

Comparative Analysis of Land Policy Instruments to Tackle Land Fragmentation

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SUMMARY

Land fragmentation has several manifestations, including but not limited to, the existence of very small parcels, having an awkward shape, scattered with a considerable distance between parcels, and the absence of road access for each land parcel. It is a serious problem in Ethiopia. It is reaching a critical point that calls for government policy action. Most of the research in this regard concentrated on fragmentation as a problem and farmland consolidation as a solution. Others also revolve around technical issues that need to be considered to implement farmland consolidation. There is no study, as far as I review and I know, on different land fragmentation tackling policy tools apart from land consolidation; and the legal regimes and institutional issues for managing land fragmentation. The main objective of this research is, therefore, to prepare a comparative analysis of different land policy instruments to tackle land fragmentation in Ethiopia and assess the legal and institutional situation of their application. Secondary data through a literature review is conducted using a systematic literature review approach. As the primary source, laws related to land consolidation are reviewed. The research revealed that land consolidation is not the only mechanism to manage land fragmentation, but there are various policy instruments. While many instruments involve the re-organization of landholding (e.g., voluntary land exchanges, various forms of land consolidation, market-based land transactions, land banking, expropriation & and compensation), others focus on the consolidation of land use (cluster farming, cooperative formation). Some of the alternative policy tools may be used as preparatory initiatives for land consolidation, while others can be taken as standalone management tools. Other measures, like determining minimum parcel size, encouraging voluntary land exchange that will bring holding consolidation or mitigate distance fragmentation, prohibition on land re-distribution, revisiting inheritance rules, cluster farming, and so on could be considered. It is imperative to have comprehensive and full-fledged policies and laws for managing land fragmentation. Besides, it is essential to establish a land fragmentation management organization, which should include a land

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consolidation commission or unit to oversee national land fragmentation management initiatives. Moreover, there should be an understanding that not all land fragmentations are problems. Research, education, training, and awareness creation on farmland fragmentation and its management tools, one of which is land consolidation, is very important.

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