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**HOMES FOR THE HOLIDAYS: \$1.5M GOOGLE GLOBAL IMPACT AWARD SUPPORTS LANDESA AND FRONTLINESMS IN THREE-YEAR PARTNERSHIP TO HELP 80,000 FAMILIES IN INDIA TO GAIN SECURE RIGHTS TO THEIR HOMES**

Landesa and FrontlineSMS are delighted to welcome and share the announcement today of a US \$1.5m Google Global Impact Award, which will enable them to use mobile technology to transform the way that the government in the Indian state of Odisha helps landless families gain secure rights to their land and homes.

With the Google award, FrontlineSMS and Landesa will work directly and through barefoot lawyers already in place in Odisha to build and roll out a mobile technology-based land titling system. Mobile telephone technology will allow government officials to exchange information with remote locations, enabling the state to provide land titles more quickly and more efficiently to as many as 80,000 poor rural households.

Approximately 1.25 billion poor people across the globe depend on land for their livelihood, but lack secure legal rights to land they occupy or cultivate. The largest concentration of those extremely poor, landless people is in India, where landlessness is the best predictor of poverty. Meanwhile, mobile phones are the most widespread digital communications technology the world has ever seen. This project will harness the comparative efficiency of mobile technologies to help vulnerable families gain legal control over their homes and homestead land.

"This project is a first step toward making legal systems accessible to the people they serve, starting by reaching out with the technology they already use," said Sean Martin McDonald, FrontlineSMS CEO and founder of the FrontlineSMS:Legal project. "Our goal is to build tools that work in the world's most challenging contexts, reach the most vulnerable people, and improve the most vital systems. This project will use mobile phones to help hundreds of thousands of people find and keep something fundamental: the place they call home."

"This project is a perfect example of how Landesa's partnerships advance durable land rights to bring transformational changes on a large scale," said Tim Hanstad, President and CEO of Landesa. "Here we have a multi-tiered partnership with the government, the private sector, and a highly specialized non-profit developing and testing a potential tool that can, with minimal investment, resources, and training, help secure land rights for some of the world's poorest and most remote communities. These rights are the first step towards establishing a stable foundation for other important development work – like literacy, clean water, and nutrition."

The FrontlineSMS and Landesa teams will start training barefoot lawyers to use the system early in 2014, and will release a toolkit and the new FrontlineSMS:Legal platform in 2015.

### **About FrontlineSMS**

FrontlineSMS is free and open-source professional messaging software. It works on and offline, enabling users to reach anyone with a mobile phone with the information, services, and goods they need most. FrontlineSMS and FrontlineCloud, are made by Social Impact Lab, recently named the #1 Technology NGO in the world by The Global Journal, and the # 37 NGO overall. Their products are used by thousands of governments, clinics, schools, charities and businesses in more than 135 countries around the world. Social Impact Lab's approach – combining on and offline platforms through user-focused design, iterative development, and applied support – has been recognized by the Rockefeller Foundation, the GSMA, and the international press.

### **About Landesa**

Landesa, a global development non-profit, was recently named the #1 Human Rights NGO in the world by The Global Journal and the #16 NGO overall. With more than 100 staff in offices in India and China and headquarters in Seattle, Landesa works to secure land rights for the world's poorest people – those 2.47 billion chiefly rural people who live on less than two dollars a day. Landesa partners with developing country governments to design and implement land-related laws, policies, and programs that provide opportunity, further economic growth, and promote social justice. Founded by a University of Washington Law School professor, Landesa's partnerships with governments around the world have helped bring more secure land rights to more than 100 million families since 1967.

Learn more at [Landesa.org](http://Landesa.org) and join us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).