

Challa Getachew, Ethiopia



Implications of Land tenure Arrangements on Food Security and Agricultural Development

Land is the major factor of production when it comes to subsistence agriculture in Ethiopia. In the past, food security and agricultural development programmes have failed to reach their intended goals. One main reason for this failure is the negligence of land tenure issues. Land tenure arrangements are important institutions that affect rural development through affecting rights on land, production decisions, investment decisions, resource allocation decisions as well as conservation and land management practices. The general objective of the research, therefore, was to identify how the land tenure arrangements during the different historical periods have contributed to the current state of food insecurity and the stagnation in the agricultural sector in Ethiopia.

To investigate the casual relationship between relevant variables of land tenure, food security and agricultural development, 72 sample households were selected based on two stage random samplings. A Multiple Linear Regression Model, Pearson's chi square test, t-test for equality of means and descriptive statistics were applied to analyse the variables under consideration. The regression model shows significant positive effects of land size and oxen ownership, moderate positive relationship with land labour ratio on food available to a household, all of which are the direct and indirect effects of the land tenure arrangements. It was also found that access to land alone does not guarantee food security of a household. Rather, it also depends on how property right on land is allocated within the household. In this regard, women's access to land was found to be crucial. In the study area, land is found to be not only a factor of production on its own, but its endowment is also the source of other productive resources in agriculture (e.g. oxen) which determines the level of household participation in government agricultural development programs and hence the overall rural transformation.

It can be implied from the results of the research that tenure changes that could occur in the country should facilitate efficient transfer of rights on land among efficient farmers, set minimum size for plots to halt further fragmentation, enforce women's right on land, clarify and have clear guidelines for natural resource management. If the increasingly high population in rural areas has to depend on the available stock of land, then, land tenure arrangements in

the country should be taken as an integral part of the development policy, including the above mentioned aspects.

Key words: land tenure, tenure security, food security, agricultural development, Ethiopia