

Access to Land Ownership by Youths in Cameroon 1974 To 2026: “Implications to Livelihood”

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ABSTRACT

Land is a vital resource that human beings need for sustenance. Issues of secured access to land control and management has been a perennial problem to youths that depends on land for survival. Ethnic heterogeneity, complex historical events and cultural diversity have made land tenure to vary both in their ancient and contemporary manifestations. The right to land and the extent to which youths can have secured access to land can only go as far as the law permits. This paper seeks to examine the land reforms in Cameroon and its implications to secured access to land by youths, taking in to cognizance the recent government policy to encourage second generation agriculture with focused to reduce youth unemployment. A qualitative and quantitative research protocol was explored where data was collected using primary and secondary sources to better understand the dynamics of access to land by youths and the implications to their livelihood. The findings reveals that Secured access to land by youths in Cameroon is a problem as the 1974 land ordinance does not give room for the youth to have access to land Certificate. The ordinance reveals that those born after 1974 cannot have access to land certificate in which the land certificate is the only official document that secure land ownership. Youths therefore occupy land under national domain in which the state is the guardian of land in this domain. Land under this domain is open for concessions and expropriation by investors. The government policies of encouraging second generation agriculture and youths to embark on agriculture as a source of livelihood have raise concerns on secured access to land by the youths in Cameroon. The paper recommends the need for an inclusive land law reform that takes into cognizance the rights of youths on secured access to land in Cameroon.

Keywords: Ownership, Land, Youths, Livelihood, Cameroon.

RÉSUMÉ

La terre est une ressource vitale dont les êtres humains ont besoin pour leur survie. Les mécanismes d'accès sécurisé, du contrôle et de la gestion du foncier ont toujours constitué des obstacles aux jeunes qui dépendent uniquement de la terre pour leur survie. L'hétérogénéité des groupes ethniques, les événements complexes et historiques et la diversité culturelle ont contribué à ce que le régime foncier varie de l'antiquité jusqu'à la période contemporaine. Le droit au foncier et les mécanismes que les jeunes ont d'avoir un accès sécurisé à la terre n'est possible que si la loi l'autorise. Cet article cherche à examiner la réforme foncière au Cameroun et ses implications à l'obtention sécurisée d'un terrain par les jeunes en tenant compte de la récente politique gouvernementale d'encourager l'agriculture de seconde génération avec pour objectif de réduire le chômage des jeunes. Un protocole de recherche qualitatif a été exploré où les données ont été collectées en utilisant les sources primaires et secondaires afin de mieux comprendre la dynamique d'accéder au foncier par les jeunes et les implications que cela a dans leur vie quotidienne. Les conclusions révèlent que l'accès sécurisé des jeunes au foncier au Cameroun est un problème surtout que l'ordonnance foncière de 1974 ne permet pas à ces derniers d'obtenir un titre foncier. L'ordonnance stipule que ceux qui sont nés après 1974 ne peuvent pas obtenir le titre foncier qui est l'unique document officiel qui sécurise le propriétaire terrain. Les jeunes occupent par conséquent la terre sous le domaine national dans lequel l'Etat est le garant. La terre sous ce domaine est réservée aux constructions et aux expropriations des investisseurs. La politique gouvernementale d'encourager l'agriculture de deuxième génération et l'appel aux jeunes de s'intéresser à l'agriculture entant qu'une niche d'opportunités; ont soulevé le problème d'accès sécurisé à la terre par les jeunes au Cameroun. L'article recommande la nécessité

d'une réforme inclusive de la loi foncière qui prenne en compte le droit des jeunes sur l'accès sécurisé au foncier au Cameroun.

Mots clé: propriétaire, terre, jeunes, moyens de subsistance, Cameroun.

INTRODUCTION

Secured access to land is of crucial importance to youth's participation in the economic activities and societal development. As result, the second generation agriculture announced by the head of state during the agro-pastoral show in January 2011 at Ebolowa focused on improving productivity. Second generation agriculture in the real sense implies modern methods of farming, provision of better training to farmers, taking advantage of scientific innovations and securing innovative financing among others. The concept equally entails local processing raw materials, increase crop export, reduction in the importation of some food crops and creation of jobs Ndedi (2015). This policy encourage the youths to embrace agriculture as a springboard to reduce unemployment and improve on the gross domestic product. The head of state equally asked for a land reform to be put in place as a matter of urgency to enable youths have secured access to land and encourage large scale land investments.

Land is a very important factor in the development of Cameroonian economy as it is important for agriculture and contributes in other sectors such as tourism, mineral resources, conservation and forest areas. More than 70% of the Cameroonian population derives their livelihood and income mainly from agriculture Nyassi (2017). Coupled to this, Urbanization has further led to increase in the value of land in Cameroon, making it a target for investors and land speculators in Cameroon. Despite the rapid population growth and urban expansion in the Country, Cameroon remains a predominantly rural country with just over half of its population living outside the main urban centers. The countries inhabitants remain highly dependent on land and natural resources for employment and the foundation of food security in the country. Youths are set to be engines of development in Cameroon, therefore land-based activities such as agriculture constitute the main livelihood option for a large portion of the population Coutla (2007). Land is an economic resource and an important factor in the formation of individual and collective identity and in the day to day organisation of social, cultural and religious life IFAD (2000). Access to land and subsequent security of tenure are fundamental for youth's engagement in farming, which significantly shape their livelihood options and reduced unemployment. Thus, secure access to productive land is critical to the youths in other to enhance second generation agriculture and reshape their livelihoods. Adequate access to land reduces vulnerability to hunger, poverty and influences the capacity of the youths to invest in productive activities. Land certificates encourages the youths to practice sustainable management of natural resources and developed more equitable relations with the rest of their society, thus contributing to justice, peace and sustainable development.

In Cameroon, as in most other African countries, ownership, access and rights to land were influenced by a mixture of former colonial policies and customary practices, as well as post-independence land reforms. These include a wide array of overlapping at times contradictory rules, laws, customs, traditions, perceptions and regulations that govern youths rights to use, control and transfer land Ngum et al (2014). The clash between customary and statutory land rights have led to the problem of secured access to land by the youths in Cameroon. According to the Cameroon National Youth Policy 2006, a youth is defines as a person between the age bracket 15 to 35 Sone (2012). This therefore raised the problem of access to land by youths in Cameroon taking in to cognizance the legal framework governing land in the country. Land tenure security is not only important for agricultural production but also it enables the youths to equitably negotiate their future and build their capacity to undertake viable, alternative off farm activities. Effective land tenure helps the youths to use their land as collateral, renting it out or realizing its true value. Secured access to productive land is critical to the millions of youths that depend on land based activities for their livelihoods. Access to land and its control constitutes a major economic challenge to youths in Cameroon.

Access to land and subsequent security of tenure are fundamental for young Africans to engage in farming and will significantly shape their livelihood options. Contrary to the widespread perception of land abundance, evidence points to rising costs associated with young people's ability to access land in Africa. Youths in Africa have traditionally acquired land through inheritance in customary tenure systems. However, allocable land is

becoming increasingly scarce in areas of longstanding settlement, as populations continue to grow amidst fixed land resources Losch (2004). Access to land by youths therefore becomes one of the primordial factors in young people's ability to participate in agriculture. Cameroon like in any other country, youth's access to land is governed by Laws and customs. Access to land by the youths in Cameroon becomes a call for concern as the legal framework fails to protect the land rights of the youths and proceeds for a system of inheritance making it difficult for the youths to obtain land certificates. Secured access to land by youths is a form of security and power; owning land does not just signify power but secures a future for their descendants in the community. Failure to have access to land hinders agriculture and drastically reduces income, thus increasing poverty. Secured access to land by youths is crucial for investments as many youths seek for vast tract of land to invest in economic and social development activities like shelter and other development activities. Secured access to land by youths enhances economic growth and development in the country Yeboah (2019).

Acquisition of land has been a matter of controversy in Cameroon from time immemorial. However, problems concerning equal rights to access, modes of allocation and reallocation of land under the customary rule, were often sorted out by local authorities using the principle of law in force. Hence, in examining the notion of equality under the customary setting, the early pattern of land acquisition was a good window through which to appreciate whether the respect of equal access to land was an issue during pre-colonial Cameroon. Ethnic groups in Cameroon settled on vacant lands or lands conquered through war from those originally in possession. Generally, during the early periods land was acquired based on three main patterns namely through first settlement, land acquisition by acts of war (conquest), and land acquisition through inheritance. After independence and reunification of the two entities in 1960 and 1961 respectively, post-colonial Cameroon introduced the 1974 Land Ordinances to regulate land ownership and registration which were largely in the spirit of the colonialist. It attempted to nationalize all lands without land certificates whether or not effectively occupied lands. Sections 14(1) and 15 Ordinance No. 74-1 Of 6th July 1974 to establish rules governing national lands. Those with certificates of occupancy or *livret foncier* over land were by these new laws given ten years urban areas and fifteen years in rural areas to convert such into proper land certificates else their lands would influx into national lands according to Section 14(3) Ordinance No. 74-1 Of 6th July 1974. This put the natives in complete disarray because the post-colonial Land Ordinance did not adequately capture the interest of the natives, the question of who owns the land and what is land ownership remain one of conjecture and confusion. The majority of the population believed that traditional authorities were the primary owners of the land and therefore pays more allegiance to traditional method of land ownership than to statutory provisions. This situation arises because although Section 1(1) Decree no 76/165 of 27th April 1976 is categorical on the fact that the land certificate issued by the state is the only official document recognizing land ownership, this Decree and other land statutes fail to explain how land is acquired in the first place before seeking registration. As a result, land ownership in everyday transaction is not generally based on land ownership as defined by the law; it is nonetheless based on ownership as defined by customs.

Method of Data collection

The data necessary for the realization of this study involves two major sources, which include the primary and secondary data sources. Questionnaires and interviews were the main sources of data collection. A stratified sampling method was used to administer the questionnaires, given the fact that population varies from one area to another, thus, the number of questionnaires reflect its population. The age bracket tackle was 18-35years that is the youth bracket in Cameroon. 130 questionnaires were designed and administered to youths in the Centre region. This provided information on access to land by youths in Cameroon, the statutory and Customary Land Laws governing land ownership, methods of acquisition, difficulties in obtaining land certificates by youths in Cameroon and the implications to their livelihood. Valuable information on the traditional land laws, especially on the acquisition of land, transfer of land, as well as the operation of communal lands was gotten from the interviews. Also, information on youth's reactions to statutory land laws and the socio-economic importance of statutory land laws to youths were obtained from interviews with the Delegate of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure and form the director of land affairs in the ministry of state property, surveys and land tenure in Cameroon. Secondary sources consulted provided data on Ordinance, Decrees and circular on land governance, management and policies to encourage youth's participation in agriculture. This data was exploited from the ministry of state property survey and land tenure, the regional Delegation of state property, survey and land tenure and the ministry of agriculture and rural development. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were

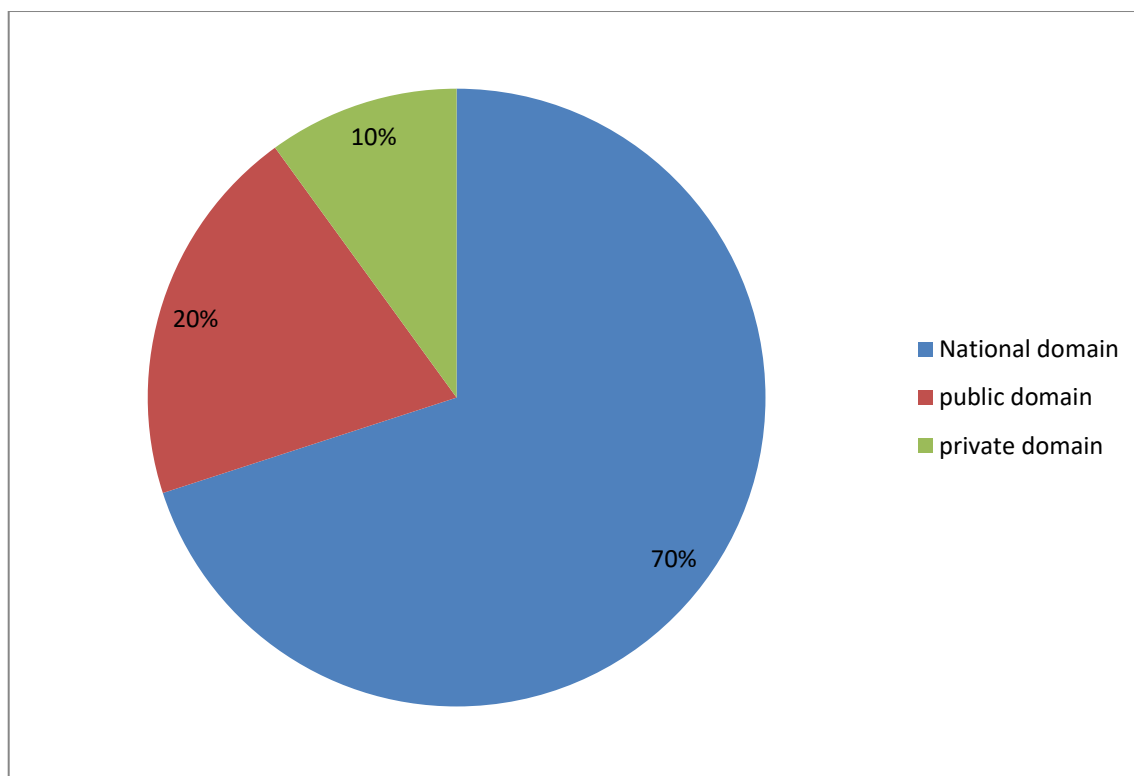
used to analyse the data. Tables were used to present the data on the information on conflicting customary and statutory land laws. Bar graphs and pie chart were used to illustrate the various ways through which people get access to land and the various forms of collaterals in which land certificates and houses were the most valuable respectively.

RESULTS

The right to land by the youths and the extent to which they can benefit from land deals can only go as far as the law permits. Ordinance No. 74-1 establishing rules governing land tenure in Cameroon, Ordinance No.74-2 establishing rules governing State lands and Ordinance no 74-3 establishing procedures governing expropriation for public interest. These Ordinances were followed afterwards by three other decrees in 1976. These were decree No.76 /165 of 27th April 1976 establishing the conditions to obtain land title, decree No.76 /166 of 27th April 1976 establishing the terms and conditions of management of national lands and decree No.76/167 of 27th April 1976 establishing the terms and conditions of management of private property of the State. These decrees have been followed by presidential and prime ministerial decrees. On the 16th of December 2005, the presidential decree no.2005 /481, repealing certain provisions of the 1976 decrees. This new Ordinance (1974 Ordinance) unified the land tenure regime of the two former territories and maintained land certificate at the center of the new national regime MINDCAF (2008).

Today, the most comprehensive legal framework governing land in Cameroon is the 1974 land tenure Ordinance which clearly states that "all land in Cameroon belongs to the State". This implies that individuals or communities are only granted access to land by the state. According to the above mentioned law, land registration is the only way of acquiring land certificate. This process requires supplementary documents and usually takes time. Apparently, these procedures, accompanied with time and cost of acquiring land certificate leaves the rural poor unable to protect their land against encroachment, leaving them vulnerable to land right infringement. For this reason, the government of Cameroon set up the 2005 law to simplify the procedures of land registration. The 1974 land ordinance also established rules governing land and divided state property into three domains: the national domain (land which is State property by the fact that it lacks certificate), private domain (land which has been registered and has certificate) and public domain (collective land of the country like road).

Figure one: Classification of land in Cameroon



Source: Field Work 2024.

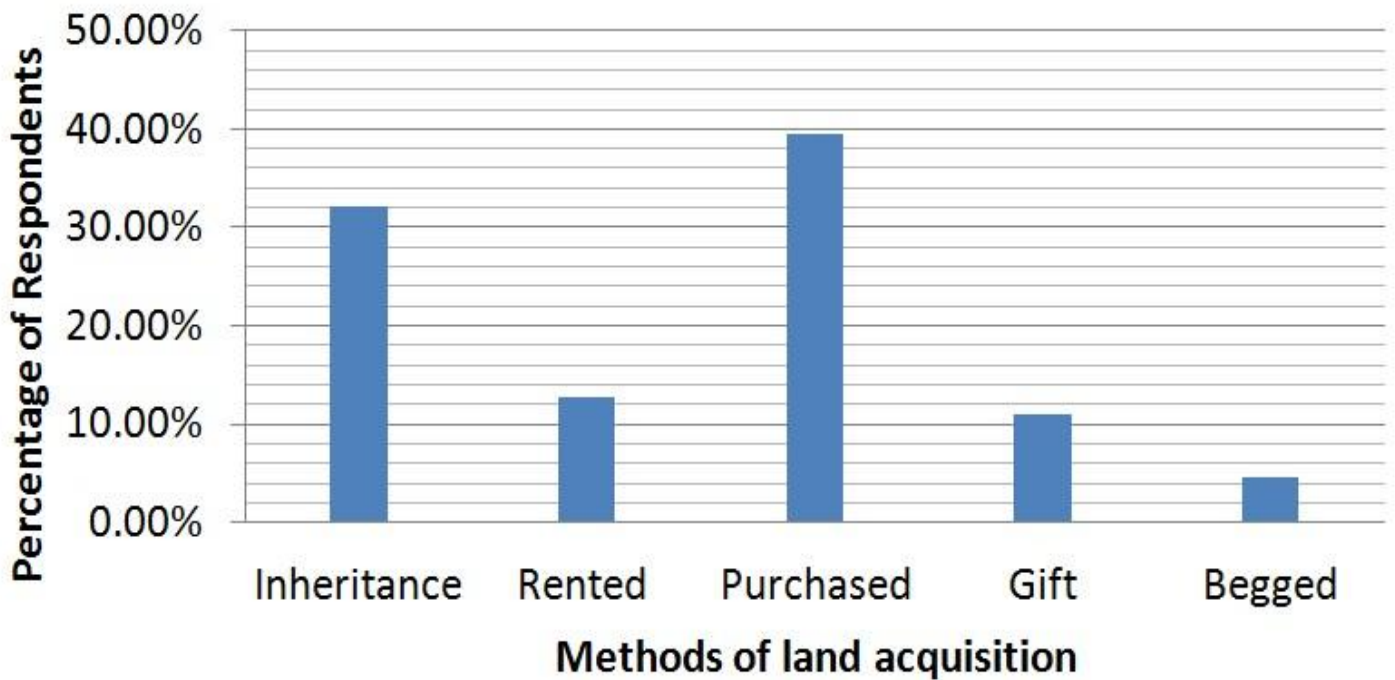
The 2005 land reform helped to facilitate the titling process. Article 17 of the 1974 ordinance “ Provided that customary communities members thereof, and any person of Cameroonian nationality, peacefully occupying or using land in category 1 as defined in article 15, on 5 August 1974, the date of entry in to force of the present ordinance, shall continue to occupy or use the said lands. They may apply for land certificate in accordance with the terms of the decree provided in article 7”. This raise major concerns on secured access to land by the youths in Cameroon. The ordinance failed to guarantee secured access to land ownership by the youths. This is mainly because the population within the youth bracket as per the Cameroon context cannot secure land certificates. Most of the youths therefore occupy land under national domain in which the state is the guardian of land in this domain. Land under this domain is open for concessions and expropriation by investors.

Do you know of any land laws that govern the ownership of land in cameroon	YES 128	NO 02		
Name the land laws you know	Customary	Statutory	Statutory and Customary	
	90	15	25	
Are these laws properly implemented	YES	NO		
	19	102		
Do Traditional land laws conflict with State land laws	YES 119	NO 02		
Does the youths in Cameroon faced difficulties in obtaining land certificates	YES 128	NO 02		
Does it affects their livelihood	YES	NO		
	129	01		
What are the implications to their livelihood?	Poor land tenure laws	Inadequate security on youth access to land	Poor implementation of state policies of youths participation in Agriculture	Rural urban migration by the youths
	78	21	18	12

Source: Field work, 2025.

From the table above, 98.4% of the youths have some knowledge about land laws existing in Cameroon. 66.9% of the youthful population is verse only with Customary land laws, while 12.4% is conversant with Statutory land tenure and 20.7% is verse with both Statutory and Customary land Laws. From this statistics, it becomes very evident that the customary land tenure is the most popular, as indicated by 87.8% of the sample population. The unpopular statutory land tenure system is considered legal and must be respected and implemented by the youths on a daily basis. This raise concerns of youths secured access to land as the statutory law does protects the rights of the youths in Cameroon to have access secured access to land ownership. The implications to their livelihood becomes evident as 60% capitalized on poor land tenure laws which leads to spillover effects like inadequate security on youths access to land, poor implementation of state policies of youths participation in agriculture and rural urban migration by youths in Cameroon to seek for alternative livelihood options.

Figure two below illustrates that youths do not have access to permanent land, as 17.4% of those that have land cannot claim total ownership of the land since it is either rented or begged. In addition, 11.4% of the youths do not have land at all. It is not easy to have access to permanent land because following the customary land tenure, land is mostly acquired by inheritance. This is justified by the fact that over 32.20% of the youths with Land acquired it through inheritance. While following the statutory land laws, land is highly purchased. Over 39.4% of the youths owned land through purchase which is not protected by the law as access to land certificates becomes a major problem to secured land ownership. The population that has no land at all as well as those who cannot lay total claims to a piece of land made it clear that the reasons why they cannot claim land ownership is as a result of the expensive nature of land and scarcity of land.



The government policies of encouraging second generation agriculture and for the youths to embark on agriculture as a source of livelihood have raise concerns on secured access to land by the youths in Cameroon. The arguments that there is plenty of arable land available for cultivation are based on the assumption that land is vacant and ownerless Taylor et al (2012). This assumption failed to undermine the fact that under effective exploitation at any given time does not mean it is vacant or idle. The absence of effective exploitation does not dispossess the youths the rights to such land because it is classified under the national domain which is not protected by the law. The advent of decree No. 76/165/76 that instituted land titling as the only proof of land ownership Fonjong (2016). The trend has change especially with the efforts of the state to improve on agriculture and economic growth in Cameroon.

The second generation agriculture launch by the ministry of agriculture and rural development was focused on the mechanisation of agriculture to improve yields, attracted many Multinational companies, political elites and land speculative investors to acquire large tracts of land for investments in Cameroon. This raise the problem of youths and secured access to land as most of this investors secure vast hectares of land under the national Domain. The Commercial Pressure on Land (CPL) has greatly affected the youths on secured access to land in Cameroon. Struggles over land are one of the defining features of movements to overcome poverty, hunger, discrimination, and political repression in the 21st century. Competition for land and natural resources is likely to continue and even intensify Schuter (2010).

DISCUSSIONS

The Decree of 1976 establishes the conditions for obtaining land certificates in Cameroon. According to the law, persons eligible to apply for a land certificate for the national lands they occupy are the customary community members or any other person of Cameroonian nationality on condition that the occupancy or exploitation of the land pre-dates 5 August 1974 MINDCAF (2018). This raise concerns of youths access to land certificates as the law does not permit the youths to engage in the procedure. The Decree of 1976 which establishes the conditions to obtain land certificate stipulates that a land certificate shall be the official certificate of real property rights. Also, once a land certificate is obtained, it shall be unassailable, inviolable and final. The land certificate can only be challenged on the condition that there was an error from a government service in the course of the registration procedure of the certificate or if the sale of such land is cancelled. Any of these occurrences may necessitate the withdrawal of the certificate by the Ministry of Lands. It is worth mentioning that though the 1976 Decree establishes the guiding conditions for land registration in the country, it failed to meet the demands of the youths. This is because although the procedure to acquire a land certificate is supposed to be very flexible to enable both men, women and youths to easily claim ownership over property, contrary turned out to be very rigid especially to the youth to have secured access to land Sone (2012). Bedeviled by unwarranted bureaucracy,

the certification procedure has become discriminatory against women who, unlike men often lack the financial means, time and human favour to easily overcome the hurdles accompanying the registration procedure. These setbacks led to the amendment of the 1976 Decree ameliorating the procedure to obtain a land certificate.

The 2005 Decree was enacted with the intention of improving on the registration procedure in order to accommodate the equality principle. Under it, any person eligible to apply for a land certificate for national lands shall prepare an application in four copies, the original of which shall be stamped, stating the full name, parentage, resident, profession, form of marriage, nationality of the applicant, and the name in which the property is to be registered. A description of the property (situation, area, nature of occupancy or exploitation, estimated value, details of liabilities with which it is encumbered) should be made available in the application file. After that, the file shall be lodged with the District Head or the Divisional Officer of the area where the property is situated. Also, as soon as the file has been received, the DO shall deliver a receipt to the address indicated on it within 72 hours. The DO shall transmit the file to the Divisional Delegate of Land Tenure within 8 days MINDCAF (2008).

This section addresses the issue of time factor which rendered the procedure of land registration under the 1976 Decree ineffective. Upon receiving the file, the Divisional Delegate of Land Tenure shall, within the next 15 days, ask the Head of the Divisional Delegation of Land Tenure Service to publish a summary of the application, posting it at the offices of the Divisional Officer, the District, the City Hall or the palace of the village concerned. Furthermore, on the proposal of the Head of the Divisional Land Tenure Service, the competent Divisional Officer or District Head - Chairperson of the Land Consultative Board, shall issue a decision fixing a date for the establishment of the right of occupancy or exploitation of the said land. Also, where there are many applications, the head of the Divisional Land Tenure Service shall publish every month, upon the decision of the Sub-Divisional Officer or the District Head concerned a schedule of the Land Consultative Board's activities. Pursuant to article 16 of Ordinance No. 74/1 of 6 July 1974 to establish land tenure, only the Land Consultative Board shall be competent to assess the occupancy or exploitation of national land of first category in view of obtaining a land certificate. When the property to be registered concerns many administrative units, all the Land Consultative Boards concerned shall meet jointly. They should be convened by the unit that has the file in its keeping. In case of effective occupancy or exploitation, the Board shall immediately have the property demarcated by the sworn Surveyor of the Surveys Service in the presence of neighbours of the land. Cost of demarcation shall be met by the applicant. When demarcation cannot be entirely carried out in the presence of all members of the Land Consultative Board, the President of the said Board shall monitor the demarcation work till its completion. On completion of the demarcation, a plan and detailed report shall be drawn up by the Surveyor. The plan shall be signed by the Surveyor.

The detailed report of the demarcation shall be signed by the Surveyor, the Chairperson of the Land Consultative Board, the Head of the Divisional Land Tenure Service, the village Chief concerned and the neighbours, stating: the full names of the parties concerned; a description of the recognized boundaries, and the length of the sides shall be included in the report. Thirty days after the meeting of the Land Consultative Board and the Divisional Delegate of Land Tenure shall transmit the file (containing the documents enumerated in article 11 of this decree, together with the detailed report of the Land Consultative Board, 5 (five) copies of the plan, and the detailed report of the demarcation of the property) to the Regional Delegate of Land Tenure. Furthermore, the Head of the Regional Land Tenure Service shall register the land certificate application in the regional land registry book and a notice of final demarcation shall be published in the Land Notice Bulletin. Also, if it has been approved, the file shall be transmitted to the Land Registry for further proceedings or it will be transmitted to the Divisional Delegate of Land Tenure for Corrections. Each Regional Delegation of the Ministry in charge of State Property and Land Tenure shall publish a Land Notice Bulletin. From the day the application for registration is lodged at the District or Sub-Divisional office, until the expiry of a period of 30 days from the day of publication in the Land Notices Bulletin of the notice of final demarcation, any interested party may intervene either: with an objection, where there is a dispute concerning the person responsible for the development of the land, or with an application for registration, in the event of a claim being based on the existence of a real right or of an encumbrance liable to be entered in the certificate under preparation. Where there is no objection, no opposition, no previous application for registration or no withdrawal, the Land Conservator shall enter the property in the land register and establish a land certificate.

The land certificate shall contain the description of the property with details of its composition, contents, situation, boundaries and adjacent areas. It will also contain details of owner's civil status; the existing real rights on the property and encumbrances attached to it; a serial number and specific name; the situation plan of the property duly signed by a sworn Surveyor and countersigned by the Head of the Divisional Surveys Service in whose area the property is situated. The innovations introduced by the 2005 Decree for processing a land certificate applies to all who intend to acquire a legal right over land. The certificate can now be obtained at the Regional level and not from the national level as in the old. The stated time limit for the process of a land certificate has made the Ministry of State Property and Land Tenure to be applauded for instituting not only the procedural but also institutional innovations through the 2005. The above procedures completely neglects the youths form secured access to land. The youths in Cameroon therefore holds land under the national domain in which the state is the guardian of land under this domain. Land concessions signed by the state and investors mostly cover land under this domain. Secured access to land and ownership by the youths becomes a call for concern as the land ordinance and the procedures of land registration fail to take in to cognizance land ownership and registration by the youths.

Cameroon has embarked on the process of migration from the agriculture of consumption to the second generation agriculture Ndedi (2015). The Cameroonian government in its long term policies on agriculture has embark on the second generation agriculture with the main objectives to promote mechanized agriculture, increase Gross Domestic production, reduce unemployment and above all enhance economic growth and development in the country. This policy focused mainly on the youths to embrace new technologies and innovative ideas on agriculture in other to reduce unemployment which is one of the major problems of the youths. Agriculture is the backbone of the Cameroonian economy as more than 70% of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihood Nguiffo (2005). The economic policies equally encourage foreign direct investments in other to ensure growth and development. The government policies of encouraging youths to participate in agriculture have raise concerns of secured access to arable land by the youths. This is mainly because the law doesn't permit the youths to acquire a land certificate which is the only official document that shows proof of land ownership.

The current land tenure ordinance stipulates that one has to be above 45 years to file land Certificate or can apply through an elder. This purse a hindrance to youths on access to arable land to meets the demands of the second generation agriculture. The land tenure that is currently implemented is old and needs to be revised to give the youth's full access to land ownership. Equally in Cameroon, there is no reliable and accessible land law for youths to own and exploit land in Cameroon this hinders the efforts to boast second generation agriculture. Second generation agriculture requires capital intensive, the agricultural bank promised by the head of state during the 2011 agro- pastoral show in Ebolowa to provide financial support for new investors agricultural sector especially to the youths have not been effective. Equally many commercial banks give loans only to those with valid land titles. This raise concerns as many youths don't have land certificates that they can benefit from this loans to support agriculture. Competition from multinational corporations and the discriminatory practices of government officials has further compounded genuine innovation of youths in this sector. The government policies in the agriculture sector on youth's participation are very vital to reduce unemployment in Cameroon. As a result, youth's secured access to land is very imperative for youth's participation in agriculture in Cameroon.

CONCLUSION

The concept of youths and access to land in Cameroon is a call for concern. Land is an asset of enormous importance for millions of youths in the developing world. The nature of property rights and their degree of security vary greatly, depending on competition for land, the degree of market penetration and the broader institutional and political context. Pressure on land sets to increase over future decades, given the impacts of continued population growth, urbanization, globalization of markets activities, international investment flows, trade negotiations and climate change. As the resource becomes scarcer and more valuable, those with weak rights to this resource will tend to lose out. Land tenure security guaranteed long-term use of the land and stable rent costs. Land tenure security therefore contributes in increasing the land value as a result of concessions signed with the state. This paper therefore recommends the need for a land law reform that takes in to cognizance secured access to land by youths in Cameroon. This helps to empower the youths on secured access to land to carry out sustainable and secured land investments. Many youths in Cameroon from the ages 15-35 have

involved in economic activities that generate income. Some serve in the civil service, private sector workers and business endeavors. Therefore secured access to land will help the youths to invest on land related investment and also ensure secured access to land for the future generation taking in to cognizance the demographic growth in Cameroon.

Youths and secured access to land ownership is imperative to promote sustainable land related investments in Cameroon. Land is a multi-faceted resource that is vital to the youths for survival and a basis for diverse investments. Legal policies and institutional frameworks remain distant and do not reflect the experiences and demands of youth. Access to land ownership is therefore important to youths in other to meet the government policies of second generation agriculture. In fact, access to and control over land is one of the main challenges that young people face in Cameroon. Inheritance of land or rights is often the main means by which young people obtain access to land. Strengthening legislation, local institutions and legal services for youth to ensure that their rights to land ownership meets government policies of encouraging the youths to embrace agriculture as a livelihood option and the need for the land law reform to address youth's access to land ownership is very important. This will equally go a long way to achieve the government economic policies and to enhance economic growth and development.

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