

“The Importance of NSDI - Case of Georgia”

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Key words: Access to land; Cadastre; Capacity building; Cartography; Education; e-Governance; Geoinformation/GI; Informal settlements; Land management; Legislation; Professional practice; Real estate development; Reference systems; Remote sensing; Security of tenure; Spatial planning; Standards

SUMMARY

The goal of my research is to maximize the public benefits drawn from the geographic data available in Georgia. In particular, determine the disaster risk reduction and management capabilities using geospatial data in the populated areas. If we use geographic data as a foundation for the creation of new and improved services and for decision making, better preconditions will exist for the sustainable development of business sector, government institutions and for state building in general.

Demand for geospatial information is growing in a society (real estate, construction, tourism, transportation, agriculture, environment protection and other industries). There is also a need to implement effective management to solve many problems in the world through this information such as climate change, natural disasters, population migration and economic crises which in turn contributes to our lives and it is related to our geographical knowledge of certain aspects. The completeness and reliability of the information allows us to work more efficiently, plan and use our resources; avoid losses, calculate risks, carry out preventive measures.

Georgia is prone to disasters that pose a significant threat to different sectors of economy and to human development. Natural hazards, coupled with significant levels of exposure and vulnerability, have a substantial negative impact on the national economy. According to the government, over the last 40 years 70% of the territory of the country experienced natural hazards of hydro-meteorological and geological origin; economic losses exceeded USD 14 billion.

The assessment of disaster damages and losses is an essential practice for developing the effective national system of disaster risk management. The examples of disasters, wildfire of the forests and flood in the capital of Georgia clearly showed that dedicated legislative and policy framework for

“The Importance of NSDI - Case of Georgia” (9662)
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FIG Congress 2018
Embracing our smart world where the continents connect: enhancing the geospatial maturity of societies
Istanbul, Turkey, May 6–11, 2018

disaster risk reduction has to be substantially and consistently strengthened and enforced. Institutional arrangements and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms require reinforcement. From one side technical, human and financial capacities exist, however, they need better coordination, prioritization and systematization across all relevant sectors, governance levels and institutions.

Unfortunately, today there is no complete geospatial database or access to the required spatial data is often difficult. That is why Georgia has to follow the path of EU member states by creating and developing the infrastructure for national spatial information, in order to facilitate and improve the access to geographic data.

And still, why is spatial data so important? Our everyday life is associated with different places, people, nature and other processes taking place around us. Spatial information makes it easy for people to comprehend the environment. We live in a digital age and we create abstract models of any object by means of digital data. We use the commonly accepted or formally agreed division of the space in order to determine the geographic location of a continent, a country, an administrative unit or a land plot.