

Land dynamics for rural development in Anjouan (Comoros)

HAFEZ BOURHANE

Economics teacher

University of Comoros, the Center University of Patsy

Abstract

Anjouan has significant land potential for farm development. Land tenure security is one of the major land issues that rural areas experience and is also holding back agricultural investment. Since becoming independent in 1975, the successive Comorian governments have set themselves the objective of solving the issue of land insecurity in order to promote harmonious sustainable development of farms as a whole, but to no avail. In Africa, there are multiple rights of access to land. In the Comoros, the legal regime is characterized by the customary law, the islamie law and the so-called modern French law. This article aims to identify strategies to promote rural development in Anjouan based on the land parameter. Thus, in a country with a fast growing population, the vast majority of the population lives in rural areas facing extreme poverty and an agricultural sector threatened by land insecurity. The agricultural land must be chosen as a basic support to achieve the development objectives.

Keywords: Anjouan, farming, land tenure insecurity, legal regime, rural development.

1-INTRODUCTION

The earth is an element inseparable to human life, since it is the place where all human activities take place. It is thanks to the land that men feed themselves to get rid of hunger, as it remains a daily pain for 800 million human beings (Brunel, 2020). Since time immemorial, man has sought a way to manage the property rights of each individual to avoid conflict. In the developed countries of America and Europe, land legislation is well established for the proper management of land assets. Land issues and their relationship with

development priorities have constantly highlighted a movement by which peoples constitute themselves as historical subjects of their future, recovering with the diversity of their cultures the control of their economic, political and ideological choices (Razafindraibe, 2009). Land issues, which are the source of numerous conflicts that have always affected the majority of humanity, are of concern to all societies throughout the world (El-Barwane, 2010). This concern does not spare the Union of the Comoros either, since the unfinished post-independence period due to the occupation of the island of Mayotte by France, the land issue has preoccupied the newly independent Comorian state. President Ali Soilihi intended to resolve the land issue, in particular by securing it through a program of nationalization of agricultural land, which led his regime to burn a large part of the documents that were filed by the Cadastre and Domains services. The government authorities that followed one another abandoned any idea of nationalizing land and found less radical solutions than those advocated by the regime of ALI Soilih. In Comoros, the national land domain includes the state domain, that of the various territorial communities and the heritage of other private individuals (DIEDHIOU,2012). As far as the land law is concerned, the different modes of space and resource management proposed within the framework of the theory of land control constitute the main feature (BEN ALI et al 2011). This legal system in the context of land regularization is characterized by the use of the customary law, the islame law and the colonial law. Moreover, the land issue is not simply a political or legal issue but is also characterized in an economic framework. As they have pointed out (E. LE BRIS et al. 1982), the land issue should not be autonomous in village practices, as it is in the discourse of researchers and practitioners, but should involve other global factors, particularly the economic factors of the farmer. The Comoros, a country with an agricultural vocation and potential, economically rank among the poorest countries. This poverty is mainly rural and affects the majority of farmers. The country ranks 134th out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI) (BEN ALI et al 2011). The Gross Domestic Product is around US\$450 per capita and the cumulative growth rate over the last ten years is barely 3%. In addition to agricultural activities, Comorians also make a living from livestock (80% of the working population is involved in these two activities). However, regardless of their main activity, almost all Comorians remain deeply attached to

the land, which has both an economic (production of market goods, savings), social and symbolic value (sign of belonging to society, redistribution of wealth) (M. Said and N. Sibelet 2004). Land plays a very important role in the socio-economic development of countries, especially in developing countries such as the Comoros, where the majority of the population is involved in agricultural activities (Mahamoud, 2013). Policies aimed at promoting the generalization of private land ownership should be among the priorities of the development policies of many African countries, such as Comoros. The management of land and natural resources is at the heart of the country's development. Agricultural, rural development and territorial planning policies are impacted and determined by it. In this respect, land policies characterize the master plans of sustainable territorial development in countries, especially developing countries. In a social context, the Comoros, as in the case of almost all Third World countries in general and in particular the island nations of the southwestern Indian Ocean, land occupies a central place in socio-economic life (EL BARWANE, 2007). The relationship of the Comorian to the land is a fact that does not allow a clear distinction between urban and rural areas. This means that more than half of the Comorian population is involved in agricultural activities. Land tenure is an exorbitant social factor insofar as it accounts for the various rights over land and natural resources while determining the actors and holders of these rights (CHENE-SANOOGO, 2012). In this social context, (Célestin, 2010) adds on the land question as being the particular set of social relations having land or territorial space as a support. These social relations are mainly determined by economic factors, legal factors, and then by the techniques of management of nature that can materialize and characterize these social relations into so many distinct regimes. In Comoros in general and in Anjouan in particular, as a Muslim country, the use of Muslim law in land management plays a very important role and the role of the father is very remarkable especially in the exploitation of land. In addition, in Comoros, the land belongs to the state. But in practice and usage, it is managed by the family, the village and/or customary chiefs within the limits of their respective soils (DIEDHIOU, 2012). Only the state can give a citizen a definitive title of ownership. Land management is generally based on a system of traditional land ownership ; the head of the family being considered the owner of the land at the family level and the village chief the owner at the village level. However,

farmers find it hard to secure their property and land conflicts arise on a daily basis, impeding the development process in rural areas. It is almost impossible to find a family or community that does not experience a land issue (BEN ALI, et al 2011). In this context, (M. Said and N. Sibelet, 2004) also adds that even the tree considered as a form of land tenure in its own right, called here tree tenure can also generate conflicts. It is very difficult for farmers to understand how land tenure works, leading to land insecurity and preventing the development process in rural areas. In fact, in an environmental context, the FAO in 2003 revealed that there is a close correlation between land tenure and environmental conditions, particularly the modes of land use that are harmful to the environment or, on the contrary, serve to improve it. In this context, (BARRIERE, 1996) shows that any form of management generates a dynamic process, but the very notion of management does not prejudice its own quality, which can be either positive or negative in its results. The management of the environment often integrates, and should always integrate, a conservation project. In this perspective, in order to conserve and remedy environmental problems, the Union of Comoros has ratified several Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in particular the post-Rio conventions, and has committed itself to elaborating a Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (SCADD) for the period 2015/2019. It has also adhered to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. However, population growth and the lack of cultivable areas are causing pressure on the environment, the degradation of resources and ecosystems, especially on the island of Anjouan. In this island the situation is serious, water extinction, rivers drying up and many springs drying up. It is currently facing a serious problem of extinction of its surface water resources (MIRHANI,2014). While 49 perennial rivers were identified in 1950, in 1970 there were only about 30 left. He added that the forest cover decreased from 8,000 ha in 1974 to 1,178 ha in 1995, and that the number of permanent rivers has dropped to about 30. He also adds that the forest cover decreased from 8000 ha in 1974 to 1178 ha in 1995. Thus, deforestation is pointed out as the main reason for the drying up of rivers, soil erosion and flooding in Anjouan.

However, the land problems hindering the development of farms in Anjouan are numerous. Rapid population growth, insufficient arable land, rising land prices that exclude the poor to the

benefit of the wealthy segments of the population and private operators working in the sector, the absence of an integrated development policy, abusive overexploitation of natural resources, and declining yields are all facts that must be overcome for the sustainable rural development of the island of Anjouan. In addition, cultivation practices, particularly over-burning in certain areas, and deforestation are factors that fast soil degradation and thus lead to erosion. In addition, land conflicts due to land insecurity are very frequent and prevent the development process in rural areas. The lack of a land policy and legislation that allow producers to secure their access to land and natural resources are behind these land conflicts. The main question of this study is what land tenure strategies should be put in place to ensure sustainable development of farms in Anjouan. Thus, the overall goal of this paper is to identify the strategies that need to be addressed in order to promote sustainable rural development of farmers in Anjouan based on the land parameter.

2-STUDY METHODS

The dynamics of land tenure for the development of farms in Anjouan requires a special method to identify the various constraints to agricultural development. The methodological approach adopted comprises three phases : preparatory phase, field trip phase and data processing phase.

2-1 Preparatory phase

It focused particularly on the development of farms in Anjouan. It was also based on the various approaches related to the aspects of land tenure at the farm level. The impacts of land tenure on farms were taken into account in the literature reviews to have a better approach. Previous and recent research studies were mobilized to better understand the evolution in time and space of land tenure contexts in the study area.

2-2 Data collection phase

Understanding the local realities of farmers requires direct field observations, exchanges and discussions with all development stakeholders in the study area. Surveys of farm households and various institutions were conducted. Household surveys were

conducted in four study areas corresponding to four prefectures based on four districts covering two villages and two towns on the island of Anjouan, namely the village of Adda in the region of Nymakélé and Koni-djodjo and the town of Tsembéhou and Moya. Overall, 100 farm households were selected for analysis. The choice of this sampling is the result, on the one hand, of a reasoned choice, based on prior knowledge of the environment and, on the other hand, this choice is derived from the Lot Quality Assurance Sampling method, CORE GROUP, (RAKOTONDRABE, 2017). The analysis considers that statistically, a sample size of 19 individuals per "supervision zone", valid for a minimum of 5 zones, is sufficiently representative regardless of the size of the population studied. The table below shows the sampling distribution for this study.

Table 1 : Presentation of the regions and operators surveyed.

Localities / districts	Number of farmers surveyed	Total population per capita
Adda	30	11, 449
Koni-Djodjo	20	10, 712
Moya	20	8 ,986
Tsembéhou	30	12, 590
Total	100	43,737

Source : 2020 survey author

Other surveys were also carried out, notably on the institutions that deal with agricultural and land activities in Anjouan. Some local authorities, including mayors, village chiefs and leaders of cooperative associations were also consulted to obtain more information on the land situation in the study area.

3- DATA PROCESSING

The data collected in the field are stored and arranged in an Excel database to facilitate exploitation and further processing. The variables of analysis are determined after the definition of the selected criteria. The use of descriptive statistics provides the main characteristics of the farms and the land tenure system in the study area. Spad software was also used for data processing and analysis.

4-RESULTS

4-1 Land tenure of farmers from the colonial era to the present day

In order to better understand the current land tenure issues on farms in Anjouan, it is necessary to first make an evolutionary analysis of the land tenure situation from the colonial period up to now.

1- the Colonial era

The colonial era is far from being the "golden age" that some describe today. It was a time of suffering for Comorian peasants in general and Anjouanese peasants in particular due to the dispossession of cultivable land for the benefit of European settlers. Indeed, the land tenure system of the colonial era in the Comoros, and more precisely in Anjouan, as in most of the colonized countries, was marked by the total negation of customary land rights. The land tenure system was imposed by the total domination of the metropolis. The settlers, particularly the French, were therefore inspired by nothing more than the socio-economic development of their metropolis to the detriment of the local population. The land tenure system was governed by laws and rules purely related to the French civil code. Farmers had lost their legitimacy of access to land to the benefit of the colonists and a dominant class of urban nobles. The dispossession of land from the peasants was imposed for several years. The local peasants had difficulties in obtaining land for farming. Only uncultivable lands such as steep peaks were reserved for the peasants. Thus, this colonial period was marked on the island of Anjouan by four main eras : the sugar era, the vanilla era, the sisal era and the era of perfume plants (Ylang-ylang).

2 -Present period

The country's independence in 1975 did not allow the country to fully eradicate the land tenure practices of the colonial era. The current land tenure system in Comoros reveals some traces of the principles governing the colonial system. This regime is governed by three legal systems : the customary law, the islame law and the civil law of colonial origin. It constitutes a major constraint on the development of the rural environment and the agricultural sector in the country. It is reflected in the inability of the jurisdictional structures to deal with and satisfy the basic problems, in particular the various conflicts concerning farmers on the State domain and the land of large

Comorian or foreign landowners. In the Comoros, the national land domain includes the state domain and the the property of other private persons. The State's domain is divided into a public domain and a private domain. The public domain of the State includes all real estate classified in the name of public use. The private domain includes the land that is the subject of a land title and real property rights established or transferred in the name of the State. The State's land tenure system stipulates that all land belongs to the State. It is the State that has a monopoly on land and it is the State that exercises regalian control over land and, consequently, it is the only one that can give a citizen a definitive title of ownership. The procedures are very cumbersome to allow a peasant to obtain a land title. This means that the vast majority of peasants do not have land titles. In terms of other private assets, there are traditional forms based on Muslim rules that govern land tenure. Thus, in order to make the current regime in favor of rural development, it is necessary to take into account the socio-cultural evolution of the citizens.

4-2 Legal status of land and mode of access to land on farms

The land tenure dynamics of farms is necessary for an understanding of the land tenure situation of farmers in terms of their legal status and their mode of access to land. The legal status of farmers was considered in order to gain a better understanding of their situation. In fact, the land of farmers in all the areas studied is untitled land. The majority of farmers in the four communes covered by this study do not have a land title. The survey results showed that 98 percent of these households do not have a land title, and 62 percent of them are not even aware of the land title. The reasons given by farmers for not registering their plots of land are unfamiliarity with the registration system, and those who do know the system cite very cumbersome, lengthy, and costly procedures, as well as confidence in the system already inherited from their predecessors, i.e., the application of customary law in farm management. This insecurity of land tenure calls on the authorities to act to guarantee access and security for farmers on their farms. In addition, in the study areas, households have access to land in the following three ways. These are purchase, inheritance and rental. The table below shows the modes of access to land by surveyed households according to commune.

Table 2 : Methods of accessing land by surveyed household and by commune

Access mode	Tsembéhou	Adda	Koni	Moya
Purchase in %	3	1	2	2
Inheritance in %	27	29	18	18
Other: rental, sharecropping in%	8	2	1	9
Household surveyed	30	30	20	20

Source authors : 2020 surveys.

The majority of the land of the farmers in all four studied communes was inherited. The commune of Adda has the largest percentage of land inherited by farmers, 29%, compared to 18% in the communes of Koni and Moya. Inheritance is one of the traditional modes of land succession most frequently observed and practiced by the majority of farmers in the study areas but also in Anjouan. Access to land through sharecropping (renting) and purchase is also practiced by farmers, but with low attendance.

4-3 Ways in which farmers develop their land

The land constitutes a huge potential for agricultural activities. It can be developed either directly or indirectly by farmers. The way in which land is developed varies according to the size and family situation of the household, particularly its wealth. The results of the fieldwork showed that direct land use is dominant and practiced in the study areas. The direct farming method was practiced by almost all farmers, i.e., 80% of the plots farmed. Farmers prefer to cultivate their plots themselves instead of borrowing or renting them from another farmer. Indirect farming concerns only 20% of the occupied plots. In this mode, the owner of the land is absent from the exploitation of the land and leaves it to another person to develop it according to a well-defined contract. There are two types of indirect development : sharecropping and tenant farming. The indirect development system practiced and dominated in the study areas is sharecropping. Instead of sharing the harvest, households prefer to rent the land for a fixed fee. The figure below shows the type of development of agricultural households by district.

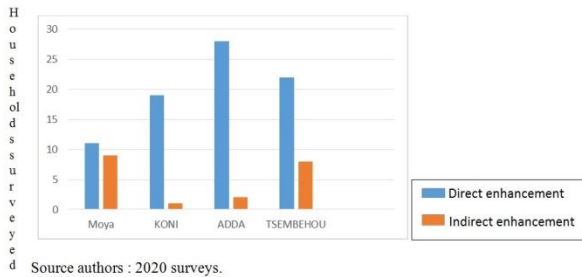


Figure 1 : Household land use patterns by commune

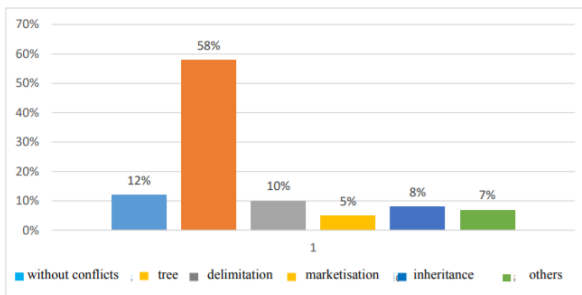
Source authors : 2020 surveys.

Indirect land use, dominated by the system of leasing for a fixed fee, is practiced in some communes. For example, in the village of Ligoni, in the commune of Moya, and in the village of Koni, there are village lands managed by the village chiefs, "land of the former settlers," where farmers rent these lands for a fixed price. In Moya, according to the farmers, the rental price is fixed at 15,000 KMF, or 30 euros per year, and in Koni the price varies from 20,000 to 25,000 KMF per year, or 40 to 50 euros. Some farmers in Koni argue that this price is very high in relation to the yields they obtain, but also in relation to their social situation. In the case of Moya, the money received from the rental of plots is used to fund village works and build schools. Thus, the reasons for renting land are often the scarcity of cultivable space, the remoteness of cultivation areas, inheritance problems and family land conflicts.

4-4 the emergence of land conflicts among farmers

The land conflicts that manifest arise at the level of farmers in Anjouan are numerous. It is almost impossible to find a family or community that does not experience a land dispute. It is a problem that does not make a distinction between social categories, whether rich or poor, farmer or not. The land conflicts recorded in the study areas concern the delimitation of plots between neighbors and neighbors, inheritance problems, the imperfect trading of land, problems related to tree planting, and what not. The figure below illustrates the land situation observed in the field.

Figure 2 : Land situation observed in the field



Source authors : 2020 surveys.

The results showed that of all the farm households encountered in the study areas, only 12% did not experience land conflicts. The 88% of households went through several types of land tenure problems. Land conflicts related to tree planting play a very important role in land conflicts. They represent 58% of the cases observed. In the Comoros, a tree has one or more crucial and different meanings for the person who plants it, for the person who enjoys it, and for the person who cuts it down (Ben Ali et al, 2011). Conflicts related to tree planting often arise when the tree is on the boundary of the plots of land or the branches enter one or the other owner or when the tree is planted on the other's plot of land. In fact, land conflicts linked to imperfect commercialization are also part of the conflicts observed. Land is considered a family or village heritage. Its sale is generally done through the application of customary law. The sale is also based on the right of use and not on the right of ownership. As a result, a sale made by an owner can be cancelled by the seller's descendants. In addition, land tenure problems related to inheritance due to the non-sharing or inequitable sharing of land and to the delimitation of parcels are very frequent in rural areas, but also observed in the study areas. First, the question of inheritance in the Comoros, depending on the culture, often the woman inherits the living areas and the men the cultivable areas. However, due to demographic pressure and the lack of living space, this trend is no longer the case. Land inheritance problems often arise when one family member wants to monopolize a large part of the land in relation to the others or wants to sell part of the inheritance without the consent of the others. This situation represents 8% of the cases observed. For the delimitation of plots, problems often arise between neighbor and neighbor. Most of the time, one wanted to move his limitation towards

the other or to take a part of the other's plot of land to reinforce his share. This situation represents 10% of the cases observed. Other land conflicts exist but are also often mentioned by some farmers. This is the problem of land ownership between herders and farmers. The herders use the areas left fallow for their livestock, but since these plots are very small, the animals go beyond the boundaries of the plots of land to destroy the farmers' crops. The land conflicts related to the wandering of animals discourage some farmers and these two actors sometimes end up in the gendarmeries and in the courts to settle their conflict.

4-5 Land tenure insecurity related to the registration of plots

In Anjouan, as in the whole of the Union of the Comoros, the land tenure situation of farmers remains a matter of serious concern. Insecurity of ownership is prevalent in farm plots. The vast majority of farmers do not have a land title. The registration procedure involves demarcation, drawing up a sketch plan, and land registration, and ends with the granting of a land title. This procedure is long and costly for farm households. However, there are few registered plots of land, but these are located in urban areas and not in rural areas and especially in farm areas. The service responsible for land management is located only in the capital of Anjouan Island, Mutsamudu. Apart from the capital, no prefecture or commune is empowered to manage land affairs on the island. This insecurity of land tenure, linked to the lack of registration of plots, affects individual family plots of land and village plots of land in rural areas. This situation often leads to conflicts, especially in the case of individual family plots, during sharing and transactions. During our surveys, conflicts related to the sharing of arable land were among the conflicts mentioned by farmers. The application of customary law in the sharing of land does not often guarantee households access to their farms. Thus, the lack of registration in cultivable areas leads to insecurity on the one hand, and to frequent breakdowns in family cohesion and disorder at the level of the owners in the sharing of agricultural household holdings on the other.

4-6 Land tenure insecurity related to agricultural intensification

The practice of intensive agriculture in all the communes covered by this study is far from being effective. The use of traditional farming systems is still gaining ground. Households use some agricultural inputs such as chemical fertilizers, but the cultivable areas are very small and are farmed for longer periods of time. Cultivable areas rarely exceed one hectare. Farmers sometimes practice fallowing techniques, but because of the scarcity of cultivable space, the duration of fallowing does not exceed one year. Farmers do not have the financial means to invest further in their farms, particularly in the purchase of equipment. The means of production are very expensive compared to the farmers' income. In the case of cash crop producers, during our surveys, some producers even said that they had closed their cash crop processing units, particularly for ylang-ylang, because of the obsolescence of the equipment and lack of liquidity to obtain new equipment. Indeed, the most important problems for rural development and agricultural intensification in Anjouan, particularly in the study areas, remain access to inputs and the issue of markets for agricultural products. The NGO Dahari distributes some seeds to certain producers, as in the case of the commune of Moya, but one must first be a member of a cooperative in order to benefit. In addition, to increase production, some farmers use the system of the cow on the stake, a system that consists of fertilizing the soil and increasing crop yields through the involvement of cows in the cultivable areas. It involves leaving the cows in the fields for a few months, often two to three months. Thus, the production system used by households and the scarcity of arable land make agricultural intensification difficult in the study areas and do not allow farming households to increase their income and meet their needs.

4-7 Other farm-related land insecurities

Increasing agricultural production depends primarily on meeting the needs of farmers. However, land tenure insecurity is prevalent throughout the rural areas. Actually, in Anjouan and especially in the district studied, other land insecurities are numerous. It is therefore difficult to mention them all. It is important only to mention those that relate to the inefficiencies of land tenure regulations and sales contracts, but also to the constraints on the development of indirect land tenure, particularly farming.

✓ **Inefficiencies of land regulations**

Several legal rules clash over agricultural land in Anjouan. The registration system dating from the colonial era still exists and does not fulfill the role of absolute security that it should in practice. The Customary law, which is the most widely practiced law, is also similar to so-called "islamic" law, and finally the so-called "modern" law, which is actually based on the old colonial law, bases land ownership on the registration system. The use of these legal rules does not allow agricultural households to escape land insecurity. The results of the fieldwork show several land insecurities, notably a low rate of registered land, the non-existence of a land regularization office, the lack of information among farmers on the land regularization system, and the fact that only agricultural households with very advanced intellectual capacities are aware of the land regularization system. It should be born in mind that only the possession of a land title allows farmers to obtain a guarantee of ownership whose definitive nature is unassailable. In addition, the steps to word obtaining a land title are very difficult, costly and very complex for the farmers. The modern law contents it self is content to alleviate the land problems in vain. Thus, the sustainable development of farms must pass through a policy of land reform facilitating the administrative land procedures.

✓ **Constraint on Contracts of Sale in land transactions**

Possession of or access to land is of primary importance to all Comorian families. The wealth of a man in the Comoros is shown and noticed socially by the number or value of land he owns. The possession of land is done either by purchase or by inheritance. In the case of land transactions, whether by purchase or sale, the customary law applies, there is the drafting of an act attributing Hatwi¹. The latter is the guarantor of the property after having been reported by a Muslim religious judge, in particular by a *cadi*². However, the possession of a deed of sale (Hatwi) is not always sufficient to avoid land tenure problems on farms. Indeed, a piece of land sold by a milk owner (one of the most widespread forms of private appropriation in Comoros), can be cancelled by descendants of the seller or resold by another person of the milk owner's family. This situation my father

¹ It is a written document in Comorian or Arabic that formalizes the land contract related to the sale of land.

² He is the religious leader

had encountered, he had bought a piece of land and 25 years later, the children of the ex-owner wanted to take back the land saying that their father should not sell the land on the price he had sold at the time and the children there, wanted to sell the land back to my father or take it back and finally the situation ended by way of justice and my father had recovered his land since he had the purchase act (Hatwi). In addition, land insecurity also arises during land transactions, as some farmers still trust customary law and conduct their land transactions verbally, which leads to conflicts later on and puts agricultural production at risk. Thus, most of the transactions carried out by the community generate conflicts and prevent the increase of agricultural production in the country and in rural areas.

✓ **Constraint related to indirect enhancement**

Family farms in Anjouan are generally small (about 1 ha per household). Land tenure insecurity on the island is the result of the application of several laws governing land tenure, notably customary, Muslim and colonial law. Various forms of indirect tenure such as plot lending, renting and sharecropping are practiced in Anjouan. These practices are not legally prohibited. This is a considerable asset for the development of farms. Land tenure insecurity also arises in these areas because these practices are not formalized legally in order to avoid and resolve various land conflicts. Lease contracts are made without guarantees between the two parties and often generate conflicts and a climate of fear for the land tenant. The duration of rental contracts is often verbal and very short. Thus, this situation prevents households from investing more in farms and does not encourage increased production on the island.

5-DISCUSSIONS

5-1 Impacts of land insecurity on the development of farms

The development of farms is necessary to reduce poverty and ensure food self-sufficiency in rural areas. This development must first and foremost involve the resolution of land insecurity. The results of the fieldwork showed that land tenure insecurity is one of the major problems in farm development in Anjouan. This insecurity of tenure leads to conflicts and consequences on the vulnerability of farm households. Agricultural development requires that land issues be taken into account, particularly access to land and its security. When

seeking to address rural development or food insecurity issues in a sustainable manner, land tenure issues need to be identified and addressed in the early stages of a rural development project (FAO, 2003). Producers demand access to land but land tenure insecurity is discouraging (R. RAZAFINDRAIBE 2009). According to Aubert et al (2013), the regulation of land relations conditions investment and access to production factors. Indeed, securing land rights at the farm level is the way for farmers, as the main actors in agricultural production, to become more involved in their activities and for the State to reduce poverty in the rural environment. Land tenure security must be achieved by raising awareness among farm households of the advantages of land tenure security, facilitating procedures with a reduction in costs, and setting up land tenure offices in the rural communes of Anjouan.

5-2 Consideration of local specificities and household capability

The household capability approach makes it possible to understand the strategies adopted by households to deal with the risks of land insecurity and the modalities of access on farms. At the local level, there are strategies for accessing land and for regulating land relations on farms. Access to land depends above all on the application of land rights, especially the islamic and customary law. These rights generally ensure the processes of land appropriation and the securing of sustainable resources. Households adapt to the strategies already inherited from their ancestors, but innovative changes need to be made to strengthen the existing system. In addition, the vulnerability of agricultural households does not allow them to face the risks of land insecurity, and risk is an important cause of the persistence of poverty (Stefan, 2006). According to Stefan, vulnerability refers to the existence and extent of a threat of poverty and misery, the danger that a socially unacceptable level of welfare will be realized. In Anjouan, vulnerable households are unable to cope with various land issues. To strengthen the capabilities of vulnerable households, an important role is assigned to the state as a facilitator, regulator and promoter of sustainable rural development (RAKOTONDRABE, 2017). Thus, for rural development in Anjouan to be effective, it is necessary to urgently address land issues and also take into account the local specificities of farmers, particularly the issues of agricultural production outlets and the processing of local products. A regulatory

framework is needed to overcome the current land blockages at the farm level and should be based on - policies aimed at promoting the generalization of private property through a simplification of procedures and a reduction of related costs - empowerment of vulnerable households in rural areas.

5-3 Dynamics of the rural land market in Anjouan

The concept of land market refers to sets of marketable land transfers (Philippe et al, 2017). The concept of market transfer indicates the transfer of ownership or use rights in exchange for a payable consideration, established on the basis of a system of equivalence, notably price (Jean-Philippe, 2017). Rural land markets are developing in all developing countries and each country or region has a wider or narrower range of market and non-market modalities for accessing land. Anjouan is no exception. The non-market modalities are through inheritance and loan. The market modalities are influenced by several factors, especially economic ones, including demographic pressure and the monetarization of the economy in rural areas. Demographic pressure is influenced by the clandestine emigration of Anjouanese peasants to the sister island of Mayotte and is a further consequence of the vulnerability of peasants in rural areas. Because of the poverty in these areas, some peasants sell their plots of land to attempt the clandestine crossing to Mayotte. Once they arrive there without a legal stay, unfortunately a few months or years later, they are driven back to Anjouan and will find themselves with land problems or without land. It is the people who have an improved social situation who take advantage of this situation by buying their land. Indeed, the commodification of access to land is not simply a result of the dynamics of population pressure impacted by emigration to Mayotte, but the policies of local microfinance institutions play a very important role. Farmers are losing their plots of land because of microfinance. At the local level, some microfinance institutions encourage farmers to take out loans in their institutions, but due to a lack of supervision at the end of the loan repayment period, many of them see their land confiscated and sold to other people. Thus, the expansion of market-based land transactions poses many challenges for agricultural and land policies, both in terms of equity and economic efficiency, as well as in terms of economic and social risks (Philippe et al, 2017). Promoting functional and secure rural land markets and investments in agriculture that benefit local

and national economies while protecting the land rights of local people is therefore particularly important.

6-CONCLUSION

This article on land dynamics for rural development in Anjouan provides an understanding of some of the obstacles to farm development. To this end, the land tenure problems in the study area affecting farmers and their farms are numerous. The management of patrimony, the management of plot boundaries, the divagation of animals destroying crops, the imperfect trading of land, the tree, borrower and owner of land are the problems frequently encountered by farmers. These problems are sources of many conflicts and contribute significantly to slow down the development in rural areas. To solve these problems and promote rural development, rapid solutions must be found, notably securing land ownership, putting in place new land legislation to secure producers' access to land and natural resources, but also solutions must be found for the high population growth on the island of Anjouan. The implementation of the new land legislation therefore requires a framework for maintaining cash crop yields, developing food crop yields and protecting the soil against erosion, as well as protecting farmers at the farm level. The new land legislation should also put in place a policy that will protect ecosystems but also the destruction of forests. In conclusion, the strategies used by farm households to deal with land tenure issues require the support and intervention development players from every walk of life. It is through the reinforcement of interventions and sensitization that households can, by themselves, get out of their situation of vulnerability and contribute to the development of their rural environments.

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