Why is it important to secure land and property rights?
Secure land and property rights are at the core of many development challenges and are key elements to eradicate extreme poverty, achieve accelerated sustainable growth, and foster an improved business environment.

**Food Security:** The world’s population is estimated to continue to grow, with the inevitable resulting pressure on land resources. To meet the demand for food, production will need to grow by an average of 20%, and 55% in Africa, in that short time.

**Urbanization:** The urban population is estimated to increase from 54% of the world’s population in 2016 to 66% in 2050. The urban growth will put pressure on existing space and infrastructure, and result in increasing land prices and reducing land access for the poor. Urbanization will also increase the need for land transactions, in turn requiring reliable systems for land administration.

**Climate Change:** Climate change could potentially have a negative effect on global crop yields by as much as 5% by 2030. Secure tenure of land is critical for landscape management, to mitigate emissions, and for addressing disaster risk.

**Fragility:** Land conflicts frequently underlie fragility, and uncertainty on land rights in post-conflict situations slows reconciliation and critical return to growth.

However, for the majority of the world’s poor, secure property rights is a rare luxury. An estimated 70% of all land parcels worldwide are not legally recognized or recorded. The poor need secure rights to turn those assets into economic opportunities so that they can start a new business or grow an existing one, partner with responsible private sector investors, and better manage their resources for future generations. Further, strengthening the land rights of women and vulnerable populations responds to basic norms of equality and has positive outcomes on human capital and development.
What can be done?

The Bank is working in 48 countries and currently has commitments of nearly a billion dollars in systems to help its clients protect, record, adjudicate, and register property rights, impacting millions of land holders in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa.

But with the current levels of investment, the global community will not significantly increase the number of poor households with secure property rights, and will likely not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target of "all men and women having equal rights to ownership and control over land by 2030".

The international community and governments need to work together in the effective recognition of land rights under all tenure regimes, and the strengthening of land governance policies and institutions. A substantial new investment program is needed to do this on a mass scale in developing countries.

The World Bank looks forward to strengthening multi-sector partnerships with governments, development partners, civil society, and the private sector in order to unblock land and property rights for accelerated growth and poverty reduction, to enhance the commitment of countries, and to mobilize resources to achieve ambitious targets of securing land and property rights by 2030.

For more information, see [www.worldbank.org/land](http://www.worldbank.org/land) Contact: Anna Corsi (acorsi@worldbank.org)