Land Titling Suitability Classification Theory

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SUMMARY

We present a simple classification framework for evaluating if land titling is suitable in a particular situation and as a tool to analyse what remedial action might be required in situations where land titles have been implemented, but do not yield the desired outcomes. We submit that the framework can be adapted to interventions that use Fit-for-Purpose land administration and/or pro-poor land recordation. The framework serves as a useful tool for policy makers, land professionals, officials, politician and community organisations to analyse a situation and determine if a proposed titling project should proceed or not, or if remedial action is necessary in situations where titles have already been issued. Land titles are suitable in some situations. In others, they are not suitable, yet they are still implemented, often grounded in ideology rather than a proper analysis of the local situation. . The Land Suitability Classification theory draws on two existing theories. The first is the Technology Acceptance Model used in management information science. This holds that an effective information system, such as a registration system or land records system, is one where users find it useful and easy to use and landholders actually use the system or there is a strong probability that they will use it in future. The second theory is the efficient market hypothesis which evaluates how well the market hypothesis fits a financial market as strong or weak. We apply four classifications in the Land Titling Suitability Classification theory; strong, semi-strong, semi-weak and weak. In strong situations, all the critical success factors (CSFs) for the system to work are in place. People use the system, or they are likely to use it in future. In a semi strong situation, some of the CSFs are missing and some landholders may not use the system; i.e. they may not register transactions in land as some of the CSFs are absent. However, it may be possible to create these CSFs, and so registration should be considered providing support mechanisms are in place that encourage landholders to register transactions. In weak situations, land registration is unlikely to be effective at all. It is not suited to circumstances. In semi-weak situations, titling is ill advised, as landholders are unlikely to register transactions as a number of CSFs are absent and it may not be

possible to create them. They may evolve in future, however. We present the Land Titling Suitability Classification Theory and then discuss some of the CSFs, that should be analysed to classify a particular situation. Following this we suggest strategic options to improve tenure security in weak and semi-weak situations.