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Land Policy in Transition Countries, Case Study on Georgia - achievements, shortcomings, possible improvements

“Land Policies are of fundamental importance to sustainable growth, good governance, and the well-being of and the economic opportunities open to rural and urban dwellers – particularly poor people” (Weltbank 2003).

Georgia, being a country in transition from centrally planned to market economy, experiences constant changes in land management and land administration. Many aspects related to land are not yet tackled at all. This master’s thesis presents an effort to identify achievements and short-comings of the current land policy in Georgia.

The research particularly focuses on the importance of the overall land policy elaboration and its contemporary implementation, taking into account and referring to up-to-date theories and approaches concerning effective and efficient land policy performance. The study highlights main achievements in the domain of land related issues since the last decade in Georgia, whereby it focuses on the shortcomings and gaps in Georgian Land Policy and gives recommendations for possible improvements in order to contribute to the understanding of how overall land policy could be undertaken effectively.

The author analyses the current legal and institutional framework as well as capacity building activities in the field of land management and land administration in Georgia to identify the barriers to more effective land policy implementation. The study shows that due to a top-down approach, lack of people’s participation and insufficient inter-institutional cooperation the Georgian land policy is deficient and not addressing all crucial issues. Numerous land related aspects are poorly developed. Present political, legal and institutional arrangements cannot adequately ensure effective land policy establishment and implementation. Therefore, there is no efficient land policy established and implemented.

Finally, based on the findings and international experience the study recommends a set of possible future actions that could enhance the effectiveness of land policy in Georgia.

Key words: land policy, land management, land administration, capacity building, institutional and legal arrangements, transition country, Georgia.