

**Information Concerning the COP 28 Outcome on Gender
regarding Inputs on Progress, Challenges, Gaps, and Priorities
in the Implementation of the Gender Action Plan
Submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

Submitted by Landesa
March 2024

This submission is respectfully submitted by Landesa,ⁱ a leading international land tenure organization dedicated to securing gender-equitable land rights for people living in poverty in rural areas, with experience in over 60 countries. This submission includes observations based on our attendance at the Strategy Workshop on Women's Land Rights and the Rio Conventions in Berlin, Germany 3-5 July 2023 and COP 28 30 November – 13 December 2023.

This submission provides inputs related to progress, challenges, gaps and priorities in implementing the Gender Action Plan (GAP), organized by Priority Area and activity, and on future work to be undertaken on gender and climate change. Across the following Activities under the GAP (B.1, B.2, C.1, C.3, and C.4, all Activities under Priority Area D, and E.2, E.3, and E.4), we encourage the Secretariat to prioritize, support, and promote strong and gender-equitable land tenure rights and land governance, and the leadership of Indigenous, young, and local women advocating for these rights as 1) a foundational element for achieving the goals of the GAP, as well as related global agendas in line with Activity C.3 (the Sustainable Development Goals and human rights), and 2) as a key pathway for coordinated and effective action to achieve climate and gender justice at national and global levels. We offer inputs on progress, challenges, gaps, and priorities in more detail below, focused on Activity C.3.

We are hearing increasing global calls from Indigenous Peoples and rural movements to recognize tenure and territorial rights as a foundation for climate action and climate justice; the call for gender justice related to land and natural resources is strong and growing stronger.ⁱⁱ Ensuring women's rights to land constitutes a foundational aspect of gender equality as enshrined in climate change frameworks and human rights treaties. Women (particularly Indigenous, young, and rural women) are crucial actors in climate action, even as they disproportionately experience the impacts of climate change. Secure rights to land are also often a precondition to the fulfillment of human rights, allowing women to realize their rights to an economic livelihood, equality, adequate living conditions, housing, education, health, freedom from violence, and participation in decision-making.ⁱⁱⁱ Additionally, rights to land, especially for women, are recognized within and linked to human rights.^{iv} When land governance and management protect women's rights to land, other outcomes related to climate action and human rights fulfillment are also furthered (see Annex below for more detailed information).

Priority Area C: coherence

Activity C.3: Strengthen coordination between the work on gender considerations of the subsidiary bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement and other relevant United Nations entities and processes, in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as applicable.

Progress: Over the last several years, there has been accelerated global action on addressing the interrelated climate, land degradation, and biodiversity crises in a coordinated manner; and we have seen increasingly integrated efforts at the intersection of climate and gender justice, as well as increasing recognition of women's rights to land, housing, property, territory, and natural resources as foundational to achieving both a sustainable and gender just future.^v Landesa has worked along with numerous partners for the past several years to explore and support synergistic implementation efforts that link the

Rio Conventions' objectives, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and human rights norms and standards, with gender-equitable land rights as a foundation.^{vi}

Challenges and Gaps: Key barriers to coherence include first and foremost a lack of resources to support the coordination and strategy needed for integrated implementation among UNFCCC subsidiary bodies and other UN bodies (including Rio Convention leadership), and national-level actors who serve as delegates to UN venues and as key actors in implementation. This is a key point for collective advocacy with development partners and the philanthropic community, and with all actors engaged in these processes, which are too often siloed. Prioritizing and supporting the leadership of Indigenous and grassroots women in each process as well as in efforts on coordination can also support Activity B.1, and Activity D.5. Support for women and gender institutions at the national level to be in dialogue with ministries of land and environment, and delegations to all Rio Conventions is also crucial in the context of achieving the goals of the GAP. Existing resources can be used to demonstrate the multiple benefits of coordination among subsidiary bodies and other UN bodies. For example, online or in-person workshops could outline the links between Activity C.3 and key workstreams under the UNFCCC related to or impacting land and territorial rights (e.g., Loss and Damage, Article 6 mechanisms, Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture), and could illustrate how strengthening gender-equitable land tenure can support more sustainable and just action under these workstreams, as well as contributing to meeting additional goals under the Rio Conventions, SDGs, and human rights frameworks.

Barriers for the implementation of land rights in accordance with global, regional, and national standards also remain a challenge and a gap for both climate and gender justice, including in delivery of the GAP Activities listed above; land rights contribute to women's agency and support the human right to participation, including in climate action and climate processes at all levels. Yet the voices of women, girls, and gender minorities are woefully underrepresented in most decision-making spaces,^{vii} and this lack of representation is especially acute within land governance agencies, community-level councils, and traditional justice mechanisms.^{viii} Indigenous and rural women disproportionately experience poverty and marginalization, including severe gender disparities related to land limiting their agency and ability to contribute to climate action. Despite the growing awareness of and evidence for women's land rights in Indigenous and rural communities as a basis for both climate and gender justice, the discourse on climate and gender justice, and on women's human rights often omits land rights, resources at this intersection are sparse, and women's rights to land and resources are constrained in law and in practice.

Priorities: Women's land rights are increasingly recognized and explored as a key avenue for achieving effective and equitable climate action.^{ix} Prioritizing and supporting the leadership of Indigenous and grassroots women in each process as well as in efforts on coordination can also support Activity B.1, and Activity D.5. Support for women and gender institutions at the national level to be in dialogue with ministries of land and environment, and delegations to all Rio Conventions is also crucial in the context of achieving the goals of the GAP. Existing resources can be used to demonstrate the multiple benefits of coordination among subsidiary bodies and other UN bodies. For example, online or in-person workshops could outline the links between Activity C.3 and key workstreams under the UNFCCC related to or impacting land and territorial rights (e.g., Loss and Damage, Article 6 mechanisms, Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture), and could illustrate how strengthening gender-equitable land tenure can support more sustainable and just action under these workstreams, as well as contributing to meeting additional goals under the Rio Conventions, SDGs, and human rights frameworks.

Vertical coordination of efforts at international, national, and local levels can significantly contribute to coherence under Activity C.3 and other GAP Priority Areas.

A wide variety of stakeholders—government, civil society, and the private sector—must be engaged and coordinated to implement the GAP, and integration with other global agendas bolsters efforts for gender-responsive action. The effectiveness and conservation of scarce resources at both global and national levels requires knowledge-sharing and collaboration across UNFCCC constituted bodies, delegations to the Rio Conventions, human rights treaty-monitoring bodies, and national level actors implementing the



SDGs. National-level coordination in particular is essential for policy coherence and for implementation of all global agendas, but it will require significant support.

One example of supporting this “vertical coordination” at the national level is the work of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). NHRIs are uniquely placed to support integrated implementation of climate change frameworks, the SDGs, and human rights norms and standards. NHRIs are independent State institutions, established by constitutional or legislative authority, mandated to ensure national compliance with international human rights commitments.^x The Paris Principles establish NHRIs’ mandate;^{xi} they include a wide range of functions implicating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which could also be integrated with climate action at the national level:^{xii} monitoring and reporting, advising the government on human rights issues, cooperating with national, regional and international bodies, and building knowledge on human rights.^{xiii}

Awareness-raising conducted by or in collaboration with NHRIs could support implementation of the GAP under Priority area B: gender balance, participation, and women’s leadership, by leveraging NHRIs’ engagement in human rights education at national and local levels, and could be specifically tailored to support Indigenous, young, and rural women’s participation in delegations (Activity B.1).^{xiv} Human rights education is a core NHRI mandate.^{xv} SDG Target 4.7 calls for HRE to promote attitudes, beliefs, behavior, and skills for inclusive development and human rights fulfillment.^{xvi} In addition to building capacity for government officials and civil society on human rights norms, NHRIs often conduct HRE in remote and marginalized communities, where addressing issues of inequality (especially gendered inequalities) requires significant shifts in social norms.^{xvii} When NHRIs are equipped with integrated information about climate change, the SDGs, and human rights, they can influence, and support needed social, and behavior change to achieve shared goals. Providing capacity development to NHRIs to support integrated implementation of the GAP and related global agendas could also meet multiple needs related to gender-responsive implementation—by supporting coordination of and greater capacity among national and local-level stakeholders relevant to the implementation of the GAP.^{xviii}

Future Work to be Undertaken on Gender and Climate

Landesa will continue to collaborate broadly with key stakeholders in the climate action, gender justice, and land rights arenas to further GAP priorities, including the following activities:

- Engaging with government and civil society organizations to advance legal and policy changes to strengthen women’s land rights in line with Tanzania’s commitments to both climate and gender justice, via implementation of the Generation Equality Forum (the Government of Tanzania has made commitments to women’s land rights specifically under the Economic Justice and Rights Action Coalition);
- Socializing a theory of change on the linkages between women’s land rights and the objectives of all three Rio Conventions with Rio Convention Secretariat members, civil society, key government stakeholders, and other relevant actors to support integrated action;
- Continuing work with the UNCCD on awareness-raising efforts^{xix} across States Parties on the linkages between women’s land rights and land degradation neutrality (and interlinkages with UNFCCC and CBD goals), including capacity-building opportunities at all Rio Convention COPs in 2024 and via the UNCCD Gender Caucus and UNCCD’s national consultations.^{xx}
- Continuing to build the evidence base for women’s land rights and climate change (Activity D.4), building on Landesa’s evidence review of women’s land tenure security as a basis for climate action,^{xxi} and linked to work on a cross-Rio Convention theory of change for women’s land rights (bullet 2 above).
- Enhancing stakeholders’ access to data to diagnose and track progress on women’s land rights and land degradation neutrality efforts, in support of SDG 15.3.1, which could also support Activity D.4 and Activity C.3;
- Encouraging and supporting reporting on progress toward women’s land rights under the SDGs, including as linked to reporting under the Rio Conventions (e.g., SDG 1.4.2 on land tenure is also included in the Kunming Montreal Framework Target 23).



Conclusion and Recommendations

These inputs are presented to elevate the issue of women's land rights in achieving the objectives of the GAP, and to advocate for priority investment in Indigenous, young, and local women's leadership in key GAP activities. We recommend that the Secretariat:

- Promote the efforts described above and similar efforts.^{xxii}
- Promote the role of coherence with human rights and the SDGs frameworks for achieving gender-responsive climate action.^{xxiii}
- Encourage States' Parties delegations to the UNFCCC to engage and collaborate with delegations and actors responsible for implementation of the two other Rio Conventions, as well as with national level entities responsible for SDG and human rights implementation and to include information on efforts for integrated implementation of global agendas into their reporting under the UNFCCC^{xxiv}
- Collaborate with civil society actors and States Parties to hold coherence activities at both national and global levels across climate change frameworks, the SDGS, and human rights norms and standards.

Annex: Benefits of Women's Land Rights

- **Mitigation and adaptation of climate change:** Emerging evidence suggests that when women hold secure rights to land, efforts to tackle climate change are more successful.^{xxv} Women, especially rural women, should be included and empowered in policy-making and implementation of policies that link infrastructure, land management, and climate change.^{xxvi}
- **Political efficacy:** Research shows that the more influence women hold over land, the more they will be involved in local-level decision making.^{xxvii} And rights to land are likely to contribute to women's influence more broadly—greater levels of assets correlate with greater levels of political involvement^{xxviii}; when women have greater economic power, including via control over land, they will also have greater political power.
- **Increased influence for women in household decision-making:** When women have secure rights, they enjoy enhanced intra-household bargaining and decision-making power, which in turn can lead to better outcomes for the family as a whole^{xxix} and greater freedom to participate in government or development initiatives.
- **Increased household income:** Women with land rights contribute a greater proportion of income to the household and exercise greater control over agricultural income.^{xxx} Extending equal land rights to women can benefit them and their families by increasing the amount and varying the sources of their income.
- **Improved food security:** When women own a larger share of the household's farmland, families allocate a larger proportion of their household budget to food.^{xxxi} This impact goes beyond individuals and households: all women and girls worldwide require food security and sustainability, whether they live in rural areas or urban, and whether or not their primary livelihood is agriculture. Strengthening gender-equal rights for the smallholder farmers, who produce a third of the global food supply,^{xxxii} is a key route to achieve equity, help migration occur sustainably and maintain peace and social stability,^{xxxiii} and provide food for everyone.
- **Increased agricultural productivity:** Secure land rights generally have been shown to increase agricultural productivity^{xxxiv}—which contributes to increased incomes at the household level as well as greater economic growth and food security.^{xxxv} Securing land tenure for women specifically is now especially crucial as increased concentration and commodification of land causes men (predominantly) to migrate for work, leaving women to work the land with fewer resources and inadequate authority to make decisions.^{xxxvi}
- **Subsidies, programs, credit:** Having proof of rights to land is often a prerequisite for access to government and development programs, including agricultural extension, training, and contracting or cooperative arrangements, yet women often lack this proof.^{xxxvii} Securing women's rights to land creates more gender-equal links to these services, and in turn creates better access to markets for women and girls via these links.
- **Education:** When women in the household have land rights, children have higher levels of educational attainment.^{xxxviii}
- **Health:** Securing women's land rights results in improved household nutrition; the odds that a child is severely underweight are reduced by half if the mother owns land. Land rights also result in a reduced incidence of HIV; women with greater economic strength and status gained from land rights are better able to negotiate safe sex with husbands, less vulnerable to transactional sex for survival, and better able to cope with the costs of disease within the family if it does occur.^{xxxix}



ⁱ Landesa is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to securing gender-responsive land rights for rural people living in poverty. Landesa has worked in over 50 countries and has contributed to over 110 million families gaining legal land rights, using a combination of robust research, collaborative law and policy design, dedicated advocacy, and tailored evidence-based interventions, www.landesa.org

ⁱⁱ The Stand for Her Land global advocacy initiative is calling for accelerated implementation of women's rights to land, property, housing, and territory worldwide. <https://stand4herland.org/> See also the Women in the Global South Alliance for Tenure and Climate, launched at COP27 by the Rights and Resources Initiative, a member of the Stand for Her Land Steering Committee. <https://rightsandresources.org/women-in-global-south-alliance/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Landesa Women's Land Rights, <https://www.landesa.org/resources/womens-land-rights-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/>

^{iv} The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights General Comment No. 26 on Land includes a detailed description of the relationship between women's land rights and human rights fulfillment. The Human Rights Committee has produced an overview of international bodies' statements establishing the links between land rights and human rights in the ICCPR, ICESCR, and CEDAW and other instruments, see HR/PUB/13/04 at 5-8 and HR/PUB/15/5/Add.1 at 11-14, and E/2014/86 at

http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Land_HR-StandardsApplications.pdf. See also, CESCR Committee, General

Comment No. 4 on the right to adequate housing (art.11(1)), at para.8(e) recognizes "access to land as an entitlement." General Comment No. 16 on the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights (art. 3 of the covenant), at II(C)(28) "requires that women have a right to own, use or otherwise control housing, land and property on an equal basis with men, and to access necessary resources to do so." For an overview of the CESCR Committee's recognition of land as a human right, see Minority Rights Group International, *Moving towards a right to Land: The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' Treatment of Land Rights as Human Rights*. (2015), at 3-4, available at: http://minorityrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/MRG_Rep_LandRights_Oct15.pdf See also CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No. 21 (13th sess., 1994) Equality in marriage and family relations, para. 26 – calling for the equal ownership of property as crucial for women's equality and livelihoods, and para. 27 – calling on states to ensure that land allocation and reform programs redistribute land to women on an equal basis with men, regardless of marital status.

^v <https://www.tmg-thinktank.com/blog/harnessing-synergies-and-mobilizing-joint-action-a-historic-first-workshop>

^{vi} See e.g., *Sustaining Sustainable Development: Leveraging Human Rights Norms to Implement Land-related Goals*, Impakter (May 2018), available at: <https://impakter.com/sustaining-sustainable-development/> See also, *Leveraging the SDGs to improve women's land rights: model validation* (in partnership with Espaço Feminista and the Global Land Alliance, September 2018), available at: <https://www.landesa.org/resources/leveraging-the-sdgs-to-improve-womens-land-rights/>

^{vii} Landesa (2012). *Women's Secure Rights to Land: Benefits, Barriers, and Best Practices*. Available at:

<https://www.landesa.org/wp-content/uploads/Landesa-Women-and-Land-Issue-Brief.pdf>

^{viii} Elizabeth Daley, et al. (2013). *Women's Land Rights and Gender Justice in Land Governance: pillars in the promotion and protection of women's human rights in rural areas*, International Land Coalition, at 10, hereinafter ILC, available at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/RuralWomen/InternationalLandCoalition.pdf>

^{ix} <https://www.tmg-thinktank.com/blog/harnessing-synergies-and-mobilizing-joint-action-a-historic-first-workshop>

^x UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2016). *National Mechanisms for Reporting and Follow-up: A Practical Guide to Effective State Engagement with International Human Rights Mechanisms*, HR/PUB/16/1, at 3, hereinafter "OHCHR," available at: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/HR_PUB_16_1_NMRF_PracticalGuide.pdf

^{xi} UN Commission on Human Rights (1993). *National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights*, E/CN.4/RES/1993/55, hereinafter "Paris Principles," available at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/statusofnationalinstitutions.aspx>

^{xii} Steven L. B. Jensen, et al. (2015), *Realizing Rights Through the Sustainable Development Goals: The Role of National Human Rights Institutions*, Danish Institute for Human Rights and Center For Economic and Social Rights, at 3, hereinafter "Jensen," available at: https://www.humanrights.dk/files/media/dokumenter/udgivelser/research/nhri_briefingpaper_may2015.pdf

^{xiii} Filskov, Nadja. *National Human Rights Institutions engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*, GANHRI, 2017, at 5, hereinafter "GANHRI," available at:

https://nhri.ohchr.org/EN/News/Documents/GANHRI_NHRIs%20engaging%20with%20the%20SDGs.pdf

^{xiv} Priority area B: gender balance, participation and women's leadership. Activity B.4. "Cooperate in, promote, facilitate, develop and implement formal and non-formal education and training programmes focused on climate change at all levels, targeting women and youth in particular at the national, regional and local levels, including the exchange or secondment of personnel to train experts."

^{xv} GANHRI at 14.

^{xvi} "Target 4.7 - By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development."

^{xvii} Jensen at 3.

^{xviii} Informal workshop report, supra note 2, at para 19: "Participants considered activities under priority area D to be valuable and expressed support for retaining this area of focus. However, the current activities are too limited in scope and should be extended to better reflect the principle of supporting implementation at the national level. In particular, participants identified the need to specify beneficiaries, stakeholders, and responsible actors in implementing gender-responsive climate action."

^{xix} UNCCD, "Land Rights Matter for People and the Planet" (2022); available at:

<https://www.unccd.int/resources/publications/land-rights-matter-people-and-planet>

^{xx} "FAO-UNCCD Joint Initiative on Land Tenure: First group of countries selected for national consultations" (2023); Available at: <https://www.unccd.int/news-stories/stories/fao-unccd-joint-initiative-land-tenure-first-group-countries-selected-national>

-
- ^{xxi} https://www.landesia.org/wp-content/uploads/WomensTenure_ClimateChange_EvidenceScan_2024.pdf
- ^{xxii} Activity C.3 Deliverable: “Promotion of efforts.” FCCC/CP/2017/11/Add.1 at pg 17.
- ^{xxiii} The Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights has developed a body of work on coherence with climate change frameworks, and has established a liaison office between the OHCHR and the UNFCCC. *See e.g.*, Integrating Human Rights at the UNFCCC, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/HRAndClimateChange/Pages/UNFCCC.aspx>
- ^{xxiv} Suggestion for improvement on Activity C.3 from informal workshop report, pg 11: “Identifying a vehicle or way through which other work on gender and climate change, by treaty bodies or other UN-agencies, can be more visible under the UNFCCC.”
- ^{xxv} Landesa (2016). *Women Gaining Ground: Securing Land Rights as a Critical Pillar of Climate Change Strategy*. Available at: https://s24756.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/LCWLR_WomenGainingGround.pdf
- ^{xxvi} CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation No. 37 on gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change (2018), UN Doc. CEDAW/C/GC/37, available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/CEDAW_C_GC_37_8642_E.pdf
- ^{xxvii} IFPRI at v.
- ^{xxviii} Pilar Domingo et al (2015). *Women’s voice and leadership in decision-making: assessing the evidence*. ODI, at 15, 95, hereinafter “ODI,” available at: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/9627.pdf>
- ^{xxix} Meinzen-Dick et al, (2017) *Women’s Land Rights as a Pathway to Poverty Reduction*, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), at v, hereinafter “IFPRI,” available at: <http://www.ifpri.org/publication/womens-land-rights-pathway-poverty-reduction-framework-and-review-available-evidence>
- ^{xxx} Landesa (2012). *Women’s Secure Rights to Land: Benefits, Barriers, and Best Practices*. Available at: <https://www.landesia.org/wp-content/uploads/Landesia-Women-and-Land-Issue-Brief.pdf>
- ^{xxxi} Landesa (2012). *Women’s Secure Rights to Land: Benefits, Barriers, and Best Practices*. Available at: <https://www.landesia.org/wp-content/uploads/Landesia-Women-and-Land-Issue-Brief.pdf>
- ^{xxxii} Vincent Ricciardi et al. (2018). *How much of the world’s food do smallholders produce?* Global Food Security, available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2211912417301293>
- ^{xxxiii} FAO at 11.
- ^{xxxiv} Landesa. *Grow the Economy: Stngthen Land Rights*. Available at: https://s24756.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/FactSheet_grow-the-economy_ENG.pdf
- ^{xxxv} Id.
- ^{xxxvi} FAO at 141.
- ^{xxxvii} Id.
- ^{xxxviii} Landesa (2012). *Women’s Secure Rights to Land: Benefits, Barriers, and Best Practices*. Available at: <https://www.landesia.org/wp-content/uploads/Landesia-Women-and-Land-Issue-Brief.pdf>
- ^{xxxix} Id.