

# Niketa Kulkarni, Senior Consultant

## Overview of Expertise

Niketa is an experienced gender and M&E specialist with over 15 years working in international development. Niketa is trained in both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and is particularly interested in designing gender and socially inclusive research and frameworks to understand how to improve the efficacy of laws, policies, and programs targeting vulnerable populations across the globe. In particular, she is committed to designing research that can help affirm, disprove, or motivate iterations of evidence-based 'theories of change' to inform current and further policy and program reforms.

Niketa has had experience working with government, private commercial entities, community level non-profits, and large philanthropic organizations on a variety of initiatives related to the socio-economic empowerment of vulnerable communities across the globe, including property rights and access to financial services. She combines her deep knowledge of gender and inclusion with her experience in monitoring and evaluation to develop robust monitoring frameworks and evaluation strategies to credibly track and understand the process of change.

Niketa has implemented research efforts across the globe, including the Pacific, Asia, Africa, and South America for entities including the World Bank, DFID, USAID, UN Women, GIZ, and multiple international NGOs.

## Qualifications & Training

- 2014 Masters in Quantitative Methods in Social Sciences, Columbia University
- 2005 Masters in South Asian Studies, University of Michigan
- 2004 Juris Doctor, University of Michigan
- 2001 Bachelor of Arts with Distinction (Political Science, Sociology), University of Michigan

## Project Experience

### Research and Evaluation

- Managed the design and implementation of a Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) funded, multi-year, gender-inclusive assessment across 3 Indian states to understand long and short term social and economic outcomes associated with the inclusion of women's names on homestead and agricultural land titles, women's participation in legal literacy programs, and access to convergence services to boost agricultural productivity.
- Led the development and implementation of M&E frameworks and processes for a DFID funded project aimed at improving the land tenure and socio-economic position of small-holder farmers in Tanzania and Uganda, with specific attention on gender-related outcomes.
- Developed technical notes for USAID on the United States' progress towards reaching targets under SDG 1.4.2, by analysing publicly available census and survey data on property ownership and perceptions of tenure security, disaggregated by sex.
- Designed and implemented a series of mixed-method efforts to monitor and evaluate a Nike Foundation funded program in West Bengal aimed at improving outcomes for girls through land-based livelihood and land rights training.

- Designed a short-interval panel effort to gather information about land use and productivity of women land reform beneficiaries in Odisha and West Bengal.
- Developed a gender integrative research and monitoring framework for a DFID funded project focused on supporting responsible investments on property and land in Tanzania and Ghana.
- Reviewed and provided feedback on research and fieldwork strategies as well as sampling methodologies questionnaires for their attention to gender inclusiveness and sensitivities across multiple research efforts conducted by Landesa.
- Conducted a qualitative assessment in Papua New Guinea to evaluate the viability of mobile financial services for women for UN Women.
- Assessed the potential of linking informal savings clubs to banks in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda through in-depth individual interviews and focus groups on the ground for a BMGF funded program.
- Collected secondary research and drafted a report for the World Bank on the feasibility of developing a set of global demand-side financial access indicators that ultimately became the Findex indicators of financial access.

## Capacity Building

- Provided guidance to gender-focused CSOs across Africa and Asia to develop and implement research agendas.
- Advised on the development of a Theory of Change for a US-based non-profit focused on creating empowerment opportunities for ultra-poor households in India.
- Provided advisory support across internal Landesa program teams to develop evidence-based and context specific theory of changes.
- Invited to speak at several philanthropic events and university classes to disseminate learnings from our research and provide guidance on developing a theory of change led M&E strategy.
- Supported the design and implementation of an M&E system at a large foundation: spent four weeks on site evaluating data currently available, and subsequently presented a plan for a comprehensive data and outcome monitoring system.

## Positions held

2014-2020	Senior Research and Evaluation Specialist, Landesa, Seattle WA, USA
2009-2012	Research Associate, Bankable Frontier Associates, Somerville, MA, USA
2005-2008	Manager, Advisory Services, Unitus Advisors Pvt. Ltd. Bangalore, India

## Memberships

Australian Evaluation Society

## Papers

Stevens, C., Panfil, Y., Linkow, B., Hagopian, A., Mellon, C., Heidenrich, T., Kulkarni, N., Bouvier, I., Brooks, S., Lowery, S., and Green, J. (2020), Land and Development: A Research Agenda for Land and Resource Governance at USAID.

Kulkarni N., et al. (2017). The potential for homestead micro-plots to contribute to food security in rural West Bengal. World Bank Land and Poverty Conference.

Louis, E., Kulkarni, N., Fletschner, D. (2017). Using innovative research methodologies to uncover nuance and diversity: The results of household diaries in Odisha, India. World Bank Land and Poverty Conference.

Kulkarni, N., et al. (2016). Micro-plot Priorities and Limitations: Using Household Diaries to Explore Land Usage by Beneficiaries of Land Titling Programs in West Bengal and Odisha. World Bank Land and Poverty Conference.

Louis, E., Kulkarni, N., Huang, S., Kloos, K., Fletschner, D. (2016). Sufficient or Necessary? Legal Documentation and Perceptions of Land Tenure Security. World Bank Land and Poverty Conference.

Bledsoe, D., Czerwinski, L., Hannay, L., Hughes, H., Kulkarni, N., Lufkin, M. (2015). Bridging the Gap between Intention and Action: Tools to Enable Socially Responsible Land-Related Investment. World Bank Land and Poverty Conference.