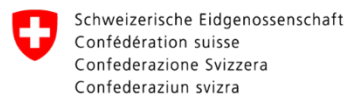


# الاراضي العربية مبادرة Arab Land Initiative

## Achievements of the Arab Land Initiative within the Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance (2018- 2022)

-August 2023-



## **ABOUT THIS REPORT**

This report highlights the achievements, challenges and lessons learned of the Arab Land Initiative within the “Regional Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability in the Arab Region” funded by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ) between 2018 and 2022.

Since its establishment, the Initiative recorded many noticeable achievements by increasing the visibility of the topic among decision makers and empowering land governance champions from the region through increased coordination, collaboration, capacity, knowledge, and information sharing.

This is made possible by the active participation and efforts of the many interested partners and experts with a shared vision, the support provided by the Global Land Tool Network and UN-Habitat, the contributions from many partners and the financial and strategic support of support of the governments of Germany, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Switzerland

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## Acronyms

<b>AoC</b>	Agreements of Cooperation
<b>APN</b>	Arab Group for the Protection of Nature
<b>BMZ</b>	Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany
<b>CRTEAN</b>	Regional Center for Remote Sensing of North African States
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GIZ</b>	German Agency for International Cooperation
<b>GLII</b>	Global Land Indicators Initiative
<b>GLTN</b>	Global Land Tool Network
<b>HLP</b>	Housing, Land and Property
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>IAEG-SDGs</b>	Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced Person
<b>ILC</b>	International Land Coalition
<b>IYCY</b>	International Youth Council of Yemen
<b>LCPS</b>	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NELGA</b>	Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>QGIS</b>	Quantum Geographic Information System
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>Sida</b>	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
<b>STDM</b>	Social Tenure Domain Model
<b>UNCCD</b>	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UN-ESCWA</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>UN-Habitat</b>	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UTI</b>	Urban Training and Studies Institute
<b>UAWC</b>	Union of Agricultural Work Committees

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## Introduction

### The Arab region

The Arab region<sup>1</sup> has been undergoing a decade of profound change and challenges. Due to their economic, political, and social contexts, country specificities and distinct characteristics exist in terms of needs, priorities and challenges. However, while there are significant national differences, regional commonalities and trends can be observed. The way land is accessed, used and controlled has an important impact on the social, economic and environmental dimensions of a society, touching upon all key elements of sustainable social and economic development, peace and stability, and realisation of human rights. This makes land a cornerstone for the achievement of the SDGs – particularly the SDGs 1,2,5,10,11, 15 and 16 - and for the success of the different regional and national development and humanitarian strategies in the Arab states.

To achieve sustainable development, Arab countries need to address a series of land related challenges: scarcity of arable land and water, food insecurity, land degradation and desertification, conflict and social unrest, migration, etc. Good land governance is an essential prerequisite to tackle all these challenges. As described in the UN Secretary General Guidance Note on “The United Nations and Land and Conflict”, intervening on the land-and-conflict nexus is crucial to promote peace and stability, and to facilitate reconstruction. Good land management will enable Arab countries to respond to rapid societal and environmental changes, improve access to affordable land and housing, and empower women and youth.

### The Arab Land Initiative

The Arab Land Initiative was established in 2016 by a group of Global Land Tool Network partners, led by UN-Habitat and the World Bank, to address key regional land governance challenges and promote equal access to land for peace, stability, climate resilience and economic growth in the 22 Arab states.

The Initiative is coordinated by UN-Habitat through the Global Land Tool Network’s Secretariat with the financial and strategic support of the governments of Germany, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Its network is composed by a broad range of global, regional and national partners – such as governments, land professionals, academia, civil society, private sector and international organisations - involved in different streams of work with a shared vision:

*All the people in the Arab countries enjoy equal and affordable access to land, peace, stability and economic growth, to be achieved with good land policies and transparent, efficient and affordable land administration systems.*

Since the end of 2018, the work of the Arab Land Initiative has been funded by Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the “Regional Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability in the Arab Region” with contributions from Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC).

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<sup>1</sup> The Arab region is defined as the 22 countries part of the League of Arab States.

## The Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance

The “Regional Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability in the Arab Region” was signed in late 2018 between the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, through its Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and UN-Habitat as the host of the Secretariat of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN). The initial three-year programme implemented by the Global Land Tool Network ran until the end of 2021 with a budget of EUR 2 million. In November 2021, the initial agreement was extended of one year, from 1 January to 31 December 2022, with an additional budget of EUR 640,000.

The programme aimed at addressing the challenges outlined above through a set of interrelated and collaborative actions, and it is based on four pillars: (1) promote collaboration and coordination; (2) develop and share knowledge; (3) develop capacities of individuals and organisations; and (4) support the implementation of existing land-related programmes and interventions in selected countries through the use of fit-for-purpose land tools and approaches.

UN-Habitat and its partners put extreme care in ensuring that every step of the programme implementation was designed and carried out keeping in mind the needs and priorities of the end beneficiaries: women and men living in the Arab states, with particular focus to youth, women, vulnerable and marginalized groups. The daily work of UN-Habitat revolved around engaging and supporting the intermediate beneficiaries of the programme, including regional and national stakeholders that play the most important and direct role in land management and administration in Arab countries. These include relevant ministries and government departments, professionals and practitioners in land-related disciplines (such as surveyors, notaries, public servants, lawyers, etc.), national statistical offices, champions and opinion makers in academia and civil society organisations.

The programme has empowered and improved the capacity of regional and national stakeholders in managing and administering urban, peri-urban and rural land in the Arab states to achieve inclusive social and economic development and to foster peace and stability. Alignment, coordination and collaboration on land-related matters in the region has been increased, new knowledge has been created, existing knowledge has been shared and the capacities of individuals and institutions in the region have been developed. More specific information about the programme achievements and results are included in the section below.

## Overview of the results

Since its establishment, the Arab Land Initiative delivers specific technical components of work and ensures that the different pieces of land governance work done by partners, organisations and countries were linked, coordinated and shared, maximizing the investments made by donors and contributing to the overall development of knowledge and capacity in the region. This section of the report summarises the results achieved by the Arab Land Initiative between 2019 and 2022, in accordance with its four key priorities:

1. **Promote collaboration and coordination** by increasing alignment, coordination, and collaboration on land governance in the region.
2. **Develop, share and manage knowledge.**
3. Empower individuals and organisations through **capacity development.**
4. **Provide technical support** at country level by supporting the implementation of existing land-related programmes and interventions in selected countries through the use of fit-for-purpose land tools and approaches.

### 1. Alignment, coordination and collaboration on land governance in the region

#### Coordination of the Arab Land Initiative

The work of the Arab Land Initiative has been coordinated by a small team within the Secretariat of the Global Land Tool Network, hosted by UN-Habitat, under the guidance of its Reference group. The **Reference Group to the Arab Land Initiative** – initially established in 2016 - was consolidated and expanded. The Group is currently composed by representatives from UN-Habitat, the World Bank, the Arab Union of Surveyors, the Dubai Land Department, the Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI), UN-ESCWA, BMZ, GIZ, FAO, the Dutch Kadaster, NELGA/IAV Hassan II, the Habitat International Coalition, the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), the International Land Coalition, the University of East London, the Jordan Department of Land and Survey, the Lebanon Real Estate Directorate, the Norwegian Refugee Council and LANDac. Multiple meetings of the Arab Land Initiative's Reference Group have been held since its establishment:

- A planning meeting was held in Beirut in February 2019. The two-day meeting was hosted by UN-ESCWA in its premises and was attended by over 30 participants. The meeting provided the opportunity for discussing the approaches and work of GLTN Partners and of other participating organisations; reviewing the progress made by the Initiative in the last two years; and strategizing on how the work of the Arab Land Initiative and the cooperation among participating organisations could be enhanced. Strategic opportunities for further collaboration and joint work were identified, and the work to be undertaken in the months ahead under the BMZ-funded programme was planned. Lastly, the contribution of GLTN and Arab Land Initiative's partners to important events such as World Bank Conference, the Amman forum and the second Arab Land Conference was agreed upon.
- A second hybrid meeting of the Reference Group was held in Cairo in February 2020, in the premises of the Urban Training and Studies Institute, one of the GLTN and Arab Land Initiative partners from Egypt. The meeting aimed at providing inputs, guidance and feed-back to the



representatives of the nine partner organisations<sup>2</sup> from the region selected and contracted to carry out the thematic streams of work presented in Section 2 (Agreements of Cooperation 1-9).

- A third hybrid meeting of the Reference Group was held in Beirut in July 2022, hosted by UN-ESCWA in its premises and attended by over 40 people. During the meeting, senior land experts were mobilized to support the Arab Land Initiative's work, enhance networking and knowledge sharing among partners, review documents and concept notes developed by partners, and undertake various tasks for the delivery of programme's activities. Three of them were contracted, while the others are providing pro bono contributions.

*Figure 1: Induction workshop of the Arab Land Initiative in Cairo, Egypt, February 2020.*



### **The network of the Arab Land Initiative**

The **network of land experts** has been consolidated, building on the models of GLTN and NELGA, in partnership with the NELGA North Africa node. A database has been created and is being continuously updated, benefitting also of the contributions of partners and experts involved in the implementation of programme's activities. Periodical updates to all Arab Land Initiative's partners have been sent out and active communications took place at different levels.

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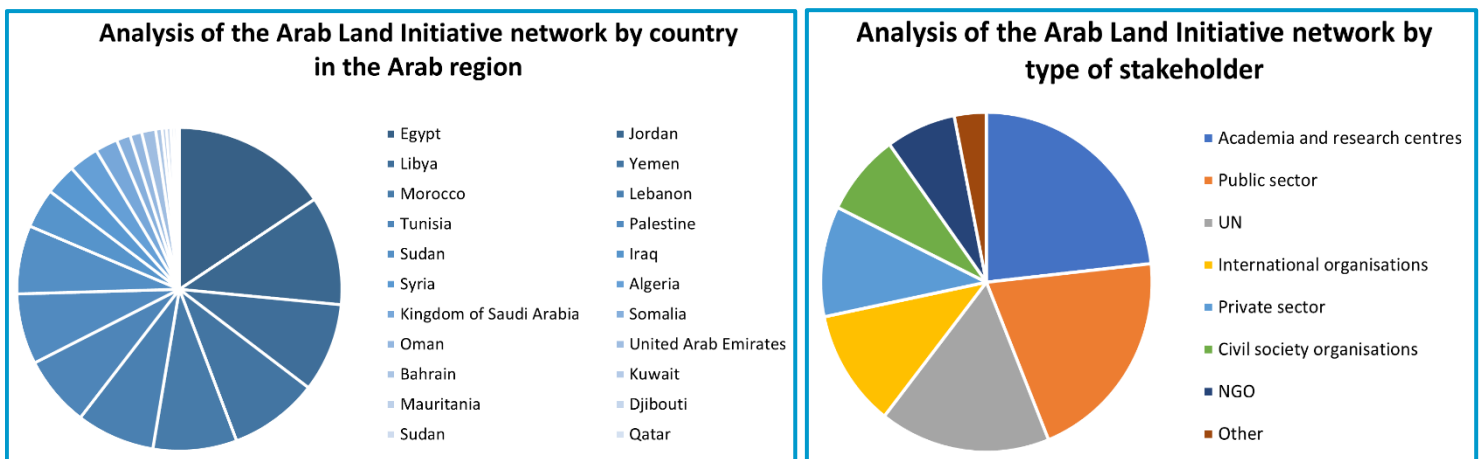
<sup>2</sup> ISTIDAMA from Sudan, the Regional Center for remote Sensing of North Africa States (CRTEAN) from Tunisia, the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies (LCPS), the Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN) from Jordan, the International Youth Council of Yemen (IYCY), the Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC) from Palestine, the Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI) from Egypt, Rasheed TI- Jordan and an independent consultant.

In November 2020, the contact database has been moved online using Mailchimp platform to simplify the access to contact information and the sharing of broad communication on behalf of the Arab Land Initiative. Contacts include land professionals working for international organisations, NGOs, civil society organisations, private and public sector, academia and research institutions, etc. As of 31 December 2022, the online database counted 2,079 contacts from the Arab region and beyond (see Figure 3). The online platform has been used to promote and share the work of the Arab Land Initiative and of its partners, increase the reach of relevant call for proposal and job vacancies, and as means of communication during the Second Arab Land Conference to send out conference-related updates and communications to all participants.

Figure 2: Extract of a communication sent to the network of the Arab Land Initiative.



Figure 3: The Arab Land Initiative's network



## The Second Arab Land Conference

The Second Arab Land Conference took place from 22 to 24 February 2021 in Cairo, Egypt. The Conference has been an important milestone of the Initiative towards establishing good land governance in the Arab region. It allowed participants, and their organisations, to exchange knowledge and country experiences for which there is no other forum, present new research, foster high level commitment to improve land management, and develop the capacities of land stakeholders from the region. The Conference contributed to advancing the priorities of the Arab Land Initiative: empower and enhance the collaboration and coordination of land stakeholders from the region, develop and share knowledge on land governance, and showcase and reflect on recent experiences and innovative approaches. These priorities guided the design of the sessions and the topics of discussion.

After multiple offers for hosting the event were made and withdrawn by a few countries, including Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Jordan, the event was hosted by the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt and co-organized, under the patronage of the Egyptian Minister of Housing Utilities and Urban Communities, by UN-Habitat, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), the World Bank, the Housing and Building National Research Centre represented by the Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI), in partnership with the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), GIZ, the Dubai Land Department, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and the Network of Excellence of Land Governance in Africa (NELGA). The event benefitted from the in-kind contributions of many partners and by additional financial support from ESRI. The Land Portal also made available its media partnership services, which included social media posts, daily briefs, and interviews.

The Conference successfully dealt with the critical challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic by allowing all presenters and participants to attend the event safely through a hybrid in- person/virtual format. This ensured a broad participation while complying with the local COVID-19 restrictions. The Conference counted 871 registered attendees (164 in-person and 707 virtual) and over 5,000 connections directly through the Zoom platform. Registered attendees participated and connected from 63 different countries, with the highest number of participants from Egypt (see Figure 4,5 and 6).

The in-person event was organised at the Four Seasons Hotel at the First Residence in Cairo, while the Whova application was used to facilitate the online event and the interaction between both in-person and virtual participants. Whova allowed virtual speakers and participants to register online, consult the agenda of the event, access the different sessions, organise parallel virtual meet ups and discussions groups, share articles, images and private messages, as well as contact directly the event organisers for questions and technical assistance. This resulted in over 3,000 interactions and more than 120 online meetups organised in parallel to the Conference. The delivery of a full in-person and online experience has been made possible thanks to a consistent effort and coordination of the UN-Habitat team with the support of Paradigm IT services.

Figure 4: Analysis of the Second Arab Land Conference’s attendance.

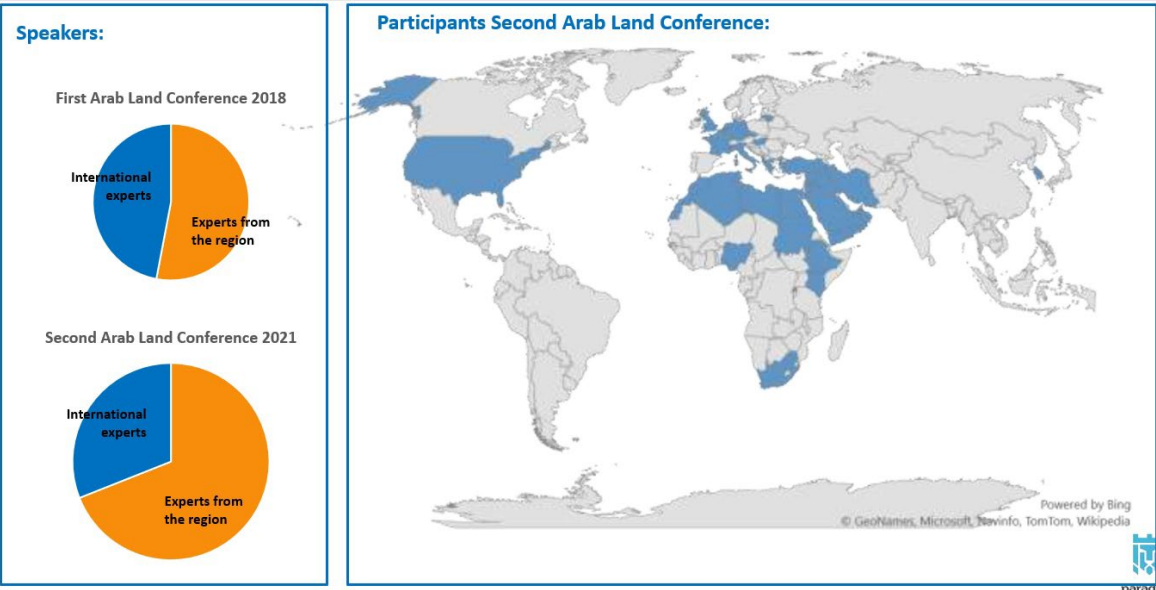


Figure 5: Analysis of the Conference's national coverage and institutional representation.

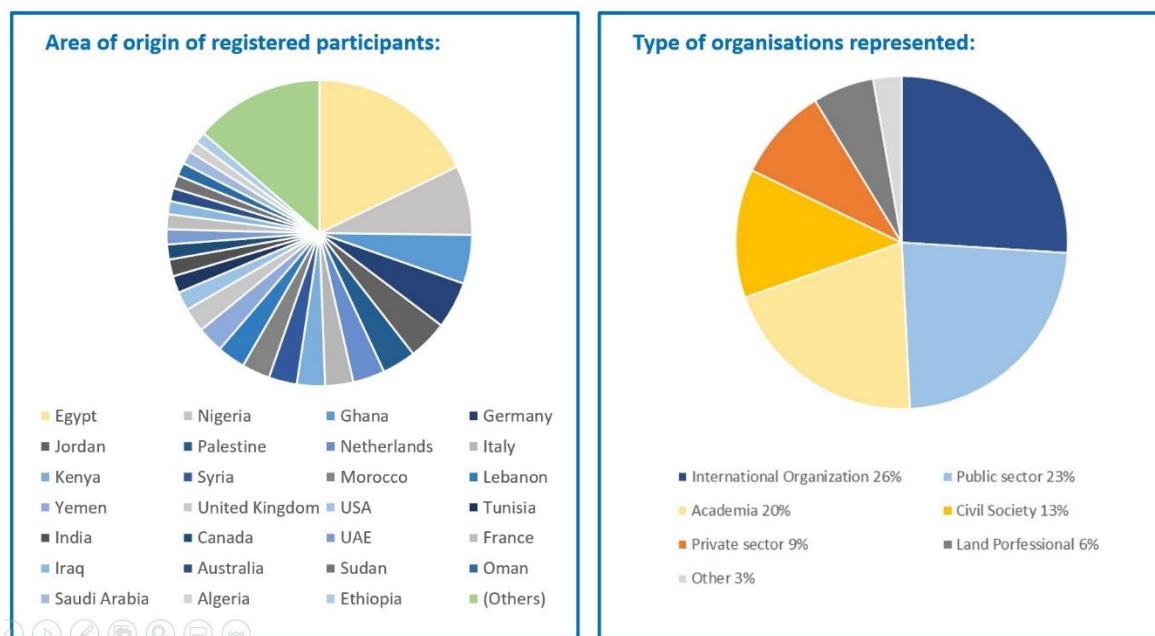
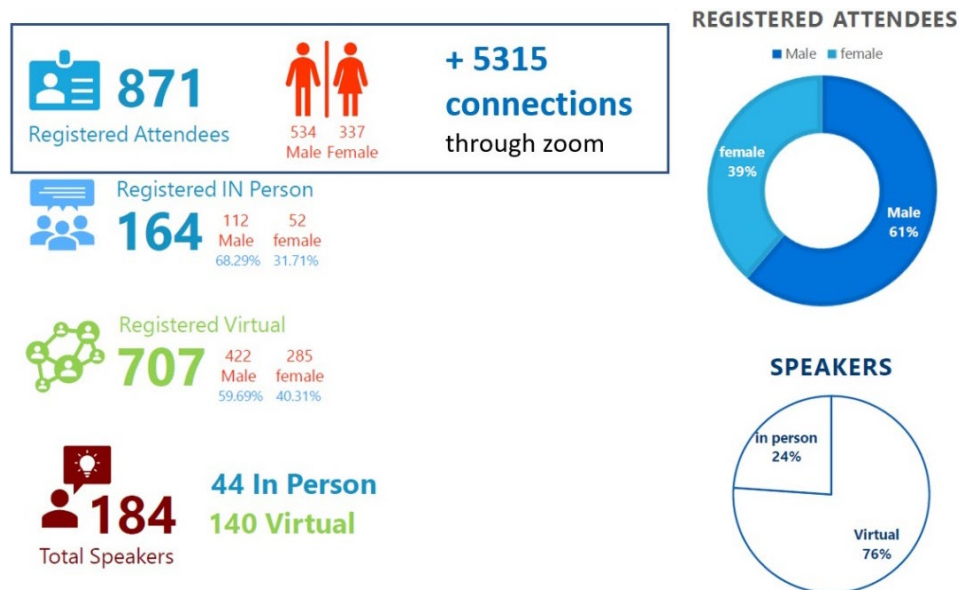


Figure 6: Analysis of the Conference's participants.



The Conference provided the opportunity to 184 speakers (44 in-person and 140 virtual) to present and discuss a wide range of land-related topics during 33 sessions which included high-level sessions, technical sessions, roundtables and masterclasses. The Conference registered a **sizeable involvement from governments**: governmental delegations from 15 countries from the region and three from outside the region attended the Conference, among these, five countries were present with high-level delegates (Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Palestine and Jordan).

The conference was divided into three high-level sessions, seven technical sessions, six roundtables and ten masterclasses. The **high-level sessions** focused on (1) land management in time of crisis; (2)

modernization and reform of land administration; and (3) women and land. The **technical sessions** discussed: (1) technologies and smart solutions for land management; (2) private sector participation in land management; (3) land management and administration; (4) land management in time of crisis; (5) land use; (6) land, women and vulnerable people; and (7) land and property registration. **Roundtables** focused on: (1) land governance and land degradation neutrality, (2) displaced women's access to land, (3) land consolidation, (4) land Administration - by invitation; (5) development partners' agenda in the Arab region - by invitation; and (6) regional flagship report on land. The ten **masterclasses** organised on the third day focused on: (1) capacity development progress in North Africa; (2) monitoring land governance and land tenure security; (3) towards a common strategy for capacity development in the Arab region; (4) land as a human right; (5) land registration and fit-for-purpose land administration; (6) land-based financing; (7) informal settlements: from technical solutions to policy dialogue; (8) displaced people's access to land for durable solutions and return; (9) land for affordable housing and land readjustment; and (10) open data training on access to information and land.

For the technical sessions, the Arab Land Initiative opened a call to invite experts, students and practitioners to submit their abstract proposal for **papers and presentations** relevant to the seven topics of the conference agreed by the Egypt Ministry of Housing and by the Conference organizers:

- Land management and administration: tools and methodologies
- Efficient land use
- Technologies and smart solutions to enhance land management and build spatial structures
- Policies to encourage the participation of private sector in land planning and management
- Flexibility and adaptation of land management in time of crises (climate change, diseases and epidemics, etc.)
- Access to land for women and vulnerable groups
- Capacity development for land management

Fifty-three abstracts were submitted and 46 papers were presented during the seven thematic technical sessions. The originally planned technical session on “Capacity development for land management” was cancelled due to lack of sufficient submissions. The submission screening process and organisation of the technical sessions has been managed jointly by GLTN, UTI and the World Bank. In parallel to the submission of abstracts, multiple organisations were invited to submit their masterclass and round tables proposals, including UN-Habitat, GLTN, FAO, UNCCD, NRC, RVO, the World Bank, NELGA, the Land Portal, HIC-HLRN, etc. Nineteen submissions were received, all of them were accepted and some of them were merged to complement knowledge and expertise of the presenters.

All the content presented at the Conference is available on the Arab Land Initiative web site, where an **e-library** was set up to collect and make accessible all the papers, presentations and supporting resources’ materials prepared for the Conference and contributed by the participating experts and organisations. The e-library is accessible through this [link](#). Further, the recordings of the sessions have been uploaded on YouTube, on the Global Land Tool Network channel, and they are accessible through the Arab Land Initiative website visiting the Conference programme page at the following [link](#).

The conference witnessed a strong and engaging participation of different international, regional and national land actors working in international organisations, public and private sector, civil society organisations, etc. The report of the Conference has been finalized and it is available for download on the Conference webpage at the following [link](#). Reflecting on the **summary of the discussions and outcomes**, the Conference focused on how land governance and land management underpin the achievement of

inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development, peace, stability and human rights in the Arab region. All the speakers of the different sessions emphasized the importance of increasing access to land and tenure security for all, particularly for women and vulnerable groups such as refugees, IDPs, minorities, etc. by scaling-up land-based interventions that do not discriminate based on gender, age, ethnicity or belonging to minority groups.

Figure 7: Interventions during the Second Arab Land Conference, Cairo, Egypt, February 2021.



Interventions concurred on the urgency of addressing women’s land rights in the region. The need of increased commitment and cooperation of governments, civil society, academic and development actors has been recognized to firmly place and push forward the protection of women’s land rights in the political agenda of the different countries. Further, the high-level sessions stressed the need of reliable land data, the importance of public-private partnerships, and of identifying avenues to put in place transitional land administration mechanisms that can enable post-conflict recovery and reconstruction while protecting the housing, land and property rights of displaced people, returnees and vulnerable communities. Many speakers called the attention on the importance of reforming and improving land administration to be able to address current and future economic, social and environmental challenges faced by the region, including climate change, land degradation, water scarcity, conflicts over land resources, and unregulated urbanisation.

During the technical sessions, attendees convened, among others, that the contribution of the private sector in all areas of development, as well as of the business community, is crucial to achieve the SDGs. While, with regards to land administration, the adoption of fit-for-purpose land administration approaches was recommended to speed up process that are slow, expensive, and not accessible to most people. Electronic and digital archiving systems were indicated as crucial to strengthen land and property

rights and the potential of adapting blockchain technologies to improve the transparency of land transactions was raised.

Roundtable sessions assessed the importance of improving land tenure security for all as a key step to enable land degradation neutrality and recognized women’s crucial role in the process. Global guidelines on land governance, land tenure security and land degradation neutrality need to be adapted to national and country-specific contexts and realities. The accumulated knowledge of societies and social groups, such as pastoralists, regarding soil protection and sustainable land management need to be transformed into knowledge that informs policies and decision making.

During the masterclasses, capacity development has been identified as a key step towards improved technical know-how of land stakeholders and improved land governance, but also as an indispensable tool for solid land policies development in the long run. Based on the presentations of the recent capacity development efforts in North Africa conducted by NELGA, the participants recommended a stronger collaboration and knowledge exchange between land stakeholders in Africa and in the Arab region.

Finally, during the different debates in the roundtables and masterclasses, the participants convened that access to land should be recognized as an essential human right which is the case of the right to adequate housing, property rights and access to water and food. Innovative approaches to urban policies in contexts of rapid urbanisation and displacement were also discussed, stressing the importance of durable solutions and securing land access for returnees and other displaced people. Land-based financing was presented as an important tool for effective local governance and for supporting the provision of infrastructure and public services. Finally, the collection of land data through comparable indicators was presented as key for developing an evidence-based national and regional policy discourse, influencing learning and sharing of best practices. The use of open data was presented as a key venue for transparent land governance.

Figure 8: Networking and communication at the Conference

- ✓ Twitter
- ✓ Facebook
- ✓ Linked in
- ✓ UN-Habitat channels
- ✓ National & regional media coverage
- ✓ Partners’ platforms
- ✓ Live interviews
- ✓ Daily summaries
- ✓ LandPortal support

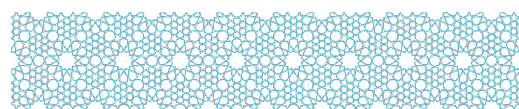


## Women and Land Campaign

On 18 February 2021, in the runup to the Second Arab Land Conference, UN-Habitat, the Global Land Tool Network and the Arab Land Initiative launched The **Women and Land Campaign** to raise awareness on how to overcome the challenges that women face in accessing their housing, land and property rights in Arab region. The regional campaign run until July 2022 and aimed at drawing the public’s attention to this important theme and at empowering women to improve their housing, land and property rights as an important steppingstone to have better lives and play a more active role in their communities. The Campaign has been promoted by UN-Habitat, as part of its mandate to achieve a better urban future for

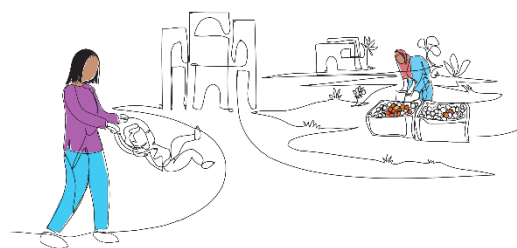
all, and by the partners of the Stand for Her Land Campaign, including the World Bank, the International Land Coalition, Landesa, and Habitat for Humanity.

Through a step-by-step approach, the campaign explained why secure housing, land and property rights are catalyst for the realisation of human rights, poverty reduction, economic prosperity and sustainable development leading to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda and other regional and national strategies aiming at poverty reduction and sustainable development.



### Empower and Improve the Life of Women by Protecting their Land, Housing and Property Rights in the Arab Region

#### KEY MESSAGES



UN HABITAT  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

GLTN  
GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK

STAND FOR HER LAND  
CAMPAIGN

Figure 9: Cover of the publication on the Key Messages.

Facebook, and LinkedIn. The regional campaign reached over 80,000 people through social media in the region of whom 40,000 actively engaged through likes, comments and shares.

As part of the campaign, a detailed country outreach plan was developed in early 2022 to pilot the campaign at country level in Lebanon, Tunisia and Libya under the leadership of UN-Habitat Lebanon and Tunisia Country Offices. Two In-House-Agreements were signed in April 2022 between the Land, Housing and Shelter Section in UN-Habitat HQ and UN-Habitat Lebanon and Tunisia Country Offices to agree on the commitments of the parties, the activities and the workplan of the Lebanon and Tunisia Offices for the country implementation of the campaign.

In Lebanon, the Women and Land Campaign was rolled out between April 2022 and December 2022 in line with the objectives of the regional campaign. To increase its outreach, UN-Habitat partnered with the [National Commission for Lebanese Women \(NCLW\)](#), an official institution affiliated to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers promoting women's rights in the Lebanese society and enhancing gender mainstreaming in public institutions. Due to delays caused by the process of assigning NCLW as the implementing partner (IP), the campaign was launched with a roundtable event in December 2022 and continued with a social media campaign to raise awareness on the importance of women's HLP rights and empower women to claim these rights.

The [roundtable event](#), which took place on 8 December 2022, was attended by key stakeholders, including representatives of women's organizations, legal entities, and the media. The event provided a platform



for a multilevel dialogue about women's HLP rights, highlighted the importance of protecting these rights, and allowed the attendees to discuss and exchange ideas on how to tackle gender-based discrimination in accessing HLP rights. The event concluded with a discussion session on the social and legal limitations that women face in securing their HLP rights and suggested recommendations for policy and advocacy to support them. The event was a success, demonstrating the potential for UN-Habitat to further explore the topic and expand the reach and impact of the national campaign. It highlighted the urgent need to address inequality regarding women's HLP rights in Lebanon.

*Figure 10: Roundtable for the launch of the Women and Land Campaign in Lebanon, Beirut, December 2022.*



The social media campaign included the development and dissemination of key messages, video series, feature stories, in addition to the creation of a dedicated campaign webpage and campaign brochure. These materials were designed to maximize the campaign's reach and amplify the impact of its intended messages. The developed key messages highlighted the importance of HLP rights for women, how to increase access to these rights, and how to promote women's participation in land-related processes. The video series included a first informational video that outlines what HLP rights are and why it is important to secure them for women, a second video briefly presenting the legal framework supporting women's HLP rights in Lebanon, and a third (testimonial) video that showcases three women who have successfully secured their HLP rights in Lebanon. Feature stories were also developed based on the success stories of the women featured in the testimonial video.

In addition, a mapping was conducted to identify legal aid providers in Lebanon that specialize in HLP issues in order to refer women seeking legal assistance. This information was included in the campaign's brochure, which also featured the campaign's details, and was widely distributed to maximize the campaign's reach.

The public response to the social media campaign was overwhelmingly positive, with more than 3.5 million impressions collected from UN-Habitat and NCLW's social media platforms (2.07 million in reach

on social media platforms alone). Furthermore, the roundtable event gathered 72 key stakeholders, and 2,400 campaign brochures were printed to be disseminated to further amplify the campaign's reach.

On 12-13 September 2022, UN-Habitat Tunisia launched the National Implementation of Women and Land Campaign in Tunisia and Libya through an introductory workshop held in Tunis, Tunisia, to raise awareness about how to overcome the barriers that women face in gaining access to their housing, land, and property (HLP) rights. This workshop brought together legal and sociological experts, representatives of various ministries (land, agriculture, equipment, finance, etc.), representatives of civil society as well as journalists and communication experts. Thirty participants from both Tunisia and Libya attended the workshop (20 in person and 10 online).

*Figure 11: Roundtable for the launch of the Women and Land Campaign in Tunisia and Libya, Tunis, September 2022.*



The campaign succeeded to disseminate and promote key messages through the media, social media and other agents of change on the socio-economic and cultural benefits of women's rights to housing, land and property, and the challenges they face in legitimately claiming these rights. The social media campaign included the development and dissemination of key messages, video series, feature stories, in addition to the creation of a dedicated campaign webpage on the Arab Land Initiative website. Overall, a considerable number of audiences were sensitized to the issue of women's right to land, housing and property, and the campaign has reached over 8,000 persons in Tunisia and 15,000 in Libya.

The Women and Land Campaign can be tracked through the hashtag #womenandland and through following social media platforms:

- GLTN: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)
- Arab Land Initiative: [LinkedIn](#)
- UN-Habitat: [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

- UN-Habitat Regional Office for the Arab States: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)
- UN-Habitat Tunisia: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#)
- UN-Habitat Lebanon: [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#)
- NCLW: [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#)

Figure 12: Some materials from the Campaign on Women and Land in the Arab states.



## 2. Knowledge creation, management and sharing

The Arab Land Initiative put significant efforts in creating, managing and sharing knowledge around land-related issues in the region. To ensure the **sustainability** of the knowledge creation and of the capacity development efforts, specific thematic components were directly led by selected partners, with the support of UN-Habitat/GLTN. To do so, UN-Habitat/GLTN entered into 9 Agreements of Cooperation (AoC) with organisations and institutions from the Arab region and established 4 twinning arrangements between entities from inside and outside the region. This increased knowledge creation and sharing by fostering collaboration and exchange of expertise and experiences between different organisations.

This section provides an overview of the topics addressed, and the activities carried out by the partners under the agreements of cooperation and the twinning arrangements. Further, it presents the main features of repository that was created to gather and disseminate the new knowledge produced by the Arab Land Initiative and its partners.

### Agreements of Cooperation

A **call for proposals** for 10 agreements of cooperation was opened in June 2019 and a total of 57 applications from 45 organisations were received. This was followed by a rigorous screening process, divided in two phases. During the first phase of evaluation, applications were evaluated based on various criteria: the country of registration; the completeness of the application; the overall quality and content

of the cover letter; the technical and financial proposals; the organisation’s vision, mission and objectives; its alignment with the topic of the AoC chosen; the organisations’ experience with project implementation; and the territorial coverage of the proposal - if regional or country level. The organisations shortlisted in the first phase of the evaluation were further assessed against their technical capacities in carrying out the activities defined in the AoCs; their administrative capacities; the situation of the country in terms of international funds transferring; the geographical distribution; existing collaborations with GLTN Partners; transparency; and their visibility on social media and through their websites. The screening led to the signature of nine contracts at the end of 2019.

The **Agreements of Cooperation** implemented are described in the table below. Some of the agreements encompass both knowledge and capacity development activities – capacity development activities are further expanded under section 3 of this report. The agreement of cooperation 10 on the private sector has been included in the table for informative purposes but was not awarded to any organisation due to the impossibility of identifying a of suitable candidate.

*Table 1: Summary of the Agreements of Cooperation.*

<b>Agreement of Cooperation #</b>	<b>Leading Organisation</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>AoC 1: Land and Conflict</b>	Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN)	Regional study on land-related causes of conflict in the Arab region Expert Group Meeting on land and conflict
<b>AoC 2: Monitoring land governance and land tenure security</b>	Rasheed TI- Jordan	Expert Group Meeting on monitoring land governance and land tenure security Two training events on monitoring land governance
<b>AoC 3: Land, women empowerment and socio-economic development</b>	Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)	Study on evidence-based linkages between access to land and socio-economic development and empowerment, especially for women Expert Group Meeting on women’s access to land Two training events on women’s access to land
<b>AoC 4: Capacity and Knowledge Development</b>	Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI)	Capacity needs assessment on land governance in the Middle East Review of the learning curricula in the region Assessment of existing land governance-related courses and institutions in the region and proposal of a work plan to complement and add value to existing efforts Two capacity development events on GLTN tools and other land tools Establishment of a research innovation fund for young professionals and practitioners

		Translation of key materials (English / Arabic / French)
<b>AoC 5: Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration</b>	Regional Center for Remote Sensing of North African States (CRTEAN)	Expert Group Meeting on fit-for-purpose land administration  Two training events on fit-for-purpose land administration
<b>AoC 6: Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change</b>	Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS)	Study on the linkages between land tenure security, land degradation and climate change  Expert Group Meeting on land and climate change  Expert Group Meeting on pastoral land and range land
<b>AoC 7: The role of land Professionals in land governance</b>	ISTIDAMA (with the support of the Arab Union of Surveyors)	Capacity needs assessments of land professionals in the region  Knowledge exchange event on the role of land professionals in the region and how to enhance it
<b>AoC 8: Baseline study on land-related legal frameworks</b>	Independent consultant	Baseline study on land tenure security and land governance in the region, including policies, laws, institutional frameworks
<b>AoC 9: The role of civil society in land governance</b>	International Youth Council of Yemen (IYCY)	Knowledge exchange event on the role of civil society on land governance in the region
<b>AoC 10: The role of private sector in land governance</b>	- (Not awarded)	Knowledge exchange event on the role of private sector on land governance in the region

All contracted partners underwent an **induction workshop, organized in early February 2020 in Cairo**, in the premises of the Urban Training and Studies Institute. The meeting was attended by 30 participants – over half female – from GLTN, UN-Habitat, the World Bank, GIZ, the Arab Union of Surveyors, International Land Coalition, Habitat International Coalition, and from the implementing partners. The five-days event was structured in open discussions, including training sessions, presentations and group work and allowed partners to present their respective areas of work, their methodologies and approaches as well as their work plans. The participants met the Arab Land Initiative’s Reference Group, whose members and experts commented the presentations and provided global, regional and country level examples to increase the partners understanding of good land governance. As output of the workshop, a broader action plan of the programme was defined, and a list of references and contacts of experts and practitioners was created to provide further support for the partners throughout the implementation of their work.

On **8 July 2020 and on 26 July 2021, two online meetings** were organised with all implementing partners to provide updates, discuss challenges and agree on the way forward. Updates on the different streams of work were presented and each implementing partner provided the main highlights of the progress

made in their respective areas of work. The meetings gave the partners the opportunity to raise concerns and challenges faced in the projects' implementation. Following the group consultation bilateral discussions were undertaken to discuss specific challenges.

The **list of partners identified** for leading each area of work is presented below, with the summary of the work carried out under the agreements of cooperation.

#### *Agreement of Cooperation 1: Land and Conflict*

On 24 November 2019, UN-Habitat and the Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN) signed an agreement of cooperation for an initial period of 18 months then extended until 31 December 2022.

Established in April 2003, in Jordan, the **Arab Group for the Protection of Nature** (APN) is an independent non-profit organisation that seeks to enhance the Arab region's sovereignty over food and natural resources, particularly in areas impacted by war, conflict and occupation.

Under this area of work, APN developed a regional research study on "Land and Conflict in the Arab region: causes and impacts based on eleven locally documented case studies" and organised EGM on land and conflict looking into the different dimensions of the relationship between land and conflict (land-related root-causes of conflict; land-related interventions in post-conflict settings; and approaches to resolve, mitigate and prevent conflict using land as entry point).

An **EGM on land and conflict** was held online on 17 and 18 March 2021. The event brought together specialists from different countries and areas of expertise who shared their knowledge on the land and conflict nexus. The meeting encouraged and increased information sharing among a network of local and international experts and civil society organizations, and described, discussed and evaluated specific land-related conflicts in the Arab countries. In the occasion of the event, experts presented national case studies identifying structural causes of land-related conflicts and the effect of conflicts on land. During the event, the APN collected valuable information to inform the research study and was able to strengthen the ties with a network of experts and actors working on the land and conflict nexus in the Arab region. The EGM was structured in five sessions, the first two gave the opportunity to participants to discuss general policy and methodological frameworks, as well as key concepts, while the last three sessions provided room for the presentation and discussion of case studies.

Figure 13: Participants of the EGM on Land and Conflict, online, March 2021.



The EGM was attended by 40 participants and speakers, including experts from APN, UN-Habitat/GLTN, the American University of Beirut, the Wageningen University, UNCCD, the University of Sharjah, the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees, the University Mohamed V (Morocco), the Ghent University (Belgium), the Alturath University College, the University of Tunis El Manar, the Sana'a University, the Lebanese University, the Cooperative Association for Rural Women in the Western Sahel, the Bannaga College in Khartoum, engineers formerly working for government institutions and other independent experts.

Based on the insights, information and empirical evidence collected during the EGM, APN developed the **research study “Land and Conflict in the Arab region: causes and impacts based on 12 locally documented case studies”**. The report starts by examining the state of the art on land and conflict in general, to then focus on the Arab region. It adapts and applies the root cause analysis tool developed by GLTN to assess the complexities of the land and conflict nexus through 12 case studies from Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen. In each case, conflicts were shown to relate to the different dimensions of land (physical, legal, economic, and social) in multifaceted ways.

The first set of case studies documents how land issues drive violent conflict, following the root cause analysis framework. The second set focuses on the effects of local and national conflicts on land (access to and control over land, especially by displaced people, land tenure security, land use, soil quality, etc.). Based on the case study analysis, a detailed typology of land-related conflicts in the Arab region has been developed. The study concludes that dispute resolution mechanisms remain largely insufficient and, building on the insights from the case studies, the report provides a set of recommendations to address, resolve and prevent conflicts in response to the identified drivers of land-related conflicts and the main impacts of conflict on land.

The report underwent multiple rounds of reviews by the GLTN team during its inception phase and in its final stage. The final draft report was submitted by APN in January 2022, and underwent an editing process between March and June 2022. The report will be published online in 2023.

## *Agreement of Cooperation 2: Monitoring Land Governance and Land Tenure Security*

On 18 November 2019, UN-Habitat and **Rasheed TI-Jordan** signed an agreement of cooperation for a period of 18 months. Rasheed Transparency International-Jordan is a non-for-profit civil society organisation established in 2013 to reinforce the involvement of the Jordanian citizens in anti-corruption activities; protect private entities as well as public and local governance institutions against corruption; support the anti-corruption movement; enhance the efficiency and independence of control agencies specialized in the area of anti-corruption; and strengthen the integrity of the legislative and judicial authorities.

This area of work envisaged the organisation of an EGM as well as two training events on improving land governance in the Arab region through the collection and analysis of land data. The work benefitted from the support of technical experts from the UN-Habitat Global Land Indicators' Initiative (GLII) and of the International Land Coalition, of which Rasheed TI is also a partner.

A detailed concept note for the three events was developed after the induction workshop held in early 2020 and reviewed by partners. A follow up discussion took place to structure the way forward in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A first intensive **training on Monitoring Land Governance and Land Tenure Security in the Arab region** (Middle East sub region) was organised and held online (via Zoom) from 14 to 16 December 2020. The training aimed to serve as a stocktaking, analytical and capacity building exercise as well as an opportunity to discuss the means to improve the monitoring of tenure security and land governance issues within the region. The training sessions were delivered by experts from GLTN/UN-Habitat, the International Land Coalition (ILC), the Global Land Alliance, the World Bank and FAO. The training was attended by 54 participants - over half of who were female attendees.

The three days training was very successful and rich in content. This allowed to: 1) build and expand the capacities of stakeholders in collecting, analysing and evaluating land governance-related data; 2) develop a better understanding of monitoring the progress of land governance and land tenure security in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals and beyond; 3) develop knowledge and capacities in regards to collecting data and reporting on the land governance-related SDG indicators; 4) hold strategic discussions on different aspects of land governance in the Arab; 5) gather key stakeholders to build and expand the network of experts working within different dimensions of land governance; 6) define key issues, challenges, and needs that are faced in the represented states and the region.

During the different sessions of the training, participants shared their reflections, inputs, and suggestions. These have been summarised below:

- Urgent development and implementation of indicators reflecting the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers is needed under the SDGs framework (1.4.2), considering both the host country and country of origin, as well as triggers of forced displacement.
- It would be relevant to find a floor to discuss the social function of property within the context of development indicators, social inequalities, housing insecurity, and climate change. In addition, it may be relevant to consider developing an indicator to monitor the social function of property.
- Building new cities to hinder urban sprawl is a good opportunity to start strong enforcement of law in new cities - this might help in decreasing the burden over the deteriorating cores of old cities, giving breathe to their infrastructure to recover with less population densities.



- Land monitoring is a mainstream for better land governance in the era of information revolution. Getting updated databases, understanding the current land situation, filling the gap between theories and application tools are the areas which need more investigations.
- It is important to change the mindset of all the stakeholder over land Indicators, which are not only about auditing, controlling or holding accountability for gaps or weaknesses in the system, but convincing them that they aim at finding opportunities for enhancement and development.
- Define the possibilities and ways on how to customize and adapt the indicators to particular states/sub-regions, by unifying the main points from the available monitoring tools and approaches to meet the states/sub-region needs and areas of concern.
- Coordinate efforts between different stakeholders and states within the region based on, for instance, the similarities in the history of land administration, and the legal frameworks and procedures, to save time and cost by following best practice based on mutual exchange of experiences and support.

Further, based on the 3-day training and discussions the following needs were identified to improve land governance:

- Increased knowledge about land governance.
- Clear understanding and development of capacities over monitoring tools and mechanisms available for land monitoring.
- Increased awareness about land monitoring, land governance, tenure security, and their importance.
- Placing land issues in the political agenda in line with the other sectors.
- Developing strong collaborations within the created network of experts and professionals, for both organizations and individuals.
- Developing clear strategies for data collection and reporting on SDG indicators related to land, as well as effective strategic pathways for land governance to be synergized with other sectors, and to be reflected and integrated to different policies, strategies, programs and budgets.

As a continuation of the training course conducted in December 2020, the **second training on Monitoring Land Governance and Land Tenure Security** was held online from 9 to 11 March 2021. The event was led by the Rasheed Transparency International - Jordan in collaboration with GLTN and UN-Habitat.

The meeting was attended by 69 participants – almost half of whom women – including team members from Rasheed TI-JO, GLTN, UN-Habitat, FAO, International Land Coalition, Global Land Alliance, International Food Policy Research Institute, and from the Arab Land Initiative partners (ISTIDAMA – Sudan). Further, the training was attended by number of different NGOs and CSOs as well as representatives from the governmental sector (Department of Lands and Survey - Jordan; National Institute of Statistics – Tunisia; Ministry of Physical Planning - Sudan; Sudan Land Authority – Sudan; Land Registration Authority – Sudan; National Anti-Corruption Commission – Libya; Survey and Cadaster Office – Tunisia; Millennium Challenge Account-Morocco Agency – Morocco), in addition to individual professionals, researchers and academia.

It should be mentioned that the training was also attended by participants from the non-Arab states within North and East Africa sub-regions, like Tanzania, Ethiopia, Benin, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Nigeria and Kenya, despite the training did not focus on their countries or sub-region. This indicates the great interest in the topic, its importance, the need of capacity building and the desire from other countries and to adapt and replicate best practices.

The training led to the following main outcomes:

- Capacities of stakeholders in collecting, analysing and evaluating land governance-related data built and expanded.
- Understanding of monitoring the progress of land governance and land tenure security in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals, and beyond, developed.
- Knowledge and capacities in regard to collecting data and reporting on the land governance-related SDG indicators developed.
- Strategic discussions on different aspects of land governance in the Arab region, based on sharing the experiences and knowledge along with the conducted training modules held.
- Key stakeholders to build and expand the network of experts working within different dimensions of land governance identified and gathered.
- Key issues, challenges, and needs faced by the represented states and the region identified.

Following the two trainings, the **Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Monitoring Land Governance and Land Tenure Security** was held in hybrid form, combining both in-person and online participation, on 14 and 15 July 2021 in Jordan, hosted by the Rasheed (Transparency International - Jordan) in close collaboration with GLTN and UN-Habitat.

The event was attended by 86 participants – over half of whom women – including team members from Rasheed TI-JO, GLTN, UN-Habitat, International Land Coalition, UNESWA and Global Land Alliance. The EGM gathered together a number of different NGOs and CSOs, as well as representatives from the governmental sector (Department of Lands and Survey - Jordan; National Institutes of Statistics – Tunisia, Jordan, Palestine; Ministry of Physical Planning – Sudan; Sudan Land Authority – Sudan; Land Registration Authority – Sudan; Ministry of Physical Planning – Sudan; Informal Settlement Development Fund (ISDF), Egyptian Cabinet – Egypt; Survey and Cadaster Office – Tunisia), in addition to individual professionals, researchers and academia from the Arab region and other regions.

*Figure 14: EGM on Monitoring Land Governance and Land Tenure Security, Amman, Jordan, July 2021.*



The EGM led to the following main outcomes:

- Core land monitoring indicators, and complementary regional and national indicators, defined and discussed.
- Steps for raising awareness on the importance of monitoring land governance, information sharing, generation of land data, and leveraging data for more transparency, accountability, and evidence-based decisions about land defined.
- Implementation strategy and action plan for land monitoring in the Arab region developed and discussed, including strategies for awareness creation, development of national indicators for effective monitoring and data collection, dissemination and policy engagement, etc.
- National land data collection plans, to be further discussed at national levels, drafted.
- Overlaps of works and priority areas for joint actions defined and addressed.
- Roles and priorities for further work and collaborations between the stakeholders defined and consolidated. Approaches for the way forward towards improved land governance and tenure security discussed and planned.

In preparation for the EGM, Rasheed TI-JO and ILC jointly conducted **pre-EGM meetings** with the participants who attended the EGM to take a step further in developing countries' own monitoring systems for quasi-homogeneous sub-regions. As a result of these pre-EGM meetings, experts came up with clearer positions for some blocks of the information for the EGM. They developed stronger concepts and materials resulting in a unified strategy for enhancing the implementation of land monitoring, to be adaptable both nationally and regionally. By drafting a more condensed and accessible list of indicators and methodologies, it allowed participants to be prepared for a practical group exercise that was conducted during the last day of the EGM. Moreover, these meetings allowed contributing to the regional standardization of the mentioned strategy deployed during the EGM, and its best fit for aligning it at national level within different states in the region. It should be also mentioned that the pre-EGM discussion meetings allowed experts to identify and clarify the needs of particular countries and sub-regions, and understand which data is available and which is not, as well as what the sources of such data are.

In addition to the above-mentioned consultations, the preparation phase for the EGM included some extra initiatives from the Rasheed's and ILC sides that focused on conducting and analysing the questionnaire on the land indicators and data availability. The conducted survey aimed to contribute to the development of a more coordinated approach for land monitoring and to help identifying the key aspects of the land sector that are of importance for the participants and their countries. Finally, as part of the preparation for the EGM, participants have also received the guiding questions to consider before attending the EGM, in order to be able to do their own research, if needed, and be able to engage more actively and effectively in the EGM discussions.

### *Agreement of Cooperation 3: Land, Women Empowerment and Socio-Economic Development*

Decades of research and practice in the land sector have shown that a secure access, use of and control over land is a driver of socio-economic development and empowerment, especially for women. The aim of this area of work, which has been implemented by the Palestine-based **Union of Agricultural Work Committees (UAWC)** was to generate knowledge about this nexus in the Arab region, by assessing the state and the challenges of land tenure security, especially for women, and their articulations with socio-economic development and empowerment. UAWC is a renown agricultural development institution in Palestine. The organisation was established in 1986 in response to the socio-political vulnerability of

Palestinian farmers resulting from the Israeli occupational policies. The organisation's projects include agricultural land development, implementation of water supplies, capacity building, rural women's livelihoods development, legal awareness, emergency response, and other agricultural development projects.

On 7 November 2019, UN-Habitat and UAWC signed an agreement of cooperation for a period of 24 months. The agreement envisaged a study on the evidence-based linkages between access to land and socio-economic development and empowerment, especially for women, in the Arab region, and the organisation of an EGM and of two training events on women's access to land.

The drafting of the study “**Land, Women Empowerment and Socioeconomic Development in the Arab Region: Evidence-based perspectives**” started after the reference group meeting held in Cairo in February 2020 and an extensive literature review and the methodological framework were finalized by UAWC in April 2021. The report was published in 2023. The study examines the factors affecting women's land tenure security in the Arab region and their connection to women's empowerment and the socioeconomic development. Drawing information from literature review, consultations (including the EGM on the evidence-based linkages between access to land and socio-economic development and empowerment, especially for women in the Arab region) and in-depth field assessments conducted in Palestine, Tunisia, Iraq and Kuwait, the research evidences the on-the-ground realities of gender- and land-related patterns.

The research highlights with field data that gender inequalities are not limited to land ownership and land acquisition. Gender disparity influences the use of and control over land and the opportunity to secure financial gains from its utilization. Noting a positive correlation between land tenure security and improved living conditions, the study confirmed that, when women have secure housing, land and property rights, they are more empowered to take decisions about their lives and families, and their social status, as well as the overall protection against gender-based violence and other hazards improves. The study provides actionable recommendations for decision-makers, stakeholders and activists on awareness and advocacy, research and data, gender-responsive reforms, women's inheritance rights and participation. The report is available for download [here](#).

Based on the final report, the decision makers' briefs on Land, Women Empowerment and Socioeconomic Development in the Arab Region: Evidence-based perspectives was developed. The decision makers' briefs reflect summarises the main results and recommendations of the report. The brief is available for download [here](#).

The **Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Land Tenure Security and Socio-Economic Development Especially for Women in the Arab Region**, held online on 1 and 2 February 2021, brought together experts with different professional backgrounds (academic, civil society, government, etc.) and women from grassroots initiatives to share knowledge and experience. The presentations and discussions aimed at comparing the state of women's access to and control over land in different countries of the Arab region. In total, 96 participants and speakers registered to the event and between 40 and 50 participants attended the meeting during the two days. The event helped identifying challenges of women's access to land and to reflect on existing practices and approaches to enhance land tenure security for socio-economic development. It sought to elaborate the extent to which land tenure security correlates with different aspects of socio-economic and political empowerment especially in conflict- and post-conflict situations. It also examined the priority action that should be undertaken by different land actors to improve women's situation with regards to housing, land and property rights.

The meeting included six sessions with general presentations and sharing of country level experiences. Some sessions also involved group work. The discussions and debates stressed that more land tenure related data and information is needed, especially regarding the following aspects: the number of people and households with limited land tenure security, land value, incomes, cases of HLP violations and forced displacements in rural and urban areas, and in conflict-affected areas. Even where some monitoring and reporting practices are performed, there participants concluded that there is a lack of data on the long-term consequences of HLP violations and displacement which weakens the planning and designing of relevant and responsive interventions. Institutional collaboration, network efforts and resource mobilisation to enrich databases are needed.

The overall recommendations and conclusions of the two days EGM are as follows:

- Women's secure tenure relationship to land is key for realising women's rights, promoting development, and creating just and peaceful societies.
- Women are often disproportionately affected by housing, land and property (HLP) violations that are assuming monumental scale in the context of displacement in the Arab region.
- Women are rarely parties to lease agreements or other HLP documentation in some Arab countries, which leaves them particularly vulnerable to evictions.
- Economic empowerment and land ownership are interlinked. Boosting economic empowerment for women is important to secure ownership of land and property and vice versa.
- Top-down policies and approaches targeting the improvement of women's conditions can achieve a lot if there is enough political commitment and resources for implementation.
- Land-related national laws, customs and practices coexist in Arab states, therefore there is the need to look into these different dimensions to increase women's secure tenure relationship to land effectively.
- Women's secure tenure relationship to land and housing goes beyond individual ownership: it includes joint ownership, use rights, etc. (the continuum of land rights).
- Community-based land rights are important to protect women's access, use and control over land to expand the concept beyond only access, replacing "access" with "secure tenure relationship".

Based on the outcomes of the EGM, a two-days **training event on Gender, Land Rights and Socioeconomic Development of Women in Palestine** was held on 26 and 27 June 2021 in Hebron, Palestine. The aim of the event was to build a better understanding for the participants of concepts like gender, gender equality, gender roles, power and power dynamics, and how attitudes can shape social norms in the society. It further aimed at increasing the knowledge and capacities of women engaging in lobby and advocacy activities to promote their own housing, land and property rights and access to and control over productive resources. Moreover, the workshop aimed to raise the awareness of men to become allies of women's social, political and economic rights. The first day of the training gathered 87 participants and the second day 60.

Figure 15: Training event on Land Governance, Women Empowerment and Socio-economic Development, Erbil, Iraq, October 2021.



The second **training event on Land Governance, Women Empowerment and Socio-economic Development in the Arab Region** was held on 25 and 26 October in Erbil, Iraq. The training focused on the topic of gender-equitable land governance; governance that recognizes equal rights to land and addresses the different needs and priorities of women and men. The aim was to train the participants in mastering key definitions and to provide an introduction to the topic, before addressing how to integrate these concepts into policies and institutional frameworks. The training also aimed at addressing legal and technical challenges in reaching gender-equitable land governance. Finally, communication methods were addressed as well as ways to promote them within different contexts of the Arab Region.

#### *Agreement of Cooperation 4: Capacity and Knowledge Development*

The **Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI)**, based in Egypt, is an organisation affiliated to the Housing and Building National Research Centre (HBRC), an Egyptian national government research institution. UTI seeks to strengthen institutional and human resources capacities that can nurture the improvement of the living and environmental conditions of cities in Egypt and in the Middle East.

On 05 November 2019, UN-Habitat and UTI signed an agreement of cooperation for a period of 24 months. UTI was awarded a contract including some of the most complex and important pieces of work, some of which are described here while others are presented in more detail under Area of work 3 – Capacity Development. UTI's contract included i) a capacity assessment of land management and land administration expertise in the Arab region; ii) a review of the existing land-related curricula offered by training and education organisations in the region to be used as the ground for adapting a curriculum on land governance for the Arab region; iii) the establishment and management of a research innovation fund; iv) the organisation of two capacity development events on land governance and land tools relevant for the region; and v) the adaptation and translation of relevant publications and materials. The above-mentioned items i, ii, and iv are described in greater detail under Area of work 3 on Capacity Development.

UTI, in collaboration with GLTN and UN-Habitat and the Housing and Building National Research Center (HBRC), hosted the **first knowledge exchange event** for contracted implementing partners. The workshop took place on 1-6 February 2020, in Cairo Egypt. The event was attended by 30 participants – over half female – from GLTN, UN-Habitat, the World Bank, the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Arab Union of Surveyors, the International Land Coalition, the Habitat International Coalition, and from the implementing partners which includes NGOs, research institutes and governmental organisations.

To kick start the capacity assessment in the Arab region, an online **Induction workshop for Capacity Development** (Middle East and Gulf Region) was held on 12 January 2021. The meeting was attended by consultants representing Middle East countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq) and the Gulf countries (Yemen, KSA, UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar), together with team members from UTI, GLTN/ UN-Habitat and the Arab Land Initiative. The meeting aimed at bringing together the consultants from the Middle East and Gulf region in charge of the different country assessments to discuss the methodology and mapping process on different aspects of land governance; defining the work needed to identify precisely the capacity gaps; learning about the surveying process and the questionnaires; defining a clear road map for the next steps, including identifying roles and responsibilities of consultants in the implementation of capacity development activities; and creating networks of resource people for identifying stakeholders for supporting country consultants in the work ahead.

The event allowed the consultants conducting the regional and country level assessments to acquire: 1) good common understanding on the content of each area of work, and on the methodologies and approaches to be used to carry out the assigned work in a collaborative and interactive manner; 2) common understanding of the different streams of capacity development work to be done; 3) guidance by GLTN and UTI on their role in facilitating the process, monitoring and follow up, and providing working templates; 4) a detailed work plan, including milestones and time plan.

Regarding the **translation and adaptation of materials into Arabic**, UTI has supported the translation into Arabic of various documents related to the project implementation, such as calls and terms of reference, communications pieces, and publications.

Regarding the establishment and management of a **research innovation fund**, UTI and GLTN, with inputs from the Arab Land Initiative's Reference Group, designed and then launched in June 2020 a call for research proposals. The call was addressed to students and young land professionals interested in conducting research on land governance-related topics in one or several countries of the Arab region. The objective of this call was to foster the interest in land-related research and to gather innovative ideas and approaches by supporting and motivating future academic and professional leaders in the field of land governance. The research grant also aimed at increasing the information and empirical evidence on land-related issues in the region, and at fostering the interest and engagement of students, young professionals and scholars in producing land-related research and becoming part of land sector networks in the Arab region.

The eligibility criteria restricted the application to master and PhD students with interest in land management and land-related topics, young land professionals and land practitioners with expertise and/or field experience on land related projects in the Arab region, and young scholars working in universities or other relevant research institutions. In addition, applicants had to be nationals, former nationals or residents of a country of the Arab region. At the closure of the call, 80 proposals for research were received by UTI. In late August 2020, UTI, GLTN and the senior Arab Land Initiative's advisors selected

seventeen research proposals to be funded and informed the researchers accordingly. The research works fell under one or more than one of the following themes:

- The nexus between land and conflict;
- Land and socio-economic development;
- Women and land;
- Youth and land;
- Land, natural resources (including water, minerals, extractives, etc.);
- Land and climate change (incl. land degradation, etc.);
- Land administration;
- Land policies, laws and regulations;
- Land-based investment, land markets, land value, land transactions;
- Monitoring land governance and land tenure security;
- Urbanization, planning, taxation and development control;
- Innovative land management tools.

The research grantees submitted their manuscripts in February 2021, after which reviews were undertaken by experts of the different thematic areas from the UTI and GLTN teams. The results of the reader reports were then shared with the authors. The final versions of the manuscripts were submitted in November 2021, and published on the dedicated Arab Land Initiative website page in November 2022 and are available [here](#) for download. The following table recapitulates the topics, the names of the selected researchers and the country on which their study focused.

Table 2: Research Innovation Fund - recapitulative table: funded researchers, topics, and region/country focus

Sub-region or country/ies	Name of the Candidate(s)	English; Title of the research	Reference to the main theme(s) [See list above]												
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Egypt	Reham Reda & Mohamed Hamdy	Egyptian slums and land conflict: pre- and post-slums eviction and relocation land governance challenges	1	2									10	11	12
	Anas Alowaily	Policy and regulatory constraints to good land governance in Upper Egypt. The Case Study Aswan, New Aswan		2				6	7	8				11	
Iraq/Syria/Leb/Yem/Jo	Shahd Mustafa Amukhtar	Enhancing accountability and transparency of public land governance through open access tools like geoportal case studies from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen							7				10		12
Iraq/Syria	Layla Zibar	Planning for forced displacement in chronic conflict zones between temporary camps and permanent settlements. The case of Kurdistan Region Of Iraq	1	2											
Syria	Batoul Ibrahim & Roula Maya	Towards a spatial polycentric approach for sustainable land administration in Syria: social and economic recovery and post-conflict reconstruction strategies							7					11	
Yemen	Wael Alaghbari	Land problems and disputes in Yemen: causes, challenges and recommendations							7	8	9				



<b>Lebanon</b>	Mario J. Al Sayah & Rita Der Sarkissian	A Review of Recent Events in Lebanon (2011-2020) and their effect on land degradation													
	Petra Samaha	Land as A cash machine. The Case of Lebanon													
	Glory El-Khoury	Land use, land cover changes and the link with groundwater: governance in Nahr al-Jaouz river basin, Lebanon													
<b>Oman</b>	Rowa Elzain	Self-organized communities, urban governance and the city. Lessons learned from Muscat, Oman													
	Hamda AL Hajri	The Land Before Lines. Social unrest and modern land management in former tribal territories.													
<b>Sub-region or country/ies</b>	<b>Name of the Candidate(s)</b>	<b>Arabic; Title of the research</b>	<b>Reference to the main theme(s)</b> [See list above]												
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Egypt</b>	Mohamed Abotera, Ahmed Zaaza & Ahmed Borham	سياسات الإخلاء وتأثيرها على المدينة (Eng) Eviction policies and their impact on the city													
	Omar Essam Elkousy & Ahmed Tarek	جدوى القيمة السوقية كمعيار للتعويض العادل لنزع الملكيات في القاهرة التاريخية; (إطار عمل مقترح لتقدير خسائر ومخاطر نزع الملكية) (Eng) The feasibility of market value as a criterion for fair compensation for expropriation in Historic Cairo; (A proposed framework for estimating losses and risks of expropriation)													
<b>Syria</b>	Mohamed Othman	العلاقات الاقتصادية الاجتماعية في سوق باب النصر وسويقة حلب من عام 2010 حتى 2020 (Eng) Socio-economic relations in the Bab al-Nasr market and Aleppo Suwayqa from 2010 to 2020													
<b>Sub-region or country/ies</b>	<b>Name of the Candidate(s)</b>	<b>French; Title of the research</b>	<b>Reference to the main theme(s)</b> [See list above]												
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Tunisia</b>	Issam Elkhorchani	Impact de la bonne gouvernance foncière sur la prévention des conflits tribaux. Cas de Kébili, Tunisie. (Eng) The impact of good land governance on the prevention of tribal conflicts. The case of Kebili in Tunisia.													

Morocco		<p>La spoliation foncière dans les médias au Maroc contribution à la compréhension d'un problème public à travers le discours médiatique</p> <p>(Eng) Land spoliation in the media in Morocco contribution to the understanding of a public problem through media discourse</p>							
Morocco	Sali Oumarou	<p>Traumatisme des projets de redéveloppement urbain: le cas du projet de l'avenue royale à Casablanca, Maroc.</p> <p>(Eng) Trauma of urban redevelopment projects: the case of the royal avenue project in Casablanca, Morocco.</p>							

*Agreement of Cooperation 5: Fit for purpose land administration.*

This agreement of cooperation contract was initially awarded to the Arab Urban Development Institute, which later withdrew from the implementation due to internal reasons. The area of work was later awarded to the **Regional Center for Remote Sensing of North African States (CRTEAN)**, based in Tunisia. A first agreement of twelve month was signed between UN-Habitat and CRTEAN in November 2020 and then extended for 6 months until June 2022.

CRTEAN is a centre for research and studies that aims at encouraging institutions to use remote sensing techniques and upstream systems in the areas of sustainable development and scientific research and promotes the transfer of technologies and capacity building.

This agreement aimed at developing knowledge and capacity on fit-for-purpose land administration principles and approaches, and at adapting them to the countries in the region. In this regard, an Expert Group Meeting was held and two training on fit-for-purpose land administration will be conducted under the lead of CRTEAN with the support of GLTN/UN-Habitat and other partners in the Arab region.

The **Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Fit-For-Purpose Land Administration System** organised by CRTEAN with the support of UN-Habitat and GLTN was held in Tunis, Tunisia, on 18–19 October 2021 as a hybrid in person and online event. The event was attended by 36 participants including policymakers, legislation experts, land surveyors, private sector, land evaluation experts, Academia, Civil society organizations, UN agencies local and regional stakeholders from eleven countries of the NENA region.

The EGM focused on the following topics:

- The current situation of land governance and land administration system in the Arab region
- Understanding, building and implementing the fit-for-purpose land administration approach and framework
- The impact of the fit-for-purpose land administration systems on the land tenure security for everyone and particularly for women and vulnerable groups.

The EGM was an opportunity for discussing and showcasing the Fit-For-Purpose (FFP) land administration principles and approaches used in the region and elsewhere, to allow the different stakeholders in the Arab countries to understand the overall fit-for-purpose land administration systems and assess the ones that can effectively be adapted to the region/countries.

The two-day event allowed open discussion and knowledge sharing about land administration, approaches, guidelines, and tools to improve land administration within three frameworks: spatial, legal, and institutional. In addition, it was an opportunity to introduce and inform the land experts and other stakeholders from the Arab region, and elsewhere, about the FFP land administration approach and tools. The meeting was also an opportunity to discuss the available data and the current status of the land management and administration system in the region, emphasizing its impact on the vulnerable groups and the socioeconomic development of the region.

The organization of the EGM followed a curriculum of topics ordered in four thematic sessions, and included presentations, case studies and best practices examples. The first thematic session focused on land governance, it introduced the Arab Land Initiative approach and stream of work, and it provided an overview of the Fit-For-Purpose (FFP) concept and implementation approach as well as of the Land Administration System (LAS) in selected Arab countries in Middle East and Gulf Region. The second session also provided a brief overview of the Land Administration System (LAS) in selected countries in North Africa. During the third session, participants followed presentations on fit-for-purpose land administration tools, on the use of drones in support of open spatial data collection and on capacity building for land-based data entry tools and, finally, on local knowledge and crowd mapping in support of land rights. At the end of this session, participants took part in a group exercise on FFP land administration. During the last session, participants reported a set of important recommendations to consider by GLTN/UN-Habitat and CRTEAN when reflecting on the way forward. More in detail, at the end of the event, participants reported a set of important recommendations that should be leading the way to set up a fit-for-purpose land administration system in the Arab region:

- Strengthen the capacity of institutions involved in land administration in Arab states and exchange experiences within the Arab region and beyond.
- Establish the regional committee of experts from Arab states "the Arab experts Committee on land administration" for preparing and developing national land administration strategies.
- Support national, regional initiatives, programs and innovations of data acquisition, processing, and management in the field of land administration by establishing a scientific group from Arab states under the supervision and coordination of GLTN / UN-Habitat and CRTEAN.
- Reinforce women's role and participation in land governance.
- Develop spatial data policies and legal frameworks related to land information systems.
- Implement standards and specifications of land administration systems.
- Design and develop a standardised land database to serve the land administration systems.
- Establish specific working groups at the regional level to handle strategic paths, such as technical, legal, standards and networking.

The first **training event on Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration hands-on tools and techniques for mapping and information management First Training** was held on 31 January – 2 February 2022 in Cairo, Egypt, by CRTEAN with the support of UN-Habitat/GLTN.

The training event aimed to introduce participants to examples of practical uses of space technology in the implementation of Fit-For-Purpose Land Administration with special emphasis on the use of open-source software and data.

Figure 16: Participants of the training event on Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration, Cairo, Egypt, February 2022.



The training included presentations, interactive discussions, simulations, exercises and group work on:

- The concept of Fit-For-Purpose Land Administration
- Spatial Information (sources, reliability and challenges)
- Open Sources Tools (QGIS, Google Earth Engine (GEE) and mobile data collector)
- Equipment and materials for land survey/inventory
- Satellite Image acquisition and processing – Practice exercise on GEE
- Aerial mapping and drone mapping – Practice example
- GPS data collection and conversion to Spatial Information – Practice exercise on QGIS
- Participatory Mapping and practice exercise on QGIS (converting hand-drawn sketch maps to GIS layer)
- Data Management (storing, use and monitoring of land information)
- Map Production
- The Social Tenure Domain Model and its applications
- Selected examples of implementation of fit-for-purpose land administration in Arab countries

The attendance to the training was open to participants selected through a call for participation published on the Arab Land Initiative website. The training was attended by 42 participants, 16 in-person and 26 online, from Egypt, Sudan, Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria and Jordan.

After conducting successfully, the 1<sup>st</sup> training in February 2022 in Cairo, Egypt, CRTEAN and UN-Habitat/GLTN organized the second edition of the Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration training in Tunis, Tunisia on 17 -19 May 2022. The training had the same objectives and covered the same topics of the first edition. It was attended by 41 participants (12 women and 29 men) from the National Statistic Office of Tunisia and Jordan, UN-Habitat Syria office, ISTIDAMA, etc.

### *Agreement of Cooperation 6: Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change*

On 24 December 2019, UN-Habitat and the **Lebanese Center for Policy Studies** signed an agreement of cooperation for a period of 18 months, which was extended until 31 December 2022. Founded in 1989, the Beirut-based Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS) is an independently managed, non-partisan, non-profit, non-governmental think tank whose mission is to produce and advocate for policies that improve governance in Lebanon and in the Arab region.

The outputs of this agreement of cooperation included a study on the correlation between land tenure security, land degradation and climate change, as well as an EGM on land and climate change and one on pastoral land and range land in the Arab region. The organisations' representatives took part in the inception workshop held in February 2020, during which the different outputs were discussed and refined. Due to the COVID-19-related restrictions, the two EGMs were held virtually in January 2021.

The **EGM on Land Governance Climate Change, and Natural Resources in the Arab Region**, held on 18 January 2021, counted 116 attendees and 136 registrations from the Arab region and beyond, and it provided Arabic-English interpretation. The EGM started with an opening session during which LCPS and UN-Habitat/GLTN representatives gave an overview of the work of the Arab Land Initiative and, more particularly, of the research project on "Land, natural resources and climate change in the Arab region" led by LCPS in partnership with UN-Habitat/GLTN. The line up of the EGM included a first session on agrarian systems, access to land and natural resources; a second session on land governance, climate risks and mitigation, and a concluding session.

The meeting allowed LCPS to collect data for their study and to better understand climate change's contribution to land tenure insecurity and the role of land governance to promote mitigation and adaptation and land tenure security. During the EGM, land use planning and urban policy were identified as two essential tools to address the challenges stemming from climatic factors, whereby states define their economic and social orders and the role of their institutions accordingly. It was also mentioned that just as climate risks and technical aspects, land is inherently political. Topics of sovereignty, trajectories of capital in relation to land, imperialism, development and de-growth, and land concentration and protection of small holders were presented in the discussion.

On the technical side, scientific knowledge about land was defined as essential for mapping topography, geo-hazards, geology, hydrology, etc. This highlighted the need of collaboration of several disciplines and the inclusion of policy makers in the discussion, as well as the need to look at innovative approaches, deriving from the huge advancements in technology, tested in similar contexts to reconcile conflicts fuelled by climate change (between farmers and herders for example).

Experts stressed that a balance is needed between smallholder protection and the increase in productivity. Cooperatives were brought up as past experiences that can be learnt from. Empowering local communities with tools or knowledge is not sufficient if their access to land is not protected. States should protect agricultural lands and natural resources with clear policies so that land remains as the basis for production and not speculation.

The discussions further recognised states as key players affecting market trends and prices by intervening in the redistribution of the means of production to balance trade and market interactions. Fiscal and trade policies were identified as essential for regulating internal and external dynamics, while land taxation essential to decrease its commodification and curb speculation and enable decent land use planning schemes to be implemented.

The meeting concluded by stressing that there is a need to scale up community agriculture and protect the land with both its social and national anti-colonial components. Strong institutions are the key players to protect land and societies and a strong collaboration between planners and governments on land use planning is needed. Economies based only on trade and services affect land use and the environment as they destroy productive sectors such as agriculture. Policies should be people-oriented and based on scientific knowledge.

The **EGM on Rangelands and Pastoral Lands**, held on the 20 January 2021, was attended by 70 participants and counted 105 registrations. Arabic-English interpretation was provided. The line up of the event included a first session on land degradation and land degradation neutrality; a second session on pastoral systems and rangeland tenure management; a final moderated discussion on rangelands in Jordan and a roundtable with three guests from the International Livestock Research Institute and the Rangelands Global Initiative at the International Land Coalition.

Participants of the event convened that pastoralism is not just the act of managing herds. It is a complex food and land use system that encompasses social and ecological dimensions. However, pastoralism is affected by the socio-economic changes of the past century: population and livestock growth, land use change, and urbanization in relation to local, national and international trajectories of capital and trade. For instance, agro-pastoralism was a hybrid lifestyle adopted in several parts of the Arab region. Within this system the role of women was also well defined and essential. Export oriented agricultural policies and land privatization weakened these systems and imposed lifestyle changes on agro-pastoral societies increasing conflict between different groups. Farming and herding are not necessarily competing activities. The case of Sudan today provides several lessons. In contrast to the judgmental modernization approaches of the '60s and '70s, policies related to pastoralism need to take these into consideration so clashes between modernity and tradition/customary and statutory modes are well managed. With the use of technology, innovative agro-pastoral systems can be promoted using biomass production. Land policies should recognize customary laws and allow a better management of grievances and disputes after close analysis of the mechanisms of communal land managing.

National land use plans that take into consideration land suitability (based on geospatial data) and reflect the economic choices of states were defined as very helpful in combatting desertification and organizing pastoralism and agriculture as essential economic activities. Accordingly, youth can find job opportunities within these sectors, especially if the use of technology becomes key in their development. The revival of Hima, or customary systems, can hence meet the challenges of this century by mixing technologic advancement with degrowth and the herders' knowledge in sustaining their land and adaptation to change. This requires tackling the questions of power relations through building institutions and frameworks for shared governance at different levels to redefine and strengthen legitimacy.

Participants of the EGM agreed that the next step would be to push leading actors in each country to operationalize such suggestions and solutions. The involvement of public institutions is key. The work of international organizations and local actors should be orchestrated by the governments so that projects are appropriated and continued.

In conclusion, the EGM convened that managing pastoralism in relation to land degradation is a matter that requires multi-disciplinarity but also context specific knowledge and approaches. The region might have shared trajectories in the past and present, but the legal and political frameworks in each country are different. Regional efforts are nevertheless important, as land questions are related to transnational dynamics. Also, these efforts matter in the case where states practice green or beige grabbing. Connecting

and documenting pastoralists' stories, then transforming them into learning material and empirical evidence for research and policy has been indicated as a good starting point.

The outcomes of the EGM, the data collected, and the information shared guided LCPS in the development and finalization of their **research study Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change in the Arab Region**. Two draft versions of the study were submitted by LCPS and reviewed by members of the GLTN secretariat as well as other experts of the Arab Land Initiative. The first draft was submitted in July 2021 and the second draft in February 2022. The initial submission date for the final version of the report (31 December 2021) could not be met by the implementing partners, given different internal and human resource related challenges (one of the main researchers started a PhD project and could no longer work full-time on the report), but also the overall difficult situation in Lebanon and in Beirut more particularly. LCPS repeatedly mentioned the difficult working circumstances in a context where power blackouts became more and more regular. However, it is worth mentioning that these challenging working conditions did not have an impact on the quality of the study that was released online and presented at COP27 in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt, in November 2022.

The study is original and ground-breaking to the extent that it provides a regional overview and analysis of the nexus between land tenure security and the different faces of climate change. National and local case studies are used and highlighted to exemplify the regional tendencies of climate change and their impacts on land tenure. The report starts with a framing of the research topic by giving an overview of ongoing regional and international debates on the land and climate nexus. It then offers an overview of land tenure systems and of key climate issues in the region before assessing the land-climate nexus, in the analytical part, through the following key entry points: land degradation, natural resource-based conflicts, climate stresses and land grabbing, as well as the impact of rapid urbanization and exposure to climatic hazards in urban contexts.

Based on the final report, the following policy briefs "Meeting the Climate Challenge: A Call for Responsible Land Governance in the Arab Region" and "Land governance, natural resources, and climate change in the Arab region. Decision makers' brief" were developed and published online. The last one has also been translated into Arabic. These policy /decision makers' briefs reflect the main results of the report and deal with the different articulations of the land and climate nexus mentioned above.

#### *Agreement of Cooperation 7: The role of Land Professionals in land governance*

In November 2019, UN-Habitat entered into an agreement of cooperation with **ISTIDAMA supported by the Arab Union of Surveyors** that ended in November 2021. ISTIDAMA is an independent policy making center for land and environmental governance based in Sudan. It delivers specific assignments, according to needs, on topics related to land and environmental governance in Sudan. The agreement with ISTIDAMA was established through a consultancy contract signed with its Chairman Salah Abukashawa, who is a Sudanese National and a Senior Land expert that worked with UN-Habitat and GLTN on a number of land project. Besides the externalities caused by COVID-19, the instability of the political and security situation in Sudan has negatively affected the pace of implementation. Close coordination and follow up with the partners have been ensured to minimize the risks and provide all the needed support.

The objectives of this agreement included undertaking a capacity needs assessment on land professionals in the Arab region and organizing a knowledge exchange event on the role of land professional in the Arab region. An inception report for the capacity needs assessment on **Land professionals in the Arab region: Roles, capacities and contribution to land governance and land tenure security** was developed, and inputs were provided by GLTN and by other Arab Land Initiative partners. The proposed approach was

reviewed by ISTIDAMA to ensure alignment and complementarities with the overall capacities' assessment coordinated by the Urban Training and Studies Institute. ISTIDAMA task force submitted the second draft of the report in November 2021, and the report was finalised by ISTIDAMA in February 2022. After which the report was professionally edited and laid out to be released online in 2023. The report and decision maker's brief are available [here](#) for download. During the preparation of the report, the partner organised a knowledge exchange event, presented below, whose outcomes and recommendation played an important role in enriching the content of the study.

A hybrid **Knowledge Exchange Event on the Role and Capacity of Land Professionals in Arab States** was conducted by ISTIDAMA on 8-9 November 2021, in Cairo, Egypt. The event succeeded at identifying land professionals reflecting on their role in the region and on how to adapt it to better suit fit-for-purpose land administration and the land administration needs of the region. After the Identification of the key areas of professionalism available in Arab states and clarifying their roles, the land expert defined and analyzed the key challenges in terms of capacity-building needed for the land professionals in the region. At the closure of the event, recommendations were formulated to propose an approach to build the capacity of land professionals in the Arab region. Some of the suggestions that were discussed include:

- Building relationships between land professionals (formal and informal) and the provisions of coordination processes.
- Providing specialized training for land workers in all fields.
- Working on introducing law, economics and geography subjects into engineering faculties.
- Including brokerage process a legal framework.
- Ensuring three years of working experience for graduates of the College of Surveying to gain experience and then practice the profession.
- Preserving gradation and specialisations for those working in the field of engineering.
- Developing a guideline to simplify land-related procedures for the citizens.
- Developing a real estate Atlas for the Arab countries.
- Achieving the unified Arab framework on land management.

*Figure 17: Knowledge Exchange Event on the Role and Capacity of Land Professionals in Arab States, Cairo, Egypt, November 2021.*





### *Agreement of Cooperation 8: Baseline study on land related legal and policy frameworks*

A senior consultant was hired from November 2019 to January 2022 to undertake this stream of work due to the lack of a qualified organisation to undertake this work among the applicants.

The study - which focuses on assessing the policy, legal and institutional frameworks related to land governance - was designed to have a regional analysis component and a set of county level analyses for Lebanon, Iraq, Palestine and Jordan feeding into the regional one. An inception report including the proposed methodology used was developed and applied to the four countries selected. With the support of a senior advisor to the Arab Land Initiative and of the UN-Habitat country office, a first country level “Legislative and Administrative Land and Property Rights Framework” study – on Lebanon - was developed and brought to a final stage of completion in October 2020 and it was presented to national actors in Beirut in May 2021. The final draft has been released on the Arab Land Initiative website in October 2022, and it is available [here](#) for download.

The Lebanon report was followed by the Iraq national analysis which was finalised in May 2021, and subsequently by the Jordan and Palestine reports which have been respectively finalised in January 2021. All four national reports have been edited and will be made available for download on the Arab Land Initiative website in 2023.

Based on the four countries, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine, the regional report was finalized in January 2022. The report discusses the status of land administration functions at the regional level. The report aims to shed a light on the shared challenges of land administration to assist land policy makers and land stakeholders in formulating appropriate responses to better manage and restore land resources, foster regional cooperation in the land sector, and achieve sustainable land management (SLM).

The main common land administration challenges that have been observed are i) outdated and fragmented legislative frameworks regulating land tenure and land registration; ii) slow, inefficient, and not client-oriented land registration services (very limited e-services are provided) iii) not all land is surveyed and registered. iv) land tenure systems are not equally protected, and the continuum of land rights is not adequately recognized; v) weak women’s ownership and access to land.; vi) property valuation is underdeveloped, and land valuation standards are lacking or not consistent with International Valuation Standards (IVS); vii) property taxation is not optimized for revenue generation; viii) land use classification is not updated and enforced; ix) use of agricultural land is not optimized, and agricultural land is not protected; x) lack of effective urban planning. Urban planning is characterized by centralization of powers and overlapping of planning responsibilities in addition to weak local governments and public participations; xi) lack or outdated housing strategy, weak state role in social housing and public-private partnership in land development and housing; xii) poor state land management and administration; xiii) weak enforcement of land development strategies and lack of monitoring and evaluation; xiv) lack of specialized courts/judges in land-related disputes, insufficient number of judges and lack of transparency; xv) alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in land disputes are still underdeveloped and not adequately promoted by the States.

### *Agreement of Cooperation 9: The Role of the Civil Society in Land Governance*

This area of work was awarded to the **International Youth Council of Yemen (IYCY)** with whom, on 2 December 2019, UN-Habitat signed an agreement of cooperation for a period of 12 months, then extended until February 2022. Founded in 2012, the International Youth Council-Yemen (IYCY) is a non-profit, non-governmental and youth-led organisation which carry out projects on WASH, nutrition, food, health, governance, energy, environment and climate change as well as youth development. This agreement consisted in the organisation of a knowledge exchange event on the role of the civil society sector in land governance in the Arab region. A concept note for the design of the event was submitted and commented upon, and GLTN produced a background paper on the topic of this AoC to facilitate the discussion before the event.

The **Virtual Knowledge Exchange Event on The Role of CSO's in Land Governance in the Arab Region**, organized by the IYCY partnership with UN-Habitat and GLTN, was held online on 20-21 December 2020 and attended by 56 participants representing the Arab countries and others. Arabic and English interpretation was provided for the participants. Over the two-day event, interactive discussions provided an opportunity for the participants to exchange experiences, thoughts and learn about the successful and unsuccessful experiences of countries on land governance and the role of civil society in land related concerns.

The event highlighted the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and potential areas of collaboration with different stakeholders for a better land governance in the Arab states. The Yemeni authorities participated actively discussing about land governance, security of tenure, and women's land rights. The representative of the Yemeni government also touched upon the challenges faced by the government and how civil society organizations can work in partnership with governments to overcome land-related challenges. Among of the most important themes that were discussed during the event, there are the common issues faced by women in obtaining their rights to land and how women could be supported to manage their land effectively. The event also discussed land rights and land laws across the Arab region, the importance of working together in coordination with governments and of strengthening the capacities of civil society organizations to contribute to the achievement of good land governance.

The following common understanding and areas of converging interests were identified regarding the role of civil society on land governance in the Arab region, with a focus on land and property rights and land tenure security:

- Facilitating people's access to legal services related to land registration in the land registry and assisting them to prepare their property papers.
- Supporting freedom of expression regarding land use in the common interests of the society and the government.
- Implementing awareness raising and capacity building activities for women regarding good land management, including agriculture and trade.
- Cooperating with governmental entities to address the problem of slums.
- Filing lawsuits against the parties that manipulate the land distribution system according to their interest.
- Implementing economic empowerment, road building and land restoration programs.
- Raising community's awareness on women's inheritance rights, providing legal support and building capacity for women to claim their inheritance rights.

- Advocating for women’s participation in decision-making, including in the agriculture sector, and for women’s land ownership.
- Increasing women’s awareness of their legal rights in the Islamic Sharia in a manner that is appropriate to the context of each Arab country.
- Providing financial and legal support to women to claim their land tenure rights.
- Implementing community awareness raising programs, advocating and supporting campaigns to tackle the prevailing cultural patterns that deprive women of their rights.
- Raising men’s awareness of the importance of women having their right to own and use land for the socioeconomic development of the society.
- Directing women’s groups to work in the field of protecting women’s rights to own land.
- Reconsidering the educational system across Arab universities and integrate land governance topics.
- Increasing women’s awareness about the importance of legal documents related to land and how to protect their legal rights.
- Raising awareness about land-related issues and involve different stakeholders to discuss their views about land to build trust between civil society and governments.
- Raising awareness on the political concept of land.

One of the most prominent outcomes of the knowledge exchange event, which was taken into account by IYCY, was the idea of **establishing a regional network** that includes a group of experts, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector to work in the field of land governance in the Arab region. Participants in the event demonstrated great interest to join the network and shared their ideas about the network’s goals and areas of work. To date, IYCY has established a **Civil Society Regional Network** on land governance. The network counts 26 organizations and institutions from different Arab countries, including civil society organisations, academia, INGOs, public and private sector.

## Twining Arrangements

Four twinning arrangements were designed and implemented by the Arab Land Initiative to increase knowledge creation and sharing by fostering collaboration and exchange of expertise between organizations from inside and outside the region. An initial discussion to identify the possible areas of work and the modalities of partnership was held in February 2019 with the members of the Arab Land Initiative Reference Group, and later debated more in detail with some of the partners. A call for nominations was developed and shared on the Arab land Initiative and GLTN websites to encourage interested organisations to apply. The call was opened on 18 December 2020 and closed on 15 February 2021; 24 proposals were received. After the screening which included shortlisting and interviewing the applicants, four twinning arrangements were selected, and four agreements were signed. A summary of the activities carried out under the twinning arrangements is provided below.

### **1. Twining arrangement between the American University of Beirut (Beirut Urban Lab, Lebanon) and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (Massachusetts, USA)**

This agreement was signed in October 2021 and run until June 2022. As part of the agreement, the Beirut Urban Lab in collaboration with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy curated set of Land and Housing Policy Dialogues, through which stakeholders shared their understanding about the relationship between land policy and how it impacts affordable housing. The Dialogues brought together a carefully selected group of activists, local government officials, public housing officials, academic researchers, and other stakeholders to build a shared understanding of the land governance crisis in Lebanon. Based on a tested format applied by the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Latin America and currently in South Africa, the Dialogues provided a space that allowed key stakeholders to assess points of alignment and promote equitable and sustainable land policies that can advance a community's urban development and housing visions.

The dialogues operated at five levels: (i) identifying existing knowledge bases, practices, and tools, (ii) assessing the collective understanding of concepts, policy tools and implications (iii) identifying points of convergence and divergence, (iv) promoting co-learning to fill in the knowledge gaps, and (v) mapping potential collaborations and policy initiatives. The five components of the Land and Housing Policy Dialogues were guided by a set of key questions: how best can land policy and effective taxation of property be used as tools to reverse Lebanon's housing and municipal fiscal crises? what could a model land use regulation and property taxation system for Lebanon look like? what are the legislative implications of such models?

Six land policy dialogue sessions were held in person in Beirut, Lebanon, and virtually, between October 2021 and April 2022. These sessions were organized around three key aspects, (i) assessments of previous and future roles of land in Lebanon's economic model, (ii) explorations of the challenges of planning and (iii) investigations of potential reforms to secure equitable and effective land policies. Each session began with a research presentation to ground the discussions to facts, allowing participants to move beyond polarized positions. Three main outcomes emerged from these curated sessions: (i) concerns were discussed and clarified, (ii) a common land vocabulary was built, and (iii) the need for an immediate revision of land betterment policies has been recognised.

## **2. Twinning arrangement between the Bena Foundation (Egypt) and Masarat Nesaya (Tunisia)**

The agreement was signed in November 2021 and run until November 2022. This twinning sought to create a long-term sustainable project questioning land inheritance and land governance from a feminist, social and legal perspective. In many Arab countries, in rural as well as urban areas, land is seen as “wealth and honour” and, at the same time, as a means of impoverishment for Arab women. As Arab women are not empowered enough to get their inheritance as men, this inequality is backed by law and culture affecting the key elements of social and economic development, justice, peace, and stability in the Arab world, and beyond. In this context, the twinning arrangement discussed the question “how does a patriarchal social culture influence the rule of law in matters of land inheritance?”. Egypt and Tunisia were used as country case study. Both countries manifest patriarchal culture despite the difference in their legal and political contexts with Egypt being primary an Islamic state, while Tunisia a civil state.

To investigate the topic, two key objectives were tackled over a period of twelve months: (i) capture oral histories of women’s experience of land inheritance in Egypt and Tunisia; and (ii) spread awareness on feminist geography by strengthening the capacities of city planners, lawyers, sociologists, feminist researchers and activists, women rights organizations and decision makers in Egypt and Tunisia. The project was implemented through virtual meetings between partners and in-person meeting with stakeholders to ensure the proficiency in the implementation progress.

## **3. Twinning arrangement between the Housing Land and Rights Network (Egypt) and ISTIDAMA Center for Land and Environmental Governance (Sudan)**

The agreement was signed in December 2021 and run until November 2022 to accommodate and mitigate all risks that affected activities implementation in Sudan. Through this twinning arrangement, the Housing Land and Rights Network (HLRN) in collaboration with ISTIDAMA Center for Land and Environmental Governance built the capacities of CSOs and IDP representative groups in Sudan’s Darfur and South Kordofan in achieving durable solutions for the resettlement of IDPs.

The activities of this twinning arrangement included: (i) conducting a rapid assessment of the knowledge, learning and capacities needs of key CSOs and IDP representative groups’ in the field of land governance and resettlement of IDPs in Sudan; (ii) holding two dialogues to exchange knowledge between the two organizations (and their partners) about land governance in Sudan and the best practices in resettlement of IDPs; (iii) developing outline for a thematic program that can build capacities of CSOs and IDP representative groups in Sudan’s Darfur and South Kordofan towards durable solutions; (iv) undertaking stakeholders meeting in Sudan with the two twinning organizations as well as CSOs and IDPs representative groups (and other representatives from concerned governmental and non-governmental bodies) to discuss and finalize the proposed thematic program; and (v) documenting the key findings, lessons learned and experiences.

## **4. Birzeit University (Palestine) and University of the West of England UWE (United Kingdom)**

This agreement was signed in December 2021 and run until November 2022. The twinning initiative aimed to strengthen land governance by identifying the capacity constraints in both the public and private sector in Palestine and then developing proposals to address these constraints through provision of short courses, targeted accredited courses, formal educational programmes, and collaborative exchange and research. The work was undertaken in consultation with the Palestinian Land Authority and other private and public stakeholders in Palestine.

The project included an initial needs assessment conducted in Palestine, and several structured dialogues between UWE / Birzeit academic staff and other professional land sector staff including the Palestinian Land Authority (PLA), municipal officials, private sector staff, to explore current problems and identify how the twinning initiative could help formulate solutions. The dialogues culminated in a UK study tour / strategy week where Birzeit academic staff had the opportunity to visit and discuss with academic and teaching colleagues in the sector (UWE) and visit UK land administration institutions, professional bodies, and the private sector (Ordnance Survey, Land Registry (HMLR), Valuation Office Agency, RICS, and private real estate developers) to understand how the sector is organised in the UK and what may be relevant for Palestine. A key part of the study tour was the allocation of time for analysis, discussion of findings, and the development of a strategy for the way forward on how the twinning initiative can further support the development of the land sector in Palestine.

### **The Arab Land Initiative website**

The **Arab Land Initiative website** is the knowledge repository where information on past and upcoming events, articles, materials and land-related documents and publications from GLTN partners and other organisations are continuously uploaded and stored. The website hosts 114 region specific publications and links to the websites of key relevant partners where further documents and resources can be found. The traffic on the website has been very good and increasing since 2020, as indicated in the graphs below (see Figure 18). In 2021, the website was renewed with the support of web developer consultant, and new sections such as "Country" and "Themes" have been added to the website, among others. These helped increasing the accessibility and exposure of the work carried out by the Arab Land Initiative, GLTN, UN-Habitat and their partners in the region, as part of this programme and beyond. Projects, events and publications were mapped and can now be filtered by geographical scope, topic and year. Improvements were also made to the Women and Land Campaign page. The overall improvement of the website already increased the quality of the user experience however, to further improve the quality of the database, a new website for the Arab Land Initiative started to be developed in 2022 and it is expected to be online in 2023. During the web design process, the Arab land Initiative team reviewed the text to be uploaded and chose the most appropriate pictures for the different pages and sections. The current knowledge repository database can be visited at this [link](#).

### 3. Capacity development and training

Capacity development is a pillar of the Arab Land Initiative. This stream of work built on the existing expertise of land professionals, practitioners, academics, and other stakeholders involved in different aspects of land governance in the region, and it capitalised on the presence and work of different relevant networks – such as GLTN, NELGA, ILC, the Housing and Land Rights Network, AUS, etc. The capacity development component of the programme comprised a series of interconnected activities:

- Undertaking a capacity needs assessment of land governance in Arab countries not covered by the capacity needs assessment undertaken by the NELGA North Africa node.
- Mapping land-governance related courses and institutions in the region.
- Reviewing the land governance curricula in the region.
- Organising short courses on land governance.
- Carrying out capacity development events on different land governance aspects, and on tools and approaches available.

Because of the centrality of capacity development, a **multi-stakeholder planning sessions** was held in Cairo, Egypt on 3 and 4 December 2019, to agree on the capacity development activities to be prioritised by the Arab Land Initiative. During the two-day planning meeting, co-organised by GLTN, UN-Habitat and UTI-HBRC, participants discussed and agreed on how to best implement the different streams of work related to capacity development in a collaborative manner, building on the work already carried out by partners in the region and globally. During the meeting, the secretariat of the Arab Land Initiative presented the planned capacity development activities, in partnership with GLTN - including proposing the scope of work and methodology to be used, while the partners shared information on the capacity development-related work already being done to identify synergies, areas of collaboration, joint work, and emerging opportunities. This allowed to define a clear road map and the steps to be achieved, as well as identifying the roles and responsibilities of partner organisations in the implementation of capacity development activities. The discussions provided clarity on the way forward, particularly on the best way to address such complex and multifaceted issue. Three levels of capacity development were identified:

- **The broader system/societal level** - This is the highest level within which capacity initiatives may be casted. This level looks at improving how the different institutions and organisations with land-related mandates work within a specific context or country. It includes both the capacity to deliver on organisational mandates and the capacity to work well, transparently, and efficiently with each other.
- **The institution / organisation / entity level** - At this level, all the dimensions of an organisation's capacity are looked at, including its interactions within the system, other entities, stakeholders, and clients.
- **The group-of-people/individual level** - This level addresses the need for individuals to function efficiently and effectively within the entity and within the broader system.

The Initiative worked at all these different levels, with emphasis on the institution / organisation / entity level. For this reason, it was decided to implement the bulk of activities through contracts with organisations and institutions from the region, as described above, allowing for intensive on-the-job training for the personnel of contracted organisations. Further, individual experts already part of such organisations or identified and hired for the implementation of project's activities were capacitated to deliver training events, following the **training of trainers'** logic and localizing land governance capacities as much as possible.

## Training events

Between 2019-2022, **thirteen training sessions** were carried out, six of which were activities planned under the Agreements of Cooperation with partners. Despite the delays and challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, eight training sessions were delivered by the end of December 2021, for a total of 13 training sessions by December 2022. Some adjustments had to be made to the format of the initially planned events, allowing for online and/or hybrid participation. Intensive support by UN-Habitat and GLTN partners have been necessary at the beginning of the process, but partners that organised more than one event significantly improved their capacity and confidence in organising successful training events. This has been one of the successes of the on-the-job training carried out, in addition to the content-specific training.

In summary, as of the end of December 2022, the following 13 training events have been successfully delivered:

- Two training sessions were held by GLTN in Iraq, on 3-7 March 2019 and on 4-8 August 2019, on the use of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) for mapping and certifying HLP rights.
- Two training sessions were held by Rasheed TI, in December 2020 and March 2021, on Monitoring Land Governance.
- Two training sessions were held by UAWC, in June 2021 and October 2021, on women's land rights.
- A national training session was held by GLTN in Iraq, in June 2021, on Monitoring Land Governance in Iraq.
- Two training sessions were held by UN-Habitat/GLTN in Lebanon, in May 2021 and December 2022, on the use of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) for mapping and georeferencing the HLP rights of displaced people.
- Two training sessions were held by the Regional Center for Remote Sensing of North African States (CRTEAN) in January and in May 2022 on Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration.
- Two training courses on HLP Rights and Conflict-Sensitive Land Governance for Peacebuilding held by UNSSC and UN-Habitat/GLTN in September 2022 and in October 2022.

Further, in collaboration with the College of Spatial Planning at the , in Iraq, UN-Habitat conducted a Course on Land Governance at Dohuk University. The course intended to explain to students, lecturers and key partners of the Duhok University the concepts of good land governance and its key components. The course complemented the existing land-related courses at Dohuk University.

A more detailed information on other training sessions' is described under Section 2, if undertaken by contracted partners, and under Section 4, if handled in support to technical advisory services to specific countries.

In addition to the work described above, GLTN representatives have **contributed to capacity development initiatives led by partners**, such as the NELGA North Africa Node workshop held in October 2019 in Rabat, Morocco, and the online session organized in July 2020 by the NELGA Master. Support was also provided to the work led by the Lebanese University (LU) and the German Development Cooperation for the establishment of a Master Programme on land governance in Lebanon. After the scoping mission held in July 2019, the organisation was supported in the implementation of the inception workshop held in June 2020. The support to this area of work continued until 2022, including a twinning arrangement between Birzeit University (Palestine) and University of the West of England UWE (United Kingdom).



## Capacity assessment of land governance capacities in Middle East and Gulf Countries

Building on the discussions held in December 2019 and during the induction workshop in February 2020, a clear vision and action plan was prepared for the activities related to capacity development and captured in an inception report developed by UTI with substantial support from GLTN and senior experts from the Arab Land Initiative.

The first activity related to capacity development stream of work has been the assessment of the land administration capacities in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria complementing the study carried out by NELGA<sup>3</sup>. The assessment comprises of a regional analysis and a set of country-level analyses developed independently but using the same methodology that was developed based on the GLTN guiding materials and agreed upon during the various consultations and follow up discussions. The assessments looked at the capacity of the land administration system, as a whole, to handle the core land administration functions: land tenure, land value, land use, land development and land disputes resolution, which together support the overarching goal of sustainable social and economic development.

The capacity needs assessment reflects the need of producing comparable information on land governance capacities (for the assessed countries); complementing the research and assessment being done by other Arab Land Initiative's partners as part of the same programme, particularly the one developed by ISTIDAMA and the Arab Union of Surveyors on the capacity needs of land professionals; and aligning with existing regional and global normative frameworks.

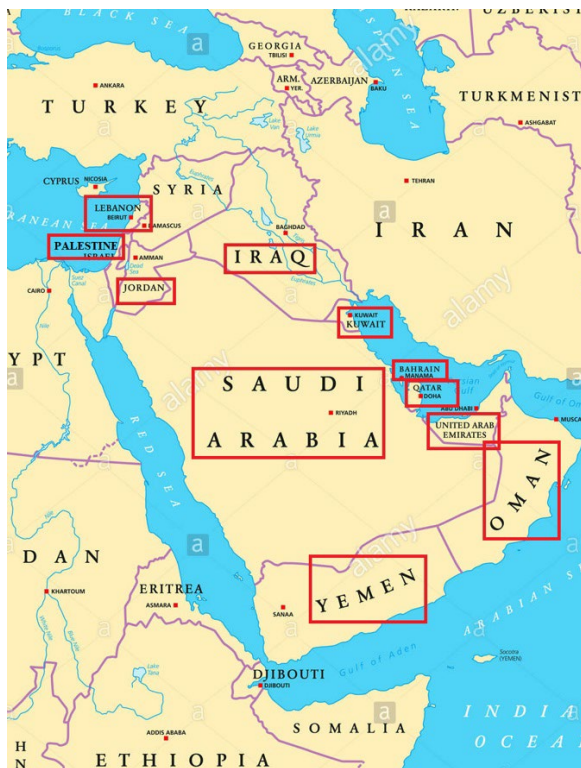
The capacity assessments underwent the following phases:

- Identification of key people who to lead and support the study from different organisations.
- Identification of key documents for the desk study to accompany interviews and primary information collection.
- Design of the assessment process and methodology, templates, and survey questionnaires.
- Preparation of a fully-fledged questionnaire with introduction and short explanation of objectives and context, definition of key terms and translation in Arabic; and adaptation of an online version for easy circulation and data compilation.
- Data collection as described in the methodology section below.
- Analysis of the findings.
- Draft of the capacity assessment report shared with key partners for the review and finalisation.
- Presentation of the findings and recommendations to inform the development of appropriate capacity development, training and research programmes, and other interventions that might emerge as priority.

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<sup>3</sup> NELGA (2021) Land Tenure Systems in North Africa: A Scoping Study.

Figure 18: Countries covered by the capacity assessment of land governance.



After the approach and standard questionnaire were designed, adapted to the specific countries of implementation, and translated into Arabic, the assessment was piloted in Lebanon.

To carry out the assessment, eight consultants were contracted and trained by UTI, the partner leading these assessments, with the guidance and supervision of UN-Habitat/GLTN. The list of respondents for each country was defined. Additional efforts were required to identify respondents for Kuwait assessment.

After the questionnaires were filled by the identified respondents, the contracted consultants drafted and submitted the desk study reviews, interviews and report for the assessments in Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, UAE, Qatar, Oman, KSA, and Bahrain. The background paper assessment on Lebanon was the most advanced of the ones received and it was published in October 2022 on the Arab Land Initiative website. The other background papers are expected to be published online in 2023.

### Mapping of the learning offer and development of a curriculum for land governance

The mapping of the learning offer on land administration and governance was also carried out. This component focused on the mapping of existing educational and training institutions in Arab States that offer learning curricula related to land governance and on reviewing the details and content of the curricula used. All countries in the region were assessed and the mapping was undertaken at the same time of the capacity assessment.

The information collected through the mapping of the learning offer and through the capacity assessment, are meant to guide the adaptation of **curricula on land governance and land administration** to the needs of the region. This builds on the curricula already developed by GLTN Partners and by NELGA North Africa partners. The component of the programme that includes **courses and visiting professors' arrangements** on land governance and land administration were planned as part of the work described below and under Twinning Arrangements.

This specific area of work has been affected by the COVID-related travel restrictions and other visa issues. As part of the visiting professors' arrangements, in June 2022, NELGA invited the Professors from Baghdad university to attend a study tour at the Hassan II Institute of Agronomy and Veterinary Medicine (IAV) to learn about the Land Governance Bachelor and Master that were developed and taught at the IAV. Unfortunately, the study tour didn't take place due to the difficulty that accrued in issuing Moroccan Visas for the Iraqi Nationals.

Further a workshop on “Developing the Curricula on Land Governance in The Arab Region” was organized by UTI and UN-Habitat/GLTN. The workshop took place in 2-4 November 2021 in Cairo, Egypt. It brought together 20 experts with different professional backgrounds, including academia, land experts, and UTI consultants, etc. The event was in English and mainly supported in-person attendance with online streaming of some sessions. The three-days regional workshop were to discuss the work done regarding the capacity assessment of land governance capacities in Middle East and Gulf Countries: outcomes, lessons and way forward; present the work done and the analysis of the learning offer: outcomes, lessons and way forward; discuss the gaps in the land curricula at national, sub regional and regional levels and recommendations on how to fill the gaps identified; and discuss how existing land networks can support the way forward.

*Figure 19: Participants to the workshop on A workshop on Developing the Curricula on Land Governance in The Arab Region, Cairo, Egypt, November 2021.*



### Translation of relevant materials

Since the beginning of the programme, a number of relevant documents and materials were adapted and translated into Arabic and most of them can be found on the Arab Land Initiative, GLTN and UN-Habitat websites. Among these documents, the United Nations Secretary General’s Guidance Note on “The United Nations and Land and Conflict” was translated and disseminated; a paper on women’s access to land in the Arab region was translated in 2020; the “Key messages on Empower and Improve the Life of Women by Protecting their Land, Housing and Property Rights in the Arab Region” were translated at the end of 2020; the “Key Messages on Women, Land and Peace. Sustaining peace through women’s empowerment and increased access to land and property rights in fragile and conflict-affected contexts” was translated in 2021; and the “Land degradation and conflict - decision makers' brief”, the “Land Governance, Natural resources, and climate change in the Arab Region - decision makers' brief”, and the “Second Arab Land Conference 2021 Report and Recommendations paper” were translated in 2022. Translations were also

provided for different communications pieces shared through the Arab Land Initiative channels, as well as for open calls, etc. This stream of work was carried out through UTI and the UN-Habitat official translation channels, depending on the timeline of the translation needed and the type of document to be translated.

#### **4. Technical advisory services at country level**

The Arab Land Initiative provided technical advisory services to country level initiatives that were considered strategic and catalytic in Iraq, Tunisia, and Libya.

The Initiative also availed expertise to other relevant initiatives running at the same time as the programme, including the NELGA North Africa initiative, the regional and national land interventions carried out by UN agencies, such as FAO, UN-Habitat, UNDP, UNHCR, OHCHR, etc., and other land governance networks and partners that are part of the Arab Land Initiative, such as the International Land Coalition, the Land Portal, Land Matrix, Global Land Alliance, etc.

##### **Iraq**

In Iraq, support was provided to UN-Habitat on the protection of housing, land and property (HLP) rights of Yazidi communities returning to Sinjar after the displacement caused by ISIL in the Nineveh governorate. Three training sessions were held in Erbil, on 3-7 March 2019, on 4-8 August 2019, and on 28 February – 3 March 2022. Various land actors and officials attended the training sessions including local authorities from Sinjar and Mosul, the Real Estate Registration authorities, and the Legal Clinics Network and Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iraq, among others. The trainings focused on the technical aspects of the customisation, deployment, and use of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) tool for the mapping and certification of the communities' HLP rights. Technical sessions showcased the different features of QGIS application as well as various capabilities of PostgreSQL, the relational database used by the STDM. The trainings provided an opportunity to exchange information, knowledge and expertise in preparation for the second phase of the project. Following the training, an action plan was formulated for a sustained strategic and technical follow-up and projects implementation in different institutions and regions of Iraq to promote sustained peace and stability. Further, continuous technical support was provided by the GLTN team to the Iraq project personnel, and the lessons learnt from that process were incorporated in the design of similar pilot projects, such as the GIZ-funded project for the mapping of HLP claims of Syrian refugees currently in Iraq and Lebanon. Separate documentation is available for the project, and it can be made available upon request.

##### **Tunisia and Iraq**

In Tunisia and Iraq, support was availed to the National Statistical Offices to improve their capacity to monitor progress on land governance in collaboration with the Global Urban Observatory of UN-Habitat. As part of the efforts to assist Member States on the production of reliable, accurate and timely data and information for monitoring and reporting on the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global Land Tool Network and the Global Urban Observatory developed a stream of work for enhancing National Statistical Offices' capacity to collect land tenure security data and report on SDG Indicator 1.4.2. This work was linked to and facilitated within the auspices of the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII), a global multi-stakeholder platform for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on land

governance issues jointly established by the World Bank, UN-Habitat and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

This work applied the globally approved methodology that provides critical methods and questions that can be integrated in national surveys, censuses and other data collection activities to facilitate monitoring and reporting on SDG indicator 1.4.2: “Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure”, and SDG indicator 5.a.1- (a) “Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure”. [The joint methodology is accessible online](#) in English, Arabic and French.

In Tunisia, a capacity strengthening technical workshop was conducted by UN-Habitat and FAO on 29-30 September 2020 convening a total of 24 participants including representative from the National Statistics Office and Land Registry. The workshop aimed to enhance participants understanding of SDG indicator 1.4.2 (and by extension 5.a.1), the importance of monitoring such indicators, their data requirements, the computation methods set out in their metadata and advanced by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) approved methodology, and finally of the role of various stakeholders at country level in generating data for reporting on the indicators.

Further follow-up discussions were held with counterparts in Tunisia culminating in the selection of Version 5 of the joint module for data collection and reporting on the indicators, for piloting in Tunisia. The pilot which included primary data collection using an adapted version of Version 5 of the module was challenged due to frequent interruptions of data collection because of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country. The pilot survey was conducted as part of the population and employment survey conducted during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of 2021 among a sub-sample of 600 households spread over four governorates. The questionnaire based on the “Common Land Module” was translated into Arabic and adapted to the Tunisian context.

In addition, a report was developed to assess the availability of land data in Tunisia. Apart from assessing the availability of data currently available on land ownership in Tunisia and preliminary analysis of the data collected as part of the pilot study, the report provides an assessment of their relevance in measuring and reporting on the two SDG indicators 1.4.2 and 5.a.1. Currently, the report is available only in French and can be accessible through the following link “[Évaluation de la disponibilité des données pour rendre compte des indicateurs des Objectifs de développement durable sur la sécurité des droits fonciers en Tunisie](#)”. The data that has been evaluated include data from surveys carried out by the National Institute for Statistics, namely surveys on population and employment, surveys on the budget and living conditions of households and surveys by multiple indicator clusters as well as the General Census of Population and Housing. Besides the survey data, there was also an evaluation of administrative source data, such as that of the National Land Property Office and the National Office of Topography and Cadastre. A dissemination workshop was organized in October 2021 to present and discuss the findings and recommendations of the report on the availability of data to monitor and report on indicators 1.4.2 and 5.a.1.

In Iraq, the Covid-19 pandemic has been a major set-back in implementation of the project activities. After the ease of the COVID-19 restrictions, a capacity strengthening workshop was conducted on 8-9 June 2021 in Erbil, Iraq. This training workshop provided a platform to introduce and discuss with officers from the Central Organization of Statistics of Iraq, relevant agencies and Ministries in charge of land administration and management, the IAEG-SDGs approved joint methodology for measuring SDG indicators 1.4.2 and

5.a.1; the data sources, reporting mechanisms and the feasibility of its adoption in Iraq for standardized and sustained monitoring and reporting on SDG indicator 1.4.2 and 5.a.1. It's important to note that the SDG Indicator 1.4.2 is under the joint custodianship of UN-Habitat and the World Bank while FAO is the custodian agency for SDG indicator 5.a.1. The workshop brought together the Iraq's technical staff responsible for survey design, land registration and management, and the reporting Iraqi Officers on the SDGs - including land indicators and representatives of other data contributing agencies, as well as staff from UN-Habitat (HQ and Iraq country office) working on urbanization and land governance issues.

Below are listed some of the workshop outcomes regarding data collection and monitoring of SDG indicator 1.4.2 (and 5.a.1) by the different Iraqis agencies:

- Increased awareness on the criticality of land governance in achieving the SDGs and how land tenure security indicator 1.4.2 can be monitored as part of national priority indicators in Iraq.
- Increased understanding of the globally approved methodology for monitoring SDG indicators 1.4.2 and 5.a.1 and its integration in existing and future relevant national surveys by Iraq's Central Organization for Statistics.
- Identification of relevant national surveys for the integration of methodological questions for data collection and reporting on indicator 1.4.2 in 2021, and beyond.
- Identification of previous national initiatives undertaken in Iraq as well as alternative official data sources that can provide complementary data on the status of land tenure security in Iraq.
- Development of action plans as follow-up trainings for Iraq's Central Organization for Statistics and land registry on data collection including areas of capacity support required from custodians and other actors to enable data collection and reporting on SDG indicator 1.4.2, and to inform policy decisions on responsive land governance in Iraq.

Following the workshop, a consultant has been hired to develop a report To collect findings and recommendations with respect to land data availability in Iraq. The report is currently being finalised and is expected to be compiled and completed in 2023.

## Libya

As part of the the technical advisory services provide in Libya, **a workshop on Land Administration and Land Rights - Paving the Ground for Peace and Stability in Libya** was held in Tunis, Tunisia, in June 2021. The event gathered 30 representatives from Libyan governmental bodies, UN, INGOs, civil society organizations and private sector to discuss land rights and land administration in Libya. It provided a platform to highlight the importance of land management and land tenure security for sustainable peace, stability and economic development; understand the prevailing land issues and their impact on the broader Libyan priorities (e.g. reconciliation, reconstruction, state building and institutional strengthening, human rights); and work towards the development of a common vision and priorities for action.

In the same year, the research on **“Land administration and land rights for peace and development in Libya: Analysis and Recommendations”** was initiated, and the first draft delivered in December 2022. The report is a step towards the improvement of the land management and land administration in Libya. It provides a description of the legal, institutional and spatial land-related frameworks in the country and analyses the key land administration functions: land tenure, land value, land use, land development and

land disputes' resolution. A list of recommendations complements the analysis, with the intention to trigger further discussions and interest in engaging on the topic.

Between 30 November - 1 December 2022 UN-Habitat, GLTN, the Ministry of Housing and Construction and the Regional Center for Remote Sensing of North African States (CRTEAN) organised the **second workshop** to discuss land management and administration in Libya with all concerned stakeholders and to identify the priority interventions for improved land governance and land and housing rights. The key findings and recommendations of the report above were presented for discussion. More than 45 participants from Libyan institutions related to land management and governance joined the event, whether in person or online.

*Figure 20: Roundtable discussion on land administration and land rights peace and development in Libya, Tripoli, 1 December 2022.*



## Evaluation of the regional programme

An end of the grant evaluation was conducted by an independent consultant between September 2022-January 2023. In accordance with the change model and initial workplan of the Regional Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability in the Arab Region, the evaluation confirmed that the anticipated outputs have largely been achieved, with identifiable outcomes accomplished. The evaluation assessed the performance of the programme against UN-Habitat criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact outlook, sustainability and integration of cross-cutting issues, examining the planning and implementation modalities, including working arrangements. Below is a summary of the findings.

- **Relevance and coherence:** The Programme was well-aligned to global development frameworks, to UN-Habitat and GLTN's strategic plans, to BMZ development priorities, and to global trends in the land sector. It clearly demonstrated its focus on addressing regional needs and gaps in the land sector and proved to be of direct and immediate benefit to its intended beneficiaries and partners.
- **Efficiency and administration:** The Programme had a dual reporting line to the regional office and headquarters of UN-Habitat, which has reportedly improved efficiency. It was managed by a small core team supported by advisors, consultants, and a Reference Group. Programme management is said to have successfully negotiated the UN system to increase efficiency. The political context has sometimes hindered efficiency and implementation, such as restricting travel or transfer of funds. The Programme spent all its budget in Phase 1, with a total investment in the region of 83% of Programme funds (USD2,653,168.51), widely viewed as money well-spent. Turn-around times for research could have been increased.
- **Effectiveness and impact outlook:** During phase 1, all planned activities took place, with planned outputs produced. To a large extent these have achieved their anticipated outcomes. Evidence for this is provided through a review of documents and respondent testimony. It is difficult, at this stage, given that the Programme is still fairly young, to attribute much in terms of impact outlook, although the signs are there that the activities, outputs and outcomes are having the desired impact, again provided in respondent testimony, but also in some achievements such as the recognition of full property rights in Iraq's Yazidi community.
- **Sustainability:** The Programme consciously addressed sustainability through its partners, advisors and investment in the region, and through its AoCs. Some senior decision makers were involved in Programme activities promoting sustainability. Funding certainty has been recognized as a long-term challenge.
- **Integration of cross-cutting issues:** Key cross-cutting issues tackled by the programme include women and gender, youth, vulnerable groups, and the impact of the challenging political context. The Programme performed very well in addressing gender in its activities, both in terms of involving women in Programme activities, and targeting women as beneficiaries. Some achievements have been made in this regard in terms of youth, although this has been identified as needing more work in the next phase. The political context was a cross-cutting challenge taken into consideration in Programme activities.



**Key successes** include tabling land as a fundamental issue which underlies many of the region's challenges, emphasising the contribution of the land sector to building peace and gender equity in the region; raising awareness and highlighting land issues in the region; building a collaborative regional network of key stakeholders in the sector; undertaking capacity assessments and capacity building; developing a repository of knowledge and resources; the organisation of the Second Arab Land Conference; the organisation of knowledge production and knowledge exchange events; research; the work on women and women's land rights; the work on Yazidi land in Iraq and the subsequent official recognition of occupancy certificates as ownership deeds; and the adaptation and implementation of tools for addressing land conflict and related issues.

The valuation strongly recommended a Phase 2 of the programme to build on the achievements of phase 1 and continue the work done under the Arab Land Initiative, consolidating learning and experiences, and deepening engagement with decision-makers and implementing partners. Among the **recommendations emerged from the evaluation**, increase the dissemination of the theory of change; discuss, clarify and confirm the thematic areas and communicate them to key stakeholders to clarify the scope of the programme; increase basket funding by donors; clarify the institutional structure of the Programme and how it relates to GLTN and UN-Habitat; clarify the role, responsibilities and objectives of the Reference Group and how this relates to GLTN's Steering Committee; increase the turnaround time and speed of feedback to implementing partners; organise a third Arab land conference; continue contracting land actors from the region for research projects such as AoCs and twinning arrangements and maintain contact with past implementing partners (and with trainees) after their project ends to promote further work together; increase engagement with professional bodies, municipalities and municipal associations, national and local land and planning associations; increase advocacy; develop and implement a continuous system for monitoring and evaluation of project activities; compile more case studies; carry out new trainings and consolidate training already conducted.

## Lessons learnt and reflections

Land governance and land administration continue to require attention in the Arab region, as deeply intertwined with social and economic development, peace and stability, and the mitigation of the causes and effects of climate change. No sustainable change will be possible unless sufficient capacity is created and retained over time by national and regional stakeholders. As the technical and strategic capacity to understand and foster change in land governance and land administration remains low in the region, the role of the international community – the UN and their international bilateral and multilateral partners - is to facilitate and accelerate the creation and sharing of knowledge and capacity based on international framework and good practices, and to create a suitable space where open, neutral, and technical sound dialogues can take place among the multiple and often competing stakeholders.

Based on the work carried out by the Arab Land Initiative between 2019-2023, the following reflections and lessons learnt emerged.

### Challenges

**Social, economic and political instability** - The region is more volatile than ever. Most of its countries have very fragile institutions, aggravated by a decade of economic contraction, social and political unrest, and democracy and governance deficit. Poverty rates have sky-rocketed, societies are getting more unequal, and the exclusion of ethnic and religious minorities remains a feature of most political regimes. Open war and conflicts are still affecting many countries of the region, which host the largest share of displaced people globally. Climate-induced risks are hitting the region hard, causing food insecurity and increased competition over land-based resources.

**Limited availability of capacities and resources** - As a result of these combined problems, decision makers are faced with many competing urgent priorities but little capacity to undertake the badly needed structural and far-reaching reforms, including land governance. On the other hand, the international community is also having limited leverage in promoting and supporting a comprehensive reform of the land sector, as international funding remains largely humanitarian and programming cycles are short.

The Academia must be given more opportunities to contribute to the improvement of the land governance in the region. Several Bachelor and Master programmes at different Universities in the Arab region are well established and they have good land related modules. Developing the capacities of the academic corps and contributing to their existing curricula, will help the researchers, graduate, undergraduate students and professors to have a different perspective about land governance in the Arab region and how to improve it.

The dire socio-economic situation and the reduced civil liberties in most countries enhanced the brain drain, making it more difficult than ever to build and retain capacities in a sustainable manner within the institutions and the societies.

Figure 21: Inequalities in participation and accessing space for contributing to the debate.



**Limited participation of local actors** - The space for participation, debate and contribution of national and regional actors is reduced by the increase of attempts by international experts and international organisations to substitute themselves to national and regional ones; this manifests itself through the (comparatively) large number of contracts signed by international actors or speaking slots in regional and national discussions allocated to international experts.

This has been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the related challenges posed by virtual participation and discussions. A healthier and better-balanced collaboration between international and regional / national actors must be promoted, based on the model of the Arab Land Initiative and NELGA.

**Inequal participation and power dynamics** -Further, the land sector remains disproportionately occupied by state, both in terms of control and decision making, but also in terms of large track of land being managed by the public in a non-transparent and inefficient way. The space for civil society and non-state-actors engagement in the land sector is very limited and the sector remains male-dominated.

**Corruption and lack of transparency** - Land administration practices are outdated and opaque, there is corruption and lack of transparency, and the reforms are gaining speed in too few countries in the region. Some of the themes addressed remain highly sensitive and politicised, particularly the land rights of women and refugees, the control of the land sector and land resources by the powerful and the elites, land taxation and land registration, etc.

**Limited mobility of funds and people** - Moving funds within the region has also proved to be quite challenging, due to local banking restrictions and government regulations. Obtaining the government's approval for transferring funds to some of the contracted organisations took more than six months, and some of the banking transactions took longer than four months. Some countries are under sanctions, which restricts payment modalities and the type of currency in which payments can be made. Large discrepancies between official and unofficial exchange rates added to the complexities of working with national partners.

Travel restrictions are severely affecting personnel's mobility, particularly between countries which are in conflict with each other or that are affiliated to different coalitions. The COVID-19 pandemic added to mobility challenges, capacity to operate of governments and partners and administrative efficiency. Further, the aggravated humanitarian needs put UN-Habitat country offices, GLTN and the Arab Land Initiative's partners under increased pressure not only to keep working and delivering under increasingly difficult circumstances, but also to provide emergency responses to COVID-related risks and other events, such as the Beirut port blast.

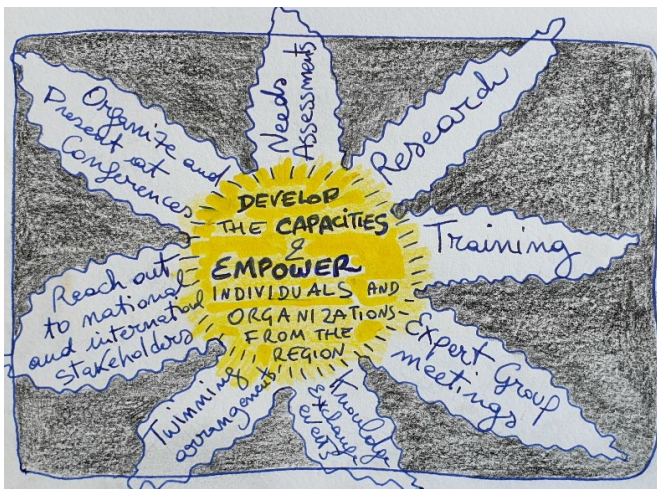
## Successes

**Improved coordination and collaboration** - The Arab Land Initiative, supported by the BMZ-funded regional programme, proved to be an overall successful model in improving the coordination and collaboration among land professionals and organisations in the region. There is now a consistent group of land experts from the region and with experience in the region that know each other, reach out to each other regarding particular initiatives and are able to count each other's expertise for the implementation of land related work.

A culture of collaboration and information sharing has been developed, bridging the divide across the silos of individual technical land-related disciplines, across humanitarian and development actors, across urban and rural experts, and among individuals and organisations. The key global and regional land actors also developed a good collaboration thanks to the Initiative, including UN-Habitat, FAO, ILC, World Bank, Norwegian Refugee Council, GIZ, NELGA, LandPortal, Global Land Alliance, UNHCR and others. Although competition and conflict of interest is a feature that still exist and needs to be factored-in, the different leaders of the initiatives have been able to define productive work modalities, acknowledging that a lot of work needs to be done in the region and all contributions are needed and welcome once basic ground rules are respected.

The Initiative greatly benefitted from the tools, the expertise, the knowledge of international partners, and social change model developed, and pilot tested by the Global Land Tool Network, then contextualized and adapted to the region and the strategic guidance provided by international partners to the Initiative – such as BMZ, GIZ, the World Bank, and other Reference Group members – and by the three senior advisors to the Initiative was crucial for its success and strategic positioning regionally, globally and at the country level in selected contexts.

Figure 22: The Arab Land Initiative's model.



**Increased regional ownership, capacity and leadership** - and The deliberate effort of putting the organisations and experts from the region in the lead for the implementation of the programme's activities proved to be extremely successful for increasing the regional ownership of the work, intensively develop the capacities of a large number of partners 'on-the-job' and producing authentic field-based and well-informed content (rather than an approximate adaptation of globally developed content). It is also a key component of the sustainability of the initiative and a way to ensure that project funds are invested and remain in the region.

Often the efforts needed from the UN-Habitat / GLTN team to obtain quality outputs were very high and many iterations and rounds of revisions were required, due to the relatively low capacity of the partners. However, the efforts were rewarded by the establishment of true partnerships and the improvement in the partners' capacity. The capacity of regional and national partners to produce good quality land governance analysis and content has increased and the confidence in coordinating and presenting at

events and consultations has improved. Some partners even went ahead to mobilise additional resources and initiate new land-related projects on their own.

**Improved knowledge management and sharing** - The organisation of the Second Arab Land Conference was a success. Its hybrid nature allowed the participation of a much higher number of experts than an in-person only event would have allowed. The in-person participation also allowed networking and trust-building. The efforts made in developing partnerships with regional and international organisations paid off, and a large number of quality and well-prepared sessions led by partners took place at the Conference.

The Arab Land Initiative web site proved to be an important avenue for land experts and land sector organisations to seek information. This is demonstrated by the very large number of visits for a regional and technical platform and by the large number of applications received for the calls for proposals and vacancies issued through that channel. This is an area that still needs to be further developed.

## Way forward

The work of the Arab Land Initiative will continue through a second phase Regional Programme on Good Land Governance which is expected to start during the second semester of 2023. Based on the work and the lessons learnt by the Arab Land Initiative, and in line with the overall framework and approach of the Global Land Tool Network, the second phase of the Arab States Good Land Governance Programme will build on, consolidate, and expand the results achieved by the Arab Land Initiative described in this report. The work started on coordination and collaboration, knowledge management and capacity development will be continued and further expanded, building on the partnership forged and the materials developed in the past years. The support to country level engagement will be scaled up regionally, and particular focus will be placed on three priority countries to be identified. Women's land rights will remain a key focus of the programme and additional emphasis will be placed on the nexus between land governance and climate change, desertification and biodiversity, key preconditions to address the causes of migration and displacement and main priorities for the planet. An overview of the work carried out under the four priorities of the Arab Land Initiative is presented below.

**Coordination and collaboration** – The Arab Land Initiative will continue to ensure increased transparency, coordination and alignment of the land sector and an improved collaboration among the national, regional, and international partners active in the region by facilitating discussions and strategy meetings, forums and thematic platforms.

**Knowledge creation, management and sharing** – This stream of work will continue and upscale the activities described in this report through new research projects on priority topics (e.g. women's land rights; land for climate resilience and food security; fit-for-purpose land administration; land and conflict and HLP rights of displaced people; monitoring land governance; land use planning); the organization of expert group meetings and knowledge exchange events; partnership opportunities; translation and dissemination of key materials; and further development and maintenance of the Arab Land Initiative website.

**Capacity development** – Capacity development opportunities will be provided through training events, including training of trainers and on-the-job training. Further, based on the assessment of the land related courses offered by universities and other training institutions in the region (see section 3, Capacity assessment of land governance capacities), the Initiative will fill the gaps and complement the courses offered with content developed by UN-Habitat and GLTN and work with partner organisations to establish additional courses or education programmes.

**Support to country level interventions** – The Arab Land Initiative will catalyse, facilitate and support nationally led land interventions in three selected countries through human rights-based, gender-responsive, fit-for-purpose and inclusive land and climate tools and approaches. Country-level interventions will be led by partners, in close coordination and with the support of the Initiative’s Secretariat. This will also include documenting and sharing lessons learned from country-level interventions to the region and internationally.

The work described above will focus on the following thematic areas emerged as key priorities for the Arab Land Initiative’s stakeholders:

- **Women’s land rights** (human rights, empowerment, economic growth, peace, advocacy, support to grassroots and women’s groups, etc.).
- **Land for climate resilience and food security** (land degradation neutrality, land restoration, desertification, land use planning, smallholder farmers’ rights, large scale land-based investments, ecosystem services, food systems and agroecological transformation, support to UNCCD, FAO, and others).
- **Fit-for-purpose land administration** (land recordation, reform, and digitalization of the land registration systems to foster transparency, inclusion, efficiency, unlocking investments and infrastructure, evidence-based decision making).
- **Land and conflict and Housing, Land and Property rights** of displaced people for stabilization, prevention of further conflict and migration (Syria, Libya, Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, Sudan).
- **Monitoring land governance.**

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