

# NEW LAND SYSTEM TO LEAD TO IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY

By Umar Nsubuga

The Uganda National Land Information System (UgNLIS), that was established in 2013 and aims to improve land management procedures for both government agencies and the public, is already streamlining the land administration process, promoting transparency and accountability in the land sector. Currently, it is considered as the most modern and comprehensive land information system in Africa.

Two years ago, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development launched the UgNLIS, a public portal that allows members of the public to conduct online searches after paying a sh10,000 fee for each search.

The technical process has addressed many of the challenges identified at the time it was set up, including strategies to review Uganda's policy and legal framework to the strengthen the protection of landowners.

According to Lenin Victor Oonyu, project manager for the implementation of the system at the lands ministry, this application has so far computerised and verified the majority of paper titles.

He also says that the system had consolidated land tenure security, is reducing cases of land fraud and corruption while improving service delivery and revenue collection from the sector.

The UgNLIS eliminates double plotting and makes illicit title-tampering extremely difficult.

Oonyu says access to land registration information through the online portal represents a substantial improvement in transparency.

The system is only applicable to registered land, which accounts for less than 20% of all the land across the country.

According to Dennis Obbo, the spokesperson for the lands ministry, the system has made a strong contribution to Uganda's economic development, which is the realisation

## ACCESS TO LAND REGISTRATION INFORMATION THROUGH THE ONLINE PORTAL REPRESENTS A SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT IN TRANSPARENCY

PHOTO BY HENRY NSUBUGA



**RDC Nabitaka Fatumah Ndisaba addresses a community land-related meeting. The UgNLIS eliminates the need for middle men in land transactions and deals with issues of fraud and double titling**



**Dorcas Okalany, Permanent Secretary, lands ministry**

**THE DECENTRALISATION OF LAND ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES TO THE MINISTRY ZONAL OFFICES (MZOS) HAS ALREADY RESULTED IN A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE DELIVERY OF LAND SERVICES IN LAND GOVERNANCE. THE SYSTEM SYNCHRONIZES ALL ADDED INFORMATION WITH EXISTING DATA ON NEIGHBORING PLOTS AND APPROPRIATE ZONING TO PREVENT THE REGISTRATION OF LAND ON FOREST RESERVES, WATERWAYS, WETLANDS, NATIONAL PARKS, ROAD RESERVES, AND OTHER PUBLIC LAND RESERVES**



**Victor Oonyu, project manager at the lands ministry**



**A family evicted from a wetland**

of multiple social and development goals, and the realisation of the government's Vision 2040.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

The national land information system

has made substantial improvements in accountability and service delivery in terms of saving time, security, and cost effectiveness.

Ugandans now receive a safer and faster

service. There are also enhanced land governance procedures which have resulted in a significant improvement in fee collection.

"This system generates good revenue and has

resulted in a significant reduction or elimination of back-door transactions, forgeries, and the challenges associated with missing land titles," he says.

**TRANSPARENCY**

The decentralisation of land administration and management services to the Ministry Zonal Offices (MZOs) has already resulted in a significant improvement in the delivery of land services in land governance.

The system synchronises all added information with existing data on neighbouring plots and appropriate zoning to prevent land registration on forest reserves, waterways, wetlands, national parks, road reserves, and other public land reserves.

The National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA), Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA), Uganda National Roads Authority (UNRA), National Forestry Authority (NFA), and the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) are among the government agencies that cross-reference all data entered into the UgNLIS thoroughly and instantly to detect illegitimate data.

Access to the national land information system is strictly limited to authorised personnel, and mistakes entered can be traced to the individual responsible as their identity and all transactions and changes made within the system are indelibly recorded.

Oonyu asserts that Ugandans should embrace this application without fear because it is transparent. It records and monitors the work performance of all staff members, including log-in times and the number of transactions completed on any given day.

Public confidence in the government's capacity to deliver land security and efficient land governance has increased as a result of improved accountability with multiple cross-checks to ensure faster resolution of land disputes and prevention.

Land now presents fewer challenges to potential investors due to increased tenure security and reduced property transaction costs.