

3rd Arab Land Conference

Rabat, Morocco

WOMEN ACCESS TO LAND IN THE ARAB REGION

CHALLENGES & FUTURE INSIGHTS

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Why do **Women** need Land ?

- Land is a major source of economic development, social security and dignity that should be enjoyed by both men and women.
- Evidence shows that increased women access to land benefits the families and the communities as a whole (food security, education, etc.).
- Secure land rights increase women's social and political status, and improve confidence and security.

What do we mean by “Access to Land” ?

Land tenure systems determine;

Who use **which** resources for **how long**

& under what conditions

**Key Challenges Facing
Women in accessing
land**

Key Challenges

Women in the Arab World face several challenges in accessing land. **key challenges include:**

➤ **Cultural and Social Norms:**

In many societies, traditional gender roles and norms favor men as the primary landowners and decision-makers. These social expectations often exclude women from owning or inheriting land, and they may face resistance when attempting to assert their land rights.

**Key
Challenges
Facing
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Key Challenges

➤ **Legal Barriers:**

In some countries, laws may not guarantee women the same land rights as men. Even where gender equality is recognized in law, discriminatory practices and weak enforcement of laws can prevent women from claiming land.

➤ **Limited Access to Credit and Resources:**

Land ownership is often tied to access to financial resources, such as loans and credit. Women, however, typically have less access to these financial services, which can make it difficult for them to purchase or maintain land.

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Key Challenges

➤ Inheritance Laws:

- Women often face challenges when it comes to inheritance. In many cultures, women may be excluded from inheriting land, or they may receive a smaller share compared to male, which leaves them without secure land tenure.
- There is a widespread practice, whereby a woman, voluntarily or may be forced (in different ways) to renounce (tanazul) her inheritance rights.
- Other women may **give up** an inheritance right to land in ‘**exchange**’ for cash that **may or may not** be paid.
- Some women renounce their rights to land to **preserve family relationships** with more powerful family members.

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Key Challenges

➤ **Lack of Property Documentation:**

In many areas, land tenure systems may not include women in the formal registration or documentation process, leaving their land rights informal and harder to defend. Without proper documentation, women can lose their land

➤ **Education and Awareness:**

Many women lack the knowledge and resources to navigate legal systems or assert their land rights. Limited education or access to information about land rights can hinder their ability to claim land or understand their entitlements.

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Key Challenges

➤ **Violence and Displacement:**

In conflict zones or areas affected by climate change, women may be extremely affected by displacement. Often, women are left without legal or social recognition of their land rights after being forced to leave their homes, making it difficult for them to reclaim their property.

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Future Insights

on

Women's access to land

Future Insights

- **Legal Reforms and Gender-Responsive Legislation:**
 - Governments should enact and enforce laws that guarantee women equal rights to land ownership, inheritance, and access.
 - Introduce gender-sensitive land registration systems that ensure both women and men are equally recognized as landowners and have legal documentation to protect their land rights.

**Future
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Future Insights

➤ **Promote Awareness and Education:**

- Implement land rights education programs at the community level to inform women about their legal rights to land and the procedures for claiming and protecting their land. This can empower women to take ownership of their rights.
- Provide training for women in rural and urban areas on land-related legal processes, including property rights, inheritance, and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- Organize workshops and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of women's land rights and the benefits of gender equality in land ownership.

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Future Insights

➤ **Strengthen Women's Economic Empowerment:**

- Facilitate women's access to financial resources such as loans, credit, and microfinance specifically for land purchase, improvement, or expansion. This would help women overcome financial barriers to land acquisition.
- Governments could provide support programs such as land grants, subsidies, or low-interest loans for women to acquire land, particularly in rural areas.
- Create platforms and systems to enable women to participate in land markets by providing the necessary resources, like land titling or access to land ownership databases.

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➤ **Ensure Access to Land Documentation:**

- Ensure that women are included in land titling processes, with equal access to land documentation and formal recognition as landowners, especially in rural or informal settings.
- Implement policies that provide long-term security of tenure for women, allowing them to have a legally recognized and protected stake in the land they occupy or own.

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➤ Address Social and Cultural Barriers:

- Advocate for the revision of discriminatory cultural practices and customs that restrict women's access to land. This can be achieved through community dialogues, engagement with local leaders, and awareness campaigns.
- Empower women in decision-making by ensuring that women are represented in local land governance structures, decision-making bodies, and committees. Their inclusion in land-related decision-making processes will help ensure policies that reflect their needs and rights.

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- **Encourage Partnerships with NGOs and Civil Society:**
 - Governments should collaborate with women's rights organizations, civil society groups, and international organizations to ensure that women's voices are heard and their needs are addressed in land policy design.
 - Support the establishment of networks and platforms for women to share knowledge, advocate for land rights, and mobilize support from local and national stakeholders.
 - Use and adapt global **GLTN** tools and implement them with different local partners. In addition, develop specific tools to increase tenure security for women in the Arab Region.

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➤ **Provide Support for Conflict-affected Women:**

- Special programs should be created to support women in conflict zones who have been displaced or had their land rights violated. These programs could assist in land restitution and securing property rights after conflict.
- Protect women's land rights during and after displacement. In addition, provide legal and social support for displaced women to reclaim or gain access to land once they return home or resettle.

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By combining these insights and recommendations into comprehensive and multi-sectoral approaches, it is possible to support women's access to land and create more equitable societies where both women and men have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from land ownership.

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THANK YOU

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