

Addressing Emerging Mega Trends Through Innovative Land Administration



Clarissa Augustinus will give a presentation to the RICS on receipt of the Michael Barrett award on the 29 November 2018. Here she outlines the main points of her lecture.

We live in an era of change – global and national. Mega trends such as climate change, global population growth, migration, massive urbanisation in some continents, escalating conflict, and displacement of people, will continue to influence our countries and our business models for the foreseeable future. The address will describe how we can innovate to tackle these mega-trends by adapting existing land practices. We need to do this in our generation as land administration is in the critical path of the sustainability of the planet.

The Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, goals set by humanity for all of humanity, recognise the central role of land to address poverty, hunger, land degradation, gender, city management, peace and stability. The address will draw on work by the UN-Habitat facilitated by the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) partners, such as RICS and FIG, and how, over the last decade they have developed new land tools to address some of the challenges of the planet. Areas of focus will be: a tried and tested approach to changing business models; the valuation of unregistered land in developing countries; and issues around conflict and land administration and what is being done and needs to be done.

Driving Change

Changing the way we do business is not easy, at global, national, local or business scale. To make it even more difficult, land falls into the category of big science or big technology because it is so complex and change cannot be engineered in a lab. Global leaders in the land administration industry and their organisations have repeatedly shown themselves to be willing to do things differently and evolve the business model of land administration. I will talk about some examples of when they have done this with GLTN partners and how change to professional approaches was debated, introduced and scaled using catalytic levers of change to address 'wicked' complex problems. This was done through: 1) champions; 2) global events to share approaches; 3) the 'many-to-many' partner relationships in the GLTN network which supplied the range of resources needed to build credible tools, among other things.

Valuation of Unregistered Land

Work using this change model produced a number of tools over a 10 year period including a policy guide on the valuation of unregistered land in developing countries. This was published by UN-Habitat, written by Mike McDermott with the support of Matt Myers and myself, with a reference group from RICS and FIG, who reviewed multiple versions of the guide. As most developing countries have about 30% registered land, this guide is to support valuation approaches in the 70%. This kind of valuation is critical to:

- Prevent conflict, and even evictions, in regard to land and natural resources.
- Mitigate climate change where the main option for humans is a 'managed retreat' requiring compensation and relocation among other things.
- Support fast growing cities receiving burgeoning populations and migration, for efficient urban management, including informal settlements and land use change, and to prevent urban chaos.

While UN-Habitat's policy guidance addresses the valuation of unregistered land, it does not specifically link it to these issues. But valuation of unregistered land is in the critical path of managing these issues.

The address will highlight some of the key aspects linked to the valuation of unregistered land such as:

- Using knowledge from valuation of registered land, human rights instruments and the International Valuation Standards (IVS) adapted to local country contexts.
- Stressing the importance of the IVS market value definition in its entirety while also adding social market value which is a significant part of unregistered land.
- Explaining the continuum of land rights, where most 'off register' land rights are found, and its link to valuation.
- Addressing large scale land based acquisitions, compulsory purchase and the possibility of human rights abuses.

Conflict

The GLTN approach to change was also used to move the agenda on land and conflict – a significant mega-trend emerging for land administration people. A quick analysis of the peace agreements supported by the UN show that the number of times land-related issues are mentioned in peace agreements has increased dramatically since the 1990s. The UN Refugee agency reminds us that there are 68.5 million displaced people, either in their own countries or living in other countries. This is the greatest number since the Second World War.

There is increased competition and conflict which leads to silent and violent conflict over land because of climate change, migration, population growth, pressure on natural resources, food security and rapid urbanisation. Population growth is stretching the earth's land and natural resources to its limits and beyond. According to UN DESA, the world's population is 7.6 billion and growing. There is very little, if any, vacant land left of use to humans. All this is leading to increased land-related conflict, often violent conflict.

There are numerous root causes of violent conflict identified by the UN, one of which is land itself. However, all the root causes of violent conflict impact land. UN-Habitat recently collected nine cases of evidence from the field, from Congo through to Colombia to Iraq, on how land administration is being made conflict sensitive to address evictions, resettlement and giving local forms of land certificates. Land valuation is also becoming a key part of negotiating some peace agreements. The land administration industry is in the critical path of managing land-related conflict to bring peace and stability and prevent further conflict. Stronger engagement by this industry in conflict contexts is needed to ensure the sustainability of the planet.

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