

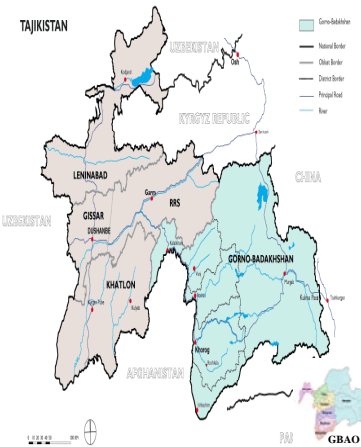
Sustainable Land Management through Land Reform in a transition period

The Case of Tajikistan – Pamir Mountains (GBAO)

Master's Thesis by Askarsho Zevarshoev (Tajikistan)

Introduction

Achieving sustainable development and food security through land reform is at the forefront of the poverty reduction objective of ongoing Tajikistan policy reforms. Since independence, the country has undergone series of transition from centrally planned economy to a more market oriented system. Land became one of the main tools to push up economic growth and to address rural poverty, in Tajikistan, as where in many other former Soviet countries. "Access to land and the ability to exchange it with others and to use it effectively are of great importance for poverty reduction, economic growth, and private sector investment as well as for empowering the poor and ensuring good governance".



Objectives of the study

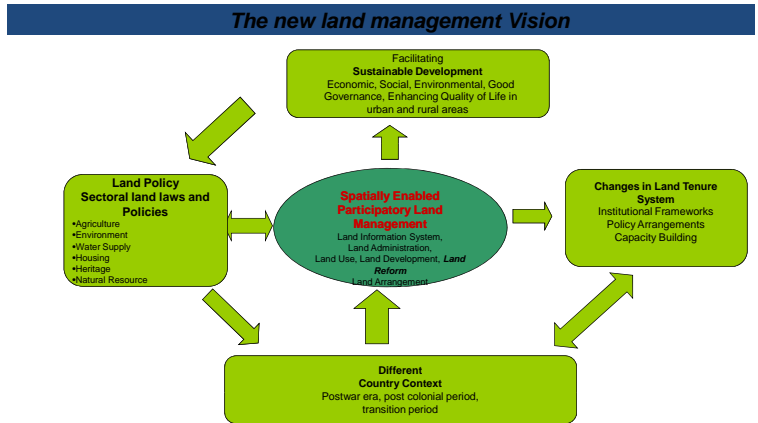
The overall goal of the study is to find out relevant factors attributing to the existing problems regarding to land use and showing the existing situation from the identified factors. Thus, the following general objectives is accordingly formulated:

General Objective:

To find out the changes that happened during land reforms in transition period and how it affected the people livelihood and contributed to economic development in Tajikistan-Pamir Mountains.

Hypothesis

Strengthening sustainable land management practices through land reform can highly contribute to economic development, poverty eradication and environmental (biodiversity) conservation.



Source: From Expert Group - at the University of Melbourne by Prof. Magel, modified by Author

The importance of the agrarian sector and land reform for Tajikistan

	Share of rural population	Share of agricultural employment	Share of agriculture in GDP
1995	72,6	59	36,7
1996	73,2	59,1	36
1997	73,3	63,9	32
1998	73,4	60,7	25,1
1999	73,5	64,3	25,4
2000	73,4	64,9	27
2001	73,5	66,6	26,5
2002	73,6	67,6	22,2
2003	73,5	67,6	24,2
Average	73,3	63,8	28,3

Problems/Findings

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the sudden end of the subsidies regime from Moscow, that bolstered the country's economy, a violent civil war erupted in 1992. Improper land use by grazing, clearing, gathering, and overuse of soils, in combination with the dry climate of the Pamir, leads to the destruction of the vegetation, reduction of the vegetation cover, change of species composition, loss of biological diversity and productivity, and erosion of soil.

Thus, land is an essential resource in meeting subsistence needs of the rural poor and for any livelihood activity in the study area. In particular, land is substantial for the rural poor in order to:

- Diversify farming and non-farming activities and cope with seasonality of income;
- Food security of the rural population;
- Make savings;
- Get benefits and salary from employment.

Main impacts of Land reform on people livelihood

Social	Financial	Physical	Human	Natural
Decrease employment, Network and connectedness, Leadership, membership, dilapidated social welfare and public goods, poor communication of government reform, little or no participation in reform	Access to credit, access to new capital goods, access to agricultural services,	Shortages in agricultural processing, disrupted access to agricultural input, bad condition of infrastructure (roads)	Lack of skills (education), labor force, rural-population growth, lack comprehensive agricultural knowledge,	Scarce biodiversity, land shortages, harsh climatic condition, natural hazards,

Conclusions

Land reform the reallocation of rights to establish a more equitable distribution of farmland to farmers in transition period in Tajikistan became a powerful strategy for promoting both economic development and environmental quality and contributed to the well-being of rural population.

Recommendations

- Develop strong representative rural land institutions that are transparent and accountable.
- Speed up the process of farm restructuring and land distribution.
- Translate laws and policies into programmes that are implemented on the ground; prioritize resource allocation to support these activities.
- Design and implement training programmers in new land laws
- Promote stakeholder participation in all land reform process in all phases

Conceptual Integration

The challenge of sustainable development of our societies and the management of natural resources can only be resolved by a complex approach like sustainable land management. Therefore it is reasonable and even mandatory to advance the development of secure tenure and land administration into land management with all its essential elements like valuation, land markets, land use management etc.

Land reform is the operational processes of implementing land policies in comprehensive and sustainable ways. Land reform not only helps to reduce rural poverty and unleash agricultural growth, but also helped to lay the social foundation for rapid industrialization. Land reform – here defined as the reallocation of rights to establish a more equitable distribution of farmland – can be a powerful strategy for promoting both economic development and environmental quality.

