

Facing the Post 2015 Global Agenda: The Role of Land Governance and Land Professionals

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Key words: Land Governance; Global Agenda; Land Professionals

SUMMARY

This paper argues that sound land governance is fundamental to achieving the post 2015 Global Agenda as set by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by all the world's leaders at the UN Summit in September 2015.

Land governance is about the policies, processes and institutions by which land, property and natural resources are managed. The operational component of land governance is the country specific land administration systems dealing with the four key functions of land tenure, land value, land use, and land development. This paper presents an overall understanding of role of land governance and land professionals in this global perspective and in support of the SDGs.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include 17 goals that are accompanied by 169 targets and will be further elaborated through indicators focused on measurable outcomes. The goals are action oriented, global in nature and universally applicable. Targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances.

This paper analyses the SDGs and identify six of the goals and their targets as having a significant land component. These goals will never be achieved without having good land governance and well-functioning country wide land administration systems in place. Good land governance and administration is also essential for meeting the challenges of climate change and rapid urbanization that should be seen as part of the global agenda as well.

There is a request for reliable and robust data for devising appropriate policies and interventions for the achievement of the SDGs and for holding governments and the international community accountable. Such a monitoring framework is crucial for encouraging progress and enabling achievements at national, regional and global level. This calls for a "data revolution" for sustainable development to empower people with information on the progress towards meeting the targets.

The challenge will relate to innovation of the mindset of land professionals to cope with new approaches and a demand for interaction across generations of land professionals to ensure implementation of a holistic approach sustainable development over time.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The global agenda is threefold and has changed over recent decades. In the 1990s the focus was on sustainable development; in the 2000s the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted as the overarching agenda; and in the 2010s there is increasingly focus on climate change and related challenges such as natural disasters, food shortage and environmental degradation. Finally rapid urbanisation has appeared as a general trend that in itself has a significant impact on climate change and sustainability.

The MDGs are now replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a new, universal set of 17 Goals and 169 target that UN member states are committed to use to frame their agenda and policies over the next 15 years. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognise their interlinkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions. There is a need for reliable and robust data for devising appropriate policies and interventions for the achievement of the SDGs and for holding governments and the international community accountable through monitoring and assessment. This calls for a “data revolution” for sustainable development to empower people with information on the progress towards meeting the targets.

Good land management and governance should be seen as a means in support of the global agenda. If a hypothetical map of the world is generated by using the Gross Domestic Product as the scale for territorial size – the so-called western regions North America, Western Europe, South Korea and Japan would “balloon” while other regions such as Africa and Central Asia would almost disappear (see map of UNEP, 2007). The global agenda is very much about bringing this map back to scale through poverty eradication, improving education and health, facilitate economic development, encourage good governance, and ensure sustainability.

2. LAND GOVERNANCE

Land governance is about the policies, processes and institutions by which land, property and natural resources are managed. The organisational structures for land governance and administration differ widely between countries and regions throughout the world and reflect the cultural and judicial setting of the country and jurisdiction. The judicial and institutional arrangements may change over time to better support implementation of land policies and good land governance. Within this country context, the land governance activities may be described by three components: Land Policies, Land Information Infrastructures and Land Administration Functions, in support of Sustainable Development as shown in Figure 2.1 below.

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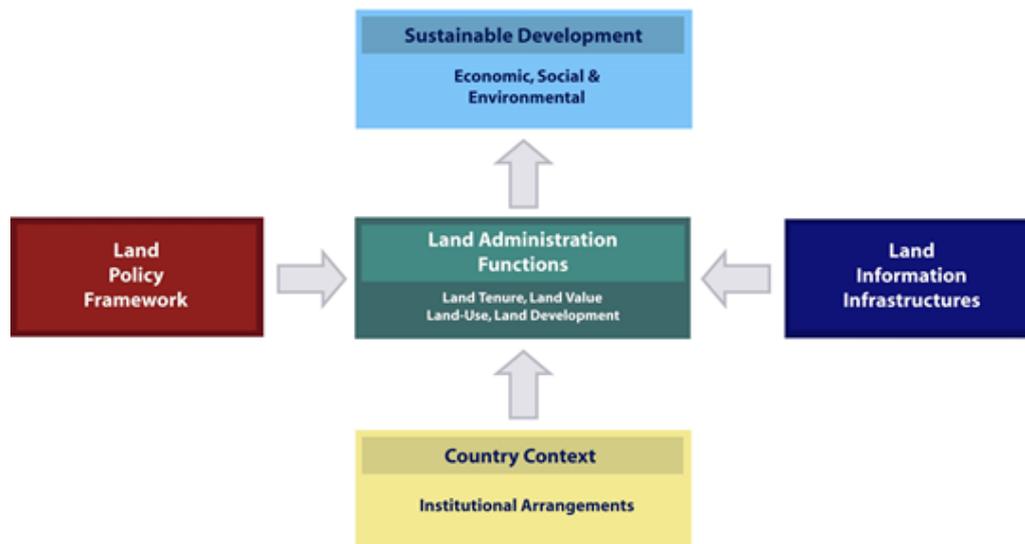


Figure 1. Land Governance and Administration
(Enemark, 2004, Williamson et al. 2010)

Land policy is a part of the national policy on promoting objectives such as economic development, social justice and equity, and political stability. Land policies may be associated with: security of tenure; land transactions and access to credit; sustainable management and control of natural resources and the environment; the provision of land for the poor; ethical minorities and women; land use and physical planning; real property taxation; and measures to prevent land speculation and to manage land disputes.

Sound land governance requires a legal and regulatory framework, operational processes and capacity to implement policies consistently within a jurisdiction or country in sustainable ways. In this regard, land administration systems provide a country with an infrastructure for implementing land policies and land management strategies in support of sustainable development. The operational component of the land governance concept is then the range of land administration functions that include the areas of: land tenure (securing and transferring rights in land and natural resources); land value (valuation and taxation of land and properties); land use (planning and control of the use of land and natural resources); and land development (implementing utilities, infrastructure, construction works, and urban and rural developments). These functions interact to deliver overall policy objectives, and they are facilitated by appropriate land information infrastructures that include cadastral and topographic datasets linking the built and natural environment.

Sound land administration systems deliver a range of benefits to society in terms of: support of governance and the rule of law; alleviation of poverty; security of tenure; support for formal land markets; security for credit; support for land and property taxation; protection of state lands; management of land disputes; and improvement of land use planning and implementation. The

systems enable the implementation of land policies to fulfil political and social objectives and achieve sustainable development.

Sound land governance and administration requires operational processes to implement land policies in comprehensive, integrated and sustainable ways. Many countries, however, tend to separate land tenure rights from land-use opportunities, thereby undermining their capacity to link planning and land-use controls with land values and the operation of the land market. Poor administrative and management procedures and inappropriate laws and regulations often compound these problems. Investment in new technology will only provide limited solutions in the major task of solving a much deeper problem; namely the failure to treat land and natural resources as a coherent whole.

3. THE POST 2015 GLOBAL AGENDA

The global agenda as set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expired at the end of 2015. This agenda served the world well as a focal point for governments to reduce poverty and improve the lives of poor people. The progress in meeting the goals was monitored and published yearly as a global incentive. For example, the 2014 progress report showed that the extreme poverty rate had been halved and Goal 1 was thereby met at a global scale - but with huge regional deviations (UN, 2014a).

Meeting the MDG Goal 1 was achieved mainly due to the contribution from China where, in 1978, the collective farms were dismantled and replaced by long-term leases to allocate land rights to farming households. This policy enforced an era of agricultural growth that transformed rural China and led to the largest reduction of poverty in history. The percentage of people living in extreme poverty declined from about 80% of the population in 1981 (the highest in the world at that time) to only 13% in 2008. In the same way, in Vietnam, the extreme poverty was reduced from 58% in early 1990s to 15% in 2008. On the other hand, even if the Sub-Saharan Africa has seen a considerable growth rate of above 5% per year for more than a decade, this region remains poor for the most part and has been unable to translate its recent robust growth into rapid poverty reduction (Byamugisha, 2013).

There is a broad agreement that, while the MDGs provided a focal point for governments, they were too narrow. The MDGs did provide a framework around which governments, especially in developing countries, could develop policies and overseas aid programmes designed to alleviate poverty and improve the lives of the poor, as well as a rallying point for NGOs to hold them to account. However, at the deadline by the end of 2015 about 1 billion people still live on less than 1.25 USD a day, more than 8000 people do not have enough food to eat, and women are still fighting hard for their rights (Guardian, 2015).

2.1 The Sustainable Development Goals

The MDGs are now replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a new, universal set of 17 Goals (see figure 2) and 169 targets that UN member states are committed to using to

frame their agenda and policies over the next 15 years (2016 – 2030). The goals are action oriented, global in nature and universally applicable. Targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition, but taking into account national circumstances. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognise their interlinkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions (UN, 2015).

The adopted UN declaration on “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” includes the following statement: “We resolve, between now and 2030, to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. We resolve also to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities” (UN, 2015).



Figure 2. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015)

While the MDGs, in theory, applied to all countries in reality they were considered targets for poor countries to achieve with fiancé from the more wealthy countries. In contrast, every country throughout the world will be expected to work towards achieving the SDGs. This relates e.g. to Goal 10 aiming to “Reduce inequality within and among countries”. This challenge reducing inequity has increased in most developed countries over recent decades. The SDGs seek to build on the Millennium Development Goals and complete what they did not achieve seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. They are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental (UN, 2015).

While the MDGs did not mention land directly, the new SDGs include six goals with a significant land component mentioned in the targets. For example in Goal 1, that calls for ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, target 4 states that by 2030 all men and women will have equal rights to ownership and control over land and other forms of property. Similarly the land component is referred to in target 3 of Goal 2 on ending hunger, and, more generally in Goal 5 on gender equity, Goal 11 on sustainable cities, Goal 15 on life on land, and Goal 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions. These goals and targets will never be achieved without having good land governance and well-functioning country wide land administration systems in place (see figure 3 below).

The MDGs were drawn up by group internally within the UN. In contrast, the SDGs have been developed on the basis of a large consultation programme to gauge opinion on what SDGs should include. The process started as an outcome of the Rio+20 summit in 2012 which mandated the creation of an open working group, with representatives from 70 countries, to develop a draft agenda. Alongside to open working group discussions, the UN conducted a series of “global conversations”. These included 11 thematic and 83 national consultations, and door-to-door surveys. The UN also launched an online My World survey asking people to prioritise the areas they would like to see addressed in the goals. The results of these consultations were fed into the working group’s discussion (the Guardian, 2015).

The open working group had its first meeting in March 2013 while the final draft with its 17 suggested goals were published in July 2014 and presented to the UN general assembly in September that year. Member state negotiations followed and the final wording for goals and targets and the associated declaration were agreed in August 2015 and adopted at the UN General Assembly 25 September 2015 by the document “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (UN, 2015).

- GOAL 1** **End poverty.** End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- GOAL 2** **Zero hunger.** End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- GOAL 3** **Good Health and well-being.** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- GOAL 4** **Quality education.** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- GOAL 5** **Gender equality.** Ensure gender equality and empower all women and girls
- GOAL 6** **Clean water and sanitation.** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- GOAL 7** **Affordable and clean energy.** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- GOAL 8** **Decent work and economic growth.** Promote sustained, inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- GOAL 9** **Industry, innovation and infrastructure.** Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- GOAL 10** **Reduced inequality.** Reduce inequality within and among countries
- GOAL 11** **Sustainable cities and communities.** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- GOAL 12** **Responsible consumption and production;** Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- GOAL 13** **Climate action.** Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- GOAL 14** **Life below water.** Conserved and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- GOAL 15** **Life on land.** Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- GOAL 16** **Peace, justice and strong institutions.** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- GOAL 17** **Partnerships for the goals.** Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global partnership Sustainable Development

Figure 3. The Sustainable Development Goals. The land related goals are marked in red.

2.2 Monitoring and Assessment

There is strong request for effective monitoring and assessment of progress in achieving the SDGs. There is a need for reliable and robust data for devising appropriate policies and interventions for the achievement of the SDGs and for holding governments and the international community accountable. Such a monitoring framework is crucial for encouraging progress and enabling achievements at national, regional and global level. This calls for a “data revolution” for sustainable development to empower people with information on the progress towards meeting the SDG targets (UN, 2014a).

According to the UN resolution on the SDGs “ ..the Goals and targets will be followed up and reviewed using a set of global indicators. These will be complemented by indicators at the regional and national levels which will be developed by Member States, in addition to the outcomes of work

undertaken for the development of the baselines for those targets where national and global baseline data does not yet exist. This framework will be simple yet robust, address all Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including for means of implementation, and preserve the political balance, integration and ambition contained therein” (UN, 2015).

This global framework – of about 240 indicators – is now developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, and was agreed by the Statistical Commission and adopted by the Economic and Social Council at their meeting March 2016, in line with existing mandates. Based on this global indicator framework an annual progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals will be prepared by the Secretary-General in cooperation with the United Nations system, based on data produced by national statistical systems and information collected at the regional level (UN, 2016).

Furthermore, the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) was established in 2011 and is mandated, among other tasks, to provide a platform for the development of effective strategies on how to build and strengthen national capacity on geospatial information and disseminating best practices. UN-GGIM has included land administration activities into their remit of global information management. UN-GGIM is gaining influence in the geospatial domain and is increasing the amount of standards, e.g. geodetic framework, and guidance to the geospatial user community. For example, UN-GGIM has published “A Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management” (UN-GGIM, 2014) that provides good background to the range of standards available and examples of their use. UN-GGIM is looking specifically on the way and means by which geospatial information and land administration and management can support delivery of the post 2015 SDGs.

This is further supported by the Global Land Indicators Initiative (GLII) that is developing a list of land indicators that will complement the Post 2015 sustainable development agenda (UN-HABITAT, GLTN, 2014). The GLII was established in 2012 with the aim to harmonize monitoring efforts around land tenure and governance and seeking to derive a list of comparable and harmonized land indicators. To achieve this, GLII is exploring the range of monitoring mechanisms and data collection methods. The Initiative is supporting global and regional frameworks such as the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure (FAO, 2012) and also Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa that is a joint initiative of the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. GLII intends to foster partnership, inclusiveness, consultation, evidence-based indicators, people-centered approach and sustainability.



Effective monitoring is central to ensuring that changes in land governance result in improved conditions and sustainable development opportunities for all, especially the poor. In particular, better knowledge and understanding are needed of a) the extent to which people benefit from secure land and property rights; and b) the effectiveness of land related policies and land administration systems in helping to deliver tenure security for all and achieve sustainable use of land resources. (UN-HABITAT, GLTN, 2014). The post-2015 development agenda creates an opportunity for the Global land Indicators to be incorporated into the framework and made universal in application.

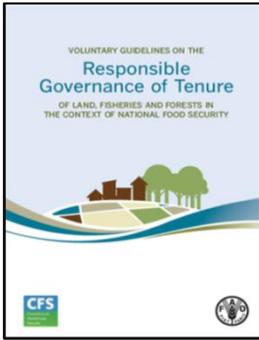
Furthermore, with special reference to land governance and administration, the World Bank, in conjunction with UN and other partners, has developed another good example of measuring and monitoring. This is the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF) for benchmarking and monitoring the core areas, such as the legal and institutional frameworks. The LGAF provides a holistic diagnostic review of the country or regional level that can inform policy dialogue in a clear and structured manner and identify weaknesses for improvement. This quick and innovative tool to monitor land governance is built around five main areas for policy intervention: rights recognition and enforcement; land use planning, land management, and taxation; management of public land; public provision of land information; and dispute resolution and conflict management. The LGAF helps policymakers and other stakeholders to make sense of the technical levels of the land sector, benchmark governance, prioritize reforms in the land sector and identify areas that require further attention see (World Bank, 2011). Further global examples of monitoring and assessment are the annual World Bank “Doing Business” reports (World Bank, 2015) and the annual “Corruption Perception index (Transparency International, 2015).

4. THE WIDER GLOBAL AGENDA

Next to the SDGs the wider global agenda includes a range of global issues such as responsible governance of tenure, human rights and equity, climate change and natural disasters, rapid urbanisation, and land conflict situations. These issues, and their relevance to good land governance, are briefly presented below (see also Enemark, 2014).

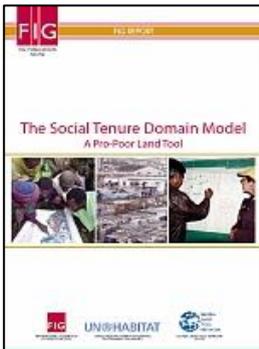
4.1 Responsible Governance of Tenure

Responsible governance of tenure is now incorporated as part of the global agenda through the Committee on World Food Security’s Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure (UN-FAO, 2012). These Guidelines are an international “soft law instrument” that represents a global consensus on internationally accepted principles and standards for responsible practices.



The Guidelines outline principles and practices that governments can refer to when making laws and administering land, fisheries and forests rights. While the Guidelines acknowledge that responsible investments by the public and private sectors are essential for improving food security, they also recommend that safeguards be put in place. These protect tenure rights of local people from risks that could arise from large-scale land acquisitions (land grabbing), and also to protect human rights, livelihoods, food security and the environment.

The Guidelines promote secure tenure rights and equitable access to land as a means of eradicating hunger and poverty, supporting sustainable development and enhancing the environment. The guidelines thereby place tenure rights in the context of human rights, such as the right to adequate food and housing. With the help of the Guidelines a variety of actors can determine whether their proposed actions and the actions of others constitute acceptable practices.



UN-HABITAT has developed an innovative approach to addressing the land tenure issue through the Social Tenure Domain Model (FIG/GLTN, 2010). This includes a “scaling up approach” with a range of steps from informal to more formalised land rights. This continuum of land rights does not mean that societies will necessarily develop into freehold tenure systems, but rather that each step in the process can be formalised, providing a stronger protection than at earlier stages. This ensures that legitimate rights, such as customary tenure, are recognised.

Landownership and secure tenure can be a vital source of capital, which opens personal credit markets, leads to investments in land and buildings, provides a social safety net, and transfers wealth to next generations. However, in several developing countries most people do not have legal documents for the land they occupy or use and thereby fall outside the formal management system. This means that most decisions are made without comprehensive information. This causes dysfunctions in the management of urban and rural areas from the household up to government level, which impair the lives of millions of people (UN-HABITAT, GLTN, 2012).

4.2 Human Rights and Gender Equity

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) is stating the universal rights of human beings based on the principle of respect for the individual – rights that can be enjoyed by everyone simple because of being alive. In relation to land and governance, the Declaration states, in simple words, “that everyone has the right to possess property (security of tenure) and the right to adequate food, clothing and housing”. This is interpreted by the UN as merely a social right to “minimal property”. However, the right to housing should not be understood in a narrow sense, such as

shelter. It should rather be seen as the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity. The right to adequate housing therefore cannot be viewed in isolation from other human rights contained in the Universal Declaration (Enemark, et.al. 2014).

These human rights are fundamental and should be encouraged and promoted through building adequate systems of land administration that are relevant and accessible for poor people and serve their needs in a wider societal context. Obviously, human rights and land governance and administration are closely linked. Therefore, every state needs to ensure that efficient and effective land governance and administration mechanisms are in place to pursue this interaction. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948) is stating the universal rights of human beings based on the principle of respect for the individual – rights that can be enjoyed by everyone simple because of being alive.

Another side of the human rights issue is about gender equity. Women make up half the world's population, but at least two thirds of the world's poor are women. In many places, national laws, social customs and patriarchal tenure systems prevent women from holding rights to land. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, just 2-3 per cent of the land is owned by women. Women's access to land needs first and foremost to be seen as a universal human right, independently of any other arguments in favour of it (UN-HABITAT, GLTN, 2012).

4.3 Climate Change and Natural Disasters

Climate change mitigation refers to efforts and means for reducing the anthropogenic drivers such as greenhouse gas emissions from human activities – especially by reducing emission of carbon dioxide (CO₂) related to use of fossil fuel. These emissions stem from consumption that of course tends to be higher in rich industrialized countries. The impact of this high level consumption in terms of global warming, tend to be worse for the poorest countries who do not have the resources for protection against the consequences such as possible sea-level rise, drought, floods, ect. Loss of healthy life years as a result of global environmental change is predicted to be 500 times greater in poor African populations than in European populations.

On the other hand, at the national level, the issue of climate change adaptation does not necessarily relate to the inequity between the developed and less developed countries. Adaptation to climate change can be achieved to a large extent through building sustainable and spatially enabled land administration systems. Such integrated land administration systems should include the perspective of possible future climate change and any consequent natural disasters. One of the elements in achieving climate-resilient urban development and sustainable rural land use is the degree to which climate change adaptation and risk management are mainstreamed into two major components of land governance, namely: securing and safeguarding of land rights; and planning and control of land use. In this regard, responsible land governance should be underpinned by FFP land administration systems that include security of tenure rights as well as effective land-use planning and control (Mitchell et al., 2015).

4.4 Rapid Urbanisation

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Urbanisation is a major change that is taking place globally. The urban global tipping point was reached in 2007 when over half of the world's population was living in urban areas; around 3.3 billion people. It is estimated that a further 500 million people will be urbanised in the next five years and projections indicate that the percentage of the world's population urbanised by 2030 will be 60%. This incredibly rapid growth of megacities causes severe ecological, economical and social problems. It is increasingly difficult to manage this growth in a sustainable way. It is recognised that over 70% of the growth currently happens outside of the formal planning process and that 30% of urban populations in less developed countries is living in slums or informal settlements, i.e. where vacant state-owned or private land is occupied illegally and used for slum dwellings. In sub-Saharan Africa, 90% of all new urban settlements are taking the form of slums. These are especially vulnerable to climate change impacts as they are usually built on hazardous sites in high-risk locations. Even in developed countries unplanned or informal urban development is a major issue.

Urbanisation with the continuing concentration of economic activities in cities is inevitable and generally desirable. However, the increase in economic density needs to be balanced with environmental safeguarding through sustainable development policies and land policies for connecting megacities and their hinterlands to maximize the significant economic and social benefits across the region. Rapid urbanisation challenges the human right of access to land and shelter. It is recognized that over 70 per cent of the growth currently happens outside of the formal planning process and that 30 per cent of urban populations in developing countries are living in slums or informal settlements (UN-HABITAT, 2012). Sound land management, governance and administration are key measures to address these urban challenges.



Lagos, Nigeria is one the fastest growing cities in the world with slum areas expanding into the waters. © Stig Enemark, 2009

5. THE ROLE OF LAND PROFESSIONALS

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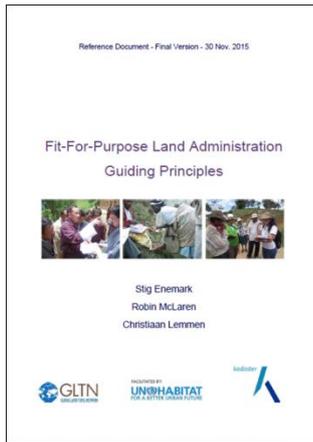
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Effective and democratised land governance is at the heart of delivering the global vision of our future laid out in the SDGs. However, the route to this vision is rapidly changing as a series of new environmental, economic and social challenges pervade and impact every aspect of our lives. Land Professionals have a vital role to play and we must understand and respond quickly to this on-going change. Our approaches and solutions across all facets of land governance and associated Land Administration Systems must be continually reviewed and adapted so that we can better manage and mitigate the negative consequences of change (FIG/WB, 2010).

Solutions to the overall global land issues relate to alleviation of poverty, social inclusion and stability, investments and economic development, and environmental protection and natural resource management. These land matters are now embedded in the SDGs and the land professionals are the custodians of the systems dealing with these land issues. The lawyers have a major role in land administration by setting the legal and regulatory frameworks and delivering land administration services in countries where the judicial system supports land registration. Land surveyors normally enjoy a monopoly on boundary determination within their countries, but in the majority of developing countries there are simply not sufficient surveyors to meet demand. For example, Uganda only had 38 licensed surveyors in 2012. Furthermore, valuers provide information and services to support property-based tax and also support the land market. The financial services sector provides mortgages and provides opportunities for investment opportunities in property. Planners are an integral part of land use and land development lifecycles.

Many developed countries have strong land institutions and laws that protect the citizens' relationship with land and provide land administration services to secure and often guarantee land rights. These services directly support land markets that underpin modern economies. In these countries, security of tenure is taken for granted. However, an often cited educated estimate indicates that for 70 per cent of the world's population this is not the case (McLaren, 2015). People are excluded from participating in formal land administration systems and cannot register and safeguard their land rights. The majority of these are the poor and the most vulnerable in society and without any level of security of tenure they constantly live in threat of eviction.

Most developing countries are struggling to find remedies for their many land problems that are causing land conflicts, reducing economic development and preventing their countries reaching their true potential. Existing investments in land administration and management solutions have been piecemeal and have not delivered the required changes and improvements at scale. The solutions have not helped the most needy; the poor and disadvantaged with no security of tenure. In fact the beneficiaries of this unsustainable management of land have been the rich, elite and organisations involved in land grabbing. Current solutions are not effective within developing countries and it is time to rethink the approaches. Solutions are required that can deliver security of tenure for all, can be quickly developed and are scalable.



Such a solution is offered by the recent publication on “Fit-For-Purpose (FFP) Land Administration – Guiding Principles (Enemark, et al., 2015). This Guide has outlined a pragmatic and realistic FFP approach for developing countries that can provide security of tenure for all across a country within a generation. This brave new thinking has evolved out of successful, innovative projects in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Kyrgyzstan, for example. Strong political leadership and land professionals willing to adopt serious change have underpinned these successful projects. The Guide presents the concept, provides the connected key principles and a generic set of guidelines to be applied in developing a country specific FFP strategy for land administration.

The hearts and minds of land professionals need to be turned to fully understand and embrace the FFP approach. This will require the benefits of such a move to be clearly articulated so that any perceived threats are dissipated. The FFP approach will create even greater demand for land professionals as security of tenure is provided for all and the need for services will increase significantly. For example, new services will be required to upgrade the evidence of land rights along the continuum of rights, to provide training and supervision of local land officers and to effectively manage and quality assure land information. This is a great opportunity for land professionals. Organisations such as FIG and their member associations need to actively promote the adoption of the FFP approach to land administration across their membership and enable experience and best practice to be shared across the land professionals.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

There is a general consensus that governing the people to land relationship is at the heart of the global agenda. Therefore, there is an urgent need to build simple and basic systems using a flexible and affordable approach to identify the way land is occupied and used by all whether these land rights are legal or locally legitimate. The systems need to be flexible in terms of the legal regulations as well as the institutional arrangements to meet the actual needs in society today. 70 per cent of the world’s population have no access to formal land administration systems and their rights are not secured.

When considering the resources and capacities required for building such systems and the connected basic spatial framework in developing countries, the conventional western style concepts may well be seen as the end target but not as the point of entry. During the assessment of technology and investment choices, the focus should be on a “fit-for-purpose approach” that will meet the needs of society today and can be incrementally improved over time (FIG/WB, 2014; Enemark, et al., 2015). Building such spatial, legal, and institutional frameworks will establish the link between people and land. This will enable the management and monitoring of improvements in meeting aims and objectives of adopted land policies as well as meeting the global agenda. Land professionals have a key to play in this regard.

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