

Critical Analysis of Ethiopian Urban Land Lease Policy Reform Since Early 1990s

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SUMMARY

In the early 1990s, the Ethiopian government launched urban land reforms. While maintaining public ownership of land of the previous era, Ethiopia has moved towards a system in which market forces shape the process of land allocation and utilization through the establishment of an urban land leasehold system. The aim of this paper is to critically review the limitations and implications of the Ethiopian urban land lease policy reform since early 1990s. Through reviews and analysis of international practices in an Ethiopian context, debates and challenges on land lease policies are assessed. The study blended practices of social research in which an overall approach of qualitative research is used in an investigation together with applied, descriptive and exploratory methods. The study findings revealed that despite the existing Ethiopian government considered urban land lease tenure as a tool to cure urban challenges, the lease policies have not formulated in such a way to meet many of their objectives. The study revealed that payments for the duration of the lease are not equal to what the market considered to be the value of the lease. The principles and practice of getting revenue from increasing land value is not addressed. The tools initiated to discourage speculators are controversial. Lessee's right of transferring and pledging use rights are restricted. The paper concluded that a more harmonized and legitimate urban land policy framework is needed. The government legislators should reconsider basic conceptual problems that have not yet been addressed and solve. The outcomes of this paper have important implications for legislators on how urban land lease policy reform is setting up.