



ECOSOC • Integration Segment (27–29 May, 2014)
SUSTAINABLE URBANIZATION

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UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON STATISTICS

Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment

The Statistical Commission considered human settlements statistics at its most recent, the 45th session, held 4-7 March 2014 in New York. The particular focus of the documentation considered under this agenda item was the methodology developed by UN-Habitat and partners to measure security of tenure in a consistent manner across countries and regions. Below is a short summary of the findings:

Security of tenure is an effective way to safeguard the relationship between people and land in both rural and urban areas and securing tenure for all has a variety of benefits, including social stability, poverty reduction, improved land management and functioning urban land markets. Although there is a consensus on the importance of tenure security, it has not been easy for Governments and the scientific community to actively monitor and track performance.

Despite its importance, security of tenure has not been globally measured owing to a lack of globally comparable data. However, UN-Habitat and its partners have made considerable progress in developing a methodology to measure security of tenure consistent across countries and regions. Observations using that method are being implemented in 25 cities around the world through household surveys, such as the Urban Inequities Survey. People or households are considered to have secure tenure when there is evidence of documentation that can be used as proof of secure tenure status, or when there is either de facto or perceived protection against forced eviction.

Significant progress has been made in the development of monitoring for security of tenure. Considering its complexity, it is desirable to measure security of tenure at three different levels: people, land and policies. At the level of people, a dedicated survey, such the Urban Inequities Survey introduced by UN-Habitat in 2003, can provide useful information on documents as well as on de facto and perceived evictions and the advantages associated with secure tenure. When it is not possible to conduct a dedicated survey owing to, for instance, lack of resources, questions can be added onto existing household surveys such as the Demographic and Health Survey and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey to derive information on documentation and eviction. Population and housing censuses present another important tool to obtain information on documentation. The surveys or censuses can be supplemented with qualitative surveys such as rapid assessments, community assessments, small-scale surveys or the Legal Institutional Framework Index to assess informality of land or land policies in cities or countries. The combination of all the instruments will provide integrated information relating to secure tenure.

The use by national statistical offices of the methodology described in more details in the report by UN-Habitat to the Statistical Commission (E/CN.3/2014/17) is expected to significantly contribute towards better monitoring of security of tenure in cities, which is central to the post-2015 development agenda, as recommended in the report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons, entitled “A new global partnership: eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development”.