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Analysis of the Implementation of Governmental Programs for the Development of marshlands and Valley Lowlands in Southern Rwanda

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Abstract

Due to an immense growth in population and a high population density combined with an extensive production level as the result of the subsistence economy, the Rwandan government was forced to cultivate its remaining land resources in the past, namely the marshlands that comprised approximately 12 per cent of the country's usable agricultural area. An intensive cultivation of these marshlands is to be achieved primarily through cooperative community usage, the introduction of new cultivation methods (multicropping and agrosilvopastoral systems), and the establishment of microfinancing institutions. Apart from assuring food security, the exploitation of marginal, especially erosion-threatened hill-sides is meant to be prevented under the aspect of ecological considerations. The question remains open whether the social situation of the small farmers in the wetlands has improved for those who have been living there or for those who were settled anew in some parts, in order to better living conditions with regard to social care and agricultural infrastructure. No explicit socioeconomic studies have been carried out up to now. It is the aim of this research study is to analyse the political, administrative and social implementation with regard to the consequences of this development policy. Based on the sociological approach of implementation theory the governmental program, its characteristics and development will be described; on the one hand the implementation by the responsible agencies will be analyzed, on the other hand the decision framework of the farmers by regarding the structure of their farm enterprises and by undertaking a social structure analysis. The research project is designed as a comparative study of two reclaimed marshlands. Between September and December 2005 structured interviews, group discussions and guided expert inter-views were carried out in 70 households in the marsh districts Rugeramigozi and Base respectively. The work was conducted in close cooperation with the PASI-Project Group of the University of Mainz (Prof.Jörg Grunert), with the Agricultural Department of the National University in Butare, which has a strong focus on production-technical aspects, and in coordination with German Agro Action.

Keywords: Implementation, Marshlands, Valley Lowlands