

The Role of FIG in Responding to the Millennium Development Goals and the Global Agenda

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SUMMARY

The eight Millennium Development Goals form a blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and all the world's leading development institutions. The United Nations Millennium Summit, September 2000, established a time bound (2015) and measurable goals and targets for combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination of women. These goals are now placed at the heart of the global agenda. The Summit's Millennium Declaration also outlined a wide range of commitments in human rights, good governance, and democracy.

This paper presents the Millennium Goals and targets with a specific emphasis on the areas being particular relevant to the surveying profession.

The paper then suggests that FIG – as an international NGO recognised by the UN – should carefully consider how we can best contribute to reaching the Millennium Goals. FIG should identify their role in this process and spell out the areas where the global surveying profession can make a significant contribution. Issues such as tenure security, pro-poor land management, and good governance in land administration are all key issues to be advocated in the process of reaching the goals. Measures such as capacity assessment, institutional development and human resource development are all key tools in this regard.

The paper outlines the FIG response to the MDGs and the global agenda in terms of a threefold challenge to be addressed in close cooperation with World Bank through a newly established Memorandum of Understanding, and with UN-Habitat through FIG contributions to the agenda around the Global Land Tool Network.

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1. INTRODUCTION

“The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) drawn from the United Nations Millennium Declaration, was a seminal event in the history of United Nations. It constituted an unprecedented promise by world leaders to address, as a single package, peace, security, development, human rights and fundamental freedoms.” (Kofi Annan in UN 2005a).

Today’s is the first generation with the resources and technology to make the right a reality for everyone and to free the entire human race from want. There is shared vision of development. The MDGs have become globally accepted benchmarks of broader progress, embraced by donors, developing countries, civil society and major development institutions alike. These goals can be met by 2015 – but only if all involved break with business as usual and dramatically accelerate end scale up action now (UN, 2005a).

Therefore I suggest that FIG – as an international NGO recognised by the UN – should carefully consider how we can best contribute to reaching the MDGs. FIG should identify their role in this process and spell out the areas where the global surveying profession can make a significant contribution. Issues such as tenure security, pro-poor land management, and good governance in land administration are all key issues to be advocated in the process of reaching the goals. Measures such as capacity assessment, institutional development and human resource development are all key tools in this regard.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a powerful concept towards development, security and human rights for all. Surveyors play a key role in this regard in terms of providing some of the fundamental preconditions for development. These preconditions are also embedded in the Millennium Declaration and spelled out in the targets and indicators for achieving the MDGs. FIG should make the world understand the important contribution of surveyors in this regard and cooperate with the UN agencies such as UNDP, UN-HABITAT, FAO, and the World Bank to optimize the outcome of our common efforts.

Section 2 below presents the MDGs in more details and explains about the framework of targets and indicators established to measure the progress of their implementation. Section 3 talks about the broader background in terms of the Millennium Declaration and the global agenda for poverty eradication. Section 4 is about the threefold challenge for FIG in responding to this global agenda. Section 5 and 6 explain about the future co-operation with the World Bank and UH-HABITAT respectively. Section 7 summarises some final remarks.

2. THE EIGHT MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The relevant material on the Millennium Development Goals is available at the UN website:
<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/goals.html>

The UN Millennium Development Goals

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day
- Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

- Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary education

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

Goal 4: Reduce Child mortality

- Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

- Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

- Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

- Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources
- Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
- Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

- Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory, includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction— nationally and internationally
- Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction
- Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States
- Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term
- In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth
- In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies— especially information and communications technologies

It is obvious that the MDGs address some of the most fundamental issues of our times. It is also obvious that only a few of these issues relate to the work and the world of the surveying community. But in any case, as stated by Kofi Annan (UN, 2005c) “We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights. Unless all these causes are advanced, none will succeed.”

In the report “In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all” (UN, 2005) UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan presents the human vision of the future world in terms of having:

- Freedom for Want
- Freedom for Fear
- Freedom to live in Dignity

In this perspective the MDGs represent a wider concept or a vision for the future, where the contribution of the surveying community is central and vital. This relates to the areas of providing the relevant geographic information in terms of mapping and databases of the built and natural environment, providing secure tenure systems, and systems for land valuation, land use management and land development. The work of the surveyors is about infrastructure investment both in physical and technical terms, which make other decisions better and more reliable.

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To track the progress in achieving the MDGs a framework of targets and indicators is developed. This framework includes 18 targets and 48 indicators enabling the ongoing monitoring of the progress that is reported on annually (UN 2001). A complete list of the targets and indicators is shown in an Annex to this paper. More details can be found at: http://unstats.un.org/UNSD/mi/mi_goals.asp.

Most of these targets are not new. They derive from the global conferences of the 1990s and from the body of international norms and laws that have been codified over the past half century. The international agenda set by the Millennium Declaration should therefore be seen as a demonstration of the political will of the UN member States to carry out the commitments already given and to implement strategies already worked out.

3. THE GLOBAL AGENDA

The MDGs stem from the Millennium Declaration adopted by the world leaders at the entrance to the new millennium (8 September 2000). Following consultations among the international agencies, including the World Bank, OECD, etc., and the specialized agencies of the United Nations such as FAO, UN-HABITAT, etc., the UN General Assembly (6 September 2001) recognized the MDGs as part of the Road Map (UN 2001) for implementing the Millennium Declaration.

The global challenge can be displayed through a map of the world (Fig 1) where the territory size shows the proportion of world wide wealth base don the Gross Domestic Product. In surveying terms, the real challenge of the global agenda is about bringing this map back to scale.

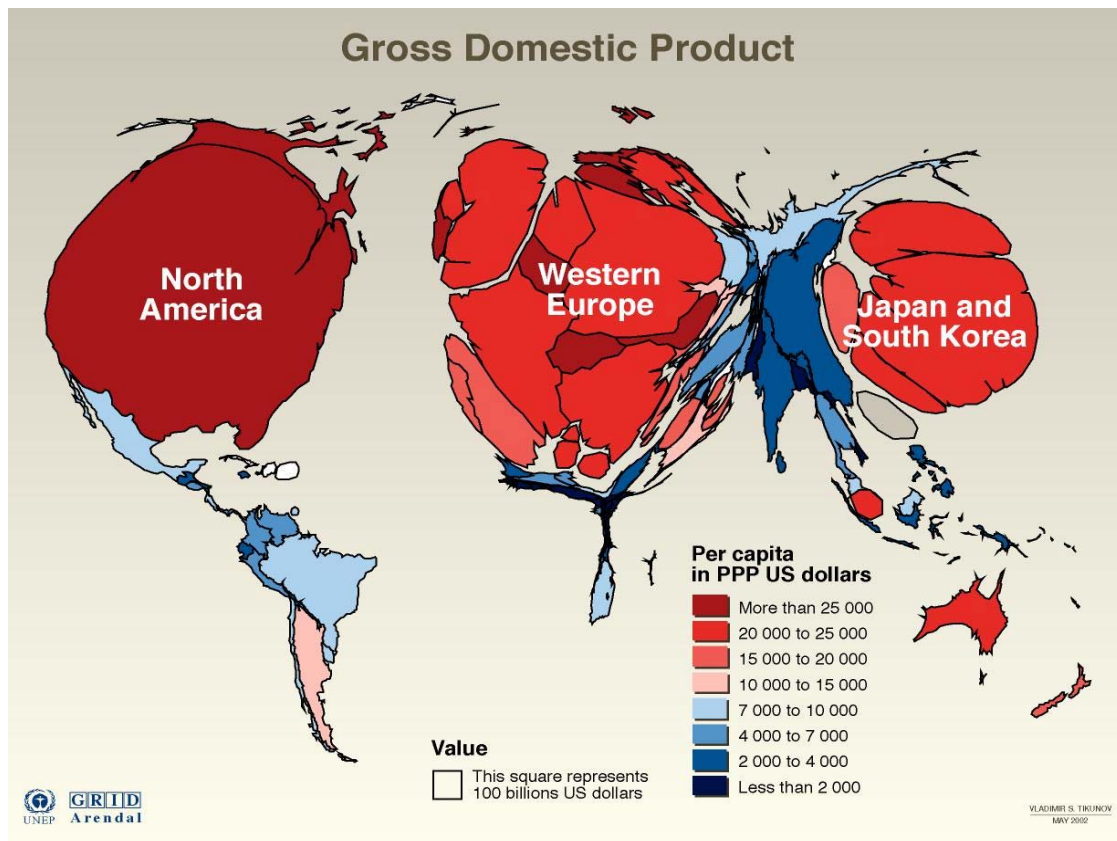


Fig 1. Map of the world where the territory size is shown based on the Gross Domestic Product. (Source: UNEP).

Achieving the MDGs by 2015 will require more focus on development outcomes and less on inputs. The goals establish yardsticks for measuring results, not just for developing countries but for rich countries that help to fund development programs and for the multilateral institutions that help countries implement them. The first seven goals are mutually reinforcing and are directed at reducing poverty in all its forms. The last goal - global partnership for development - is about the means to achieve the first seven.

It is almost a truism that the problems facing humanity are closely intertwined, and that each tends to complicate the solution of one or more other. A comprehensive approach and a coordinated strategy are therefore of vital importance, tackling many problems simultaneously across a broad front. This is precisely the objective of the Millennium Declaration and this is why the goals, targets and indicators are necessary for monitoring the specific achievements as well as the overall progress towards the deadline of 2015. However, a coordinated strategy will not be achieved without better coordination among international institutions and agencies, including those within the United Nations system. And this effort must also mobilize the energies of all actors, including notably the private sector, philanthropic foundations, non-governmental organizations, academic and cultural institutions, and other members of civil society (UN 2001).

In a global perspective the areas of surveying and land administration are basically about **people, politics, and places**. It is about **people** in terms human rights, engagement and dignity; It is about **politics** in terms of land policies and good government; and it is about **places** in terms of shelter, land and natural resources. To complete the picture I should add another “P” namely **power** in terms of providing equity and legal empowerment of the poor. By taking this approach FIG will pursue sustainable development in both an economic, social, governmental, and environmental sense.

4. THE CHALLENGE FOR FIG

A coordinated strategy as presented above can not be established by a top down approach. It has to be developed through mutual initiatives supporting the overall aim and objective. The challenge for FIG in this regard is threefold:

1. To explain the role of the surveying profession and the surveying disciplines in terms of their contribution to the MDGs. Such statements also make the importance of the surveying profession disciplines more understandable in a wider political context. Issues such as tenure security, pro-poor land management, and good governance in land administration are all key issues to be advocated in the process of reaching the goals. Measures such as capacity assessment, institutional development and human resource development are all key tools in this regard. These issues in response of the MDGs should be reflected in the work plan of the council as well as the commission work plans within their specific areas.

- To develop and disseminate knowledge, policies and methods towards achieving and implementing the MDGs. In fact, FIG and the world wide surveying profession has already contributed in many ways in this respect. Throughout the last 10-15 years FIG has taken a lead role in explaining the importance of sound land administration systems as a basis for achieving “the triple bottom line” in terms of economic, social and environmental sustainability. International organizations such as UN, FAO, UN-HABITAT, and the World Bank have been key partners in this process. A number of FIG publications have made significant contributions. Some of these are shown below:

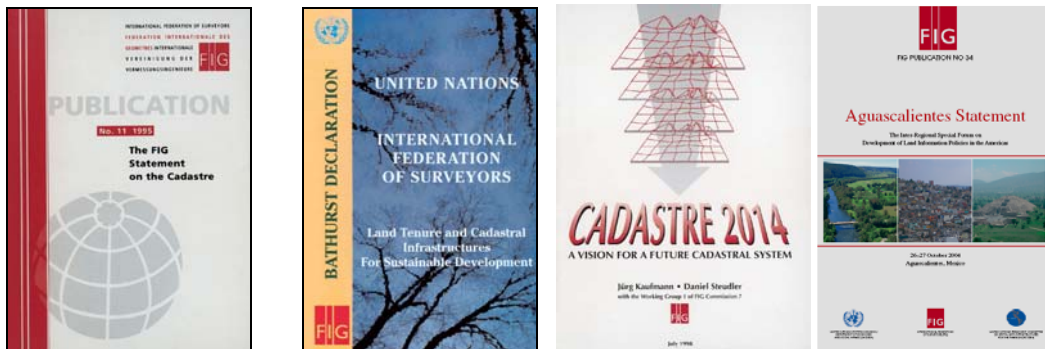


Fig 2. Examples of FIG publications contributing to the global agenda.

- To work closely with the UN agencies and the World Bank in merging our efforts of contributing to the implementation of the MDGs. This provides a platform for focusing on specific issues of mutual interest. At the same time it will contribute further to the well founded cooperation between FIG and our UN partners.

The World Bank Development Agenda plays a key role in implementing the MDGs. It is widely recognized that FIG and the World Bank have conducted some very successful events over the years, and that the two organizations in many areas - especially within land administration - are working very much in parallel.

A more targeted area of cooperation includes the UN-HABITAT agenda on the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) for pro poor land management. The main objective of the GLTN is to facilitate the attainment of the MDGs through improved land management and tenure tools for poverty alleviation and the improvement of the livelihoods of the poor (UN-Habitat, 2006b).

Other targeted areas of cooperation may include the UNDP, FAO and UNEP on projects related to urban/rural interrelationship and environmental sustainability. Equally important is the cooperation with the UN OOSA (UN Office for Outer Space Affairs) in relation to issues like disaster and risk management.

The future cooperation in partnership with the World Bank, UN-Habitat is presented in more details below.

5. PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WORLD BANK FOCUS ON LAND ADMINISTRATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

It would be appropriate to develop some more formal relations between FIG and the World Bank based on our common experiences and successful cooperation. We have therefore now established a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FIG and WB that includes a mutual commitment to the global agenda on implementing the MDGs especially in terms of capacity development, secure tenure systems, and good governance in land administration. The MoU also describes a range of activities to be undertaken in cooperation between FIG and WB over the next four years. These common objectives towards which they wish to cooperate together include the following:

- Mutual representation at conferences, forums and meetings. Both FIG and the Bank will endeavour to provide prominent roles in such events, including key note presentations, chairmanship and expert panel membership.
- Mutual representation in collaborative projects. This includes the World Bank Land Administration Good Governance Project where FIG will participate in the steering committee; The FAO/FIG project on Self Assessment for Land Administration Capacity where the World Bank may provide some testing of the model in relation to current projects in South East Asia.
- Joint publications. FIG and the World Bank may agree to jointly publish reports and papers relevant to land administration and management policies and best practice for the rural and urban sectors.
- Joint promotion. Both the Bank and FIG will collaborate to promote opportunities and initiatives for dissemination of knowledge, information, and experience in land administration and management
- Organizing a joint WB/FIG high profile conference late 2008 at the WB headquarters in Washington DC. The conference should present how FIG and the World Bank are working in parallel for achieving the MDGs. FIG will also develop and present a policy document that should help the world better understand the important contribution of the global surveying community in providing the basic conditions for social, economic, and physical development.

In general, the FIG/WB collaboration is aimed at improving capacity building at all levels in the areas of land tenure, land value, land use and land development. This also includes implementation of appropriate technologies for data collection and mapping; building of spatial data infrastructures and comprehensive information systems; property valuation and taxation systems: planning control and environmental management systems. This should facilitate increased and equal access to land for all, ensure good governance, and promote proper management of land-use and natural resources.

6. PARTNERSHIP WITH UN-HABITAT – FOCUS ON PRO POOR LAND TENURE SYSTEMS

Today there are about 1 billion slum dwellers in the world, while in 1990 there was about 715 million. UN-Habitat estimates that if the current trends continue, the slum population will reach 1.4 billion by 2020 if no remedial action is taken. In 2005 the world's urban population was about 3.2 billion out of world total of about 6.5 billion. Today in 2007 is the year that most people throughout the world live in urban areas. Current trends predict the number of urban dwellers will keep rising, reaching almost 5 billion in 2030 where 80% will live in developing countries. Over the next 25 years, the world's urban population is expected to grow at an annual rate of almost twice the growth rate of the world's total population. (UN-Habitat, 2006). In this perspective, where one of every three city residents lives in inadequate housing with few or no basic services, it becomes urgent to focus on informal settlement and find ways and means to influence government policies and actions. This also relates to the Millennium Development Goal 7, target 11 stating that by 2020 to have improved the lives of least 100 million slum dwellers.



Figure 3. Informal settlement Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya covers 150 ha for 1 mill+ slum dwellers.

The Millennium Development Goals provide an apt framework for linking the wealth of cities with increased opportunity and improved quality of life for their poorest residents. In many countries, however, prosperity has not benefited urban residents equally. Mounting evidence suggests that economic growth in itself cannot reduce poverty or opportunities if it is not accompanied by equitable policies that allow low-income or disadvantaged groups to benefit from that growth (UN-Habitat, 2006a).

FIG is committed to the UN-Habitat agenda around the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) that aims to facilitate the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals through improved land management and tenure tools for poverty alleviation and the improvement of the livelihoods for the poor (UN-Habitat 2006b). The city authorities view most people living in slums as illegal. Because of this, cities do not plan for or manage slums, and the people in them are overlooked and excluded. They receive none of the benefits of more affluent citizens, such as access to municipal water, roads, sanitation and sewage. This attitude to slum dwellers and approaches to disregard them, perpetuate the levels and scale of poverty, which impacts on the city as a whole (UN-Habitat, 2004).

“Rights such as freehold and registered leasehold, and the conventional cadastral and land registration systems, and the way they are presently structured, cannot supply security of tenure to the vast majority of the low income groups and/or deal quickly enough with the scale of urban problems. Innovative approaches need to be developed” (UN-Habitat, 2003).

A solution to this problem may be found in the so called Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) originally developed as the Core Cadastral Domain Model (CCDM). The key issue here is that, in the technical field, there is often an insufficient focus on pro poor technical and legal tools. In the development of the CCDM efforts are being made to avoid such criticism; a lot of useful functionality has been developed but the name of the Model, class names and used terminology is still too much aligned to formal systems. For that purpose the Social Tenure Domain Model is being proposed as the next step for research, which could be a specialization of the CCDM based on Domain related terminology. (Augustinus, et.al., 2006).

FIG will facilitate development and testing of a prototype for such a STDM as a tool to deal with the kind of social tenure that exist in informal settlements (and also in areas based on customary tenure) that cannot be accommodated in traditional cadastral systems. Traditional cadastral and land registration systems deal with identification of properties and land parcels as a basis for securing legal rights such as title, leasehold, and easements. The STDM attempts to be able to deal more generally with the relation between objects, subjects, and the social tenure that is established between the object and subject. The object may be a parcel, property, construction work, natural asset, 3-D object, etc. The subject may be a physical or legal person, a group of people or a group of groups, etc. The social tenure may include all kind of rights, restrictions and responsibilities. Such a system, provided as open source software, should be available as a tool for managing the range of tenures found in informal settlement and be manageable for the local communities as well as public authorities.

7. FINAL REMARKS

The objective of this paper has been to present the MDGs and the FIG response to this global agenda.

The MDGs serve as a visionary challenge to help garner new energies and resources for the development agenda, with a focus on outcomes. The agenda includes the basic elements for a new global partnership. It also includes, however, a range of challenges and risks to the larger development community – risks posed by the cynicism that failure (or only partial success) could engender (World Bank, 2002).

FIG already shares this global responsibility and has now established a focused partnership with both the World Bank and UN-HABITAT to deal with these challenges. An outcome in support of the UN-HABITAT agenda on Global Land Tools Network should be ready by the second half of 2008 to be presented at the World Urban Forum in Nanjing, October 2008. This will include a special focus on developing a model for providing secure social tenure for the poorest. Another outcome will be in the areas of capacity building and good governance in land administration in support of the MDGs to be presented at a joint FIG/WB high profile conference in Washington DC in November 2008.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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