

UNLOCKING THE “DEAD CAPITAL” THROUGH EFFECTIVE LAND ADMINISTRATION REFORM IN NIGERIA

O.A. Ajala

BSc., MSc, PhD PDG (RS&GIS)

TPL, MNITP, MANG, MNCA, MGEOSON



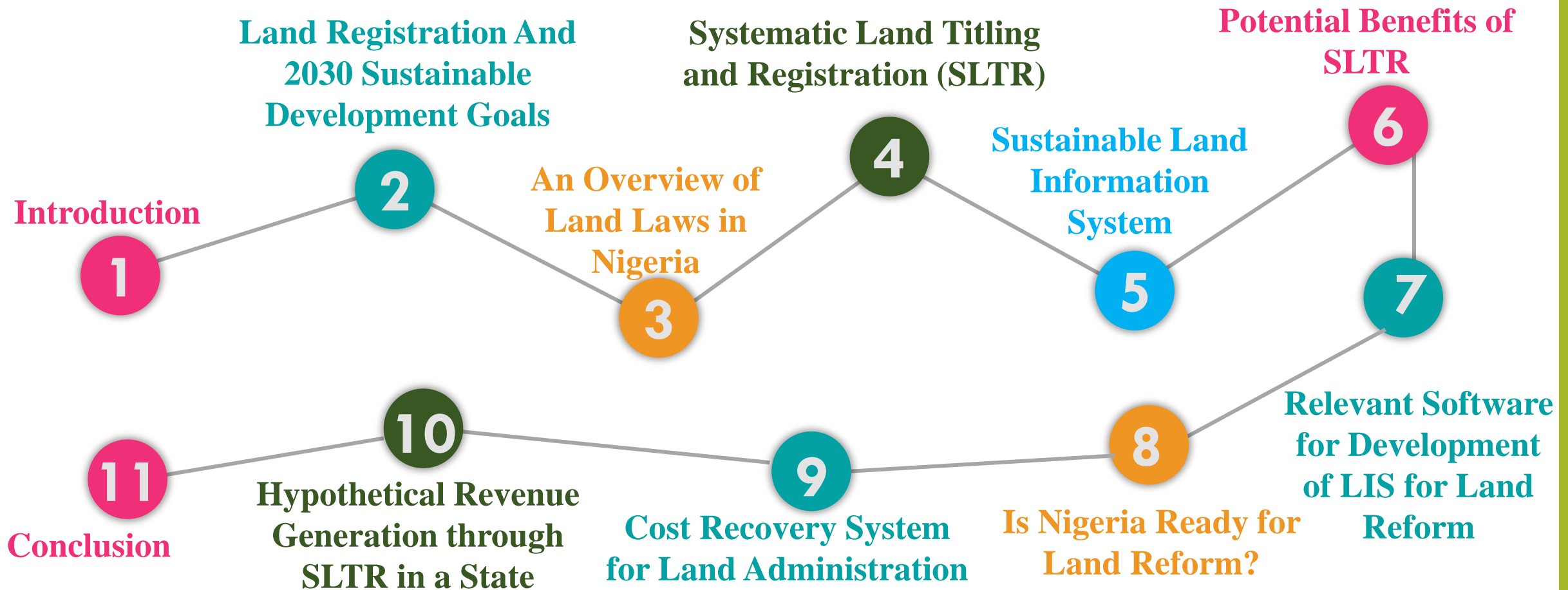
National Land Conference:

Reforming Land Governance for Sustainable Development in Nigeria

@ NAF Conference Centre, Abuja,

26th - 28th March 2025

OUTLINE



INTRODUCTION

➤ Land, as an important factor of production has become a major issue of contention, and ultimate source of wealth (UN-ECE, 1996).

➤ The right to land has been considered as a major component in the economic development.

❑ A good system for land registration has effect on the socio-economic development of a country (UN-FIG, 1999).



INTRODUCTION

➤ Globally, no country has developed without undertaking land administration reform, which has become imperative to every country of the world towards achieving 2030 SDGs.

➤ Unfortunately, Africa is far behind in the paradigm shift in land administration within the context of the geospatial technology advancement in the world:



- ✓ to know what is where?
- ✓ who is where?
- ✓ who owns what in determining rights of individual as pertaining to land?

INTRODUCTION

Land without proper title deeds remains “dead capital” both to the government and the people and thus contribute to poverty, as it:

1

denies the
government of
revenue
and individual
of collateral for
credit

2

inhibits
accessibility to
land by potential
investors
including farmers

3

jeopardises
security of tenure

4

induces land
conflicts in
various
communities.

INTRODUCTION

❑ In Africa, most people own land through informal procedure (“Without legal title”) and few processed title deed to C of O point. (formal procedure “Legally”).

❑ The existing land policy and land Acts in most countries including Nigeria locks up the potential and benefits which land should provide for the people.

❑ About 900,000 square kilometres of Nigerian Land is effectively lock up as
“Dead Capital”.

❑ It is not possible to fully harness the potentials in land and land resources without title deeds (Atilola, 2013).

❑ **Unlocking the potential in land starts with proper land titling and registration.**

LAND REGISTRATION AND 2030 SDGs

The key questions in land tenure are:

OWNER

WHO?

Who holds the land
(individual or group)?

RIGHT (TITLE)

HOW?

How is it held
(ownership,
leasehold, etc.)?

PARCELS

**WHERE/HOW
MUCH?**

Where is it
located
(specific
parcel)?

Their relationship brings
about a system of land
registration .

*Connection between Cadaster and Land Registration
(Reformed from Zevenbergen, 2002)*

LAND REGISTRATION AND 2030 SDGs

- Many countries of Africa do not have a well-functioning system of land registration.
- It evolves through quasi land tenure systems which do not guarantee the right of every individual
- **Under five SDGs 1, 2, 5, 11 and 15 (UN, 2020) there are 10 land-related targets and 12 indicators to ensure prosperity for all and healthy environment.**



- Achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is directly tied to land may be difficult with sporadic system of land registration.

AN OVERVIEW OF LAND LAWS IN NIGERIA

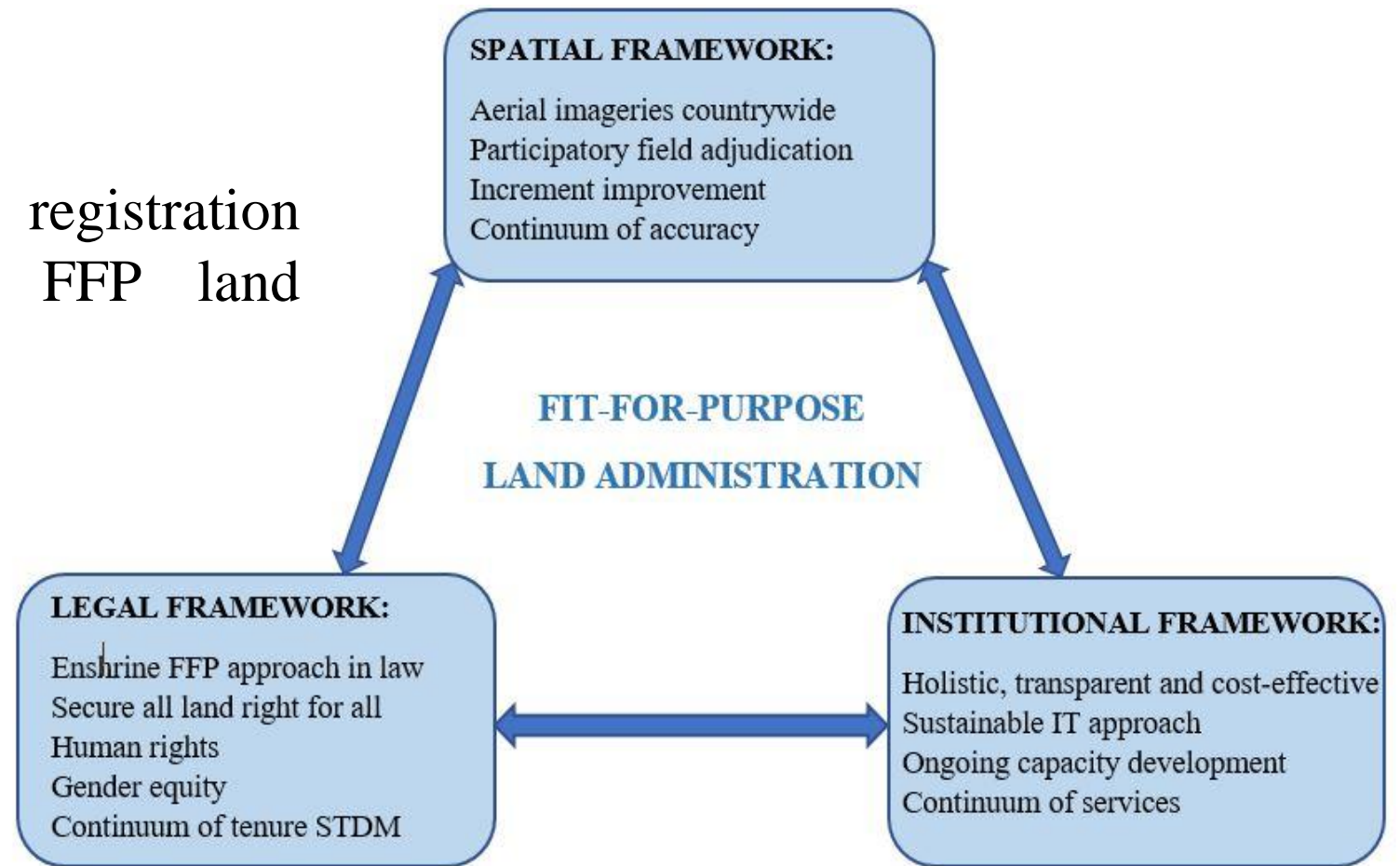
- ❑ In Nigeria, land laws have witnessed different epochs in its development
- ❑ Sporadic method of land registration was the practice adopted in Nigeria
- ❑ Less than 5% land in Nigeria has been registered (PTCILR 2013)



Eras of Land Administration
Source: Olabamiji & Ajala (2021)

SYSTEMATIC LAND TITLING AND REGISTRATION (SLTR) AS A FIT-FOR-PURPOSE APPROACH

- ❑ The term “Fit-for-Purpose (FFP) means applying the spatial, legal and institutional methodologies that best suit t]
- ❑ Systematic land titling and registration (SLTR) is a prototype of FFP land administration
- ❑ SLTR is a process by which rights to land in a particular area are ascertained and then documented in an official register of land titles (PTCLR, 2014).



The Fit-for-Purpose Concept, adapted from (UN-Habitat/GLTN, 2016)

SYSTEMATIC LAND TITLING AND REGISTRATION IN NIGERIA



1



**Capturing, revalidation,
and updating of cadastral
land registration**

2



**Refinement of Services – in the process
of land registration leading to issuance of
Certificate of Occupancy (C of O).**

3



**Geospatial Systems and
databases/Web application**

4



**Training and
Capacity building**

**The SLTR will
include four (4)
main
interrelated
components**

**Existing land records
will be re-validated
and converted into
digital records that
can be queried for
day-to-day land
related transactions**

For instance, during pilot project,
about 14,600 parcels were captured
in three selected LGA in Ondo State

SYSTEMATIC LAND TITLING AND REGISTRATION IN NIGERIA

Unlocking Dead Capital is achievable through Cadastral Information System (CIS) based on SLTR.

To account for every square metres of land in the nation.



To harness land and land resources potentials for the prosperity of residents and businesses in Nigeria



SLTR will incorporate land acquisition, land titling and registration for integration in a digital database.



POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF SLTR



Improvement in revenue accruing to the nation from Land and property taxation



Attracting investors from within and outside with enabling transparent land accessibility



Involvement of all stakeholders in Land matters



Equitable access to land resources by all citizens and potential investors



Improvement in the storage, retrieval, proper documentation and access to records in the Lands registries



Easy access and computation of property tax payable by property owners

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF SLTR



Cost effective and efficient management of land records



Reduction/removing land disputes/conflicts



Confidence in individuals and businesses to invest in land



Automation and Integration of cadastral information into a single centrally managed digital system



Resolution of the challenge of “ghost plots”, parcel overlapping and double allocation within the cadastral department(s)



secure property rights and efficient land registration institutions are a cornerstone of any modern economy

RELEVANT SOFTWARE FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM (LIS)

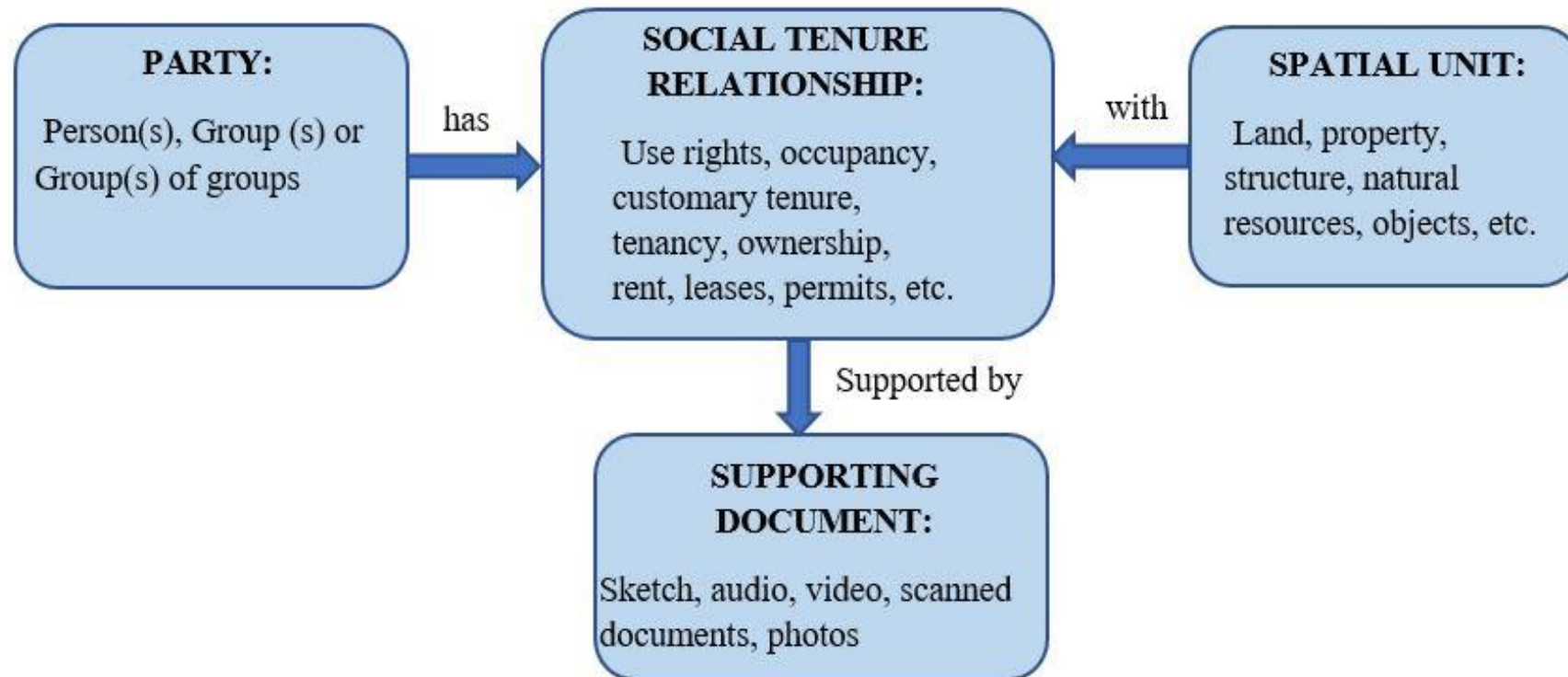
- ❑ There are a number of available tools which are suitable for adaptation within the Nigeria context.
- ❑ GLTN and FIG advocate for the application of sustainable tools and approaches for better land administration and information (GLTN, 2016; Hendriksa, et al., 2019).

Two of these tools are particularly relevant, these are:

- 1. Social Tenure Domain Model (STDm)** developed by GLTN
- 2. Solution for Open Land Administration (SOLA)** developed by FAO

RELEVANT SOFTWARE FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM (LIS)

The STDM explains the interrelationship between parties, social tenure, and the spatial units supported by relevant documents (UN-Habitat/GLTN, 2016).



The STDM Conceptual Model, adapted from (Antonio et al., 2016 and UN-Habitat/GLTN, 2016)

RELEVANT SOFTWARE FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND INFORMATION SYSTEM (LIS)

2. Solution for Open Land Administration (SOLA)

The aims of formulating SOLA are to computerize cadastre and registration systems in affordable and sustainable manners with the main focus on developing countries.

- In ascertaining the effectiveness of SOLA, the pilot project was initiated in Ghana, Nepal and Samoa, and later extended to Lesotho.
- It was also used in systematic land titling and registration work in Ondo, Kaduna, Kano and Kogi States (Nigeria).

Is Nigeria Ready for Land Reform ?

- With the advent of geospatial technology, the question to raise within the context of Nigeria are the following:



- **Do we have the required capability to utilize the new Technical tools?**
- **Are there enabling environment and political will for the paradigm shift?**

Ease of Doing Business Ranking for African Countries

S/N	Country	World Rank	Africa Rank
1	Mauritius	13 th	1 st
2	Rwanda	38 th	2 nd
3	Morocco	53 rd	3 rd
4	Kenya	56 th	4 th
5	South Africa	84 th	5 th
6	Zambia	85 th	6 th
7	Botswana	87 th	7 th
8	Ghana	118 th	8 th
9	Nigeria	131 st	9 th
10	Niger	132 nd	10 th

Land registration is an important index for measurement of business environment

Source: World Bank (2020)

COST RECOVERY SYSTEM FOR LAND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES

- ❑ In order to harness the benefits of land registration, according to UN-Habitat/FIG/GLTN, 2018), **land reform is not automatic,**
- ❑ there is a decision supporting tool called Costing and Financing of Land Administration Services (CoFLAS), involving four stages.
- ❑ These stages are:



Hypothetical Revenue Generation through SLTR in a State

No of parcels to be captured	Average Registration Rate per Parcel	Expected Revenue	
		At 50% success	At 100% success
10 million	₦100,000 per parcel	₦500 Billion Naira	₦ 1 Trillion Naira

- ✓ Such a huge sum of IGR will provide the government with resources for development in other critical sectors

CONCLUSION

- By 2030, it is a focus that 70% of the world's population will possess secure property rights (World Bank, 2020)
- There is therefore the need for all stakeholders involved in land issues present in this conference to champion the advocacy for the paradigm shift from sporadic system to SLTR.

The stakeholders needs to give strong support to the proposed Land Use Acts Regulation (2013) by PTCLR

- A paradigm shift from Sporadic to SLTR land registration system remains a panacea for a better land reform that will unlock the dead capital in land resources and enhance prosperity for all states in Nigeria.

THANKS

FOR YOUR ATTENTION

