

Improving Land governance Through Innovative Rapid Mobile Data Generation Tool

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SUMMARY

The effect of COVID-19 pandemic has created an unexpected global crisis that has affected over one billion slums dwellers in cities and urban areas. This highlighted glaring issues of inequalities and poverty among poor people. The measures taken to curb the spread had a severe impact particularly in slums. The vulnerable groups mostly women were hard hit by the pandemic due to increased abuses, loss of income and evictions during lockdown measures. The lack of credible and readily available data to guide appropriate interventions in slums was a limiting factor to act quickly.

UN-Habitat is responding to many requests from both national and local governments to help them prepare for recovery and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the actions under the UN-Habitat Covid-19 Response Plan seeks to provide urban data, evidence-based mapping and knowledge for informed decision making. It seeks to mobilize local and global partners to participate in collecting reliable and credible data using smartphones and free mobile applications. The use of fit-for-purpose (FFP) tools and solutions such as the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) which integrates mobile computing and smartphones was relevant to gather reliable data in land and housing tenure. Further, the approach of STDM was improved to include web platform that enables integration of data generated from smartphones applications on slums and hazard-prone areas in the cities. This innovation was needed to cater for rapid data generation at neighborhood level and aggregated at the city level with open access to wider stakeholder. The innovation was introduced to address data gap witnessed during the Covid-19 pandemic that limited planning, joint decision-making and quick mobilization of resources or support the needy and vulnerable communities. The rapid mobile data collection app (the app) supports collection of land tenure data, social-economic and demographic data, infrastructure and basic services at the city level and can inform Sustainable Development indicators.

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This app is integrated with STDM framework and will support data aggregation at city level in the web to bring the tool ecosystems together similar to crowdsourcing platform. The web users will have access to data generated from smartphones, spatial data and capabilities for analysis in a unified portal. The development seeks to capitalize on the experiences of GLTN and UN agencies in data generation and to promote a coherent and consistent platform for sharing with partners and governments. It seeks to outline how cities should lead the move towards working with the public, civil society and private sector to reduce poverty and inequality, provide adequate housing and strengthen social protection while rebuilding from the pandemic. This includes proposing relevant policies to protect land rights, improve access to basic services, public transport, education facilities and ensure inclusive digital connectivity.

The app will be tested in three countries; Kenya, Uganda and Zambia and supported by UN-Habitat in integrating data on emerging priority needs including planning, housing and land tenure security, health services and livelihoods.

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