Land Administration in Ethiopia: Lessons, Paradoxes, and Challenges Ahead

LESSONS:
- Cheap, large-scale, participatory, and successful land certification is feasible, with proven positive results, economic and social
- Ground-level economic actors trust the rural certification system, despite multiple legal uncertainties

PARADOXES:
- Rural land administration appears to be more effective than urban – in Amhara, at least – despite all odds
  
  *Example*: revenue collection in Amhara

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CHALLENGES:

- A disconnect between urban and rural land (land rights; regulatory systems; policies; institutional settings; land administration practices)
- Elements of land administration that are too complex and expensive for the country
- Policies that still are not supportive of economic mobility
- Respective roles of the central government and regional governments
- Finding an optimum role for land administration agencies at each level of government
An Urban – Rural Disconnect in Ethiopia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Radius, km</th>
<th>Square, km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City administrative territory</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Plan</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffer zone</td>
<td>9.84</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Separate and uncoordinated lines of laws and regulations on urban and rural land
2. Property rights different for urban and rural tenants
3. No mechanism for conversion of rural land rights to urban
4. Expropriation “by default” from rural tenants in areas covered by Master Plans
5. Government does not benefit from this expropriation: it costs more than it generates in revenues
Land Administration in Ethiopia: What Next (a very partial list)

- Overcoming the disconnect:
  - Introduce the mechanism for the land rights conversion
  - Reduce expropriation to the unavoidable minimum
  - Build future land policies on a unified (urban-and-rural) platform

- Designing policies and next steps based on (i) unbiased research of the realities on the ground and (ii) and the costs and feasibility of implementation