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Understanding Informal Urban Land Market Functioning in Peri-urban Areas of Secondary Towns of Rwanda: Case Study of Tumba Sector, Butare Town

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Abstract

Since mid-1970s, a great number of rural-urban migrants are converging towards Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, and secondary towns, putting strain on land, especially of urban fringes. This is the case of Tumba Sector, a suburb of Butare Town, which attracts many people searching land for various uses. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the land market process in Tumba Sector. Data used in this paper were collected through desk study, survey and from non-structured interview held with the Tumba Land Bureau Officer. Findings revealed land-owned was acquired through informal purchase and land sellers were mainly native people who acquired land through inheritance. Size of land to be sold is frequently fixed unilaterally by the seller. Land demarcation is done with indigenous plants. Land price is negotiable and varies greatly based on the land size and its specific location and is higher than the reference land price. Land right transfer is evidenced by a simple “sale contract”. All informal land purchases are not reported to the Land Bureau though the process is very easy, clear and cheap. Land buyers are primarily local tradespeople, and secondarily civil servants. Great involvement of tradespeople in land purchase and high price suggest that there is land speculation in the area. Though informal land market benefits to the land seller and the buyer, it can be detrimental the client. Informal land market develops as a response to the failure of formal land provision which leads people not to apply to Huye District/Tumba Sector for land provision. Therefore it is important for the District and the Sector be empowered to be land provider and enforce rules and the law governing land, especially in peri-urban areas.

Key terms: land market; beneficiaries; land disputes, Rwanda

1. Introduction

City growth causes changes in urban suburbs. The most remarkable impact is the land allotment in geometric building plots over land that was before was used for agriculture. This urban encroachment up on urban edges is followed by a rapid change in land ownership and change in population composition with the increasing competition and number of people aspiring to acquire land for house construction and for other different purposes. In most developing countries, the rate of this phenomenon has outgrown the capacity of municipalities to plan and provide land for housing leading to the development of informal urban land market which results in expansion of urban unplanned settlement (Kombe and Kreibich, 2001).

Land is a tangible, durable and inextensible good, and a basis for economic development. Land can be State-owned, community-owned or private-owned. Private-owned land is usually acquired through inheritance, formal or informal purchase, and community or State donation. As stated by UN Habitat (2010, pp. 4-6), land rights transfer through purchase is usually referred as land market because it involves exchange of a commodity (land) against money between the supplier (landowner) and the client (land buyer) and respects supply and demand principles. Land market is not elastic because land is a finite resource while the population is always increasing especially in urban areas of developing countries which are experiencing rapid urbanisation that requires huge land for various purposes including housing, industry development, services, infrastructure, etc.

Land market can be formal or informal. Land market is formal when land right transfer through purchase is done in respect with national laws and regulations governing land transfer rights: land to be sold is advertised, prices fixed and land rights transfer officially recorded once the transaction is completed. Formal land market works in developed countries contrary to developing countries where informal land market largely prevails. In developing world, the formal land market works rarely due to either the inexistence or the looseness of laws and rules or the non-enforcement of passed laws. As a response, land is then acquired through informal process that encompasses inheritance, informal purchase, squatting, private donation, etc (UN HABITAT, 1996, p. 239-241). Land right transfer is done orally with an unofficial *sale contract* signed by the land seller, the buyer and a few witnesses from both side or *proof of inheritance*, and not officially recorded. Thirkell (1996) noted that information on land to be sold was spread through social network or through informal brokerage. According to Nkurunziza (2008), the size of land to be sold and land price

are negotiated often discreetly until the final agreement is reached, when disclosure to witnesses to the sale agreement is made and payment of money completed. People utilize this channel because it is quick and minimizes transaction costs. However, Thirkell (1996) remarked inconsistencies in land price determination in informal land market. Kironde (2000) found that land informally acquired most of the time has no official title or no official approval.

In Africa, many researchers (Kironde, 2000; Mooya and Cloete, 2007; etc) mention that the concept of land market has not paid sufficient attention in the processes of access to land nor it has not been well studied. This indifference stems from both colonial and post-colonial policy makers who believed that land market transaction was inexistent within African societies. They believed that Africans gave no value to land, that they owned it only in usufruct. Customary tenure under which Africans considered to hold land was seen as the complete negation of freehold or other individual forms of tenure like getting land through informal purchase which is expanding considerably in urban areas and rural areas as well (Phillips, 1989 cited by Kironde, 2000).

In Rwanda, land can be State-owned, District-owned, or private-owned. Land private-owned is usually acquired through inheritance, donation by the State/District, formal or informal purchase, and squatting on public domain. In Rwandan urban areas, as observed by many scholars (Sagashya, 2009; Kanyamugenge, 2006; Nsabimana, 2007; Nyandwi, 2010; etc), private-owned land is mainly acquired through informal land market. However, a little attention has been paid to urban land market in scholars' works.

The research on which this article is based sought to bring insights on urban informal land markets functioning. Basing empirical evidence on Tumba Sector it aimed specifically at describing informal land market from the demand to the offer perspectives, analysing drivers of informal land market development and associated advantages and drawbacks, assessing its socio-economic implications and its influences on the spatial orderliness of the urban development and finally suggesting strategic options to mitigate identified problems.

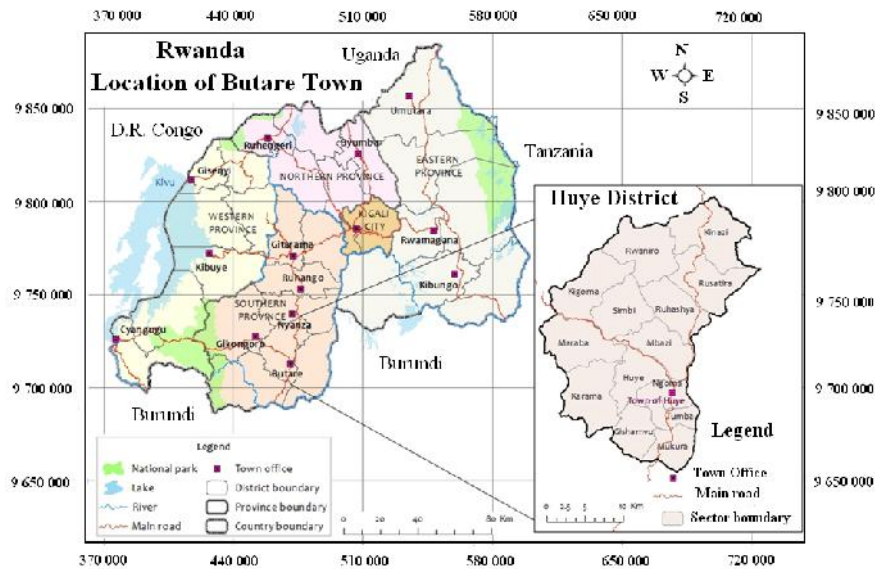
2. The study area

Butare town (also called Huye Town) is located in Huye District, Southern Province¹ (Figure 1). The population of Butare increased ninefold in 30 years shifting from 8,400 people in 1970 to 77,217 in 2002. This explosive population growth was accompanied by an increasing land demand for housing especially in peripheral areas. Since 2000, Butare Municipality was conferred prerogative to administer urban development. Therefore, the municipality was expected to be the primary land provider for housing. However, until now, a few land seekers are formally provided land by the municipality especially in urban neighbourhoods close to Butare Town centre. In peripheral areas including Tumba Sector a great number of rural-urban migrants heads towards, land is still held by customary landowners and new urban dwellers are not formally provided land by the District.

Tumba Sector is located nearly at a distance of two kilometres from Butare town centre and close to the National University of Rwanda (NUR). Tumba Sector is mad up of four cells: Gitwa, Rango, Cyarwa, and Mpare. Until end-1970s, the area was still rural with marked scattered settlement but was subject to urban influence of Butare. In 1980s, much non local population started erecting housing in the Sector. After the 1994 Genocide, the area became the most attractive suburb of Butare thanks to the high increase of NUR staff and students number. In 2009, the Sector accommodated 27,133 people living in 5,224 households settled on a surface area of 18 km² that is to say 15.0 persons per hectare. The availability of idle bare land attracts many land seekers for housing or speculation. This is mirrored in the great number of new housing being erected in the area leading to a large informal settlement development.

¹The country is divided in four provinces and Kigali City, the former are subdivided in districts, districts in Sectors, Sectors in Cells, and Cells in Villages.

Figure 1: Administrative map, Huye District



Source: CGIS, Rwanda Administrative Map, 2006

3. Data collection and processing

Data analysed in this paper encompasses secondary data and primary data. Desk study was used to collect secondary data on urban land market through published materials including United Nations publications and texts governing land rights transfer and land policy in Rwanda.

Secondary data were supplemented with primary data on informal land market collected in Tumba Sector through a research survey and unstructured interview. In the survey, a questionnaire focusing on land acquisition modes, land size and land demarcation processes, sources of money paid in land purchase, origin and employment of land buyers and actors benefiting from the informal land market was used. The survey was conducted in August, 2010. Though all householders were eligible to answer the survey questionnaire, the latter was submitted to 72 householders selected randomly in 18 villages of Gitwa, Cyarwa, Rango and Cyimana Cells (Mpare Cell was excluded because still less subject to urban influence), meaning that 4 household per village. Unfortunately, only 68 respondents returned the filled-in questionnaire. Among the respondents, 39 were male and 29 female. With regard to the employment of respondents, 38.2% were civil servants, 30.0% were farmers, 22.0%

were self-employed, 5.8% were retired. Collected data were classified, compiled and analysed with Excel software.

In addition, an unstructured interview was conducted with informal local land brokers and Tumba Sector Land Officer. The latter is the one to handle day-to-day local land matters. The interview focused on brokerage fees, dissemination of information on land for sale, and land right transfer processes.

4. Results and discussion

Informal purchase: common channel of land acquisition

Informal land acquisition prevails in the Sector. As shown in Table 1, half of surveyed households' heads acquired owned-land through informal purchase, and only almost 1/5 got it via inheritance, the traditional land acquisition mode in Rwanda especially in rural areas. No land was obtained through gift and squatting. From January to August, 2010 Tumba Sector Land Officer recorded 522 recorded land sales. This is probably a small part of the land market, because all land transactions are not officially recorded. According to Tumba Sector Land Officer, land market is done in a fully unrestrained way. Landowners sell their land to meet pressing financial needs (daily subsistence, children schooling, healthcare, modern housing, etc) or to anticipate public expropriation that pays less than prices paid by private land seekers. Land subject to informal selling is primarily held by native people who inherited it from their parents. Family farmland can be sold at once or in many small pieces. Land sold is predominantly bare land.

Table 1: Mode of land acquisition

Mode of acquisition	Number of respondents	Percentage
Inheritance	13	19.1
Informal purchase from a private owner	36	52.9
Donation by the State	1	1.5
Squatting	0	0.0
Gift	0	0.0
No answer	18	26.5
Total	68	100.0

As observed by André and Plateau (1998), informal land market development in Rwanda dates back end 1970s. They noted that “*land market transactions abounded and multiplied outside all written regulations, despite its legal prohibition*” in rural and urban areas as well. In a study conducted in Kigali City, Sagashya (2009) noted that informal land market was still prevailing. He found that both the number of land sales and prices were to increase for coming several years. Informal land market develops despite various decrees and law governing land purchase especially the order No. 09/76 of 04/03/76 governing right of soil occupation which stipulates that right to purchase and to sale customary property land requires the permission of the Minister in charge of land. Informal land market also infringes Rwanda Organic Land Law N° 08/2005 that states that no land rights transfer is binding unless recorded by the Land Officer (article 38). The prevailing informal land market reveals that laws and rules governing land rights transfer are not enforced.

Informal land acquisition as alternative to the failure of public land provision

Informal land market develops the only alternative for many urban dwellers to the failure of land provision by the District. As revealed by the survey, only 17.6% of respondents applied for land provision through Huye District Land Bureau while 68.7% did never apply (Table 2). Over the ones who applied, only 7.7% were provided with land by the district. The trivial proportion of people provided with land by the district reveals that public land provision is inefficient.

According to the respondents, getting land through formal channel involves complex and endless procedures: the land seeker addresses a formal request to the District Land Bureau and then waits for the answer. On one hand, some applications are not considered for unknown reasons or simply it takes long time to get a feedback, and feedback is not always positive on the other hand. This confirms the observation according to which informal urban land market is a response of the majority of urban dwellers to the failure of public authorities to provide land (UN HABITAT, 1996, p. 242). Moreover, land provided by the District imposes that every land acquirer has to apply for building permit and to pay annual land tax. As result, for escaping all those procedures and obligations, land seekers manage to get land through informal land market since no sanction is applied against them and land sellers.

Table 2: Acquisition of land through formal channel

Application for land acquisition	Number of respondents	Percentage
Applied for land and were provided	7	10.3
Applied but no land was provided	2	2.9
Applied but no feedback	3	4.4
Never applied for land	44	64.7
No answer from the respondent	12	17.7
Total	68	100.0

Origin and employments of land buyers

Land buyers are usually from the district. As observed through the survey, a great proportion of respondents (36.8%) declared that people involved in informal land market are from the Sector while 21.8% said that land buyers come from other sectors of Huye District. Many land buyers consider themselves as from the Sector or Huye District because many of them already settle in there. Tumba Sector does not attract people from other parts of the country because Butare as some other Rwandan secondary towns is not economically dynamic.

In regard with land buyers' employment, self-employed people category including mainly tradesmen was reported as the category the most involved in informal land market (45.6%) while State-employees, self-employees, employees of private companies were reported only by 13.2%. The great proportion of tradesmen involved in land market can result in land speculation as the land market is fully unrestrained as declared by Tumba Sector Land Officer. It is important to note that, according to the survey, no politician, real-estate developer or community group was involved in informal land market as it is the case in many peri-urban areas of developing countries (UN HABITAT, 1996, p. 242).

Information dissemination on land to be sold

Information on land to be sold is spread mainly through informal channel (friends and land brokers) as declared by 77.9% of respondents (Table 3). Land availability is never advertised through mass media or public billsticking except land sold at auction following landowners to pay back bank loans, taxes, legal deeds, etc. Some respondents said that individuals do not need to make advertisement of their land selling because land selling is illegal unless authorised by public authorities on one side, and

advertisement should be done for large land or high value property on the order. In addition, advertisement is costly and land sellers wish to maximize the amount earned in the land transaction. Consequently, information is spread by hearsay by friends and land brokers.

Land brokers are very active in Tumba: in August 2009, Nyandwi (2010, p. 28) recorded 30 land brokers regrouped in informal association called “*Cabinet Commissionnaire et Courtage*” in French. Most of land brokers operate as land agents on a part-time basis. They search information on land by asking people and friends or are contacted by prospective land sellers and land buyers. In order to avoid post-sale land disputes, land brokers and friends have to collect information on the real landownership and to disclose it when the transaction is to be completed. The emergency of land brokers in Tumba Sector means that land is becoming more commercialised as in other peri-urban areas of developing countries (UN HABITAT, 1996, pp. 242-244). Informal network is a most important means through information on land market is spread, and which does not apply only for poor people as observed by Isandla Institute et al. (2007, p. 167) in South African metropolitan areas.

Table 3: Ways for getting information on land to be sold

Mode of information	Number of respondents	Percentage
Advertisement	5	7.4
Via land brokers	20	29.4
Via friends	27	39.7
Via both friends and brokers	6	8.8
No answer	10	14.7
Total	68	100.0

The predominance of informal channel on information on land selling suggests that formal land market is not operational in Tumba. This is linked to low proportion of land State-owned (MININFRA, 2008, p. 9-10) and inexistence of land information system that is a prerequisite for an effective land market (UN HABITAT, 1996, p. 252). The government should intervene ultimately in this specific area.

Land size and land demarcation processes

There is no standard size of land acquired through purchase. Data collected on purchased land size shows that it varies considerably, the average size being 950.85m² (Table 4). Size of land to be sold is frequently decided unilaterally by the land seller (36.7%) ignoring rules and laws governing

land and urban development. In some cases, land size can be negotiated with the land seeker depending on the latter's needs ignoring the above-mentioned rules and laws (Table 5). As result, 66.1% of land buyers purchased owned-land with a surface area equal or above 600 m², which is the legal minimum size of building plot in urban areas legal size of building plot. Size of land to be sold varies according to many factors including the size of land owned by the land sellers, their financial needs, wishes and financial capacity of the buyer, etc.

The very high standard-deviation in size of sold land (Table 4) suggests that sold land is not dedicated for only housing as people usually pretend. It is an indication that there is land speculation in the area. The great proportion of tradesmen (45.6%) involved in informal land purchase confirms that. The great difference in size of sold land stems from illegal land subdivision as elsewhere in informal urban settlement of developing countries (UN HABITAT, 1996, p. 256-258). Informal land selling infringes Rwanda Organic Land Law, which stipulates that land sale is subject to the approval of the ministry in charge of land or his representative, and prevents sale farmland or pieces of farmland of below 2 hectares. Land regulations and laws are not fully applied.

Table 4: Surface area of sold land

Size	Surface area in m ²
Maximum	6,320.0
Minimum	108.0
Average	750.0
Median	950.9
Standard-deviation	1,1194.7

The size of purchased land is to be taken cautiously. Indeed, land size measurement is often done using human pace, which usually equals approximately 0.75m but is considered as 1 meter and without keeping necessarily a rectangular shape. Rarely a decameter is used when the land buyer requires it. The so delineated land parcels rarely fulfill the minimum legal size and shape, thus leading to a haphazard development.

Table 5: Land size determination process

Plot size determination process	Number of respondents	Percentage
Determined by the buyer	13	19.1
Determined by the seller	25	36.7
Fixed according to urban standards	8	11.8
Negotiated between the seller and the buyer	6	10.3
No answer	15	22.1
Total	68	100.0

Source: Survey August-2010

According to 80% of respondents, land demarcation is done in a traditional way once the transaction is agreed upon. First, the seller shows boundaries of available land. Then, the land is demarcated. Boundary-markers used are usually indigenous plants, which are unfortunately easily removable. Demarcation is done in presence of adjacent land parcels' owners, witnesses from both the land seller and the land buyer sides, and sometimes Village and Cell leaders. Then the payment is done. Nkurunziza (2008) considers that used measurement and land demarcation processes inappropriate especially in urban areas. He advises the use of appropriate surveying instruments and concrete beacons respectively for land measurement and demarcation. Thus, the land buyer can acquire land, which fulfils minimum legal building plot size, and avoid post-sale land dispute following ill-intentioned displacement of boundary-markers.

Evidence of land rights transfer

Land transaction is certified by an informal written *sale contract*. It is a simple sheet of paper, which attests that the landowner has sold his land; there is no formal standard format. The core body of the contract mentions the land seller and land buyer names, the size of the sold land and the amount paid. It also includes a sketch map mentioning names of landowners of adjacent parcels, and visible physical features such pathway, road, piped water, etc. The *sale contract* is co-signed by the land seller and land buyer and adult witnesses of both parties. In many cases, signature of adult relatives (especially the wife, brothers and sisters) required in order to avoid later claim from them. In many case, the land buyer requires also the signature of some landowners of adjacent parcels. The majority of respondents (75%) declared that the Village Coordinator and sometimes

Cell leaders have to append their signature on the *sale contract*. They consider that the signature of those local authorities on the *sale contract* confers it a character somehow official; hence, eventual disputants cannot easily defy it. The original *sale contract* is held by the buyer while the land seller holds a copy. The original *sale contract* is required by the Sector Land Bureau when the client wishes to register the transaction. The sale contract is a common document to evidence land rights transfer in other urban areas of Rwanda even in Kigali, the capital, where a survey conducted in 2007 showed that land owners had *sale contract* as accepted document to prove property ownership (Ilberg, 2008, p.3).

Negotiation of land price

Land price is unsettled. Computation of land price purchased in 2008 and 2009 revealed that a land of 600 square meters cost 2,912,634 Rwandan Francs² (Rwf) that is 4,854.4 Rwf per square meter, the minimum being 125,0 Rwf and the maximum 1,476 Rwf (Nyandwi, 2010, p. 29). Land price is negotiated between the land buyer and the land seller. Usually the seller asks a high price and the buyer always proposes lower price. Then friends and/or land brokers act as mediators to reach an acceptable price for both the seller and the buyer. Land buyers have to pay cash. When land transaction is completed with help of a land broker, the land seller is charged 10% of the land price as brokerage. When land transaction is done with help of friends; there is no fixed charge to be paid to the latter. He is usually given a small amount as reward. Land price varies depending on specific location of sold land in relation with available infrastructure: land price is higher for accessible and serviced land than for not serviced and inaccessible one. The main cause of such higher land price is the great number of land seekers who joined the area because the formal channel was unable to provide them with land on one hand, and eventual land speculation on the other.

The average land price in informal market was two times higher than the one District-owned provided in Karubanda planned zone (Butare Town) where a building plot of same surface area cost 1,500,000Rwf. The high standard-deviation recorded (3,707.6) indicates that land price is not regulated, as stated by Tumba Sector Land Bureau Officer. Land price (of well located land) is higher than reference land price which varies between 628 Rwf and 1,025 Rwf (Republic of Rwanda, 2010). Land prices in Tumba infringe the 2004 national land policy which stipulates that land value for bare land should remain within the reference price range.

² . In 2009, 580 Rwandan francs approximately equaled 1US dollar.

Consequently, native people cannot withstand offered price as declared by 79.4% of respondents. Unfortunately, local land sellers rarely can afford other land on which to settle on because some of them spent the money to solve pressing needs. According to Tumba Sector Land Officer, these people then become a charge for the State (Nyandwi, 2010, p. 38).

Family saving: the predominant source of funds for land purchase

Family saving was reported as the main source of money paid to purchase land-owned: indeed 70% of respondents declared to have purchased owned land with money collected from family saving against 22.4% who assured to have paid their land with money from bank loan and 5.6% who had been sponsored by NGOs or the State (Table 6). Compare to the situation which prevailed in Rwandan urban areas until mid-1990s where 95% of purchase land was financed through household saving (MINITRAPE, 1995, pp. 57-62), banks' contribution in land acquisition has improved slightly. The low contribution of banks in informal land acquisition is linked to its informal nature. Indeed, informally purchased land cannot be accepted as collateral because land buyers have no legal ownership as observed by Oyer, Ketley and Davis (2008, p.8) in Kigali. Furthermore, buyers have no other collateral, and thus, are considered as risky borrowers.

Table 6: Source of funds paid to purchase land

Source of funds	Number of respondents	Percentage
Own savings	25	69.4
Bank loan	8	22.4
From NGO and religious relief services	1	2.8
From the State	1	2.8
No answer	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0

Beneficiaries of urban informal land market

The population has different opinions on who benefits the most from urban informal land market. As it appears in table 7, the majority of respondents (55.9 %) consider that informal land transaction benefits to either the seller or and the buyer separately or both parties. Only 5.9% consider the operation beneficiary to the seller, the buyer, and the State.

Urban informal land market is beneficiary to both the seller and land buyer as it allows both to complete quickly the transaction and therefore everyone can meet quickly his/her respective needs without any administrative

bureaucracy and potential obstacles from authorities. However, the gain is not sustainable for land sellers as it is hard for them to get another piece of land to settle on, especially when they sell all owned land. They can hardly afford the land market. This is linked to the fact that informal land market development is occurring in the national context of land scarcity: by mid-2000s a household's farmland rarely exceeded 0.5 hectares. Land is becoming scarce, and therefore, expensive. As result, informal land market explosion engenders exclusion or marginalisation of poor households by gradual loss of their land through distress land sales, creates social conflicts land-related as observed by André and Plateau (1995) in former Gisenyi Province.

Table 7: Winner in informal land market according to respondents

Actors benefiting from informal land market	Number of respondents	Percentage
None	23	33.8
Buyer and seller	20	29.4
Land seller	10	14.7
Land buyer	8	11.8
Land seller, land buyer and State	4	5.9
No answer	2	2.9
State	1	1.5
Land broker	0	0.0
Total	68	100.0

For the buyer, informal land purchase can be a risky operation especially in case of post-sale land disputes as stated by 51.5% of respondents who acknowledged to have faced post-land sales dispute or to be aware of them. The respondents and Tumba Sector Land Officer declared post-land sale disputes are frequent in the area. They erupt when the real landowner is not the seller or when land is sold without the approval of the entire family. Post-sale land disputes also erupt following wrong demarcation at selling time or when plant boundary-markers are intentionally or accidentally displaced. When it is found that the land seller is a fraudulent, 19.1% of respondents asserted that the land buyer risks not to be refunded, 10.3% estimated that the buyer should be refunded while 70.6% did not answer to the question. Refunding is made difficult near impossible because concerned deceitful land sellers either are often poor or the dispute is reported many months after the transaction when deceitful land seller already had consumed the money paid or had moved from the area, and therefore, not creditworthy or unreachable. In both case, neighbours and

Village/Cell/Sector authorities intervene to solve the dispute. In case of dissatisfaction of one party, the case is sent to court. As stated by Daudelin (2001 quoted in Gasarasi and Musahara, 2004), land disputes engender discontent and tensions within families and with land buyers.

Informal land market is also detrimental to the District/Sector as the transaction is not recorded and thus the District/Sector cannot collect land registration and land rights transfer fees and annual land tax because officially unknown (Dowall, 1991, cited by Kironde, 2000). Amazingly, none respondent mentioned that urban land market benefits to land brokers though the latters are paid for each initiated and completed land transaction.

Asked on the best way for land acquisition, 47.1% of surveyed people affirmed consider that formal land acquisition from the District/Sector is the best, because secure. To avoid risks for land buyers, Tumba Land Officer advised people to regularise informal land purchase at Sector level once the transaction is completed. Land registration and land rights transfer usually take less than 30 days once all required administrative papers provided. The land buyer pays 20,000Rwf for right transfer and 3,500 Rwf for the rendered service in accordance with Huye District Council decision. Yet, many land buyers fear to regularise land acquired through informal purchase in order to escape annual land tax. The majority of respondents (60.3%) prefer to register their land once construction over concerned land is completed. This a common feature of informal land development in developing countries especially in African cities where occupation comes first, development and regularisation come last contrary to the regular mode land development where planning is the first step, followed by land and housing development, and finally occupation of the housing.

Conclusion

Land in Tumba Sector is a commodity sought by many people. Land is held primarily by customary landowners however many people converging towards the area in search of land has opened a breach for an open informal land market. The size of land to be sold is negotiated between the land seller and the land buyer ignoring national laws and other regulation governing land purchase. The great difference of sold land engenders a haphazard development leading to the development of informal development. Though the area is urban, land demarcation is done in traditional way with indigenous plants which are easily removable. Land transfer is evidenced by a simple sale transfer contract and is not regularised at Sector level. Non-registration of land right transfer makes that the Sector cannot collect land taxes and land transfer registration fees,

per se losing a source of revenues. The land market is not too informal as the sale contract is considered as a piece attesting landownership in Rwandan context. Illegality in land right transfer is not easily understood. The great number of land seekers and inefficiency of public land provision make that land prices are higher than reference prices. Local landowners cannot resist higher land price paid. There is need for the government to regulate land market in order to protect them and reduce land speculation.

To overcome the situation, following actions should be undertaken:

- a. The District and the Sector should enforce laws and regulations governing land use and urban development so that haphazard development can be reduced.
- b. Tumba Sector authorities should prevent customary landowners to sell their land in order to avoid to have them as floating people;
- c. As land for housing is the main pushing that leads to higher land price, the Town Planning Department will have to publicise land prices and disseminate information on land available so that land seekers can be provided with land by the District,
- d. Displacement of population should be done with a fair compensation when redevelopment activities are implemented;
- e. The Land Bureau should monitor land transfer and record new land acquirer so that the District/Sector can collect taxes.
- f. The Land Bureau should sensitise citizens on benefits of legal land acquisition as a proactive and citizenry mechanism against post-sale land disputes and associated drawbacks.

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