AN EXAMINATION OF LAND REGISTRATION IN LAFIA, NASARAWA NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Land in Lifia and in Nigeria has generally been a subject of controversy. Land acquisition and registration is faced with many problems because there is a constant increase in population. Also the government of the country does not assist in making easy the means of land acquisition in the country. This research work examines the land acquisition procedure in Lafia, Nasarawa state capital. Relevant concepts on land acquisition were examined. Data was collected from estate agents, workers in ministry of land and planning. The data collected was analysis by the use of table through the use of descriptive statistics.

Key Words: Land, Registration, titling, Land acquisition, Lafia Estate Agents, Ministry of Lands and Planning.

INTRODUCTION

The social, economic and political condition of any nation of the world depends on land. No human being can stay alive without land. Land is the most important natural resources that are available for humans. It is with great difficulty before human beings can be made to part with their land due to the fact that humans attach great significance to land ownership. All over the world, there are great immeasurable quantities of land, yet having right to use such land as being very difficult. As a result of urbanization and improved standard of living, people are constantly seeking for land which they will develop there by leading to constant land acquisition problem. Through statutory right of occupancy, the government of every nation controls the way and manner in which land acquisitions, registration and development take place. The system of land ownership has in general made land acquisition to be very difficult; the fact that the land tenure system in the nation is dual in nature has made land acquisition to be very difficult in Nigeria. Udo (1990) The land use decree of 1978 also known as the land use Act Of 1978 made an attempt to solve the problems of land acquisition in Nigeria but instead of solving land acquisition problems has rather Contributed to land (Mabogunje, 2002):

CONCEPT OF LAND

The following concept of land has been developed over the years

1. Physical concept
   This concept sees land in term of its physical attributes. Land means the physical surface of the earth, it can also be seen as the part of the earth terrain in which men and animals live on. It is made up of the total earth crust and the total inner substances that are under the earth. It also includes the sea, river, air and space.

2. Social political concept of land
   This concept of land sees land as a group of people, tribe, nation or continent. It defined land in term of its social political unit such as the Yorubas, the Nigerians and the Africans.

3. Abstract concept of land
   This concept sees land as an inanimate object that cannot be toughed. It refers to the right and interest that is inherent in the ownership of land.

CHARACTERISTIC OF LAND

The following are the main characteristic of land

1. Fixity of location
   Land is immobile, it cannot be moved from one place to another, and hence landed property cannot be literally moved from Lafia to Lagos or Jos.

2. Limited physical supply
The physical supply of land means the total land that is available in a particular place. The supply of land is limited physically; hence it is difficult if not impossible to increase the quantity of land that is available in a particular place.

3. Heterogeneity
Land is heterogeneous in nature; no two plots of land can ever be the same no matter how close they may be to each other.

4. Durability
Land is durable in nature, this makes land cannot be destroyed. An acquired land can be passed down to many generations.

Land allocation in Nigeria
In the communal land ownership, the right to allocate land for various uses is under the control of the chiefs and family head of that particular community. This system of land allocation does not promote the rapid growth of most communities in Nigeria; hence, there was need for another system of land allocation in the country. Section 2(2) of the land use Act of 1978 made it mandatory for every state in the country to establish a body that is known as LAND Use and allocation committee (LUAC). Section 5 of the Act also made it compulsory for every local government area in the country to set up similar body that is known as land allocation and adversary committee. Adedeji (2008)

LAND REGISTRATION
This is the record that that is kept in the land registry. This record list the registered owner of a plot of land, it is also the process of recording interest on land through deed or title registration of land. Land registration in Nigeria was first introduced in Lagos in 1863. In Nigeria, there are three basic system of land recording, they are as explained below
1. By private conveyance
2. By registration of Title
3. Registration of Deed

IMPORTANCE OF LAND REGISTRATION
Land registration is very important because it’s helped governments to determine record and circulate information regarding the ownership, value and the type of use in which land is being put in to use. Dale (2007). Land registration is importance to the government of any nation because of the following reasons:
1. Its enable the government to be able to manage very important natural resources.
2. Its enable government through law to be able to control the real estate and land market.
3. It gives security to both national and international investors as well as the financial sector of the nation.
4. It is important to land market development because it assists labour mobility.
5. It enables the development of financial market because registered land can be used as collateral
6. It encourages the creation of new business
7. It acts as a good source of revenue for the government
8. It should also be noted that land registration, assist in poverty reduction.

LAND ADMINISTRATION
This is the process of recording and circulating information on the ownership, value and land use in relation to its connected resources. Land administration involves the determination of rights and other attributes of land, survey and the explanation of important information that support land market. Adedeji (2008).

Land system in Nigeria during this period land ownership is strongly determined by might and power. Kings and religion rulers that had great power appropriated and adjudicated land to themselves and the people they were willing to give land to. The community leaders and warlords had great influence on the way in which land is being distributed for communal use, farming and grazing.
Land ownership in Nigeria was characterized by the founding of land ownership by the Fulani as they move from one place to another.

**DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY**

The data for the study was collected from a sample 23 estate firms, 32 property owners with certificate of occupancy and 15 staff of ministry of planning, Lafia. Total of 70 questionnaires were served and returned. This represent 100 % success rate... Respondents were selected based on a stratified random sampling from work.

The table below shows the analysis of response to the questionnaire distributed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s/</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>No of questionnaire</th>
<th>Questionnaires returned</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ministry of land, survey and town planning</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Estate firms</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Property owners</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources: authors field work (2013)**

The table below shows the methods through which land was obtained

The table below shows the means by which people acquired land in the study area and the percentage of the people that registered their land in accordance to land use act of 1978.

35 numbers of land owners show the means through which they got their land and their registration or non registration of such properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land acquired</th>
<th>Land registration through land use Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant from government</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources: authors field work (2012)**

From the above it can be seeing that the total number of people that did register their land is much more than those that did not register their land in the study area.

The table below shows the total numbers of application for land in lafia and the total numbers that were granted from 2005 to 2011.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>s/no</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Granted</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1064</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1603</td>
<td>1054</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2045</td>
<td>1509</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources: ministry of land, survey and town planning, lafia (2012)**

The table shows that at least 60 percent of the applicants had their application granted. This means that more than of the applicants registered their land in the study area.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION
Lafia which is the capital of Nasarawa state has the problem of land registration. There is no doubt that land registration in Nigeria requires government attention. It takes at least six months for an applicant land to be fully registered in all parts of Nigeria, Lafia inclusive. The government should ensure that the land in the state is speedily registered.
It is not enough to provide the people of the state with registered land; they should also be provided with adequate and affordable housing.

REFERENCES