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Explorers Foundation Award to Launch Openworld Grassroots Land Registry Initiative

The Explorers Foundation announces the presentation of its first Cobden-Bright Award to an innovative grassroots private-land-registry initiative for funding self-help groups in developing countries.

The initiative will enable neighborhood residents who record uncontested land ownership claims to enjoy new learning and health care opportunities funded through the rise in property values. Rapid real estate value gains can occur in cases where local and international investors better understand patterns of land ownership.

The award provides seed funding for Openworld, Inc., a transnational nonprofit group based in Arlington, Virginia, to develop an "Awakening Dormant Assets Toolkit" so that communities in developing countries can apply a portion of the rising land values to fund "microvouchers" for new learning and healthcare choices in poor communities.

The web-based Toolkit will offer strategies and tools in multiple languages that enable grassroots schools and allied local groups to digitally record uncontested property claims on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, with the ability to upload digital images and video clips into user-navigable maps as a key first step towards transparent land-titling registries.

Leading economist Hernando de Soto has noted in widely published works that as much as \$9 trillion in dormant land values can be awakened by introducing transparent land registry solutions in developing countries.

The Toolkit will illustrate paths by which local and national governments can integrate and "formalize" the grassroots-generated land titling or registry resources in official land-registry systems. In cases where the grassroots registries receive formal recognition, land values are expected to soar further.

Openworld expects that its web-based private land registry toolkit will be offered first to communities and neighborhoods in Asia, Africa and the Americas that are already acting on Openworld innovations including land-grant transfers for private schools and local microvoucher funds enabling the poor to become self-supporting.

For information on the Awakening Dormant Assets Toolkit, and how to provide further support, contact Openworld at 202.257.2574 or markf@openworld.com, <http://www.openworld.com>

The Explorers Foundation is a nonprofit organization advancing changes to make a world fit for explorers. Requests for funding are not accepted, acknowledged, or returned. <http://www.explorersfoundation.org>

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