

### **IDLO Small Grants Programme (summary)**

IDLO seeks to provide small grants (USD \$10-30,000) for innovative, empirically-focused research projects which analyze the links between customary legal systems and legal empowerment. Particular emphasis will be placed on programmatic interventions designed to enhance legal empowerment and access to justice through improved operation of customary justice systems. The overarching objective is to collect empirical data on the effectiveness of such approaches, as well as lessons learned and best practices. Example activities include:

- Detailed, independent evaluation of existing legal empowerment activities.
- Research to assess practical strategies to strengthen customary legal systems, determine the practices of customary legal institutions or to gauge community perceptions of customary law.
- Pilot projects which through a strong research component aim to achieve legal empowerment by strengthening customary legal systems.

### **IDLO Call for Papers (Summary)**

IDLO, in partnership with the Van Vollenhoven Institute for Law, Governance, and Development, are seeking submissions for an edited volume on the links between customary legal systems and legal empowerment, particularly on how customary legal systems can be strengthened to achieve legal empowerment. The publication aims to enhance knowledge and understanding among academics, policymakers, and donors regarding the functioning of customary legal systems, and in particular their strengths and weaknesses, as tools for legal empowerment. Research should focus on contexts or interventions where customary justice systems are being harnessed, explicitly or implicitly, as vehicles for legal empowerment. While papers can adopt a policy, academic or practice-oriented approach, and are not restricted by geographical area, preference will be given for research that adopts predominately empirical methodology. While solid qualitative studies are welcomed, research that quantitatively evaluates the impact of efforts to achieve legal empowerment through strengthening customary legal systems is also needed. A thematic area that will receive particular attention is the role of customary legal systems in securing land rights and achieving legal empowerment in relation to property. Examples of relevant research include evaluations of existing projects, thematic papers which capture innovative ideas for integrating support for customary legal systems into broader reform, and country-specific studies which track the interaction of customary legal systems within the formal legal system.