



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR RESPONSIBLE LAND ADMINISTRATION

FIG Commission 7 & 2 Annual Meeting 2023

2-4 October 2023, Deventer



Halting land degradation through equitable land access and land ownership by Women

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Introduction

- Land degradation is a global phenomenon occurring from poor agricultural practices as well as with poor land choices for urban physical infrastructure development.
- At scale, uncontrolled land degradation could interfere with ecosystem services such as the services and benefits derived from topsoil, mangroves forests, and other terrestrial media.
- Lack of access to land and inequitable ownership of land amongst men and women can promote uncontrolled land degradation specifically from human induced sources.



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- There appears to be a shortage of ‘land stewards’ globally, as women and youth remain marginalized in terms of land access and ownership.
- Empowering women through inclusive and equitable access to land and ownership will increase the number of individuals with title to land a duty of care over land.
- With the growing demand for land, inequitable land access and/or land ownership can be a hindrance towards halting or reversing land degradation.



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Land Degradation Drivers

Several factors act as drivers of land degradation either individually or through synergistic relationships, working together to cause it such as:

1. Poor land Use Planning and Inequitable Access to Land.
2. Soil Pollution and Urbanization-driven Land Degradation
3. Climate Change, Resource Extraction and Desertification
4. Weathering and other natural processes

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Halting Land Degradation through equitable land ownership

Land administrators and managers can work together in a number of ways to actively halt land degradation and promote habitat conservation through equitable ownership as follows

- Countries without adequate financial resources or investments required for land restoration, can opt to promote preventive measures which would discourage land abuse and promote wise land use.
- Increasing the number of people with access to land and promoting land ownership reduces the volume of *unregistered and undocumented* lands that can easily be polluted thereby contributing to the burden of land degradation.

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- Closing the Gender Gap in Land ownership and increasing women’s participation in decision-making on land.
- Promoting Gender Equality in Land Access. Women and men should be given equal conditions for access to land and land ownership.
- Gender Empowerment and Parity in Land Ownership. Addressing employment gaps, gender pay differences and creating equal opportunity for men and women to be gainfully employed can improve their chances of becoming land owners.

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- Incorporating Gender Perspectives. Having more women in leadership promotes a balance of perspectives in decisions reached.
- Enhancing Women's Land Rights. A gender approach to land rights can enable shifts in gender power relations
- Raising the Voices of Indigenous Women. By improving land access and ownership particularly of women can help promote indigenous knowledge on land preservation which can also be used to halt land degradation.

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Conclusion

In addition to ensuring balanced access to land ownership by men and women, land administrators and managers can contribute to reducing land degradation in a number of other ways:

- By producing and sharing of relevant data including soil maps, and information is a key priority to halt land degradation.
- Making projections as to what can go terribly wrong to the environment, to lives and property if land degradation continues unchecked is crucial.
- There is the need to promote investments into land and sustainable soil management in urban areas. and to promote sustainable and integrated land management in urban and rural lands.

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The G20 Global Land Initiative (GLI) for reducing land degradation and enhancing conservation of terrestrial habitats aims to support existing efforts to prevent, halt, and reverse land degradation and habitat loss through sharing of knowledge and best practices on protecting, conserving, sustainably managing, restoring, and rehabilitating degraded land, and by showcasing and disseminating publicly available data and information on degraded lands and conservation/restoration efforts (www.g20land.org).



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