

Development of Modern Land Management Education in Uzbekistan

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SUMMARY

Uzbekistan became independent since Soviet Union collapse. Today, Uzbekistan is in the process of transition from centralized planning economy to social oriented market economy system. Since independence, Uzbekistan is gradually implementing social and economical reforms to facilitate economical development in the country. The country has become a member of the international community and is aimed at developing a modern system of education.

In 2006, the consortium of European and Uzbek universities has granted by EU Tempus program to implement Joint European Project “Land Resources Management in Uzbekistan (LAREMA). The main objective of the LAREMA project is to introduce a new Master program in Land Resource Management at Uzbek Universities: Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Melioration and Samarqand State Architectural Construction Institute. The project approach is to develop a multi-disciplinary curriculum formed in three subject blocks: Economic, Legal and Technical one. Therefore, the new Master program will focus on relationship between land, economic development, socio-political organization, and environmental sustainability.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Uzbekistan became independent since Soviet Union collapse. Today, Uzbekistan is in the process of transition from centralized planning economy to social oriented market economy system. Since independence, Uzbekistan is gradually implementing social and economical reforms to facilitate economical development in the country. The country has become a member of the international community and is aimed at developing a modern system of education. Since obtaining national independence, the reform of the education system in the country has been one of the focal points of the national policy. In 1997 President signed a Law on “National Program for Personnel Training” (NPPT), which provides a long-term strategy for strengthening education, development of a continuing education system and reinforcing the multi-level higher education system. The NPPT sets out strategy, outlines the problems and sets priorities. Its main aim is to fundamentally reform education system, introduce training of highly qualified specialists in each branch of state economy. One of the tasks of NPPT is to intensify a mutually beneficial international co-operation. This is mainly accomplishing through Tempus program. Up-to-date in Tempus projects participated totally 43 higher education institutions and 25 non-academic organizations (ministries, chambers of commerce, enterprises, etc.) covering whole country. Tempus program covers a vast number of subject areas such as economics, agriculture, water resources, natural resource management, technology, environmental sciences and many others.

2. BACKGROUND

Uzbekistan, with its 26 million inhabitants, is the largest country in Central Asia in terms of population. During the Soviet time multiple land tenure variations were abolished, nationalization of land took place in parallel with establishment of state and collective property. Under that period all the remaining small land plots (farms) were collectivized. An extensive centralized agricultural system was built and the government changed land use to foster commercial monoculture crop (cotton) production.

A large share of land resources is used by agricultural sector. Today Uzbekistan is still dependent on its agriculture even if it has dropped from 30 % in 2000 to 22 % of the gross domestic product (GDP). During the first half of the 90s, the government of Uzbekistan has restructured state and collective farms into agricultural enterprises, and further redistributed into individual private farms and small household plots. One of the important goals of agrarian reform in Uzbekistan is to introduce an effective competitive agricultural production, initiative-driven and based on entrepreneurship.

Land reform is not only carried out on agricultural lands but also affected urban (residential and commercial) and industrial lands. In 2006, President has signed a decree on privatization

of lands under residential and industrial buildings. These kind reforms in land tenure are demanding improvement in land administration and management. Therefore, there is an urgent task to upgrade administration, management and monitoring methods by which the land resources will be put to good effect. One of the challenges for Uzbekistan is to introduce an effective land resource management and thereby to improve land development. An efficient system of land resource management will improve (ECE 1996):

- collection and storage of data for planning and administration
- security of property rights
- financial development
- implementation of land policy
- control over land resources

3. CURRENT LAND MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN

Uzbekistan is step by step going towards market economy. The important challenge is implementation of land reform policy. It should be pointed out such stages as reformation of collective and state farms into private farms giving possibility for private persons to lease land plot. Today government is finalizing this transformation process and start to pay attention on another land category as urban land. In this stage President signed decree (UP-3780 2006) "About privatization of land plots". From 2007, 1 January government is about to start privatization of land plots under industry and commercial buildings and from 2008, 1 January planned to start privatization of land plots under residential buildings. It is assumed that next stage for privatization can be agricultural lands.

However, due to lack of competent specialists in relevant ministries, the land administration was unable to proceed for implementation of above mentioned decree. This issue has historical roots, since during Soviet period private property on land was eliminated. Consequently people were unable to sell or buy any piece of land plot. Land plots were given only for possession and use. During Soviet period land management specialists were mainly working with issues not involved into real market, and ownership cases. Therefore, in that time demand for universities was to train specialists in land management with more technical knowledge and less with legal and economical.

After collapse of soviet regime, Uzbekistan is in transition to social oriented market economy system. Established during centrally planned economy higher education institutions were not ready for rapid changes to face market economy principles. Universities were required to retrain its teaching staff. Even if heritated literature were discarded by libraries, content of curricula and syllabuses kept most parts of old versions.

Thus, along with all ongoing reforms implementing by government need to be supported by training of highly qualified specialists possessing modern knowledge and skills. Therefore, the introduction of a new Master Program in Land Resource Management at Uzbek universities is a top priority on national level and is demanded by existing practice.

4. TEMPUS LAREMA PROJECT

In 2005, the consortium of European and Uzbek universities has applied Joint European Project proposal named as “Land Resources Management in Uzbekistan (LAREMA) to Tempus program. The main objective of the LAREMA project is to introduce a new Master program in Land Resource Management at two Uzbek Universities: Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Melioration (TIIM) and Samarqand State Architectural Construction Institute (SSACEI).

The project is planned for the period September 2007 – September 2009. This implies introduction of a new specialization in land resource management at the Land Use and Land Cadastre faculty by September 2009 through creation of new curriculum and courses, which will be taught during a two-year period after four years of undergraduate (Bachelor) study. The intention is to develop a complete set of new courses together with newly prepared teaching materials with developed new teaching methodologies. The study program will end up with thesis work and leading to Master’s degree.

4.1 Project objectives

During the two-year period of project implementation, the following specific objectives are planned to be implemented:

- to develop a new curriculum of Master program;
- to develop new courses with teaching materials;
- to establish Land Tenure Centers at two universities;
- to introduce new IT teaching methodologies;
- to retrain teachers and students;
- to disseminate the results.

4.2 Curriculum Development

The project approach is to develop a multi-disciplinary curriculum formed in three subject blocks: Economic, Legal and Technical one. Therefore, the new Master program will focus on relationship between land, economic development, socio-political organization, and environmental sustainability. The following ten courses are to be developed during the project:

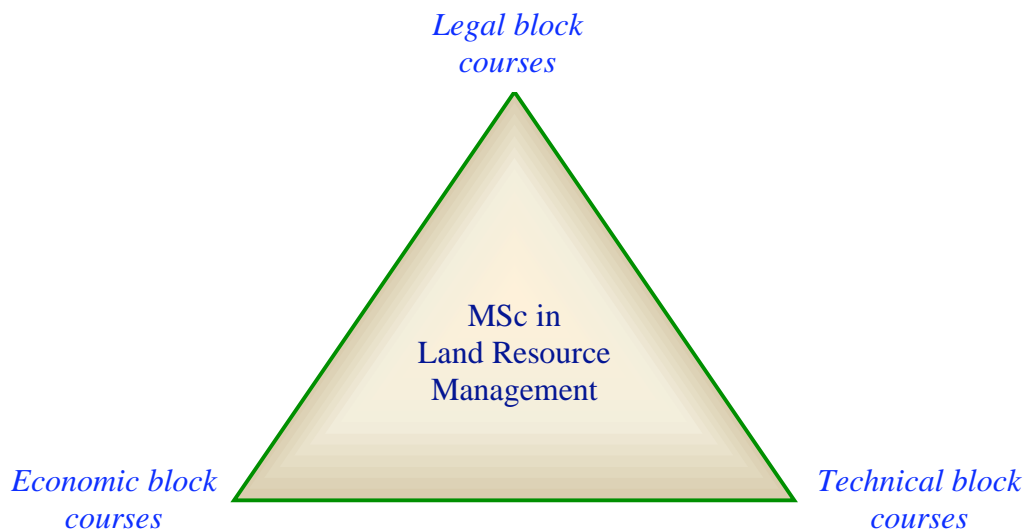


Fig. 1: Proposed multi-disciplinary curriculum by LAREMA project

4.2.1 Legal block:

Land law

The Land law course will provide detailed knowledge about the existing system of law, which deals with land and real estate issues. The course will provide principles as well as practical rules in the legislations governing issues such as land and real estate; land market; title registration; land ownership, possession and use; compulsory purchase; easements and restrictions; leasing and leasehold regulations; mortgaging and perspectives of land market development in Uzbekistan. It will also consider how land issues are treated in different European countries i.e. in Sweden, Finland, Slovenia etc.

Civil and Public law

This Civil and Public law course will be divided in two parts, the first Civil law part will give an overview of the existing types of property rights/encumbrances, mortgages and types of their enforcements, consider contract law with focus on land. The comparative analysis with the European experience will also be given. The course will only treat the general policy issues relating to land. The second part in Public law will study legal relations between individuals and the government. For example, the course will deal with the legal framework for the protection and use of natural resources. Students will also obtain knowledge of the constitutional and administrative principles, gain understanding of compulsory purchase concept, and different limitations affecting rights to property.

Rural land development

The Rural land development course will provide a fundamental understanding of the Uzbek environmental legal system from perspective of implementing and monitoring of the environment. A combination of specially designed case studies and workshops will give students the opportunity to learn and apply the environmental regulations in the reality.

Moreover, the students will obtain knowledge about planning, building and environmental regulations of the country, get the skills for identifying legislation governing agriculture and water resources use, forestry, hunting, fishing and mining as well as cultural heritage.

Urban land development

The Urban land development course will focus on administration of property rights and provides students with a thorough understanding of a role of property rights in the society. Since the legal framework is important for understanding how to administer property rights, special attention is given to a relevant legislation. The aim is to form an understanding of the relation between existing property rights and demands for changing them to enhance dynamism in the society. Rights related to ownership of land (2D and 3D), commons, infrastructure and utility easements, joint facilities, leasing, water supply are also considered.

Property formation and registration

The Property formation and registration course will provide understanding for, and knowledge about, the land subdivision and the means of changing it to enable students to handle complicated situations within the field of land formation and granted land use rights. The second part of the course considers the whole spectrum of legal rules connected with state registration of land, its terms, legal requirements as well as an overview of experience of developed countries.

4.2.2 Economic block:

Land valuation and taxation

The Land valuation and taxation course will provide knowledge of land valuation theories and methods. The students will obtain knowledge and understanding of different concepts of value and other related terms such as price, income, capital and costs. It will provide students with various approaches to land valuation. The course will also study factors affecting valuation, purpose and application of valuation, problems related to valuation. In the second part of the course the students will get insight in analysis of land taxation. Taxation law with application to different types of land use will be considered.

Real estate investment theory and analysis

The Real estate investment theory and analysis course will provide theoretical concepts, methods of investment analysis and sensitivity analysis applying the techniques on practical examples. This course will cover the foundation of value theory and provides an extensive coverage of capital budgeting methods as well as the development of a computerized valuation model. The course aim is to provide basic theoretical and practical knowledge about investment analysis, with emphasis on real estate. The course will contain the following parts: I. Capital budgeting. Providing advanced knowledge in theory and methods for asset valuation, profitability analysis of investments and decision criteria in capital budgeting such as present value, internal rate of return, pay-off etc. II. Cash flow analysis of complex investments with emphasis on property applications. Analysis of financing decisions. III. Analysis of risk in investments and the relationship between risk and return.

Economics (micro, macro)

The Economics course will provide knowledge in the functioning of the market economy. Basic insights in the role of economic policy. During the course, students will obtain knowledge on microeconomics. This part will cover selected concepts, apply microeconomic concepts to the reality. Macroeconomics part will introduce contemporary macroeconomic theory and techniques of analysis, relevant macroeconomic policies in national and international context.

4.2.3 Technical block:

Cadaster and Land Information Systems

The Cadaster and Land Information Systems (LIS) course will focus on the function of property register in a wider sense. The students will receive knowledge of the importance of property register as well as LIS. The importance of public access to official records is going to be accounted for. The students will receive knowledge in contents, updating and questions concerning security when dealing with LIS. This also includes the knowledge of the importance of focusing on content (law, economy and organization). Different theories about organizations and communications etc. form the theoretical base. Historical development of land information system and the experience of different countries, the benefits of land register for the development of rural and urban areas, and feasibility studies for establishing of improving land information system.

Geographic Information Systems

The Geographic Information Systems (GIS) course will allow students to be familiar with the architecture of GIS. During the course student will obtain knowledge on three major components of GIS: to develop and manage a database; to spatially model and analyze the data sets; to graphically display in other words enable students to analyze of various geographically-based data sets to use in decision making processes, to visualize data and information in most appropriate way. Emphasis will be given in the application of GIS tools in adopting land valuation and land use planning techniques for sustainable use of land resources with adequate capability and technical know-how.

Remote Sensing

The Remote Sensing (RS) is a rapidly developing and very broadly based field. Specialists with various backgrounds of such diverse areas as agriculture, ecology, forestry, urban and regional planning, water resources and many others are using the information processed from RS data. The course will particularly provide methods of RS application in planning, valuation and development of land and real property. Students will acquire knowledge on modern technique to collect data from a distance, determine position of objects and its processing methods. Wide application of RS in land and real property management may be possible through available commercial high-resolution earth-orbiting systems.

4.2.4 Additional:

Negotiation and communication

This course is designed to highlight on the basics of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and techniques of negotiation that will help interested parties arrive at a certain agreement. Such important techniques like negotiation, conciliation and adjudication will have wider treatment in this course. At the end of this course the students will:

- be able to resolve disputes in amicable means and mechanisms
- understand the various techniques of negotiations
- be capable of giving well reasoned advises to disputing parties on how to negotiate for their common good.

5. PROJECT METHODOLOGY

5.1 Capacity Building

Within the framework of the project, intensive staff retraining courses and student training have been planned. These training courses implies three study visits of university staff to the EU universities for experience exchange, learn new teaching methodology, acquire ideas for development of teaching materials to be developed and published during the project. The student training involves participation of two postgraduate students from TIIM and SSACEI in the International Master's program in Land management at KTH. The intention is to prepare the students for teaching of the newly developed courses at TIIM and SamGASI. In the project, it is also planned (West-East mobility) practical placement of European Community students at the TIIM or SamGASI for one month. The aim of this mobility is for student to collect data for writing a thesis in the future and to reinforce mutual co-operation between the universities involved.

5.2 Supply of teaching materials

To assist in teaching process of the new Master program new teaching materials are to be prepared for each introduced new course. Lecture notes of new courses as well as textbooks will be developed in co-operation with EU partners through study of existing European textbooks in land resource management, discussions and analysis of teaching materials used by the EU partners.

5.3 English language and IT courses

To improve communicative skills of the teaching staff of the participating Uzbek universities intensive English language courses are planned. To improve IT skills of Uzbek teachers, IT courses are also included in the project. Mainly these courses are aimed at teaching staff and graduate students involved in a new master program. After completion, the teachers will be able to apply modern IT teaching methodology to the educational process.

5.4 Land Tenure Development Center

Besides capacity building and development of above-mentioned new courses establishment of Land Tenure Development Center (LTDC) is planned. The LTDC will consist of a library supplied with modern national and international literature and IT laboratory supplied with modern specialized softwares and hardwares (i.e. PCs, Plotter, GPS etc.). The laboratory will be equipped with PCs for each student and research staff. This laboratory will intensively be used for teaching/studying of Master students.

In perspective, the LTDC is planned to become a scientific research and education center. The intention of LTDC development is to establish competent capacity, leading in the field of land and real estate science. In order to achieve this aim the LTDC will improve its capacity through training of new MSc students and retraining of current staff. After launching of new Master program the LTDC will be able to provide training courses for enterprisers, local authorities, NGOs and other interested target groups.

5.5 Dissemination

Another important activity or in other words strategy of the project is dissemination. The main objective of the dissemination process is to make results of projects available for a target public, which has not been directly implicated in the project. To achieve this objective website of LTDC is designed to deliver detailed information for public. The website is to help share information between consortium members, keep informed interested people about the project progress and the results achieved. Moreover this website will be used by teaching staff and students for on-going educational process after finishing the project combining with web-presence for each course and electronic version of teaching materials.

As a final event of the project the dissemination conference is planned. The conference will be held at TIIM in partnership with project consortium members. The national and international experts in land management and other related fields are to be invited. Dissemination conference is devoted for teachers from participating and other related Uzbek universities, for students from both under- and postgraduate studies, for professionals from the State committees and other government authorities as well as for private organizations.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The universities should actively be involved into country's development process and their functions cannot be overstated. Obviously, on-going reforms in Uzbekistan are demanding highly educated professionals in land management. These professionals have to possess knowledge on how land management functions in the market environment. Today land management profession in Uzbekistan is demanding multidisciplinary knowledge and they have to possess skills of how to solve not only purely technical problems, but also economic, legal and social ones. Education has to be reoriented towards meeting the modern requirement of the society and ensuring competitiveness of graduates in the labor market. Universities

need to play a development role through outreach activities and by establishing linkages with related stakeholders.

The LAREMA project is aimed to develop a Master program in Land Resource Management. There is a lack of potential to introduce a new specialty by national universities itself. It should be stressed that development and introduction of the new and modern specialty in Land management at Uzbek universities demands cooperation of national and international universities.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Odil Akbarov is a head of Land Tenure Development Center at Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Melioration (TIIM). In same time he is a faculty member (Researcher/Teaching assistant) at Surveying and Land Cadastre department. He made his undergraduate degree in land management and land cadastre at TIIM and got his Master of Science in Built Environment specialized in land management from Royal Institute of Technology (KTH). He is currently engaged with teaching, research and consultancy in land and real estate issues. At present time he is National coordinator of LAREMA project.

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