

**MIDTERM EVALUATION OF THE LAND TITLING PROJECT IN HONDURAS**  
Project Number 522-0173

Prepared by a Land Tenure Center Evaluation Team  
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"Evaluación de Punto Medio del Proyecto de Titulación de Tierras"  
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I. Summary

The Land Titling Project (or as known in Honduras, the Proyecto de Titulación de Tierras, or PTT) has been functioning for over two years. Cadastral surveying and titling in the Departamento of Santa Barbara began in late 1982, but got seriously underway in 1983.

The Instituto Nacional Agrario (the National Agrarian Institute, or INA) has the overall responsibility for the management of the project, but depends for the cadastral surveying on the National Cadaster Office, or CN. This latter agency is contracted to produce cadastral maps of delineated parcels at a scale of 1:10,000, along with computerized lists of the occupiers of the parcels, the general uses of the land, the size of the parcels, the form of tenure, and at a later point in time, a computer produced parcel map for each parcel.

INA uses this basic information for locating and interviewing potential project beneficiaries, and for providing part of the information requirements for the issuing of property titles to those who qualify.

A. Purpose and Outputs

The PTT's designed outputs are: (1) the titling and registry of public lands in six departments completed, and underway in the seventh; (2) the mapping and delineation of public lands in these six departments to be completed, and underway in the seventh; and (3) the completion of information dissemination and identification of beneficiaries. These outputs mean the completion of cadastral surveys of all national and ejidal lands in at least six departments of the country (approximately 3,328,000 hectares), and the delivery of 71,628 property titles to Hondurans occupying parcels between 5

and 50 hectares, and in the case of parcels with coffee plantations, between 0.1 and 50 hectares.

The purpose of the project is to establish a coordinated and functioning system for the titling of rural lands in Honduras. This general purpose requires that through the achievement of the designed outputs, there will be an institutionalized system in place for producing titles to public lands and for maintaining an accurate land records system over time. The Honduran governmental capacity will be strengthened to carry out such cadastral work and to issue property titles in the remaining departments, as well as to form the basis for a modern property registry system based on accurate cadastral mapping.

The broader objective to which this project is to contribute, as stated in the Project Paper, is "to increase food production, employment and income in rural Honduras by expanding the benefits of private property ownership to the small, peasant farmers."

#### B. Project Progress and Problems

In general, the first year's work went slower than expected in terms of the number of titles delivered, but in 1984 the rhythm increased significantly. Substantially more land has been covered by Catastro Nacional, and a much larger number of parcels have been found than anticipated. See Table 1 for the statistical summary of work accomplished.

The PTT has found ways to deliver more than the planned number of delineated parcels and nearly the planned number of titles in Santa Barbara. The quality of work both in delineation and titling has improved greatly since the first weeks of the project. The overall impression is of a well organized project which is overcoming the previously existing barriers to the delivery of land titles to small farmers, occupiers of public lands.

The major disappointment especially in the second Departamento undertaken by the PTT, Comayagua, is the low number of titles being delivered. This low rate of titling is largely due to there being less coffee grown and more small holdings (less than 5 hectares) than anticipated. In recent months in Comayagua, less than 20 percent of the parcels have proven eligible for titling. Even in Santa Barbara about 90 percent of the parcels were less than 17 hectares and nearly 60 percent were less than 5 hectares. See Table 2. Those parcels of less than 5 hectares would not have been titled except for the legal exemption of coffee land from the minimum size provision of the agrarian reform law. Because of there being less coffee in Comayagua, such parcels are not eligible for titling. The higher titling rate in Santa Barbara is also probably due to a more effective publicity and promotional effort, which has been cut back significantly in Comayagua and Copan.

The early detected problems with the quality of the cadastral survey work appear to have been largely corrected, basically through the continued insistence from the PTT coordination that equipment and procedures be adopted to produce maps and other parcel information of acceptable accuracy. This is the first time that an outside agency has made demands on Catastro, and the effects seem to have been largely positive.

The agreement between INA and CN, however, has at times meant serious administrative and coordination problems. INA has the overall responsibility for the project, but does not have direct management control over cadastral activities. The complicated management command structure has produced misunderstandings and unanticipated delays in the titling process. Recently, it appears that these delays are being significantly reduced, although they continue to be of some concern.

A second, more long-term problem is the maintenance of the property system. INA's titles in most areas of the country will probably duplicate the number of registered titles in the Property Registry. This massive investment in cadastral surveys and the issuance and registry of titles make it possible that a new land records system (the "Folio Real") based on land parcels rather than deeds can be made operational. At present it is not clear that the titles in the Property Registry will be kept up to date, nor that the cadastral surveys will reflect the actual ownership of the land a few years from now, after the normal operations of the land market. Unless measures are taken to improve the integrity of the property system, it is possible that the condition of tenure insecurity deriving from the lack of a registered title to land may reappear on a fairly massive scale in a generation or two.

## II. Evaluation Methodology

As stated in the Project Paper, the midterm evaluation "will test the strength of the mechanics of the land titling effort." The evaluation is to focus on the major segments of the titling process, namely the publicity and promotional efforts being undertaken, the process of delineating parcels in the cadastral part of the project, and the process of issuing and registering property titles to the project's beneficiaries. The major purpose of the midterm evaluation is to allow for revisions in Project implementation procedures should they be necessary. Technically, this evaluation would be normally called a "process" type study, although it does include elements of an "impact" evaluation.

The responsibility for carrying out the midterm or process evaluation is included in the contract between the AID Mission and the Land Tenure Center of the University of Wisconsin. That contract is designed to carry out the long-term impact evaluation of the titling project, largely based on the over-time study of a sample of PIT beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. The baseline studies for this research have both been completed, one in Santa Barbara in 1983 and the second in Corayagua in 1985.

As part of that over-time study of samples in the two Departments, it was decided that a follow-up study be done in Santa Barbara in 1985, focusing more in depth on a smaller number of communities and people than was possible in the baseline surveys. The objective of that follow-up study is to provide more rapid feedback on the likely effects of the titling project than would be possible by relying only on the survey studies.

The midterm evaluation was originally scheduled for January 1985, but it was decided to delay that effort in order to combine it with the follow-up study, since the operational assessments of the midterm evaluation would be

complemented by data from the field on what significance the titling process has had for those who have received the titles.

The rather complicated sequence of evaluation events, then, is as follows:

First baseline study for the impact evaluation, July 1983

Second baseline study, in Comayagua, for the impact evaluation, Feb. 1985

Follow-up case and institutional study, in Santa Barbara, July 1985

Midterm or process evaluation of the PTT, July 1985

Re-study of the two baseline studies, 1987-88

Two teams were formed for the July 1985 effort. One team, composed of Ricardo Zeledón, David Stanfield and Santiago Moquete, dealt with the "midterm evaluation" study of the procedures and structures being used in the process of identifying parcels and titling their owners. A second team was composed of Alex Coles, Mario Fajardo, Kandy Stringer and Lily Caballero to do the follow-up study of the Municipio San Jose de Colinas, one of the first Municipios incorporated into the PTT. David Stanfield also participated in that study.

The process evaluation team gathered information on the procedures, achievements and problems of INA and CA through direct interviews with people who occupied different positions in the project. Data used for the management of the project were noted and analyzed. The legal bases of the project were reviewed and the conformity of the project with these bases analyzed.

This team also made field visits to Cadastro and INA teams working in the field to observe procedures being used, problems encountered and to get the field people's impressions of how the project might be improved.

The follow-up team spent about two weeks in Santa Barbara, most of the time in Colinas, interviewing farmers as well as technicians and officials of banks, cooperatives and service agencies concerning the likely effects of the titling project. An interview schedule was developed for gathering data from banks and a second schedule was developed for interviewing farmers. A sample of 27 farmers was selected, most of which were people who had been interviewed in the baseline study in 1983. A special attempt was made to describe the property and labor networks which provide some structure to rural communities, and through these networks assess the meaning of the titling project for different segments of the community structure.

Three themes were covered in the interviews: (1) likely changes in tenure security as a result of the titling project; (2) the implications of the PTT for the securing of credit by the newly titled farmers; and (3) the implications of the PTT for the operation of the land market and the integrity of the Property Registry.

### III. External Factors Which Have Had an Impact on the Project

There have apparently been few changes in the project setting which have an impact on the project. The criticisms of the project which question its

legality have apparently been adequately answered. There continues to be little campesino union support for the project, although farmer interest is high.

#### IV. Inputs

The major physical constraints to the project have apparently been overcome, except for the poor performance record of the Jeep vehicles which have had to be given special reinforcements and attention.

A series of procedural suggestions emerged from the evaluation, however, concerning the work being done by CN and by INA. The following sections present these suggestions and some background to interpret them.

##### A. Comments on the Cadaster

1. There is an ongoing discussion about the desired degree of precision of the cadastral surveys. The parcel maps which are presently being produced do not contain geographical coordinates or measurements by which the parcels can be physically located. The parcels can be found through reference to the parcel number within the list of parcels on any given cadastral map, but the precision of the demarcation done on aerial photos and, therefore, on the cadastral map, is not very high. Should there be a boundary dispute, the precision of the cadastral map would not be much help for settling the dispute. It is proposed that one boundary for each parcel be physically located in reference to some physical feature or in reference to a cadastral marker, and that 30 cm pegs be placed in the ground to mark that boundary.

The debate over the necessary level of precision of boundary demarcation is a complicated one, however, and the costs in time and money of greater precision have to be carefully weighed. At this point in the project, it would be difficult to change the levels of precision, but perhaps the acceptability of future work would benefit sufficiently to warrant the change.

2. At present the cadastral maps are being produced which identify national and ejidal lands, even where they border one another. Since both types of land are subject to titling it is proposed that this distinction be eliminated, thereby saving the time and expense which goes into demarcating these common boundaries and in producing the maps which show these two types of land separately.

3. Titling is not supposed to occur on urban parcels, since the PTT is basically an agricultural project. The problem is that in many towns, the boundaries of the town are not precisely marked. The INA titling team makes a judgment as to the location of the parcel largely on the basis of how far the electric street lights extend and the predominant use of the land. A certain amount of delineating work has been done which INA subsequently judged to be urban. It is proposed that INA be charged with defining the boundaries of towns, prior to the arrival of the cadastral demarking teams.

4. The setting of administrative boundaries between Departamentos and Municipios has proven to be a slow process in some instances. There are

presently 25 such conflicts still outstanding in Santa Barbara. Until they are settled the land involved cannot be titled nor can the cadastral maps be finalized. It is suggested that a special commission be formed to work with the Ministerio de Gobernación to settle these disputes.

5. A certain amount of delay has been experienced by the cadastral teams due to disputes concerning the location of private property boundaries which identify land that cannot be titled in the present project. Until such boundaries are demarcated, parcel delineation cannot proceed. Personnel from the Departamento de Afectación y Distribución de Tierras of INA should be in the field resolving these disputes, rather than the PTT relying on the cadastral personnel.

6. Part of the cadastral work includes the noting of land use on each parcel, which represents about 20 percent of the field teams' time. It is recommended that this effort be assigned to the INA titling team, since the agronomist has to do a land use study to set the price of the parcels. There is no reason to do the work twice, and INA needs more precise information than is provided by the cadastral brigades.

7. Quality control has been a continuing problem for the cadastral teams. It is recommended: that each supervisor should be responsible for no more than four survey teams; that the supervisor does field checks of one day's work of each team each week; that the quality control team do a random sample of five percent of the work approved by each supervisor to determine the rate and types of errors; and finally, that INA and CN agree what maximum level of error there should be and exactly what constitutes an error.

8. Mapping has generally been good, but the cadastral maps have lacked certain details. It is suggested that the people doing the plotting transfer a minimum of curved lines, and that special characters be used and recognized by the computer to indicate changes of directions and the location of ground markers and other physical referents as noted in the survey report for each parcel.

9. The identification of each parcel has been a bit haphazard. The identification number of each parcel for both Catastro and INA should be based on the cadastral parcel number, i.e., the map number and parcel number. In addition to this information it is suggested that the numerical identification of the Departamento and Municipio and possibly Aldea be included for administrative purposes. This identification number should be used throughout the land recorder system, including CN, INA and the Property Registry, when dealing with land parcels. If possible, the provisional identification number allocated by the field cadastral teams should be maintained, rather than as presently done, which is the complete re-numbering of the parcels in the central office.

10. The negotiations between INA and Catastro have often been prolonged. It is suggested that the experience to date seems to have ironed out the major problems, and, as a result, a longer term planning horizon should be possible. Particularly, agreements should permit the fielding of the cadastral administrative boundaries teams well in advance of the parcel demarcation teams, and well in advance of the date when the maps and plots are going to be needed, that sufficient time is allowed to prepare these materials.

11. The new property registry, which is to be based on land parcels and the cadastral map, is to be made operational gradually throughout the country. Once a Departamento is finished by CN, the new system becomes operational. Unfortunately to date no Departamento has been completed. It would be useful to seek a change in the law to speed up this process, namely the declaration of a Municipio as completed and subject to the new Registry, rather than waiting for the completion of an entire Departamento in order for the Registry to begin operating.

B. Comments on Titling

1. The PTT issues two types of titles. One is called a "family" title and is issued for parcels of less than 17 hectares (the equivalent to the 10 hectares of irrigated land specified in the agrarian legislation). The parcel with this type of title cannot be subdivided or transferred to another person without the permission of INA. The purpose of this regulation is to discourage the subdivision of smaller and smaller parcels, as well as the absorption of these parcels by the large landowners.

The second type of title is for "dominio pleno," or full property rights, and is issued for parcels of more than 17 but less than 50 hectares. There are no restrictions on the subdivision of these parcels, nor their transfer. However, for their transfer and registration the approval of INA is required to verify that the parcel is paid for.

For both types of titles, INA assesses the value of the land and sets up a payment schedule which takes the form of a promissory note with coupons for payment monthly or annually at a local bank.

Photocopies of both types of titles are entered into the Departmental Property Registry at INA's cost, and subsequently handed over to the project's beneficiaries.

2. The PTT has been subject to substantial public debate. The main point of criticism has been that under the PTT, INA delivers a full property title without the cancellation of the debt that the titled person has with INA as a result of the purchase of the land. The agrarian reform law states that only a provisional title is issued in such cases, and that INA issues full property titles only when the debt is cancelled.

The project agreement, however, clearly calls for the delivery of full property titles, regardless of the debt situation. Since this agreement was approved by the National Congress, it has the force of law. In addition, the Constitution states that in cases of conflicts between international agreements and national law, the agreement takes precedence.

3. The other criticism of the project is that it is "institutionalizing minifundia" through the issuance of property titles to small holdings. The problem of the very small holdings is certainly a serious one in some parts of Honduras. However, the effects of the PTT on this problem are not at all clear. First of all, since the permission of INA is still required for the transfer of the "family" titles, in practice it is unlikely that these small parcels will at least legally be further subdivided unless the law is changed. Little, then, has changed from the situation prior to the action of the PTT, at least on non-irrigated parcels.

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In reference to the coffee producing parcels, due to the passage of Decree 78 in 1961, parcels on which coffee is grown are not subject to any minimum size legislation. It could easily be argued that the PTT is not institutionalizing minifundia any more than Decree 78, nor more what in fact exists regardless of the agrarian reform.

What is not clear is the overall effect of the titling of minifundia on the migration patterns of families holding very small parcels. Does the titling of such holdings tend to tie people more firmly to the land and thereby reduce migration to urban areas? Or as some have argued, does having a title encourage a greater dedication to what is admittedly a small piece of land, and thereby deprive the campesino organizations of membership pressuring for a re-distributive agrarian reform?

Neither is it clear what effect the operation of the land market will have on newly titled minifundia. Instead of more firmly tying the people to the land, will the title make sales easier and more prevalent? Such an effect has been observed in the Caribbean and certain parts of Africa. If increased sales do result, then, obviously, the previous concern would be incorrect.

Exactly what effect the PTT will have on the institutionalization of minifundia is not easy to foresee, and deserves some serious attention.

4. Pertaining to how the PTT handles the minifundia question, a serious problem has emerged for the PTT in parts of the country where small parcels predominate and yet little coffee is grown. In such instances, not even a "family" title is issued. As noted earlier, only about 20 percent of the delineated parcels are being titled presently in Comayagua, largely because the great bulk of the holdings are very small and few grow coffee. There is great interest in getting a title among the small holders, an interest which INA cannot satisfy. Moreover, the expected benefits of titling will be deprived precisely from those most in need, the small holders.

It is suggested that ways be explored to remove the minimum size restriction from the regulations governing the project. With Decree 78 as a precedent, such a modification in legislation may be possible. Another option would be a more lenient interpretation of the existing regulations. PTT field personnel could refrain from insisting on a commercial coffee plantation to justify an exemption from the minimum size regulation, but rather accept just a single coffee tree as justification for titling.

5. The debate about the legality of the project and its effects in light of the previous agrarian reform legislation has produced a situation where many lawyers, judges, and administrative personnel working with agrarian law do not have a clear idea about the legal bases of the project and what it is actually doing. Because of this confusion, even within INA, there are people who do not support the project, even while working on it.

It is suggested that the project management take some direct steps to clarify doubts and unify criteria relating to the legal bases of the project and its objectives. Such steps might include a 3-4 day seminar involving people from INA, Catastro Nacional, the Ministry of Justice, lawyers practicing in rural areas, and personnel from the Property Registry. An

abbreviated form of this seminar could be repeated for all new people who begin working with the PTT as well as new agencies which come into contact with the project as it moves from Departamento to Departamento.

6. Different perceptions of property ownership have also produced some problems. A peasant can acquire property through a transfer from a previous holder, or through his own occupation and farming of national lands. In the areas presently being titled by the PTT there are holders of property of both types. Both types of farmers have, usually, an undisputed, locally recognized claim to the land. Both types of farmers plant and harvest the land. Both expect to be able to transfer the land to another person or persons should the occasion arise.

With the entry of the PTT into the titling of national and ejidal lands, however, the state re-asserts its claim to ownership of these lands. The government argues that it is, through the PTT, transferring ownership to the lands' holders (subject to certain restrictions as noted above).

The peasants' ideas of property ownership as previously noted are very different from those behind the PTT. This is not to say that the peasants for the most part do not value the INA titles, since the response to the PTT from the peasants has been largely favorable.

The problem arises when INA tries to persuade the beneficiaries to pay for the lands covered in the title. To date about 17 percent of the titled farmers in Santa Barbara have begun to pay for their titled parcels. If they already "owned" the land, why pay INA? INA's argument is that from a legal perspective, what the farmers "owned" previously were the improvements on the land and not the land itself, which was owned by the state. What INA is selling under the PTT is the land. This argument is not very convincing for farmers who have worked a piece of land for years, perhaps in response to the governmental decree No. 8 of 1972 empowering the peasants to occupy all national lands. It is even less convincing for people who have purchased a piece of such lands from an individual for a price and through a negotiation which did not recognize the INA distinction between the land and the improvements on it.

7. These past transactions have in many cases been documented through some sort of bill of sale or deed of transfer, which identifies the land and the parties involved. In some cases, as in the transfer of use rights to ejidal lands by the Municipal governments, as was done prior to the Agrarian Reform law of 1974, the transfer document was notarized and entered on the property registry. Subsequent transfers were likewise noted, but as a simple property transfer and not necessarily involving ejidal lands. In such cases official paper was used, with the properly affixed stamps and signatures, thereby assuming a character very much like that of private property transactions.

However, in the INA transfer process, these documents are not collected or recognized, except in the rare cases of boundary disputes or disputes over occupation rights. Even then the underlying documentation is not included in the INA file for the parcel involved. The only documents included are the signed dispositions of witnesses as to the identity of the claimant and the location of the parcel's boundaries.

In such cases not only is there a difference of opinion between INA and the titled person about what is being transferred, but the documentary evidence as to ownership which existed previously continues to exist unrecorded in the INA files or on the INA title. This duplication creates a potential doubt about ownership and what claims there may be against the land. From a bank's point of view the INA title is just one document which proves ownership. The traditional documents are another way to provide such proof. The bank managers fear that should they loan money on the basis of one set of documents, it would be very easy for the "owner" to present the other set as the basis for a loan application, but using the same land as collateral a second time. This "documentary doubt" requires some resolution if the INA titles are to be as fully negotiable as was originally hoped. One solution would be to attach copies of these documents to the title in the Registry, or at least in the INA files.

8. Another problem is related to the distinction which INA makes between the value of the land and the value of the improvements made to the land. For purposes of the title and the subsequent payment to INA by the beneficiary for the property received, the titling team place a value on the land transferred, but not the improvements. That value which appears on the title is very low, compared with the market value of the property. That market value includes the land and the real goods attached to the land.

The low value which INA assesses the property serves to lessen the "debt" of the beneficiaries to INA, which we have already seen is a debatable concept in the minds of most peasants (and in terms of the Civil Code traditions). The low value also serves to cheapen the INA title, since it is so far from the market value, and since it is the basis for requesting a bank loan. The bank managers consider that value as the maximum loanable amount, which is typically much less than would be available on the basis of private documents which may still be in the possession of the farmer.

One possible solution, which maintains the INA distinction between the land and improvements, would be to have the titling team assess the value of such improvements and include them with the title to the land. Such an inventory would greatly simplify the requirements for providing third parties with the basic information necessary for "dealing" in the property, especially for getting bank loans. Such an assessment might also be useful for providing the Departmental Cadastral offices with updated information for assessing properties for tax purposes.

### C. Advertising the Project

Much of the success of a project like this one, in terms of sorting out property claims of a large number of people and issuing legally recognized documents covering these claims, depends on a good public relations campaign. In the design phase of the project, it was hoped that campesino organizations would carry much of this public relations burden. However, once the project got underway in Santa Barbara, a slightly different model was developed. The INA promoters, in the early Municipios, talked with the administrative leadership (the mayors, police chiefs, etc.) to explain the project. They also organized volunteer committees in each community who received basic information about the project and acted to pass the word along to their neighbors. The mass media were also used, especially radio and posters to advertise the project.

One rather ironic problem with the public relations campaign is that it has been almost too effective in getting messages to farmers about the credit benefits of the project. The promoters and radio spots have made continuous reference to the very significant advantage which farmers will supposedly receive by cooperating with the INA titling teams and with the Cadastral demarcating teams, namely the access to credit.

In one booklet about the project, the claim is made that "the title guarantees the obtention of credit in the banks for improving the production of foodstuffs." In a radio spot, the claim is made that with an INA title, "you can be sure that the banks will lend you money for making the land produce."

These messages have been transmitted since the beginning of the project, but unfortunately are not exactly true. Many farmers have either themselves gone to banks with their titles, or have heard of others going to banks with the titles in hand, and yet have been turned down for credit. Banks may be interested in land as a loan guarantee, but they are primarily interested in the repayment of the loan and the receipt of the corresponding interest owed for the loan. The likelihood of an individual repaying a loan is due to many factors, such as how much land he or she has, what his or her repayment history has been, and the type of investment which is being contemplated. The title alone certainly does not guarantee a loan.

The expectation of being guaranteed a loan once the title was issued has played a part in getting farmer cooperation with the project. It has also led to a certain frustration with the project after the title is issued and no credit secured. A group of beneficiaries in Santa Barbara are talking about organizing a massive return of the titles to INA as a protest, but it is difficult to assess their seriousness. It is apparent that having a property title is highly valued by most farmers. The project probably does not need to promise credit in order to get people's cooperation, and might have fewer future problems by not doing so.

A second problem has been the elimination of the direct, person-to-person public relations efforts in Departments after Santa Barbara. Only radio spots and posters are being used in advance of the arrival of the Cadastral teams, and not much information can be transmitted by such means. When the cadastral teams arrive in a community, they are questioned by the farmers about the meaning of the project, particularly about the cost to them of the project. However, the cadastral teams know very little about the titling aspects of the project, and in particular have no way of knowing how much the title will cost the farmers. They basically inform the farmers that Cadaster is measuring the farmers' lands, and not much about the eventual title, nor the likely cost of the title, nor the minimum requirements to be eligible for a title.

It seems advisable that the project return to the earlier model of direct communication between INA promoters and farmers, preferably also involving local people in this diffusion process, prior to and following the work of the cadastral teams.

From a quick examination of the information concerning the achievements of eight INA titling teams in Comayagua during May 1965, it seems that the low

rate of titling may be in part due to the lack of an effective public relations and information campaign. The data, reproduced in Table 3, shows that the number of titled farms might be doubled with a more effective campaign. At least the possibility is there, and further study should be given to using a more direct communications campaign for informing the public about the PTT.

#### V. Lessons Learned

In assessing the worth of this project, the main difficulty is determining what level of analysis to use. For some, the Project Purpose of strengthening the Honduran capacity to title land is of primary importance. For such people the significant efforts which have gone into making the National Cadaster and the titling activities of INA work more efficiently and effectively have shown some positive results, which makes less important the intermediate goals of issuing a certain number of titles in a specified period of time.

On the other hand, for those who view the title as the main benefit for the agriculture of the country, especially the coffee sector, the rapid and extensive distribution of titles assumes great importance. The lengthy delays and complications involved in getting the cadastral mapping to work at an acceptable level proves very frustrating for these people, and leads to the search for administrative simplicity, which could mean that the project should be housed completely in just one agency.

In general, as a methodology for delivering titles, the PTT has achieved significant results. The use of orthophotos by delineating teams has meant rapid demarcation of parcels. The procedures and talents necessary for identifying the public lands eligible for titling have been assembled. The costs of titling have been greatly reduced for the beneficiary population. Other countries contemplating such efforts would learn a great deal by becoming acquainted with the PTT in Honduras and taking advantage of what has been learned about how to do a titling project.

Taking the long term perspective, however, does bring certain factors into discussion which need to be addressed. First of all, many of the titles issued, especially in the first Department, are deficient in that they lack reference to the Cadastral map and Cadastral identification number. Such a lacking makes the relation of these titles to the overall property system problematic. Secondly, the titles are not being tied precisely to a geographic grid, which makes their boundaries difficult to identify in the case of dispute, again challenging the adequacy of the information base for the new land records system.

Also in the long term perspective, the situation of insecure tenure which resulted from the lack of a property title registered in the Property Register derived originally from the lack of an easily accessible system for registering such property rights. What the PTT is doing is making the acquisition of such titles relatively cheap and easy for the holders of public lands. The acquisition of title was possible previously, but was simply very time-consuming, complicated and costly. Such factors apparently prevented

many farmers from getting title, although there may have been other factors operating which reduced the necessity for getting such a document from INA.

The important point is that with the present involvement of INA in transactions involving the titled parcels, it appears that the future costs of registering transfers in time and money may again be prohibitively high. With high transaction costs over the long term, perhaps a generation or two, the land presently titled may pass into the un-titled state. Certainly attention should be given to reducing these costs so that future transactions will be registered, thereby maintaining the integrity and usefulness of the land records system.

Table 1:  
Program of the PTT

ACTIVITIES	PLANNED		1983			1984			ACHIEVED			
	Area	No. Parcels	Area	%	No. Parcels	%	Area	No. Parcels	Area	%	No. Parcels	%
Delineation	343,359	16,132*	241,375	70.3	12,900	79.9	647,940	11,124	476,304	73.5	19,345	174.0
Titling and Registry		10,000	20,145		4,052	40.5		12,000	58,268		10,034	84.0

Source: PTT, Planes Operativos, 1983 and 1984; Informes Anuales, 1983 and 1984.

\* Project Paper.

Table 2:  
Size of Parcels Encountered by Cadastral Teams  
in Three Municipios of Santa Barbara

Size Category	Number of Parcels	Percent
0.1 - 4.99 hectares	398	59
5.0 - 16.99 hectares	200	30
17.0 - 50.00 hectares	58	9
Larger than 50 hectares	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	670	100

Source: INA Cadastral Lists.

Table 3:

**Cadastral Files Processed by INA Titling Teams  
in May and June 1985**

1. Number of files processed	4,191
2. Number selected to be titled	584
3. Number who did not attend field interviews	998
4. Number who attended field interviews, but did not qualify to be titled	2,609

Reasons for not qualifying:

5. Parcel less than 5 hectares	1,212
6. Another file possible in other area	342
7. Lack of birth certificate	197
8. Parcel larger than 50 hectares	165
9. Did not desire a title	160
10. Abandoned	110
11. Located on private land	107
12. Error in delineation	75
13. Forest zone	74
14. Urban zone	43
15. Change of owner	54
16. Divided among heirs	62

**Note:** Only 584 processed files were approved for titling, or about 14 percent of the total files which had been put together by CNA. Items 3, 7 and 9, totaling 1,355 files were not processed due to a possible lack of interest in promoting the project. Eliminating the 57 percent which would probably be eliminated due to size and other legally imposed restrictions, would leave about 579 files which might have been processed if people had been more cooperative or better motivated and informed.

Source: Monthly work Report, INA Titling Team, Comayagua.