LAND TENURE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND WAY FORWARD

Workshop on Land Administration and Management
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OUTLINE

• The Global Land Tool Network
• The Regional Land Tenure Initiative
• Key Findings of the Scoping Research
  • Key Challenges
  • Key Opportunities
• Way Forward/Conclusion
GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK

Core Values:
- Pro-poor
- Governance
- Equity
- Subsidiarity
- Affordability
- Systematic large scale approach
- Gender sensitiveness
- Sustainability

- Coalition of 70 international partners
- Focuses on tenure security
- Promotes good land governance and continuum of land rights
- Works in both urban and rural areas
- Moving towards regional/country level engagement

GLOBAL LAND CHALLENGES

Conventional land systems cannot deliver tenure security at scale:
- Limited coverage (30% globally, some countries like Nigeria 3%)
- Complexity of land rights, claims and records (e.g. customary, statutory, informal - Liberia)
- Systemic inequalities (e.g. women’s limited access/control over land, youth not addressed)
- Rapid urbanization is increasing pressure on land (e.g. urban sprawl 175% by 2030)
- Food security and pressures on agricultural land (need 70% increase in food production by 2050)
- Large scale land investment (78% in agriculture but majority in non-food corps)
GLTN, as facilitated by UN-Habitat, was established to address these challenges

“Securing Land and Property Rights for All”

THE ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

• Covering 30% of total land mass
  ➢ Stretching from Turkey to Kiribati and from Russia to New Zealand
• Home to 2/3 of world's population
• Increasing level of urbanization
  ➢ 2011: 13 of world’s 23 megacities
  ➢ 2025: 7 of world’s 10 largest cities
• About 80% farming households are small scale farmers
• Key challenges:
  ➢ Economic transformation with growing inequality
  ➢ Vulnerability, risk exposures
  ➢ Environmental degradation & declining quality of growth
THE REGIONAL INITIATIVE

Regional Land Tenure Initiative in the Asia-Pacific

- Initiated by UN-Habitat, GLTN, UNESCAP, FIG, RMIT and other partners in late 2013

- Initial Objectives:
  - Provide consultation platform for Asia and the Pacific
  - Further knowledge and discussion on regional entry points for land tenure interventions
  - Increasing interest (and engagement) by partners

KEY FINDINGS OF THE SCOPING RESEARCH

- Securing the Right to Land
- Land Administration: National vs. Regional Challenges
- Land Reform Monitoring in Asia
- CSQ and Land Governance in Asia

FACILITATED BY: UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE
KEY CHALLENGES

ISSUE 1: CHANGING RURAL POPULATIONS AND ACCESS TO LAND

- 80% of farming households are smallholders who are ageing and increasingly women
- Previous land reforms led to unequal land distribution, fragmentation and duality of tenure systems
- Rural poverty highest in rural landless, marginal farmers, tenants, IPs, IDPs, and ethnic minorities
- Large scale land acquisitions – forest dwellers, IPs
- Many programmes such as REDD+ minus tenure security

ISSUE 2: WOMEN’S TENURE SECURITY AND ACCESS TO LAND AND RESOURCES

- Most formal records in men’s name, or joint
- Women’s ability to inherit property is restricted in many countries across the region
- Often not involved in dialogue
- Largest marginalised group
OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES

ISSUE 3: URBAN GROWTH AND TENURE INSECURITY

• Informal land occupation and informal land markets
• Constant threat of eviction, and land grabbing
• Inability to control the location & spread of informal settlements (land use planning)
• Settlement in areas of high hazard-risk
• Western land use planning approaches ineffective

KEY CHALLENGES

ISSUE 4: TENURE INSECURITY OF INDIGENOUSPEOPLES

• Dispossession - risk of eviction, lost of livelihoods, and pressure to assimilate
• Large scale land-based development projects – history of land acquisitions or concessions that undermine IPs tenure rights
• Climate change – changes in livelihoods, food security, resettlement
ISSUE 5: THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL DISASTER ON TENURE SECURITY

- Informal development on hazard-prone land
- Places greater pressure on rural landless and IDPs
- REDD potential due to large forest areas. Tenure security concerns.
- Disaster risk not adequately integrated into planning

ISSUE 6: ISLAMIC LAND TENURE SECURITY ISSUES

- Lack of rights for women to hold, use, inherit and sell property in practice
- Youth, children’s access to land - assumed family will provide
- Marginalised groups, migrants, and IDPs - at risk of losing their land rights
- Islamic inheritance laws - uneconomical subdivisions & excessive land fragmentation
KEY CHALLENGES

ISSUE 7: LAND ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

• Main land administration issues raised:
  • Quality of land records – paper-based, inaccurate, out-of-date,
  • Limited coverage – most without formal records.
  • Uncertain demarcation - informal tenures and public land.

• Problems with policy and legal frameworks:
  • Formal tenures only – only serves the elite.
  • Don’t adequately protect the tenure rights of the vulnerable – poor, women, elderly, children, IPs, IDPs, ethnic minorities.
  • Limited recognition of cultural norms - customary & religious land principles

• Land valuation records very limited.

ISSUE 8: CROSS CUTTING ISSUES

• The urban-rural divide
• Capacity limitations across all organisations particularly public sector
• Many of the issues above lead to disputes – improved resolution mechanisms needed
• Technology drives policy and practice – the need for Fit-For-Purpose Land Administration and Continuum of Land Rights Approach
KEY BARRIERS

• Capacity limitations in government agencies
  • Inadequate capacity in local land institutions across the region.
  • How do we have sustainability of projects?
• Disconnection between development, climate change, land use planning and the land sector.
• Lack of understanding of the role of private sector
  • Huge economic growth in the region - many drivers.
  • How can this lead to improved tenure security?
• The large number of people outside formal land administration systems
  • More than 70% of people without formal recognition of tenure.
  • How do we bring them into the formal land administration system AT SCALE?

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

• Land is in the global discourse; global conventions/frameworks exist (e.g. SDGs, VGGT, LGAF, GLTN, Land Watch, etc.)
• Existing platforms, forums and partnerships at regional and sub-regional level
• Existing land programmes and initiatives in the region – where lessons can be learned
• Vibrant academic and civil society organizations
• Capacity development will allow for more sustainable changes
KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- Fit-for-purpose through spatial innovations
- Low-cost recording of land rights for informal tenures
- Complete spatial frameworks
- Digitisation of land records
- Mobile access to land records
- Alternative dispute resolution
- Valuation of non-formal lands
- Key pro-poor land tools exist and are ready for implementation at country level

WAY FORWARD

- Multi-stakeholder dialogues and meetings (also at country level)
- Establishment of a Regional Forum including a Secretariat
- In-depth and context specific studies and research (e.g. climate change)
- Capacity development initiatives (e.g. education, organizing groups).
- Implement measures to improve land records (digitalization) where appropriate.
- Knowledge sharing (e.g. web portal, good practices, learning exchanges)
- Advocacy and awareness building
- Monitoring and evaluation
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