



Studies on land utilization for rural and urban stakeholders: A case study

NAMRITA KALSI¹ and RAVI KIRAN²

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd, New Delhi

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to understand the utilization of land for Development from the perspective of the stakeholder. A balanced economic development embracing rural or agriculture on one hand and urban or industrial growth on the other side, is indispensable for emerging economies like India. The present research is a study of the diverse objectives and how they can be attempted, with a least possible resistance or friction, through a medium of consultative approach. The results have been derived through a survey of stakeholders, covering land owners and other stakeholders through a case study of Greater Mohali Region of Punjab, primarily an agrarian state. The paper tries to throw light on recent evolving land legislatures and compare it with stakeholders options, preferences and incentives needed to facilitate land utilization for development. The results showed that stakeholders are less averse to spare land for certain key sectors like transport, social infrastructure like health and education. Not only this, the acceptance is more if the methodology is packaged through smooth processes, the approach is sensitive and incentivized with market-based compensation.

Key words: Balanced development, Compensation, Land acquisition, Land utilization, Land legislatures, Social infrastructure, Stakeholders preferences

Land is a very important natural resource for the development of a country. A developing nation faces numerous challenges when it comes to assessment of land and the manner in which it can be utilized. For a large and populous country like India, the scenario is no different. The principal law to mobilize land for development in India since last 120 years was Land Acquisition Act 1894 (LA) a legacy from British India, with an eminent domain nature. This law was frequently used, through the “public purpose” clause for the cause of urbanization and industrialization. Which for the pheasant ordained paltry and irregular compensation; little or no policy for relief and rehabilitation and the deprivation of the original owner from the fruits of development and non-reversion of land to the original owner in case of non-utilization of land for the purposes for which it was acquired were some of the alarming drawbacks of this policy (Namrita and Kiran 2015).

Although agriculture presently accounts for only about 14% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it is still the main source of livelihood for the majority of the rural population, and provides the basis of food security for the nation. Therefore, fertile agriculture land and clean water resources need to be protected effectively for providing and ensuring livelihood to rural population and food security to the nation. There is a need for long term plans

to meet the food security as well as livelihood issues. For this purpose, reasonable restraint on acquisition and conversion of at least certain types of agricultural land can be introduced. However availability of Land and its utilization is required to be examined before coming to judicious inference.

What can be considered a judicious balance between land utilization for rural functions like agriculture or forestry and urban needs can be a complex algorithm which has challenged academicians and policy makers for a long time. A perfect standard solution is elusive, perhaps a localized need based approach can offer a way out. On one side there can loom the challenge of ensuring adequate food on the plate of the country. On the other hand lies the economic development of the country for which urbanization is an engine of growth, indispensable for a developing country like India. According to the world population prospects by the United Nations 55% of Indians are likely to be living in urban areas by the year 2050. There is likely to be transformation of the economy from primarily agrarian to manufacturing and service based. Urbanization is the main tool for developing countries for achieving massive transformation (Draft National Land Utilization Policy 2013).

In order to carry out rural and urban objectives, the government may often need resources like land, building, water etc. Often, the land is not owned by the government. For example, if an industrial corridor is proposed to be built in any state and there is a requirement of land, most

¹ Deputy Chief Architect (email: nkkalsi@gmail.com);
² Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Thapar University, Patiala

of it may not be owned by the government. In such a case, the government may have to endeavor for the same from the land owners (Quora, 2015). However, these people may not want to dispose off their assets, which can be detrimental to and may impact the development activities of the entire region. The land acquisition law, therefore, in the past had provided for compulsory acquisition of land, subject to certain conditions and procedure.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used both primary and secondary data and publications besides in-person observations, semi-structured interviews, and taking into account of inputs from the public forums. The study also focused on the Greater Mohali Region (GMR) of Punjab, India an agrarian state of India. Key stakeholders in development mosaic were identified. A self-administered questionnaire was considered to be primary survey instrument for collecting primary data from identified stake holders. The questionnaire was formulated based on literature review using random stratified sampling technique. The questionnaire was validated by academicians and stakeholders and their suggestions were incorporated. Open ended and multiple selection was utilized in the two strategic questions to evaluate responses on land matters. Data entry of responses was made on Data entry software specially developed in Microsoft Access, which was converted into Microsoft Excel format for interpretation.

Appropriate groups were framed to represent urban development mosaic. After validation checks 3 Stakeholder groups were frozen and were allocated abbreviation LR, SD and DD for ease: i. *Land Resources (LR)*: Land owner, Land assembler, ii. *Supply Drivers Developer and Government (SD)*: Builder, Developer, Licensee, Colonizer, Official of Development Authority Land, Approval Agencies, Planner, Architect, Estate Official etc. and iii. *Demand Drivers Buyer and Investor of property (DD)*: Citizen, Technical-professional-engineer, consultant, housewife, Private-service, Self-employed, Academician, Student, Industrialist, Entrepreneur, Businessman and other Professions etc. Out of these groups the land research relates to Land Resources (LR) who form the main focus of this research paper. This group comprised, 52 Land owner and Land assemblers. As far as LR is concerned the low and non-tax payers dominate up to 81 percent in the sample, understandably so as agriculture income is non-taxable.

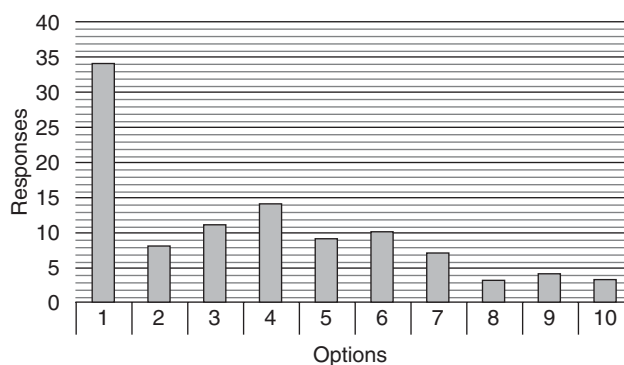
Data analysis and inference

The research has tried to focus on three basic aspects: i. present land utilization, ii. stakeholders sentiment for conceding land for development, iii. stakeholders willingness for land utilization for development and iv. stakeholders preferential option for land utilization for development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was important to understand, how the land was being

Table 1 Present land utilization



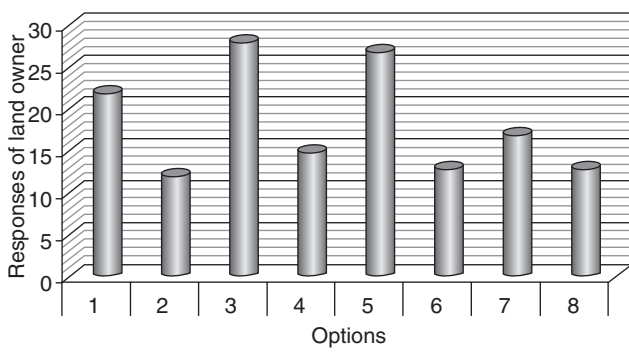
Present land utilisation options	Responses
1. Agriculture, vegetable, grains, cash crops and floriculture, etc.	34
2. Dairy farming, Poultry farming and Fisheries etc.	8
3. The land is lying fallow	11
4. Given on rent/ lease to other party	14
5. Household industry or small scale industry/ trade	9
6. Built infrastructure for rent, i.e. Marriage palace, hostel etc	10
7. Built Farm House/ Residential	7
8. Institutional use – school, panchayatghar, dispensary, sports ground etc.	3
9. Food processing units like rice sheller etc.	4
10. Any other purpose	3
Total Responses	103

utilized by the LR. Multi choice questions yielded 103 responses logic being that LR can put his land to multi usages for maximizing return in accordance with personal suitability, presenting the wise option scores for land utilization (Table 1).

A graphical description indicates the strong preference for option 1. From data analysis of LR, which can be seen that out of the total responses more than half (55%) depicted that the land was being utilized for agricultural practices whether it be cash crops, vegetables, poultry farms or fishing farms etc. A quarter of the responses (23%) depicted a rent collecting trend whether it was from housing properties, societies or marriage palaces etc. About 9% depicted a diversion of land towards small scale / household industry such as manufacturing clay pots, wheels, blacksmithing etc. Only about 7% of the responses exhibited residential use of the land.

Out of all usages agriculture usage was maximum in (33%) of instances, where land is positioned to plant agriculture (cash crops, grains, vegetables, floriculture etc.). The sample depicts a reflection of LR from Punjab, which is an agrarian state and still looking for other avenues of return. Probably the income from land put to only agriculture usage is not optimizing returns, i.e. a local diversion of land resources is taking place to overcome possible high agricultural input versus diminishing return

Table 2 Sentiments to part with land



Stakeholders sentiment for conceding land for development	Responses
1. If the land is infertile, fallow, kaller, undulating, unusable and unsuitable for cultivation or other use including lack of irrigation water.	22
2. If the Land is disputed or under litigation.	12
3. If the Land is shared and not demarcated properly. Land is not in own name, but in the name of ancestors or relatives and there are ownership issues.	28
4. Pressure of family members, especially the younger blood, who are not keen on farming and looking for better lifestyle through quick money or an alternate business or educated children do not want to engage in agriculture.	15
5. Pressure of market forces as land cost has escalated due to nearness to development.	27
6. If the Land holding is too fragmented/ small for agriculture to be viable or higher agriculture inputs.	13
7. If the family is under debt/ loan. The land is already mortgaged and the family is unable to pay back the debt because of unviable agriculture or inadequate income from the land to make two ends meet.	17
8. Because of the unavailability of farm labour at affordable/ viable rates	13
Total	147

and alternate avenues of income are being explored and land is being seen as an asset.

Stakeholders sentiment for conceding land for development

Stakeholders were asked the reasons for parting with land for development. They were given 10 options listed in the Table 2. This was to identify the motive-wise preference of stakeholders. Multi choice questions yielded 147 responses logic being that LR should share different possible grounds for parting with their land assets which can be seen in Table 2. The foremost underlying cause because of which LR had least reservation to spare the land is, if it was not demarcated properly (19%) meaning thereby if the land was not in his own name but in the name of their ancestors and/or relatives and there were ownership issues. Around (18%) motivation is attributed

to market forces as land cost has escalated due to nearness to development. About 15% of responses bring out that the compulsion to sell is if the land is infertile, fallow, kaller, undulating, unusable or unsuitable for cultivation or other use including lack of irrigation water.

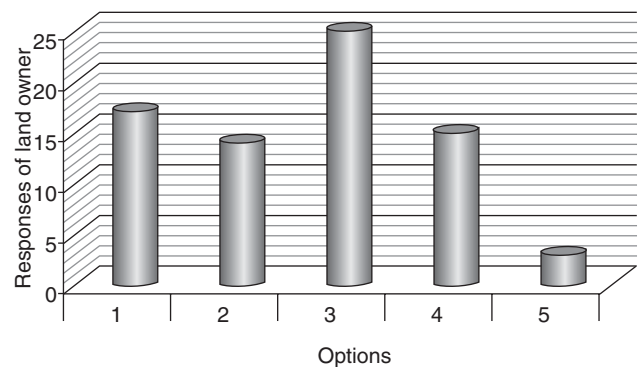
About a tenth (11.5%) of admitted that they would be forced to sell their land in case of financial need such as a large family debt / loan which cannot be paid due to inadequate income. Only 8% reason to part with land related to disputed or under litigation factor, 9% instances related to unavailability of farm labor or if they couldn't afford farm labor. 9% reason was attributed to fact if it was too small or fragmented for agriculture.

Stakeholders willingness for land utilization for development

Stakeholders Willingness for Land Acquisition for Development is very important as otherwise the purpose of development for urban or rural requirements can be lost. The results as shown through multi choice questions yielded 74 options.

As can be seen in Table 3, one third options (33%) showed willingness to support land acquisition and development if they were made partner, allottee of development or housing project. This can be interpreted a wish for speculative earning from land or as safe option for land allotment (Namrita and Kiran 2015). More than a fifth (23%) responses supported surrender of their land

Table 3 Stakeholders Willingness for Land Utilization for Development



Stakeholders willingness for land utilization for development	Responses
1. Transport infrastructure - airport, bus stand, railway stations, container services etc.	17
2. Setting up new industry where jobs would be available for younger generations	14
3. A housing/ development project where i am made a partner /allottee	25
4. Social, education & health infrastructure like hospitals, schools, colleges, play grounds government offices, etc.	15
5. Religious temples, gurudwara, old age homes, etc.	3
Total	74

for transport infrastructure. Another fifth (20%) were not averse to acquisition of their land for a just cause like educational or health/social purposes- infrastructure project like hospitals, schools, colleges.

This can be interpreted that nowadays people are willing spare their land for infrastructure projects limited to transport, education health or social. About a fifth (18%) of the respondents were willing to part with their land for setting up an industrial project which would provide jobs for younger generation.

Only a mere 4% of the respondents were willing to spare their land for either religious buildings or old age homes etc. This is an unexpected result thrown by respondents since Punjabis are known for donations to religious and social causes but here in the research they are unwilling to spare their land for religious purposes although they may not be averse to making reimbursements in other forms.

Stakeholders preferential options for land utilization for development

Lastly the researchers tried to understand the incentives that are sweetener for stakeholders to yield Land and facilitate land acquisition for Development.

This question was asked to clarify how it might be easy for institutions/agencies (government or private) to have land for development. About 74 responses were received in this multi choice open ended question which can be seen in Table. 4.

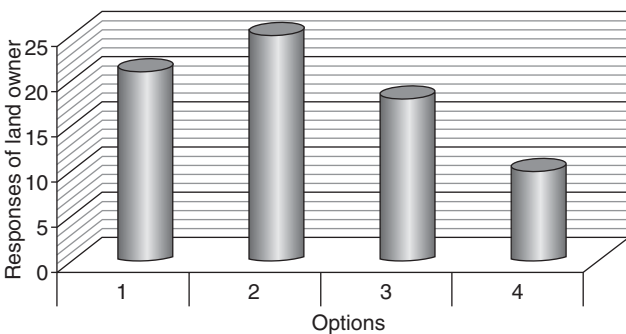
- Surprisingly about a third (34%) wished that their family livelihood is ensured for the rest of the life or that

their children are given some sort of job security or alternative livelihood.

- Nearly a third (28%) of the respondents wished for high compensation for their land appropriately linked to the market value of the land possibly after development.
- About a quarter (24%) wanted some financial advice or some package regarding proper utilization of the compensation in addition to the compensation itself.
- This means that almost all of the respondents (86%) wanted some sort of financial restitution for their land either for themselves or their families.

The Key options, motives of LR to spare land for Development as has been achieved through survey based analysis echos in accordance with the provision in the evolving Acts: LR stakeholders are ready to spare land for Transport infrastructure. LR stakeholders are generally in agreement to spare land for Education and Health (Social) infrastructure. LR stakeholders do not mind to make available land for development which is not demarcated with disputed ownership. LR stakeholders prefer to spare waste land for development, i.e. multi cropped land should not be acquired. Since land was ensuring both home and livelihood, employment should be ensured by acquiring agency, so that family bereft of acquired land can make arrangement for both LR stakeholders are not averse to development provided they are made partner in Development or with allotment of homes. Some LR could be ready to part with their land for setting up an industrial project which would provide jobs for younger generation. LR stakeholders are ready to flow with market forces as land cost has escalated due to nearness to development and ready to bow to Pressure of family members, especially the younger blood, who are not keen on farming and looking for better lifestyle through quick money or an alternate business. LR is happy to concede land provided compensation is high enough at market value.

Table 4 Stakeholders preferential options for land acquisition for development



Stakeholders preferential options for land acquisition for development	Responses
1. If the land owner get appropriate compensation for the land at its market value	21
2. If my family livelihood is ensured for rest of the life or children are facilitated alternative livelihood	25
3. If I am given financial advice or package so that proper utilization of compensation can be made	18
4. If alternate roof on head of the land owner is assured.	10
Total	74

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