



PRESS RELEASE

Land Alliance Calls On Government to implement Constitutional land provisions For Women to own land

Freetown, 08 March, 2021: People around the world are celebrating International Women's Day today, a day set aside to recognize the achievements of women and to advocate for gender equality.

This year's campaign theme is "Choose to Challenge." We are choosing to challenge and calling for women's land rights. It is a call for advancing gender equality and empowerment of women, particularly in the area of access to land and resources. This is in line with the achievement of the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which requires transformative shifts, integrated approaches and new solutions, particularly when it comes to advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

"Based on current trajectories, existing interventions will not suffice to achieve a Planet 50-50 by 2030. Innovative approaches that disrupt "business as usual" are central to removing structural barriers and ensuring that no woman and no girl is left behind" Said John Paul Bai, Director of The Sierra Leone Land Alliance.

The Sierra Leone Land Alliance, in the spirit of "Women Policy Campaign", calls on the Government of Sierra Leone to put in place mechanisms for the implementation of the Constitutional review Committee report 2016 provisions on land and successive land and gender laws for secure women land rights.

Given the existing data on land ownership from different land rights agencies, it is time the Ministry of Land, Housing and Country Planning and Office of Administrator and Registrar General considered to fast-track the process of digitising land registries across the country. With digitised registries, it will be easy to verify and document disaggregated data on women land ownership. The availability of verifiable data will subsequently facilitate policy interventions by the relevant state actors and institutions in favour of women land and property ownership.

Secure land access and ownership provides women with economic independence, which is protective against intimate partner violence. It allows women to better navigate gendered power relations. Women who maintain independent access to land have the ability to leave violent situations and return to their own land for sustainable food production and subsequent income. Thus, one key mechanism to reduce violence against women is to ensure ownership and control over land and natural resources.

"We call on citizens to join us in this noble campaign that will help us choose to challenge women's land rights now and in future. From challenge comes change, so let's all choose to challenge land rights for women and girls in Sierra Leone." Mr Solomon Sogbandi, Director, Amnesty International Concluded.

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