CURRICULUM REFORM IN LAND GOVERNANCE EDUCATION: THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMING EXISTING CURRICULA IN AFRICA

UCHENDU EUGENE CHIGBU¹, KWAME TENADU² AND AGNES MWASUMBI³

1. Chair of Land Management, Technical University of Munich, Germany.
3. Ardhi University, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Presenting Author: ue.chigbu@tum.de

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ABSTRACT
Higher education curricula in African are not adequately responding to Africa’s needs in capacity development in land. This calls for a (re)conceptualization of the role curricula play in capacity development in the continent’s land sector. The African Land Policy Initiative recognized this in its assessment report on the continent. However, there is a lack of follow-up research to investigate more carefully the best ways forward. This study contributes beyond theory by examining curricula in land education from 10 African countries. The countries are Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, Kenya, Mauritius, Uganda, Namibia, South Africa and Tanzania. The study examined curricula from selected institutions from these countries to ascertain their adherence to current needs in Africa. Using a track system derived from African Land Policy Initiative’s assessment report, the study critically investigated these curricula’s relatedness to the current requirements in land education in the continent. It makes specific recommendations for improving curricula in land education in Africa.

KEY WORDS: Africa, Curriculum development, Education, LPI, land governance, land policy.
1. INTRODUCTION
Africa is one of the most endowed continents in land and natural resources. It also has one of the most land resources dependent population on earth. In all its spatial units – e.g. urban, rural and peri-urban areas – most of its people derive their livelihoods from land and natural resources. As such, addressing poverty and infrastructural development issues in Africa will depend largely on how land challenges are dealt with in the continent. That means training or development of human resource capacities on land is a necessity for dealing with these issues. In response to the current demands for education on land and its resource management on the continent, many universities have embraced training programs to help build knowledge production in land management, geodesy, spatial planning, real estate, estates management, urban and rural development and land economy. The question that arises though is whether the curricula on which these programs reflect the needs of today or the future of Africa and eventually of its citizens? Alternatively, is Africa facing what Wheelahan (2010) referred to as “crisis of curriculum” in its land education sector? This study addresses these questions beyond theory.

The study investigates curricula in land education from 10 African countries to establish the extent to which they address the current needs in Africa. The curricula were evaluated based on the report of Curricula Needs Assessment in Africa (LPI 2016). The study critically investigates these curricula to ascertain their relatedness to the current requirements in land education in Africa. It then makes recommendations for improving curricula in land education in Africa based on the findings from the ten case studies. It contributes to research on land governance and rigorous impact evaluations, from a capacity development perspective on Africa. Its focus is to use curriculum development as a “land interventions” or “capacity development” tool for ensuring improved governance of land in Africa in the future.

2. CONTEXTUALIZING CURRICULA EFFORTS IN LAND GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA
In its most simple meaning, curriculum has two widely accepted definitions. “It can be seen as a package (i.e. the content of education) or/and as a process (i.e. the dynamics of giving flesh to organizational, teaching and learning principles in education)” (Obanya 1994, 3). Whatever the definition used, an effective curriculum should ensure that learning and teaching yield the desired benefits for the society. The importance of education on land issues in Africa is growing tremendously due to the continent’s over-reliance on land resources for its development. The implication is those African universities compared to other universities around the world, are struggling to reposition themselves in response to the capacity needs of their nations and continent. There are pieces of evidence from all over the continent to show that enhancing capacity for education on land has become a precondition for attaining sustainable development in Africa. Existing curricula in most of the universities do not fully respond to the needs of today and for Africa domestically. Administrators and lecturers in universities are becoming so attached to curricula
developed based on neo-colonial needs and mostly decided by bureaucrats that they are failing to make their teachings attractive to their societies. This situation calls for a (re)conceptualization of the role of curricula as an intervention tool for improved development. In the context of land education, it makes transforming curricula to enhance the capacity development and implementation in land governance in Africa a basic need. LPI recognized this need in its assessment report of the continent, and have made it a primary objective in its mandate in the continent (LPI 2016). Since land governance is complex – in technical, political and cultural terms – there is no better place to develop its capacity than in the higher institutions of learning of different African nations.

This study acknowledges that land governance has been defined in the literature in a variety of ways and forms. It adopts AUC-ECA-AfDB (2010) definition of the term as the political and administrative structures and processes through which decisions concerning access to and use of land resources are made and implemented, including the manner in which conflicts over land are resolved. This supports LPI’s (2016, 11) usage of “land governance” as an encompassing term for decision-making activities emanating from “traditional notions of land administration, land management, and land policy.” The use of land governance in this study, therefore, relates to issues of land policy, land administration, and land management. Its usage cuts across the various legal, institutional, power relations, information systems, management, administrative, resolution mechanisms and social frameworks related to rules and regulations on land matters.

2.1 DISJOINTED EFFORTS AT TACKLING CURRICULA NEEDS IN AFRICA

Curriculum development for educational purposes is nothing new in Africa. Several curriculum reforms have taken place in different countries in the continent. In most cases, such reforms involved “a radical re-thinking and remodeling of the entire curriculum process (or aspects of the process)” as “an integral pan of overall educational reform” Obanya 1994, 4). Conferences have been held in this regard as a way of making improvements to knowledge creation in Africa. Prominent among these conferences are the Addis Ababa Conference (in 1961), Abidjan Conference (in 1964), Nairobi Conference (in 1968), Lagos Conference (in 1976), Harare Conference (in 1982), and Dakar Conference (in 1991) to mention a few. These conferences, in which the United Nations and its agencies (especially the UNESCO) played prominent roles in, focused mainly on curriculum enrichment for various needs. The objectives include promotion of teacher education, students’ literacy, African Languages in Education, Science and Technology Education. The Nairobi conference pushed for guidelines for restructuring primary and secondary education, with a focus on improving mathematics and core science subjects. The Lagos Conference pushed for the then Organization of African Union Member States to promote inter-African cooperation in matters of curriculum renewal. All of these are viable efforts for curriculum development at the primary and secondary levels of education.
At the tertiary (higher education) or university level, not many efforts have been made to push for pan-African needs-specific curriculum for specific professions or areas of studies. Concerted efforts have been made (and are still being made) by different countries, national regulatory bodies, professional organizations and governments in Africa at improving the curriculum inherited from their colonial educational systems. Particularly, academics in African universities find themselves tasked with developing curricula, new courses or modules and revising or reviewing existing ones (Maphosa et al. 2014). Although the earliest programs on land in African universities started in the late early 1950s in South Africa, Ghana, and Nigeria (to mention a few), the majority of the courses in the other African countries started after 2000. All of them constitute individual efforts at creating curricula in land studies from different perspectives. Current studies show that there is renewed growth of land governance “academic education in Africa are to a large extent young” (Groenendijk et al. 2013, 2). The reason being that many of the land governance related subjects fail to reflect the current frames of land policy, land management and land administration demands of Africa.

Several courses – e.g. “estate management,” “geodesy,” land or geodetic surveying” and “Land economy” in many African countries – fail to reflect elements of land governance necessary for addressing today’s African needs (see Zimmerman 2015; LPI 2016; Adriansen et al. 2016). This is understandable, considering that many of these courses were based on colonial curricula directly imported from Europe. Many of the land-related programs set up during the colonial and post-colonial periods in many African countries were created based on colonial needs. Most were based on curricula adopted (or adapted) from universities in England and France. This trend has not stopped. Groenendijk et al. (2013, 2) note that many land administration programs in Eastern African Universities were set up with the support of European institutions such as the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Sweden and International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation, ITC (University of Twente) in the Netherlands. Further support is being provided by the Technical University of Munich (TUM) to some of these universities in teachings in land management. A critical question arises concerning the new programs in land governance in Africa today –such as those set up in the past decade. These programs claim to be meeting the current needs of either Africa or their individual countries. In the context of LPI’s (2016) findings on the curriculum needs of Africa, the question is, “do these curricula of land governance programs in Africa reflect the continent’s needs?” To answer this question, one must first understand the findings of LPI’s curricula needs assessment.

2.2 LPI’S CURRICULA NEEDS ASSESSMENT ON LAND GOVERNANCE

From 2006 to 2009, the LPI through a participatory process developed the Framework and Guidelines on land policy in Africa. The Framework and Guidelines (F&G) was endorsed by the African Union’s (AU) joint conference of Ministers in charge of Agriculture, Land and Livestock in 2009. The same year the
African Heads of State and Government at the 13th ordinary session of the Assembly, approved the *Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa*, calling for the efficient use of the F&G at national and regional levels. In 2010, the LPI received the mandate from the AU to use the F&G in support of national and regional land policy processes, developing and implementing strategies and action plans. The LPI then developed a five-year Strategic Plan and Roadmap which covers nine focus areas including capacity development. Capacity development refers to “the continual and comprehensive learning and change processes by which African governments, organizations, and people identify, strengthen, adapt, create and retain the needed capacity for effective land policy development, implementation and tracking for the resolution of priority land challenges facing the continent“ (Haile 2013, 3).

It is now well recognized that land professionals in Africa play a critical role in the development of their respective countries and the continent. The Framework and Guidelines (F&G) on Land Policy in Africa identifies main challenges to land governance implementation to include a lack of capacity to manage change and technological know-how required to manage contemporary land reform programs (AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium 2010). As a way of addressing this concern, LPI commissioned curricula needs assessment exercise to understand the extent of the challenge in Africa better. This is in line with its objective of developing an implementation strategy for capacity development in Africa. The specific aims of the curricula need assessment by LPI (2016, 5-6) included undertaking curricula needs assessment on land governance in Africa as a way of identifying the current and emerging expertise needs of land professionals to inform training curricula for Africa. These led to the assessment of the programs in African Higher Education institutions dealing in land issue to explore the gaps in land policy, land governance, and land administration curricula in AU member states and their capacity to collaborate on Continental programs.

As a follow-up, an inception meeting was organized by the LPI and held in Addis Ababa on September 29th 2014 to discuss the objectives, scope and expected outcomes of the study on land curricula in Africa. It was supported with an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) which was organized by LPI in Bahir Dar (Ethiopia) in May 20th and 21st 2015. In addition, a Validation Workshop was held from July 26th to 28th 2016 at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss the findings and recommendations of the curricula need study. One of the major outcomes of the curricula needs assessment was a matrix of what should be the elements of a curriculum on land governance in Africa today. In recognition of the differences between different African nations, the LPI assessment report identified gaps in the curriculum in the various African regions. Land governance subjects found to be categorically missing in curricula in African universities include:

- Land conflicts resolution;
• Climate Change;
• Diversity among and within countries;
• Large-scale land acquisitions;
• Religion and Customs;
• Customary land tenure system;
• Women's land rights;
• Land rights of vulnerable groups;
• Corruption in land matters;
• Legalization and privatization recognition of customary land ownership;
• Colonialism and European acculturation of land matters in Africa;
• State ownership of land;
• Technology;
• Decentralization of land administration;
• Rural and urban land governance, among many others.

The matrix of needs produced from LPI’s assessment was a guide rather than a fit-all matrix. The evaluation report recognized the need to:

“Ensure that a fit-all matrix is not developed as the curricula while conforming to known international principles and standards have to take account of the social and political circumstances of the individual countries. For example, in the countries of the Arab North, the influence of Islamic principles of property and land administration need to be recognized, while in the Francophone countries, the influence of the Napoleonic laws must be taken into account. In countries, such as Ghana where the Constitution recognizes and protects traditional customary land rights and in Nigeria where the Land Use Act has virtually nationalized all land – at least in law – efforts were made to give recognition to these differences. In the end, the curricula of the tertiary institutions were studied, they were compared to the needs of the employers and the issues that were found to be absent in their curricula from the discussion of land on the continent were identified as the gaps to be filled in their curricula”.

The above statement is an excerpt from LPI’s Draft report on “Curricula Needs Assessment and Mapping of Existing Land Training Centers in Africa,” dated 26-28 July 2016. The report is based on the assessment of 25 institutions in Africa. From the 25 institutions that were studied in the LPI’s curricula assessment, LPI (2016) grouped the programs into three thematic areas (represented by different names) as shown in Table 1.

1 LPI’s Report, Curricula Needs Assessment and Mapping of Existing Land Training Centers in Africa, July 2016, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
According to LPI (2016, 42), “Despite the variety of names, the contents of some of the programs are quite similar, especially within the respective Groups A and B.” In general:

“Programmes in Group A place their focus on the administrative and economic aspects of land administration and management. In addition, they provide basic knowledge on the technical aspects such as surveying and GIS. The programs of Group B place their emphasis on technical and cartographic aspects and provide additional knowledge about economic, management and tenure related issues... Programmes in Group C can be counted among the above-mentioned integrated programs, where land governance is treated as an important issue within a broader thematic area. However, only selected aspects of land governance are covered such as land use planning and land management, management of the commons, natural resource management, regional development/spatial planning, sustainable tourism development, Geographical Information Systems, law and decentralization or urban planning.” (LPI 2016, 45).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Subject area</th>
<th>Names and types of degree programs</th>
</tr>
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| A     | Degrees related to land administration, land management and economic aspects of land | • Bachelor/Master of Land Administration  
• Bachelor of Land Administration and Management  
• Bachelor/Master of Land Management  
• Bachelor of Land Management and Valuation  
• Bachelor of Estate Management  
• Bachelor of Estate Management and Valuation  
• Bachelor/Master in Estate Management and Real Estate  
• Bachelor of Real Estate  
• Bachelor of Land Economy  
• Bachelor of Land Economy and Real Estate  
• Bachelor of Property Studies |
| B     | Degrees related to surveying and geoinformatics | • Bachelor of Land Surveying  
• Bachelor of Surveying and Geoinformatics  
• Bachelor/Master of Geomatic Engineering  
• Bachelor of Geomatics  
• Bachelor of Geoinformation Technology  
• Bachelor of Geoinformation Science |
| C     | Degrees related to spatial planning and rural development | • PGD in Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies  
• Bachelor of Rural Development  
• Diplôme en Ingénierie du Développement Local (Local Development)  
• License/Doctorate in Collectivités Locales et Décentralisation et Foncier (Local Authorities and Decentralization and Land)  
• Master of Spatial Science  
• Bachelor of Town and Regional Planning  
• Bachelor of Town and Country Planning  
• Bachelor of Physical Planning |

Table 1: Degree programs in land in Africa based on 25 countries studied by LPI (2016, 41-42)
Apart from programs in universities, there are land surveying and geoinformatics programs at National Diploma and Higher National Diploma levels in some of the countries. The study did not identify any university in Africa that is offering an on-line program in land governance.

2.3 LPI’S EFFORT AT GUIDELINES FOR CURRICULA ON LAND GOVERNANCE

Over the past five years, the LPI has conducted some activities in support of capacity development on land issues in Africa, including a study of capacity needs, training and hosting of sensitization forum on capacity-building on land governance at margins of the Annual World Bank’s Land and Poverty Conference in Washington DC. However, the most conceived and most direct effort it ever made on enhancing curricula on land governance in Africa is the ongoing effort by the LPI. As a follow-up to previous efforts made by the LPI on improving land governance education in Africa, the LPI spearheaded a Writeshop on the development of guidelines for curricula on land governance in Africa in Nairobi (Kenya) from 21-27 September 2016. During this period, LPI assembled a team of experts in land governance, curricula development and training from universities and institutions of higher learning to deliberate and draft guidelines for developing curricula on land governance for higher institutions in Africa. The guidelines developed during this Writeshop would facilitate the development and review of land governance curricula to ensure that university graduates and land professionals in Africa are better skilled in addressing Africa's land governance challenges. These guidelines were developed and expert-reviewed during the period off the Writeshop. A key instruction to the drafters of the guidelines was to ensure that output from the Writeshop integrate technology in curricula to make it resonate with students in African higher institutions. Most importantly, the drafters were instructed to develop curricula guidelines that are flexible enough that will empower graduates to not only be employable by the public sector and NGOs but also enable them to practice in other areas.

The draft guidelines are still under further review by the AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium. If adopted as a pan-African document for curricula development on land governance, it will be a pace-setting effort ever made on capacity development in land governance in Africa and by Africa. It will be expected that African universities and training institutions should use it as a “land interventions” or “capacity development” tool on land governance. New and existing institutions would be encouraged to review and update their curricula to reflect current needs in land management, land policy, and land administration to enhance capacity in land governance. This will also imply an assessment of staff and infrastructure to be able to deliver locally targeted and globally accepted courses, modules and programs in land governance education in Africa.

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2 Previously discussed in details in section 2.2
To expose the nature of the (dis)connection land programs’ curricula share with land governance needs in Africa, this study critically investigates some curricula to ascertain their “depth ontology” (Elder-Vass 2007) in current requirements in land education in Africa. The study is a depth ontological study because it assesses the real curricula from institutions against actual needs identified by LPI (2016) based on empirical data. Banfield (2004, 58) identified these three domains – “the Real, Actual and Empirical” – as the key to grasping the ontological depth of any situation. The following section presents the approach for assessing land governance curricula about the specific needs identified by LPI (2016).

3. METHODS
This research was motivated by three Expert Group Meetings (EGM) of the LPI. The first is the EGM on “Curricula Gaps Assessment and Institutional Mapping” held on 20-21 May 2015 in Bahir-Dar, Ethiopia. The second the Validation Workshop of the Study on Curricula Gaps Assessment and Institutional Mapping, which took place from 26-28 July 2016 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The third are the combined Writeshop (and review workshop) for the Drafting of Guidelines for Curriculum Development on Land Governance in Africa held on 21-27 September 2016 in Nairobi, Kenya. These EGMs allowed for expert discussions on land governance education in Africa and allowed the authors access to data on the extent of capacity development challenge on land governance in Africa.

Based on issues raised in these EGMs, this study assesses the extent selected curricula from African higher education institutions reflect the capacity development needs identified by the LPI (2016). A key limitation of the study is that it fails to capture the full geographical coverage of all African countries and the entire curricula coverage of all land-related programs in African higher education institutions. To make up for this limitation, the study purposively selected popular (and in some cases, newly instituted programs) from ten countries in Africa.

3.1 THE CURRICULA CASE STUDIES
The case studies involved the assessment of the curricula of selected land-related programs selected from ten countries. The countries are Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Mauritius, Rwanda, Kenya, Namibia, Uganda, South Africa and Tanzania. The curricula under investigation in this study are from programs selected at undergraduate (Bachelor stage) and graduate (Master stage) levels of education in these countries. Doctoral programs were excluded in this study because they are usually entirely research based and are not always based on modular curricula – hence are more flexible than Bachelors and Masters level studies in most African countries. The curricula investigated at the Bachelors’ level include those of:

3 For details of the key issues addressed in these EGMs, please consult UNECA/LPI official website.
• **Ghana:** Bachelor of Science (BSc) Land Economy program at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST).  

• **Rwanda:** BSc Land Administration and Management program at the Institute of Applied Sciences, INES-Ruhengeri.

• **Kenya:** BSc, Land Resource Planning and Management program at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JUAT).

• **Nigeria:** BSc Estate Management program at University of Lagos (UniLag)

• **Uganda:** Bachelor of Arts (BA) Environmental Management program at Makerere University (MakU).

The above programs were selected because they provide an opportunity for grasping the curricula content of old and new programs in land studies in Africa. The curricula investigated at the Masters’ level include those of:

• **Namibia:** MSc Integrated Land Management program at Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST).

• **South Africa:** MSc Environmental Management program at the University of Pretoria (UoP), South Africa.

• **Tanzania:** MSc Real Estate program at Ardhi University, Tanzania.

• **Botswana:** MSc in Environmental Science program at University of Botswana (UoB).

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5 Curriculum content is available on INES’s official website, and accessible here [http://ines.ac.rw/Department%20of%20Land%20Administration%20and%20Management.html](http://ines.ac.rw/Department%20of%20Land%20Administration%20and%20Management.html)


7 Curriculum content is available on UniLag’s official website, and accessible here [http://moodle.unilag.edu.ng/course/index.php?categoryid=38&browse=courses&perpage=20&page=0](http://moodle.unilag.edu.ng/course/index.php?categoryid=38&browse=courses&perpage=20&page=0)

8 Curriculum content is available on MakU’s official website, and accessible here [https://courses.mak.ac.ug/programmes/bachelor-arts-environmental-management-0](https://courses.mak.ac.ug/programmes/bachelor-arts-environmental-management-0)

9 Curriculum content is available on NUST’s official website, and accessible here [http://africa.ufl.edu/files/PolyNam_CurriculumandSyllabus_IntegratedLandMgmt.pdf](http://africa.ufl.edu/files/PolyNam_CurriculumandSyllabus_IntegratedLandMgmt.pdf)


11 Curriculum content of Ardhi is not available online but were made accessible to authors (offline) by Ardhi.

• **Mauritius:** MSc Sustainable Energy Engineering with Environmental Management program at University of Mauritius (UoM).\(^\text{13}\)

The above programs were selected based on the possibility of obtaining details of their curriculum and the availability of land-related programs they offer. Most importantly, they provide opportunities for understanding the curricula content of post-graduate level education in land-related subjects in Africa. A major limitation of this study is that it fails to incorporate curricula from Francophone, Lusophone and Arabophone countries of Africa. Hence the data presented here do provide in-depth understanding of the scenario in Anglophone Africa.

### 3.2 ANALYTICAL METHODS FOR CURRICULA ASSESSMENT

The analysis provides a snapshot of subjects offered within the land-related programs at BSc and MSc levels in the ten countries. Most importantly, it involved assessing the content of the selected programs—not against each other—but to the needs identified in the LPI curricula need assessment. Details of the gaps identified in the evaluation report are available in LPI (2016, 73-83). This study is based on the summarized version of these needs as presented in section 2.2 of this article. The analytical approach used in this study is based on “need tracks” approach based on LPI’s curricula needs assessment findings (LPI 2016). The “tracks” approach is a methodology that has been used by Groenendijk *et al.* (2013). For the analysis of this study, ten major land governance categories (derived from the LPI report) were used for each track. These tracks, which were coded for analytical purposes, are justifiably described below:

1. **Basic knowledge:** This track, coded as “BK,” relates to core subjects that are mandatory for the understanding and discussion of land governance and related topics at Higher education level. Such subjects may include philosophy of science, language, mathematics, computer skills, to mention a few.

2. **Land/Natural conflict management and resolution:** This track, coded as “LCMR,” embraces all subjects that reflect on land and natural conflict issues and ways of resolving or managing them. Africa is land conflicts infested continent (Ayana *et al.* 2016). It is to have these matters embedded in curricula in the continent.

3. **Customary land management and tenure:** This track, coded as “CLMT,” contains subject areas that particularly deal with cultural issues relating to land management and land tenure. Its core focus is on

\(^{13}\) Curriculum content is available on UoM’s official website, and accessible here [http://www.uom.ac.mu/images/Files/Programmes/FOE/YR2016/Postgraduate/E512A.pdf](http://www.uom.ac.mu/images/Files/Programmes/FOE/YR2016/Postgraduate/E512A.pdf)
traditional land tenure regimes and cultural governance systems in African societies. AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2010 and 2014) recognizes customary tenure practices as a subject that should receive particular curricula attention in land-related programs in African higher education.

(4) Natural resources, environment and climate change: This track, coded as “NREC,” is a category for subjects that teach natural resources and environmental management subjects about climate change issues. AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2012a, 21) recognizes the linkages between “Climate change, migration and land issues” as a key knowledge that university education curriculum in Africa should embrace. This makes pertinent to study land governance without negating the challenge of climate change in Africa.

(5) History and politics of land in Africa: This track, coded as “HPLA,” entails subjects that focus on the history of land matters in Africa from ancient, pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial perspectives. It also embraces the politics of land within the continent as a way for students to become armed with the necessary knowledge for governing land from a balanced dimension. AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2012b) in its Tracking Progress in Land Policy Formulation and Implementation in Africa called for understanding the politics and history of land in Africa by Africans. This makes it a potential content for inclusion in land governance curricula.

(6) Women’s land rights: This track, coded as “WLR,” is dedicated to studies on women’s land challenges, with a focus on creating awareness for students to understand the importance of gender equality in land matters. AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2011, 14) have noted that African women should have “unimpeded access to and control over land which they can inherit or bequeath to their children.” Understanding the challenges women face is necessary for any path towards women’s land access. Integration of these issues in land governance curricula is imperative for forging the path to land access for women.

(7) Technology in land: This track, coded as “Tech,” contains subjects for understanding and applying information technology to land issues – e.g. for planning, data capture, GIS, mapping, analysis, etc. There is little or no future for improving land governance with embracing technology (Enemark et al. 2016). This is why all curricula in land governance and related subjects should integrate information technology into their curricula.

(8) Large-scale land acquisition: This track, coded as “LSLA”, relates to any subject that focuses on the understanding of large-scale land acquisition and its impact on the development of Africa or within a country context in Africa. AUC-ECA-AfDB Consortium (2014) recognizes well governed large scale land
acquisition as a relevant factor for large-scale land-based investment in Africa, and expects African states to particularly teach it in school based on its “Guiding Principles on large-scale land-based investments in Africa.”

(9) Rural and urban development: This track, coded as “RUD,” involves subjects that treat rural and urban land matters. On the one hand, “ruralisation” has been identified as a tool for transformation (Chigbu 2015). On the other hand, urbanization is a challenge in Africa but is also a tool for development in the continent (Clos 2016). Ward and Shackleton (2016) have noted the need for integrating the rural-urban continuum as part of the development concept and practice in developing countries. Africa cannot develop its capacity for development without recognizing these development practices. They have to be part of the knowledge building process in universities, hence, should be a core part of curricula.

(10) Dissertation or research project: This track, coded as “Diss,” relates to solid research projects or/and dissertation writing on land related topics. The importance or research in curricula in higher education can never be over-emphasized because it is core to problem investigations and solution searching in land governance. Hence is of crucial relevance in curricula.

The curricula contents were assessed to using the matrix shown in the appendix. From the assessment, it was found that some subjects (at both the BSc and MSc levels) could be categorized in more than one tracks due to their actual curricula content. Such courses were placed only in one category in order not to change the general direction of the results. The following section present the findings divided into BSc and MSc programs.

4. FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

There is evidence that the curricula surveyed only partially reflect the current needs of Africa in land governance. As such, it can be concluded that Africa is facing a “crisis of curriculum” in its land education sector. This is a crisis because the results point to a dearth of key aspects of land governance subjects in the curricula of the programs investigated. In the context of this study, when curricula downgrades, rather than upgrade knowledge, it is in crisis. In order to understand the extent to which these curricula address the current needs in Africa, it is important to see the overview of the programs surveyed.

4.1 OVERVIEW OF UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Figure 1 (below) shows how the BSc program relate to the LPI’s curricula tracks. It also shows a comparative view of distribution of subjects or courses within the tracks. All of the five BSc/BA programs
studied (in Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda), had basic track, subjects or courses meant for giving their students orientation into their programs. On the positive side, a common character of the programs is that they incorporate basic and dissertation/thesis or research project as part of their modules or courses. All students are required to do research and write a dissertation or thesis. However, JKUAT incorporates up to three research project in its modules at different levels of the undergraduate program.

![Figure 1: Number of BSc/BA subjects offered within each of LPI’s summarized curricula tracks](image)

On the negative side, none of the programs has a specific module or course dedicated to the study of history and politics of land in Africa or women’s land rights issues or large-scale land acquisition. Further, it is deducible from the data that issues related to land and natural resource conflicts; and urban and rural development are less studied in these programs.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS

It also reflects how the five programs compare to each other within the context of LPI’s (2016) requirement or expectation from land related programs in Africa. All of the five MSc programs studied (in Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Botswana and Mauritius), had basic track, with the exception of the program in Botswana. It is difficult to say why, but it may be because most of this programs are too professionally
focused, hence, students are expected to have graduated along this program in their undergraduate level. Figure 2 (below) shows how the MSc. program relate to LPI’s curricula tracks.

![Figure 2: Number of MSc subjects offered within each LPI’s curricula tracks](image)

Just as in the case of the BSc/BA programs, all the MSc programs failed to integrate or incorporate history and politics of land, customary land management/tenure, women’s land rights and large-scale land acquisition subjects as either core or specific module or courses. In addition, land and natural resource conflict subjects (with the exception of NUST) are not part of the curricula). Interestingly, the study found that despite that the NUST’s program in Integrated Land Management appears to have strong NREC track, the program is being phased out and replaced with the MSc Spatial Science from 2017. The program is by research only, so it is difficult to ascertain its specific relationship with the LPI tracks.

4.3 RESEARCH COMPONENTS OF THE CURRICULA
All the programs have research components in their curricula. Dissertation or thesis forms the key part of the research components. There is no remarkable difference found in the research components between the undergraduate and graduate dissertation. However, there may be a considerable difference in the quality of

supervision and themes investigated at the two levels, but this research did not focus on deciphering that. However, there were some differences in the application/teaching of the research components between some of the programs investigated.

![Figure 3: Outlook of the research components of the programs](image)

With the exception of time allocated to final research/thesis, all programs at all levels (undergraduate and graduate) have thesis components. Differences exist the undergraduate level where KNUST is found to be using group-thesis approach while the rest followed individual thesis work for their final research projects. In addition to thesis work, JCUAT subjects its participants to two other major research project work during their studies.

### 4.4 CHALLENGES FACING LAND GOVERNANCE EDUCATION

This study confirms many of the challenges that has been previously identified by Mitchell and Enemark (2008). These challenged range from concerns relating to the qualifications within academic faculties, to the use of outmoded teaching methods and poor library facilities. However, these are general challenges
faced by higher education institutions in Africa. From curricula perspectives, some specific challenges that land governance education in Africa face are:

- There is a craze to have foreign collaborations and guest lecturers. In the development of curricula, this may have led to “over-emphasis on development of curricula to support the donor-funded projects” and foreign collaboration enhancement, with limited focus for long-term local capacity needs.
- Dominance of land surveying (geodesy) course/subjects in land governance and related programs.
- Neglect of social science teaching and themes in land governance programs. Many of the programs fail to collaborate with social scientists in teaching and curricula development. This may have led to imbalance on certain land governance courses within the programs.
- Some crucial subjects or courses necessary for teaching land governance in the context of Africa have not been adopted in many curricula in land governance in the many programs. The most critical subjects identified to be lacking at all levels surveyed include subjects that should impact the following land governance knowledge or skills on students:
  - Customary land governance regimes.
  - History of colonialism acculturation of land in Africa.
  - Evolution of land and property rights in Africa.
  - General knowledge of land governance.
  - Corrupt/ethical practices in the land sector.
  - Land Governance in rural and peri-urban areas.
  - Guided thesis/dissertation/research (for data in the most critical areas).
  - Natural resource governance.
  - Governance of women’s land and property rights.
  - Environment and Climate governance.
  - Governance of large-scale land acquisitions.

These subjects (or themes) are considerably missing in the curricula surveyed. Even where such appeared to have been addressed, they lacked content and quality. This is particularly the case in the customary land tenure, women’s land rights and issues relating to Ethics in land management/governance/policy practice.

5. POLICY AND CURRICULA GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 REFORMING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE IN LAND GOVERNANCE

The consequences of African students not studying certain critical subjects – e.g. Large-scale land acquisition history and politics of land in Africa, women’s land rights and land conflict management, to
The real purpose of African development agenda is to find ways of tackling the continent’s complex socioeconomic challenges by broadening the approaches to change. Capacity development in land governance (and related areas) can help the continent get there. At the moment, many African higher education institutions (especially at the undergraduate level) have not made the teaching of the aforementioned subjects a priority in their curricula. The implication is that many students graduate from their studies with poor knowledge of the dynamics of large-scale land acquisition. They graduate with little or no knowledge of the history and politics of land in Africa. They are faced with land conflicts in their environment with no coordinated knowledge or skills in contemporary land conflict management. And most importantly, gender ignorance and miseducation cannot be curtailed without the proper understanding of women’s land rights in the continent. There is a dire need to enhance curricula in different land related programs in African higher education institutions to cover key missing subjects of land governance. This calls for a reform – one that can simply be done by embracing (through adoption or adaptation) the proposed LPI’s Curricula Guidelines on land governance in Africa.

5.2 ADOPTION OF LPI’s CURRICULA GUIDELINES IS A PATH TOWARDS CURRICULA REFORM

The implications of this study is a need for curricula reform in land governance in African higher education institutions. The full or partial adoption of the Curricula Guidelines being developed by LPI by concerned institutions provides a smooth path towards such a reform. The Curricula Guidelines are basically meant to address the capacity development gaps needed for improving the land governance challenges in Africa. LPI’s Curricula Needs Assessment Study identified the capacity development needs for Africa, most of which have been confirmed in the analysis of selected curricula in this study. The most critical aspects of the identified needs include the inclusion of themes – such as women land rights, history and politics of land, land and natural resource conflict, customary land management/tenure and large-scale land acquisition – in their land governance curricula.

Broadly, the observations of LP’s Curricula Needs Assessment and our study suggest that the curricula of most programs in land governance within Africa are not in line with the socio economic, political and environmental realities confronting the continent. Despite that most of the programs have been (re)branded with new names, they largely consists of outdated curricula contents. As such the professionals produced have inadequate capacity to address the continents land management/policy/governance needs. These observations are also in line with the challenges identified by the F&G on Land Policy which found that African land professionals lack the capacity to manage change in the land sector. This why an adoption of in-preparation LPI’s Curricula Guidelines should be embraced by African institutions as a path towards
curricula reform, hence the first attempt in capacitating African land professionals towards capacity to manage change in their various land and related sectors.

6. CONCLUSION
This study does not in any way prescribe a fit-all matrix in land governance curricula in Africa. Rather, it argues for locally realistic curricula that conform to known international principles and standards. The study achieved three key things. Firstly, it evaluated individual programs from 10 institutions (at BSc and MSc levels) from 10 African countries, to track how their curricula contents relate to the gaps identified by the LPI in African institutions. What was found is that, they reflect the gaps identified by LPI to a considerable extent. Secondly, by way of implication, the study calls for the adoption of LPI’s Curricula Guidelines as a path towards curricula reform in the continent. Thirdly (and lastly), it confirms the study done by LPI on the critical gaps in capacity development in land governance in Africa.

This study was motivated by the LPI’s efforts at tackling land governance issues in Africa. One of the objectives of the LPI’s 5-year Strategic Plan is to “enhance the human resource capacity to support land policy development and implementation in Africa”. The development of its guidelines for curricula development is an important step towards achieving this objective. If adopted the guidelines will facilitate an environment of curricula review that could lead to improved training in land governance in Africa. However, two critical questions arise here. How will the Curricula Guidelines be used to reform land governance in African institutions? What are the capacities of those who will lead the efforts at implementing the Curricula Guidelines in Africa? How the LPI and its partners answer these questions would have impact on the extent of success the implementation of the Curricula Guidelines would have in the continent.

7. REFERENCES


### APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF CURRICULA EVALUATION MATRIX

#### Bachelors’ Degree Track Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Overall frequency of thematic tracks covered</th>
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<td>UniLag</td>
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<td>MakU</td>
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#### Masters’ Degree Track Evaluation

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<tr>
<td>UoM</td>
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#### LEGENDS

**Legends to track categories and institutions’ abbreviations**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of undergraduate institutions</th>
<th>Abbreviations</th>
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<tr>
<td>BSc. Land Economy, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana.</td>
<td>KNUST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc. Land Administration and Management, Institute of Applied Sciences, INES-Ruhengeri, Rwanda.</td>
<td>INES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc. Land Resource Planning and Management, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya.</td>
<td>JKUAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSc. Estate Management, University of Lagos, Nigeria.</td>
<td>UniLag</td>
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<tr>
<td>BA. Environmental Management, Makerere University, Uganda.</td>
<td>MakU</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of graduate institutions</th>
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<tr>
<td>MSc. Integrated Land Management, Namibia University of Science and Technology, Namibia.</td>
<td>NUST</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSc. Environmental Management, University of Pretoria, South Africa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSc. Real Estate, Ardhi University, Tanzania.</td>
<td>Ardhi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSc. Environmental Science, University of Botswana.</td>
<td>UoB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSc. Sustainable Energy Engineering with Environmental Management University of Mauritius.</td>
<td>UoM</td>
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<th>Track categories</th>
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<td>Natural resources, environment and climate change</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Rural and urban development</td>
<td>RUD</td>
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