

Land Tenure Security Innovations in the Philippines – the Case of ‘Good Enough Land Governance’ in Muntinlupa City

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SUMMARY

The growth of cities through the process of rapid urbanization delivers both positive and negative outcomes. Cities have often been described as engines of economic growth, but neither all cities, nor all residents within the city necessarily benefit from the potential dividends of urbanization. It is in these cities too where slums/informal settlements are prevalent, and whose inhabitants struggle with insecure tenure and continuous threats of eviction, houses that are overcrowded and offer little resistance against winds and heavy rains, scant access to basic services such as water, sanitation, schools, and health care, and with insecure and underpaid jobs. The Sustainable Development Goals aim at solutions to the broader global challenges caused by a lack of good land governance and efficient land administration systems. Governing land in urban areas and the urbanization process is about dealing with urban people, and urban-to-land relationships. Hence, information regarding the people-to-land relationships is crucial, including the value, use and the possible forms of land tenure types that exist.

In the Philippines, approximately 43% of the country’s population was reported to live in informal settlements as of 2018. The proliferation of informal settlements is aggravated by the rapid increase in population and consequently growing housing demand. Most informal settlements develop in once vacant land, along seashores, riverbanks, railway tracks, on pavements, garbage dumps, mountain side, highways, roads, and reclaimed land earmarked for development projects. This paper will draw experiences from the community mapping interventions in the Philippines, one of the fastest urbanizing countries in the East Asia and Pacific region. The paper will interrogate, in the context of ‘good enough urban land governance’, how these interventions, steps, actions and decisions, have influenced the improvement of tenure security as well as urban policy and practice in Muntinlupa city, a first-class highly urbanized city in Metro Manila. Through a mixed-method approach, this paper will provide a detailed account of the assessment of projects implemented over

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a five-year period with the aim of improving processes on land tenure security, inclusive planning and informal settlement upgrading in the city of Muntinlupa. The research will draw lessons from this case study to inform other similar interventions in the country, and elsewhere.

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