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# Research on the Urban Integration of Land-losing Farmers

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**Abstract** Fishbone chart is used to analyze the status of the living ability of land-losing farmers, as well as its causation from the aspects of system layer, social support network, land-losing farmer themselves, and economic layer. Result shows that the system layer includes the unreasonable land compensation, the lack of social security for land-losing farmers, and the employment exclusion of land-losing farmers. Small scale and low heterogeneity are the causations for social support network. Low willingness to become citizens, low cultural quality and difficulty in role change are the causations of land-losing farmers themselves. The low expected return and high living cost are the causations for economic layer. Based on the above analysis, countermeasures to improve the urban-living ability of land-losing farmers are put forward, such as improving the land expropriation system, establishing a multi-level social security system, enhancing the training and employment mechanism of land-losing farmers, and improving the quality of land-losing farmers.

**Key words** Land-losing farmers, Citizenization, Fishbone chart, Urban integration, China

With the accelerated process of urbanization in China, a large number of land-losing farmers have appeared, who have turned into city inhabitants, but still maintain their old thinking, behavior, lifestyle and value orientation<sup>[1]</sup>. Therefore, to make farmers become the real urban residents, we should improve their living standard, realize both the efficiency and fairness, achieve the Pareto improvement between the national social and economic development and the improvement of living of land-losing farmers, and enhance the urban-living ability of land-losing farmers, so that they can truly integrate into the urban system.

Processes of urbanization development in different countries have provided many experiences we can learn from. For instance, the Latin American Trap, also known as Latin American Deformity, is the coexistence of deformed advanced and deformed backward, the coexistence of deformed richness and deformed poverty, and the coexistence of deformed civilization and deformed ignorance. Its population urbanization is an urbanization of the polarity between the rich and the poor<sup>[2]</sup>. At the same time, counter urbanization sometimes happens during the process of urbanization, that is, the resistance to rural urbanization and farmer citizenization. It mainly means that the farmers in the suburban areas of a city are unwilling to become residents of a city. Therefore, the development planning of a region can not keep the pace with the development of the whole city. Based on the experiences of urbanization development of other countries and the actual situation of China, fishbone chart is used to analyze the status of the living ability of land-losing farmers and its causation from the aspects of system layer, so-

cial support network, land-losing farmer themselves, and economic layer, by taking Weinan City, Shaanxi Province, China as an example.

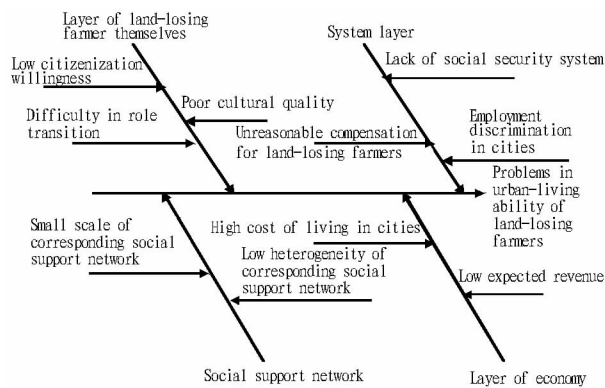
## 1 Status and causation analysis of the urban-living ability of land-losing farmers

Urbanization is not only a process of population aggregation into cities, but also a process of citizenization of farmers. However, land-losing farmers have low urban-living ability and can hardly achieve the transformation from farmers to citizens due to the imperfect social security system, the unreasonable compensation for land-losing farmers during land requisition, the lack of corresponding social network, and the poor concept, cultural quality, citizenization willingness, and economic status.

Fishbone chart is used to analyze the status of the living ability of land-losing farmers and its causation from the aspects of system layer, social support network, land-losing farmer themselves, and economic layer. Fig. 1 illustrates the problems in urban-living ability of land-losing farmers.

### 1.1 System layer

**1.1.1 Unreasonable compensation for land-losing farmers.** According to the investigation on 400 land-losing farmers in Yingtian Village and the High and New Technology Industrial Development Zone of Weinan City, only 8% of the farmers are satisfied with the land compensation. 34.5% are relatively satisfied; and more than half of the farmers are unsatisfied with the standards for land compensation (Table 1). Land-losing farmers are not satisfied with the land compensation, which is mainly manifested in the following areas: firstly, they think that government compensation is too low, because only 44.8% of the land-losing farmers get more than 30 thousand RMB for land compensation (Table 2). Secondly, the difference between the minimum and maximum compensation is as high as



**Fig. 1 Fishbone chart of the problems in urban-living ability of land-losing farmers**

three times according to the law, which has objectively left a large space for government to offer a low compensation. Thirdly, basis for measurement is incomplete. There are significant differences between adjacent lands, causing the chaotic distribution among land-losing farmers. Bases for allocation in different villages vary greatly, including the ration, land area, and agricultural registered permanent residence, which may cause complicated contradictions. During the process of urbanization, land requisition usually occurs; and farmers will lose both their productive resource and living resource they rely on. Therefore, governments ought to provide means for resources conversion of land-losing farmers. However, under the present land requisition system, reallocation of land in agricultural and non-agricultural industry is still a non-market administrative enforcement, which makes land-losing farmers neither enjoy the achievements of urbanization, nor enjoy the added value of land. Thus, land-losing farmers lack the capital accumulation and economic support during their pioneering work of non-agricultural industries and their transformation to urban life, so that the land-losing farmers have poor ability in seeking development chances in cities.

**Table 1 Attitudes of farmers towards current standards for land compensation**

Item	Number of people	Proportion // %
Satisfied	32	8
Relatively satisfied	138	34.5
Dissatisfied	230	57.5

**Table 2 Compensation fees of farmers for land acquisition**

Range // $\times 10^4$ yuan	Number of people	Proportion // %
$\leq 1$	93	23.2
1 – 2	59	14.8
2 – 3	69	17.2
$\geq 3$	179	44.8

**1.1.2 Lack of social security system for land-losing farmers.** Social security is an expansion of the urban-living ability of land-losing farmers. At the same time, it is also an effective alternative for land security and a defense against the risk of farmers citizenization, which can increase the urban-living ability of

land-losing farmers. Table 3 reports the social security of land-losing farmers. According to the investigation, the proportion of farmers insured is relatively low, and proportion of farmers without social insurances is 48.8%. As for the source of social insurance, proportion of individual is as high as 53.8%, and those of government and collective are only 20.4% and 15.9%, respectively (Table 3).

Firstly, a majority of the people investigated, especially the old, can not participate in social pension insurance system. The fundamental issue of social insurance is still the low income of land-losing farmers, who have no financial planning ability for the future before meeting the basic needs of life. Secondly, commercial pension insurance needs a relatively long period of capital accumulation. The old can not use commercial pension insurance to ensure their life at present. Thirdly, collective old-age security in rural areas is facing new difficulties. With the implementation of household contract responsibility system, peasant household integrating the production function and consumption function has become a basic unit of rural production and management in the traditional social pension system in rural areas. And the old insurance mode for rural workers with collective security as the main body has gradually disappeared.

**Table 3 Type of social insurance for land-losing farmers and the source of their insurance premium**

Item	Type	Number of people	Proportion %
Type of social insurance	Endowment insurance	138	34.4
	Medical insurance	35	8.7
	Unemployment insurance	4	1.0
	Commercial insurance	28	7.1
	No insurance	195	48.8
Source of social insurance premium	Collective	64	15.9
	Individual	215	53.8
	Government	82	20.4
	Land compensation	39	9.7

**1.1.3 Employment discrimination in cities for land-losing farmers.** For the most of land-losing farmers, losing land means the loss of the most fundamental jobs. Besides, job market in urban areas has the characteristics of dual labor market. One is the major labor force market. Its position provided mainly needs high-quality labor forces. The other is the secondary labor force market, that is, the informal labor market. According to the investigation on land-losing farmers' satisfaction with working conditions in Yingtian Village and the High and New Technology Industrial Development Zone of Weinan City, only 8.7% land-losing farmers are regular employees; and most of the farmers investigated get work from the secondary labor force market. Contract workers and temporary workers account for 68.3% of the farmers investigated. There are only 3.9% land-losing farmers who are satisfied with their working condition, indicating that the land-losing farmers have a low satisfaction degree towards their work status in urban areas. Under this employment system of dual labor market, employment discrimination appears more or less among land-losing farmers, leading to the low urban-living ability of land-losing farmers (Table 4).

**Table 4 Working nature of land-losing farmers and their satisfaction degree towards their works**

Item	Type	Number of people	Proportion %
Working nature	Regular employee	35	8.7
	Contract worker	153	38.3
	Temporary worker	132	33.0
	Others	80	20.0
Satisfaction degree towards works	Very satisfied	16	3.9
	Relatively satisfied	199	49.7
	Dissatisfied	106	26.5
	Extremely dissatisfied	35	8.8
	No answer	44	11.1

## 1.2 Social support network

**1.2.1** Small scale of corresponding social support network. Social support network helps to solve the problems in daily life and to alleviate the living pressure of individual. In the social layer, social support network dissolves the contradictions between individual and society and promotes the social stability<sup>[3]</sup>. Investigation shows that social communication of land-losing farmers is restricted by kinship and geography. The small scale of network has limited the farmers' ability to quickly integrate into the city, leading to the low skills of communication of land-losing farmers in urban areas.

**1.2.2** Low heterogeneity of corresponding social support network. Process of farmers' citizenization is a reconstruction process of new social relationship network. The single social network with low heterogeneity can not meet the social and belonging needs of land-losing farmers, leading to the lack the clear positioning of land-losing farmers in social structure, and greatly increases the probability of crisis of status recognition and social recognition<sup>[4]</sup>. The complex heterogeneity of the city is constituted by the social division of the city, the income gap among different professions, the high degree of social mobility and impersonalization. Heterogeneity of social support network of land-losing farmers becomes single when facing with the complicated heterogeneity in urban areas. The low heterogeneity of corresponding social support network leads to the limited support of farmers' social support network, makes land-losing farmers feel hopeless when facing with the high heterogeneity of urban life, and affects the urban-living ability.

## 1.3 Layer of land-losing farmer themselves

**1.3.1** Low citizenization willingness. Although most land-losing farmers have nominally become city residents, they usually do not take themselves as city residents, can not be accepted by urban civilization and live in the edge of the city<sup>[5]</sup>.

According to the investigation of land-losing farmers in Yingtian Village and the High and New Technology Industrial Development Zone of Weinan City, land-losing farmers are mostly unwilling to become city residents. Only 14.36% land-losing farmers think that it is good to become city residents. Table 5 reports that although land-losing farmers have become city residents, they can not change their concept of small-peasant mentality and the way of life, because they have engaged in agricultural production for a long period of time. Many land-losing farmers psychologically tend to take themselves as farmers.

After becoming city residents, land-losing farmers are at a loss, cause the inferiority complex, lack the initiative to transform, can hardly integrate into urban life, and have low urban-living ability.

**Table 5 Willingness of land-losing farmers to become urban citizens**

Willingness	Number of people	Proportion // %
Good to be farmers	44	11.1
Good to be urban citizens	58	14.4
Having advantages and disadvantages in both	230	57.5
Not sure	68	17.0

**1.3.2** Difficulty in role transition. During the process of citizenization of land-losing farmers, there are always problems in role transition. And the most common problem is the unclear role, which means that the social person or role is not clear with the behavior criterion of a certain role, does not know what should be done and how to do it. Rapid change in society is usually the main reason causing the unclear social role<sup>[6]</sup>.

Investigation shows that during the citizenization of land-losing farmers in Weinan, urban residents are not clear with their behavior criterion, and are at a loss when facing with this role. At the same time, since the role of urban resident is far from the role of farmer, land-losing farmers can neither show their new identity in the new stage, nor adapt to the urban social system, arousing resentments during the process of citizenization.

## 1.3.3 Low cultural quality

**1.3.3.1** Low education degree. According to the statistics, farmers investigated have relatively low education degree. Among them, people with junior high school education are the most, accounting for 58.5%, followed by senior high school, accounting for 27.3%. People graduated from college or higher are very scarce, only 1.6%.

**1.3.3.2** Lack of skills. Restricted by historical reasons and objective conditions in rural areas, there are few land-losing farmers who have grasped skills. And even few farmers have skills certificate. This cultural quality has greatly restricted the job choosing space and trend of farmers during the transition of urbanization, has affected the professional repay of land-losing farmers, and has forced them to choose the jobs with low income and social status, which are unacceptable for the land-losing farmers<sup>[7]</sup>.

## 1.4 Layer of economy

**1.4.1** Low expected revenue of land-losing farmers after living in cities. A necessary condition for land-losing farmers to integrate into cities is the living ability in cities. In brief, the income of land-losing farmers must be able to pay the cost of living in cities. The sources of income for land-losing farmers are mainly the wage income and non-wage income. Thus, getting a job after living in cities provides the major source of income. Investigation shows that after living in cities, land-losing farmers have not established alternative resources for land, can not get a good job in labor force market due to their limited skills and knowledge, and has low expected revenue after living in cities.

Table 6 shows that the major source of living for land-losing farmers is from the secondary and tertiary industries, accounting for 52.3%. In Weinan City, basic monthly income of secondary and tertiary industries is only between 800 and 1 000 RMB, which is relatively low. Besides, compensation for land-losing farmers is also relatively low and they have accumulated little material wealth during farm work. Thus, their expected revenue of non-wage income is relatively low, leading to the poor urban-living ability.

**Table 6 The major income source of land-losing farmers**

Item	Number of people	Proportion//%
Secondary and tertiary industries	209	52.3
House for rent	67	16.7
Subsidy from the collective	18	4.5
Dividend	60	15.0
Others	46	11.5

**1.4.2 High cost of living in cities.** The cost of city life for land-losing farmers at least includes two parts. One is the daily cost of basic urban survival, that is, the basic living expenses for land-losing farmers living in cities. The other is the cost in finding a job after transferred into cities, the psychological cost when integrating into urban life and so on. Compared with the rural life before, cost of living in cities is greater, which hinders the process of citizenization of land-losing farmers.

## 2 Countermeasures to improve the urban-living ability of land-losing farmers

**2.1 Improving land requisition system** Firstly, commercial land should be strictly separated from public welfare land. Since public welfare land also may encroach the interests of farmers, the commercial land in public welfare land should also be differentiated. Commercial project must be treated differently. Government should increase the transparency in land acquisition, expand the channels for information disclosure, hold a system of public hearings for land acquisition, make the purpose of land acquisition and the compensation standard known to the public, adopt market mechanism to allocate land resources, adhere to the direction of the market, and implement unified land acquisition. At the same time, government should allocate land according to the overall panning of urban development, set a relatively reasonable price for base land price according to the land level, and adopt the unified land acquisition.

**2.2 Establishing multi-level social security system** Social security system refers to the sum of all social security subsystems, which are implemented by government through legislative measures in order to provide material assistance to the members of the society. Social security system can be divided into social insurance, social relief, social welfare, special allowance and other projects. And the social security system for land-losing farmers should include the social insurance and social relief. Social insurance refers to the social pension insurance, social medical insurance, and social unemployment insurance. Social relief mainly refers to the poverty relief. At the same time, land-losing farmers should be gradually brought into the

system of the minimum standard of living for urban residents. Most of the land-losing farmers live in cities, who are almost the same with urban residents in employment property, living area, lifestyle and so on. Therefore, the current policy should be changed in order to bring the land-losing farmers into the system of the minimum standard of living for urban residents, so that the living standard of land-losing farmers will not be reduced and their urban-living ability will be improved.

### 2.3 Improving the training and employment mechanisms

Under the conditions of market economy, the old resettlement mode in the planned economy period can no longer be used to solve the employment of land-losing farmers. Thus, skill training and cultural education should be carried out among land-losing farmers, so that they may get jobs with relatively high technical content. After improving the market competitiveness, land-losing farmers can find better alternative resources than land, integrate into the capital accumulation in cities, and improve their financial support ability in cities. At the same time, government should expand the employment channels, create more job opportunities for land-losing farmers, develop tertiary industry to attract more labor forces, enhance the economic income of land-losing farmers, and provide economic resources for them after living in cities, and enhance their urban-living ability.

**2.4 Enhancing the quality of land-losing farmers** During the transition from farmers to city residents, land-losing farmers can hardly adapt to the urban life and show the phenomenon of psychological self-exclusion. Therefore, improving the quality of land-losing farmers is an important measure for them to integrate into urban life and to improve their urban-living ability. Community, as a unit, should hold activities for land-losing farmers to refresh their ideology, to make them adapt to the urban civilization, to cultivate their city consciousness, and to realize the transition from farmers to city residents.

## 3 Conclusion

Amartya Sen argued that the practical ability of an individual was dependent on the economic, social and political arrangements. During the social transformation of land-losing farmers, market integration of land resources should be carried out in order to realize the conversion of economic resources. After losing land and abandoning the agricultural production, land-losing farmers should obtain the operating capital and economic condition of industrial transformation. Based on this, urban-living ability of land-losing farmers is strengthened with new resource reliance, who become entrepreneurs in city industry or the employees in modern professional system. Thus, new interests of land-losing farmers will be obtained during the non-agricultural production and operation activities, so as to enhance their social rights and gradually integrate into city life<sup>[8]</sup>.

During the process of citizenization, land-losing farmers change their identity and living environment. To integrate into cities, land-losing farmers need to improve their urban living ability, including the enhancement of economic capability, the embodiment of interest and right protection, the change of ideology and behavior, the ability improvement of land-losing farmers

capital source for the village construction.

### 3.4 Establishing the compensation system for ecological and developmental right and interest of land

**3.4.1** Establishing ecological compensation system. As a social economic policy, the final purpose of ecological compensation is to improve and maintain the ecological service function of ecological system. The ecological compensation includes the compensation provided by the beneficiary to protector and the compensation provided by destroyer to sufferer.

Food safety and ecological service function provided by agriculture are enjoyed by all the people. But the central government represents the beneficiaries, so the central government should be the main body to provide ecological compensation and farmers and local governments who provide food safety and ecological service function should be the beneficiaries. In the process of providing products and services, besides the farmers who bear the risk of loss and extra cost input, the local governments also take the risk of losing certain opportunity cost due to the limitation of development.

As for the problem of compensation caused by the process of urbanization and industrialization to rural areas, the relevant enterprises have the responsibility of reducing their pollution emission to the national demand. If the relevant enterprises do not take their responsibility, they should make up for the farmers whose interests have been violated. The main body to provide the compensation should be the enterprises which produce the pollution and the rural collective and farmers should accepted the compensation for suffering from the pollution.

**3.4.2** Paying attention to the compensation of land development right and interests. In the overall plan of land use, land is divided into agricultural land use, construction land use and unused land. If the land is used as construction land, the value of it will increase. But if it is used as agricultural land, the development right of it will be limited and the output efficiency of it is low. So only by subsidizing the benefits from construction land

to agricultural land, and then the social justice of land benefits distribution can be reflected. In Chengdu City, the farmland protection fund is set up, which aims at the establishment of farmland protection mechanism and trying to realize "win-win" in terms of protecting farmland and increasing farmers' income<sup>[6]</sup>. The fund has bought positive social effect and economic effect and worth to be promoted to other places. For one thing, it has greatly reduced the illegal action of using land, so as to protect farmland. In addition, stimulating by the subsidies, farmers' enthusiasm on protecting farmland can be improved. For another thing, the establishment of the fund is conducive to increasing farmers' income, innovating rural social security mode and promoting the coordinating and harmonious development between urban and rural areas. At the same time, the fund has solved the long-term life problem of farmers and it has displayed a significant role in narrowing the gap between rural and urban area, reducing social conflicts and coordinating rural and urban development. Therefore, the model is worth to be promoted to other places of the country.

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themselves, and the reconstruction of social network. To improve the urban-living ability of land-losing farmers, government, society and land-losing farmer should work together. To be specific, government should provide land-losing farmers with system security, create a strong social support network for land-losing farmers, and help them to integrate into the heterogeneous life in cities. At the same time, land-losing farmers should receive more training and education in employment and urban life, improve their own qualities, realize the real transformation to urban residents, and achieve citizenization in the real sense.

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