

# Seminario Internacional

## Superada la informalidad, nuevos desafíos: Políticas para colonias populares consolidadas

Del 9 al 12 de noviembre de 2011  
Centro Universitario de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas

### 1 The Latin American Housing Network (LAHN) Research Project

[www.lahn.utexas.org](http://www.lahn.utexas.org)

The multi-city research focuses upon low income settlements that began informally some thirty or more years ago at the (then) city periphery, but which today are located in the intermediate ring close to the inner city. Consolidated gradually by young pioneer households through self build these homes have been intensively used over 20 or more years and are often heavily deteriorated. A new round of policies is required to assist with redesigning the dwelling structure to meet new household arrangements and needs; to accommodate lot sharing among second generation adult households; to expand and the dwelling structure; and promote the retrofitting of water pipes, electrical wiring, w.c., bathroom and showers, more energy efficient doors and windows and other installations. These rehab policies should also embrace "green" technologies wherever possible. Titles were regularized in the 1980s, and typically most of the original families still live on their lots (Table 1).

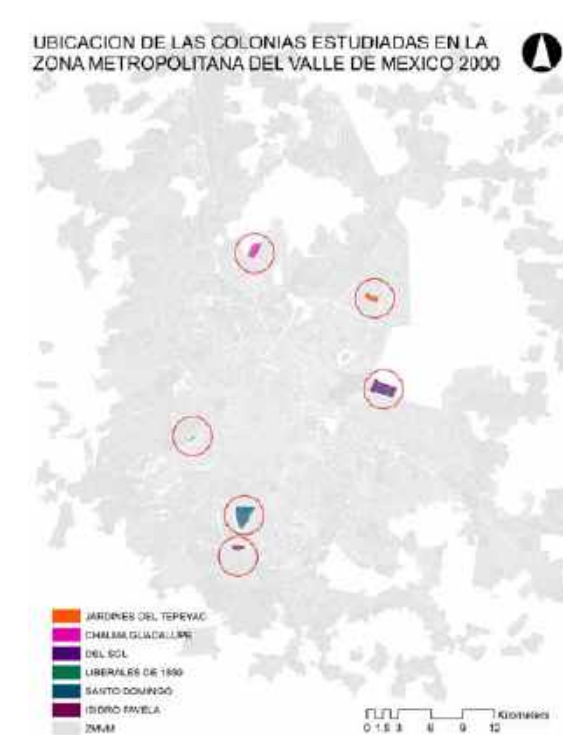
Total de lotes incluidos en la encuesta (# de colonias en paréntesis) 2007 Resurvey	253 (5)
Original family still living on the lot after 30+ years	82%
Promedio de personas por lote	9.16
Promedio ponderado de casas en el lot (1979 en paréntesis)	2.55 (1.58)
Median year of occupancy	1972
Promedio de años viviendo en la colonia -	35.2
Porcentaje de lotes con 2 o más viviendas	65
Porcentaje de familias extendidas	35 (estimate)
Edad promedio del dueño del lote	67.7
Porcentaje dueños de edad de más de 60 años (70 en paréntesis)	77 (39)
Precio promedio recortada de las viviendas y el lote	US\$101,800
Precio promedio recortada - valor catastral	US\$66, 670

Table 1. Major features of the Mexico City case:

- 1) Over 80% of the households resurveyed in 2007 were confirmed as the original owners from the 1970s -- indicating very low mobility of the owners (although our work shows high "churn" as family members (adult children) exit and sometimes return.
- 2) High level of lot sharing (see section 3 opposite), mostly with close kin (adult children and their families -- 2-3 generations). Associated with this are high population densities. Strong expectations of resident children to inherit and remain living in the family home
- 3) Elderly household heads who are now passing away (usually intestate)
- 4) High value of the housing asset -- average value over US \$100,000 (broadly confirmed by current catastral values). But much higher than Guadalajara and Monterrey. However, there is no effective market for most of these homes due to lack of financing mechanisms for buy-outs and *traspasos* and the fact that often for many adult children this dwelling remains their home.

Colonia y municipio/delegación	Superficie (has)	Poblacion (hab)	Propiedad original
El Sol (Netzahualcóyotl)	227.99	58,488	Faccionamiento clandestino -- por empresas
Chalma Guadalupe (DF Gustavo Madero)	99.53	21,912	Venta de ejido
Santo Domingo los Reyes (Coyoacán)	248.44	77,730	Invasión de terrenos comunales
Isidro Fabela (DF Tlalpan)	48.64	12,128	Invasión de propiedad privado en litigio
Liberales de 1849 (DF Alvaro Obregon)	11.17	5,205	Venta privada por el dueño / compra cooperativa

Map showing the location of the study settlements; & photos clockwise from the top: Santo Domingo ; Isidro Fabela; Chalma Guadalupe.



### 3. The Mexico City Study

**Stage 1** was conducted in 2007 as a pilot to the later survey applied in 2009-11 in the other LAHN cities. It was designed to examine the level of residential mobility of 1970s colonias, as well as the extent of lot sharing and housing rehab to cater for changing household organization. Therefore the survey returned to colonias and lots that had been surveyed by Drs. Alan Gilbert and Peter Ward in their 1978-79 study *Housing the State and the Poor* which researched both Mexico City and Bogota. The 2007 survey is different, therefore, and because so much was already known about these settlements, a full survey was not undertaken.

**Stage 2.** Was to map the innerburbs (Section 2), and to analyze GIS data for the selected settlements.

**Stage 3.** From the 2007 survey we selected 7 households for intensive case study (casos a profundidad) which would highlight several of the major issues that arise in Mexico City: lot subdivision (formal and informal); renting; conflict resolution around inheritance, etc.

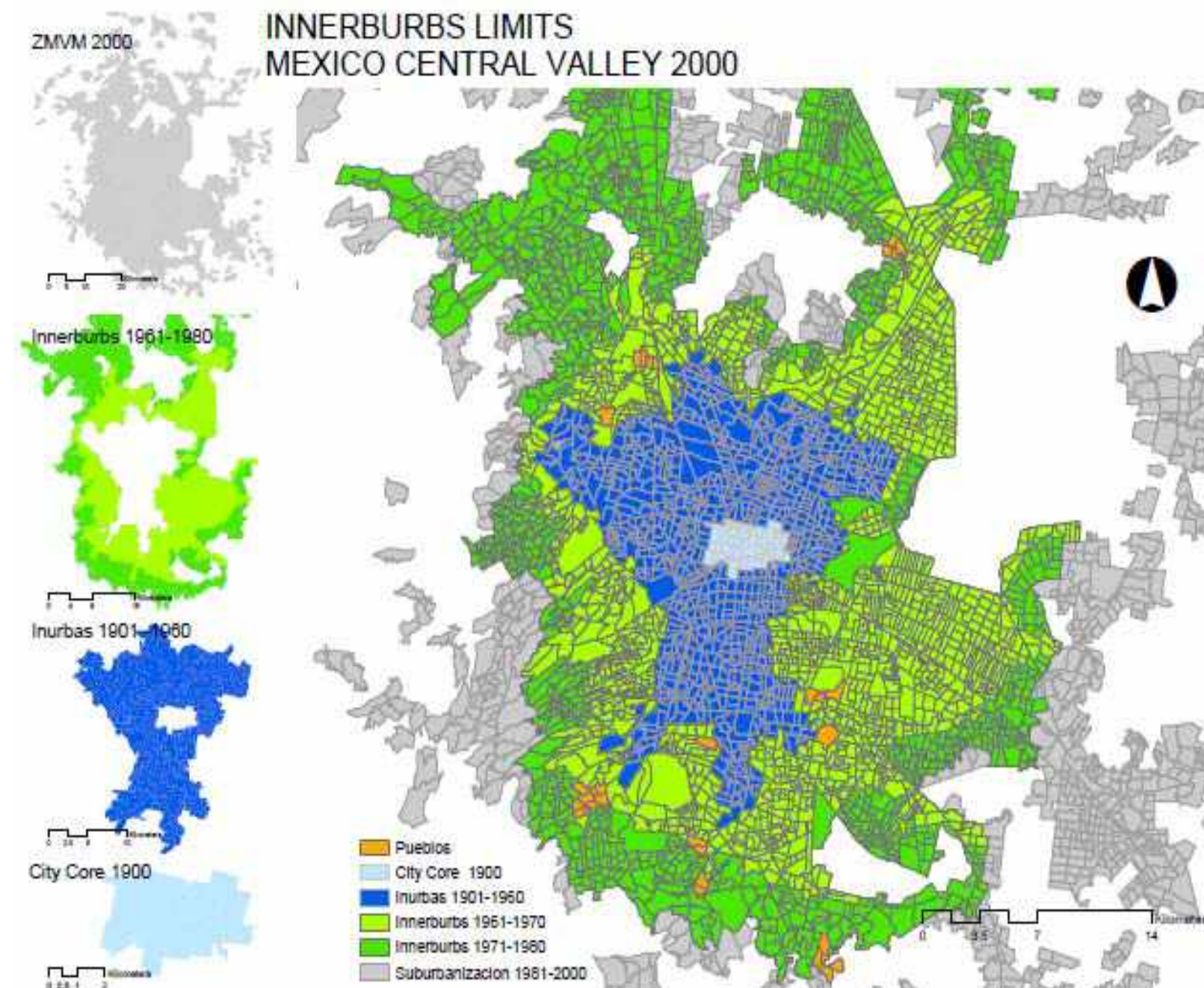
### 5 Specific Housing Rehab and Settlement Regeneration Needs in Mexico City

- **Financing policies to facilitate market sales and property transfers:** Mortgage markets, INFONAVIT, Social interest financing, social development and investment zones, etc.
- **Policies to Promote Lot Sharing & Tenure Security:** Planning and Redesign of spatial layout of existing and new dwelling structures; Securing shared or part-titles to give tenure security; Promotion and regulation of rental or other economic opportunities where stakeholders wish to engage in partial rent-seeking
- **Credit & Technical Assistance to Facilitate Housing Rehab:** Micro finance; home improvement grants & loans; pro bono or low cost technical assistance for stair construction, bathroom expansion and improvement; rewiring and pipe replacements; improved subdivision of space paying attention to privacy, access, and improved light and ventilation;.
- **Policies to Enhance Adoption of Green and Sustainable Applications:** Recycling & composting; solar panel or passive water heating; patio gardens and planters; improved insulation and energy efficient appliances; etc.
- **Policies to Promote Local Civic Engagement and Mobilization:** Around Issues of Security, Sustainable Neighborhood Improvement and Home Improvement, Local Traffic Circulation and use of meso-space (sidewalk and street);
- **Policies to Promote Title Transfers to Second and Third Generations Stakeholders:** Promotion of Wills and inter vivos transfers; Policies to promote shared family title; Dispute resolution policies and pro bono organizations to assist with title disputes & conflicts; provide for title "cleaning" (where clouded);

### 2 El anillo de los primeros suburbios

#### Defining the Innerburbs

The innerburbs, or "first suburbs" as they are known in the USA, comprise those settlements and neighborhoods that formed between 1950-70. However, in the LAHN study widespread suburbanization started a little later, so we take a 1960-80 time horizon, sometimes differentiating between 1960-70 and 1970-80 development -- as here in Mexico City. Not all of the first suburbs or *anillo intermedio* so defined are low-income, but they also include middle and upper income residential areas as well as industrial and commercial zones. However, in most Mexican cities a large part comprise consolidated colonias. Once defined, the innerburbs can be analyzed using GIS overlays (*capas*) of different socio-economic characteristics.



Left: Isidro Fabela in 1973 and 2007 with arrow showing the same house). Below: El Sol in 1973 and 2007



Variable	Area Metropolitana	"innerburbs" 1960-70	"innerburbs" 1970-80	"innerburbs" total
No. de AGEBS	4,711	1,619	1,230	2,849
Superficie (ha)	190,550	50,873	47,425	98,298
Población	17,577,069	6,839,969	4,712,752	11,552,721
Viviendas particulares habitadas	4,049,234	1,589,091	1,038,351	2,627,442

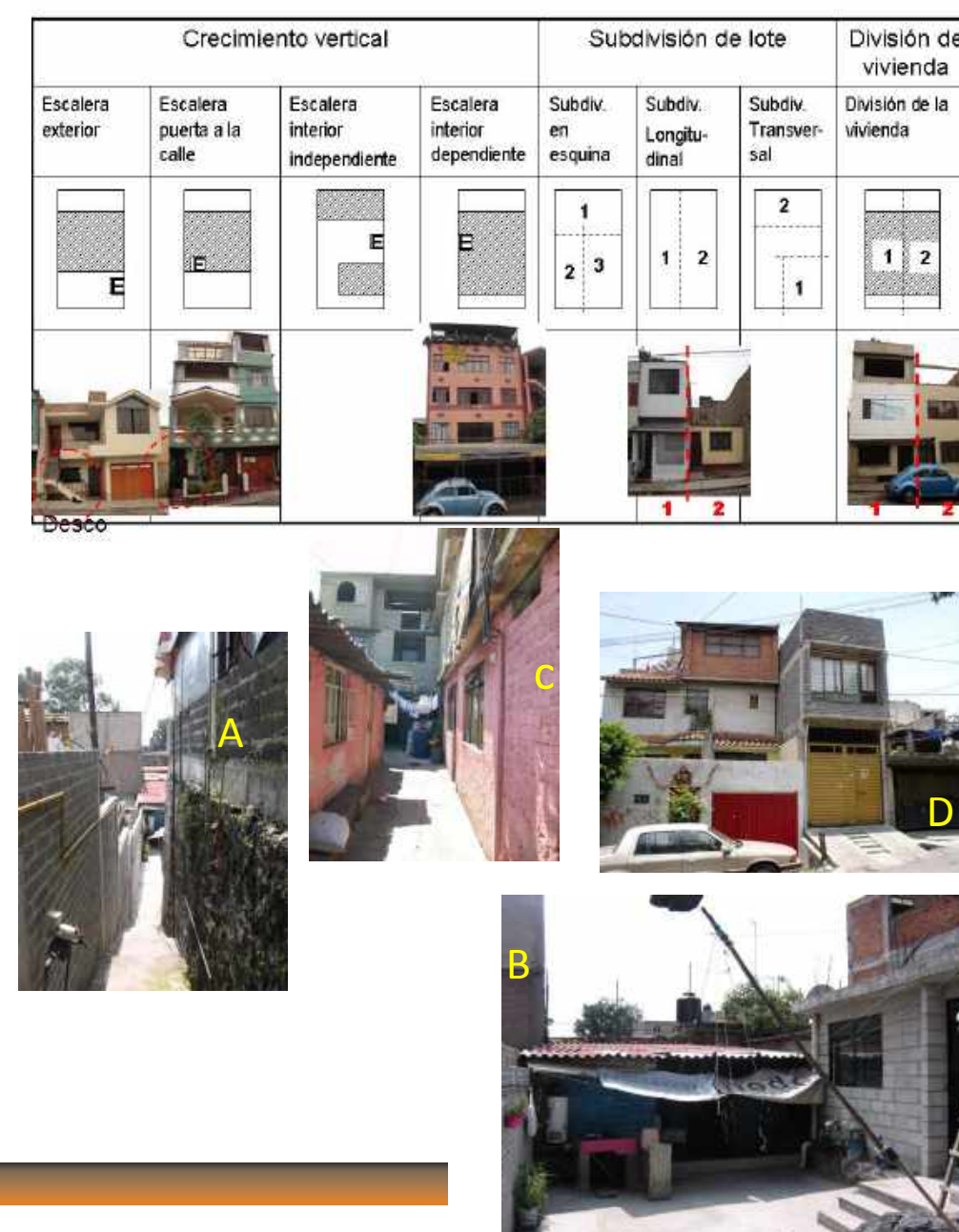
### 4 Lot Subdivision and Multi-family Occupancy

#### High densities, lot sharing, and housing subdivision

As Table 1 indicates a major feature of consolidated colonias is the rising densities and degree of lot sharing usually between first and second generation households. Many pioneer self builders in the 1970s always wished to create a "patrimonio para los hijos" and as Table 1 shows many of these properties are already shared by one or more children and households, often spanning three generations. Sub-division of the property may occur in several ways (see chart on the right): a) subdivision of the lot itself into sections (easier to achieve the larger the lots; b) formally dividing the lot in half (as in photo D); or dividing vertically (different floors) with or without private access. Successful remodeling to achieve an effective subdivision of space is probably one of the biggest challenges, along with ensuring property titles and security to the various stakeholders.

Additionally it is important to consider whether, and how, independent access and ownership are to be achieved, especially where one dwelling is at the rear of the lot. Shared (alley) access is likely to be necessary (photos A & C). Or separate stairways from the patio or the street (see Monterrey poster for examples). The alleyway in A leads to the area being remodelled (B).

#### Re-producción de la Vivienda



### 6 Housing Rehabilitation: Challenges and Scenarios



**Clockwise from top left:** Evidence of renting (4 meters). Renting 5 families plus owner (13 people) and precarios stairs to second and third floors. *Escombro* on sidewalk awaiting collection; unsanitary and small wc and bathrooms and patios for washing and hanging clothes; Precarios & hazard balcony railings (reja.)