

Fundamentals of Land Consolidation as an Instrument to Abolish Fragmentation of Agricultural Holdings

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Keywords: land consolidation, agriculture, fragmentation, practicable procedures.

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to give an overview of the main technical and policy issues that have to be taken into account when land consolidation is implemented in the most practicable way.

The paper focuses on land consolidation for agricultural purposes, that is land consolidation as an instrument to abolish fragmentation of agricultural holdings. Land consolidation for specific non-agricultural purposes such as nature and landscape is not an issue in this paper.

Land consolidation on a voluntary basis implies too much uncertainty with respect to its final results. Land consolidation can only be carried out in an efficient way when it is based on special legislation. Therefore the description of the land consolidation process in this paper emanates from a process provided by law.

In countries where land consolidation already has a long history, procedures have become rather complicated, because over the years the instrument of land consolidation has been developed in such a way that the fulfilment of a variety of different goals with respect to the development of the rural area can be achieved. The advanced multi-purpose character of the instrument may imply that the instrument is becoming too inert. Therefore there is a need to go back to the fundamentals of land consolidation. The result may also be of interest for countries where land consolidation still has to start.

In Chapter 2 some definitions and main characteristics of land consolidation will be mentioned.

Chapter 3 will give an overview of a practicable organization and practicable distribution of responsibilities.

Chapter 4 describes a practicable land consolidation process.

The paper is a summary of a publication about land consolidation, prepared for the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the UN.

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TS7.4 Land Consolidation: New Perspectives

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FIG XXII International Congress

Washington, D.C. USA, April 19-26 2002