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Making Land Work: Supporting Land Policy Reform in the Pacific

A presentation for the “Land Administration Workshop:
Knowledge Sharing for the Future”

14 August 2008

Rydges Lakeside Canberra





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“Land reform can no longer be ignored”

Hon. Dr Derek Sikua, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands,
in a major policy speech to Parliament, 18 January 2008

***“We cannot remain complacent. The costs of ignoring
land issues are too high”***

Rt. Hon. Sir Michael Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea,
at the launch of the National Land Development Taskforce, 4 May 2006



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Presentation outline:

- » What is AusAID doing to support land policy reform in the Pacific?
- » Why is land policy reform on the agenda?
- » What types of reforms are required?
- » What are some principles for effective land policy reform?





What is AusAID doing to support land policy reform through the Pacific Land Program?

» Phase One – Background research and publication of the *Making Land Work* report (2006-08)

» Phase Two – Support to Pacific countries through an investment of \$54 million (2008-12);

- PNG
- Vanuatu
- Solomon Islands
- East Timor
- Regional program





Why is land policy reform on the agenda?

- » Poor development outcomes in the Pacific
- » Land represents the most fundamental social, cultural and economic resource for Pacific countries
- » Customary tenures are under new and increasing pressures to change as a result of:
 - Globalisation and a weakening of customary authority
 - Population growth and migration





What types of reforms are required?

‘What Vanuatu needs at this time, is to find a middle ground as to how it can continue to enjoy its custom and culture, but at the same time allow a cash economy to develop in a fair way.’

Russell Nari, Director-General of the Ministry of Lands, Vanuatu,
in his address to the Vanuatu National Land Summit, 2006





Two systems of governance in the Pacific

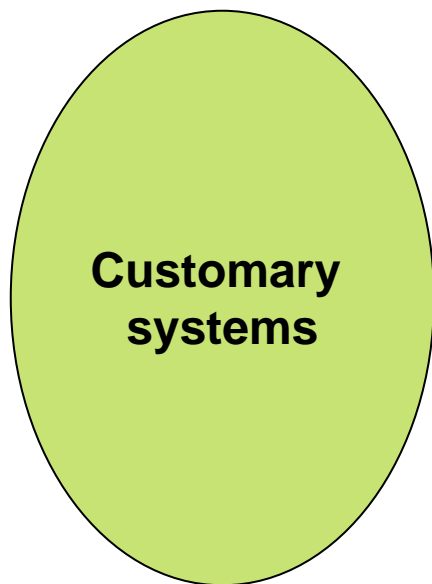
**Customary
systems**

**Formal institutions
and systems
of the nation State**

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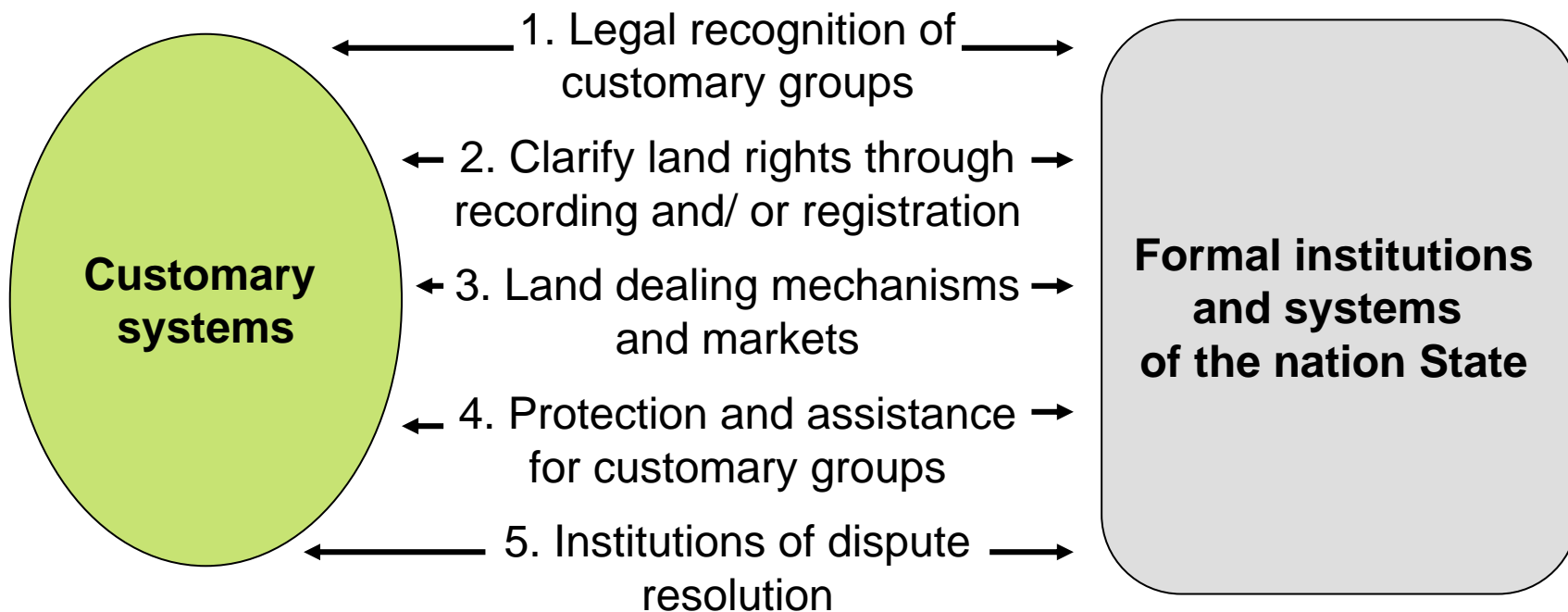
The 'middle way' approach



**Formal institutions
and systems
of the nation State**



Making Land Work – Five linkages





Other important land policy reforms

- » More land for public purposes
- » More land for urban growth and tenure security for urban settlers
- » More secure access to land for women
- » Provision of more efficient and effective land administration services





What are some principles for effective land policy reform?

- » Make tenure security the priority
- » Work with and not against customary tenure
- » Intervene only if is necessary
- » Ensure that land policies reflect local needs
- » Be prepared for long timeframes
- » Provide safeguards for vulnerable groups
- » Actively involve stakeholders
- » Adopt simple and sustainable reforms
- » Balance the interests of landowners and land users





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Access to more information

» Electronic copies of *Making Land Work*
www.ausaid.gov.au/publications

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