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The status of FAO support to land consolidation in Europe and Central Asia

*10th International LANDNET workshop
Regional Consultation on Land Consolidation Legislation
19-21 June 2018*

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Early FAO support to member countries on land consolidation

- After it was founded in 1945, FAO had started to support member countries addressing land fragmentation and small holding sizes through development of land consolidation instruments.
- During the 1950s and 60s, FAO supported through TA land consolidation in countries such as Turkey, Greece, Spain and Cyprus but also in countries in the Near East and Asia.
- Seminars with experts from member countries were organized through the Working Party on Consolidation of Holdings.



Early FAO support

- During the second half of the 1950s, a study was conducted on best practice on land consolidation in Europe.
- In 1955, FAO concluded that
“Excessive fragmentation or uneconomically small holdings may prevent the farmer from using his time to best advantage or adopting modern means of production, e.g. mechanization”.



Land fragmentation and small farms - a side-effect of land reform in most CEE countries

- Land reforms were conducted from the early 1990s and onwards in most countries in Central and Eastern Europe, either through *restitution* or *distribution*.
- In most countries land reforms completely changed the farm structures that existed during the socialist era and resulted in land fragmentation and small farm sizes.
- In several CEE countries the average farm sizes are 1–3 ha and often distributed into 3–7 land parcels.

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Current level of land fragmentation in FAO programme countries in Europe and Central Asia

Country	Level of fragmentation of ownership in agricultural land	Level of fragmentation of land use in agricultural land
Albania	High	High
Armenia	High	High
Azerbaijan	High	High
Belarus	Low	Low
Bosnia-Herzegovina	High	High
FYR Macedonia	High	High
Georgia	High	High
Kazakhstan	Low	Low
Kosovo*	High	High
Kyrgyzstan	Low	Low
Moldova	High	Medium-high
Montenegro	High	High
Serbia	High	High
Tajikistan	Low	Low
Turkey	High	High
Turkmenistan	Low	Low
Ukraine	Low-medium	Low
Uzbekistan	Low	Low

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

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The need to address land fragmentation and small farm sizes has been recognized in several CEE countries

- In the late 1990s, land fragmentation and land consolidation re-appeared on the agenda.
- FAO began to document and address the problems.
- The Munich Symposium in 2002 was a milestone and the first of so far 19 regional workshops held on land consolidation, land banking, land market development and related topics.



Five minimum requirements for having an operational land consolidation programme

1. Land consolidation is embedded in the overall land policy.
2. Legal framework for land consolidation has been adopted.
3. Public lead agency for land consolidation has been established and delegated the task to manage the programme.
4. Secured funding on an annual basis.
5. Technical and administrative capacity has been developed for both field work and to manage programme.



Status for the development of land consolidation programmes in Europe and Central Asia (as of June 2018)



Countries with ongoing national land consolidation programme	Countries where land consolidation is introduced but not yet with a national programme	Countries with little or no experiences in land consolidation
Poland	Estonia	Montenegro
Eastern Germany	Latvia	Georgia
Czech Republic	Hungary	Russian Federation
Slovakia	Romania	Belarus
Slovenia	Bulgaria	Kyrgyzstan
Lithuania	Croatia	Tajikistan
Serbia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kazakhstan
FYR Macedonia	Kosovo*	Turkmenistan
Turkey	Albania	Uzbekistan
	Moldova	
	Ukraine	
	Armenia	
	Azerbaijan	

FAO has supported land consolidation in countries in bold

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FAO Regional Initiative on smallholders and family farms

- Small farms are usually suffering at the same time from a wide range of needs, constraints and challenges.
- Support to smallholders and family farms is one of four regional priorities of FAO.
- The two components of the FAO Regional Initiative on smallholders and family farms:
 1. *Support policy development and innovative practices for increased sustainable agricultural production*
 2. *Support improvement of rural livelihood and enhanced access to natural resources*

FAO land tenure work in ECA including support to land consolidation is a strong component in the Regional Initiative.

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Three pillars of the FAO regional programme on land consolidation

1. Technical guidelines
2. Field projects in FAO programme countries
3. LANDNET – the informal network of land tenure professionals interested in land consolidation, land banking, land market development etc.



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FAO experiences on land consolidation in ECA 2000-2018 (A)

- Field projects implemented in so far 10 countries
- Often projects with three components (Armenia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Azerbaijan):
 - Drafting of National Land Consolidation Strategy
 - Pilot project using existing legislation
 - Training and capacity building
- Support to LC strategy in Lithuania and Moldova
- Land consolidation methodology in Kosovo
- Land Consolidation legislation in Ukraine
- Ongoing MAINLAND project in FYR Macedonia

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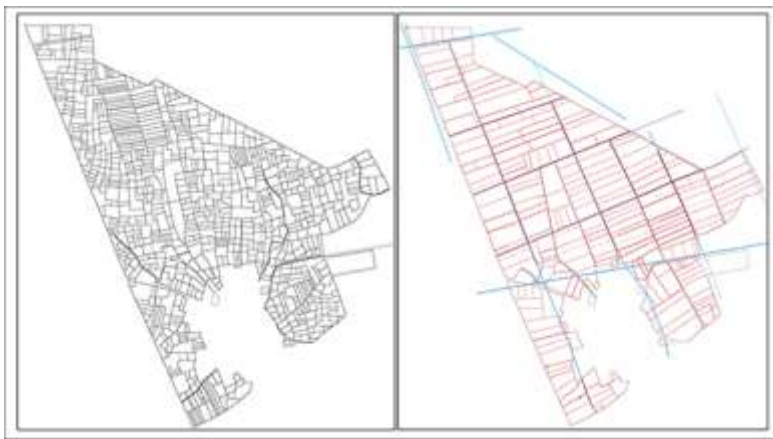
FAO experiences on land consolidation in ECA 2000-2018 (B)

- Introduce land consolidation instruments in support of the development of the normal land markets.
- Implementation of land consolidation can support the development of weak agricultural land markets.
- It is recommended to empower the decision making bodies approving the re-allotment plan also to take decisions on solving land registration problems or land consolidation will be blocked.
- Choose land consolidation approach depending on situation in project area: *majority-based* or *voluntary integrated land consolidation*.
- Strong need to integrate the land consolidation work with broader support to local community development.
- To be fully in line with VGGT.

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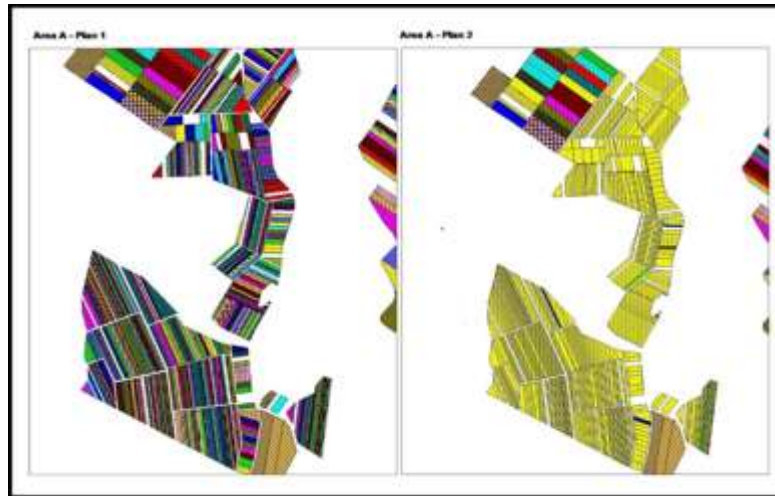
Majority-based FAO land consolidation pilot project in Egri village in FYR Macedonia (2017)



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Voluntary land consolidation pilot project in Moldova (2008)



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The way forward (1/2)

- The adoption in 2015 of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals with 17 goals and 169 associated targets requires a more programmatic and integrated approach.
- LC projects are often hampered by low land mobility but still land banks have so far largely failed in CEE.
- Development and adoption of solid and operational land consolidation legislation is in all countries a corner stone but has proven to be difficult to do right in the first attempt.
- FAO is in 2018 finalizing a regional study on land consolidation legislation to identify best practice and provide generic guidance on the drafting of land consolidation legislation (to be published before the end of the year).

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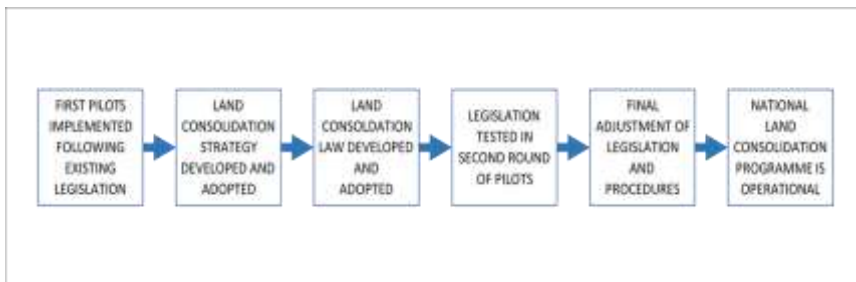


The way forward (2/2)

- There is a general need to mainstream and accelerate development of operational land consolidation programmes in many countries.
- Need for enhanced regional cooperation and exchange of experiences between countries (LANDNET provides strong platform for further development).
- Land consolidation is by nature a multi-functional tool.
- Most CEE countries focus LC instruments exclusively on agricultural development and it is about time to learn from experiences in Western Europe and begin to use LC also for climate change adaptation, nature restoration, acquisition of land for large-scale infrastructure projects etc.



The optimal process from introduction of land consolidation to an operational programme



It is often a long and not straightforward process to develop a fully operational national land consolidation programme.



Thank you very much!

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FAO Regional Initiative on Empowering Smallholders and Family Farms:
<http://www.fao.org/europe/regional-initiatives/smallholders-family-farms/en/>

Proceedings from LANDNET workshops 2002 – 2018:
<http://www.fao.org/europe/resources/land-tenure-workshops/en/>

VGGT and Governance of Tenure:
<http://www.fao.org/nr/tenure/en/>