FIG WORKING WEEK 2017

Helsinki Finland

29 May - 2 June 2017

Surveying the world of tomorrow –
From digitalisation to augmented reality

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Plenary Session 2: Professional Behavior – In a Digitalized World

How Can We Favor Secure Land Rights For The Digitalized World We Want?

Remarks by: Dr. Jolyne Sanjak, Chief Program Officer, Landesa. May 31, 2017 Helsinki

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Three Aspects of Professional Behavior to Consider:

1. **Accountability** to global 'social responsibility' standards for land rights

2. **Intentionality** for better alignment of policy/practice innovation and technological innovations across land administration investment areas

3. **Flexibility** to harness innovation for delivery at scale.

Professional Behavior 1: Be Accountable to Standards

What Standards are We Accountable To?

- **The 2030 Agenda (2015)**– bold call to achieve secure tenure rights **for all women and men** in target 1.4.2

- **"Fit-for-Purpose" Declaration (2014): from tech-driven choices to tech enabled progress; LADM** and **STDM**

- **The VGGT (2012)** - FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of the Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries; **The African Union Framework and Guiding Principles on Land Policy (2009)**

- **Citizen, businesses and industry (demand enabled by data and technology!)**

Professional Behavior 2: Intentionality for Better Alignment of Policy/Practice Innovations with Technology Innovations

Documentation of the status of land tenure and real property rights.

Establishment or improvement of **spatial data and related infrastructure** to allow adequate capture of physical attributes of land parcels

Land Administration Investment Areas

A land information system (e.g., hardware and software) for archiving digital records, for automated processing of information requests, and changes to information

Services that rely on the registry or cadastre (e.g., registration of changes, verification of rights, planning, taxation and valuation).

Policy/practice Innovations: Newer Ideas and Methods

- Recognition of the continuum of tenure
- Citizen and community engagement/empowerment as providers, users, and/or custodians of land rights information
- Non-governmental service provision (private firms, social enterprise, community resource persons (para-professionals))
- Gender responsive solution designs

Gender-Responsive Solutions and Technology: Some Considerations

- **What data the technology is capturing is particularly important in regard to women's land tenure security (monitoring data, LIS);**
  - software configuration (STDM vs LADM, digital forms)
  - relation to unchanged government procedures

- **Capacity to use technology and bias in technical education, training and access to equipment**

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Two Examples from India: The Potential of Innovation for Scalable Secure Tenure

- In each example, Landesa partners with state and district government in Telangana State to improve tenure security for families living in extreme poverty

  - ✓ In both examples, technology innovations are twinned with policy or practice innovations that favor tenure security

  - ✓ What was done is scalable and low cost

Example 1: On-line process for Titling and Registration Reaches Families Living in Poverty

- In 2016, **a government policy change enabled more than one million small holder farmers in Telangana to register their parcels and obtain titles without a fee --** saving very poor families an aggregate of 10 billion rupees or $148 million USD.

- **The entire registration process was done online, and for the first time the revenue department used biometric authentication.**
  - The online access to the registration process allowed people to respond to the policy change in real time with added fraud prevention.

- **Nearly 1.2 million people applied**, clearing the way for government recognition of their land rights. Through the action of the state government, these farmers will now receive patta, or legal title, to the land they have purchased.

Example 2: low cost, community-based records updation

In Warangal District, Landesa collaborated with local officials, trained para-legals and local youth to pilot an approach to identifying and resolving issues with land records:

- ✓ In 6 villages, trained local youth (community resource persons) and paralegals walked the villages and gathered information about land rights
- ✓ This information was compared to the official land records
- ✓ Among villages, 45- 90% of the land parcels had incongruence between the on-the-ground reality and the land records on the books
- ✓ In 3 of the 6 villages, all records are now updated and families have new Patta documents (titles)

Example 2 continued: add technology innovations to the mix:

- Recently, Telangana State made all property records available online

- In September 2016, Cadasta staff spent **one week** in with the Landesa team in Telangana. An open source mobile application (GeoODK) was configured for data collection based on the existing paper forms, approximately 27 Landesa staff members were trained in its use, and data collection exercises were conducted in four communities. Digital land records were downloaded for comparison to data collected in the field.

- **Improved efficiency** (single visit for data collection and entry in field), **reduced errors** in transcribing information from paper to digital format for analysis, **additional evidence** (photos of documents and fields), paper sketches substituted with GPS-based digital boundary measures.

Our forward thinking about this example:

- "If this is scaled across Telangana - in 1 year land records can be updated in all 10800 villages and at least 10 lakh families will get land records kits …This model has potential for scaling across the nation under DILRMP." Sunil Kumar, Sr. Land Policy Advisor, Landesa

- With the addition of the technology applications, beyond lowering the already low cost and reducing the time it will take, integrating the updated records into digitalized land records system, which is underway, will be even easier – the data are interoperable. (perspective shared by Frank Pichel, Cadasta Foundation)

- Without community engaged records updation, digitalization will not be inclusive and the benefits of it will not have the full reach. (my view)

Professional Behavior 3: Flexibility for Delivery at Scale:

- Adopt a fit-for-purpose mindset to investment in each area of land administration so that results are sustainable and scaling is affordable

- Breakdown barriers and silos:
  - Enable connections between the bottom up with the top down
    - e.g., by enabling para-surveyors or community resource persons to generate data for land rights documentation and records updation
  - Distributed path to scaling results – reaching scale by aggregation of many local tech enabled and tech inter-connected efforts?

- Be gender responsive (not just gender neutral)

Concluding Thoughts: Bringing our Professional Behaviors to Bear on the Challenge of Inclusion via Secure Tenure

Target: By 2030, ensure that **all** men and women …

Indicator 1.4.2: Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure

- ✓ The world we want – the world of tomorrow is digital and calls for delivering inclusive land administration at scale

- ✓ The statistics on tenure security and formality have barely changed since I first started working on land titling projects in the late 1980's

    - Today, it is estimated that more than 1 billion people lack secure rights

    - In many countries, the rights to the majority of parcels remain undocumented

- ✓ The stakes are getting higher as development accelerates with innovative technologies paving the way, e.g.,:

- higher tech land registry and cadastre systems risk being less sustainable and less reliable given the continued incongruence between the books and the ground reality

- improving access to credit using block chain … in a world where the majority have undocumented land rights…how far will the impacts be felt?

- large-scale land based investment gone awry, aka “land grabbing,” happens in the void of complete land records and other land governance gaps – digitalizing without updating data for all won’t help close the pockets of opportunity for misinformed decisions

Optimism: Practice and Technology Innovations Converging

Continued mindset shifts will unleash the real power of technology to drive bigger and better results:

- **Inclusive**
- **Transparent**
- **Affordable**
- **Efficient**
- **Reliable**

Secure
Sustained
Scaled

& these are the standards for socially responsible investment in land administration – see VGGT!

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