Land Tenure & Gender: Promoting Equity & Climate Resilience through Landownership

Accelerating Progress on Agenda 2030: Good Practices for Parliamentary Action
SDG Target 5A: Why?

Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

- Land represents economic and social assets, with ownership rights having broad development impacts.
- Women's access to land and other forms of ownership, is inextricably linked with fundamental rights such as food security, health, access to water, decent work and a safe home.
- To avert the feminization of poverty.
- Rural Caribbean women play an integral role in primary agricultural production.
Female ownership of agricultural lands

Globally, less than 15 percent of all landholders are women. - FAO, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Female holders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grenada</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Kitts &amp; Nevis</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucia</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Legal Framework

Of 161 countries surveyed, only 37 had specific laws granting equal rights for men and women to own, use and control land - CSW, 2018

- In **Chile** the husband administers joint property but also any private property of his wife unless she acquired it using financial means independent of his.

- Under customary law, daughters and sons are equally entitled to inherit family land, yet few women own land legally in **Jamaica**. Women most often access land through their spouse, partner, or family; they may also rent land.

- Women are prevented from enjoying legal rights to land and are insecure in their access due to patriarchal customs and attitudes in **Guatemala**.

- 90 percent of female heads of farm households in **Guyana** have no title to their land and are therefore unable to access credit to expand or improve their farming activities.

- In **St. Lucia** through the “Turning Dead Capital into live Capital” saw women gaining title to their land which they were then able to utilize to secure bank loans.

Of 161 countries surveyed, only 37 had specific laws granting equal rights for men and women to own, use and control land - CSW, 2018

#ParlAmericasSDG #ParlAmericas2019
Causes & Effects of Landlessness among Women

EFFECTS

THE PROBLEM

CAUSES

- Higher levels of poverty among men than women
- Inability of women to access credit/loans
- Gender-based violence

- Low % of women owning land

CAUSES

- Historical antecedents
- Customary laws & practices that promote patrilineage
- Prohibitive costs

- Inadequate or no Land Reform
- Traditional beliefs and stereotypes
- No income to afford land
SDG 5 and SDG 13: The Intersection

Women and the environment represent twin dimensions of exploitation that suffer from the current capitalist regime and patriarchal structures of domination therein

McKinney et.al, 2015

• Approximately 70 percent of the world's poor are women—climate change exacerbates poverty
• <70% of agricultural land in the region is held by men- women occupy marginal lands
• Data suggests that countries are doing better on SDG 5 than on SDG 13
• NAPs, NAMAs & NDCs must be gender responsive

#ParlAmericasSDG #ParlAmericas2019
The Role of Parliamentarians

- **Promote gender-sensitive budgeting** to mainstream gender in economic processes and policies
- **Enact laws** that promote equity and justice in land access, and secure land rights for women (and men)
- **Advocate** for the marginalized and vulnerable communities, bring awareness to the issues and address that through legislation

#ParlAmericasSDG #ParlAmericas2019
Recommendations

...all countries must incorporate a gender equality approach into their public policies, ensure its effective implementation and make it a top political issue—FAO, 2017

- **Data.** Essential sex-disaggregated data is required for effective M&E in the SDG process—percentage of men & women who own land, distribution of land owned by men & women, land tenure of men & women, employment status, job type, income levels

- **Policy & Law.** Spatial justice, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, women’s land & property rights

- **Integrated development planning.** Climate change, gender and other goals are linked

- **Gender transformative governance.** Engender systemic change that transforms structures and systems that promote gender inequality
Unless gender equality is extended to land rights and ownership, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would become an impossible vision.