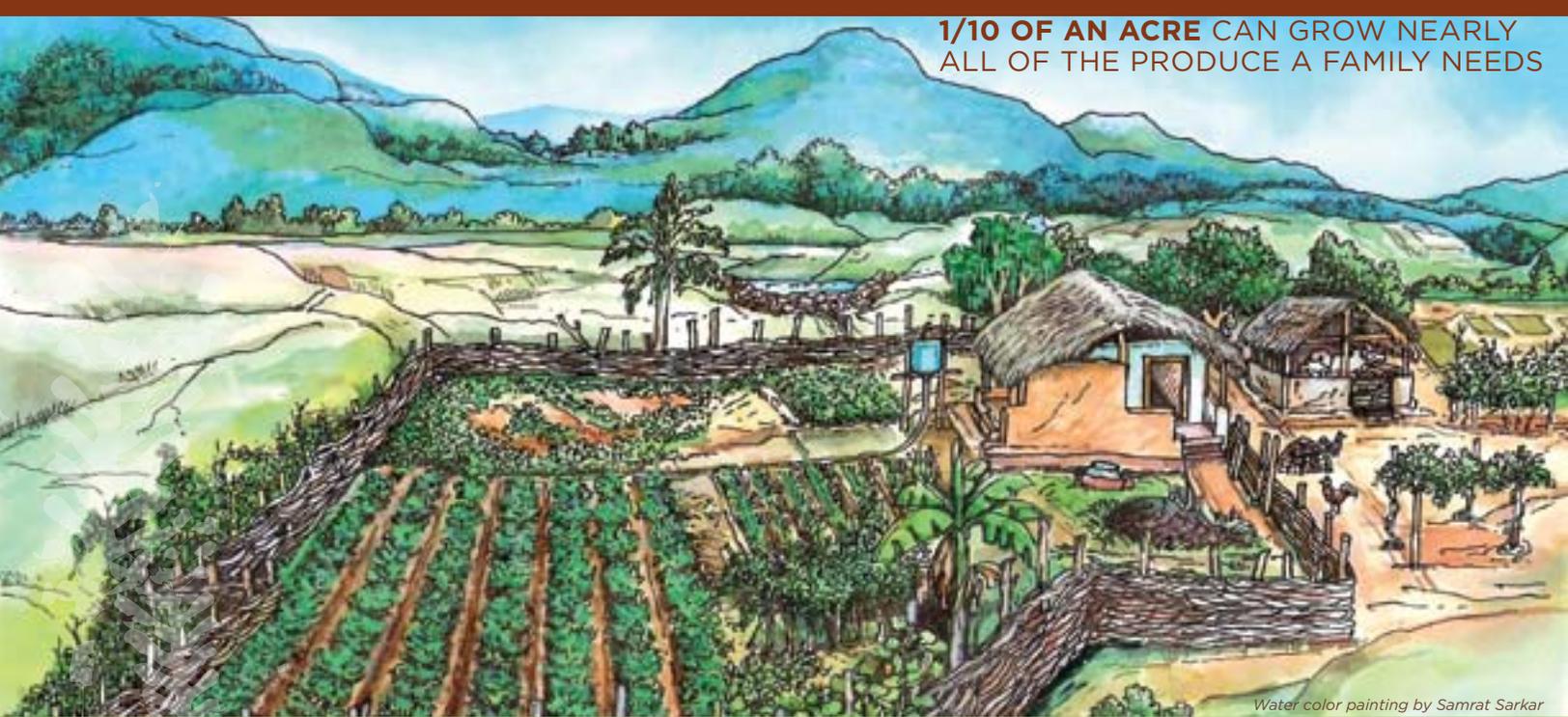


1/10 OF AN ACRE CAN GROW NEARLY ALL OF THE PRODUCE A FAMILY NEEDS



Water color painting by Samrat Sarkar

MICRO-PLOTS

A LITTLE LAND CAN
MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

GOAL: Support the State of West Bengal's efforts to provide 500,000 previously landless families with a micro-plot of land.

PROGRESS

As of March 2015, more than 265,852 previously landless families in West Bengal have received micro-plots.

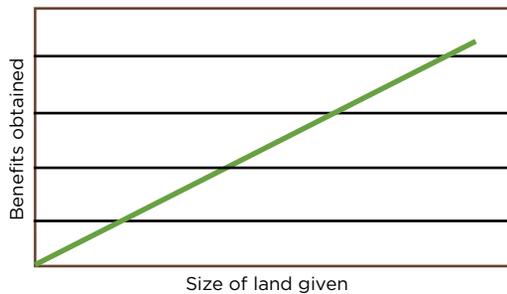
OVERVIEW

Micro-plots are tennis-court-sized home and garden plots of land. On these one-tenth-of-an-acre plots, families can produce most of the vegetables and fruit they need and sell excess produce to supplement the family's other earnings. Their big impact belies their small size. They were developed based on research that shows that secure rights to even a small area of land boosts family income, enhances family nutrition, provides physical security, provides bargaining leverage to farm hands who otherwise have to live on the property of their employer's property, serves as a vehicle for generating wealth, offers space for a home business or post-harvest storage, and secures the family's status in the

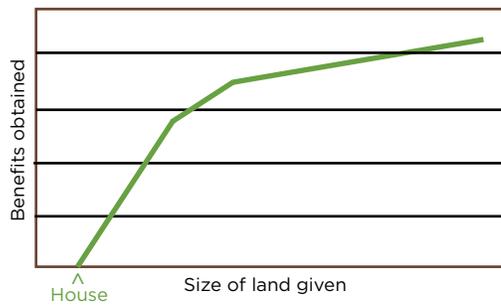
community. Micro-plots are developed with what is typically the family's most abundant resource—their own labor. And micro-plots are small enough that even governments with constrained coffers can afford to pay market prices to purchase sufficient quantities of land from willing private sellers and distribute it to their rural poor. Using the micro-plot approach, governments can provide huge benefits to their poorest citizens sparking sustainable growth with a financially and politically feasible program. The emergence of micro-plots as a tool in the fight against global poverty is related to new thinking about the relationship between the size of a farm and the benefits it produces, based, in part, on our field research which found that micro-plots between 100 to 270 square meters provided the most benefits. Benefits plateaued or even decreased for plots above 270 square meters.



Old consensus on size and benefits:



New consensus on size and benefits:



MICRO-PLOTS AROUND THE WORLD

India

The government of India, in partnership with Landesa, has launched an ambitious plan to provide micro-plots for 2 million of the country's landless families. Landesa has been working with the states of Karnataka, West Bengal, and Odisha to develop, implement, monitor, and improve micro-plot programs. Some states have paired their micro-plot programs with the national government's housing program for added impact.

Pakistan

Punjab province, Pakistan's most populous, is distributing one-quarter acre house and garden plots to an initial 1,500 landless families. Landesa served as an advisor to this program during its initial stages.

The Former Soviet Union (Russia, Ukraine, and Moldova)

The household garden plots on the former Soviet collectives and the "dacha plots" held by urban residents in the former Soviet Union played a major role in ensuring household food security in both the Soviet and post-Soviet era. Dacha plots, small house and garden plots common in Russia, have long been disproportionately productive. In 1990, for example, these micro-plots comprised about 2 percent of the land under cultivation, but accounted for 27 percent of the agricultural output. Currently about 14 percent of the agricultural land in former Soviet Union, privately held dacha plots now produce more than half of all the agricultural output for the region.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF MICRO-PLOTS

The value of home garden production increased average monthly income by 1/3:

[Building on Traditional Gardening to Improve Household Food Security](#)

Returns on the land and labor are often higher for small homestead plots:

[Development of Evidence-based policy around small-scale Farming](#)

Micro-plots can provide women with significant control over household assets and provide a critical nutritional safety net for the rural poor:

[Building on Traditional Gardening to Improve Household Food Security](#)

Overview of micro-plot research:

[One Billion Rising: Law, Land and the Alleviation of Global Poverty](#)

ABOUT LANDESA

Landesa partners with governments and local organizations to ensure that the world's poorest women and men have secure rights over the land they till. Founded as the Rural Development Institute, Landesa has helped more than 105 million poor families gain legal control over their land since 1967. When families have secure rights to land, they can invest in their land to sustainably increase their harvests and reap the benefits—improved nutrition, health, and education—for generations.

