

# Transforming land management

In the past, the Land registry was such a problem, where registering a transaction took two to three years to complete. Thanks to the CEDP interventions, efficiency, effectiveness and sanity are returning.

So serious is this intervention that the lands component of the project takes up 50% of the \$100m project co-funded by the World Bank and the Government of Uganda.

The aim is to consolidate, enhance and scale-up land sector policy and institutional reforms to create an enabling environment that will contribute to eliminating key constraints to the cost of doing business and Uganda's international competitiveness.

"We want to enhance security of tenure and encourage investment, particularly in the medium and small manufacturing enterprises sector, especially to enable the private sector to be better positioned to respond to opportunities that involve the land market," explains Richard Oput, the CEDP Project Coordinator Ministry of Lands.

The project component that is a continuation of the Private Sector Competitiveness Project (PSCPII) that saw the creation of the Land Information System (LIS) is already registering progress. Construction designs of eight (8) ministry zonal offices of Moroto, Soroti, Tororo, Luwero (Bukalasa) Mityana, Kabale, Rukungiri have been finalised and tendering for contractors is underway. These will complement the already functional offices of Wakiso, Mukono, Masaka, Mbarara Jinja and Kampala (KCCA) as well as the seven others being rolled out in Lira, Gulu, Kabarole, Kibaale, Mbale, Arua and Masindi.

"The aim is to build modern infrastructure designed to enhance decentralisation of land services, improve the title registration systems by accelerating the adoption of ICT in all ministry office operations and making their transactions more transparent, fast and secure. This will make the registry offices more focused on serving customers and taking services closer to the people," explains Oput.

Developing and extending the Land Information System to incorporate registration, valuation and physical planning functions in all zonal offices is also being done. It includes strengthening valuation and land use planning functions, including the conversion of all associated land records to digital formats.

As part of the Lands Ministry transparency and accountability initiatives, Open days have been held where the public are invited to carry out searches and view any information in the Land Information System at no cost. During these interactions, the ministry also receives complaints from the public relating to any land issue they may have. Most issues are addressed immediately. To date, over 2000 land owners have been reached in Mukono and Kampala districts.

## Other interventions being undertaken are:

- Reviewing sector-related laws and legal framework, developing valuation data bases and improving land registration processes;
- Strengthening the capacity of the surveys and mapping department to carry out surveys, and manage acquisition and processing of spatial data.
- Producing and disseminating maps for land administration and producing spatial data in appropriate formats to meet the growing land administration and land management needs.
- Providing technical advisory services for carrying out an inventory of Government land. Activities under this include reviewing the legal, institutional, and operational aspects of the Uganda Land Commission



and recommending programmes for implementation; developing administrative regulations and guidelines for managing government land.

- Progress has also been registered in undertaking systematic registration of communal and individually owned land beginning with physical planning of the areas in Apac, Sheema and Jinja. "Work is underway in organising and establishing Communal Land Associations (CLAs) in the north and Karamoja regions. This is to meet the target of registering 600 CLAs and registration of individual lands in rural and peri-urban areas, including issuance of 900,000 land titles to individuals, families and communities," says Oput.

The ministry is implementing actions to strengthening institutions and mechanisms for land dispute resolution. "Dialogue with the Judiciary to develop a more collaborative relationship in terms of reinstating operations of land tribunals, improving provision of information for the adjudication of land cases and deepening knowledge of judges, lawyers and other key actors in land administration processes and in the use of mediation and other Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms is ongoing," Oput explains.

The ministry has completed an assessment of the Land Administration Institution, which has identified gaps and made recommendations for improvement; and assessing other public and private land sector institutions to identify skill gaps and implementing capacity development programmes.

A dormitory and multi-purpose hall are also being constructed for the Institute of Survey and Land Management, which will be equipped with instructional equipment.

Additional reporting by B. Rwothungeyo



## HIGHLIGHTS

98bn shillings revenue generated in 2014/15 from 8bn in 2012/13  
592,000 titles vetted and converted into digital copies.  
16,500 maps rehabilitated and converted into digital maps.  
85.5% of pending land transactions processed by June 2015, up from 1.8% in February, 2013.  
23 days taken to complete a transfer and from 39 days in 2013/14.  
1-5 working days, time taken to complete a search from a high of 19 days previously.  
3 working days – time taken for mortgage registration from 7 days.  
Effective decentralization of cadastral information to Ministry Zonal Offices  
Established audit trail for ease of tracking land transactions  
Inbuilt security measures for ensuring accuracy, reliability and integrity of land records.

GRAPHICS BY BRIAN SSEKAMATTE

## LIS enhancement and roll-out project

