Collective maintenance of affordable condominiums in Bogota and Quito

Condominiums (all = Cuadro mínimo) From Latin core - “together” + dominium “domain/control” (1)

A form of housing tenure, institutionalized and regulated by modern property laws. “Condominium” entails both individual and collective rights of ownership and use.

- In co-housing schemes under the condominium regime, common elements such as land, structure, infrastructure, and common economic goods are owned and governed in collective.
- Governance and maintenance of the common property implies sustained organization and depends on institutions of collective action.
- Condominium as a property regime exists in civil law countries around the world. The modern law of condominium, or Law of Horizontal Property, is from 1948 in Colombia and from 1960 in Ecuador. (2)

High percentage of residential units in condominium

Elements in common property

A condominium owner has the obligation to self-govern and self-regulate their community to maintain their common property.

Housing institutions’ levels of analysis

Vives et al. (2006) introduces a key variable influencing housing policy systems and outcomes (3). In Latin America, “homeownership” is the policy goal steering the provision of low-cost apartments in condominium regimes.

PROBLEM OF STUDY:

This study looks into the institutional complexity of condominium tenure by seeking to understand how low and middle income homeowners organize themselves to maintain their common property, both in Bogota and Quito.

Low and middle income households buy affordable units in condominium with the assistance of a down-payment subsidy that comes from the government. This study focuses on condominiums that are built for the affordable housing market and observes how the interdependent behavior of actors affects the maintenance practices of the common property. There is empirical evidence that units are in a path of deterioration due to lack of maintenance.

METHODS:

A sample of households from eight case studies was surveyed during February and March, 2014 in Bogota and Quito (n=114). The goal was to measure collective action factors (3), as well as socio-economic information from households to understand the collective capacity of the group in order to govern and maintain the common property.

The conceptual model for the analysis follows the institutional design principles of long enduring common property resources (4). The problem of the “free-rider” and rational individual behavior is present in co-housing schemes such as in the condominium (5,6).

Institutional model

State-centered provision Subsidy-based housing policy

Condominium tenure: users are owners and tenants – case studies sample:

These results show the extent to which co-owners share common space, use and maintenance responsibilities with tenants. From the sample, 81% of tenants pay maintenance fees themselves. Low and middle income owners can let their units for at least five years after purchase of the property.

Who is responsible for the maintenance of the common property?

The condominium is closer to the Historic Center of Quito. Owners have built new apartments on the roofs to accommodate family members or to let out.

REFERENCES

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