

Distribution of Farm Lands, Landlessness and Land Acquisition in Rural Areas: Current Situation in and a Model Proposal for Turkey

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Key words: Land distribution; Land policy; land distribution; landlessness; land acquisition; financial support mechanism and conduct authority.

SUMMARY

ABSTRACT

In many countries, different models of land acquisition and use, or land management in general, are implemented in rural areas. There is the necessity of provision of lands required by rapid urbanization and industrialization activities on the one hand while on the other, there is the need for protecting and developing fertile lands for agricultural production. Despite the urbanization and smart growth movements, the development and management of land assets are important issues. Within the scope of the land management system, land banking is the process of securing land lots for future development processes and strategic public purposes. Briefly, the concept of land banking is used to collect land lots, to manage them temporarily and to encourage for development. Apart from this, some countries also have models for long-term lease of land assets (ownership remains with the state) or use of land in common ownership.

In Turkey, a significant imbalance in the distribution of land holdings in rural areas and households is not seen in the period between 1923 and 1950. In the post-1950 period, two major changes were observed, namely the increase in the amount of land handled per household due to mechanization and the use of intense industrial inputs, and on the other hand, migration from rural areas to urban areas. In rural areas, there are households that do not have land that provide sufficient income or any land at all as well as households that have lands with a large surface area and the implementation of land reform has not been achieved with two negative attempts during the Republican period. However, in the last two decades, problems constituted by migration of the owners of small lands in the countryside to the cities and the vast amount of land being left empty have been encountered. In this framework, although arrangements aimed at preventing fragmentation of land and ensuring real and legal persons acquire land have been made under Law

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No. 5403 on Soil Conservation and Land Use, it has not yet been possible to start application regarding land acquisition by households and legal entities. Acquisition of suitable parcels in urban areas for zoning application and construction takes place entirely in market conditions and in general, speculative behaviors cannot be prevented.

Development of models for land acquisition or consolidation of upper rights based on private property, and in this way, ensuring that people and businesses with little or no land, who are willing to do agricultural production, acquire land seem possible. These approaches appear to have been implemented in many countries, both in rural areas and in the immediate vicinity of cities. This study examines land acquisition models such land banking system, collective land management and easement rights instead of ownership for the economic development of rural and urban regions. The available literature has included that the importance of protecting fertile farmland, the green areas and spreading the cities on the suburban control. This study is emphasizing that the strategic dimension of the development. Also, land banking institutions divide land into smaller plots to sell to investors, with the expectation it will soar in value once it's available for development. Land use cooperatives coordinate agricultural production in large scale without parcel boundary of owners. Despite significant developments in the field of information systems in Turkey (e.g., Land Registry and Cadastre Information System, Farmer Registration System), land management regulations have long been aimed at meeting the needs or finding solutions to problems as they arise, rather than long-term policy compliance. It has not been possible to create efficient structures to administer, regulate, and audit rural and urban land markets. This research highlights the amount of household land assets, number of landless households, land acquisition possibilities in rural areas and requirements for a new land management system. Also, this research will help creation of new land management policies. It will assist land based sectors in the realization of economic development in Turkey.

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