
5 Influences of Community Land Rights and Tenure Security Intervention Processes on Food Security in Northwest Ghana

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5.1 INTRODUCTION

A joint FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, and WFP (2018) report claims that globally, many people lack land and related rights to produce food for themselves. They may therefore lack agricultural revenue for food accessibility too, thus worsening food insecurity (FAO, 2019). For instance, WFP says “on any given day, it has 5,000 trucks, 20 ships and 70 planes delivering food to those in most need,” yet global food insecurity still persists and affects one in nine people (FAO et al., 2018). Fertile agricultural land is a major source of livelihood for many people in Asia and Africa, but it is scarce, thereby threatening food production (Duncan and Brants, 2004; Lawry et al., 2014; Ruerd, 2011). This is partly due to demographic growth changing customary laws and practices where state legislations and implementation are either weak or absent, or where there is low farming input (Bugri, 2008; Naab, Dinye, and Kasanga, 2013). Little attention is paid to smallholder subsistence farming, even though such farms generate majority of food consumed in the world (Lawry et al., 2014; Mwesigye, Matsumoto, and Otsuka, 2017). Also, little research covers “unnoticed” tenure insecure groups like settlers (i.e. permanently resident migrants) in customary areas in Ghana who possess fewer secure secondary land rights, which tends to hinder their farming. This research seeks to suggest responsible land management interventions from local practices to first secure land rights and tenure in

order to enhance subsistence farming for food security in line with de Vries and Chigbu (2017) and Zevenbergen; de Vries, and Bennet (2016, pp.6–7). Land management is responsible if it is resilient, robust, reliable, respected, reflexive, retraceable, and recognizable (de Vries and Chigbu, 2017). Such interventions are important, as settlers in some communities in Ghana constitute up to 80% of the population as compared to 30% in Ivory Coast (Cotula, Toulmin, and Hesse, 2004). In both countries, farmers often suffer land rights and tenure challenges such as evictions, rights variations, reduced farm sizes, etc. which have consequences for food security (Cotula and Toulmin, 2004; Lawry et al., 2014).

Food security is when “all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (Pinstrup-Andersen, 2009). This chapter first focuses on the food availability component from their own farming, upon which access, nutrition, and stability dimensions revolve. Land rights and tenure security, often based on customary tenure and service arrangements, remain a major means for food supply and income for most people in sub-Saharan Africa (Lawry et al., 2014; Ruerd, 2011; Simbizi, 2016). These service arrangements are basically non-monetary tributes which landholders are required to seasonally render to landowners to acknowledge landowners’ ownership rights and renew landholders’ access, holding, use, and other rights. Therefore, when these arrangements hinder farming, agricultural revenue is reduced, thereby affecting farmers’ food accessibility since subsistence farmers sometimes sell some of their produce to buy foods they lack.

Since customary tenure is socio-culturally unique, responsible land management interventions require addressing contextual user requirements to secure land rights. This, however, may necessitate formal state facilitation to locally re-negotiate and alter service arrangements to be compatible with changing trends.

5.1.1 LAND TENURE SECURITY, CHALLENGES, AND MECHANISMS TO ADDRESS THEM

A landowner in northwest Ghana is *tendana* in Kufabiala and Sing, *tortina* in Nimoro and Piina 1, or *tengansob* in Fielmua and Piina 2. He controls family/clan lands by ensuring that rights of both members and non-members are secure based on custom and within the formal legal framework. Land tenure security involves the protection that landholders have against involuntary removal from the land they hold (Almeida and Wassel, 2016; Boudreaux and Sacks, 2009; Simbizi, 2016). It is the perception that tenure is secure and influences land use or farming decisions (Bugri, 2008; Simbizi, 2016). Secure and large land are a precondition for “profitable” farming for most people in sub-Saharan Africa (Payne, 2004; Ruerd, 2011). Customary tenure and service arrangements can provide adequate security because land rights, once allocated, are rarely revoked under customary law and practices (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Place, 2009; Platteau, 1996). The rare circumstances for revocation are: absence of heir, gross misbehavior (denying landowner’s ownership); and abandoning the land.

A complex tenure system exists in most developing countries, so its degree of security and influence on livelihoods is crucial (Chauveau et al., 2007). Tenure security, in the form of formal legal, customary, or religious land rights, can provide some predictability and access to fundamental rights, including to food and housing (Wickeri and Kalhan, 2010). Cotula and Toulmin (2004) suggest that the state can legitimize land rights by validating (documenting) local practices. But Zevenbergen et al. (2013) caution that registration alone does not secure tenure. De Soto equates land tenure security to recognition of existing rights by means of formalization (Brasselle et al., 2002). However, Lawry et al. (2014) question the impact of formalizing customary land rights on investments, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Cotula and Mathieu (2008) found that in four sub-Saharan African countries, neither titled tenure nor land transfer rights affected farm productivity. Also, Almeida and Wassel (2016) found that the current land law in Timor-Leste does not provide legal rights for those without any documentation, yet most of the respondents without documentation still consider their tenure to be secure. That is why for Lund (2000), land tenure security exists

when an individual perceives that s/he has land rights on a continuous basis, free from imposition or interference from outside sources, and the ability to reap the benefits of investments in it, either in use or upon transfer. Bugri found that 80% of his sample farmers in neighboring northeastern Ghana with no registered title felt that their land rights and tenure were secure. Also Obeng-Odoom (2012) clarified that it is the perception of secure tenure that matters, not necessarily a formal legal mechanism.

Customary land law is noted to historically offer the best security of tenure to individuals, families, and local communities (Akrofi and Whittal, 2011), but levels of tenure security differ on gender grounds (Duncan and Brants, 2004). Yet, tenure remaining relatively secure for different categories of people, irrespective of age, disability, and status, is still challenging. On the whole, secure land tenure, whether legal, *de facto*, or perceived, is the recognition of one's bundle of rights for a given period which is long enough to support investment and recouping the benefits (Lambrech and Asare, 2016; Nguyen, 2014; Van Gelder and Luciano, 2015). For Boudreaux and Sacks (2009), forcible eviction and deprivation of land rights places responsibility on formal authorities and customary custodians. Therefore, a critical investigation is worthwhile to assess local interventions to strengthen land rights and secure tenure. It is also important to ascertain how adequate these local procedures are in addressing land rights and tenure security for farming and food security.

5.2 METHODS

This explorative study was conducted from June–December, 2018. This duration witnessed the commencement of farming activities through to harvesting, facilitating assessment of how changing customary tenure and service arrangements affect land rights and influence farming. Direct narrations of respondents' personal experiences on avenues used in resolving their tenure challenges in Figure 5.1 below were obtained, analyzed, presented, and discussed. Key issues they responded to included tenure security and farming and stakeholders' role in securing land rights, as well as community perception, challenges, and indicators of food security.

The research used focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews, institutional interviews, and satellite image interpretation. Focus groups ranged between eight and 12 people (Hancock, Ockleford, and Windridge, 2009; Kothari, 2014). Separate FGDs of male and female elders, aged 60+, and youths aged between 18 and 59 (Republic of Ghana, 2012) were conducted. The disabled FGDs were categorized into males and females irrespective of age. A total of 36 FGDs were conducted in six communities, involving about 400 individuals. Additionally, six key informant interviews were conducted with three each of indigenous landowners and heads of settler groups. Two institutional interviews were conducted with the regional Lands Commission (LC) and Wa Central Customary Lands Secretariat (WCCLS). The categorization of the focus groups facilitated collection of data specific to each group. It became clear that age and disability do not influence land rights and tenure in the communities, but rather status (landowners or settlers) and gender. This guided the rest of the analysis.

5.2.1 DATA ANALYSIS

The data comprised audio-recordings, hand-written proceedings of FGDs, interviews, and satellite images. The results have been presented in maps, graphs, and charts. The emerging issues were juxtaposed with the literature in descriptions and discussions, based on which an informed opinion is expressed in the conclusion and recommendations.

5.2.2 STUDY AREA

The study area is the Upper West region (also referred to as the northwest) of Ghana (Figure 5.1), where the nature of customary land rights and tenure system (explained later) may have attracted

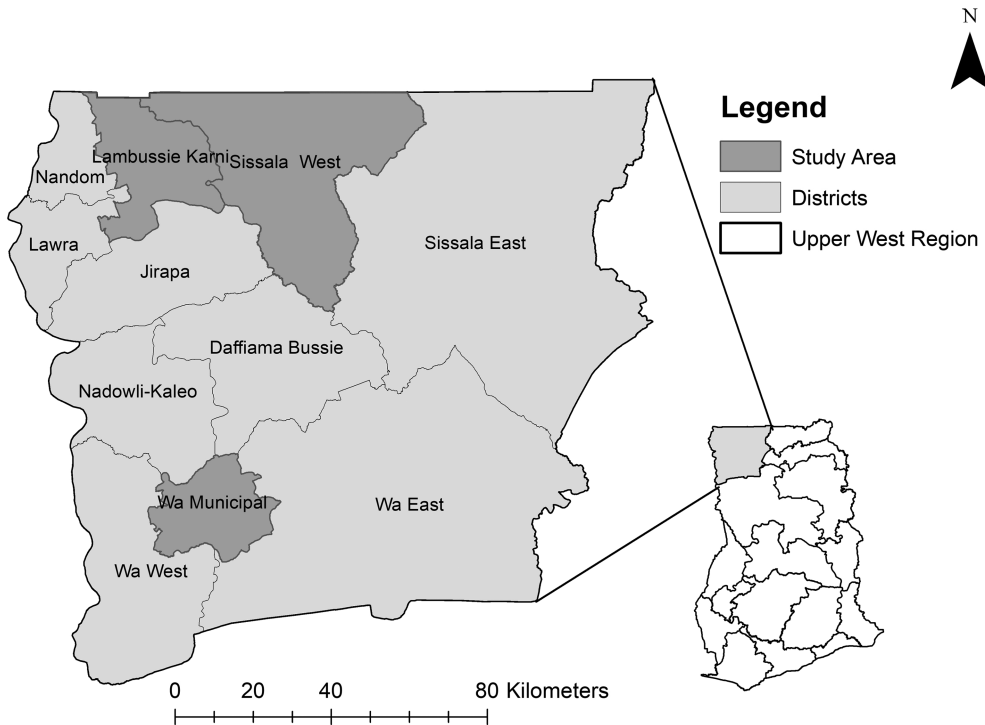


FIGURE 5.1 Study area – northwest Ghana. (Adapted from Free Spatial Data by Country by DIVA-GIS, 2017: <http://www.diva-gis.org/gdata>.)

people from Ghana and Burkina Faso as settlers since time immemorial. The communities together cover a total land area of 3,641.74 km². They were purposively selected due to the prevalent dominance of subsistence and settler farming (Republic of Ghana, 2012). Also, its land tenure system is unique in Ghana, i.e. initially without land sale or sharecropping. There are intermittent subtle, and sometimes escalated, land rights disagreements between landowners and settlers affecting farming and food security. Additionally, there is reported out-migration of youth claiming they can no longer secure food from their own farming activities, due to weakening land rights and increasing tenure insecurity.

The communities visited included Kunfabiala and Sing in Wa Municipality with approximately 234.74 km² of landmass and the most urbanized place in the region. The other two largely rural districts are Lambussie-Karni and Sissala West, having 1,356.6 km² and 2,050.4 km² of land area respectively. They are located over 200 km north, sharing a boundary with each other and southern Burkina Faso. The choice of rural and urban areas was to determine the extent to which their urbanity or rurality affects land rights and tenure security, and influences farming and food security.

5.3 RESULTS

5.3.1 LOCAL PROCESSES OF RESOLVING LAND RIGHTS AND TENURE CHALLENGES

The regular “payment” by settlers of the “token gift” called *kagyin* or *kaju* to landlords in accordance with custom was indicated by landowners as the settlers’ duty. Meanwhile, settlers admitted their failure to meet this obligation due to smaller infertile lands and continuously poor harvests, which settlers claim is obvious to landowners. Settlers in Fielmua claim that for them, “token gift-giving” tenure service ended centuries ago, marking their assumption of landowner status which

their original landowners in Nimoro are contesting in court. All the FGDs indicated that such disagreements weaken rights, as landlords are currently selling lands that settlers claim to have become infertile, and reclaiming lands that settlers hold without rendering the required customary services. In addition to the above, and to offer interventions in land rights and tenure challenges, other avenues exist. These are specific local “offices,” institutions, and organizations who are direct or indirect stakeholders in customary land rights and tenure security in northwest Ghana. From Figure 5.1 below, a landholder having issues goes to the group head to mediate it. If it fails, it goes to the *tendana* involving the CLS for spiritual or administrative intervention. When that fails, it goes to the chief to arbitrate and also moves to the Lands Commission for notification (verification), and if that fails too, then it goes to court for a final adjudication.

The people reminisced about the peace that accompanied farming, food availability, and food security when this order was strictly respected. The FGDs indicated that seeming non-adherence to the procedure in Figure 5.2 is because there are virtually no punitive measures meted out for non-compliance. A land management intervention that is responsible based on user requirements to secure land rights and tenure is desired by communities to curb the growing disregard for people’s rights and foster inclusiveness. FGD participants mentioned that stipulated re-negotiation and subsequent documentation can curtail both landowners’ and especially settlers’ weak land rights. FGD participants also complained that the laid down structure to secure land rights in Figure 5.2 would be effective with strict legal backing and penalties for offenders in the constantly changing socio-economic environment.

FGD participants further stated that land rights and tenure insecurity stem from subtle unilateral re-allocation of settler lands for sand, stone, and gravel winning rendering the land uncultivable and facilitating its conversion to non-agricultural uses. Consequently, resistance from settlers then worsens the situation, affecting farming and food availability with lingering mistrust and fear of possible attacks. In the FGDs, it came out that to resolve the current tenure insecurity, there

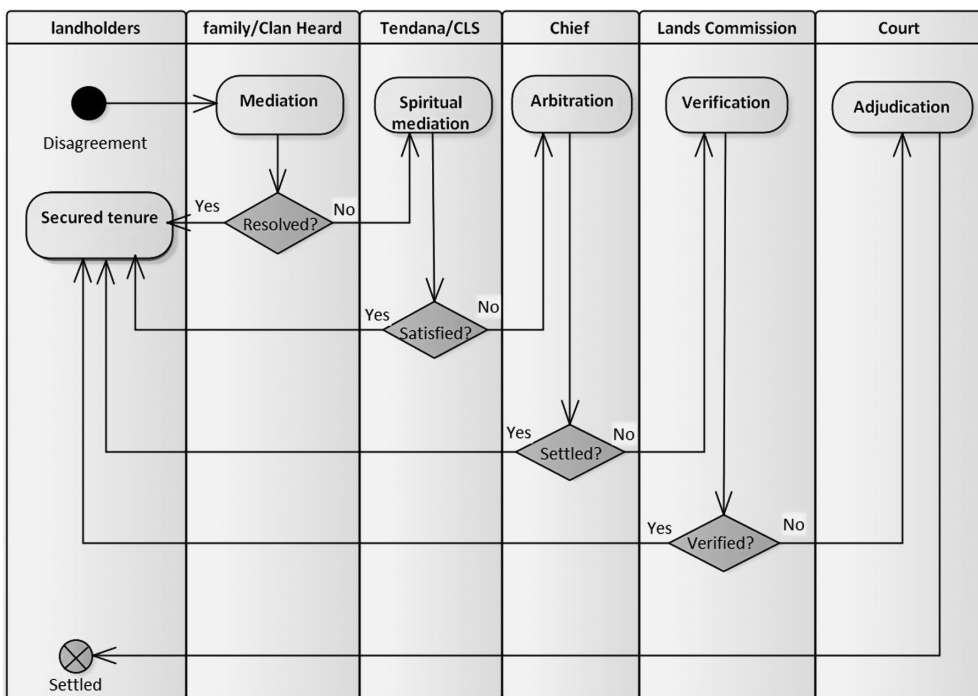


FIGURE 5.2 Procedure for settling customary tenure challenges. (Author’s construct, 2019, using Enterprise Architect.)

have been calls for renegotiation of customary terms involving all stakeholders with state/outsider facilitation and state endorsement as a measure of responsible land management in line with the community's continuum of land rights. Also, the FGDs indicated that special tenure packages for specific groups, agreed upon and applicable in each area is feasible to minimize frequent and often contested land rights changes/challenges. Settler FGDs specifically proposed that landowners allow settlers to permanently own land not exceeding 2 ha. Otherwise, these settlers cannot envisage any end to their tenure challenges, suspicions, and consequent food insecurity in the following intervention measure:

we appeal to be spared some minimum farmland of about 2 hectares as our reward for 'protecting the land for landowners' against encroachers, other claimants and potential attacks over the centuries. We have never let them down and they will also not let us down at this crucial moment in spite of current monetary motivations for land sale. This can be an effective land rights and tenure security intervention to enable us continue to farm for our food needs. Otherwise, the thought of complete future landlessness rather emboldens us to resist tenure changes being introduced by landowners but this worsens tenure insecurity and consequently affects food security.

The settlers hinted that such purely customary agreements should then be documented by the Lands Commission to prevent any unilateral variations to tenure in the future, as they are currently witnessing reducing farmlands.

The case of women is different because women's access and control of land remains almost entirely dependent on their relationship as daughters or wives of men. It emerged from the FGDs that wives farm mainly "for soup" crops like vegetables and groundnuts on smaller farms, evident in Figures 5.3 and 5.4, to complement husbands' or household harvests.

5.3.2 MINIMIZING THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGING CUSTOMARY TENURE SECURITY

Land rights insecurity, FGD participants said, affects the kinds of production decisions they can make which affects farm output, and consequently food availability and accessibility too. Another challenge of the current nature of changing customary tenure and service arrangements is settlers' uncertainty of the extent and time the changes take place. For instance, settlers said currently, landlords unilaterally decide what expanse of land to repossess from them (and for how long), contrary to laid-down customary norms and practices. Even though settlers customarily have perpetual duration on land rights and tenure, the unilateral decision of landowners to re-enter at any time defeats

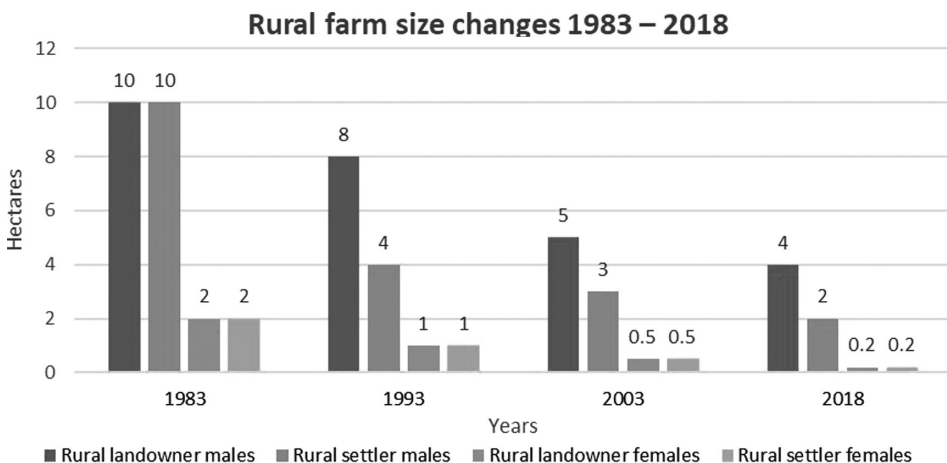


FIGURE 5.3 Trend of rural farm size changes. (Author's construct, 2019.)

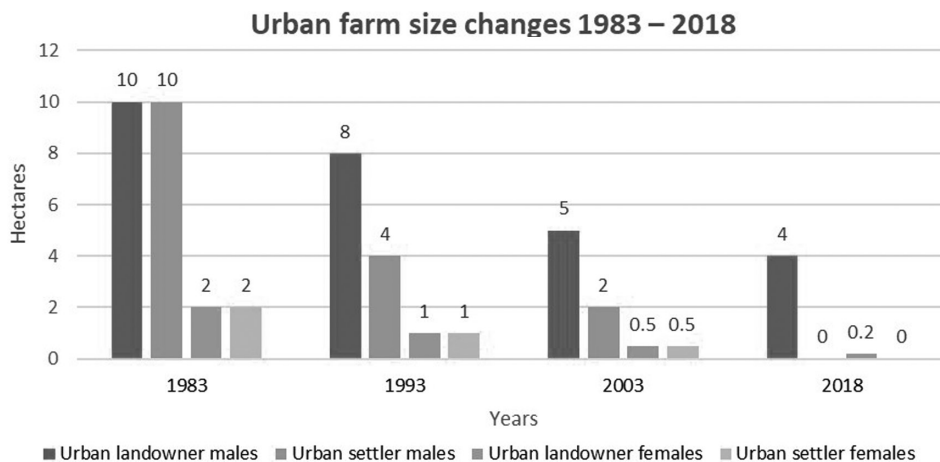


FIGURE 5.4 Trend of urban farm size changes. (Authors construct, 2019.)

that right. Settlers believe this can be minimized with state/outsider intervention. Also, the absence of settler rights to trees in Piina, for instance, was discussed in the focus groups. Settlers said this partly weakens their farming decision-making because it is nearly impossible for settlers to plant trees as an investment to help re-fertilize farms. These together leave settlers with “nothing to live for,” because they claim some do not know their roots, and so are referred to as settlers, but not visitors.

Settlers said they quietly, but strongly, resisted attempts to dispossess them of the lands they occupy. So, when those in Kunfabiála, for instance, heard of eviction intentions, they responded by making more permanent structures to secure their settlements at least. Due to the commercial forces driving land rights changes, according to Chauveau et al. (2007), many landlords do not feel obliged to respect the customary norms guiding tenure and service arrangements. To minimize tenure insecurity, the enactment and enforcement of a well-publicized legal framework rooted in customarily re-negotiated land rights was constantly re-echoed, especially by settlers and women. The reason they advocate this intervention measure is because settlers claim “the ancestors are dead,” an indication of loss of trust in the “spiritual verdict” regarding disagreements on tenure. This “death” makes landowners abuse land rights of marginalized groups without caution. All FGD participants explained that in times past, major contrary tenure decisions automatically attracted “invitation to the ancestry,” i.e. death. This deterred people from engaging in arbitrariness on land, but urbanization and foreign religions have partly contributed to land rights changes and consequent tenure insecurity. FGD participants pointed out that rights and land tenure can further be made secure by government-led facilitation to protect the vulnerable. They suggested that government should 1) make or streamline laws, 2) ensure strict law enforcement, 3) promote affordable and socio-culturally acceptable payment, and 4) promote transparent land documentation by collaborating with customary people and experienced private land documentation agencies. Furthermore, settlers said that to overcome the challenge of continuous farm size reduction caused by these transformations, the state must also legislate lower and upper landholding limits beyond which defined categories of settlers cannot hold. This will prevent settlers from claiming too much land at the expense of landlords and vice versa. By this, they all believe land rights security, peaceful co-existence, and food security can be promoted.

The satellite images in Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show that housing development in Kunfabiála between 2006 and 2018 seems minimal. This may defeat the direct influence of urbanization solely changing customary tenure in terms of land availability and rights. FGDs revealed that the expectation for urbanization characterized by physical development has prompted land demarcation. The result,

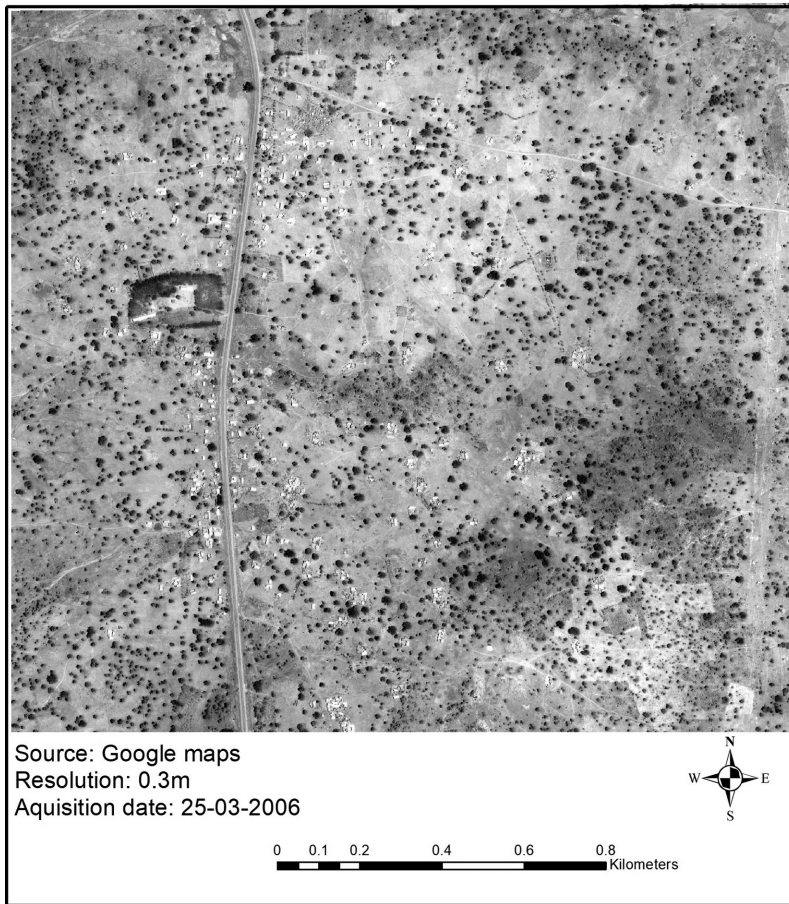


FIGURE 5.5 Building development and land availability, 2006. (Adapted from Google Earth Pro.)

they confirm, is that settler farmers now resort to land encroachment to farm for their household food supplies. To settlers, these point to some need for adopting a combination of socio-cultural, legal, and administrative participatory land management interventions that can be referred to as responsible in the short- to medium-term to address land rights and tenure insecurity. FGDs also raised that the government should prepare and implement development plans that cater for subsistence farming even in urban areas to minimize the threat of food insecurity. The medium to long term was emphasized, since development will definitely catch up in all these communities (whether urban or rural) sometime in the future.

5.3.3 LOCAL PERCEPTION ON FOOD SECURITY AND LAND RIGHTS CHANGES

Pinstrup-Andersen (2009) identifies transitory and permanent food insecurity. The former is periodic while the latter is long-term food insufficiency. Food may be secured through production, borrowing, exchange, purchases, or food aid properly processed and stored. Meanwhile for the FGDs, food security is fundamentally the production and availability of food in the household for their consumption from one harvest to the next. They believe that food availability through production or purchase provides food security. For the people, since physical, financial, and even social challenges can hinder access to food from the market, they rely largely on their own food production, and also



FIGURE 5.6 Building development and land availability, 2018. (Adapted from Google Earth Pro.)

because food can be secured premised on land rights and tenure security (Holden and Ghebru, 2016; Nguyen, 2014; Savenije et al., 2017). This was confirmed by respondents when one in Kunfabiala remarked rhetorically that: “if you lack land, on what will you farm to produce your own food?”

So, it came out during the FGDs that with secure tenure and other land-related opportunities like mortgage, transfer, and credit access, it may facilitate increased farm investments and food production, as shown in Nguyen (2014). Therefore, weakening land rights and tenure security can affect farming and food availability. Figure 5.7 illustrates the diminishing food production and reduction of monthly food availability trends as land rights weaken and tenure becomes insecure. This spanned over three decades since 1983 and the creation of the northwest as the Upper West region, which may have activated land transactions and showed the prospect of land value increases. This situation makes the drive towards responsible and fit-for-purpose land management a step in the right direction.

Figure 5.7 shows transitory food insecurity, since household food stocks last up to eight months. There are other challenges to food security which landowners mentioned as non-use of modern farming inputs, followed by an army worm epidemic, erratic rainfall, and post-harvest losses. The landowners asserted that in the past, they could manage their food stocks to last until the following season. They therefore had some surplus to sell and buy foods they do not grow themselves. So streamlined tenure, they hope, can assure people of reaping the benefits from their investments for

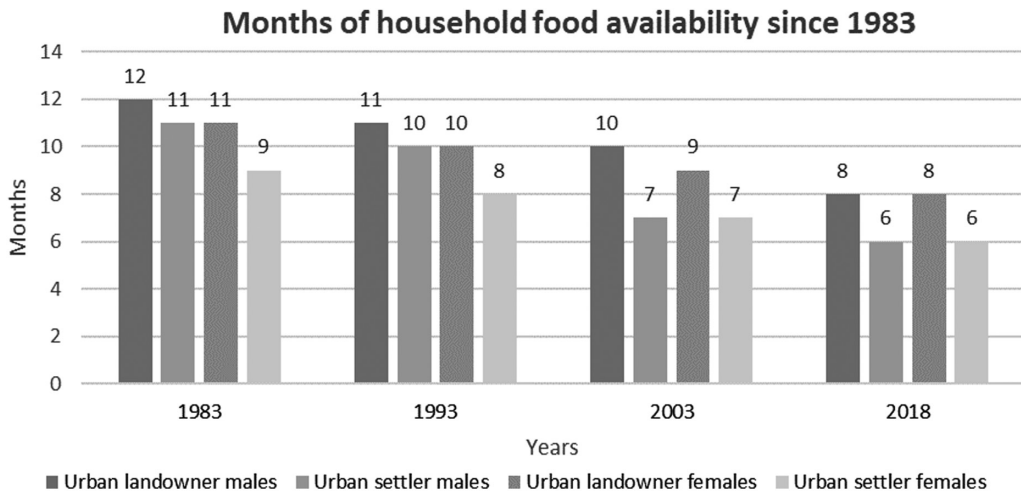


FIGURE 5.7 Monthly trend of food availability from own farming, 1983 and 2018. (Author's construct, 2019.)

which reason they will invest more by using modern inputs to increase production. But settlers in Piina number 2 stress that:

with tenure security assured, the current size of our landholdings [small as it may be] will suffice since we will buy and apply chemicals – fertilizer, pesticides and weedicides to increase yield. In the absence of these chemicals, we need large parcels of land to produce more. Now that we seem to be under siege, the worst is feared and 'only bulldozers can move us out [an indication of resistance].

5.4 DISCUSSION

Holden and Ghebru, (2016) emphasized that secure access to sufficient land is an important means of promoting subsistence farming and achieving food security on customary lands. But Rao et al. (2016) indicated that there are currently weak laws to regulate various aspects of land, and either formal or local customary laws were not adequately used. Even though legislation can contribute to a high level of land tenure security in formal environments, it sometimes fails to protect some categories of local farmers (Barry and Danso, 2014; Deininger and Jin, 2006). This study contends that food insecurity occurs partly because of non-adherence to customary and formal land laws, and over-generalizing formal laws by disregarding context differences. For instance, the land tenure system in the study area operates on moral considerations rather than for profit or commerce. External influences have now introduced commercial-for-profit potential on land. Coupled with weak local land governance and poor implementation of national land laws, this threatens tenure security and consequently, food security of all subsistence farmers in varying degrees (Barry and Danso, 2014; Ho, 2001). This is supported by Barry and Danso's findings (2014) that existing formal land laws in Ghana were enacted without considering the unique context of users. For this reason, landholders, but especially owners, do not find current land laws very beneficial to them. Landowners therefore disregard these laws with almost no legal consequences, since tenure arrangements are not documented and scarcely enforced by formal laws. The available literature emphasizes that documentation alone cannot secure land tenure, especially in environments with a weak legal framework and institutional capacity and commitment (Zevenbergen et al., 2013). FGD respondents also insist that their perceptions alone no longer provide customary tenure security, except for landlords (in a few instances), because it is the courts that have finality on all land litigations in Ghana. Furthermore,

women and settler respondents indicated that their land rights are no longer secure based on the customary practices, norms, and guarantees alone.

Even though local people recognize that other factors influence food security, they are convinced in line with Lawry et al. (2014), Ruerd (2011), and Savenije et al. (2017) that the primary factor is land rights and tenure security that enable them to farm their own food. It is especially true in this case, because the local people confess that they do not possess alternative skills with which to increase farm investment or diversify their food supply sources. Also, respondents concluded that if there is no means to farm their own food, it implies they particularly will have weak financial power to access food from the market. As a result, women, but especially male settlers said they welcome efforts to intervene in their tenure insecurity to facilitate continuous farming for their food supply and security. Even landowners agreed that perception alone is no longer sufficient to secure tenure, because there is a risk of unfair changes in future to the detriment of succeeding generations.

This therefore bridges the land rights and tenure security controversy in the literature regarding perception by Bugri (2008) and Simbizi, Bennett, and Zevenbergen (2014), documentation by Cotula and Toulmin (2004), and registration by Zevenbergen et al. (2013) to secure land rights. The reliance on either perception or documentation for land rights security in part depends on whether one's land rights are primary, in the case of landowners, or secondary in the case of settlers and women. This is clear on the ground, as the people of Fielmua are regarded as settlers, but insisted, based on perception and *de facto* possession, that their land tenure is secure. But this claim is immediately in question as it is being challenged in court by the original landowners; meanwhile, the court has freedom and finality to rule for or against. The current generation of both Fielmua and Nimoro have never witnessed the performance of any tenure services between the two peoples in their life. Yet the Nimoro people (original landlords) believe there is a need to reactivate the receipt of tenure services and "gifts" from the people of Fielmua (latecomer settler "landowners"). But the people of Fielmua rather find this to be the re-introduction of a practice that was ended mutually by both groups' ancestors long before any of the current settler and landowner generations were born. Based on the above discussions, further research is required to identify the most appropriate, effective, and efficient interventions which respond to responsible land management.

5.5 CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The research objectives focused on addressing tenure challenges with locally based approaches to promote farming and food security. Agriculture is a main economic activity in northwest Ghana, and access to land is a fundamental means for food supplies. In the short- to medium-term, changes in land tenure systems may produce winners (urban landowners gaining money from land sales) and losers (women and settlers losing farmland). In the long run, all the people may lose out when these disagreements escalate. Both groups do not completely adhere to local intervention structures/avenues to address tenure insecurity issues due to discriminatory customary practices, weak formal land laws, and non-speedy adjudication in courts. This does not encourage compliance to either law or custom to address land rights and tenure insecurity. Recurring disagreements arising from weak institutional and legal system and non-documentation of customary arrangements governing land tenure raises inherent weaknesses in a transforming society.

In spite of its inherent relevance in making land available to many people in the area, the customary tenure system is challenged. And so, government intervention is still required in line with responsible land management through further research into blending formal legal recognition with local involvement. In this way, current land rights are ensured, but future needs for land are not compromised. Documentation with state facilitation and active participation of users can promote future land rights and tenure security, thus making land management more responsible. Furthermore, the involvement of private players, closely monitored by government, is vital for tenure documentation, thereby making land management more responsible (based on Meridia's successes in other parts of the world and in the western region of Ghana). Legal protection of previously

obtained land rights based on customary arrangements may sanitize local land access and tenure security. It is especially so for marginalized groups like women and male settlers. Legal recognition of existing land rights and locally based institutions like the Customary Lands Secretariats (CLSs) using alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms to secure tenure are equally relevant for responsible land management interventions. Land management can also be responsible if it involves all stakeholders resolving land rights and tenure challenges. For instance, the formal laws can mandate CLSs to settle related disputes so that cases referred by them should be allowed to be heard in court in order to eliminate the numerous unresolved land cases in Ghana's courts for decades (Biitir and Nara, 2016). The dynamics influencing tenure security are unique. This calls for a process to design and implement context specific participatory responsible land management interventions for each spatio-cultural setting. The customary dimension of land access, land rights, and tenure security may promote farming for food supply and food security. This chapter advocates documentation of community-based land rights backed by law with strict legal enforcement, since local people now voluntarily accept that land documentation can strengthen their land rights and secure tenure for the future. The people have therefore suggested that the state through its representatives like the courts, quasi-judicial bodies, and Lands Commissions (LC) should collaborate with CLSs, customary leaders, and institutions to legislate and regulate an appropriate locally acceptable hierarchical land management structure. This makes land management responsible, since all stakeholders' needs may have been incorporated into it to meet the land needs of both current and future generations.

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