

ABOUT NAMATI



Namati is dedicated to placing the power of law in the hands of people. In a world where billions of people live outside the protection of the law, Namati is building a global movement of grassroots legal advocates who work with communities to advance justice. These advocates are solving problems on the front lines to help people protect their rights, pursue their livelihoods, and demand accountable and responsive governance from public institutions.

Namati is advancing the field of legal empowerment, building it into a vibrant, evidence-based, well-financed movement with the reach and scope to solve some of the world's most pressing justice problems. Namati's strategy has three elements: grassroots innovation, a global network, and the translation of grassroots experience into systemic change:

1. Grassroots innovation. Grassroots legal advocates have the potential to take on the toughest justice challenges of our day. But realizing that potential requires a commitment to innovation and methodological rigor that the field of legal empowerment has not yet developed. Together with local partner organizations, Namati implements innovative, evidence-driven legal empowerment programs that demonstrate how grassroots legal advocates can generate results on some of the greatest justice issues of our times: delivering quality legal aid at scale; protecting community land rights; closing the enforcement gap in environmental

law; fulfilling the right to citizenship; and ensuring that essential services like healthcare and education are accountable to local communities. Namati evaluates and documents all of these efforts, publishing both impact studies and practical guidance for practitioners.

2. Global legal empowerment network. Namati cultivates the largest global community of legal empowerment practitioners: a network of over 500 legal empowerment organizations from across the world working to take innovations to scale and raise the profile of the field as a whole. Members of the network learn from one another and from Namati's experiences with partners. Join the network at <https://namati.org/network/>.

3. Systemic change. Namati leverages insights from grassroots implementation, drawing on data to advocate for large-scale policy change. Namati and its partners aim to show that not only can grassroots legal advocates help bring good laws to life, their work can also lead to positive changes in the law itself and the institutions through which law is applied. Namati also collaborates with network members to advocate for global policies that advance legal empowerment.

Together these elements form a reinforcing cycle that leads to empowered citizens and sustainable, equitable development.

ABOUT NAMATI'S COMMUNITY LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM

Namati's Community Land Protection Program partners with national and local organizations to proactively strengthen communities' ability to protect, document and steward their customary and indigenous lands. Namati's integrated community land protection approach combines the legal and technical work of mapping and documentation with the governance work of establishing mechanisms for accountable, equitable and participatory local management of land and natural resources. Namati's community land protection process supports communities to:

- Improve local governance by holding leaders accountable and increasing community involvement in land and natural resource management;
- Strengthen protections for women's and minority groups' land rights;
- Resolve long-standing land disputes and reduce future land conflict;
- Improve conservation and sustainable use and management of natural resources;

- Align community norms and practices with national and international law; and
- Vision and plan for community-defined local development.

To strengthen fieldwork and ensure significant impact, Namati and its partners rigorously collect and analyze data on communities' land protection activities. Namati then develops all findings, shared learnings, innovations and strategies into practical resources for the growing network of organizations working to protect community lands and natural resources. Namati also offers technical support and legal assistance to advocates and activists, and advises governments on how best to enact and implement legislation protecting community land rights. All Namati publications, policy advocacy, and technical support are grounded in and informed by grassroots fieldwork.



THE COMMUNITY LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM'S VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Community Land Protection Program envisions a world where community land and natural resource governance and management systems are celebrated as powerful and viable models for modern societies, and lead to the realization of:

1. Vibrant, engaged communities with accountable governance structures, empowered to participate and advocate for themselves in wider political and governance systems;
2. Inclusive, diverse communities that respect the rights of women and other marginalized groups;
3. Sustainable local economies, connected with regional markets, that enable a diversity of livelihood options while maintaining protections for community members who rely upon communal lands and resources to support their families;
4. Effective local environmental stewardship that results in flourishing ecosystems, food security, and the protection of future biodiversity; and
5. The revival, maintenance, and inter-generational transfer of dynamic local cultures, languages, ceremonies, and traditional knowledge.

Namati's Community Land Protection Program operates according to the following guiding principles:

1. **Self-awareness.** We strive to be deeply reflective, thoughtful, and humble in all that we do. We embrace complexity, learning and vulnerability. We commit to recognizing and addressing the underlying power dynamics that exist between international and local organizations – and between local organizations and communities – and the potential imposition of desired outcomes.
2. **Critical self-reflection and honesty about our shortcomings and uncertainties.** We are clear and honest about which findings and impacts are supported by hard data, and which are based on anecdotal evidence. We report on our failures and ongoing challenges so that we and others can continue to learn and improve.
3. **Adaptation, not replication.** Our goal is for our partners and the communities we work with to critically assess and adapt our approach to local circumstances, not to simply replicate it. Communities' priorities and concerns drive the work forward, with facilitators listening carefully and adapting the process as necessary. While maintaining the approach's core components, we remain open to continuously learning from our partners and improving our strategy.
4. **Bridging indigenous/customary knowledge with statutory systems.** We work to bridge the gap between communities, national governments and international institutions by elevating the voices, lived experiences, priorities and interests of communities up into national and global decision-making processes. We aim to create a legitimate space within statutory law for customary norms, practices and knowledge.
5. **Grassroots-driven advocacy.** We engage in policy advocacy efforts to strengthen communities' rights to their lands and natural resources and to facilitate community land protection in practice. Our policy priorities are derived from communities' expressed needs and our experiences working at the grassroots.

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