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What Works for  
Women's Land and  
Property Rights?

What we know  
and what we  
need to know

**Evidence Brief**  
Do Land Rights  
Formalization  
Interventions  
Work for Women?

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Advancing Women's Land and Resource Rights

## Introduction

*Women's land and property rights are an important component of economic and social development as well as critical to human rights for women. There is a growing body of evidence linking women's land and property rights to important social and economic outcomes for women. Yet there is a gender gap in relation to land and property rights around the world where women are significantly disadvantaged relative to men with regard to land rights. They own a smaller share of agricultural land globally, and are disadvantaged in the management, control, and potential opportunities of land rights* (Doss et al., 2013).

Globally land rights formalization projects have a large share of land sector investments, particularly by multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors (Peluso et al., 2012). They are often promoted as a means to improve land tenure security, address conflict, improve land markets, increase agricultural productivity and food security, create access to credit and markets, mitigate the effects of and adapt to a changing climate, and address entrenched poverty (Land Tenure and Development Technical Committee, 2015). Land rights formalization is, to some extent, included in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development in its goal 1 and target 1.4: "By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance."<sup>1</sup>

Land rights formalization is also promoted as a pathway to achieving gender equality, as in SDG 5 target 5.a: "undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws."<sup>2</sup>

This evidence brief seeks to answer the question of whether there is rigorous evidence to support promoting land rights formalization efforts for women, and to identify further research needs in this regard. It examines the **availability, strengths, and limits** of evidence on the effectiveness of land rights formalization interventions based on a desk review of qualitative and quantitative studies published in English, and is a supplement to the Resource Equity paper, *What Works for Women's Land and Property Rights? What we know and what we need to know* (Scalise & Giovarelli, 2020).

As with that seminal report, this paper is focused on evidence, with the ultimate goal of encouraging additional and deeper research on land rights formalization efforts and gender equity. We do not intend to suggest that land rights formalization does not work for women, but rather that greater investment in research is needed to ensure that land rights formalization processes are responsive to the needs of men and women.

<sup>1</sup> SDG tenure security indicator 1.4.2: Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure.

<sup>2</sup> Target 5.a. has two indicators (5.a.1 and 5.a.2). Indicator 5.a.1 has two sub-indicators: 5.a.1 (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure. Indicator 5.a.2: Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control.

## A. Contextualizing Land Rights Formalization

Formalization covers titling, certification, and/or registration (or similar) programs and are common land reform interventions aimed at recording, adjudicating, and registering rights to land. While formalization does not automatically lead to tenure security, documenting rights has the potential to make them more secure by integrating them into formal institutions and provide the backing of the law. First time formalization can be either systematic or ad hoc. Systematic formalization tends to be more studied in the literature.

Though the process of land rights formalization differs across countries, generally, it involves a series of steps:

- Information campaign on the objectives and procedures of formalization
- Land committee to organize and manage this effort
- Physical demarcation of boundaries and/or a process of mapping
- Identification of rights holders
- Some form of adjudication where there are multiple claims of a right
- A process for validation of rights holders and boundaries
- Public notice and consultation
- Issuing of titles or certificates (or some form of evidence for the rights holder)
- Registration and/or recording of rights and boundaries in a land management or administration system

Generally, the success of land rights formalization is likely to be determined by existing pre-conditions, demand and understanding of value by land rights holders (when ad hoc), complementary policies, and laws (political will), institutional capacity, community capabilities, and the degree of adherence to the titling or certification process in the field. Moreover, titling or certification is likely to have different impact on the lives of women whose challenges and opportunities are shaped by a range of ascribed attributes (ethnicity, religion, age, marital status, etc.,).

Pre-formalization, all land tenure systems are gendered where women and men can have different rights and responsibilities regarding land. An understanding of gender dynamics is therefore critical when designing and implementing a land rights formalization intervention. Though gradually changing, conventional land rights formalization programs were delivered without consideration for gender differences. The inclusion of women on legal documents recognizing land rights can take several forms: individual, joint, or collective. There is strong evidence to suggest that land rights formalization in the names of women, individually or jointly, has broader positive outcomes (see table below for more details).

## B. What Do We Know About Land Rights Formalization Interventions and Outcomes for Women?

Table 1 shows the availability and strength of evidence on land rights formalization interventions. The **strength** of evidence connotes the degree of rigor and quantity of studies related to that intervention category. The **findings** of the evidence refer to the degree to which the evidence finds the intervention is **effective**, **promising**, **ineffective**, or **not measured** in terms of outcomes for women.

None of the available evidence looks at whether an intervention is impacting land tenure security for women, as measured by the three dimensions of tenure security: completeness, durability, and robustness of rights. Specifically, completeness or the quality and quantity of rights held, including the right to occupy (ownership or use), access, and derive benefits from the resource, and participation in management; robustness, including the legal and social legitimacy of rights, the enforceability of rights against internal and external threats and the ability to exercise the rights; and finally, the duration and certainty of rights (Doss & Meinzen-Dick, 2018).

The research is often restricted to small scale interventions with limited geographic coverage, and many studies do not provide enough contextual details to make broad inferences. Available research is also skewed in its scope as it often fails to capture the intra-household dimensions. A disproportionate number of studies reviewed limit their analysis to male-headed household versus female-headed households, inadvertently excluding most female household members of male-headed households. Further, most studies do not adequately unpack the intersection between the various variables (e.g., age, geography, ethnicity, religion, etc.) that shape women's rights to land in practice. Some studies also neglect to account for the quality and quantity of land parcels registered to women. Further, most assessments reviewed are short- or medium-term in nature and do not capture potential long-term effects of land titling or certification interventions. Finally, the research appears to be disproportionately influenced by a few disciplines and could benefit from a more multidisciplinary analysis to better capture the various factors that influence women's land rights and potential benefits.

**Table 1: Availability and strength of evidence on land rights formalization interventions and outcomes for women**

	STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE		
	Fair Evidence	Emerging Evidence	More Evidence needed
<b>Effective</b>	<p>Women with documented rights to land are better positioned to influence household expenditure and investment, especially agriculture decisions (e.g., crop choice) and land-related investment</p> <p>(Holden &amp; Bezu, 2014; Melesse et al., 2018; Persha et al., 2017; Wiig, 2013).<sup>3</sup></p>	<p>Ensuring that women as well as men are named on land documents</p> <p>(Holden &amp; Tilahun, 2017; Persha et al., 2017).</p> <p>Encouraging joint titling by providing an incentive (e.g., conditional discounts) for spouses to opt for jointly titling marital property</p> <p>(Ali et al., 2016; Cherchi et al., 2018).</p> <p>Legal reform of family laws, and land registration process that is favorable to women have a mutually reinforcing positive effect on women's land rights and welfare</p> <p>(Kumar &amp; Quisumbing, 2015).</p>	

#### KEY

##### Strength of Evidence

**Fair Evidence:** The question has been studied in peer-reviewed literature, in three or more studies

**Emerging Evidence:** The question has been studied in less than three studies or is limited in scope or geography

**More Evidence Needed:** Evident in practice or in grey literature but not yet rigorously studied

##### Findings in relation to effectiveness of interventions

**Effective:** Found to be effective in improving some aspect of women's land tenure security

**Promising:** Found to show promise in improving some aspect of women's land tenure security or findings not framed in terms of women's land tenure security, but intervention touches on land and findings are related to economic and social outcomes

<sup>3</sup> In Ethiopia, the shift in intra-household dynamics was found to be a combined effect of certification, participation in related information meetings, and social awareness (Holder & Bezu, 2014).

Table 1: Continued

STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE			
	Fair Evidence	Emerging Evidence	More Evidence needed
Promising	<p>Women with documented rights to land are better positioned to influence household expenditure and investment, especially agriculture decisions (e.g., crop choice) and land-related investment</p> <p>(Holden &amp; Bezu, 2014; Melesse et al., 2018; Persha et al., 2017; Wiig, 2013).</p>	<p>Written spousal consent requirement for transactions post joint registration enables wives to have more influence on land rental decisions</p> <p>(Kumar et al., 2010; Bayisenge, 2018).</p> <p>Women's representation on land administration committees and their membership in women's associations enhances women's knowledge about land formalization efforts</p> <p>(Kumar and Quisumbing, 2015; Bayisenge, 2018).</p> <p>Raising awareness about the legal and economic implications of inclusion of women's names on land title or certificates necessary for effective enforcement of women's land rights.</p> <p>(Bayisenge, 2018; Kumar &amp; Quisumbing, 2015).</p> <p>Certification of rights can improve the perception of tenure security of women and men</p> <p>(Holden &amp; Tefera, 2008).</p> <p>Rights certification, participation in related information meetings, and social awareness raising helped to positively shift gendered intra-household dynamics</p> <p>(Holden &amp; Bezu, 2014).</p>	<p>Formal documented land rights for women may facilitate access to credit for agriculture</p> <p>(Santos et al., 2014; Persha et al., 2017).<sup>5</sup></p> <p>Joint titling increased agricultural yields</p> <p>(Newman et al., 2015; Bezabih, Holden, &amp; Mannberg, 2016).</p> <p>Women with documented rights to land less likely to be subjected to domestic violence</p> <p>(Grabe, 2010).</p>

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<sup>4</sup> High transactional costs associated with rental markets proved prohibitive for some women. Female-headed households found to rent out land to less reproductive users (in-law tenants) due to high cost of screening or evicting tenants (Holden & Bezabih, 2008)

<sup>5</sup> Where land cannot be used as collateral as a matter of law, land certificates may assist in securing microfinance or loans from informal sources by demonstrating other aspects of holders' creditworthiness (Persha et al., 2017). Conversely, some evidence suggests there is no significant impact of land titling on credit (Ali et al., 2014).

Table 1: Continued

	STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE		
	Fair Evidence	Emerging Evidence	More Evidence needed
<b>Promising</b>		<p>Rights certification enhanced women's ability to transact in land (agriculture contracts, rentals) (Deininger et al., 2010; Holden, et al., 2015).</p> <p>Women with formal documented land rights and an understanding of the significance of the attached rights are more likely to adapt soil conservation technologies and sustainable farming techniques (Quisumbing &amp; Kumar, 2015; Ali et al., 2014).</p> <p>Demarcation of boundaries prior to the issuance of land certificates encouraged female-headed households to fallow (traditional social conservation strategy) demarcated land (Goldstein et al., 15).</p> <p>Female-only held land use rights decreased the incidence of illness among children, increased their health insurance coverage, raised school enrolment, and reallocated household expenditures toward food and away from alcohol and tobacco (Menon et al., 2014).</p>	

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## C. More on What is Known About Land Rights Formalization and Outcomes for Women

Despite limitations in the evidence that specifically relate to land rights formalization and women's tenure security, there is a growing body of evidence that links land rights formalization interventions and better outcomes for women in other areas such as well-being, poverty, agriculture, and sustainable land management. This table includes additional detail on what we know from the evidence about common interventions for women's land rights and associated outcomes.

**Table 2: Evidence on land rights formalization and outcomes for women**

WELFARE OUTCOMES	
Women's well-being	Household well-being
<p>Women with documented rights to land less likely to be subjected to domestic violence (Grabe, 2010).</p>	<p>Land use rights registered exclusively in women's names or jointly by couples lowered household vulnerability to poverty (Menon et al., 2017).</p> <p>Female-only held land use rights decreased the incidence of illness among children, increased their health insurance coverage, raised school enrolment, and reallocated household expenditures toward food and away from alcohol and tobacco (Menon et al., 2014).</p>
IMPROVED EFFICIENCY	
Agricultural outcomes	Maximising benefit from land
<p>Land certification may enhance women's ability to enter into an agricultural contract (Holden et al., 2011).</p> <p>Formal documented land rights for women may facilitate access to credit for agriculture (Santos et al., 2014, Persha et al., 2017).</p> <p>Women with documented rights to land are better positioned to influence household expenditure and investment, especially agriculture decisions (e.g., crop choice) and land-related investment (Wiig, 2013; Holden and Bezu, 2014; Melesse et al., 2018; Persha et al., 2017).</p> <p>Joint titling increased agricultural yields (Newman et al., 2015; Bezabih, Holden &amp; Mannberg, 2016).</p>	<p>Women with formal documented land rights and an understanding of the significance of the attached rights are more likely to adapt soil conservation technologies and sustainable farming techniques (Ali et al., 2014; Quisumbing &amp; Kumar, 2015).</p> <p>Demarcation of boundaries prior to the issuance of land certificates encouraged female-headed households to fallow (traditional social conservation strategy) demarcated land (Goldstein et al., 2015)</p>

- <sup>6</sup> However, male-only held registered land rights was more effective than female or jointly held use rights in reducing incident of food poverty in the rural households (Menon et al., 2017).
- <sup>7</sup> However, high transaction costs associated with rental markets proved prohibitive for some women. Female-headed households found to rent out land to less productive users (in-law tenants) due to high cost of screening or evicting tenants (Holden & Bezabih, 2008).
- <sup>8</sup> Where land cannot be used as collateral as a matter of law, land certificates may assist in securing microfinance or loans from informal sources by demonstrating other aspects of holders' credit worthiness (e.g., capacity to repay) (Persha et al., 2017).
- <sup>9</sup> In Ethiopia, shift in intra-household dynamics was found to be a combined effect of certification, participation in related information meetings, and social awareness (Holder & Bezu, 2014).
- <sup>10</sup> However, it is not clear if the increase in yield is specific to crops.

## D. Challenges in Assessing Whether Formalization Efforts Work to Improve Women's Land Tenure Security

### Tenure security is multidimensional, and rights formalization tends to have a singular focus

One study identified ten sources of differentiation that affect women's land tenure security, including ability to inherit, marital status, migration status, type of land, economic status, health status, education status, life cycle stage, socio-political status, and geography (urban or rural dweller) (Chigbu et al., 2019). A meaningful attempt at tackling the multi-dimensional relations and the gender-based power dynamics that underpin land governance systems and practices calls for a multifaceted yet coherent, nuanced, and sustained approach, and data collection must be aligned with the multifaceted approach to be meaningful.

### Means of acquiring rights highly influences whether formalizing rights works for women

Land is typically acquired from the state, family, community, or the market. Irrespective of the mechanism for acquiring land, women are routinely excluded or have not benefited on equal basis due to interrelated normative and structural constraints. For example, women are not well positioned to access land through the market (purchase or lease) because of capital constraints and limited access to financing (Croppenstadt et al., 2013). Women are less likely to be allocated land through inheritance from husbands or fathers due to norms related to ancestral lands, patrilocal residence, patrilineal inheritance, and intra-household wealth distribution (e.g., dowry, bride price).<sup>11</sup> Customary land rights are typically conferred based on one's membership in a community and women are often considered temporary residents as they are likely to marry out of their natal community or as outsiders when they marry into a husband's village.<sup>12</sup> State allocation programs can provide greater opportunities for women to gain rights to land that would then be formalized, but are also often limited by gender bias such as assuming that if a male head of household has rights to land from the state then the whole household would benefit.

Gender equity in the way that rights are acquired matters because formalization is intended to formalize rights that are already in place, not to create new rights. Thus, if women are excluded from acquiring rights, they can be excluded from benefitting from formalization of those rights when it occurs.

### Formalization treated as a technical exercise and often fails to fully integrate relevant gender-responsive laws

While not all statutory laws are positive for women, very often statutory laws provide affirmative protections for women's rights to land, especially in laws that govern marital property—often creating a joint right to own marital property where the joint right does not exist in custom. However, as joint ownership of marital property is perceived as a family matter, particularly by land administrators, protections for women in family law are not often incorporated in the formalization process. Moreover, land legislation may recognize or require joint titling. However, the regulation detailing the modalities for implementing the law may be insufficient to ensure married women's rights are registered with men's. In other words, a joint titling application developed in accordance with the regulation may theoretically allow for inclusion of both names, but only designate applicant status to one spouse on the form, typically the traditional head of household (Girma, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> Nonetheless inheritance remains an important mechanism for women to access land. It should be noted some matrilineal customs and practices afford women secure rights to land, while others recognize women's right to inherit land, but men remain the primary decision makers over land.

<sup>12</sup> Shifts in the residence patterns of men due to factors such as land scarcity and urban migration could weaken the justification for transferring land to sons because daughters are considered temporary residents of their natal villages.

### Formalized rights are necessary, but not sufficient to ensure that rights are exercisable

Women's ability to exercise their rights to land depends on women's awareness of their land rights, their ability to invoke their rights, and social acceptance of those rights. This is a critical piece to bridging the gap between the law and the practice of women's land rights. Financial limitations also impede women's ability to exercise their land rights. A summary of findings from the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF) in select African countries reveals that protecting land rights via registration/documentation is not only subject to prohibitively high costs in most target countries, but also often subject to high informal payments or bribes supporting the elite capture narrative (Ghebru, 2019).

### Formalized rights alone are not sufficient to ensure that rights are enforceable

Often women, especially in rural settings, do not have physically, socially, linguistically, and financially accessible forums to present their claims. Land disputes are often associated with high transactional costs given the physical distance and considerable backlog of formal courts in many developing countries and women's limited availability due to competing demands for their time. Women may be less educated than their male counterparts and may need support to navigate cumbersome legal processes. While customary or informal mechanisms are often the first recourse and usually physically accessible, some customary systems are not socially accessible to women. Women may not receive a fair hearing where the customary courts are exclusively controlled by men and local level institutions may not be well informed about relevant gender-responsive statutory laws. Women may not assert their rights because socially sanctioned gender norms heavily influence implementation of formal laws. The relative influence of laws versus local norms varies with women's social position/economic class, education, and geography (degree of urbanization) (Holden & Bezu, 2014).

### Formalization can have the effect of concretising exclusion

Formalization as a process has many built assumptions about rights to land, often derived from Western or colonial ideas of property relations, which are ill-suited to other contexts. For example, if more than one person has an interest in the land being formalized, but not all rights and interests are formalized, those with undocumented interests could lose their rights if they are challenged because they will not have the formal evidence to support their claim of a right. Also, women's customary interests in land are often not considered "rights" or are considered "secondary" because they are often gained through rights with a male relative, thus are not documented, leaving them more insecure.

<sup>13</sup> Female farmers are up to 30% less productive than their male counterparts because they have access to fewer resources (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2017).

## E. Recommendations for research and interventions

There is clearly a need for more evidence on the effectiveness of land formalization for making a difference in women's lives. Generally, there is considerable room for improvement with regards to the evidence base, including scope, scale, and timeline of research or assessments to better reflect diversity of contexts, capture nuances, and improve generalizability. In addition, land rights formalization interventions ought to take a multifaceted approach to gender equitable land tenure security, where formalization of land rights is but one output of a more holistic reform that gets to the underlying barriers that women and men face with land tenure insecurity. Without complementary resources and services, women's need for other productive resources are typically largely unmet.<sup>13</sup> Frequently, women are underserved and need targeted assistance to access economic opportunities and production enhancing inputs and services (extension services, seeds, fertilizer, irrigation, technology, access to finance, access to markets, etc.) to maximize and sustain benefits from land.

Regarding research, there is a need for more nuanced research on the following questions:

- Examine whether women in female-headed households or male-headed households are more likely to attend information meeting during land formalization.
- Examine under what conditions formalizing individual rights for women is better than formalizing joint rights.
- Assess under what set of conditions mandatory joint titling is more effective than optional joint titling with incentives.
- Conduct further research to better understand what complementary resources and production-enhancing services women need to maximize benefits from land.
- Identify and examine the necessary pre-conditions/conditions (enabling environment) for women's economic empowerment following formalization.

Regarding interventions, even without rigorous evidence, experts and practitioners agree that there are several features of land rights formalization efforts that have more of a chance of improving outcomes for women, by any measure. These include:

- **Ensure that legal rights are clear and address historical or traditional discrimination against women**

This can include an inclusive definition of a spouse for marital property rights, making community of property the default marital property regime, removing "claw back" clauses that allow customs to trump constitutional protections against discrimination, providing for mandatory joint titling where marital property is jointly-owned, removing rules that allow for male control of jointly-owned marital property, and mandating representation of women in land governance bodies at every level.

Refer to Annex 1 for additional information on key substantive and procedural safeguards.

- **Ensure that there are procedural safeguards for women to protect and assert rights**

Evidence suggests while ensuring the representation of women on land committees has proved challenging in practice, mandated representation of women in local land administration bodies nonetheless seems to be an effective strategy for encouraging and reaching women.

Multiple efforts, including women's representation on land administration committees and their membership in women associations has been shown to enhance women's knowledge about land formalization efforts (Bayisenge, 2018; Kumar & Quisumbing, 2015).

- **Ensure that women know and understand the legal and economic implications for land rights formalization**

From an equity perspective, land titling and certification can effectively promote the inclusion of women's names on titles or certificates when undertaken in a gender-responsive manner (Holden & Tilahun, 2017; Persha et al., 2017). However, women must know and understand the legal and economic implications of inclusion of their names on land titles or certificates to effectively enforce their rights (Bayisenge, 2018; Kumar & Quisumbing, 2015). To this end, targeted interventions are needed to address the gender gap in information and knowledge to support meaningful participation of women (Bayisenge, 2018; Kumar & Quisumbing, 2015).

Women are not the public face of the family, and registration is a public activity. Without clear guidelines for involving women in the registration process, women will not be involved in community information meetings; the forms will have room for only the head of the household, usually a man; the land committees will be all or mostly all male; and women will not be present when the boundaries are being demarcated (Giovarelli, 2019).

- **Ensure that design of land rights formalization programs are closely to linked to the reality of land tenure as experienced by women and men and reflects the needs of women and men equally**

Statutory law can also have negative implications on the customary protections of women's rights to land when laws are formulated without considering the traditional safety nets such as pre-existing protection of women's rights under customs or the family and community norms around wealth distribution and land. It is important to understand which of the overlapping systems best protects the interests of women in a given context at a particular time. When possible, it is prudent to exploit the flexibility of customary systems and build on gender equitable aspects of customary tenure systems and practices to strengthen women's rights to land in practice.

- **Build an iterative process for intervention design and that allows for mid-course adjustments**

Evidence demonstrates the importance of employing an iterative and progressive process to refine government's formalization strategy. The Government of Ethiopia has undertaken arguably the largest low-cost land certification program in sub-Saharan Africa while the Government of Rwanda is the only sub-Saharan country to have completed systematic titling and registration (Ali et al., 2016; Deininger et al., 2007). In both countries, some women were initially excluded from benefiting from formalization. The problems were identified through monitoring and subsequently remedied, leading to a more positive result for women (Ali et al., 2014).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> In Rwanda, women and men in consensual unions were able to register their land as co-owners, and they did not have to prove their marriage (by producing a marriage certificate), but still many fewer women had their names documented if they did not have a marriage certificate.

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## Annex 1: Key Substantive and Procedural Safeguards

Legal Provision	Legal Significance	Rationale	Example
<b>Inclusive definition of spouse</b>	Law recognizes and gives equal legal effect for civil, customary and/or religious marriages, and/or consensual unions. Preferably no documentary evidence requirement.	Majority of women in developing countries reside in rural communities, are likely to be in customary unions (or religious marriage) and less likely to possess documentary evidence of such marriages or arrangements.	Namibia
<b>Community property default marital property regime</b>	Law establishes a presumption of joint ownership of marital property as the default marital property regime. Joint property means that each person owns the whole. Consequently, each spouse has an automatic legal right to all marital property. When one spouse dies, the entire estate, automatically, by operation of law becomes the property of the other spouse.	Presumption of joint ownership expected to protect women in developing countries because in most patrilineal communities or communities with patrilocal post-marital residence, often, the presumption is that land is held by the man in the household.	Rwanda Ethiopia
<b>Mandatory joint titling for couples</b>	Legally mandated joint titling of property or user right by spouses or partners. This is more common in contexts where land being registered is allocated by the state.	During marriage (and/or cohabitation), it serves to safeguard against one spouse (or partner) making unilateral decisions on sale, rent, or mortgage of jointly held property. Joint titling is also designed to protect women when there is a change to the household such as divorce or death of the spouse/partner. It is important that joint titling applies to both informally and formally married couples as most poor women are not likely to be formally married because of costs associated with civil marriages and/or lack of knowledge about the related legal protections. Until recently, conventional approach to land registration was to record only one name, typically the traditional head of household, men.	Ethiopia Peru
<b>Spousal consent</b>	Law requires consent to transfer or burden jointly held property.	When coupled with joint titling, this has the effect of reinforcing the aim of joint titling and supporting the enforcement of each right holder's rights. In practical terms, it helps ensure that both spouses consent to such transactions.	Ethiopia Rwanda
<b>Mandated representation</b>	Law establishes legal quotas for women's appointment in land governance and administration committees.	Women are often underrepresented or excluded from land governance and administration bodies where men are considered the public representative of the family in matters related to land.	Ethiopia Rwanda Namibia