



FIG Working Week 2024

19-24 May Accra, Ghana

Your World, Our World: Resilient Environment and Sustainable Resource Management for All

The Importance of Land Tenure in Rapidly Urbanizing Africa: Demonstrating the Centrality of Land in Achieving the SDGs (Goal 11) and the Africa Vision 2063

Abstract: Although many countries in Africa have initiated reforms to their legal and regulatory, spatial and institutional frameworks related to land and tried to harmonize modern statutory law with customary ones, the majority of Sub-Saharan Africa's urban dwellers still have insecure land tenure and property rights, with the majority living in informal settlements. Communal rights on land, even in informal settlements, are still not recognized across many societies in the region.

In Africa, secure land tenure rights are an essential element in achieving poverty reduction and the overall achievement of the SDGs. Land tenure underpins economic development through the provision of livelihoods, especially to the vulnerable communities who have been excluded from the formal land administration system. It also spurs the social inclusion of the marginalized groups of society. Secure land tenure offers communities in urban and peri-urban areas, especially those in informal settlements, an opportunity to invest in improved households and human settlements while improving access to basic services and other social services like public spaces, schools, and health facilities.

UN-Habitat recognizes that security of land tenure for the vulnerable population can be a driver of positive change among urban dwellers and is working towards realizing SDG 11, particularly indicator 11.3 on promoting inclusive and sustainable urbanization, and ultimately contributing towards a prosperous Africa as envisioned in the Agenda 2063.