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Framework for Effective Land Administration

United Nations Secretariat for Global Geospatial Information Management
Statistics Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Land in sustainable development

Determine, Record, and Recognize land and property rights
Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA)

Vision Statement
Recognize people-to-land relationships in all forms for the wellbeing of people, planet, prosperity and peace.

Mission
To provide leadership, coordination and internationally recognized standards and support responsible innovation and partnerships for effective land administration to deliver solutions for sustainable social, economic and environmental development.
Goals and Requirements

**Goals**
- Transparency and accountability increased
- Gender and vulnerable group sensitive
- Affordable investments and economic returns assured
- Reliable data and service quality obtained
- Responsible innovation oriented

**Requirements**
- Accountable and transparent governance
- Inclusive and recognize all forms of tenure
- Affordable with sustainable business models
- Data maintained, secure and easily accessible
- Upgradable systems and approaches
- Interoperability and integration supported
- Consider internationally agreed standards
- Cooperation, partnerships, and participation leveraged
- Strengthen partnerships and supports collaboration
- Capacity, capability and knowledge transfer obtained
- Facilitates capacity development and knowledge transfer
- Natural engagement and contextualization enhanced
- Advocates for land administration and management

Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA)

The overarching goal is to support global policy convergence in land administration – with a view to guiding policy development and policy operationalization in Member States according to the IGIF. Effective land administration caters to all people, and must:

- Accelerate the proportion of population with tenure security;
- Develop confidence and trust, promote security, safety, peace and peace building;
- Promote efficient and vibrant land market taking into consideration aspects of land values and land development;
- Allow economic development through revenue systems that are equitable and fair;
- Contribute to smart and resilient societies;
- Cater to all circumstances, situations and people – in times of peace and prosperity, in times of stress and hardship (disaster and conflicts, migration and human displacement, poverty, food and water scarcity);
- Promote and respect the inherent rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories and resources and recognize traditions, customs and customary tenures; and
- Promote preparedness, resilience (with increasing climate vulnerabilities), sustainable consumption and strong institutions.
Nine Pathways of the Framework for Effective Land Administration

The nine strategic pathways of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) guide FELA. In this regard, the main areas of influence of the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework equally apply: governance, technology, and people. The strategic pathways are intended to guide the implementation of FELA, support the IGIF implementation more broadly, and ultimately deliver towards the achievement of the SDGs and sustainable development.

All nine pathways are linked and necessarily overlap, however, for the purpose of FELA and in accordance to the IGIF they are dealt with independently. Linkages between the nine pathways are highlighted where appropriate.

Governance, Institutions and Accountability

Land administration is a societal activity both shaping and shaped by governance, institutions, and accountability. Broadly speaking, the entirety of the SDGs focuses on the enhancement and reform of governance, institutions and associated accountabilities. IGIF identifies the themes as a standalone strategic pathway, and calls for the articulation of clear governance models, leadership, institutional structures, and a clear value proposition. These are intended as a means to strengthen multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral participation, and a commitment to achieve an Integrated Geospatial Information Management.

FELA accepts plurality in terms of available land governance approaches, including market-based, networked, and more conventional hierarchical/institutional approaches - provided there is adherence to good governance principles. On this, increasingly networked approaches are seen to enhance multi-lateral, multi-sectoral, and multi-disciplinary collaboration – with inclusivity and transparency further supported.
Legal and Policy

Land administration often finds its basis in land law and policy, and IGIF explicitly highlights the requirements for the establishment of robust legal and policy frameworks relating to geospatial information. These are considered essential for enabling the availability, accessibility, exchange, application and management of geospatial information.

Land administration systems conventionally find mandate within national or state land laws, and more recently land policy frameworks. Systems have often developed with supportive policies, legislation, safeguards, accountability mechanisms, and protections around data and privacy. This strong legal backing often differentiates land data from other types of geospatial information, where laws and directives have called for prescribed collection, ordering, and storage methods. That said, it is important to recognize the dualist and pluralist nature of land administration systems, particularly in developing contexts, where parallel systems may have evolved with time and may be embedded in cultural and customary ways of life which may not always be catered for by statutory law. A platform for coexistences and complementary laws and policies is necessary.

Finance

The financial aspects of land administration and land management relate to the establishment and maintenance costs of the system and underlying data and records within, and also where and how the financial benefits of the system are distributed back to society. Finances are a cross-cutting theme in the SDGs and find explicit mention in both SDG 8 and 12.

It is important to promote the achievement of a sustainable economy, and economic justice through land administration systems that can be sustained and maintained on an ongoing basis. Land administration and management systems are one of the limited examples in the geospatial domain, that in addition to supporting administration and governance activities, have historically acted as a revenue generation tool for governments, be it through duties, tax, or charging for information. Therefore, the identification or development of land administration business models is essential. These must not only be sustainable and affordable for land administration stakeholders, but also generate value for society as a whole for the realization of sustainable revenue streams.
Data

Land data is the core of any land administration and management system. Data cuts across all SDGs in terms of evaluation and monitoring of indicators - but also supporting the day-to-day activities of people and the interaction with built and natural environments. The linking role data plays between people and planet only increases with the growing use of ICT and web technologies.

Recognition of land tenure, land use, land value, and land development data - including elements relating to gender, conflict, and disaster - are fundamental geospatial data themes within any jurisdiction - and this data should be integratable with other fundamental themes. The land data may be sourced from a wide range of sources, scales and sensors - but, in all cases, should generally enable standardized identification of the spatial extent, time period, and people to which the right, restriction or responsibility pertains to. Defining characteristic of land data is the spatial and temporal extent, the need for appropriate spatial accuracy, the requirement to be temporally up-to-date, to be backed up and potentially insured by an authority. Without these elements, the data is quickly undermined in terms of societal use and relevance. Availability, accessibility, and interoperability, of the land data are also necessities for effective land transactions and management.

Innovation

Innovation in land administration is both opportunity and necessity. The emergence of ICT and web technologies challenge centuries old, procedures and techniques. SDG 9 recognizes the importance of innovation, particularly coupled with infrastructure - and continuing on - IGIF recognizes both these elements as a standalone strategic pathway. IGIF recognizes that technology and processes are continuously evolving; creating enhanced opportunities for innovation that governments, and other stakeholders, can use to quickly bridge the digital divide - and in the case of land administration - the cadastral divide.

Land administration innovation can be driven by societal pull on the one hand, and technological push on the other. Together these forces encourage process improvement, technical advancement, and the promotion of creativity and innovation. In terms of societal pull, the concept of ‘land rights for all’ has led to the development of the ‘continuum of land rights’ and ‘fit-for-purpose land administration’. This results in new techniques that re-concentrate land administration efforts on being flexible, participatory, achievable, upgradable, cost-effective, easy-to-use, and conflict sensitive, amongst other characteristics.
Standard

Standards for land administration policies, laws, organizations, financing, transactions, and particularly data and technology are increasingly evident at national, regional, and global levels.

FELA can be seen as a reference at international level, whilst highlighting the existence and value of standards at regional and national level. Significant contributions have emerged in land administration with regards to standards, particularly through initiatives of standards setting and development organizations. At national level, significant efforts at standardization and sharing are observed in national geospatial information initiatives and national land and property information strategies, taking advantage in developments with ICT and web technologies. Across all initiatives, the objective is to enable different information systems to communicate and exchange data through interoperability (legal, semantic, and technical). In this regard, the use of standards is strongly encouraged.

Partnerships

Partnerships are an inherent element of all land administration and management systems. In the contexts of the SDGs they gain importance: the SDGs cannot be achieved without effective cross-sector and interdisciplinary cooperation, industry and private sector partnerships, and international cooperation. IGIF calls for trusted partnerships, strategic alliances, and shared values relating to geospatial information management.

Regardless of the context, partnerships form the basis for effective land administration. This might variously include the creation and harnessing of strong relations within and between public sector, private sector (via PPPs), academia, civil society, non-profit nongovernmental organizations, professional bodies, coordinating organizations, and international agencies and societies. Land administration stakeholders are found in each of these sectors: the types and nature of partnership building focused upon and depends on the country context.
**Capacity and Education**

Capacity development is regularly recognized as a major focus area when it comes to achieving sustainable land administration systems. The issue cuts across numerous SDGs and is directly dealt with under Goal 4. IGIF requires strategic attention in the context of sustainable integrated geospatial information management.

The development of enduring knowledge and skills transfer in land administration is essential. This must be at the required level, for all land administration stakeholders, be they local, national, or international actors - and likewise variously based in government, private sector, academia, civil society, community or with the not-for-profit sector. Overall, the objective is to increase the awareness and level of understanding of land administration through both conventional and emerging means - including conventional skills development programs, context-based skills training, professional training, peer-to-peer learning, and inter-governmental training programs. Capacity development also include skills establishment and strengthening, sharing of cross-country experiences, and also incorporating nation-nation and interdisciplinary knowledge sharing.

**Advocacy and Awareness**

Advocacy and awareness are an essential element of any contemporary land administration project and resultant system. Land administration cannot succeed without stakeholder acceptance and support across society: advocacy and awareness activities can help to create and maintain this backing. All prominent global land policy initiatives mention the importance of stakeholder identification, development of engagement strategies, and actively implementing and evaluating communication and engagement initiatives.

Increased recognition is needed from the land administration community that meaningful engagement with all land stakeholders is integral for the implementation of an effective land administration and management system. This includes actively undertaking stakeholder identification, planning and execution of engagement, undertaking integrated communication strategies, and monitoring and evaluation of those activities. Depending on the scale of system or project, this might include undertaking these tasks at local, national, regional, and international level.
Conclusion

- The SDGs call for all people-to-land relationships to be recorded, documented and recognized

- UNGGIM is developing a framework for effective land administration (FELA) that is closely linked to the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF)

- FELA, with its’ nine pathways, provides a mechanism towards effective leadership, advocacy, mobilization and actions, to secure land and property rights