

**Report to the 40th General Assembly
FIG Working Week 2017, Helsinki, Finland**

Africa FIG Regional Development Network (ARN)

Report of Activities 2016

1. Overview and Purpose

This is the Chair's report on the activities and running of the Africa FIG Regional Network (ARN) over the period 2016.

The key purpose of ARN is to enable the surveying profession in Sub Saharan Africa to deal with social responsibility in terms of contributing to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, the role of the surveyors as change agents engaging with the politicians is important.

The Africa Network through workshop activities will consider and present new and creative tools and other means to revitalise and strengthen Land professional members within Sub Saharan Africa. The focus will be led by FIG Member Associations to build the capacity of the surveying association and individual surveyors to act as agents of positive change and encourage the process of development and growth for the benefit of Africa and its people.

Key activities undertaken

2. Cooperation

Central to the activities of the ARN is the cooperation and collaboration with a range of stakeholders, foremost the Young Surveyors Network who have been integral to deliver workshop content, in addition to partnering with FIG Commissions and FIG corporate members (i.e Trimble, Thomson Reuters) who have in the past, provided unbiased content and sponsorship.

This year (2016) we cooperated specifically with the Fédération des Géomètres Francophones (FGF) to hold our annual ARN capacity development workshop in Abidjan, Ivory Coast and were introduced to De L'Ordre des Geometres-Experts de Cote d'Ivoire (OGECI), who provided the workshop logistical support.

3. Seminar organisation

In order to provide valuable input for the network's work over the term 2015- 2018, a series of thematic Regional workshops will be arranged in Africa between each FIG Working Week. These workshops will develop tools for use by the members and validated at Roundtable discussions at the following FIG Working weeks, the next roundtable meeting is scheduled in Helsinki, Finland 2017.

Accordingly, drawing upon the theme agreed in ARN's terms of reference, and ratified by General Assembly, the 2016 workshop: ***A time to Improve Land Governance: How the Land Professionals can support the implementation of The Voluntary***

Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure (VGGT) was held in Abidjan, Ivory Coast 16 - 18 November 2016

Every year, ARN invites an African FIG member association to partner in the ARN workshop activities. In 2016 the opportunity arose to cooperate with **President François Mazuyer, Fédération des Géomètres Francophones (FGF)**.

The ARN event complemented the FGF conference theme: "Land management and sustainable development, which solutions for developing countries". The FGF conference was attended by Land professionals and exhibitors from across Francophone speaking Africa. The ARN program was designed in parallel with FGF activities, ensuring that we came together at various stages to join across Anglophone and Francophone networks thereby exposing land professionals to a greater and diverse number of people creating an informative and productive meeting.

The ARN workshop brought together 35 land professionals over the 2 day workshop, participants were drawn from several Anglophone and Francophone African nations with expertise across the range of land professional disciplines within FIG membership.

Vice President **Diane Dumashie** chaired the meeting and designed and facilitated the training workshop. From the FIG family, the chair was assisted by **Stephen Djaba** (Geotech Ghana) and **Robinson Ndwiga Murithi** (GEBCO Kenya) and **Yacoba Hamed Dagnoko** (OGECI) who was indispensably on logistics. Importantly ARN collaborated with the Young Surveyors from West Africa, led on this occasion by **Yusuf Aro-Lambo, Adama Sarr, Daniel Brown** and **Chuck Onwuzuligbo**.

4. Seminar deliberations

The workshop focus sought to build the future resilience into land professional practices to improve governance of tenure by understanding the implementation opportunities referenced in the VGGTs that will ensure that people benefit from secure and equitable tenure rights. The key objective is to communicate action orientated messages to multi-stakeholders of how land professionals can assist to improve governance of tenure drawing upon the VGGT principles.

The VGGTs are important. As an international soft law there is consensus that equitable land governance and tenure security for all is the foundation for sustainable economic development, all participants recognised this and expect to identify what they might do in their own place of work. The outcomes will be further discussed at the FIG ARN roundtable to be held at the 2017 FIG working week in Helsinki.

Over the two days the participants' task was to apply the VGGT principles by addressing what ideas using a digital communication platform to develop messages for a statement for action, and to explore leadership skills within their own communities

On Day 1

Focussing on the VGGT's and blending participatory group work with the adaptation of the FAO's E-learning modules (<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/e-learning/>) enabled comprehensive deliberations and activities. The network welcomed Dr **W. Odame Larbi, FAO** Africa (on secondment from AU LPI) who supported our deliberations throughout the day, and **Robinson Ndwiga Muriithi** assisted at the plenaries.

The day's outcome was a series of digitally created messages that in 4 minutes highlights messages to public, private and civic communities demonstrating:

- *The existence of the VGGT guidelines,*
- *Identifying What Land professionals can/ and do, to help implement the VGGT, and*
- *For subsequent discussion in the lead up to the FIG Working week in Helsinki, the groups own Unique key message to contribute to the African VVGT Action Statement*

The group's video messages can be viewed at the ARN web site http://www.fig.net/organisation/networks/capacity_development/africa/events/2016_abidjan/index.asp

On Day 2

The morning sessions were jointly held with ARN and FGF. Vice President **Diane Dumashie** delivered a welcoming address to FGF/ ARN, and was also asked to chair the opening presentations and convene the panel discussants: **Dr W. Odame Larbi** and Madame **Clair Galpin** (delivering Fit-For-Purpose on behalf of GLTN).

The ARN network then re- convened for the remainder of the morning with FIG **Stephen Djaba** presenting thought provoking leadership skill requirements and facilitating an open plenary discussion. The closing was provided by Dr W. Odame Larbi, and **Ibrahim Mwathane** (on behalf of the Africa Union Land Policy Initiative).

In the late afternoon the ARN workshop and FGF conference combined to formerly close. Activities were rounded of and participants came together to share some fun on an early evening boat trip navigating through the complex waterways of Abidjan harbour

5. The workshop outcome

The workshop successfully provoked thought and stimulated debate, along with achieving the following objectives:

- To raise awareness by coming together to consider the opportunity land professionals could make to improving governance of tenure by implementing the VGGT principles
- To add value for participants through a learning experience to enable them to act as agents of change
- To provide succinct messaging that will enable the compilation of a African Land professionals VVGT statement for action
- A final draft document is to be uploaded on the website in preparation for a roundtable discussion at the Working Week in Helsinki Finland June 2017.

6. Communications

Over the year, the chair with support from the ARN core team has:

- Delivered a successful capacity development workshop bringing together anglo phone and francophone land professionals from across the Continent. This enhanced knowledge and enabled them to share their experiences.
- Developed a Strategic framework document with tangible actions to be reported to General Assembly at the end of the term (2018)

- Discussed on going strengths and capabilities of the regional network and identified risks and challenges
- Defined and continue to build partnerships with member associations and external strategic stakeholders including FAO, AU, FGF and GLTN (UN Habitat)
- Drafted a program to engage and deliver the next capacity development workshop in 2017, subject to attracting sponsorship
- Delivered communication platforms for Member associates, Academics and the Young surveyors network and gained new entrants from Africa into FIG and ARN

7. Closing remarks

The network is about equipping Land professionals to better contribute to society, to do this requires professionals to understand, adapt and embrace the future.

Within the SDG's and having ethics underpinning everything that Land professionals do the workshop in 2016 considered the opportunity land professionals could make to improving governance of tenure, recognising the context that land and (other natural resources) provide humanity, among others, food and shelter and a basis for economic production and social, cultural and religious practices.

It is imperative that Land Professionals across the world remain engaged in initiatives that will enable them to make a difference.

Rights of access are increasingly affected by climate change, natural disasters, population growth, urbanization and the growing demands for land for agriculture including for bio-energy initiatives. The focus is on how to translate the VGGT's from principles to implementing strategies within our sector and to meet the societal challenges and opportunities articulated in the SDGs.

The attending participants and those from the wider ARN network are proving that communicating to influence, purposefully collaborating and, in doing so, building connectivity to ensure that skills are developed that will reach out to all stakeholders' community networks. The upcoming workshops in 2017 will continue to strive to optimise and continue the network's deliberations in Africa.

If you wish to be kept informed of ARN upcoming activities, please do contact the Chair who will be happy to place you on the Email circulation.

Dr Diane Dumashie FRICS
FIG Vice President
Chair Africa FIG Regional Development Network 2015-18