LAND TENURE, HOUSING RIGHTS AND GENDER



Law, Land Tenure and Gender Review: Latin America



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IN M E X I C O



MEXICO

Law, Land Tenure and Gender Review Series: Latin America

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Foreword to Latin America Law And Land Tenure Review



Security of tenure is one of the cornerstones of Millennium Development Goal 7, Target 11 on the improvement of the living conditions of slum dwellers. It also plays a crucial role in the implementation of Target 10 on access to improved water and sanitation and is thus the main focus of UN-HABITAT's Global Campaign for Secure Tenure.

While urbanisation trends and living conditions of the urban poor vary considerably from country to country in Latin America, the region is generally characterised by rising poverty and social inequality. The majority of urban dwellers hold precarious tenure rights to the land they occupy, hindering their access to basic infrastructure and services, including water and sanitation, health and education, and rendering them vulnerable to forced evictions.

Through the generous support of the Government of the Netherlands, UN-Habitat is pleased to publish its review of the legal and policy frameworks governing urban land tenure in Latin America. This report provides an overview of the situation in all twenty countries of the region as well as four case studies on Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Nicaragua. These case studies provide a comprehensive analysis of the laws and policies governing urban land tenure, with a special focus on women's rights to land and housing. National experts in each country have conducted extensive research on the often-complex legal issues which hinder or enable the efforts of Governments, local authorities and their civil society partners in attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

It is noteworthy that Latin America has registered some progress in achieving these goals. The region is home to a number of positive and innovative laws and practices providing security of tenure, and a well-established civil society has contributed significantly to advancing a rights-based approach to housing. There remains, however, a lot to be done. Reducing inequality is a key cross cutting issue that needs to be incorporated in all sectoral reforms in the region. Land reform is pivotal to furthering this objective while providing security of tenure constitutes an important first step in reducing the vulnerability of and the constraints facing the urban poor. Secure tenure alone will not, however, be sufficient and a clear message that emerges from this review is that good urban governance is essential to achieving the full effectiveness and desired impact of tenure security programmes.

This review contains findings and recommendations for both immediate and longer-term law reform to strengthen the tenure rights of all people, especially the poor and women. While they will further guide and inform UN-HABITAT's normative work through its two Global Campaigns for Secure Tenure and Urban Governance, it is my sincere hope they will contribute to furthering broad-based dialogue and engagement in land reform and security of tenure in all countries in Latin America in support of attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

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List of Abbreviations

Organisations, institutions and cities

AMG Metropolitan Area of Guadalajara

BANOBRAS National Bank of Public Works and Services

BANSEFI National Savings and Financial Services Bank

CABIN Assessment Commission of National Assets

CENVI Centre for Housing and Urban Studies

CFE Federal Electricity Commission

COCOPA Commission of Concordance and Peace

CONAFOVI National Housing Promotion Commission

CONAPO National Population Council

CONAVI National Housing Council

COPEVI Housing Cooperative

COPLADE Development Planning Committee

CORETT Commission for Land Tenure Regularisation

DF Federal District

EZLN Zapatista National Liberation Army

FIFONAFE National Funding Trust for Ejidal Development

FONHAPO Popular Housing National Fund

FOSOVI Social Housing Promotion Fund

FOVI Fund for Bank Operations and Housing Funds

FOVISSSTE Housing Fund of the Social Security and Services Institute for State Workers

IMSS Mexican Social Security Institute

INEGI Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics

INFONAVIT National Workers Housing Fund Institute

INI National Institute of Indigenous Affairs

INMUJERES National Institute for Women

INVI Federal District's Housing Institute

ISSSTE Institute of Social Security and Services for State Workers

NGO Non-governmental organisation

PA Agrarian Attorney's Office

PEMEX Mexican Oil

PRI Institutional Revolutionary Party

PROFEPA Environmental Protection Federal Attorney's Office

PRODEUR Urban Development Attorney's Office (Jalisco)

RAN National Agrarian Registry

RPP Public Property Registry Office

SCT Ministry of Communications and Transport

SEDESOL Ministry of Social Development

SEDUVER Urban Development Secretariat of the State of Veracruz

SEMARNAT Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries and Natural Resources

SHF Federal Mortgage Society

SRA Ministry of Agrarian Reform

UCISV-Ver Union of Settlers and Tenants Requesting Housing in Veracruz

Laws

CCF Federal Civil Code

LGAH General Law on Human Settlements

LGBN General National Assets Law

LGEEPA General Law of Ecological Balance and Environmental Protection

Programmes, Agreements

NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement

NPUD National Programme on Urban Development and Regional Planning

PISO Social Land Incorporation Programme

PNPI National Programme for the Development of Indigenous People

NDP National Development Programme

PROCEDE Ejidal Rights Certification Programme

PROMEJORVI Federal District's Integrated Territorial Social Development Programme

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