Summary of Discussions in Session 8: Experiences of Developing Countries.

Rapporteur: Gershon Feder

The discussion highlighted the following themes:

1. **Virtual seminars:** A commentator proposed that the Internet and other electronic media could be utilized to conduct a virtual seminar. Two topics that could be the focus are issues of financing land information systems, and the handling of informal tenure. In response, panel members generally supported the idea, viewing it as an element in the general effort to expand training on land administration issues that was called for by the Bathurst Declaration.

   It was pointed out that some issues may not be amenable to global generalization (such as issues of informal tenure), and should be handled through regional or subregional seminars. Another point was made regarding the expense of hooking into the Internet in areas such as Africa. practical considerations would require that a coordinator for such a virtual seminar be funded and retained in an appropriate international agency.

2. **Municipal cadastres:** An observation was made regarding the evolution, in Latin America, of municipally initiated cadastres, mostly for the purpose of fiscal management. These systems emerge in a context of fiscal crisis at the central government level, which leads to neglect of the maintenance of the land information system. While such local level cadastres start as single-purpose initiatives, they could evolve into a multi-purpose information system. The risk is that the local nature of the initiatives will lead to lack of uniformity and inability to integrate the data nationally.

3. **Community support for projects upgrading land management systems:** A query was raised on how to generate community support, given that most people in developing (and even developed) countries are not well-informed or familiar with land administration. In response, it was clarified that a concerted information campaign is required, clarifying to beneficiaries at the outset what projects will provide, what services will be available, and what benefits can be derived from such services.

4. **Cadastres and LIS in Africa:** Given the dearth of proper cadastres, a suggestion was made that perhaps a simpler system of land information would be designed, that would fit regional circumstances. In response it was clarified that indeed, a concept for a simpler land information system has been articulated recently, although it has not been implemented yet. Some pilot experiments are being contemplated.