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Pro-Poor Land Administration for National Security and Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

One of the major effects of uncontrolled population growth in most developing countries including Nigeria is the pressure on accessibility to land. The consequence of this is the increasing spate of conflicts between and among communities. In Nigeria like in most African countries, the individuals have strong attachment. This is so strong that they can go to war over even the smallest dispute on land. Despite the enactment of Land use Decree of 1978, Land use decree does not address the fundamental challenges that can avert land disputes. While some people hold large parcels of land beyond what they can effectively utilize, many are denied access to land. This is the basis of tensions in several communities and is contributory to the challenges insecurity everywhere in the *country. A pro-poor land administration is anchored on the thesis that no matter how poor a person may be, he should not be denied access to land as a natural resource endowment to mankind. Access to land should be guaranteed for all, thus a pro-poor land administration agenda that will curb insecurity of land tenure, conflicts and disparity in access to land among different social strata is required. This paper examines the concept of pro-poor land administration strategy and how its adoption can help mitigate conflicts on land and thereby promote human and food security in the country for national development. It concludes that the existing land administration system in Nigeria needs to be revisited to forestall impending doom over land war in the near future in Nigeria.*

Key Words: Land Administration, Geospatial Technology, Land-Use Decree 1978

Administration foncière en faveur des pauvres pour la sécurité nationale et le développement au Nigéria

Resumé

L'un des principaux effets de la croissance démographique incontrôlée dans la plupart des pays en développement, y compris le Nigéria, est la pression sur l'accessibilité à la terre. La conséquence en est la vague croissante de conflits entre et entre les communautés. Au Nigeria comme dans la plupart des pays africains, les individus ont un fort attachement. C'est si fort qu'ils peuvent entrer en guerre même pour le plus petit différend sur terre. Malgré la promulgation du décret sur l'utilisation des terres de 1978, le décret sur l'utilisation des terres ne traite pas des défis fondamentaux qui peuvent éviter les litiges fonciers. Alors que certaines personnes détiennent de grandes parcelles de terre au-delà de ce qu'elles peuvent utiliser efficacement, beaucoup se voient refuser l'accès à la terre. C'est la base des tensions dans plusieurs communautés et contribue aux défis de l'insécurité partout dans le pays. Une administration foncière favorable aux pauvres est ancrée sur la thèse selon laquelle, quelle que soit la pauvreté d'une personne, elle ne devrait pas se voir refuser l'accès à la terre en tant que dotation en ressources naturelles pour l'humanité. L'accès à la terre devrait être garanti pour tous, c'est pourquoi un programme d'administration foncière favorable aux pauvres qui réduira l'insécurité du régime foncier, les conflits et les disparités dans l'accès à la terre entre les différentes couches sociales est nécessaire. Ce document examine le concept de stratégie d'administration foncière en faveur des pauvres et comment son adoption peut aider à atténuer les conflits fonciers et ainsi promouvoir la sécurité humaine et alimentaire dans le pays pour le développement national. Il conclut que le système d'administration foncière existant au Nigéria doit être revu pour prévenir la catastrophe imminente de la guerre terrestre dans un proche avenir au Nigeria.

Mots-clés: Administration des terres, Technologie géospatiale, Décret d'utilisation des terres de 1978

Introduction

Land as the main resource base for human existence and development needs to be well managed such that every individual needs is met, while getting the best out of land in a sustainable manner without jeopardizing the future needs of unborn generation. The paradox of human to land relationship is such that while available land remains fixed (except for few areas reclaimed along the sea coast), population of humans continue to increase rapidly, yet every individual is entitled to benefit from resources of land. The declining ratio of size of land per head has been a source of concern and the reason for the spate of conflicts over land across the globe. Land, as a natural endowment to humans, has been experiencing tremendous increase in its use in various forms by man. Rapid population increase and spatial inequality of socio-economic development are two major driving forces that are responsible for increased demand of land, and unbridled urbanization. Consequently, anthropogenic activities of man, in turn, cause the changing pattern of land use especially in urban areas UN-HABITAT 2012).

In many countries of the world, accessibility and security of land rights are challenges and are generating tension and conflict among and between communities. This is due to poor land tenure systems which place some categories of people at disadvantage in land tenure security. This is more apparent in developing countries than developed world as the latter practise better land and property administration strategies. For instance, scholars have observed that the land and housing access policies are more well regulated in the western countries than developing countries due to historical and cultural norms and practices which tend to favour the rich (Zevenberge *et al., 2013*). Even when laws on land issues were introduced, such laws still tend to protect the interest of the elites as against the poor. For instance, in most developing countries and for 70 percent of World's population, people are excluded from participating in formal land administration system and cannot register and safeguard their land rights (Global Land Tool Network*: GLTN, 2016*). The majority of these people are the poor especially women in the society.

According to (UN-HABITAT, 2003: I), "*The total number of slum dwellers in the world stood at about 924 million people in 2001. This represents about 32 per cent of the world's total urban population. At that time, 43 per cent of the combined urban populations of all developing regions lived in slums, while 78.2 per cent of the urban population in least developed countries were slum dwellers. In some developing country cities, slums are so pervasive that it is the rich who have to segregate themselves behind small gated enclaves. And if no serious action is taken, the number of slum dwellers worldwide is projected to rise over the next 30 years to about 2 billion".* One of every three urban dwellers live in slum households (Richie and Roser, 2019). The city authorities view most people living in slums as illegal. Because of this, cities do not commonly plan for or manage slums, and the people living there are in most cases neglected due to the facts that governments are overwhelmed by limited resources together with so many issues begging for attentions. They receive none of the benefits of more affluent citizens, such as access to municipal water, roads, sanitation and sewage. This attitude to slum dwellers and approaches that disregard them,

perpetuate the levels and scale of poverty, which impacts on the cities as a whole. Urban settlements require a more inclusive approach to planning and land management if they are to sustain all the people who live in them. A basic need for all people living in cities is shelter. This is Habitat Agenda goal of "adequate shelter for all" (UN-HABITAT, 2004). Cities that want to meet this need have to improve tenural right of all people in the cities. An important approach to this, according to Global Campaign for Secure Tenure (GCST) is the application and realization of "a right based approach to housing". This is why UN-Habitat describes housing and land as entries to secure tenure. Creating sustainable urban settlements and securing tenure for people in the cities will make urban slum dwellers have a sense of s legitimate citizens. (UN-HABITAT, 2004).

In the rural areas of developing countries, particularly Sub- Sahara Africa including Nigeria, the existing customary land tenure system appropriately stipulating successive inheritance of land. The increase in population would lead to the sub-division and fragmentation of existing farmland in such a manner that the sizes of farm holdings discouraged agricultural commercialization. The land fragmentation also led to widened distance between plots due to different land's owners, and subsequently to increased waste of man-hour and energy. This then made modern innovation and mechanisation of agriculture less impracticable under land fragmentation. Even the application of customary land tenure system is gender bias against women either as wives or as children. In many tribes, female children do not have right to inherit land and widows are not also entitled to land.

The concern about inaccessibility of the poor and vulnerable groups to secure land tenure, endangering human and food security was the basis of the launching of Global Campaign for secure Tenure by UN-HABITAT in 1999. Since then, a number of countries have joined the campaign and agreed to implement a set of universal principle at local level. This has also caused many concerned people with the sponsorship of international donor agencies to develop land management tools that meet the needs developing countries. Land administration is traditionally the responsibility of the government; governments at local and central levels enforce land policies and legislation through land administration (UN-HABITAT, 2004; GLTN, 2020). The development of various geospatial tools such as SOLA, STDM, targeted at land administration have also help in this direction such as applied to slum redevelopment without eviction and rural land redistribution for farmers to allow for mechanization. In fact, some developing countries of Africa including Rwanda, Ethiopia, and Ghana have gone ahead to reform their land administration strategies to improve land tenure security for the poor and vulnerable groups. Despite the progress recorded in many parts of the world and particular in Africa on land administration reform to protect the land rights of the poor and vulnerable groups. For instance, according to World Bank (2020a), "*the report on Malawi highlights that Malawi's redistributive land reform programme as a good model on which other countries can build to address landownership inequality and landlessness. This is as a result of over 15,000 rural Malawian households own land as part of a community and each*

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family's income has increased by 40 percent. Food security has also improved for these families and for those living in the surrounding communities." Despite the recommendation of World Bank (2020b) on regularizing tenure rights of squatters on public land in urban slums that are home to 60 percent of urban dwellers in Africa; Nigeria is yet to depart from the status quo which promotes the elites and certain group of people to have undue access to land while less privileged were suffering.

The existing Land Use Act (LUA) of 1978 and the customary land tenure system are skewed in favour of the elites and male gender against women and vulnerable groups both in the urban and rural areas. No wonder, World Bank (2020a) views that weak governance and corruption endanger land administration in many African countries, and while the rich are favoured, the interest of the poor are harmed. The weakness of LUA and Customary system of land administration are among the major momentums to the insecurity and tension leading to conflict between and among communities in different parts of the country. The Tiv/Jukun crisis in part of North East precisely Southern Taraba, the series of herders/farmers conflicts in Nigeria are all linked to the problem of poor land administration (Vanguard, 27th September, 2020; and Premium Time, 18th May, 2020), and Nigeria has even lost, as at 2016, thirteen billion, and seventeen million dollar ($ 13.7 billion) to herders/farmers crises (Punch, 20th October, 2016).

There is therefore the need to re-access Nigeria's land administration system and to proffer possible options that will ensure that the poor and vulnerable groups have secure tenure to land and land services. The objectives of the paper are to review the existing land administration system in the country; examine the concept of pro-poor land administration strategy, and how its adoption can help mitigate land-related problems in the country, and recommend possible path ways by leveraging on the modern geospatial frameworks such as Software for Land Administration (SOLA) and Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) developed for land administration. This was with a view of engendering policy reformulation on land reform in the country.

Overview of Land Administration in Nigeria

Land as a major factor of production is the most important ingredient of development both in the urban and rural areas. In fact, land is the source and the main support for all the needs for the existence of man. Nigeria has a total land mass of 9, 24768 sq.km with an estimated population of 198 million and annual population growth rate of 2.8% (NPC, 2018; and Vanguard, 11th April, 2018). Nigeria comprises over 250 ethnic groups located within the 36 states and Federal Capital Territory (Isaac, *et al., 2018)*

Land administration in Nigeria could be diagnosed in three epochs, depicting the trend and evolution of land administration, taken cognizance of the political development of the country. These are pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods.

Pre-Colonial Period

In the pre-colonial period, land tenure system (ownership of land) was anchored on two perspectives which are the perspectives of *'First Settler'* and perspective of *'Conquered Territory'*.

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Perspective of 'first Settler' states that a person or group of persons who happen to be the first to settle on a particular virgin land is the owner. The size of acquisition is determined by ability to farm and or hunt by individual farmer/hunter. Such first settler therefore becomes the landlord and a reference point in land holding system in that community. The perspective of *Conquered Territory* suggests that where an already occupied land is subdued and taken over by war lords (which is much rampant in many African countries before western colonization), the commander of the war becomes the overall head of such conquered community and thus assumed the position of land administrator who divides the area among warlords in the expedition. Some portions were also reserved for community use (Udoekanem, Adoga and Onwumere, 2014; Atitola, 2010) From the two perspectives of land holding, land is bequeathed on individuals and community (Dosumu 1977, Akingbehin *et al., 2016)*.

From the initial occupation stage, the land of the first settler becomes the inheritance of his descendants. The head or the first male child then becomes the land administrator of such property/ estate. He holds the land in trust for the family, and also has right to give portion to family members for farming or building. He could as well give to non-family member but with the consent of the family members on terms approved by the family. This stage would hold until the family decides to partition such land among individual member of the family who are direct children of the first settler. As the population of the settlement increases the partitioning increases and the portion that can be allocated to the individual decreases (Lamond *et al., 2015).*

Colonial Period

With colonial authority came the legal strategy for land administration. Before independence, colonial power acquired land through legislation and Treaties such included Treaty of Cession (1861), Land Proclamation Ordinance (1900), Land and Native Rights Act (1916), Public Lands Acquisition (1917), State Land Acts (1918), Land Instruments Registration Acts, Laws of Nigeria (1924) and Town and Country Planning Act (1947). The colonial legislations were meant to take property rights out of the reach of traditional community leaders (Udoekanem *et al., 2014*). For instance, in 1900, the Land Proclamation Ordinance created by Lord Lugard disregarded the principles of native law and custom and stipulated that the title of land can only be acquired through the high commissioner (Udoekanem *et al., 2014*). This is referred to as non-customary land tenure system of land administration. Adeniyi *et al.* (2018) noted that registration of land parcels in Nigeria started in 1863 under the colonial administration.

Non- Customary Land Tenure System was tied to the Received English Land Law which consists of the Common Law of England, Doctrine of Equity and the Statute of General Application which were in force in England on the 1st day January 1900. Though, the application of the Statutes is subject to local circumstances, the Received English Land Law, for instance Land Proclamation Ordinance (1900), complete property right over Crown land was transferred to the colonial government. The colonial government then had exclusive rights over all Crown lands, while indigenous people had user's rights over public land. The Received Land Law

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is thus based on the Doctrine of Tenure which vested the absolute ownership of all land in the Crown to the exclusion of all subjects, and on the doctrine of Estate which concedes to the individual, the right to possession. The right to possession is legally an estate capable of individual ownership (Ghebru and Okumo, 2016).

Though, the colonial authorities introduced the instrument of law to land administration, they were only able to use the instrument to acquire land for public use. The legal instrument did not abolish the customary land administration structure, but re-enforced it and thus approved the lopsided land distribution system in favour of the elites at the detriment of the poor and vulnerable people (Omuojine, 1999, Bardi, 1998 cited in Udoekanem, Adoga and Onwumere, 2014).

Post-Colonial period

Land administration structure after independence was anchored on two key legislations enacted after independence: Land Tenure Law of Northern Nigeria of 1962 and Land Use Act of 1978. Before 1978, private ownership of land by individuals, families and communities was the predominant land tenure system in the Southern States of Nigeria. In the south, land continued to be customarily held by the indigenous population or natives, with chiefs as the key managers. However, the scenario was different in the northern part of Nigeria where the then government of the North in 1962 enacted the new Northern Nigeria Land Tenure Law to replace the colonial-era Native Lands Acquisition Ordinance (Ghebru and Okumo, 2016) .The land tenure law of Northern Nigeria of 1962 stipulated that the minister responsible for land matter controls, holds and allocates land (unoccupied or occupied native lands) to natives of Northern Nigeria. This implies that non-natives except for the approval of the minister could not have land titles. The law granted the natives of Northern Nigeria the right to own land for a limited number of years. The individual/native may sell, mortgage or transfer the land subject to the minister's approval. The Land Tenure Law of 1962 was repealed, and land use decree of 1978 was implemented.

The promulgation of the Land Use Act was based on four objectives which are:

a) To remove the bitter controversies, resulting at times in loss of lives and limbs which land is known to be generating.
b) To streamline and simplify the management and ownership of land in the country;
c) To assist the citizen, irrespective of his social status to realize his ambition and aspiration of owning the place where he and his family will live a secured and peaceful life; and
d) To enable the government to bring under control the use to which land can be put in all parts of the country and thus facilitate planning and zoning programme for particular uses.

Other objectives of the Acts which are germane to land administration are:

a) To give government power of compulsory acquisition of land in order to ease difficulties encountered by government in acquiring private land for public projects and development,

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b) To reduce or eliminate series of litigations arising from lack of coordinated and, or formalized land tenurial arrangement in the Southern part of the country before the Acts;
c) To correct some of the anomalies prevalent in the tenurial arrangement existing in the northern part of the country which had impeded agricultural mechanization and urban development before the Acts; and
d) To prevent ethnic discrimination with respect to land holding (NGENVIRONMENT, 2012).

While the Acts provided for the protection of right of individual on land holding before the commencement of the Decree, it also laid the foundation for proper land administration system for the country. However, the implementation since then to have proper land titling and registration system, have been fraught with problems with cumbersome procedural steps and variations in the implementation strategies across the country. While in the Northern part, they adopted Local Government Registration of interest for rural land, in the southern part the power is vested on the Governor of the state. The aftermath was political considerations in the allocation of land, corruption and rise in tendencies of lobby. The Land Use Act avails the opportunities to own lands without recourse to families and communal land holdings. But the process of obtaining certificates of occupancy is characterised by bureaucratic bottlenecks, high registration fees and perpetual payment of levies and taxes (Chikaire *et al., 2014*). Though, Section 1 of the Land Use Act vests all land in each state in the Federation of Nigeria in the Governor of that state, and such land shall be held in trust and administered for the use and common benefit of all Nigerians in accordance with the provisions of the Act Udoekanem *et al., 2014*); till date, land tenure is also governed by customary laws, especially in rural Nigeria. Therefore, tenure security is low as the transactions in the land market are largely informal. Adeniyi *et al*. (2018) further asserted that since 1863 when land registration started not more than three percent (3%) of the nation's land mass of 923,768 square kilometres have been surveyed and registered. This underlines the inefficacy of the systems and factors that govern land administration in the country.

As at 2017, Nigeria trails other African countries in the ease of registering land indices (World Bank, 2017). Nigeria ranks 179th in the ease of registering land compared to Ghana (119th position), South Africa (107th position), Morocco (86th position), and Botswana (81st position). In terms of the number of procedures required to complete land title registration, there are 11 procedures in Nigeria compared to Botswana, Morocco, South Africa and Ghana with four procedures, six procedures, seven procedures and six procedures, respectively. This depicts low level of innovation and inefficiency in the land registration process in Nigeria. As expected from a country with one of the highest number of procedures for land title registration, it takes more days to register land title in Nigeria than elsewhere.

The conclusion one can draw from the review of current land administration framework is that Nigeria land administration is weak. The weakness of

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the current land administration in Nigeria is not only caused by the lack of a National Land Policy but also by the inadequacies of the principal land law – the Land Use Act (LUA). (Adeniyi *et al., 2018*). The LUA, for instance, does not provide any detailed requirement for land titling and registration.

Despite global effort on the reform of land administration, the failure to adopt, at all levels, appropriate rural and urban land policies and land management practices remains a primary cause of inequity and poverty in Nigeria. It is also the cause of increased living costs, the occupation of hazard-prone land, environmental degradation and the increased vulnerability of urban and rural habitats. It is also affecting all people, especially disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, people living in poverty and low-income people in many developing countries including Nigeria (Habitat Agenda, 1997: 75). Furthermore, a series of communal conflicts, for instance herders/farmers crises, witnessed in many parts of Nigeria have been linked to land's matters. There is therefore the need to examine the new trend of pro-poor land administration strategies as a basis to develop new pathways for Nigeria land administration policy.

Pro-Poor Land Administration Frameworks

The United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management at its eighth session in August 2018 encouraged the Expert Group on Land Administration and Management (Expert Group) to continue its advocacy and raising awareness of the merits and benefits of effective and efficient land administration and management systems, and to formulate overarching policy guidance that could be referenced by Member States (UN-GGIM, 2019) considering that an estimated seventy percent of humanity do not enjoy secure land and property rights, there is a need to accelerate efforts to document, record and recognize people to land relationships in all forms (UN-GGIM, 2019). The Expert Group recognized this urgent need cognizant of the diverse social, economic and environmental circumstances at the national and sub-national levels. Land becomes an essential factor in attaining the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – it is a global plan of action focused on 5Ps: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. The international community has recognized the fundamental role that land plays in sustainable development by including it in its targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains 10 land-related targets (1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 5a, 11.1, 11.3, 11.7, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3) and 12 indicators [1.4.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4.1, 5.a.1, 5.a.2, 11.1.1, 11.3.1, 11.7.1, 15.1.1, 15.1.2, 15.2.1, 15.3.1] under SDGs 1, 2, 5, 11 and 15 (GLTN, 2020).

Land administration relates people to land and informs on the 'how', the 'what', the 'who', the 'when' and the 'where' of land tenure, land use, land value, and land development. Land administration systems are the basis for recording the complex range of rights, restrictions and responsibilities related to people, policies and places. Effective land administration must be fit-for-purpose, appropriate and adequate, interoperable and sustainable, flexible and inclusive, and able to accelerate efforts to document, record and recognize people to land relationships in all its forms. Effective land administration

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provides humanity with better access to security of land and property rights; mitigates issues relating to land as a root of triggering conflict; and enhances overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda. Goals 1 and 5 of SDGs expressly focused on: - End poverty in all its forms everywhere and Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, respectively. Table 1 illustrates further on the targets and indicators of these goals as it relates to land (World Bank, 2015).

Table1: Examples of Goals, Targets and Indicators Related to land (World Bank, 2015).

Goal 1 **End poverty in all its forms everywhere**	
Target 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and **control over land** and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services.	**Indicator 1.4.2** Proportion of total adult population with secure **tenure rights to land**, (a) with legally recognized documentation, and (b) who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and type of tenure
Goal 5 **Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**	
Target 5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and **control over land a**nd other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws	**Indicator 5.a.1** (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure **Indicator 5.a.2** -Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control

However, Zakout (2019) advocates that policymakers, governments and whole world should see secure land and property rights as most important agenda, as these will be an important pillar for agriculture; essential tools for urban development; protector of the environment; crucial factor for private sector development and job creation; important means of empowering women; a platform for securing indigenous peoples' rights; and vital weapon for keeping peace, and food security of the

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poor. Pro-Poor Land Administration is thus a crucial factor in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Going by the people to land relationship towards attainment of 2030, Agenda, Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) was developed as a policy guide for Pro-Poor Land Administration (UN-GGIM, 2019). Specifically, the framework seeks to:

- implement the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for the land sector, and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals; develop a comprehensive vision for understanding, advocating and promoting effective land administration;
- provide strategic guidance towards country-specific action plans to be prepared and implemented;
- advocate the continuous strengthening of land administration and management procedures, techniques, and tools; and
- enhance multilateral partnerships through policy convergence in effective land administration with a view to guiding policy development in Member States, (UN-GGIM, 2019).

The Framework for Effective Land Administration was presented to the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management for endorsement. The Framework was developed for all countries, jurisdictions and other stakeholders. It is composed of two parts. The first part describes contextual background, provides relevant definitions, a high-level vision statement, and includes the outline of specific goals and objectives. The second part responds to the vision by elaborating on nine pathways for effective land administration and includes a series of priority actions as guidance for implementation.

Effective land administration caters to all people, and must:

▪ accelerate the proportion of population with tenure security,

▪ develop confidence and trust; promote security, safety, peace and peace building,

▪ promote efficient and vibrant land market taking into consideration aspects of land values and land development,

▪ allow economic development through revenue systems that are equitable and fair,

▪ contribute to smart and resilient societies,

▪ cater to all circumstances, situation and people – in times of peace and prosperity, in times of stress and hardship (disaster and conflicts, migration and human displacement, poverty, food and water scarcity), and

▪ promote preparedness, resilience (with increasing climate vulnerabilities), sustainable consumption and strong institutions (UN-GGIM, 2019).

This Framework is intended as a living document, to be periodically reviewed, updated, and tailored to suit local circumstances, the changing global context, and evolving political, technological, economic, environmental and societal landscapes. The Framework for Effective Land Administration (FELA) is a reference for developing, renewing, reforming, strengthening or modernizing land administration and management systems.

FELA directly relates to the overarching Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) as adopted by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) at its eighth session in August 2018. FELA implements the IGIF for the land sector (UN-GGIM, 2019).

The development and adoption of pro-poor land administration for developing countries was a response to the discernible divide, the conventional land administration systems in the West which failed to solve land administration problem in the developing countries and particularly in the sub-Saharan Africa. It was noted that it often works against the needs of the poor (Zevenbergen *et al, 2013)*. Initiatives such as Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), donors and academia have developed different pro-poor land management tools. These include conceptual tools related to land tenure, land policy tools (Van Der Molen and Lemmen, 2006; UN-HABITAT, 2007, 2008; Enemark *et al., 2014*; Simbizi *et al, 2014*) and more technical tools intended to support land tenure mapping and land registration (Zevenbergen *et al, 2013*).

The three frameworks developed by (Enemark *et al., 2014*, Zevenbergen *et al., 2013* and Simbizi *et al.,* 2014) become the benchmark within which pro-poor land administration theory is anchored (Figure 1). The three theoretical works constitute well-organized components of the pro-poor land administration domain: (1) fit-for purpose land administration considers the entire land administration system, (2) the pro-poor land recordation system elements focus specifically on land recordation activities, and (3) the model of rural poor land tenure security look at the actors and entities involved in the process.

The three frameworks can be integrated-the different aspects that each deals with, previously studied in isolation, are now drawn together as a single conceptual model for pro-poor land administration indicating the three domains of operation as: (1) Spatial Framework, (2) Legal Framework (3) Institutional Framework. Spatial framework consists of aerial imagery, participatory field adjudication, incremental improvement, and continuum of accuracy. Legal framework enshrines fit-for-purpose approach in law, secures all land rights for all human right, and gender equity continuum of tenure-STDM. Institutional framework is holistic, transparent and cost effective, suitable IT-approach, ongoing capacity development continuum of service (Figure 2). This new model is comprehensive and flexible which allows for adjustment to incorporate local variables of reality in different societies without losing the main objective of the strategy. The model prescribed inputs to land administration systems that are believed to improve the land tenure security of the poor and vulnerable groups; it promotes inclusive and participatory approaches to recording spatial data on land and associated legal and social rights. The system should be affordable and accessible to a society's poorest members and as well attainable and reliable. It is on these three domains that the pro-poor land administration strategy could be successfully implemented.

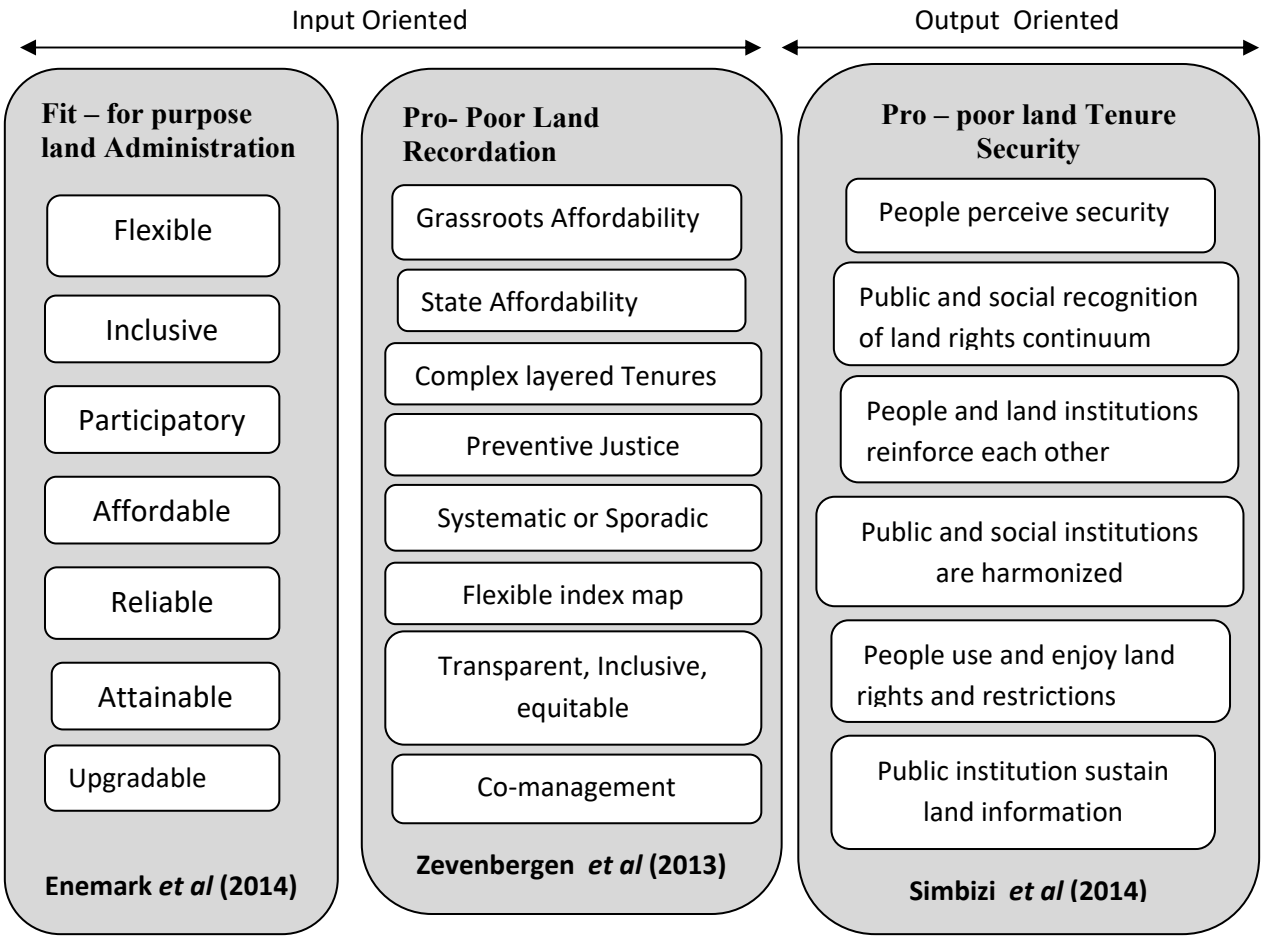


Figure 1: Frameworks for Pro- poor land administration and land tenure security Adapted from Simbizi *et al..,* (2016)

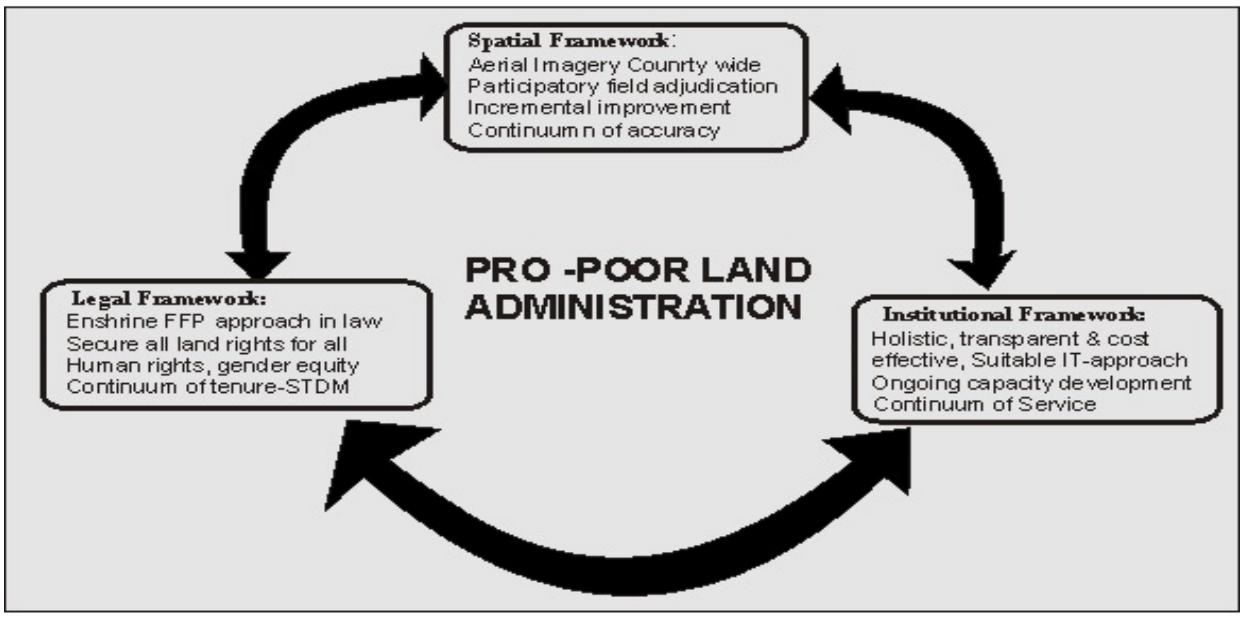


Figure 2: Conceptual Model for Pro- Poor Land Administration Indicating the Three Domains: Adapted from Global Land Tool Network (GLTN, 2016)

A few African countries have adopted and implement pro-poor land administration strategy in their land reform policies. Recent efforts include Rwanda's Land Tenure Regularization (LTR) Program, (Sagashya and English, 2010), the Rural Land Certification in Ethiopia (Deininger *et al., 2008*), the Land Administration Reform in Ghana (Independent Evaluation Group [IEG], 2013), The Land Tenure Services Project in Mozambique (Hagos,2012) and land reform in South Africa (Benjaminsen *et al., 2009*). The little success story from the land administration reforms so far taken in these countries indicated there is hope of land tenure security for the poor and vulnerable groups. Though there are still some hiccups about the process yet it is better than not starting at all. For instance, the LTR programme in Rwanda led to the creation of a countrywide geographic information system (GIS) based recordation system, which includes descriptive database of land claims (or land registry) and spatial details of land parcel.

LTR is additional evidence on how a general boundary approach, coupled with the use of affordable technology, such as high- resolution satellite and aerial images can lead to flexible land recordation system. The base of successful implementation of LTR in Rwanda is the strong political will by the political leaders. The LTR programme in Rwanda has contributed to the stability, peace, security and steady progress in the economic development of the nation, apart from improved physical planning in both rural and urban areas (Zevenbergen *et al.*, 2016).

The way forward for Nigeria

The recent global efforts led by United Nations and other international agency on reform of land administration policy are already yielding positive results for countries that have adopted the initiatives. It becomes manifest that the current land administration system in Nigeria is still bedevilled by various issues ranging from legal, administrative, inadequate capacity as well as lack of political will, needed to drive the reform in land administration. The resultant effect is that the incessant conflict among and between communities would degenerate further and made it more difficult for the country to address the security challenges arising from herders/ farmers conflicts and armed banditry ravaging our country. It will also be difficult for the country to achieve many of the SDGs particularly to: End poverty in all its forms everywhere and achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The way forward therefore for Nigeria is to realize that land is a major factor for national security and development and thus make the giant move for a comprehensive land administration reform with focus on the following critical areas:

Legal Framework Review

As noted earlier, the subsisting LUA (1978) does not guarantee tenure security for all, in fact the poor and the vulnerable groups were at disadvantage based on the LUA. The review needs to incorporate the pro-poor land administration goals of guarantying accessibility and security of tenure of every citizen. Particularly, the customary tenure

attributes which promote a gender against the other need to be adequately addressed in the review. The review should set the limit of size of land, a single person/ or organization could hold as not to jeopardise the interest of others in the face of population increase. It should also regulate land use practices particularly as it relates to farming and animal husbandry to cub incessant herders/farmers conflicts.

Institutional Framework Reform

The LUA (1978) confers the power of land allocation to the State Governor, while the expected land allocation committees were moribund with no effect. The administrative structure for land registration is too cumbersome, time consuming and expensive, the more reason while people revert back to customary tenure system that gave advantage to land speculators at the detriment of the poor and vulnerable group (Atilola, 2010; Ghebru and Okumo, 2016). Therefore, there is the need to decentralize land administration structure such that local community leaders could be involved in the process. One of the pro-poor strategies is the harmonization of public and social institutions for effective land administration. It is been noted that failure of many government policy is due to top-down implementation methods which neglect the views and participation of the beneficiaries and critical stakeholders. The decentralization of land administration structure should go down below the local government administrative level to include community level structure for urban and rural areas.

Geospatial Technology in Land Administration

Geospatial technology deployment is the technical component on which pro-poor land administration is anchored. Geospatial technology allows for integration of land maps with ownership attributes which are stored in the land registration database at different levels. It enables ease of identification and tracking of who owns which parcel of land and how land exchange hands among people. Softwares have been developed for land administration such as Software for Land Administration (SOLA) and Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM). To have an effective land administration, the shortage of personnel and lack of competence will need to be addressed properly. Among possible options that can be considered in this regard is that every level of government and its agencies on land matt should collaborate with international agencies in land administration for training and transfer of skills on geospatial technology for land administration. Also, our university should be empowered to training new generation with the required technical know-how to fill the gap with required personnel to drive the reform.

Conclusion

The Sustainable Development Goals universally apply to all countries and mobilize efforts to end all forms of poverty and achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls whilst ensuring that no one is left behind. Considering that an estimated seventy percent of humanity do not enjoy secure land and property rights, there is a need to accelerate efforts to document, record and recognize people to land relationships in all forms.

Land administration relates people to land and informs on the 'how', the 'what', the 'who', the 'when' and the 'where' of land tenure, land use, land value, and land development and should be appropriate, accessible and affordable and recognize social, economic and environmental circumstances at the national and sub-national levels. The situation of land administration in Nigeria is fraught with many challenges ranging from law (legal instrument), administrative to technical capability. Pro-poor land administration as advocated in this article provides a policy guide and reference for Nigeria to take steps toward a better land administration and management system nationally or sub-nationally. Pro-poor land administration provides a mechanism towards effective leadership, advocacy, mobilization and actions to accelerate efforts to document, record and recognize people to land relationships in all forms and provide humanity with secure land and property rights. Effort in this direction, by Nigeria will foster peace, human and food security necessary for national development.

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