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# الاراضي العربية ادارة Arab Land Initiative

## Reference Group Meeting: Achievements, Vision and Planning for the New Phase

29-30 May 2024 – League of the Arab States Building, Cairo, Egypt - Version 27.5.2024

### Background

**The Arab Land Initiative** is a multi-sided platform of land stakeholders coming together to bring about positive change in the areas where good land governance has positive dividends: sustainable social and economic development, food security, climate action, women's empowerment, peace and stability.

**Vision:** "All the people in the Arab countries enjoy equal and affordable access to land for peace, stability and economic growth, to be achieved with good land policies and transparent, efficient and affordable land administration".

The Initiative was **established in 2016** by a group of Global Land Tool Network partners, led by UN-Habitat and the World Bank, to address key regional land governance challenges and promote equal access to land for peace, stability, climate resilience and economic growth in the Arab region. The Initiative, coordinated by UN-Habitat through the Global Land Tool Network's Secretariat, is composed a broad range of global, regional, and national partners involved in different streams of work, including governments, land professionals, academia, civil society, private sector and international organisations.

Since its establishment, the Initiative recorded many **noticeable achievements** by increasing the visibility of land issues among decision makers and empowering land governance champions from the region through increased coordination, collaboration, capacity, knowledge, and information sharing. This was made possible by the active participation and efforts of the many interested partners and experts with a shared vision for change, the support provided by the Global Land Tool Network and UN-Habitat, the contributions from many partners and the financial and strategic support of BMZ, Sida, Norway, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

**The Arab Land Initiative's Reference Group** is a strategic and flexible group of knowledgeable people sharing the vision of the Arab Land Initiative. To reflect the complexity of the land sector of the Arab region, the Reference Group is composed by a mix of experts, influential figures, and representatives of institutions, organisations and constituencies that have an important role in advancing good land governance and its multifaceted components in the region.

### Objectives of the 2024 Reference Group's meeting

The objectives of the meeting are:

- Discuss the status of land governance in the region: key trends, challenges and opportunities
- Share the highlights of the work done in the past years
- Consolidate a vision for the way forward
- Discuss the key streams of work planned and possible collaborations
- Strengthen the network, enhance regional cooperation, and mobilise support for the way forward

## **Participants**

The meeting will be attended by approximately 25 experts from the partners of the Arab Land Initiative. A full list of participants will be provided at the event.

## **Key preparatory reading materials**

- [Report of the Arab Land Initiative's work \(2018-2022\)](#)
- The draft Terms of Reference of the Arab Land Initiative's Reference Group, which will be discussed during the meeting (in Annex)
- Report of the [Independent Evaluation](#) of the regional programme supporting the Initiative
- [Arab Land Initiative's Library](#) with all the key publications and papers produced
- [Key information](#) about the Initiative's and its priority themes

## **Logistical arrangements snapshot**

The meeting will take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May in Cairo, Egypt. It will be hosted by the League of Arab States in its building in Tahrir Square, in Cairo (full address: 26VM+V8R, Ismailia, Qasr El Nil, Cairo Governorate 4272081). Participants are expected to attend in person and to make their own arrangements for visa, accommodation and travel, unless otherwise agreed with the organisers. English/Arabic interpretation will be provided. Specific sessions may allow for virtual attendance, but interpretation will not be available for virtual participants. Further information is available in a separate Logistic Note.

## **Contacts**

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## Agenda outline (Version 27 May 2024)

Day 1 – Wednesday 29 May 2024		
Time <i>Cairo time</i>	Agenda item	Notes
9:00	Arrival of participants and registration	Entrance will only be possible if in possession of ID document
9:30	<p><b>Session 1 - Welcome of participants &amp; Opening</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening remarks</li> <li>Objectives of the meeting and agenda</li> <li>Participants' introduction and expectations</li> </ol>	<p>Chairing by Ambassador Shahira Wahby, Director, Water, Housing and Disaster Risk Reduction, League of Arab States</p> <p><b>1. Opening remarks: 5 minutes each</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Rania Hedeya, Regional Representative, UN-Habitat</li> <li>✓ Robert Lewis Lettington, Secretary of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)</li> <li>✓ Sukaina Al Nasrawi, Lead of Sustainable Urban Development Portfolio, UN-ESCWA</li> <li>✓ Judy Wambui Kariuki, UNECA</li> <li>✓ Ambassador Shahira Wahby, Director, Water, Housing and Disaster Risk Reduction, League of Arab States</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Objectives and agenda</b>, by Ombretta Tempra GLTN / Arab Land Initiative's Secretariat, 5 minutes</p> <p><b>3. Introduction of participants</b></p>
10:30	<p><b>Session 2 - The status of land governance in the Arab region</b></p> <p>Presentation and discussion on trends and recommendations emerged from the analysis of the Arab Land Initiative</p>	<p>Chairing and facilitation of the discussion by Rania Hedeya, Regional Representative, UN-Habitat</p> <p>Presentation by Ombretta Tempra, Arab Land Initiative's Secretariat</p> <p>Remarks by Omar Abdellatif, Embassy of the Netherlands</p>
12:00	Picture & Tea / coffee break	
12:30	<p><b>Session 3 – Highlights of the work done and ideas for future collaboration</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presentations by partners</li> <li>Facilitated discussion</li> <li>Recap of the ideas emerged</li> </ol>	<p>Chairing and facilitation by Ahmed El Atrash, UN-Habitat / GLTN.</p> <p><b>Interventions by partners 5 / 6 min each max</b> (no Power Point).</p> <p><b>Each partner will briefly highlight the land-related work being done in the region (including but not only with the Arab Land Initiative), the work planned for the next two years, and the key opportunities to collaborate in the context of the Arab Land Initiative.</b></p> <p>Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN), American University of Beirut/Urban Lab (AUB), Arab Urban Development Institute (AUDI), Arab Union of Surveyors (AUS), Regional Center for remote Sensing of North Africa States (CRTEAN), Dubai Land Department (DLD), Duhok University, Economic and Social Commission of West Asia (UN-ESCWA), Economic and Social Commission of Africa (UNECA), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), International</p>

		Land Coalition (ILC), Istadama, LandPortal, Land at Scale Netherlands, Lebanon Cadastre, Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa / North Africa (NELGA NA), Norwegian Refugee Council, Urban Institute (UTI), World Bank (videomessage).
14:30	<i>Lunch</i>	
15:30	<p><b>Session 4 – Group discussions on coordination and collaboration, knowledge and capacity development</b></p> <p>1. Short introduction of the topics and the group work, and distribution of participants in the respective groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Group 1: Coordination and collaboration</b>, including the 3rd Arab Land Conference, outreach, expansion of the network and partnerships</li> <li>➤ <b>Group 2: Knowledge development</b>, including research innovation fund, new regional reports and thematic events</li> <li>➤ <b>Group 3: Capacity development</b>, including collaborations with training and research institutions and joint training events.</li> </ul> <p>2. Report back to plenary and discussion</p>	<p>Overall facilitation of the session: Doaa El Sherif, Urban Institute.</p> <p>Introduction of the topic of the group work by UN-Habitat / Arab Land Initiative. <b>The session will identify key successes and priority areas of future engagement in the 3 streams of work identified.</b></p> <p>Group 1: Facilitated by Kholoud Saad</p> <p>Group 2: Facilitated by Jihad Farah</p> <p>Group 3: Facilitated by Ahmad El Atrash</p>
17:30	<i>Closing</i>	
19:00	<b><i>Dinner together in town: Le Pacha 1901</i></b> [Address : Saray El Gezirah Street, El-Khalig, Zamalek, Cairo]	

**Day 2 – Thursday 30 May 2024**

<b>Time</b> <i>Cairo time</i>	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Notes</b>
9:30	<p>Recap of day 1</p> <p><b>Session 5 – Achieving change at country level</b></p> <p>Catalyzing and increasing momentum of national land programmes and reforms:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Framing presentation</li> <li>2. Panel discussion</li> <li>3. Open discussion and contributions from the group</li> </ol> <p>Focus countries presentations – work done and way forward:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Lebanon</li> <li>5. Jordan</li> <li>6. Open discussion and contributions from the group</li> </ol>	<p>Recap by Rafic Khouri, Arab Union of Surveyors</p> <p>Overall facilitation of the session, framing presentation and moderation of the panel discussion by Salah Abukashawa, Istdama.</p> <p><b>The session will address the question of how a regional land initiative can catalyse change at country level, building on the work beind planned and done by partners, facilitating dialogue and coordination, knowledge sharing, and capacity building, and providing technical and financial support to specific strategic interventions.</b></p> <p>Panelists (questions shared in a separate document):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mariam Jaajaa, APN</li> <li>▪ Mahmoud El Burai, DLD</li> <li>▪ Wala Bashari, UN-Habitat</li> <li>▪ Layla Raswol, Duhok University</li> </ul> <p>Country presentations (12 / 15 minutes each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lebanon: Georges Maarawi and Ornella Nohra and Racha Serhal</li> <li>▪ Jordan: Deema Abuthiab and Lubna Shaheen</li> </ul>
11:30	<i>Tea / coffee break</i>	
12:00	<p><b>Session 6 – Group discussion on priority themes</b></p> <p>Short introduction of the topics and the group work, and distribution of participants in the respective groups</p> <p><b>Groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 1: Women’s land rights</li> <li>▪ Group 2: Land for food security and climate action</li> <li>▪ Group 3: Land and conflict and Housing, Land and Property rights of displaced people</li> <li>▪ Group 4: Land for housing and sustainable urbanisation</li> <li>▪ Group 5: Fit-for-purpose land administration</li> <li>▪ Group 6: Monitoring land governance</li> </ul> <p>Report back to plenary and discussion</p>	<p>Overall facilitation of the session: Ahmad El Atrash, UN-Habitat / GLTN</p> <p>Introduction of the topic of the group work by Eleonora Serpi, UN-Habitat / Arab Land Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Group 1: Facilitated by Dina Naguib, Independent/LandPortal</li> <li>▪ Group 2: Facilitated by Francesco Pierri, FAO</li> <li>▪ Group 3: Facilitated by Salah Abukashawa, Istdama / Ahmad El Atrash UN-Habitat</li> <li>▪ Group 4: Facilitated by Abir Zaatari, AUB/Urban Lab</li> <li>▪ Group 5: Facilitated by Hadi Gashut, CRTEAN</li> <li>▪ Group 6: Facilitated by Shahd Almukhtar, ILC</li> </ul>
14:30	<i>Lunch</i>	

15:30	<p><b>Session 7 – Way of working of the Arab Land Initiative and its Reference Group</b></p> <p>Presentation on the the Theory of Change of the Arab Land Initiative and draft Terms of Reference of the Initiative’s Reference Group</p> <p>Facilitated discussion</p>	<p>Presentation and facilitated discussion led by Ombretta Tempra, Arab Land Initiative’s Secretariat</p>
16:30	<p><b>Session 8 – Recap, next steps and closing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Evaluation of the meeting</li> <li>▪ League of Arab States</li> <li>▪ UN-Habitat / GLTN</li> </ul>	
17:30	<i>Closing</i>	

**ANNEX – Draft ToRs of the Arab Land Initiative Reference Group** *(shared separately)*