

Evaluating Land on a Continuum of Land Rights

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Key words: Access to land; Cadastre; Implementation of plans; Informal settlements; Land management; Legislation; Urban renewal; land tenure security consequences; land tenure evaluation; types of theory; individual private property.

SUMMARY

The article describes a structure for evaluating different land tenure forms on a continuum of land rights and evaluating the process of transforming from one tenure form to another on this continuum. There is a large body of empirical work which measures the outcomes of individual private property supported by land titles. Due to the negative consequences of individualised tenure in situations where the critical success factors for titling to work are missing, the continuum metaphor has emerged as one alternative view of improving land tenure security.

What is lacking is empirical work on evaluating tenure forms that are alternatives to individual ownership, and a framework for structuring the different types of evaluations which serve different purposes and users. The paper presents a structure for these different types of evaluations which is tied to different types of theory, on the assumption that this should lead to improved rigour in both tenure evaluations and the empirical foundation for different tenure related theory. A hierarchy of evaluations is presented which take the form of report on: (1) evaluations which report on the status of a situation alone, (2) evaluations which report on status with some explanation for diagnostic purposes, (3) evaluations which explain a situation and predict what might occur, and (4) evaluations which use the first three types to evaluate tenure administration projects and programmes.

The benefit of linking each evaluating category to a category of theory is it should be possible to establish where and how a particular evaluation should be used and, importantly, how it should not be used.