

Train women to manage land and resources

Develop a land literacy package educating rural women on legal processes and documents of implementing rights to land and resources Provide free legal aid.

Support inter-regional exchanges between rural women, civil society organisations and government staff to facilitate mutual learning on innovative and progressive strategies on implementing

Assist women's legal ownership of land under following classifications

- **Individual titles** in the name of women alone for farms, garden plots or housing/homestead land for subsistence needs,
- **Joint ownership of women** with men for income generation and management of land and resources
- **Group rights for women** under control of women's groups on common property resources, ceiling surplus land, forest and water resources.



Claiming women's land and resource rights at ICARRD*, Brazil, March 2006

Increase Rural Women's Ownership of Land, Resources and Productive Assets as the key to the Agrarian and Land Reform Agenda

Consult for Women and Land Rights (CWLR)

CWLR engages different stakeholders to discuss the options to create gender equality through allocation of land and resource rights for livelihood and homestead land. Women's land and resource rights include ownership of land, housing, assets access to water and forest. This needs to be accompanied by availability of credit, training, information as well as access to amenities.

CWLR demands that a women resource right agenda be included in the ICARRD outcome document. This agenda needs to be a part of national planning process that links women's right to land and resources to agrarian reform process.

The 'Women's Resource Right Agenda' : A One Window Approach

It is imperative that existing programs ensured by government to increase women's ownership over land and associated resources are converged. Government should make resources and training available from existing schemes more accessible at the local level through a single delivery point. CWLR terms this a "One-Window Approach". Government schemes need to be rights-based, rather than offering concessions to women. This will assist women to lay claim to public resources.

To maintain decision making power of working class women on resource allocation, a tripartite workers board (consisting of workers, employers and government) could be active in regulating employment and training women in resource mapping. This can support a women's resource rights committee. A women's resource rights committee could manage the documentation of, and increase in, women's resource base at the village level. All of the above should be implemented on the basis of related resolutions of a women council within local governance systems.

Articles 14, 15 and 16 of CEDAW and Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights recognise women's housing, land, property and resource rights. This forms the legal framework for the "One Window Approach" to the Women's Resource Rights Agenda. The resource base for women can increase if governments support the distribution of resources in favour of women and take responsibility for protection from harm when they begin to gain land and resource rights. This will improve the capability of women as managers of public resources. As this transformation takes place, women's capacity to take ownership of private property within the family through inheritance and other means can increase.

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Vision: A gender just world reflected by equal ownership of land, property and resources to expand choices for women and enhance their capabilities.

As peoples and governments convene for the *International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development to fulfil the commitments of the 1996 World Food Summit, the World Food Summit: *five years later*, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the rights of women, especially rural and land-poor disadvantaged women remain critically vulnerable across the world. Women represent the majority of the rural poor and hungry, yet simultaneously women in their social roles are vital catalysts for food security and agrarian productivity. Given these roles, rural women remain marginalized and shamefully neglected from policy discourses and government programmes seeking to address issues of poverty and hunger.

Governments under their obligation to implement rights for women as full citizens must commit to this through agrarian reform and rural development by equitably distributing land and related resources to rural women for food security and sustainable livelihoods. Increasing women's bargaining power in this way is the first step towards the empowerment of rural women to be equal citizens with equal entitlements to the benefits of our globalising world.

Informed by the experience of civil society, the Consult for Women and Land Rights calls for an agenda for implementing women's land and resource rights, implemented at all level of governance, to be endorsed by all levels of civil society.

ICARRD Conference must give attention to the following additions to its themes and outputs:

1. Policies and practices for securing and improving access to land by the poor and promoting agrarian reform to alleviate poverty and hunger **must begin equitable redistribution of land and resources through local governance institutions to women.**
2. Building capacity to improve access to land, water agricultural inputs and agrarian services to promote sustainable natural resources management and rural development **by information, collection and dissemination processes by the agency of rural women who have access to and control over land resources and budgets specified for women's empowerment**
3. New opportunities to revitalize rural communities **can be pursued through a women's resource right agenda supported by government and civil society.**

This will fulfil commitments made during the Beijing Conference, Conference on Hunger and Poverty, Earth Summit, the World Food Summit and the Habitat agenda as well as under ICESCAR Art 11 and CEDAW Art. 14, 15, and 16. It also will support UNHCR Resolution 2003/22, (women's equal ownership of, access to and control over land and quality rights to own property and to adequate housing) and ensure effective participation of women in governance and decision-making processes at all levels.



Governments must support that:

1. Every rural family should be provided with at least 2 to 5 acres of land in the women's name especially for Tribal, Dalit and other marginalised social groups through redistribution of surplus land identified under land ceiling laws.
2. The provision of land must be supplemented with livelihood-related resources, employment opportunities and skills.
3. Every woman has a right to homestead land and adequate housing. This must be implemented so that the property is in the woman's name.
4. Prohibit forced evictions such that families have security of tenure.
5. Women should be recognized as the major decision-makers and managers of grazing lands; forestlands, water and other common property resources. Women's rights to these resources should be legally guaranteed and ensured.
6. Increase in women's share in family inheritance and property bought via market must be supported and monitored by civil society and government through an agreed agenda of time bound actions.
7. The international community could look to the Government of India's example of allocation of 40% of government land grants for women and 33% reservation of seats for women in local government. This can be built upon with reserving 33% of rural development budgets for women's development.

The ICARRD outcome document and declaration can increase rural women's ownership of land and resources by ensuring that government agree to :

Initiate Policy Provision of land to rural women for security rather than as a commodity.

Engender Legal Reform by amending land and livelihood related laws to include definition on resource rights for women and apply gender equity in inheritance rights, particularly widows and daughters.

The Land Right Laws should be made more gender sensitive, taking into consideration women's particular circumstances regarding housing and land.

Prohibit forced eviction and in cases relocation provide protection against all forms of gender - based violence against women in addition enforcing due process of law.

Women in governance need resources to be effective in their roles as government representatives. For this the government must give land and resources to women independent of males in their families through the following means:

Set up a women's resource committee in every village with power to demand 33% share in rural budgets and to demand land redistribution exclusively for a woman resource right agenda.

Make the implementation of existing programmes available at one location in a village

Sanction land and money to provide housing benefits for all categories of single women including subsidised housing for poor women and low-interest housing loans.

Support program that which enable women to own / lease land by forming groups for collective management of economic activity. Ensure access to agricultural credit even in the absence of land titles to enable women to cultivate on leased land.

Provide sex dis aggregated data on resources at women owned information centres

Carry out participatory village-level resource mapping, inclusive of women from all marginalised social groups to identify land that can be allotted to women for livelihood.

Make all data collection processes gender-disaggregated data for all existing statistical surveys.

Sanction land and budgets for women groups to own rural information centres.

Ensure all government schemes related to land, resources and livelihoods are advertised in local languages, both written and verbally communicated to rural women of all social groups.

