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MINISTRY OF LANDS, HOUSING
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In any correspondence on
this subject please quote No **ADM 184/276/01**

25th August 2025

All Chairpersons of Commissions,
All Permanent Secretaries,
All Resident District/ City Commissioners,
All Chief Administrative Officers,
All City/Town Clerks,
All Chief Executive Officers of State-Owned Enterprises and Public
Corporations,
All Chairpersons District/City Land Boards
All Secretaries District/City Land Boards

CIRCULAR NO. 1 OF 2025- GUIDELINES ON LANDS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1. These guidelines are issued in accordance with the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) mandated to ensure rational and sustainable land management, orderly urban and rural development, and adequate housing for all citizens.

1.2. The Ministry's mandate is achieved through formulating national policies, developing regulatory frameworks, setting standards and guidelines, and coordinating all matters related to Land, Housing and Urban Development in the Country.

2.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE CIRCULAR

2.1. The objective of this circular is to provide guidance on key policy and other emerging issues related to Lands, Housing and Urban Development in the Country.

3.0 KEY POLICY ISSUES

A. LAND SUB-SECTOR

(a) Decentralization of Ministry Services

3.1. The Ministry has decentralized all its services (land registration, physical planning, housing and urban development) to 22 Ministry Zonal Offices (MZOs) serving different regions and districts across the Country.

3.2. Operational Ministry Zonal Offices are:

1. Kampala MZO (serving Kampala Capital City Authority)
2. Wakiso Kyadondo MZO (serving Wakiso Kyadondo)
3. Wakiso Busiro MZO (serving Wakiso Busiro)
4. Mpigi MZO (serving Butambala, Gomba, and Mpigi Districts)
5. Mukono MZO (serving Mukono, Buikwe, Kayunga and Buvuma Districts)
6. Bukalasa MZO: (serving Luwero, Nakaseke and Nakasongola Districts)
7. Mityana MZO (serving Kiboga, Kyankwanzi, Mityana and Mubende Districts)
8. Masaka MZO (serving Bukomansimbi, Kalangala, Kalungu, Kyotera, Lwengo, Lyantonde, Masaka, Rakai and Sembabule Districts)
9. Masindi MZO (serving Buliisa, Hoima, Kiryandongo and Masindi Districts)
10. Kibaale MZO (serving Kagadi, kakumiro and Kibaale Districts)
11. Kabarole MZO (serving Bundibugyo, Bunyangabu, Kabarole, Kamwenge, Kasese, Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo and Ntoroko Districts)
12. Mbarara MZO (serving Buhweju, Bushenyi, Ibanda, Isingiro, Kiruhura, Mbarara, Mitooma, Ntungamo, Rubirizi and Sheema Districts)
13. Rukungiri MZO (serving Kanungu and Rukungiri Districts)
14. Kabale MZO (serving Kabale, Kisoro, Rubanda and Rukiga Districts)
15. Gulu MZO (serving Agago, Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, Lamwo, Nwoya, Omoro and Pader Districts)
16. Lira MZO (serving Alebtong, Amolatar, Apac, Dokolo, Kole, Lira, Otuke, and Oyam Districts)

17. Arua MZO (serving Adjumani, Arua, Koboko, Maracha, Moyo, Nebbi, Pakwach, Yumbe and Zombo Districts)
18. Soroti MZO (serving Amuria, Bukedea, Kaberamaido, Kapelebyong, Katakwi, Kumi, Ngora, Serere and Soroti Districts)
19. Moroto MZO (serving Abim, Amudat, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, Nakapiripirit and Napak Districts)
20. Jinja MZO (serving Bugiri, Buyende, Iganga, Jinja, Kaliro, Kamuli, Luuka, Mayuge, Namayingo and Namutumba Districts)
21. Tororo MZO (serving Budaka, Busia, Butaleja, Kibuku, Pallisa, and Tororo Districts)
22. Mbale MZO (serving Bududa, Bukwo, Bulambuli, Kapchorwa, Kween, Manafwa, Mbale and Sironko Districts)

3.3. The general public is encouraged to access all Ministry related services directly from the Ministry Zonal Offices (MZO). The MZO deliver services through an integrated conveyor belt system that encompasses Land Administration, Survey and Mapping, Physical Planning, Valuation and Land Registration functions.

3.4. For new land registration i.e. land which is not titled, it is recommended to secure approvals from Land Management Institutions (LMIs). The institutions include Area Land Committees, District Land Office, Physical Planning Committees and District/City Land Boards.

3.5. The functions of the Land Management Institutions are clearly spelt out in the Land Act, Cap. 236, sections 60, 65 and 68.

(b) Titling of Public, Institutional (Cultural/Traditional, Faith-based Organizations) and Government Land

3.6. The Ministry, through various interventions, has facilitated the titling of land for 133 Seed Schools and 178 Health Centre IVs under the Uganda Inter Governance Fiscal Transfer (UGIFT) and Uganda Secondary Education Expansion Project (USEEP) projects.

3.7. In this regard, Public and Government institutions are reminded to prioritize the titling of land under their jurisdictions. Institutions are encouraged to seek technical support and information from the Ministry Headquarters or Ministry Zonal Offices (MZO) whenever necessary.

3.8. For the Customary land owners holding Communal land, the Clans should be incorporated into legal entities that can hold, own and carry out land transactions as provided for under the law. The legal entities that are formed are called **Communal Land Associations (CLAs)**. The procedure for formation of CLAs can be obtained from the MZOs or the Ministry Headquarters.

3.9. Faith-based institutions that have untitled land are encouraged to submit applications for land titling to the MZOs so that they can be considered by the Ministry in the ongoing land registration projects across the Country.

3.10. Take note: The titling of land for seed schools and health centers does not result into transfer of land ownership i.e. from Faith-Based Organizations (FBO) to Government. The ownership of land remains with the Faith-Based Organization, but the user is indicated on the land title for purposes of ensuring that the land use remains for education or health services.

(c) Protection of Fragile and Protected Ecosystems

3.11. Protection against rampant allocation of land in fragile and protected/gazetted ecosystems (i.e., wetlands, forest reserves, etc.) by the Land Management Institutions is mandated under Article 237(2)(b) of the Constitution of Uganda, Sections 53 and 54 of the National Environment Act, Cap 181, Sections 44 and 45 of the Land Act Cap. 236, the Survey Act Cap. 241, Section 42 Registration of Titles Act Cap. 240 and the Physical Planning Act, Cap 142.

3.12. The Land Management Institutions are encouraged to seek information from the Ministry and other relevant organs of Government regarding the status of fragile and protected/gazetted ecosystems before allocation of land. All land applications fraudulently approved by the Land Management Institutions in fragile and protected/gazetted ecosystems shall be investigated and appropriate action taken. The LMIs shall be held culpable for violations in regard to allocation of land that are found to be in the fragile and protected/gazetted ecosystems across the Country.

3.13. The Ministry advises the public to desist from encroaching on the fragile and protected/gazetted ecosystems. Any investment in these areas shall be destroyed and proprietors held culpable.

(d) Allocation of Government Land to individuals/institutions by District/City Land Boards

3.14. In accordance with Section 60(1)(a) of the Land Act, Cap 236, District/City Land Boards are empowered “*to hold and allocate land in the district which is not owned by any person or authority.*” Therefore, the District/City Land Boards must sustainably manage and limit allocation of land that legally falls under their jurisdiction.

3.15. Local Governments should ensure that District/ City Land Boards are properly inducted on their roles and the associated penalties for overstepping their mandate. The District/City Land Boards are further advised to desist from allocation of land without carrying out due diligence in respect of the land applied for.

3.16. The Ministry shall continue to support District/City Land Boards with technical expertise from time to time to ensure transparency and efficiency in the execution of their mandates.

3.17. Courts have guided that currently, there is no more land in the District/City that is not owned by any other person or authority (titled or untitled), therefore, District/City Land Boards should focus on performing other functions assigned to them by law.

3.18. The District/City Land Boards are further cautioned to respect the protected/gazetted ecosystems when granting leases and allocating land.

(e) Expiry of Leases

3.19. The Ministry has observed that some District/City Land Boards have a habit of not informing the lessees the expiry of their leases in advance and they end up allocating the land to new lessees. In practice, priority should be given to the current occupant (lessee), provided they have complied with all the terms and conditions of the previous lease. The District/City Land Board should also ensure that the lessee is given at least two years’ notice prior to the expiry of the lease, in order to allow adequate time for renewal of the expired lease.

3.20. In case the current lessee breached the terms and conditions of the lease, the District/City Land Board has a mandate to allocate the land to any other person.

(f) Allocation of land by Uganda Land Commission (ULC)

3.21. The Uganda Land Commission (ULC) is mandated by law to manage and allocate land that is vested in or acquired by the Government of Uganda as provided under Article 238 of the Constitution of Uganda. Relatedly, section 50 of the Land Act, Cap. 236, empowers ULC to manage public land and land held by the Government.

3.22. However, it has been observed that sometimes ULC allocates land that is outside its mandate. Therefore, ULC should not allocate land that falls outside its legal jurisdiction, such as land that is vested in the District/City Land Boards or privately owned land. Any allocation of land by the ULC outside its mandate is unlawful and may be subject to legal challenge.

(g) Government Land inventory

3.23. Local Governments, State owned enterprises and public corporations are reminded of their obligation to submit an updated inventory of government land to the Ministry on an annual basis. The inventory should clearly indicate the status of the land under their jurisdiction, including both titled and untitled land. Regular submission of this information is essential for effective land management, planning, and safeguarding public assets. (see Annex 1: Reporting template format).

(h) Appointment of District/City Land Boards

3.24. The Constitution and the Land Act, Cap 236 provide for establishment of a District/City Land Board in every District/City and their respective functions and powers.

3.25. Local Governments are required to have operational District/City Land Boards through timely renewal or appointment of Board members, as per sections 57 and 59 of the Land Act, Cap. 236.

3.26. In the event that a District/City Land Board is expired and no successor Board has been appointed, the District/City should utilize the services of a nearby District/City Land Board as an interim measure to ensure continuity of service delivery.

(i) District/City Land Boards Sitzings and Submission of Minutes

3.27. In accordance with Section 63(3) of the Land Act, Cap. 236, the District/City Land Boards are required to meet for the discharge of their

functions at least once in every two(2) months at such places and times as the chairperson may appoint. All District/City Land Boards are required to hold meetings at least once every quarter.

3.28. Boards are also required to submit the Minutes of the meetings to the Ministry two (2) weeks after their adoption. This requirement ensures transparency, accountability and effective oversight in land administration and management. Boards are expected to comply with this requirement.

(j) Boundary conflicts

i. Administrative units

3.29. Section 7A(6) of the Local Governments Act, Cap. 138, provides for the definition and demarcation of the boundaries of a new administrative unit.

3.30. The National Urban Policy (2017) underscores the importance of integrated planning and clear boundary definition for prevention of conflicts and promotion of orderly development.

3.31. To address the issues of increasing boundary disputes and conflicts between neighboring administrative units, there is need for comprehensive mapping, surveying and physical demarcation of all local government boundaries across the Country.

3.32. In light of the above, Local Governments are hereby requested to notify the Ministry through the Ministry of Local Government of any existing or potential boundary disputes/conflicts within their jurisdiction. The information will help the Ministry in planning for;

1. Boundary verification and dispute assessment.
2. Technical surveying and mapping exercise.
3. Physical boundary demarcation; and
4. Preparation of boundary maps and datasets.

ii. Gazzeted Wildlife conservation areas

3.33. Boundary disputes between local communities and the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) often arise due to unclear or contested demarcations of protected areas such as national parks, wildlife reserves, and forest reserves. Where there is doubt or dispute as to the boundary of a wildlife conservation area, the Uganda Wildlife Authority should in consultation with the Commissioner for Surveys and Mapping and the relevant local government, cause the boundary to be surveyed, demarcated and marked.



3.34. Local Governments are hereby requested to formally notify the Ministry of any existing or potential boundary disputes within their jurisdiction.

iii. International borders

3.35. International border disputes arise when there are disagreements regarding the precise location of boundaries between neighboring countries, and their resolution is guided by both international and national legal frameworks. Some of the legal frameworks include the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, Article 123 (regarding treaties and agreements on international boundaries); the Uganda National Security Act (provisions on territorial integrity and border security); the African Union Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention) 2014, Article 4; the East African Community Protocol on Peace and Security, Article 3(2)(d); the Survey Act, Cap. 241 among others.

3.36. Uganda has currently reaffirmed and demarcated 21.4% of its international boundaries. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is collaborating with other Ministries and Government agencies, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Uganda Peoples Defence Forces, Office of the President, and the Ministry of East African Community Affairs to continue with the process of reaffirming and demarcating its borders with the neighboring countries.

3.37. The reaffirmation of international borders is done through bilateral technical and political engagements, such as joint border commissions. The goal of reaffirming and maintaining the borders is to resolve cross-border disputes, improve security cooperation, and ensure orderly border management.

3.38. Local Governments in border areas are encouraged to promote peaceful coexistence and good neighborliness among communities, peaceful dispute resolution as well as formal reportage of any existing or potential international boundary disputes to the Ministry.

3.39. Communities along the borders are also encouraged to cooperate with the Ministry and other authorities during the process of reaffirming the borders.

(k) Land Brokers and Agents

3.40. The Ministry has noted with concern there are some land brokers and agents who masquerade as Ministry staff and they end up fleecing the unsuspecting public lots of money. Land brokers and agents need to know that impersonation which involves misrepresenting oneself as a public officer or engaging in fraudulent activities is a criminal offence and punishable in accordance with Section 17 of the Anti-corruption Act Cap 116, and Section 305 of the Penal Code Act Cap 128.

3.41. The Ministry is also in the final stages of developing a legal framework for the real estate sector that is intended to regulate the activities of land agents and brokers.

3.42. The public is advised to seek services only from authorized agents and official government offices dealing with land matters, such as the Ministry headquarters, Ministry Zonal Offices, District Land Offices, or dedicated government One-stop centers. For assistance or verification, the public is advised to contact the Ministry through its toll-free customer care helpline: 0800-100-000.

3.43. Ministry staff are encouraged to put on the Ministry corporate wear and display their work IDs all time during working hours for easy identification. Any member of the public dealing with an unauthorized person shall do so at their own risk and the Ministry shall not be liable for any loss/damage caused.

(l) Protection of Citizens Property

i. Illegal /forceful land evictions

3.44. Article 26(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, provides that every person has a right to own property either individually or in association with others. The right can either be registered or unregistered. While article 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides for a right to fair hearing.

3.45. Section 33 of the Land Act, Cap. 236 prohibits forceful or unlawful evictions of lawful or bona fide occupants. The law provides that any eviction must be sanctioned by a court order, after both parties have been heard and with at least six months' notice given.

3.46. The Ministry developed Land Eviction Guidelines to further guide the process of land evictions. The guidelines are intended to ensure that all evictions are conducted in a transparent and within the legal framework.

3.47. Evictions conducted outside legal procedures are deemed illegal and constitute a criminal offence. All individuals and authorities must therefore respect the due process and the rights of land occupants. Anyone involving him/herself in illegal or forceful land evictions will be held accountable and prosecuted as per the law.

ii. Land grabbing

3.48. Land grabbing, especially against vulnerable and indigent persons, is strictly prohibited under the Land Act, Cap. 236. The Act protects lawful and bona fide occupants from unlawful deprivation of their land, and any acts of land grabbing are a criminal offence. All individuals and authorities must respect the rights of vulnerable land occupants, and those found with the habit of land grabbing will be prosecuted in accordance with the law.

3.49. The public is encouraged to report all cases of land grabbing and illegal or forceful evictions to the relevant authorities, including the District Security Committee, Police, and the Ministry for investigation. All those found culpable should be held accountable in accordance with the law.

(m) Protection of Landlord-Tenant relationships

3.50. The Land Act, Cap. 236, under Sections 31, 34, and 35, provides for tenants protection and enjoyment of uninterrupted use and occupation of the land they occupy. The law requires the tenants to pay annual nominal ground rent (Busuulu) to the landlords, which rent is determined by the District Land Boards or the Minister incharge of lands. The Land Act further provides that the only ground for evicting a tenant is non-payment of the annual nominal ground rent (Busuulu).

3.51. The Ministry noted with concern that there are some landlords who reject or refuse Busuulu on account that it is too little and yet for them they would prefer to charge economic Busuulu. But also there are incidents where the landlords are absent or not known to the tenants and this poses a challenge to the tenants who to pay Busuulu to.

3.52. In order to safeguard the tenants rights, in case of landlords who are absent or reject or refuse Busuulu, The Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development issued a Statutory Instrument No. 2 of 2025 on the Land (Annual Nominal Ground Rent) (Amendment) Regulations, 2025, which provide for depositing of Busuulu on a designated bank account. The deposit of Busuulu on that bank account will act as proof of payment in case of absentee landlords or landlords who reject or refuse Busuulu.

3.53. The Ministry further issued guidelines on depositing Busuulu on the designated bank account. Tenants are required to obtain approval for depositing Busuulu on the designated bank account from the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. The details of the requirements are contained in the guidelines which can be accessed from the Ministry Headquarters, Ministry Zonal Offices, District Offices (LC V Chairperson, RDC, CAO and Land Office) and on the Ministry website; www.mlhud.go.ug.

3.54. *Take Note:* The payment of Busuulu is done using the URA portal, where a Personal Reference Number (PRN) is generated to enable the tenant to pay Busuulu.

(n) Protection of the National Geodetic Network

3.55. The Government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development has established a modern geodetic reference frame - The Uganda Geodetic Reference Frame (UGRF), which aligns with regional and international standards. This marks a major milestone in the development of Uganda's spatial data infrastructure and contributes significantly to enhancing land administration, promoting secure land tenure, and supporting national development priorities.

3.56. The UGRF comprises forty (40) Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) and four hundred twenty-six (426) passive geodetic control stations, strategically distributed throughout the Country, including within your local jurisdiction. The stations form part of the core national infrastructure that underpins accurate positioning and georeferencing, modern mapping and cadastral surveying, navigation and smart infrastructure development, precision agriculture and mining operations, environmental monitoring and disaster risk management, and scientific research and innovation.

3.57. The integrity of this infrastructure is of paramount importance and as such geodetic control points and CORS installation sites must be strictly safeguarded from; physical damage, encroachment and land grabbing, unauthorized relocation or modifications, vandalism or deliberate interference.

3.58. Any tampering, destruction, or misuse of these stations and Geodetic control points constitutes an offense and attract legal and administrative sanctions in accordance with the provisions of the Survey Act, Cap 241 and other relevant laws of Uganda.

3.59. To ensure the sustainability and functionality of the geospatial reference system, the Senior Land Management Officers and District Staff Surveyors are hereby directed to:

1. Sensitize local leaders and communities on the value of the installations.
2. Routinely monitor the status of geodetic and CORS stations within their jurisdictions.
3. Prepare and submit comprehensive quarterly status reports on the geodetic network to the Commissioner for Surveys and Mapping.

3.60. The general public is therefore called upon to take collective responsibility in protecting and preserving these critical national infrastructure.

(o) Private land surveying

3.61. The Government of Uganda adopted a policy where it privatized land surveying. However, the Ministry noted with concern the high costs of land surveying charged by private surveyors and came up with interventions aimed at reducing the high costs. Some of the interventions include:

1. Establishment of Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) and Geodetic Networks across the Country.
2. Strengthening the Surveyors Registration Board so as they can be able to regulate the survey fees.
3. Commenced the review of the Survey Act and Surveyors Registration Act to address the emerging issues in the survey and mapping functions
4. Implementation of a Systematic Land Adjudication and Certification (SLAAC) Program across the Country. Over 400,000 parcels have so far been adjudicated and demarcated out of which over 180,000 land titles

have been processed and issued to beneficiaries in the districts of Rwampara, Kikuube, Isingiro, Ibanda, Oyam, Apac, Mbarara, Kiruhura, Sheema, Ntungamo, Luuka, Mayuge, Namutumba, Jinja, Maracha and Kamuli. Others are Kamwenge, Kiryandongo, Lamwo, Yumbe, Adjumani, Terego and Obongi.

5. Provided 12 sets of GNSS surveying equipment, 12 computers, and 12 motorcycles to the local governments of Rukiga, Kitagwenda, Kikuube, Nakaseke, Sembabule, Mityana, Nebbi, Kwanja, Napak, Buyende, Kapchorwa, and Amuria to scale up subsidized land titling efforts. The equipment is to be used exclusively for land management activities, and each local government should allocate a budget for routine maintenance.

3.62. The Ministry urges members of the public to organise themselves preferably as communities to approach the Ministry and request for the use of the services of Government surveyors stationed at MZOs and Districts to be able to survey and title their land.

(p) Compilation of compensation rates by District and City Land Boards

3.63. Section 60(1)(e) of the Land Act Cap 236, provides that District and City Land Boards are responsible for compiling compensation rates payable in respect of crops, buildings of a nonpermanent nature and any other thing that may be prescribed. Still the Land Act under section 60(6), mandates the Board to compile a list of rates of compensation in consultation with the technical officers in the district including a Valuer.

3.64. The Ministry has over time noted and observed that Districts and Cities have not recruited Valuers as prescribed in the Land Act. This creates a gap in the determination and compilation of compensation of rates and in some instances neighbouring districts have determined different rates for the same crops.

3.65. The Ministry urges District and City Land Boards to request for a representative from the office of the Chief Government Valuer (CGV) to provide technical guidance during the determination and compilation of compensation rates.

3.66. The District compensation rates should be submitted to the Office of Chief Government Valuer (CGV) within 2 weeks after adoption by the Board

for validation and thereafter final compensation rates will be issued to the public for use during land acquisition.

(q) Land acquisition for Government Projects

3.67. The Government is implementing a robust program for infrastructure projects across the Country. However, there are instances where there are delayed land acquisitions for Government projects arising out of lack of proper coordination.

3.68. The Ministry encourages all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), and Local Governments with land acquisition needs to submit their requirements early enough to enable the Ministry undertake rapid physical planning, gazettelement for Right of Way (RoW) and undertake valuation for compensation purposes in accordance with Articles 26 and 237 of the Constitution.

(r) Contestation of Valuation reports

3.69. The Government through its development agenda prioritized infrastructure development as one of the drivers for sustainable development. The Constitution under articles 237(2)(a) and 26 empowers the Government or local government to acquire land compulsorily if the land is to be used for public interest.

3.70. There have been instances where the Chief Government Valuer (CGV) returns a value on a property and is contested by the property owner that it is not fair and adequate. In turn, the property owner hires a private valuer to assess the value of the property. At times, the two values returned by the CGV and the private valuer are at variance and this has sometimes caused delays in the implementation of Government infrastructure projects.

3.71. To address concerns about fairness and adequacy, the Ministry has undertaken the following initiatives;

1. Carried out nationwide market research to compile up-to-date market values, ensuring that compensation reflects fair market prices.
2. Developed National Valuation Standards and Guidelines
3. Developed the Valuation Bill, which is currently before Parliament for enactment into law
4. Developed the Land Valuation Management Information System (LAVMIS), which is being piloted in six (6) Ministry Zonal Offices

(MZOs) of Arua, Gulu, Lira, Jinja, Mukono and Kibaale as well as the Headquarters before complete roll out to other MZOs.

3.72. The LAVMIS covers all statutory valuation services performed by the Chief Government Valuer, which include; stamp duty on transfer of immovable property (land), rental of premises by government, sale or purchase of property by Government, compensation assessments, determination or revision of terms (premium and ground rent), capital gains tax assessments, property rating by Local Government, assurance of tax levy by Commissioner Land Registration and Courts, asset valuation for financial reporting among others.

3.73. Members of the public with assets in the pilot MZOs are encouraged to log in and upload their instructions on the LAVMIS where they will be able to conveniently track the valuation process using the transaction number automatically assigned to them by LAVMIS. The Ministry will keep the public posted when the LAVMIS is finally rolled out to all the MZOs.

(s) Local Government Conditional Grants for Land Management and Physical Planning functions

3.74. The Ministry has noted with concern that a number of Local Governments do not allocate sufficient budgets for physical planning and land management functions, yet these functions are some of the revenue sources for local governments.

3.75. In order to support the Local Governments, the Government through the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban development came up with two grants, one for land management and the other for physical planning.

3.76. The Ministry has piloted a Land Management Grant under UgIFT in 12 Local Governments namely: Rukiga, Kitagwenda, Kikuube, Nakaseke, Sembabule, Mityana, Nebbi, Kwanja, Napak, Buyende, Kapchorwa, and Amuria. These Local Governments are reminded to strictly adhere to the grant guidelines and submit quarterly progress reports detailing the utilization of the grant using the provided reporting template.

3.77. Due to limited funding, a Physical Planning Grant has been provided to 40 Local governments of Mubende, Luwero, Mityana, Rakai, Nakaseke, Tororo, Mayuge, Kamuli, Bugiri, Bududa, Oyam, Nwoya, Kole, Agago, Lira, Soroti, Serere, Kumi, Alebtong, Moroto, Rukungiri, Kisoro, Kanungu, Kabarole, Kasese, Kakumiro, Isingiro, Ntungamo, Ibanda, Bundibugyo,

Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo, Kagadi, Kikuube, Bunyangabu, Yumbe, Nebbi, Sheema, Koboko, and Maracha. These Local Governments are reminded to strictly adhere to the grant guidelines and submit quarterly progress reports detailing the utilization of the grant using the provided reporting template. More Local Governments will be included on the list of beneficiaries when the budget for the grant is enhanced.

3.78. All Local Governments are reminded to budget and allocate adequate resources for implementation of decentralised services of land management and physical planning

(t) Fees charged by Area Land Committees

3.79. The Ministry has noted concerns regarding the exorbitant and unauthorized fees being charged by Area Land Committees. According to Section 67 of the Land Act, Cap. 236, all expenses incurred by or on behalf of the committee shall be charged on the district administration funds.

3.80. District Councils are reminded to set clear standards and guidelines for the operations of the Area Land Committees, particularly during locus visits, and to ensure that any costs to applicants remain within the limits prescribed by law and therefore should not be prohibitive.

3.81. Any additional fees or demands for facilitation or solicitations from applicants by the committees are prohibited and should be handled within the existing anti-corruption frameworks.

(u) Timelines for processing of applications by Land Management Institutions

3.82. The Ministry has observed delays in the approval of files by the various land management institutions (Uganda Land Commission, District Land Boards, District Land Offices, Physical Planning Committees and Area Land committees) and yet there are clear timelines for processing applications.

3.83. All land management institutions should adhere to the stipulated timelines and where need be should fast-track the approval of files and ensure that all processes are completed within a period of three (3) months.

B. HOUSING SUB-SECTOR

(a) Implementation of the Housing mandate and functions in Local Governments

3.84. The housing function is not fully decentralized at the Local Government level. However, District/City Engineers, Physical Planners and Community Development Officers play a supportive role in the implementation of housing-related activities at the local level. The Ministry continues to provide guidance to Local Governments through the dissemination of housing policies, regulations, standards, guidelines and prototype house plans.

3.85. All local governments are urged to forward any housing related issues or challenges to the Ministry for guidance and appropriate action.

3.86. The Ministry further encourages all local governments to prioritize and integrate housing issues into their infrastructure plans and budgets.

3.87. All Local Governments are encouraged to designate an officer to be in charge of housing matters whom the Ministry shall deal with on matters of housing.

(b) Land for Affordable Housing Projects in Local Governments

3.88. There is a growing housing crisis in the country, resulting in a range of challenges including development of slums, development of informal settlements, increasing rental prices that exclude low-income earners, among others. This is adversely affecting the health, productivity, and competitiveness of local governments and urban areas.

3.89. In response to this challenge, the Ministry has embarked on a countrywide exercise of identifying suitable land for the construction of affordable housing projects for key categories including public servants, slum dwellers and low & middle-income housing which will be implemented in collaboration with respective Local Governments and the private sector.

3.90. The Ministry requests Local Governments to identify and set aside land for this purpose and submit details of the identified land including status of titling within 3 months from the date of issuing of this circular.

(c) Proliferation of slums and informal settlements

3.91. Section 3 of the Physical Planning Act, Cap 142 declared the entire Country a planning area. This implies that all developments on land should be approved by the physical planning committee. Section 36(1) of the Physical Planning Act, Cap 124, states that no person shall carry out any development within the area of a local physical development plan without development permission issued by the relevant physical planning committee. To strengthen

enforcement, the Cabinet under minute no. 237(CT 2022) dated 18th July 2022 approved a special unit under the Land Use Regulation, Compliance and Enforcement Department. This unit will begin issuing notices to condemn and demolish any infrastructure found to be in violation of physical planning.

3.92. Section 34(1) of the Building Control Act Cap 136, prohibits any person from carrying out any building operation unless he or she has a valid building permit issued by a building committee. This means that all construction activities must be authorized by the relevant authorities, and any building operation undertaken without a valid permit is illegal and subject to enforcement action under the law.

3.93. All Local Governments are therefore reminded to refrain from approving developments that do not comply with the set standards, guidelines and building codes.

3.94. The Ministry will soon embark on issuance of notices to condemn and demolish any infrastructure found to be in violation of the law and Local Governments are expected to enforce the legal provisions.

(d) Protection of House Landlord-Tenants relationships

3.95. The Landlord and Tenant Act, Cap 238 was designed to create a fair and transparent framework for renting premises. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of both landlords and tenants, and aims at reducing disputes and promotion of mutual respect for both the landlords and tenants.

3.96. Local authorities should support communities in compliance with the law through sensitization, enforcement, conflict resolution and providing feedback to the Ministry.

3.97. Landlords and tenants are reminded to adhere to their respective roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Act and any violation of the Act should be reported to the relevant authorities.

(e) Management of Condominium Plans and Developments

3.98. The Condominium Properties Act, Cap 234 and Regulations, 2002 were enacted by the government to provide for individual ownership of units in multi story buildings in order to promote efficient use of land and nucleated settlements.

3.99. All Condominium Plans must be registered with the Registrar of Titles in accordance with the law.

3.100. No Condominium Plan should be approved without evidence of having obtained physical planning and building approvals. The submission from the developer should include copies of previously approved documents to confirm compliance.

3.101. Additionally, every Condominium Plan should be accompanied by a letter of clearance from the Condominium Vetting Committee under the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. The role of the Committee is to review the plans to ensure that they have been prepared in accordance with the requirements for titling as stipulated under law. This is intended to avoid ownership disputes and conflicts that may arise in future.

3.102. No local Authority should approve a condominium plan without evidence of clearance from the Vetting Committee.

3.103. Any challenges faced in the creation and management of condominium properties should be referred to the Ministry for guidance.

C. PHYSICAL PLANNING SUB-SECTOR

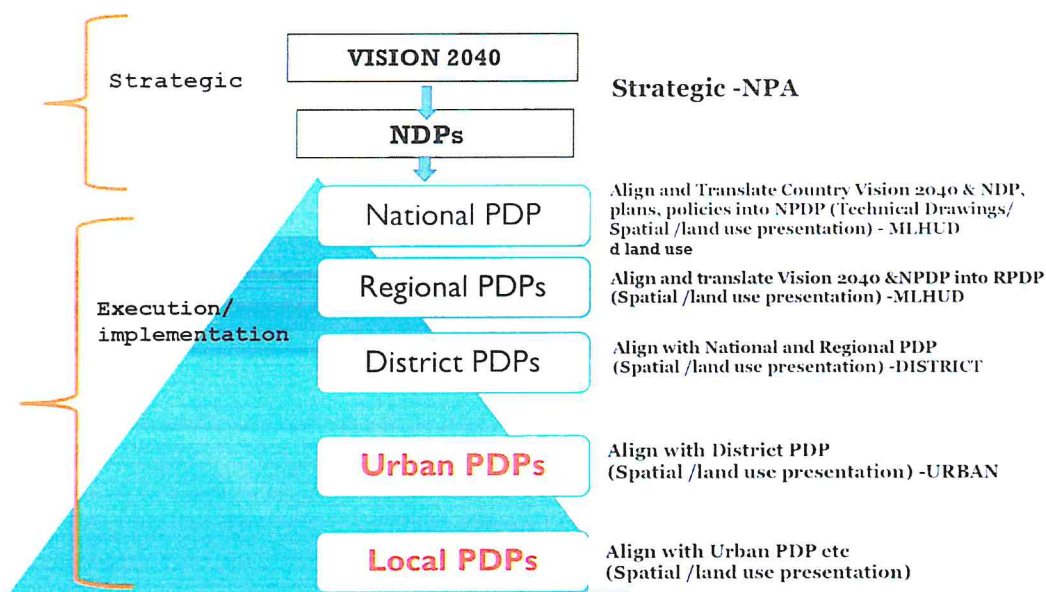
(a) Physical Planning Mandate in the Country

3.104. During the Rationalization of Agencies and Public Expenditure (RAPEX) exercise, the Government transferred the physical planning function from the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development to the National Planning Authority. However, during implementation of the Government decision, challenges were experienced and H.E the President guided that the physical planning function should be returned to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development.

3.105. The process of amending the Physical Planning Act, Cap 142 has commenced with a view of returning the physical planning function to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and urban Development as guided by H.E the President.

3.106. All Local Governments and the public are hereby informed that the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is mandated to provide

guidance on all policy, legal and operational matters concerning physical planning in the Country. For avoidance of doubt, the globally related Physical Planning hierarchy and practice is illustrated below:



(b) Declaration of urban centers without Physical Development Plans

3.107. Section 7 of the Local Governments Act, Cap 138 gives the Minister of Local Government authority to declare an area as an urban authority such as a Municipality or Town Council upon the recommendation of the District Council. The Act further stipulates that such recommendations and declarations should be consistent with both national and district physical development plans.

3.108. All Local Governments should ensure that before an area is declared an urban authority, there must be an approved physical development plan corresponding to the urban authority to be declared. This approach promotes orderly urban development and efficient service delivery, as prescribed in relevant policy and legal frameworks.

(c) Prioritization of physical planning by Local Governments

3.109. Physical Planning function is a decentralized function which is managed by Local Governments. This means that local governments are responsible for preparing and implementing physical development plans within their jurisdictions, while the Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development is responsible for policy formulation, developing the legal

framework, setting standards, monitoring and evaluation and providing technical support in regard to physical planning.

3.110. Local Governments are encouraged to prioritize the development of physical development plans and budget for physical planning interventions in annual budgets and work plans. This is essential for ensuring orderly development, efficient land use and sustainable growth of urban and rural areas in line with national and district development objectives.

(d) Enforcement of compliance to physical development plans

3.111. All developments within local government jurisdictions must conform to approved physical development plans, as per Sections 34 to 42 of the Physical Planning Act, Cap 142. Physical Planning Committees are empowered under Sections 52 and 53 of the Physical Planning Act, cap 142 to enforce compliance, issue enforcement notices, and take remedial action where necessary. The Local Governments Act, Cap 138 provides that land use and urban development should be managed in line with national and district development plans.

3.112. All Local Governments are encouraged to prioritize enforcement of physical planning related laws and report noncompliance to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development and other relevant agencies, to ensure orderly and sustainable development.

3.113. The Ministry is soon embarking on issuance of Certificate of Compliance to physical planning to each local government as per section 55 of the Physical Planning Act, Cap 142.

(e) Performance reporting of the Physical Planning Committees

3.114. Section 106 of the Local Government Act, Cap 138 provides that line Ministries shall inspect, monitor and where necessary offer technical advise, support, supervision and training within their respective sectors for purposes of implementing national policies and adherence to performance standards on the part of local governments.

3.115. To ensure compliance, Physical Planning Committees are reminded to prepare quarterly performance reports and submit them to the Ministry to enable monitoring and assessment of their performance.

D. URBAN DEVELOPMENT SUB-SECTOR

(a)Waste Management in Urban Areas

3.116. The National Urban Policy (2017), requires urban authorities to ensure effective and sustainable solid waste management systems that promote a clean, healthy and productive urban environment.

3.117. To support local governments in the management of waste, the Ministry procured waste management facilities, including 22 garbage trucks and waste bins, for Cities and Municipalities to ensure proper garbage collection and safe disposal. The Ministry also supported local governments to prepare Waste Management Strategies.

3.118. Local governments are required to implement Waste Management Strategies and to identify or acquire land for establishment of waste management facilities.

3.119. Local governments are required to submit to the Ministry a report on waste management to facilitate the Ministry's evaluation of the necessary scale and type of interventions for waste management under the Uganda Support to Cities and Municipalities Infrastructure Development Program, which will soon be implemented.

3.120. Local governments are also required to submit quarterly data on waste production, collection, and disposal to the Ministry for proper planning and support to local governments.

(b) Outdoor Advertisements in Cities and Municipalities

3.121. City and Town Councils are encouraged to enact ordinances to regulate outdoor advertisements and to establish appropriate fees structures for each category of advertising. This measure is intended to enhance local revenue generation.

(c) Maintenance of USMID investments in Cities and Municipalities

3.122. The Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, through the Uganda Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development (USMID) Project, constructed standard urban infrastructure including roads, markets, abattoirs, playgrounds, bus parks and street lights in 10 Cities of Mbarara, Gulu, Arua, Lira, Hoima, Fort Portal, Jinja, Mbale, Soroti, and Masaka, and 12 Municipalities of Lugazi, Mubende, Kamuli, Kasese, Tororo, Kitgum, Entebbe, Apac, Busia, Moroto, Kabale, and Ntungamo.

3.123. Cities and Municipalities are encouraged to allocate adequate budgets for the maintenance of the infrastructure that was constructed with support of USMID in order to prolong the useful life of the assets and achieve their intended objective of supporting the socio-economic transformation of the urban economy.

(d) Status of Uganda Cities and Municipality Infrastructure Development

3.124. The Ministry has developed a successor project to the Uganda Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development (USMID) initiative, known as the Uganda Cities and Municipal Infrastructure Development (UCMID) Program. The development objective of UCMID is to scale up urban infrastructure development, enhance urban competitiveness, and strengthen the capacity of Cities and Municipalities across the Country.

3.125. The UCMID Program is currently at the negotiation stage and will be funded by the World Bank. The project features an expanded scale and scope, with a total investment of USD 750 million, and is structured to achieve comprehensive coverage of all Municipalities and Cities in the Country.

4.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

(a) Partnership between the Ministry, Development Partners and Civil Society Organizations

4.1. The Ministry strongly encourages non-state actors particularly Civil Society Organisations and Development partners operating in the land sector, to ensure that they enter into formal partnerships with the Ministry by signing Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), clearly outlining Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in their areas of interest. The Ministry has a clear procedure on how partners can enter into formal MOUs.

4.2. Local governments are advised to verify the status of civil society organizations dealing in land in their respective jurisdictions whether they possess duly signed MOUs with the Ministry.

(b) Corruption tendencies in provision of Ministry services

4.3. The Ministry's management has been approached by some clients that some of the Ministry staff are involved in corruption tendencies of asking bribes before they can be served. These tendencies reflect badly on the image of the Ministry, thus affecting service delivery to the public.

4.4. The Ministry has taken the necessary steps to wipe out the corruption tendencies amongst the staff. Some of the initiatives include;

1. Adoption of the open door policy in offices.
2. Installation of cameras in offices with audio capabilities.
3. Undertaking disciplinary action
4. Interdiction of officers on the recommendation of IGG or those charged in courts of law
5. Cooperating with relevant anti-corruption agencies
6. Designation of the Department of Land Inspectorate (Land Administration) to internally handle all corruption reported cases to the Ministry.

4.5. The Ministry urges the public to reject, avoid and immediately report any demands for bribes, facilitation fees, or irregular payments to the Office of Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development; the Inspectorate of Government (IGG), or Police for investigation and appropriate action.

(c) Ministry Service Standards and Client Charter

4.6. The Ministry's services, timelines and the requisite fees charged for the various services offered by the Ministry are clearly stipulated in the Client Charter. A copy of the Charter can be accessed online on the Ministry's website (www.mlhud.go.ug).

4.7. The public is urged to pay only the official fees as stipulated in the Ministry Clients Charter. The public is also urged to report any Ministry staff who ask for unofficial fees to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development using any of the following channels.

i Physically deliver the complaint to;

Century Building

P.O Box 7096, Kampala

Plot 13/15 Parliament Avenue

ii. Email: mlhud@mlhud.go.ug

(d) Ministry Helplines

4.8 For any inquires, the following are the official Ministry communication channels

Toll free line: 0800-100-004

Website: <https://www.mlhud.go.ug>

Online land services portal: <https://www.ugnlis.mlhud.go.ug>

4.9 The Public is also advised to visit the Ministry Zonal Offices for any assistance.



Dorcas W. Okalany (Mrs.)

PERMANENT SECRETARY

Cc: The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister

“ All Hon.Ministers

“ All Hon. Ministers of State

“ The Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet

“ The Deputy Head of Public Service and Deputy Secretary to Cabinet

“ The Deputy Head of Public Service in charge of Performance and Service

Delivery

“ The Permanent Secretary and Secretary to the Treasury, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

“ The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government

“ The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Service

“ The Solicitor General, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs

“ The Chairperson, Local Government Finance Commission

“ The Secretary, Uganda Land Commission

“ The Chairperson, Inter-Religious Council

“ All Cultural/Traditional leaders

Annex 1: Reporting template for land inventory

Local Government Name:

Date:

S/ N	Description and Location	Land Use Type: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing/Residential buildings• Non-Residential/Offices• Agriculture• Undeveloped• Open spaces	Titled/Not Titled	Area in Ha	Block and Plot Number