WEBINAR:
WOMEN AND LAND ACCESS RIGHTS IN NORTH AFRICA

ADVANCING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND IN EGYPT: POLICY FRAMEWORK & COLLABORATIVE PROGRESS

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WHAT 'LAND' MEANS TO WOMEN

- The relationship between women and land is not just a legal or technical relationship.
- It is mediated by socio-cultural norms and ideas.
- Leading to limited access to land rights and insecure property rights
- Undermines women’s empowerment, preventing them from participating in the economic and political spheres.
- Improving women’s access to land solves a common social problem in Egypt and Africa and enhances gender equality
CHALLENGES ACROSS THE REGION

• Women in MENA has limited access to formal land tenure, with less than 25% having official title to land (Adnane, S., 2018).

• The rate of active formal savings among women is lowest in the region, 4% within urban women.

• Access to loans among women-owned formal small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is also lowest with less than 6% (Khodary, Y., 2022).

• Lack of formal legal property rights: an estimated number of 25 million urban women in the MENA are affected by the lack of equal constitutional and statutory property rights (Adnane, S., 2018).

• Despite the existence of laws, women are prohibited from exercising their legal rights due to customary laws and cultural norms.
THE CASE OF EGYPT

• The *Egyptian Civil and Commercial Code* gives women the right to own and access land.

• A study by Egypt’s National Council for Women in cooperation with the World Bank has revealed that socio-cultural barriers hamper women’s ownership of agricultural land leading to **only 5.2% of agriculture land owned by women**.

• Women have a relatively high representation in Egypt’s agricultural sector,
  - the country’s second-largest employer after construction,
  - employing 21.1% of the labor force
  - providing a livelihood for 55% of the general population (CAPMAS, 2019).
Registering land/real estate is an **exhausting and costly process** that increases the challenges that women face when trying to obtain title deeds.

Women appear reluctant when it comes to **inheritance rights** and still **favor granting land to their sons** rather than their daughters.

**Persistent discriminatory societal norms** deprive women of their land and basic financial stability.

The **absence of legal protection mechanisms** subject women to different manifestations of gender discrimination especially in case of separation or divorce.

The **lack of recent sex-disaggregated data** specific to forms of housing and land tenure and control is a persistent issue.
One-third of working women in Egypt work in agriculture, more than half in Morocco and Sudan, and one-tenth in Tunisia.

Women constitute approximately 43% of the agricultural labor force and provide the majority of unpaid labor on family farms.

Women in these value chains are often concentrated in seasonal, informal, and low-paid positions.

Access to training for women is limited.

Female farmers are often excluded from decision-making processes that impact agricultural production and their daily work arrangements in irrigated agriculture.

Female participation in Water User Organizations (WUOs) ranges from 3-5% due to cultural norms and traditions. (GIZ)
The **2018 survey of rural women** indicated that
- least popular response *(1.4%)* was to store wealth via purchasing agricultural land.
- And *(6.1%)* for purchasing real estate

A survey by Baseera, in cooperation with the National Council for Women and the World Bank.

- Almost **12% of female holders' portion is less than 1 feddan**, lower than the average in the Arab world (FAO).
- Only 6% of women aged between 18-64 own any form of assets or properties. (Built environment observatory, 2022)
- 8 out of 10 women in this age group lack independent income

Women and Housing 3: Systemic Barriers to Women’s Right to Adequate, Safe and Independent Housing in Egypt - مرصد العمران (marsadomran.info)
Egypt's is committed to the 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women' CEDAW and African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Amendments of 2014 Constitution:

• **Article 9**, refers to the principle of equal opportunity and condemns discrimination against women,

• **Article 11**, ensures women’s protection against violence, their equality and access to economic, social and civil rights.

• **Article 17**, rural women are also granted social security from their states
LEGAL REFORMS AND AMENDMENTS

Social

Law No. 10 of 2004 established specialized family courts, known as Personal Status Law courts, to handle family matters in Egypt.

Law No. 11 of 2004 created the Family Insurance Fund, ensuring the enforcement of judgments on maintenance or alimony payments to wives, divorcees, children, and relatives.

Economic

Political

Amendments to the Nationality Law, pursuant to Law No. 154 of 2004, enabled Egyptian mothers to pass on their nationality to their children.
Amendments to the Inheritance Law (Law No. 219 of 2017) revised provisions originally established in Law No. 77 of 1943, with the intention of ensuring gender equality. The Investment Law (Law No. 72 of 2017) underwent amendments to ensure women's empowerment in opportunities and rights. It offers incentives, tax breaks, and customs exemptions to support these businesses, encouraging their development and contributing to economic growth and job creation. Law No. 144 of 2020 was enacted to amend the House of Representatives Law (Law No. 46 of 2014), mandating that women hold no less than 25 percent of the total seats in the Egyptian Parliament.
Established in 2000, aligned with Egypt Vision 2030

- propose general policies that advance women’s affairs
- integrate women’s efforts in development programs,
- develop a national plan to advance women’s issues
- monitor and evaluate public policies
- present suggestions to competent authorities
- provides expert commentary on draft laws and recommends new laws related to women’s issues
THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF EGYPTIAN WOMEN 2030

Year 2017 was the designated year of Egyptian Women

➢ 1st Pillar; Political Empowerment
legislative representation at the national and local levels/ leadership positions in executive and judicial institutions

➢ 2nd Pillar; Economic Empowerment
equal participation in labor force and employment opportunities

➢ 3rd Pillar; Social Empowerment
create opportunities for social participation, preventing unjust and harmful practices within the family

➢ 4th Pillar; Protection
eliminate all forms of violence against women

• Government Action Programme Principles

1. equality before the law;
2. political rights;
3. educational rights - including equal educational opportunities and compulsory education laws;
4. labor rights - including the right to hold public office and to equal pay;
5. maternity protection
6. laws regulating abortion;
7. Development of family arrangements
**Mainstreaming Gender Perspective in Egypt**

**Egyptian Women’s Observatory**

- Established in 2017 by the National Council for Women
- A mechanism to follow up on the implementation of goals related to the status of women during the period 2017-2030
- Monitoring indicators of the strategy
- Preparing a set of periodic reports on the status of Egyptian women, gender-based gaps, and listing and presenting laws related to women

*Check online:*[enow.gov.eg](enow.gov.eg)

**Egyptian Women’s Entrepreneurship Guide**

- Published in 2018
- Jointly prepared by the National Council for Women, the Egyptian Centre for Economic Studies, and Canadian Aid, seeks to advance the economic empowerment of women in Egypt.

*Check online*[WomEnt-Guide-Full-v.2.0-for-website.pdf](eces.org.eg)
CLOSING THE GENDER GAP ACCELERATOR

- In 2020- National Council for Women (NCW), the Ministry of International Cooperation, and the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- First public-private collaboration model in the MENA region
- The hub for all the initiatives under the WEP Women’s Economic Empowerment Pillar of the ‘Egyptian National Strategy for the Empowerment of Women 2030’.
- Private sector engagement - Egyptian Gender Equity Seal (EGES)
The ‘Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation’ MALR
engaging Egypt’s smallholder farmers and prioritizing key value chains for investment
potential impact of these investments on the broader agri-food sector.

In 2015-2019, the ‘Water Management Reform Programme’ WMRP, in cooperation
with GIZ-Egypt, MALR and farmer organizations –
empowering women in irrigated agriculture

In 2023-2026, the 'Agricultural Innovation Project' AIP, GIZ
introducing green innovations resulting in higher incomes for smallholder farmers
and rural businesses in Upper Egypt.
COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

‘Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy’ SADS- 2009 by MALR / FAO
In alignment, the ‘National Strategy for the Empowerment of Egyptian Women 2030’ emphasizes the need for social insurance and income security
Roles of women in rural development stimulating institutional support for implementation through creating new credit lines and financial support

Women’s Employment Promotion in the Agriculture Sector’ WEPP- 2015, UN Women partnered with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Following the WEP framework

‘She Feeds the World’ program - 2020, Care Egypt Foundation implemented the in cooperation with ‘Agricultural Research Center’ ARC
Provides VSLAs ‘Village Savings and Loans Associations’
Around 20 women in each village to develop an evidence-based road map for decision-makers.
Capacity development CAAES. ‘Central Administration for Agricultural Extension Services’
Housing Finance Program-for-Results (PforR)

• Since 2015, funded by World Bank

• Among female-headed households, 8% include spouses and children, while the majority are composed of divorced, widowed with children, and unmarried individuals.

• With the help of local NGOs, the program has reached out to over 60,000 potential women beneficiaries (behavioral change trainings / economic inclusion activities).

• Around 4,000 women to date have received assets through which they can sustain their livelihoods.

Check online  https://www.shmff.gov.eg/

Egypt’s Inclusive Housing Finance Program (worldbank.org)
GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMS
HAYAH KARIMA

• Social Protection Programme ‘Haya Karima’, 2019

• An integrated rural development program/ presidential development initiative.

• The initiative works to achieve economic empowerment for women by enhancing their participation in the labor market.

• Covers 5,000 poor villages and marginalized rural areas through an integrated gender-transformative participatory approach.

• Women benefit from loans provided through microfinance associations (220,000 women in 2021).

• Women represent 78% of the total beneficiaries of the Takaful and Karama program.

Check online www.hayakarima.com
Women Economic Empowerment for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth in Egypt known as "Rabeha" program

- Implemented by UNIDO and UN Women in partnership with the National Council for Women (NCW), the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) and the Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises Development Agency (MSMEDA), with the generous support of Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

- 2022-2023, 'Rabeha' supported 300 rural women in the governorates of Beni Suef, Fayoum, and Minya.

- Provides technical support and employability skills training.

- UNIDO team supported job matching with companies, boosting women's confidence and financial independence.
• Egypt ranked 4th out of 19 countries in the Middle East and North Africa in the Global Gender Gap Report 2021, with a score of 0.639, ahead of Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania.

• This is Egypt's highest ranking in the last 10 years, and a significant improvement from its 8th place ranking in 2020.

• Egypt is the first Arab country to apply the Gender Equality Seal Certification Programme in private and public institutions that offers guidance to Egyptian businesses on tackling women's challenges in areas.

• The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency MSMEDA was awarded the seal in 2019.

• 'Country Gender Assessment in the Agriculture and Rural Sector' report- 2021, current insights on the status of women in Egypt's rural sector

• Egypt has launched ‘Global Vision of Women, Environment and Climate Change’ in New York last March 2022 as a lead-up to COP27.
THANK YOU

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