

MINISTRY OF LANDS

Telephone& Fax: Kitale054-30024
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Ref. No TN/KTI/1735/37
and date



DEPARTMENT OF LANDS
T/NZOIA, W/POKOT & TURKANA
P.O BOX 620-30200,
KITALE

DATE: 11th January, 2012

The Programme Manager,
Contract No. DOT-1-00-08-00033-00-04 AID-0AA-TO-22-00014
Grant CHXELD002
Kenya Transition Initiative
ELDORET OFFICE.

RE: DOCUMENTATION AND SAFE GUARDING OF RECORDS- FINAL REPORT

The above subject refers.

The Kenya Transition Initiative (K.T.I.) and the Ministry of Lands Trans-Nzoia District represented by the District Lands Officer signed a Limited Scope Grant Agreement amounting to **KSHS 2,326,000** on **15th July, 2011** with an effective start date of **18th July, 2011** and concluding on **16th December, 2011**.

The main objective of the Grant was to facilitate documenting processes and the process review for the Ministry of Lands, Kitale.

The main activities which were funded by this grant were as follows:

- Preparation of a **USER GUIDE** that would systematize the work processes in a working document that would be a resource for staff and service users. In this regard, the Grant envisaged the engagement of a consultant as captured in the initial scope of work document prepared by KTI. Quite a major part of the grant budget actually covered this item which basically included the expenses due to the consultant, and the type setting and printing of the user guide.

Achievements:

This exercise was not conducted as a similar initiative had already been planned by the Ministry of Lands headquarters to come up with a standard document for the entire Ministry, and hence the same would have amounted to duplication.

- **INVENTORY TAKING** of all records within the four departments of the ministry. In this regard, a provision was made to hire interns from Kitale Technical Institute to assist in the actual inventory taking and inputting the same into excel worksheets. A new file indexing system would therefore be developed for each department. The idea behind the inventory taking was to facilitate a smooth and systematic move from the old offices scattered in various locations to the newly constructed ministry of Lands own building- Kitale Ardhi house.

Achievements:

- Inventory taking was successfully conducted for all the four departments. Through the facilitation of the grant, 10 NO Interns were engaged effective **15th August, 2011** up to **15th November 2011**. A stipend of **Kshs 6,000** was paid to each intern per month for the three months. All the documents, Files, Registers, Registry Index Maps, Development plans and all other relevant documents were entered into ledgers and systematically labeled and where necessary coded for easier identification and filing.
- All the closed correspondent files and all documents that were deemed expired and/or useless were separately categorized, listed and stored in cartons awaiting disposal once authorization has been obtained from the Director of National Archive.
- We introduced electronic data entry for both the contents of the ledgers as well as the contents of the Green Cards contained in the land registers. The Green Card is the most important document in the land information and management system as it contains all the pertinent information with regard to any registered parcel of land. We therefore developed a suitable database model to capture all the information as contained in our land registers. The IT officers from headquarters visited the office and approved of what we were doing, even acknowledging that ours was the very first attempt in the Ministry to create a soft copy version of the Green card. If the system becomes operational, it will be possible, amongst other things to undertake an official search of any land record on-line. As at **30th December, 2011**, a total of **16,961** electronic data entries had been made out of slightly over **200,000** green cards.
The immediate advantage of this process if it were to become fully operational would include:
 - Efficient data maintenance,
 - Security,
 - Electronic searching/checking of documents,
 - Improving turn-around times due to improved efficiency.
- By the time the interns' contract expired on **15th November, 2011** however, we had only managed to capture very few records due to lack of computers. I however managed to acquire 2 NO additional computers from headquarters and retained a few of the interns whom I have been personally paying to continue with the exercise, thus attaining the above quoted entries by the close of the year.
- The interns were also very instrumental in organizing, moving and undertaking the actual filing of documents and files in the Archive in the new Ardhi house. New filing racks were acquired from the head quarters for this purpose. Unlike our previous very small storage room which was very cramped and dusty, and where registers, files and other documents were stored in a haphazard manner, the new Archive is very spacious, airy and clean and documents have been arranged systematically in the newly acquired filing racks. This is all thanks to the interns, sourced through the very kind assistance of KTI, who did a very thorough job of sorting and arranging the files in the desired format.

- Overall the following No of Files were sorted and recorded in ledgers in the four Departments:
 - Lands Department: Approx. **150,000 documents** (this excludes green cards that are being electronically captured, which total approx. **200,000**)
 - Land Adjudication and Settlement Department: Approx. **12,000** Files
 - Survey Department: Approx. **1,500** Documents and files.
 - Physical Planning Department: Approx. **1,500** documents and files.
 - Appendix A of this report shows the condition of the Archive at the former offices while Appendix B shows the current status.
- **STAKEHOLDER FORUM** for Trans Nzoia County to discuss the emerging and other pertinent land issues, and the reforms currently taking place in the land sector. This was also envisaged to be a monthly dialogue forum. The stake holder forum was, like the preparation of user guide taking a substantial chunk of the grant budget.

Achievements

This did not take off as it was closely tied with the preparation of USER GUIDE as above described, and which would have involved the engagement of a consultant.

➤ **IMPROVEMENT OF RECORD MANAGEMENT IN THE LAND REGISTRY**

Although this was not originally captured in the grant budget, KTI introduced the idea of backing up important documents issued by the department to our customers, especially the TITLE DEED. The idea came about due to the fact that no copies of title deeds are filed in the registry, hence it is very difficult to authentic genuine title deeds issued by successive Land Registrars. This has resulted in a proliferation of fake titles, especially for land within Kitale municipality.

KTI also challenged the continued use of Kalamazoo binders to file the GREEN CARDS. The challenge is to come up with a better, user- friendly system that does not subject the cards to fast and excessive wear and tear as is currently the case. The kalamazoo binders are also exorbitantly priced, each costing in excess of KES 60,000, yet holding only about 1000 cards at the very most, are bulky and heavy to handle and consumes a lot of space. The use of the alternative box files, though cheap subjects the cards to even faster wear and tear especially due to the patching that has to be done in order to file.

Achievements:

KTI has purchased a photocopier cum scanner which will be used to scan all titles before they are issued. These will be stored as soft copies. Photocopies of the same will also be made and filed in respective parcel files for future reference. Both the soft and hard copies will be used as reference in the event of lost titles and/or dispute regarding duplication or suspicion of forgery. We anticipate starting on this programme as soon as we are connected to power in the new building, hopefully by end of January.

As part of the contribution towards modernizing the land registry, KTI has also purchased and delivered an executive office desk and chair for use by the District Lands Officer. This was a very kind gesture by KTI especially given that no furniture has been provided for the new office and what we had in the old offices, apart from being very old and unsightly, was grossly inadequate.

Appendix C shows the items already installed by KTI.

CHALLENGES:

- The overall achievement of the programme was generally hampered by lack of adequate equipment, especially computers and the requisite software. A lot more would have been achieved if the Ministry had enough computers and established software.
- Another major challenge is lack of computer skills on the part of ministry staff. Although most staff have undergone basic computer training, none has the requisite training and experience to develop and/or manage soft copy records of land registers.
- The development of an alternative card filing system that is acceptable to the Ministry, and one that can be adopted by other registries for standardization purposes.
- Lack of parcel files for use in filing documents pertaining to each registered parcel. This in effect means that documents for various parcels are mixed in one file and this makes retrieval difficult and time consuming.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- For the programme of computerization to continue and succeed, we need additional computers and the necessary workforce to convert all the Green Cards into soft copies. This will later be converted into a programming language, say My- SQL and interfaced using programmes like visual basic and fed into the land information management system.
- There is also need to enlighten staff on the Land Information Management System and give them the necessary computer training in order to adopt and sustain the use of the computers.
- There is need to procure parcel files to facilitate the separation of documents pertaining to each land parcel so that each can be filed separately.
- There is need for the ministry to role out and support the computerization programme in all districts in order to create harmony in dispensing our mandate.

Attached is a report by the interns covering the entire three months attachment period, the work done, challenges and recommendations.

FRANCIS N.P. KARIUKI
DISTRICT LANDS OFFICER,
TRANS NZOIA, W/POKOT & TURKANA

CC
Commissioner of Lands,
P. O. Box 30089,
NAIROBI.

**The Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Lands,
P.O. Box 30450,
NAIROBI.**

APPENDIX A- STATUS OF ARCHIVE BEFORE SORTING STARTED



Parcel files stored in no particular order- note land registers on table top



Land Registers and Files crammed in a small storage/Archive



Documents stored in the cramped Registry



Interns sorting the documents and entering into ledgers

APENDIX B- CURRENT STATUS



Sorted documents arranged in agreed format



Land Registers properly arranged



Land Registers and files



Additional Filing racks in the spacious archive

APPENDIX C- ITEMS INSTALLED BY KTI



Executive office desk and chair purchased by KTI



Photocopier cum Scanner purchased by KTI