

Topic: Agricultural Laws and Reforms

Lesson Objectives:

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Explain **land tenure systems in Nigeria**
 - Describe the **Land Use Decree of 1978** (now called the **Land Use Act**)
 - State the **implications, advantages, and disadvantages** of the Land Use Decree
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1. Land Tenure in Nigeria

Definition of Land Tenure:

Land tenure refers to the **system of land ownership, control, and management** in a community or country. It determines **who owns the land, how land is used, and who can transfer it**.

Types of Land Tenure Systems in Nigeria:

Type	Description
Communal Land Tenure	Land is owned by the community or village . Individuals use the land but cannot sell it.
Inheritance Tenure	Land is passed down from parents to children over generations.
Leasehold Tenure	Land is given to a person for a specified period , after which it is returned to the owner.
Gift Tenure	Land is given as a gift , often permanently, from one person to another.
Purchase Tenure	Land is bought outright from the owner.
Rent Tenure	Land is rented for a fee ; the owner keeps the right to the land.

Problems with Traditional Land Tenure:

- **Fragmentation of land** into small plots

- **Difficulty in obtaining land for large-scale farming**
 - Land disputes and **boundary issues**
 - **Limited access to land for women and youths**
 - No official documentation of land ownership
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2. The Land Use Decree of 1978

Definition:

The **Land Use Decree of 1978** (now called the **Land Use Act of 1978**) is a **law made by the Federal Government of Nigeria** to regulate **land ownership and management**.

Key Provisions of the Land Use Decree:

1. **All land in Nigeria belongs to the government (state).**
 2. **State Governors control land** in urban areas.
 3. **Local Governments control land** in rural areas.
 4. People can **apply for a Certificate of Occupancy (C of O)** to use land for farming, building, etc.
 5. Land can be allocated for **agriculture, industry, and development projects**.
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3. Implications of the Land Use Decree

Positive Implications

Easier for the government to **allocate land** for agricultural projects

Helps avoid **land disputes** by centralizing land ownership

Provides a **legal system** for land transactions

Negative Implications

Traditional landowners may lose control of ancestral lands

Farmers may face **bureaucratic delays** in getting land approval

Some farmers may be **evicted without proper compensation**

Positive Implications

Encourages **development and investment** in agriculture

Negative Implications

May discourage private investment due to **fear of land seizure**

4. Advantages of the Land Use Decree

- Makes **large-scale farming possible**
 - Reduces **land disputes** and boundary conflicts
 - Provides **legal documentation** of land ownership (Certificate of Occupancy)
 - Allows the government to **plan land use effectively**
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5. Disadvantages of the Land Use Decree

- **Complex procedures** to acquire land legally
 - Government can **seize land without consulting owners**
 - **Neglect of customary land rights**
 - May lead to **land misuse or corruption** in allocation
 - **Rural farmers may lose access** to their traditional farmlands
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6. Summary of Key Points

Concept	Meaning
Land Tenure	System of land ownership and control
Land Use Decree (1978)	Law that made the government custodian of all land
Advantages	Reduces disputes, encourages investment
Disadvantages	Bureaucracy, loss of traditional land rights

7. Conclusion

Agricultural development depends greatly on **land availability and management**. The **Land Use Act of 1978** was introduced to make land **more accessible and manageable**, but it has also caused **challenges and controversy**, especially in rural areas.