



Statement by the SDG land momentum group in response to the political declaration of the SDG summit:

September 06, 2019

Nearly five years into the implementation of the ground breaking global commitments of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, the time is upon to consider what has been accomplished so far and to set the tone for action that will enable the world to meet its ambitious goals.

The political declaration to be discussed and adopted at the upcoming SDG summit provides an ideal platform to strongly convey this message. We are encouraged to see the inclusion of a reference to eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions as a global challenge and highlighting tackling poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development in the declaration. As rightly acknowledged, the failure to tackle poverty would contribute to the rise of hunger and would impinge on the progress towards gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. Nonetheless, we as organisations working on land governance, food security, natural resources management and poverty eradication, strongly recommend that the declaration propose additional concrete actions that would contribute to making this a reality.

Critical among its recommendations are secure land rights for all, a foundational step stone to eradicating poverty and hunger and to empower women and achieve gender equality as agreed under some of the specific targets (1.4, 2.3 & 5.a) and instrumental also to achieving SDG goals related to education, health, economic growth, reducing inequality, climate action, life on land and peace, justice and strong institutions.

In this context it is paramount that the declaration makes a reference to land and people-centred governance of land. Among others:

- If governments fail to secure and protect collective tenure rights, local communities will be evicted without compensation from their land, undermining efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, achieve gender equality, guarantee peace and security and tackle inequality at large. This will also indirectly impact SDG targets aiming to improve health and well-being and provide quality education.
- If forested land held by indigenous people is bought, leased or grabbed by others and cleared, it will adversely impact climate change and the protection of ecosystems and life on land.
- An increase in land conflict and attacks on land rights defenders will undermine many targets in SDG 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions and right to sustainable economic growth and decent work.

Given this gravity, we urge all member states to include and recognise the following in the Political Declaration:

- The importance of respecting, securing and protecting tenure rights of land and other natural resources for all women and men, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, fisher people and local communities under "Our Commitment" to eradicating poverty and combatting hunger. (section I)
- Poor land governance as a key contributory factor to conflict, corruption, forced migration, whilst good land governance and secure land rights promote peace, prosperity and just societies at large under "Our World Today." (section II)
- A need for urgent and ambitious actions to ensure that women have equal rights to land and other natural resources and decision making and the importance of support from politicians and international partners for people-centred land governance to achieve SDGs under "Our Call to Accelerated Action." (section III)



NO LAND RIGHTS
NO SDGs