

Electronic Land Registration: A Re-Engineering of Land Administration in Jamaica

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SUMMARY

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) aims to modernise land administration systems as a key part of its e-government objectives. The Electronic Registration Project (eTitles) supports the GOJ's goals for transparency, efficiency, and economic growth through digital governance. This initiative is a fundamental component of the National Land Agency's broader digital transformation programme under the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC). The ambitious plans of the NLA are expected to improve land registration processes through computerised and automated systems designed to enable online access to all land records, digital submission of survey files, automated checking and certification of survey plans, electronic land registration applications, and an enhanced customer service experience (Government of Botswana, 2011).

According to Tembo, Kampamba and Nkwae (2014), the transition from the current state to e-registration will face challenges. These include outdated legislation, the condition of the digital juridical cadastre, duplications in the workflow, siloed operations across various sectors of the NLA, geodetic reference issues, human resource capacity, and change management. Critical success factors for eTitles involve overcoming the cultural hurdle of proprietors holding a physical record of land interests being replaced by a digital file, authenticating this digital file, and addressing the perceptions of key stakeholders.

Williamson and Ting (2001) offered an insightful approach to the Jamaican venture, proposing that a conceptual model of choice should be based on the social fabric of the operating environment, which is shaped by factors such as technology and urbanisation. The consultant, FUJITSU Caribbean (Jamaica) Limited, conducted a comprehensive review of the NLA's processes, systems, workflow, operators, and infrastructure to prepare an inception report. This report, combined with a scoping activity involving the Land Titling and Survey Agency (LTSA) in British Columbia,

Canada, and a detailed future projection, will be integrated to define the project scope.

Dale and McLaughlin (1999) noted that Land Registration Systems fundamentally serve as a methodology for safeguarding proprietary rights, outlining the conditions and extent of land rights, as well as the alienation and transfer of property rights. The re-engineering of Jamaica's Land Registration system will be enthusiastically adopted to address the current challenges. The planned e-Titles system will bring both challenges and opportunities.