SCHOOL OF LIBRARY ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES

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RESEARCH REPORT

AN ASSESSMENT OF RECORDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS AND THEIR INFLUENCES IN GOVERNMENT REGISTRIES: A CASE STUDY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE AT BAGAMOYO DISTRICT

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A Research Report Submitted to the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that he/she has read and hereby recommend for acceptance by the school of library, Archives and Documentation Studies Research report entitled “An Assessment of Records Classification Systems and Their Influences in Government Registries: The Case Study of the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office **“**in partial /fulfilment of the requirements for award of ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Managements.

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Lastly, I thank my family for their moral and financial support, patience, and prayers, which made this achievement possible.

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DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my loving parents, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been my foundation; to my siblings for their patience and understanding; and to all records management practitioners striving to improve organizational efficiency and accountability through enhanced records classification systems in Tanzania.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation		Full Meaning
DLNRO	-	Department of Land and Natural Resources Office
ISO	-	International Organization for Standardization
RMA	-	Records Management Assistant
SLADS	-	School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies
TRAMP	-	Tanzania Records and Archives Management Programme
URT	-	United Republic of Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed records classification systems and their influence in government registries, with specific focus on the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine the existing records classification system; to assess its influence on records retrieval speed and information accessibility; to identify limitations of the existing system.

The study employed a descriptive case study design with mixed methods approach. The target population comprised 42 staff members at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, all of whom participated in the study. Data were collected through questionnaires administered to 15 registry and support staff, interviews with ten departmental heads and land officers, and structured observation using a standardised checklist.

The findings revealed that the department primarily uses parcel-based classification (71.4%) combined with numerical (59.5%) and alphabetical (52.4%) approaches, but lacks a documented, standardised classification manual. Retrieval times were found to be excessive, with 59.5% of respondents requiring more than 30 minutes to locate files. Major limitations identified included absence of classification guidelines (69.0%), lack of staff training (64.3%), inconsistent classification practices (61.9%), and inadequate indexing systems (57.1%). The study concluded that the current classification system significantly impairs registry efficiency and service delivery.

The study recommends implementation of a comprehensive functional classification system with documented file plan, development of multiple indexing access points, staff training programmes, and gradual introduction of computerised classification support.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the background of the study on the assessment of records classification systems and their influence in government registries, with a specific focus on the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo. It covers the introduction and background to the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Effective records management in any organization rests on a well-designed classification system, which forms part of its core operational infrastructure. In simple terms, a classification system is a logical framework used to group records into categories on the basis of shared characteristics, functions, or subject matter, thereby making it possible to control, retrieve, and preserve information systematically (Yusuf & Cheko, 2022). Government registries generate enormous volumes of records on a daily basis, and it is the classification system that underpins administrative efficiency and accountability within such offices. How records are classified has a direct bearing on the speed of retrieval, the accuracy of the information obtained, and, by extension, the overall quality of service delivered to the public.

On the global scale, records classification has evolved considerably, moving away from basic alphabetical arrangements toward more sophisticated functional schemes anchored on business activities. Australia offers a good illustration of this shift: its Keyword AAA (Australian Algorithm for Administrative) Classification System transformed government record-keeping by organizing records according to function rather than subject (Shepherd & Yeo, 2022). A comparable approach is found in Canada, where the

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national records management framework prioritizes functional classification so that records generated by similar activities remain grouped together irrespective of their format. Taken together, these international examples confirm that classification systems are central to information governance, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making in the public sector (Johnston & Bowen, 2023).

Within Africa, growing attention has been paid to records classification as governments push to modernize public service delivery. In South Africa, the National Archives and Records Service has put in place detailed classification guidelines requiring functional classification schemes to be applied across all government departments (Ngoepe & Makhura, 2022). Kenya, for its part, has rolled out a government-wide classification system intended to harmonize record-keeping practices across ministries, although challenges of implementation remain (Kemoni & Mose, 2023). In Botswana, initiatives to introduce electronic records management systems have shown that sound classification structures are a necessary precondition for successful digitization (Mosweu & Nkwe, 2022). Across the continent, these experiences point to a shared understanding that poor classification leaves records difficult to locate, manage, and preserve, ultimately weakening government efficiency and accountability.

Tanzania is no exception to this continental trend and has likewise acknowledged the need to strengthen records management practices within its public institutions. To this end, the government has put in place legal instruments such as the National Archives Act and the Records and Archives Management Act, both of which offer direction on proper records classification and management (URT, 2023), while the Public Service Reform Programme has stressed the importance of efficient information systems in improving service delivery. Even so, these policy measures have not fully resolved the classification-related difficulties still experienced by government registries, especially at the local government level where resources and technical capacity remain limited (Lema & Manda, 2024).

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The Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo is a case in point of a government registry where sound records classification is indispensable to effective service delivery. The office manages a broad range of land records, among them title deeds, allocation letters, survey maps, and natural resource permits, all of which need systematic organization if they are to be retrieved and referenced efficiently. How these records are classified has a direct bearing on the pace of land transactions, the accuracy of ownership information, and the manner in which land disputes are resolved (Chachage & Mbilinyi, 2023). Given that land administration remains a delicate and complicated matter in Tanzania, the effectiveness of classification systems within land registries carries far-reaching consequences for social stability, economic growth, and the rule of law. It is against this background that the study set out to assess the existing records classification system at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo and to examine its influence on registry operations and service delivery.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Public registries in Tanzania are required by mandate to keep records that are accurate, accessible, and secure so as to support efficient service delivery and sound decision-making. Like other government registries, the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo depends on an organized classification system to arrange land documents, permits, and administrative files for ease of retrieval and reference. Yet even though national guidelines on records management already exist, early observations at this department suggested that its classification arrangements were falling short of present-day operational needs.

Both citizens and staff had repeatedly reported difficulties in tracing land files, delays in the processing of land applications, and challenges in pulling up historical records whenever these were required for dispute resolution, all of which hinted at underlying weaknesses in the classification system in use. What remained unclear, however, was the exact nature of the classification methods being applied, the extent to which they were shaping retrieval speed and information accessibility, and which specific shortcomings

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in the system were driving these operational inefficiencies. Although existing literature points to functional classification systems as a possible remedy to such challenges, empirical evidence on the particular classification needs of land registries in Tanzania, and on how improved systems might enhance their performance, remained scarce. It was this gap that the present study sought to close, through a comprehensive assessment of the classification system at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo, an identification of its shortcomings, and a proposal for an improved system built on essential components for greater registry efficiency.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study were to assess records classification systems and their influence in government registries, focusing on the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To examine the existing records classification system used at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

ii. To assess the influence of records classification practices on records retrieval speed and information accessibility at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

iii. To identify the limitations of the existing records classification system and their influence on registry operations.

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1.4 Research Questions

The study were guided by the following research questions:

i. What is the existing records classification system used at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo?

ii. How do records classification practices influence records retrieval speed and information accessibility at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo?

iii. What are the limitations of the existing records classification system and how do they influence registry operations?

1.5 Significance of the Study

To the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, Bagamoyo: The findings of this study provide departmental management with a clear understanding of how the current records classification system affects registry operations and service delivery. This evidence-based assessment guides targeted improvements in classification practices, staff training, and system upgrades to enhance the speed and accuracy of land record retrieval, ultimately improving citizen satisfaction with land services.

To the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development: This study contributes valuable insights into the operational challenges faced by district-level land registries in implementing effective records classification systems. These insights can inform national policy reviews, the development of standardized classification guidelines for land records, and the design of capacity-building programs for land registry staff across Tanzania.

To the Records and Archives Management Profession: The research highlights the critical importance of classification systems in government registry operations, reinforcing the professional value of proper classification techniques. It also contributes

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to the body of knowledge on classification practices specific to land records, an area that had received limited research attention in Tanzania.

To the Academic Community: This study adds to the growing literature on records management in Tanzanian public institutions, particularly in the context of land administration. It serves as a reference for students and researchers in records management, information science, public administration, and land governance, providing empirical evidence from a district-level case study.

To Citizens and Land Users: By identifying pathways to improved records classification and retrieval, this research contributes to faster land transaction processing, more accurate land ownership information, and more efficient resolution of land disputes, thereby benefiting citizens who depend on the services of the land office.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused on assessing the records classification system and its influence at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo, encompassing the examination of current classification practices, including both manual and any digital components, their influence on records retrieval speed and information accessibility, the limitations of the existing system, and potential improvements through a proposed classification system with essential components; the study involved departmental staff who create, manage, or use classified records in their daily operations, including records officers, registry clerks, land officers, and departmental administrators, while its geographical and institutional scope was limited to the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo District, Coastal Region, Tanzania, and it focused specifically on records classification systems without extending to other aspects of records management such as preservation, disposal, or digitization, except where these intersected with classification practices.

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1.7 Limitations of the Study

In conducting this study, the researcher encountered several limitations. The duration for data collection and analysis was constrained by academic schedules, which limited the depth of investigation possible within the available timeframe; this was mitigated through a strict, phased time management plan with predefined milestones, pre-tested and streamlined data collection tools, and prioritization of essential data within the allocated period. Access to certain land records was also restricted due to privacy concerns and legal protocols governing land information, and the study addressed this by relying on anonymized data, aggregated statistics were available, and staff perceptions and experiences rather than requiring direct access to confidential individual land files, with formal permission sought from relevant authorities and all data collection conducted in compliance with confidentiality requirements. In addition, costs associated with transportation to Bagamoyo, printing of research instruments, and data analysis posed financial challenges, which were addressed through cost-effective methods, including digital surveys where appropriate, careful budgeting, manageable sample size balancing research needs with available resources, and the use of local transportation to minimize travel costs. Finally, some staff members were hesitant to participate due to concerns about workload, fear of criticism, or sensitivity regarding departmental performance; this was mitigated through formal protocols emphasizing voluntary involvement, strict anonymity, and confidentiality, clear communication of the academic and non-evaluative purpose of the study, interview schedules designed to respect respondents' time constraints, and assurances that responses would not be used for performance evaluation purposes.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1.8.1 Records Classification System: A systematic framework for categorizing records into logical groups based on shared characteristics, functions, activities, or subjects to facilitate organization, retrieval, and management throughout the records lifecycle (ISO 15489-1:2016; Yusuf & Cheko, 2022). It is usually documented as a file plan that

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assigns every record to a defined category, ensuring consistent filing and easier retrieval. In this study, it refers to the classification arrangements used for land records at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

1.8.2 Government Registry: A designated office or unit within a government institution responsible for the systematic receipt, registration, classification, storage, retrieval, and tracking of official records and documents (Lema & Manda, 2024). It is typically staffed by records officers and clerks tasked with maintaining the security and integrity of documents. In this study, it refers to the registry section of the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

1.8.3 Records Retrieval: The process of locating and accessing stored records in response to a specific information request or business need (Ngoepe & Makhura, 2022). Its speed and accuracy largely depend on how well records were classified and indexed at filing. In this study, it refers to how quickly land files can be located by staff at the department.

1.8.4 Information Accessibility: The ease and speed with which authorized users can obtain the records and information they need to perform their duties or serve citizens (Kemoni & Mose, 2023). It is shaped by the clarity of the classification system and the competence of registry staff. In this study, it is examined in terms of how readily staff and clients can obtain the land records they require.

1.8.5 Functional Classification: A method of classifying records based on the business functions and activities that generate them, rather than on subject headings or organizational structures (Shepherd & Yeo, 2022). It is considered more stable than subject-based classification because functions tend to persist even as organizational structures change. This study considered it as an alternative the department could adopt to strengthen its classification practices.

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1.8.6 File Plan: A document that outlines the classification structure for records, showing the hierarchical arrangement of categories, classes, and file titles used to organize records within a registry (Johnston & Bowen, 2023). It gives staff a common reference for filing and supports consistent indexing and training. This study examined whether such a documented plan existed at the department.

1.8.7 Registry Operations: The range of activities performed in a registry including receiving, registering, classifying, storing, tracking, retrieving, and disposing of records (Chachage & Mbilinyi, 2023). These activities follow a defined sequence, and weaknesses at any stage, such as poor classification, affect the entire chain of operations. In this study, the term refers to how these activities are carried out at the department.

1.8.8 Land Records: Documents related to land ownership, administration, and management, including title deeds, certificates of occupancy, allocation letters, survey plans, and land registers (Mosweu & Nkwe, 2022). They serve as official evidence of rights and interests over land and must be kept accurately and traceable. In this study, they refer to the categories of documents handled at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature related to records classification systems and their influence on government registries. It presents the theoretical framework, empirical literature, research gap, and conceptual framework that guide the study.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides the conceptual lens through which a research problem is understood and interpreted. This study is anchored on the Records Life Cycle Model, a foundational theory in the field of records and archives management that explains the successive stages through which a record passes from the point of its creation to its ultimate disposition, whether through permanent preservation as an archive or through authorized destruction.

2.1.1 The Records Life Cycle Model

The Records Life Cycle Model was first articulated by Schellenberg (1956) and remains one of the most influential theories in records management. It conceptualizes a record as passing through three sequential stages: creation, maintenance and use, and disposition. At creation, records arise from an organization's transactions. At the maintenance and use stage, records are actively consulted and relied upon, and it is here that classification, filing, and indexing become central to ensuring efficient retrieval. At disposition, a record is either preserved permanently as an archive or destroyed according to an approved retention schedule (Penn, Pennix & Coulson, 1994; Shepherd & Yeo, 2022).

An alternative view, the Records Continuum Model (Atherton, 1985; Upward, 1996), holds that creation, capture, organization, and use occur simultaneously rather than in discrete stages, especially in digital settings. This study nonetheless adopts the Life Cycle Model, since the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo

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operates a largely paper-based registry whose records can be clearly understood as passing through distinct stages of creation, use, and disposition.

2.1.2 Relationship of the Records Life Cycle Model to This Study

This study focuses on the maintenance and use stage of the life cycle, the stage at which classification systems are designed and relied upon for retrieval (Schellenberg, 1956). The model explains why the classification method used by the department, whether parcel-based, numerical, subject-based, or alphabetical, directly affects retrieval speed and information accessibility. Weaknesses introduced at this stage, such as the absence of a file plan or inconsistent classification, propagate forward and result in delays, misfiling, and loss of access to records (Shepherd & Yeo, 2022).

The model further shows that classification is a continuous responsibility requiring documented procedures, training, and review, not a one-time task (Penn, Pennix & Coulson, 1994). It therefore justifies this study assessment of the classification system at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office and its influence on the speed and reliability of records retrieval.

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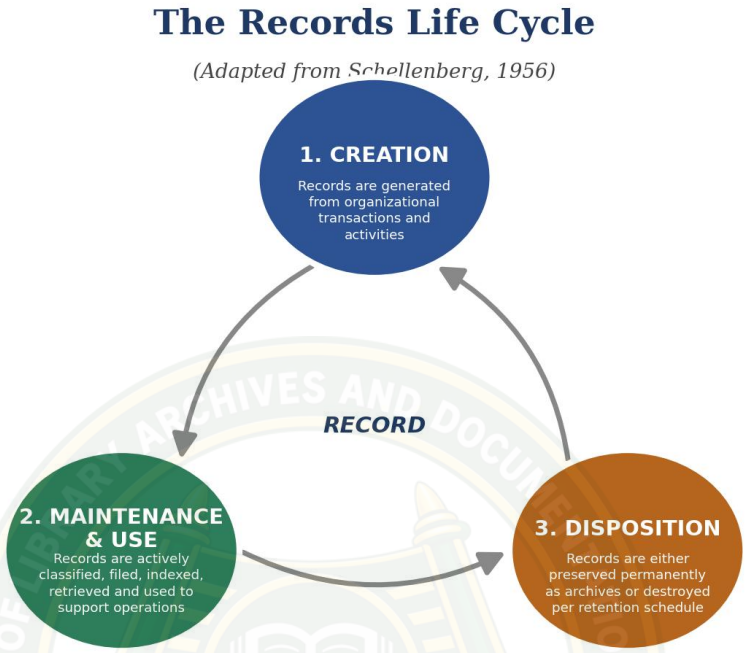


Figure 1 : The Records Life Cycle Model, showing the three sequential stages of creation, maintenance and use, and disposition (Adapted from Schellenberg, 1956)

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

This section reviews empirical studies relevant to records classification systems in government registries. In keeping with the objectives of this study, the review is organized into four sub-sections: a general overview of records classification systems in government registries; the influence of classification practices on records retrieval speed and information accessibility; the limitations associated with existing classification systems; and proposed improvements together with the essential components of enhanced classification systems, as reported in the literature.

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2.2.1 Existing Records Classification Systems in Government Registries

Studies conducted across different jurisdictions reveal considerable variation in the classification systems adopted by government registries, shaped by institutional history, resource availability, and the nature of the records handled. Johnston and Bowen (2023) examined record-keeping practices in developed-country government agencies and found a general shift away from subject-based schemes toward functional classification, in which records are organized according to the business activities that generate them rather than according to arbitrary subject headings. They attribute this shift to the greater stability of organizational functions relative to subject terminology, which tends to change as administrative language evolves.

In the African context, Ngoepe and Makhura (2022) surveyed government departments in South Africa and reported that, although national policy mandates functional classification, a considerable number of registries continued to rely on ad hoc combinations of numerical and subject-based filing due to weak enforcement and limited technical capacity among registry staff. Similarly, Kemoni and Mose (2023), in a study of Kenyan government ministries, found that classification practice was frequently inconsistent even within the same institution, with different registries adopting different schemes in the absence of a unifying, government-wide file plan.

Within Tanzania specifically, Lema and Manda (2024) assessed records classification systems in local government authorities and found that most registries relied on classification methods developed informally over time rather than on any documented or standardized scheme. Their study further revealed that reliance on informal, undocumented classification is especially pronounced in registries handling specialized records, such as land records, where classification is frequently organized around parcel or plot numbers rather than the broader functional or subject categories recommended in professional literature. Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023), focusing specifically on land records management in Tanzanian district land offices, corroborated this finding, reporting that parcel-based classification, though intuitive for staff familiar with a given

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jurisdiction, offers limited flexibility when users seek information through other access points such as an owner's name or the date of a transaction. Mosweu and Nkwe (2022), examining Botswana's experience with digitizing land records, likewise observed that classification systems built solely around parcel numbers created significant obstacles when the department attempted to introduce computerized search functions, since the underlying data lacked the structured metadata needed to support multiple search pathways.

Taken together, these studies suggest that government registries in general, and land registries in developing countries in particular, tend to rely on classification systems that are narrower in scope than the functional or hybrid models recommended in contemporary professional literature, and that the absence of documented file plans is a recurring and cross-national phenomenon rather than one confined to any single institution.

2.2.2 Influence of Records Classification on Retrieval Speed and Information Accessibility

A second body of literature examines the relationship between classification practice and the practical outcomes of retrieval speed and information accessibility. Shepherd and Yeo (2022) argued, from a theoretical and practitioner standpoint, that the primary purpose of any classification system is to enable predictable and rapid retrieval, and that retrieval performance is therefore the most direct measure of a classification system's effectiveness. Empirical support for this proposition is provided by Kemoni and Mose (2023), who found a statistically significant association between the presence of a documented file plan and shorter average retrieval times in the Kenyan ministries they studied, with registries lacking a file plan reporting retrieval delays roughly twice as long as those with a documented and consistently applied scheme.

In the Tanzanian setting, Lema and Manda (2024) reported that local government registries without computerized classification systems experienced considerably longer

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retrieval times than those with even partially computerized systems, and that citizens visiting these registries frequently experienced delays in the processing of routine administrative requests as a direct consequence. Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023) extended this line of inquiry to land records specifically, finding that the reliance on a single access point, typically the plot or parcel number, meant that requests framed around other information, such as the name of a land owner or the type of transaction, routinely took longer to resolve and, in some cases, could not be resolved without extensive manual searching through multiple files.

Ngoepe and Makhura (2022) further observed that information accessibility is compromised not only by the classification scheme itself but by the absence of comprehensive indexing that would allow records to be located through several complementary access points simultaneously. Their findings suggest that classification and indexing function together, classification determining where a record is physically or logically placed, and indexing determining how many different ways that record can subsequently be found, and that weaknesses in either component independently degrade overall accessibility. These findings collectively affirm that classification practice is not merely an administrative housekeeping matter but a determinant of substantive service delivery outcomes, since delays and failures in retrieval translate directly into delays in resolving land disputes, processing transactions, and responding to citizen inquiries.

2.2.3 Limitations of Existing Records Classification Systems

A substantial body of literature has sought to identify and categorize the limitations that commonly afflict records classification systems in government registries. Ngoepe and Makhura (2022) identified inconsistent application among staff as a primary and recurring limitation, arising principally from inadequate training and insufficient supervision, and note that even a well-designed classification scheme will fail in practice if different members of staff interpret and apply its rules differently. Shepherd and Yeo (2022) similarly highlighted the problem of rigidity, observing that classification systems built around fixed hierarchical categories often struggle to accommodate new

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types of records or new organizational functions as these emerge over time, resulting in records that do not fit existing categories being either misfiled or forced into inappropriate classes.

Johnston and Bowen (2023) drew attention to the challenges created by hybrid recordkeeping environments, in which paper-based and digital records coexist without an integrated classification approach spanning both formats, leading to fragmentation and duplicated effort. Resource constraints represent a further widely reported limitation, particularly in African contexts; Lema and Manda (2024) found that Tanzanian local government registries typically lack sufficient numbers of trained records personnel, a finding echoed by Kemoni and Mose (2023) in the Kenyan context, where high staff turnover was found to erode institutional knowledge of classification practice over time.

With specific reference to land records, Mosweu and Nkwe (2022) and Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023) both identified the absence of comprehensive indexing as a critical limitation, since parcel-based classification alone cannot support retrieval by the range of access points that land registry users typically require. These studies collectively point to a cluster of interrelated limitations, namely inconsistent application, rigid classification structures, fragmented paper–digital environments, resource and training deficits, and inadequate indexing, that together undermine the effectiveness of classification systems in government land registries across the African region.

2.2.4 Proposed Improvements and Essential Components of Enhanced Classification Systems

A final strand of the literature addresses proposed remedies to the limitations identified above. Yusuf and Cheko (2022) argued that functional classification, being grounded in relatively stable organizational activities rather than in subject terminology or organizational structure, offers the most sustainable long-term solution for government registries, since it remains valid even as organizational structures are reformed. Kemoni and Mose (2023) recommended the integration of structured metadata schemas

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alongside classification schemes, arguing that metadata capturing attributes such as creator, date, function, and format enables retrieval through multiple pathways without requiring wholesale reclassification of existing holdings.

Ngoepe and Makhura (2022) discussed the potential of rule-based and semi-automated classification tools that can suggest classification codes based on record content, while cautioning that such tools currently perform best when combined with human verification rather than operating fully independently. Mosweu and Nkwe (2022) advocated specifically for sector-specific classification schemes tailored to land records, combining parcel-based, transaction-based, and party-based access points to reflect the multiple relationships characteristic of land administration. Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023) and Lema and Manda (2024) both emphasized that any technical improvement to classification must be accompanied by a documented classification manual, sustained staff training, and regular supervisory review if it is to be sustained over time, echoing the emphasis placed by Johnston and Bowen (2023) on the importance of clear, written procedures. Collectively, this literature identifies a consistent set of essential components for an improved classification system: a documented classification scheme or file plan, comprehensive indexing, clear procedures, appropriate metadata, adequate staff training, and, where feasible, computerization.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework presents, in diagrammatic and narrative form, the variables of a study and the hypothesized relationship between them. In this study, the conceptual framework distinguishes between an independent variable, comprising the components of records classification practice, and a dependent variable, comprising the resulting level of registry performance, while also recognizing the role of intervening variables that may strengthen or weaken the relationship between the two.

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2.3.1 Independent Variable: Records Classification Practices

The independent variable in this study is records classification practice, operationalized through six components identified in the literature reviewed above: the classification scheme or method in use (whether parcel-based, numerical, subject-based, alphabetical, or geographical); the availability and use of a documented file plan or classification manual; the consistency with which classification rules are applied across different members of staff; the comprehensiveness of the indexing system and the number of access points it supports; the level of staff training and competence in classification procedures; and the extent to which the classification system has been computerized.

2.3.2 Dependent Variable: Registry Performance

The dependent variable is registry performance, operationalized through the following indicators: the speed with which requested records are retrieved; the overall accessibility of information to staff and to citizens; the accuracy and completeness of records once retrieved; the general efficiency of registry operations; the quality of service delivery experienced by citizens seeking land-related services; and the resulting level of staff and citizen satisfaction with the registry.

2.3.3 Diagrammatic Presentation of the Conceptual Framework

The diagram below presents the hypothesized relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. It proposes that stronger, more consistent, and better-resourced classification practices lead to improved registry performance, while weaknesses in classification practice, such as the absence of a file plan, inconsistent application, or inadequate indexing, translate into slower retrieval, reduced accessibility, and diminished service quality.

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Table 1 : Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Records Classification Practices and Registry Performance

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE (Records Classification Practices)	**DEPENDENT VARIABLE (Registry Performance)**
• Classification scheme/method used (parcel-based, numerical, subject, alphabetical, geographical) • Availability of a written file plan/classification manual • Consistency of classification practice among staff • Indexing systems and access points • Staff training and competence Level of computerization	• Speed of records retrieval • Information accessibility • Accuracy and completeness of records • Efficiency of registry operations • Quality of service delivery to citizens • Staff and citizen satisfaction

2.4 Research Gap

The reviewed literature offers useful insight into the development, practice, and limitations of records classification systems, yet gaps remain. Most Tanzanian studies (Lema & Manda, 2024; Chachage & Mbilinyi, 2023) address records management broadly rather than examining classification practice within a single district land registry in depth. International literature on functional classification and metadata integration (Yusuf & Chek, 2022; Kemoni & Mose, 2023; Ngoepe & Makhura, 2022) has also not been tested against the resource-constrained, parcel-based context typical of Tanzanian land offices, and no identified study has applied the Records Life Cycle Model to explain classification practice and retrieval performance together within such a setting. This study addresses these gaps by assessing, within one department, the classification method in use, its influence on retrieval and accessibility, its limitations, and the improvements staff themselves recommend.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains how the study on records classification and its influence on registry operations was carried out at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, Bagamoyo. It covers the research type, research design, study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, sources of data, ethical considerations, and how the data collected was processed and analyzed.

3.1 Research Type

A descriptive research type was adopted for this study. Kothari and Garg (2014) explain that descriptive research is concerned with describing a situation as it exists at the time of the study, rather than manipulating variables to establish cause and effect. This type suited the present study because the researcher was interested in describing, as accurately as possible, how records are currently classified at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, what systems and tools are used for that purpose, and what challenges staff face in the process, without altering any of these conditions.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is the overall plan that links the research questions of a study to the data that will be collected and the way that data will be analyzed (Kothari & Garg, 2014). A case study design was used in this study, meaning that the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo was studied closely as a single case, so as to gain an in-depth understanding of its classification practices and how they affect its registry functions. This design was considered suitable because it allowed the researcher to look at the classification system in its real, everyday setting, combining both numerical and narrative data.

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3.3 Study Area

It refers to the specific geographical location or setting where a research study is conducted and where data are collected. It describes the place, institution, community, or organization selected for the research because it is relevant to the research problem and objectives (Creswell, J, W.& Creswell, J, D). The study was carried out at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, located in Bagamoyo District, Coastal Region. Three considerations informed the choice of this office as the study area. First, its proximity to the researcher made repeated visits for data collection practical within the time and resources available. Second, the office hosts the specific categories of respondents required for this study, namely administrators, land officers, records staff, and support staff, all of whom interact with land records in the course of their duties. Third, the office handles a wide range of records, including title deeds, allocation letters, survey maps, and permits, which made it a suitable setting for examining records classification practices.

3.4 Target Population

A target population is the entire group of individuals from which a researcher seeks to draw information for a study (Bryman, 2012). The target population for this study consisted of staff at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo whose duties involve the creation, classification, management, or use of records. Four categories of staff were covered: Departmental Administrators and Section Heads, Land Officers and Surveyors, Records Management Officers and Registry Clerks, and Support Staff involved in records handling. The estimated total size of this population was 42 staff members.

3.5 Sample Size

Sample size refers to the actual number of respondents drawn from the target population to participate in a study (Kothari & Garg, 2014). A total of 25 respondents were selected from the 42 members of the target population, comprising 4 Departmental

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Administrators/Section Heads, 6 Land Officers/Surveyors, 10 Records Management Officers/Registry Clerks, and 5 Support Staff. These respondents were selected because their daily duties gave them direct and sufficiently informed exposure to records classification practices at the office.

Table 2 : Sample Size

Category of Respondents	**Population**	**Sample Size**	**Percentage (%)**
Departmental Administrators / Section Heads	5	4	16%
Land Officers / Surveyors	8	6	24%
Records Management Officers / Registry Clerks	20	10	40%
Support Staff	9	5	20%
Total	**42**	**25**	**100%**

Source: Researcher (2026).

3.6 Sampling Techniques

Sampling techniques are the procedures researchers use to draw a manageable sample that still reflects the characteristics of the wider population (Kothari & Garg, 2014). Both probability and non-probability sampling were used to select respondents for this study.

3.6.1 Probability Sampling

Probability sampling gives every member of the population a known and, in most cases, an equal chance of being included in the sample, typically through random selection (Kothari & Garg, 2014). In this study, simple random selection was used to draw the 10 Records Management Officers/Registry Clerks and the 5 Support Staff from their

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respective staff lists, reducing the chance that the researcher's own judgement would influence who was included.

3.6.2 Non-Probability Sampling

Non-probability sampling does not give every member of the population an equal or known chance of selection; instead, respondents are chosen based on criteria set by the researcher (Kothari & Garg, 2014). This study applied purposive sampling to select the 4 Departmental Administrators/Section Heads and the 6 Land Officers/Surveyors, on the basis of their position, oversight role, and specialized knowledge of land records, since these respondents were best placed to provide informed answers on the study objectives.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods are the specific tools and procedures used to gather information needed to answer a study's research questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). Both primary and secondary data collection methods were used in this study.

3.7.1 Primary Data

Primary data is information gathered directly by the researcher for the specific purposes of the study at hand (Kothari & Garg, 2014). Three methods were used to collect primary data in this study: observation, questionnaires, and interviews.

3.7.1.1 Observation

Observation involves the systematic viewing and recording of behaviors, processes, and phenomena in their natural settings without manipulating or interfering with the situation, it can be participant observation, non- participant, structured observation (Kumar, 2023). In this study, the researcher employed a structured observation approach to directly observe records classification practices, registry operations, and records retrieval processes at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office.

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The researcher spent time in the registry area observing how staff members classify new records, locate files, handle retrieval requests, and manage the physical filing system. A standardized observation checklist was used to ensure systematic recording of specific behaviors and conditions related to records classification. Observations were conducted at different times and days to capture variations in workflow and to minimize the Hawthorne effect.

Specifically, the researcher observed: the physical arrangement of records and filing equipment; the classification scheme in use (e.g., geographical, parcel-based); how staff identify and assign classification codes to new records; the process of retrieving requested files; the condition and labeling of file covers and folders; any finding aids or indexes available; and the general workflow and organization of the registry. Observations were recorded on the observation checklist and supplemented with field notes describing contextual details and any notable incidents or patterns.

3.7.1.2 Questionnaires: Structured questionnaires containing mostly closed-ended items were administered to the 15 Records Management Officers, Registry Clerks, and Support Staff. The items focused on the classification system currently used, how quickly records could be retrieved, and the challenges encountered in daily classification work.

3.7.1.3 Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the 10 Departmental Administrators, Section Heads, and Land Officers, allowing the researcher to probe for detail that a questionnaire could not capture, particularly on how the classification system affects decision-making and service delivery at the office (Kothari & Garg, 2014).

3.7.2 Secondary Data

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Secondary data is information that was originally collected for a purpose other than the current study but is drawn upon to support it (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). In this study, secondary data was obtained through document review.

3.7.2.1 Document Review: Departmental annual reports, registry operational manuals, file plans, classification guidelines, and the National Archives Act were reviewed. This helped the researcher to situate the findings of this study within existing knowledge and to compare the findings from the Bagamoyo office with those reported in other settings.

3.8 Sources of Data

3.8.1 Primary Data Sources: Primary data was obtained directly from administrators, land officers, records staff, and support staff at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office through observation, questionnaires, and interviews, providing first-hand information on classification practices and challenges.

3.8.2 Secondary Data Sources: Secondary data was drawn mainly from departmental reports, operational manuals, and relevant legislation, as well as from published literature on records classification, which supported and contextualized the primary data collected from respondents.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis refers to the process of organizing, summarizing, interpreting, and presenting collected data in order to answer the research objectives and draw meaningful conclusions (Kothari, 2004). Since this study adopted a mixed methods research approach, both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed.

Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, specifically frequencies and percentages. The analyzed data were presented in tables and figures to facilitate interpretation and comparison of the findings according to the study objectives. This analysis helped to assess the existing records classification system, its influence on records retrieval and information accessibility, and the challenges affecting its implementation at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

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Qualitative data collected through interviews and document review were analyzed using content analysis. The responses were organized into themes based on the study objectives and interpreted to explain the views and experiences of the respondents. Relevant quotations from participants were included where necessary to support the findings. Finally, the findings from both quantitative and qualitative data were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the records classification system, its influence on registry operations, and possible improvements at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics are the moral principles that protect the rights, dignity, and privacy of research participants while ensuring honesty throughout the study (Creswell, 2018). Before data collection, the researcher obtained an introduction letter from SLADS, which was presented to the relevant office authorities for approval. Informed consent was sought from each participant, who was also informed of the right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by excluding participants' names and specific departmental details, and all data collected were used strictly for academic purposes. Findings were reported truthfully and honestly, without fabrication, alteration, or plagiarism (Creswell, 2023).

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, and discusses the findings of the study on records classification systems and their influence in government registries, using the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office (DLNRO), Bagamoyo, as a case study. The chapter is organized into five main sections corresponding to the demographic characteristics of respondents and the four specific objectives of the study: the existing records classification system, its influence on retrieval speed and information accessibility, the limitations of the existing system, and the proposed system with its essential components. Findings obtained from questionnaires are presented using tables and figures and are supplemented by responses from the semi-structured interview and by observation data where relevant.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.1.1 Gender of Respondents

Figure 4.1 shows that male respondents constituted the majority, 15 (60%), while female respondents accounted for 10 (40%) of the sample.

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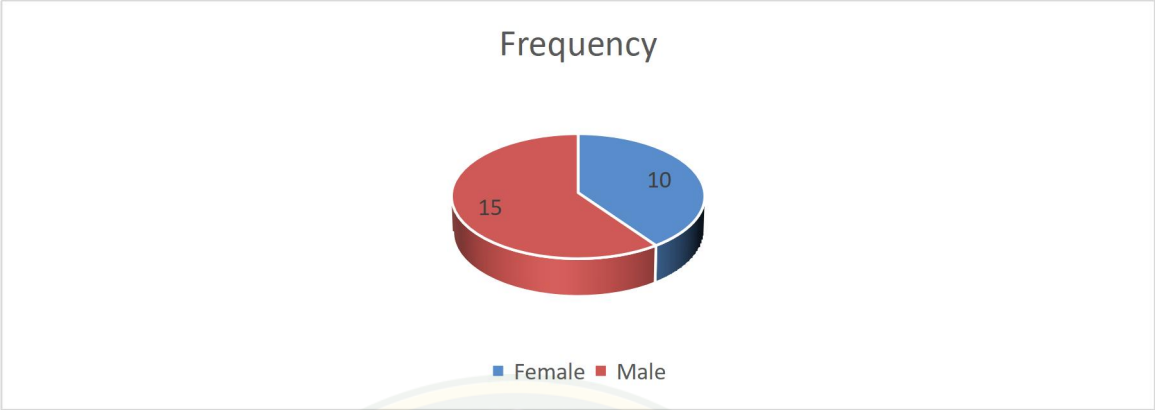


Figure 2 : Distribution of respondents by gender.

Source: Field Data (2026)

The fairly balanced gender distribution suggests that the views obtained on records classification practices at DLNRO were not skewed toward a single gender perspective, strengthening the representativeness of the findings.

4.1.2 Age Group of Respondents

Table 4.1 shows that respondents aged 18–25 years formed the largest group, 8 (32%), followed by those aged 36–45 years and 46 years and above, each accounting for 6 (24%), while those aged 26–35 years accounted for 5 (20%).

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents by age group.

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18–25 years	8	32%
26–35 years	5	20%
36–45 years	6	24%
46 years and above	6	24%
Total	**25**	**100%**

Source: Field Data (2026).

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The presence of respondents across all age brackets, including a substantial proportion of more experienced, older staff, indicates that the sample captured both newer perspectives and long-standing institutional knowledge of the department's classification practices.

4.1.3 Position/Department of Respondents.

Figure 4.2 shows that Land Officers and Surveyors formed the largest group of respondents, 10 (40%), while Departmental Administrators/Section Heads, Records Management Officers/Registry Clerks, and Support Staff each accounted for 5 (20%) of the sample.

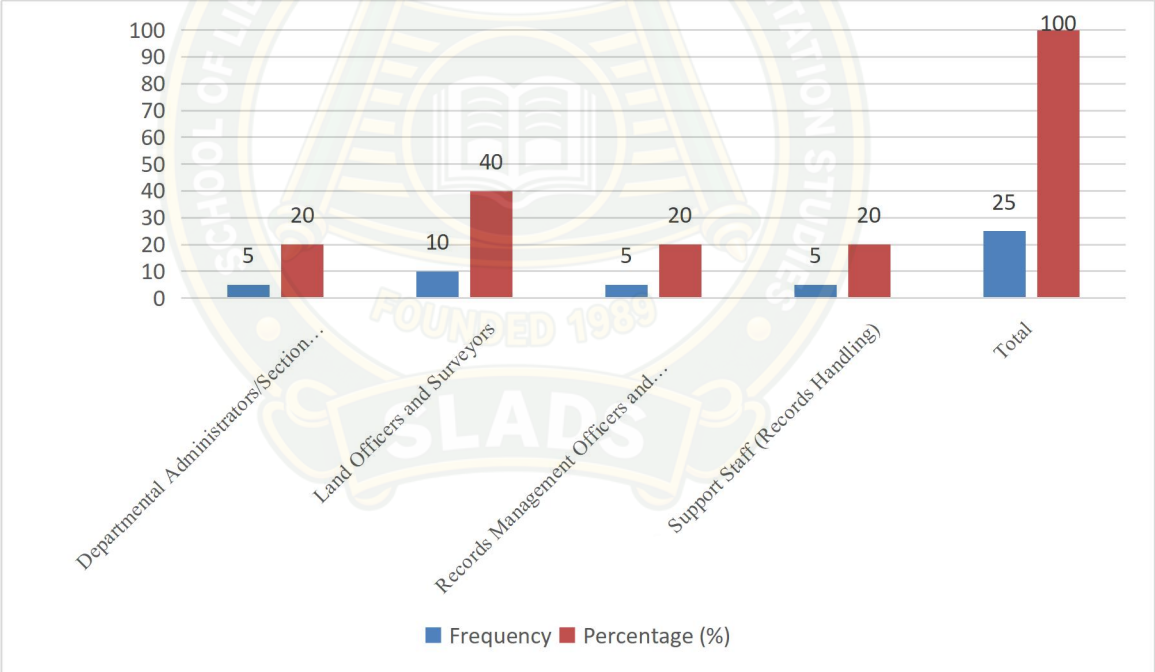


Figure 3 : Distribution of respondents by position/department.

Source: Field Data (2026).

The relatively strong representation of Land Officers and Surveyors, who routinely request and rely on land files in their daily work, means that a considerable share of the

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findings reflects the perspective of frequent end-users of the classification system, rather than records staff alone.

4.1.4 Work Experience of Respondents

Figure 4.3 shows that the majority of respondents, 10 (40%), had worked at the department for more than 10 years, while 8 (32%) had between 1 and 5 years of experience, 5 (20%) had between 6 and 10 years, and only 2 (8%) had less than 1 year of experience.

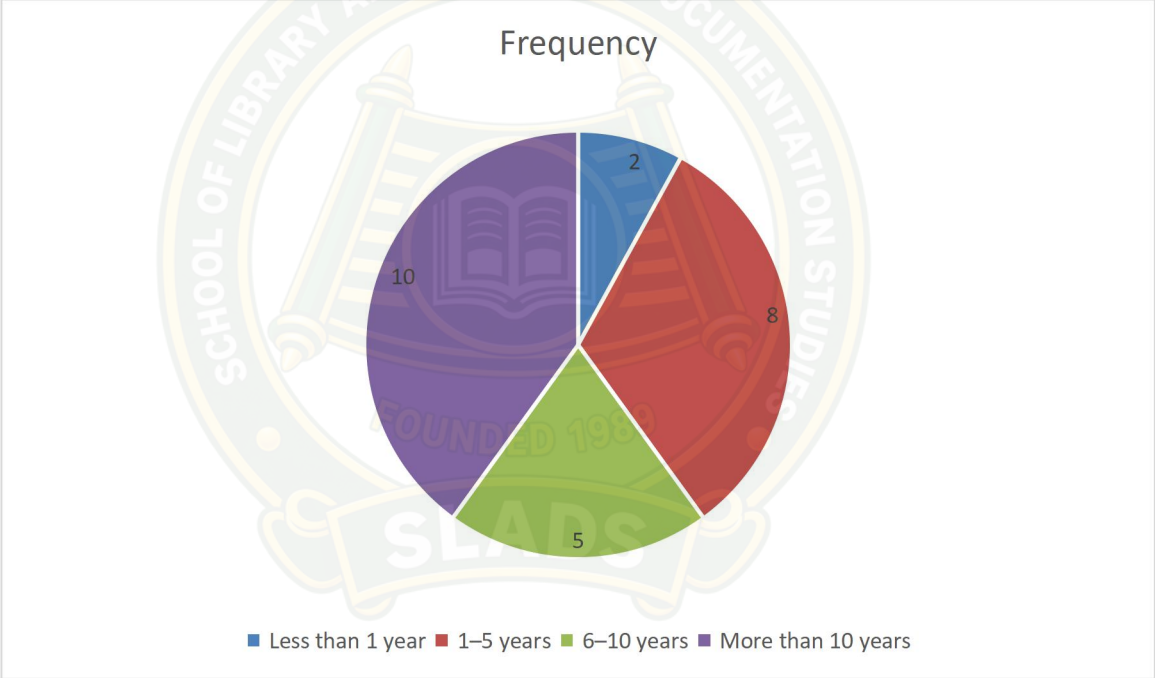


Figure 4 : Distribution of Respondents by Work Experience.

Source: Field Data (2026).

The fact that 60% of respondents had worked at the department for more than five years suggests that most participants were well positioned to comment on how classification practices had functioned, and possibly changed, over an extended period.

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4.2 Existing Records Classification System

4.2.1 Type of Records Classification System Currently Used

Respondents were asked to indicate the type(s) of classification system currently used in the registry and were permitted to select more than one option, since more than one method is often used concurrently. As shown in Table 4.2, parcel-based classification and geographical classification were the most commonly cited methods, each mentioned by 8 (32%) of respondents, followed by numerical classification, mentioned by 7 (28%). Alphabetical classification was mentioned by 2 (8%), subject-based classification by 1 (4%), and 1 (4%) respondent indicated they did not know which system was in use.

The study sample size was 25 respondents. However, for this question, the total number of responses exceeded 25, because some respondents provided more than one response, as expected. All responses were considered during the analysis

Table 4 : Type of Records Classification System Currently Used.

Classification Type	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Parcel-based classification (by plot numbers)	8	32%
Numerical classification (by file numbers)	7	28%
Subject-based classification (by topics)	1	4%
Alphabetical classification (by names)	2	8%
Geographical classification (by location)	8	32%
I don't know	1	4%

Source: Field Data (2026).

To verify this finding, the researcher interviewed a departmental head, who was asked to describe the current classification system in use, its basis, and how long it had been applied. The respondent stated:

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"The current records classification system used in this department is Geographical classification."

This response is broadly consistent with the questionnaire results, in which geographical classification tied with parcel-based classification as the most frequently cited method; taken together, these two location-oriented approaches account for the majority of classification activity at the department, while numerical, alphabetical, and subject-based classification play a comparatively minor, supplementary role. This pattern mirrors the finding of Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023) in Tanzanian district land offices, where parcel-based and location-based classification were similarly found to dominate land registry practice because they are intuitive to staff already familiar with a given jurisdiction. However, Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023) equally caution that this intuitiveness comes at a cost: such schemes offer limited flexibility once a user needs to search by an access point other than location or plot number, a limitation that is examined further in Section 4.3.3 below. The near-total absence of subject-based classification at DLNRO, mentioned by only one respondent, also departs from the functional classification approach recommended by Johnston and Bowen (2023) and Yusuf and Cheko (2022), suggesting that the department's classification method remains closer to the traditional, geography-anchored model typical of many African land registries (Mosweu & Nkwe, 2022) than to the business-function-based schemes increasingly adopted in more developed record-keeping environments.

During the study, the researcher observed that the type of records classification system currently used at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office is geographical classification (by location) and parcel-based classification (by plot numbers).

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4.2.2 Availability of a Written File Plan or Classification Manual

Figure 4.4 shows that 15 (60%) of respondents indicated that a written file plan or classification manual exists and that they use it regularly, while 5 (20%) said they did not know whether one existed, 3 (12%) indicated one exists but is rarely used, and 2 (8%) stated that no written guide exists at all.

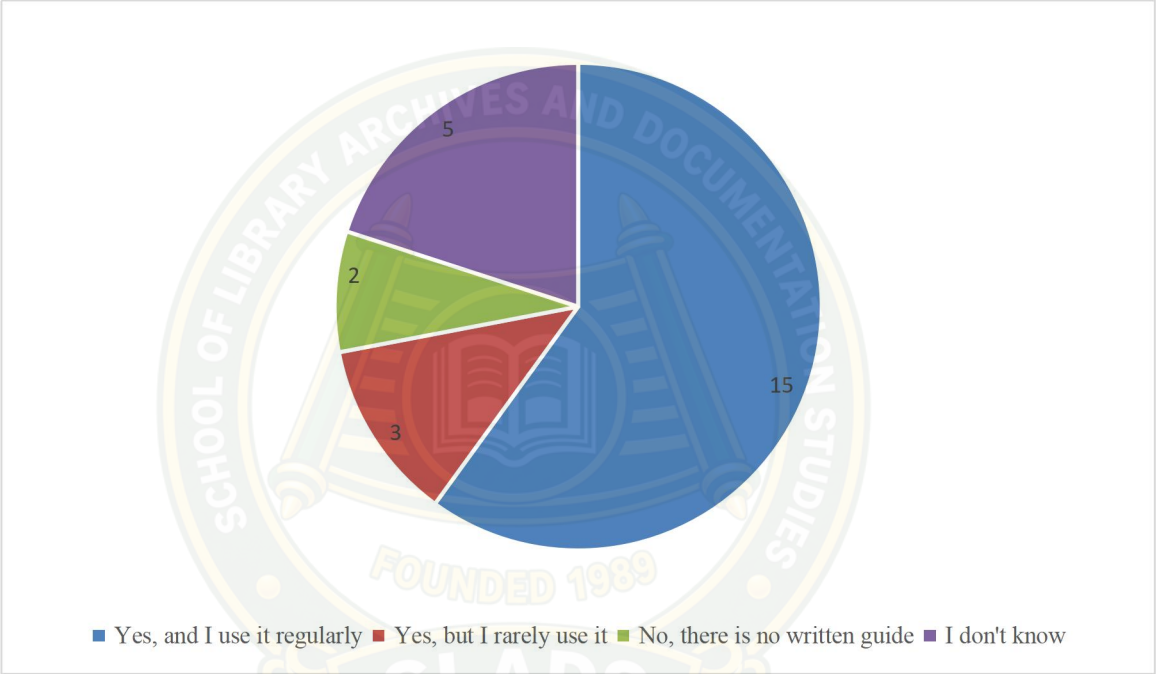


Figure 5 : Availability of Written File Plan or Classification Manual.

Source: Field Data (2026).

This finding stands in notable contrast to the interview response obtained from the departmental head. Asked directly whether documented classification guidelines, a file plan, or a classification manual exist, and how accessible and up to date such a document would be, the respondent answered without qualification:

> *"No there is no any documented classification guidelines."*

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The departmental head was further asked who is responsible for classifying records and what training or qualifications that person holds. The response identified

Records Management Assistant (RMA) as the officer responsible for classification, with training obtained through Tanzania Records and Archive Management Associations (TRAMP) the relevant records management training programmer, rather than through any department-specific induction tied to a written manual.

This discrepancy between the questionnaire, interview and observation findings is itself an important result. It suggests that what most frontline staff experience as a "file plan" may in practice be an informal, learned convention passed on through general professional training and day-to-day habit, rather than an officially documented and departmentally approved manual. This is consistent with the researcher's own observation that no documented classification guidelines exist at the department. Staff may therefore be applying broadly consistent practices without there being any authoritative written document to which those practices can be traced, or against which new staff can be formally trained. This finding closely echoes Lema and Manda (2024), who found that Tanzanian local government registries typically rely on classification methods developed informally over time rather than on any documented or standardized scheme, and Ngoepe and Makhura (2022), who identified weak enforcement and limited technical capacity, rather than the complete absence of policy awareness, as the reason many South African registries continue to apply classification inconsistently. Read through the Records Life Cycle Model discussed in Chapter Two, this gap is significant precisely because it occurs at the maintenance and use stage, the stage the model identifies as depending on documented procedure (Schellenberg, 1956; Penn, Pennix & Coulson, 1994); where that documentation does not formally exist, the consistency of classification cannot be assured over time or across staff turnover.

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4.2.3 Consistency of Records Classification Among Staff

During the study at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, respondents were asked how consistently records are classified across different staff members. As shown in Figure 4.5, 8 (32%) reported that classification is always consistent, and an equal number, 8 (32%), reported that it is only sometimes consistent. A further 5 (20%) reported that it is rarely consistent, while 4 (16%) reported it as usually consistent. None of the respondents selected "never consistent."

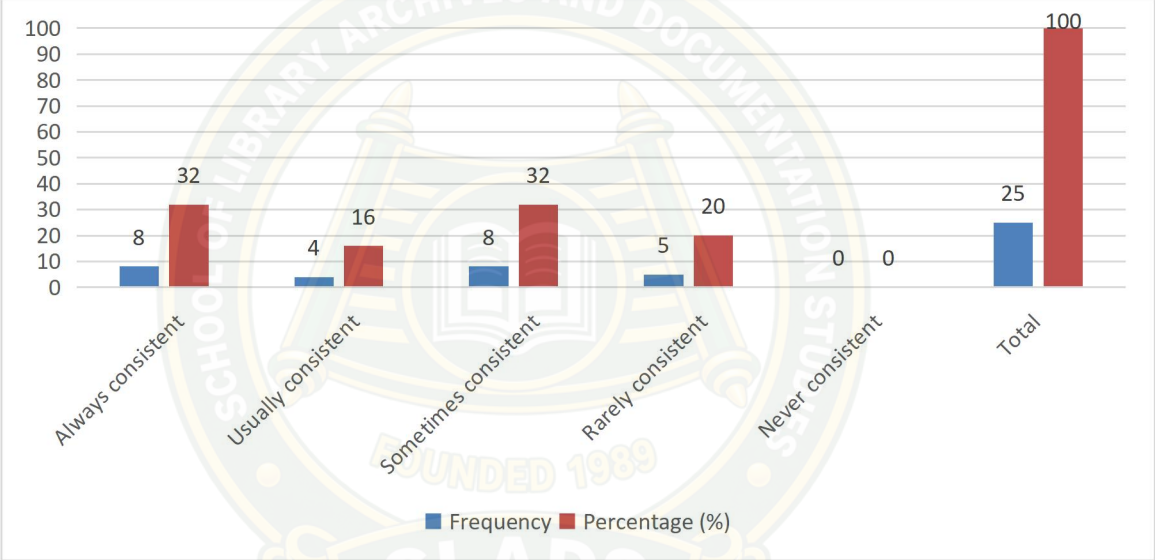


Figure 6 : Consistency of Records Classification Among Staff.

Source: Field Data (2026).

Asked how decisions are made about where to place a new file or how to classify a new type of record, and whether this follows a formal process or is left to individual judgement, the departmental head responded simply:

> *"Individual Judgement."*

Combining the "sometimes" and "rarely consistent" questionnaire responses shows that more than half of respondents, 13 (52%), experience some degree of inconsistency in

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how records are classified. This finding directly corroborates the interview response above. Taken together, the absence of a documented file plan (Section 4.2.2) and the reliance on individual judgement in classification decisions explain why a substantial share of staff experience inconsistent classification: without a written standard to apply, each member of staff necessarily falls back on personal interpretation, and the resulting variation is exactly what Figure 4. 6 captures. This is precisely the mechanism described by Ngoepe and Makhura (2022), who identified inconsistent application among staff as a primary and recurring limitation arising principally from inadequate training and insufficient supervision, and who noted that even a well-designed classification scheme will fail in practice if different members of staff interpret and apply its rules differently. Kemoni and Mose (2023) reached a similar conclusion in their study of Kenyan government ministries, finding that classification practice was frequently inconsistent even within the same institution in the absence of a unifying, government-wide file plan; the DLNRO finding suggests that the same dynamic operates even within a single department when no internal file plan exists to anchor practice.

Taken as a whole, the findings in this section show that DLNRO's classification practice is dominated by geographical and parcel-based methods, is guided more by informal convention and individual judgement than by documented procedure, and is consequently applied with only moderate consistency across staff. This directly answers the first objective of the study and sets the foundation for the retrieval and accessibility findings discussed in the next section.

4.3 Influence on Records Retrieval Speed and Information Accessibility

4.3.1 Average Time to Retrieve a Requested Land File

Table 4.3 shows that the largest proportion of respondents, 10 (40%), reported that retrieving a requested land file takes between 30 and 60 minutes. This was followed by 7 (28%) who reported retrieval in less than 5 minutes, 6 (24%) who reported 5–15 minutes, and 2 (8%) who reported 15–30 minutes.

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Table 5 : Average Time to Retrieve a Requested Land File.

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 5 minutes	7	28%
5–15 minutes	6	24%
15–30 minutes	2	8%
30–60 minutes	10	40%
More than 1 hour	0	0%
Sometimes cannot be found at all	0	0%
Total	**25**	**100%**

Source: Field Data (2026)

Although no respondent selected the most extreme categories, the finding that 40% of respondents experience retrieval delays of 30 to 60 minutes indicates a real and fairly widespread problem, since land registry users, whether staff or citizens, would typically expect a well-classified file to be locatable within minutes rather than the better part of an hour. This finding is consistent with Shepherd and Yeo (2022), who argued that the primary purpose of any classification system is to enable predictable and rapid retrieval, and that retrieval performance is therefore the most direct measure of a classification system's effectiveness; measured against that standard, the retrieval times recorded at DLNRO point to a system that is only partially fulfilling its core function.

During the study, the researcher observed that the average time to retrieve a requested land file at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office ranged from less than 5 minutes to, in some cases, records that could not be found at all.

4.3.2 Perception on Whether Current Classification Enables Quick Retrieval

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed that the current classification system enables quick and easy retrieval. As shown in Figure 4.6, 9 (36%) disagreed, 6

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(24%) agreed, 5 (20%) strongly agreed, 3 (12%) were neutral, and 2 (8%) strongly disagreed.

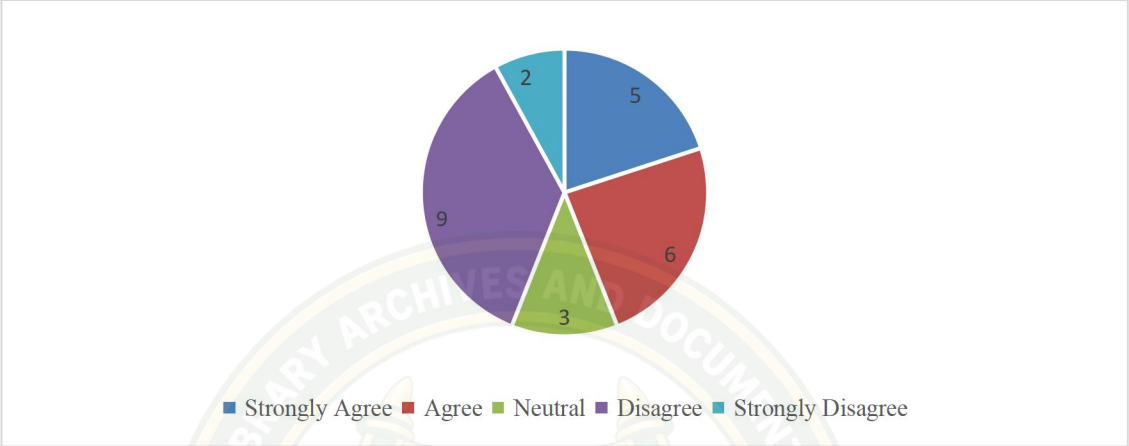


Figure 7 : Perception on Whether Current Classification Enables Quick Retrieval. Source: Field Data (2026).

Combining "disagree" and "strongly disagree" shows that 11 respondents (44%) do not believe the current system supports quick retrieval, compared with 11 respondents (44%) who agree or strongly agree, and 3 (12%) who remained neutral. This near-even split suggests that experiences of the classification system's effectiveness vary considerably depending on the respondent's role and the type of record they typically need to retrieve, a pattern that becomes clearer when the access points respondents actually use are examined. The finding also lends indirect support to Kemoni and Mose (2023), who found a statistically significant association between the presence of a documented file plan and shorter average retrieval times in Kenyan ministries, with registries lacking a file plan reporting retrieval delays roughly twice as long as those with a documented and consistently applied scheme; the divided perception recorded here is consistent with a department that, as established in Section 4.2.2, lacks such a documented plan and where retrieval outcomes therefore depend heavily on which access point, and which member of staff, a given search happens to involve.

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4.3.3 Access Points Typically Used for Finding Information

Table 4.4 shows that when searching for information, 11 (44%) of respondents typically use the plot/parcel number, 8 (32%) use location/area, and 6 (24%) use the file number. None of the respondents reported typically using the owner's name, the type of document, or the date of transaction as an access point.

Table 6 : Access Points Typically Used for Finding Information.

Access Point	Frequency	Percentage (%)
File number	6	24%
Owner's name	0	0%
Plot/parcel number	11	44%
Date of transaction	0	0%
Type of document	0	0%
Location/area	8	32%
Total	**25**	**100%**

Source: Field Data (2026).

This finding is significant because it shows that staff have effectively adapted to the classification system as it exists, relying almost entirely on plot/parcel number and location, the two access points that the geographical and parcel-based classification methods directly support, while abandoning owner's name, transaction date, and document type as practical search strategies. This is not evidence that these other access points are unimportant; rather, it reflects the interview finding, discussed in Section 4.4.1 below, that no comprehensive indexing system exists to support them. Ngoepe and Makhura (2022) observed that information accessibility is compromised not only by the classification scheme itself but by the absence of comprehensive indexing that would allow records to be located through several complementary access points simultaneously; their argument is that classification and indexing function together, with classification

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determining where a record is physically or logically placed and indexing determining how many different ways that record can subsequently be found. The DLNRO finding illustrates this dynamic directly: a land registry user who does not know a plot number or general location, for instance someone searching only by an owner's name, would have no effective way to locate the relevant file under the present system, regardless of how well that file may in fact be classified by location.

4.3.4 Frequency of Inability to Locate Records Even After Searching

Table 4.5 shows that, of the 22 respondents who answered this item, 6 (27%) reported that they are sometimes unable to locate records even after searching, while 5 (23%) each reported "very often" and "often," 4 (18%) reported "never," and 2 (9%) reported "rarely."

Table 7 : Frequency of Inability to Locate Records Even After Searching.

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Very Often	5	23%
Often	5	23%
Sometimes	6	27%
Rarely	5	9%
Never	2	18%
Total	**22**	**100%**

Note: Three respondents did not answer this item; percentages are calculated on the 22 valid responses.

Source: Field Data (2026).

Combining "very often," "often," and "sometimes" shows that a large majority of the respondents who answered this item, 16 out of 22 (73%), have experienced difficulty locating records at some meaningful frequency. This is a serious finding: it means that

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outright retrieval failure, not merely delay, is a recurring rather than occasional experience for most staff.

4.3.5 Frequency of Difficulties Locating Records Due to Classification Problems

During the study at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, respondents were asked more specifically how often they experience difficulties locating records because of classification problems. As shown in Figure 4.7, the majority of respondents were split evenly between "sometimes" and "rarely," each at 10 (40%), while 3 (12%) reported "very often," 2 (8%) reported "never," and none reported "often."

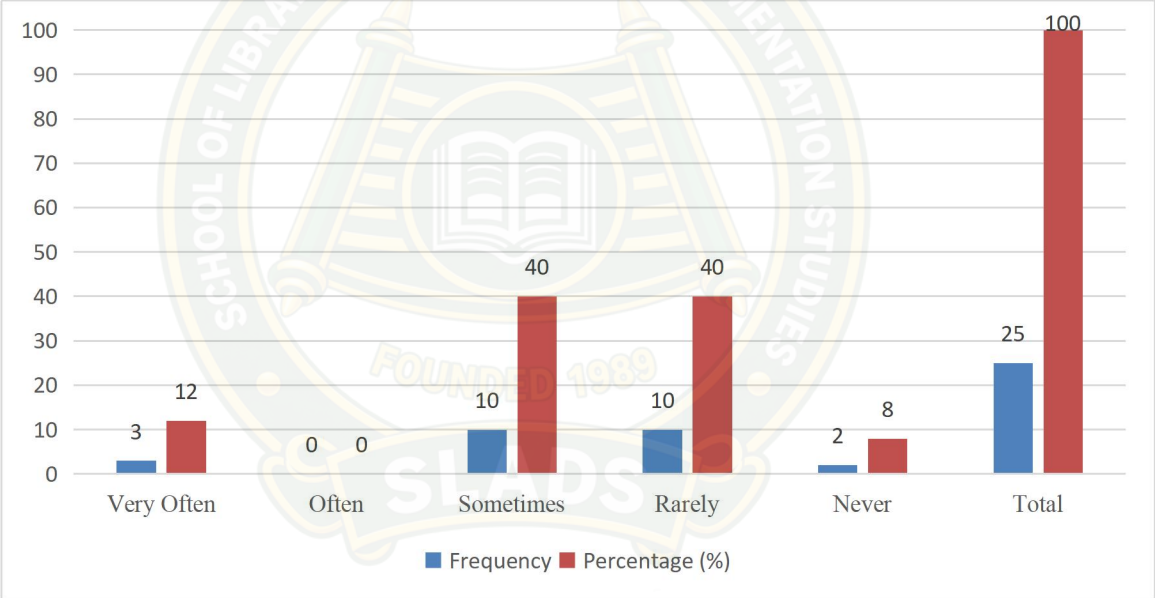


Figure 8 : Frequency of Difficulties Locating Records Due to Classification Problems.

Source: Field Data (2026).

Read alongside Figure 4.7, this item suggests that while classification problems specifically are experienced by a moderate share of staff (52% at "sometimes" or "very often"), the broader experience of simply being unable to find a record, for whatever combination of reasons, including storage congestion and misplacement, is considerably

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more widespread. This pattern was strongly confirmed in the interview. Asked how the current classification system affects the speed at which records can be retrieved, and whether this produces noticeable delays affecting service delivery, the departmental head answered:

> *"Delays in service delivery to clients."*

Asked what specific challenges staff and clients face in accessing information because of the way records are classified, the response identified a cluster of related consequences:

> *"Complaining from the clients, business discontinuity, delay in retrieving the information."*

The departmental head elaborated further when asked how the classification system supports or hinders decision-making by departmental officials, explaining:

> *"The classification system supports decision-making when records are properly classified, complete, and easy to retrieve. Officials can quickly access reliable information needed for planning, policy implementation, and resolving land disputes. However, when records are poorly classified, incomplete, or misplaced, decision-making is delayed and may be based on incomplete information. In land dispute resolution, the availability of well-organized records is essential for making fair and legally sound decisions."*

Finally, asked directly whether the department had received citizen complaints about delays in processing land matters that might be related to record retrieval problems, the departmental head confirmed:

> *"Yes, the department has occasionally received complaints from citizens regarding delays in processing land-related services. In many cases, the*

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delays result from difficulties in locating physical files due to misclassification, file misplacement, or congested storage facilities. These challenges increase the time required to retrieve records and consequently delay the processing of land transactions and other services."

These four interview responses converge closely with the quantitative findings above and give the retrieval problem a concrete service-delivery dimension that the tables alone cannot fully convey: retrieval delay is not simply an internal administrative inconvenience but a factor in citizen dissatisfaction, disrupted land business, and, in the department's own account, decisions taken on the basis of incomplete information during dispute resolution. This directly supports Chachage and Mbilinyi (2023), who found that reliance on a single access point in Tanzanian land offices meant requests framed around information other than plot number routinely took longer to resolve and, in some cases, could not be resolved without extensive manual searching, and it extends Ojo and Popoola's (2015) broader observation, cited in Chapter Two, that poor infrastructure and weak enforcement of records policies in developing countries slow down service delivery more generally.

4.4 Section D: Limitations of the Existing Classification System

4.4.1 Limitations of the Existing Records Classification System

During the study at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, respondents were asked to indicate, from a list, the main limitations they experience with the current system, with multiple selections permitted. As shown in Table 4.6, insufficient storage equipment was the most frequently cited limitation, mentioned by 8 (32%) of respondents, followed by records being misfiled or misplaced and the absence of a computerized classification system, each mentioned by 6 (24%). No training on how to classify records was mentioned by 5 (20%), too many records with similar names/subjects by 4 (16%), classification system being outdated by 3 (12%), while lack

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of proper indexing and no clear classification guidelines were each mentioned by 2 (8%), and inconsistent classification by different staff was mentioned by 1 (4%).

The study sample size was 25 respondents. However, for this question, the total number of responses exceeded 25, because some respondents provided more than one response, as expected. All responses were considered during the analysis

Table 8 : Limitations of the Existing Records Classification System.

Limitation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Insufficient storage equipment	8	32%
Records are misfiled or misplaced	6	24%
No computerized classification system	6	24%
No training on how to classify records	5	20%
Too many records with similar names/subjects	4	16%
Classification system is outdated	3	12%
Lack of proper indexing	2	8%
No clear classification guidelines	2	8%
Inconsistent classification by different staff	1	4%

Source: Field Data (2026).

These findings were substantially corroborated in the interview. Asked directly what he considered to be the main limitations or weaknesses of the current records classification system, the departmental head identified a cluster of interlocking problems:

> *"The major limitations include inconsistent implementation of the classification scheme, inadequate staff training, limited financial and technological resources, and overreliance on manual recordkeeping systems. In addition, the current classification structure is not regularly reviewed to accommodate organizational changes, leading to inconsistencies in records organization and retrieval."*

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Asked more specifically how the current system handles different types of land records, and whether any record types fall outside the existing structure, the departmental head explained:

> *"The current system classifies different categories of land records such as title deeds, allocation letters, survey maps, permits, and correspondence into separate files according to their functions or subjects. However, some records, particularly survey maps, digital records, and documents relating to multiple land transactions, do not fit neatly into the existing classification structure. This creates inconsistencies and makes retrieval more difficult, especially when records are linked to more than one function or activity."*

These two interview responses substantially deepen the quantitative picture in Table 4.6. Where the questionnaire identifies insufficient storage equipment, misfiling, and lack of computerization as the most frequently cited limitations in isolation, the departmental head's account shows how these individual weaknesses interact: manual, paper-dependent recordkeeping is sustained by inadequate training and an uncomputerized system, while the classification structure itself, never formally reviewed, becomes increasingly poorly suited to newer or more complex record types such as survey maps and multi-transaction documents. This is consistent with Shepherd and Yeo (2022), who highlighted the problem of rigidity in classification systems built around fixed hierarchical categories, noting that such systems often struggle to accommodate new types of records or functions as these emerge over time, resulting in records that do not fit existing categories being either misfiled or forced into inappropriate classes. It also mirrors Johnston and Bowen's (2023) observation regarding hybrid recordkeeping environments, in which paper-based and digital records coexist without an integrated classification approach spanning both formats, leading to fragmentation; the departmental head's explicit mention of "digital records" not fitting the existing paper-oriented structure is a direct, local instance of exactly this problem. Furthermore, the

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finding that resource and training constraints compound the classification weaknesses reflects Lema and Manda's (2024) conclusion that Tanzanian local government registries typically lack sufficient numbers of trained records personnel, and Kemoni and Mose's (2023) related finding, in the Kenyan context, that high staff turnover erodes institutional knowledge of classification practice over time.

4.4.2 Formal Training Received on Records Classification

Figure 4.8 shows that 9 (36%) of respondents received formal training more than two years ago, 8 (32%) received training within the last two years, and an equal number, 8 (32%), had never received any formal training on records classification.

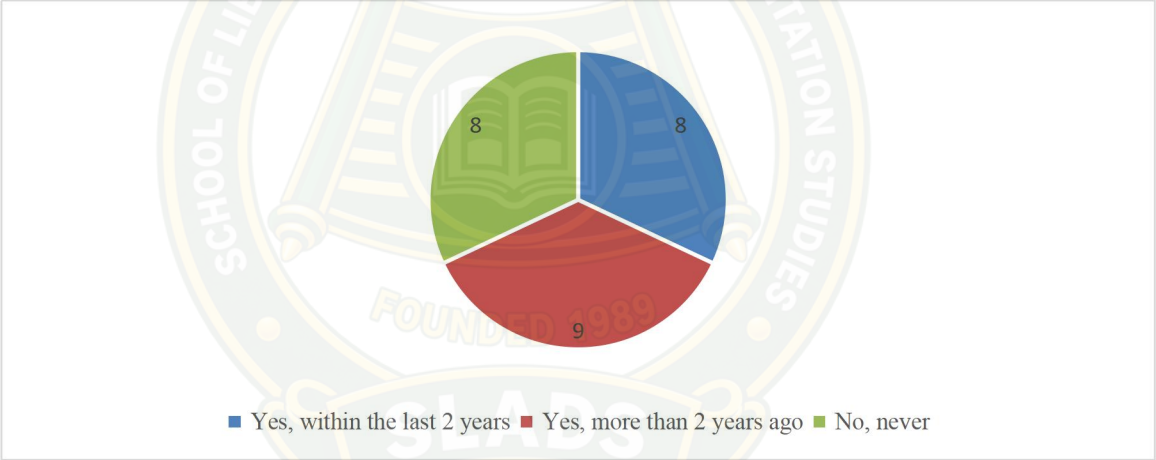


Figure 9 : Formal Training Received on Records Classification.

Source: Field Data (2026).

This finding gives measurable weight to the training gap identified qualitatively in Table 4.12 and by the departmental head: nearly one in three staff members has never been trained at all, and among those who have, the majority were trained more than two years ago, meaning their knowledge may not reflect any changes in departmental practice or record types since that time. Kruse et al. (2016), although writing in the context of electronic health records rather than land registries, identify poor staff training as one of

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the most consistently reported barriers to effective records system adoption across sectors, a pattern the DLNRO data reproduces almost exactly; the training gap identified here is therefore not an isolated local weakness but part of a broader, cross-sectoral pattern documented in the wider records management literature.

4.4.3 Perception on Whether the System Can Accommodate New Record Types

Figure 4.9 shows that 7 (28%) of respondents believe the current system is too rigid to accommodate new record types, while 6 (24%) each said it can do so easily, can do so with some difficulty, or that they did not know.

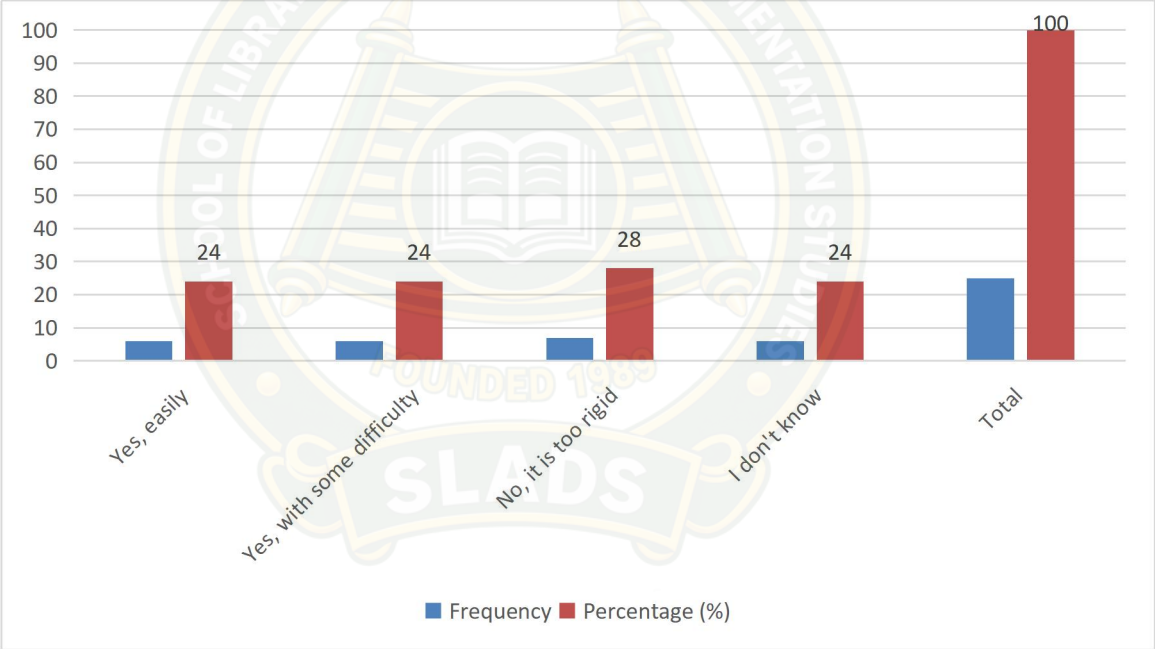


Figure 10 : Perception on Whether System Can Accommodate New Record Types.

Source: Field Data (2026).

Combining "too rigid" with "yes, with some difficulty" shows that 13 respondents (52%) perceive the system as struggling, to varying degrees, to accommodate new record types. This aligns closely with the interview finding on survey maps, digital records, and multi-transaction documents falling outside the existing structure, and reflects the kind of

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rigidity that the Records Life Cycle Model would attribute to a classification scheme that has not been reviewed or adapted as the department's functions and record types have evolved over time.

Taken together, this section shows that the limitations affecting DLNRO's classification system are not confined to a single cause but form a cluster of interrelated weaknesses: physical resource shortfalls, a substantial and partly untrained workforce, and a classification structure too rigid to comfortably absorb newer categories of records. This directly answers the third objective of the study and, together with the findings in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, provides the evidentiary basis for the improvements discussed in the following section.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, the conclusions drawn from the findings discussed in Chapter Four, and the recommendations arising from the study. The chapter is organized into five sections: a summary of the study, a summary of the key findings in relation to the four specific objectives, the conclusions of the study, recommendations addressed to departmental management, policy makers, and future researchers, and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study assessed records classification systems and their influence in government registries, using the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office (DLNRO), Bagamoyo, as a case study. The study was guided by four specific objectives: to examine the existing records classification system used at DLNRO, to assess the influence of records classification practices on records retrieval speed and information accessibility, to identify the limitations of the existing classification system and their influence on registry operations, and to explore a proposed records classification system and its essential components for improving registry efficiency.

The study adopted a descriptive research type and a case study design with a mixed-methods approach, anchored on the Records Life Cycle Model, which explains classification as a function of the maintenance and use stage of a record's life. A sample of 25 respondents, comprising Departmental Administrators and Section Heads, Land Officers and Surveyors, Records Management Officers and Registry Clerks, and Support Staff, was selected using a combination of probability and non-probability (purposive) sampling techniques. Primary data were collected through observation, structured questionnaires, and a semi-structured interview with a departmental head, while secondary data were obtained through a review of departmental reports, operational

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manuals, and relevant legislation. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data from the interview and observation were analyzed through content analysis organized around the study's four objectives.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The key findings of the study are summarized below in accordance with the four specific objectives that guided the research.

5.2.1 Existing Records Classification System

The study found that DLNRO relies primarily on geographical and parcel-based classification, each cited by 32% of respondents, with numerical classification used to a lesser extent (28%) and subject-based and alphabetical classification playing only a marginal role. Although 60% of respondents believed a written file plan or classification manual exists and is regularly used, this was directly contradicted by the interview with the departmental head, who confirmed that no documented classification guidelines exist at all. Consistent with this, decisions on how to classify new files are made through individual judgement rather than a formal process, and 52% of respondents reported some degree of inconsistency in how records are classified across staff.

5.2.2 Influence on Records Retrieval Speed and Information Accessibility

The study found that retrieval of a requested land file most commonly takes between 30 and 60 minutes (40% of respondents), and that opinion was almost evenly divided on whether the current system supports quick retrieval, with 44% agreeing and 44% disagreeing. Access to records was found to rely almost entirely on two access points, plot/parcel number (44%) and location/area (32%), with no respondent reporting regular use of owner's name, transaction date, or document type as a search strategy. Of the 22 respondents who answered the relevant item, 73% reported experiencing outright inability to locate records at some meaningful frequency. The interview confirmed that these retrieval weaknesses translate directly into delays in service delivery, client

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complaints, disrupted land-related business, and, at times, decisions made on the basis of incomplete information during land dispute resolution.

5.2.3 Limitations of the Existing Classification System

The study identified insufficient storage equipment (32%), misfiled or misplaced records (24%), and the absence of a computerized classification system (24%) as the most frequently cited limitations, compounded by a lack of staff training, with 32% of respondents having never received formal training on records classification at all. Slightly more than half of respondents (52%) considered the current system too rigid, or only able with difficulty, to accommodate new types of records. The interview corroborated these findings, with the departmental head specifically identifying survey maps, digital records, and documents relating to multiple land transactions as record types that do not fit neatly into the existing classification structure, alongside inconsistent implementation, inadequate training, limited financial and technological resources, and overreliance on manual recordkeeping.

5.2.4 Proposed System and Essential Components

The study found close agreement between staff and departmental leadership on the priorities for reform. Respondents most frequently called for staff training on classification (28%), a clear written classification manual (24%), and reorganization of existing records with proper classification (24%). When asked about essential components of an improved system, respondents most frequently identified comprehensive indexing systems and staff training and guidelines (24% each), followed by a documented classification scheme and a computerized database with search functions (20% each). These priorities were echoed independently by the departmental head, who identified a documented and formally adopted file plan, comprehensive indexing supporting multiple access points, and structured, ongoing staff training as the essential features of an ideal system.

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5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings presented in Chapter Four, the study concludes that the records classification system currently used at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, Bagamoyo, is only partially effective in supporting efficient registry operations. While staff have developed a broadly workable, geography- and parcel-anchored method of organizing land records, this method rests on informal convention and individual judgement rather than on any documented, department-approved file plan. This absence of documentation is the single weakness from which most of the study's other findings flow: it explains the moderate inconsistency in classification practice across staff, it explains why retrieval is often slow and why records occasionally cannot be located at all, and it explains why the system struggles to accommodate newer or more complex record types such as survey maps and digital records.

The study further concludes that these classification weaknesses are not merely internal administrative inconveniences but have direct consequences for registry performance and citizen service delivery, manifesting in retrieval delays, client complaints, and, in some instances, land-related decisions made on the basis of incomplete information. At the same time, the study concludes that the department is well positioned to address these weaknesses, since staff and departmental leadership independently converge on the same set of priorities for reform, namely documentation, indexing, and training, echoing the recommendations of the wider records management literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Overall, the study concludes that strengthening the documentary, procedural, and training dimensions of records classification, rather than pursuing computerization alone, is essential for DLNRO to achieve consistent, efficient, and reliable registry performance.

5.4 Recommendations

In light of the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made.

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5.4.1 To the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office Management.

Departmental management should develop and formally adopt a written classification manual or file plan that documents the classification scheme in use, so that classification decisions no longer rest on individual judgement alone. Management should introduce a comprehensive indexing system that supports multiple access points, including owner's name, transaction date, and document type, in addition to the plot/parcel number and location currently relied upon, so that records can be retrieved regardless of which detail a user happens to know. The department should organize structured and regular training on records classification for all staff involved in creating, classifying, or retrieving records, giving particular priority to the substantial proportion of staff who have never received such training. Management should also review and reorganize existing records in line with the newly documented classification scheme, and should establish clear procedures for classifying record types, such as survey maps and digital records, that do not currently fit the existing structure. Finally, the department should improve its physical storage infrastructure, including additional filing cabinets and shelving, to address the storage shortfalls identified as the most frequently cited limitation in this study.

5.4.2 Recommendations to the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development and Policy Makers

The Ministry should support district-level land registries such as DLNRO with resources and technical guidance for developing standardized, documented classification schemes appropriate to land records. Policy makers should consider developing national guidelines specifically tailored to the classification of land records, combining parcel-based, transaction-based, and party-based access points, to guide district land offices facing similar challenges across Tanzania. The Ministry, in collaboration with training institutions, should also support the introduction of computerized classification systems

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in district land registries, prioritizing those with the least developed indexing and retrieval infrastructure.

5.4.3 To the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies:

Strengthen practical training in records classification. The school should ensure that students receive comprehensive practical training in records classification, including hands-on experience with classification schemes, indexing systems, and electronic records management systems.

Develop short courses and professional development programmers. The school should develop short courses and professional development programmers in records classification that can be offered to practicing professionals in government registries. These programmers should be flexible, accessible, and tailored to the needs of the workplace.

5.4.4To the Government of Tanzania:

Strengthen records management training in public service institutions. The government should ensure that records management and classification training are integrated into the curricula of public service training institutions. This will ensure that public servants have basic records management competencies before they enter the workforce.

Develop national competency standards for records classification. The government, through relevant ministries and agencies, should develop national competency standards for records classification in government registries. These standards should define the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for effective records classification.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

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This study was limited to the assessment of records classification practices, their influence on retrieval, their limitations, and proposed improvements at a single government registry. Future researchers may wish to conduct a comparative study across several district-level land registries in Tanzania to establish whether the findings of this study reflect a wider national pattern. Further research could also examine the cost-effectiveness and feasibility of introducing computerized classification and indexing systems in resource-constrained land registries, as well as investigate the perspectives of citizens and land users on how classification practices affect their direct experience of land registry services.

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APPENDIX I: TIME SCHEDULE SHOWING ACTIVITIES DURING RESEARCH WORK

ACTIVITIES	April	May	June	July	August
data collection at the **department** of land natural resources office					
Start to Formulate data analysis and summary, conclusion and recommendation					
Submit finally draft of research report					
Report writing and compilation					
Final binding and Submission of the research report					

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APPENDIX II: BUDGET

S/NO	Item	Qty/Cost (TZS)	Amount (TZS)
1	Research Proposal Printing & Binding	4 copies @ 10,000	40,000
2	Questionnaire Printing	25 copies @ 500	12,000
3	Stationery (Pens, Papers, Files)	1 set	20,000
4	Transport to Bagamoyo (Field work)	8 trips @ 50,000	40,000
5	Internet and Data bundles	Lump sum	20,000
6	Research Assistant Fees (If any)	7 days @ 10,000	70,000
7	Meals and Refreshments during field work	Lump sum	30,000
8	Final Report Printing & Binding	4 copies @ 15,000	60,000
	TOTAL		**292,000**

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APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR REGISTRY STAFF

Dear Respondent,

I am a student at the School of Library Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) Bagamoyo. I am conducting research on **"An Assessment of Records Classification Systems and Their Influence in Government Registries: A Case Study of the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo"** as part of the fulfilment for the award of an Ordinary Diploma in Library, Records and Information Studies.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather your views and experiences regarding the records classification system used in this department and how it influences your work. Please be assured that the information provided will be kept strictly confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Instructions: Please put a tick (√) in the box provided or write your answer where appropriate.

Section A: Demographic Information

1.What is your gender?

a) Female ( )

b) Male ( )

2.What is your age group?

a) 18-25 ( ) b) 26-35 ( ) c) 36-45 ( ) d) 46 and above ( )

3.What is your current position/department?

a) Records Management Officer/Clerk ( )

b) Registry Assistant ( )

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c) Support Staff (Records Handling) ( )

d) Other (specify)……

4.How long have you worked at the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office?

a) Less than 1 year ( ) b) 1-5 years ( ) c) 6-10 years ( ) d) More than 10 years ( )

Section B: Existing Records Classification System

5. What type of records classification system is currently used in your registry? (Tick all that apply)
   a) Alphabetical classification (by names) ( )
   b) Numerical classification (by file numbers) ( )
   c) Subject-based classification (by topics) ( )
   d) Geographical classification (by location) ( )
   e) Parcel-based classification (by plot numbers) ( )
   f) I don't know ( )
   g) Other (specify)……

6. Do you have a written file plan or classification manual that guides how records should be classified?
   a) Yes, and I use it regularly ( )
   b) Yes, but I rarely use it ( )
   c) No, there is no written guide ( )
   d) I don't know ( )

7. How are new files created and classified in your registry? (Describe briefly)
   ……
   ……
   ……
   ……

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8. Are records classified consistently by all staff members using the same approach?
   a) Always consistent ( )
   b) Usually consistent ( )
   c) Sometimes consistent ( )
   d) Rarely consistent ( )
   e) Never consistent ( )

Section C: Influence on Records Retrieval Speed and Information Accessibility

9. On average, how long does it take to retrieve a requested land file?
   a) Less than 5 minutes ( )
   b) 5-15 minutes ( )
   c) 15-30 minutes ( )
   d) 30-60 minutes ( )
   e) More than 1 hour ( )
   f) Sometimes cannot be found at all ( )

10. How often do you experience difficulties locating records due to classification problems?
    a) Very Often ( )
    b) Often ( )
    c) Sometimes ( )
    d) Rarely ( )
    e) Never ( )

11. To what extent do you agree that the current classification system enables quick and easy retrieval of records?
    a) Strongly Agree ( )
    b) Agree ( )
    c) Neutral ( )

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d) Disagree ( )

e) Strongly Disagree ( )

12. When you need to find information, what access points do you typically use? (Tick all that apply)

    a) File number ( )

    b) Owner's name ( )

    c) Plot/parcel number ( )

    d) Date of transaction ( )

    e) Type of document ( )

    f) Location/area ( )

    g) Other (specify)……

13. How often are you unable to locate records even after searching?

    a) Very Often ( )

    b) Often ( )

    c) Sometimes ( )

    d) Rarely ( )

    e) Never ( )

Section D: Limitations of the Existing Classification System

14. What are the MAIN limitations or problems you face with the current records classification system? (Tick all that apply)

    a) No clear classification guidelines ( )

    b) Classification system is outdated ( )

    c) Inconsistent classification by different staff ( )

    d) Too many records with similar names/subjects ( )

    e) Lack of proper indexing ( )

    f) No training on how to classify records ( )

    g) Insufficient storage equipment (shelves, cabinets) ( )

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h) Records are misfiled or misplaced ( )

i) No computerized classification system ( )

j) Other (specify)……

15. Have you ever received formal training on records classification?

    a) Yes, within the last 2 years ( )

    b) Yes, more than 2 years ago ( )

    c) No, never ( )

16. Do you think the current classification system can accommodate new types of records or changing departmental functions?

    a) Yes, easily ( )

    b) Yes, with some difficulty ( )

    c) No, it is too rigid ( )

    d) I don't know ( )

Thank you for your participation!

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APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DEPARTMENTAL HEADS AND RECORDS OFFICERS

Title of Study: An Assessment of Records Classification Systems and Their Influence in Government Registries: A Case Study of the Department of Land and Natural Resources Office in Bagamoyo

Interviewer: …… Date: ……

Interviewee Position: ……

Duration: Approximately 30-45 minutes

Section 1: Existing Records Classification System

1. Can you describe the current records classification system used in this department? (Probe: What is the basis of classification? Is it subject-based, functional, alphabetical, numerical, or a combination? How long has this system been in use?)

2. Do you have documented classification guidelines, a file plan, or a classification manual? If yes, how accessible is it to staff, and how often is it updated?

3. Who is responsible for classifying records in this department? What training or qualifications do they have in records classification?

4. How are decisions made about where to place a new file or how to classify a new type of record? (Probe: Is there a formal process, or is it left to individual judgment?)

Section 2: Influence on Retrieval Speed and Information Accessibility

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5. From your perspective, how does the current classification system affect the speed at which records can be retrieved when needed? (Probe: Are there noticeable delays? How does this affect service delivery to citizens?)

6. What challenges do staff or clients face in accessing information due to the way records are classified?

7. In your experience, how does the classification system support or hinder decision-making by departmental officials? (Probe: Can officials easily find the information they need? Are records complete and well-organized when needed for land dispute resolution?)

8. Have you ever received complaints from citizens about delays in processing land matters that might be related to record retrieval problems? Please elaborate.

Section 3: Limitations of the Existing System

9. What do you consider to be the main limitations or weaknesses of the current records classification system? (Probe: Is it the system itself, staff capacity, resources, or implementation issues?)

10. How does the current system handle different types of land records? (Probe: Title deeds, allocation letters, survey maps, permits, correspondence? Are there records that don't fit well into the existing classification structure?)

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APPENDIX V:OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST FOR RECORDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Department of Land and Natural Resources Office, Bagamoyo

Observer's Name:	**Date of Observation:**
Time of Observation:	**Location/Registry Section:**

Instructions: For each item, tick (√) the appropriate box and provide descriptive notes where indicated.

SECTION A: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND FILING INFRASTRUCTURE

S/N	Observation Item	Yes	No	Partial/Some	Comments/Notes
A1	Are there designated storage areas specifically for records?				
A2	Are filing cabinets/shelves adequate for the volume of records?				
A3	Are filing cabinets/shelves labelled or identified clearly?				
A4	Is there logical physical arrangement (e.g., by series, by department, by year)?				
A5	Is the registry area clean, tidy, and well-organized?				

Additional Notes on Physical Environment:

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SECTION B: RECORDS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

S/N	Observation Item	Observed	Not Observed	Comments/Notes
B1	Evidence of alphabetical classification (files arranged by names)			
B2	Evidence of numerical classification (files by sequential numbers)			
B3	Evidence of subject-based classification (files by topics/functions)			
B4	Evidence of geographical classification (by location/region)			
B5	Evidence of parcel-based classification (by plot/parcel numbers)			

Additional Notes on Classification System Characteristics:

SECTION C: RECORDS RETRIEVAL PROCESS OBSERVATION

S/N	Observation Item	Yes	No	Sometimes	Comments/Notes
C1	Do staff use finding aids (indexes, registers, computers) to locate files?				
C2	Do staff appear to know where files are located without consulting finding aids?				

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C3	Is the retrieval process systematic and orderly?				
C4	Do staff spend excessive time searching for files?				
C5	Are there files that cannot be located despite searching?				

SECTION D: RECORDS CLASSIFICATION PRACTICES

S/N	Observation Item	Observed	Not Observed	Comments/Notes
D1	Staff following documented classification procedures			
D2	Staff referring to classification manuals/guidelines			
D3	Staff consulting supervisors about classification decisions			
D4	Staff classifying new records upon receipt			
D5	Staff recording classification information in registers/databases			

Specific Classification Practices Observed (describe in detail):

SECTION E: CONDITION AND LABELLING OF RECORDS

S/N	Observation Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Comments
E1	Physical condition of file covers					

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E2	Legibility of file labels/labelling					
E3	Completeness of information on file labels					
E4	Condition of documents inside files					
E5	Order of documents within files					
E6	Appropriateness of filing equipment					

Additional Notes on Record Condition and Labelling:

SECTION F: FINDING AIDS AND ACCESS TOOLS

S/N	Observation Item	Yes	No	Partially	Comments/Notes
F1	Presence of a file register (manual or electronic)				
F2	Presence of a card catalogue or index system				
F3	Presence of a computerized database for records				
F4	Presence of a file plan document				
F5	Presence of classification guidelines/manual				

Summary of Key Observations:

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Any Incidents or Notable Events Observed:

Questions Arising from Observations (to explore in interviews):

Observer's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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APPENDIX VI: APPROVAL LETTER



JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

OFISI YA WAZIRI MKUU
TAWALA ZA MIKOA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA

HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA BAGAMOYO

Unapojibu tafadhali taja

Kumb Na:. JB.311/375/01/269 **Tarehe:** 24 Machi, 2026

Mkuu wa Chuo,
Chuo cha Ukutubi na Utunzaji wa Nyaraka za Serikali,
S.L.P 227,
BAGAMOYO.

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI KWA NDUGU CHRISTINA ZABRON.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika.

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo inakiri kupokea barua yako yenye Kumb. **Na. DA.201/457/VOL/1/20** ya tarehe **04 Machi,2026** yenye somo sawa na hapo juu.

3. Kwa barua hii, napenda kukufahamisha kwamba mtajwa hapo juu ameruhusiwa kufanya Utafiti Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Bagamoyo katika **Idara ya Ardhi na Mipango Miji** kwa kipindi cha kuanzia tarehe **1, April** hadi **1 Mei, 2026**

4 Namtakia Utafiti mema.

Majid S.Mhina
KAIMU MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO.

KAIMU MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO
S.L.P. 59
BAGAMOYO

Nakala: Mkuu wa Idara,
Idara ya Ardhi na Mipango Miji,
Halamashauri ya Wilaya,
S.L.P. 59,
BAGAMOYO. - Mpokee na kumpa ushirikiano.

Christina Zabron - Ripoti Idara ya Ardhi na Mipango Miji

Barua zote zinatakwa kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji (W)
Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji, Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo,Barabara ya uhindini, S.L.P. 59,61301 BAGAMOYO Mkoa wa Pwani.
Simu Na: +255 733860575, Nukushi: 023 2440338 Barua Pepe: ded.bagamoyo@pwani.go.tz, Tovuti: www.bagamoyodc.go.tz

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