ARAB REGION PROGRAMME ON GOOD LAND GOVERNANCE IN SUPPORT OF INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND STABILITY

END-OF-GRANT EVALUATION

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Table of Contents

ACRONYMS

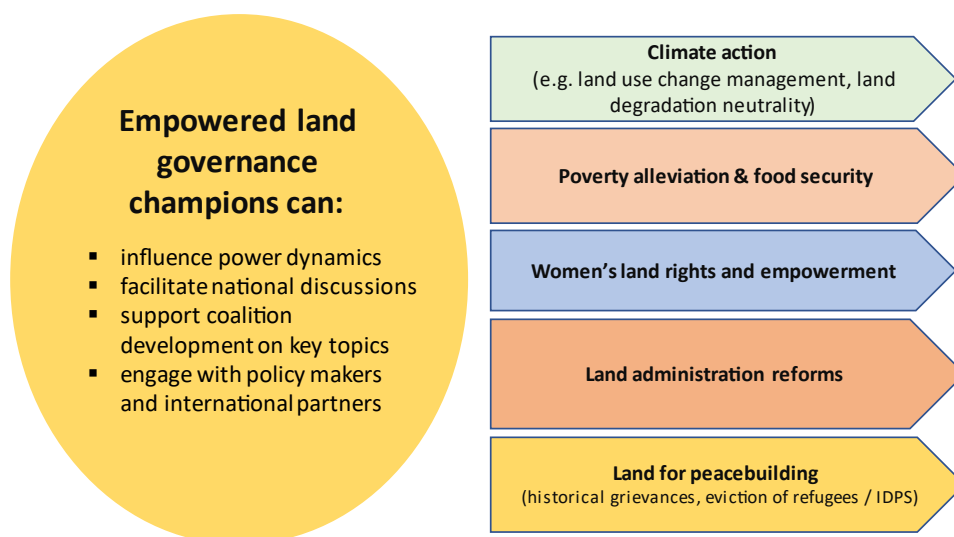|	
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AoC	Agreement of Cooperation
APN	Arab Group for the Protection of Nature
BMZ	German government (Responsible Land Policy Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development)
CRTEAN	Centre for Remote Sensing of North African States
ECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
EMENA	Europe, Middle East and North Africa
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
GBV	Gender-based violence
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GLTN	Global Land Tool Network
HBRC	Housing and Building National Research Centre
HIC	Habitat International Coalition
HLP	Housing, land and property
IDP	Internally displaced person
ILC	International Land Commission
IYCY	International Youth Council of Yemen
LDN	Land degradation neutrality
LHSS	Land, Housing and Shelter Section
LPI	Land Policy Initiative
LCPS	Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies
NELGA	Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PLA	Palestine Land Authority
SINA	Settlements Information Network Africa
STDM	Social Tenure Domain Model
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TI	Transparency International
ToR	Terms of reference
UAWC	The Union of Agricultural Work Committees
UFM	Union for the Mediterranean
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
WB	World Bank
WPLA	Working Party on Land Administration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction

Countries across the Arab region have a total population of about 436 million people, a high proportion of them poor and under 25 years old. Millions of people are migrants, refugees or displaced people. Key challenges include extreme political, social and environmental fragility; competing urgent priorities; leadership often with little capacity to address structural reforms including land governance; gender inequalities; outdated and opaque land administration; corruption and lack of transparency; the fact that the land sector is disproportionately occupied by the state; and a brain drain[1]. Recently poverty levels have soared, and climate-induced risks are causing food insecurity and increased competition over resources[2].

2. The Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance

Established by GLTN, UN-Habitat and the World Bank in 2016 to address key regional land governance challenges, the Arab Land Initiative held the first Arab Land Conference in early 2018. Funded by the German government (through BMZ) from 2019 for four years, the Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability (the Programme) was developed to support the Arab Land Initiative, through increased alignment, coordination and collaboration.

> The Programme's change model below states that empowered land governance champions can influence power dynamics; facilitate national discussions; support coalition development on key topics; and engage with policy makers and international partners.

Empowered land governance champions can:

- influence power dynamics
- facilitate national discussions
- support coalition development on key topics
- engage with policy makers and international partners

Climate action
(e.g. land use change management, land degradation neutrality)

Poverty alleviation & food security

Women's land rights and empowerment

Land administration reforms

Land for peacebuilding
(historical grievances, eviction of refugees / IDPS)

Note: Social change approach is based on soft systems methodology for complex contexts (Checkland: 2000 and Ortiz: 2013), adapted and used by GLTN over 15 years

Land governance champions are empowered through capacity building, through activities such as research, conferences, enhanced educational curriculae, expert group meetings and events like webinars, round-table

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[1] From Powerpoint presentation by Ombretta Tempra, Arab region programme on good land governance in support to inclusive development, peace and stability: Achievements and Way Forward (presentation), 15 February, 2022

[2] UN-Habitat/GLTN (2022)

discussions, training, international exposure, providing and generating information and knowledge, and supporting people's own processes. Key focus areas are climate change; poverty alleviation and food security; women's land rights and empowerment; land administration reforms; and land for peacebuilding. The Programme's aims to improve the capacity of regional and national land governance stakeholders to manage land to foster peace, stability, and socio-economic development particularly for women, youth, and displaced people. Stemming from this are 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

The target group or end beneficiaries of the programme are people in the Arab states, with a focus on youth, women, vulnerable and marginalised groups. The intermediate beneficiaries are regional and national stakeholders with a key role in improving land management and administration. The Programme focuses mainly on the intermediate beneficiaries, the assumption being that changes in their mindsets, behaviour and work will impact on people living in their countries. Capacity development focuses on the institution.

3. The evaluation: Objectives and methodology

Given that the grant from BMZ ends in December 2022, this evaluation aims to conduct an end-of-grant independent evaluation of the Programme. In accordance with the ToR, the evaluation assesses performance against the 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. It also provides an overall assessment of how the Programme considered the following land-related issues: political sensitivities of land governance, women's land rights, and pastoral/rangelands and water rights.

The methodology involved a desk-top review of key programme documents and knowledge products as well as relevant UN-Habitat and GLTN and other policy documents, key stakeholder interviews, and a survey sent to all partners and beneficiaries, and people part of the Arab Land Initiative's network in whatever capacity.

4. Key findings

The Programme's change model and initial workplan were used to compile a draft results framework showing for each of the four priorities, activities, outputs and outcomes. For each priority, the anticipated outputs have largely been achieved, with identifiable outcomes accomplished. Key successes include raising awareness and highlighting land issues in the region; building a collaborative regional network of key stakeholders in the sector; capacity assessments and capacity building; developing a repository of knowledge and resources; the Arab Land Conference II; knowledge production and knowledge exchange events; research innovation; work on women and women's land rights; work on Yazidi land in Iraq and the subsequent official recognition of occupancy certificates as legal tenure; and the adaptation and implementation of tools for addressing land conflict and related issues. The assessment was based on the UN-Habitat criteria as outlined.

- *Relevance and coherence:* The Programme is well-aligned to global development frameworks, to UN-Habitat and GLTN's strategic plans, and donor development priorities, and to global trends in the land sector. It very clearly demonstrates that it is focused on addressing regional needs and gaps in the land sector and is of direct and immediate benefit to its intended beneficiaries and partners.

- *Efficiency and administration:* The Programme has dual reporting lines to the regional office and headquarters, which has reportedly improved efficiency. It is 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 $2,977,701, or 99.06% of Programme funds, widely viewed as money well-spent. Turn-around times for research could be 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. See Table 3 for details of outputs and outcomes of Programme activities. 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 addresses sustainability through its partners, advisors and investment in the region, and through its AoCs. Some senior decision makers are involved in Programme activities, which promotes sustainability. Funding certainty is a challenge long-term.

- *Integration of cross-cutting issues:* Key cross-cutting issues are women and gender, youth, vulnerable groups, and the impact of the challenging political context. The Programme has done very well to address 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 is a cross-cutting challenge which is taken into consideration in Programme activities.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The Arab region is politically complicated and faces many challenges such as conflict, war, drought and poverty, all inextricably linked to land. Over the last four years, the initial work of the Arab Land Initiative has been extended by the Arab Land Programme on good land governance in support of inclusive development, peace and stability. This provided catalytic funding to develop the land portfolio. One of its biggest successes has been 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. This has been followed by developing activities to increase awareness and collaboration and build capacity. Despite having limited resources and only operating over a relatively short period of time, the first phase has achieved great successes in many respects. This includes raising the issues around, and importance of, land governance and tenure security. Now that the issue has been identified and defined, a network of key stakeholders in the sector built, and a repository of relevant material developed, it is important to take this further and a Phase 2 is strongly recommended. It will be important to focus attention on the core issues, consolidate learning

and experiences, and deepen engagement with decision-makers and implementers, to see concrete positive results. Recommendations for future programming are provided below.

1. *Programme conceptualisation*

Phase 2: It is strongly recommended that Phase 2 of the Programme is implemented to consolidate the activities and findings of Phase 1, and to continue with more concrete implementation and piloting of solutions, that can be shared and adapted to the contexts of the different countries in the region.

Theory of change: The Programme has a clearly stated change model, and there is a very clearly and well-articulated and logical link between the Programme's theory of change, its objectives, priorities and workstreams, activities, outputs and desired outcomes. Although it is included as part of the standard presentation of the Arab Land Initiative some respondents were unaware of it. It is important that the current change model be confirmed, or modified if necessary, and more widely and effectively communicated, in consultation with relevant stakeholders including the Secretariat, the Reference Group and possibly donors.

Thematic focus areas: The thematic focus areas differ slightly across Programme documents and need to be discussed, clarified and confirmed and communicated to key stakeholders in part to ensure that people understand that the Programme does not cover all and everything to do with land.

2. *Programme structure and management*

Funding: To maintain continuity (particularly re staffing) and enhance effectiveness, it is important to increase funding certainty and preferably increase the basket of donors.

Programme structure and reporting relationships: It may be useful to develop an organogram showing the institutional structure of the Programme, how the Programme Secretariat relates to GLTN and UN-Habitat, and who is in the core team. This would be useful for prospective new donors or investors.

Reference Group: It would be useful to discuss and clarify the role, responsibilities and objectives of the Reference Group, particularly with regard to how this relates to GLTN's Steering Committee. Consideration should be given to strengthening its role in advising and support and broadening it to include additional senior national decision makers.

Feedback: Increase the turnaround time and speed of feedback to implementing partners, such as AoCs and twinning arrangements if at all possible.

3. *Partners and participants*

Arab Land Conference 3: It is strongly recommended that a third Arab land conference be held, both in-person and virtually, allowing participation to be as broad as possible.

Call for contributions to the Programme: Several respondents offered to contribute further to the Programme in different capacities. It is recommended that this be followed up e.g. by putting out a call for contributions, such as volunteer advisors, trainers, researchers.

Implementing partners: AoCs and twinning arrangements: The use of Programme funds in Phase 1 to conduct research on different aspects of the land sector has been very beneficial in promoting awareness, developing a pool of relevant regional resources and knowledge products, increasing regional capacity and confidence. It is recommended that the Programme **continue contracting for research projects such as AoCs and twinning projects**. It would be useful to extend this by considering developing **some longer-term research projects**, to allow for richer exploration of some topics. It would also be useful to implement **pilot projects** applying the research results, developing solutions (through implementing partners), assessing results and disseminating the findings, and investigating opportunities for replication. The Programme's

strategy to contract with implementing partners in AoCs or twinning arrangements and to bring together all participants in-person at the outset and at an event sharing findings once projects were concluded was seen as having been extremely beneficial. It is strongly recommended that an engagement **strategy is developed to maintain contact with past implementing partners** (and with trainees) after their project has ended, and to promote further work together.

Discuss increasing engagement with some groups: Although some respondents felt that there is not sufficient involvement of relevant government officials and decision-makers, there are a number of notable instances where they have been involved in various Programme activities. It is recommended that further engagement continue, such as through professional bodies, municipalities and municipal associations, national and local land and planning associations. As already indicated, the Programme focuses on intermediate beneficiaries and by design does not engage with many very local, grassroots stakeholders. The logic is that the more local engagement will primarily be done through other organisations such as ILC. It may be useful to discuss extending this by having more direct partnerships with such organisations, or by discussing with those grassroots organisations that the Programme was involved with in Phase 1.

4. *Increase advocacy*

A key concept underpinning much of the Programme's work is the political dimension of land and its potential role in building peace in the region. The Programme is involved in advocacy at many levels, but it would be useful to explore whether there are other avenues for this, perhaps more mainstream media involvement in dissemination and awareness raising. Further emphasising the role of land and land governance in promoting peace could be used when approaching potential donors.

5. *Monitoring and evaluation*

It is recommended that an ongoing system of monitoring is developed and implemented e.g. exit surveys after training events or research projects as standard procedure. It would also be useful to try to have follow up surveys after a period of time, e.g. a year.

6. *Knowledge products*

The number and extent of knowledge products created in the first phase of the Programme is impressive. It is recommended that more case studies are conducted or written up that illustrate and explain successful solutions. This could include identifying particular issues and writing up international case studies to propose and research solutions within the region.

7. *Training*

Noting that this could be time-intensive and depends on the Programme's resources, it is recommended that training be continued in Phase 2, not only new training, but also consolidating training already conducted, making efforts to follow up past trainees to provide support, and encouraging them to apply their training.

8. *Management Response and Action Plan to the Recommendations*

It is recommended that Programme management develop a response and action plan to address the recommendations.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The context: Land in the Arab region

Countries across the Arab region have a total population of about 436 million people, a high proportion of them poor and under 25 years old. Most people (approximately 90%) live on only 4% of the land. Millions of people across the region are migrants, refugees or displaced people. Fresh water scarcity is a challenge in 18 of the 22 countries in the region, and much of the region suffers from desertification and land degradation. Key challenges faced in the region include its extreme political, social and environmental fragility; competing urgent priorities; leadership often with little capacity to address structural reforms including land governance; gender inequalities; outdated and opaque land administration; corruption and lack of transparency; the fact that the land sector is disproportionately occupied by the state; and a brain drain of skills leaving the region[3]. During the last four years poverty levels in the region have soared and inequalities increased, and climate-induced risks are causing food insecurity and increased competition over resources. International funding flows mainly to humanitarian causes meaning that the international community has limited leverage in promoting reforms in the land sector[4].

According to the founding document that provides the rationale and justification for the Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance, written in 2018, the most important areas of attention related to land governance in the region are the following:
- Intervene on the land-and-conflict nexus to promote peace and stability and facilitate reconstruction
- Improve land management to respond to rapid changes
- Improve access to affordable land and housing
- Increase women's and youth's access to land

1.2 The Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance

1.2.1 Development of the Programme

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. It is the focal point for urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system. The agency supports national and local governments in laying the foundation for sustainable urban development. UN-Habitat envisions well-planned, well-governed, and efficient cities and other human settlements, with adequate housing, infrastructure, and universal access to employment and basic services. To this end, UN-Habitat has adopted the Strategic Plan (2020–2023) which repositions the organization as a major global entity and a centre of excellence and innovation.

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[3] From Powerpoint presentation by Ombretta Tempra, Arab region programme on good land governance in support to inclusive development, peace and stability: Achievements and Way Forward (presentation), 15 February, 2022

[4] UN-Habitat/GLTN (2022)

Hosted by the Land, Housing and Shelter Section (LHSS), within the Urban Practices Branch of UN-Habitat, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is a network of over 80 international institutions working to promote secure land and property rights for all, through the development of pro-poor fit-for-purpose and gender responsive land tools within the continuum of land rights approach.
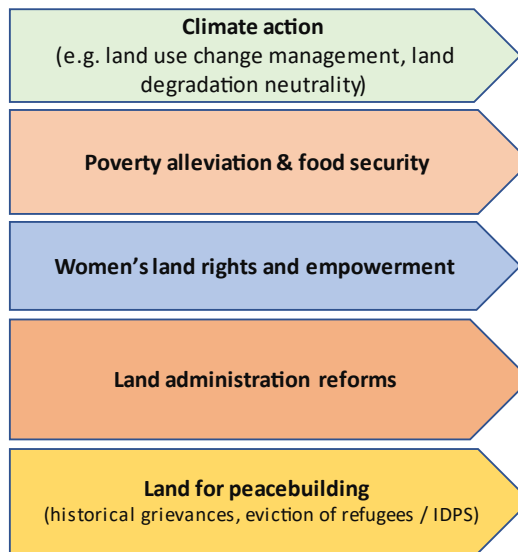
Established by GLTN, UN-Habitat and the World Bank in 2016 to address key regional land governance challenges, the Arab Land Initiative stems from the September 2016 'Expert Group Meeting on Fostering Good Land Governance in the Arab States' which provided an opportunity to discuss the most pressing land-related issues in the Arab states, formulated a joint vision for change, identified key thematic areas, and developed a road map for action. This was followed by the first Arab Land Conference in early 2018 which "generated a technical and political momentum for changes in the land sector of the region"[5]. The Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability (the Programme) was developed to support the existing Arab Land Initiative, which has provided "an effective platform to increase alignment, coordination and collaboration of different organisations, partners and countries, contributing ultimately to the desired change"[6]. The Programme provided further momentum to the Initiative through funding from the German government (Responsible Land Policy Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)) from 2019, for a three-year period ending in December, 2021, to the tune of €2 million, subsequently extended for a further year with additional funding of €640,000, thus ending in December 2022. Through this BMZ-funded programme, the Arab Land Initiative joins efforts and coordinates streams of work on land governance.

1.2.2 Change model, objectives and activities

> The Programme's change model (depicted below) states that empowered land governance champions can influence power dynamics; facilitate national discussions; support coalition development on key topics; and engage with policy makers and international partners.
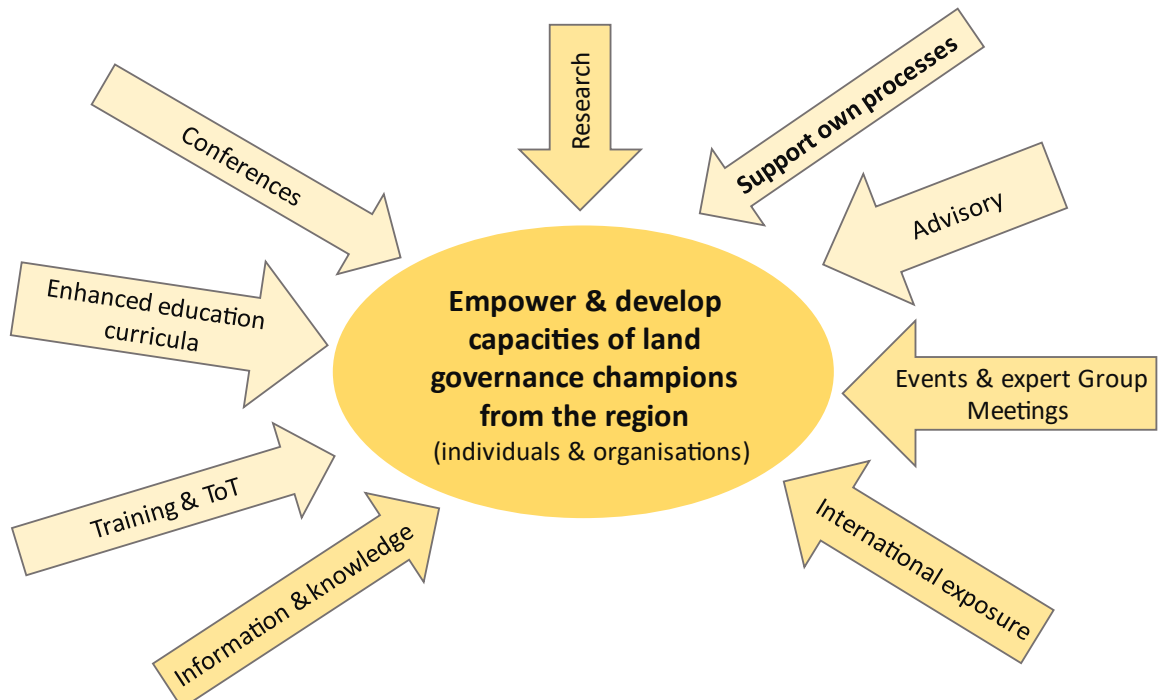
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[5] German Government-GLTN partnership agreement to address land governance in the Arab region, 2018
[6] Ibid

Empowered land governance champions can:

- influence power dynamics
- facilitate national discussions
- support coalition development on key topics
- engage with policy makers and international partners

Climate action
(e.g. land use change management, land degradation neutrality)

Poverty alleviation & food security

Women's land rights and empowerment

Land administration reforms

Land for peacebuilding
(historical grievances, eviction of refugees / IDPS)

Land governance champions are empowered through capacity building, which is accomplished through activities such as research, conferences, enhanced educational curriculae, expert group meetings and events like webinars, round-table discussions, training, international exposure, providing and generating information and knowledge, and supporting people's own processes.

Conferences

Research

Support own processes

Enhanced education curricula

Advisory

Empower & develop capacities of land governance champions from the region
(individuals & organisations)

Events & expert Group Meetings

Training & ToT

Information & knowledge

International exposure

Key focus areas, as indicated in the change model above, are climate change (e.g. land use change management, land degradation neutrality (LDN); poverty alleviation and food security (e.g. smallholder farmers' rights, food security, regulate large scale land based investment); women's land rights and empowerment; land administration reforms (for sustainable urban and rural development, services and

infrastructure, transport, dams etc); and land for peacebuilding (e.g. historical grievances, migration/evictions, refugees/IDPs and return, stabilise communities).

The Arab Land Programme's change model links directly to the underlying assumption of GLTN's theory of change: "that the creation of partnerships around issues of common interest – such as good land governance and tenure security – is a crucial element to achieve long-lasting change at the society level, as it aligns priorities and actions of a large number of individuals and organisations".

The objective of the Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance leads directly from its theory of change as stated above, i.e. to improve the capacity of regional and national land governance stakeholders to manage land to foster peace, stability, and socio-economic development particularly for women, youth, and displaced people. Stemming from the Programme's objective are its four key priorities which have been translated into four workstreams[7]:

5) Promote collaboration and coordination by increasing alignment, coordination, and collaboration on land governance in the region
6) Develop, share and manage knowledge
7) Empower individuals and organisations through capacity development
8) 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

The Programme's founding document provides a 2018-2021 workplan detailing activities for each workstream[8]:

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[7] From slide presentation by Ombretta Tempra, Arab region programme on good land governance in support to inclusive development, peace and stability: Achievements and Way Forward (presentation), 15 February, 2022
[8] German government-GLTN partnership to address land governance in the Arab region, 2018

Table 1: 2018-2021 work plan

A. INCREASE ALIGNMENT, COORDINATION, AND COLLABORATION
   1. Support the Arab Land Initiative Secretariat
   2. Second Arab Land Conference
   3. Network of land centres
B. KNOWLEDGE CREATION, MANAGEMENT AND SHARING
   4. Research (4) (where knowledge gap exists)
      a. Topic 1 (e.g. regional analysis of the land-related root causes of conflict)
      b. Topic 2 (e.g. review and analysis of the land related policies, laws and institutional frameworks in selected countries)
      c. Topic 3 (e.g. management of public land: challenges and opportunities faced by countries in the region)
      d. Topic 4 (e.g. addressing land fragmentation and land consolidation: regional and international challenges and practices)
   5. Expert Group Meetings (6) (where recommendations need to emerge based on existing and newly created knowledge)
      a. Topic 1 – Land and Conflict (e.g. Protecting HLP rights of displaced people in the region: concepts and practices)
      b. Topic 2 – Land and conflict (e.g. the role of private sector in HLP restitution and reconstruction of conflict-affected urban centres)
      c. Topic 3 - Women access to land (e.g. approaches and practices that proved successful in increasing women's access to land and housing: lessons & recommendations for the region)
      d. Topic 4 – Range lands and rights of pastoralist communities
      e. Topic 5 – Land administration for sustainable business and investment (e.g. analysis and recommendations for the application of fit-for-purpose land administration principles in the region)
      f. Topic 6 - Monitoring land governance and land tenure security (e.g. international methodologies and tools and national practices: supporting national statistical offices and the role of the other stakeholders)
   6. Knowledge exchange events (4) (where practices exist but need to be shared among stakeholders and countries)
      a. Topic 1 – Land for sustainable business and investment
      b. Topic 2 – Land and climate change
      c. Topic 3 – Land management (e.g. Work and challenges of land professionals in the region)
      d. Topic 4 – Land management (e.g. Work and challenges of civil society organisations and women organisations in the region)
   7. Twinning arrangements (6)
   8. Knowledge repository / database
C. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING
   9. Curriculum for land governance and land administration for the Arab region
   10. Courses and visiting professors' arrangements
      a. Topic 1, two sessions (e.g. fit-for-purpose land administration: concepts and applications)
      b. Topic 2, two sessions (e.g. Tools and approaches to increase women and youth access to land)
      c. Topic 3, two sessions (e.g. land-based financing and costing and financing of land administration services)
      d. Topic 4, two sessions (e.g. monitoring land governance and land tenure security)

   11. Translation and adaptation

   12. Training of trainers

D. TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICES FOR COUNTRIES: Country 1, 2 and 3

1.2.3 Target group

The target group or "the end beneficiaries of the programme are women and men living in the Arab states, with particular focus on youth, women, vulnerable and marginalised groups. The intermediate beneficiaries are regional and national stakeholders that have a key role to play in improving land management and administration. These include relevant ministries, municipalities' departments, land-related professional, national statistical offices, champions and opinion makers in academia and civil society organisations"[9]. The Programme's activities focus mainly on the intermediate beneficiaries, the assumption being that changes in their mindsets, behaviour and work will impact on people living in their countries.

The 2020 progress report outlines three levels of capacity development[10]:

- The broader system/societal level targeting institutions and organisations with land-related mandates work within a specific context or country.
- The institution/organisation level including its interactions within the system, other entities, stakeholders, and clients.
- The group-of-people/individual level which addresses the need for individuals to function efficiently and effectively within the entity and within the broader system.

Although the Programme works at all levels, the focus is on the level of the institution or organisation, and most of the Programme's activities are therefore implemented through contracts (Agreements of Cooperation) with organisations and institutions from the region.[11]

Progress reports note that the Programme has been empowering and improving 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 foster peace and stability. At the same time, the alignment, coordination and collaboration on land-related matters in the region has been increased, new knowledge is being created, existing knowledge is being shared, and the capacities of individuals and institutions in the region are being developed.

1.3 Purpose of this evaluation

Given that the grant from BMZ comes to an end in December 2022, this evaluation aims to conduct an end-of-grant independent evaluation of the "Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability".

The report consists of five sections. Following this introduction, the evaluation approach will be discussed. The methodology is then outlined in Section 3, followed by a discussion of the key findings, and an elaboration on lessons learned. Finally, a conclusion and set of recommendations is outlined.

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[9] German Government-GLTN partnership to address land governance in the Arab region, 2018
[10] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2020)
[11] Ibid

2 THE EVALUATION APPROACH

2.1 Evaluation objectives

This end-of-grant evaluation of the "Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability" has the following specific objectives:

- Assess the **performance** of the programme in terms of the extent to which it achieved planned results at the expected accomplishment (outcome) and output levels
- Assess the **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact outlook, sustainability and integration of cross-cutting issues**
- Assess the **planning and implementation modalities**, including working arrangements and how they may have affected the effectiveness of the programme
- **Identify lessons and propose recommendations** for future programming

In addition, as per the evaluation's terms of reference (ToR), the evaluation addresses the following substantive issues:

- How the Programme, in line with the UN-Habitat and GLTN mandates, has dealt with the **politically sensitive issue of land governance**, especially at the country level and beyond the narrowly defined land administration institutions with focus on the strategy and approach used in the face of stronger or weaker political will,
- How the Programme addresses **women´s land rights**, especially at the country and local levels with particular attention to lessons learned and good practices,
- How the Programme addresses the challenges and conflicts related to **pastoral and rangelands, and/or water rights** with particular attention to lessons learned and good practices.

The evaluation, therefore, considers whether the programme has made a difference (and if so, how), whether the tools are in place to extend, replicate and expand the programme, (i.e. sustainability), and whether it has managed to deliver within budget and within the required time periods. It also outlines lessons learned for future planning, and provides several recommendations based on the research conducted.

2.2 Key considerations for evaluation

2.2.1 Introduction

As noted earlier, the Programme's change model states that empowered land governance champions can *influence* power dynamics; *facilitate* national discussions; *support* coalition development on key topics; and *engage* with policy makers and international partners. To bring this about, the Programme has four priorities, translated into workstreams, each of which has a set of activities, with the objective of improving the capacity of regional and national land governance stakeholders to manage land to foster peace, stability, and socio-economic development particularly for women, youth, and displaced people.

The underlying assumption then, is that if the capacity of land champions is increased, they will be empowered to influence, facilitate, support, and engage. One of the issues to be addressed in the evaluation, particularly in the primary research (interviews and survey), is to examine to what extent capacity has been

increased, and whether that has brought about change. Conversely, what could prevent it from happening? What are the potential blockages, risks or challenges? And how are they overcome, or what is done to mitigate them? For example people or organisations with increased capacity may not be empowered to implement change due to factors such as political instability or war, communication difficulties (language, internet access, technology limitations), conflicting responsibilities or priorities, changes in staffing or institutional arrangements (hence the need to focus on organisational or institutional capacity building rather than only on increasing individual capacity, so that there is broad, sector-wide change), climate change or other disasters or emergencies (such as the Covid-19 pandemic).

The ToR noted that the evaluation needs to outline the Programme's performance, or achievements, assessed against the UN-Habitat criteria for evaluation in terms of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact outlook, sustainability and integration of cross-cutting issues, examine the planning and implementation modalities, including working arrangements and how they may have affected the effectiveness of the programme. In addition, it should provide an overall assessment of how the Programme has considered the following key land-related issues in the region: political sensitivities of land governance, women's land rights, and pastoral/rangelands and water rights issues.

2.2.2 UN-Habitat criteria for evaluation

As per the Terms of Reference, the evaluation was "guided by the standard UN-Habitat (and OECD) criteria for evaluation in terms of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact outlook, sustainability and integration of cross-cutting issues and in line with standards and norms of evaluation in the United Nations system"[12]. Thus, beyond addressing the initial issue of performance and achievements, the evaluation addressed the following broad questions for each of the criteria[13].

Table 2: UN-Habitat criteria for evaluation

CRITERIA	DEFINITION
RELEVANCE	*Is the intervention doing the right thing?* *(Extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change)*
COHERENCE	*How well does the intervention fit?* *(Compatibility of intervention with others in a country, sector or institution)*
EFFECTIVENESS	*Is the intervention achieving its objectives?* *(Extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and results, including any differential results across groups)*
EFFICIENCY	*How well are resources being used?* *(Extent to which the intervention was delivered in an economic, timely manner)*
IMPACT	*What difference does the intervention make?* *(Extent to which the intervention has generated significant positive, negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects)*
SUSTAINABILITY	*Will the benefits last?* *(Extent to which net benefits of the intervention continue, or are likely to continue)*

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[12] Terms of reference for the evaluation
[13] Reference from https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm

These questions, and the issues they raise, were addressed in the desk-top review and questions related to these categories were included in the interviews and in the survey, in consultation with the Arab Land Initiative team.

2.2.3 Planning and implementation modalities

The evaluation also included an assessment of the planning and implementation modalities, including working arrangements and how they may have affected the effectiveness of the programme. This is dealt with, to a large extent, by the questions required to address the efficiency category, listed in the table above.

3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology involved both primary and secondary research, with each aspect informing the other. For example, the initial desk-top review of programme and related documents, as well as those to set the broader context, informed the questions asked in the key informant interviews, and in the survey, and vice versa. The evaluation took place in five phases over a period of four months. Analysis of the information collected was both qualitative and quantitative, as below:

- Identification of key issues and performance from desk top review
- Qualitive assessment of key stakeholder interviews
- Analysis of survey responses, both qualitative and quantitative

3.1 Data and information collection

The data and information collection consisted of three components: desk-top review, key stakeholder interviews, and a survey sent to all partners and beneficiaries, and people part of the Arab Land Initiative's network in whatever capacity.

3.1.1 Desk top review

A desk top review of key programme documents and knowledge products, along with other documents such as UN-Habitat and GLTN policy documents assisted in identifying key issues to focus on, using the UN-Habitat Evaluation model as a guide, and included the following:

- Programme design/proposal and motivation for funding, i.e. to identify what the programme intended to do, and how it planned to do that, what indicators or performance monitoring, if any, were initially proposed
- Programme budget and financial reports
- Progress reports and presentations
- Knowledge products developed as a result of the programme, e.g. training guides such as advancing women's land and property rights in Somalia, , the report on gender equality in Syria, reports on campaigns and conferences like the Women and Land in the Arab region campaign, papers developed for the second Arab Land, reports developed under the agreements of cooperation by APN, UAWC, LCPS and ISTIDAMA, the land administration assessment (baseline study) for Jordan, Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon, Innovation fund papers, all the papers developed for the Second Arab Land Conference etc.
- Brief review of current global frames, such as SDGs, EU, BMZ and overall German development policy to assess relevance of this programme to that
- Brief review of GLTN's overall approach, and objectives of UN Habitat's strategic plan and of its partners, to assess relevance and alignment

3.1.2 Key stakeholder interviews

Key respondent interviews were held with 38 people (see Annexure 2). This included the following groups, noting that these are not necessarily mutually exclusive (i.e. some people fall into more than one category):

- people responsible for overall development and implementation of the programme, such as in UN-Habitat, and GLTN,
- representatives of the donors (BMZ and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ))
- people involved in the Reference Group to the Arab Land Initiative[14]
- senior sector or regional experts who 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,
- representatives from a network of land centres in partnership with NELGA North Africa, the Housing and Land Rights Network,
- officers in UN-Habitat country offices,
- implementing partners involved with the nine Agreements of Cooperation
- implementing partners involved in the four Twinning Arrangements

To conduct the interviews, a generic interview guide was developed for each category of interviewee, based on the desk-top review (See Annexure 2). From the Arab Land Initiative data base, potential interviewees were prioritised for interviewing. The secretariat sent an introductory email to all high priority respondents, explaining the evaluation and alerting them to the possibility of being interviewed. The interview was then scheduled by the evaluator. Prior to each interview, the interview schedule was adapted to be tailored to the particular interviewee, allowing for deeper exploration of their specific areas of involvement with the Programme. All interviews were conducted on-line. The more in-depth interviews and discussions were held with those people working closer to the programme.

It is important to note that the responses provided by interview respondents are obviously influenced by the extent to which they are aware of the Programme, and the areas within which they interact with the Programme. Interviewees were all regarded as key stakeholders but vary from those who have been involved in setting up the Programme, to those who have only recently become involved, with some being very involved members of the Reference Group, some being representatives of the donors, Programme management, and implementing partners, some of whom had limited knowledge of the Programme beyond their particular project. Thus the responses are diverse and can be contradictory or restricted to a limited area of the Programme. It is important to reflect people's perceptions of the Programme, but as far as possible interview claims have been verified or explained.

3.1.3 Survey

As part of the evaluation, an online survey of partners was also conducted. Survey questions were developed as the desk-top review was conducted, assessing key issues and performance of the programme and asking questions such as what respondents have received from the programme, and what they have contributed (e.g. expertise, in-kind contributions). The survey was implemented using Google forms, and all questions were available in either English or Arabic (See Annexure 3). It was emailed to everyone on the Arab Land Initiative database and was posted on the Arab Land Initiative's Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter channels.

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[14] See Arab Land Initiative – Reference Group Meeting Reviewing the progress made and paving the way forward 13 – 14 July 2022

People were given three weeks to respond. In total, 56 people completed the survey, 60.7% of whom answered in English, and 39.3% in Arabic. The open-ended questions in the survey allowed for greater elaboration on a range of topics, and some valuable qualitative input was received in terms of experience of, and suggestions for, the Programme. Most survey respondents were from Egypt and Jordan (19.6% each), followed by Lebanon (16.1%), Tunisia (14,3%) and Yemen (12.5%). Most respondents worked as academics or researchers (21), followed by those working civil society or a Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) (15), and in an international organisation (14). Interestingly, 11 respondents, close to 20%, were government officers. Two thirds of respondents (66%) have been involved in the land sector in the region for over 5 years, and 28.5% have been involved for 1 – 5 years.

Looking at involvement with the Arab Land Initiative, 80.3% of respondents receive information from the Initiative, 69.6% participate in online and in-person events, 57.1% participate in training events, 55.4% contribute to developing new knowledge and capacities, and 53.5% access and read resources on the website.

3.2 Challenges and limitations

Several potential challenges associated with the proposed methodology were identified prior to conducting the evaluation, including accessing key respondents for interviews and for completing surveys, possibly limited internet access, language and translation issues, and possible poor response to the survey, noting that a similar survey was planned for the evaluation of GLTN Phase 2, but was not conducted due to time limitations and past experience of poor response to similar surveys[15].

In fact, the response of key respondents to the Arab Land Initiative's request for interviews was extremely high, and there were very few problems with internet access, or with language. To address possible challenges with the administration of the survey, an introductory explanation was developed and sent by the Arab Land Initiative team to try to raise sufficient awareness and motivation to respond.

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[15] GLTN-UN-Habitat (2018) End-Of-Phase Evaluation Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) – Phase 2 May 2018

4 KEY FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

As indicated earlier, the objective of the evaluation of the Programme is to assess performance (in terms of achievements against expected output and outcomes), consider the criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact outlook, sustainability and integration of cross-cutting issues used in the UN-Habitat evaluation system, assess the planning and implementation modalities, (including working arrangements), identify lessons and propose recommendations for future programming, and consider how the Programme addressed political sensitivities around land governance, women's land rights, and challenges related to pastoral and rangelands and water rights. This section outlines the key findings from the desk-top review, the key stakeholder interviews and the survey, in terms of these objectives.

4.2 Performance/achievements

4.2.1 Achievements

The Programme's progress reports reported the following achievements:

1. The creation of a regional platform for awareness, capacity and knowledge building, strengthening regional and country level dialogues among different Arab and international land stakeholders
2. The establishment of the e-platform (Arab Land Initiative website) which has been very valuable and is well-utilised.
3. The development of good collaboration and information sharing among global and regional partners and land related initiatives
4. The mobilisation of middle career and senior experts from the region, a significant step towards the creation and retention of knowledge and capacity on land governance in the region.
5. Putting 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 developing the capacities of a large number of partners 'on-the-job' and producing authentic field-based and well-informed local content [16]. It promotes sustainability and ensures that project funds remain in the region.
6. The capacity of regional and national partners to produce good quality land governance analysis and content has increased as has their confidence[17]. Many of the implementing partners are now engaging independently in national and international initiatives related to land.
7. More recently, a major achievement was reached in Iraq. Using the STDM, approximately 14,500 HLP claims have been registered since 2018 through the issuing of occupancy certificates, increasing tenure security for the Yazidi community. In December, 2022, the Iraqi government issued a decree officially

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[16] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2022)
[17] Ibid

recognising the land ownership rights of the Yazidi communities, recognising these occupancy records as full property titles[18].

The Programme's change model and initial workplan have been used to compile a draft results framework showing for each of the four priorities, activities, outputs and outcomes. For each priority, the anticipated outputs have largely been achieved, with identifiable outcomes accomplished.

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[18]https://arabstates.gltn.net/2023/01/17/the-iraqi-authorities-officially-recognize-the-housing-land-and-property-rights-of-the-yazidi-minority/

Table 3: Change model, activities, and results

Theory of change	Empowered land governance champions can: • *influence* power dynamics • *facilitate* national discussions • *support* coalition development on key topics • *engage* with policy makers and international partners	Key areas[19]: • Climate action • Poverty alleviation and food security • Women's land rights and empowerment • Land administration reforms • Land for peacebuilding and stabilisation
Objective	To improve the capacity of regional and national land governance stakeholders to manage land to foster peace, stability, and socio-economic development particularly for women, youth, and displaced people.	
Assumption	If the capacity of land governance stakeholders is increased, they will become empowered land governance champions who will influence, facilitate, support and engage, including at decision-maker level to bring about change in land governance and improve land security particularly for these groups	

Priority A: Increase alignment, coordination, and collaboration		
Activity[20]	**Outputs**	**Outcomes[21]**
Support Arab Land Initiative network	• Network of land governance champions (over 2121 experts & practitioners) and over 50 organisations as at 31 December, 2022 • Collaborations with existing networks (NELGA North Africa, Arab Group for Protection of Nature, ILC EMENA, Regional Centre for Remote Sensing, GLTN, GIZ) • Reference Group established (World Bank (WB), GIZ, FAO, Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa (NELGA), International Land Commission (ILC), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), etc.) Collaborations with existing networks (NELGA North Africa, Arab Group for the Protection of Nature, ILC Europe, Middle East and North Africa (EMENA) platform, Regional Centre for Remote Sensing, Global Land Tool Network, GIZ, etc.)	• Raised awareness including women, land and natural resources, climate change, conflict sensitivity, peace building • Opened discussion of sensitive topics, and pivotal issues around land, conflict and peace – marked difference from pre-Arab Land Initiative • Built trust, in partners, Programme management team • Increased knowledge of who is doing what in the sector • Increased collaboration with other experts and across disciplines • Land coalition built, as was momentum around land rights • Structured coordination and accessible support provided • Increased coordination in UN agencies and NGOs

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[19] Note: Youth and displaced people are mentioned in the Programme objective, but not as a key area of focus; they are clearly seen as cross-cutting issues

[20] Note: Most activities address several priorities and sub-objectives, so they are not mutually exclusive, e.g. the Arab Land conference increases collaboration, knowledge creation and capacity development.

[21] Based on desk-top review and interview and survey responses

	• Strong collaboration with UN-Habitat country offices (15 countries) and catalyze the expansion of the land governance portfolio in the region • Website, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn accounts and partners' media platforms • Strong collaboration with UN-Habitat country offices (15 countries)	
Second Arab Land Conference (2021)	• Well-attended conference (871 attendees (39% women) + 5315 Zoom connections; 184 speakers; from 15 countries in the region, high-level delegates from 5 countries in the region) • Significant increase in proportion of regional experts since 2018 conference • 37 papers prepared, 7 technical sessions, round-tables, 10 masterclasses	• Identification of people in the region who know what they're doing and working with them • Getting government authorities more comfortable with discussing these issues • Reinforced connection between land, environment and conflict.
Women and Land Campaign	• Public Trello board • Launch of key messages and related campaign on "Women and Land in the Arab region", supported by UN-Habitat, GLTN, UN-Women and Stand for Her Land Campaign Partners. • Regional campaign (February 2021 - July 2022) • Country outreach plan: Lebanon, Libya, Tunisia • Finalisation of national implementation in Lebanon, Tunisia and Libya; spin-off activities now being implemented	• Changes in women's land rights, in the discussion and in behaviours e.g. Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan

Priority B: Knowledge creation, management and sharing		
Activity	Output	Outcome
Research: Areas of Cooperation (AoC) (9) Note: The AoCs serve to promote both Priority B: knowledge creation, and	• (4) Reports e.g. Land Governance, Natural Resources and Climate Change in the Arab region, along with Decision Makers brief summarising key points • Knowledge exchange events (3+) • Expert Group Meetings (6)	• Increased enquiries to partners about related activities and events • Increased confidence • "Lots of beneficiaries" changed their behaviour as a result of their involvement • Increased understanding of capacity needs, which inform training • Many knowledge products produced on different platforms - opeds, advocacy • Communication excellent, especially on social media • Increased involvement of women, in AoCs and roundtables

Priority C: Capacity Development)	• Research innovation fund established, 17 research proposals developed and published on website (AoC 4) • Capacity needs assessment of land professionals (AoC 7) • Report on Legislative and Administrative Land and Property Rights Framework Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, and regional (AoC 8) • Civil Society Regional Network on land governance established (AoC 9) • 37 papers prepared for Arab Land conference	• Increased focus on women in content • Women enablement through incentives, agricultural projects etc. • Involvement of senior level government officials and politicians increased • Increased capacity, workshops; as a result new strategic plans have been developed, incorporating knowledge gained • Involvement has increased capacity, skills, knowledge through participating in projects eg women's empowerment and land tenure. • AoC 9 – has changed government mindsets, increased understanding and knowledge of land governance and land tenure security. • Increased knowledge of other countries for us and our government • Increased trust between us and local authorities has led to government acceptance of the need for land governance • Provided material for incorporation into teaching at university level • Started moves to create platforms for water management • Empowerment of decision-makers, change in perspective of technical staff.
Research: Twinning arrangements (4) Note: The twinning relationships serve to promote both Priority B: knowledge creation, and Priority C: Capacity Development)	• Land & Housing Policy Dialogues, Lebanon and USA • Land inheritance and land governance project, Egypt and Tunisia • Capacity assessments, Sudan, Palestine • Outline for programme to build capacity in Sudan • Dialogues, Sudan and Palestine • Stakeholders meeting, Sudan • Reports providing guidance, Sudan, Palestine • Proposal for teaching material at university level • Additional non-formalised arrangements	• Built strong relationships with partners • Increased confidence and capacity of both partners • Increased knowledge • Women talking more about the issues • Involvement of high-level decision makers • Modules for Master's courses developed • Further collaboration planned • Baseline surveys and end surveys measured increase in awareness of women • Reports outlining the different responses of women • Knowledge exchange event provided data for policy papers • Allowed conversation for the development of an embryo of a network for public sector, academics • Deputy Minister of Finance provided with support to successfully motivate for a new land valuation system • Birzeit/Univ W England - Programme developed to support public and private sector needs in the land sector in Palestine, build Higher Education capacity and strengthen international links
Establishing website	• Arab Land Initiative website (14 research papers, Country pages: Palestine, Libya, Iraq, Somalia, Syria, Lebanon, news, publications, training	• Increased use of materials on website (>39,000 unique visitors, >61,000 visits, >3.4 million hits, >19,000 publications downloaded) • Pride in having material published on website

	materials, events, links to partners, campaigns, themes)	
	• Some publications on pastoralists and rangelands	

Priority C: Capacity development & Training

Activity	Output	Outcome
• On-the-job training for partners • Translation of materials into Arabic • Training sessions & training of trainers • Capacity needs assessment of land governance in countries not covered by NELGA North Africa • Mapping land-governance related courses & institutions • Reviewing land governance curricula • Organising short courses on land governance • Carrying out capacity development events on land governance, tools, approaches	• Multi-stakeholder planning session (2019) • Meeting of all implementing partners prior to project commencing • Training events (8) e.g. Events on monitoring land governance, with Rashid TI & ILC; Event on land governance, with UTI; Events on women and land, with UAWC / Palestine,2 events on fit-for-purpose land administration, with CRTEAN Tunisia, one event in Libya in December 2022 • Capacity assessment of land governance in 11 Middle East and Gulf Countries, and 2 regional reports • Mapping of the learning offer in region • Regional curricula complemented with materials from GLTN/UN-Habitat and partners • Translation of relevant materials • Working Glossary of Land Governance Terms in English, French and Arabic • Training on "Land Governance" at Dohuk university in November 2022 in Dohuk, Kurdistan Region, Iraq • 282 courses related to land governance identified	• Training was very beneficial, for technical and soft skills – "When we gathered in the EGM and training, people contacted us after this asking for further training". • Training people who now lead large programmes at country level, working with UTI who now lead land-related projects. • Trainees becoming trainers – "In 2018 I trained a batch of technical staff, now these trainees are trainers. We trained about 150 in two projects, they have trained many more". • Provided safe space for discussion and speculation on solutions • Increased awareness of local authorities of HLP rights, land governance and land administration • Changed mind-sets of governments, partners and NGOs • Increased capacity development and empowerment of partners: "All the streams of work empowered each other; we built relationships with experts that we really value". • Opened up more trust and networking beyond the research leading to further collaboration • Successful involvement of women in terms of involvement in Programme and impact, e.g. numbers of women trained, participants in Arab Land Conference, people contracted in AoCs or twinning arrangements – "huge growth in the number of women speaking out, and increased numbers at events."

Priority D: Technical Advisory Services for Countries

Activity	Output	Outcome
Provision of technical advisory services to	• *Iraq*: support to UN-Habitat protecting HLP rights of Yazidi communities. Two training sessions, technical sessions, action	• Legal framework of HLP rights in Iraq; recognition of occupancy certificates as full property rights (Dec 2022)

country level initiatives that are considered strategic and catalytic	plan for strategic & technical follow-up, project implementation, and continuous support provided. • *Iraq*: Ongoing knowledge sharing and support to land portfolio • *Tunisia and Iraq*: Monitoring land governance / SDG land indicators • *Libya*: Support re land administration and land rights • *Libya:* Support the re-establishment of the land registration system to support investments and reconstruction • *Sudan:* Strengthening Land Management for Peaceful Co-Existence in Darfur. Contributes to peace and stabilization by addressing land-related conflicts. Maps 50 villages to identify areas where returnees (and internally displaced persons (IDPs) can settle without conflict with host communities, or infringing on agricultural areas and other land uses.	• Engagement around digitalisation in Iraq arising from partnership building • Increased capacity of UN-Habitat country offices, shared information and experience • Brought attention of high-ranking officials to issues like minority land rights, e.g. Prime Minister • Support for Land records in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon with positive feedback in terms of laws, regulations, issue of certificates of occupancy, e.g. in the Yazidi community wife and daughters can now be registered as joint owners on land certificates • Number of Syrian refugee claims on their housing, land and property rights • Building national capacity working with governments and land officials e.g. in Palestine, Yemen, Ira • Good relationship with land departments e.g. in Libya and Sudan. • In Syria developed important HLP rights programme with EU

4.2.2 Key successes

In line with these programme progress reports, most respondents agreed on the key successes of the Programme, in particular:

i) **Raising awareness and highlighting land issues in the region**: The Programme has opened up the space for constructive dialogue on issues not covered in the region before, putting land rights on the agenda at the regional and country level in some countries, and providing an easily accessible platform and relatively safe space for discussion and sharing. As one interviewee noted "the fact that we hear of the problem is in itself a massive success", while another noted that the biggest success of the Programme has been bringing land issues to high levels of governments. It has raised land as an important issue on the regional agenda, providing an overview of who is doing what on land governance in the region and has increased interest in the topic among land practitioners and universities. One interviewee noted that this has developed a new mindset in different governments, partners, NGOs, and others who now better understand how important land issues are. Governments are now more aware of these issues, and therefore more likely to take them into account in the future.

ii) **Building a collaborative regional network of key stakeholders in the sector:** Networking has been highly successful, with a large community of experts across the region being established, who now know and trust each other, triggering further collaboration, with some people working together beyond the Programme. For example, through their work with the Programme, a conversation has started between stakeholders in Iraq and Yemen on how to work, drafting projects and proposals, supporting the government in Yemen.

iii) **Capacity assessments and capacity building**: Capacity assessments were successfully conducted in 11 countries, and the results contributed to the design of training and capacity development exercises. Although many people involved with the Programme were already experts, some indicated that their involvement has increased their understanding and capacity and has broadened their scope. Several interviewees noted that feedback from training has been extremely positive, with some people asking for more. One interviewee noted that capacity development has been above average for UN-Habitat projects, with a high level of training programmes on Housing, Land and Property rights. Training has also included UN-Habitat staff, government officials including from local government and national ministries, e.g. in Yemen the Deputy Minister of Judicial Affairs, a very powerful level of government, attended HLP training. Another noted that the results of capacity building efforts were much more than could be expected with a small budget, with 20 universities now being involved, from a base of zero. In Sudan, the initial group of about 150 technical staff trained in two projects in 2018 are now trainers themselves and they have trained many more. They have also established two urban observatories, and GLTN work is part of that. Collaboration with the Programme in another case enabled the interviewee to draft the HLP rights legal framework of Iraq, through the deployment of experts, sharing of information and experience, which helped him to build his own capacity. Specific training mentioned in survey responses were intensive online training on monitoring land governance and land tenure security in the Arab region, a course on HLP rights and conflict-sensitive land governance for peacebuilding, one on securing women's interests in land in the aftermath of conflict, training on ownership documents used in Syria using STDM to document ownership in the areas of UN-Habitat project, training for municipal employees on using STDM.

"All the training and EGM events were extremely useful, enriching the knowledge and understanding of land-related issues as well as cross-cutting points. At the personal level, this brought much bigger

attention to the revealed problems, and motivated and interested me to develop myself in the land sector further and deepen my professional expertise", one respondent said.

iv) **Developing a repository of knowledge and resources**: Through the website, professionals across the region now have access to a wide range of resources that they didn't have before.

v) **Arab Land Conference II:** Several respondents felt that the most successful activity was the second Arab Land Conference, which despite covid travel restrictions still succeeded in having 871 registered attendees (164 in-person and 707 virtual) and over 5,000 connections directly through the Zoom platform, raising awareness, connecting stakeholders, and building momentum around the land sector.

vi) **Knowledge production and knowledge exchange events:** These were seen as very beneficial, and included publications on land rights, particularly women and land rights. Particular mention was made of on-line workshops, face to face meetings, webinars on specific issues such as women land rights, data, and pastoralists, and the Expert Group Meetings associated with the AoCs and twinning arrangements. One respondent noted that there has been a significant information push to develop a clear understanding of the situational contexts from the perspective of different approaches and thematic clusters.

vii) **Research innovation:** The research innovation fund proved very successful, generating 17 innovative research projects on land governance in Arab countries. Capacity assessments of 11 countries resulted in two regional reports which will inform capacity development and training.

viii) **Work on women and women's land rights:** This was specifically mentioned in a number of interviews, and in survey responses as having been extremely successful and included looking at women and land in conflict settings.

ix) **Work on Yazidi land in Iraq:** The work conducted on land ownership on Yazidi land in Iraq is seen as having been extremely important, and very successful, something that some interviewees urged should be highlighted much more.

x) **Adaptation and implementation of tools:** This included facilitating the implementation of GLTN tools for addressing land conflict and related issues (such as STDM) at country level, by carrying out training and providing technical support.

These successes can be attributed to the following key factors, according to interviewees:

i) **Institutional nature of the Programme – dual reporting**. This was said by a senior manager to be the single most important factor in the Programme's success. It is a key governance/institutional component which positioned the Programme very well and was said to be unique for UN-Habitat. As a regional programme, this mode of implementation means that the Programme is anchored in the region with dual reporting lines to the regional and head office. The success of this approach both administratively and in terms of funding, has led to UN-Habitat expanding this in other areas of its operation. The Programme is seen as having provided basic catalytic funding to develop the land portfolio in general in the region.

ii) **Staff and colleagues leading the Arab Land Initiative** are seen as being a large part of what has contributed to its successes, as they constitute a very good team. What has been key is maintaining a two-way street. "They have a small team doing highly relevant work in an extremely difficult setting."

Particularly important has been the role of the Programme manager, who is very committed and seen as "a driving force behind this, passionate about it, and always looking for opportunities. She is very aware of the issues and has excellent and relevant contacts – "she is a collaborator, who brought in UN-Habitat staff for training, tapping into the national vision".

iii) **Building on existing extensive networks** of partners, such as UTI in Egypt.

iv) **The role of BMZ as donor** was very important. They have been very flexible and understand the region very well. They helped in positioning the Programme, particularly with the EU, and helped UN-Habitat build another very important programme with GIZ in Yemen and Iraq.

v) **The catalytic impact of Programme funding** was very important, with co-investment from the Land Housing and Shelter Section and the Regional Office for Arab States of UN-Habitat working very well. "We contributed to the Arab Land Initiative, and it contributed to us".

vi) **Bringing together the pool of all those involved in the AoCs and twinning arrangements**, in an initial meeting, Expert Group meetings, and final presentations, was seen as a very helpful approach which brought Arab professionals in the land sector together for the first time. As one interviewee involved in an AoC noted, "from working on the project, we know partners who we didn't know previously, but now we know them as people, have built relationships, and can target people we know for other work." Another noted that through the process they learned a lot about Sudan and Yemen, which was very enriching, and relied on them in the EGM.

vii) **Funding the generation of knowledge products** by a wide range of experts, most of which are available in both English and Arabic.

viii) **Holding multiple events, often in several languages**, making material and learning more accessible across the region.

ix) **Financial support to the Programme** to enable the Arab Land Initiative to extend and deepen its work was very important.

One person from an AoC captured the general feeling around the success of the Programme:

"It's really incredible that all this data generation and networking has been generated in such a short time on a topic that hasn't been addressed on a regional level. They did a great job – all the streams of work empowered each other. We built relationships with experts that we really value".

4.2.3 Challenges, gaps, and weaknesses

Challenges

The Programme's progress reports contain a fairly extensive discussion of the kinds of challenges faced in the first four years of the Programme's implementation. Some of these relate directly to the way in which the Programme was developed and implemented and were generally anticipated. Others relate to the regional and international context and are beyond the control of the Programme. To supplement the desktop

review, interview and survey respondents were asked to identify challenges faced by the Programme and these reflect similar concerns.

The Programme has been implemented in a region that is fraught with political, social and environmental challenges, as outlined in the introduction. These are beyond the control of the Programme but impact Programme implementation, often severely. External, or regional, challenges include the following:

i) **Covid-19 and other travel restrictions** due to conflicts affected administrative efficiency. UN staff and the Programme's partners faced increased pressure to deliver under very difficult circumstances, but also to provide emergency responses to COVID-related risks and other events, such as the Beirut port blast[22]. The pandemic affected planned activities such as the Second Arab Land Conference, and some of the broader research work and meetings of the Programme. However, moving many activities on-line helped mitigate this, and possibly increased attendance at some events like the second Arab Land conference.

ii) **Political context and lack of political support**: Over the four-year period of the Programme, social unrest spread, the socio-economic situation in many countries worsened, and instability rose. Climate-induced risks cause food insecurity and increased competition over land-based resources. This means decision makers face competing urgent priorities but little capacity to address them, including around land governance. Donors have "limited leverage in promoting and supporting a comprehensive reform of the land sector, as international funding remains largely humanitarian and programming cycles are short". This is compounded by an increasing brain drain from the region, making it difficult to build capacities.[23]

The level of political support varies across the region, and is reportedly higher in Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco, but lacking in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Several interviewees referred to the challenges associated with the political context, with some specifying land and corruption as being 'huge issues'. Some countries, and implementing partners working in them, experienced major external challenges such as the Beirut explosion. Interviewees noted, however, that the Programme's management was able to understand this and extended their time to complete. Two interviewees expressed some frustration at the need to restrict or censor some material being placed on the website due to it being politically sensitive in some countries. "Sometimes we find ourselves stuck in some diplomatic issues that don't allow the Arab Land Initiative or UN-Habitat to tackle some problems. There are some limits imposed by UN system, e.g. the status of tribal lands in the Arab world". Political issues can lead to travel restrictions, with some people being unable to travel outside their country, and others being restricted from entering certain countries, e.g. the core team was denied visas to travel to Iraq to launch the programme on capacity development in land governance, seen as an important component of peace-building in the country.

iii) **Weak existing capacity:** The Programme was designed to be implemented through contracted partners in the region, as a way of developing and retaining regional capacity. However, due to very low capacity of many implementing partners, the GLTN Secretariat needed to invest a significant amount of time to ensure that activities were completed and up to standard[24]. Linked to this, was a poor understanding or experience of land governance among many regional partners. One of the interviewees working on an AoC noted that people did not really understand the term 'land governance' and had to have it explained to them, and that they struggled to find experts in the field

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[22] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2021)
[23] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2022)
[24] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2020)

in the different Arab countries. When they did find them, they sometimes didn't live in the country, so had to work online. In Yemen they overcame some of the difficulties associated with this to a certain extent in Yemen by linking the expert with two of the young researchers already working on a Programme-funded research project who provided the necessary in-country support. This provides a good example of collaborative work across different aspects of the Programme.

iv) **Contribution of regional and national actors:** The space for contributions by national and regional actors is reduced by attempts by international experts and international organisations to substitute themselves to national and regional ones, evident in the large number of contracts signed by international actors or speaking slots in regional and national discussions allocated to international experts. The reports note that "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".

v) **Challenges in the land sector:** The land sector is disproportionately occupied by the state with limited space for civil society and non-state actors or women. "Land administration practices remain outdated and opaque; there is corruption and lack of transparency, and the reforms are gaining speed in too few countries in the region"[25].

vi) **Local banking restrictions and government regulations** created difficulties in moving funds in the region, creating delays and requiring greater investment of time by Programme staff.

vii) **Civil society:** Civil society in the region is often poorly organised or non-existent; as a respondent noted, engagement of civil society is difficult in the Arab world as often "there is no civil society – no recognition, no capacity, no legitimacy". This poses difficulties for the Programme in its work but the Programme has implemented strong partnerships with organisations such as the ILC to overcome this and has awarded many of its contracts to civil society organisations, many of whom did not engage on land at all prior to their involvement in the Programme. One international partner noted that there was a gap in their work in the region as they had thought that civil society was more consolidated than it actually is. Grassroots movements are not necessarily in place. They are now trying to increase networking in the region, and the Programme has been essential in helping them to do this.

The key challenge internal to the Programme relates to funding constraints and limited resources. The Programme is under-resourced, in terms of finance and staff. This affects continuity and sustainability of the initiative.

Gaps

Gaps noted by respondents also include both regional gaps, and perceived gaps in the Programme. At regional level, the main gap in the sector which was noted was in a lack of academic courses, which is being addressed by the Programme. Several interviewees commented on the gap in teaching on land-related issues, and the need to increase teaching around the land sector at tertiary level in order to level qualified land governance professionals from the region. Some pointed out that this should not only be at the level of degrees, as many people can't access that level of education, but that focusing on short courses (even three days) and targeting senior and mid-level officials, can change people's way of thinking and working. As can

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[25] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2022)

be seen in Table 3, outlining the Programme's activities and progress, several interventions to address this regional gap have been concluded.

The following gaps in the Programme were noted by respondents:

i) **Civil society and grassroots engagement**:   Some respondents felt that civil society activities should be promoted more, especially those related to youth and climate. Others felt that there is a lack of sufficient support and encouragement for the participation and contribution of grass roots organisation, and that there is a need to "to mainstream land rights activities with more grassroots organisations" rather than focusing more on consultants and higher-level people.

ii) **Involvement of decision-makers:** While some interviewees felt that there is lack of involvement of senior political leadership and high-level decision makers, this is not the case in all countries. In some countries, senior government officials are aware of the Programme, and of the key issues associated with it, and have been engaged in different aspects of Programme activities, reportedly with positive outcomes.

iii) **Missing countries:** Some interviewees suggested that some countries in the region were not involved in the Programme, such as Comoros, and Mauritania. They noted that they have different issues from the Middle East, so consideration needs to be given to how to bring them into the initiative, perhaps through sub-regions or clusters.

iv) **Pastoral rangelands:** While this is not a major focus of the Programme, it is a big issue in countries like Somalia, Mauritania, and Sudan, with millions of people involved, and some interviewees felt that it hasn't been addressed well by the Programme and needs much more attention. However, an EGM on this topic was conducted during Phase 1 and some case studies have been developed. There are several other organisations operating in this sector in the region, such as ILC, FAO and IFAD, and it was a deliberate decision to incorporate it as an issue, without going too deeply into it.

v) **Research focus:** One interviewee felt that there's a need to work towards having a regional body dedicated to regional land issues.

vi) **Advocacy:** Several interviewees would like an increased focus on advocacy, not only tools, but highlighting the political dimension of land, why it is fundamental to peacebuilding and how land tenure can strengthen food security in Arab cultures. "Advocating actions to improve land governance on the national and local level within the region could be achieved through partnerships with local universities, national government and local municipalities to advocate for needed legal changes and related governance structures".

A few weaknesses in the Programme were identified by respondents although notably, several interviewees made the point that they saw no weaknesses:

i) **Core team:** The core management team is young, and "did brilliantly", but they need more senior people to ensure the quality of knowledge products remains high, and to provide greater insight into aspects like research methods. The work is seen by some as becoming too much for such a small team, with several interviewees motivating for a more permanent structure which could provide more support.

ii) **Reference Group:** Linked to the above point, some people felt that the Reference Group did not provide enough support and needs to be strengthened to be more effective. This is elaborated later in this report.

iii) **UN-operation**: There were several comments on the bureaucracy and inefficiency of the UN system as sometimes being frustrating, although these were balanced by other views which noted that the Programme management works hard to overcome these challenges to a large extent.

iv) **Need for "Arabisation" of the Programme**: Several respondents felt that there is need to increase the "Arabisation" of the Programme in order for more effective implementation. However, as discussed in more detail later in this report, this needs to be balanced against the fact that the Programme deals with very sensitive and controversial issues, and the fact that it *is* situated within the UN system provides a level of neutrality and objectivity which provide entry points which are unlikely to be available otherwise.

v) **Short**-term nature of interventions: It is difficult to accomplish significant changes in the short-term, and having some projects or longer-term research programme would be beneficial.

vi) **Funding:** Several survey respondents indicated that more financial support is needed to organisations involved in AoCs and twinning relationships, particularly locally based and grassroots organisations.

vii) Perceptions of small grants and limited time for AoCs and twinning arrangements: Several interviewees felt that the time period for their contract was very short, and the funds provided were not commensurate with the amount of work required, stating that for a more deliberative process longer time frames are desirable. However, agreements were, in fact, often between 18 and 24 months, and most of these were extended. In contrast to some feeling that the funds granted were insufficient, in one twinning relationship, one of the partner institutions provided their time and input free and then promised a phase II immediately after phase I ended. This highlights the extent to which some organisations and individuals were prepared to invest in the sector, and the longer-term spin-offs of the work they conducted through the Arab Land Programme.

viii) **Need to increase accessibility of material:** Although some respondents noted the need to increase the Arabic content of material and to simplify language, much of the material produced through the Programme has, in fact, been translated into Arabic, and is designed to be user-friendly rather than very academic.

ix) **Continuity of training:** Although several respondents indicated that there is a lack of continuity after training, or that activities are not continuing as they had hoped, with fewer in-person training sessions and workshops the Programme delivered 100% of training and events planned for Phase 1, despite the impact of Covid-19 on activities. The need to continue with, and consolidate training, has been noted as a suggestion for future programming of Phase 2.

x) **Development of terms of reference:** Concern was raised by a respondent that the process for developing the ToR for research projects needs to be reviewed, with greater input from the Reference Group and/or key organisations and academic institutions in the region.

xi) **Need to move to concrete actions:** Several respondents indicated a need now to move from "concept to execution", to be more involved in formulating national land policies and strategies, to take more actions with relevant stakeholders to update the outdated land system etc. There is still a need to

make progress in reforming and modernising the land-related normative framework (laws, policy, access to justice, access to information, transparency, addressing corruption). This is, however, beyond the scope of the first phase of the Programme and is planned for Phase 2, starting in 2023.

4.3 Assessing the Programme against the evaluation criteria of UN-Habitat

Beyond performance or achievement, as per the Terms of Reference, the findings of the evaluation are discussed according to the UN-Habitat criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact outlook, sustainability, and integration of cross-cutting issues[26]. A tabulated form of this assessment, responding directly to the more detailed questions outlined in the ToR is provided in Annexure 5.

4.3.1 Relevance and coherence

Relevance considers whether or not the intervention is doing the right thing, specifically the extent to which its objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities. Coherence looks at how well the intervention fits, i.e. its compatibility with others in the sector and region. The desktop review and interviews examined the extent to which the Programme is relevant to global programmes and frameworks, to EU and BMZ strategies and frameworks, to German development policy, to GLTN's approach and UN-Habitat's strategic plan, to regional and national development priorities, to global trends in the land sector, and, very importantly, to its intended beneficiaries and partners. Annexure 4 provides a detailed discussion of the global and international frameworks, GLTN's approach and UN-Habitat's strategic plan, regional and national priorities, and global trends in the land sector in order to assess the relevance of the Programme to these key frameworks, and how compatible the Programme is with others in the region.

The top global frameworks and programmes for development, particularly those related to human settlements and land management are the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda (NUA), and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT). It is clear from the desktop review that the Programme is very relevant to the main global frameworks for development, not only in terms of objectives, but also underlying principles and approach. Like the SDGs, NUA and VGGT, the Programme is based on human rights, sees land as key to sustainable development, and highlights the link between land rights and human rights. Land governance is seen as key to creating tenure security for everyone and the sustainable use of land, particularly in the NUA and VGGT. They also recognise the continuum of land rights, the importance of gender equity in land governance, and the central role of responsible governance[27].

UN-Habitat's approach is based on partnerships and targets specific rights of women, children, youth, older people and persons with disability. GLTN was designed to respond to UN-Habitat's strategic plans and is consistent with the VGGTs and regional programmes implemented by the African Union (AU), African Development Bank and UN Economic Commission for Africa. It is committed to increasing access to land and tenure security for all, particularly the poor, women, and youth. The Programme constitutes an important aspect of GLTN's activities and is therefore directly relevant to its operations. GLTN is a centralised network,

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[26] Reference from https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm
[27] Whermann (2017)

with the activities that take place in the Arab region via the Arab Land Programme constituting decentralised activities of the overall GLTN network[28]. This further points to the fact that the Programme is inextricably linked to GLTN's work[29]. The activities and objectives of the Programme are explicitly reflected in GLTN budgets and workplan. A recommendation to GLTN and UN-Habitat Land Unit in 2017 was that "the current work on creating tenure security, promoting the continuum of land rights and pushing for fit-for-purpose land administration should be continued as it received new support from international policies. More attention could be given to regulating land uses in support of key development objectives". Most, if not all, of these are being done by the Arab Land Programme, again highlighting its relevance to GLTN.

Interviewees generally view the Programme as being relevant and aligned to global development frameworks and the UN-Habitat strategic plan, recognising that a lot of effort has gone into aligning activities. The Programme is seen as aligned to UN-Habitat, and to GLTN's key outcomes, especially with regard to capacity development. One interviewee noted that the Programme is very recognisable in terms of advancing SDGs. Another felt that despite being relevant to these frameworks, cultural specificity means that the Programme needs to give more support to specific issues. One person felt that there's a need to establish a better link between the technical knowledge of GLTN and the more global development challenges – peace building, food security, climate change - to address political and economic challenges.

With regard to German development policy, the Programme contributes to at least three of BMZ's priority areas, and addresses Germany's broader developmental goals, particularly those related to gender equality, climate and biodiversity, the use of digitalisation and technology transfer, and the promotion of sustainable development[30]. Respondents see the Programme as responding very well to German development goals and to German development policy because of Germany's deep focus on human rights, and the VGGTs. Germany is also very oriented towards climate-related issues. The new leadership in Germany is well aligned to the SDGs, and the need for transformation to achieve these goals. Food security is important to SDG2 (no hunger); therefore, transformation of the agricultural and food systems is needed: "The Programme is quite clearly linked". The current German government pursues a feminist agenda and climate goals. The Programme is reactive to pressures that makes this transformation necessary and has a clear willingness to engage on sensitive topics like gender.

The Arab region faces increasing competition and conflict over land. It is critical to protect the housing, land and property (HLP) rights of displaced populations and returning refugees. This enables people to start rebuilding their lives, strengthens institutions and stabilizes societies emerging from conflict, contributing to longer term peace and stability. Land rights in the region are extremely complex[31] and tenure insecurity is the highest in the world.[32] Key issues include the need to develop capacity, fight corruption in the land sector, ensure women's equal access to land, and address issues around data[33]. Women's unequal access to land is addressed by regional policies such as the AU's Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, the Nairobi Action Plan on Large Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa, the Arab Charter on Human Rights, and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa. The AU also urges members to "build adequate human, financial, technical capacities to support land policy development and implementation." The African Land Policy Centre and the Land Policy Initiative (LPI) also support land policy development and implementation in Africa, adopting similar approaches to the Programme.[34] ILC EMENA is a regional platform

[28] Camacho, B and M. Orellana (2021)
[29] Ibid
[30] https://www.bmz.de/en/issues
[31] AUC-ECA-AfDB (2010)
[32] Zakout (2021)
[33] Ibid
[34] Haile et al (2013)

on land governance issues which aims to build capacity to realise people-centred land governance and has many similar areas of concern to those of the Programme. The desktop review shows, therefore, that the objectives and activities of the Programme align well with the key issues and concerns across the region, and that the Programme is therefore of direct relevance to regional and national policy.

Several people interviewed felt that the Programme responded well to regional frameworks and policies. Examples given included applying the Volunteer guidelines which "requires some minimal policy support from the countries concerned; about half of them have no interest at all, and land law is often still "in the middle-ages". They can try to promote gender equality, but the law doesn't allow it". However, another interviewee noted that there is no land framework for the Arab region, and no strong regional framework. In fact, there is often no agreement on defining which countries fall into the region, so each organisation includes different countries in the region. In Syria, of most concern is the Urban Recovery Framework, the UN-Habitat framework for crisis settings. "The Arab Land Programme's guidance speaks directly to this because it has a conflict sensitivity angle". Some respondents felt that, at a national level, if there is no response from government the Programme does not have the political influence to bring about change, although this is clearly beyond the scope of the programme, which is focused at regional level.

With regard to emerging global trends in the land sector, most are reflected in the Arab region, and the Programme recognises them, and responds to them appropriately. On the more positive side these are:

1. Increasing recognition of the centrality of land issues to all aspects of development and the realisation of human rights and peace
2. Increasing recognition of the marginalising effect of many processes and practices in the land sector, particularly with regard to the exclusion of women, and the negative effect that has on their outcomes, and those of their families, and the consequent need to develop inclusive land governance mechanisms
3. Increasing adoption of a participatory process to land management and urban planning
4. Adopting an incremental approach to land tenure, a continuum of land rights, exploring alternative forms of land rights (such as community land rights), and recognising customary land rights and processes
5. Increasing recognition of the importance of having accurate, reliable and transparent data and the use of innovative technology to collect such data
6. Increasing recognition of the importance of having local (community-based) management of land, and the need for inclusive, locally driven land tenure solutions[35]

At the same time, the global land sector also faces numerous challenging trends globally, many of these exacerbated in the Arab region. These include the following:

1. Increasing pressure on land
2. Shrinking spaces for dissent and activism in some countries
3. Increasing risks of disasters, both natural and human (many related to climate change, conflict and war)

The objectives of the Programme are of direct relevance to these global trends.

From a sectoral point of view, the Programme is seen by some interviewees as being completely in line with all relevant issues to the land governance sector. "They spent a good amount of time to identify where they should focus, which partners are there. It is definitely aligned with the relevant questions". However, another indicated that the Programme necessarily responds only partially to gaps in the land governance sector of

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[35] Miller (2022)

the region, which is beset by conflict and corruption. "This means that it is best to create a noise" which the Programme has done very well, although its intention is not to fill all the gaps.

There is no doubt that the Programme is of direct relevance to its intended beneficiaries and partners. This is highlighted by work conducted in Palestine, through the twinning arrangement between Birzeit University and University of West England. "The lack of an effective land administration system in Palestine is undermining tenure security, restricting economic development and restricting access to land rights by women and disadvantaged groups". However, despite this, they found that while multiple international actors and donors are engaged in the land sector in Palestine including the World Bank, UN-Habitat, UK FCDO, GIZ, the Norwegian Refuge Council, Netherlands, "there is not much focus on capacity building, professional development or strengthening the education and academic organisations active in the sector". They also found that apart from the World Bank Programme, "there appears to be no significant programme with a component including significant capacity building of the land administration organisations. Further, the Palestinian Higher Education sector does not currently provide land administration or valuation courses at undergraduate or postgraduate level". They found that professional short courses are not easily available, and professional bodies not well developed. Overall, their needs analysis highlighted an urgent need for courses in land administration and related areas, including valuation.

One interviewee noted that "The Arab Land Programme deals with transformative issues that are important to us, linked to climate change", another said "this was the first time that I can relate to the global frameworks in relation to land, and also how it relates to HLP globally in terms of the human rights global agenda". Another, an international contributor who works in food security, made the point that small farmers know how to care for their crops but will only improve food security if they're sure of their land; the issue of land ownership and tenure security in the region is therefore crucial. Land is not only to be protected for environmental sustainability but also as an asset for economic wealth and people's health.

Perhaps the best way of illustrating this is through some of the interviewees' own words:

- For local partners the training is very, very relevant, targeting specific relevant regional issues.
- It is very good for the welfare of this region
- It's important to bring our Arabic speaking people as they really need this thing.
- Consultations were very good in networking and shedding light on the key issues and technicalities; the beneficiaries will have benefitted from that.
- We look forward to implementing recommendations, carrying out pilot projects, we need to implement and make sure the study doesn't just stay on shelves.
- When we gathered in the EGM and training, people contacted us after this asking for further training. It is changing mindsets now.
- Government institutions have taken part, and most of them are supportive, and see this as important. Decision-makers are keen.
- We learned how to support civil society organisations regarding land governance, telling them what they are supposed to do

4.3.3 Efficiency and administration

Efficiency focuses on how well resources are being used, and the extent to which the intervention was delivered in an economic, timely manner. This includes considering the financial aspects, as well as the institutional structures and human resources. It also assesses to what extent the resources used to implement the Programme were justified in terms of delivering on the outcomes, and identifying any factors

(institutional, political, administrative, financial and managerial) that contribute to or inhibit the efficient implementation of the Programme. To a large extent, the UN-Habitat criteria for efficiency address one of the requirements of the Terms of reference, to assess the planning and implementation modalities, including working arrangements and how they may have affected the effectiveness of the programme.

Institutional structure and staffing

As indicated earlier, the Arab Land Programme reports to both the regional office and headquarters, something which is unique to UN-Habitat and which is seen as being a key governance/institutional component of the Programme, having dual reporting lines to the regional office and the head office. This is seen as a good adaptation to ground the Programme in the region, and to deal with reportedly low levels of efficiency in UN-Habitat. "Creating a hybrid arrangement between head office and the regional office allows them to act more quickly." This "allows us to negotiate better, which has been a value". Some activities are implemented through the country offices; and the Programme is well supported by the country offices. Several internal interviewees noted that the Programme has performed better, at an administrative level, than other UN-Habitat programmes.

The Programme is managed by a small core team as indicated below.

Name	Position	Percentage time spent on Programme
Ombretta Tempra	Human Settlements Officer – Programme manager	60%
El Habib Benmokhtar	Project Support Officer	100%
Eleonora Serpi	Project Support Officer	80%
Nicolo Bedino	Project Support Officer	100%
Heba Fekry	Project Support Officer	100%
Fathi Egal	Land and Conflict Consultant	100%

The Programme manager reports to two people, the Chief of Section of Land, Housing and Shelter in headquarter, and the Director of UN-Habitat Regional Office for the Arab States. The former estimates that he spends 3 – 5% of his time on the Programme (mainly in an oversight role), with the budget for that coming from the UN core budget rather than the Programme budget.

Although some of the core staff do not have dedicated time employed on the Programme, the fact that there are crossovers in terms of reporting and responsibilities tends to be beneficial, for example, the Programme manager has responsibility for the global portfolio on land and conflict, and land, housing and property rights, providing technical assistance to country offices, works on housing, land and property rights for Syrian refugees, along with one other member of the Programme's core team, and has desk office functions for several countries in the regional office. This overlap allows for a sharing of resources and knowledge across all aspects of her work.

To maintain continuity and promote sustainability, it is important to adapt the funding cycles to build and maintain a good and consistent team. "This is probably the biggest challenge – mainstreaming and nurturing the core staff team". The current programme manager is seen as having done good job planning to keep a good team around her.

The core team is supported by a large number of short-term consultants, many being seen as partners in the Arab Land Initiative. The contributions made by partners and others associated with the Programme vary, with some of this being paid and some not. For example, the BMZ and GIZ respondents estimate that they

normally spend about 2-5% of their time, and two days p.a. on the Programme, respectively, although this has sometimes increased dramatically, as in the case of the Second Arab Land conference, when GIZ's team was very involved with mobilising funding for the Land Portal, holding webinars and the like, to drum up momentum for the conference, and to maintain it afterwards. The Programme's senior consultants are contracted for a maximum of 40 days p.a. and are obviously paid for this time. However, they are involved in various activities beyond this, on a voluntary basis, one estimating that they spent about 10 days p.a. on voluntary or pro-bono work for the Programme. Staff in several UN-Habitat country offices work closely with GLTN and the Programme, with one noting that she found it hard to distinguish between them. One country officer noted that it was a two-way street, they spend about 10-15% of their time liaising with the regional office, but also contribute work such as their papers. On specific work, if the regional office funds one or two people, the country office would probably match it.

The database of key contributors to the Programme includes 32 partners from UN and other international organisations. Some of them were more heavily involved in establishing the Programme, estimating about 10% of their time being spent on that, although they now spend less time on it. Others estimate that they spend between one week and one month per year on the Programme. They also may contribute by paying their own travel costs (e.g. ILC), or providing venues or office space (e.g. UTI). Most partners noted that they view the time they spend on the Programme as a mutual exchange, and that their overall work benefits greatly from this. No-one interviewed begrudged the time or costs they incurred by being involved with the Arab Land Initiative.

Representatives from seven of the nine AoCs, and from three of the four twinning arrangements were interviewed. Some of them had been aware of the Arab Land Initiative prior to their contract with the Programme, while others only learned of it when the calls for research were made, and have only been involved in working with the Programme since the beginning of their contract, all of which have now ended. However, despite their contractual obligations being over, most respondents indicated that they continue to be involved with the Programme, through attending webinars, using the website, and engaging in similar Programme activities. Some of those involved in AoCs indicated that they had invested far more time and resources in their project than was reimbursed through the contract, one saying that they did this as the work was directly relevant to their objectives and "we believed in the effort", although another noted that they had received complaints. They did note, however, that the resources provided through the contract were small, while the goal was huge. Their team was involved due to their passion for the topic, but they felt that it could become draining for grassroots organisations. Some of those involved in the AoCs have given some voluntary time to Programme work, such as providing input into Expert Group Meetings. In one of the twinning arrangements, one of the partners donated his time to the project, about 20 days in all.

In terms of administration, a few respondents noted that there were some delays in feedback to their reports and one noted that sometimes the comments received, although constructive, were too ambitious and outside the mandate of the study. However, they were pleased to have had "very healthy conversations about this", successfully resolving the issue. Another respondent lamented the long procedures and security audits, although it must be noted that security audits were beyond the control of the Programme as they were requested by some governments, such as Jordan, before contracts could be signed

Financial issues

The Programme is wholly funded by BMZ. Engagement with BMZ was very good, and was felt to be one of the key contributors to the success of the Programme, with BMZ/GIZ understanding the complexity of the region and the nature of the UN-Habitat secretariat, and being very flexible.

As of 19 December, 2022, the total income received for the Programme was $3,005,957, with total funds committed being $2,977,701, or 99.06%. This was paid in an initial four instalments, plus a further instalment with the one-year extension of the project into 2022. Over the duration of the Programme, 83% of funds spent on the Programme were spent in the region, a total of $2,653,168. Having the capacity to spend all the funds within the timeframe of the Programme points to successful implementation and efficient allocation and disbursement practices.

To illustrate the differences in weight of the Programme's four priorities, the table below shows the total budget allocated to each priority over the four-year period, i.e. the original three-year grant plus the one year extension. As can be seen, the budget allocated to Knowledge is the largest, representing almost 30%, followed by Coordination and alignment (27%), and Capacity development (22%), with Technical support receiving 9% of the total budget.

Table 4: Total budget allocation by priority/workstream, 2018-2022

Priority/workstream	Total (€)	%
A: Coordination	713000	27,01%
B: Knowledge	784000	29,70%
C: Capacity development	585000	22,16%
D: Technical support	240000	9,09%
Admin/M&E	318000	12,05%
Total	**2640000**	**100,00%**

Several interviewees noted that the funds had been well-spent, and had achieved a lot, given that the budget was relatively small. "There is value for money in terms of volume of outputs and activities and "the small budget vs the results achieved is huge".

Disbursement of funds

Frustration around disbursement of funds was expressed on two levels. At Programme level disbursements from BMZ were not always received on time, and it was twice necessary to get a loan from UN-Habitat to advance the cost of activities. Overall, however, the relationship with both BMZ and GIZ has been very good, "once they sign, we rely a lot on them and work closely with them". From a donor point of view, communication with the Secretariat was very good, programme and financial reporting was very satisfactory, and Programme management is "great at liaising and creating a link between us, the Reference Group and the Arab Land Initiative at large".

At project level, some of those involved in contracts (either AoCs or twinning arrangements) expressed a level of frustration with delays in receiving funds. In particular, one team noted that the AoC was advertised as a grant, which in their experience means that funds are received upfront, prior to the work being conducted, allowing them to assemble a team and carry out the work. However, they found that it worked like a consulting project, with a portion of the funds paid at inception, and the remainder on receipt of deliverables, something they had not anticipated, which created difficulties in staffing and conducting the work. Another AoC also noted that funding was deployed by call, "therefore it went into service provision type of implementation, with no co-development or co-implementation". Although the amounts provided in the AoCs and twinning arrangements were relatively small, and some people would have preferred a longer time period and more funds for their projects, several interviewees indicated that awarding more but smaller grants is a good way to keep the network alive.

Funding of Phase 2

Although the current donor, BMZ, is interested in funding a second phase of the Programme, if this is confirmed and approved, the funds would only be disbursed from mid-2023. This requires developing a creative solution to manage the gap. In situations such as these, "having GLTN as an umbrella is a big advantage". However, this gap will place strain on the Programme, particularly in terms of retaining the continuity of some of the members of the core team.

Impact of political context on efficiency and administration

Political and other tensions in some countries tended to impact negatively on some implementing partners. One of them noted that it would be useful to conduct a risk analysis for each partner when working in different countries to alert both partners to the potential for disruption in their project. They also suggested that it would be better, in twinning relationships, to have separate contracts for each partner, as this may alleviate problems in transferring funds from an organisation in one country to their partner in another.

The political context also impacted some implementing partners in Palestine, who's involvement triggered an investigation that blocks the work of all UN agencies. As part of routine due diligence processes related to the German parliament, this required Germany to investigate, delaying implementation. Political issues can lead to travel restrictions, as outlined earlier. In Yemen and Sudan political conflict negatively affected implementation.

Reference Group

Perhaps the topic with the most divergent views expressed in the interviews was the role and effectiveness of the Reference Group. This is not a formally constituted structure and is seen by most as an informal advisory group consisting of people who understand the region well and want to see change, providing advice and support to the core team, and identifying opportunities. The Reference Group does not have any formal decision-making or approval power. As part of GLTN, it is GLTN's steering committee that approves the Programme's workplan. One interviewee noted that the core team operates in a complex environment and has been facing a lot of challenges including with some Arab countries. They felt that having a more collective approach through a strengthened Reference Group could alleviate this to some extent.

The membership of the Reference Group is fairly fluid, with some people taking part in all meetings, while others have been invited for specific meetings. Several interviewees, members of the Reference Group, believe that it has worked well. As one interviewee noted, she "feels that the Reference Group has added value by having key stakeholders come together, prioritising, identifying overlaps and looking to where the Programme could add value, working on synergies". In another case, the core team was made aware of other projects in the region and the reference group made sure the necessary linkages were made.

In contrast, several other interviewees expressed frustration at the lack of formalisation of the Reference Group, felt that it was not very active and that it has no decision-making power which means that the Arab Land Initiative tends to be driven by GLTN/UN-Habitat, rather than by stakeholders from the region, and is therefore seen by some as part of GLTN, rather than belonging to the region. This will be discussed in more detail later in the report.

Identity of the Arab Land Programme

Apart from the implementing partners (AoCs or twinning arrangements), several interviewees seem unclear about the distinction between UN-Habitat/GLTN, the Arab Land Initiative and the Programme. In some interviews it was clear that the responses were directed more at GLTN broadly, rather than specifically focused on the Programme. One interviewee noted that the governance of the Arab Land Initiative is not clear, even though he knows it is driven by a small, powerful team. Another asked what the overlap between the Arab Land Initiative and GLTN is and queried whether or not there is a need for governance of the Initiative. Another feels that the Arab Land Programme is "a shining star embedded in a non-hierarchical network in a UN agency, and that "all the time it's about managing identity. How does it relate to GLTN, and what is the future of both?"

Almost all interviewees see the Arab Land Initiative and the Programme as interchangeable. However, it is not clear whether or not this is a problem. The Arab Land Initiative existed prior to the development, funding and implementation of the Arab region programme on good land governance in support of inclusive development, peace and stability. Ideally, it will continue to exist even if the funding for the Programme stopped. The distinction is explained in the 2020 Programme progress report: "The Arab Land Initiative has created a platform for awareness, capacity and knowledge building by adapting and regionalising global knowledge and thinking on land governance to the Arab states' context and to its stakeholders. The Programme has significantly contributed to the credibility of the Initiative and has given a boost to its work and outreach. It has also enabled UN-Habitat and GLTN to reach out to more experts and partners, strengthening the regional and country level dialogues around land and the partnerships among different Arab and international land stakeholders[36]". Thus, the Arab Land Initiative created a platform which has been considerably strengthened through the funding and implementation of the Programme. It is not clear that this message is well-understood by partners, which could possibly have implications for longer term planning of the institutional structure and funding.

4.3.4 Effectiveness and Impact outlook

Effectiveness means the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups. Impact issues to be considered hinge around what difference the intervention makes, or the extent to which it has generated significant positive, negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects. Specific questions around effectiveness include a consideration of whether or not the implemented activities have resulted in the expected outputs, and whether these have contributed to the achievement of the expected outcomes, what products and services the Programme is providing to target beneficiaries, and what positive changes have resulted from these. Table 3 shows the key outputs and outcomes for each of the four priorities. As indicated, for each priority, the anticipated outputs have largely been achieved, with identifiable desired outcomes accomplished.

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[36] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2022)

To supplement the desktop review and key stakeholder interviews, survey respondents were asked to score their view of performance of each of the four priorities of the Programme on a scale of 1-10, with 1 being very low and 10 being very high. The following responses were received.[37]

Table 5: Survey respondents' perceptions of Programme performance for the four priorities

Scale (1= Very low – 10 = Very high performance)	Collaboration	Knowledge	Capacity development	Country level support*
	Number of respondents (%)			
Very high = 10	5 (9%)	7 (13%)	8 (14%)	4 (11%)
9	9 (16%)	11 (20%)	5 (9%)	3 (8%)
8	14 (25%)	11 (20%)	12 (21%)	3 (8%)
7	5 (9%)	12 (21%)	7 (13%)	8 (22%)
6	6 (11%)	6 (11%)	3 (5%)	1 (3%)
5	8 (14%)	5 (9%)	5 (9%)	5 (14%)
4	2 (4%)	2 (4%)	3 (5%)	1 (3%)
3	0	0	2 (4%)	0
2	0	0	1 (2%)	1 (3%)
Very low = 1	0	0	1 (2%)	0
Don't know	7 (13%	2 (4%)	9 (16%)	10 (28%)

For coordination and collaboration (Priority 1), 25% of survey respondents gave a score of 9 or 10, and 25% of 8, meaning that 50% of respondents felt that the programme was performing well or very well. Only two respondents scored it less than 5. In all, 79% of respondents had been personally involved in such work (either taking part, contributing, or benefitting from it). Looking at the extent to which this had benefited them or their organisation, 51% ranked it 8 or above. One respondent noted that "this is the first ever cross-country collaboration and coordination between land-related organisations and land professionals in the Arab states". It has raised awareness of land management and land governance, especially with regard to customary tenure rights, and has enabled people to get connected with a network of land professionals in the MENA region. The point was made that more attention needs to be paid to involving active CSOs.

Several comments from survey respondents highlight the contribution of the Programme to achieving desired outcomes:
- I hope to hold workshops and supervise the standardization of land management standards between the competent authorities in land management
- I have implemented programs on land ownership and housing in Nineveh Governorate, especially in the Compensation Court and the Compensation Committee, in addition to the Real Estate Department, and the issuance of title deeds to those affected during terrorist operations and military mistakes
- Through my work in the Arab Land Initiative, I was able to build my capabilities in the field of land governance in a large way, and I transferred my experience to my colleagues in the institution. I was

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[37] Total number of respondents = 56. Only 36 respondents indicated that they knew of the Country level support activities of the Initiative's work, and they were asked to respond only if they did know so the total number of responses received for this question was less than for the others.

able to present an initiative to the government side, to hold a virtual regional conference and to present a thorough study to solve the problems related to lands. The government worked on it and achieved a qualitative shift.

For knowledge production and management (Priority 2), 32% of survey respondents scored 9 or 10, and 20% gave it 8, meaning that 52% of respondents believe that the Programme is performing well or very well in knowledge production and management. Most people (80%) who answered this question had been involved in activities related to this priority; 57% of them gave it a score of 8 or more in terms of benefiting them or their organisation.

Comments related to the need for more structured and constant sharing of knowledge, consistently disseminated via email, and other media. A respondent noted that material from the Initiative has featured in the Settlements Information Network Africa (SINA), and Women and Habitat activities of Mazingira Institute. Another noted that it was the first ever cross-country knowledge and data sharing between land-related organisations and land professionals in Arab states as well as knowledge creation. Concern was voiced that after attending the workshop in Tunisia, no further communication or action was taken.

Capacity development (Priority 3) was rated as 9 or 10 by 23% of survey respondents, and 44% rated it as having been 8 or above, i.e. as being high or very high. Almost 18% of survey respondents did not know enough to rate the capacity development efforts. In all 54% of survey respondents had been involved in some aspect of capacity development, with 52% rating it as 8 or above in terms of benefiting them or their organisation. Respondents noted that they have regular consultation meetings with the Arab Land Initiative team on HLP related issue, that they "saw nationals grow in knowledge".

Some respondents noted that more training is needed, particularly on using and managing data in the absence of formal data, or the manipulation of data by government. Concerns were raised regarding stakeholder definition, with some "land dependent people not always there". A respondent felt that there seems to be limited understanding of the interplay between developing human capacity to match the capabilities of current technologies in the context of land tenure. In some cases, such as Yemen, training could not take place due to conflict.

Country level support (Priority 4) received the lowest scores from survey respondents, relative to the other priorities, with only 19% giving a score of 9 or 10, and 27% giving 8 or more, i.e. Very high or high. However, a relatively high percentage of respondents were unaware of this aspect of the Programme's work (48%). This is not surprising as it is the smallest component of the Programme (about 9% of total budget) and involved very little seed money in three countries – Libya, Tunisia and Iraq. As this aspect of the Programme focuses on particular countries, regional partners outside of those countries are not likely to be aware of it. Of those who responded to the question about the extent to which they or their organisation had benefited from country level support, 32% of respondents scored it 8 or more, i.e. High or Very high.

An interviewee noted that at state level the Arab Land Initiative "had a remarkable impact as we were able to create a common understanding with the government on this aspect". The activities were said to generate solidarity between the African and Arab regions' experience. Another felt that the Programme's administration needs more capacity and better, more reliable communication to manage projects. Yet another noted that the support process is lengthy and complicated and needs more flexibility. Country level support depends on willing partners, and is limited to a few countries and a few topics, with it not being feasible to engage in more during Phase 1 of the Programme.

The main achievements of the Programme in terms of progress against its objectives have already been outlined. On the whole, respondents felt that the Programme has gone a long way in achieving its objectives,

with some noting that these had been fully accomplished and others that the team has exceeded expectations. The funding provided to the Programme has been catalytic, and "has developed a coalition and really enabled the Arab Land Initiative to develop and strengthen relationships", "many people in the sector and in the region are now very active, with increased knowledge, and we are expecting changed mindsets as a result, regarding both land rights and IDPs".

The Programme has been very successful in raising awareness, capacity building, and advocacy according to most respondents. This is evident in the fact that several countries expressed interest in hosting the third Arab Land conference. At institutional level, perhaps the best evidence of success is a new recognition of UN-Habitat in HLP, with the recent decision to reposition UN-Habitat to lead this portfolio globally as co-coordinators, together with NRC, of the HLP Area of Responsibility of the Global Protection Cluster. The capacity development and partnership building undertaken by the Programme have contributed to the success of several very strategic projects such as the HLP programme conducted in Syria and digitalisation in Iraq, and most recently contributed to the official recognition of occupancy certificates as full property rights in Iraq.

All interviewees indicated that their engagement with the Programme has been positive, with benefits including getting to know others in the sector across the region, finding out about overlapping activities, increased exposure to different disciplines, bringing together partners to share information and collaborate, and encouraging people to think about land governance in a different way. The point was made that the Programme ensures that coordination is very structured, that it enables people to know what is happening in different countries, to discuss issues, and to ask for input and support (which is readily available). Having tools available online has been very beneficial, as has the website generally. Most implementing partners noted that they have continued to be involved in the Programme's work once their project had ended, and that through their project they had built a huge network with other partners across the region. Interacting with partners has been very beneficial, and some interviewees noted that they relied on their partners in the Expert Group meetings. Several interviewees pointed to changed behaviour of beneficiaries as a result of their work.

The Programme has brought people together to discuss pivotal issues such as women's land rights, youth, displaced people, and conflict and land occupation. This includes the literature produced, particularly summaries around women's rights, in Arabic and English. Some interviewees noted that the technical achievements of the Programme were excellent, but that there was now a need to extend the non-technical aspects. However, others felt that the overall objective was very ambitious, and that the duration of the Programme to date has been too short to show whether this has been accomplished. While a lot has been accomplished around awareness raising, capacity development and building networks, some felt that it is still too early to reach the ultimate target groups. However, the way in which the Programme is developing and the kinds of topics it addresses show that it is "on the right track". Some interviewees noted that the Programme tries to address multiple issues, which is difficult, and it might be useful to narrow the focus somewhat in future.

Many interviewees mentioned intangible benefits to their involvement in the Programme, such as "I learned a lot, my involvement increased my self-confidence that I was an expert with things to share with others, also learning that there is a better way to do things", and "working with the Arab Land Programme has taken our work to a different level".

Target groups

The Programme's objectives highlight women, youth and displaced people as particular targets for better land governance following capacity building through the Programme. The following discussion focuses on these issues.

One of the interviewees reflected that the Programme is very focussed on women, youth and displaced people, "maybe too much sometimes. There are many issues that are beyond these groups, general issues, it would be good to look at more global issues that need to be addressed". She was concerned that narrowing the focus onto specific user groups could be counter-productive, as there are overarching challenges that affect everyone which might be better dealt with by adopting a broader more universal approach.

Women

The Programme has been very successful in terms of both its focus on women and women's land rights, and on the involvement of women in Programme activities. This is generally seen as the most successful aspect of the Programme in terms of groups reached by both interview and survey respondents, which is reflected in the desk-top assessment of outputs.

Table 6: Survey respondents' perceptions of Programme performance regarding women

Impact area	Score					
	Number (%) survey respondents[38] scoring performance (1 = Negligible to 5= Very high)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Women's participation	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	10 (18%)	18 (32%)	12 (21%)	10 (18%)
Impact on women	3 (5%)	2 (4%)	10 (18%)	11 (20%)	10 (18%)	20 (36%)

Looking at the survey results where respondents were asked to score their assessment of performance on a scale of 1 – 5, with 1 being negligible and 5 being very high, 21% of respondents believe that women's participation in the Arab Land Initiative is very high, and 32% that it is high. Ten respondents (18%) did not know. With regard to the impact of the work done by the Programme on women in the region, 18% felt it was very high, and 20% that it was high. However, 36% indicated that they did not know.

One interviewee estimates that 50 – 60% of the Programme's advocacy has been on women and land. This includes the regional Women and Land Campaign and now in Tunisia, Libya and Lebanon. Another interviewee maintained that "This is the cherry on the top of the cake", for Housing, Land and Property rights. This is reflected, for example, in the numbers of women and women's organisations trained, participating in the Arab Land conference, and implementing partners contracted. By including a session on women's land rights in most of the Programme's forums, e.g. a debate at country level in Tunisia, and one in Lebanon, "we're creating a narrative". Another noted that the Programme is "becoming a platform of ideas and knowledge for us in Sudan. Like Palestinian women, now we have a section on women and land, and the women feel confident to discuss the land issue".

There has reportedly been a "huge growth in the number of women speaking out, and increased numbers at events". As one interviewee noted "inside our organisation, women are talking more proudly about issues and their involvement".

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[38] N=56

One of the AoCs on land, women empowerment and socio-economic development provides evidence-based linkages between access to land and socio-economic development and empowerment, especially for women in the Arab region. This focuses on women's land rights and the impact of tenure security on women's socio-economic status.

One of the organisations in a twinning arrangement indicates that their project increased women's awareness and how to be empowered. Outcomes were measured such as conducting baseline surveys and end surveys to measure increased awareness of women. They also noted that the Programme's focus on women land rights has been very good. Many of the people involved in the AoCs were women, as were many of the participants at roundtable discussions. Many women interviewees felt that their involvement with the Programme has increased their networking with other women across the Arab region, sharing problems and solutions. The project conducted in Yemen addressed women empowerment and rights to land, and most people involved were young, in their 20s, according to the person interviewed. This has increased awareness for women's organisation e.g. Union for Women in Yemen, and has also impacted at government level. Another tangible success was the work done in Iraq on the Yazidi minority, where wives and daughters can now be registered as joint owners of property on the certificate, registering the land rights of women and children. In December, 2022, the Iraqi government issued a decree officially recognising the land ownership rights of the Yazidi communities, recognising these occupancy records as full property titles[39]. Addressing women's land rights through the Programme is now functioning well in Iraq, and the approach is being replicated in Yemen.

The Programme, and GLTN, are therefore mostly seen as doing well with regard to increasing awareness of women's land rights. One interviewee said that they try to disseminate these, but that it would be useful to provide more information on enhancing and utilising the tools such as the tool on gender evaluation on measuring the impact of land governance.

Despite the successes related to women and the Programme, some interviewees indicated that this needs to be increased, one saying that she would like to see training tailored to gender and land management and administration, showing how to use tools in a gender-responsive way.

Challenges related to women's participation include cultural and traditional restrictions, which suggests the need for a more critical focus on patriarchy as the underlying cause of discrimination. Poverty and low levels of education are also factors. One survey respondent noted that participation of women in the Programme is limited to a number of known names, and that more "space should be given to juniors to deliver their messages". Rural women and those working in the agricultural sector are seen by some as not being sufficiently present in Programme activities. One person noted, however, that many more women are engaged in the Arab Land Initiative compared to men in CSOs, research and capacity development.

Youth

There seems to be agreement that the Programme's involvement of youth, and the impact on youth, has been less advanced, although there has been no age analysis of people involved in events. However, the Programme's call for research innovation projects which formed part of the Programme activities was

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[39]https://arabstates.gltn.net/2023/01/17/the-iraqi-authorities-officially-recognize-the-housing-land-and-property-rights-of-the-yazidi-minority/

specifically targeted to young researchers from the region and was significantly over-subscribed. Over 80 people responded to the call, with 17 receiving research grants.

Survey respondents scored youth's participation in the work of the Arab Land Initiative, with 18% rating it as very high, 20% as high, and 27% as don't know. Looking at the impact of the Programme's work on youth in the region, 21% felt it was very high, and 21% that it was high, with 29% indicating that they did not know.

Table 7: Survey respondents' perceptions of Programme performance regarding youth

Impact area	Score					
	Number (%) survey respondents[40] scoring performance (1 = Negligible to 5= Very high)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Youth's participation	7 (13%)	5 (9%)	8 (14%)	11 (20%)	10 (18%)	15 (27%)
Impact on youth	2 (4%)	5 (9%)	9 (16%)	12 (21%)	12 (21%)	16 (29%)

A survey respondent cautioned the Arab Land Initiative to be aware of "youth washing", referring to having youth engaged more as a Public Relations exercise than in any meaningful manner. They felt that promoting youth and access to land should be a priority, but they are not aware of that in the Arab Land Initiative's programming. Another felt that the youth issue is still not directly addressed, yet the inclusion of youth-related organisation is vital, particularly when civil society is weak.

One of the young interviewees involved in one of the Programme's research projects felt that it had created a very rich repository of information and informed her PhD topic. The impact on youth is also felt through improvements in university teaching, such as partnering with universities to develop a broader land governance component. In Iraq this included the Minister of Education approving a Master's programme on land governance at university. One interviewee explained that she teaches at university and has incorporated the results of her AoC into her teaching. Another indicated that her work on an AoC project has supported and benefited her other work, enriching her university teaching. The Birzeit/University of West England twining arrangement led to a programme being developed to support public and private sector needs in the land sector in Palestine, build Higher Education capacity and strengthen international links.

Displaced people

Interviewees had different perceptions of the extent and success of the Programme's focus on displaced people. Work on displaced people includes that on refugees, and in Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, and Sudan, where three projects target refugees and displaced people, all of which has been very important to highlight the role of land and tenure in peacebuilding. However, this work has apparently not been done in a structured way, or through direct consultation.

The survey asked respondents about the participation of vulnerable groups in the Programme, and about the impact of Programme activities on vulnerable groups. A high proportion of respondents indicated that they did not know to both questions – 41% and 43% respectively. 29% of people rated the participation of vulnerable people as high or very high, and 11% as negligible. Looking at impact of the Programme's work on vulnerable people, 28% rated it as high or very high, and 9% as negligible.

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[40] N=56

Table 8: Survey respondents' perceptions of Programme performance regarding vulnerable people

Impact area	Score					
	Number (%) survey respondents[41] scoring performance (1 = Negligible to 5= Very high)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Vulnerable group's participation	6 (11%)	3 (5%)	8 (14%)	10 (18%)	6 (11%)	23 (41%)
Impact on vulnerable groups	5 (9%)	3 (5%)	8 (14%)	8 (14%)	8 (14%)	24 (43%)

Comments related to this included the fact that vulnerable stakeholders are less involved, not enough is done to protect vulnerable groups, small farmers have not benefited, indigenous people are not well represented or participating, nor are pastoralists. One person felt that the poor have been assisted by the Programme, by "paying for documents and transportation fees". However, it was acknowledged that dealing with national administrations on land and displacement is not easy, and that it is "too much to be handled in such a small Arab Land Initiative compared to the real challenges". As indicated earlier, the Programme is not currently designed to work directly at grassroot level. It is rather aimed at regional and national stakeholders involved in land management and administration, such as ministries, municipalities, land-related professionals, academics and civil society organisations, with the assumption being that this will lead to a change in mindsets, behaviour and work, which will then, in turn impact the end beneficiaries who are the people living in the Arab region. The Programme is therefore based on the idea that the Arab Land Initiative will work with national and regional champions who, in turn, will function as 'intermediaries' and will be able to better discuss with the grassroots.

Key areas

The survey asked respondents to score the Programme's performance on the following key areas, again with 1 being negligible and 5 being very high:

Table 9: Survey respondents' perceptions of Programme performance regarding key thematic areas

Key area	Score[42]					
	Number (%) survey respondents[43] scoring (1 = Negligible to 5 = Very high)					
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't know
Land and conflict/HLP	2 (4%)	0	11 (20%)	20 (36%)	15 (27%)	8 (14%)
Women's land rights	2 (4%)	5 (9%)	5 (9%)	19 (34%)	15 (27%)	10 (18%)
Land, climate change, land degradation neutrality	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	16 (29%)	15 (27%)	9 (16%)	13 (23%)
Pastoral, range lands, water rights	2 (4%)	5 (9%)	13 (23%)	15 (27%)	7 (13%)	14 (25%)
Fit-for-purpose land administration	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	11 (20%)	16 (29%)	13 (23%)	13 (23%)

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[41] Total number of respondents =56

[42] Total number of respondents = 56.

[43] Total number of respondents =56

Land indicators & monitoring land tenure security	2 (4%(	4 (7%)	13 (23%)	15 (27%)	10 (18%)	12 (21%)

Respondents were most familiar with the Programme's work on land and conflict/HLP, and women's land rights. For these key areas over 50% of survey respondents scored performance very high or high.

The Reference group asked for the evaluation to specifically consider how the Programme had dealt with the issue of pastoralists and rangelands. One quarter of survey respondents did not know, while 40% rated it as high or very high. Some interviewees felt that the Programme pays no attention to this and needs to prioritise it, with some suggesting that the Programme should set up a dedicated team to investigate this issue to come up with solutions as it varies from country to country. The region is greatly affected by climate change, land degradation and increasing desertification, and needs both land and water management, all issues associated with pastoralists and rangelands.

Some interviewees felt that the Programme is working on this topic, especially in North Africa. The Expert group meeting on pastoral land was seen as being very important, building networks. Some work has been done in Palestine with Bedouins. The topic was given some space in the Arab Land conference, and some publications touch on this. The AoC on Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change was a desktop study which dealt with this issue and was very successful but requires ethnographic research to go further. The UN-Habitat office in Sudan has worked on this topic, mapping 20 villages, looking at conflict between farmers and migratory routes to set clear village boundaries and buffer zones were set in a participatory way, with farmers and pastoralists jointly demarcating the boundaries. They are developing a manual for mapping villages. GLTN colleagues assisted with customising a system to capture a village/community type ownership, rather than individual ownership. Some of the results of the work done in Sudan are on the Arab Land Initiative website. Although it is seen as good to have raised the issue of pastoralists and rangelands, it is unlikely that the Programme will lead on it as there are several other organisations focusing on this in the region.

4.3.6 Sustainability

Sustainability focuses on whether the Programme's benefits will last, and includes considering expansion, extension, scaling-up, and replication of the initiative. Part of this relates to the extent to which partners have been able to design, implement, sustain and build on the capacities developed through the activities implemented during the Programme, and to what extent the Programme has been able to implement capacity development and learning exchange effectively, including across the countries.

Partnerships

The Programme is based primarily on loose, informal partnership arrangements, working mainly with more than one person in each organisation to promote sustainability. The Programme management believes that there are gaps, and that they "have about 60 – 70% of the people who need to be there". Others suggested that there's a need to increase the involvement of civil society, and to investigate the possibility of the Programme establishing national multi-actor land-related platforms, which are very inclusive of communities. However, one interviewee believes that there is some level of vulnerability and risk associated with partners and cautioned the Programme to be careful not to broaden partnership too much or too

unpredictably, saying that adding new partners needs to be very measured. To promote sustainability, and to ensure that the activities of the Programme do, in fact, bring about the desired changes in the long-term, it's important to involve governments in the region at a high level. Bringing in some decision makers in a few key countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Algeria, Jordan, Bahrain could possibly influence decision makers in other countries. The suggestion was made that the Programme needs to involve the Arab League, and the Union for the Mediterranean (UFM).

The design of the Programme consciously addressed the issue of sustainability through the decision to enter into AoCs with organisations from within the region to build and expand their capacity and knowledge on land governance, and to encourage collaboration across the region. A total of 57 applications were received in response to the call for proposals, with nine AoCs being signed[44]. In addition, contracts were signed for four twinning relationships between organisations in the region and others, some international. This approach is widely seen as having been extremely successful in addressing the Programme's priorities. Of particular value were the meeting of all implementing partners (i.e. in the AoCs and the twinning relationships) at the outset of the projects, and the knowledge exchange event at the end of the project. These put people in contact with other people who were working on similar topics across the region. Translation of project reports into Arabic has enhanced dissemination of the material.

Implementing partners (in the AoCs and twinning relationships) pointed to the fact that their projects had meant building trust with their partners, had alerted them to others working in the same field in different countries, allowing them to share experiences and learn. Most people interviewed felt that their work on the project has benefitted their other work. Several indicated that they have concrete plans to work together with their partners in future. Others explained that the project has increased coordination in UN sister agencies and NGOs (e.g. in Syria), and other organisations such as NELGA. Several implementing partners expect their involvement to lead to further long-term collaborations. The feedback session sharing results and lessons learned provided a valuable opportunity for cross-fertilisation of ideas.

Some of the comments from implementing partners explain these experiences:

- We had a true genuine partnership with UN-Habitat. We were really analysing the root causes of the problems. It was very consultative, very participatory.
- Our sentiments were respected and supported by the Programme and people in the region. We really made an effort to prepare, to discuss with experts who have first-hand regional knowledge. The consultations opened up more trust and networking beyond the research itself – leading to more room for further collaborative work.
- Often people don't work in a sensitive manner in conflict zones, but this study is going in the direction of sustainable and just peace in the region.
- The Programme leadership made it much more effective and enjoyable. They have a lot of experience in the region. For us (an AoC) it was more of a partnership, a very dignified partnership.
- The Programme leadership facilitated discussion between us and our partner to find common ground to be able to work together. We generated great results and learned that the same problems exist in different contexts, but with specific local differences.
- Our project wasn't just capacity building, it included a research element and knowledge exchange, on a broad spectrum from short professional courses to an accredited version (with the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors), to proposing a new master's course.
- There were several calls to increase this type of work as "co-working together adds vibrancy".

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[44] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2020)

Suggestions to promote the work done in these projects included that the recommendations are implemented in pilot projects, and that more dissemination events are held to policy makers, academic institutions, and, importantly, media agencies. There's also a need to do further analysis of successful efforts of conflict resolution in the region and internationally. Some people suggested that there needs to be greater diversity in partners.

Leadership involvement

To promote sustainability, and to ensure that the activities of the Programme do, in fact, bring about the desired changes in the long-term, it's important to involve governments in the region at a high level. The extent of involvement of senior government leaders with the Programme varies across countries. "Consultations with policy makers would be great, turn these findings into training, hold dissemination activities to sensitise policy makers to try to impact policies on a regional and national level." Some pointed to the fact that it is important to have the backing of the UN-Habitat in order to push for change at higher levels, that this is not possible through NGOs.

A number of interviewees bemoaned the fact that top decision makers are not involved in Programme activities, and that this gap means that long term change in land governance is less likely. Suggestions to address this included holding more specific workshops, training and meetings, rather than regional events, and meeting parliamentarians to explain the Programme so that they go to government with sub-regional insight. In contrast, however, many others noted that getting government authorities a bit more comfortable with discussing these issues has been a big step, and that they succeeded in not only changing the perspective of technical staff, but also that of officers who conduct the planning and take decisions, to guide them and empower them. "Empowerment of decision-makers and a change in perspective of technical staff" has been important. In one AoC, local authorities and decision makers were invited to participate and their involvement "has changed government mindsets, and increased understanding and knowledge of land governance and land tenure security". As a result, new strategic plans have been developed, incorporating the knowledge gained from workshops. Another indicated that their knowledge of other countries has increased, "as has that of our government".

It is important to note that, despite the perceptions of some respondents, there are several key instances where senior decision makers have been involved, and successfully so. These include the following:

- The government of Bahrain sent representatives to two training events in 2022. In addition, representatives from the private sector in Bahrain took part in an EGM on the role of the private sector/real estate developers in land governance, that was held in Kuwait.
- In Iraq the importance of land governance and related issues was brought to high-ranking levels, as far as the Prime Minister, and included minority land rights. The Ministry of Education was also involved as they plan a new Master's programme on land governance in Iraq.
- One of the twinning arrangements involved very senior leadership in Palestine, the Palestine Land Authority (PLA) with the Minister of the PLA endorsing their application, and the PLA's Head of Planning department being kept informed throughout the project, "It was a golden opportunity for us, land management in the PLA was scattered, now it is structured".
- An interviewee who has been involved in various different aspects of the Programme and its development previously worked in cabinet for the Ministry of Housing in Egypt and maintains contacts at high levels of government. She suggested that opening up calls for AoCs and twinning relationships to government, in line with CoP 27 agreements, could be useful in drawing in senior decision-makers.

- In one of the AoCs, in Yemen, senior level government officials were involved, up to the Prime Minister. This was seen as a very successful engagement, as "land is a very sensitive issue. It required high levels of coordination and trust between us and local authorities. But after that, a representative of the Minister said we needed this".
- In Yemen, the Deputy Minister of Judicial Affairs, a very powerful level, was sent to attend HLP training. The key focal point with regards to HLP from Iraq also attended. Very positive feedback to the training was given.
- In one of the twinning arrangements, very high levels of government and decision makers in Lebanon took part - the Acting Director, Ministry of Finance, Housing Agency, Municipal Council of Beirut and someone from CDR, the highest planning agency in Lebanon. The Deputy Minister of Finance is now trying to work with the Lincoln Institute and the Minister to set up a new valuation system for land. "He needed support from this process to be able to do this".
- An interviewee remarked that the Programme has worked with governments and land officials in Palestine, Yemen, Iraq and some from Bahrain, but not from Dubai and Saudi Arabia and also has a good relationship with land departments in Libya and Sudan.

Institutional structure

A number of interviewees raised the future institutional structure of the Programme in relation to its sustainability. Some felt that there is a need for a more permanent body to organise the work of the Arab Land Initiative and that "it shouldn't be up to GLTN/UN-Habitat". One interviewee remarked that he had hoped, at the Reference Group meeting in Beirut, that an intra-Arab permanent body would be established, along the lines of the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) in Europe, who presented at that meeting. In line with this, another remarked that for the Arab Land Initiative to become sustainable it needed to change its format. One of the international partners noted that there was much discussion at the 2019 Reference Group meeting about whether or not the Arab Land Initiative should be formalised. He points out that while that might well contribute to sustainability it could also preclude some governments from participating. Another discussed the idea of establishing an Arab Academy of Land as an institution, which he said has been agreed to by decision makers but is limited by resources.

Someone noted that "removing UH-Habitat/GLTN as middle-people would be good, encouraging more peer-to-peer knowledge transfer", and another that the Programme needs a governing body or "serious advisory committee" to guide and plan the Programme, with voice in its design. However, others felt differently, that GLTN/UN-Habitat is well placed to convene the necessary actors, as they have a good way of connecting to governments, which is easier than for civil society or NGOs.

Several people indicated that these four years of the Programme have been the initial phase, and that a phase 2 is necessary in order to establish all aspects of the Programme's work. Some called for strengthened ownership by the region, particularly in subsequent phases. This relates to the earlier discussion of the role of the Reference Group. Someone felt that the Programme is run as a UN-Habitat only project, and that GLTN/UN-Habitat should rather operate only as a secretariat, with a Board of Arab partners playing a more active role in guiding it. However, there was an acknowledgement that it is probably too early for that, and that the status quo is best at the moment, with plans to move to greater regional ownership in Phase 3. It seems clear, given the political tensions and complexities in the region, and the fundamental role that land, land governance and land ownership plays in these conflicts, that it is beneficial to continue to operate under the auspices of the UN for at least the medium term. It may, however, be useful to clarify the role of the

Reference Group and the criteria for selection of members to ensure that members are directly engaged with organisations in their own countries.

Funding

A critical aspect of sustainability is funding. It is hard to expand and increase Programme activities because of resource constraints. Several interviewees noted that many platforms like this having difficulties getting funding as many donors are inclined to fund concrete activities to show results. They suggest that it would be useful to investigate getting more regionally focussed funding, and that there are some governments in middle income countries who may be in a position to do that. In this regard, diversification is important, and "forces you to show your added value in the region".

There are concerns around the transition to the next Phase. The UN Secretariat relies completely on project funding. If they don't get a decision on continuation of funding very soon, they might lose staff, and will then need to rebuild internal capacity.

4.3.7 Integration of cross-cutting issues

The Terms of Reference outlines cross-cutting issues in the Programme as addressing the needs of women and youth, and other vulnerable groups, looking at women´s land rights, challenges faced by pastoralists and the conflicts related to pastoral and rangelands, and water rights, grassroots engagement, and the impact of the political context. Most of these have been discussed in the preceding sub-section. In much of the Programme's work considerations such as women and women's land rights underpin activities, even though they might not constitute a specific focus. For example, one of the AoCs, on land and conflict, noted that criteria such as gender emerged as an issue in some areas, but wasn't a specific focus of the project as a root cause of conflict.

This discussion focuses on the impact of the political context, as an issue which underlies all the work of the Programme, but which manifests in different ways in different countries, requiring careful and informed attention before implementation. The political context of the region has a huge impact on how the Programme operates, where it operates, the challenges it faces, the active engagement of stakeholders, and the extent to which it can achieve results. In this regard, the "Programme has far exceeded expectations" and interviewees felt that the Programme is doing extremely well, particularly given the context in which it operates. An important point raised was that a politically sensitive system such as the Arab region prefers quiet diplomacy, therefore things move more slowly which can be frustrating.

When organising the second Arab Land conference, a few countries showed interest or committed and then withdrew (e.g. Morocco, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia). As a result, it was then held in Cairo, hosted by the Ministry of Housing of Egypt.

It is important to be sensitive to differences between countries and to listen, to work through country programmes using local networks and colleagues. Several interviewees noted that the Programme and/or UN-Habitat is trusted by many in the region and is therefore well-placed to raise issues and mediate difficult discussions. Some interviewees pointed out that, given the fraught regional political context, having the Programme under the GLTN/UN-Habitat umbrella offers a good departure point for engaging in these types of discussions. Being under the umbrella of the UN "gives us huge leverage, accessibility, neutrality, and

accountability". UN partners are likely to have better entrance into discussions with policy makers and engaging governments, whereas NGOs can have a more difficult time doing that. Without the role of the UN it seems highly unlikely that many of the issues could be raised in countries where the Programme operates, like Palestine and Syria. Where networks are established it's usually easier to feed into e.g. UN system practices in terms of field operation.

Setting the basics for developing tools for land conflict is seen as key to dealing with land governance in the region, while acknowledging that "working on data and linking it to democracy is important and very difficult to do". In some countries addressing issues such as land rights is difficult as land relates to power, security, and institutional dominance. It's important to make officials understand that being involved won't undermine their power. In these cases, it can sometimes be better to focus on the more technical aspects of land governance and land administration. As one interviewee noted "(some) governments get panicked when it's presented as a human rights issue. It's better to try to open up communication through a technical perspective". Related to this, some interviewees noted that more sensitive issues can often be discussed more openly at a regional level, rather than at country level, as taking some issues to country level makes them very political, giving the specific examples of women and displaced people.

Palestine is an example where it is difficult for the Programme to have partners. However, they have successfully completed an AoC on land, women empowerment and socio-economic development through the Union of Agriculture Work Committee, and a twinning relationship on land registration and valuation between Birzeit university, Palestine and University of West England with the latter involving senior leadership as outlined above. In Syria interviewees noted that even to have a joint programme was risky and they had to meet outside the country. For the most part, solutions have been found to political sensitivities, although it is necessary to be pragmatic and flexible.

4.4 Lessons Learned

The first four years of the Programme's implementation has yielded some important lessons to inform its future development.

1. *Pace of implementation*
   It's important to recognise that the objectives of the Programme are ambitious, and that a longer time frame is needed to really see results. Implementation requires patience and sensitive negotiation and communication. "We need to entrench the value that slow and steady can work, based on persistence and treading softly." "It's an ongoing process, we need to revisit and evaluate for continuous improvement.

2. *Regional approach*
   Having a regional approach rather than one focused on individual countries can be less threatening to decision-makers and can foster collaboration and learning. The Programme has shown how sensitivities around land governance and land conflicts can be mitigated somewhat through adopting a regional approach. Taking sensitive topics like women's land rights, or displaced people, to national level often makes it become more political, and can be better discussed at regional level.

3. *Confidence building*

A key aspect of capacity development is building confidence, which has been done in many of the Programme's activities, acknowledged by several interviewees, e.g. "we are not alone any more", our involvement "shows us that we are going in the right direction", it has been "inspiring and encouraging".

4. *Increased knowledge of the region*

   Interacting with people from other countries in the region has increased people's knowledge of the different countries in the region and the issues they face, often highlighting the similarities between countries, and prompting the mutual development of solutions. "Learning about situations in other countries has helped us and presented solutions".

5. *Partnerships, collaboration and networking*

   Organisations and experts from the region were consciously put in the lead for implementation of activities which increased regional ownership of the work, developed regional capacity and produced field-based content. As outlined earlier, this is key to the Programme's sustainability, and ensured that project funds are invested and remain in the region[45].

   Working with partners has, for the most part, had benefits beyond the immediate project, such as building trust, increased collaboration, further work for the partners in the region, and increased interest from others, building capacity and knowledge. Identifying people across the region "who really know what they're doing" and working with them has been very successful. "From one of the twinning initiatives, "this initiative has provided a strong base for future cooperation including specific course development and the opportunity to undertake future collaborative research and to expand the twinning links across different faculty".

   It's important to recognise at the outset that the expectation for deliberations is mainly to build a common understanding. The deliberative process is important, and "highlights the power of collaborating even if we disagree". Bringing in different perspectives and outside experience has also been important and has allowed self-reflection.

6. *Capacity building*

   Capacity development works but even though it's had to monitor the impact there are some concrete examples such as training people who now lead large programmes at country level, working with UTI who now leads land-related projects. One of the younger interviewees remarked that in the first workshop in Cairo in 2020 there was no common basic understanding of land governance and land tenure security, but through capacity building this has now happened, and "now we're working at the international level with international groups". However, capacity building to bring about real change can take time, e.g. "working with women in capacity building training needs to continue beyond short-term projects to really increase empowerment and make lasting change".

7. *Targeting young researchers*

   Targeting young researchers (<35 years old) for innovative research projects helps mobilise them, and increases overall engagement in the region, with positive implications for change in the longer term. Linked to this has been the importance of including relevant material in university teaching. This is happening but the capacity of academics needs to be increased, and more programmes on land governance need to be included in undergraduate studies; many universities "have nothing". This should include components on appropriate technology to be used in land governance. Some interviewees noted the need to engage more with universities on a partnership basis.

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   [45] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2022)

8. *Communication, publications and dissemination*

Communication is very important, using experiences and data to "go on the ground to tell the story". One interviewee noted that "to increase communication you need to reduce the UN type approach, and adopt a more dynamic, more fresh approach, bringing it beyond partners into the public domain." Publishing research reports and material on the Arab Land Initiative website has been very successful, raising confidence. Implementing partners were very pleased to see their final reports being published, with the main messages extracted for dissemination, and noted that "We're proud to share our stuff published on the website", increasing knowledge across the region, and promoting a broader perspective beyond a local or national focus, e.g. "now we're more present at the regional level".

Case studies are very useful and more need to be written, documenting what is happening, presenting innovations and solutions, and good practices. This could include comparisons to international examples, to ensure that the region benefits from international as well as regional experiences. An example given was the need to document more positive examples of successful access of women and youth to land, showing not only how they have access to land, but also that they can now do something constructive with their land.

Data is important to help tell the stories, and to plan and implement actions. There needs to be an improvement on using land data. Linked to this, it is important not to rely only on government-produced data only, as it can be misleading.

9. *Technical vs. "soft" issues*

There's a need to use technology for land management and administration, and in some countries a more technical approach is seen as less threatening than one which places the issues of land rights upfront. Tools need to be responsive and adaptive. There should be increased focus on deploying technology and ICT in land governance, with appropriate training at universities. However, conflict sensitivity and "softer" tools are important too and need more elaboration and awareness, for work on the ground.

10. *Importance of legal issues*

Despite analysis and support from the Programme, legal issues are of concern. The legal context for HLP rights is extremely difficult to decipher, multi-layered, and complex, making it very difficult to understand. This limits the extent to which the Programme can provide support. More work on this aspect is needed.

11. *Prioritise issues and focus activities*

At the moment the Programme addresses a multitude of issues in numerous ways, which has been important in the first phase. However, it may be necessary in the future to focus more on specific priorities, to consolidate, to ensure sustainability and more targeted impact.

12. *Improvements in general work practices*

Being provided with well-structured and accessible support to implementing partners while some implementing partners conduct their projects has reportedly led to improved coordination of their work in general. In one case an implementing partner reported that their experience had helped them to develop their own internal due diligence processes for future partners and contractors that they might work with.

13. *Institutional nature of the Programme*

An interviewee noted that the narratives of many international organisations can sometimes be polarising, being seen as western, or judging the region from the outside. It is recognised that it's important that the Programme is driven from the region although, at the same time, political sensitivities could make this difficult. For now, having the Programme under the auspices of the UN seems more likely to promote coordination and collaboration.

Adopting a programme management structure that involved joint reporting to both the region and head office works well administratively and in terms of funding and it is worth replicating.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

The Arab region is politically complicated and faces many challenges such as conflict, war, drought and poverty, all inextricably linked to land. Over the last four years, the initial work of the Arab Land Initiative has been extended and deepened by the Arab Land Programme on good land governance in support of inclusive development, peace and stability. This provided catalytic funding to develop the land portfolio in the region. One of the Programme's biggest successes has been tabling land as a fundamental issue in the region, an issue underlying many of the region's challenges, emphasising the contribution of the land sector to building peace and gender equity in the region. This has been followed by developing activities to increase awareness and collaboration and build capacity across the region.

This very ambitious Programme has been conducted by a small core team supported by consultants, advisors and implementing partners. Despite having limited resources and only operating over a relatively short period of time, the first phase of the Programme has achieved great successes in many respects.

The evaluation methodology consisted of a desktop review, key stakeholder interviews and a user survey. Assessment was based on the UN-Habitat criteria of relevance and coherence, efficiency and administration, effectiveness, impact outlook, sustainability, and integration of cross-cutting issues. For more details see Annexure 5. In this regard, the assessment found the following:

- *Relevance and coherence:* The Programme is well-aligned to global development frameworks, to UN-Habitat and GLTN's strategic plans, and donor development priorities, as well as to global trends in the land sector. It very clearly demonstrates that it is focused on addressing regional needs and gaps in the land sector, and if of direct and immediate benefit to its intended beneficiaries and partners.

- *Efficiency and administration:* The Programme has dual reporting lines to the regional office and headquarters, an institutional structure which has reportedly helped in terms of bureaucratic efficiency. The Programme is managed by a relatively small, stretched core team supported by advisors and 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 $2,977,701, or 99.06% of Programme funds over the four year period, widely viewed as money well-spent. Turn-around times for research could be increased.

- *Effectiveness and impact outlook:* During this first phase of the Programme, all planned activities have taken place, with planned outputs produced. To a large extent these have achieved their anticipated or desired outcomes. Evidence for this is provided through a review of documents, and from respondent testimony. See Table 3 for details of outputs and outcomes of the Programme activities. 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 of the Programme 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 addresses aspects of sustainability through its partners, advisors and investment in the region, and through its AoCs. The involvement of some senior decision makers in Programme activities also promotes sustainability. Funding certainty is a challenge in the long-term.

- *Integration of cross-cutting issues:* Key cross-cutting issues are women and gender, youth, vulnerable groups, and the impact of the challenging political context. The Programme has done very well to address 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 is a cross-cutting challenge which is taken into consideration in Programme activities.

During this initial phase, one of the major components of the Programme has been raising the issues around, and importance of, land governance and tenure security in the Arab region. Now that the issue has been identified and defined, a network of key stakeholders in the sector built, and a repository of relevant material developed, it is important to take this further in a second phase, to continue sharing and enhancing ideas, and to come up with, and test, possible solutions to the prevailing challenges around land governance in the region. There is overwhelming support for at least one more phase of the Programme, and a Phase 2 is strongly recommended. Going forward into the second phase, it will be important to focus attention on the core issues, consolidate learning and experiences, and deepen engagement with decision-makers and implementers, to see concrete positive results.

5.2 Respondent suggestions

Respondents were asked to suggest any new or additional activities, and for any general recommendations for the next steps of the Programme's development. Most respondents recommended continuing and increasing existing efforts, such as more specific tools on land governance and land management, more practical support to each country, more support to land professionals (e.g. land surveyors), increased and reinforced training, more workshops to increase partners' capacity, greater involvement of youth in implementation, a clearer focus on climate change and natural resources, particularly with regard to land degradation, water rights and water management in terms of land, and pastoralists and rangelands, an increased focus on legal and policy issues, and more on land valuation and land value capture. These are outlined in the discussion below. However, several people cautioned against adding any new activities given that the Programme is still young and needs to consolidate. This is a valid point and it seems prudent in Phase 2 to concentrate on consolidation and extension of the activities conducted in Phase 1, rather than expanding into new areas.

5.2.1 Enhance social change approach

The suggestion was made that it would be useful to strengthen program activities to advance the social change approach, acknowledging that the Arab region is very different from others. Such an approach emphasises communication and community engagement in developing social change programmes to bring about change in institutions and cultures, such as the overall system of land governance and tenure security.

5.2.2 Pressing need for a third Arab conference

A key recommendation was the need to hold a third Arab Land conference, which is seen as very important to continue momentum, increase awareness and visibility of the issues, and deepen the Programme. Many respondents pointed to the success of the first two Arab conferences, particularly the second one, which was blended, both in-person and virtual. They urged that a third conference be held, again blended, allowing in-person meetings which are generally preferred as a means of increasing collaboration through both formal and informal engagements, but also having a virtual component which broadens participation extensively, and reduces costs of participation for many who would otherwise not be able to attend.

5.2.3 Increase focus on specific areas

Although there is general consensus that the Programme has made great strides in addressing women's land rights, and in involving women in its activities, people indicated that this needs to be increased, and material updated regularly, with increased focus and support from different stakeholders.

During the first phase, the Programme developed a joint paper on water, with FAO, and produced a report on land degradation, and has done extensive work on fit for purpose land administration. Future engagement should increase the focus on several areas, according to respondents. These include pastoral and water issues, including water harvesting, desertification, and drought; land, conflict and climate change; and challenges of the green transition; vulnerable groups; and youth, particularly those who have been trained and participated in Programme initiatives in the first phase. A respondent suggested that the Programme should study the ownership problematic in Libya, and another advocated for promoting legal change in Arab countries with regard to women's rights in line with the recent initiatives in Tunisia.

5.2.4 Increase attention to legislative issues

A number of respondents recommend increasing attention on legislation around land and tenure as it is a key component of land tenure and home ownership, and often hinders efforts to reform. Recommendations included the need for stronger regulatory guidance and the creation of tailored, appropriate and sensitive platforms.

5.2.5 Increase engagement with different sectors

Several people noted the need to build long term sustainability, engaging more with donors, including not only accessing funds, but also looking at how to support governments in relation to land.

Greater efforts to engage with academic institutions, and to bring government officials and decision makers into the Programme would be likely to have greater impacts. There is a need to increase alliances within the UN system. Someone urged for more cooperation in North Africa through the NELGA Centre of Excellence. Another suggested that including voluntary organisations for professional evaluation, such as EvalYemen, as implementing partners at local and national levels would ensure greater impact. A further suggestion around implementing partners was that the criteria for selection of participants should be improved.

5.2.6 Implementation of solutions

Comments around more concrete work included the need to now show the real implementation of solutions, not just theoretical aspects; carrying out feasibility studies of what has already been accomplished to identify options; and conducting pilot projects.

5.2.7 Extend training

Understanding that the stakeholders involved in the Programme's various activities come from different backgrounds and have different levels of understanding of the land sector, the suggestion was made that training is provided to everyone to ensure the same basic understanding. This could also be addressed by developing a basic training manual for the region which could be adapted for specific countries. One of the people involved in a twinning arrangement suggested the use of game playing as a method of assessing the land sector and land values, to show how changes in laws impact land values. Several interviewees were successfully involved in delivering training in Phase 1 of the Programme and are keen to continue doing so.

Several respondents indicated the need to develop training programmes that deal with land issues, aimed at municipal officials. On the other hand, a respondent noted that sometimes mixing government officials and members of civil society is problematic, sometimes making it hard for CSOs to speak up, and therefore censoring their input. It could be beneficial in some contexts to have some dedicated sessions for CSOs to be able to speak freely when raising their concerns, and after this merge this work with government.

5.2.8 Deepen research

Several interviewees commented on the need to increase and deepen research, develop more publications and increase dissemination of results. Suggestions made included further research into the application of the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) which has been applied in 15 or more places and could provide lessons on the way local land records can be developed. The point was made that it would be very valuable for the Programme to now move to tying learnings together, lifting the findings to a level where the designs are more robust. For example, in Iraq, as outlined earlier, the Programme successfully pushed for the incorporation of Yazidi land certificates into the land registry, following their research, with the government recently officially recognising Yazidi these occupancy records as full property titles. On a continuum of rights, in Syria multiple types of evidence are needed to claim ownership; in Yemen traditional authorities create the evidence and are part of the system which gets lifted by a lawyer into a land registry. Investigations of what factors make that successful would be valuable, as would increased comparative research along these lines across the region.

5.2.9 Move to include work at national level

Some interviewees commented on the need to supplement the regional work by also going to a more sub-regional or national level. This included splitting the region into two, Gulf and North Africa, or into francophone and anglophone, as this can affect land management. A more ambitious suggestion was made to divide the region into sub-regions with local coordinators each being responsible for about five or six countries. This seems a bit premature and is likely to be resource-intensive, possibly diluting the overall momentum and impact of the Arab Land Initiative as it is currently configured. Suggestions to establish national land coalitions, at country level, were also made, such as the recent one launched in Palestine. An interviewee indicated the need to programmatically come together more, including at country level, for example through a shared folder with documents listing activities and time frames.

5.2.10 Reference group

Several recommendations were made regarding the institutional structure of the Programme. This included "strengthening the advisory board so that they discuss the workplan, approve it, guide implementation etc, functioning as a Board". Along with this was the suggestion to narrow down the Programme's activities by prioritizing two or three focus areas which should be done by the Reference Group, functioning as an advisory Board. Building serious partnerships with governments and including government representatives in the advisory Board would be likely to promote success.

5.2.11 Increase advocacy

A need was expressed for greater advocacy at the highest levels, and for more mainstream media involvement in dissemination and awareness raising. Someone suggested that the Programme "do podcasts that shed light on the common issues of the region especially climate change related ones." To improve communication within the network it was suggested that a list of annual activities, their objectives and targets, is published on the website.

5.2.12 Future involvement of respondents

Respondents were asked about their contributions to the Arab Land Initiative, and if they would like to contribute further, and if so, in what way. Over half of survey respondents elaborated on positive ideas on how they would like to contribute, suggesting that they feel a sense of ownership and personal involvement in the Programme's work. Responses included conducting training sessions, e.g. by establishing courses on land, management and GIS, teamwork in developing tools and strategies to apply both human rights and sustainable development standards to remedy land deprivation, conducting research, writing publications, holding webinars, assisting with data collection at country level, participating in online and offline events, as external advisor, developing knowledge products, sharing their community's concerns and knowledge, creating relevant university diploma/short courses, community engagement, providing professional advice in land management, and supporting policy reforms in the land sector. One respondent from a university indicated that they could assist in reformulating the terms of reference, another that they would like to contribute to framing, formulation, and actual participation, in projects, and yet another that they would be "happy to support as a Small Medium Enterprise in establishing modern land administration being policies, standards and guidelines, digital transformation, information products, revenue generation, and outreach and training". One of the implementing partners involved in an AoC said that he would like to be more involved in preparing activities in the future, building on the capacity he has developed in this Phase.

5.3 Existing proposals for Phase 2

Many of these recommendations are already reflected in the Programme's 2022 progress report which highlights the following key activities for Phase 2[46]:

- Consolidate, package and communicate the content developed to the land governance community in the region and internationally.
- Mobilise support for the way forward with current development partners and additional supporting governments and organisations, to secure the gains made and do not lose the team working on the project and the momentum created for the advancement of good land governance in the Arab region.

The proposed thematic content for Phase 2 is women's land rights, land for climate resilience and food security, fit-for-purpose land administration, land and conflict, HLP rights of displaced people for stabilization, prevention of further conflict and migration, and monitoring land governance. This would be done through increased coordination, collaboration and partnership development, contributing to and supporting partners' initiatives, regionally and nationally; further insitutionalised capacity development, building on what done and collaboration with partners, continued knowledge development and sharing including the third Arab Land Conference in 2023, bringing on board decision makers, facilitating national

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[46] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2022)

land governance engagements, continued provision of specialized technical expertise and catalysing land programmes in the region, and mobilising financial support.

5.4 Recommendations for the future

Based on the desk-top review, key stakeholder interviews and inputs from survey respondents, a set of recommendations for future programming has been developed. These move from the higher level to more practical implementation as follows:

- Programme conceptualisation
- Programme structure and management
- Partners and participants
- Practical activities such as research, training, and knowledge production
- Monitoring and evaluation

5.4.1 Programme conceptualisation

Phase 2

Phase 1 of the Programme has done very well to raise an area that has previously neglected in the region, but one that has huge ramifications for human rights, gender inclusion, peace and reconciliation, and socio-economic development. Phase 2 is necessary to consolidate the activities and findings of Phase 1, and to continue with more concrete implementation and piloting of solutions, that can be shared, disseminated and adapted to the contexts of the different countries in the region. It is therefore strongly recommended that Phase 2 of the Programme is implemented, with a view to continuing into Phase 3, depending on the outcomes of Phase 2 after two years of implementation.

Theory of change

The Programme has a clearly stated change model, and there is a very clearly and well-articulated and logical link between the Programme's theory of change, its objectives, priorities and workstreams, activities, outputs and desired outcomes. The assumption underpinning the Programme's objective and four priority areas is that if the capacity of land governance stakeholders is increased, they will become empowered land governance champions who will influence, facilitate, support and engage, including at decision-maker level, to bring about change in land governance and improve land security particularly for women, youth and displaced people. Of some concern, however, is that the Programme's change model, which appeared in a powerpoint presentation of progress in February 2022, does not seem to be included in any other Programme documents. Although it is included as part of the standard presentation of the Arab Land Initiative at every event, a couple of interviewees pointed to the need for the Programme to develop a theory of change, clearly being unaware of the fact that there is one already. Given the emphasis placed on agreeing on a theory of change in order to develop objectives, activities, outputs and outcomes, and to ensure that these are, in fact, geared towards the theory of change, it is important that the current change model be confirmed, or modified if necessary, and more widely and effectively communicated. It is recommended that this be done through consultation with a group of stakeholders including the Secretariat, the Reference

Group and possibly donors. Doing so answers the questions of why are we doing this, what do we want to change, and how do we plan to do that?

This process is also likely to clarify the Programme's mandate and demonstrate that it does not necessarily address everything related to land in the region. It also helps to ensure that all activities and outputs are geared to bringing about the desired change.

Thematic focus areas

The thematic focus areas differ slightly across Programme documents which perhaps contributes to people feeling that some issues, such as pastoral and rangelands, are not emphasised enough. In Phase 2 it is recommended that the thematic focus areas are discussed, clarified and confirmed, and communicated to key stakeholders such as members of the Reference Group and key advisors, again to ensure that people understand that the Programme does not cover all and everything to do with land.

5.4.2 Programme structure and management

Funding

To maintain continuity (particularly regarding staffing) and enhance effectiveness, it is important to increase funding certainty. It would also be useful to increase the basket of donors to the Programme. However, this is admittedly often very difficult to do, particularly with a small team already focused on getting the Programme's work done. There were some suggestions from respondents to try to get more regional funding, e.g. from middle income countries who may be able to do that. This is worth pursuing, although governments in the region face many pressing demands for funds, and may not place land and tenure issues high on their agenda, or to have the funds available to do this.

Programme structure and reporting relationships

It may be useful to develop an organogram showing the institutional structure of the Programme, how the Programme Secretariat relates to GLTN and UN-Habitat, and who is in the core team. This would be useful for prospective new donors or investors.

Reference Group

The extent and nature of involvement of members of the Reference Group varies greatly, as does their familiarity with the Programme. To a large extent this is beneficial, as management can call on different members for assistance as and when needed, according to their expertise, interest, and availability.

It would be useful to discuss and clarify the Reference Group's role, responsibilities and objectives, particularly with regard to how this relates to GLTN's Steering Committee. If there is then room to do so, consideration should be given to strengthening its role in advising and support and broadening it to include additional senior national decision makers.

It is recommended that criteria for membership of the Reference Group be developed and confirmed, such as ensuring that they are directly engaged with organisations in their own countries, or represent specific

constituencies. It would be important to ensure representation from key groups including women, youth and vulnerable groups, with a fair gender and regional representation.

Feedback

Increase the turnaround time and speed of feedback to implementing partners, such as AoCs and twinning arrangements if at all possible. It is recommended that a streamlined process be developed to do this, possibly drawing in senior consultants, current advisors or members of the Reference Group to assist.

5.4.3 Partners and participants

Arab Land Conference 3

It is strongly recommended that a third Arab land conference be held, both in-person and virtually, allowing participation to be as broad as possible.

Call for contributions to the Programme

Several respondents offered to contribute further to the Programme in different capacities. It is recommended that this be followed up e.g. by putting out a call for contributions, such as volunteer advisors, trainers, researchers.

Implementing partners: AoCs and twinning arrangements

The use of Programme funds in Phase 1 to promote and conduct research on different aspects of the land sector across the region has been very beneficial in promoting awareness, developing a pool of relevant regional resources and knowledge products, increasing regional capacity and confidence of local, and young, researchers and providing the basis for implementation of change. It is recommended that the Programme **continue contracting for research projects** such as AoCs and twinning projects. In Phase 2 it would be useful to **extend this by considering developing some longer-term research projects**, focusing on specific topics, and increasing the funding provided and duration for each, to allow for richer exploration of some topics.

It would also be useful, now that a pool of research has been compiled, to **implement pilot projects** applying the research results, developing solutions (through implementing partners), assessing results and disseminating the findings. Furthermore, based on these pilot projects, **investigate replication** and scaling up, and, when appropriate, develop plans to do this.

A very successful aspect of the Programme's strategy to contract with implementing partners in AoCs or twinning arrangements was bringing together all participants in-person at the outset, to share knowledge, explain their projects and develop a common understanding of the Programme, its objectives and how they contributed to this and to the regional land sector through their project and to follow this up with an event sharing findings once projects were concluded. This was remarked on by almost all implementing partners as having been extremely beneficial, building their capacity, and leading to collaboration beyond the Programme. It is strongly recommended that this is continued in Phase 2, and further, that an engagement

strategy is developed to maintain contact with past implementing partners (and with trainees) after their project has ended, and to promote further work together.

Discuss increasing engagement with some groups

Although some respondents felt that there is not sufficient involvement of relevant government officials and decision-makers in Programme activities, there are, in fact, several notable instances where they have been involved in various Programme activities. It is recommended that further engagement continue, such as through professional bodies, municipalities and municipal associations, national and local land and planning associations.

As already indicated, the Programme focuses on intermediate beneficiaries and by design does not engage with many very local, grassroots stakeholders. The logic is that the more local engagement will primarily be done through other organisations such as ILC. It may be useful to discuss extending this by having more direct partnerships with such organisations, or with those grassroots organisations that the Programme was involved with in Phase 1.

5.4.4 Increase advocacy

A key concept underpinning much of the Programme's work is the political dimension of land and its potential role in building peace in the region. The Programme is involved in advocacy at many levels, but it would be useful to explore whether there are other avenues for this, perhaps more mainstream media involvement in dissemination and awareness raising. Further emphasising the role of land and land governance in promoting peace could be used when approaching potential donors.

5.4.5   Monitoring and evaluation

In order to have a good sense of what is working well, and where improvements could be made, it is recommended that an ongoing system of monitoring is developed and implemented e.g. by routinely administering exit surveys after training events or research projects as a matter of standard procedure to get participant feedback. It would also be useful to try to have follow up surveys after a period of time, e.g. a year, to assess the extent to which the learnings have been applied, or research findings implemented, how, and with what results.

5.4.6 Knowledge products

The number and extent of knowledge products created in the first phase of the Programme is impressive. It is recommended that more case studies are conducted or written up that illustrate and explain successful solutions. This could include identifying particular issues and writing up international case studies to propose and research solutions within the region.

5.4.7 Training

Noting that this could be time-intensive and depends on the Programme's resources, it is recommended that training be continued in Phase 2, not only conducting new training, but also consolidating training that has

already been conducted, making efforts to follow up with past trainees to provide support, and encouraging them to apply their training.

5.4.8 Management Response and Action Plan to the Recommendations

It is recommended that Programme management develop a response and action plan to address the recommendations, such as that outlined below.

Table 10: Management Response and Action Plan to the Recommendations

Recommendation	Management response	Proposed actions	Timeframe	Responsible team	Current status	Comments on progress
Implement Phase 2						
Theory of Change – confirm and communicate						
Thematic areas - confirm						
Develop Programme organogram						
Discuss extending funding						
Discuss Reference Group role, ToR						
Increase feedback time						
Hold Arab Land Conference 3						
Follow up offers of contributions						
Continue contracting for AoC & twinning projects						
Consider developing some longer-term research projects						
Implement pilot projects, replication						
Develop strategy to maintain contact with past implementing partners & trainees						
Discuss increasing engagement with different groups – officials, grass-roots, youth						

Implement ongoing M&E					
Increase write-ups of relevant case studies					
Continue with new training and consolidate past training					

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ANNEXURE 1: RESPONDENTS INTERVIEWED

	Programme management - UN-Habitat / GLTN / Arab Land Initiative	
Robert Lewis-Lettington	Chief of Section of the Land, Housing and Shelter (UN-Habitat/GLTN)	2022-11-15
Erfan Ali	Director, Regional Office for Arab States (UN-Habitat ROAS)	2022-12-12
Ombretta Tempra	Human Settlements Officer (UN-Habitat/GLTN) - Programme manager	2022-11-23
	Donor (BMZ) and Technical Advisors to the donor (GIZ)	
Maria Wichmann	Senior Policy Advisor (BMZ)	2022-11-22
Dominik Wellmann	Policy advisor (GIZ) - Sector Project Rural Development and Agriculture	2022-11-22
	Senior Advisors Arab Land Initiative	
Willi Zimmermann	Senior Consultant (GLTN/UN-Habitat)	2022-11-11
Clarissa Augustinus	Senior Consultant	2022-11-21
Rafic Khouri	Consultant, GLTN and Union of Arab Surveyors	2022-11-23
	UN-Habitat country offices	
Musmil Qazimi	Programme Officer (UN-Habitat Iraq)	2022-11-10
Walaa Abdelwalati	Programme Officer (UN-Habitat Sudan)	2022-11-21
Ahmad El Atrash	Senior National Urban Programme Officer (UN-Habitat Palestine)	2022-11-16
Hilary Murphy	Deputy Head of Office (UN-Habitat Syria)	2022-11-21
Akram Homsy	Land specialist (UN-Habitat Syria)	2022-11-21
Hussam Suleiman	Land specialist (UN-Habitat Syria)	2022-11-21
	UN and International Organisations Partners	
Wael Zakout	Global Lead, Land Policy and Geospatial (World Bank)	2022-11-09
Annalisa Mauro	Global Network & Land Monitoring Coordinator (International Land Coalition)	2022-11-15
Rabie Morsy	Regional coordinator: Europe, Mid-East, Africa (International Land Coalition)	2022-11-15
Moha Elayachi	Professor (NELGA/IAV Hassan II University)	2022-11-09
Gemma Betsema	Senior Programme Advisor (Land at Scale)	2022-11-14
Daniel Valenghi	Regional Programme Officer, Swiss Agency for Development & Cooperation (SDC)	2022-12-06
Dina Naguib	Land Administration & Cadastre Manager (ESRI North Africa)	2022-11-17
	Implementing Partners	
Mariam Jaja	Manager, Arab Group for Protection of Nature	2022-11-29
Doaa Zayed	Project Officer, Land, women empowerment and socio-economic development	2022-11-14
Doaa El-Sherif	Director, Urban Training and Studies Institute, Egypt	2022-11-22
El Hadi Gashut	Director-General Regional Centre for Remote Sensing N African states (CRTEAN)	2022-11-18
Lamia Khemiri	Regional Centre for Remote Sensing of N African states CRTEAN	2022-11-18
Salah Abukashwa	Head, ISTIDAMA Center for Land and Environmental Governance, Sudan	2022-11-14
Salah Al-abdali	Programme Manager, International Youth Council, Yemen	2022-11-17
Petra Samaha	Beiruit Urban Lab	2022-11-17
Mona Khechen	Fellow, Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies	2022-11-17
Rania Abi Habib	Programmes manager (Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies - LCPS) AoC6	2022-11-17
Mona Fawaz	Professor in Urban Studies and Planning, American Univ of Beirut	2022-11-18
Abir Zaatari	Research Coordinator, Beiruit Urban Lab American University of Beirut	2022-11-18
Rashna Emad-Eldin	Vice Chair, BENAA Foundation	2022-11-16
Aya Tarek	Managing director, BENAA Foundation, Twinning - co-lead	2022-11-16
Salem Thawaba	Birzeit University: Architecture, Engineering and Planning Dept	2022-11-15
Richard Baldwin	Visiting professor: University of West England	2022-11-15
Grazyna Wie-jack Roy	Senior lecturer, Urban Economics and Real Estate, University of West England	2022-11-15

ANNEXURE 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

ARAB REGION PROGRAMME ON GOOD LAND GOVERNANCE IN SUPPORT OF INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT, PEACE AND STABILITY: END-OF-GRANT EVALUATION: Interview guide

<u>**Objective of Interview guide**</u>: to prepare for, provide an overall direction to the interview, and to promote discussion. It is quite likely that not every question will be asked, as the respondent may already have covered the topic fully in an earlier reply or the respondent will not know enough detail about a particular question, in which case it will be dropped.

<u>**Introduction**</u>

In 2016, a group of partners established the Arab Land Initiative, with leadership from the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), UN-Habitat and the World Bank. In 2019, the German government (BMZ) funded the Initiative through the "Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability" (the Programme). This had a duration of three-years, subsequently extended to December 2022, and enabled UN-Habitat and GLTN to scale up the work of the Arab Land Initiative in collaboration with experts and partners.

The Arab Land Initiative is now conducting an **end-of-grant independent evaluation** which aims to assess performance of the Programme and guide the shaping of the next steps of the work of the Arab Land Initiative.

As a reminder, the overall objective of the Programme is **to improve the capacity of regional and national land governance stakeholders to manage land to foster peace, stability, and socio-economic development particularly for women, youth, and displaced people.** The Programme has four key priorities translated into workstreams:

- Promote **collaboration and coordination** by increasing alignment, coordination, and collaboration on land governance in the region
- Develop, share and manage **knowledge**
- Empowerment through **capacity development** of individuals and organisations
- **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

Questions for Programme management and key contributors

1. **Introduction**
    1.1 How long have you been involved in the Arab Land Initiative, and what has been the **nature of your contribution** to the Programme?

2. **Your contribution:**
2.1 I understand that your (and part of your team's) time is not charged to this Programme. Is this correct?
2.2 Could you estimate **your and your team's in-kind / time contribution** to this programme and the work of the Arab Land Initiative in the past 4 years?
2.3 Can you say a bit more about the **type of support and contributions** provided? (strategy, political leverage, etc.)

3. **Performance**
3.1 To what extent do you think the Programme is **achieving its overall objective**? What factors have helped and/or prevented this from being accomplished?
3.2 What do you think have been the biggest **successes** of the Programme, or the most effective activity? What do you think contributed to this?
3.3 Do you see any **weaknesses or gaps** in the Programme? If so, what are they, and how could they be addressed? Do you think any activity has not been successful? Why do you think this, and what could be done to change this?
3.4 Do you think that any **new or different activities** should be implemented in future to work towards accomplishing the Programme objectives? If so, please explain.
3.5 Please indicate your overall view of the **progress** made with regard to the Programme's four priorities or workstreams. Please give examples as far as possible to support your response.

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

4. Administrative issues (efficiency) [47]

4.1 How **efficiently have resources** (financial and technical) been used to deliver the Programme's outputs and outcomes? Do you think this was justified in terms of the outputs and outcomes achieved?

4.2 Has the **institutional structure** of the Programme worked efficiently (including relationships, the Reference group, staffing, management and partnerships)? If so, what aspects have contributed to this? If not, how could it be improved?

4.3 What **challenges** were experienced in implementing the programme, and how were they overcome, or how do you think they could they be overcome?

4.4 Do you think that partners and other stakeholders understand the roles and responsibilities of the Arab Land Initiative secretariat and of others involved in implementing the Programme or benefitting from it?

5. Alignment and relevance

5.1 The programme has been designed to **align with global, regional and national priorities** for the land sector, such as SDGs, UN-Habitat Strategic Plan, GLTN, AU etc. Do you think that this has been accomplished? Do you think there are any gaps or misalignments? If so, how could these be addressed in future?

5.2 Are the planned Programme results **relevant to intended beneficiaries and partners**, and do you think they respond to gaps in the land governance sector at regional and national levels?

5.3 How have the Programme's priorities dealt with the **politically sensitive issue of land governance**, particularly at country level? If possible, please give examples.

6. Sustainability

6.1 The Programme relies on the development of different types of **partnerships**. How effective has been the engagement of partners (in the region, international partners, other UN-Habitat offices, and key stakeholders) in developing the Programme's objectives and implementation?

6.2 To what extent have **other partners been able to design, implement, sustain and build on the capacities developed** through activities implemented during the Programme?

6.3 To what extent, and how, can the results achieved by the Programme be **sustained or replicated or scaled up**?

6.4 What do you suggest would contribute to the **longer-term sustainability of the programme**?

7. Impact

7.1 The objective of the Programme specifically mentions **women, youth and displaced people**. How effective has the Programme been in ensuring the inclusion of women, youth, and other vulnerable groups? Please give examples if possible, and indicate any challenges encountered. How could these challenges be overcome in future?

7.2 Do you know how the Programme address **women´s land rights**, and challenges faced by **pastoralists and conflicts related to pastoral and rangelands, and water rights**? Please give examples if possible.

7.3 The Programme has implemented capacity development and learning exchange across the region and countries. Do you think there are **any gaps in terms of capacity development**, or specific types of capacity and learning?

7.4 Did the regional political context impact the implementation of capacity development activities? If so, how, and to what extent did this impact the overall outcomes of the Programme?

7.5 Do you think there are any **lessons learned** from the partnerships formed in the Programme that could inform the regional land sector? Please elaborate.

Do you have any additional comments or feedback?

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[47] Check if respondent is familiar with this level of detail

ANNEXURE 3: SURVEY SCHEDULE

The survey schedule was available in English and Arabic, as below.

Dear …,

The Arab Land Initiative is currently conducting a survey of land governance stakeholders in the Arab region as part of our end-of-grant evaluation of the "**Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability**".

We would greatly appreciate your help by clicking on the link below to complete the survey. This will only take few minutes of your time. Your responses will remain confidential, and they will only be used in an aggregate sense.

<div style="background:#29ABE2; text-align:center; padding:20px;">

CLICK HERE TO FILL THE SURVEY!

</div>

The Arab Land Initiative was established in 2016 by a group of partners, led by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), UN-Habitat and the World Bank, to promote equal access to land, peace, stability and economic growth in the Arab region through good land governance and transparent, efficient and affordable land administration systems.

Since 2019, the work of the Initiative has been funded by the German government (BMZ) through the "Arab Region Programme on Good Land Governance in Support to Inclusive Development, Peace and Stability". This funding has enabled UN-Habitat and GLTN to scale up the work of the Arab Land Initiative in collaboration with experts and partners. Your input can help us to assess past and present performance and better plan the implementation of the next phase of the Initiative!

Thank you very much for your cooperation and support!

Kind regards,

The Arab Land Initiatives team

You prefer to answer the survey in:

- a) English
- b) Arabic

Survey questions

PART 1 – ABOUT YOU

1. What country/ies of the Arab region do you live and/or work in? [include all the 22 countries and allow multiple choice]

2. You work as: (tick all that apply)
    a) Government officer
    b) Member of a civil society / non governmental organisation
    c) Land professional or practitioner
    d) Academic or researcher
    e) International organisation
    f) Private sector
    g) Other

3. How long have you been involved in the land sector in the Arab region?
    a. Less than 1 year
    b. 1 – 5 years
    c. > 5 years

4. How long have you been aware or involved in the work on land led by the Arab Land Initiative partners, UN-Habitat, GLTN and others?
    d. Less than 1 year
    e. 1 – 5 years
    f. > 5 years

5. How would you describe your involvement? [tick all that apply]
    a. I receive information
    b. I access and read the resources on the website
    c. I participate in online and in-person events (conference, meetings, workshops, webinars)
    d. I participate in training events (in person or online)
    e. I contribute to developing new knowledge and capacities (as trainer, researcher, peer-reviewer, speaker, etc.)
    f. I implement activities with funds provided by the Initiative
    g. I am an advisor or member of the Reference Group
    h. I am part of the UN-Habitat or GLTN or Arab Land Initiative's Secretariat team
    i. Other

PART 2 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

6. **COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION -** Among its objectives, the Arab Land Initiative aims at increasing coordination and collaboration among land stakeholders in the Arab region, for example, the two Arab Land Conferences.

    a) How would you rate the work and the success of the Arab Land Initiative towards this goal [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high+ I do not know]
    b) Have you personally taken part, contributed or benefitted from such work? [yes / no]

c) If yes, how beneficial was this for you personally and for your organisation? [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high]

d) [optional] Please give some additional information on this [include a field for respondents to type]

7. **KNOWLEDGE** - The Arab Land Initiative aims at developing and sharing knowledge on land in the region. (Examples: the website, the knowledge sharing events and expert group meetings)

a) How would you rate the work and the success of the Arab Land Initiative towards this goal [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high + I do not know]

b) Have you personally taken part, contributed or benefitted from such work? [yes / no]

c) If yes, how beneficial was this for you personally and for your organisation? [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high]

d) [optional] Please give some additional information on this. [field for respondents to type]

8. **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT** - The main focus of the Arab Land Initiative is on developing the capacities and empowering land stakeholders from the region. (Examples: training events)

a) How would you rate the work and the success of the Arab Land Initiative towards this goal [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high + I do not know]

b) Have you personally taken part, contributed or benefitted from such work? [yes / no]

c) If yes, how beneficial was this for you personally and for your organisation? [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high]

d) [optional] Please give some additional information on this [include a field for respondents to type]

9. **COUNTRY LEVEL SUPPORT** - The Arab Land Initiative provides support to selected country level land interventions.

a) Are you aware or have you taken part in such type of work? [Yes / No]

b) If yes, how would you rate the work and the success of the Arab Land Initiative towards this goal [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high + I do not know]

c) How beneficial was this for you personally and for your organisation? [On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being very low and 10 very high]

d) [optional] Please give some additional information on this [include a field for respondents to type]

PART 3 - REACH AND IMPACT ON TARGET GROUPS

WOMEN

10. How would you rate women's participation in the work of the Arab Land Initiative [on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and5 very high + I do not know)]

11. How would you rate the impact of the work done on women in the region by the Arab Land Initiative [on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being negligible and 5 very positive + I do not know)

12. [optional] Please describe what challenges have been experienced with regard to women's participation and how they could be addressed [field to type]

YOUTH

13. How would you rate youth's participation in the work of the Arab Land Initiative [on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I do not know)]

14. How would you rate the impact of the work done on youth in the region by the Arab Land Initiative [on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being negligible and 5 very positive + I do not know)]

15. [optional] Please describe what challenges have been experienced with regard to youth's participation and how they could be addressed [field to type]

VULNERABLE GROUPS

16. How would you rate the participation of vulnerable people in the work of the Arab Land Initiative [on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I do not know)

17. How would you rate the impact of the work done on vulnerable groups in the region by the Arab Land Initiative [on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being negligible and 5 very positive + I do not know)]

18. [optional] Please describe what challenges have been experienced with regard to vulnerable groups and how they could be addressed [field to type]

PART 4 – THEMATIC AREAS

How would you rate the work of the Arab Land initiative on:

19. Land and conflict / Housing Land and Property rights (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I don't know)

20. Women's land rights (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I don't know)

21. Land, climate change, land degradation neutrality (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I don't know)

22. Pastoral, range lands and water rights (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I don't know)

23. Fit-for-purpose land administration (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I don't know)

24. Land indicators and monitoring land tenure security (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being very low and 5 very high + I don't know)

PART 5 - Overall work of the Arab Land Initiative

25. What were the most successful activities undertaken and why? (list up to 3) [field for respondents to type]

26. What are the key gaps or weaknesses? How should they be addressed [field for respondents to type]

27. Please give some advice to the Arab Land Initiative for the way forward? What to do more, less, differently, continue doing. [field for respondents to type]

28. [optional] How would you personally like to be involved and contribute in the future? [field for respondents to type]

29. [optional] Please add anything else you would like to share? [field for respondents to type]

ANNEXURE 4: RELEVANCE OF THE PROGRAMME TO VARIOUS FRAMEWORKS, POLICIES AND PRIORITIES

The desktop review examined the extent to which the Programme is relevant to global programmes and frameworks, to EU and BMZ strategies and frameworks, to German development policy, to GLTN's approach and UN-Habitat's strategic plan, to regional and national development priorities, and to global trends in the land sector. Details of this review are provided below.

To global and international frameworks

The top global frameworks and programmes for development, particularly those related to human settlements and land management are the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda (NUA), and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT).

Looking at the SDGs, SDG 11 is the goal most relevant to the work of GLTN and the Programme. It aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. This includes access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums (11.1), access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons (11.2), enhanced inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management (11.3), strengthened efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage (11.4), significantly reduced number of deaths and of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations (11.5), reduced adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management (11.6), universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities (11.7), support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning (11A), substantially increased number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, holistic disaster risk management at all levels (11B), and support to least developed countries, including financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials (11C).

In addition, under SDG 1 (end poverty in all its forms) target 1.4 is particularly relevant, i.e. ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance. A key indicator for this is 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". SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) has two key relevant indicators: 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", and SDG Indicator 5.a.2. Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control.

The NUA's guiding principles are to leave no one behind, to ensure urban equity, to eradicate poverty, to achieve sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all, and to foster ecologically and

resilient cities and human settlements[48]. Countries who subscribe to the NUA have committed to provide basic services for all, ensure that all have access to equal opportunities and face no discrimination, promote measures that support cleaner cities, strengthen resilience in cities to reduce the risk and the impact of disasters, take action to address climate change by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, fully respect the rights of refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons regardless of migration status, improve connectivity and support innovative and green initiatives, and promote safe, accessible and green public spaces. Land is central to the realization of the NUA. Transparent, inclusive, participatory spatial planning and creating tenure security for all segments of society are pre-requisites for almost all, if not all, issues of the NUA[49]. Land related issues that need to be addressed include tenure security for all, including women and youth; urban land policy, legislation on land tenure, administration and management, urban spatial planning law; responsible governance of tenure; pro-poor land taxation; land value sharing; responsible land governance; fair, reliable gender-responsive, accessible way of resolving disputes over tenure rights etc.; prohibition of forced evictions; free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) in case of resettlement; and cities and climate change and disaster risk management.

The VGGTs are the internationally negotiated framework to improve land governance. They outline "principles and practices that governments can refer to when making laws and administering land, fisheries, and forests rights[50]". They aim "to improve tenure governance, with the overall goals of food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection and sustainable social and economic development[51]. They consider "existing land users' tenure rights, regardless of their legal status, recording, or other[52]". To promote implementation, they provide detail on legal, recognition and allocation of tenure rights and duties, and administration of tenure through technical guidelines on internationally accepted practices, contributing to the development of policy, legal and organizational frameworks, enhancing the transparency and functioning of tenure systems, strengthening the capacities and operations of all concerned with tenure governance, promoting the cooperation between actors[53], from gender focus to agricultural investments, forest tenure rights, to registers of rights, responses to climate change and emergencies[54], and others[55].

German development policy focuses on the global realisation of human rights, the fight against hunger and poverty, the protection of the climate and biodiversity, health and education, gender equality, fair supply chains, the use of digitalisation and technology transfer, and the strengthening of private investment to promote sustainable development worldwide[56]. Three of the four priority areas recently outlined by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development relate directly to the Programme[57]:

- Pushing back poverty and hunger (food security, social protection, decent work, living wages, training, and aims to reduce inequality within and among countries by tackling the inequitable distribution of assets, resources and rights)
- Forging ahead with a Just Transition (work to make cities climate-smart, liveable places, safe energy, climate change, natural resources)

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[48] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/11/last-month-a-new-global-agreement-to-drive-sustainable-urban-development-was-reached-so-what-is-it-and-happens-next/
[49] https://gltn.net/land-and-the-new-urban-agenda/#
[50] https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/vggt-global-guidelines-ensure-secure-land-rights-for-all
[51] Ibid
[52] Ibid
[53] https://landportal.org/voluntary-guidelines/understanding-the-vggt
[54] Ibid
[55] https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/vggt-global-guidelines-ensure-secure-land-rights-for-all
[56] https://www.bmz.de/en/issues
[57] German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, August 2022, A world facing radical change Our development policy priorities (https://www.bmz.de/resource/blob/121222/caae4af8b9417b71c27e3b38b4e69252/our-development-policy-priorities-en-data.pdf)

- Embracing a feminist development policy (strengthen the rights of women, girls, LGBTIQ+ people, work for equal political, social and economic representation, improve access to, and control over, resources, child-rights and protection, reduce gender-based violence (GBV)

GIZ funds projects such as one to promote responsible land policy worldwide, known as Global Programme Responsible Land Policy[58], **c**ommissioned by BMZ and **c**o-funded by the European Union. It operates from 2015 – 2026 in the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Laos, Madagascar, Peru, Uganda, and Paraguay. It aims to improve access to land for specific population groups, particularly women and marginalised groups. The project focuses on three areas of action, all of which are directly relevant to the Programme: Securing land rights for the rural population through improved procedures; promoting the participation of civil society in responsible land policy; and improving the framework conditions for responsible private agricultural investment.

It is clear from the discussion above that the Programme is very well-aligned to the main global frameworks for development, not only in terms of objectives, but also underlying principles and approach. Like the SDGs, NUA and VGGT, the Programme is based on human rights, sees land as key to sustainable development, and highlights the link between land rights and human rights. Land governance is seen as key to creating tenure security for everyone and the sustainable use of land, particularly in the NUA and VGGT. They also recognise the continuum of land rights, the importance of gender equity in land governance, and the central role of responsible governance[59]. With regard to German development policy, the Programme contributes to at least three of BMZ's priority areas, and addresses Germany's broader developmental goals, particularly those related to gender equality, climate and biodiversity, the use of digitalisation and technology transfer, and the promotion of sustainable development[60].

To GLTN's approach and UN-Habitat's strategic plan

UN-Habitat's vision states "A better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world". The Strategic Plan sets out the relationship between sustainable urbanization and sustainable development. It focuses on those left behind, including women and youth. It aims to respond effectively to development problems such as extreme poverty, socioeconomic inequality, slums, social exclusion and marginalization, gender-based discrimination. The overarching objective is to advance sustainable urbanization as a driver of development and peace, to improve living conditions for all. The NUA's three transformative commitments: (a) Sustainable urban development for social inclusion and ending poverty; (b) Sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all; and (c) Environmentally sustainable and resilient urban development are reflected in the four domains of change of UN-Habitat's Strategic plan: reduced spatial inequality and poverty, enhanced shared prosperity, strengthened climate action and improved urban environment, and effective urban crisis response and prevention. UN-Habitat's approach is based on partnerships and targets specific rights of women, children, youth, older people and persons with disability in each domain of change, each of which is reflected in the Arab Land Programme's change model, objectives and activities.

GLTN was designed to respond to UN-Habitat's strategic plans and is consistent with the VGGTs and regional programmes implemented by the African Union, African Development Bank and UN Economic Commission for Africa. GLTN is committed to increasing access to land and tenure security for all, particularly the poor, women, youth, and has been shown to be effective in shifting the discourse on land governance at global and national levels towards pro-poor and gender-responsive land tools and approaches. The Programme constitutes an important aspect of GLTN's activities and is therefore directly relevant to its operations. The GLTN Phase 3 Progress review notes that its Outcome 4 is the establishment of an e-learning platform. This was launched in 2019 as part of the Programme. The review notes that through the Arab Land Initiative progress has been made to strengthen capacities and knowledge on land tenure security of national and

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[58] https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/39918.html
[59] Whermann (2017)
[60] https://www.bmz.de/en/issues

international actors[61]. Much of this progress can be attributed to the activities made possible through the Programme.

An interesting point is that GLTN is a centralised network, with the activities taking place in the Arab region via the Arab Land Initiative and particularly the Programme, constituting decentralised activities of the overall GLTN network, activities which have brought different stakeholders together around relevant issues of land tenure[62]. This again points to the fact that the Programme is inextricably linked to GLTN's work[63]. In order to sustain this decentralised network, there needs to be "regional resources, capacities, and skills to run the network"[64]. A key objective of the Arab Land Initiative, through the Programme, is to build regional capacity in the land sector, including involvement in the network.

One of the recommendations to GLTN and UN-Habitat Land Unit in 2017 was that "the current work on creating tenure security, promoting the continuum of land rights and pushing for fit-for-purpose land administration should be continued as it received new support from international policies. More attention could be given to regulating land uses in particular in support of key development objectives, such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, protection of biodiversity, disaster prevention and preparedness, sustainable infrastructure development, balanced territorial development and responsible production". Most, if not all, of these are being done by the Arab Land Initiative, through the Programme, again highlighting its relevance to GLTN.

To regional and national priorities

The Arab region faces increasing competition and conflict over land, due to multiple factors such as climate change, population growth and movements, increased food insecurity and changes in land use[65]. This leads to conflict, war and instability, forced evictions and mass displacement. Land rights violations often result from armed conflict while in turn fuelling armed conflicts[66]. It is critical to protect the housing, land and property (HLP) rights of displaced populations and returning refugees as this underpins other human rights, such as health, protection from violence and GBV, and access to adequate housing. This not only enables people to start rebuilding their lives but also strengthens the role of institutions and stabilizes societies emerging from conflict, thus contributing to longer term peace and stability. Land rights in the region are extremely complex, with private land, tribal lands, customary land, and land fragmentation[67]. Tenure insecurity in the region is the highest in the world which negatively affects all aspects of development.[68] Several countries have started addressing this through reforms and modernisation of land registration and administration, e.g. Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Tunisia, while others already have a well-functioning land administration system, e.g. the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain and Jordan[69]. Key issues to be addressed in the region include the need to develop capacity, fight corruption in the land sector, ensure women's equal access to land, and address issues around the lack of data, questionable transparency of data, and lack of awareness of the importance of land-related data[70].

Women's unequal access to land is a problem in much of the region. This is addressed by various policies and commitments such as provisions of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, adopted by the AU in 2009 and the Principles and Guidelines on the Implementation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The AU's Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa resolves to "strengthen security of land tenure for women [who] require special attention. The Nairobi Action

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[61] Camacho, B and M. Orellana (2021)
[62] Ibid
[63] Ibid
[64] Ibid
[65] Tempra (2021)
[66] Ibid
[67] AUC-ECA-AfDB (2010)
[68] Zakout (2021)
[69] Ibid
[70] Ibid

Plan on Large Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa promotes alternative land based investment models and emphasises the need "to maximise opportunities for Africa's farmers, with special attention to smallholders [most of whom are women] and minimise the potential negative impacts of large-scale land acquisitions, such as land dispossession and environmental degradation, in order to achieve an equitable and sustainable agricultural and economic transformation that will ensure food security and development." Article 31 of the Arab Charter on Human Rights states that "everyone has a guaranteed right to own private property and shall not under any circumstances be arbitrarily or unlawfully divested of all or any part of his property." Article 3 states that each State "undertakes to ensure to all individuals subject to its jurisdiction the right to enjoy the rights and freedoms set forth herein, without distinction on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religious belief, opinion, thought, national or social origin, wealth, birth or physical or mental disability" and "pledges to take all the requisite measure to guarantee equal opportunities and effective equality between men and women"[71].

The Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa provide guidance on developing and implementing a land policy. They involve a commitment to land policy formulation and implementation and provide a foundation for popular participation in improved land governance. They also engage development partners in resource mobilization and capacity building in support of land policy development and implementation in Africa.[72]

The African Land Policy Centre states as its mission "to ensure all land users have equitable access to land and security of all bundles of land rights, by facilitating effective partnerships, dialogue and capacity building for participatory and consultative land policy formulation and implementation, as well as efficient and transparent land administration in both customary and statutory jurisdictions[73]". This is reiterated in the AU Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa which urges members to "build adequate human, financial, technical capacities to support land policy development and implementation." One of the key objectives of the Land Policy Initiative (LPI) is "facilitating capacity development and technical assistance at all levels in support of land policy development and implementation in Africa." This is reinforced by knowledge creation, documentation, dissemination and advocacy and communication[74].

ILC EMENA is a regional platform on land governance issues in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. It contends that people should be central in the policy agenda and discourse on land, that there should be dialogue of parties to address land related governance and issues, and that local people should be empowered and organized to actualize their land rights"[75]. It aims to build capacity in the region to realise people-centred land governance. "Priorities in the Middle East/Fertile Crescent include protecting Palestine from colonisation, safeguarding rangelands, sustainably managing natural resources such as water, strengthening civil society, and keeping young people on the land. Priorities in North Africa include recognizing indigenous land rights, women's' rights to land, and countering the flow of outward migration". Overall, the ILC has similar areas of concern to those of the Programme. In the EMENA region the following are emphasised: Climate emergency, rural out-migration of youth, forced displacement, global migration, commons (commonly managed forests, grasslands, irrigation systems, hunting societies, etc), and women. The key regional issues of migration, climate change and conflict are key global issues. Challenges faced across the region include the following[76]:

- Multi-level land use planning for effective, sustainable and transparent land decentralization
- Climate crisis
- Youth and land-based opportunities in rural areas
- Rangelands and Forestry Community-based land management
- Preventing or resolving conflicts through secure access to land

[71] UNHR and UN-Women (2013)
[72] Wehrmann (2017)
[73] https://www.uneca.org/african-land-policy-centre
[74] Haile et al (2013)
[75] ILC EMENA Regional Strategy 2019-2021
[76] Ibid

- Recognition of women's land and inheritance rights
- Arab integration to prevent conflicts

It is clear from the above that the objectives and activities of the Arab Land Initiative, particularly those facilitated by the Programme, align well with the key issues and concerns across the region, and that the Programme is therefore of direct relevance to regional and national policy.

To global trends in the land sector

Globally there are many emerging trends in the land sector, most of them reflected in the Arab region, some more clearly than others. The following key global trends have been identified through desk-top research:

On the more positive side:

7. *Increasing recognition of the centrality of land issues to all aspects of development and the realisation of human rights and peace*
There is increasing recognition of the centrality of land issues, e.g. the 2010 AU-AfDB-UNECA Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa take as a starting point the understanding that land is central to sustainable livelihoods and that the process of allocation and enjoyment of land rights is closely linked to human rights.[77] USAID notes that strengthening land tenure and property rights is important for agricultural productivity, promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment, improved tax systems, better management of natural resources, and improved resilience to shocks and disasters[78].

   The enjoyment and regulation of land tenure rights and the realization of human rights are closely linked. Land governance contributes to the following: poverty reduction, food security, gender equality, economic development, sustainable infrastructure, balanced territorial development, sustainable cities and communities (including adequate housing), responsible consumption and production, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental protection, resilience, post-disaster and post-conflict redevelopment as well as social stability, peace and security[79]. Land governance and secure tenure have been shown to be linked to the prevention of land degradation, and thus to food security, poverty, conflict and migration. "There is a recent recognition that responsible governance of tenure is necessary to address issues of land degradation. The assumption behind this assertion is that tenure security provides confidence to land users so that they are incentivised to incorporate a sustainable land management regime for the long-term protection of that land" [80].

   Reporting on the adoption of the Dead Sea Declaration by the Global Land Forum in 2022, Weldali notes that "Land rights are human rights. Equitable land rights are the key to inclusive development, flourishing and healthy societies, and a sustainable planet. They are central to the most urgent challenge of our time: Avoiding catastrophic climate breakdown." The declaration adds that "equitable land rights are the foundation of peaceful and democratic societies and sustainable and resilient local food systems"[81]. Applying this approach in Yazidi villages in Iraq "shows how practical land tools that support locally led and community-level activities can encourage and support voluntary returns, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and economic recovery, and build community resilience. And it demonstrates the roles of different levels of government and of multi-stakeholder partnerships in addressing a critical root cause of displacement – competition over land"[82].

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[77] AU-AfDB-UNECA Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, 2010
[78] https://www.usaid.gov/land-tenure
[79] Wehrmann (2017)
[80] Haywood (2022)
[81] Weldali (2022)
[82] Sylla et al (2019)

8. *Increasing recognition of the marginalising effect of many processes and practices in the land sector, particularly with regard to the exclusion of women, and the negative effect that has on their outcomes, and those of their families, and the consequent need to develop inclusive land governance mechanisms*
Women play a key role in all aspects of development, including sustaining peace. By protecting women's housing, land and property rights women are more able to sustain peace. Thus, "women's housing, land and property rights contribute to preventing and recovering from conflict and fragility" [83]. When women's housing, land and property rights are protected, they are more capable of providing for themselves and their families, and are less vulnerable to economic shock, disasters, or violence. They are less likely to adopt negative coping mechanisms, such as forced marriage or sale of sex, and become more independent and engaged at the level of the household, community and beyond.

In many areas of the world, women are often excluded from owning or managing land, and from using it as an economic asset, either through law, culture or tradition. This is increasingly being recognised as detrimental to development, and measures are being adopted to change this. For example, the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, adopted by the AU in 2009, contains a specific section on strengthening the land rights of women.[84] The Principles and Guidelines on the Implementation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights also recognize the principle of gender equality and women's equal rights to property and land. They note that not only should states ensure equal access and treatment of women to land and housing, but also should prohibit harmful social and cultural practices which "prevent women and other members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups from enjoying their right to property, particularly in relation to housing and land". The AU's Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa resolves to "strengthen security of land tenure for women [who] require special attention[85].

9. *Increasing adoption of a participatory process to land management and urban planning*
In many parts of the world there has been increasing public mobilization and participation in policy processes at all levels. These include public engagement with land issues and ultimately more democratic, bottom-up land governance systems[86]. Many African countries use participatory modalities in land policy development. For example, when formulating plans and programmes for combating desertification and regenerating forests in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, consultative processes were adopted, indicating institutional transformation towards multi-stakeholder participatory decision making for land policy formulation and administering land resources[87].

10. *Adopting an incremental approach to land tenure, a continuum of land rights, exploring alternative forms of land rights (such as community land rights), and recognising customary land rights and processes*
In many countries and organisations there is growing recognition that land rights can be seen as on a continuum, from the more informal, traditional or customary to the more formal and legislated. This is reflected in UN-Habitat/GLTN's analysis of key international frameworks on securing land and property rights with a recommendation that "the current work on creating tenure security, promoting the continuum of land rights and pushing for fit-for-purpose land administration should be continued as it received new support from international policies"[88].

The Land Policy Initiative, a joint programme of the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) recognises the importance of customary based land rights and institutions and is assisting member states to develop land policies and tools that enhance women's secure access to land and recognise the legitimacy of Africa's customary

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[83] United Nations Human Settlements Programme (2021)
[84] UNHR and UN-Women (2013)
[85] Ibid
[86] Cotula et al (2019)
[87] AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2010)
[88] Wehrmann (2017)

based land rights and institutions.[89] This is often addressed with the development of legal, regulatory, and guiding frameworks to strengthen land governance from the reform of land laws, to the implementation of international soft law instruments such as the VGGT, or the African Union's Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy[90]. Recognition of communal land, or collective land holdings, such as for indigenous and local communities, is also increasing, as are the tools need to secure rights to this land.

In the project discussed earlier, conducted in Yazidi communities of Iraq, an incremental approach was adopted, using a continuum of land rights. This was necessary as it was difficult to obtain formal land ownership documents. The aim was not to establish full property titles, but to begin with securing occupancy rights with land documents. Houses were rehabilitated, property claims mapped, and people returning to the area were certificates as initial land documents. "The provision of certificates, mapping and technical rehabilitation were a significant first step toward the recognition of full land titles registering legal ownership[91].

11. *Increasing recognition of the importance of having accurate, reliable and transparent data and the use of innovative technology to collect such data*
Miller notes that as the approach to land tenure evolves, there will be "greater sophistication and creativity, with land tenure interventions that are locally driven, flexible, financially sustainable, inclusive, and grounded in good data"[92]. He predicts four key trends for securing land tenure and land rights in 2022, two of which relate to technology and data: Embracing flexible technology solutions to better document land rights and meet people's needs and integrating data collection and analysis for greater impact on land tenure[93]. Developing a national spatial database is critical for effective land tenure management and spatial planning[94].

Globally there is increasing recognition of the importance of using new technologies in land governance, and of collecting reliable and appropriate data. These include digital registration, participatory mapping, and land rights demarcation by drones. This is providing important information and expanding opportunities for people to access data and knowledge[95]. While there are many positive aspects to this, it does raise the question of access, with the potential to widen the gap between those who can access and use such technology, and those who cannot.

Lack of data severely hampers land administration in some Arab countries, e.g. Cairo uses a manual-paper based system, while Jordan is a good example of modernisation and data generation[96]. In some countries in the region transparency of data is questionable as some elites generate revenue through their control of land and land markets. There is an urgent need to increase awareness about the importance of data, particularly sex-disaggregated data, to improve land governance, human rights and socio-economic development. "Grassroot initiatives are needed to push towards transparency of data to ensure social economic development in the region"[97]. There is also increasing recognition of the need for local level data. Very few datasets provide details on tenure security, particularly those people who have insecure tenure. Recent research on land degradation neutrality (LDN) projects in forests in Benin suggests that "rather than looking to large-scale globalised datasets, this requires bottom-up initiatives such as utilising participatory land mapping schemes. This is the scale that allows the recognition of local land use, often unrecognised in national legislation and policy". "This demands co-creation with local

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[89] https://www.uneca.org/african-land-policy-centre
[90] Cotula et al (2019)
[91] Sylla et al (2019)
[92] Miller (2022)
[93] Ibid
[94] Bell (2009)
[95] Cotula et al (2019)
[96] Zakout (2021)
[97] Ibid

land users in a project. In this way, LDN linking to land tenure security can emphasise "inclusivity, participation and gender-sensitivity"[98].

12. *Increasing recognition of the importance of having local (community-based) management of land, and the need for inclusive, locally driven land tenure solutions[99]*
Another trend in land tenure and land governance is the focus on more inclusive, locally driven land tenure solutions[100]. "By securing land tenure through innovative and locally-based land registration and administration interventions, we have an opportunity to simultaneously address multiple, interconnected sustainable development challenges—thereby improving people's lives and economic prospects"[101]. This includes not only the need to involve the local community in land governance, but also the fact that devolution of power to the local administration is usually a pre-requisite for the effective implementation of new land laws[102]. This can be a problem in countries, such as many in North Africa, which remain centralised.

At the same time, the land sector also faces numerous challenging trends globally, many of these exacerbated in the Arab region. These include the following:

4. *Increasing pressure on land*
"Mega-trends reshaping global demography, climate, consumption and economic integration have been intensifying pressures on land" in many areas of the world[103]. This is leading to land grabbing in some areas, with some states favouring large scale developments and commercial enterprise that drive increased pressure on land and resources, to the detriment of smaller, locally based farmers[104].

5. *Shrinking spaces for dissent and activism in some countries*
In contrast to the increasing adoption of participatory approaches to land governance and spatial planning in many countries, there has been a clamp down on citizen mobilisation, and activism in others. This has included shrinking spaces for dissent and land activism, with repressions, violence, spurious lawsuits, harassment and even assassinations, in some cases. These weaken people-driven and indigenous movements and weaken land-related institutions[105].

6. *Increasing risks of disasters, both natural and human* (many related to climate change, conflict and war)
In countries that are exposed to high risks of natural disaster, or conflict addressing land issues can be a key consideration for actors working towards achieving a sustainable peace[106]. With increasing levels of climate-change related natural disasters such as flooding and drought, and high levels of conflict and unrest, as is the case in several countries in the Arab region, there is a growing need for measures to reduce disaster risk, ensure disaster preparedness, and to create secure tenure for everyone, including those negatively affected by disasters and conflict.

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[98] Haywoon (2022)
[99] Miller (2022)
[100] Ibid
[101] Ibid
[102] AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010 Land Policy in Africa: North Africa Regional Assessment
[103] Cotula et al (2019)
[104] Ibid
[105] Ibid)
[106] Ibid

ANNEXURE 5: ASSESSMENT OF EVALUATION QUESTIONS AS PER THE TOR

	Evaluation questions	Findings
#	**Relevance**	
1	How relevant are the Programme[107] objectives, outcomes and outputs within current global frames (SDGs, VGGT, NUA, relevant EU and BMZ strategies and frameworks), regional and national priorities and global trends in the land governance sector?	The desktop review shows the Programme is very relevant to the main global frameworks for development, in terms of objectives, underlying principles and approach. Like the SDGs, NUA and VGGT, the Programme is based on human rights, sees land as key to sustainable development, and highlights the link between land rights and human rights. Land governance is seen as key to creating tenure security for everyone and the sustainable use of land, particularly in the NUA and VGGT. They also recognise the continuum of land rights, the importance of gender equity in land governance, and the central role of responsible governance[108]. Interviewees generally view the Programme as being relevant to global development frameworks, and the UN-Habitat strategic plan. However, cultural specificity means that the Programme needs to give more support to specific issues. At regional level, the Arab region faces increasing competition and conflict over land and it is critical to protect the HLP rights of displaced populations and returning refugees. Key issues include the need to develop capacity, fight corruption in the land sector, ensure women's equal access to land, and address issues around data[109]. Women's unequal access to land is addressed regionally by policies such as the AU's Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, the Nairobi Action Plan on Large Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa, the Arab Charter on Human Rights, and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa. The African Land Policy Centre and the Land Policy Initiative (LPI) also support land policy development and implementation, adopting similar approaches to the Programme.[110] ILC EMENA is a regional platform on land governance issues which aims to build capacity to realise people-centred land governance, and has many similar areas of concern to those of the Programme. The desktop review shows, therefore, that the objectives and activities of the Programme align well with the key issues and concerns across the region, and that the Programme is of direct relevance to regional frameworks. Several interviewees felt that the Programme responded well to regional frameworks and policies although one noted that there is no strong land framework for the Arab region. Some indicated that, at national level, if there is no response from government the Programme does not have the political influence to bring about change, e.g. VGGTs. The Programme contributes to at least three of BMZ's priority areas, and addresses Germany's broader developmental goals, particularly those related to gender equality, climate and biodiversity, the use of digitalisation and technology transfer, and the promotion of sustainable development[111]. This was confirmed in interviews. The Programme is also directly relevant to the work of Land at Scale, a dedicated support programme on land governance in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands directed at their embassies.

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[107] Please note that the term 'Programme' is used instead of 'project' which seemed to be used interchangeably in the ToR for this evaluation, as a project is usually smaller in scope, with strict outputs, while a programme is broader in scope, often consisting of multiple related projects, contributing to more strategic outcomes and longer-term impact. "A programme is "a group of related projects managed in a coordinated way to obtain benefits and control not available from managing them individually" (https://www.prince2.com/zar/blog/project-vs-programme).
"Results from projects aggregate and contribute to the delivery of higher level results (work programme outputs, EAs and strategic results)" (https://unhabitat.org/results-based-management/2-3-project-level-planning).

[108] Whermann (2017)

[109] Zakout (2021)

[110] Haile et al (2013)

[111] https://www.bmz.de/en/issues

		Most emerging global trends in the land sector are reflected or exacerbated in the Arab region, and the Programme recognises these, and responds to them appropriately, as indicated by both the desktop review and interviews. Several interviewees commented on gaps in alignment or relevance. This included comments that global development frameworks are very western, focus on big data and may not always be implementable. One noted that the Programme could also be limited by its need to deliver for the donors.
2	How relevant is the Programme to intended beneficiaries and partners?	There is no doubt that the Programme is of direct relevance to its intended beneficiaries and partners. This is particularly evident in interviews which raised issues around land and human rights, the importance of tenure security for small farmers, dealing with important transformative issues linked to climate change, training that is directly relevant to people's needs, targeting specific relevant regional issues, the participation and enthusiasm of government institutions and decision-makers, and learning how to support civil society organisations regarding land governance.
3	Do planned Programme results respond to the gaps identified in the land governance sector at regional and national levels?	From a sectoral point of view, the Programme is seen by some interviewees as being completely in line with all relevant issues to the land governance sector, appropriately addressing gaps. However, one interviewee indicated that the Programme responds only partially to gaps in the land governance sector of the region, which is beset by conflict and corruption. "This means that, rather than try to fill all the gaps which is not the Programme's intention, it is best to create a noise" and the Programme has done that very well.
4	How do the four priorities of the Programme, in line with the UN-Habitat/GLTN mandate, deal with the politically sensitive issue of land governance, especially at country level and beyond the narrowly defined land administration institutions – with focus on the strategy and approach used in the face of stronger or weaker political will?	The political context of the region has a huge impact on how and where the Programme operates. In this regard, the "Programme has far exceeded expectations" and interviewees felt that the Programme is doing extremely well given the context. The level of political support for the Programme varies across the region. To deal with this, the Programme mainly adopts an approach of quiet diplomacy. Having a regional focus also facilitates discussion of more sensitive topics like women and displaced people, at a less threatening scale than at country level. Some interviewees expressed some frustration at the need to restrict or censor some material being placed on the website due to it being politically sensitive in some countries. Political and other tensions in some countries tended to impact negatively on some implementing partners, sometimes placing projects at risk. This might be averted by conducting a risk analysis for each partner to alert both partners to the potential for disruption. It may be better, in twinning relationships, to have separate contracts for each partner, to alleviate problems in transferring funds. Implementation was delayed or negatively affected by government restrictions on funding (Jordan), and political insecurity and instability (Sudan). The political context also impacted some implementing partners in Palestine, while in Syria having a joint programme is risky and meetings had to take place outside the country. Some feel that having the Programme under the GLTN/UN-Habitat umbrella is likely to allow it to have better entrance into discussions with policy makers and engaging governments. UN-Habitat is trusted by many in the region and is well-placed to raise issues and mediate difficult discussions. Working through country offices has been beneficial in some cases. In some countries addressing issues such as land rights is difficult as land relates to power, security, and institutional dominance. It's important to make officials understand that being involved won't undermine their power. In these cases, it can sometimes be better to focus on the more technical aspects of land governance and land administration.
5	Is the Programme aligned with the GLTN approach and overall objectives of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan?	UN-Habitat's approach is based on partnerships and targets specific rights of women, children, youth, older people and persons with disability. GLTN was designed to respond to UN-Habitat's strategic plans and is consistent with the VGGTs and regional programmes. It is committed to increasing access to land and tenure security for all, particularly the poor, women, youth. The Programme constitutes an important aspect of GLTN's activities and is therefore directly relevant to its operations. GLTN is a centralised network, with the activities that take place in the Arab region via the Arab Land Programme

		constituting decentralised activities of the overall GLTN network[112]. This further points to the fact that the Programme is inextricably linked to GLTN's work[113]. A recommendation to GLTN and UN-Habitat Land Unit in 2017 was that "the current work on creating tenure security, promoting the continuum of land rights and pushing for fit-for-purpose land administration should be continued as it received new support from international policies. More attention could be given to regulating land uses in support of key development objectives". Most, if not all, of these are being done by the Arab Land Programme, again highlighting its relevance to GLTN. Interviewees see the Programme as aligned to UN-H, and to GLTN's key outcomes, especially with regard to capacity development. The activities and objectives of the Programme are explicitly reflected in GLTN budgets and workplan. One person felt that there's a need to establish a better link between the technical knowledge of GLTN and the more global development challenges – peace building, food security, climate change - to address political and economic challenges.
6	How relevant is the Programme and its outcomes to German development policy?	Interviews showed that the Programme is seen as responding very well to German development goals and to German development policy because Germany participates in the Middle East and North Africa, and because of migration, Germany's deep focus on human rights, and the VGGTs. Germany is also very oriented towards climate. The new leadership in Germany is well aligned to the SDGs, and the need for transformation to achieve these goals. Food security is important to SDG2 (no hunger); therefore, transformation of the agricultural and food systems is needed: "The Programme is quite clearly linked". The current German government pursues a feminist agenda and climate goals. The Programme is reactive to pressures that makes this transformation necessary and has a clear willingness to engage on sensitive topics like gender.
	Coherence	
7	To what extent is the Programme's design and implementation consistent with relevant international norms and standards and, when applicable, to national legislation and policies?	The Programme was designed to be implemented through contracted partners in the region, as a way of developing and retaining regional capacity. However, due to very low capacity of many implementing partners, the GLTN Secretariat needed to invest a significant amount of time to ensure that activities were completed and up to standard[114]. Most interviewees felt that the work produced thus far has been of a very high standard. Concern was raised, though, that it will be difficult for such a small and relatively young core team to ensure that all Programme outputs continue to be of high standard. Most of the Programme's work has been at regional level, apart from the technical support provided to some countries. In those cases, the work done has been consistent with national legislation.
8	To what extent does the Programme's implementation support synergies and interlinkages with other projects of German development cooperation and other donors? Has its design and implementation been coordinated with other donor's activities?	The Programme is relevant to all issues related to land governance, in terms of GIZ and BMZ's activities. This is particularly true for their work on food security, and the need to transform agricultural and food systems. Currently BMZ is the major donor to the Programme. As donor, BMZ played a key role, being flexible, and understanding the complexities of the region. GIZ and BMZ were very involved in the early phases of the Programme, in setting up the Reference Group, in bringing in support for the Arab Land Conference from its network, and in positioning the Programme, particularly with the EU. They have helped UN-Habitat build another very important programme with GIZ in Yemen and Iraq. Partnership building in Iraq has contributed to work on a very strategic programme on digitalisation which involves the Netherlands. Other donor organisations contribute to some specific events or travel costs. In this regard, the Programme coordinates its design and implementation to these donor's activities, e.g. in AoCs, meetings, forums, conferences etc.
9	To what extent do interventions complement and support UN-Habitat and key partners' efforts?	The Programme works closely with UN-Habitat country offices in some countries, and with partners like UTI and ILC. Its activities relate directly to those of GLTN and UN-Habitat, and complement and support their work, along with their key partners.
10	To what extent has the intervention been designed to use existing systems and structures (of partners, other donors and international organisations)	The Programme supports an existing network, the Arab Land Initiative, whose members are active in the sector. In extending the scope of the Arab Land Initiative, the Programme consciously built on the work of these members, and on networks they are involved in. E.g. UTI and GLTN. This continues to be important and has been a successful strategy in building collaboration and cooperation. UTI has contributed a lot to the Programme. A specific example is the AoC, which is a financial agreement, but includes an in-kind contribution from the team leader and support staff, and providing offices and space for

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[112] Camacho, B and M. Orellana (2021)
[113] Ibid
[114] UN-Habitat, BMZ, GLTN (2020)

		meetings, amounting to around 20% of the whole agreement. ILC contributed funds to the Global Land Forum in May 2022, and some funds for the land data project (AoC). They see the Programme as essential in their work to develop people-centred land governance, and is keen to work further with the Programme, particularly around pastoralists and rangelands. Some organisations, like Land at Scale indicated that they would like to engage their knowledge management partners in further work with the Programme.
	for implementing its activities? To what extent are these systems and structures used?	Being part of GLTN, UN-Habitat offers the Programme a good departure point for engaging with key stakeholders in the sector, across the region, and this has been well utilised in implementing the Programme.
		Some organisations have contributed staff time and travel costs, others venues, and some individuals have contributed time, which has, to some extent, boosted the Programme's limited financial and human resources and contributed to its success.
		The Programme also works through UN-Habitat country offices, who sometimes match the contribution in terms of number of staff working on a project. Implementing partners have engaged in other work with or for the Programme.
	Effectiveness	
11	In accordance with the Programme's theory of change, have the implemented activities resulted in the expected outputs? Do the outputs contribute to the achievement of the expected outcomes, or how likely are they to be achieved?	The implemented activities under each of the four priorities have resulted in the expected outputs. Activities do not usually fit only one of the priorities, in fact, most activities address several priorities and sub-objectives, so they are not mutually exclusive, e.g. the Arab Land conference increases collaboration, knowledge creation and capacity development. Evidence to support the achievement of the outcomes has been derived mainly from interview and survey responses, and indicates that the anticipated outcomes have largely been achieved. See Table 3.
12	What type of products and services is the Programme providing to target beneficiaries and what kind of positive changes have resulted from products and services delivered?	The Programme provides training, knowledge products, research outputs, support and coordination, and some specific technical support to some countries. Positive changes include increased capacity, improved alignment and collaboration in the sector across the region, involvement of senior decision makers in some cases, and changes in practices in some countries. The importance of land and land governance in resolving conflict and building peace, and in the social and economic development of women, and therefore of countries has also been promoted. See Annexure xx for more details.
13	How effective is the management structure of the Programme to allow modifying project planning in accordance with the lessons learnt and the needs arising from the Programme implementation?	The Programme has been flexible in terms of implementation, e.g. moving to online platforms with covid-related travel restrictions, and working intensively with implementing partners to build capacity and ensure delivery of their research. Implementing partners have, for the most part, commented on the mutual respect shown to them, on the fact that Programme management listens and adjusts to their needs and circumstances. Some challenges arose around the implementing of the AoCs, seen as grants by some partners, but apparently operated as a service provider contract, which might need to be addressed in future work.
14	How effective is the Programme in engaging partners in the region, relevant international partners and other UN-Habitat offices and key stakeholders on its objectives and implementation? What factors contribute to or inhibit the effectiveness of the Programme?	The Programme relies to a large extent on partners and consultants, many of whom indicate that they spend more time on the Programme than they are contracted to do (in the case of implementing partners and consultants) because their work on the Programme benefits their other work. The Programme works closely with UN-Habitat country offices and GLTN in developing and implementing its objectives and projects. Some people in the Reference Group are also on the GLTN steering committee and therefore are in a position to advise on alignment of activities across the initiatives. Those interviewed see partnership engagement as generally effective, although some felt this could be extended to include more decisionmakers in government, while others cautioned against getting too many partners which might spread the Programme too thin and dilute its focus. To some extent the political context in some countries has limited effectiveness or changed modes of implementation. Financial and human resource constraints limit the Programme, as it has a small core team, most of whom are not working full-time on Programme activities. Constraints in some governments limit effectiveness, with some having sophisticated digitised systems and others being in crisis, meaning that a case-by-case approach has to be adopted for many issues, particularly grouping

		countries for capacity development. There is also sometimes a problem with younger officials who have been trained through the Programme leaving their jobs for more lucrative careers out of government. To mitigate against this, however, efforts are made to train several people from each organisation, so capacity is more likely to be retained in the organisation. The core team, and particularly the Programme Manager, is seen as being the most important factor in contributing to the Programme's achievements – being passionate about the topic, having good contacts in the region, well able to collaborate with partners and who understands the internal organisational systems and structures in UN-Habitat to maximise the use of the limited human and financial resources available.
	Efficiency	
15	How efficiently have resources (both financial and technical) been used to deliver the outputs and outcomes? To what extent were the resources used to implement the Programme justified in terms of delivering on the outcomes?	The institutional structure of the Programme, with dual reporting to the regional and head office is seen as a good adaptation to ground the Programme in the region, and to deal with reportedly low levels of efficiency in UN-H. "Creating a hybrid arrangement between head office and the regional office allows them to act more quickly." Several internal interviewees noted that the Programme has performed better, at an administrative level, than other UN-Habitat programmes. Several interviewees noted that the funds had been well-spent, and had achieved a lot, given that the budget was relatively small. "There is value for money in terms of volume of outputs and activities and "the small budget vs the results achieved is huge".
16	What factors or obstacles (institutional, political, administrative, financial and managerial) contribute to or inhibit the efficient implementation of the Programme affecting cost-effectiveness?	Obstacles encountered which inhibit efficient implementation include difficulties and delays around the transfer of funds, the limitations of a very small core team managing the Programme, political tensions limiting in-country meetings, political tensions limiting participation of particular partners, or of government officials. There are concerns around the transition to the next Phase. The UN Secretariat relies completely on project funding. If they don't get a decision on continuation of funding very soon they might lose staff, and will then need to rebuild internal capacity. The covid-19 pandemic negatively affected some aspects of Programme implementation, restricting travel and some research work. However, the Programme moved quickly to being more online, in terms of meetings, now holding hybrid meetings, which is very cost-effective. One of the implementing partners noted, however, that finally meeting the other implementing partners in person was extremely beneficial, and far better than their previous online engagements.
17	What perceptions do partners, donors and key stakeholders have on the efficiency of the Programme?	Interviewees see the Programme as having been very efficient in terms of spending all the funds received and doing so very well, in terms of the Programme objectives. Core team staff are seen as being dedicated and passionate, devoting a lot of time to their work on the Programme. Some inefficiencies were noted in terms of financial disbursements (mainly out of the control of the core team), and in terms of delayed feedback on reports and deliverables submitted (seen as being understandable, given the few people in the core team). A concern raised by a couple of interviewees around the mode of implementation of the AoCs and twinning arrangements, i.e. that these were not implemented as a grant (as advertised), but more like a service provider contract, which required them to work around administrative and financial delays and caused some stress.
18	How was the Programme designed and implemented, and what have been the most efficient types of activities implemented?	The Programme was designed to build on the strengths and contacts of the Arab Land Initiative, and on the work of organisations and individuals involved with the Initiative and in the land sector regionally. The Programme has dual reporting lines, to the regional office and to head office. This is a key governance/institutional component unique for UN-H, allowing the Programme to be anchored in the region. This approach has proved extremely successful, both administratively and in terms of funding. A Reference Group was established at the outset of the Programme. This is not a formally constituted structure and is seen by most as an informal advisory group consisting of people who understand the region well, providing advice and support to the core team, and identifying opportunities. It does not have any formal decision-making or approval power. There is some contention around its role, and it may be useful to clarify this, along with the criteria for selection of members. The most efficient activities are probably the Arab Land Conference, in terms of reach, and the implementation of the AoCs and twinning arrangements, in terms of generating knowledge products (research reports), building collaboration, and capacity development (although it is important to note that some of these also required considerable input from the core management team).
	Impact outlook	

19	What emerging outcomes, if any, can be attributed to the implementation of the Programme? To what extent has the Programme attained or not (or is expected to attain) its objective and outcomes?	The Programme has gone a long way to achieving its objective and sub-objectives. The capacity of key stakeholders across the region with regard to land governance has definitely been improved, although this has necessarily been uneven, and some countries have not participated in the Programme at all. All four priorities have been successfully addressed – increased alignment, coordination and collaboration; knowledge creation, management and sharing; capacity development and training; and technical support to some countries. "It's really incredible that all this data generation and networking has been generated in such a short time on a topic that hasn't been addressed on a regional level. They did a great job – all the streams of work empowered each other. We built relationships with experts that we really value". Concrete changes include the inclusion of women and children on land certificates in the Yazidi community of Iraq, changed mindsets of Ministers etc. See Annexure xx for more details. Comments from survey respondents highlight the contribution of the Programme to achieving desired outcomes: • I hope to hold workshops and supervise the standardization of land management standards between the competent authorities in land management • I have implemented programs on land ownership and housing in Nineveh Governorate, especially in the Compensation Court and the Compensation Committee, in addition to the Real Estate Department, and the issuance of title deeds to those affected during terrorist operations and military mistakes • Through my work in the Arab Land Initiative, I was able to build my capabilities in the field of land governance in a large way, and I transferred my experience to my colleagues in the institution. I was able to present an initiative to the government side, to hold a virtual regional conference and to present a thorough study to solve the problems related to lands. The government worked on it and achieved a qualitative shift.
20	What is the likelihood that the Programme will contribute to positive (or negative) impacts on land governance in the region?	It seems highly likely that the Programme will contribute to positive impacts on land governance in the region. It's important to note that the overall impact will vary from country to country, as some countries do not form part of the Programme, while others already have a fairly sophisticated land governance system in place, and others are starting from a low base.
	Sustainability	
21	To what extent can the results achieved so far by the Programme be sustained or replicated or scaled up?	Most of the results achieved by the Programme could be replicated or scaled up, with the primary limitation to this being resources, both financial and human. Although there are many similarities in the issues across the region, there are also very important local specificities, meaning that a cut-and-paste approach to replication would not work; the experiences of, and tools used in, each country will need to be adapted to suit their particular context. It was noted that "the more resources and staffing you have, the more you can do in parallel. There are scaling up options in what we do, but they take time. You need to build layer upon layer to build confidence.". Some countries are not ready to participate in the Programme, often due to political issues. The suggestion was made to develop a basic training manual for the region which could be adapted for specific country contexts. With regard to immediate sustainability, there are concerns around the transition to the next Phase. The UN Secretariat relies completely on project funding; without receiving an immediate continuation of funding very soon they might lose staff, and will then need to rebuild internal capacity.
22	To what extent have partners been able to design, implement, sustain and build on the capacities developed through the Programme's activities?	The design of the Programme consciously addressed the issue of sustainability through AoCs and twinning arrangements to build and expand capacity and knowledge on land governance, and to encourage collaboration across the region. This approach was extremely successful. Of particular value were the meeting of all implementing partners (i.e. in the AoCs and the twinning relationships) at the outset of the projects, and the knowledge exchange event at the end of the project. These put people in contact with other people who were working on similar topics across the region. Implementing partners (in AoCs and twinning relationships) pointed to the fact that their projects had meant building trust with their partners, had alerted them to others working in the same field in different countries, allowing them to share experiences and learn. Most people interviewed felt that their work on the project has benefitted their other work. Several indicated that they have concrete plans to work together with their partners in future. Others explained that the project has increased coordination in UN sister agencies and NGOs (e.g. in Syria), and other organisations such as NELGA. Several implementing partners expect their involvement to lead to further long-term collaborations. The feedback session sharing results and lessons learned provided a valuable opportunity for cross-fertilisation of ideas.

23	To what extent has the Programme been able to implement capacity development and learning exchange effectively, including across countries?	Capacity development and learning exchange has taken place through a wide range of activities. This includes the twinning arrangements, when implementing partners came from different countries, the Arab Land conference, webinars, and the website. Many interviewees noted how they had learned from each other, would continue further collaboration, and now knew more about other countries and the similarities and differences in contexts.
	Integration of cross-cutting issues	
24	How effective is the Programme in ensuring the inclusion of the needs of women and youth, and of other vulnerable groups, in the programme design, planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring?	The Programme addresses gender issues directly as one of its key focuses, and deliberately targets women for involvement in Programme activities. Youth were deliberately targeted in the call for innovative research projects, aimed at researchers under the age of 35. It is clear that the topic of women has been addressed extremely well, even though there are some calls for this to increase. Other vulnerable groups include displaced people and youth. These are not always targeted directly. However, there has been work on refugees, displaced people in Lebanon, Syria and Yemen. What is most important in this regard is illustrating the link between land governance and tenure security to peace building, conflict resolution and social and economic development.
25	Were any context specific challenges encountered in ensuring the participation of women in the Programme implementation? If so, how and to what extent did this impact the overall outcome of the Programme?	One interviewer noted that even though "60% of all active partners in activities and research are women, and young female researchers are taking up the opportunities offered by the Programme, they need to build capacity in shadow, not upfront at the beginning, due to the cultural and political context". The Programme actively seeks and supports women's participation, however, so this does not seem to have as great a negative impact as might be expected.
26	How does the Programme address women´s land rights, especially at the country and local levels?	The Programme is seen as having been very successful at addressing women's land rights. This is generally seen as the most successful aspects of the Programme in terms of groups reached. This includes the Women and land campaign in Tunisia, and now in Lebanon, and work on the Yazidi property certificates in Iraq. One interviewee estimates that 50 – 60% of the Programme's advocacy has been on women and land.
27	How does the Programme address the challenges faced by pastoralists and the conflicts related to pastoral and rangelands, and/or water rights?	The region is greatly affected by climate change, land degradation and increasing desertification, and needs both land and water management, all issues associated with pastoralists and rangelands. Although it is seen as good to have raised the issue, it is unlikely that the Programme will lead on it. Some interviewees felt that the Programme pays no attention to challenges faced by pastoralists and needs to prioritise it, with some suggesting that the Programme should set up a dedicated team to investigate this issue to come up with solutions as it varies from country to country. Some interviewees felt that the Programme is working on this topic, especially in North Africa. The Expert group meeting on pastoral land was seen as being very important, building networks. Some work has been done in Palestine with Bedouins. The topic was given some space in the Arab Land conference, but more facilitating, and some publications touch on this. The AoC on Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change was a desktop study which dealt with this issue was very successful but requires ethnographic research to go further. The UN-Habitat office in Sudan has worked on this topic, mapping 20 villages, looking at conflict between farmers and migratory routes to set clear village boundaries and buffer zones were set in a participatory way, with farmers and pastoralists jointly demarcating the boundaries. They are developing a manual for mapping villages. In Sudan GLTN colleagues assisted with customising a system to capture a village/community type ownership, rather than individual ownership. Some of the results of the work done in Sudan are on the Arab Land Initiative website.
28	How effective is the Programme in meeting other crosscutting concerns such as capacity development, human rights, grassroots engagement and others in the Programme design, planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring?	The Programme is very effective in addressing many cross-cutting concerns, several of which underpin all, or almost all, Programme activities, such as capacity development (which occurs in activities associated with all four Programme priorities), and human rights (which is the basis of most of the Programme's work on land governance). The Programme addresses gender issues directly as one of its key focuses, and deliberately targets women for involvement in Programme activities. Youth and displaced people are also cross cutting issues in that these groups are affected by changes in land governance systems; however they are not dealt with as thoroughly as is gender.

| 29 | Did the political context impact the implementation of capacity development activities? If so, how and to what extent did this impact the overall outcome of the Programme? | Political tensions in some countries tended to impact negatively on some implementing partners, sometimes placing projects at risk and delaying their work. However, this did not affect the final outputs. Implementation was delayed or negatively affected by government restrictions on funding (Jordan), and political insecurity and instability (Sudan). The political context also impacted some implementing partners in Palestine, while in Syria having a joint programme is risky and meetings had to take place outside the country. Political issues can lead to travel restrictions, with some people being unable to travel outside their country, and others being restricted from entering certain countries, e.g. the core team was denied visas to travel to Iraq to launch the programme on capacity development in land governance, seen as an important component of peace-building in the country. When organising the second Arab Land conference Morocco withdrew at the last minute, and it was held in Cairo. For the most part, solutions have been found, although it is necessary to be pragmatic and flexible. Being under the umbrella of the UN "gives us huge leverage, accessibility, neutrality, and accountability". |