



# URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES: A CONCEPT AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

*A world in which everyone enjoys secure tenure rights*

URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES: A CONCEPT AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

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# URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES: A CONCEPT AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

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## ABBREVIATIONS

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>COVID-19</b>   | Coronavirus disease 2019   |
| <b>FIG</b>        | International Federation of Surveyors  |
| <b>GLTN</b>       | Global Land Tool Network   |
| <b>LGAF</b>       | Land Governance Assessment Framework   |
| <b>NUST</b>       | Namibia University of Science and Technology   |
| <b>NUA</b>        | New Urban Agenda   |
| <b>RAI</b>        | Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems  |
| <b>RULs</b>       | Rural-urban linkages   |
| <b>SDGs</b>       | Sustainable Development Goals  |
| <b>UN-Habitat</b> | United Nations Human Settlements Programme   |
| <b>URL-GP</b>     | Urban-Rural Linkages Guiding Principles  |
| <b>URLLs</b>      | Urban-rural land linkages  |
| <b>URLs</b>       | Urban-rural linkages   |
| <b>VGGT</b>       | Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security |

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## PREFACE

Recent development literature provides a narrative of three worlds, which are sometimes socioeconomically divided into thriving urban areas, semi-thriving peri-urban areas and declining rural areas. The extent to which this narrative is true depends on whom you ask and where you are. The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) considers urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas to be of equal importance in ensuring that all persons worldwide have access to adequate living conditions. A narrative of two or three worlds that fundamentally enjoy unequal development can be improved by ensuring that all people, wherever they may live and have secure access to land.

The GLTN recognizes that secure land and natural resource rights are mandatory for mitigating critical development challenges such as poverty, disaster risk management, land conflicts, climate change and unequal distribution of resources. Across the African, Asian and Latin American continents, there is an increasing need to tackle these challenges in both urban and rural areas. Land administration and management strategies require a better understanding of the role of land if they are to improve our knowledge of and approach to urban-rural interdependent development. Protecting people's land tenure rights is an effective way of ensuring development and empowering people.

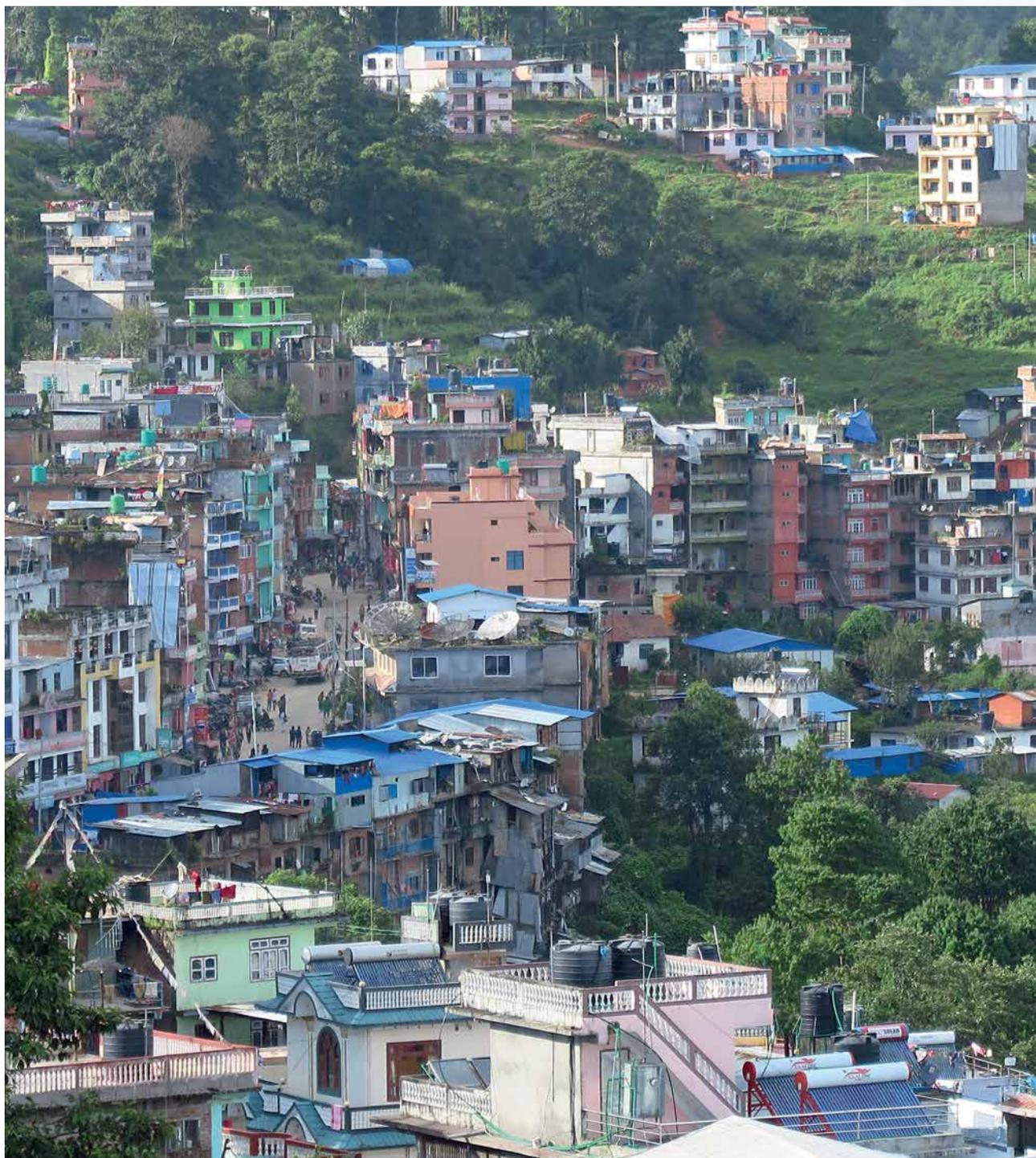
This report presents a framework for action on urban-rural land linkages in developing countries. Divided or un-coordinated land management and administration efforts between rural and urban areas can inflict insecurity in two ways. First, they leave peri-urban areas out of the development discourse. Second, they do not enable coordinated exchanges – for instance, land information, natural resource distribution, land infrastructure dependencies or access to resource use – that lead to interdependent development.

This report is based on research by global land sector experts concerning the most practical ways to engage in urban-rural continuum development with a focus on securing land tenure rights. A literature review served as the foundational step for action. This detailed desktop analysis was performed to collect and review academic and practitioner documents on land interventions in the context of urban-rural linkages. The synthesis of these data, in addition to information obtained from interviews and consultations with land experts, led to the concept presented here.

Although this report can be used for general applications, its objective is to provide a framework for the GLTN and for those at local and national levels who use GLTN tools. This report is not a land tool. Rather, it provides structured guidance on how to address land-specific problems within the intersection of urban and rural development. It consists of action-oriented steps and recommendations that should be pursued in urban-rural interdependent development. This report expands on current knowledge of urban-rural linkages in the context of land tenure challenges.

It is hoped that this report will inspire and inform additional policy debates on securing land tenure in an urban-rural continuum rather than viewing these areas in isolation. It will also be useful to GLTN global partners (currently more than 80 civil society, bilateral and multilateral organizations; research and training institutions; and professional bodies) in addressing land-related urban-rural development concerns.

## PREFACE



A view of Bhimeshwar municipality, (formerly Charikot)- urban landscape in Dolakha district north-eastern Nepal.  
Photo © Kadaster International.

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# INTRODUCTION

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

There have been global discussions around engendering policies and development approaches to tackling urbanization and rural development simultaneously. However, this issue has not received sufficient attention. This report presents a contribution by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) to concepts, principles and frameworks for action towards interdependent development. In this context, the term “interdependent development” is development that mutually benefits urban and rural areas.

Following GLTN efforts at developing land tools (box 1) that enable land tenure security at the country level, it is necessary to ensure that this security is now also achievable in urban and rural areas in an inclusive manner. Where there is no existing land tool, as is the case for the urban-rural continuum of development, a framework for action provides a platform for immediate efforts.

The concept of urban-rural land linkages (URLLs) and its framework for action emerged from a collaboration between the GLTN and the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) in response to land problems that affect urban and rural areas. It follows the work of other international institutions, particularly the United Nations, on bringing together strategies that support both urban and rural development equally.

Urban and rural development, in terms of land issues, affects people in many ways. In busy cities and markets, people depend on the backward-forward exchange of agricultural goods to and from rural areas. Transport networks (including rivers) are crucial for rural residents

who want to travel to the city and for urban residents who want to travel to rural areas. Agricultural activities, usually found in rural areas, provide leisure and food security for urban residents. All these urban-rural features and functions are intrinsically linked. Efforts to improve their management must ensure that the land on which they occur is secure and that the rights of those who use the land are protected.

#### BOX 1: WHAT IS A LAND TOOL?

A land tool is a practical way to solve a problem in land administration and management. It is a way to apply principles, policies and legislation.

The term covers a wide range of methods: a simple checklist to use when conducting a survey, software and accompanying protocols, training modules, or a broad set of guidelines and approaches. The emphasis is on practicality; users should be able to apply or adapt a land tool to their own situation.

Land tools may complement each other. For example, one tool may give overall guidance on how to collect data on land use, while another may give detailed instructions on how to assess whether the different needs of women and men are considered.

**Source: GLTN (2021)**

This report provides details on the concept of URLLs. It evolved from ideas in relevant literature and experiences drawn from case studies that reflect how urban and rural land can be better managed and administered to ensure security for everyone. URLLs highlight what is required to achieve an urban-rural continuum of development and how affordable land tools can be better utilized for this purpose.

## 1.2 URBAN AND RURAL LAND MANAGEMENT IN THE GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK 2018–2030 STRATEGY

Land challenges (e.g., climate change, land conflicts, food insecurity, environmental degradation) are critical factors in people's movements from urban to rural areas and vice versa. Therefore, a framework for URLLs that implements land management tools that work for both urban and rural populations can transform sustainable human development for the benefit of all. It can also lead to a better understanding of the socioeconomic and environmental interactions between rural and urban areas and bridge knowledge and capacity gaps related to urban and rural challenges.

The GLTN 2018–2030 strategy (box 2) reflects a strong vision and an inclusive mission.<sup>4</sup> It is a statement of the values and objectives that support the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA) in interdependent development of urban and rural areas. This report generally follows this strategy in contributing to the dialogue of land tenure challenges in the urban-rural nexus.

More than 80 international GLTN partners from civil-society organizations, research and training institutions, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and professional bodies are working together to address urban and rural planning and development. The URLLs framework outlined here will allow them to plan and prioritize actions (including capacity-building and the potential development of additional land tools) that address urban-rural challenges.

The SDGs emphasize the importance of achieving equality among people around the world. The NUA stresses the

need to accomplish this by reducing disparities between urban and rural areas to foster equitable development. Land stands at the centre of these visions because land use (and its management) is a crucial component encouraging urban-rural interactions and connectivity. It is also a core resource for strengthening transport and infrastructure to achieve productivity and socioeconomic and environmental sustainability. It will be challenging to reach the 17 SDGs and the NUA without improving land tenure security and land governance in urban and rural areas. This makes URLLs a pertinent issue going forward. Land tenure security and effective and responsible land governance are essential for achieving the SDGs and the NUA.

### BOX 2: THE GLTN 2018-2030 STRATEGY

- A strong vision: a world in which everyone enjoys secure land rights.
- An inclusive mission: partners working together to develop and implement inclusive, fit-for-purpose and gender-responsive land tools to improve living conditions for all, prioritizing women, youth and vulnerable groups in both urban and rural settings.
- A strategic goal: improved tenure security for all, with a focus on women, youth and vulnerable groups.
- A set of core values: social justice and equity, strength in diversity, reciprocity, transparency.
- Aligned strategic objectives:
  - Accelerate reforms of the land sector by fostering global, regional and national discourse on responsible land governance and transformative land policies.
  - Institutionalize land tools to scale up tenure security interventions.
  - Monitor land-related commitments and obligations by mobilizing international, regional and national partners to track progress and build evidence.
  - Share and develop capacities, knowledge, research and resources on land tenure security.

Source: GLTN (2018, P. 6).

<sup>4</sup> The GLTN 2018–2030 strategy can be found at <https://gltn.net/download/gltn-strategy-2018-2030/?wpdmdl=13612&id=1554303041649>.



Lodwar urban centre within Turkana county, the largest town in North-Western Kenya. The once remote town is growing fast after oil exploration by large investors, the regional and international communities, and upstream oil companies, leading the local community to raise concerns over land and environmental rights. Photo © UN-Habitat.

## UNDERSTANDING URBAN (INCLUDING PERI-URBAN) AND RURAL AREAS

## 2 UNDERSTANDING URBAN (INCLUDING PERI-URBAN) AND RURAL AREAS

Urban and rural areas can mean different things to different people, and the meaning can vary from country to country (and sometimes within countries). The difficulty in understanding urban and rural areas arises because many developing countries are not exclusively urban or rural. Urban characters (e.g., towns) may exist in rural areas, and rural characters (e.g., urban greening, urban food systems) may exist in urban areas. Moreover, rural and urban areas can have a linkage settlement between them; this is known as the peri-urban area, which emerges from dispersive urban growth and thereby takes a hybrid spatial form characterized by urban and rural features.<sup>5</sup> Peri-urban areas constitute land that connects urban and rural fringes and are the physical manifestation of direct urban-rural linkages (URLs). This relationship makes URLs the foundation on which URLLs can operate (box 3).

Peri-urban areas are also the areas most affected by urban growth, impacting agriculture and food and water security, which often results in a higher number of people in these areas being exposed to environmental disasters resulting from human activities (e.g., erosion caused by open agriculture, land clearing, etc.) or land tenure insecurity. Even when peri-urban areas are not present, urban and rural areas do not exist in isolation. The flow of people, goods, services and transport, for instance, does not go in only one direction. “There is a repeated and reciprocal circular movement across the urban-rural continuum that connects these areas and generates a synergy that is greater than the sum of the parts, and that contributes to functional, integrated territories and regions” (UN-Habitat, 2019b, p. viii).

<sup>5</sup> A peri-urban area exists between an urban area and a rural area and has its own features. But it may not exist in all situations. This report assumes that urban includes peri-urban, except in situations where it is deemed necessary to emphasize the latter.

### BOX 3: THE GLTN 2018-2030 STRATEGY

#### Why are URLs so important?

In many settlements, a large number of households live, work in and depend on both rural and urban ecosystems that sustain human life beyond political and administrative spheres. The reciprocal and repetitive flow of people, goods and financial and environmental services (defining urban-rural linkages) between specific rural, peri-urban and urban locations are interdependent; they are the reality of socio-spatial arrangements, creating places with distinct yet interwoven, socially constructed identities.

From this emerges the possibility of people- and place-based development along the urban-rural continuum, that is, the promotion of urban-rural linkages through “functional territories” that help to reduce regional inequalities and increase resource efficiencies. Formulating and implementing policies, and planning interventions that reduce territorial inequality and strengthen urban-rural territories (including in smaller and island countries) could generate better and more sustainable development results that will meet many of the goals and targets in the SDGs, the NUA and other, parallel international agendas.

Source: UN-Habitat (2019b, p. 1).

Therefore, URLs and rural-urban linkages (RULs) have been promoted as a strategy for advancing development on the urban-rural continuum.

### 2.1 URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES ARE THE LAND DIMENSION OF URBAN-RURAL LINKAGES AND RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES

Achieving the SDGs and the NUA requires that urban and rural areas develop simultaneously. Secure access to land and natural resources (and the exercise of rights embedded in them) is critical for improving all aspects

of urban and rural development. When land rights are securely held and land is appropriately used, there exists the potential to reduce conflicts, guarantee environmental sustainability, improve food security and boost socioeconomic opportunities, regardless of urban or rural location. The patterns of land use and land tenure security levels that people have can also determine the quality of development outcomes implemented by land professionals in local communities.

Understanding land tenure relationships and the connections between urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas is necessary before any responsible interventions can be made to improve them (box 4).

**URLLs are not the same as URLs or RULs.** In both scholarly and grey literature, the term “URLLs” is rare, unlike “URLs” and “RULs”. URLs and RULs imply interactions across space and sectors (e.g., the movement of goods, people, money, services, information and waste) between rural and urban areas (Tacoli, 2006). It is thus

#### BOX 4: URLLs in relation to URLs and RULs

URLs and RULs are already on the global development agenda.

URLs and RULs are the same concept seen from two perspectives. URLs are linkages between urban and rural areas (i.e., through an urban lens or from a top-down view). RULs are linkages between rural and urban areas (i.e., through a rural lens or from a bottom-up view).

URLLs are related to, but not the same as, URLs or RULs. They entail land-based or land-related interactions (including interdependencies and exchanges) between rural and urban areas.

URLLs emphasize the land (and land-related activity) components of URLs and RULs and how their interactions and interlinkages can benefit urban and rural land tenure.

Source: Chigbu (2020)

necessary to explore URLLs as a new concept in urban and rural land management and land administration.

URLLs are not exclusively about urban or rural areas as spatial sectors. Instead, they present a unified perspective for improving land governance’s core aspects around the urban-rural continuum by focusing on the land components of URLs and RULs.

All urban and rural areas have boundaries and are considered human settlements because urban and rural land shapes them. Linking the spaces and spatial activities within these boundaries can improve development outcomes for those who live there. Doing this involves applying land-management principles, using land tools, and understanding the spatial arrangement in both areas. As a concept, URLLs are a means for the GLTN to view urban-rural interrelationships from the perspective of land challenges that exist in these development domains.

## 2.2 LAND CHALLENGES EXIST IN URBAN, PERI-URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

In terms of human settlement development, urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas constitute the domains where land interventions are needed. Population movement (human mobility) through voluntary migration, displacement and involuntary resettlement is complex (some is temporary, some is permanent) and often happens across both urban-rural and rural-urban geographies. This movement (often away from relatively secure land tenure) can lead to land tenure insecurity and sometimes hazard-prone land occupation (e.g., migrants move into informal areas, create settlements outside formal governance arrangements and thus have no protection against natural disasters). URLLs become necessary when there is a need to address both the drivers and the results of this mobility (if it leads to bad outcomes).

Urban, peri-urban and rural areas have similarities and differences in their development needs and in the governance of land. Put simply, many of the differences between urban and rural areas only exist as a matter of scale. Through the lens of a continuum, their differences are distinct at their two extremes but blur at their centres. For instance, there is more competition for land in urban and peri-urban areas than there generally is in rural areas, so land values are higher, making it more difficult for the (peri-) urban poor to access land legally. There is less competition for land in rural areas than in urban areas, so formal land markets are less developed and land values are lower. While land grabbing threats are mostly felt in rural areas, rural land suffers from a significant lack of transparency that adversely and disproportionately affects the poor and those with insecure rights.

Furthermore, the squatter settlement is primarily, but not only, an urban (or peri-urban) phenomenon. It manifests in these areas in the form of poor housing and unsanitary conditions. But it also exists in rural areas as communities living in forested areas or semi-forested areas without legal recognition of their land tenure rights. These communities similarly have poor access to services and have limited sanitation facilities and infrastructure. Rural slums may not be overcrowded, but their residents still suffer from land tenure insecurity.

As box 5 illustrates, urban, peri-urban and rural areas have more similarities than differences in terms of their general development challenges and needs. For instance, it is torturous for the poor (mostly women and other disadvantaged groups) in these areas in many developing countries to secure land tenure security because land registration procedures are often expensive and not adapted to their needs. Customary practices in

rural areas also make it difficult for women, youth and vulnerable groups to secure legitimate land rights. Where customary tenure and different forms of non-statutory tenure exist in peri-urban and urban areas, they often overlap with formal tenure. These overlapping tenure rights also exist in rural areas. Urban sprawl causes expansion problems in cities, leading to peri-urbanization along urban-rural boundaries, which is exacerbated by rural-urban migration. The consequences are a lack of services and infrastructure in urban, peri-urban and rural areas. It also leads to declining living conditions in urban and peri-urban areas. It is the same in rural areas, except at a smaller scale.

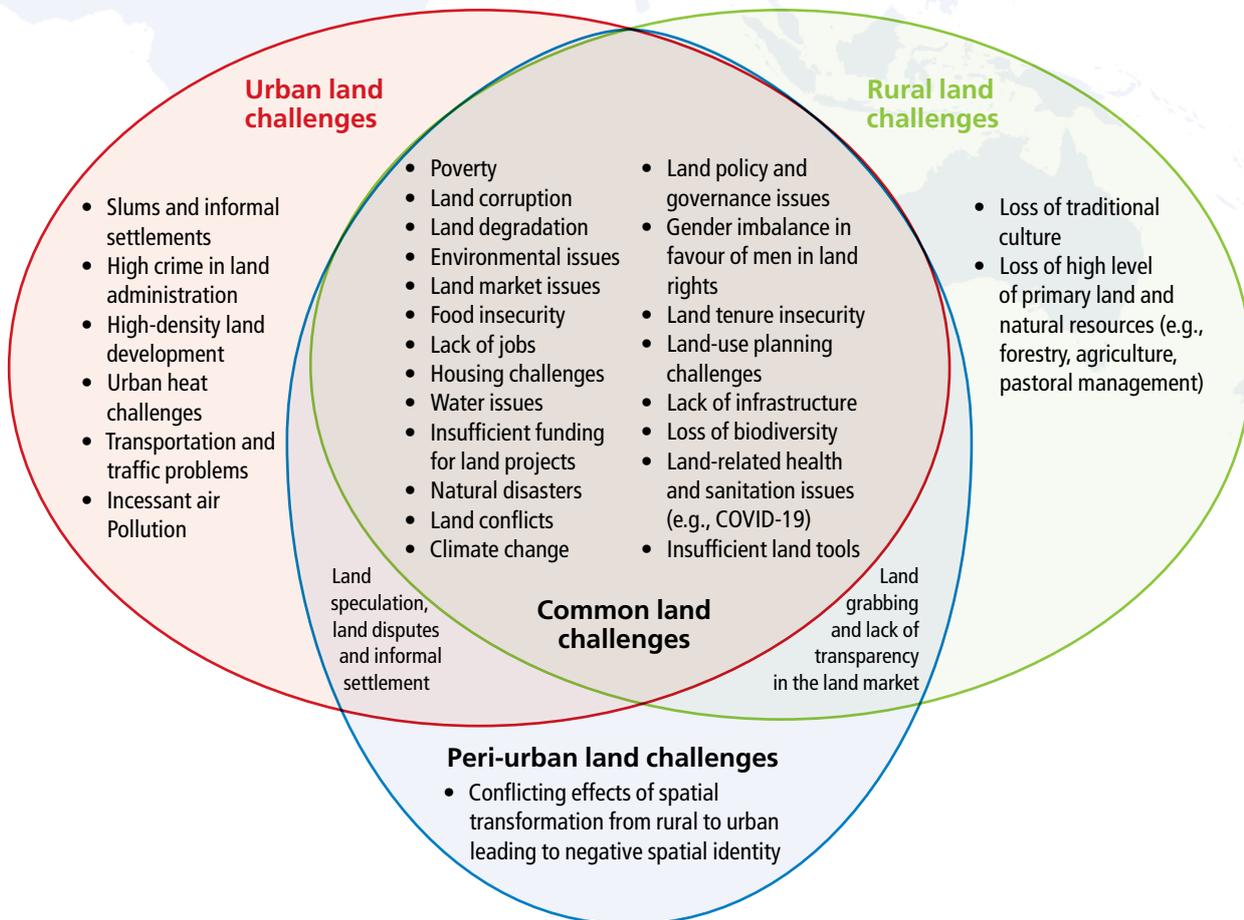
#### BOX 5: Rural features exist in cities and urban features exist in villages

Despite the urban and rural divide, even within the rural areas there are small towns or indigenous towns. They are rural in character, smaller than cities and located in rural regions or territories but exhibit urban functions within rural contexts. These places serve as urban centres in the rural areas, and form important part of the social, economic, and political fabric of the rural entity.

In cities or urban regions, there exist micro spaces (such as the village markets, vegetable/fruit markets and some informal settlements that are dominated by rural features). These places play socioeconomic roles in the development of urban areas.

Source: Chigbu (2013).

A critical look at prevalent land issues suggests that urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas share some common and distinct land-related problems. For instance, the following land-related challenges can be found in all three: poverty, land corruption, land degradation,



**Figure 1: Examples of land problems in urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas.**

environmental issues, land market issues, food insecurity, lack of jobs and housing, water issues, insufficient funding for land projects, natural disasters, land conflicts and climate change issues. Other common problems include a lack of sufficient land policy and governance, gender imbalance in favour of men having greater access to and security of land rights, and land tenure insecurity for the poor and marginalized. There are also challenges concerning land-use planning, lack of infrastructure, negative impacts of large infrastructure projects, loss

of biodiversity, eviction, land disputes and land-related health and sanitation issues (e.g., the outbreak in 2020 of the coronavirus disease [COVID-19] pandemic) (figure 1).

As figure 1 shows, while urban, peri-urban and rural areas each have their own land problems, the concern of UURLs is to tap into their commonalities to create mutually beneficial development. This scenario is common in many developing countries that face too many interlinked urban, peri-urban and rural challenges. It is thus not

realistic to continue to tackle these challenges in isolation. An example of common land-related problems includes transportation infrastructure for boosting mobility and accessibility. Infrastructure development in either urban or rural areas could be developed to ensure complementary use and linkages in ways that encourage backward-forward exchanges of land resources between them.

URLs emphasize the need to coordinate the commonalities (in terms of land challenges or opportunities) between urban and rural areas with a conscious effort to improve them. This necessitates an understanding of the interdependencies and synergies between them and requires policy actions that are based on stakeholder interests in the urban-rural continuum discourse..

In this regard, land tenure insecurity is a critical challenge in urban, peri-urban and rural areas but in different ways. The land tenure situation in rural areas is customary, communal or indigenous. The larger threat of eviction occurs in urban areas. Furthermore, implementing zoning regulations in peri-urban areas leads to changes in agricultural, forestry and residential land development..

### 2.3 STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE URBAN-RURAL DISCOURSE

Concerns about URLs and RULs evolved from criticism against traditional approaches to urban and rural development that has proven to be divisive in development practice. The discourse has led to calls for renewed approaches to the subject, which have in turn led to ideas about the potential of rural-urban (and urban-rural) interactions, interrelationships, interdependences, cooperation and partnerships.

Many organizations have worked (and continue to work) on URLs or RULs. The concept of URLLs presents an opportunity to develop land governance and land policy perspectives to ensure that URLs and RULs cater to the land challenges on the urban-rural continuum.



A section of Medellín town in Colombia showing the interconnection of urban, peri-urban and rural areas.  
Photo © UN-Habitat/Julius Mwelu.

Table 1 presents a collection of selected contributions to URLs and RULs. All provided the ideas that led to the concept of URLLs outlined in the current rep

TABLE 1: SELECTED STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTIONS TO URLLS

| Stakeholder <sup>6</sup>                                | Document type             | URLLs-related documents  | Informs RULs in the context of forestry.                            |
|---|---------------------------|--|---|
| Center for International Forestry Research              | Occasional paper          | Hecht et al., 2015: <a href="http://www.cifor.org/knowledge/publication/5762/">www.cifor.org/knowledge/publication/5762/</a> .   | Promotes stakeholder dialogue on URLs in the context of the NUA.    |
| United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization       | Dialogue                  | Forster et al., 2014: <a href="http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/agphome/documents/horticulture/crfs/Strengthening_Urban_Rural_Linkages_through_CRFS.pdf">www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/agphome/documents/horticulture/crfs/Strengthening_Urban_Rural_Linkages_through_CRFS.pdf</a> .   | Focuses on the marketing and supply chain aspect of RULs.           |
|   | Framework                 | Tracey-White, 2005: <a href="http://www.fao.org/3/a-a0159e.pdf">http://www.fao.org/3/a-a0159e.pdf</a> .  |   |
| FIG   | Declaration               | FIG, 2004: <a href="http://www.fig.net/resources/publications/figpub/pub33/figpub33.pdf">www.fig.net/resources/publications/figpub/pub33/figpub33.pdf</a> .  | Promotes ideas for rural-urban relationships.                       |
| GLTN  | Scoping review            | Chigbu, 2020: the only document on URLLs ever produced; the working document was the basis for the present publication (not available online)  | Focuses on URLLs (teases out the land components of URLs and RULs). |
|   | Strategy                  | Wehmann and Antonio, 2015: <a href="https://gltn.net/download/applications-of-the-voluntary-guidelines-on-the-responsible-governance-of-tenure-of-land-fisheries-and-forests-in-the-context-of-national-food-security-vgmt-in-urban-and-peri-urban-areas/?wpdmdl=8215&amp;ind=0">https://gltn.net/download/applications-of-the-voluntary-guidelines-on-the-responsible-governance-of-tenure-of-land-fisheries-and-forests-in-the-context-of-national-food-security-vgmt-in-urban-and-peri-urban-areas/?wpdmdl=8215&amp;ind=0</a> |   |
| International Council for Research in Agroforestry      | Working paper             | Vos, 2018: <a href="http://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/agricultural-and-rural-transformations-asian-development">www.wider.unu.edu/publication/agricultural-and-rural-transformations-asian-development</a> .  | Informs RULs through the lens of agricultural transformations.      |
| International Fund for Agricultural Development         | Case study                | Hussein and Suttie, 2016: <a href="http://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39135332/Rural-urban+linkages+and+food+systems+in+sub-Saharan+Africa.pdf/f5801ff5-2fb8-4b0d-ae77-976aa3e116d3?eloutlink=imf2ifad">www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39135332/Rural-urban+linkages+and+food+systems+in+sub-Saharan+Africa.pdf/f5801ff5-2fb8-4b0d-ae77-976aa3e116d3?eloutlink=imf2ifad</a> .   | Regional focus on RULs in Africa.                                   |
| International Institute for Environment and Development | Policy briefs and reports | Rural-urban linkages (several documents since 2003): <a href="http://www.iied.org/rural-urban-linkages">www.iied.org/rural-urban-linkages</a> .  | Promotes RULs as a development concern                              |

<sup>3</sup> Many other institutions either are working on URLs and RULs or have contributed to discussions about them through conferences, journal publications, workshops and webinars. This table includes only those institutions whose contributions are publicly accessible. The work of the GLTN adds value to these efforts because it teases out the land dimension of URLs and RULs in the context of URLLs

TABLE 1: SELECTED STAKEHOLDER CONTRIBUTIONS TO URLLS ... CONTINUED

| Stakeholder  | Document type            | URLLS-related documents  | Informs RULs in the context of forestry.                                |
|--|--------------------------|--|---|
| Overseas Development Institute                         | Discourse                | Farrington, 2002: <a href="http://www.odi.org/publications/2312-rural-urban-linkages">www.odi.org/publications/2312-rural-urban-linkages</a> .   | Analyses the discourse.   |
| Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development | Working paper            | Veneri and Ruiz, 2013: <a href="https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5k49lcrq88g7-en">https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5k49lcrq88g7-en</a>   | Shows how proximity to cities alters population growth in rural areas . |
|  | Framework and case study | OECD, 2013: <a href="http://www.oecd.org/publications/rural-urban-partnerships-9789264204812-en.htm">www.oecd.org/publications/rural-urban-partnerships-9789264204812-en.htm</a> .   | Explains the economic dimensions of URLs and RULs.                      |
| Oxfam International                                    | Analysis and case study  | Meikle et al., 2012: <a href="https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/229731/rr-global-urban-market-based-livelihoods-in-oxfam-gb-010412-en.pdf?sequence=2&amp;isAllowed=y">https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/229731/rr-global-urban-market-based-livelihoods-in-oxfam-gb-010412-en.pdf?sequence=2&amp;isAllowed=y</a> . | Informs on the nature of RULs in specific cases.                        |
| United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification    | Working paper            | Hatcher, 2017: <a href="https://knowledge.unccd.int/publication/rural-urban-linkages-context-sustainable-development-and-environmental-protection">https://knowledge.unccd.int/publication/rural-urban-linkages-context-sustainable-development-and-environmental-protection</a> .   | Informs the RULs in the global land outlook.                            |
|  | Working paper            | Rural-urban dynamics policy recommendations: <a href="https://knowledge.unccd.int/publication/rural-urban-dynamics-policy-recommendations">https://knowledge.unccd.int/publication/rural-urban-dynamics-policy-recommendations</a> .   | Makes recommendations for RULs.   |
| United Nations Environment Programme                   | Case study               | Gyasi et al., 2014: <a href="https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/9427">https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/9427</a> .  | Informs the urban and peri-urban context of URLs.                       |
| UN-Habitat   | Strategy                 | UN-Habitat, 2019b: <a href="https://urbanrurallinkages.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/url-gp-1.pdf">https://urbanrurallinkages.files.wordpress.com/2019/09/url-gp-1.pdf</a> .   | Frames the principles for action for URLs.                              |
|  | Training                 | UN-Habitat, 2019a: <a href="http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/url-training-manual.pdf">http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/url-training-manual.pdf</a> .   | Focuses on capacity-building for URLs.                                  |
|  | Case study               | UN-Habitat, 2020: <a href="http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Compendium-of-URL-Case-Studies_Web-vers-2020.pdf">http://urbanpolicyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Compendium-of-URL-Case-Studies_Web-vers-2020.pdf</a> .  | Provides a compendium of case studies on URLs.                          |
|  | Analysis                 | UN-Habitat, 2017: <a href="https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/Urban%20Rural%20Linkages%20for%20implementing%20the%20New%20Urban%20Agenda_08112017.pdf">https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/download-manager-files/Urban%20Rural%20Linkages%20for%20implementing%20the%20New%20Urban%20Agenda_08112017.pdf</a> .                            | Calls for a departure from traditional urban-rural dichotomy of URLs.   |
| World Bank   | Discourse                | Evans, 1990: <a href="https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/771321492046108896/rural-urban-linkages-and-structural-transformation">https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/771321492046108896/rural-urban-linkages-and-structural-transformation</a> .                                       | Focuses on structural transformations.                                  |



## WHY AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK IS NEEDED

### 3 WHY AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK IS NEEDED

#### 3.1 ADDRESSING THE GAPS: EXISTING FRAMEWORKS AND LAND RIGHTS ISSUES

In GLTN country operations, tackling land challenges through interventions based on URLs and RULs have several problems. Two of these need immediate attention. First, existing frameworks are too generic and lack land-specific elements. Their implementation does not lead to land management and land tenure solutions in urban-rural continuum development because they only address the planning and policy perspectives of the problem. When subjected to local-level operations, they lack the land-based activities that directly influence peoples' living conditions. Second, the issue of managing appropriate land rights is a critical aspect of urban, peri-urban and rural development. Land rights, or the rights to a piece of land over which a person or entity may make a decision to exclude others (and has responsibilities and obligations to), exist everywhere, irrespective of urban, peri-urban or rural location. However, these rights may manifest in different ways, depending on the location. For instance, peri-urban transformation produces new forms of land rights that are not common in either urban or rural areas, and exercising these rights may encroach on those of residents who live on the fringes of rural and urban areas.

A URLLs framework, with its focus on land, ensures that land issues are directly targeted in URLs and RULs interventions. The GLTN has embraced this approach, as it will allow stakeholders to view the issues from the perspective of "land" as they resolve URLs or RULs challenges.

#### 3.2 JUSTIFICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK

There are justifications that necessitate the development of a URLLs framework. *Rural land will remain in high demand as the urban population continues to grow.* The number of people living in cities is expected to grow by 175 per cent by 2030 (UN-Habitat, 2019a, 2019b). Involuntary displacement or resettlement due to climate change and other natural disasters will continue to occur.

Urbanization will continue to put pressure on land and transform it from rural to urban. Inequalities that already exist between the land rights of men, women and vulnerable groups will be exacerbated. To ensure food security for all, 70 per cent more agricultural land is needed by 2050 (UN-Habitat, 2019a, 2019b). There will be consequences if this target is not met. This scenario implies the following outcomes will occur:

- Women, youth and other disadvantaged groups will most likely continue to have limited access to land. In many developing countries, there is still a lack of adequate provision for women to enjoy their land rights independently. In most cases, women access land rights through their husbands or male relatives. Where statutory laws do provide for women's land rights, mechanisms to enforce them are often weak. *This requires URLLs as a cross-policy issue between urban and rural areas.*
- Communities will continue to be displaced in urban and rural areas if no unified action on climate change mitigation is taken. *This calls for concerted efforts to improve continuum-focused land administration (and land management) projects and programmes.*



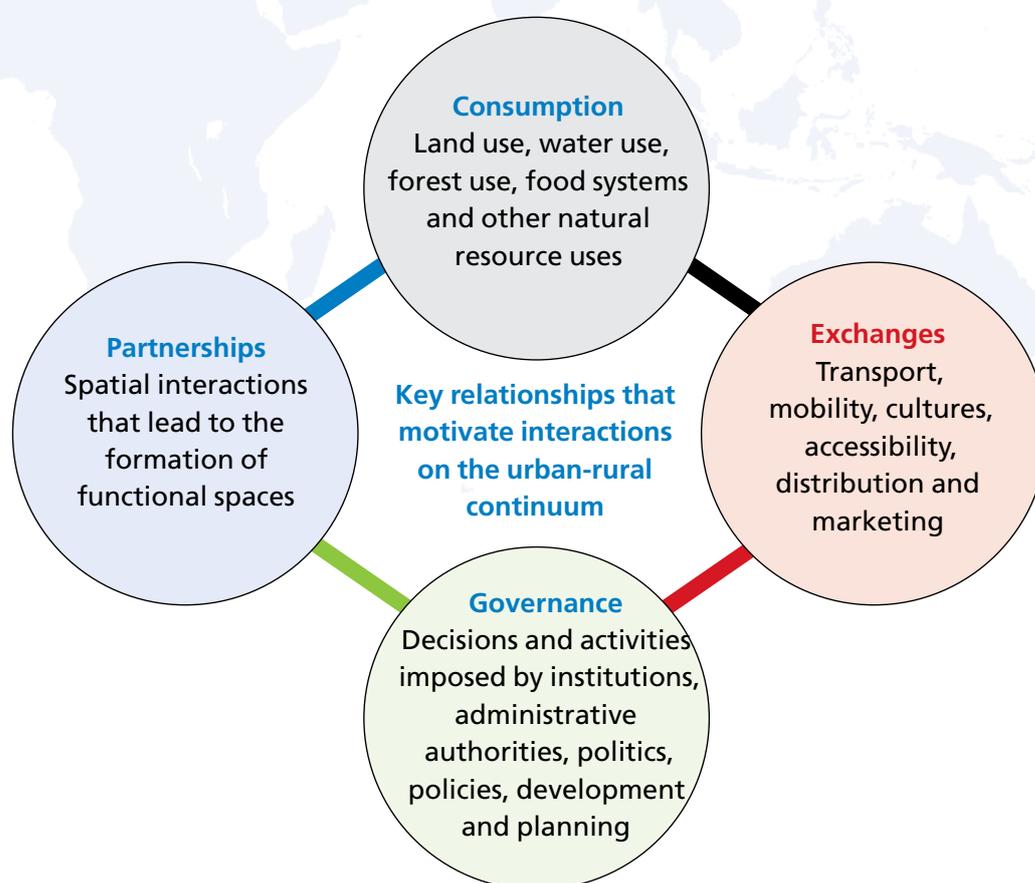
**Busan city, the Republic of Korea's second largest city after Seoul, with a population of approximately 3.6 million as of 2010.**  
Photo © UN/Kibae Park.

- It is unlikely that urban migration will ever decrease because more rural people are likely to face land dispossession (through statutory and illegal ways). Landlessness is expected to increase owing to land conversion and legal and unlawful dispossession of land occurring within and at the intersection of urban and rural areas.

Commonalities aside, there are key factors that motivate interactions between urban and rural areas. Consciously or unconsciously, urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas share relationships and interdependencies that manifest in various forms (e.g.,

governance, partnerships, consumption, multiple exchanges) (figure 2). Each of these factors can have influences on the whole. For instance, excessive consumption or demand for rural natural resources (e.g., land, water, forests and minerals) by urban or peri-urban residents can put pressure on these resources. In terms of governance, natural resource decisions made (or activities carried out) in one space can influence other spaces.

The interactions that exist because of the movement of goods, people and knowledge constitute a partnership worth leveraging for mutual development between urban, peri-urban and rural areas.



**Figure 2: Factors that motivate interactions between urban, peri-urban and rural areas.**

The various exchanges (e.g., mobility, distribution, transport) form relationships that make these areas interdependent. To achieve a balance in developing these areas, it is essential to view these relational factors as shared opportunities rather than as threats.

Guiding principles that are responsive to URLs have already been developed. These provide entry points for developing specific principles for URLs. UN-Habitat (2019b, p. 4) has proposed the Urban-Rural Linkages Guiding Principles (URL-GP) and a framework for action (figure 3). The URL-GP can help shape strategies, policies and plans for sustainable urban and territorial

development that include the perspectives and participation of those whose lives are most affected.

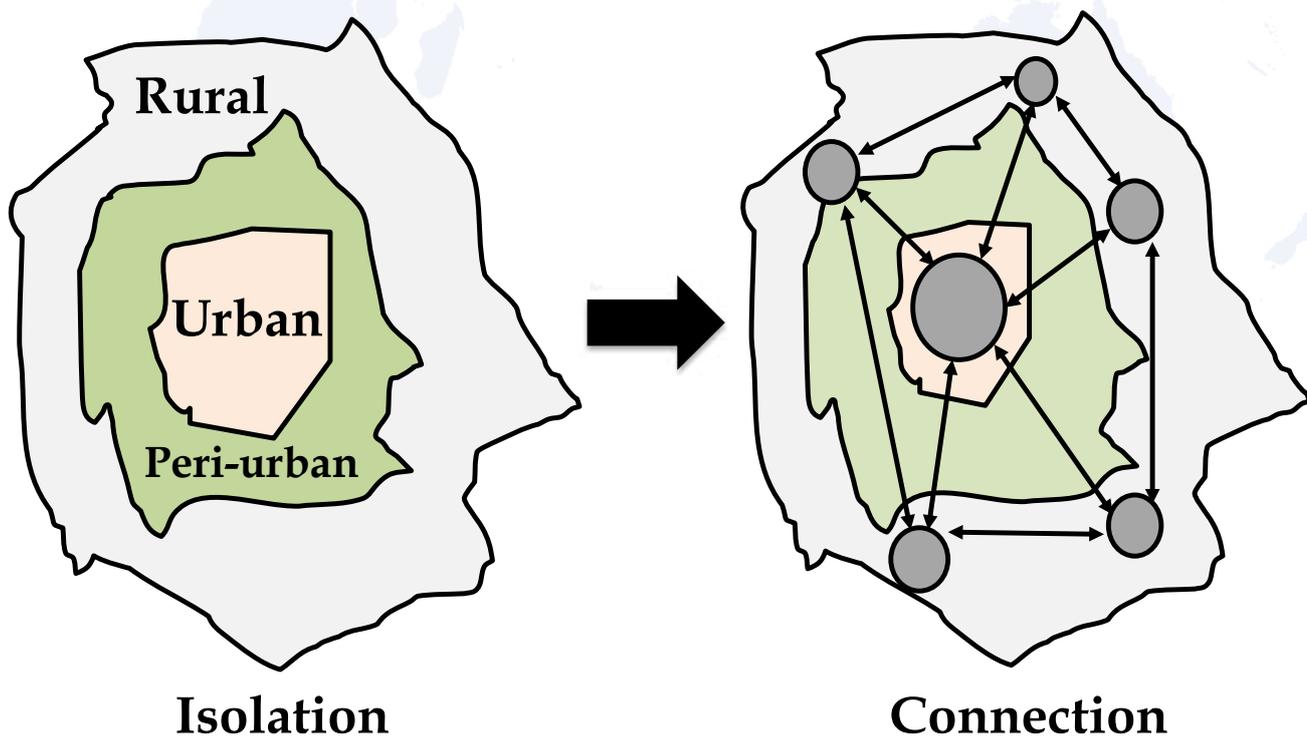
The URL-GP brings together the ideas and values that all agents of change should be mindful of when they are engaged in planning for change. While it will contribute to the development of a URLs framework, in terms of applicability to land issues, more specific principles are necessary. These must support the urban-rural perspective of land administration and management, so that no one in urban and rural communities is left behind in development practices.



**Figure 3: Guiding principles for URLs that apply to URLLs . Source: UN-Habitat, (2019b, p.4).**

It is necessary to shift development thinking from a focus on the rural-urban divide to one that promotes urban-rural connections. It is also vital to replace traditional development approaches to urban and rural areas with inclusive practices that embrace peri-urban areas. There is a need for urgent action to tackle urbanization. However, rural areas should not become land areas that cities use to fulfil urban objectives (Magel, 2003). The literature supports a need for achieving interdependent development to solve rural and urban problems simultaneously (figure 4).

The urban-rural divide leads to uneven development between urban and rural areas and encourages more inequality. Uneven development happens when urban and rural areas are disconnected in terms of land policy and planning; one (the urban) develops in isolation from the other (the rural). Interdependent development can be described as balanced development because it “emphasises functions that encourage rural-urban relations” (Chigbu, 2013, p. 19). Urban and rural areas have more in common now than ever before.



**Figure 4: Illustration of a shift from a focus on the urban-rural divide to one that promotes urban-rural connections.**

They face similar socioeconomic and environmental problems that require identical planning and policy solutions. Existing frameworks for URLs and RULs tap into the available connections shared by urban and rural areas. A URLLs framework will ensure that the land components of these connections are identified and leveraged for mutual development.

The application of a URLLs framework will not be effective on urban-rural continuum development if it is based on traditional methods (e.g., master planning in urban areas,

agricultural development in rural areas), as these are too sector-focused and fail to embrace the multidimensional issues people face. This is because they are implemented in isolated ways. Peri-urban areas exist between rural and urban areas in many developing countries. Furthermore, there are urban parts of rural areas and rural parts of urban areas. Hence, the development divide between rural and urban areas has become blurred. In applying URLLs, it is essential to embrace inclusive rather than exclusive approaches.



## URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES AND OTHER GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS

## 4 URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES AND OTHER GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS

### 4.1 URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES IN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS, GUIDELINES AND FRAMEWORKS

The concept and application of URLLs neither duplicate nor replace any of the existing solutions to global development problems. URLLs are not yet available in contemporary development literature (unlike URLs and RULs). This has resulted in a significant knowledge gap that limits the ability to understand and characterize land challenges inherent in the urban-rural continuum. It also leads to a lack of understanding of the elements and dynamics of land interventions that are needed to ensure that urban-rural development enables sociospatial connectivity. Therefore, it is not surprising that a framework – whether in a narrow or a comprehensive form – does not exist for URLLs. If left this way, this situation will continue to blur or even impede sound discourse on the measures and constraints for action on the land-related aspects of URLs and RULs.

Although URLLs are not specifically discussed in any literature on development, they are a hidden element in current development agendas, guidelines and frameworks on URLs and RULs. This is discussed further below.

**URLLs and the URL-GP.** The URL-GP consists of 10 principles that are the foundation for strengthening URLs within and across sectors such as planning, finance, economic development, health, environment,

transport, agriculture and land management. These principles are related to land issues, either directly or indirectly. Their fields of action are also interrelated. The URL-GP provides a base for developing URLLs-specific principles that can create an immediate action-oriented impact on land issues along the urban-rural continuum.

**URLLs and the NUA.** The NUA provides a platform for framing URLLs and serves as a new vision for urban development (while the URL-GP provides its implementing principles). The NUA includes provisions for promoting tenure security (and equitable and secure access to land) in rural and urban areas. This is a prerequisite to harnessing investment, good land governance, social justice and poverty reduction in urban and rural areas (UN-Habitat, 2016). One of its three principles addresses the question of land tenure security for URLs: “leave no one behind, urban equity and poverty eradication”. This principle calls attention to the growing inequality, persisting forms of poverty, and social and spatial vulnerability and marginalization in cities (UN-Habitat, 2008). It advances providing urban residents with different kinds of support (e.g., access to necessary physical and social infrastructure, affordable serviced land and housing) that enables them to live, work and participate in urban life (UN-Habitat, 2016). The vision of the NUA is what links it to URLLs, but it needs to be backed by policies and actions relating to the proper management of and access to land resources (and space) for all.



**A view of Windhoek, the capital of Namibia. Urbanisation in Namibia is affected by population dynamics in urban population growth and internal migration, rural poverty that causes people to migrate to the city to improve their livelihood and re-gazetting of some urban areas. Photo © NUST.**

URLs and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI). The RAI is essential for improving food security and access to nutrition (box 6). It focuses on enhancing sustainable livelihoods, creating decent work for agricultural and food workers, eradicating poverty, fostering social and gender equality and promoting economic growth towards achieving sustainable development (FAO, 2014). URLs cannot be effective unless different forms of investment (like those aimed at increasing food production in rural areas) are carried out in a way that contributes to sustainable and inclusive economic development and poverty eradication. This requires minimizing the risk

of land deprivation for existing smallholder farmers, including family farmers, and empowering them to strengthen their investment capacities. The RAI can also serve as a framework for guiding the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and reducing the disaster risks associated with intensive and large-scale agriculture investments. For instance, forest degradation and deforestation may lead to erosion and changes in soil quality. Notably, large-scale agricultural investments, when not guided by good governance of land tenure, can lead to landholder insecurity and impoverish original land users (from large-scale land acquisition for agriculture).

**URLs and the SDGs.** Through the lens of URLs, sustainable development requires defining spatial development and environmental management rules for the appropriate use of land and other natural resources, including protecting sensitive areas (such as wetlands and cultural landscapes), towards improving the welfare of local people in both urban and rural areas. Emerging interventions for urban and rural (re)development should recognize the social and economic anchors of sustainable development by protecting all landowners

and users' against different insecurities, hazards and diseases. They should also promote the rights to access land, housing and necessary infrastructure and services (irrespective of whether in rural or urban areas). A prerequisite to attaining this aspiration is establishing land-use regulations and development plans that promote sustainable development in urban and rural areas. The SDGs present such a platform for action.

Most SDGs are interlinked and complementary, and achieving one hinges on achieving most of the others. The URL-GP complements the SDGs because some of the indicators of the SDGs directly link to the framework of action for URLs. This is particularly true for SDGs 2, 11 and 15 in the context of sustainable soil use and land management. Land tenure security is also directly linked to SDGs 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 15 and 16.

#### BOX 6: The RAI

The RAI promotes responsible investments in agriculture that should contribute to food security. The principles can be applied to URLs to ensure that rural food production is sustained with adequate buy-ins from urban and peri-urban exchanges.

- Principle 1: Contribute to food security and nutrition.
- Principle 2: Contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development and the eradication of poverty.
- Principle 3: Foster gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Principle 4: Engage and empower youth.
- Principle 5: Respect tenure of land, fisheries and forests and access to water.
- Principle 6: Conserve and sustainably manage natural resources, increase resilience and reduce disaster risks.
- Principle 7: Respect cultural heritage and traditional knowledge and support diversity and innovation.
- Principle 8: Promote safe and healthy agriculture and food systems.
- Principle 9: Incorporate inclusive and transparent governance structures, processes and grievance mechanisms.
- Principle 10: Assess and address impacts and promote accountability.

Source: FAO (2014)

**URLs and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT).** The VGGT focuses on land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security. Food security is a crucial challenge in both urban and rural areas. The VGGT is also intended to contribute to achieving "sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection, and sustainable social and economic development" (FAO, 2012, p. 1).

One of the limitations of the VGGT is the lack of emphasis on urban areas. To address this, the GLTN produced guidelines (focusing on considerations and prospects) on how to apply the VGGT in urban and peri-urban areas (GLTN, 2015). A URLs framework can serve as a direct response to balancing the urban-rural dimension by addressing the land question in the context of land resources governance in urban and rural areas. It emphasizes land tenure security and promotes access to and control of land and other natural resources for poor and low-income populations. The VGGT is

sensitive to URLLs because it strives to (1) secure local communities' land rights and preserve productive land and natural resources in both rural and urban areas; (2) support well-functioning land rental and purchase markets for the rights of all affected landowners and users; and (3) boost effective management of land acquisition for private investment: land transactions are based on free prior and informed consent of affected communities; they abide by the due legal process, and adequate compensation is paid to individuals who lose their land rights.

**URLLs and the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF).** The LGAF provides an overview of the historical, political, economic and social background of Africa's land policies (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium, 2010). It elaborates on the role of land as a valuable natural resource in attaining economic development and poverty reduction. It promotes the need for a shared vision among all stakeholders of a comprehensive and coordinated land policy as a significant factor in national development. It urges African governments to pay attention to land administration systems' status, including land rights delivery systems and land governance structures and institutions, and to ensure adequate budgetary provision to land policy development and implementation. URLLs are reflected in the LGAF by the attention it gives to land policy matters in both urban and rural areas.

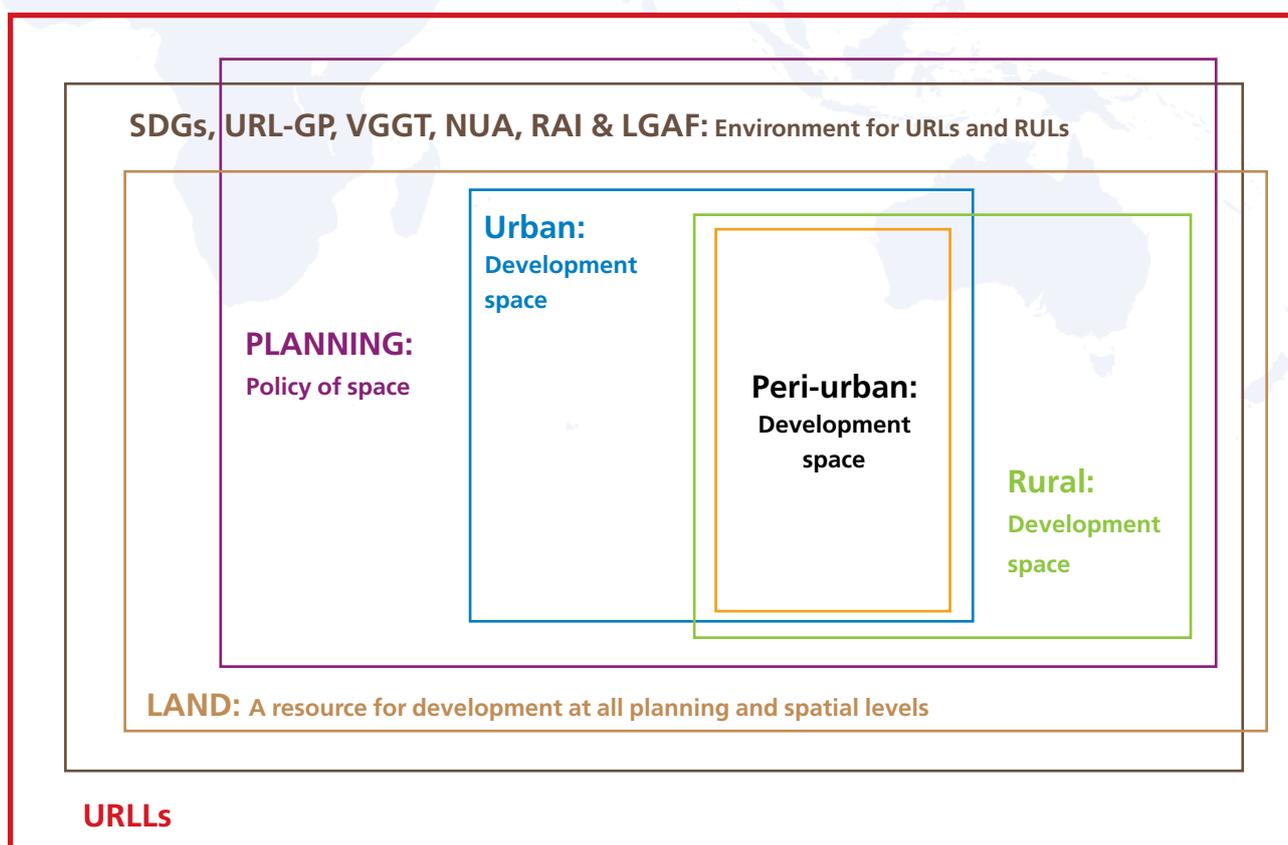
**URLLs and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).** A report by the IPCC shows how critical land-related global problems permeate urban and rural boundaries (IPCC, 2020). These include climate change, desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management, food security and greenhouse gas fluxes in terrestrial ecosystems. A URLLs framework can help in three critical ways: (1) it can create awareness

of these issues equally in urban and rural areas; (2) it can develop knowledge capacities for tackling these challenges across urban and rural borders; and (3) it can lead to a tool for addressing these problems in urban and rural areas.

#### 4.2 URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS

Having identified URLLs in selected global agendas (URL-GP, SDGs, NUA, RAI, VGGT and LGAF), it is now possible to understand their place in the scheme of these solutions-driven programmes. This represents a necessary step towards an informed framework for URLLs. Some of these global agendas address the environment, or conditions, for development (with a focus on URLs and RULs). Some work as the common resource for operating within that environment. Others serve the role of planning to make development happen within defined interactive spaces (figure 5).

In this regard, it is essential to note that these agendas provide the environment for using land as a common denominator in the quest to achieve global development goals (e.g., poverty reduction, land degradation neutrality, climate change). Land is one of the most crucial requirements for a person's livelihood and perception of land tenure security; if land itself is not the asset, it is shelter. Hence, there is the need for securing land resources in ways that benefit all domains of development (urban, peri-urban and rural areas). The application of land tools will depend on the planning (or policy) platforms that define objectives and goals for action. The planning aspect will enable the coordination of rural, peri-urban and urban spaces as units for development.



**Figure 5: URLLs in the scheme of solutions to global land issues.**

The issues surrounding URLLs emerge from the need to coordinate backward-forward linkages across the intersection of rural, peri-urban and urban spaces. These imply that for URLs and RULs to be inclusive and development-oriented, a land-based perspective (i.e., URLLs) is necessary. While this perspective can rely on the frameworks (including principles and guides) of existing development agendas using tested land tools, it should be specific to URLLs.

05



A FRAMEWORK  
FOR URBAN-RURAL  
LAND LINKAGES

## 5 A FRAMEWORK FOR URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES

### 5.1 THE GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK 2018–2030 STRATEGY AS A MOTIVATION FOR AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK

Urban, peri-urban and rural land-based challenges require actions capable of benefiting these spatial units as a unified development territory because they share common land problems despite their differences in spatial scale. To date, conceptual and operational frameworks have focused on URLs and RULs, with unfortunately little effort put into engaging in both urban-rural and rural-urban land-specific linkages. As a result, directly applicable land tools and sufficient datasets (e.g., resource-dependency rates between rural and urban settlements) are not available.

As noted earlier in the report, the GLTN 2018–2030 strategy embraces an inclusive mission, stating to always engage with partners who work “together to develop and implement inclusive, fit-for-purpose and gender-responsive land tools to improve living conditions for all, prioritizing women, youth and vulnerable groups in both urban and rural settings” (GLTN, 2018, p. 6). Following this, it became necessary to conceptualize a framework for addressing the land-specific aspects of URLs and RULs (i.e., URLLs). This opened a discourse on a new perspective on land issues that systematically links rural and urban areas to find ways of turning their commonalities (and relationships) into opportunities for their development.

The development of a URLLs framework is in line with the focus of the GLTN strategy, which is twofold:

“(1) to consolidate [the work of the GLTN] on land tool development, testing and dissemination, focusing on urgently needed, priority tools; [and] (2) through effective in-country partnerships, to promote and facilitate the adoption at scale of land tools and practices that promote tenure security, and to develop the capacity needed for fit-for-purpose implementation”

(GLTN, 2018, p. 6).

URLLs add value to the inclusive approaches needed for addressing the land-tenure challenges of URLs and RULs. A URLLs framework will allow the GLTN to respond effectively to emerging needs, challenges and opportunities in the land sector on the urban-rural continuum. It will also enable the GLTN and its partners to establish a knowledge base from where tools and expertise can be delivered to meet stakeholder needs and requirements in urban, peri-urban and rural areas in developing countries. Most importantly, it is hoped that a URLLs framework will motivate responsible actors and stakeholders in the global land sector to develop a new perspective in their engagement with URLs and RULs practices. *Bringing attention to URLLs in all policies and programmes and in land administration implementation and land tool development is essential to the work of the GLTN.*

## 5.2 PRINCIPLES OF AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK

Urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas face housing, land and property rights challenges of critical proportions. A lack of land tenure security affects many people in all of these spaces, and the situation is particularly dire in developing countries. According to the Prindex (2020), the average rate of insecurity is highest in the Middle East and North Africa (28 per cent), followed by sub-Saharan Africa (26 per cent); it is lowest in Europe and Central Asia (12 per cent), followed by North America (14 per cent) and East Asia and the Pacific (15 per cent). The rate in Latin America and the Caribbean (21 per cent) is between these poles. The aim of a URLLs framework is to curtail this insecurity and enable mutually beneficial interactions between these areas.

*Land is a crucial driver of URLs and RULs. Hence, it should be the focal point for URLLs. The administration of land (and its associated natural resources) has an essential bearing on urban and rural development.* Governance over such resources (including access to and control and management of land, water, forests and minerals) is crucial in urban and rural planning and development. This means introducing territorial governance of resources irrespective of geographical location. It is relevant in URLLs initiatives as it means undertaking land administration (including land-use planning) across urban and rural jurisdictions. Responsible land governance and land administration, along with tenure-responsive land-use planning applied across different local government or provincial borders, is an essential part of the solution.

A URLLs framework entails integrating land issues into decision-making processes in URLs and RULs and is a necessary operational platform for developing countries

to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. It must include measures to ensure that land plays a primary role in the development process (e.g., poverty reduction, equal land rights, land degradation neutrality, natural resource conflict resolution, environmental conservation, agricultural production). In so doing, it is hoped that it will enable rural-urban integration through multiscale policies and actions that are focused on resolving land challenges. This requires institutions in rural and urban areas to unify their responses and coordinate their actions.

Beneficial exchanges in URLLs should have backward-forward interactions to activate urban-rural development. This is possible when people in these spaces (urban, peri-urban and rural areas) have secure land tenure rights, which will enable them to have sufficient resources (including all necessary means of livelihood) to meet household needs and socioeconomic preferences for an active and healthy life. The URL-GP dimension is integral to the concept of URLLs. However, the URL-GP is generic.

URLLs principles are process-oriented, but they are mainly land-related actions that can inform interdependent interventions on the urban-rural continuum. The following principles are included in a URLLs framework:

- Adopt cross-jurisdiction and an urban-rural continuum of interactions as two of the critical objectives in development planning and decisions.
- Protect the rights of land users as a common good in urban and rural areas.
- Implement local knowledge across urban and rural areas in land administration and management.
- Base land-use decisions on multivariable assessments that consider land potential, land condition, land tenure security, and social, cultural and economic factors.

- Apply participatory and inclusive development processes by including stakeholders across urban and rural borders in the design, implementation and monitoring of interventions to achieve better urban-rural interactions and knowledge exchanges.
- Embrace urban-rural transboundary legislations and policies necessary for urban-rural continuum development.
- Balance economic, social and environmental sustainability visions to include urban-rural cross-border objectives.
- Respect fundamental human rights established in international, supranational and/or national legal acts and documents (while implementing the initiatives).
- Include pro-poor, gender-responsive and youth-responsive procedures in projects and programmes.
- It is a strategy that requires engagement in urban-rural continuum development. The GLTN 2018–2030 strategy depends on a significant commitment to and progress in land sector reforms, land tools, capacity-building and other land-related commitments. Likewise, URLLs require a strategy for action.
- It is a framework that activates rural-urban continuum development. This represents the basic structure underlying URLLs activities at the country level.

### *5.3.1 Urban-rural land linkages as a concept for land-based solutions to urban-rural continuum challenges*

The URLLs concept is an interplay of land-related activities and decisions that enable beneficial development on the urban-rural continuum (figure 6).

*Any action-oriented objectives in applying a URLLs framework require that land administration and land management activities focus on how urban and rural areas can play interdependent roles in their development. Below are some critical action-oriented interventions for implementing URLLs:*

These principles can be viewed from either a sustainable development or a development planning perspective. Whatever lens they are seen through, it is essential that they are operationally tailored towards addressing land problems along the urban-rural continuum of development.

### **5.3 AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK**

*A potential URLLs framework is based on the premise that any land-based intervention simultaneously improves urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas.*

It can be understood in three ways:

- It is a scheme that represents how land-based solutions can contribute to resolving urban-rural continuum challenges. This is the entry point for grasping the GLTN perspective of URLLs as a concept worthy of operation in development initiatives.
- Land governance actions engender interactions, partnerships and interdependences (e.g., developing urban-rural continuum land policies, land and spatial planning).
- Land management and administration actions promote environmental goods and amenities for mutual benefit (e.g., land management to avoid environmental risks).
- Land development actions, including infrastructure, information and human capital exchanges (e.g., land information systems, land-use planning, mobility and accessibility) promote spatial connectivity between urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

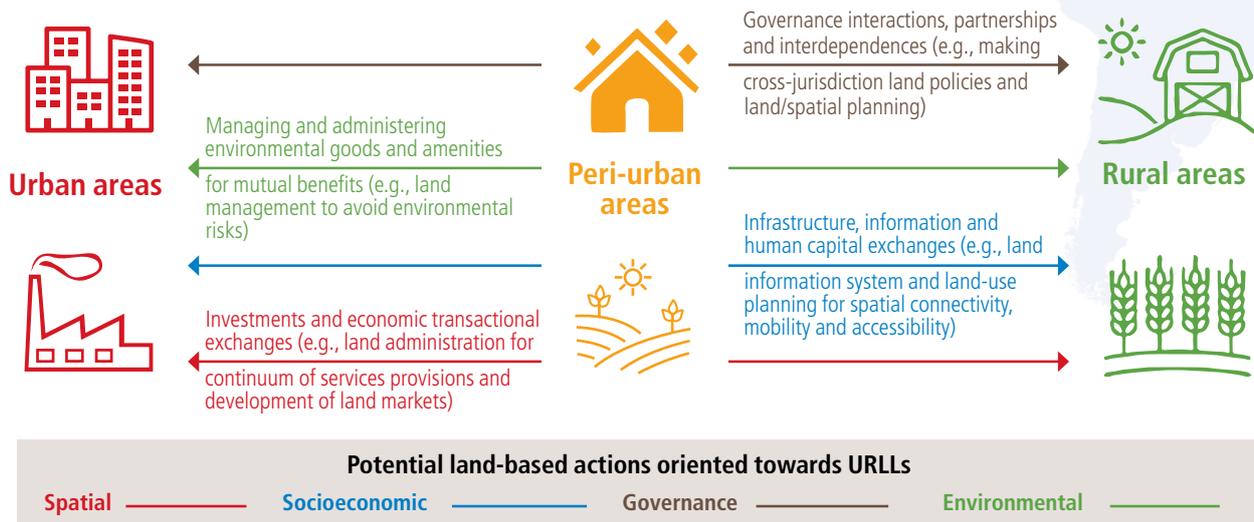


Figure 6: URLLs in the scheme of land-based solutions to urban-rural continuum challenges.

- Land investments and economic transactional exchanges (e.g., land administration for the provision of services, land markets for development) promote continuum in services provision and usage.

### 5.3.2 Urban-rural land linkages as a strategy for urban-rural continuum development

GLTN partners can realize URLLs through commitments to and progress in interlinked objectives driven by the goal of improving land administration functions in urban and rural areas (figure 7).

A URLLs framework requires, as a starting point, a vision that will improve land administration and land management in urban-rural continuum development. This vision should include appropriate interventions to support its objectives. One such intervention is to review and prioritize the urban-rural continuum of spatially

inclusive interactions. Another is to develop and share land knowledge and information between urban and rural areas. It is also essential to increase the capacity of key land actors and institutions in the urban-rural land concept and operations. These actions can evolve into collaborative urban-rural land sector activities, a necessity for applying URLLs.

### 5.3.3 A framework for improving urban-rural land linkages

A framework for addressing URLLs is based on the need for urban-rural continuum development. Since land interventions do not exist in isolation, but rather operate along a continuum of national-local development agendas, a URLLs framework should consist of activities embedded in a development plan, vision or agenda. On this basis, this framework is rooted in the premise of a unified urban-rural vision about land that includes context, strategies, outcomes and impact (figure 8).

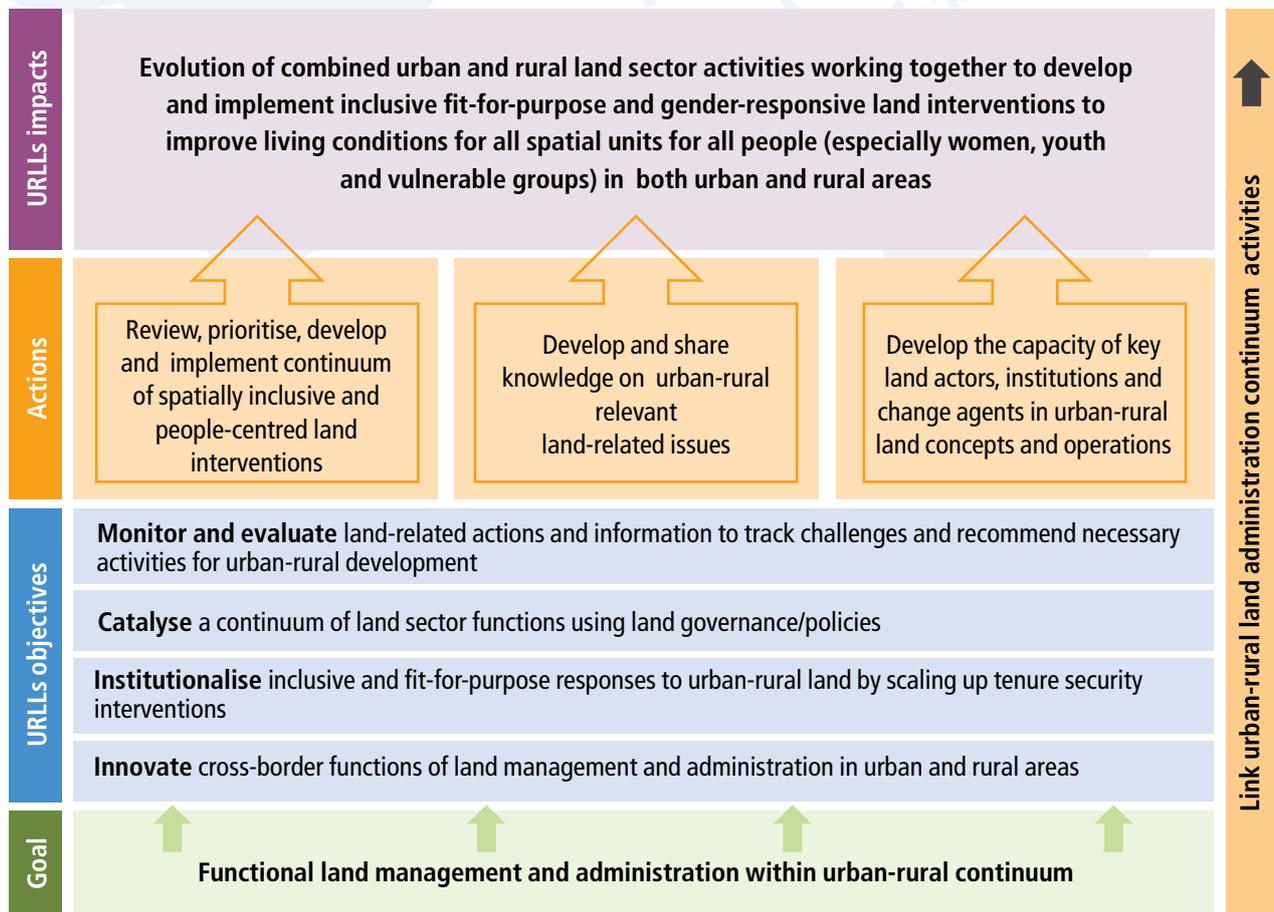


Figure 7: URLLs as a strategy for urban-rural continuum development.

- Vision.** A starting point for a URLLs framework should be a vision that recognizes that land access and use should be administered in ways that create interdependent effects in both urban and rural areas. For instance, land tenure security should be pursued in critical areas of urban and rural geographies to ensure that rural populations do not migrate to urban areas in search of better access to land and vice versa. The best approach to creating a purposeful vision is to respect global, regional, national, local and grassroots urban-rural continuum development agendas. Although a URLLs framework is best applied as a project intervention, its guiding vision does not have to be local. If it is already captured at the country level, it will have more policy-driven action, with possibly a broader context, at provincial and local levels. The key is to have a consistent policy (or vision) that supports land-related urban-rural continuum development at all levels.
- Context.** The vision for urban-rural continuum (or interdependent) development should be contextualized to motivate the innovation of strategies to support land sector reforms, capacity-building and other action-oriented steps towards URLLs. It should also engender the monitoring and evaluation of critical land-related commitments.

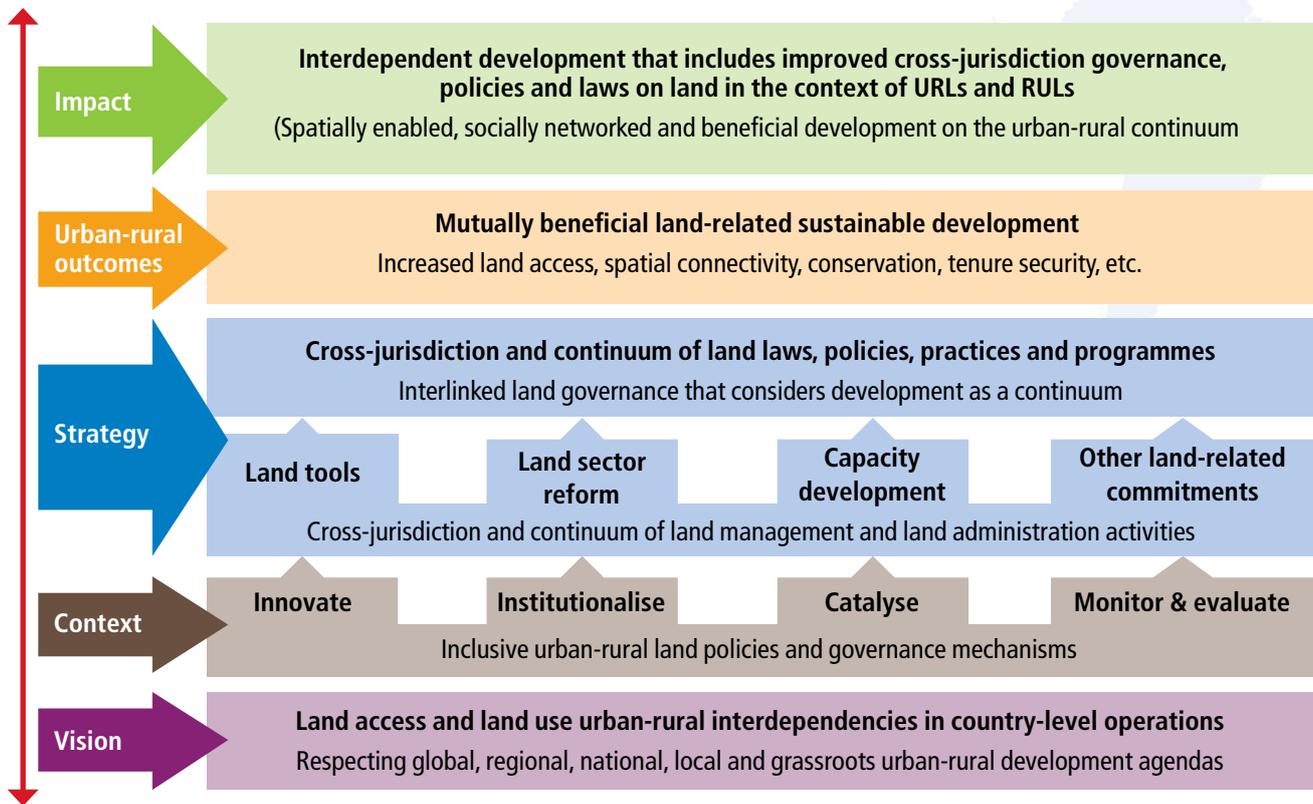


Figure 8: A framework for improving UURLs.

Land policy and governance mechanisms would allow for the vision to be placed into specific land-related development contexts, especially at the provincial, regional and local levels where urban-rural continuum challenges exist.

- **Strategy.** Since the core premise behind UURLs is to produce interdependent outcomes that lead to urban-rural continuum development, a common strategy would be to use land tools, capacity-building measures and sector reforms (or any locally possible measures) to engage in cross-jurisdiction (or continuum activities) that would enable land laws, policies, practices and programmes to generate land management and administration outcomes on the continuum of development.
- **Urban-rural outcomes.** If all these efforts are geared towards continuum land management and administration, they will lead to inclusive urban

and rural land management and administration outcomes (by way of both principle and action), which may result in mutually beneficial, suitable land-related development for urban, peri-urban and rural areas. Such outcomes can manifest as increased land access, spatial connectivity, environmental awareness and tenure security, to name a few. Outcomes achieved within any specific territory would depend on the nature of the land challenges and the pattern of the vision driving the UURLs initiative.

- **Impact.** Consequently, a long-term gain would be the emergence of interdependent development resulting from continuous efforts aimed at improving land governance, policies and legislation in the context of UURLs and RURLs. To achieve the expected outcomes and impact, a UURLs framework requires action-oriented steps.

## FROM AN URBAN- RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK TO CASE STUDIES AND ACTION- ORIENTED STEPS

## 6 FROM AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK TO CASE STUDIES AND ACTION-ORIENTED STEPS

Land professionals should have a local understanding of the urban and rural geographies in which they operate in order to successfully implement a URLLs framework. A sharp distinction between urban and rural areas has often reduced inhabitants' livelihoods to two opposing categories: agriculture in rural areas and manufacturing in urban areas. However, as figure 1 shows, rural and urban areas have many commonalities. Their differences mainly manifest themselves in the scale of their problems. The same applies to their livelihood dependencies. Therefore, the task of land professionals is to ensure that appropriate analysis is performed to understand the land dimension of urban and rural challenges and to adapt appropriate land tools and methods. The world is becoming more interdependent due to globalization, so urban and rural areas must also become interdependent. This requires identifying the continuum challenges that affect them.

### 6.1 LAND-RELATED CHALLENGES REQUIRING AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK

Many land-related challenges (e.g., unemployment, social exclusion in natural resources, local economic crises, poverty) have urban, peri-urban and rural dimensions. Hence, implementing a URLLs framework requires a focus on urban-rural issues that are mutual and complementary rather than those with differences or competition between them. It requires identifying action-oriented steps to create solutions for land-related challenges in urban and rural areas. A starting point is to identify specific categories and types of land-related challenges on the urban-rural continuum. To

illustrate specific steps to be taken towards applying a URLLs framework, some of these challenges have been identified. They include land tenure insecurity, illegal or excessive consumption of rural land by urbanization, and environmental risks (e.g., floods, drought, tsunamis, land degradation, pollution and other natural and human-made disasters without recourse to administrative borders). Naturally occurring environmental risks can displace populations or cause involuntary migration of urban populations to rural areas and vice versa. Environmental concerns such as air pollution due to urban industrial activities can have consequences in rural areas. Capacity-building challenges related to urban-rural continuum research are another kind of problem. Other challenges manifest in the form of cross-jurisdiction policy-making for urban-rural land administration and management and tenure-responsive land-use planning, among many others.

A framework for URLLs is presented above (in section 5.3.3). Two case studies are now introduced to show how it is possible to locate specific action-oriented steps applicable in the implementation of URLLs elsewhere. The case studies focus on identifying the issues and assessing the measures and outcomes to derive learning points.

### 6.2 URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES AND URBAN- RURAL CONTINUUM: CASE STUDIES

#### 6.2.1 *Halting excessive consumption of rural land by Munich in Germany*<sup>4</sup>

The region of Weyarn, Germany, is situated 30 km southeast of the city of Munich. It is rural, with about 3500 people living in 20 villages in an area of approximately 47km<sup>2</sup>. Beginning in the late 1970s,

<sup>4</sup> For more on this case study, see Chigbu (2012).

when Munich property prices became unaffordable, many of its residents started buying land in cheaper Weyarn. Over the next two decades, Munich's urbanization pressures led to an influx of outsiders (working in Munich) to Weyarn, which resulted in an astronomical rise in the latter's property prices. The local communities in Weyarn were under threat of being overcome by urban encroachment, and land access became unaffordable, even for the native residents. Table 2 synthesizes the Weyarn situation, detailing the challenge, measures taken, outcomes and lessons learned.

This case study demonstrates two things. First, URLs are not about urban areas dominating rural areas. Instead, they are about maintaining unique identities while coexisting in interdependent ways. Second, a focus on the land components of URLs allows URLLs to emerge as a mutually beneficial strategy for preserving land and sharing or distributing land resources (in this case, water). In this project, a rural area (Weyarn) on the brink of urban domination (by the city of Munich) had to introduce measures for maintaining its rurality by safeguarding its land from excessive consumption while cooperating with the neighbouring city.

### 6.2.2 *Reconstructing the Aceh land administration system in Indonesia*<sup>5</sup>

Aceh is a semi-autonomous Indonesian province on the northwest tip of Sumatra Island. It is a well-known tourist and coastal region made up of urban, peri-urban and rural municipalities. Natural disasters do not discriminate between urban and rural areas, and this was demonstrated by the 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami that struck many countries across East and South Asia. Parts of Indonesia, including Aceh,

were significantly damaged by the tsunami, which killed almost 200,000 people in the country. The estimated cost of damage to properties and businesses in the two impacted provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra was approximately \$4.4 billion. More than 570,000 people were displaced, and at least 250,000 homes and buildings were destroyed as the wave swallowed large parts of the coastline. Sixty per cent of the buildings in Aceh's capital, Banda Aceh, were damaged. In addition to the loss of human life and buildings, the tsunami destroyed or severely damaged communities, infrastructure, roads, bridges and farms, and around 54,000 coastal land parcels were washed away or permanently inundated with water. Table 3 synthesizes the post-tsunami reconstruction of the Aceh land administration system to secure land tenure rights.

<sup>5</sup> This case study was supplied by Keith Clifford Bell (World Bank). For more on it, see World Bank (2005, 2010) and Clarke et al. (2005).

**TABLE 2: MEASURES TO SOLVE UNAFFORDABLE PROPERTY PRICES IN WEYARN, GERMANY, BY TAPPING INTO UURLS WITH MUNICH**

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Challenge           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Munich: There is a lack of access to land for residential purposes and a need for water to meet urban use.</li> <li>• Weyarn: There is a lack of access to land for building by rural residents owing to high prices caused by the demand for land by urban residents moving there from Munich.</li> </ul>   |
| Project background  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project timeline was 1991–2011.</li> <li>• By way of planning, the project was designed for 20 years. But by way of principle, the project timeline is considered limitless because its impact is meant to become a way of life (i.e., a lived experience from generation to generation).</li> <li>• Partners include the European Union; German federal, state and local governments; civil societies; and local community groups.</li> <li>• The objective was to secure rural land from urban consumption or pressure.</li> </ul>   |
| Measures taken      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Main principle:</b> Germany has a policy of “equivalent living conditions” protected by the constitution, which gives municipalities stronger development rights than the central government.</li> <li>• <b>Key measure:</b> The tool used is known as “village renewal” (Dorferneuerung). It is a rural development strategy that seeks to improve the economic and cultural structure of rural communities by maintaining their traditions and features while simultaneously linking them responsibly to urban communities. This involved the following steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development vision: Remain rural and cooperate with Munich rather than become urban</li> <li>- Spatial networking: Cooperate with Munich rather than depend on Munich.</li> <li>- Land policy measure in Weyarn: Mobilize and provide land. In other words, this rural policy requires landowners to sell two thirds of their agricultural land (i.e., future residential areas) to the rural municipality at double the market price. They can (if they choose to) sell one third privately at the market price. The municipality can then carry out a land-use planning measure to convert the agricultural land to residential land and offer residents affordable arrangements. Stringent conditions are put in place for urban residents (they must participate in rural activities and be resident for a minimum of 10 years to access land meant for native rural residents).</li> <li>- Collaboration with Munich: Munich accesses water from Weyarn through cross-boundary agreements on the condition (financial and environmental) that farms are managed ecologically to maintain quality water for Weyarn and Munich.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| Outcomes and impact | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project has allowed for affordable access to land by rural residents and availability of living space and improved economic development.</li> <li>• The project excluded all undesired development by actively planning and implementing the local land policy.</li> <li>• An equal development partnership between the rural municipality and its urban neighbour has enabled mutual discussions ensuring that one municipality’s policies do not negatively affect the other.</li> </ul>   |
| Lessons learned     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project’s beneficiaries include everyone in the rural and urban areas, including the local governments, civil society, etc.</li> <li>• Citizens from both areas ran the project, which included a citizenship-based participation strategy, based on the philosophy of “politics for the people needs politics with the people” (Chigbu, 2013, p. 220).</li> <li>• The rural municipality leveraged its unique negotiating points (location, landscape, water resources) with Munich.</li> <li>• The rural municipality advanced rurality as a spatial product capable of being valued by a city.</li> </ul>   |

**TABLE 3: MEASURES TAKEN IN RECONSTRUCTING THE ACEH LAND ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM**

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Challenge</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The tsunami in Aceh damaged or destroyed all the land records stored in offices across the province.</li> <li>• All the cadastral index maps were irretrievably lost.</li> <li>• There was a need to secure land tenure for everyone in the region irrespective of whether they were from urban or rural areas.</li> <li>• There was pressure for revised and improved spatial planning in a few communities. It was determined that any such planning should only proceed after a community land mapping system had been completed and documents lodged with the national land agency.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Project background</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reconstruction project was the first one initiated and approved under the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Aceh and North Sumatra, supervised by the World Bank. It received \$28 million out of the almost US\$500 million allotted to 11 projects.</li> <li>• The project was to improve land tenure security in Aceh after the devastation caused by the tsunami and the destruction of evidence of land ownership.</li> <li>• The proposed objectives were to (1) recover and protect ownership land rights of the people in the affected and surrounding areas, and (2) rebuild the land administration system. It was recognized soon after the tsunami that people wanted to rebuild quickly. However, normal government processes were slow for land rights adjudication.</li> <li>• A community land mapping system was devised under which communities with civil-society support could identify ownership and boundaries of land parcels and package the outcomes and supporting evidence for subsequent official government adjudication.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Measures taken</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Build Back Better strategy was conceived in 2005 during the reconstruction project.</li> <li>• It was the first project to embrace this strategy, which focused on the sustainability and resilience of communities to future disasters and conflict. The linkages between urban and rural communities were a general consideration in the project design and implementation. It was essential to consider URLs because of access to farming lands for those living in villages and towns. An assessment of the pre-tsunami land rights of the communities was conducted, and a new spatial planning was undertaken for the reallocation of land.</li> <li>• Women of Aceh were afforded equal land rights for the first time in the province's history. The government also prohibited all land transfers to prevent land grabbing.</li> <li>• The government and civil society worked closely with mosques to ensure that inheritance rights, especially for widows and orphans, were secured</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Outcomes and impact</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the first anniversary of the tsunami, approximately 5000 land certificates were produced, distributed and reported.</li> <li>• A total of 330,000 land parcels were mapped by communities, and almost 230,000 titles were issued. Furthermore, community land mapping and titling distribution was undertaken after the project closed on 30 June 2009. Nearly \$15 million of the project's funding, or a little more than 50 per cent, was spent.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Lessons learned</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aceh is made up of urban, peri-urban and rural local authorities.</li> <li>• The implementation of cross-jurisdiction or continuum land administration is useful because it allows multiple areas (urban, peri-urban and rural areas) to be covered under one project or programme. This saves time. It also saves resources and impacts multiple geographies.</li> </ul>  |

Some complex issues arose due to the cross-jurisdiction systematic titling on lands that were uncertified before the tsunami. Most of these lands are in the rural areas and are held under customary communal tenures (*tanah ulayat*). Most belonged to poor people who could not afford to get titles and so could not produce evidence of their land rights in the post-tsunami period. The project used a conflict resolution procedure to address some of these issues, but some of the challenges linger.

### 6.3 ACTION-ORIENTED STEPS FOR APPLYING AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK

A significant issue drawn from the two case studies is that the urban-rural continuum problem can take various forms. It can take a more direct land administration or land management dimension (as in the case of Indonesia), requiring the immediate use of land administration tools (e.g., professional approaches like land tenure, cadastral survey, titling, and boundary and land registration). But it usually manifests in the form of interlinked land administration and land management and cross-cutting issues (as in the case of Germany). This requires a hybrid approach of combined professional tools (e.g., land tenure) and institutional tools (e.g., land policy, land governance, land markets).<sup>6</sup>Hence, there cannot be a blueprint for applying (or adapting or adopting) the URLLs framework presented in this report. It is only possible to present generic action-oriented steps for using it in local situations where URLLs or RULLs are disconnected from tackling land challenges. In line with achieving the expected outcomes and impact of a URLLs framework (figure 8), some action-oriented steps are presented below.

<sup>6</sup> While a definitive description of the full range of land administration approaches is not possible, Williamson et al. (2010, p. 318) provide an overview in the introduction of their toolbox methodology, in addition to details of the typical interventions that are available in a land administration toolbox.

#### 6.3.1 Urban-rural continuum land policy activities

- **Conduct cross-benefit policy assessments.** This should be done to review opportunities for urban-rural cooperation for interdependent development. This requires institutional mandate and policy analyses to ensure coherence in policy expectations and coherence with acting based on national or regional laws. Cross-benefit policy assessments will enable the emergence of a vision for urban-rural continuum development. A vision is vital to guiding spatial development in the whole territory, and it should have a socioeconomic and environmental focus. This will enable the planning aspect to be coordinated to attain the vision. It will also allow achievements to be measured against goals to ascertain the success or failure of development efforts.
- **Establish cross-jurisdiction land resource policies.** A cross-jurisdiction land policy means putting in place local-level rules, by-laws and regulations on the use of land and natural resources. This requires multisectoral and multi-actor mechanisms to target integrated territorial development and critical resources management in an urban-and-rural policy arrangement. This is possible through intermunicipal policy arrangements to discern shared objectives about complementary benefits in land and natural resource use.
- **Develop a strategy for implementing an urban-rural continuum land policy.** This strategy focuses on the inclusion of complementary urban-rural sectors, disadvantaged urban-rural geographies and populations (including women, youth and marginalized groups), and land resources. Any developed strategy should also include how to raise awareness about participating in, and the benefits of, URLLs. It should also have land and spatial planning

dimensions of urban-rural continuum development (e.g., urban-rural land-use planning or land-use planning across the urban-rural continuum, tenure security, urban-rural spatial data infrastructure, land information sharing, capacity- and institution-building).

- **Establish monitoring mechanisms for ensuring urban-rural continuum land policy activities.** Monitoring and evaluating urban-rural policies requires collecting, validating, interpreting and sharing policy data across urban-rural jurisdictions and using it for urban-rural continuum development decision-making.

### 6.3.2 Strategic urban-rural land use planning

- **Initiate urban-rural continuum planning.** A critical entry point could be through urban-rural land use planning, which could be mainstreamed into existing planning policies in urban and rural areas. Another strategy could be to create an urban-rural land-use planning team.
- **Set the objective of identifying specific urban-rural land-use plans.** This should focus on complementarity in the benefits of land use and protecting urban-rural land users' rights. The critical issue here should be to ensure that urban and rural areas reach agreements on land-use benefits and avoid illegal land consumption by neighbouring cities and vice versa.
- **Develop a strategic urban-rural land-use plan.** This involves identifying and assessing future land use and can provide a guide for rural and urban areas to grasp each other's land vision. As such, they can develop a complementary, rather than a conflicting, plan for their future development.

### 6.3.3 Urban-rural spatial data infrastructure and land information sharing

- **Create and combine spatial data and land information for urban-rural continuum decision-making and actions.** This can involve sharing existing data and creating new data to ensure the availability of information access (e.g., demographic data, GIS-based spatial data on land and natural resources, spatial development, land tenure).
- **Develop a shared platform for collecting, storing and using spatial data and land information.** Such a platform can be used as a base for appropriate cross-jurisdiction planning and policies. It is important that this information is accessible and available to rural and urban governments to enable them to create and deliver diverse livelihood options for their citizens.
- **Use shared land information and demographic data to support backward-forward linkages.** These relationships can be kept between agriculture, manufacturing and services. Shared synergies between rural agricultural production and urban-based enterprises have the potential for mutually beneficial urban-rural development. They can be used to identify tenure-insecure areas in urban-rural territories and project ways to improve them.

### 6.3.4 Continuum approaches for land tenure and food security

- **Analyse the territorial land tenure security.** This is necessary to understand the urban-rural state of land tenure and to find ways of linking secure tenure to better livelihood options to improve food security.

This requires securing tenure for farmers and traders, so that agricultural value chains can result in better food security. This means ensuring that agricultural products are available to demand.

- **Strengthen urban and rural land tenure systems.** This is crucial in agriculture and food and water security by linking their associated ecosystem services. Land administration systems, which are already a continuum of services in many countries, can enable tenure security. Cross-management of natural resources can support them, increase food security and address inequality concerns in their distribution.

### 6.3.5 Important cross-cutting urban-rural development activities

- **Develop capacities.** Apply capacity-building in urban-rural tenure knowledge. This is possible through continuous learning that embraces anticipating, planning, tracking, interpreting, reviewing, adjusting and creating urban-rural cross-jurisdiction land-tenure related visions and plans.
- **Create a fund to support the land tenure aspects of urban-rural continuum development.** UURLs should not be a mere idea. There must be funding criteria for their initiation, planning, implementation, and monitoring. It is well known that many urban and rural governments have funding problems. However, where possible, it is worthwhile to set aside funding for executing the UURLs aspect of the urban-rural development continuum.
- **Mainstream gender, youth and pro-poor interests in UURLs.** This makes it essential to mainstream their interests in the policy, planning, implementation and monitoring aspects of UURLs to ensure inclusiveness and equity in urban-rural development.

- **Develop and exercise the political leadership and will for governing the urban-rural continuum in the context of UURLs.**

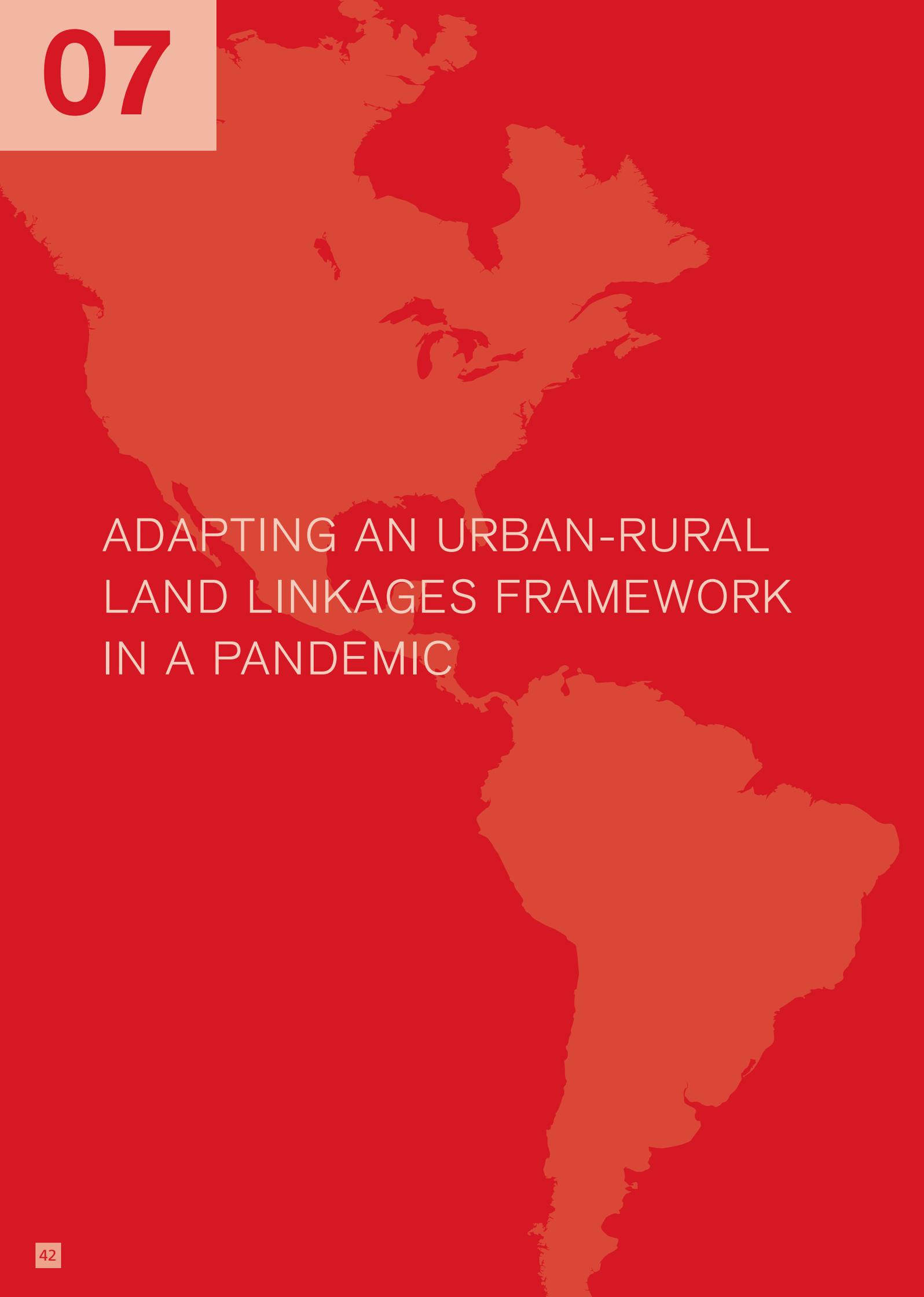
Politics play a substantial role in urban and rural development. There has to be strong and focused political leadership with the will to implement UURLs and related policies without bias. It is best for individuals with strong political influence and a principled political philosophy to lead the UURLs process.

The action-oriented steps are presented to assist implementing agencies who may want to adapt a UURLs framework to their procedures for enhancing land challenges that are tied to the continuum of urban-rural development. These steps have been suggested knowing that what works in one place may not work in another place.



Rice production in rural Chad. In Chad, customary and Islamic laws govern issues regarding access to and control of land and natural resources in both urban and rural areas. Photo © United Nations Chad.

07



ADAPTING AN URBAN-RURAL  
LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK  
IN A PANDEMIC

## 7 ADAPTING AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK IN A PANDEMIC

The virus responsible for COVID-19 has shown that pandemics pose severe problems for humanity and are capable of impeding the progress made on land issues thus far. With exceptionally high morbidity and mortality rates, the COVID-19 pandemic caused devastating impacts across the globe. For instance, “a growing number of reports about land governance in the time of COVID-19 suggest that national elites in several countries are using the reduced space for oversight and accountability as an opportunity to seize lands” (Cotula, 2020). A URLLs framework can enable effective responses to secure land rights and stop land grabs during situations such as the present one. It can lay the foundations for a just recovery for people in urban and rural areas. However, this requires investment in urban-rural partnerships in public health as well as collaboration in research.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that social distancing regulations can limit physical interactions between URLLs and RULs. A URLLs framework can improve living conditions during a pandemic because the land-related problems that could arise from it, or be exacerbated by it, are evictions and land pressures caused by urban-rural migration.

**Evictions.** During the pandemic, evictions have emerged as the most problematic outcome for land and property renters due to the loss of livelihoods caused by the halt in economic activities. With appropriate urban-rural coordination of a URLLs framework, it would be possible for governments to introduce and monitor actions to secure land and housing tenure for tenants in peri-urban areas, urban areas (especially in informal settlements) and rural areas.

**Mass urban-rural migration.** A pandemic can reverse migration (from urban to rural areas). This deurbanization scenario puts pressure on rural resources (e.g., pastoral and agricultural land, water, forests), and as people leave cities for rural areas, they leave their houses (and other property) behind. A URLLs framework can ensure that land administration procedures are resilient enough to ensure land tenure security, and that transactions are efficient, secure, transparent and reliable. It does not unfairly or inadvertently make vulnerable people worse off. Where reverse migration is necessary, URLLs measures can also ensure that land and property left behind by those temporarily migrating to rural areas are not taken over by other vested interests such as private developers, urban squatters or irresponsible government agents.

There are many potential opportunities for ensuring that people (whether in urban, peri-urban or rural areas) are secure in their use of land during a pandemic. The structures of URLLs (if put in place) are such that the urban-rural flow of land information exchanges can enable transparent continuum land governance. This can lead to property rights protection and decrease the chances for elite capture on the urban-rural continuum. Some measures of URLLs (e.g., tenure-responsive land-use planning) can link spatial activities in central business districts and informal (slum) settlements to peri-urban and rural areas. This can be made possible by identifying potential pandemic hotspots (usually settlements characterized by a lack of or poor infrastructure and spatial planning standards).

**Worth noting is that not all linkages and interactions between urban, peri-urban and rural areas are physical.** Information communication technologies can allow for more e-governance in land management and administration. However, this also means that an adequate infrastructure for these technologies must be

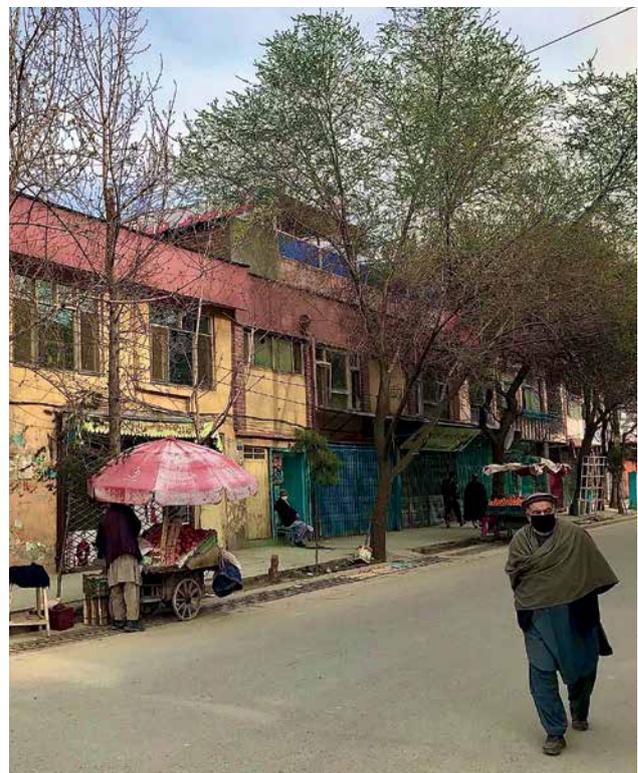
made available to serve the urban-rural continuum. If in place, they can enable physical distancing. The crucial issue will be overcoming inequities in access to the technologies.

A URLLs framework can also include land and natural resource policy issues. Policy changes (as part of the measures of URLLs) can lead to positive responses to pandemics. It is important to balance public health priorities with economic and social activities to mitigate the effects of a pandemic on the urban-rural continuum. Policymaking for regional and territorial preparedness is necessary to ensure that there are interdependent, sociophysical developments. So far, this is relevant because spatial and development policies do not treat urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas as isolated spatial entities. Pandemic disaster preparedness strategies should be designed to raise alerts along the urban-rural continuum. Preparedness plans should also include increased collaboration between urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas.

Through adequate planning, it is possible to adapt URLLs issues to mediate public health inequalities between urban, peri-urban and rural areas. This will enable these areas to coexist for mutual benefit, even during a pandemic. Employing planning and mapping tools could, for instance, enable access to spatial and population data and health centre locations, which would be helpful for decision-making.

Adopting a URLLs framework can protect and enhance land tenure security and appropriate land-use practices to enable physical distancing across urban- rural lines. This would help maintain the backward-forward flow of information (including knowledge), goods and services. With adequate spatial networking between urban, peri-

urban and rural areas, there will be no intrinsic trade-off between socioeconomic conditions and public health during a pandemic. A URLLs framework can also allow for rural residents to access urban health infrastructure and for urban residents to access the rural safe space. Establishing clear land tenure rights on the urban-rural continuum could improve the water access continuum, which could lead to improved sanitation in informal settlements and peri-urban and rural areas. Responses can be collaborative rather than isolated interventions that have proven to be weak during the COVID-19 experience of most developing countries. Owing to the closure of already secluded borders, urban and rural populations face various forms of hardship, especially difficulties in accessing land-related resources.



**Shops and markets on the streets of Kabul city in Afghanistan during the COVID-19 lockdown. The bustling city full of cars and people appears almost empty after the restriction on movement is introduced to prevent spread of Corona virus in the city. Photo © UNDP/ S.Omer Sadaat.**

TOWARDS DEVELOPING  
A LAND TOOL FOR  
URBAN-RURAL LAND  
LINKAGES

## 8 TOWARDS DEVELOPING A LAND TOOL FOR URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES

A URLLs framework presents an opportunity to develop a URLLs-specific land tool. The GLTN and its partners (and other implementers in the global land sector) offer tools and approaches to achieve responsible and efficient linkages between urban, peri-urban and rural areas. But multiple land problems are common in these areas, so the development of a tool for URLLs is imperative.

A potential tool for URLLs should include (but not be limited to) the following features:

- It follows the GLTN tool development process.
- It is based on broad consultations with stakeholders (e.g., farmers, rural populations and civil society organizations representing landowners' interests).
- It contributes to the capacitation of people and institutions in urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas.
- It contributes to achieving the GLTN 2018–2030 strategy and the SDGs.
- It is developed in line with the URL-GP and follows evidence-based practices on URLLs and RULs.
- It provides for proper safeguards, guaranteeing that all stakeholders' legitimate rights in urban, peri-urban and rural areas are considered and respected.
- It is adaptable to local situations in the country or region of operation.
- It responds to tenure problems and public health situations (e.g., natural and human-made disasters like pandemics).

### 8.1 USING EXISTING GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK TOOLS TO ADDRESS URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES

The GLTN has some existing tools that can be used in either isolated or combined forms to tackle the challenges of URLLs. A URLLs tool should prioritize some crucial issues:

- **Urban-rural nexus.** An understanding of the challenges of URLLs is essential for fostering efficient rural-urban interrelationships.
- **Climate change, land tenure and land rights.** The links between land tenure, land rights and climate change are critical because they are a continuum of land issues.
- **Food and water insecurity.** These basic needs must always be addressed in the context of urban-rural continuum development.
- **Environmental degradation.** Achieving land degradation neutrality by protecting the environment is crucial for land administration and land management.
- **Securing customary land tenure in rural areas and the various urban land tenures in informal settlements.** This requires ensuring that the poor in urban and rural areas have secure access to and the use of land. Registering the customary rights of rural residents and informal settlers along the urban-rural continuum is crucial.
- **Women and youth empowerment.** Urban-rural development is only realistic when women and youth have fair access to the use of land and natural resources. In both urban and rural areas, women and youth lack equitable access to land. Land administration and management procedures in an urban-rural framework can scale up women and youth empowerment under a URLLs context.



Community mapping in Muntinlupa city, Philippines using GLTN land tools and approaches. Photo © Technical Assistance Movement for People and Environment, Inc./TAMPEI.

The GLTN land tools are developed in ways that benefit everyone, with particular attention given to the poor, women and other disadvantaged groups.

The GLTN considers land tools to be pro-poor and youth- and gender-responsive if they have the following features:

- **Affordability.** They are affordable to anyone required to pay for their use and maintenance.
- **Equitability and gender-responsiveness.** They address everyone's needs fairly while paying particular attention to inequalities faced by women compared to men.
- **Pro-poor.** They aim to reduce poverty.
- **Sustainability.** They can be implemented in the future without large-scale external inputs.
- **Systematic and large-scale oriented.** They are flexible enough to deal with a wide range of situations.
- **Governance.** Their development and implementation must be attentive to how decisions are made regarding access to land use.
- **Subsidiarity.** They are sensitive to local situations and needs and are applicable at the lowest appropriate level of authority, whether that is the community or the lowest level of local government.

Table 4 summarizes how existing GLTN land tools can be used to address URLLs.

**TABLE 4: SELECTED GLTN LAND TOOLS THAT CAN ADDRESS URLLS**

| GLTN land tool                            | Potential role of the land tool in URLLs   |
|---|--|
| Fit-for-purpose land administration       | To support initiatives based on fit-for-purpose principles and locally realistic methods on the urban-rural continuum.   |
| Grassroots                                | To initiate grassroots, youth and gender-based teams.  |
| Continuum of land rights                  | To analyse the continuum of existing land rights, mainstream the continuum of land rights principles and record all rights and any identified continuum.           |
| Youth                                     | To analyse youth and gender data.  |
| Land-capacity assessment                  | To assess capacity-building needs.   |
| Land and disaster                         | To assess vulnerability to disaster and mitigation.  |
| Pro-poor land record system               | To document pro-poor land and rights, consolidate pro-poor land records and build a pro-poor land information system.  |
| Land sector coordination                  | To provide guidelines on how to establish an effective land sector mechanism.  |
| Pro-poor land policy development          | To provide guidelines on how to develop a pro-poor land policy.  |
| Transparency in land administration       | To use a tool-kit on transparency principles.  |
| Regulatory framework for non-state actors | To provide guidelines on how to establish a non-state actor mechanism.   |
| Social tenure domain model                | To compile a pro-poor land inventory, map the physical and social borders of land and mainstream a continuum of land rights principles.                            |
| Customary tenure                          | To conduct assessments to protect customary rights.  |
| Land and conflict                         | To collect customary land tenure data, analyse paths to recognize customary land tenure and conduct certification exercises that include customary land.           |
| Land monitoring and indicators            | To assess and document conflicts and ways to resolve them.   |
| Participatory enumeration                 | To engage communities in data collection and enumeration and recording of land data and identify or develop local indicators for monitoring and evaluating issues. |

TABLE 4: SELECTED GLTN LAND TOOLS THAT CAN ADDRESS URLLS ... CONTINUED

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Gender   | To evaluate the progress of gender issues.   |
| Valuation of unregistered lands and properties | To assess the values of land parcels that have not been entered into the formal land registry.   |
| Islamic land mechanism                         | To provide guiding principles for implementation in territories where Islamic communities are located.   |
| Citywide planning                              | To provide a systematic guide for planning cities (which can be adapted) to achieve urban-rural continuum development.                                     |
| Land-based financing                           | To provide training and capacities to communities on how to access funds for initiatives and provide strategies for financing projects.                    |
| Land-use planning                              | To provide strategies for tenure-responsive land use along the urban-rural continuum and provide capacity-building for carrying out land-use planning.     |
| Citywide slum upgrading                        | To provide responsive procedures for community-driven citywide upgrading (this will be key to ensuring inclusiveness across urban and peri-urban borders). |
| Land readjustment                              | To provide a guide for implementing participatory and inclusive land readjustment in the urban-rural continuum.  |

## 8.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS IN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES

A URLLs framework is necessary because it embraces infrastructure, agriculture and food systems, land tenure security, environmental issues, gender inequality in resource use and benefits and the creation of jobs, to name a few. Further work is needed in these (and other) areas, as they are essential for eliminating poverty and hardship and linking and leveraging the development potentials of urban, peri-urban and rural areas. To ensure that land-related issues are addressed in the context of URLLs and RULLs, different responsibilities among the various stakeholders in the land sector are necessary. Potential stakeholders include the State, local and district governments, business enterprises, local communities, research and educational institutions, donors and financial institutions, civil-society organizations and [global development](#) agencies.

These stakeholders' general responsibilities in URLLs are described below and summarized in Table 5.

**TABLE 5: RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

| Potential stakeholder  | Potential actors in urban, peri-urban and rural areas   | Specific URLLs responsibilities  |
|--|---|--|
| State  | National and regional parastatals and government ministries responsible for land management and land administration, including cadastre and land registration, environment, finance, courts, trade and economy, natural resources, urban development, agriculture, public works (e.g., infrastructure, construction, housing, transport)  | To engage in territorial planning and land administration and management and implement a URLLs framework by setting up multi-stakeholder platforms and monitoring and evaluating the implementation of URLLs-related programmes and impact on people and their environment.                          |
| Local and district governments   | District and local government political leaders (e.g., mayors) and municipal councils (and their agencies) responsible for land management and land administration, including cadastre and land registration, environment, finance, trade and economy, natural resources, urban development, agriculture, public works (e.g., infrastructure, construction, housing, transport) | To promote and implement URLLs initiatives as part of URLLs and RULs programmes and projects.  |
| Business enterprises (including small- and medium-sized enterprises and farmers) | Urban, peri-urban and rural farmers' unions; small-scale (informal) food processors' associations; street traders' and food vendors' coalitions   | To adhere to practices that promote URLLs in their professions, trades and development interests.  |
| Local communities  | Women's organizations, indigenous people, squatters, slum dwellers, minorities groups   | To respect URLLs land-use regulations, communicate continuum interests and needs and participate in URLLs projects.  |
| Research and educational institutions  | Research centres and universities addressing land issues in urban and rural areas; primary and secondary schools in urban, rural and peri-urban areas   | To engage in urban, peri-urban and rural land governance activities (particularly in research, capacity-building and publications) that build on addressing URLLs; collaborate across administrative borders.  |
| Civil-society organizations  | Organizations involved in advocacy and lobbying for different interest groups along the urban-rural continuum (e.g., slum dwellers, farmers, pastoralists); non-governmental organizations promoting environmental protection   | To participate in URLLs initiatives and lobby and communicate the interests of represented groups to ensure that their URLLs needs (e.g., land tenure security, food security, physical security) are protected.   |
| Implementing agencies  | Development programmes (both global and local, including GLTN) that focus on URLLs and RULs   | To provide technical and financial assistance to addressing URLLs problems in project territories and contribute to institutional capacity-building and knowledge, including sharing and exchanging URLLs-related experiences through workshops, conferences and publications (e.g., policy briefs). |
| GLTN   | All partner organizations   | To promote URLLs in research, professional practice and advocacy.  |



**The Global Land Tool Network Partners at a past event. There are more than 80 international GLTN partners representing bilateral and multilateral development institutions, international research institutions and academia, international professional bodies, and international rural and urban civil society organizations, working together to address urban and rural planning and development. Photo © UN-Habitat.**

**The role and responsibilities of the State (including national, regional and local authorities).** The State can play a unique role in fostering URLLs in a manner that will produce people- and environment-centred impacts on institutional efforts to enhance URLs and RULs as part of integrated urban-rural development measures. The State has the primary responsibility of achieving adequate living conditions for its citizens and fulfilling its commitments under international conventions relevant to achieving local and global development goals. The State can play several roles in a URLLs framework:

- *Promote an enabling environment for URLs and RULs and ensure that the land issues that impede their positive impacts are identified.* Efforts to improve them include coherent and consistent policies that encourage multi- and intersectoral planning and coordination of land use.
- *Build capacity along the urban-rural continuum of land management and land administration.* This is essential for maximizing URLLs outcomes and is especially important in developing countries where such capability is often lacking.

- *Recognize intermediary human settlements that link urban and rural areas as peri-urban areas.* This gives the people living in these settlements an administrative basis for playing the roles necessary for linking interactions between urban, rural and peri-urban areas.
- *Decentralize land administration and management agencies so that there is an active base in urban, peri-urban and rural areas.* This will ensure that land-based activities (including land markets) in the three areas are linked by a territorial network that can deliver land-related services relevant to URLLs and RULs.
- *Reform land sectors to remove institutional and administrative barriers to coordinated, collaborative and harmonized approaches among different government institutions and agencies dealing with rural and urban development.* It is impossible to promote and achieve URLLs if government ministries, agencies and departments dealing with various rural and urban development issues continue to work in uncoordinated silos. In situations where reforming land sectors is not possible (as may be the case in many countries), a strategy to build a bridge between agencies is an incremental, more realistic step towards a continuum of development agendas. This should not be merely about linking urban and rural geographies and the infrastructure, transport, communications, and mobility aspects of their development.
- *Provide public goods and services necessary for URLLs and RULs by investing in physical and information technology infrastructure, energy, environmental programmes, agriculture, and food systems strategically located and beneficial to urban, peri-urban and rural populations.* Even where this is already happening, it is pertinent to extend the scope of funds and capacity to deal with large urban centres and remote agricultural communities simultaneously.

Furthermore, the State should ensure that the national land policy (including regional and local land regulations) adequately covers URLLs issues. It should introduce relevant laws and administrative rules and regulations or realign existing laws (and regulations and legislation) to address them (e.g., urban planning, rural planning, construction legislation).

**The role of local and district governments.** This involves developing sufficient human, financial and technical capacities for effective and responsible land management and land administration of urban, peri-urban and rural areas to ensure that the challenges of URLLs are addressed. This could include conducting major campaigns against corruption and forced evictions. Authorities on the urban-rural continuum can also conduct collaborative territorial planning that embraces issues that affect urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

**The role of businesses (including small- and medium-sized enterprises and farms).** Businesses and farms (including workers and other non-state actors [box 7] need to adhere to sustainable land management practices and respect land-use regulations within and outside their operational borders. They also should make local and regional commitments to support continuum supply chains based on business plans meant to create food security and the supply of goods and services in the context of urban-rural and rural-urban nexuses. They should respect legitimate land tenure rights in line with the URL-GP, VGGT and RAI. More interactions would be needed between the producers, processors, distributors and retailers of goods and services in backward-forward exchanges. They should respect URLLs land-use regulations.

**The role of local communities.** The expected development outcomes (and impact) that would evolve from RULs and URLs policies and activities cannot happen without local community participation in rural, urban and peri-urban areas. Furthermore, URLs and RULs cannot be adequately coordinated without impacting existing land tenure (including local and regional land administration) systems. Communities (including indigenous peoples) should be open-minded and receptive to the sociocultural changes that would occur. They should support local land regulations and policies and respect others' rights to avoid incessant land and natural resource conflicts; they should also align their development vision to one that is integrative not isolationist. This may demand social networking on issues concerning URLLs across borders with neighbouring communities.

**The role of research institutions (including universities and land-related research centres).** Research institutions, irrespective of where they are located, should engage in collaborative programmes (including workshops and seminars) that promote spatial or territorial integration. This can facilitate renewed policy contributions, knowledge exchanges and skills development on URLLs concerns. These institutions should also continue to research better ways of supporting URLs and RULs (without negating URLLs). Educational institutions can train people and organizations to navigate the land issues connected to URLs and RULs.

**The roles of donors and funding or financing institutions.** Donors should recognize the relevance of URLLs and the principles that guide them. It is essential that donors and funding or financial institutions put measures in place for investors who are willing to operate in rural and peri-urban areas. They should also ensure that their funds are not used in implementing projects that violate

#### **BOX 7: Key land governance roles that are addressed as part of URLLs**

Non-state actors, including business enterprises, have a responsibility to respect human rights and legitimate tenure rights. Business enterprises should act with due diligence to avoid infringing on the human rights and legitimate tenure rights of others. They should include appropriate risk management systems to prevent and address adverse impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights. Business enterprises should provide for and cooperate with non-judicial mechanisms to provide remedy, including effective operational-level grievance mechanisms, where appropriate, where they have caused or contributed to adverse impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights. Business enterprises should identify and assess any actual or potential impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights in which they may be involved.

States, in accordance with their international obligations, should provide access to effective judicial remedies for negative impacts on human rights and legitimate tenure rights by business enterprises. Where transnational corporations are involved, their home States have roles to play in assisting both those corporations and host States to ensure that businesses are not involved in [the] abuse of human rights and legitimate tenure rights. States should take additional steps to protect against abuses of human rights and legitimate tenure rights by business enterprises that are owned or controlled by the State, or that receive substantial support and service from State agencies.

**Source: FAO (2012, p. 4).**

people's land rights and their fundamental human rights. They can develop innovative financial mechanisms targeted to support investment in agriculture and the agroindustry that is beneficial to urban, peri-urban and rural populations.

**The role of civil-society organizations.** Civil societies should advocate for responsible interactions and relationships between urban, peri-urban and rural areas. This should include the promotion of land rights, human rights, and spatial justice. Such advocacy should encourage mutually beneficial urban-rural policies and projects beneficial to the poor (including peri-urban and rural farmers and informal settlers in urban areas). They should also advocate for the appropriate application of the URL-GP and other relevant principles and support accountability and transparency in the governance structure within their development territories.

**The role of global implementers of land initiatives (including the GLTN and its partners).** The current wave of action on URLs and RULs would not be sustainable without mainstreaming the land issues into any methods for action. Addressing URLLs provides an opportunity to frame interventions that tackle urban-rural continuum development without negating its land aspects. Implementers in the global land sector should strengthen their partnerships and encourage research and knowledge exchange so that land-based approaches to integrating urban, peri-urban and rural areas can be developed.

PROSPECTS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS

## 9 PROSPECTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 9.1 PROSPECTS

A framework for URLLs as presented in this report has the potential to become a highly useful land management tool that can enable urban (including peri-urban) and rural areas to leverage each other's strengths. The framework encourages secure land ownership and land rights, and the mobility of land-related services across urban-rural lines. It also facilitates the allocation of new land areas for purposes other than agriculture (e.g., nature restoration, public infrastructure). Implementing it requires thoroughly integrated urban (including peri-urban) and rural regulations and a territorial-focused spatial framework as part of national and regional development plans.

A potential short-term prospect includes publishing a report that introduces URLLs to academics and development practitioners who are operating in the land sector.

A potential medium-term prospect includes creating a dedicated research field in URLLs with professional land-sector practitioners who can develop land tools specific to URLLs.

A potential long-term prospect includes implementing a URLLs framework at the country level towards making local impacts in urban and rural areas.

In both the SDGs and the NUA, United Nations Member States agreed to normative policies supporting integrated urban and territorial planning and development, calling for new, inclusive approaches and enhanced synergies between urban and rural communities and spaces. The reciprocal and repetitive flow of people, goods, information and financial and environmental services

between rural, peri-urban and urban areas (i.e., URLLs and RULs) are in the URLLs framework. These backward-forward exchanges can depend on sociospatial arrangements. Land management measures can ensure that these sociospatial arrangements create cities and villages with spatially enabled networks within functional territories. Putting the URLLs framework into action (as a key aspect of URLLs and RULs) is critical to meeting sustainable development challenges on the urban-rural continuum.

The GLTN is committed to creating opportunities and synergies around applying and implementing tools that address URLLs to contribute to the interdependence between urban, peri-urban and rural areas. The GLTN has been working with key partners to add value to existing RULs and URLLs initiatives and the substantive discourse on how to improve them. It now needs to strengthen these knowledge capacities and awareness-building initiatives by championing the land linkages dimension of the discourse (i.e., URLLs). The GLTN, with its expertise in the development of pro-poor land tools and influence in the global land sector at various levels, is well situated to facilitate the development of a URLLs land tool and champion its application and implementation at the country level.

### 9.2 KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM EMBRACING THE URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES CONCEPT

The massive disruptions to global land agendas as a result of COVID-19 have come with some URLLs lessons:

- **There is security in having fresh food and ample outdoor space for social/physical distancing.** These scenarios can be best appreciated and improved through urban policies that consider the values of neighbouring rural areas.



An aerial view of San Francisco, California, United States of America. Photo © UN/ Mark Garten.

- **Pervasive poverty is not only a rural phenomenon.**

It is an urban issue, too. Adapting continuum policies against poverty by adopting a URLLs framework can provide solutions that work simultaneously for urban, peri-urban and rural areas.

- **Urban, peri-urban and rural areas can learn from each other's experiences.** The focus on the urban-rural divide tends to overlook these areas' commonalities. The narrative of a rural area in need of constant repair and an urban area that has undergone enough repair trivializes the importance of the peri-urban area on the development continuum. Embracing a URLLs framework can enable these areas to share their unique experiences and learn from each other.

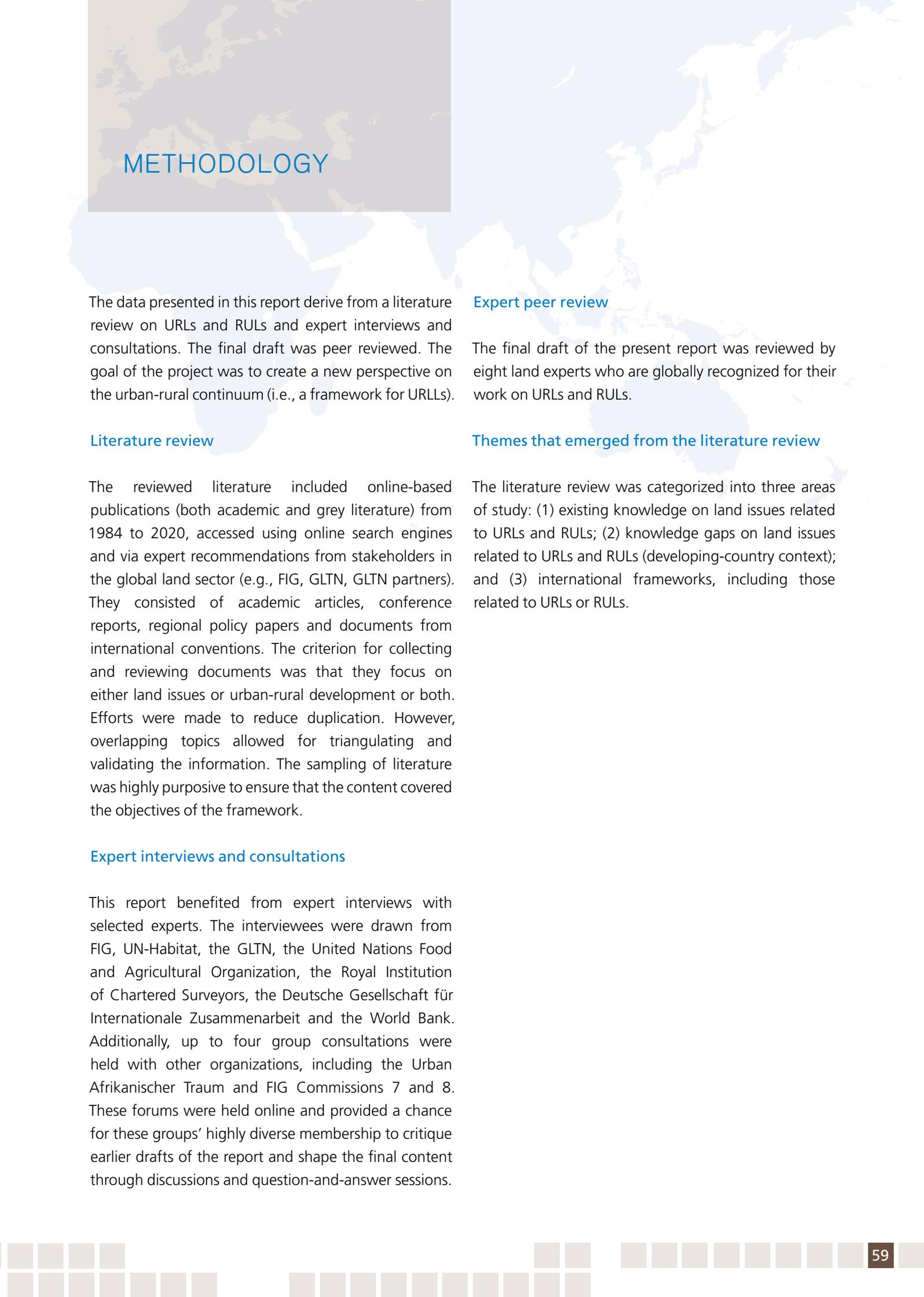
### 9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING AN URBAN-RURAL LAND LINKAGES FRAMEWORK

Stakeholders in land management (including land administration and policy and governance aspects of addressing tenure) seeking to improve and apply solutions to URLs and RULs can use the framework presented in this report. However, it is still a work in progress and needs fine-tuning and consolidation before it can be developed into a land tool. Some measures to improve it are as follows:

- Engage in an inclusive process for developing a URLLs land tool.
- Begin a multi-stakeholder process of developing a strategy for capacitating academics and land professionals about URLLs.
- Define the role stakeholders can play in identifying the challenges in URLLs and ways to resolve them. It is also essential to identify the specific role GLTN partners can play in promoting URLLs and related concerns on the urban-rural continuum.
- Urge governments and other stakeholders to embrace and emphasize URLLs in their URLs and RULs initiatives, and allocate specific funds for addressing URLLs in their projects and programmes.
- Mobilize resources for planning and implementing efforts and activities in support of URLLs initiatives to contribute to the global efforts to improve URLs and RULs.
- Encourage (and engage with) stakeholders, especially those in the research sector, to engage in in-depth research on the issues of URLLs to understand its dynamics with evidence-based data.
- Engage in research on URLLs measures to enable effective responses to secure land rights and stop land grabs during situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Such a research stream could lay the foundations for recovery from natural and human-made disasters, including pandemics.
- Encourage stakeholders to support capacity-building towards effectively addressing URLLs.



# ANNEX



## METHODOLOGY

The data presented in this report derive from a literature review on URLs and RULs and expert interviews and consultations. The final draft was peer reviewed. The goal of the project was to create a new perspective on the urban-rural continuum (i.e., a framework for URLLs).

### Literature review

The reviewed literature included online-based publications (both academic and grey literature) from 1984 to 2020, accessed using online search engines and via expert recommendations from stakeholders in the global land sector (e.g., FIG, GLTN, GLTN partners). They consisted of academic articles, conference reports, regional policy papers and documents from international conventions. The criterion for collecting and reviewing documents was that they focus on either land issues or urban-rural development or both. Efforts were made to reduce duplication. However, overlapping topics allowed for triangulating and validating the information. The sampling of literature was highly purposive to ensure that the content covered the objectives of the framework.

### Expert interviews and consultations

This report benefited from expert interviews with selected experts. The interviewees were drawn from FIG, UN-Habitat, the GLTN, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit and the World Bank. Additionally, up to four group consultations were held with other organizations, including the Urban Afrikanischer Traum and FIG Commissions 7 and 8. These forums were held online and provided a chance for these groups' highly diverse membership to critique earlier drafts of the report and shape the final content through discussions and question-and-answer sessions.

### Expert peer review

The final draft of the present report was reviewed by eight land experts who are globally recognized for their work on URLs and RULs.

### Themes that emerged from the literature review

The literature review was categorized into three areas of study: (1) existing knowledge on land issues related to URLs and RULs; (2) knowledge gaps on land issues related to URLs and RULs (developing-country context); and (3) international frameworks, including those related to URLs or RULs.

# METHODOLOGY

A summary of the sources consulted is presented below.

## Summary of the issues addressed in the surveyed literature on URLs and RULs

|   | SOURCES  |
|---|--|
| Existing knowledge on land issues related to URLs and RULs                          | Peri-urban land-use conversion and tenure (in)security (Tacoli, 2003; Agergaard and Ortenbjerg, 2017); rural-urban interrelationships and cooperation in policy (Chigbu, 2013); rural-urban interactions in the forms of spatial movement and exchange (Tacoli, 2006; Mayer et al., 2016); agriculture transformation and access to land for the rural and poor and low-income people (Töpfer, 2001); rural-urban migration and remittances that influence rural land use ( Lambin and Meyfroidt, 2011; Eppler et al., 2015; (Töpfer, 2001; Andreasen et al., 2017); landscape and land resource (UN-Habitat, 2008)  |
| Knowledge gaps on land issues related to URLs and RULs (developing-country context) | Urban-rural land linkages (Chigbu, 2020); rural-urban spatial networking (Chigbu, 2013); territorial justice for urban and rural regions (Magel, 2015); tenure-responsive land-use planning (Chigbu et al., 2016; Chigbu et al., 2017); rural-urban interrelationships and cooperation (FIG, 2004); inclusive development (World Bank, 2015); territorial planning and development (UN-Habitat, 2015); equal living conditions or equivalent living conditions (Magel, 2009)   |
| International frameworks (including those related to URLs and RULs)                 | Equal rights for both spouses in respect of ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property ( United Nations, 1981); climate change mitigation and adaptation ( United Nations, 2015a); customary and indigenous rights to land and property ( United Nations, 1948); global SDGs (United Nations, 2015b); responsible governance of tenure of land in the context of national food security (FAO, 2012); urbanization based on a renewed agenda (or a new urban agenda) for balanced development (UN-Habitat, 2016); global food security (FAO, 2012); tenure-responsive land-use planning (Chigbu et al., 2016); land rights (GLTN, 2015); balanced and sustainable development of territories (European Union, 1999); international guidelines on urban and territorial planning (UN-Habitat, 2015); the Marrakech declaration on the urban-rural interrelationship for sustainable development (FIG, 2004); LGAF (Deininger et al., 2012); inclusive development (World Bank, 2015); Songyang consensus on urban-rural linkages (Songyang County Foreign Affairs Office, 2019); strengthening urban-rural linkages(UN-Habitat, 2017, 2019a, 2019b); compendium of case studies for implementing the URL-GP and a framework for action (UN-Habitat, 2020); rural well-being (OECD 2020) |

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FIG was founded in 1878 and is a United Nations and World Bank recognized non-governmental organization of national member associations, cadastral and mapping agencies and ministries, and universities and corporations from more than 120 countries. FIG represents the interests of surveyors worldwide and covers the whole range of professional fields within the global surveying community, including, but not limited to, surveying, cadastre, valuation, mapping, geodesy, geospatial, hydrography, quantity surveyors, spatial planning and land economics. It provides an international forum for discussion and development that aims to promote professional practice and standards. For more information, visit [www.fig.net](http://www.fig.net).

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NUST is a public institution based in Windhoek, Namibia. Established in 1996 and known as the Polytechnic of Namibia until 2015, NUST has a long history dating back to 1980, when it started classes in teacher training and secretarial courses. Today, NUST is ranked as the best higher education institution in Namibia. It is recognized by the African Union (through its Network of Excellence on Land Governance initiative) as a Centre of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa. For more information, visit [www.nust.na](http://www.nust.na).

## THE GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK (GLTN)

GLTN aims to contribute to poverty alleviation and the Millennium Development Goals through land reform, improved land management and security of tenure. The network has developed a global land partnership. Its members include international civil society organizations, international finance institutions, international research and training institutions, donors and professional bodies. It aims to take a more holistic approach to land issues and improve global land coordination in various ways. For further information, visit the GLTN web site at [www.glttn.net](http://www.glttn.net).



## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication presents a framework for tackling urban-rural land challenges. It is designed to help a range of stakeholders in developing countries understand how to adopt an inclusive approach to land management and administration initiatives to produce a balance in urban and rural development. It provides structured guidance for addressing land-specific problems within the intersection of urban and rural development.

The publication presents action-oriented steps and recommendations that should be pursued in urban-rural interdependent development. It also expands current knowledge about urban-rural linkages in the context of land tenure challenges. It is hoped that the publication will inspire additional policy debate on securing land tenure on an urban-rural continuum rather than viewing these areas in isolation.

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