



The World Bank



Rwanda: Assessing the impact of the Land Tenure Regularization (LTR) Program Narrative Report

1. Summary

Although the case of Ethiopia offers important lessons, land issues are pressing in other countries as well and it would be surprising if Ethiopia were the only African country that can implement large scale land regularization at a cost that is locally affordable. While its area is quite small, Rwanda poses a large number of challenges for land administration. Among others, it is the most densely populated country in Africa where land conflicts have been a key factor contributing to the 2004 genocide that left a terrible legacy in terms of orphans and female headed households. Recognizing the central role of land for social and economic development, the Government has, over the last decade, passed far-reaching legislation on land and family matters, including inheritance. To implement this legislation, it has obtained some US\$ 40 million in support from other partners, mainly DFID, and is progressing with implementation at a rapid pace. However, while arrangements for process monitoring have been in place, there was no arrangement to monitor the impacts, especially on the poor on women. Given the scarcity and value of land, this was recognized as a serious deficiency and a collaboration was established to conduct an evaluation of impacts that would allow to (i) provide feedback to program implementation; (ii) rigorously document the impact of this intervention to allow replication in other contexts; (iii) set a new standard in illustrating how programs of this nature could be evaluated.

Against this backdrop, the activity can point to a number of methodological and substantive achievements:

- It has developed and successfully implemented a methodology, drawing on satellite imagery, to evaluate the impact of the pilot program even in the absence of a baseline. Results highlight the positive impact of this intervention on investment but at the same time also document the risks that, without additional measures, the process may put women who are not legally married at a serious disadvantage. This has been very effective as an input into the policy debate.
- It has agreed with the GoR on an innovative methodology to evaluate the impact of this program. The methodology involves a randomized roll-out and is likely to be adopted by many other countries in the future. Based on the experience from the pilot cells, an elaborate questionnaire that allows assessing gender-differentiated impacts of land tenure reform in an African context has been developed.
- The baseline survey is being implemented on a sample of 3,600 households. The Bank and GoR have already agreed to use the data as a basis for a comprehensive assessment of the land sector in Rwanda that will be used to identify key policy issues that will need to be addressed to make the program sustainable set the stage for future engagement by all relevant partners.

2. Introduction

This project set out to collect data to determine the impact of the LTR pilots on (i) land-related investments, by assessing whether there had been changes in the construction of new structures or maintenance of existing structures and whether there had been a significant shift in the choice of technology (improved seeds, etc), (ii) participation in land markets, (iii) women's access to land and (iv) the extent to which inheritance dynamics have been affected by certification.

A number of expectations were tested through the work including the extent to which the program's stated objectives of fairness and transparency were met, the degree to which certification helped strengthen women's land rights, and the expected beneficial changes in land-related investments and market activity as a result of certification. The project met its objectives by (i) conducting a rigorous assessment of the impact of the LTR pilot at the household and parcel level; (ii) providing valid data that will inform the up-scaling of the program; and (iii) provide data that can serve as input into the design of a monitoring and evaluation methodology, including assessment of the program on vulnerable groups. The remainder of this document is organized as follows: firstly, an overview of the background to this project including links to other GLTN tools, cross-cutting issues, and values is presented, followed by a brief description of the partnerships among World Bank, Government of Rwanda and GLTN. Achievements of the project will then be presented before a discussion of key challenges and recommendations for taking the work forward. The report will conclude with an overview of the work's impacts, as well as lessons learnt, next steps, and key references produced.

3. Background

Rwanda poses a large number of challenges for land administration. Among others, it is the most densely populated country in Africa where land conflicts have been a key factor contributing to the 2004 genocide that left a terrible legacy in terms of orphans and female headed households.

In recognition of the central importance of land in Rwanda, and building on the comprehensive policy reform on land use and management enshrined in the Organic Land Law (OLL), the Government of Rwanda launched a national program of land tenure regularization (LTR). The LTR pilots applied a participatory and low-cost process to systematically cover a total of 3,513 households with some 15,000 plots in four areas (one of them urban) that were chosen to reflect the country's heterogeneity. The activity outlined in this report aimed at collecting initial data on the impact of the LTR pilots at the household and parcel level. The activity was designed to evaluate the initial impacts of the LTR pilots so as to (i) provide feedback to program implementation; (ii) rigorously document the impact of this intervention to allow replication in other contexts; (iii) set a new standard in illustrating how programs of this nature could be evaluated. The activity was designed with a view toward refining a number of GLTN tools related to Theme 1: Land Rights, Records, and Registration and the Cross-Cutting Theme of Gender.

More specifically, the project addressed the impacts of the LTR pilots on investments in land (Environment Mechanism). It also set out to capture the gendered benefits of socially appropriate adjudication (1d) through its effects on women's land rights (Gender Mechanism). In addition, the activity was designed to explore the impact of land certification on beneficiaries' participation in land markets (1g).

4. Partnership

Because of its low-cost model for land certification, the Rwanda LTR program has attracted considerable interest regionally and internationally (World Bank, GLTN, bilateral donors). However, the evaluation of large-scale land initiatives requires significant technical and financial support. The monitoring and evaluation of such a large project is critical to identifying the changes that need to be made to ensure its long-term sustainability and the extent to which it can be recommended as a model for other countries in the region, or for informing similar initiatives. The ongoing partnership with the GoR, with the support of GLTN, is crucial to documenting and assessing the experience of LTR program implementation and ensuring its alignment to national targets and GLTN targets.

5. Achievements

Evaluation of Rwanda's innovative land certification scheme which was based on household surveys helped to demonstrate that the model is implemented in a fair and transparent manner (Output 1.2). The survey also provides evidence as to the gender-inclusiveness of the LTR pilots, the initial investment impacts of the pilots and the enhanced knowledge of the laws governing land inheritance. The latter is particularly relevant as it relates to female empowerment (Gender Mechanism).

6. Key Challenges and Recommendations/Way Forward

The activity's findings point towards a number of challenges: First, despite its low-cost, it is essential to ensure that information on the LTR program and its legal framework be disseminated widely to all the beneficiaries prior to the next implementation phase. Second, the effects of certification on women's bargaining power within the household should be assessed more closely. Finally, a more detailed examination of the issues underlying the non-issuance of certificates, especially for high rates of unresolved conflicts, is warranted.

A number of next steps are envisioned, namely:

- To provide input into the ESW to guide the Government on issues of sustainability as well as institutional reform;
- To undertake an analysis of baseline survey to provide evidence on the level of conflict and its impact as well as activity of land markets;
- To link to LGAF and the AU LPI initiative including dissemination workshop.

7. Impacts

Against this backdrop, the activity can point to a number of methodological and substantive achievements:

- It has developed and successfully implemented a methodology, drawing on satellite imagery, to evaluate the impact of the pilot program even in the absence of a baseline. Results highlight the positive impact of this intervention on investment but at the same time also document the risks that, without additional measures, the process may put women who are not legally married at a serious disadvantage. This has been very effective as an input into the policy debate.
- It has agreed with the GoR on an innovative methodology to evaluate the impact of this program. The methodology involves a randomized roll-out and is likely to be adopted by many other countries in the future. Based on the experience from the pilot cells, an elaborate questionnaire that allows assessing gender-differentiated impacts of land tenure reform in an African context has been developed.
- The baseline survey is being implemented on a sample of 3,600 households. The Bank and GoR have already agreed to use the data as a basis for a comprehensive assessment of the land sector in Rwanda that will be used to identify key policy issues that will need to be addressed to make the program sustainable set the stage for future engagement by all relevant partners.

The first phase of the impact evaluation activity prompted the GoR to request further technical assistance from the World Bank in support of the LTR roll-out, including a land sector study. The work contributes to GLTN Outcome 1 by enhancing knowledge of Rwanda's unique land certification process, including its resulting effects on investment and female empowerment. In particular, it contributes to output 1.2, namely to evaluate innovative land programs consistent with GLTN core values of equity, transparency and gendered sensitiveness.

8. Lessons learnt

It is possible to go to scale at low cost in the African context but avoiding negative impacts requires strong management and continuing monitoring.

The rapidly changing environment in Rwanda indicates that the evaluation and monitoring of LTR pilots is of great value, as it enables to make adjustments in the design of the program and ensure that distributional aspects are given full attention. As was demonstrated by the evaluation of the pilots, even where implementation is based on principles of equity and fairness, certification can adversely impact women's security of tenure. Failure to document these negative impacts can have severe consequences for the long-term sustainability of land reforms. However, well-documented positive experiences of large-scale land initiatives can have a tremendous impact on the national and international dialogue on land policy and contribute to the development of pro-poor, pro-women land tools.

9. Next steps

The first phase of the impact evaluation activity prompted the GoR to submit an ESW request to the World Bank for its support in conducting a study of the Rwanda land sector, and providing additional expertise in support of the long-term land reform. Provide support to the NLC and AU in the roll-out of the LPI initiative, particularly as the AU has expressed interest in using the Rwandan experience as a case study.

In terms of the next steps in the impact evaluation activity, the following are envisioned: (ii) to conduct a national baseline that would allow quantification of the demand for tenure security by different groups, provide quantitative evidence as to some of the limitations of the current land administration system so as to enable an adaptation of survey instruments and (iii) to conduct a follow-up survey of the households included in the baseline, as a basis for a comprehensive impact evaluation of the project.

In addition, it is expected that the dissemination of findings will be strengthened through stakeholder and regional workshops, 2012 Land Conference and technical missions.

10. Key references

The following outputs were produced as a result of this project (attached):

Ayalew Ali, D., Deininger, K., Goldstein M. and M. Stickler. (2010). Pilot Land Tenure Registration in Rwanda: Evidence of Initial Impacts. World Bank Case Study Series.
Land Tenure Regularization in Rwanda: A Methodology Report. (2011)