



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
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IMPROVING GOVERNANCE OF TENURE IN UNECE REGION: FAO/WORLD BANK/UNECE/EU JRC PARTNERSHIP

RUMYANA TONCHOVSKA, GULNARA ROLL, KATHRINE KELM

FAO of the UN, Rome, Italy, Rumyana.Tonchovska@fao.org

UNECE, Geneva, Gulnara.Roll@unece.org

The World Bank, Washington D.C, kkelm@worldbank.org

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Abstract

The “Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security”, endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security in May 2012, is the first comprehensive intergovernmental global instrument on tenure and its administration. Successful implementation of the Guidelines involves participation of all stakeholders (i.e. governments, civil society, private sector, universities and research institutes, international financial institutions, regional organizations, UN agencies, resource partners). This requires strengthened cooperation and partnerships between these various actors. FAO, UNECE, World Bank and EU Joint Research Center are joining efforts in support countries from the UNECE region to improve tenure governance.

Property Valuation and Taxation, State Property Management, Open Data and Building Spatial Data Infrastructure are areas, where most of the countries in the region are working. Learning from experience of more advanced countries facilitates and speed up the implementation process in the countries, which have recently started. Practical examples from several countries from the UNECE region, focused on the key achievements in improving governance of tenure of land, lessons learned and next priorities will be presented.

Key Words: Governance of Tenure, Voluntary Guidelines, Partnership



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I. BACKGROUND

The “Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security”, VG (www.fao.org/nr/tenure/en), which has been endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) on 11 May 2012, set out principles and internationally accepted standards for responsible practices and is the first comprehensive intergovernmental global instrument on tenure and its administration. They allow government authorities, the private sector, civil society and citizens to judge whether their proposed actions and the actions of others constitute acceptable practices. Successful implementation of the Guidelines involves participation of all stakeholders (i.e. governments, civil society, private sector, universities and research institutes, international financial institutions, regional organizations, UN agencies, resource partners). The implementation of the Guidelines has been supported in the Rio +20 Declaration and by the United Nations General Assembly, G20, G8, l’Assemblée parlementaire de la Francophonie, and the Berlin Summits of Agricultural Ministers.

FAO is supporting the implementation of the Guidelines through a program of awareness raising, capacity development, support to countries, development of partnerships, and monitoring. FAO is working with its partners to build up on the results achieved and to further streamline the Voluntary Guidelines implementation in the existing projects and in the design of the new projects.

After the endorsement of the Guidelines the **FAO** and the **World Bank** are working together to integrate the Voluntary Guidelines principals into the ongoing Bank financed Land Reform and Land Administration projects and into the design of the new projects. The predominant FAO and World Bank support behind the Land Administration reforms in Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region during the last decades was to rebuild the systems of secure real estate tenure by developing transparent and accessible systems of real estate registration and cadaster (over USD 1.4 billion in loans and grants). Currently the World Bank is financing 16 land administration projects in ECA for 645.32 MUSD and several more are in the pipeline.

Under the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe** (UNECE), the Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA) was established as an intergovernmental platform for cooperation on land administration and management. The WPLA is an effective mechanism for the exchange of best practices, capacity building for the land administration authorities in the UNECE 56 member States. The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing agreed by



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the intergovernmental UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management in October 2014 stresses the importance of the provision of secure land tenure as a basis for sustainable development of human settlements.

The **FAO, the World Bank and the UNECE** have been supporting the countries from the region to establish a Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism. Property Valuation and Taxation, State Property Management, Open Data and Building Spatial Data Infrastructure are areas, where most of the countries in the region are requesting further support.

Some of the above topics are closely related to the work of the European Union Joint Research Center (EU JRC), responsible for the technical implementation of the pan European Spatial Data Infrastructure. **FAO, the World Bank, UNECE and the EU JRC** have organized several joint events during the 2014 in support the non EU Member States to learn from the EU Member States experience on Open Data, Spatial Data Infrastructure, but also to share their experience and next priorities.

The UNECE, FAO, World Bank and EU JRC have agreed to develop a joint Annual Action Plans to ensure better synergy in the support activities. This paper provides an overview of the joint work already completed in 2014 and the plan for 2015.

Countries specific examples will be presented separately by countries from the UNECE region, which are at different stage of their land reforms: Denmark and the Netherlands, Ukraine, Turkey and Kirgizstan.

In other regions of the world, such as Africa, Western Asia and Latin America, multiple regional initiatives on land administration and management are ongoing and emerging as recognition of the need for the regional cooperation for sustainable use of the shared land resources and sustainable urban development. There are already a few examples of the **interregional exchange of experiences**. For instance, a delegation from Nicaragua paid a visit to Croatia and Macedonia in September 2014 and the delegations from Croatia and Macedonia will visit Nicaragua to spread the knowledge and learn about the ongoing reforms in Nicaragua. Such kind of initiatives will be encouraged by UNECE, the FAO, EU JRC and the World Bank as there are lots of lessons learned and good practices, from which other regions could benefit.



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ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



II. FAO, UNECE WORLD BANK, EU JRC JOINT ACTIVITIES IN 2014

1. AWARENES RAISING

Following the endorsement of the Voluntary Guidelines a series of ten regional workshops have been organised by the FAO and its partners that aim to raise awareness of the Guidelines. Two of those workshops have been organised in Easter Europe and Central Asia region – one in Kiev, Ukraine - 14 to 16 May, 2013 and the second one in Sofia, Bulgaria, from 29 to 31 October 2013. The objectives of the workshops were:

1. To present the Guidelines and other relevant regional initiatives;
2. To discuss and analyze the application of the Guidelines in both the national and regional context of governance of tenure;
3. To discuss and identify priority actions and ways forward to improve governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests; and
4. To join other existing initiatives to create networks at the national and regional level.

These meetings were the first step in building regional networks of professionals from the public and private sector, civil society organizations, academia and others to share information, experiences and knowledge on the governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests.

The workshops provided an opportunity to review existing initiatives, share information and learn from experiences. It served as leverage for multi-stakeholder dialogue in countries and in the region.

The Voluntary Guidelines has been presented in several other workshops and conferences in the UNECE region in 2014, some are listed below:

- World Bank Land and Poverty conference in Washington, March 2014
- EU 2014 INSPIRE conference in Alborg, June 2014 – Joint FAO and World Bank session on Technology Contribution to improve governance of tenure in Eastern Europe and Central Asia
- UNECE Workshop "The Socioeconomic Potential of Land Administration Services", Copenhagen, May 2014



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



- Joint UNECE/WPLA, World Bank and FAO workshop on "Benchmarking of land administration systems and implementation of Land Governance Assessment Frameworks (LGAF) in the UNECE region", Baku, November 2014
- Joint EU JRC, World Bank and FAO Workshop on Spatial Data Infrastructures and Open Data in Central and Eastern Europe in Belgrade, Serbia, November 2014

2. CAPACITY BUILDING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Several joint webinars have been organized in 2014 to share knowledge and best practices from the region. Those have been recorded and are available for use by other countries and regions:

- Using UAS for fast and low cost spatial data capturing – in English
- Gender and Land – FAO/WB/Landesa – in English
- Monitoring VG implementation at country level – in Russian and in English (sharing best practices from Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova) – participants from UNECE region and Africa

Joint Innovation projects:

1) Improving Governance of Land Tenure: Unmanned Aerial Systems improve development projects

The FAO Land Tenure team together with the World Bank Land team applied and was awarded a World Bank Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Region innovation grant to test the use of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) as a way to accelerate the production of fit-for-purpose spatial data, thereby allowing local and national government and the private sector to use the up-to-date and accurate data for multiple purposes. The pilot was conducted in several locations in Albania in December, 2013.

The results and analysis of using UAS are available in:

- A paper “Drones for Peace” at the 2014 World Bank Land and Poverty conference – *use the link below*;
- Recorded Webinar: The use of drones. Experience in Albania and the trends in the new technology – *use the link below*;



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY

WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



- Video for decision makers and project managers – *use the link below*;
- Video for potential UAS operators, such as private surveyors, local municipalities or other technical staff – *use the link below*;
- Video with a general Overview of the innovation UAS project in Albania: This video presents the project and key benefits – *use the link below*;
- Article “Albania uses UAS for development projectsin”, Geospatial World magazine – *use the link below*;
- The Voluntary Guidelines Newsletter, September 2014, provides the links to all available materials:

<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/whats-new/september-2014-newsletter/it/>

The basic methodology applied in the innovation project will result in improved supply of high quality spatial information to all stakeholders in the fields of infrastructural design, urban and rural planning, resettlement action plans (RAP), civil contract management, cadastral surveying and property registration, environmental impact assessments, natural resource monitoring and disaster risk mitigation to name but a few. We are continuing the work in Albania and there is a request from some countries in Africa to use the methodology.

2) Land and Gender: Improving data availability and use in the Western Balkans

A joint FAO and World Bank initiative aim at helping countries to integrate the Voluntary Guidelines principles on gender equality into the Bank financed land administration projects in six Western Balkans countries: Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The experience shows that even though the Government institutions are generating inordinate amounts of data, these are not used to inform policy making (and in some cases even lost irrevocably) because the institutions involved lack capacity and manpower to properly process and link them between subsectors and over time. Multi-stakeholder teams from the participating countries that consist of land administration specialists, government policy makers, gender officers, local NGOs, notaries have been established in 2013 to support the process of improvement of gender equality and social inclusion in property rights. The country teams identified the reform areas, target groups, stakeholders, and developed action plans for the first 11 months period and after that to



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



prepare a longer term plans to scale up the successful activities at national level. Several useful capacity building materials have been produced:

- A leaflet describing the program in the Western Balkans has been prepared and available online with links to the available articles and gender disaggregated reports from all six countries:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/nr/land_tenure/E_LandAndGender_Leaflet_Web.pdf

- A documentary video “Understanding customs and peoples’ lives Land and gender in the Western Balkans” has been launched during the UN General Assembly side-event by FAO and the World Bank on 23 September 2014: <http://www.fao.org/news/audio-video/detail-video/en/?uid=10740>
- 15 interview clips with all six teams, the Bank and the FAO are posted on the youtube:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcFASiXODBVHFS3EzVgFSneiwtbAs5Ghx>
 - All materials could be accessed through the Voluntary Guidelines Newsletter – September 2014: <http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/whats-new/september-2014-newsletter/it/>.

3) Spatial Data Infrastructure and Open Data in Central and Eastern Europe

A joint workshop on Spatial Data Infrastructure (SDI) and Open Data in Central and Eastern Europe, organized by the Directorate General Joint Research Centre (DG JRC) of the European Commission, World Bank, FAO and the Republic Geodetic Authority of Serbia, brought together leading experts within these fields to discuss how to explore synergies and find means to establish joint actions on interoperability and open data related matters. The workshop was held in Belgrade on 4 November 2014. Good practices ranging from regional to national and international scales were presented. While countries from the region have the basic systems to produce, maintain and share data, there are further requests for support in building their national SDIs, provide new e-services and improve data quality. The discussions outlined possible avenues for more active cooperation of all stakeholders and



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



exchanges of experiences in the future. A plan for joint activities in 2015 was prepared as part of the workshop conclusion. More information could be found here:

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/event/workshop/open-data-spatial-data-infrastructures-central-eastern-europe>.

4) MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Section 26 of the Guidelines calls on States for the implementation and encourages them to set up multi-stakeholder platforms and frameworks at local, national and regional levels or use such existing platforms and frameworks. This process should be inclusive, participatory, gender sensitive, implementable, cost effective and sustainable.

In November 2014 a workshop on benchmarking land administration systems and the implementation of the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF) in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) has been organized. The event took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, and was hosted by UNECE's Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA), the World Bank, the State Committee on Property Issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan and FAO. UNECE WPLA has recently published a study of land administration systems in countries of the UNECE region, including information on the efficiency of their services, the security of their data and their ability to recover data and services in the event of a disaster. The study allows for the sharing of experiences in different countries in the region on establishing and managing land administration systems. In addition, results and lessons learned from the completed LGAF in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine were presented and the next priorities within this field were shared.

[Link to workshop](#) - [Link to study](#)

One of the tools currently practiced for identifying current status of governance in the country is the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF), which was developed by a consortium of interested bodies (including FAO) and is led by the World Bank. The LGAF has been piloted in 30 countries and is now being used increasingly widely in countries around the world.

In order to identify the best mechanism for promoting the Guidelines implementation FAO developed a methodology for collecting the information from the results of the existing land governance assessment tools, in order to assess their usefulness and completeness in the



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



context of the requirements for the Guidelines implementation. The methodology has been tested with the LGAF results in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Philippines.

The **FAO, the World Bank and the UNECE** have organised two webinars in 2014 (one in Russian language and one in English language) with practical examples from Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine. The recorded sessions and the articles are available here: <http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/whats-new/july-2014-newsletter/en/>

5) INTERREGIONAL EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES

There are already a few examples of the **interregional exchange of experiences**. For instance, a delegation from Nicaragua paid a visit to Croatia and Macedonia in September 2014 and the delegations from Croatia and Macedonia will visit Nicaragua to spread the knowledge and learn about the ongoing reforms in Nicaragua. Such kind of initiatives will be encouraged by UNECE, the FAO, EU JRC and the World Bank as there are lots of lessons learned and good practices, from which other regions could benefit. **In other regions of the world, such as Africa, Western Asia and Latin America**, multiple regional initiatives on land administration and management are ongoing and emerging as recognition of the need for the regional cooperation for sustainable use of the shared land resources and sustainable urban development.

III. FUTURE AREAS OF FAO, UNECE WORLD BANK, EU JRC JOINT SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES FROM UNECE REGION

The UNECE, FAO, World Bank and EU JRC have agreed to focusing on the following type of joint activities:

- Promoting awareness among all stakeholders of the need for development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive and inter-sectoral land policies for improvement of governance of tenure in line with the principles of the Guidelines;
- Promoting regional, sub-regional and national networks of stakeholders in the fields of governance of tenure, and liaising and collaborating with other stakeholders;
- Mainstreaming land policies and governance of tenure in the strategies and programs of the institutions at headquarters, regional, sub-regional and national levels;



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



- Engaging in joint programming, activities and collaboration in regards to capacity building and promotion and enhancement of sustainable and effective land policies;
- Providing support to member countries and RECs to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate sustainable and effective land policies and improving governance of tenure in line with the Guidelines;
- Identifying, documenting and disseminating successful and innovative experiences and good practices as well as contributing to multi-disciplinary research on such experiences and practices;
- Promoting the monitoring and evaluation of land policies and governance of tenure.

IV. FINAL REMARKS

Voluntary Guidelines paragraph 7. *Promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation* encourage the international organisations to work together and provide support to the efforts of the States to implement these guidelines and define their roles:

“Development partners, specialized agencies of the United Nations, and regional organizations are encouraged to support voluntary efforts by States to implement these Guidelines, including through South-South cooperation. Such support could include technical cooperation, financial assistance, institutional capacity development, knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences, assistance in developing national tenure policies and transfer of technology.”

Voluntary Guidelines, part 7. Promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, para 26.3

“In accordance with the voluntary nature of these Guidelines, States have the responsibility for their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. States are encouraged to set up multi-stakeholder platforms and frameworks at local, national and regional levels or use such existing platforms and frameworks to collaborate on the implementation of these Guidelines; to monitor and evaluate the implementation in their jurisdictions; and to evaluate the impact on improved governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests, and on improving food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, and sustainable development. This process should be inclusive, participatory, gender sensitive,



Linking Land Tenure and Use for Shared Prosperity

ANNUAL WORLD BANK CONFERENCE ON LAND AND POVERTY
WASHINGTON DC, MARCH 23-27, 2015



implementable, cost effective and sustainable. In carrying out these tasks, States may seek technical support from regional and international bodies.”

Voluntary Guidelines, part 7. Promotion, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, para 26.2