



**NATIONAL
LAND
COALITION** | **NEPAL**

Advancing Land Rights for Equity, Prosperity and Resilience in Nepal
“Let’s work together to make equitable land governance a reality”

Addressing Nepal's Land Rights Crisis

Land in Nepal is not just a resource; it is the foundation of identity, power and wealth. However, historical injustices and systemic inequalities have excluded Dalits, Indigenous peoples, landless, tenant farmers, and other marginalized groups from securing land



rights. This exclusion continues to leave them vulnerable and trapped in poverty, injustice and hindering their chances for progress and wellbeing. The climate crisis and recurrent disasters have further aggravated the landlessness and displacement and land insecurity in Nepal, further deepening these challenges.

The National Land Coalition (NLC) Nepal, part of the International Land Coalition (ILC), is at the forefront to address land rights challenges. It began as the National Engagement Strategy (NES) in 2012, with a focus on improving land access, ownership, and governance. Initially, it consisted of ILC members;

- Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC),
- College of Development Studies (CDS),
- Consortium for Land Research and Policy Dialogue (COLARP),
- Abhiyan Nepal (AN) and
- National Land Right Forum (NLRF)

Over the time, it expanded to 19 members, including INGOs, CSOs, and NGOs. In 2018, it became the Land Governance Working Group (LGWG) and later evolved into NLC Nepal in 2022, aligning with ILC's 2022–2030 strategy. Additionally, a women-led coalition of 10 CSOs, including both ILC and non-ILC members, works on women's land rights, land justice, and climate change as a thematic group.

Through advocacy, and grassroots mobilization, NLC is committed to securing land rights for marginalized communities, promoting gender equality, and enhancing climate resilience.

NLC Nepal's Key Achievements:

- Over the past decade, NLC members have facilitated the securing land tenure for 88,933 families and the protection of approximately 15,000 hectares of land through strategic policy interventions.
- Continue advocating for policy and legal provisions that uphold the spirit of the Constitution and address key land-related issues. Notably, efforts have played a pivotal role in the formulation of the National Land Policy 2019, the Land Use Act, and the amendments to the Land Act and its regulations. These initiatives aim to ensure equitable land governance, strengthen land rights, and promote sustainable land use practices across Nepal.
- Successfully secured land certificates for over 10,000 women through Joint Land Ownership (JLO), significantly advancing women's access to land and strengthening their land rights. From 2011 to 2021, land ownership by women increased from 19.71% to 23.8%, reflecting steady progress. This achievement has been facilitated by measures such as fee waivers and the mandatory provision of joint titling in land allocation initiatives.
- Strengthened organizations from the community to the national level, such as the National Land Rights Forum (NLRF), the *Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj* (NMES). These organizations have been effectively mobilized to secure land rights and resist forced evictions.
- Developed risk-sensitive land use plans and adaptive farming to restore degraded lands and strengthen community resilience.

The Urgent Land Rights Challenges in Nepal

In Nepal, despite decades of informal land occupation, around 300,000 families, primarily Dalits and *Sukumbasi*, remain landless, and over a million people live as informal settlers without legal land ownership, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation, displacement, and poverty. This issue is especially dire for families in disaster-prone areas, where floods and landslides worsen their insecurity. The land rights movement faces systemic challenges



including poor governance, political instability and evictions. Ongoing protests, such as like the *Guthi* protests, highlighting the urgent need for a coordinated effort to secure land rights for marginalized communities. Women, indigenous people, and tenant farmers also face significant barriers to land ownership due to cultural, legal, and social obstacles. Additionally, bonded laborers such as *Haruwa*, *Charuwa*, *Haliya*, and *MuktaKamaiya* continue to live in landlessness and poverty due to the lack of official recognition and support. The 2019 Land Use Act has failed to be effectively implemented, and the slow progress in land classification has only added to the complexity, further hindering any meaningful resolution of these challenges.

Building Resilient Land Governance Together

To address the pressing land rights challenges in Nepal, it is crucial to strengthen the land rights movement and empower marginalized communities.



This requires capacity

building for activists and organizations, fostering coordinated efforts to address systemic inequalities. By equipping local leaders with the necessary tools, knowledge, and resources, we can create a unified movement that promotes inclusive land tenure and enhances community resilience.

Together, we can:

- Empower landless, tenants and land poor communities to secure land rights and sustainable livelihoods.
- Critical engagement with the Land Issues Resolving Commission to promote social justice and secure with land rights of more marginalized landless.
- Promote women's land rights and Joint Land Ownership to advance gender equality.
- Support Nepal's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in poverty eradication, gender equality, and climate action.

Strategic Actions to Advance Land Rights

- Localization of land governance by conducting land-agriculture context mapping, implementing local land laws, and supporting land use planning in collaboration with local governments and grassroots organizations.
- Massive awareness through land literacy programs and assisting the most vulnerable landless families in claiming their land rights under the government's land allocation initiative.
- Strengthening the capacity of grassroots and movement organizations by providing legal camps and continuous support to frontline leaders.
- Leadership development of grassroots leaders and mobilizing them to lead community-driven campaigns for land rights.
- Research and documentation of critical land rights cases and dissemination of findings to support informed advocacy and policymaking.
- Regular policy dialogues and advocacy from local to national levels, using research-based evidence and updated position papers to reflect the evolving land governance context.

Join the Movement for Equitable Land Rights in Nepal

Collaboration is essential for transforming land governance in Nepal. Together, we can make a lasting difference. Here's how you can help:

- 1. Empower Activists:** Strengthen organizations to lead advocacy efforts and mobilize communities for land rights.
- 2. Fuel Grassroots Campaigns:** Provide resources for community-driven campaigns that elevate marginalized voices in land governance.
- 3. Drive Research & Advocacy:** Partner on research and advocacy to address land tenure, environmental challenges, and climate resilience.

4. **Advance Land Allocation:** Support the Land Issues Resolving Commission to ensure fair and equitable land distribution.
5. **Co-Fund for Change:** Invest in programs that advance land rights, empower women, and build climate resilience for vulnerable communities.

Join NLC Nepal to Transform Land Rights

By collaborating with NLC Nepal, you can help transform land rights into equity, prosperity, and resilience for land-dependent communities. Together, we can address land inequality, build climate-resilient farming systems, empower marginalized women, and ensure justice for communities leading Nepal's land



Join **NLC Nepal** today and be part of the solution!

Contact Us:

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<https://www.landcoalition.org/en/our-network/our-focus-countries/nepal/>