

Tapiwa Uchizi Nyasulu, PhD Candidate, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn, Germany

Richard Ameyaw Ampadu, PhD Candidate, International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University, The Hague, The Netherlands



Introduction

- > The marginal group in rural farming communities of Ghana, have their land related livelihoods activities (farming) being threatened by local elites.
- > At the same time, these elites fail to account for the revenue from land sales to the state or local people even though the law requires that to be done.
- > Community development is missing and livelihoods of marginal people are eroding.
- > Thus access to land has legal and economic implications as well as political connections, which makes the situation of local marginal people complex.

Objectives

- 1) To examine activities of local elites and allocation of land towards marginal people in the context of the dynamics of customary tenure evolution
- 2) Analyze how the dynamics shapes livelihoods of the local people, particularly marginal people (youth, women and migrants and land poor native men).

Methodology

- > Using data obtained from classical anthropology, questionnaire survey, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions.
- > A review of literature/policy documents was done.
- > Participant/Personal observations
- > Case studies



Case Study 1: Conversion of Agricultural Land into Residential Lands in Kasoa

- ❖ There is an increased conversion of agricultural land to residential lands by chiefs and family heads as a form of reverse land-grabbing in 5 selected communities in Kasoa
- ❖ The key findings show that while 70% of migrant farmers are more likely to lose land they acquired on arrival, indigenes are equally no longer assured of secured land titles due to an increasing rate of land sales by chiefs and family heads.
- ❖ This practice has largely increased land conflicts in the area.
- ❖ Local controls on chiefly land administration consist of checks on chiefs administrative powers through a council of elders.
- ❖ However, these elders have been corrupted and abuse their authority to also gain substantial income from land sales.
- ❖ Government and donor initiatives to enhance accountability mechanisms in customary land management, such as the Office of Administrator of Stool lands and the Customary Land Secretariat exist.
- ❖ But chiefs use various means to legitimize their community farmland conversions through, for instance,
 - ❖ Making reference to outdated customary laws,
 - ❖ The adaptation to vagaries of rapid urbanization that is out-stripping the pace of town planning initiatives,
 - ❖ Profiting on skewed attention to selling unused farmland, and
 - ❖ The manipulation of the meaning of communal landownership, to foment conflicts in the area.
- ❖ The real losers in the communities are those with little or no employment options outside agriculture.
- ❖ Individuals who have benefited from conversions and from the changing livelihoods are the chief/landowners, some women and some youth acquiring skills in building construction.
- ❖ It is interesting to note that women have been positively affected. Due to the commercialization of land, women, excluded from traditional forms of land ownership, can access land based on their financial strength.
- ❖ However, prices of foodstuffs have increased as they are now

Case Study 2

- Many Krobo, the rural community studied is an old agricultural frontier,
- It pioneered oil palm cultivation in Ghana for export.
- However, presently, no single productive tree of the plant can be found in the area.
- Youth, women and migrants express interest in farming but have no land or restrict access
- Marginal people today include youth, migrants and women as well as land poor natives
- High level of exclusion and other social instability, constraints agriculture, upon which many survive
- High rents and other nuance social mechanisms used to deny marginal people access to land
 - disrespectful, irresponsible, idleness, poor reputation, poor, commoner, talkative, low esteem for culture, etc
- Access to land is based on power, wealth than rights and is exchanged for cash or money
- The 'haves' have the advantage and 'have not' loses
- This creates a polarization between the elders who prefer to hold on to land as a source of power and the marginal groups who need land for farming, sources of livelihood and poverty reduction
- The embedded nature of the unequal power relations, lack of youth development groups and community movements have hush the voice of the youth.
- Government intervention needs but based on local norms and values or customs

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Conclusions

- > The importance of land to all social actors is clearly demonstrated, even though the interest of people in land is not the same.
- > This study shows that land is not mere physical asset for production and source of livelihood but one that commands power, which is the contested issue in local communities.
- > In the context of increasing scarcity value of land and the emergence of a land market, elders who traditionally controlled land, are less likely to share or give out their power over land.
- > The inability to break away from these power relations will also create a rift between the local elders and the youth, putting agricultural production in a terrible position, paving way for more poverty and destitution.

Contact:

tapiwa.nyasulu@uni-bonn.de
or ampadu@iss.nl