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Social and Economical Improvement through the Implementation of Land Tenure in Rural Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

Rural and agricultural development on Java, Indonesia, is undervalued. Land tenure and tenure security are under pressure due to a fast growing population in relation to an already high population density. Over 40 % of Indonesian workers are engaged in agriculture. With regard to agricultural production, Java alone contributes for more than 50 % of the national rice production. However, Java's population accounts only 0.07 % of the total Indonesia population. On Java the population density varies from 764 people km² in East Java to 13,499 km² in Indonesia's capital Jakarta. By considering Java as the most densely populated island, the need for land for living compete with the need for land for agricultural purposes. On Java, particularly in peri-urban areas, the presence of agricultural land is becoming scarce due to the urban expansion. Secure access to land is therefore becoming more and more crucial for further agricultural and rural development on Java.

This paper explores the implementation of land tenure in rural Java. It analyses the factors that have and had an influence on the implementation of land tenure systems in rural Java. Finally, it offers feasible suggestions to prevent situations and to overcome conditions in which the implementation of land tenure is not viable. This paper is primarily a literature study. Meanwhile secondary data are collected from FAOSTAT and Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) - Statistic Indonesia.

This study shows that there are various ways to implement land tenure systems in rural Java. However, these varieties can be categorised in either land ownership or land renting. The main threats to the implementation of land tenure are the lack of agricultural laborers, inequality of agricultural land ownership, poverty and insecure land tenure. Agricultural revitalisation in the way of accelerating rural infrastructure and providing adequate agricultural production inputs such as fertilisers and seeds, a land reform programme (for example distribution of land to rural landless), and a land registration programme can increase the social, economical and ecological security of land tenure.

Keywords: Agriculture, Indonesia, land tenure, rural Java, tenure security