

THE IGAD COFFEE TABLE BOOK ON THE MULTIVERSE OF WOMEN ON LAND

Gender discrimination in access, control and ownership of land remains a serious impediment to socioeconomic development. Social, economic, political and other intersecting factors affect exactly how an individual woman experiences this discrimination. But the problem is widespread. Although the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Member States have progressive legal and policy frameworks, the ways in which they are applied and implemented may fall short of addressing the gender barriers that continue to hinder women's abilities to obtain secure land tenure. Men dominate the public land sector in the region, and they typically have limited knowledge of gender issues regarding land. As well, women are rarely represented in land governance structures, and therefore their voices are not heard. Different land stakeholders have devised various interventions to address the imbalances and inequalities in the land sector, but their scope and scale have been quite limited.

Her Voice, the IGAD Coffee Table Book on the Multiverse of Women on Land, is an attempt to further expose the barriers, violations and discriminatory actions that women face when they attempt to access, control or own land. Using a storytelling approach, the voices of women and their lived experiences appeal for change to all key stakeholders at the family, community and national government levels. Women are calling upon family members, leaders of traditional institutions, public and private sector actors responsible for land to take immediate and effective action to address these challenges.

It is important to note that positive change will happen only if governments and development partners redouble their funding efforts towards gender equality and women's economic empowerment, which in the IGAD region may be attained through securing women's land tenure.

We are delighted to release Her Voice, and we call upon every stakeholder to collaborate with IGAD in the implementation of the IGAD Women's Land Rights Agenda to address the issues and gaps presented in the book.

