



# High-Level Regional Conference on Land and Conflict in the East and Horn of Africa

Concept note – 24.10.2022

Title	
Session	<b>4.b. Securing women’s interests in land in the aftermath of conflict</b>
Relation to the Conference’s themes	Theme 4: Realizing the rights to land of women and girls
Day & Time	25 <sup>th</sup> October at 16:00 – 17:30 EAT
Link to session	<a href="#">Zoom link</a> Meeting ID: 81637861502 Passcode: 583358
Lead organisation(s)	
Organisation(s) name(s)	<b>UN-HABITAT and the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)</b>
Website	<a href="https://unhabitat.org/">https://unhabitat.org/</a> <a href="https://glttn.net/">https://glttn.net/</a> <a href="https://arabstates.glttn.net/">https://arabstates.glttn.net/</a>
Focal point contact information	<b>Eleonora Francesca Serpi</b>
Email of contact person(s)	<a href="mailto:eleonora.serpi@un.org">eleonora.serpi@un.org</a>
<b>Organisation(s)’ brief</b>	
<p><b>UN-Habitat</b> is the Agency of the United Nations working towards sustainable urbanisation. It promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements and adequate shelter for all. Mandated by the UN General Assembly in 1978 to address the issues of urban growth, UN-Habitat developed a wealth of knowledge and expertise by working in human settlements throughout the world and building a brighter future for villages, towns, and cities of all sizes. Its expertise ranges from policy development to partnership building, to a wide range of specific technical issues. This makes of UN-Habitat a key partner for local and national governments to formulate and make their urban vision of tomorrow a reality, ensuring that cities become inclusive, affordable, and drivers of economic growth and social development.</p> <p>UN-Habitat is hosting the <b>Global Land Tool Network’s</b> Secretariat. The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is a dynamic and multisectoral alliance of international partners committed to increasing access to land and tenure</p>	



security for all, with a particular focus on the poor, women and youth. GLTN partners include international rural and urban civil society organizations, research and training institutions, bilateral and multilateral organizations and international professional bodies. GLTN aims to develop inclusive tools, such as guidelines and methods and procedures, in key areas relating to land.

#### Resource persons involved

Salutation	Name	Title	Organization	Role
Mrs.	Ombretta Temptra	Human Settlement Officer – Land Specialist	UN-Habitat Regional Office for the Arab States/ Global Land Tool Network	Chair
Mr.	Fathi Egal	Independent Land Rights Consultant		Presenter
Ms.	Eleonora Francesca Serpi	Project Support Officer	UN-Habitat/ Global Land Tool Network	Presenter
Mr.	Salah Abukashawa	Program manager	Centre for Land and Environmental Governance in Sudan (ISTIDAMAA)	Presenter
Ms.	Evelyn Aero	Regional Adviser – Information Counselling and Legal Assistance	Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	Presenter

#### Description of the content discussed in the session

Conflict in Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan has triggered significant outflows of refugees and asylum seekers. According to IOM, in 2021, refugees and asylum seekers from the EHoA accounted for 4.7 million in 2021 (54% residing in countries within the region). In the same year, nearly 7.4 million new internal displacements were recorded in the EHoA, the highest number ever recorded in the region. New internal displacements in this region are largely attributed to the escalation of the Northern Ethiopia conflict; political tensions, terrorist attacks as well as prolonged droughts and floods in Somalia; and national and localized conflict as well as heavy floods in South Sudan.

Conflict and displacement have given rise to a transformation of gender roles for women, with women reporting increased decision-making power in households and taking on additional roles that used to be considered male-only. Women with secure access to land are better able to become breadwinners, heads of households and caregivers to those in need. Securing women's access to land is therefore an imperative to enable women to take care of their family and to support fragile societies transitioning from the humanitarian phase to recovery and self-reliance, alleviating the negative economic and social impact of conflict. Further, secure access to land can provide significant support to displaced women by guaranteeing the economic independence they need to cope with the lack of family support.

The session will open discussing the importance of protecting and securing displaced women' housing, land and property (HLP). It will then explore the challenges and barriers faced by displaced women in claiming and exercising their HLP rights while in displacement and upon return, such as difficulties in accessing justice



mechanisms for claiming their rights and the barriers posed by repressive social norms, poverty and loss of social networks through displacement.

It will present efforts needed to empower and increase women’s participation in processes related to land management and HLP rights in fragile contexts, such as negotiation and mediation efforts related to access to, use of and control over land and land related resources, dispute resolution processes, land commissions, return and restitution commissions, definition of land and HLP-related provisions in peace agreements and other relevant frameworks.

Finally, the session will highlight how there is a window of opportunity following periods of conflict to intervene in progressive ways along the humanitarian-development nexus to support women’s enjoyment of their land rights and increase women’s empowerment for peacebuilding and peace keeping. The session will present the main legal regional and international framework protecting the land rights of women and displaced women and a set of recommendations to advance and protect women’s land rights in the aftermath of a conflict and in context of legal pluralism. Recommendation will touch upon, among others, the review of laws and practices (particularly the revision of gender-discriminatory inheritance and personal laws); the promotion of the registration of written marital contracts containing information on land and property regimes; the removal of the impediments keeping women from accessing land administration services, financial facilities and mechanisms, systems for land improvement and exploitation, and land disputes resolution mechanisms; and the reform of the legal and administrative systems with a gender-sensitive lens.

The session will allow time for discussion and reflections on best practices, different perspectives and experiences from countries within the region and outside the region.

The session will build on the key Messages on Women, Land and Peace developed by UN-Habitat and the Global Land Tool Network, in partnership with the Housing, Land and Property Area of Responsibility of the Global Protection Cluster, NRC and UNHCR; on the recently published Training Guide on Advancing Women’s Land and Property Rights in the Somali Region, developed from the field experience of UN-Habitat, the Global Land Tool Network and their partners; and on the field experience brought in by UN-Habitat Somalia Programme as well as the comparative experience of UN-Habitat and GLTN in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

### Expected outcomes

The expected outcomes of this session include:

- Increase the awareness of the challenges faced by women in claiming and enjoying their land rights in contexts of displacement and return;
- Increase the understanding of the existing legal instruments that protect women’s land rights in the region, how they relate to each other and how to work with them in contexts of legal pluralism;
- Identify ways in which humanitarian and development actors, governments and donors can support displaced women enjoying of HLP rights while in displacement and upon return along the development-humanitarian nexus; and
- Contribute to the political dialogue on the protection of women’s land rights.



### Outline of the agenda

Time	Agenda item	Roles / responsibility	Additional notes
10 mins	Opening remarks	Ombretta Tempra	Chair
15 mins	Advancing women's land rights in fragile contexts – setting the scene	Eleonora Francesca Serpi	Presentation on the key messages on women, land and peace
45 mins	Panel discussion on entry points and best practices for protecting women's HLP rights in the aftermath of conflict	Panelists: Evelyn Aero Salah Abukashawa Fathi Egal	Panel discussion (in English)
15 mins	Q&A	Q/A facilitated by the chair	Questions from the public
5 mins	Closing remarks	Final thoughts from the panelists and chair	