

UN-Habitat and The Global Land Tool Network Land-Based Finance Learning Series 4

Report On Session 2: “Taking stock of the learning series (2020-2023)” 24 June 2024

Drafted by Mikel Berra Sandin

Reviewed by Jonathan Yakutieli, Paterson Gauntner, and Wilson Prichard.

On 24 June 2024, the UN-Habitat Land, Housing, and Shelter Section, along with GLTN and in collaboration with LoGRI of ICTD, held Session two of its Land-based Finance Learning Series 4. This session aimed to review previous learning sessions, focusing on participants, topics, and engagement, and identifying ways to improve and better meet the needs of attendees. The session was attended by 46 participants from 12 institutions (see Annex 1 for the participant list).

The session emphasized understanding the current dynamics of the Land-based Finance Learning Series to highlight its relevance, identify areas for improvement, and brainstorm new ideas for more effective knowledge exchange.

Learning series 4 Sessions	Presenters	Date and time (EAT)
1. <i>“The Land Question Underpinning the Affordable Housing Crisis”</i>	Presenter: Astrid R.N. Haas, (UN-Habitat, Consultant) Discussant: Deon Van Zyl, (Chairperson, Western Cape Property Development Forum (WCPDF); Managing Director VORTO.)	11 March 2024 17h00-18h00 EAT PREVIOUS SESSION
2. <i>“Taking stock of the learning series (2020-2023)”</i>	Paterson Gauntner, (UN-Habitat, Consultant) Discussants: Wilson Prichard, (ICTD, LoGRI)	24 June 2024 17h00-18h00 EAT THIS SESSION
3. <i>“TBC”</i>	Discussants:	16 September 2024 17h00-18h00 EAT
4. <i>“TBC”</i>	Discussants:	4 November 2024 17h00-18h00 EAT

Presentation: Taking stock of the learning series (2020-2023) (Paterson Gauntner)

- 1. Relevance of Land-based finance and the learning sessions:** Land-based finance addresses challenges posed by rapid urban growth, yet it remains underutilized. These learning sessions are crucial for promoting and developing the use of land-based finance. Since 2020, they have gathered a community of over 350 participants across 17 sessions.
- 2. Lack of diversity among presenters:** Learning sessions are lacking diversity, as presenters are mainly male (65%), from international organizations (73%), and high-income countries (63%). Most case studies are from Africa (19 of 25, 13 of which from Anglophone countries).
- 3. Topics covered and areas for improvement:** Key topics include revenue administration and governance, focusing on the challenges of implementing land-based finance. Areas needing deeper exploration include enhancing local revenue for public services, fostering community voice, using land-based finance for affordable housing, and law and policy review.

4. **Generate more value of the Learning Series:** Continue the series with more diverse cases and participants, deepen learnings, hold in-person events, enhance online networking, workshop real cases, and make land-based finance learnings accessible through an online repository or publication.

Key questions and reflection with discussant (Wilson Prichard)

1. **Ensuring sessions provide added value:** Content should be detailed and specific to ensure clear takeaways that are valuable to participants.
2. **Engaging with the community:** Organizers should collaborate with presenters to craft pertinent questions and deliver useful content, similar to Jean du Plessis's approach when leading the series.
3. **Addressing relevant topics and cases:** There should be a concerted effort to identify core topics of interest for all attendees. Case-specific sessions would provide more targeted and clear learnings.

Open Discussion

1. **Exchange as a basis for learning:** The series should facilitate exchanges between practitioners, which could take place through smaller, more unstructured and relational networks.
2. **Topic alignment to policy priorities and GLTN agenda:** While land-based financing is of interest, land and housing are not current policy priorities. Aligning sessions with priority issues like climate change and using them to inform the GLTN agenda could be beneficial.
3. **Local governments presenting cases:** local governments or agencies presenting real ongoing cases with a small group of experts, which, while previously done with the LBF Learning Series, requires significant preparation, though DAG has used a simpler format for officials to discuss ongoing issues more easily.
4. **In person v online sessions:** Opinions are mixed on the format. Some prefer in-person interactions, while others find physical gatherings challenging. Leveraging existing events (e.g., World Urban Forum, World Bank Land Conference) for in-person interaction is a valuable opportunity. It was mentioned that during the World Bank Conference, UN-Habitat with ICTD and LoGRI organized a thematic session.

Chat inputs

1. **Suggested topics of interest:** attendants suggested a wide range of topics, such as success stories of land value capture (especially in developing countries), different options of land-based financing, use of land-based financing to fund infrastructure, effects of disasters and pandemics on land-based financing, strategies for reform of property tax, analysis of unregulated development, and valuation approaches.
2. **Demand for tailored approaches:** attendants stated that creating country-specific workshops, discussions or resource repositories might be helpful. It is important to note that a resource repository is annexed on the concept note for each event.
3. **Adding stakeholders:** capacity building should go further than government and reach to traditional leaders, which oversee land management in some countries as Ghana.

Key Takeaways

1. **Enhance diversity among presenters and case studies:** More women and government officials should present, and case studies should extend beyond Anglophone Africa.
2. **Promote a proactive approach:** Instead of organizers solely inviting presenters, participants should be encouraged to propose topics and presentations.

3. **Maintaining thematic coherence and audience interaction:** Focusing sessions on key ideas with clear value, and ensuring high-quality engagement rather than expanding or adding new dimensions. This by enhancing focus and audience interaction, rather than broadening the scope of the discussions.
4. **Explore new learning methods and formats:** Consider in-person events, online collaboration tools (e.g., Slack/Teams), case-specific workshops, and online repositories or publications to improve knowledge sharing.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Attendance list

Name	Organization	Email address
David Amborski	School of Urban and Regional Planning, Ryerson University	amborski@ryerson.ca
Carlotta Emde	German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)	carlotta.emde@giz.de
Paterson Gauntner	Independent expert	gauntner.paterson@gmail.com
Helen Rourke	Development Action Group (DAG)	helen@dag.org.za
Jane Katz	Independent expert	janekatz@globalurban.org
Kaio Santos Nogueira	Reading University	k.m.santosnogueira@pgr.reading.ac.uk
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Peadar Davis	Ulster University	pt.davis@ulster.ac.uk
Sibongile Mazibuko	National Treasury City, South Africa	Sibongile.Mazibuko@Treasury.gov.za
Wilson Prichard Colette Nyirakamana	Local Government Revenue Initiative (LoGRI), ICTD	wilson.prichard@utoronto.ca c.nyirakamana@utoronto.ca
Paul Okunlola Aida Robbana	UNDP	paul.okunlola@undp.org aida.robbana1@un.org
Jonathan Yakutiel Giulia Lavagna Eric Gachoka Mikel Berra Sandin	UN-Habitat (Learning Series Team and support staff)	jonathan.yakutiel@un.org giulia.lavagna@un.org eric.gachoka@un.org mikel.berrasandin@un.org
Imran Khan Safi Abibata Bavug Tontie Binado Haregewoin Haregewoin Ornella Nohra Ponpat Sahacharoenwat Marco Voltolina Mohamoud Hussein Jong Hee Paik Avril Bundale Charles Wagura Nicolas Tamayo Jian Feng Robert Kehew Hiroshi Takabayashi Semiha Turgut Heba Fekry Regina Orvananos Emmanuel Gbadebo Adeleke Mercy Chebet Cheruiyot Viola Fonnesu Mariana Saraiva de Melo Pinheiro Winston Njuguna Judas Cossa Frederic Saliez Elizabeth Mbaya Emmanuel Attianah	UN-Habitat	imran.safi@un.org abibata.bavug@un.org tontie.binado@un.org haregewoin.bekele@un.org ornella.nohra@un.org ponpat.sahacharoenwat@un.org marco.voltolina@un.org mohamoud.hussein@un.org jonghee.paik@un.org avril.bundale@un.org charles.wagura@un.org nicolas.tamayomedina@un.org jian.feng@un.org robert.kehew@un.org hiroshi.takabayashi@un.org semiha.turgut@un.org heba.fekry@un.org regina.orvananos@un.org emmanuel.adeleke1@un.org mercy.cheruiyot@un.org viola.fonnesu@un.org mariana.saraivademelopinheiro@un.org winston.njuguna@un.org judas.cossa@un.org frederic.saliez@un.org elizabeth.makeba@un.org emmanuel.attianah@un.org

Annex 2: Presentation - Taking stock of the learning series (2020-2023) (Paterson Gauntner)

PARTICIPANT INTROS

Please type in the chat:

- Name and organization
- Optional: Name one topic of recent curiosity related to your work. It can be broad or specific.

The session report will have participant contact info – feel free to reach out to other participants on shared interests.

THE LAND-BASED FINANCE LEARNING SERIES: PARTICIPANTS, TOPICS, THEMES, AND WAY FORWARD

PATERSON GAUNTNER
24 JUNE 2024

IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE

- There are nearly **8,000 cities** in middle income countries and nearly **1,000** in low income countries.
- By 2050, urban populations of low and middle income countries will increase by **1.9 billion**.
- There is an investment gap of **\$4 trillion** annually to achieve the SDGs.
- Land-based finance is highly underutilized.
- Urban land **more than doubled** in middle-income countries and **more than tripled** in low-income countries between 1975 and 2015, and is still climbing rapidly.

AND IMAGINE YOU HAVE ACCESS TO

- A pool of over **350** land-based finance professionals, including some of the top experts in the field.
- 59** organizations with an interest in land-based finance, including international agencies (World Bank, UN, OECD, etc.), think tanks and academic institutions.
- This pool of experts is already meeting regularly.

...what would you do?

THE LAND-BASED FINANCE LEARNING SERIES

- Launched in September 2020
- Currently in its 4th series and 17th session
- Fourth series: Still land-based finance, but more emphasis on housing, governance, policy and practical solutions
- Over 350 unique participants
- Average of 50 participants per session
- 59 organizations represented
- Fairly consistent group (Over 40 participants attended 5 or more sessions)

THIS PRESENTATION

- Part 1: Who has participated in the series?
- Part 2: What have we learned?
- Part 3: How can the series and community of practice generate even more value?

PART 1: WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN THE SERIES?

DIAGNOSTICS ON THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

TYPE OF ORGANIZATIONS

Organization Type	Presenters, moderators, discussants	Other participants
Government	8	3
International organization	15	18
University	6	9

BACKGROUND OF PRESENTERS

Category	Percentage
Government	10%
International org or think tank	28%
UN, Habitat	45%
University	23%
Women	35%
Men	65%
Nonbinary	5%
Lower income countries	38%
High income countries	63%

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can the series attract and include more local government practitioners?
- How can the series attract and include more organizations (academic, NGOs, think tanks) from lower income countries?
- How can the series strengthen the voices of women and participants from lower income countries?

**PART 2:
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?**

DIAGNOSTICS ON CASES, TOPICS, LESSONS AND THEMES

CASES

- Afghanistan (4)
- Cape Town, South Africa (2)
- European cities
- Freetown, Sierra Leone (5)
- Malawi (2)
- Nansana, Uganda
- Senegal (2)
- Somalia (3)
- South Africa
- Togo
- Toronto, Canada
- Zambia

Case studies count



- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

MOST COMMONLY DISCUSSED TOPICS

#1: Revenue administration

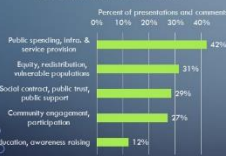


#2: Governance



MOST COMMONLY DISCUSSED TOPICS

#3: Community voice & benefit

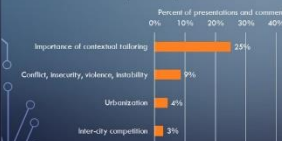


#4: Housing and land markets



MOST COMMONLY DISCUSSED TOPICS

#5: Context, context-specific variables



#6: Programmatic aspects



OVERARCHING THEMES (1 OF 2)

(recurring issues from presentations and discussions)

- The merits of land-based finance are widely recognized, but there are significant challenges to real world implementation.
- Social equity and impacts on vulnerable populations are a persistent issue, complicated by the power of land-holding political elite.
- There are many interconnections between land-based finance and other issues, particularly housing.
- Action on multiple fronts (legal, political, administrative, community-based) is often necessary, and where to start is an important question.
- Contextualization of any intervention is paramount.

OVERARCHING THEMES (2 OF 2)

- Property tax is the go-to land-based finance instrument, but in practice valuating land, particularly vacant land, is more challenging than buildings.
- More work is needed to further develop good practices that can deliver on the promise of land value capture.
- That said, there have been successes, even in low income and fragile contexts, that make meaningful strides toward building the social contract and warrant conscientious scaling up and further study.

TOP AREAS FOR FUTURE STUDY



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How can we find or develop good practices in areas where more study is needed?
- How can the series find case studies that demonstrate successes in areas of deep challenge?
- How can lessons and takeaways be transferred in ways that build on prior experience but acknowledge contextual differences?

**PART 3:
HOW CAN THE SERIES AND COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE GENERATE EVEN MORE VALUE?**

IDEAS FOR THE WAY FORWARD

IDEAS:

Continue the series, with more diverse cases, more diverse participants, and deepening learnings on top areas for future study.



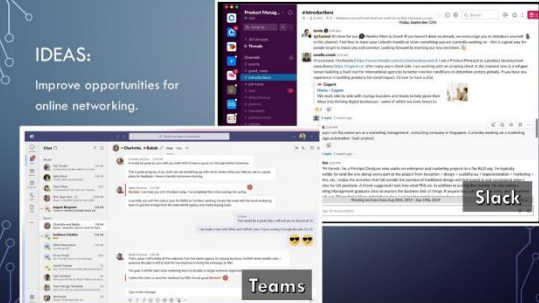
IDEAS:

Hold or participate in an in-person event.



IDEAS:

Improve opportunities for online networking.



IDEAS:

Organize opportunities to workshop real cases.



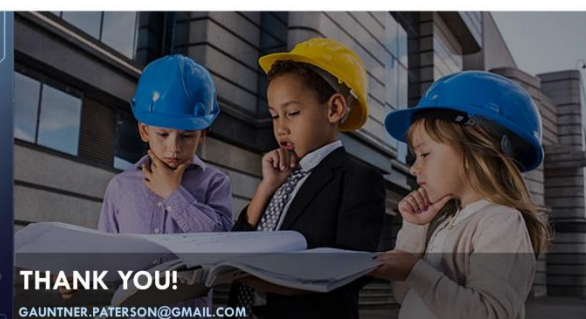
IDEAS:

Make land-based finance learnings available through an online repository or publication.



DISCUSSION QUESTION

- How would you leverage the learnings and community of practice to create more value?
- How can organizers encourage participants to bring ideas and cases to the group for discussion?
- What resources, experiences or cases would you recommend we discuss?



THANK YOU!
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