

ABSTRACT

Tenure Insecurity and the Growth of Informal Settlements on Peri-Urban Land: A Case Study of River Estate, Diego Martin, Trinidad

Erica Prentice-Pierre

Most Caribbean countries are undergoing rapid urbanization and increasing population growth that is making unprecedented demands on the use of their land resources. This Project Report examines the type of State action needed in order to address the growth of informal settlements and tenure insecurity on State land.

The major methodology used to collect data for the Project Report is the questionnaire, structured and unstructured interviews. The collected data have revealed that tenure insecurity is pervasive and tenure regularization involves a lengthy process that straddles several Government Ministries and Divisions. Conflicting policies also exist.

The findings are significant in that if the State has to treat successfully with the growth of informal settlements on its landholdings, new land policies and urban reform strategies must be formulated and agreed upon by all State Agencies charged with land management and land administration functions.

The Project Report places emphasis on the need for the State to reform the operations of the land market, formulate meaningful land and tenure policies as well as generate employment so that access to land and a house is affordable to the average citizen. Although a lot has been written on tenure insecurity at an international level, much of the literature has been focused on the illegal occupation of private lands. This Project Report has merit in that it focuses on a specific State land holding in the most urbanized part of Trinidad in order to synthesize all of the critical issues facing State land management at the present time.

Keywords: Erica Prentice-Pierre; Tenure insecurity and the growth of informal settlements; peri-urban land.