Older Women's Rights to Property and Inheritance in Kenya: Culture, Policy, and Disenfranchisement


Women’s rights to property and inheritance are safeguarded through various human rights policies and laws at international, regional, and country levels. However, many women continue to experience discrimination while claiming these rights. In Africa, older women, in particular, experience obstacles as they attempt to secure inheritance and property rights. These older African women, who are already more likely to be among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, have little recourse when denied access to property or inheritance. In Kenya, there are various legislated policies and guidelines regarding property ownership and inheritance. Despite these policies, cultural, structural, and even judicial impediments continue to disenfranchise women. This article highlights the historical and cultural context of property and inheritance rights for older women in Africa and Kenya and the evolution of policy responses to these impediments.