

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES LAND SECTOR

A SNAPSHOT

مبادرة
الاراضي العربية
Arab Land Initiative



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABOUT THIS PAPER

This paper presents the results of an assessment conducted on land management and land administration in UAE between 2020 and 2022. Good land governance is essential for realizing sustainable social, economic, and environmental development, peace and stability. The paper indicates the country's capacity to deliver good land governance by measuring its performance on the core land administration functions: land tenure, land value, land use, land development and land disputes resolution. It also maps the existing learning offer on land governance, identifying the key institutions and the courses available in UAE. The paper was prepared as part of the work of the Arab Land Initiative, and its preparation was coordinated by the Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI) of the Housing and Building National Research Center (HBRC), Egypt, under the leadership of UN-Habitat and the Global Land Tool Network.

THE GLOBAL LAND TOOL NETWORK AND THE ARAB LAND INITIATIVE – GLTN is a multi-sectoral alliance of international partners committed to increasing access to land and tenure security for all, with a focus on the poor, women and youth. The Network's partners include international rural and urban civil society organizations, research and training institutions, bilateral and multilateral organizations, and international professional bodies.

In 2016, GLTN Partners, led by UN-Habitat and the World Bank, launched the Arab Land Initiative to promote equal access to land, peace, stability and economic growth in the Arab region through good land governance and transparent, efficient and affordable land administration systems. The Initiative aims at empowering land champions from the region by developing capacities, increasing collaboration and promoting innovation, learning and sharing of best practices. It also supports the implementation of land gender-responsive and fit-for-purpose land tools and approaches at national and local level. The Initiative is supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany (BMZ).

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CONTENTS

CONTENTS	III
FIGURES	IV
ABBREVIATIONS	IV
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The country	1
1.2. Methodology	5
1.2.1 Stakeholders and Sources	5
1.2.2 Time Frame and Limitations	6
2. LAND-RELATED LEGAL FRAMEWORK	7
2.1. United Arab Emirates Legal System Overview	7
2.2. Land-Related Framework	7
3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND STAKEHOLDERS	8
4. LAND MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION	10
4.1. Land Tenure	13
4.2. Land Value	17
4.3. Land Use	17
4.4. Land Development	22
4.5. Land Disputes Resolution	25
5. LEARNING OFFER AND CURRICULA	26
5.1. Existing Learning Offer	26
5.2. Research	27
5.3. Potential Collaboration	27
6. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS	29
REFERENCES	1
ANNEXES	2
Annex 1: Existing Learning Offer and Related Curricula for Land Governance (Academic)	2
Annex 2: Existing Learning Offers and Related Curricula for Land Governance (Government)	4

FIGURES

Figure 1: The Abu Dhabi master plan proposed by John Harris (1962).	2
Figure 2: Downtown Dubai, UAE.	3
Figure 3: Types of respondents.	5
Figure 4: Affiliation of respondents selecting “other”.	5
Figure 5: Sex disaggregation of respondents.	6
Figure 6: Organizational chart of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (2021).	9
Figure 7: Perceptions of the role of government and institutional landscape.	12
Figure 10: Perceptions of coverage and digitization of cadastre system.	15
Figure 13: Perceptions of land-use plans at the local level.	18
Figure 14: Perception of urban plans for main urban centres.	19
Figure 15: Perception of building permit regulations.	20
Figure 16: Environmental protection regulations.	21
Figure 17: Digitalization of land-use system.	22
Figure 18: Perceptions on acquiring land for public use.	23
Figure 19: Perception of the property development process.	24
Figure 20: Perception of the formal land disputes resolution system.	26

ABBREVIATIONS

AED	Emirati Dirham
DLD	Dubai Land Department
EPA	Emirates Planning Association
EREC	Emirates Real Estate Corporation
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GFA	Gross Floor Area
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLTN	Global Land Tool Network
MoEI	Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure
RERA	Real Estate Regulatory Authority
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
VAT	Value Added Tax

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The country

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is located at the eastern end of the Arabian Peninsula and is made up of seven federal emirates: Abu Dhabi (the capital), Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm Al-Quwain. Each emirate is ruled by a single sheikh, who together make up the Supreme Council, which approves the appointment of the prime minister and the cabinet. The emirates also elect and appoint 40 members of the advisory National Council (Bugden, 2008). UAE's land territory spans 71,023 km², including several islands, in addition to 27,625 km² of territorial waters. Abu Dhabi accounts for 84 per cent of the country's total landmass (Ammar, 2013; UAE, 2021).

The Constitution maintains that the welfare of the UAE is a top priority, highlighting the following goals for the Federation:

- Maintain UAE's independence and sovereignty,
- Protect security and stability for the Federation and member states,
- Defend any aggression upon its existence or the existence of its member states,
- Protect the rights and freedoms of the people of the Federation,
- Achieve close cooperation between the emirates for the common benefit of the Federation,
- Promote the prosperity and progress of the Federation,
- Provide a better life for all citizens, and
- Respect the independence and sovereignty of the other emirates in their internal affairs within the framework of this Constitution.

The Supreme Council is the main federal authority with the power to pass federal laws. These laws have resulted in a number of regulations around real estate, the most relevant law being the Civil Transactions Law. However, UAE is a federal state where each emirate can also pass local laws. Each local government has introduced laws regarding real estate, producing a distinct regulatory framework for each emirate. Emirate are also able to pass local laws establishing 'free zones', which have their own rules and regulations. If there is a conflict between emirate and federal law, the federal law shall prevail.¹ This section focuses mainly on Abu Dhabi and Dubai, UAE's two largest emirates.

The establishment and expansion of Abu Dhabi, UAE's capital, focused on developing the city around formal plans and reducing informal planning and tenure types. The city's development began in 1962 with the establishment of the Municipality of Abu Dhabi, with the main aim of improving living conditions. The first master plan was developed by the British architect and planner John Harris, who recommended reconstruction and integrating the old city with the new. His plan, however, was not approved, and other planners and companies (notably Halcrow) subsequently submitted proposals. Upon the ruling of Sheikh Zayed, UAE's first president and founder, widely regarded as responsible for unifying the seven emirates into a federal state in 1971, the urban development of Abu Dhabi commenced under Halcrow's modified

¹ For a complete list of federal ministries, please see the [Official Portal of the UAE Government](#).

plan which required eradication of the old city. To accelerate development, citizens from Abu Dhabi were granted three lots of land for residential, commercial and industrial development (Elsheshtawy, 2013).

Between the 1960s and 1980s, the city of Abu Dhabi developed without a comprehensive framework, and in 1988 the Executive Council decided to implement a master plan prepared by the city's Town Planning Department with the assistance of UNDP. The plan consisted of five stages, and included plans to extend development towards several surrounding islands, establish wide grid-pattern roads and high-density residential buildings and distribute state-owned land to citizens for development. The latter was executed through the Khalifa Committee, which developed the land on behalf of the citizens. These centralized plans resulted in a lack of mixed-use developments. After 2004, under UAE's new president and ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khalifa, development accelerated with the development of Plan Abu Dhabi 2030: Urban Structure Framework Plan focusing on identity and sustainability (Elsheshtawy, 2013).



Figure 1: The Abu Dhabi master plan proposed by John Harris (1962).
Source: Elsheshtawy (2011).

The transformation of Abu Dhabi's central market is an example of the intent to formalize the city. According to Elsheshtawy (2011), city officials and some residents viewed the old market as chaotic and not representative of the modern metropolis that the city officials wanted to portray. The redeveloped space is now a modern interpretation of traditional Gulf market style.

Regulation of the real estate market in Abu Dhabi began in 2005 with the establishment of the Land Registration Department and the issuance of a law that regulates real estate registration. All properties must be registered with the Department of Municipal Affairs, which grants the owner a land title certificate. As of 2005, several additional laws have been issued to regulate the transfer or releasing/cancelling of property rights, selling or purchasing real estate, landownership according to citizenship, creation of investment zones and land entitlement within these zones based on citizenship (Marlow, 2012; Black and Carrol, 2017).

As for Dubai, the city transformed from a simple fishing village and port into a global centre of commerce and finance. Prior to its urban development and expansion, Dubai consisted of three neighbourhoods:

Deira, Bur Dubai and Shindagha. Deira represents the city's central business district, which was further developed into a transit hub. Originally, Deira (in particular, Baniya Square) served as a hub for traders from Somaliland, India, Pakistan and Iran. This "low-end" hub provided the base for Dubai's development. Between 1961 and 1970, the waterway within the city was deepened, docking areas were established, land was reclaimed and water features and landscaping elements were added. Later, the existing buildings surrounding the creek and Baniya Square were replaced with large complexes. The area further evolved with the construction of the Dubai Metro (Elsheshtawy, 2014). In May 1960, the Dubai Land Department (DLD) was founded to promote the real estate sector at regional and international levels.



Figure 2: Downtown Dubai, UAE.
Source: Shutterstock.

Given the need to diversify the economy of the emirate, in 2007 the Dubai Real Estate Regulatory Authority was created, which has played a crucial role in developing the regulatory framework (e.g., the escrow law). Escrow is a legal financial arrangement where a third party holds a large sum of money on behalf of both parties until the process is completed. In 2007, a law was issued in Dubai to regulate real estate developers and safeguard purchasers' money in case of off-plan developments. The law allows authorities to preserve the rights of purchasers; however, until now they have taken limited action against non-compliant developers. Property rights and long leases are registered in DLD, but short leases are registered in the Real Estate Regulatory Authority. The strata law, issued in 2010, encourages developers to act together in a consortium and to jointly manage a neighbourhood and the buildings within it. In the same year, legislation was issued to introduce a mechanism where the holders of industrial and commercial granted lands could convert their lease into a freehold land deed, where the owner has full rights to the property for an unlimited time. In 2011, DLD issued a law prohibiting foreign companies not registered in Jebel Ali Free Zone from owning property in Dubai (Marlow, 2012; Black and Carrol, 2017; Banton, 2021).

Like Dubai, the city of Sharjah also started as a small fishing village and later developed into an urban settlement in the 19th century under British occupation. Sharjah became an important port with links to the Indian Ocean, as it formed part of a trade route that connected South and South-East Asia with the

Middle East and Europe. This resulted in the development of Sharjah as a linear city along the coast, which later constructed its own fort.

British records from the 1820s document four interconnected spaces within the city: the linear port of Sahil, the linear market, the external market outside the fort and the residential area. In 1932, the British occupation established an airport, part of the main route between India and England, serving as a regional hub. It was intended to compensate for the fact that Dubai had become the main trading port. Later, in 1953, the first school was established, attracting students from all over the country. In 1971, Sharjah joined the UAE as a founding member, and the entire country embarked on massive urban development projects funded by oil revenues. In 1972, Sharjah established its Real Estate Registration Department after issuing a property registration law. The law permitted only UAE citizens to own land, and only the Governor/Sheikh could bestow the right of landownership on people or entities of other nationalities. In 1980, further laws were issued to regulate ownership of multi-storey buildings and to introduce strata ownership (Marlow, 2012). In the 1990s, following ad hoc developments and conversion of historic places into workers' housing, the Government of Sharjah intervened and procured the property rights to historical places, restoring and reconstructing old structures. In recognition, UNESCO nominated Sharjah as the cultural capital of the Arab world (Rab Kirchner, 2011).

For Ajman, the smallest emirate and a historical pearl trading post, its initial development focused on maritime services and activities. Up until 2014, the physical development of the city was concentrated along the main arterial road connecting Ajman to Sharjah. Current urban development within Ajman is monitored by the government to ensure that settlements undergo structured development, aimed at tackling urban poverty and informal housing. Ajman University is considered the central hub for activities as it has ample infrastructure, which in turn attracts prospective developers to nearby locations. Moreover, a spillover effect from Dubai and Sharjah spurs housing growth in Ajman (Wahid et al., 2020). In 2008, the Ajman Real Estate Regulatory Authority was established, and a decree granted UAE and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) citizens or entities freehold right over land. Foreigners are permitted to own land if the Governor allows it. The decree also regulates jointly owned land and requires owners or developers to register with the Ajman Land Department. Furthermore, all developers must have their master plans and infrastructure plans approved (Marlow, 2012).

In 2005, the city of Ras Al-Khaimah permitted UAE citizens to own property, with limitations placed on non-GCC foreign entities. However, in 2007, a decree relaxed these limitations allowing non-UAE citizens and corporate bodies to own freehold title to property in projects owned by Ras Al-Khaimah Investment Authority, Al-Hamra and Rakeen real estate firms. In 2006, temporary mortgages were allowed for long leases (over 20 years) governed by the Ras Al-Khaimah Land Department. From 2008 onwards, developers who sell off planned properties need to register their names in the Real Estate Developers' Register with Ras Al-Khaimah Investment Authority to obtain permission/licence for the development (Marlow, 2012).

Finally in 2006, similarly to the other emirates, Umm Al-Quwain allowed UAE and GCC citizens (as well as public joint stock companies) to own land within the emirate. However, foreigners are only allowed to own floors/flats and not land. By 2007, a law was issued that required developers to register in a Developers' Register at the Survey and Planning Department (ibid.).

1.2. Methodology

1.2.1 Stakeholders and Sources

The study initially targeted a wide range of actors and stakeholders (academia, civil society, private sector, international organizations and government bodies); however, it became clear after two months that the bulk of respondents came either from academia or private sector professionals.

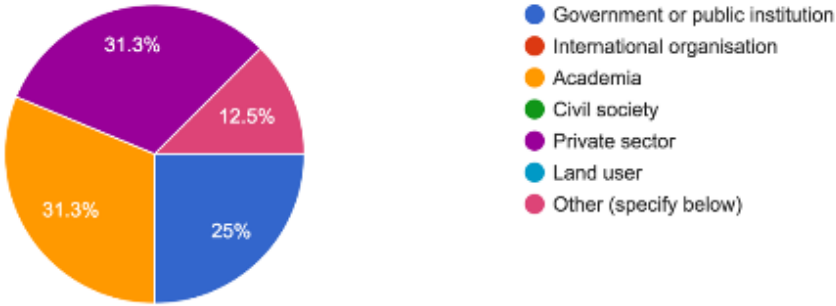


Figure 3: Types of respondents.

Those who selected “other” as a vocation category also came from the private sector or academic institutions (see Figure 4).

United Arab Emirates University
Abu Dhabi University
Architecture & Interior Consultant.
The Engineering Office in Diwan Dubai UAE
Architecture/Urban Planner
Emirates Planning Association

Figure 4: Affiliation of respondents selecting “other”.

Apart from one or two respondents affiliated with the government and one respondent from the Emirates Planning Association (EPA), this study therefore mainly reflects the opinions of academic researchers and professionals in the field of architecture and design. In terms of the gender balance, most of the respondents – 75 per cent – were male while 25 per cent were female. It is also essential to note that most respondents were familiar with Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and thus much of the information gathered is relevant only to those two emirates. Additional studies should be carried out to broaden the scope of the research to other emirates within the UAE.

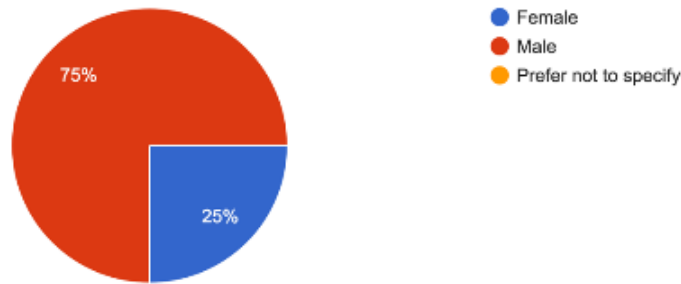


Figure 5: Sex disaggregation of respondents.

1.2.2 Time Frame and Limitations

The study began in April 2021 and was scheduled to end in July; however, the timeframe was extended to allow for a greater response rate. Fieldwork therefore concluded in September, the first draft of the report was delivered in October 2021 and the final report in January 2022.

This section discusses reflections on the process of data collection, particularly the questionnaire, employed for this study. First, access to information in the UAE and, more generally, in the Gulf region remains a challenge, especially for non-nationals. The study faced obstacles in securing access to the right information from trusted sources. Second, there was very limited participation of governmental bodies and agencies, which impacts the quality and quantity of information obtained on land management. As a result, the study faces a limitation resulting from potential bias in viewpoints due to the dependence on private sector respondents to the survey. A lack of participation was similarly encountered with stakeholders in other fields, and the absence of civil society and international development agencies in UAE added further limitations, as they could have acted as complementary sources. Some individuals, when approached to participate in this study, indicated that responding to such questions was a consulting service that they offer, and therefore requested compensation for their time and knowledge. On the other hand, academics and researchers were eager to participate in the questionnaire and provided detailed answers. A key reason for low participation rates, and identified limitation of this study, was the remote nature of the research, as face-to-face interviews and meetings may have yielded better results. The consequence of using remote data collection method was a lower response rate from the target group.

2. LAND-RELATED LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. United Arab Emirates Legal System Overview

Sharia law is the basis of UAE's fundamental legal principles, however most of the country's legislation comprises a blend of Islamic and European civil law concepts, originating from 19th and 20th century Egyptian legal code (Khedr, 2018). While the legal system in the UAE is structured and comprehensive, it is also somewhat rigid and bureaucratic. The legal structure is complex, with both sharia and civil courts, and with each emirate maintaining its own federal court of first instance. Dubai and Ras al-Khaimah, however, have completely separate judicial frameworks (ibid.).

UAE's legal structure can be daunting for those unaccustomed to it, particularly for business endeavours, as it diverges significantly from Western legal frameworks. Despite these disparities, the foundational legal principles remain logical and adaptable, evolving over centuries to address contemporary societal needs. Recent amendments in commercial law have also fostered a more accessible environment for foreign enterprises and investors (ibid.).

Islam is designated as the state religion and sharia or Quranic law is the primary legal source according to the Constitution. While sharia principles influence criminal and civil laws, their direct impact is primarily observed in social laws such as family, divorce or inheritance matters. Commercial disputes are predominantly adjudicated by civil courts or arbitration tribunals (ibid.).

Several sharia principles apply to business transactions, shaping the development of commercial codes in the UAE. While not directly mirrored in commercial legislation, these principles inform the drafting and interpretation of laws. These include the prohibition of usury or interest (*Riba*), the requirement for shared risk, the avoidance of uncertainty (*Gharar*) and clarity of contracts, the necessity for parties' legal capacity and consent and the prohibition of coercion or duress in contracts (ibid.).

2.2. Land-Related Framework

In 2002, HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum announced that real estate in designated areas of Dubai would become available for ownership by foreigners on a freehold basis. At the time, there were virtually no specialized laws and regulations in place to accommodate Dubai's burgeoning real estate market (Marlow, 2012). Following its creation in 2007, Dubai's Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) has played an increasingly public and crucial role in developing and supervising Dubai's real estate regulatory framework and development (ibid.).

The same can be said of Abu Dhabi after the enactment of Law No. 19 of 2005, which allowed property ownership for the first time. The legislative framework in the northern emirates remains in part inconsistent but is slowly developing. The real estate market in Abu Dhabi started to develop in earnest in 2005, when Law No. 3 of 2005 introduced regulations regarding the registration of property, including the establishment of a Land Registration Department at Abu Dhabi and Al-Ain Municipalities (ibid.).

At the national level, the Emirates Real Estate Corporation (EREC) was established through federal law No. 7 in 2000, with capital of AED 500 million and the overall mission to design and construct properties to meet the real estate needs of the government. Clients include a variety of government entities, ranging

from ministries to federal authorities (including ministries of education, foreign affairs, human resources and infrastructure and others). EREC is also involved in construction projects abroad, such as the embassies of the UAE in Germany, Turkmenistan and Canada, as well as head of mission and ambassador residences in several countries.

In general, the legislative system pertaining to land can be summarized in the following:

- Decision-making is highly centralized and tightly connected to the power structure of the country (the sheikh).
- The institutional framework of land management in the UAE is based on the laws of each emirate. Apart from the federal ministries, each emirate has full autonomy over its land and how it is distributed and managed.
- Only the Federal Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MoEI) has a near full mandate over lands at the federal level (MoEI, 2021).
- There is a mix between laws at federal and emirate levels, in addition to specific rulings issued by the sheikhs.

3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND STAKEHOLDERS

As a federal country, each emirate has its own laws and regulations; however, some federal ministries govern across the entire UAE. For example, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure has the mission to organize, develop and enhance competitiveness in energy, mining, water resources, land and sea transportation, roads, utilities, housing, building, construction and sustainability of investment; it is also responsible for the optimal use of partnerships, technology and advanced sciences and adopting innovative global solutions to improve quality of life (MoEI, 2021). In general, the key stakeholders driving land policy in the UAE are the private sector, government bodies and the ruling family.

The UAE has defined several types of property rights: (1) freehold, where the owner has full rights over the property; (2) usufruct, where the property can be used for a limited time and the owner can derive income from the land; (3) *Musataha*, also where the property can be used for a limited time, and the owner can construct buildings on it; and (4) leasehold, where the property is used for a limited period of time based on a contractual agreement. In Abu Dhabi and Dubai, land acquisition is tightly linked to and dependent on nationality: UAE citizens have no restrictions, GCC citizens are subject to some restrictions, and other nationalities face much tighter limitations (Black and Carrol, 2017).

At the federal level, the Sheikh Zayed Housing programme, established in 1999, provides interest-free housing loans repayable over a 25-year period to citizens with low incomes. Over 14,500 Emiratis received new houses from 2000 to 2012.



Figure 6: Organizational chart of the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (2021).
Source: MoEI (n.d.).

4. LAND MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

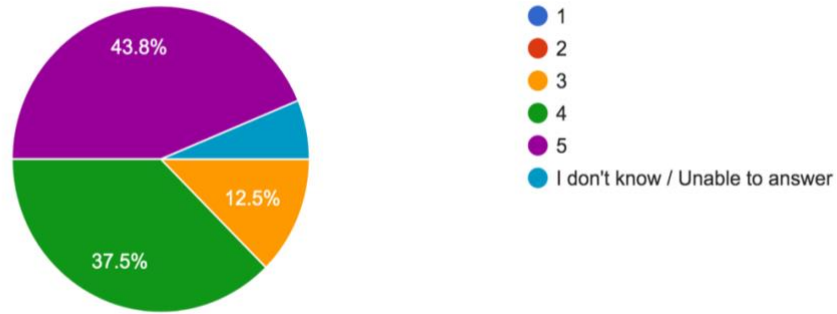
The land management and administration system in the UAE is highly institutional, with strict rules and regulations in place for most transactions. Nevertheless, the system is still undergoing changes and improvements in terms of digitization and ensuring faster and smoother processes. Land administration functions can be grouped into the following main categories: (1) land tenure, (2) land value, (3) land use, (4) land development and (5) land disputes resolution.

- **Land tenure** refers to the relationship among individuals or groups concerning land and land-related natural resources. Such a relationship can be legally or customarily defined. Rules of tenure establish guidelines for the allocation of property rights within societies, outlining both responsibilities and limitations. Land tenure systems dictate who can use what resources, for how long and under which conditions.
- **Land value** is the economic value of a property. All land is considered to have a value. The process of assessing land value is a technical evaluation used to determine how much a plot of land is worth.
- **Land use** defines how people use and exercise rights over land.
- **Land development** involves using resources to enhance land quality and facilitate new, improved or more efficient land use. These resources may encompass financial investments, such as constructing buildings, utilities or infrastructure; labour, such as clearing or draining land for agricultural purposes; or administrative procedures, such as obtaining or modifying planning permits.
- **Land disputes resolution** is the means by which disagreements over land are addressed. Various types of disputes can emerge concerning access to, use of and control over land and land-related natural resources. These disputes can manifest at different scales, from individual to families, communities or whole societies. Some land-related disputes may escalate into violent conflicts; others can lead to land tenure insecurity, hampering the optimal use of land resources. A country's capacity to efficiently manage and resolve land-related disputes is a critical factor for a successful land sector.

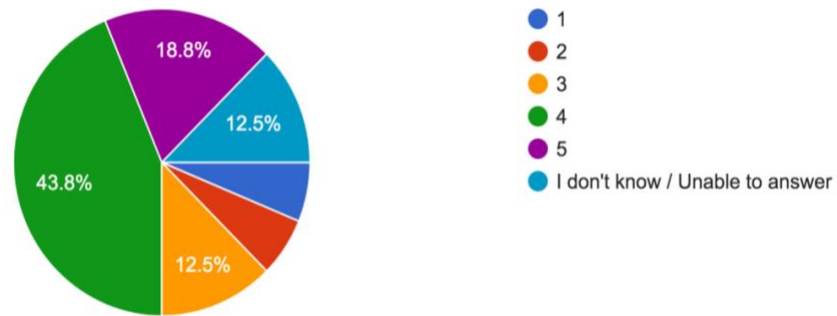
Information outlined in this section is based on the results of the survey conducted for this report, as well as additional interviews with respondents in the UAE.

The most common perception regarding institutional set-up in the UAE is that the state is aware of the importance of land for sustainable development and economic growth, with the vast majority of respondents agreeing with that statement (Figure 7a). More than half of respondents indicate that they perceive land-related mandates and functions as clear and well defined (Figure 7b). Half or slightly more than half of respondents believe that linkages between institutions are well-defined, and that the institutions are well-managed, well-staffed and well-financed (Figure 7c-f).

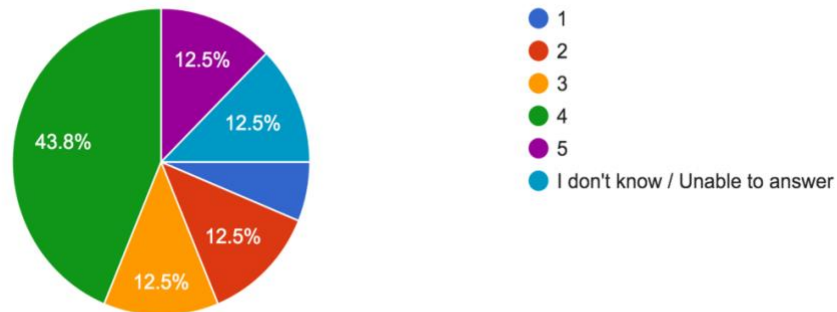
a) Is the government aware of the importance of the land issue for sustainable development (where 1 is not at all aware and 5 is very well aware)?



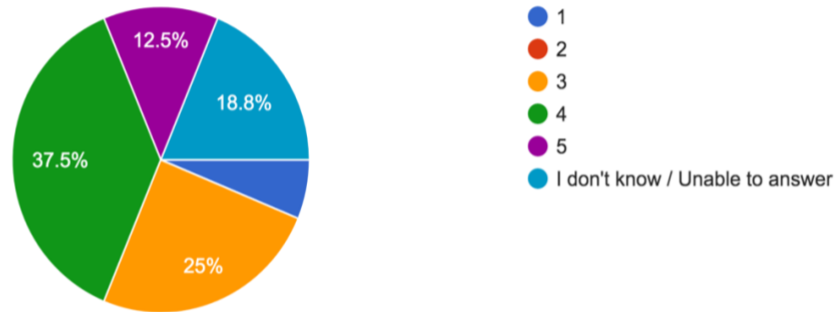
b) Are mandates of public institutions with land-related functions clear, well-defined and manageable (where 1 is not at all clear and 5 is very clear, well-defined and manageable)?



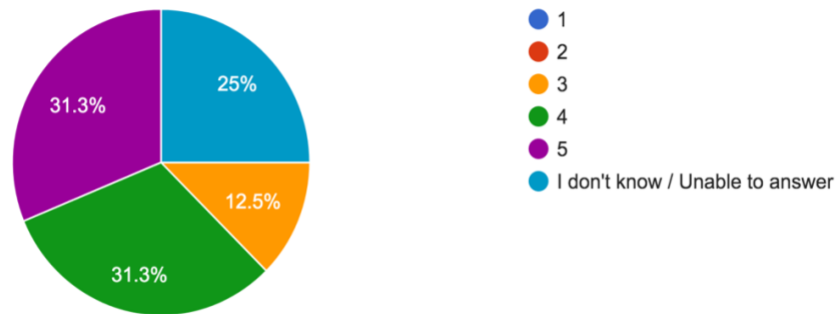
c) Are linkages between institutions and organizations with land-related mandates well defined to ensure good institutional cooperation (where 5 is resulting in very good cooperation)?



d) Are institutions and organizations with land-related mandates well-managed (where 1 is not well-managed and 5 is very well-managed)?



e) Are institutions and organizations with land-related mandates overall well-financed (where 1 is not at all well-financed and 5 is very well-financed)?



f) Are institutions and organizations with land-related mandates overall well-staffed with enough competent personnel (where 1 is not at all well-staffed and 5 is very well-staffed)?

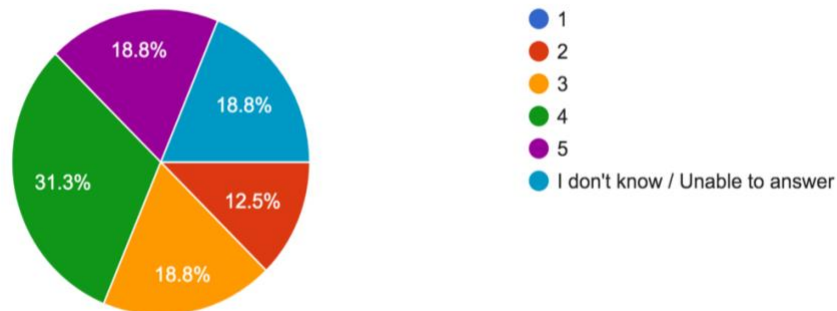


Figure 7: Perceptions of the role of government and institutional landscape.

4.1. Land Tenure

Land is a highly political topic in the UAE. While some information on land tenure is available for investors, there is still a great deal of ambiguity concerning how the system works. The main sources of information regarding tenure are legal texts and brochures made to attract foreign real estate investors in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Public data is not always clear or available and depends on the specifics of the emirate and the associated data owner.

All Emirati households are entitled to land or built properties in their emirate of origin, granted to them by the state. However, it is difficult to have a clear picture for the whole of UAE about land tenure rights and ownership patterns and the process of allocating them to citizens. Different rules apply in different emirates, as the UAE has a federal regime in which each emirate has its own rules and regulations regarding land.

Landownership as a right belongs to Emirati nationals only, which accounts for only 13 per cent of UAE's total population, and less than 10 per cent of the population in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. While there is now an option for foreign nationals residing in the UAE to buy residential property in the form of floors and apartments, they cannot purchase land.

In Abu Dhabi, usufruct agreements with the emirate give nationals the right to use but not own land, and *musataha* grants the right to own floors or buildings but not the land itself. Foreigners are allocated rights to residential units for 99 years in Abu Dhabi, *musataha* for 50 years, usufruct for 99 years or a long-term lease of 25 years or more. The Abu Dhabi Executive Council implemented a standard form to be used for all *musataha* agreements made in the emirate between two or more government entities or between government entities and third parties. The private sector follows the same rules with minor deviations.

In Dubai, foreigners may own property without restriction only in designated areas (including "free zones" such as Sports City, International City, Arabian Ranches, Palm Jumeirah, etc.). They also have usufruct and long-term lease options available to them. The Dubai Land Department is responsible for land tenure in coordination with municipalities and RERA (Real Estate Regulatory Authority). Foreign nationals cannot own property in Sharjah, but do have an option of 99-year usufruct rights.

Most respondents believe that Emirati citizens are generally confident in their security of tenure and the government's ability to fulfil their housing needs. However, the process of land and property distribution is believed to raise some discontent, as people are sometimes encouraged to move to different neighbourhoods or encounter long wait times as young couples, which often results in them renting apartments while waiting to own a property. The situation also varies widely according to the emirate: residents of northern emirates who work in Abu Dhabi or Dubai (where most jobs in the UAE are located) cannot access land there and thus have to rent or buy in the same designated areas that foreigners have access to. All residents of UAE can rent places of residence on a limited period contract. Most foreigners perceive their tenure rights as insecure, as leases must be renewed every year and can easily be revoked.

Respondents are generally unaware of whether the UAE collects and holds sex-disaggregated information, or of the proportion of the adult female population with secure tenure rights or who perceive their rights as secure. Tenure is typically granted to the head of the household, which in most cases is considered the husband.

Regarding knowledge of different tenure types in the UAE, respondents provided conflicting responses, which reflects a general lack of clarity in land rights. Respondents are, however, aware of the existence of different tenure types for foreign nationals.

While there is uncertainty around forms of informal land tenure in UAE, respondents indicate that a large amount of housing is informal, in the sense that people rent or sub-let apartments, villas, rooms or bedspaces without any formal contract. Usually, this goes through several intermediaries: the owner rents the unit to someone able to pay an increased price of the lease for a year; this person then sub-lets it monthly or weekly to various individuals or families. This housing scheme is not formally accepted and is sometimes repressed by authorities, but in general it is tolerated, as it is the only way many foreign workers are able to afford housing in the UAE.

Approximately half of respondents indicate that they believe it is very unlikely to be forcibly evicted in the UAE. When land is required for a new urban development, it is typically bought legally from the owners, and tenants are legally – not forcibly – evicted with compensation. In very rare cases people may be asked to vacate their properties for reasons such as re-zoning or re-planning an area. Accordingly, owners receive good compensation for the acquisition. In cases where land is given by a higher authority to an individual as a gift, such land may be withdrawn under certain circumstances. In general, all of UAE's land belongs to the government/the ruling family.

Most respondents indicate that there is no forced displacement in UAE unless for the purpose of national security, but relocation (with compensation) is most often due to land development. This can include the creation of new developments, upgrading of informal settlements, urban regeneration, replanning and infrastructure requirements (such as constructing the metro). One example of displacement that occurs due to urban regeneration is that which took place at Pier I at Mina Zayed (the old harbour), where fishermen and craftsmen living in older warehouses were displaced when the entire pier was turned into a mixed-use entertainment area.

According to interviews, the main reasons for eviction in UAE include an inability to pay rent, a decision by the building's owner to renovate or redevelop the plot of land and crackdowns by municipalities and police on certain forms of informal housing. Tenants who rent monthly without a proper contract can also simply be evicted because of a conflict or a breach of the agreement between them and the main tenant of the flat.

Half of survey respondents believe that the cost of buying urban land and property is affordable, while only roughly a third indicate that rural or agricultural land is affordable. About one quarter of respondents believe that citizens understand their land rights. In addition, roughly half believe that it is relatively easy to obtain funds to purchase lands or properties, and a similar proportion of respondents believe that such funds are as easily obtained by women as by men. Most respondents do not know if it is possible to use land or property as collateral to obtain loans, or whether it is equally possible for men and women.

A vast majority of respondents indicate that there is a functioning cadastral system, and about half believe the system covers more than 80 per cent of the country's land (Figure 8a). Most respondents also believe that more than 80 per cent of information is kept in digital format (Figure 8b), which corresponds to an

earlier finding that the system is still developing and being improved for comprehensiveness. Dubai and Abu Dhabi are generally believed to have the most thorough and digitalized records.

Some respondents believe that while land tenure information exists, the public may not have the ability to access such information, especially in area where the Emirati families reside. According to interviews, information is likely available to the authorities engaged in urban planning and housing for land management purposes, and more easily accessible in 'free zones' where foreigners can buy land.

In Abu Dhabi, for example, cadastral documents are kept in GIS format at the Department of Municipal Affairs, along with land use and development plans. It is not likely that a single service that has access to all information, as the Statistical Centre of Abu Dhabi and the Abu Dhabi Housing Authority seem to have only partial access. In Dubai cadastral documents are also kept at the Municipality of Dubai.

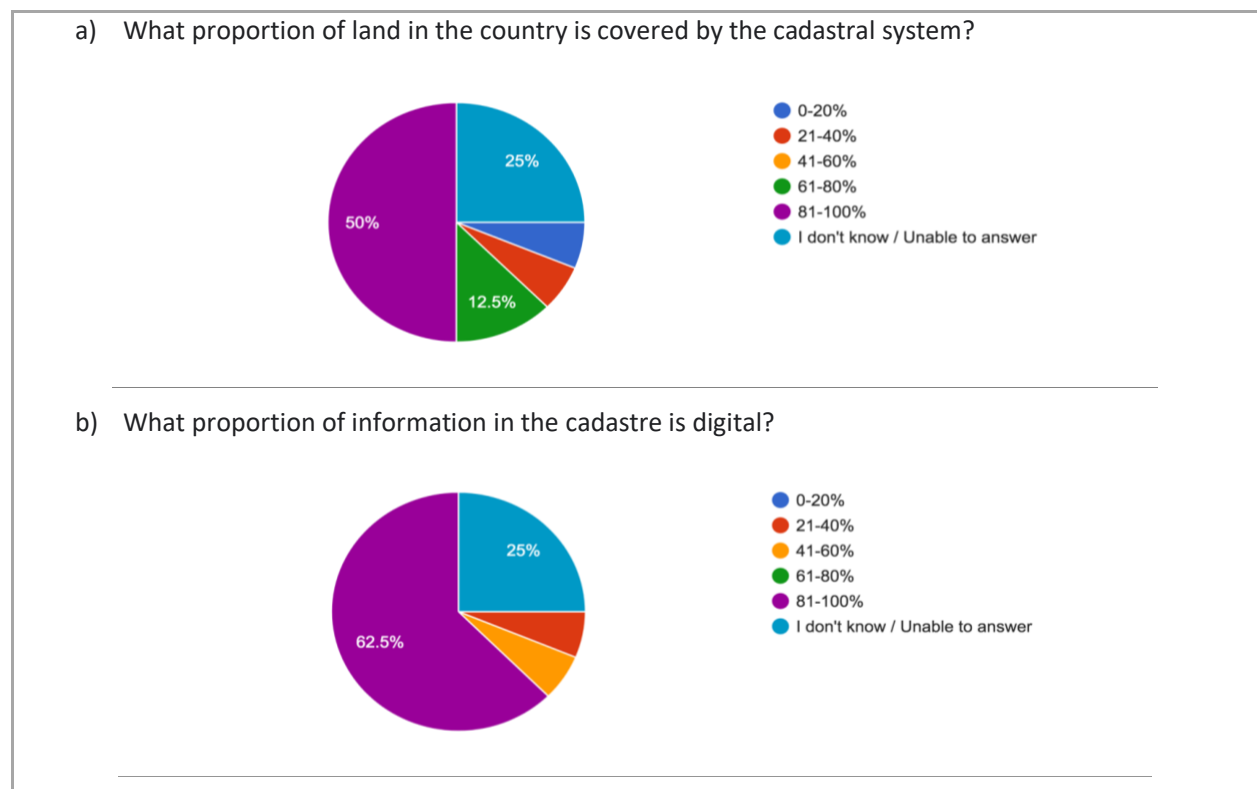


Figure 8: Perceptions of coverage and digitization of cadastre system.

Fewer than half the respondents believe that the process to register new properties is easy, as there is a strict procedure that involves several stakeholders and is only easy for those who understand the system well. It may also be easier for citizens. Less than a quarter believe that altering existing properties is easy. One reason provided for the perceived difficulty in altering existing properties is that additional spatial studies need to be conducted and justifications need to be provided for any plot amendments. The modification process is especially difficult for those living in properties distributed by the government (Elshehtawy, 2011), but is thought to be easier for 'mega projects' on land that is designated for foreigners to own or lease.

Half of respondents indicate that transferring ownership or use of a property from one party to another is easy, though half also believe the process is expensive. Transfer and registration costs are based on a fixed rate related to the property or land value; in Dubai, for example, the Dubai Lands Department charges 4 per cent of the property price as a registration fee. Registering or modifying existing properties in UAE is seen as more costly than in other countries in the region. Respondents note that ease of process may differ between the different emirates, as in general they are more familiar with Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Respondents are generally unaware of the number of days the process to record a change in the cadastral system takes, nor were they aware of the number of cadastral offices in the country or how centralized or decentralized the system is. In Dubai, for example, several governmental entities oversee planning and are involved in the registration process. In addition to the Dubai Municipality, there are around eight free zone authorities involved in the process, with each covering a specific geographical area and each establishing its own process and fees.

In terms of land tenure information and spatial data infrastructure, respondents provided a detailed breakdown of the type of information included in the cadastre. The cadastre holds two main types of documents: (1) the title deed certificate, which includes the owner's name, value, area, plot number and any special conditions, and (2) a map that shows the plot boundaries and coordinates, area, owner name, community name and plot number. In addition, the cadastre holds information on type of land use, number of floors and rooms in a building, applicable development regulations, electricity and water authority approval, other infrastructure and underground services (not applicable in desert or undesignated lands) and civil defence approval if required. Urban services, however, may not be completely updated in cadastral maps, meaning that problems may arise during new construction projects.

Most respondents indicate that cadastral data is linked with other data, such as GIS and land-use planning departments. These other agencies include municipalities, civil defence, the national housing program, electricity and water authorities and the police department. Utility services, topography and planning parameters (gross floor area (GFA), height, coverage, land use, parking requirements, etc.) can be obtained through the website. Land-use plans are also available and made public by municipalities. The 2030 plan for Abu Dhabi, and the 2021 and 2071 plan for Dubai, for example, include land-use and zoning maps, as well as natural resources maps.

Most respondents believe that decision-makers have access to land-related information, but highlight that no one has full access to the entire database, only partial. Data is believed to be available for urban planning authorities and municipalities, government service providers and master developers and property owners.

In addition, about one third of respondents indicate that other forms of land tenure registration exist in the UAE; they are, however, unaware of the proportion of tenure type these alternative forms constitute.

4.2. Land Value

In terms of assessing the value of land and properties, most respondents believe that there is an institutionalized methodology for assessing the land value, whether urban or rural, with more than half believing the methodology to be both adequate and covering all tenure types (registered, private, public, unregistered, etc.). In addition, respondents note that in free zones/designated areas, the value of land is determined by the private or semi-public developer. The Dubai Land Department (DLD) also has a separate evaluation criterion based on its own annual index for land values per square foot GFA, in addition to private market valuation.

A vast majority of respondents confirm there is a valuation system for buildings, with about half believing the methodology to be adequate and covering all tenure types. Most respondents also indicate that professional land valuers are an official, recognized category and registered, but only half believe they are formally trained. Many interviewees believe that the number of land valuers is sufficient to cover the entire country as well as all tenure typologies (registered and unregistered). Others are knowledgeable about the situation in Dubai but not the other emirates. For example, some note that land valuers exist as part of the same entity that provides land entitlement and building permits. One respondent notes that professional valuers deal with properties or buildings rather than the land itself. Most respondents also indicate that the services of professional valuers are expensive, with only developers (companies) using their services.

Most respondents believe there is no taxation system on land or properties, and about one quarter consider the land taxation system to be fair. While land is not taxed, other than land sales, fees and annual service charges are seen as very high. One respondent sees such charges as a form of indirect taxation, though the fees are not transparent and are believed to go to semi-governmental developers. There is, however, a 5 per cent tax on tenancy contracts and 10 per cent of commercial properties, as well as an additional municipality tax, paid at the same time as water and electricity (in Abu Dhabi, this tax is also 5 per cent of the tenancy contract and is higher for foreigners than for nationals). Correspondingly, most respondents either do not know the amount or believe that less than 20 per cent of municipal revenue and expenditures come from land and property taxation.

Less than half of respondents indicate that there is a digital land information system recording land value, with some believing that while it exists, it is incomplete. One respondent stresses that land value information is accessible to everyone through submission of a request to the government.

4.3. Land Use

Most respondents confirm that there are land-use plans at the national level, though only half consider them to be adequate; most believe they are tightly enforced (Figure 9). Some respondents indicate that land-use plans exist at the level of the emirate and municipality but not at the national level with no centralized entity to oversee land use in the UAE. Plans are sometimes referred to as “national” economic plans, however, they are often published either by the government of Dubai or Abu Dhabi and tend to compete with each other to some extent. Even at the local level, Dubai, for example, has developed multiple versions of land-use plans, not all of which are implemented.

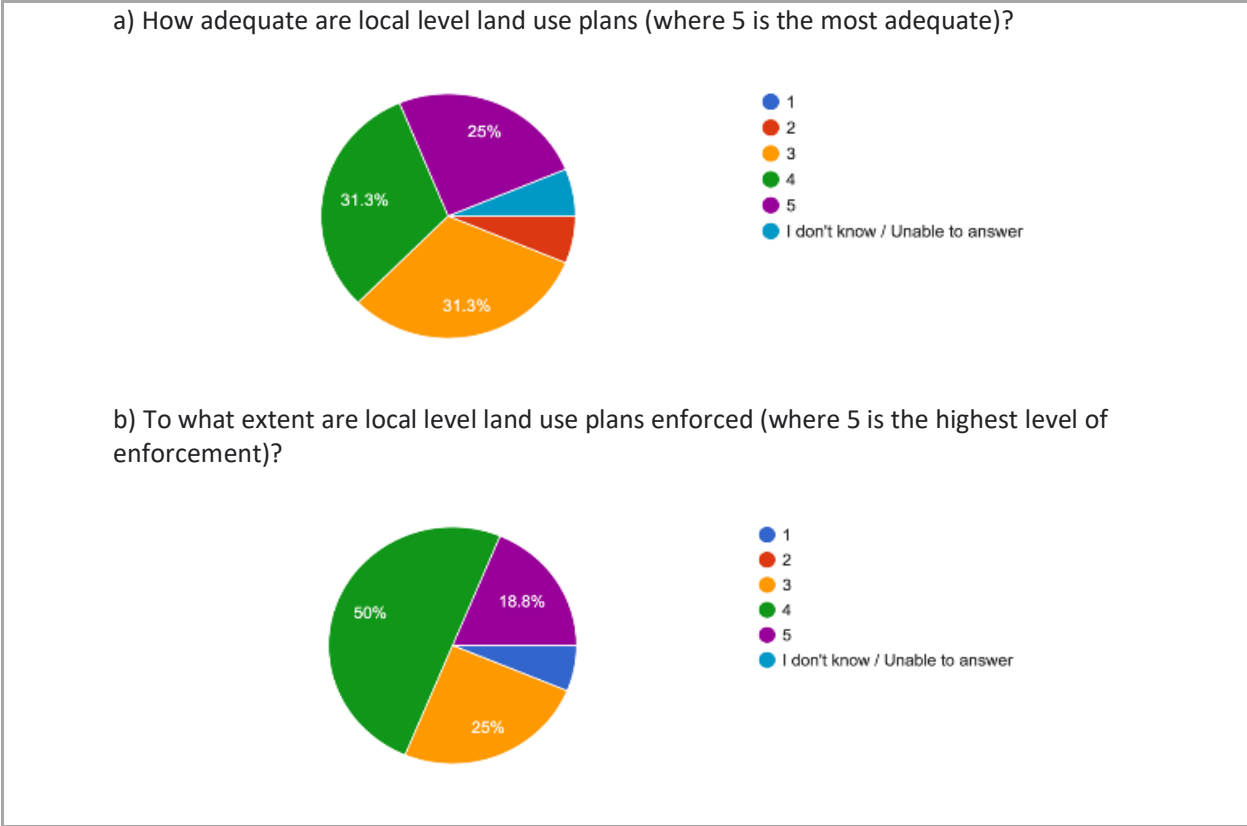


Figure 9: Perceptions of land-use plans at the local level.

Similarly, most respondents confirm the existence of land-use plans at the regional level, with less than half believing them to be either adequate or tightly enforced. It should, however, be noted that “regional level” is not easily defined in the UAE. There are plans at the scale of the emirate in Abu Dhabi and the northern emirates, as these include secondary cities and rural areas with some importance. They have been unequally applied and implemented throughout the years.

Finally, for land use at the local level, all respondents confirm that there are such plans, with more than half indicating that they are adequate and well-enforced. Some respondents gave further insights into local planning:

- Plans are often programmatic (over the next 10, 20 or 30 years) and do not include all private developments. Historically, these plans have rarely been implemented in full. There is often a discrepancy between centralized plans at the scale of emirate/municipality and developments initiated by members of the ruling family at a private or semi-public scale, which tend to trump the integrated public plans. More generally, an increasing part of these plans includes entrusting the development of large plots of land to private or semi-public developers, who then manage these areas entirely (e.g. many of the smaller islands in Abu Dhabi).
- Municipalities issue an annually updated plan; however, these are not always implemented.
- In spite of land-use and land development regulations in place since 2007, developers are able to propose projects that do not fit these plans and they are often approved.

Almost all respondents confirm that plans for the main urban centres exist, though some note that there is no difference between “local” and “urban” scales in the UAE, as the capital city of each emirate also tends to be the main urban centre and geographically separate from secondary cities and rural areas. Most respondents consider urban plans to be adequate and well-enforced (Figure 10).

Less than one third of respondents are aware of regulations or schemes addressing informal settlements or displaced populations, and most do not know if they are adequate or well-enforced. Respondents note that there is very little tolerance for illicit activities in the UAE, including illegal or informal settlements. Those without proper work permits are typically deported out of the country.

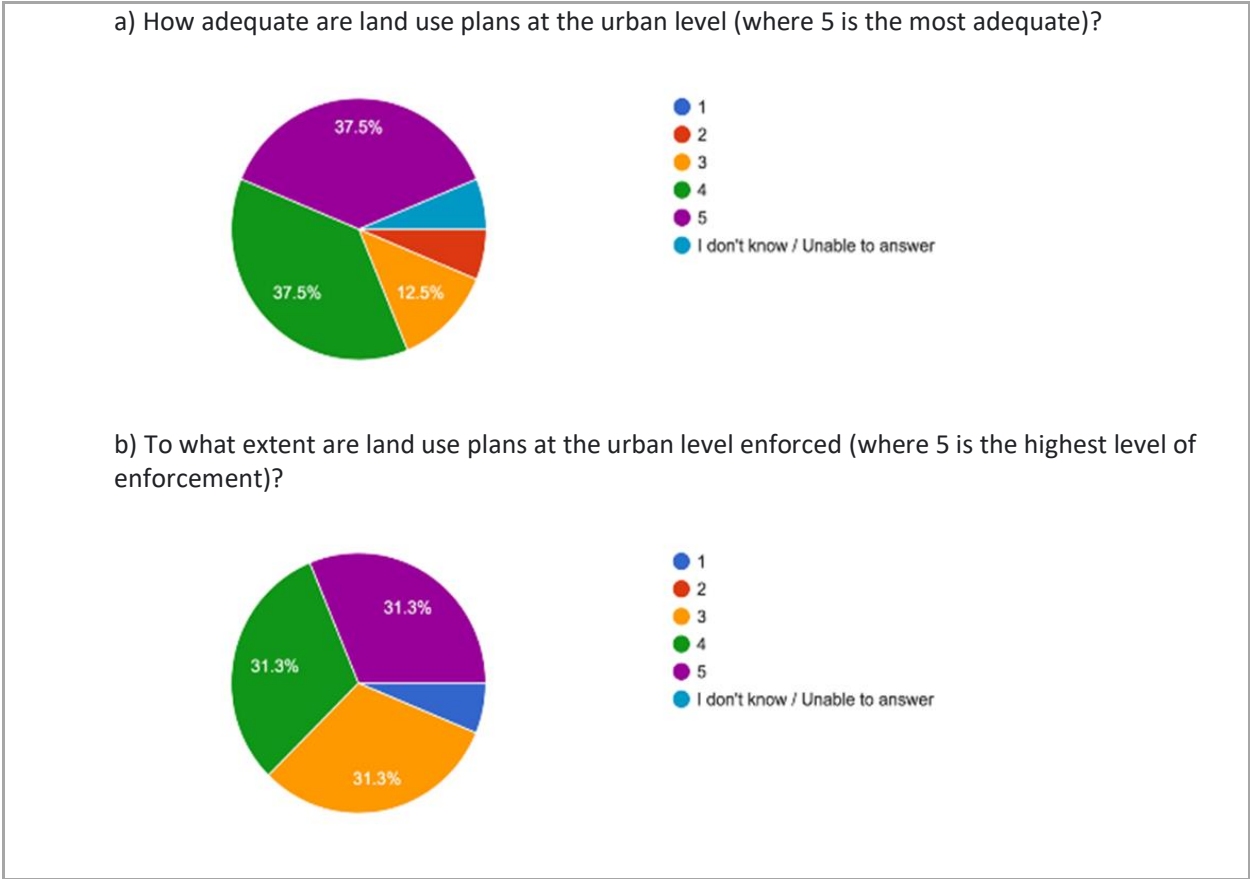
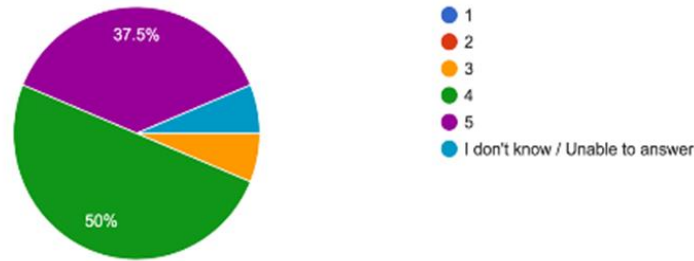


Figure 10: Perception of urban plans for main urban centres.

All respondents confirmed that there are building permit regulations in place, with nearly all indicating that they are adequate with heavy enforcement (Figure 11). Some respondents described the process of registration and obtaining permits as rational and centralized at the municipality level. Recently, a large part of this process (such as government-related services) has moved online. For example, every tenancy contract now has to be registered digitally on governmental websites. Building permits are not issued unless all approved drawings are inspected by the relevant municipality, civil defence, DLD and Roads and Transport Authority.

a) How adequate are building permit regulations (where 5 is most adequate)?



b) To what extent are building permit regulations enforced (where 5 is the highest level of enforcement)?

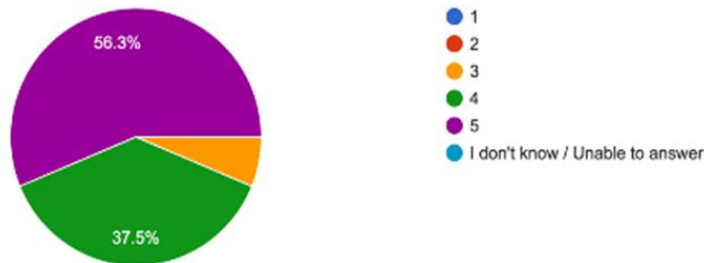
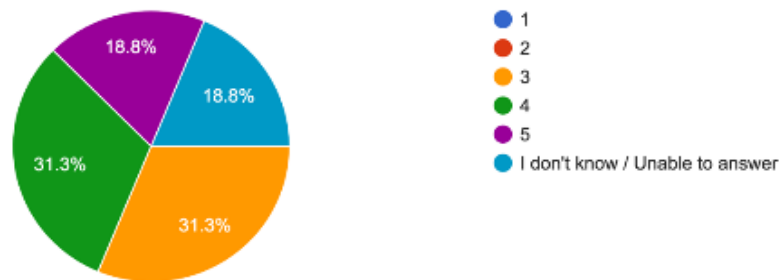


Figure 11: Perception of building permit regulations.

More than half of respondents believe that rural and agricultural land use regulations exist, though most do not know if they are adequate or enforced. A vast majority of respondents confirm that environmental protection land-use regulations also exist, but only roughly half find them adequate; most associate these regulations with a high level of enforcement (Figure 12). One respondent notes that such regulations ensure the sustainability of new buildings and improves UAE's image internationally. The current regulations include a rating system for building design called Estidama, which grants a number of "pearls" depending on the sustainability of the design and sets ground rules that each new building has to meet.

a) How adequate are environmental protection land use regulations (where 5 is the most adequate)?



b) To what extent are environmental protection land use regulations enforced (where 5 is the highest level of enforcement)?

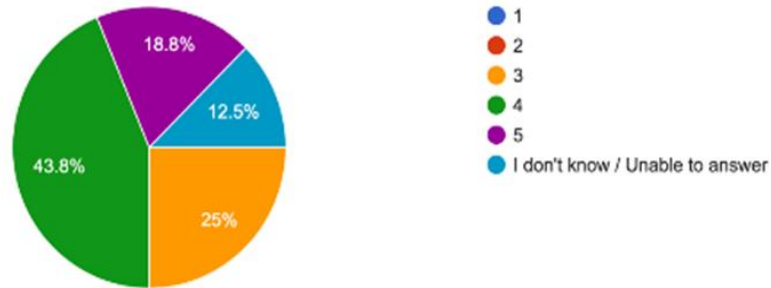


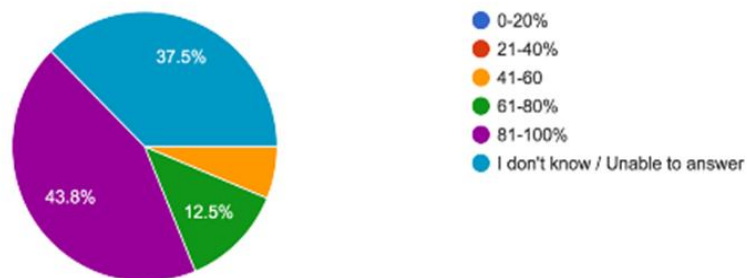
Figure 12: Environmental protection regulations.

Roughly half of respondents indicate that the government may interfere in private land rights, particularly as the land system is highly centralized at the government, being the ruling family, has the right to do so. Approximately half of respondents feel that the government's management of state lands is clear and adequate, though some respondents feel that there are relatively clear rules for private developers, but governmental management of state lands remains quite obscure.

Regarding opportunities for the government to acquire private land for public use, around half of respondents indicate that they are near optimal. One respondent notes that it is difficult to separate public and private development in the UAE, as many developers are "semi-public", and their private shareholders are often members of the ruling families.

Most respondents confirm that there is a complete and accessible digital system recording land use. Just over half of respondents believes this system covers more than 60 per cent of national land and believes the system is digitally accessible (Figure 13). Some note that a digital system is only available in some emirates, such as Dubai, while other Emirates may not have the same level of accessibility.

a) What is the estimated portion of national land covered by the land use information system?



b) How accessible/digitalized is the information in the land use information system (where 5 is the most accessible/with most information being digitalized)?

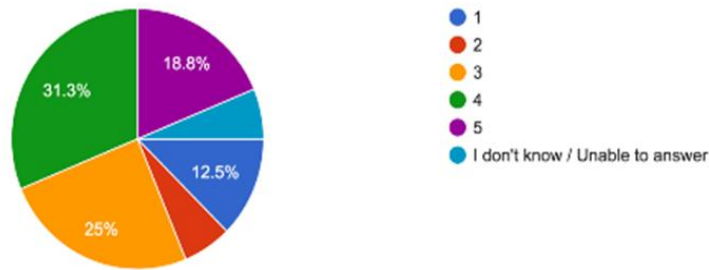


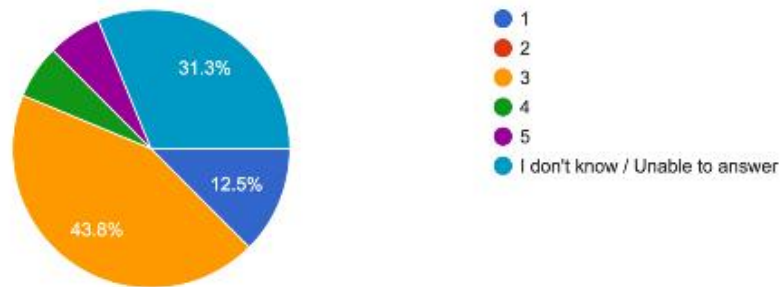
Figure 13: Digitalization of land-use system.

Most respondents also believe there is a complete and accessible/digital land information system on natural resources, though less than one third believe that it covers at least 60 per cent of national land. Slightly over one third believe such information to be accessible or digitalized.

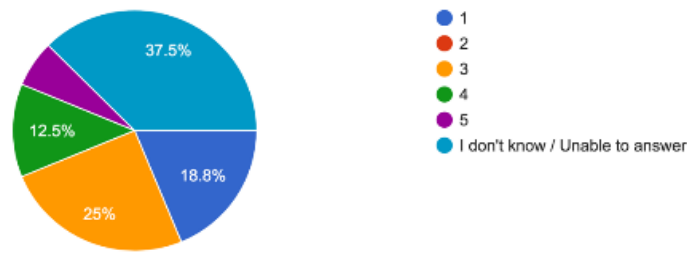
4.4. Land Development

In terms of acquiring land for public use, half of respondents indicate that there are mechanisms for such purposes, though less than half feel these mechanisms are even somewhat fair and an even smaller minority believe they are cost-effective (Figure 14a, b). Similarly, less than one quarter indicate that these mechanisms are used in a frequent and fair way (Figure 14c).

a) How fair are the mechanisms for the public to acquire land for public use (where 5 is the fairest)?



b) How cost-effective are the mechanisms for the public to acquire land for public use (where 5 is the most cost-effective)?



c) How frequently are the mechanisms for the public to acquire land for public use used (in the correct way) (where 5 is very often used)?

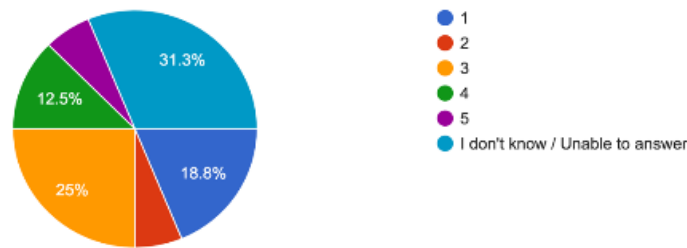


Figure 14: Perceptions on acquiring land for public use.

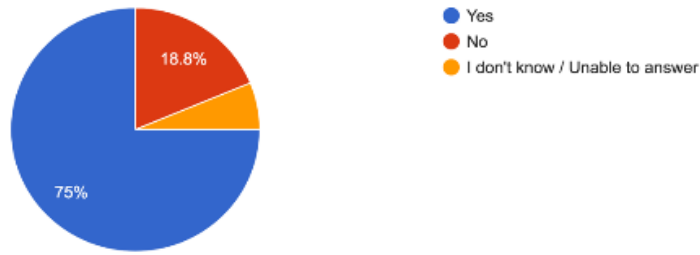
Most respondents are aware of land expropriation mechanisms, and half feel they are fair. Less than half believe that they are cost effective, and even fewer believe they are used in a frequent and fair way. Some respondents note that most expropriations involve tenants being removed from residential or commercial properties, but not land, as land expropriation is not common in the UAE. When it does occur it is believed to involve generous compensation.

Regulations to control land subdivisions/consolidation in urban areas are considered efficient by the vast majority of respondents. Most also see them as fair and cost effective, and half believe they are frequently used. Most also believe that regulations to control land subdivisions/consolidation in rural areas are efficient, though only around one third consider them fair and cost effective.

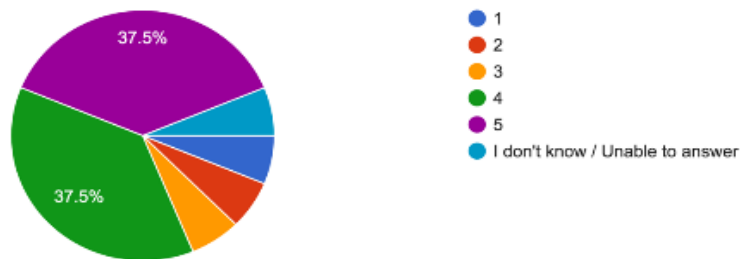
Most respondents confirmed that there are mechanisms for ensuring that planning and construction align with land-use regulations. Most indicate that they are frequently used, and around half believe they are cost-effective. One respondent added that everything is supervised by municipalities when granting permits for construction and registration.

The process for property development is considered easy for landowners, professional developers and public authorities by most respondents (Figure 15). Some respondents added that since development is highly encouraged and is one of the major sectors for investment and economic development, the process is intentionally made quite fast and easy, even though it is expensive and has many regulations. One respondent notes that the process is very confusing in Abu Dhabi and more straightforward in Dubai.

a) Is the property development process easy for landowners?



b) How easy is the property development process for professional developers (where 5 is the easiest)?



c) How easy is the property development process for public authorities (where 5 is the easiest)?

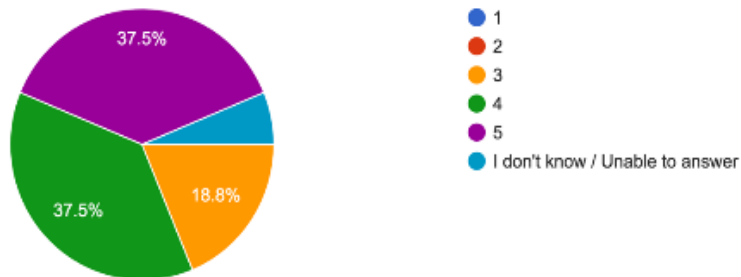


Figure 15: Perception of the property development process.

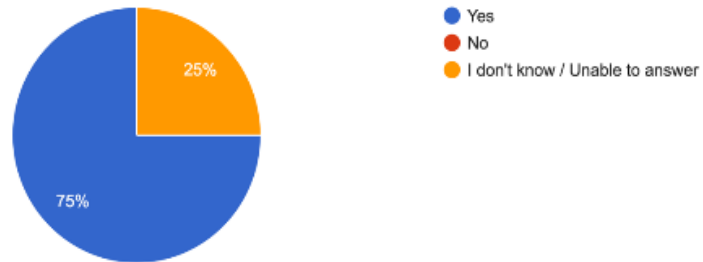
A large majority of respondents confirm that mechanisms to change land use are in place and are carried out by the granting of planning permissions and building permits. Half see these as cost effective, and slightly less than half indicate that they are frequently used.

Only roughly a third of respondents believe there are mechanisms to ensure that development costs are fairly distributed between the public and private sectors. However, most are unaware of how fair they are for public and private actors. One respondent added the developer will often pay for any provisions beyond the infrastructure connection point and associated roads.

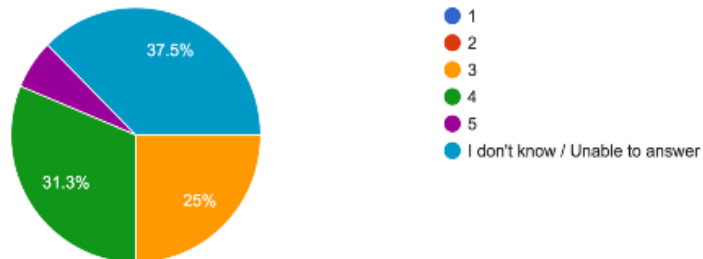
4.5. Land Disputes Resolution

In terms of land disputes resolution, most respondents confirm that there is a well-structured formal system for resolving conflicts related to land and parcel boundaries (Figure 16a). A little over one-third consider the dispute resolution process to be fast, but were generally unsure of how affordable it is for the poor and vulnerable (Figure 16b, c). Roughly half of respondents indicate that people are at least somewhat familiar with the procedures and access to the formal dispute resolution system (Figure 16d).

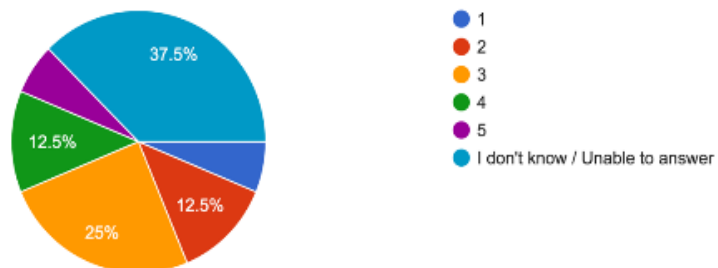
a) Is there a well-structured formal system to resolve conflicts and disputes related to land rights and parcel boundaries?



b) How fast is the formal dispute resolution process (where 5 is very fast)?



c) How affordable is the formal dispute resolution process (including for the poor and other vulnerable groups) (where 5 is very affordable)?



d) How familiar are people with the procedures to access the formal dispute resolution system (where 5 indicates that the large majority of people know how to access it)?

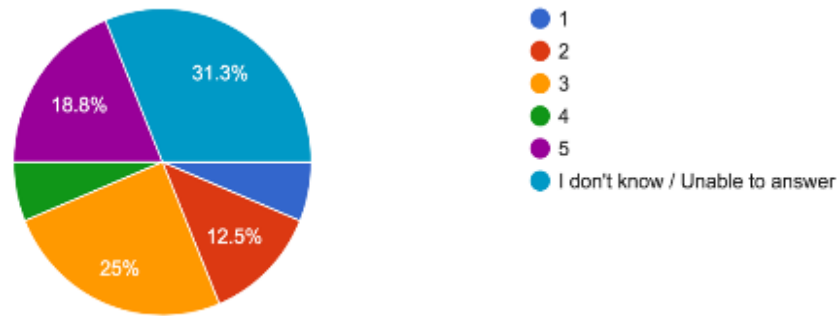


Figure 16: Perception of the formal land disputes resolution system.

Most respondents do not believe that women face different or additional challenges than men in accessing the formal dispute resolution system, though opinions are more divided regarding women's access to non-formal land dispute resolution mechanisms.

In terms of land-related dispute cases, most respondents are unaware of the proportion being settled in formal courts (court records are near inaccessible in the UAE), while half indicate that there are other mechanisms to solve land rights disputes. These include governmental entities (DLD, land authorities, municipal land departments), arbitration, community mechanisms (Diwan, majlis, etc.) and political mechanisms. However, no respondents know the share of land-related dispute cases being settled using non-formal mechanisms.

5. LEARNING OFFER AND CURRICULA

5.1. Existing Learning Offer

Learning offers on topics related to land are mainly provided by universities in a strictly academic format. There are very few independent research institutions or professional research bodies, such as think tanks. The universities provide very high-quality programmes, mainly at the bachelor's and master's level. Most of the programmes focus on architecture, civil engineering and geospatial studies. Only the Université Paris-Sorbonne Abou Dhabi offers courses that cover environmental, social, economic and sometimes political issues in urban planning. In general, land issues are covered under the themes of housing, mobility, the real estate market and geospatial technologies. No specific attention is given to land management systems as a separate topic. Apart from courses provided by the DLD, which are geared towards real estate development (see Annex below), urban planning courses cover land issues in a very general way.

The key observations can be summarized as follows:

- There is room to establish specialized research institutes or initiatives for urban studies, including land topics, both for applied research and theoretical knowledge.
- There is a need to diversify the learning offers and create a platform for urban planners, practitioners, researchers and other professionals to meet and exchange on a regular basis.
- The private sector dominates the scene and will continue to do so as long as there is no civil society present in the urban landscape.

5.2. Research

Most research that is conducted on land-related topics is led by individual researchers pursuing their degrees (master's, PhD or post-doc). Little research is known to have been initiated by government authorities or research centres. The DLD has conducted research on housing markets, residential sales and the real estate sector. Much of the existing research tackles issues related to climate change and sustainability in general (see Mfarrej, 2019) or looks at market-based research on land value and investment (see Abdelfattah, 2013). Several academics regularly publish on this topic².

Access to research and data in general at national bodies is another issue that needs to be addressed. It is possible that research on land management topics exists at the national level, however, if that is the case it is strictly kept for political decision-making and hence may not be publicly available.

5.3. Potential Collaboration

This section identifies institutions that may be suitable for initiating urban or land-related cooperation projects. The list features key educational institutions that had some input during the study or those that were found to have a good record for other international cooperation activities. It should be noted that most private and public sector respondents did not indicate strong interest to participate in the study or beyond. Some outreach activities could be initiated to discuss common points of collaboration.

The following government entities have been identified as having the potential to collaborate on land-related projects, including capacity development and joint research. Joint workshops or events could be a good starting point to trigger interest and initiate long-term cooperation.

Government entities:

- Emirates Real Estate Corporation³
- General Secretariat of Municipalities
- Federal Environmental Agency – Abu Dhabi⁴
- Sheikh Zayed Housing programme⁵

² Including Dr Khaled Adham, Dr Yasser Elsheshtawy, Dr Laure Assaf, Dr Khaled Galal, Dr Khaled Alawadi, Dr Sultan Sooud Al-Qassimi, Dr Simon Huston, Mahmoud Abdelfattah, and Manar Mfarrej.

³ See official [Emirates Real Estate Corporation](#) website.

⁴ See official [Federal Environmental Agency – Abu Dhabi](#) website.

⁵ See official [Sheikh Zayed Housing programme](#) website.

- Dubai Land Department⁶
- Abu Dhabi Department of Municipal Affairs and Transport⁷
- Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research⁸

Universities, institutions, research and community service centres:

- **United Arab Emirates University** is based in Al-Ain and includes colleges of humanities and social sciences, education, business and economics, sharia and law, information technology and engineering. It offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in chemical, civil, mechanical, architectural and petroleum engineering, as well as other engineering-related courses.
- **Abu Dhabi University** has colleges of arts and science, engineering and computer science and business administration.
- **Dubai International Academic City** is a purpose-built, free trade zone for tertiary academic institutions. It is home to a selection of globally recognized universities, training centres, e-learning centres, professional centres and research and development companies. Many of these institutions were previously part of the earlier-established Dubai Knowledge Village, also a dedicated education zone.
- **Ajman University of Science and Technology** is a network of universities in the UAE with campuses in Ajman, Al-Ain and Fujairah.
- **Zayed University** offers BA and MA programmes in business sciences, information technology and education, with campuses in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.
- **Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research** is an independent research institution dedicated to the promotion of professional research and educational excellence in the UAE and the Gulf.
- **CSEM-UAE Innovation Center** works on technologies in environmental applications (energy and water), system engineering and mechatronics. It is a joint venture between the Government of Ras Al-Khaimah and the Swiss Research Center CSEM.
- **Gulf Research Center** in Dubai promotes studies on GCC countries and Gulf issues, conducts workshops, publishes data on GCC, offers consultancy services and provides training to students and employees.
- **Center of Excellence for Applied Research and Training Higher Colleges of Technology, Abu Dhabi and UAE** provides online courses.
- **Academia UAE** is an academic institute offering education, vocational training and transfer of technology in the UAE.
- **Lotus Educational Institute, UAE** is an educational institute located in Dubai Knowledge Village.

⁶ See official [Dubai Land Department](#) website.

⁷ See official [Abu Dhabi Department of Municipal Affairs and Transport](#) website.

⁸ See official [Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research](#) website.

6. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

The study shows that while the land administration system in the UAE is generally perceived as efficient and well-functioning, there are some areas that could be improved, and several areas where clarity and transparency appear to be a concern. In terms of land tenure, there are some concerns over how secure tenure rights are, particularly for foreign nationals, who make up most of the UAE's population. While there is a strong land valuation system, it is not likely used to its potential as a basis for taxation. Land use plans at the local level are considered adequate and regularly updated but are not uniformly implemented and development projects that do not fit the plans are often accepted regardless. The UAE has a formal land dispute resolution mechanism; however, many choose instead to use alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, pointing to potential shortcomings in the formal system.

While the land administration system in UAE is overall efficient and functions well, two key recommendations on the country's legal and institutional framework have been identified based on the results of this study. First, the legal system should be made more accessible, transparent and less politicized. More attention could also be given to land services that are not exclusively focused on market-driven land development. Second, promoting and supporting the establishment of civil society organizations and research institutions will strengthen the land administration by balancing economic and environmental concerns, and will help create a repository of knowledge for future urban development needs.

Given its robust statistical systems and credibility, the UAE can become a pioneer in the Arab region in land administration systems and establish a successful model. In terms of land management and administration, the UAE seems to have advanced systems in place and strong institutions in comparison to the rest of the Gulf or even the Arab states. However, the system is heavily centralized and focuses on land development and valuation within a market-driven system.

Establishing and promoting civil society organizations will strengthen the land administration system and will balance concerns over the tension between the economic and environmental agendas. Similarly, establishing and promoting research institutions, and supporting their work, will also help create a repository of knowledge that will serve the literature needs for UAE's urban development in the future.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Existing Learning Offer and Related Curricula for Land Governance (Academic)

Organization	Type of Org.	Type of Content	Name of course/ learning offer	Duration	Type of Course	Grade/ Level	Certification	Funding	Payment	Information on the curriculum	Website and contacts
UAE University	Public	Bachelor of Arts in Geography	1: Environmental Geography Concentration (Req. Ch: 24)	4 y. (Total Degree Credit hours: 120)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students	Remote Sensing Geomorphology Climatology Current Environmental Issues Practicum Research Seminar in Geography	https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/catalog/undergraduate/programs/bachelor-of-arts-in-geography.shtml
UAE University	Public	Bachelor of Arts in Geography	2: Geoinformatics Concentration (Req. Ch:24)	4 y. (Total Degree Credit hours: 120)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students	Remote Sensing Spatial Analysis Cartography II Geographic Information Systems II Practicum Research Seminar in Geography	https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/catalog/undergraduate/programs/bachelor-of-arts-in-geography.shtml
UAE University	Public	Bachelor of Arts in Geography	3: Urban Planning Concentration (Req. Ch:24)	4 y. (Total Degree Credit hours: 120)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students	Spatial Analysis Planning Theory and Practice Land Use Regional and Urban Planning Urban Planning Internship	https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/catalog/undergraduate/programs/bachelor-of-arts-in-geography.shtml
UAE University	Public	Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering	Urban Planning and Infrastructure (ARCH551) - elective course	5 y. (Required Credit Hours: minimum 147 hours)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.uaeu.ac.ae/en/catalog/undergraduate/programs/bachelor-of-science-in-architectural-engineering.shtml
University of Ajman	Private	Bachelor of Architecture	Urban Planning (ARC 461)	5 y. Total # of Credit hours 159	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.ajman.ac.ae/en/academics/academic-programs-majors/programs/bachelor-of-architecture
American University of Ras Al-Khaimah	Public	Bachelor of Architecture	Urban Planning (ARCH 454)	5 y. (162 credits)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://aurak.ac.ae/en/academics/school-of-engineering/academic-programs/architecture/
Université Paris-Sorbonne Abou Dhabi	Private	Bachelor of Geography and Planning (in French)	Urban Geography	3 y.	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.sorbonne.ae/study/undergraduate-study/bachelor-in-geography-and-planning/
Université Paris-Sorbonne	Private	Master of Urban planning and Development	Postgraduate studies	18 months (3 semesters)	Academic	Master	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.sorbonne.ae/study/postgraduate-study/master-in-urban-planning-and-development/

Abou Dhabi											
Université Paris-Sorbonne Abou Dhabi	Private	Master of Environment: Dynamics of Territories and Societies	Postgraduate studies	2 y. (120 credits)	Academic	Master	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.sorbonne.ae/study/postgraduate-study/master-in-environment-dynamics-of-territories-and-societies/
Canadian University of Dubai	Private	Bachelor of Architecture	Bachelor of Architecture (BArch)	5 y. – 10 semesters (170 credits)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.cud.ac.ae/faculties-and-departments/architecture-and-interior-design/architecture
American University of Sharjah	Private	Master of Urban Planning	UPL 621 – Environmental and Land Use Planning	2 y. (minimum of 33 credits)	Academic	Master	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.aus.edu/caad/master-of-urban-planning-program/master-of-urban-planning-program
Khalifa University	Public	MSc In Sustainable Critical Infrastructure		2 y. (36 credits)	Academic	Master	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.ku.ac.ae/academics/graduate-programs/m-sc-in-sustainable-critical-infrastructure
Zayed University	Public	Bachelor of Arts in International Studies	ANT302 – Cities: Culture, Space, Sustainability 3 credits Schedule	3 credits	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/colleges/colleges/__college_of_humanities_and_social_sciences/_course_descriptions/bachelor-of-Arts-in-International-Studies.aspx
Zayed University	Public	Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and Sustainability	ENV240 - Principles of Environmental Sustainability	3 credits	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.zu.ac.ae/main/en/colleges/colleges/__college_of_natural_and_health_sciences/academic_programs/_programs/LES.aspx
University of Sharjah	Private	Bachelor of Science in Architectural Engineering		5 y. (158 Credits)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.sharjah.ac.ae/en/academics/Colleges/eng/dept/aed/Pages/Bachelor-of-Science-in-Architectural-Engineering.aspx
American University in Dubai	Private	Bachelor of Architecture (B.Arch.)		5 y. (166 credits)	Academic	Bachelor	Yes	Other (scholarships available)	Fees from students		https://www.aud.edu/aud-school/school-of-architecture-art-design/departments/department-of-architecture/department-programs/bachelor-of-architecture-b-arch/

Annex 2: Existing Learning Offers and Related Curricula for Land Governance (Government)

Organization	Type of Org.	Country	Type of Content	Name of course/ learning offer	Duration	Type of Course	Grade/Level	Certification	Funding	Payment	Information on the curriculum	Website and contacts
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified Training for Real Estate Brokers	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Owners Association Management Programme M100	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Registration Trustee Training	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified Course for Real Estate Valuer	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Accredited Buyer Representative (ABR)	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified Diploma in Real Estate	7 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified Property Management CPM	2 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified Mortgage Broker (CMB) Course	2 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Owners Association Facility Management Programme M201	2 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Risk Management Training for Owner Association Managers M205	2 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified International Property Specialist (CIPS)	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae
Dubai Land Department	Gov.	UAE	Course	Certified Real Estate Brokerage (CRB) Manager	3 days	Technical		Yes		Self-paid	English and Arabic	www.drei.ae