



Land Tenure and Its Effect on Sawah Technology Development: The case of Smallholder Rice Farmers in the Ahafo- Ano South, Atwima- Nwabeagya and the Amansie –West Districts of Ashanti Region, Ghana.



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FAO (2002), defines tenure as the relationship, whether legally or customarily among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land. Rules of tenure define how property rights to land are to be allocated within societies. They express how access is granted to rights to use, control, and transfer land as well as associated responsibilities and restraints. In simple terms, land tenure systems determine who can use what resources for how long, and under what conditions. Land tenure comprises the habitual and/or legal rights that individuals or groups have to land, and the resulting social relationships between the members (GTZ, 1998). Systems of land tenure are location specific and can not be generalized for a particular country the diverse social systems at the different parts of the country have specific tenure arrangements. Access to wetlands is a key to sawah adoption. Sawah being a long term investment is both capital and labour intensive and requires reasonable tenure arrangements. The study was to examine the existing methods of accessing land, tenancy types and conditions of rent and duration of tenancy and to determine how land tenure affects sawah development and rice production in the study areas in Ghana.

Methodology.

A descriptive survey was conducted in the study areas in 2009. A structured questionnaire was administered through interview schedule. Seventy farmers and other stakeholders in agriculture at the district level were interviewed. Table 1 shows the area and number of people in the various locations.

District	Community	Number of Farmers
Atwima Nwabiagya	Ntensere	14
Ahafo-Ano South	Biemso	22
	No1Adugyama	13
	Amakom	6
Amansie-West	Maanukrom	4
Total		69

Results

Access to wetland for sawah is open to all members of the community. These members with access to land may generally be classified as owners or tenants.

Out of the sawah farmers interviewed only 14 percent have ownership to wetlands whilst the remaining 86% are tenants who have entered into some form of agreements.

The study showed three forms of tenancy arrangement namely written, verbal and no contract existed in the study area.

Arrangement or terms of contract involves duration and mode of payment. The period of tenancy ranged from 1 to ten years

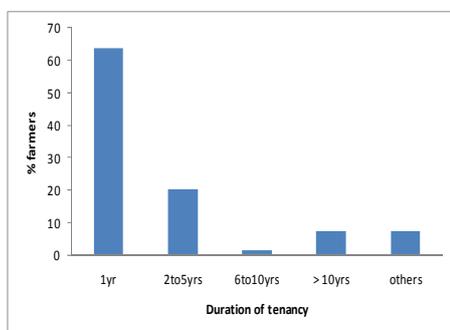


Fig.1: Percentage of farmers and their tenancy duration.

Three main types of tenancy agreements existed in the study area as shown in figure 2.

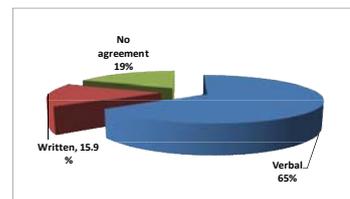


Fig.2 Tenancy agreement.

Under the contract the system of payment was either fixed rent tenancy or sharing-cropping. None of the sawah farmers were share-croppers rather all contracted fixed rent tenancy either by cash or in kind. Though sawah has been a male dominated farming system the study showed about 31% of the farmers were women.

The different use rights are given in figure 2 below.

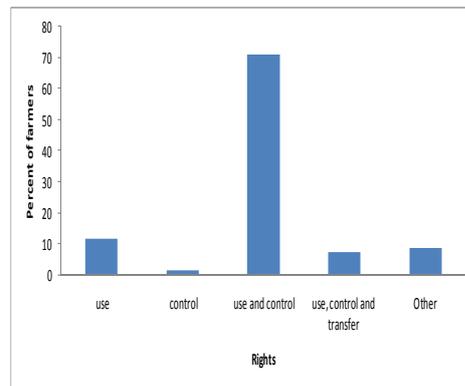


Fig.3: Right of land use.

Conclusion

Majority (91.3%) of respondents indicated that access to wetlands for sawah development is not a problem. Renting was an accepted mode of acquiring wetlands. Tenure arrangements and terms of conditions were location specific.

Land tenure is therefore not a major threat to sawah development. Predominant constraints were lack of credit, unavailability of power tillers and operators, labour for transplanting and supply of inputs.

Acknowledgement

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