

A Review to Improve the Efficiency of Survey Department's Involvement in the Process of Cadastral System Reform in Sri Lanka

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Deeds registration based cadastral system has long been established in Sri Lanka. This system was originally introduced by the British Ceylon (1796 - 1948). Both the major components of this cadastral system, deeds registration and cadastral surveying, have several drawbacks. The deeds registration suffers low efficiency and ineffectiveness related matters. On the other hand, the cadastral surveying system fails because of incomplete land ownership information. In 1998, the Sri Lankan government introduced a title registration based cadastral system in response to the problems faced by this old system. The Survey Department and Land Settlement Department play major roles in this reform program. However, little progress has been made since the program's inception. The program administrators are now re-evaluating and forming strategies to expedite the progress of cadastral system reform program. Identifying different avenues to strengthen individual organizational involvement in the program is a key factor to this strategy formulation exercise.

This study aims to investigate the Survey Department's internal process that comprises registration of land titles and identify improvement options. Filed data collection involves interviews, direct observations in the field and review archival records. Findings of this study indicate that any delay of cadastral maps has affected the whole program as subsequent steps of title registration depend on cadastral plans. Although the current work processes of the Survey Department are satisfactorily efficient enough, the existing survey department regulations have not streamlined with the objectives of the cadastral reform program. The existing regulations of the Survey Department have satisfied self-interested objectives in the department. This collaboration delay among major government departments involved in the program has negatively affected the efficiency of the cadastral reform program. Finally, it was found that with the existing system, time taken to complete a cadaster plan cannot be reduced significantly. The necessity of a new systematic methodology to prepare cadastral map in a collaborative manner with other involved departments is clearly visible.

Keywords: Cadastral System, Cadaster, Land Titling Program, Survey Department