

# BUILDING GENDER- INCLUSIVE CITIES



*TOWARD MORE GENDER-INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMES,  
PUBLIC SPACES & CITIES IN THE ARAB REGION  
BY UN-HABITAT 2021*

# TABLE OF CONTENT

01 BACKGROUND

02 REGIONAL URBAN AND GENDER CONTEXT  
AND FACTS

03 REGIONAL GENDER  
CHALLENGES

04 REGIONAL APPROACH TO GENDER-RE-  
SPONSIVE INTERVENTIONS IN CITIES AND  
HUMAN  
SETTLEMENTS

05 THEMATIC INTERVENTIONS  
AND PROJECTS IN THE REGION

06 WAY FORWARD





## BACKGROUND

In a world that is urbanizing rapidly, and when cities are expected to host 60% of people globally by 2030, women, men, girls and boys experience urbanization and cities differently. It is thus paramount to design, plan and build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities where no one is left behind, especially women and girls.



UN-Habitat's vision of "a better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world" can offer various benefits for women and girls, as cities open the doors to more diverse employment and education opportunities, better access to healthcare and more possibilities to redefine the traditional roles of men and women.

UN-Habitat is committed to advancing **gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls as an integral part of its projects and interventions with a special focus on the areas of equal accessibility, mobility, safety from violence, security of tenure and resilience to climate change.**

The New Urban Agenda also calls for the prevention of all forms of discrimination and violence and emphasizes the need for gender-responsiveness in all aspects of sustainable urban development, through clear principles and illustrative actions.

Additionally, the Strategic Plan of UN-Habitat 2020–2025 mainstreams gender equality into urban planning, legislation, finance, and economic development.

## REGIONAL URBAN AND GENDER CONTEXT AND FACTS

The rate and scale of urban growth presents daunting challenges across the globe, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is no exception. Home to more than 260 million people living in cities, Arab/MENA citizens are more than ever in need of adequate transportation, housing, sanitation, energy, social and physical infrastructure.

The developmental plans of the Arab/MENA cities must be designed with an inclusive approach where no one is left behind, especially women and girls who represent half of the population. However, the region has made the slowest progress on gender equality across multiple indicators despite the documented progress achieved in the past few years. The political and economic upheaval, conflict, occupation, and the COVID pandemic have also aggravated the situation.

### Facts and Figures

20%  
of women are  
in the  
labor force

- Violence against women and girls has been identified as the highest priority in the fight for gender equality across the region.
- The region has one of the lowest percentages of female representation in national legislatures worldwide.
- Female youth are more than twice as likely to be not in education, employment, or training than male youth
- Informal employment tends to be higher amongst women and girls (especially agriculture).

Women  
are 19%  
of members  
of  
the parliament

***"When cities are planned for women – they are fit for all."***  
***-Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat***

### Gender-Urban Facts

59%  
of Arab  
Population  
is Urban

- On average, **women feel less safe in their cities** than men (increased in emergency)
- The main reason for the gendered nature of the mobility patterns and land use is the unequal gendered division of household labor, given that **globally women spend on average between three and six hours per day on unpaid care activities**, while men spend between half an hour and two hours per day
- Gender impact on urban mobility and land use allocation strategies are totally ignored in the cities' developing policies
- The Arab/MENA region is the most water scarce region in the world, including 15 of the most water-scarce countries worldwide. **Water scarcity can amplify domestic work burden on women and girls** at both household and community level

## REGIONAL GENDER CHALLENGES



*“Our kids play in the streets due to the lack of parks and play areas in the neighborhood» – Jordanian mother*

*«Our houses are not really our houses... because we have no documents” -Najat Naadosh Ali, 21, Iraq*

On a daily basis in the Arab/MENA region, women face many obstacles, including loss of civil and Housing, Land and Property (HLP) documents, civil documentation and cadastral services in areas of conflict; lack of safe and affordable public transportation; high unemployment rates; harmful social norms; limited access to public spaces; gender based violence and sexual harassment; gender gap in labor market and political participation; restricted access to financial resources and unresolved inheritance issues, security of tenure and illegal occupation of land and property.

In addition to these challenges, a woman who is faced with the adversity of a destroyed house in a war-torn area now has to push through humanitarian challenges and the disproportionate burden that falls on a woman during conflict and war.

Emergencies, conflicts and natural disasters’ impacts are discriminatory due to predetermined gender roles. Crises dramatically increase the number of women supporting their families on their own. More than 70 per cent of women in crisis situations have experienced one or more types of gender-based violence.



## REGIONAL APPROACH TO GENDER-RESPONSIVE INTERVENTIONS IN CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS



Through social inclusion and ensuring gender is mainstreamed in its Strategic Plan 2023-2020, UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States is moving on its way toward safe urban settings that are empowering for all women and girls. UN-Habitat prioritizes safety in urban development plans, gender-responsive local programmes, inclusive mobility and transport networks and safe and economically viable public spaces through partnerships with local and national governments and the engagement of women, among other community actors, in the planning stages.

By collecting gender-specific data and conducting gender-sensitive analysis that addresses men's and women's respective roles, needs and aspirations, UN-Habitat builds on its

urban profiling experience. Through community consultations, the data feeds into evidence-based and community-led interventions.

In conflict and post conflict contexts, UN-Habitat ensures "Building Back Better" through identifying gender specific sensitivities and implementing gender responsive infrastructure.

Further, UN-Habitat's work addresses HLP rights and builds awareness around equal HLP rights, with a focus on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugee communities.

Through its normative and operational work, UN-Habitat seeks to improve women's access to land as a key contributor to stabilizing societies in crisis and/or post-conflict.

## THEMATIC INTERVENTIONS AND PROJECTS IN THE REGION

### Housing, Land and Property Rights



*Growing up in the Yazidi township of Borek in Sinjar, Iraq, Najat and Layla, among their families, were forcibly relocated in the 70's. This was part of the previous regime's discriminatory policies against ethnic and religious minorities.*

*With no documents to prove their right to their houses, how can Najat, Layla and their families return?*

**Housing, land and property are not just assets**, they are a representation of freedom, shelter and well-being.

Realizing women's land rights is an integral part of the gender-responsive implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Securing women's land and property rights is fundamental for women to take a step closer to realizing their right to equality and ensure they're more capable to provide for themselves and their families. They would also be better protected from physical and psychological violence and natural hazards. This could contribute to women's increased meaningful participation in decision-making processes within communities and in public discourse and debates.

In this light, UN-Habitat is implementing a series of interventions in the Arab/MENA region that tackle HLP rights.

# Housing, Land and Property Rights (HLP)

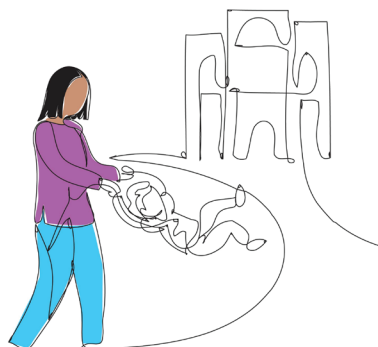
## Women and Land in the Arab region

*Why women need HLP rights?*

### When women have housing, land and property rights...

...they are more likely to enjoy a range of interconnected human rights, including adequate standard of living and protection from forced eviction.

www.arabstates.gln.net



As the Arab/MENA region is undergoing a decade of profound change, there is an increasing realization that the way land is accessed, used and controlled is a key element of sustainable, social and economic development, as well as peace and stability.

Women in the Arab/MENA region (especially those affected by conflict,

Tool Network (GLTN) and the Arab Land Initiative launched the ongoing Women and Land Campaign to raise awareness around the challenges Arab women face in accessing their HLP rights and empowering them to claim such rights.

Through a step-by-step approach, the campaign explains why secure HLP rights are a catalyst for the

A displaced woman in Syria faces many barriers in accessing her HLP rights. The main challenges in Syria revolve around displaced individuals' living conditions; illegal and undocumented HLP transactions; HLP disputes; access to land for livelihoods; land contamination with landmines and lack of personal and HLP documentation. Since 2018, a joint program between UN-Habitat, United Nations Development Programme, Norwegian Refugee Council, Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is being implemented to address immediate HLP issues in Syria through the formation of a legal database, development of thematic papers, guidance notes and policy paper, with a particular attention to those who are vulnerable based on either their gender or socio-economic background, including women, children and youth. To date, UN-Habitat developed analytical papers on land and conflict to guide staff governmental and non-governmental organizations, risk analysis, papers on HLP rights for Palestinians and HLP due diligence use of land and secondary occupation, all including gender as a main component.

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_31091](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_31091)

