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ISTANBUL

06-11 MAY 2018  
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# The VGGT in academia: The current state and needs for land governance education at HEIs (Case of Georgia)



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**FIG Academic Forum on VGGT (FAO & FIG)  
Istanbul, 10 May 2018**

VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON THE  
**Responsible  
Governance of Tenure**  
OF LAND, FISHERIES AND FORESTS IN  
THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY

**Presented at the FIG Congress 2018,  
May 6-11, 2018 in Istanbul, Turkey**



# Background

- Scarcity of academic programs/curricula dedicated to land governance and land policy issues at HEIs of Georgia and other transitional (post-Soviet/post-communist) countries.
- Prevalence of fragmented, topic based approach compared to holistic and comprehensive vision of land governance. Teaching mainly separate (legal and technical) components, while omitting socio-economic, sustainability and developmental aspects.



# Background (2)

- Academic programs throughout a same country often are incompatible in terms of knowledge and methodology, and scattered over several universities.
- Little if any focus on the VGGT issues in the curricula.



# Reasons and barriers

- Insufficient acknowledgement by government institutions of the importance of responsible land governance and the VGGT, in particular.
- Limited cooperation between government sector and universities, as well as HEIs and private sector – lack of demand for preparation of relevant specialists and difficulties in job-finding.



# Reasons and barriers (2)

- Lack of awareness, capacity/know-how, facilities, academic sources and funding for implementation quality academic programs.
- Underestimation of interdisciplinary approach and corresponding methodology.
- Limited cooperation between HEIs inside a country, as well as on the international level.



# Needs and recommendations

- **Acknowledgement** - prioritization of good land governance and the VGGT principles by governments, and creation of corresponding request to academic sector.
- **Cooperation** - concluding formal collaboration agreements between governmental institutions, private sector and HEIs, for assuring support to academic process and giving job opportunity for graduates.
- **Needs assessment** - conducting international study (perhaps under support of FAO and/or other relevant international organizations) for an academic program(s) on responsible land tenure governance with involvement of interested HEIs, governmental sector and relevant stakeholders.



# Needs and recommendations (2)

- **Networking** – supporting of international academic or multi-stakeholder professional networks (e.g. LANDNET) and associations for securing systematic exchange of know-how, best practices and initiating relevant (academic) projects.
- **Academic excellence** - development of an exemplary core curriculum with a focus on VGGT principles, based on inter-and trans disciplinary approach and assuring compatibility throughout international education system. (For doing it, the creation of HEIs consortium and application for funding will be necessary).
- **Awareness** - organizing international summer schools, conferences and other academic fora in order to raise awareness regarding VGGT principles among scholars, practitioners and students, and adapting them to particular cases for implementation.



# Needs and recommendations (3)

- **Sustainability** - curricula provision with qualified personnel, facilities and funding – in many cases support (at least short- and medium-term) of local and international development agencies will be necessary.
- **Bridging VGGT and academia** – reformatting and converting VGGT from a policy document into the academic source/textbook; promotion of its implementation in academic curricula.

