



COLLECTIVE DEMANDS ON WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS FOR BEIJING +30 REGIONAL REVIEW

ADDIS ABABA
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We, women living in rural areas, grassroots women organisations, women's land rights defenders and advocates in Africa wish to recall our historic contribution to the outcomes of the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, China. We recall the international community's commitment to women's land rights, including the over 30 references to women's land rights in the Declaration, which recognised the centrality of these rights to the realisation of women's rights and sustainable development.

Land is our identity, our heritage, and a critical productive resource for rural women and communities in Africa.

We take stock of further commitments by national governments in Africa and international leaders on women's land rights, including the Sustainable Development Goals. We acknowledge governments' past and ongoing efforts to advance women's land rights through land governance reforms and robust legal and institutional frameworks intended to achieve gender equality in land governance across the region..

In 2021, during the review of the Beijing+25, again, different stakeholders recognized the importance of women's land rights to advance gender equality, empowerment of women, gender justice, climate justice and overall a sustainable development agenda. As a result, a multitude of stakeholders endorsed the women's land rights collective commitment as a pathway to the meaningful integration of women's land rights in sustainable development.

However, as women living in rural areas, we observe that the progress in fulfilling such commitments has been slow and inadequate despite the permanent engagement of civil society actors, grassroots organizations and local communities. Land-related policies and legal reforms remain overwhelmingly unimplemented. Gender inequality in land governance perpetuated by patriarchal systems, harmful social norms and traditions continue to be significant barriers to fulfilling women's land rights. Furthermore, emerging new challenges such as the climate crisis, increasing inequality, and extractivism, which

cause unsustainable utilisation and competition for land and natural resources, have compounded insecure land rights for women.

We, women living in rural areas in Africa, have continued to confront these challenges through advocacy, the implementation of transformative and innovative practices, learning and sharing among ourselves and building on the immense diversity of expertise and experience on women's land rights that exists within our communities and organisations/movements. In 2016, we worked to bring our demands to the African Union through an innovative campaign called '***The Kilimanjaro Initiative***'. We have been actively and relentlessly doing our part, feeding the population, conserving biodiversity, educating citizens, as well as perpetuating positive traditions to sustain our communities, nations and continent.

As the world commemorates 30 years of the Beijing Conference in 2025, we call upon all leaders and stakeholders (private sector, civil society, philanthropists, traditional and customary leaders, and intergovernmental organisations) to fast-track the implementation of all these past commitments and establish a renewed momentum to fulfil women's land rights.

We recommend the following:

Strengthening accountability on women land rights-

Rural women call on African Governments, the African Union (AU), civil society organisations, development and funding partners to implement the Kilimanjaro Charter of Demands for Women Land Rights which was submitted to the AU Commission in 2016 and now sits at the Africa Union repository.

In their 2009 declaration on land, Africa Head of States and governments pledged to promote women's land rights across the continent. The Africa Land Policy Centre presented recommendations to the Specialised Technical Committee which consisted African Ministers responsible for finance, economic development, planning, integration and central bank governors to emphasize a commitment to allocate 30% of land to women by 2025. We urge the Centre to actively monitor progress toward this commitment as we approach the deadline.

Governments and influential decision-makers, including traditional and faith leaders, must demonstrate political will to advance women's land rights through meaningful, transformative decisions and the development of comprehensive implementation plans and budgets.

Funding partners and the private sector should prioritise mobilizing resources and continue to support women's organisations to secure, protect, and demand their land rights. Government, CSOs, development and funding partners as well as other stakeholders must effectively utilize existing data and collect new data specific to attacks against land rights defenders.

Amplify women's voices through education and social norms –

Knowledge and lived experiences of women and girls in rural areas regarding land restoration, productivity, climate change adaptation, and mitigation methods. Programs

and policies affecting women land rights must be grounded in their priorities and insights ensuring that their voices shape the narrative and foster social norms that promote gender equality in land management. By centering women's perspectives, we can create more effective and equitable solutions that recognize their vital role in sustainable land practices.

On Countering the dominant narrative and offering and shifting narratives-

Stakeholders should dispel and counter the narrative that reduces land rights as mere commodities or source of livelihood. For women in rural areas, land represents identity, territory and an integral part of our lives. It is important to recognize the historical and central role women play in land use, protection, and restoration. To achieve this, stakeholders should ensure that women are consulted as empowered agents rather than victims.

Additionally, efforts should focus on enhancing women's capacities to address emerging issues and support their access to justice. By shifting the narrative and reinforcing women's agency in land rights, we can foster a more equitable and inclusive approach to land management.

Intersectionality is Key in advancing women's land rights –

To effectively advance women's land rights, governments and organizations must be intentional about funding and supporting the interconnected issues faced by women. This includes combating gender-based violence against women land rights defenders, improving access to information for women living in remote and rural areas as well as addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate crisis on women and the exclusions based on identity, invisibility or ethnicity.

Funders, development partners and civil society organisations should invest in efforts to address land injustices in communities by acknowledging issues like land grabbing, evictions and conflicts are feminist issues. Women are affected not only as community members, but also due to their gender.