

## Land and Ethiopia's Journey to Self-Reliance

## **KEY LAND ISSUES IN ETHIOPIA**



Ethiopia's economy depends on the productivity of its natural resources, principally land and water. Through their use, agriculture contributes 42% of Ethiopia's GDP and 90% of exports. Most people live in densely populated rural areas, where farmers depend on small plots of land (average of 0.5 hectares). Land markets remain tightly constrained: conditions are imposed on land rentals, and the sale and use of land as collateral is generally prohibited. Until recently, pastoral and agro-pastoral groups had no legally recognized rights to their wet and dry-season lands. In 2018, the first ever pastoral land certificates were issued with support from USAID.

1975 - 1990s | Marxist Derg regime nationalizes all land, promotes collective agriculture, villagization, and settlement in new areas. This era is marked by frequent land seizures, declining productivity, food insecurity and famine.

2005 | GoE and USAID launch first ever land tenure and administration strengthening program, mapping and certifying rural parcels.

1997 | Government of Ethiopia (GoE) begins process of improving land tenure security and provides legal basis for land certification activities.

2004 - 2013 | Ethiopia experiences 11% average annual GDP growth, mainly from expansion in services and agricultural sectors. Percentage of population living in extreme poverty falls from 39% to 30%.

2014 | Building on the success of certifying farmers' land rights, GoE and USAID launch first-ever pastoral certification program.

**2016 - 2020** | GoE's Growth and Transformation Plan II prioritizes agricultural investment and pastoral development.

2020

1970 1990 2000

1994 | New constitution

maintains status quo on

state ownership of land

transfers significant land

administration authority to

land use rights and

regional governments.

but recognizes citizen's

2005 | Legal reforms strengthen land rights: landholders now have rights to sell, bequeath, and claim compensation for land improvements, but not the land itself.

2005 - 2012 | USAID's two consecutive projects successfully issue over 500,000 land use rights certificates and assist with digitizing the land administration system. Other development partners (DFID, World Bank) join efforts to improve land tenure security.

2010

2014 - 2019 | Building on successes and approaches of USAID's programs, DFID launches major land project to register 14 million parcels.

2015

2018 | GoE, with USAID support, issues first pastoral rangeland certification covering an area the size of Rwanda.

2014 - 2018 | USAID works with GoE to relax some restrictions on land rentals and develop the country's first-ever Land Use Plan and Policy, which includes widespread reforms to improve land tenure security and investment.

Note: Gray indicates GoE context, dark blue indicates USAID activities

## IMPACTS OF USAID LAND PROGRAMS (Since 2005)



Likelihood of household's access to [informal] credit increased by 10%



Likelihood of a woman possessing land in her own name increased by 10%



Wife's decision role on the type of crops to grow on land under her control increased by 44%



Household's belief in their right to bequeath land increased by 11%



Land held jointly by husband and wife or by femaleheaded households increased by **0.32 hectares**