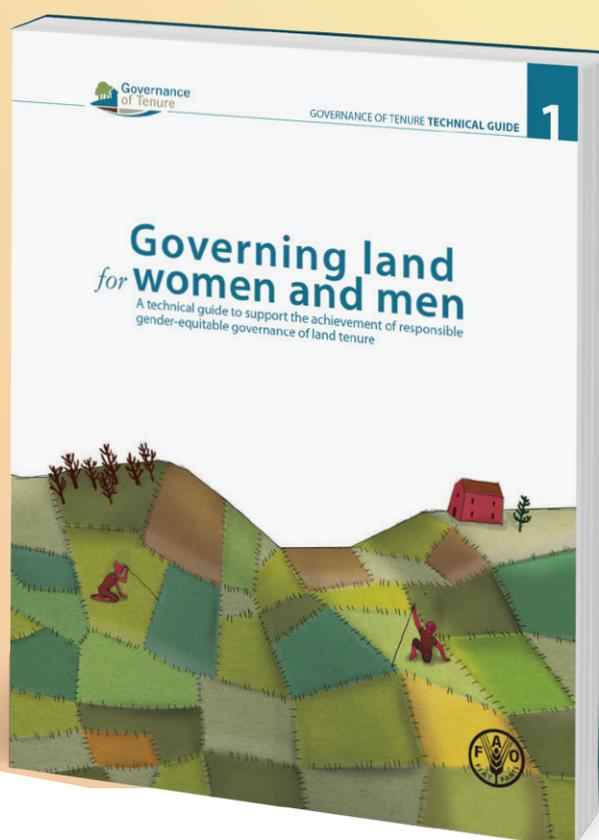


Launch of the Technical Guide on Gender-equitable Governance of Tenure



"States should consider the particular obstacles faced by women and girls with regard to tenure and associated tenure rights, and take measures to ensure that legal and policy frameworks provide adequate protection for women and that laws that recognize women's tenure rights are implemented and enforced. [...] States should develop relevant policies, laws and procedures through participatory processes involving all affected parties, ensuring that both men and women are included from the outset."

Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. CFS and FAO 2012

Gender and gender roles shape the opportunities and constraints that women and men face in securing their livelihoods, including their access to land, decision-making about land, and the institutions that administer land and other productive resources.

Stark gender disparities in land holdings are apparent in all regions. The evidence illustrating gender inequalities in access to land is overwhelming. Women across all developing regions are consistently less likely to own or operate land; they are less likely to have access to rented land, and the land they do have access to is often of poorer quality and in smaller plots.*

Access to land is a basic requirement for farming and control over land is synonymous with wealth, status and power in many areas.

Strengthening women's access to, and control over, land is an important means of raising their status and influence

within households and communities. Improving women's access to land and security of tenure has direct impacts on farm productivity, and can also have far-reaching implications for improving household welfare.*

Gender equity has to be mainstreamed into the governance of land tenure to ensure that the interests and needs of all people – women and men – are addressed, and that the processes and institutions for land tenure are transparent, consultative and participatory. Mainstreaming of gender equity in land tenure governance is also essential for achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 3 – promoting gender equality and empowering women; and 1 – eradicating poverty and hunger. Mainstreaming is supported by internationally endorsed principles of non-discrimination by gender, as most clearly set out in the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Interview

Martha Osorio, FAO Gender and Rural Development Officer, explains why the adoption of the Guidelines represents an important achievement for women's rights and for the realization of the right to food, particularly for marginalized groups.

How are women's and gender issues addressed in the Guidelines?

The Guidelines are unique because they represent the first global land tenure agreement, and they adopt a sustainable development model that directly responds to the needs of rural families and communities. Within this framework, gender equality is identified in the document as one of the 10 principles for the implementation of responsible tenure governance.

The Guidelines underline that gender equality is at the core of all processes and aspects of tenure governance, including policy formulation, service provisioning, and access to legal systems and information. They also provide guidance to improve gender equality in both formal and customary systems, for instance, through amending discriminatory inheritance and property laws.

We believe that if the Guidelines are implemented following the main principles outlined, men and women, through greater participation in land-related institutions and processes, will have greater and more equitable access to land.

What are some of the key issues that the Guidelines address in relation to gender equality and women's empowerment?

Women's issues and perspectives are well articulated in the Guidelines. The Guidelines call upon Governments to fully remove inequalities in the law: both in property, family and succession laws, as well as in national agrarian laws. Among other issues, the guidelines address women's poor access to legal advice and representation; the occurrence

of arbitrary evictions from their land; the need to safeguard the rights of women who hold subsidiary tenure rights, such as gathering rights. The guidelines also provide guidance on introducing legal reforms that strengthen women's land rights, even when these come into conflict with customary tenure systems.

What are some of the key recommendations put forward to promote and protect women's empowerment and gender equality?

One of the key recommendations from the Voluntary Guidelines is for Governments to acknowledge the different roles, needs, challenges and priorities women and men have and to take specific measures to accelerate gender equality.

This may include, for example, removing and prohibiting all forms of discrimination related to tenure rights, including those resulting from change of marital status, lack of legal capacity, and lack of access to economic resources.

The Guidelines also actively encourage States to provide assistance and services that take into account women's needs and constraints; guarantee that land redistribution reforms provide equal access to land for men and women; and monitor the different impact public and private sector strategies have on male and female farmers, so that they benefit equally.

Interested in our publications?

All publications electronically available at www.fao.org/nr/tenure/information-resources - the main reference point for FAO information resources on tenure governance.

For hard cover copies of our publications please write to us at VG-tenure@fao.org.



Governing land for women and men

A technical guide to support the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance of land tenure

Gender equality is one of the ten core principles of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. This guide aims to assist in its implementation through the achievement of responsible gender-equitable governance of land tenure.

The guide focuses on equity and on how land tenure can be governed in ways that address the different needs and priorities of women and men. Gender-equitable governance of land tenure ensures that women and men can participate equally in their relationships to land, through both formal institutions and informal arrangements for land administration and management.

Who is this guide for, and how should it be used?

The guide is a reference tool that can be used by anyone working in any capacity on issues relating to gender and/or land. It is specifically intended for national and local government officials, civil society groups, administrators, technicians and professionals working in the land sector worldwide.

The guide provides advice on mechanisms, strategies and actions that can be adopted to improve gender equity in the processes, institutions and activities of land tenure governance (what has worked, where, why and how?). It contains a wealth of guidance including case studies, examples, checklists, suggested monitoring indicators that

were gathered through substantive research and consultation bringing together land sector practitioners from government, civil society and the private sector around the world to share practical, hands-on experiences and approaches to improving gender equity in land tenure governance. See the table below for modules in the guide, and their suggested target groups.

Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure

On 11 May 2012, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (Guidelines). Since then, they have received global recognition, including at the recent G8, G20 and Rio+20 meetings and the United Nations General Assembly.

The Guidelines represent an unprecedented international agreement on the governance of tenure, which places secure access to land, fisheries and forests firmly in the context of food security. The Guidelines are based on an inclusive, transparent consultation process started by FAO and then finalized through intergovernmental negotiations led by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which involved also civil society organizations, private sector representatives, academics and researchers, and international organizations from over 130 countries.

Based on the principles of sustainable development and in recognition of the centrality of land, fisheries and forests to development, these Guidelines are intended to contribute to global and national efforts towards the eradication of hunger and poverty by promoting secure tenure rights and equitable access to these resources.

The Gender and Land Rights Database

Country level information

Provides country - level information on:

- National legal frameworks
- International treaties and conventions
- Customary law
- Land tenure and related institutions
- Civil society organizations
- Selected land related statistics

Gender and Tenure

Information Resources online

The FAO Gender and tenure information resources website offers videos, news items, newsletters and a range of publications on the subject matter.

Visit the website at www.fao.org/gender/landrights

Visit the website at www.fao.org/nr/tenure/information-resources/gender/en/

Governance of Tenure Technical Guide 1 - Table of Contents

1 Policy-making

Building gender-equitable participation into land policymaking processes

2 Legal issues

Legal pluralism, legal drafting, access to justice, land dispute resolution, legal support

3 Institutions

Gender-equitable participation and representation in the institutions of land tenure governance

4 Technical issues

Gender equity in land administration activities, technologies and systems, and women's participation in land administration

5 Getting the message across

Communication strategies and methods to support responsible gender-equitable land tenure governance

Did you know that...?

Women, on average, comprise **43%** of the agricultural labour force in developing countries.



Of those women in least developed countries who report being economically active, **79%** report agriculture as their primary source of livelihood.

The share of female agricultural land holders in the main developing regions varies from **2%** to maximum **20%** for the respective region.



About **25%** of rural households in Africa are female headed.



Moreover, where women hold land, their plots are generally smaller, of an inferior quality, and with less secure rights than those held by men.

Source: FAO.

FAO in the field - Gender and land

Gender equality is one of FAO's key objective. To ensure that rural women benefit equally from agricultural and rural development the Gender, Equality and Rural Employment Division (ESW) works to incorporate rural gender equality concerns into organizational programmes and projects.

Selected projects focus specifically on gender and land:

- Senegal
- Angola
- Cape Verde
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Tajikistan
- Albania
- Niger
- East Timor
- Mozambique