

Understanding Land Ownership in Ghana

Land Ownership in Ghana: Legal Overview

Land ownership in Ghana is governed by a unique blend of **customary practices**, **statutory law**, and **constitutional principles**. Whether for residential, commercial, or investment purposes, understanding the legal framework is essential to ensure secure and enforceable land rights.

Types of Land Ownership in Ghana

1. Customary Land (Approx. 80% of Land in Ghana)

Customary land is held by stools, skins, families, or clans and governed by customary law. These lands are administered by traditional authorities and typically granted to individuals under customary freehold or leasehold interests.

Legal Framework:

- 1992 Constitution, Article 267
- Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036), Sections 2–3
- *Case Law: Nyaasemhwe v Afibiyesan II* [1976] 2 GLR 156

2. Public Lands

Public lands are vested in the President on behalf of the people of Ghana and are typically used for public purposes. Such lands may originate from private or customary landowners through compulsory acquisition.

Legal Framework:

- 1992 Constitution, Article 257
- State Lands Act, 1962 (Act 125)
- *Case Law: Akufo-Addo v Attorney-General* [1998–99] SCGLR 1

3. Vested Lands

Vested lands are a hybrid category of customary lands that are administered by the state in trust for the traditional landowners. The government handles their management, but ownership remains with the customary authorities.

Legal Framework:

- Administration of Lands Act, 1962 (Act 123)

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