



Message from Hon'ble Agriculture Minister



Land Degradation and Drought Day

June 17, 2023

Today, as we observe Global Land Degradation and Drought Day, we come together under the theme "Her Land. Her Right" to emphasize the critical role of women in agriculture, sustainable land management, and the need to ensure their rights to land ownership and empowerment. In Bhutan, we acknowledge the immense contribution of women in these sectors and recognize the challenges they face. Let us join hands to protect our land, reduce the impact of dryspells, empower our women, and secure a sustainable future for all.

Bhutan has a rich agricultural heritage, with women playing a vital role in nurturing our lands and ensuring food security for our nation. They are the backbone of our rural communities, dedicating their time, energy, and skills to agricultural activities. From sowing seeds to harvesting crops, their labour and knowledge are the foundation of our agricultural success.

Furthermore, women in Bhutan have the right to own land, and their ownership is safeguarded by our laws and cultural practices. This recognition of women's land ownership is a testament to our commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. By granting women access to land, we enable them to have a stronger voice in decision-making processes and contribute to sustainable land management practices.

However, despite their significant contributions, women in agriculture continue to face challenges. Limited access to resources, including credit, technology, and training, often hampers their productivity and inhibits their potential. Cultural and societal norms, such as gender stereotypes and unequal power dynamics, can further restrict their participation in decision-making and accessing land rights. It is essential that we address these barriers and create an enabling environment for women in agriculture to thrive.

Recognizing the role of women in sustainable land management is crucial for the preservation of our environment. Women have a deep connection to the land, possessing traditional knowledge and practices that promote conservation and biodiversity. Their expertise in agroforestry, soil conservation, and water management contributes to sustainable land use and protects our ecosystems. By empowering women in these practices, we ensure a harmonious balance between human activities and the preservation of nature.

On this Desertification and Drought Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to promoting gender equality, women's empowerment, and sustainable land management. We must invest in providing women with equal access to resources, education, and training opportunities. By enhancing their capabilities and removing barriers, we can unleash their full potential, benefiting not only the women themselves but also our communities and the environment.

Furthermore, we must foster an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages women's participation in decision-making processes related to land management and agriculture. Their unique perspectives and experiences are invaluable in shaping policies and practices that are equitable, sustainable, and responsive to the needs of our society.

Today, let us celebrate the remarkable contributions of women in agriculture and sustainable land management. Join us in advocating for gender equality, supporting women's land ownership, and recognizing their pivotal role in protecting our environment.