FIG/-UN-HABITAT Seminar and Dialogues:

Improving Slum Conditions through Innovative Financing

“Land Policies Across Geography and Time”

An overview of Land policy issues based on Lincoln Insiute’s experience in Latin America

Lessons learned and exchange of experience between and within regions - is it possible?

• 13 yrs of activities - a compelling sense of *déjà vu*

• Sweeping generalizations of “seen one, seen them all” - type

• Impassioned statements claiming uniqueness

• Everyone is convinced of the singularity of his/her country, city, district

... The most salient issues lies somewhere between the commonalities and singularities
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*Share a poor performance record in “Just and Sustainable shelter”:*

- Recovery publicly generated land value increments
- Urban infrastructure and services
- Provision of housing alternatives for the poor
- Strong culture of Urbanistic delinquency
- Taxation of land
- Hostile environment for implementing sound Land policies

*Commonplace Diagnosis:*

- Hard to comply with elitistic urbanistic norms and regulations
- Clientelistic practices
- Regularization policies on informality with negative effects
- Market distortion
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Unavailable or untapped resources:

- Lack of operational capacity
- Unscrupulous behaviour managing existing resources
- Example of paralysis - Transferable development rights as currency
- Public compensations to private landowners
- Urban land, an asset to demonstrate privileges rather than generate needed resources for a broader community

Resources exist but not the capacity and willingness to tap into them.

Lack of existing information or the capacity to use it

Cadastres, LIS, empirical research

- Exists, but not the capacity to use it! Find, recognize, organize and interpret it.
- Valuable rich information, applied at best superficially or ceremonially
- Public officials’ inability (unwillingness) to assimilate and translate into operational results.
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Lack of Dialogue between Urban planners and Public Finance Officials

- Planners mostly concerned with quality of the built environment restricted to a small area of the city
- Fiscal officials seeking to maximize public revenues
- Planners overlooking how projects should be financed and how urban forms affects the tax base
- Impacts of tax collection practices on land uses
- Economic and/or financial benefits spatially and socially circumscribed. Gentrified enclaves.
- Real direct and indirect costs largely ignored or unaccounted for, if not deliberately misrepresented

Addressing the core of Sustainable Development

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- Projectification - disease
- Permanency of the rules of the game - major component affecting private agent’s behaviour
- Creating a self-defeating cycle. Counting on discontinuity
- Promising ideas never implemented successfully

Important signs of consistent improvements

Local solutions! Need to look more closely at available resources and recognize their value
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**A broader range of Stakeholders**

* Capable of implementing better land policies
* Capable of demanding policy responses from public agencies
* Land policy should transcend party politics
* Achieve constructive dialogue
* Bridge the gap in communication and interaction

Public officials at different govt levels, civil society, urban development professionals in diverse disciplines

**Linking the Land Administration Chain**