



IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE

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New approach to making informal settlements legal can solve delivery problems

Informal settlements have become flashpoints for angry protests as residents vent their frustration at the lack of housing and delivery of other basic services.

More than 1.3 million families are living in these settlements. However, lack of tenure security and the delay in the delivery of urban services and formal houses has left people in limbo without basic amenities.

Municipalities are increasingly under pressure to address the needs of these residents. Unfortunately efforts to upgrade these settlements while people continue to live there are still getting off the ground or have not yet been initiated – despite recent promises in the state of the nation address to pursue upgrading as a priority.

Urban LandMark believes that recognising informal settlements and promoting tenure security is the place to start in transforming these areas.

Urban LandMark has conducted research into how to bring secure occupancy status to people in informal settlements. It has developed an approach for incrementally securing tenure. The Incremental Tenure Approach emphasises practical mechanisms that allow land rights to be upgraded over time. It combines a number of administrative and legal actions into a usable tool which can lead to secure tenure.

“Adoption of the Incremental Tenure Approach will open up possibilities for providing infrastructure services and social facilities in informal settlements”, says Lauren Royston, tenure theme co-ordinator at Urban LandMark, who co-ordinated the project.

“With greater tenure security, residents of informal settlements will have more opportunities for enjoying the benefits of land access. These include increased levels of service, the possibilities of access to microfinance and to economic opportunities” she says.

The Incremental Tenure Approach will be launched at the Joburg Theatre, Braamfontein on Wednesday April 14, at 4pm for 4.30 (food and drinks will be provided)

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The Urban Land Markets Programme (Urban LandMark) is a think tank dedicated to making urban land markets work better for poor people. We aim to influence policies and practice in southern Africa by investigating and promoting sustainable ways to access affordable urban land.

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