Land Administration in Malawi

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Introduction

- Background
- Legal framework
- Land reform programmes
- Government interventions to improve access to land and tenure security
- Challenges
Background

• Malawi is generally a land constrained country;
  • 11.8 million ha;
  • 9.4 million ha is land and 2.4 million is covered by water;
  • 6.2-6.4 million ha is customary land,
  • 1.2 million ha is private land,
  • 1.8 million ha is public land
  • 1.1 million ha agricultural estate land
  • 300,000 ha is urban land
Legal Framework

There are various legal instruments that govern land administration and Management in Malawi:

- The Lands Act (Cap. 57:01),
- The Registered Land Act (Cap. 58:01),
- The Deeds Registration Act (Cap. 58:02),
- The Land Acquisition Act (Cap. 58:04),
- The Customary Land (Development) (Cap. 59:01),
- The Local Land Board Act (Cap. 59:02),
- The Adjudication of Title Act (Cap. 58:05), and
- The Local Government Act, etc.
Land Tenure

The Land Act categories land ownership into three:

- **Public Land** (government land, public roads, protected areas)
- **Customary Land** (land which is held, occupied or used under customary law)
- **Private Land**
  - Leasehold
  - Freehold including Lilongwe West area (Ndunda)
Categories of Land in Urban areas

- Public land (Mtandire/Mtsiriza/Piyasani)
- Private land (Chinsapo)

Landlords in Urban areas

- Malawi Government (Ministry of Lands & Housing)
- Malawi Housing Corporation (MHC)
- City Councils
- Airport Development Limited (ADL)
Land Reform Program

• 1996-> Presidential Commission on Land Reform;
• 2002-> Malawi National Land Policy (MNLP) was approved by Parliament. The MNLP recommended decentralized, market-assisted land reforms in order you improve efficiency and equity in land administration and management.
• 2003->Special Law Commission was constituted to review the Law (currently based on the Land Act of 1965).
• The Special Law Commission was mandated to examine all land related laws.

Access, hold and trade Land in urban areas
2004-> the country launched National Land Reform Programme;

2006-> Land related Laws were drafted by the Special Law Commission.

2012-> Land related Bills were approved by Cabinet.

2013-> Expected the Land related Laws to be enacted into Law.

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Interventions implemented after approval of MNLP

• Review of all Land related Laws;
• Computerization of Land Registries through a project known as Business Environment Strengthening Technical Assistance Project (BESTAP) funded by World Bank;
• Establishment of Land Information Management System by Surveys Department;
• Capacity Building and development, the ministry initiated the introduction of tertiary education at three local colleges offering degrees and diplomas in Land administration and management;

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• Recruitment and training of staff by the key departments in the ministry

• The country is currently conducting Land Governance Assessment Study using World Bank recommended framework known as Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF);

• LGAF has five thematic areas namely: Legal and Institutional Framework; Land Use Planning, Management and Taxation; Management of Public Land; Public Provision of Land Information; and Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management
Expected outcome of the reviewed Land related Laws

- The whole country shall be a planning area;
- All land administration and management functions shall be decentralized to Councils;
- Establishment of Land tribunals;
- Establishment of Land Village committees where women shall constitute over 50% of the composition of the committee;
- Formalization of Traditional leaders roles in land administration and management functions.
Reasons for Government’s interventions

- To enhance efficiency in land administration and management services,

- Cleaning and computerization of the land records - in the Deeds and Title Registries to improve service delivery
• Establishment of a functional land information Management system - computerized land records and cadastre;

• Decentralization of land administration and management services – provision of equipment and capacity building and development in the Departments of Lands, Physical Planning and Surveys.
CHALLENGES

- Existence of chiefs in urban areas
- Encroachment
  - The Land Act, section 10
  - The Registered Land Act, section 134
- Delays in enactment of enabling legislation
- Inadequate resources (Human, Finance, Equipments).

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Thank you!