

Latin America Land Administration Network – LALAN; current status and planed new activities

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SUMMARY

During the International Workshop Land Administration in Latin America and LADM+, 5-9 November 2018 in Quito Ecuador, organized by Universidad de las Fuerzas Armadas ESPE (ESPE University) Ecuador and Kadaster International together with Faculty ITC University of Twente from the Netherlands, Latin America Land Administration Network - LALAN was established. The objective of this network is to: perform activities that can support capacity development and sharing knowledge in both fit-for-purpose and responsible land administration within the Latin America Land Administration Network of education institutions. Networks of academic and higher education institutions are proven platforms for knowledge sharing and experiences in education exchange.

At the International Symposium on Land Administration in Bogota, Colombia, 11-12.10.2022 (<https://okpadministraciondetierras2022.org/>), LALAN members from two European and three Latin America countries had a meeting to discuss previous finished activities and planned new activities. This paper aims at elaboration more in details on the higher mention topics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an overview of activities undertaken and academic institutions involved in the process of establishment of Latin America Land Administration Network – LALAN. These activities were conducted in Quito, Ecuador, in the period 5 - 9 November 2018, during the International Workshop LALA LADM+. The International Workshop LALA LADM+ was organized by ESPE University Ecuador and the School for Land Administration Studies (SLAS). SLAS is a joint initiative between the Faculty of Geo-information Sciences and Earth Observations - ITC, University Twente and the Netherlands' Cadastre, Land Registry and Mapping Agency (Kadaster). SLAS is created with aim to build capacity in the land administration domain in developing and emerging economies, resulting in a reliable, practical and transparent land administration; both in academia and in the public sector. Organisers initiated this workshop and invited representatives from academia and governmental agencies from all Latin America countries. Seven countries from Latin America accepted the invitation and took active participation. Representatives from Guatemala (5), Colombia (3), Brazil (2), Suriname (1), Peru (3), Bolivia (1) and Ecuador (40-60). From Europe, Spain (with 1 representative) and the Netherlands (with 4 representatives), were present at the workshop. The idea about establishment of the LALAN was launched on the first workshop day. During the informal parts of the event (e.g. lunch breaks, dinners and coffee breaks), outside of the official workshop programme, the initial idea was further discussed with several participants that had additional ideas. After the positive welcome of the idea, last day preliminary objective and potential activities were presented. That was positively received by the audience and after the agreement was reached, LALAN was established. In addition, topic of the current status, LALAN Workshop executed in Bogote in October 2022 and planned new activities will be addressed at the end of this paper.

In the following chapter two, different capacity development concepts and activities for higher education are reviewed. In the chapter three the need for establishment of LALAN is elaborated. In the following chapter four, the network's objective and planned activities for the coming period are presented. The paper finally ends with drawing some conclusions about this exercise in chapter five.

2. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION

Capacity development is a key issue related to development policies and the sustainability of any measures of development. Since the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness¹ in 2005, many countries recognized that “the capacity to plan, manage, implement, and account for results of policies and programmes, is critical for achieving development objectives”. With the following Accra Agenda for Action² in 2008, they recognized that “without robust capacity – strong institutions, systems, and local expertise – developing countries cannot fully own and manage their development processes” and therefore they committed themselves to strengthen capacity development. The process of capacity development is in itself an endogenous process. In 2014, the GLTN capacity development strategy articulated the objectives in relation to capacity development and expressed the necessity to put together teams and build entities not only in the content and process of land tools, but also in local context and knowledge, training and learning practices.³ In this perspective, GLTN positions itself as a “catalyst, bridge builder and facilitator of the necessary linkages, methodologies and learning partnerships for action” and looks for partnerships with in-country organisations that “represent and articulate the contextual information, perspectives, experiences and positions on land. ‘Capacity development is one of the key issues for designers of land administration systems. Traditionally, capacity development focused on the short term by means of staff development through formal education and training programs to meet the lack of qualified personnel. But capacity development measures must be seen in the wider context of developing and maintaining institutional infrastructure in a sustainable way. Only then can capacity needs be met and adequate responses to the societal, organisational, and individual level be made.’ (Williamson, et. al., 2010).

Levels and dimensions of Capacity Development

Capacity Development relates to three levels: societal level, organisational level and individual level. These levels relate to their application of capacity in society and have been identified as follows:

- The broader system/societal level. The highest level within which capacity initiatives may be cast is the system or enabling environment level. For development initiatives that are national in context the system would cover the entire country or society and all subcomponents that are involved. For initiatives at a sectoral level, the system would include only those components that are relevant.
- The entity/organisational level. An entity may be a formal organisation such as government or one of its departments or agencies, a private sector operation, or an informal organisation such as a community based or volunteer organisation. At this level, successful methodologies examine all dimensions of capacity, including its interactions within the system, other entities, stakeholders, and clients.
- The group-of-people/individual level. This level addresses the need for individuals to function efficiently and effectively within the entity and within the broader system. Human Resource Development is about assessing the capacity needs and addressing the gaps through adequate measures of education and training (FIG, 2008).

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European Union (EU) continuously acknowledges the importance and the value of capacity development. There are funds available for this every consecutive year, and here a good examples are EU Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ (https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en). Joint projects for capacity development in Higher Education with three and more European, and three and more overseas partners are a network in itself.

For ITC, capacity development implies building capacity in domain-specific knowledge, skills and attitude at the individual and institutional/societal levels. ITC therefore aims to achieve both individual and collaborative capacity building. This development reflects what happens in modern societies with a strong private sector. Individual capacity development aims will be addressed through education (ITC, 2019). ITC has long experience in capacity development in both academic/education and public/governmental sectors. This done via Masters Programme, Postgraduate Diploma programme, Short Courses, Tailor Made Trainings and Refresher courses. In addition, in the last decade establishment of academic networks was proven as fruitful platform for knowledge and experience sharing in the level of academia and education. Examples are: UN-HABITAT Global Land Tool Network – GLTN (<https://gltm.net/>), Eastern Africa Land Administration Network – EALAN (<https://ealan-network.org/>), NEGLA etc.

Based on these experiences, where collaboration is a key factor in development, we came to idea to establish similar network in Latin America. The needs and ideas about that are presented in the following chapter three.

3. THE NEED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF LALAN

Based on experiences of SLAS actors involved, both ITC and Kadaster, believe and work together in establishment of network that could facilitate knowhow and knowledge sharing within established or potential new networks in land administration domain. Here we consider land administration as ‘the process of determining, recording and disseminating information about tenure, value and use of land when implementing land management policies’ (UN/ECE, 2005).

We used the opportunity of several present academic participants at our International Workshop LALA LADM+ to make an inventory about presence of the topic of land administration in the bachelor degree and master programmes in the countries/universities present at the workshop. The following representative’s actors from respective countries were consulted:

- ESPE University – Ecuador;
- Universidad de San Carlos De Guatemala;
- Universidad Distrital – Colombia;
- Universitat Politècnica de València – Spain;
- Universidade Estadual de Campinas - Brazil
- Universidad San Martin De Porres, Universidad Catolica San Pablo – Peru.

It was identified that land administration domain is taught only as a separate subject in some Bachelors programmes or in some master specializations, in Latin America countries. On the other hand, practice about performance of the public sector in regard of land administration was

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not as good as it could be, but all participants acknowledged that some international projects (e.g. World Bank funded projects or related donor projects) are active in most of Latin America region. A gap between a particular country land policy/strategy, operations, and academia in land administration is evident. Having said all this the need and justification of the LALAN was derived.

4. THE OBJECTIVE AND ACTIVITIES OF LALAN

After this initial thoughts and considerations next logical step was to articulate the objective of this network and initial planned activities. Those were presented during the closing ceremony of international workshop LALA LADM+. Here follows the objective of LALAN:

The objective of this network is to: perform activities that can support capacity development and sharing knowledge in both fit-for-purpose and responsible land administration within the Latin America Land Administration Network of education and research institutions.

In addition to the objective of LALAN the initial possible activities to be performed in the coming period were listed as follow:

- Articulation of the LALAN – Statement
- Network and secretariat (management, coordination, & assessment of the network activities)
- Short courses for Land Professionals in education (train the trainer approach)
- Education and Knowledge sharing (review of current curriculum in Land Administration with aim of update and improve)

The objective and the possible activities are considered as a good starting point and all present actors from academia and education institutions were optimistic for positive outcome from this network. It was also suggested for the future activates to invite other interested partners from other countries.

5. CURRENT STATUS AND PLANED NEW ACTIVITIES OF LALAN

In this section, firstly, the International Workshop and LALAN workshop from October 2022 will be discussed and then the new planned activities of LALAN for the coming period will be listed

2.1 Colombian experience

At the international symposium on Land Administration (LA) held in Bogotá (October 11-12, 2022), it was possible to appreciate the importance of transferring knowledge of land administration. Bogotá is, in a way, the center of academic knowledge in Colombia because 23 of the 75 higher education academic programs have some relationship with the LA, such as Cadastral Engineering and Geodesy, Topographic Engineering, Environmental Engineering, and Geography, among others. In comparison, Medellín offers seven academic programs, and in the city of Cali, only three academic programs (Grupo OKP-UD, 2019).

Therefore, Colombia has a knowledge gap in the territory because professionals and technicians are not spread across the country. The National Service of Learning (SENA), oriented to work

skills, also offers some training programs to accomplish the needs required by the government to meet the goals in the development of the multipurpose cadastre. Moreover, after the Peace agreement in 2016, rural development is a challenge nowadays, and LA is the most important tool to meet the governmental goals (Universidad Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas, 2022). Another issue is the disconnection between academia and the needs of public and private institutions. They require professionals and technicians with comprehensive training to face the challenges of having an updated and modern land administration system for the country. In the same way, the use of technology in cadastral processes has also been a bottleneck for professionals in charge of carrying out cadastral work in Colombia, taking into account that throughout the country, there are no academic programs that focus on the use of technology for this purpose (Grupo OKP-UD, 2019).

In this context, the Universidad Distrital, with the academic programs Cadastral Engineering and Geodesy and technology in Topographic Surveys, have been worked together within the framework of the Orange Knowledge Project – OKP Land for Peace, (ITC University of Twente & District University). The first goal was to generate a new academic curriculum that fits the country's current needs, with competencies that allow a multidisciplinary professional with a capacity for continuous learning. The second aim was to establish a research agenda to determine the path to follow in the relevant topics to support the institutions related to LA since processing geospatial technologies is the academic strength (Grupo OKP-UD, 2022). Certainly, it is important to emphasize that cooperation between countries will allow through the LALAN Network to share experiences and lessons learned to create the knowledge that is required between the countries of Latin America and in this way to generate synergies, where Colombia can contribute significantly due to the experience gained of the cooperation projects carried out with the University of Twente and Kadaster of the Netherlands.

2.2 Planned new activities of LALAN

In the coming period, and after the Covid19 pandemic is over, LALAN members had a list of activities that could be beneficial for all the members. In a summary these are activities performed so far within LALAN portfolio:

- Conference papers about LALAN
- Geospatial Symposium in Quito 2018
- Scientific paper in LAND special issue on FFP LA <https://www.mdpi.com/2073-445X/10/8/862>
- Quiet period of on-site activities/online FIG session 2021
- Invite and support participation of LALAN members like in this event
- 10 days On-line training in Ecuador (by end of 2022)

In the coming period LALAN network is expected to be more active. Within this period, we include the current chair of Commission 2 (2023-2026) as one of the members but also active members from the network, which we believe it will be beneficial. Next planned activity is an online meeting and small workshop on experience exchange on the current curricula's in Land

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Administration studies and activities within FIG Commission Working Group 2.1 on Developing and strengthening academic networks.

6. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, different capacity development concepts were reviewed. The need for establishment of LALAN is elaborated and the network's objective and planned activities for the coming period are presented. In conclusion, Latin America Land Administration Network - LALAN was established in 2018. From the experience from the performance and outcomes from other networks we can derive that this is a positive activity that could develop capacities at partner's side and increase knowledge on the creators/organisers side. This kind of networks also require a lot of coordination and communication activities, and good administration. The event in October in 2022 was continuation of the LALAN network activities and it is a good sign that the network will be active in the future with the planned new activities.

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