



# XXVII FIG CONGRESS

11-15 SEPTEMBER 2022  
Warsaw, Poland

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Presented at the FIG Congress 2022,  
11-15 September 2022 in Warsaw, Poland

## An Innovative Land Information Tool for Documenting Tenure Rights of the Urban Poor in Namibia

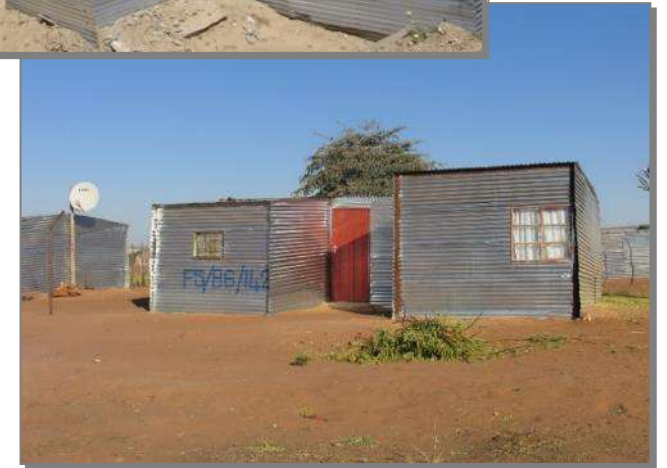
John Gitau  
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14th September 2022



## Growth of Informal Settlements in Namibia

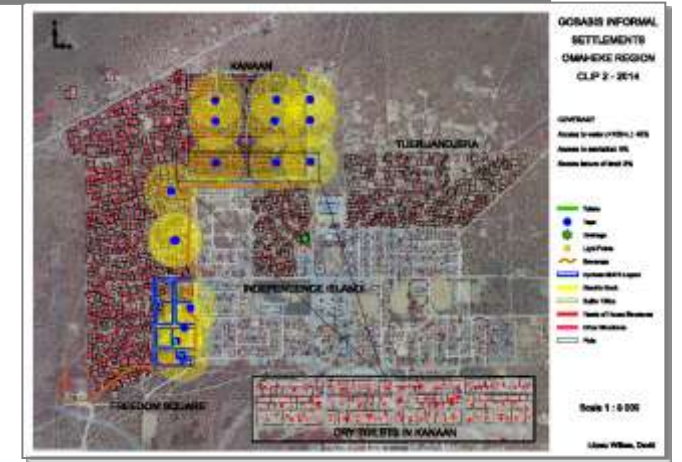
- Urbanization in Namibia increased dramatically following independence in 1990
- By 2011, 43% of the Namibian population was living in urban areas
- Existing land development, allocation and access processes, including the land rights registration process, were not able to respond to the needs of the growing urban population, which resulted in the mushrooming of informal settlements
- 25% of the population is living in 242 informal settlements
- Number of urban shacks will outnumber formal urban houses by 2025 and all rural houses by 2023
- The predominant form of housing in Namibia will then be urban shacks by 2030





## Factors Driving Growth of Informal Settlements

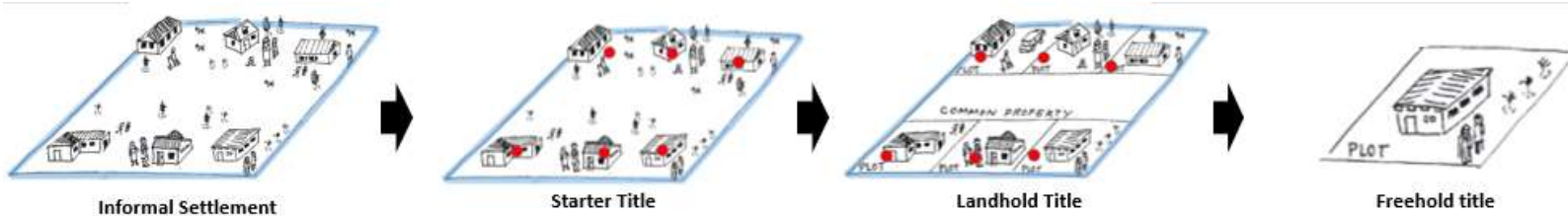
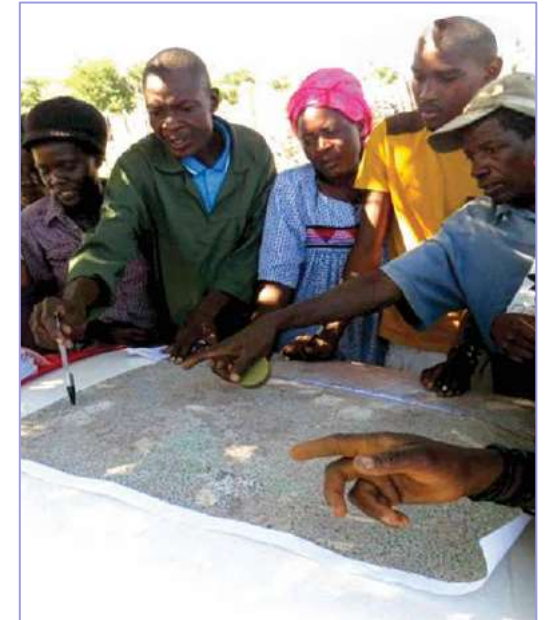
- High rents, very few renting options for low income households
- Land for formal living unaffordable to poor households
- Lengthy and costly process for land delivery
- High costs to service urban land, particularly to upgrade unstructured settlements
- Lack of resources and capacities for local authorities to deliver serviced land
- High pressure on local authorities through massive informal growth



During the period of 1992-1998, the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement developed an alternative and flexible land tenure system to provide security for middle and low-income groups excluded from the conventional freehold land tenure system

## Flexible Land Tenure System (FLTS)

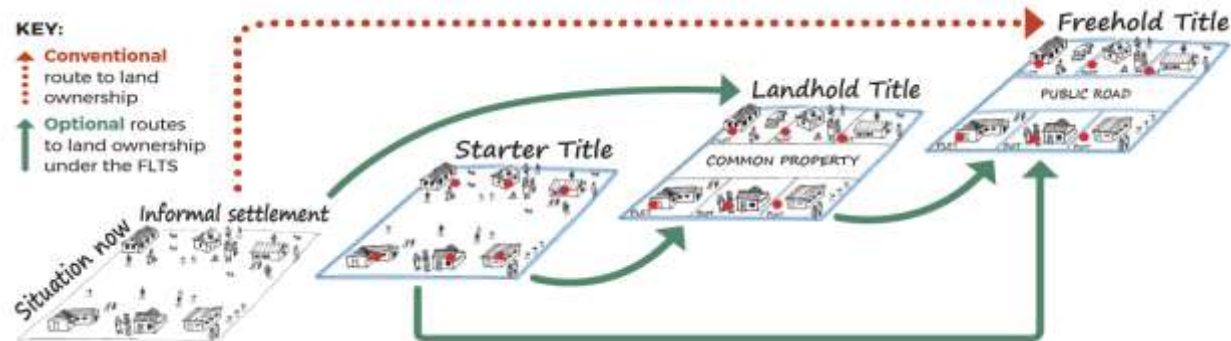
- Create alternative forms of land titles that are simpler and cheaper to administer than conventional forms of land title
- Provide security of tenure for persons who live in informal settlements or who are provided with low income housing
- Empower the persons concerned economically by means of these rights
- Group-based individual rights of within a block of land registered in a Land Rights Office through starter title and land hold title rights respectively





## FLTS Principles

- **Flexible** – choice of tenure type at the discretion of beneficiaries in consultation with relevant authority (RA)
- **Interchangeable** – tenure types can be upgraded
- **Parallel/complementary** – parallel institutions responsible for the registration and surveying within the blocks, complementary as being embedded with the freehold system (blocks registered in Deeds Office and endorsed by Surveyor General)
- **Community participation** – strong emphasis on community support and involvement (desirability, internal layout planning, association formation), initiative to cause consideration for scheme establishment by RA, formed associations to represent community towards RA and right to manage internal affairs



## Computer-Based Flexible Land Tenure System (CB-FLTS)

The FLT regulations, passed in 2018, support the establishment of a Computer-Based Flexible Land Tenure System (CB-FLTS) for managing the starter and land hold title registers

### Registration pathways

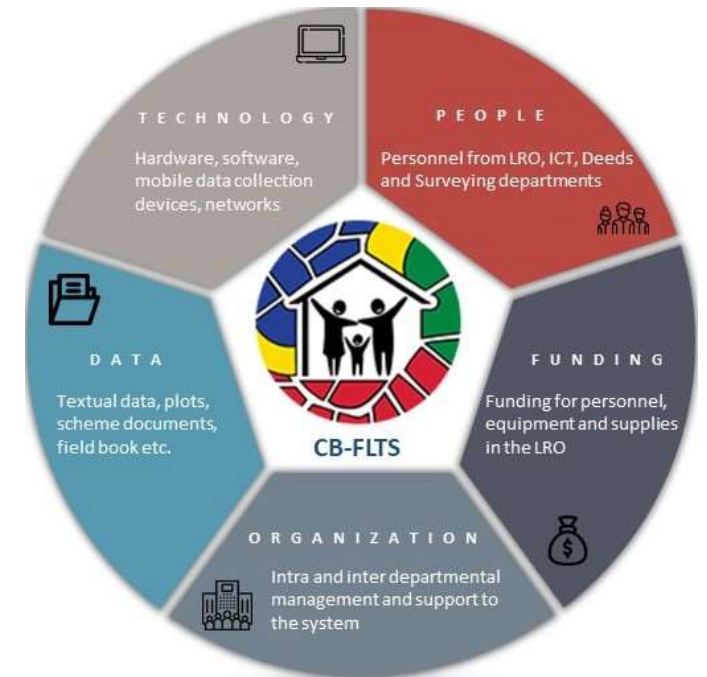
#### Starter Title

- Initial registration
- Transfer of rights
- Upgrade to land hold title rights
- Upgrade to full ownership

#### Land Hold Title

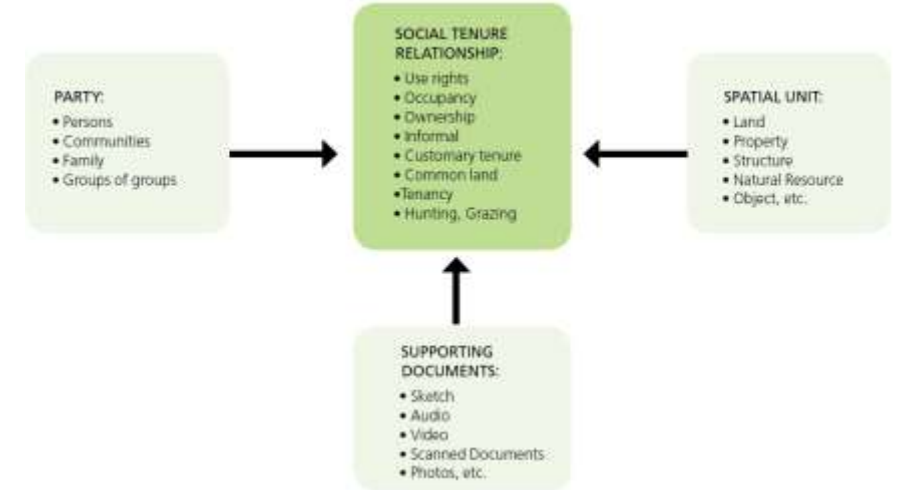
- Initial registration
- Transfer of rights
- Upgrade to full ownership
- Registration of mortgages

- CB-FLTS is based on the Global Land Tool Network’s Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM) tool



## Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM)

- A flexible and low-cost land tool for representing people-to-land relationships
- Provides evidence-based information for facilitating land tenure security, land use and urban development
- Based on free and open-source software and ISO standard
- Can easily combined with other tools
- Easy-to-use, and easy to customize for specific purposes and context



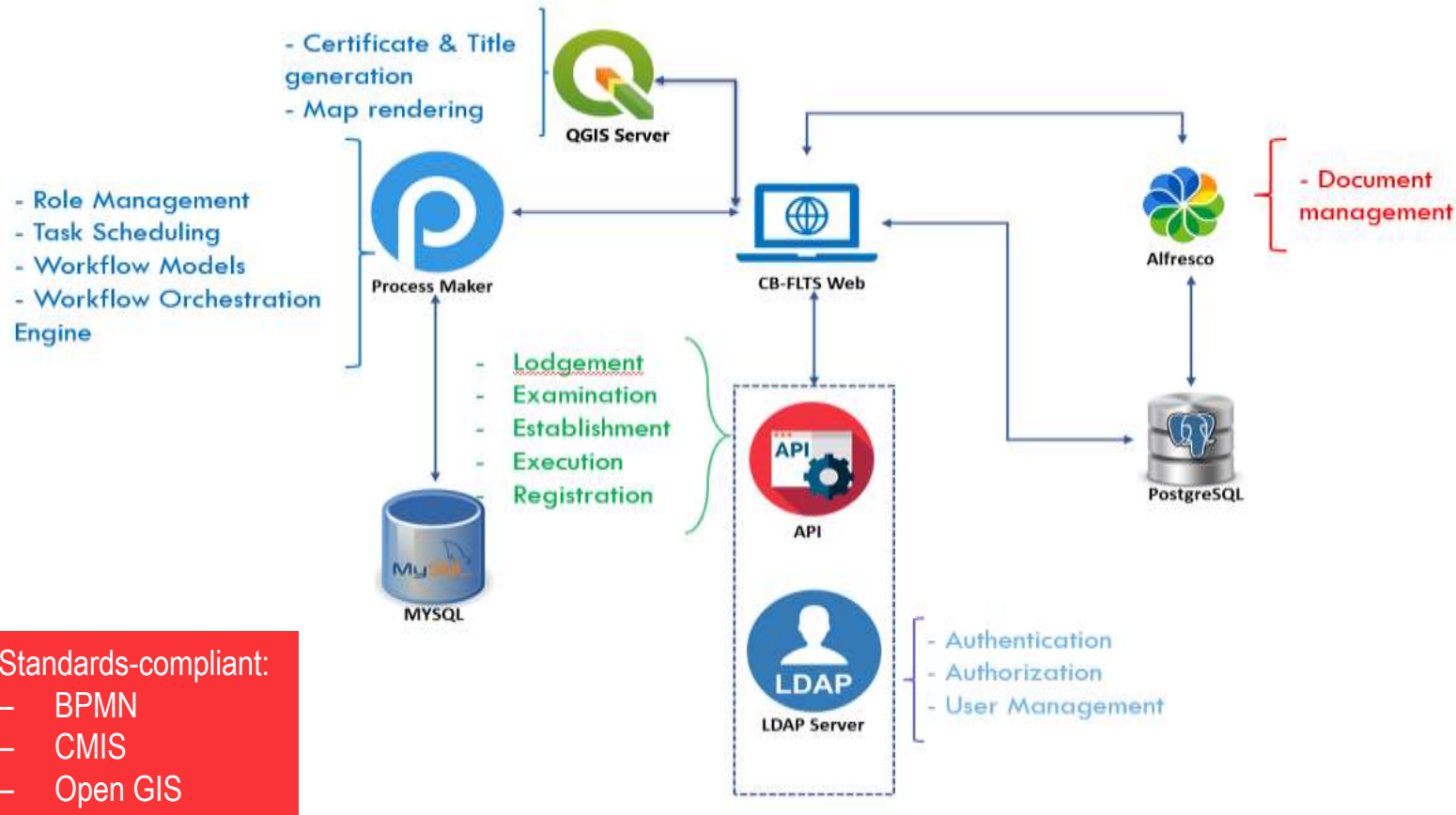
### Previous Application in Namibia

- Supported the Municipality of Gobabis in documenting land tenure of the Freedom Square community in 2017
- Exercise provided practical input in the drafting of the FLTS implementation manual





## Promoting the Application of Open Source Tools



Standards-compliant:

- BPMN
- CMIS
- Open GIS

- Most government agencies still using enterprise software systems while struggling to meet cost obligations related to the licenses
- Opportunity to showcase the capabilities of open source tools for surveying and land registration systems at the Ministry (CDRS, NCLAS, CIS)
- Ministry-wide open source awareness and sensitization workshops



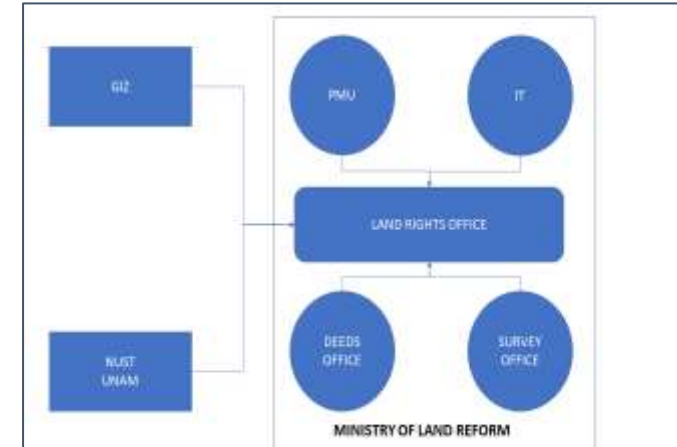
## Capacity Development of the Land Rights Office (LRO)

### First Phase (2018-2020)

- Capacity Assessment (2019)
- Overall Induction Workshop for appointed staff (2019)

### Second Phase (2020-2022)

- Continuous trainings (online and during missions) assisted through overall better acceptance of online tools due to pandemic
- Establishment of working group with regular meetings improved capacities as well as communication and coordination within the partner ministry



## CB-FLTS Information Working Group (CIWG)

Collaborative approach in providing technical guidance during the engineering, testing and deployment stages of the CB-FLTS in order to ensure that it conforms to and meets the information requirements as envisioned in the FLTA

- Established to:
  - Create institutional capacity, memory and baseline for future reference
  - Increase ownership of the system by the Ministry
- Composition:
  - MAWLR: Directorate of Surveying and Mapping, Division of IT Services, Directorate of Deeds Registry
  - GLTN
  - GIZ





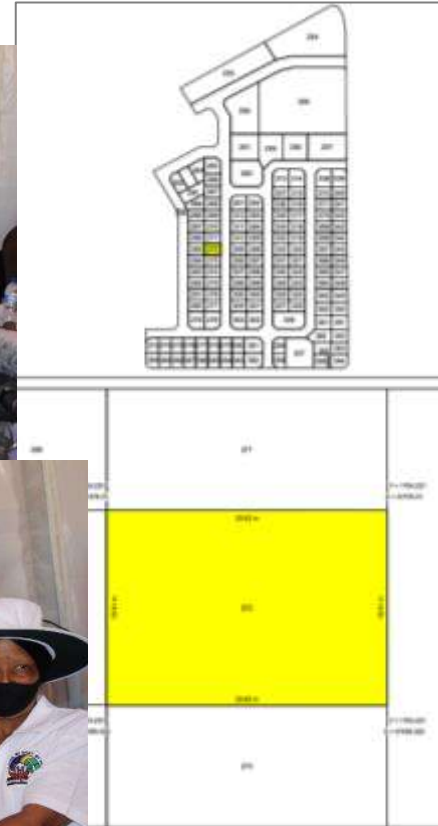
## Key Achievements, Challenges and Lessons Learnt

### Milestones / Achievements

- First module developed for first titles to be handed over in March 2020
- Comprehensive capacity assessment in October 2019
- Setting up of Working Group in second phase 2020
- Continuous online engagement 2020-2022
- Collection and reporting of gender and inclusion data
- Potential for incorporation and visualisation of digitally collected data

### Challenges / Lessons Learnt

- Mistrust towards digital system in particular open source
- Limited server capacities
- Lack of involvement of IT personnel



## THANK YOU

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