

Sustainable Land Management: Securing Tenure Rights and Motivating Landholders

1. INTRODUCTION

Issuance of land holders' certificates, such as the Second Level Landholding Certificates (SLLC), plays a crucial role in securing tenure rights. These certificates grant landholders' legal recognition and protection, building confidence in their ownership. With secure tenure rights, landholders are more likely to invest in their land and adopt sustainable land management (SLM) technologies and practices. In Haromaya Woreda, Oromia regional state, over 25,000 households have received SLLCs, leading to increased tenure security and fostering sustainable land management practices. The SLMP aims to incentivize landholders to make long-term investments, such as tree planting, terrace construction, and soil fertility management. These practices contribute to improved land productivity and the overall sustainability of the landscape.

This case study showcases the impact of land certification on securing tenure rights and motivating land holders in Haromaya Woreda. The assessment focused on the perception of land holders regarding the benefits of land certification, such as tenure security, land management, reduction in land disputes, access to credit, and women empowerment in decision-making based on data collected from fifteen households.

2. FINDINGS

The findings of the case study indicated that land certification has significantly enhanced tenure security for land holders in Haromaya Woreda. The surveyed households expressed high levels of confidence in their land ownership rights after receiving land certificates. The adoption of sustainable land management practices, such as terrace construction, tree planting, and soil fertility improvement, has led to increased productivity and improved resilience. Land certification has also contributed to adoption of SLM technologies and practices, improving productivity and resilience, land transactions and access to credit, women empowerment and land-related decision-making and reduction in land disputes.

2.1. Adoption of SLM Technologies and Practices



Figure 1: Landholders from Haromaya woreda with their land certificate

The intervention of the SLMP through land certification programs has resulted in the increased adoption of sustainable land management technologies and practices. Landholders who have received land certificates are more likely to engage in terrace construction, tree planting, and forage development. These practices contribute to soil conservation, erosion control, and the overall improvement of land management.

2.2. Improving Productivity and Resilience

The adoption of sustainable land management practices has led to noticeable improvements in land productivity. Land holders who have implemented SLM technologies and practices report increased crop yields and improved soil fertility. By investing in productive landscapes, land holders are better equipped to withstand environmental challenges, such as droughts or floods, resulting in enhanced resilience.

2.3. Reduction in Land Disputes

One of the significant benefits of securing tenure rights through land certification is the reduction in land disputes. The clarification of land rights and the issuance of land certificates help to resolve boundary conflicts and disputes over land ownership. This is particularly beneficial for female-headed households, as they often face challenges in asserting their land rights. The secure tenure provided by land certification contributes to a more peaceful and harmonious land management system.

2.4. Women Empowerment and Land-Related Decision-Making

Tenure security not only contributes to land management but also empowers women in decision-making processes related to land. Land certification plays a crucial role in enhancing women's land rights and their involvement in determining land use and management. With secure tenure, women are more confident in asserting their rights and participating in land-related decision-making, leading to more gender-inclusive and equitable land governance.

2.5. Land Transactions and Access to Credit

Land certification also facilitates land transactions, such as inheritance, gifting, and renting. The issuance of land certificates provides legal documentation and formal recognition of land ownership, enabling land holders to engage in various land transactions. Additionally, land certificates can be used as collateral to access credit from financial institutions, allowing land holders to invest in agricultural machinery, inputs, and other income-generating activities. Improved access to credit enhances the productivity and economic viability of land holders.

3. LESSONS LEARNED

Based on the case study conducted in Haromaya Woreda, land certification has been demonstrated to be a powerful tool for enhancing land tenure security, empowering women, and promoting sustainable land management. The findings emphasized the need for continued support and investment in land administration and use programs to ensure sustainable and equitable land governance.

4. CONCLUSION

Securing tenure rights through land certification is crucial for motivating landholders to invest in productive landscapes and adopt sustainable land management practices. The Sustainable Land Management Program in Ethiopia has played a significant role in supporting the government's initiatives by providing landholders with secure tenure rights. Furthermore, land certification contributes to increased productivity, improved resilience, reduced land disputes, and women empowerment in decision-making. Continued efforts in land administration and use programs are essential for the long-term sustainability and equitable management of land resources.
