

An Application to the GIZ's Gender Award 2024 under the GE1 Category
On Behalf of the Participatory Integrated Land Use Planning (PILUP II) and Support to Responsible Agricultural Investment (S2RAI II)

Abiy Demissie, Ayenew Girma, Christian Mesmer, Leonie Gomm and Yaman Hebbo

In Ethiopia, GIZ's Land Projects, including PILUP II¹ and S2RAI II², prioritize gender in land governance. They are part of the broader "Land Family" and collaborate with global programs like GPRLP, RGIL, and SLGA. These projects are committed to gender-responsible development and cooperation from the outset, focusing on gender considerations in land administration, planning, and development at all levels.

However, since the topic of land governance is of a complex, multifaceted and sensitive nature, there was a need for a proper framework to address gender equality and inclusion of marginalized groups in the land sector in a structured and consistent manner. The idea, therefore, was to anchor our gender-responsive action in the principles of the Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) not only reaching out to women but also benefiting them and enhancing their agency. This, in principle, goes hand in hand with the 3Rs Approach focusing on women's land rights, access to resources and proper representation in land governance. We also perceive that desired impact of both approaches can benefit greatly from a strong implementation of the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in land governance, stressing the principles of equal access to information, meaningful participation, accountable decision making and access to justice. Our three-fold framework, based on GTA, 3Rs and HRBA, acknowledges the interrelated and mutually reinforcing nature of these approaches utilizes it to combat gender inequality, suppressive societal norms and unbalanced power structures in land governance as in the following:

Our Human Rights-Based Approach as a Basis for Gender-Responsible Action in Land Governance

- **Access to Information:** Access to information is a basic human right that empowers women to make informed decisions about land use and claim their rights.
- **Meaningful Participation:** Promoting women's meaningful participation in decision-making aligns with human rights, enhancing their representation in land use planning.
- **Decision-Making Accountability:** Holding decision-makers accountable for gender-inclusive land use policies and practices is crucial, ensuring women's rights and representation are substantive.
- **Access to Justice:** Strengthening women's access to justice safeguards their land rights, ensuring equitable access to land and resources.

Our Gender Transformative Approach

- This approach tackles the root causes of gender inequality by transforming norms, behaviors, and power structures.
- In land use planning, this involves challenging traditional norms that limit women's access to land rights, resources, and representation, such as the view that landownership is mainly for men.
- It also involves creating enabling environments where women can assert their rights and participate fully in land use planning and resource management.

Our Commitment to Strengthening Women's Access to Land Rights, Resources and Representation

- **Land Rights:** Securing women's land rights empowers them economically and enhances their influence, aligning with human rights and gender transformation.

¹ The Integrated Participatory Land Use Planning (PILUPII) project enhances land use planning at national and regional levels, aligning with human rights standards. It strengthens land management capacities, supports policy development, and enforces integrated plans. The project promotes sustainable resource use, prevents land disputes, and fosters sustainable development.

² The Support to Responsible Agricultural Investment (S2RAI II) project promotes responsible agricultural investments, enhancing food security and land tenure rights. It aligns large-scale agriculture with small-scale farmers' needs, issues land certificates, and improves land governance. The project assists the Ethiopian Government in regulating agricultural investments.

- **Resources:** Ensuring women access resources like credit, inputs, and education helps them utilize their land effectively, promoting economic development and gender equality.
- **Representation:** Representation in land use planning ensures women's perspectives are considered, aligning with equality and non-discrimination principles in a human rights-based approach.

We emphasize the strong links between the three approaches in our projects, aligning with feminist principles. Access to land rights, resources, and representation are not only vital for gender equality but also fundamental human rights essential for sustainable and equitable development. After we have dissected our take on gender in land governance, we will track the suggested structure of the Gender Award to examine the performance of PILUP II and S2RAI II projects in fulfilling the criteria, as in the following points:

Promoting Gender Equality in PILUP II and S2RAI II

- **Context and Achievements:**

- **PILUP II:** 4 out of 6 output indicators are directly dedicated to fields of action ensuring women's active participation in land use planning and decision making and developing gender-sensitive land use plans and enhancing women skills and knowledge.

Fields of Action	Women's Reach & Rights	Women's Benefit & Resources	Women's Empowerment & Representation
Meaningful Women Participation	Aired radio programs tailored to local communities at convenient times In dialogues, 28% of 115 participants were women and voiced their issues.	Women in target districts gained a better understanding of their land rights. Women voiced their interests in the project during public dialogues.	115 women acquired decision-making roles in land use plan preparation and implementation in their districts.
Capacity Building for Decision Making	Set a 20% target for women trainees in government and CSO sectors for short-term training opportunities.	Targeted training for women in HRBA and GTA approaches ongoing (17 trained so far).	In the future, the 17 trained women will play key roles in leadership positions within their institutions.
Regulatory Guidelines Development for Women Participation	Women employees invited to give feedback on gender sensitivity in land use planning regulations.	Preparing a regulatory instrument for women's participation in land use planning.	Women can use these instruments to defend their rights and guide further interests.

- **S2RAI II:** 4 out of 9 outputs are directly connected to fields of action ensuring women's secure land tenure rights, establishing gender-sensitive land-related conflict-resolution mechanisms and responsible agricultural investments that recognize the voice of women as a major labor force.

Fields of Action	Women's Reach & Rights	Women's Benefit & Resources	Women's Empowerment & Representation
Land Titling (SLLC)	Recruited a Social Development Officer to ensure women's participation in land titling Separate women's meetings at all kebele centers. Village-centered awareness campaign to inform everyone about the process.	37, 399 women received their land certificates. Women with land certificates are less vulnerable to losing land unlawfully and resolve land conflicts amicably.	Women with land certificates now have more decision-making power over their land.
Implementing Agricultural Investments for Women & Marginalized Groups	Organized surveys and meetings at kebele centers (798 women, 53% of total) to assess satisfaction with agricultural investments and impacts on rights and livelihoods.	Rights and concerns of women recorded and reported for action by agricultural investors.	Surveyed 798 women landholders now influence the ranking of agricultural projects.
Resolving Land Conflicts	274 women represented in 162 Community Investor Government Fora dialogues.	Women landholders resolved land conflicts peacefully, avoiding litigation and court costs.	Women in CIGF committees play a significant role in community and agricultural project issues.

Capacity Building for Decision Making	Set a target for 20% women trainees in government, CSO sectors, and local communities.	272 women (58% of total trainees) trained on land rights.	In the future, trained women will play key roles in institutional leadership and community decision-making.
Enhancing Livelihoods through Land Certificates	Delivered entrepreneurship skill training to 321 women in 8 districts via 21 women trainers. Developed training guide and manual specifically for women. Adjusted training schedules for greater women participation. Top of Form Consulted with microfinances for special loan access for women households.	321 trained women learned to improve livelihoods using their land certificates. 9 trained women engaged in alternative business income areas. 9 women improved their income and livelihood through entrepreneurship training.	21 women trained and appointed as trainers for future women-targeted trainings. Women with higher incomes from training and business now have increased confidence and decision-making power in their communities and families.

- **Effective Approaches:**

To reach the fullest potential of our activities in both projects, strengthening the aforementioned four principles of the Human Rights-Based Approach in the implementation areas is a precondition.

- **PILUP II:** First, we engaged in community outreach to raise awareness about women's land rights and advocate for gender-inclusive land use planning. Then, we conducted training to enhance women's land management skills and organized participatory workshops for their involvement. We partnered with an international think tank to align with human rights and gender standards, a national consultancy to identify regulatory gaps, and local CSOs to connect with communities.
- **S2RAI II:** First, we prioritized land certification for women, alone or with a spouse. We use monitoring tools to track progress. We're creating guidelines for gender-sensitive Community Investors Government Fora (CIGF) to align investments with local needs, involving women in agricultural decisions, resource access, and conflict resolution within their daily routines.

- **Impacts:**

- **PILUP II:** Short-term impacts we could see include increased awareness of gender rights in land use and more women participating in decision-making. Expected medium-term impacts include the development of gender-sensitive land use plans and enhanced skills and confidence among women in land management. Long-term impacts we are hoping for are societal attitude shifts towards gender roles in land management and institutionalized gender equality.
- **S2RAI II:** Short-term impacts include improved land tenure security and access to dispute resolution for women. Medium-term impacts include economic opportunities and increased knowledge about investments. Long-term impacts include economic independence, improved status, and changing perceptions of women's roles in land and agriculture.

Gender as a Quality Feature of PILUP II and S2RAI II

- **Recognition:** Both projects received praise from communities for increasing women's involvement in land use and agriculture. Our government and CSO partners acknowledged our efforts in promoting gender-inclusive practices. A delegation from the Stand for Her Land Campaign (S4HL) from Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda also visited our office to learn about our gender approach and replicate.
- **Reflection of Values:** Looking in, in our daily operations in both projects, we try to embody our commitment to gender equality through inclusive practices and decision-making (e.g., two of our three leading positions are headed by women) with a gender-diverse team to the best of our ability, considering that the Ethiopian land sector is short of women colleagues. and measurable outcomes that empower women and promote gender balance in land use planning and agricultural investment.

Looking out, we urge our partners, through art and communication, to work together on embedding active women engagement in every activity we deliver. Both projects are conducting gender analyses to inform decisions, ensuring women's perspectives, in implementation areas, shape their directions.



Using Ethiopian iconography, we try to tell a story of two scenarios on each side of the tree representing land and resources. One inclusive community where all can enjoy access to land and resources is favorable, of course!

Implementing Feminist Core Principles

- **Alignment:** Both projects align with the feminist principles by adopting a Gender-Transformative Approach (GTA) and the 3Rs based on a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA). They address structural inequalities, ensure women's participation in decision-making, and uphold their rights. PILUP focuses on policy advocacy and capacity building in land use planning, while S2RAI secures land tenure for women, empowering them economically and preventing marginalization in agricultural investments.
- Top of Form
- **Concrete Contributions:** Both projects combat structural inequality by: 1) advocating for women's land rights and participation to challenge historical norms, 2) enhancing women's economic independence and social status through training, and 3) driving long-term structural changes for gender equality via lobbying, policy advocacy, legal reforms, and inclusive practices.

Cooperation

- **Collaborative Efforts:** Apart from our political partners and CSOs, both projects partnered with the Women Land Rights Task Force of the Ethiopian Government and the Stand for Her Land Campaign, leading a coalition of 15+ CSOs across Ethiopia, to advance women's land rights (see the link [here](#)).
- **Shared Goals and Challenges:** The new partnership aims to: 1) raise awareness and build capacity for advocating women's land and property rights, 2) collaborate on policy-making and lobby for laws prioritizing women's land rights, and 3) foster partnerships and networking for collective action. Discussions are ongoing with UNIFAD to join, and there's close cooperation with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC).
- **Key Challenges:** These include aligning diverse stakeholder interests, cultural and social norms limiting women's land rights, weak enforcement of supportive laws and policies, and resource constraints.
- **Key Success factors:** These include collaborative efforts leveraging partners' strengths and resources, continuous communication and coordination of planned activities for maximum impact, and policy influence to effect legal and policy changes.

Scaling Up

To scale the gender-focused efforts of PILUP and S2RAI, key steps include: documenting successful strategies and training programs (web-based training), using digital platforms for wider dissemination and data management, expanding the partnership with WLRTF and S4HL, empowering women leaders, and implementing robust impact assessment frameworks. These approaches aim to replicate and amplify successful gender equality initiatives in broader contexts.