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Building Spatial Data Infrastructures in Latin America
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ABSTRACT

Success in the case of land administration systems is based to a large extent, on the availability, access and applicability of related spatial information. In this context, the concepts, technologies and resources associated to the development of sound spatial data infrastructures (SDI) at multilevel have the capacity optimize land administration processes and land management.

In the developed nations and At a high fixed cost, such SDIs are a reality and its contribution to economic and social development is now well document. On the contrary, most of the developing nations are still struggling with the sustainability of national and local efforts oriented towards the building of effective SDIs to respond to pressing social and economic needs. In the case of the Americas, the author of this paper has participated in the introduction and subsequent stages of SDI development at the local, national, regional and global levels.

In this paper and after presenting the essential background and current situation of national and regional SDI initiatives in the Americas, the author focuses on (1) the main challenges confronting institutions and professionals to attain the SDI vision and (2) the need for sustainable land information infrastructures in capacity to perform efficiently and to respond to the demand incoming from multiple areas and users related to the ownership, value and use of land, but also to the Millennium Development Goals.

In particular, attention is provided to capacity building issues that among other relevant priorities, are at the core of the current situation. Endemic and chronic situations are outlined to conclude that: (1) The SDI in the LAC region is what is resulting from current concepts, practices and projects in the Americas. It is not necessarily harmonic and consistent but it reflects the reality of the region and the efforts of many entities and specialists; and (2) spatial data production and the building of SDI in developing economies, to be successful, require as a pre requisite a minimum level of financial and institutional sustainability, otherwise, the lagging situation observed in the so called “digital divide”.

Key words: Spatial data infrastructures, land administration, fundamental data, sustainable development, decision making.

Theme 2: Sustainable Systems for Land Administration
SYS1: Building sustainable well governed land administration systems