

**Writeshop:
“Enumerations” as a tool for tenure security**
Lake Naivasha Country Club, Naivasha, Kenya
28 September-2 October 2009

Background Note for Participants

1. WHY A GLTN FOCUS ON ‘ENUMERATIONS’?

The Land Tenure and Property Administration Section (LTPAS), within the Shelter Branch of UN-HABITAT has the mandate to develop normative approaches on sustainable urbanisation about land, innovative residential tenures, affordable land management/administration systems, and land related regulatory/legal frameworks and tools, particularly for women.

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN)— with it’s Secretariat at LTPAS— focuses on establishing a continuum of land rights and the creation of innovative, pro poor, scalable and gender-sensitive land management and land tenure tools. (For further information see the Concept Note for the Writeshop as well as www.gltm.net). The work of GLTN is centered around developing implementation methods or ‘tools’ around five key themes: (1) land rights, records and registration; (2) land use planning; (3) land management, administration and information; (4) land law and enforcement; and (5) land value capture. In total, a set of 18 tools have been agreed upon by the GLTN partners to be advanced around these areas. One of these ‘tools’ is **enumerations for tenure security**.

GLTN has identified a key challenge around enumerations to be how to make sure that the information produced by community-led enumeration exercises is also effectively used to strengthen security of tenure through state recognition, and for use in formal physical planning procedures

2. HOW DOES GLTN DEFINE ‘ENUMERATIONS’?

‘Enumeration’, simply defined, refers to a numbered list, or the act of counting. It is a term often associated with periodic national census taking, with counting being done in geographic units called ‘enumeration areas’. Census enumerations include the collection of a variety of data, including demographic characteristics (sex, age, marital status, etc.), health, access to services, employment, income, access to housing, etc. Enumerations are often spatially referenced, and linked to surveying, mapping and development planning processes. There are many other forms of enumeration, designed for specific purposes (*drawn from scoping study by Jean du Plessis for GLTN*).

GLTN is particularly concerned with what can be referred to as ‘innovative methodologies’ around enumerations. These include, for example, participatory rural/urban appraisal; community mapping; and alternate forms of enumerations such as people’s census, participatory enumeration, community enumeration and self-enumeration.

GLTN considers community-driven, participatory enumerations to represent a fundamental part of the slum upgrading process. They are a tool to establish information on the population size, the ownership patterns and the state of infrastructure within a settlement. Enumerations also importantly provide the

means by which not only the data is gathered to allow for local planning, but also the process by which consensus is built and the inclusion of all residents negotiated. As such, they are also means to federate and organize communities and involve them in large scale slum upgrading projects.

The experience with enumerations worldwide has revealed the importance of having people from the community be the main enumerators rather than developing a specialist team of external enumerators. How an enumeration is done and who does it, is as important as the information it collects. In informal settlements there might be groups and sub-groups and complex micro-politics that may act to exclude or hide some of the poorest households. All community processes as they stand may not be positive. Therefore, mediation and negotiations while surveys are ongoing is important to ensure sustainability and justice. An accurate enumeration of conditions for tenure security is a prerequisite (i) to evaluate various levels of insecurity and corresponding risks of eviction; (ii) to provide the normative foundation for promoting secure tenure, and guidelines for statutory recognition of secure tenure, and (iii) to identify and develop global norms for secure tenure.

This could be based on: (i) a global comprehensive typology of tenure categories and associated rights; (ii) an inventory of legal, regulatory and planning measures aiming to provide temporary or permanent protection against forced evictions, and (iii) an inventory of public policies and practices on informal settlements and customary tenures.

3. HOW WILL GLTN ENGAGE WITH THE TOPIC OF ‘ENUMERATIONS’?

The Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) is a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder partnership hence any topic that the Network engages with is done from multiple professional and geographical lenses and disciplines. These include national and local governments in developing and transition countries; land professionals, NGOs and community-based groups, academic, research and advisory services, donors and UN organizations; and the media and through them, the general public in developed and developing countries.

The same is the case for the Writeshop on ‘Enumerations’. One of the key challenges which GLTN undertakes is to communicate effectively with each group, and to bring the range of experiences together and build bridges across these lenses, for example in the work on gender evaluation criteria to assess whether a land tool is sufficiently gender-sensitive. The goal of the Writeshop, and the publication that it will produce, is to build such dialogue and to document different experiences. Rather than striving for a consensus in all areas, GLTN will encourage an exchange of experiences in regard to enumerations.

In order to identify the niche and scope for GLTN’s work on ‘enumerations’ a scoping study was commissioned prior to the Writeshop to provide guidance on the approach taken. It was here determined that several guidelines already exists, and a depth of organizational experience, on the steps involved in how to undertake various ‘enumeration’ activities, for example a draft community enumerations handbook offering a set of tools for communities facing threats to tenure security, and field manuals for various projects. Interviews also revealed that certain groups engaged with ‘enumerations’ feel that their peer-to-peer exchange is sufficiently effective in on-the-job coaching on their methodology.

With this in mind, GLTN has chosen to focus on unpacking the current, and potential new usages of ‘enumerations’, based on experiences and lessons learned in different contexts, and **to specifically focus on how the information produced by community-led enumeration exercises can also be effectively used to strengthen security of tenure through state recognition, and for use in formal physical planning procedures and land management.**

The Writeshop publication will therefore not be a ‘how-to’ manual on current enumeration approaches, but rather examine:

- (i) How enumerations have been used to date (such as for community empowerment, planning, relocation and access to credit purposes), lessons learned and strengths/weaknesses if their application in different contexts; and
- (ii) Potential new areas of usage for enumerations (such as evidence for the state of land rights, land information, taxation, city-wide upgrading, and in the utilization of the GLTN Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM)).

4. WHAT ARE SOME KEY FACTORS FOR GLTN TO BEAR IN MIND?

Important aspects for GLTN to bear in mind include firstly, the significance of context. The specific context can determine which approaches, methodologies and techniques are appropriate where and when, and how they can be combined in a complimentary way. A key contextual difference could, for example, be that of varying official policy approaches towards informality, slums and tenure security, which tend to range from ‘oppositional’, ‘indifferent’ and ‘cooperative’.

In understanding the role of enumerations in promoting tenure security it is, secondly, important to note that the enumeration process—counting and being counted—invariably involves politics, contestation and power. It must thus be accepted upfront that information gathering of this kind is not a neutral exercise.

Third, any enumeration method used can benefit from an analysis as to its benefits and limitations and constant reflection. This includes unpacking terms such as ‘community’, ‘community-led’ and ‘community-driven’ to fully capture what such concepts mean in specific contexts, and to be clear about when participation adds value to a process, and if part of a wider implementation programme, where it fits in and where it ends.

Fourth, a range of gaps exist where GLTN can add knowledge, including guidelines on the power aspects of information; ensuring that the traditionally perceived weaker forms of tenure are not ignored in the enumeration process and that a range (continuum) of tenure options is considered; develop enumeration tools which bridge the dichotomy between the land tenure needs of communities and their land tenure rights in terms of national/international laws and standards; and that guidelines are created for when enumeration processes are used to facilitate large-scale relocation.

The key goal is to work with the already existing range of grassroots knowledge and use professional knowledge to build new tools which can strengthen grassroots negotiations with the State and to expand the tools available for professionals in their role in the delivery of security of tenure and services to the poor.