In November 2017, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators reclassified SDG indicator 1.4.2 and 5.a.2 from Tier III to Tier II.



### SDGs blog series publishes first blog by Jeffrey Sachs

The first blog in the SDGs blog series focusing on **Land and the SDGs** is published by Professor **Jeffrey Sachs**, Chairman of the Advisory Board of CCSI, University Professor at Columbia University, and Director of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

### Webinar on the Future of Land-Related Indicators in the 2030 Agenda

Land Portal Foundation, the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network's Thematic Network on Good Governance of Extractive and Land Resources and the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) co-hosted an interactive webinar to discuss land-related Sustainable shared updates about their work to monitor SDG implementation, including the status of indicator 1.4.2, which aims to measure progress on secure tenure rights for all.

## SEPTEMBER (CONTINUES)

### Land Portal Foundation and International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) launch thematic portfolio on Land & Food Security

Approximately 40 percent of the world's land is used for crop production and pasture, but 800 million people remain food insecure and as many as 2 billion are malnourished. The **Thematic Portfolio on Land & Food Security** puts the spotlight on key issues, data and information from diverse information sources and provides access to a wide range of food security indicators and statistics from major global databases, including Global Hunger Index (GHI).



### Dynamic and interactive representation of the Global Property Rights Index (PRIndex)

PRIndex fills the gap in information about individual perception of tenure security by creating a baseline global dataset to support the achievement of secure property rights around the world. The Prindex page contains interactive data visualization tools showing data on the rate of property documentation and the perceived tenure security.

# PRIndex.

## OCTOBER

### High-level event at FAO Committee on Food Security (CFS) on SDGs, Food Security and Tenure Rights

The Land Portal Foundation organized a high-profile side event on SDGs, Food Security and Tenure Rights: Taking stock of progress and mapping future contributions from development actors together with the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), Land Alliance, Inc., Omidyar Network and the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN) at the annual CFS.



## NOVEMBER

### Country Portfolios for Kenya, South Africa and Zambia launched

Developed in partnership with local experts and organizations, portfolios for **Kenya**, **South Africa** and **Zambia** on the Land Portal offer an in-depth look at both the current and historical land governance situation as well as access to a wide range of datasets, publications, and other land-related content.



### A Redesigned and Restructured Website

At the end of 2017, the Land Portal platform was redesigned, reorganized, and upgraded to ensure a user-friendly experience for all visitors of the website. The platform landing page now provides quick access to **country** and **issue-related** information, **online discussions**, **data**, **Land Library Resources**, **News**, and **Events**, and **Profiles** of people and organizations in the land community.

### Bangladesh and Brazil country portfolios launched

Land Portal and **Habitat for Humanity International** co-launched a **Brazil Land Governance Country Portfolio**. Together with Uttaran, a local NGO that follows a rights based approach to empower poor communities and reduce poverty, a **Country Portfolio on Bangladesh** was launched.



# Online Discussions

Facilitated by local and global partners, dialogues on the Land Portal bring together communities to discuss strategic and timely issues, resulting in increasingly cohesive communities of practice and networks engaged in crucial land governance issues.

## **Responsible Investments in Land: perspectives from Tanzania and globally**

Co-facilitated by Landesa's Godfrey Massay and Lukasz Czerwinski, the discussion received 109 comments from subject matter experts from government, civil society, and academia in Tanzania and other countries. The debate focused on the questions of "What do 'responsible investments in land' look like in practice?" and "What is the role of civil society in promoting responsible investments and gap filling?" Godfrey Massay of Landesa also published a **Summary of the Land Debate** report that highlights key takeaways from the discussion.

## **Tenure Security & SDG Indicator 1.4.2- How do we measure perceptions on land tenure security?**

Facilitated by the GLTN, Land Alliance, Inc. and the Land Portal, this dialogue brought together key voices from around the world on measuring the perceptions of tenure security and SDG Indicator 1.4.2. The discussion generated 50 highly substantive comments and served to move the needle with regard to the tier status of Indicator 1.4.2.

## **Towards Sustainable Land Governance in Kenya**

Facilitated by Land Portal partner Land Development & Governance Institute (LDGI), this discussion drew attention to the implications of sustainable and good land governance by the stakeholders, land institutions and the land owners, and engaged and amplified Kenyan voices.

### **Responsible Large Scale Agricultural Investment in the Mekong Region**

Facilitated by Land Portal partner Mekong Region Land Governance (MRLG), this dialogue generated 50 comments in order to collaboratively explore challenges and opportunities related to the responsible large scale agricultural investments in the Mekong region in order to identify issues of common interest, contrast country and regional contexts and strategies, and generate a regional-level synthesis of key challenges and opportunities to contribute to solutions.

### **Women's Land Rights in India and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

Facilitated by NRMCC, the Land Portal's partner in India, the discussion led to 74 substantive comments from local and global experts on women's land rights and the SDGs. The discussion was timed to bring global attention to the SDGs in the run up to the Inter-Agency Expert Group (IAEG) on the SDGs in November.



# Land Portal People

## Our Board of Directors



**Dr. Leon Verstappen – Chair**  
Professor of Notary Law,  
University of Groningen



**Terry Parnell–Treasurer**  
Information Platform  
Coordinator, Mekong  
Regional Land  
Governance, MRLG



**Timothy Fella**  
Global Business  
Development Manager for  
Land Administration, ESRI



**Annette Jaitner**  
Land Programme Lead,  
Transparency International



**Johannes Keizer**  
Strategic Partnerships,  
Global Open Data for  
Agriculture and Nutrition,  
GODAN



**Magdalena Anna  
Kropiwnicka**  
Food and Land Policy  
Advisor, Food and  
Climate Consulting

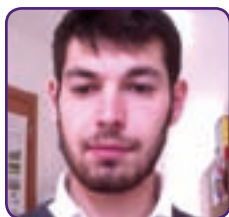


**Dr. Ritu Verma**  
Anthropologist,  
International Development  
Expert and Civil Engineer

## Our Team



**Laura Meggiolaro**  
Team Leader



**Marcello De Maria**  
Data Analyst



**Lisette Mey**  
Information Management  
Officer



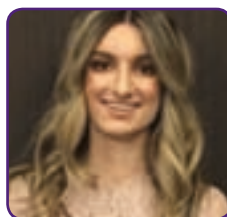
**Neil Sorensen**  
Communications Specialist



**Nicholas Tagliarino**  
Research Analyst



**Carlos Tejo Alonso**  
Data Officer



**Stacey Zammit**  
Communications Officer

## Our donors

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Land Portal is grateful for the generous support of our donors:



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# Land Portal in numbers

**477,969** visits

**800,816** page views

**2,350** Land Portal users

**4,545** Twitter followers

**1,645** likes on Facebook

**313** blog posts

**4,500** news articles

**45,000** Land Library Resources

**1,100** sources of information

**600,000** data points

**570** indicators

**29** datasets

**70%** of Land Portal users  
are from the Global South

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## LAND PORTAL FOUNDATION

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