

論 文 要 旨

Thesis Abstract

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主論文題名 (Title) Impact of Insecure Land Tenure on Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Case Study of Urban and Agricultural Lands in the Republic of Benin			
内容の要旨 (Abstract) Knowledge regarding the implications of land tenure systems is often neglected despite their significant contributions to sustainable development. Many countries have completely restructured their legal and regulatory framework related to land and have tried to harmonize modern statutory law with customary ones; however, millions of people around the world still have insecure land tenure and property rights. Fortunately, a wide range of possible forms of tenure has become internationally recognized as being a continuum, and each form of tenure provides a different set of rights and different degrees of security and responsibility. The comprehension of the drivers, states, trends, and impacts of different land systems on social and natural processes will help to reveal how much transformations affect the overall functioning of the socioeconomic system and elucidate the types of flexibility they require. To this extent, land tenure security could function essentially in the movement toward sustainable development, specifically toward achieving the 11th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), namely, making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. This paper addresses the issue of tenure security in both urban and rural areas in the Republic of Benin, a fast-developing Western African country. The study aims to assess the impact of insecure land tenure on sustainable development. The objective is to show land tenure security as an important development factor, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, where land challenges remain a major concern despite the initiatives implemented for decades by the governments, civil society, the private sector, and development cooperation. The selected case studies from south to north Benin ensure not only a geographic balance but also represent different socioeconomic and land-related histories that have followed different pathways. Case study 1 addressed the conurbation of Grand Nokoué, which is a set of five cities in southern Benin, while case study 2 addressed four villages of the communes of N'dali and Tchaourou in northern Benin. Data were collected through interviews and fieldwork observations and were analyzed using a			

mixed methodology. A qualitative approach and a quantitative technique were applied for case studies 1 and 2, respectively.

In the conurbation of Grand Nokoué, the combination of field observation and interview provides answers to the question of the factors of land tenure influencing housing conditions. More specifically, the proliferation of shantytowns (1) and precarious housings (2) resulting from the absence of basic services expose occupants to the lack of recognition by authorities (i) and the lack of protection from eviction or exclusion (ii). Moreover, the long-term existence of shantytowns and precarious housing promotes the development of informal community-based rights (iii), which often serve as a source of disputes and conflicts between populations and governments. In turn, the informal community-based rights do not prevent occupants from a loss of housing for public projects development (3) nor house demolition under judicial decision (4). These issues ((3) and (4)) are induced by a lack of recognition by authorities (i) and a lack of protection from eviction or exclusion (ii). Overall, this study reveals a chaotic condition, creating a negative downward spiral that threatens sustainable development.

The investigation of the communes of N'dali and Tchaourou shows that private property rights are the cornerstone of family-owned and cultivated land, which in turn is the backbone of agricultural production. It reveals a set of land issues that make farmers highly vulnerable, resulting in compromising sustainable agriculture. It highlights land contract farming and land inheritance as a trap that exposes agricultural production to a sudden stop when conflict or misunderstanding occurs among original landowners or inheritors. Moreover, it shows land security as a key factor for sustainable agricultural development toward poverty reduction and reiterates the unbreakable link between land security, agricultural production, and sustainable development. The result demonstrates that agricultural economic profitability strongly depends on land security. That is, the agricultural production of tenant farmers may increase if they are assured that the owners will not indiscriminately evict them from the farmlands. As a result, they may contribute more to the gross domestic product (GDP) and export earnings, leading to a tangible reduction in poverty.

Overall, this research has met the objective set at the beginning and asserts that the safer the land tenure, the more investment in land. This then leads to better land exploitation, superior agricultural productivity, better GDP and export earnings, and a tangible reduction in poverty. However, housing issues and agriculture productivity are not only related to land tenure factors; they may have implication on other factors not addressed in the present study. This research provides a basis for some suggested future research for achieving sustainable development recommended by the 11th SDG.