

able to support appropriately and effectively those who face difficulties. At the same time, groups have to recognize problems such as some community members who sought to exploit the process for their own benefit, politicians seeking to establish clientelist relations in their own interests, and the tendency to replicate inappropriate professionally designed solutions. Learning from the first housing project enabled the federation to develop and then fine-tune its loan management skills to contribute to the development of strong grassroots financial institutions. The paper explains how the local savings schemes devised strategies to assist members to repay their loans, easing the pressure on households that have multiple demands on scarce budgets. New systems were developed for loan applications and repayment collection, which did not undermine local processes but added value to the efforts of savings scheme members. This included federation leaders taking on the challenge of supporting local groups to decide what to do in cases of loan default. It also included balancing how to be fair to the longer-term needs of federation members who had yet to receive loans, while building a movement responsive to members facing problems of loan default.

VI. LAND

Regularization of Informal Settlements in Latin America

Edésio Fernandes, 2011, 48 pages. ISBN 978 1 55844 202 3. Policy Focus Report published by and available from the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 113 Brattle Street Cambridge MA 02138 USA; website: www.lincolninst.edu.

This provides a clear, thoughtful analysis of approaches to regularizing Latin America's informal settlements. It examines two main paradigms by comparing the cases of Peru and Brazil, and the author offers policy recommendations to improve regularization programmes across the region. Although recent interventions have helped to enhance tenure security, improve housing and promote social and spatial integration, he identifies several remaining challenges. He argues for collecting additional baseline data and evaluation studies, ensuring gender equity in design and implementation, financial mechanisms to promote self-sustainability, and mechanisms to ensure more appropriate titling arrangements, such as land trusts or leasehold rather than individual titles.

Chapter 1 begins by discussing the challenges of informal development, noting the legal, social, political, environmental and economic burdens generated by informal settlements (including an interesting discussion of the costs of informality both to society and to residents, who must pay informal fees or higher rates for illegal water). The

report calls for creating a "...legitimate and inclusive legal order that respects the informal processes of distributive justice reflected in the daily practices of these informal settlements" (page 6). Chapter 2 examines the interlinked challenges of defining and measuring informal settlements, which have hindered regularization efforts. It also discusses the overlapping causes of informal settlements, such as low incomes, sociospatial issues, political clientelism, dysfunctional legal systems and unrealistic planning standards. A wide range of activities are encompassed by "informal development", and informality also has a "...dynamic aspect so that its patterns and the importance of its various causes continue to change" (page 17).

The report turns to regularization strategies in Chapter 3, with an overview of the reasons for regularizing settlements, financing strategies and results from past experiences. The author notes that there is no one-size-fits-all solution and it is important to prevent informal settlements from emerging in the first place. But even with past shortcomings, experiences suggest that regularization policies can still improve residents' living conditions. Chapter 4 discusses two key approaches, as exemplified by Peru and Brazil. Peru's COFOPRI programme had a narrow focus on individual titles but it resulted in nearly 1.6 million titles being issued between 1996 and 2006, 56 per cent of which were issued to women (page 37). The low-cost programme led to housing improvements, tenure security and some increases in property values (averaging 25 per cent, an increment greater than programme costs of just US\$ 64 per household). However, COFOPRI did not catalyze significant changes in access to formal credit and it is difficult to attribute poverty reduction to changes in land titling. Brazil's integrated approach has promoted tenure security while maintaining communities in original locations, promoting jobs, overcoming stigma and upgrading informal areas (depending on the particular strategies adopted by local municipalities). Although costs are far higher and projects more limited in scale than in Peru, Brazil's integrated strategies have the important potential to promote socioeconomic development and political integration for millions of residents. Chapter 5 offers additional discussion of legal issues, such as the types of tenure rights, ensuring gender equality, and possible conflicts between environmental protection and maintaining communities. Chapter 6 concludes with recommendations.

VII. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Limits to Participation: The Struggle for Environmental Improvement in Moreno, Argentina (Los Límites de la Participación; La Lucha por el Mejoramiento Ambiental en Moreno, Argentina)