

EDITORIAL

The accelerated urban growth of Bogotá, added to the difficulties of access to land due to scarcity and cost, constitutes a public problem that requires attention and response from the State.

The phenomenon of scarcity of available land in the midst of a model of free real estate market leads to its price rising, especially in central areas of the city, because of the economic dynamics generated around connectivity, such as communication, roads, and networks, among others. Therefore, the demand (both from government and population) has moved towards the periphery of the cities, causing segregation and exclusion phenomena against the poor population.

Failures in the government's response to offer housing to the population with fewer resources, as well as insufficient and fragmented financing, lead to the growing quantitative housing deficit. This situation, added to the absence of control mechanisms, increases the conditions that favor the emergence of illegal urbanization processes and pirate developers, which leads to greater exclusion and social vulnerability.

The process of land habilitation and land management in Colombia is the responsibility of the state entities and is linked to the possibility of developing integral urban projects. That is, those that generate housing solutions and include the provision of public services, education, and recreational areas, and improve the quality of life of the population. Although in this way the consolidation of an exclusionary and segregated city model is counteracted, this process faces a series of technical, administrative, and regulatory obstacles; but *its greatest difficulty lies in the creation of a land policy that links housing policies with a long-term vision that guides the orderly development of cities.*

There are several reasons why the very nature of urbanism generates inequities. First, it is necessary to

take into account the tensions between appropriation and use of the land generated by its unique and specific location. Second, the characteristics of a distorted market, produced by low regulation in the midst of a free market economy. And third, there are cases in which the regulations of a project laid out in the Territorial Ordering Plan (POT in Spanish) benefit some sectors of the population more than others, or it can drastically affect some to achieve collective benefits in a community more extensive.

From the analysis of this problem it is possible to identify some factors that point towards the need to improve urban planning and management processes, especially the deficiencies evidenced in the regularization of the ownership of public and private lands. In addition to preventing the absence of a policy of creating land banks in urban areas, which leads to a non-comprehensive and in many cases inefficient public management in the processes of purchase and land clearance.

In this context, the need arises to generate different mechanisms of public intervention that allow government authorities to respond to the housing problem, promoting actions that optimize the application of land management instruments; These are elements "sine qua non" of any housing policy and key components of urban and regional planning. However, beyond improving current instruments or proposing new land management instruments, it is necessary to reflect on other aspects. For example, *its nature*, or how to articulate the public policy of land as part of a public housing policy that is geared to low-income population categories. Likewise, it is fundamental to devise integral solutions that respond to a broad and not partial or immediate approach to the country's housing policy.

CÉSAR AUGUSTO GARCÍA-UBAQUE
Director