



Inventory of Socio-Economic Land Data in Madagascar

Marilys RAZAKAMANANA

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Abstract

Land governance is needed to develop agriculture, protect environment, and ensure peace and security. It can improve the quality of life and well-being of the population. Finding concrete evidence upon which to base land policy requires the availability of accurate and up to date data and information on land. Therefore, an inventory of socio-economic land data has been carried out and strategies have been developed. Following stakeholders' interviews and literature review on land in Madagascar, the aim is to inform decision-makers on policy measures that can improve these data and their accessibility. Socio-

economic data exist but are very scattered and are not updated. Most of them are stored on paper. Moreover, archiving is not compliant with standards. While statistics can be accessed, the data bases are inaccessible. Although the Observatory of Land (OATF) should ensure the management of most of socio-economic land data, conditions of accessibility depend rather on donors who finance the studies and surveys. Because of these problems, policy measures should consist of improving the quality of socio-economic land data and facilitating their accessibility.

Introduction

Madagascar is a low-income country where 8 out of 10 people live from agricultural activity. However, out of the 40 million ha of arable land, only 8.5% are used (World Bank, 2016) and only 6% of agricultural land are legally secured (OATF, 2018). Despite the land reform of 2005, reviewed in 2015, and the Land Policy Letter for 2015-2030, land insecurity has not been completely resolved (Ministry of Land, 2019).

Land governance can promote the development of a country. This would help to develop agriculture, protect environment, ensure peace and security, then improve the quality of life and well-being of the population (Economic Commission for Africa, 2017). Data availability is the sine qua none condition for a good definition of the land policy to be adopted. Thus, an inventory of socio-economic land data was carried out. The actors and the limits relating to these data were identified. Following interviews with stakeholders and literature review relating to land in Madagascar, the aim is to inform decision-makers on the policy measures that can help improve quality of these data and their accessibility.

Methodology

A review of documents and studies on land in Madagascar was carried out. This not only informed the land reform and land policy in Madagascar, but also helped to identify sources of information that could be exploited.

Subsequently, interviews were conducted with all stakeholders in the land sector. Field visits were carried out from 20 to 25 October 2019. The head of each service surveyed was asked about the mission of the service, the socio-economic land data available, the limits relating to the centralization of these data and the proposed solutions to improve data accessibility and quality.

A report on inventories of socio-economic land data and a strategy report were prepared and are available.

Results and main strategy

Land surveys are performed by the National Institute of Statistics (INSTAT) and the Land Observatory (OATF) in particular. OATF and INSTAT's PDF (*Plan de Développement du Foncier*) study reports are freely available, but databases are not accessible. Land services, such as the « *Direction des Domaines* » and the « *Direction des Etudes Topographiques* », etc. also have data. Socio-economic land data concerns owners (sex, age, marital status), plots (mode of acquisition, surface area, etc.), land use and agricultural productivity, land investments, cost of land security, land disputes, costs of investments and operation of land offices, and socio-economic impacts of land security.

However, these data are very scattered and are not updated. The majority is stored on paper. Archiving is not in accordance with standards and leads to a high risk of documents deterioration. Furthermore, databases available are not accessible. The conditions of accessibility depend mainly on the donors that finance studies and surveys.

Thus, strategies have been proposed to improve data quality and accessibility. These include promoting the modernization of equipment and infrastructure, and increasing the funds received by the land service.

Conclusion

Madagascar is a country where land has a special place in the economic, social and cultural life of the population. Land is a sign of wealth. However, only 6% of land is legally secured (OATF, 2018). Socio-economic land data can better explain this situation.

To improve data quality and accessibility it is recommended that the government implement a digital platform where land data and information will be collected and centralized. Subsequently, a helpdesk should be set up. Technical staff should be selected with their role being to collect and filter information for the platform. The government will define to which institution this platform will be attached. To ensure its sustainability, the technical staff should be staff of the ministry or institution to which it is attached. The information to be stored is also to be determined by the country, as well as the accessibility and the control of this information. However, we must study the financing of the help desk and its operating costs (telephone, travel in the field, etc.).

Policy implications

Before the platform is set up, three policy measures must first be implemented. The first measure is to ensure an improvement in the quality and accessibility of socio-economic land data. This requires the identification of available data and the integration of additional key land information into household surveys and topographic data. For the establishment of reliable and complete databases, it is necessary to standardize the archives first by improving the conditions of the archive room and providing it with adequate storage equipment, to reconstitute missing land data, to digitize these data, and to ensure the centralization of data in one institution. The latter should subsequently implement an agreement with all departments and ministries holding land data to better facilitate information sharing. However, for all this to happen, it is advisable to have the necessary material means to be able to store all this information.

Thus, the second measure is to promote the modernization of equipment and infrastructure by providing the land service with this equipment, which requires well-trained human resources and funds for its implementation. Therefore, the third measure is to increase the funds received by the land service by promoting the self-financing of the system via the National Land Fund, the responsible for financing activities relating to the land service in Madagascar. To do this, it is necessary to encourage the population to use the land service by raising awareness on land security and ensuring their confidence in the system through the fight against corruption. Finally, it is necessary to ensure a good allocation of funds while strengthening the monitoring and control of these funds.

These strategies will make it possible to ensure the quality of data and their accessibility with a view to implementing the appropriate land policy for the purpose of good land governance. In the long term, the good governance will lead to the development of the agricultural sector where 80% of the Malagasy population works.



Mission

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African Economic Research Consortium
Consortium pour la Recherche Economique en Afrique
Middle East Bank Towers,
3rd Floor, Jakaya Kikwete Road
Nairobi 00200, Kenya
Tel: +254 (0) 20 273 4150
communications@ercafrica.org