

GENDERING LAND TOOL DEVELOPMENT

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) aims to establish a continuum of land rights, rather than just focus on individual land titling; improve and develop pro poor land management, as well as land tenure tools; unblock existing initiatives; assist in strengthening existing land networks; improve global coordination on land; assist in the development of gendered tools which are affordable and useful to the grassroots; and improve the general dissemination of knowledge about how to implement security of tenure.



Introduction and Brief Overview

Implementation of women's land, property and housing rights is often frustrated by the lack of effective gendered land tools. One of the values and priorities of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is that every tool must be gendered, as must the process of tool development. Despite continuing efforts of those working on enhancing women's access and rights to land, there is at present little systematic information on existing gendered land tools or even an adequate methodology on genderising tools. There are good examples of gendered tools at community levels but these are yet to be fully documented, replicable and affordable. Given the limitations of existing piecemeal and *ad hoc* gender land strategies there is a

potent demand for an integrated gendered tool framework. Needed is a model that centres women's experiences while at the same time synergises inputs from various stakeholders, actors and users.¹

Addressing Gender Gaps

The objective is three fold – to genderise existing land tools and those under development; to evaluate and upscale existing gendered tools and to create new gendered tools in response to identified gaps. These tools have to be innovative, pro-poor, scalable and effective. Admittedly this process is at a low starting point with no inventory of gendering tools, patchy documentation, poor dissemination and sharing of best practices and virtually no replicable gendered land tools. Rather than create passive tools which use

default gender assumptions reducing women's inputs and choices, effective or active tools involving women at every tool building stage are needed. A bottom up approach builds on the knowledge base of women, recognises their experiences and needs and facilitates their informed choices. Tooling could be a dynamic collective learning opportunity rather than a sterile technical routine.

Wide Range of Tools Needed

A whole range of interconnected gendered tools are required in order to protect women's secure tenure, through gendered land management systems and flexible tenure types, for example co-tenures. The recognition of the diversity of women and their contexts, be it experiences, HIV/AIDS, domestic violence or

¹ See Kabeer, N (2003) *Gender Mainstreaming in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat).



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post-conflict, requires that policies relating to spatial information, land use, planning, administration and registration are gendered. Tools often overlap to form integrated toolkits. For example, a number of tools are involved in securing inheritance rights. Thus, tools linking land registry to the civil registry and tools on gender-accessible dispute settlement mechanisms need to correlate to tools on gender sensitive administration of estates in inheritance cases.

Drivers of the Process

Land tools would ideally be developed within the communities that use them. Yet, they often emerge out of a synergy of community practices as well as professional, expert or policy interventions and the tools are often not scalable. At present, there is little co-ordination or consultation on gendering land tools between these four main potential contributors. Community and grassroots women's groups are best placed as listeners, mobilisers and implementers and are well positioned to not only challenge gender discriminatory cultural practices, but also in proposing solutions. However, women's groups have been largely unsuccessful in converting social tenure into legal security of tenure.

The writ of land professionals in tool development cannot be underestimated but they have often been resistant to gendering land tools. Limited consultations between women and community groups and land professionals have yet to succeed in making grassroots women's practices count in the tool development process. Decision makers and enforcers, including the State land agencies, are often unable to resolve the conundrum of *de facto* and *de jure* tenure. State land policies and implementation strategies are often driven by fictitious assumptions of existing tools with little interface between professionals and women's groups. Development partners and experts devote considerable time and resources to promote gender analysis and identification of tools but often meet with limited success due to lack of coordinated tool development among the major players.

A Systematic Multi-Stage Approach

This proposed gender mechanism, suggests a multi-stage approach, strategies and methodologies for systematic gendered tool building, from preparation and analysis to the piloting/evaluation of gen-

dered tools. Each stage requires inputs, guidelines, checklists and action plans from stakeholders and expert groups. The process will be realised through the GLTN by the following steps:

1. Sharing 'Genderising Land' Approaches
2. Unblocking Gender Disaggregated Data
3. Participatory Gender Land Analysis
4. Creating a Genderised Framework
5. Reviewing Land Tools
6. Piloting and Upscaling of Existing Tools
7. Participatory Evaluation of Tools
8. Engendering Land Governance via Gendered Tools

No single partner has the capacity to undertake this hard and difficult process. It requires a clear road map, collaboration and guidelines from partners. Engendering the tool building process requires not merely the passion and commitment but the sharing of capacity, expertise, and experience of various partners. GLTN can provide coordination and an enabling mechanism for partners to undertake, as per their comparative advantage, this challenging but vital endeavour to enhance women's security of tenure.

² Mukhopadhyay, M (2001) *Gender Perspectives on Property and Inheritance: A Global Sourcebook* (Amsterdam: Oxfam and KIT)

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