

THE IGAD REGIONAL WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS AGENDA 2021-2030

Closing the Gender Gap on Land in the IGAD Region



Land is a crucial resource for the people living in the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region. However, land governance continues to be characterized by many concerns including insecure land and land-based resource rights; unequal distribution of land; and the duality of property regimes and legal pluralism. The last concern is especially complicated; archaic colonial/statutory laws are sometimes still enforced, and customary and religious practices frequently are applied simultaneously and inter-changeably with formal law. Under all of these systems, women's rights to own and use land are precarious in the region thus still a challenge.

Achieving gender equality in land rights requires a commitment at the global, regional and national levels. The African Union Agenda 2063 commits to fully empowering African women in all spheres. To achieve this, women must be assured of having equal social, political and economic rights. This includes rights to own and inherit property, sign contracts, and register and manage businesses. For rural women, this includes ensuring access to productive assets such as land, credit, inputs and financial services. The 2063 Agenda also promises to eliminate all forms of systemic inequality, exploitation, marginalization and discrimination of young people and to mainstream youth issues in all development agendas.

Various human rights instruments and policy frameworks at the global, regional and national levels guarantee women's equal rights related to access, use and control over land. These instruments and frameworks include the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs); the New Urban agenda; and national constitutions, among others. Notwithstanding progressive legal and policy frameworks on gender equality, security of tenure for women continues to lag behind that of men due mainly to policy and legislative gaps in many of the Member States, along with poor implementation and enforcement of the existing laws in some countries.

The IGAD Member States (e.g., Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda) have diverse priorities for achieving national development and are at different levels with regard to implementing international, regional and national instruments towards securing women land rights. For this reason, IGAD through the Land Governance Programme launched developed and launched the IGAD Region Women Land Rights Agenda. This is in line with Land Governance Programme Business Plan 2020 -2030, which seek among other things: a) make land administration in the region more efficient, harmonized and gender-inclusive; b) enable sustainable development through strategic gender-sensitive and conflict-sensitive approaches to land-use and management; c) increase Member States' capacity to leverage land (rural, peri-urban and urban) for economic transformation and; d) reduce barriers and enhance protection of women's rights to land in both the public and private spheres.

The IGAD Region Women Land Rights Agenda (The Nairobi Women's Land Rights Agenda)

The Agenda is a 10 years, 10 priority issues document. It seeks to comprehensively promote and strengthen women's land rights in the region.

The Agenda was developed through a series of national consultation processes at the Member States leading to the development and adoption of National Women Land Rights Agenda. The National Women Land Rights Agenda were then synthesized into Regional Women Land Rights Agenda. The Agenda was endorsed by Ministers responsible for land and Ministers responsible for gender/women's affairs at a ministerial meeting held in Nairobi in July 2021, as a framework for women's land rights programming. We can call it: "The Nairobi Women's Land Rights Agenda!"



SCOPE OF THE AGENDA

The IGAD Regional Women's Land Rights Agenda is of unprecedented scope and significance, covering all peoples of the IGAD region irrespective of tribe, religion or cultural background. It accounts for different national realities, capacities, and contexts, and respects national sovereignty and priorities.

It covers the following 10 priority issues that are closely interlinked:

1. Improving the policy and legal environment for gender equality on land in the IGAD Member States
2. Addressing culture, religion and customary practices that hinder women's realization of their full potential on land
3. Reshaping urbanization towards inclusive, resilient and sustainable cities in the IGAD region
4. Strengthening inclusion in large-scale, land-based investments
5. Enhancing capacity and coordination of land institutions and actors on gender mainstreaming
6. Enhancing public awareness/information and communication on women's land rights
7. Building women's leadership and participation in land governance
8. Enhancing youth participation in land governance
9. Strengthening women's rights in communal and community land (i.e., commons such as pastures, forests, fisheries and the blue economy)
10. Generating data on land disaggregated by gender

IMPLEMENTATION

The Regional Agenda will be implemented – in accordance with differing situations, realities, capacities and mandates – by various actors including governments, civil society organizations, private sector and academic and research institutions.

The Regional Agenda underscores potential strategies for achieving each of the priority programmes listed above. IGAD Secretariat and Member States will establish mechanisms for monitoring implementation of the Agenda and report progress at a continental level.

Please access the Regional Agenda on this link:

[https://igad.int/attachments/article/2764/IGAD%20Women's%20Land%20Rights%20Agenda%20\(2021-2031\).pdf](https://igad.int/attachments/article/2764/IGAD%20Women's%20Land%20Rights%20Agenda%20(2021-2031).pdf)

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