

Can a Successful Modern Cadastre Be Developed in South-East Asian Developing Countries? - South-East Asian Experience with the Focus on Cambodia

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Key words: Cadastre, Digital cadastre, Low cost technology, land administration, Cambodia, South-East Asia, developing countries, systematic land registration, systematic land titling

SUMMARY

The paper discusses whether sticking to traditional manual paper-based systems can fulfil the requirements of a successful cadastre and needs of the developing South-East Asian countries in the 21st century, or could optimised utilisation of modern information technology, along with other innovative approaches, provide cheaper, more effective and efficient and more accurate solutions to benefit the whole society of a developing country. According to the FIG Statement on the Cadastre, “a successful cadastre should provide security of tenure, be simple and clear, be easily accessible and provide current and reliable information at low cost”. The FIG vision for a future cadastral system, “Cadastre 2014” calls for “abolishing the separation of “maps” and “registers”, which was previously necessary only because the old available technology – paper and pencil – did not allow another solution”. It is argued that real low-cost solutions and other features of a successful cadastre are only possible when modern information technology is used as a normal tool as part of the system. In other words, in the 21st century, modern cadastre is digital. In South-East Asia, as part of the overall development of the societies, the need for the improvement of the cadastral system - or even development of practically a new one - has been recognised in many countries. This has often led to implementation of accelerated systematic land registration/titling campaigns and the development of whole land administration systems with the support of various foreign donors’ financial aid and technical assistance. Both manual and digital solutions are being developed and used by the land administration systems in the region, with different local features and costs. For example in Cambodia, modern technology is used in the land registration system both as a tool for efficient and cost-effective systematic first registration as well as for the maintenance of up-to-date digital land register from which reliable land information is to be easily and fast obtained whenever needed for whatever purpose. Creating a strong foundation for the rehabilitation of the post-conflict country is essential in the situation where all information on land has been destroyed in the past. The land policy of Cambodia clearly recognises that a paper-based manual system could not fully support the needs of the developing Cambodian society in the long run, so gradual steps towards an up-to-date land information system are necessary. If there is adequate political, legal and technical support as well as financial resources available, there also are no obstacles for the

Cambodian cadastral administration to apply new appropriate technologies for developing a successful modern cadastre, as defined in the FIG Statement.

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