

Report on NLRMP Workshop on Implementation issues relating to Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme with specific focus on Conclusive Titling

Participants: Department of Land Resources (Secretary, Addl. Secretary, Jt. Secretaries (LR&WM), Director (LR, WM and Neeranchal), Settlement Commissioners of various States and UTs, Inspector General Registration (IGR) of various States and UTs, NIC.

Special Invitees: National Institution for Transforming India (NITI), Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER), National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Centre for Rural Studies, Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration LBSNAA, Association of Geospatial Industries (AGI – Mr. Rajesh Mathur, Ms. Bharti Sinha and Dr. Yogita Shukla).

Highlights of the Workshop

- Department of Land Resources (DoLR) has rechristened NLRMP Program of GoI to **Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme (DI-LRMP) with specific focus on Conclusive Titling.**
(This spells a change from the current practice of presumptive titling to conclusive).
- The program is now 100% centrally funded. The changes include diversion of funds sanctioned between any of the activities approved under the NLRMP and is for setting up the system and not for operational and infrastructure related expenses, which are the responsibilities of the states.
- The workshop primarily focused on understanding the current scenario and the progress made so far in the NLRMP program, evaluate the challenges and discuss on the state of readiness or required activities to enable the states to take the first step towards conclusive titling.
- States were advised to speed up the activities in this direction and to utilise all the unspent funds before March 31st 2016.
- DoLR presented the salient features of the new program, which is based on **Four fundamental principles:**
 - A single agency to handle property records
 - “Mirror” principle: property records mirror ground reality
 - “Curtain” principle: proving past titles/ transactions unnecessary
 - Title guarantee/insurance against losses arising from inaccuracies
- The presentation also described **Prerequisites of the Program**
 - Accurate description of property
 - Unique identification of property
 - Clarity re-boundaries of property
 - Integration of transfer of property & record updation
 - Alignment of record with reality
- **Proposed Benefits** of the program were presented at the workshop. These are anticipated as:
 - Tool for good governance
 - Higher revenue generation

- Citizen-centric focus: Ease of doing business and bankruptcy reform
- Unlocking of capital stuck in land
- Higher capital flows in to the economy
- Property owners: easy access to records
- Property litigation: considerable reduction
- Transaction time: greatly reduced
- All the States where NLRMP is being implemented currently provided a status update on the project and also briefed about their readiness to move towards conclusive titling.

- Major discussion Points during the workshop were:
 - What is most appropriate model for India for DI-LRMP and Conclusive Titling at this point?
 - Systematic exhaustive
 - Systematic selective
 - Incremental compulsory
 - Incremental optional
 - Should all of India have to have one system? Or Should States/UTs have the choice?
 - What is going to be the institutional mechanism for the same, i.e.:
 - Role for GOI
 - Legislative
 - Policy advisory
 - Enforcement of minimal national standards and inter-operability
 - Financial assistance
 - National Registry
 - Role for State governments
 - Legislative
 - Implementation
 - Role for GOI after legislation
 - Same permanent body
 - Leaner permanent body
- The takeaway from the workshop are:
 - All the stakeholders and the experts to work together to make conclusive titling reality in India. This would involve a concerted effort to speed up and conclude all activities already sanctioned and funded before end of this fiscal year.
 - The workshop also emphasised on the need for both, first time creation of up-to-date land records, as well as, ensure currency by regular updation of the records, which would need to be budgeted for at the time of planning.
 - Capacity building especially in state-of-the-art technologies requires major thrust.
 - Creation of a high level working group and pool of knowledge that will provide directions to the implementation of this program as well as document the best practices as the program moves forward. The Working group will focus on the following aspects of the program:
 - Legal
 - Administrative
 - Technical
 - Financial
 - Outcomes