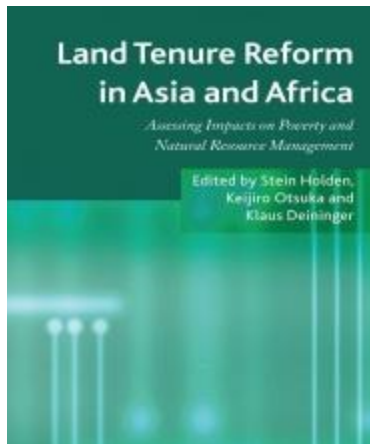


## Land Tenure Reform in Asia and Africa: Assessing Impacts on Poverty and Natural Resource Management<sup>1</sup>

*Stein Holden, Keijiro Otsuka and Klaus Deininger, 2013*



Land and land tenure issues have been and will continue to be high on the policy agenda in a large number of countries, including those in Africa and Asia. The highly political and contested nature of land policy issues makes it highly relevant to provide in-depth analyses of such issues in diverse contexts. While attempts have been made to develop ‘silver bullet’ solutions in this area, we advocate humility in the causal analysis of past reforms due to the contextual complexity and limited data quality as well as in the prescription for future land tenure reforms. Pilot testing before scaling up based on empirical evidence seems like an approach with higher probability of success as compared to some of the large-scale failed interventions of the past.

One of the motivations for this book has been to address land tenure policies from an international perspective. Soon after we (Holden and Otsuka) published the edited book, *The Emergency of Land Markets in Africa: Assessing the Impacts on Poverty, Equity, and Efficiency* (2009), we realized that in order to address land tenure policy issues deeply, we should undertake another book project with stronger and clearer focus on policy issues in a number of countries. This multi-country approach is badly needed, as there are both commonalities and differences in land tenure reform issues. Fortunately, Klaus Deininger, who has been actively working on land tenure issues in diverse settings, agreed to join this new project.

Another motivation was to involve young scientists from the countries that have been studied as a contribution to building national capacity. In the process of creating the book, these young scientists were exposed to many senior scientists and scientists coming from countries with a very different history of land tenure policies. We see this building of capacity and exchange of experiences as a complementary public beneficial outcome of this project. We hope the book can also serve as a valuable input for national and international teaching programs focusing on land tenure reform issues.

While the book has primarily been written by economists who have used sophisticated statistical methods in the analysis of large datasets, the editors have attempted to keep the book non-technical to make it accessible to the broader public interested in land tenure policy issues. Many of the interpretations and conclusions are tentative, with the intention of creating constructive and open-minded debate. Such debates are fundamental for the development of evidence-based land tenure policies conducive to efficiency, equity, and sustainability of farm and forest land management in the future.

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