

Flexible Land Information System as Driver For Change, Peace and Development: The Case of Post Conflict DRC (UN-HABITAT GLTN)

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SUMMARY

The importance of building land information systems cannot be underestimated in support of land reform, public service provision and promotion of social economic development especially in post conflict areas. There are many opportunities for their applications particularly in context such as enabling access to land, resolving disputes, raising revenue, service delivery as well as providing information services for private investment and local economic development. They provide an elaborate framework for creating inclusive and integrated system thus facilitating collaboration and participation of many actors. The systems are more acceptable (and sustainable in the long term) if they adopt bottom up and participatory processes for gathering information and if they use affordable and appropriate systems as advocated for by the principles of fit-for-purpose land administration (Cadaster/GLTN 2016).

In post-conflict situation such as Eastern DRC, where large numbers of internally displaced people and refugees are waiting return to their places of origin ridden with disputes over scarcely available land, testing of innovative systems for land administration ought to be championed. Land sector remains one of the most affected with majority of population facing evictions, tenure insecurity, and loss of life in eastern region. Access to land and related services especially for the poor, women and vulnerable groups is not guaranteed. Despite many conflicts linked to land, land has not received greater attention in the conflict mitigation and resolution processes. Yet, land administration sector has been negatively affected as a result. Appreciating the critical role of land and natural resources plays in conflict situations in an innovative manner may foster prospects for peace and recovery quickly (OECD, 2005).

This paper will demonstrate that building participatory and flexible land information system catalyzes innovation in land administration that addresses institutional gap, foster collaboration and

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improves delivery of land services in a sustainable manner. Hence the rights of women, poor and vulnerable groups can be secured enabling them to become active actors in decision making as championed by SDGs and other global agenda. Also, the process of building LIS in DRC demonstrates real potential of mitigating conflicts through improved land governance, land use and transparency, thus creating a conducive environment that improve service delivery, accountability and foster investments in land and natural resources. The paper also highlights the need for a flexible and affordable system coupled with participatory approaches to elicit support from various stakeholders and provide evidence based learning towards the ongoing land policy debate.

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