LAND GRABS AND LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES: EXPLORING THE COPING MECHANISMS ADOPTED BY FARMERS IN AGRARIAN COMMUNITIES IN GHANA

by

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Abstract

Large-scale land acquisitions worldwide evoke controversy due to its impact on communities. This thesis employs the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework to examine the coping mechanisms adopted in host communities to cope with the impact of land grabs on livelihoods. The study adopts an exploratory approach using mixed-methods design to arrive at the findings. The thesis finds the effect of land grabbing on communities to be negative. This thesis also finds that the alternative livelihood activities people have resorted to in response are not sustainable. Further, it finds that the regulatory and institutional regime guiding these land transactions has done little to assist the people to cope well with the adverse outcomes of land grabs. These findings point to the need for the establishment of precise timelines for compensation to affected people. Also, there is the need to involve the people in the decision-making process from project planning to implementation.

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Glossary

Breadwinner	The primary source of income for a family.
Jatropha	A multipurpose plant with biodiesel production and medicinal potential.
Sub-chief reports	In the traditional political structure, this is a leader who to another chief of a higher status.
District assembly	This is the highest political authority or body responsible for local governance in Ghana.
Smallholder farmers	Individuals engaged in farming on smaller land sizes.
Structural Adjustment Programme	A set of economic policy reforms (emerging in the 1980s) that a country must adopt to qualify for support from the Bretton Woods institutions

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Africa has become a prime target for most land grabs because the continent is endowed with abundant land and water resources and tends to have weaker protections for land rights. (Aha and Ayitey 2017). This interest has occasioned heated debates and academic research looking at various dimensions of the phenomenon (Ahmed et al. 2019). However, the dominant literature on this subject has primarily focused on documenting the impacts of these acquisitions on host communities (Suhiyini et al. 2018). These studies essentially concluded that land acquisitions negatively impact host communities, including land dispossession, food insecurity, and a widening gender equity gap (see, e.g., Hausermann et al. 2018; Suhiyini et al. 2018).

In terms of the emphasis of previous studies and the prevalent literature, little is known about how farmers in host communities respond to land grab-related livelihood changes. This study, therefore, seeks to explore how Ghanaian farmers are dealing with the situation. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework guides the study (see Chambers and Conway 1992; Scoones 1998). The Sustainable Livelihood Framework provides a useful guide to understand the impact of these land grabs on farmers, how they respond to the phenomenon, and the role institutions play to either aid or constrain these responses/coping mechanisms. The adoption of the livelihood strategies and outcomes component of the framework provides the context to describe the means adopted by the farmers in response to livelihood changes occasioned by land grabs.

The first part of this thesis provides a background to the phenomenon of land grabs. The following section contains a summary of relevant literature on the subject and the context in which this study is conducted. The third section comprises a description of the research methodology, the research design, and the methods employed for data collection. It is then

followed by a chapter on the findings, analysis, and discussions. The concluding chapter reflects the key findings, policy prescriptions, and recommendations for future research.

1.0 Background: land grabs and livelihood outcomes

"Buy land, they're not making it anymore"
(Mark Twain cited in Fortin and Richardson 2013:1)

The above statement made with humour seems to have been taken up seriously as different global entities have actively sought to acquire land for various purposes. Although there is no consensus on the exact quantum of land acquisitions worldwide, some studies (e.g. Cotula 2013; Fortin and Richardson 2013) estimate that over 200 million hectares of land have either been sold, leased or are being negotiated. The opaque nature of these land acquisitions has been cited as the reason for the apparent scanty and inconclusive information on the actual land sizes acquired globally (Nolte et al. 2016). However, there is some agreement among scholars (Cotula 2013; Fortin and Richardson 2013; Nolte et al. 2016) that many land areas are purchased worldwide. The Land Matrix (2020) estimates that 67,807,624 million hectares of land have been acquired worldwide.

Several factors, including the growing demand for food, fuels, shrinking resource base, and trade liberalization, have been cited for driving the global rush for land (Answeeuw and Taylor 2014). The need to produce more food due to rising food prices and the abundance of mineral and other natural resources drive interest in African lands (Lanz et al. 2018). Also, the quest for alternative energy solutions through biofuel production has occasioned land grabs on the continent (Boamah and Overa 2016). As a result, the race for African land is designed to meet both food and non-food production needs so that these products can be exported.

The quest for lands to meet demands for increased food production has led to a surge in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), primarily in agricultural production in Africa. This surge is linked to the steep rise in commodity prices in 2007 and 2008. Countries, heavily dependent

on food imports, decided to invest in other countries where land and other natural resources are abundant to secure supply (Gerlach and Liu 2010). This new scramble for resources in Africa has a different dimension when examining the plurality of global actors involved (Carmody 2011). The rise of new global powers such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) has changed foreign investments in Africa. These countries compete favourably with traditional global powers such as the United Kingdom, France, and the United States for turf in Africa. The influence of these new powers reflects in global statistics on trade and flows of Foreign Direct investments (FDI). There has been a leap in investments from 6% in 1980 to 31% in 2012. Their share of global trade also expanded from 8% in 1980 to 27% in 2010 (Amanor and Sergio 2016).

Aside from their increasing power base and influence in Africa, these new powers and the traditional ones are investing heavily in the agricultural sector of Africa for a myriad of reasons. The quest for fish products, for instance, has driven the European Union and the Chinese government to enter into fishing agreements with African governments to benefit from the estimated 7.3 million tonnes of fish that Africa produces in a year (Carmody 2011). On the other hand is the demand for biofuels and other considerations such as high oil prices, energy security concerns, and climate change (Acheampong and Campion 2014; Alhassan et al. 2018).

These global powers have used a combination of force and rewards to achieve their goals in the scramble. The commercialization of agriculture in Ghana, for instance, evolved progressively from the colonial era aided by policies of coercion, persuasion, and incentives to its current globalized form (Yaro et al. 2018). To help the commercialization plan, large tracts of land have been bought. It is estimated that 26,938,403 hectares of land have been acquired in Africa (Land Matrix 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, some 24 million hectares of land have been obtained for commercial agriculture (Abubakari et al. 2019). In the case of Ghana, an estimated 1.1 million hectares of land have been acquired for investments in large-scale

agriculture, mining, and biofuel production (Andrews 2018). Most of these acquired lands are usually located in communities with a reliance on lands for daily livelihood needs.

1.1 Research Problem

Despite the impact of agricultural commercialization on local communities, most country projects have focused on stronger market orientation. For instance, in 2013, Ghana launched the Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project (GCAP) with the objective to, among others, improve the investment climate for agri-business and develop inclusive Private-Public Partnerships (MoFA 2020). GCAP targets commercial enterprises engaged in agricultural production, agro-processing, and other activities along the value chain. Commercial farming has risen due to this, fueled in part by the population demands, commodity price swings, biofuel mandates, and the prospect of economic growth. (MoFA 2020). However, the acquisition of lands for commercial agriculture, either for food-based production or for the development of biofuels, has been a highly controversial issue. The controversy surrounds the possible impacts of these projects on the local populations of the areas where the acquisitions occur. Ross (2014: 99) concludes that the boom in biofuel production, for instance, was "an extension of a prolonged colonial affair designed to displace subsistence, food-based autonomy for global commodity production."

This pessimistic viewpoint, as mentioned above, has fueled widespread opposition to land deals. Citizens in the areas where these land purchases occur also suffer adverse economic consequences, resulting in public uproar. As a result, research on land grabs for biofuel development has centred on the livelihood consequences of agricultural land transfer to other uses (e.g.Boamah and Overå 2016; Kidido and Kuusaana 2014; Schoneveld et al. 2011). Similar studies have been conducted into the impact of commercial cash crop farming on communities. For instance, Anderman et al. (2014) found a significant negative relationship

between cash cropping and the three dimensions of food security: food availability, food access, and food utilization. Doso et al. (2016) found that large-scale gold mining posed a substantial long-term threat to food crop production in their host communities. Also, Gyapong (2019), in a study on wage labour in the commercial oil palm production in Ghana, concludes that workers drawn mainly from the communities of operation do not benefit from their work on the palm plantations. This finding contrasts the positive impacts of contract farming in Ethiopia in an earlier study by Rieraa and Swinnen (2016) cited in Cochrane and Legault (2020).

The preceding observation demonstrates that commercial land transactions have detrimental implications for local communities. However, current information about the social distinction involved in understanding such impacts along gender and social grouping lines is still lacking. Furthermore, little is known about the coping strategies used by smallholder farmers in agrarian societies in terms of livelihood outcomes. Admittedly, some studies (Fredua et al. 2017; Mensah et al. 2019; Tanle and Abane 2018) have been carried out on various aspects of sustainable livelihoods in Ghana. Fredua et al. (2017), in their research into the effects of environmental and socioeconomic stressors on the livelihoods of Ghanaian fishers, concluded that both climate and non-climate stressors have combined complex ways to affect the livelihoods of small-scale coastal fisheries.

Similarly, Tanle and Abane (2018) examined how mobile phones, viewed as a livelihood capital, could reduce vulnerability and enhance an individual's livelihood outcomes. The authors concluded that mobile phone use enables people to engage in different livelihood activities to improve their livelihood outcomes. The data for this analysis was gathered using a qualitative approach therefore, it only presented findings without necessarily having an in-depth examination of how mobile phone usage could reduce vulnerability and improve people's livelihoods. Further, in a study, Mensah et al. (2019) found that sanitation affected

livelihoods associated with tourism, fishing, and salt production through its implications for health, productivity, income, job security, and sustainability of the physical environment.

A recent study by Suhiyini et al. (2018) is related to my research with specific reference to the impact of land grabs on livelihoods. In a study carried out in seven regions in Ghana, the authors focused on land grabs and their impacts on farmer livelihoods in farming communities, including Lolito. The study concluded that land grabs pose a threat to development because the disadvantages outweigh the advantages of the people's livelihood outcomes. While the research is helpful, there is still a gap in understanding how institutional and regulatory mechanisms influence the land acquisition process and its impacts on smallholder farmers' livelihoods. Furthermore, it is unclear how livelihood options and structural interventions forecast whether locals will be able to cope well with the phenomenon of land grab in farming communities. These are the knowledge gaps that this study aims to fill using data from Ghana's three agrarian regions. In other words, this study seeks to learn more about the effect of land grabs on smallholder farmers and how they cope and adjust to the changes in their livelihood.

1.2 Research question & objectives

The central research question for this study is, how are farmers experiencing and responding to processes of land grabs? To answer this question, the study aims to

1. document the impact of land grabs on livelihoods in Ghanaian farming communities;
2. examine the coping mechanisms adopted by individual farmers and communities to mitigate the impact of land grabs to livelihood alternatives, food security, and meaningful economic opportunities; and
3. investigate the institutional and regulatory frameworks that aid or constrain the coping mechanisms in local communities.

1.3 Significance of the study

In addition to contributing to the ongoing scholarly debate around the processes of land deals and the consequent implications for livelihoods, this study also intends to inform policies on future land acquisitions. The outcome of this study should help shape policies on land acquisitions that consider the impact on the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and the provision of alternatives to enable farmers to cope with these livelihood changes. A recent study by Cochrane et al. (2021) identified some of these knowledge gaps around coping mechanisms and livelihood outcomes as characteristic of the existing literature. Therefore, this study is particularly relevant as it falls within and contributes to the broader debate on the global land rush (see Kaag and Zoomers 2014; Ross 2014).

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter is in two parts: a review of relevant literature on the phenomenon of land grabs and the conceptual framework which guides this study. The first part offers a thematic analysis of the themes which emerged from a scoping literature search on land grabs in Ghana. Thematic analysis is a method for analyzing qualitative data that entails searching across a data set to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns (Kiger and Varpio 2020). This type of review allows the researcher to associate the frequency of a theme with one of the whole contents. In doing so, the researcher can summarize, highlight key features of, and interpret a wide range of data sets while discussing existing literature based on themes or theories important to understanding the topic (Alhojailan 2012).

The scoping review of the literature was conducted using Web of Science and Google Scholar databases. Peer-reviewed publications from Web of Science were compiled using the keywords "land grab" and "large-scale land acquisition," each paired with "Ghana" in separate searches for publications on the subject matter up to the year 2020. Removing false positives from the results was undertaken to eliminate studies not primarily related to Ghana. The same pairings were carried out to search for related articles on Google Scholar. The search results from these two databases were then merged to remove duplicates (i.e., articles in both searches). The themes found in the review, which serve as sub-headings for the discussion below, include defining the concept of land grabs, the actors and drivers of the phenomenon in Ghana. It also consists of the effects of land grabs and differentiated impacts, the land tenure system, the role of customary institutions, and the role of land grabs in fueling or curtailing conflicts over natural resources in Ghana. However, before examining these themes, this next section begins with a brief overview of the literature on the global land grab phenomenon, followed by a review of land grabs in the African context.

2.1 The global land-grab phenomenon

The 'global land grab' according to Borras and Franco (2012), emerged as a catch-all phrase to refer to the explosion of (trans)national commercial land transactions and land speculation in recent years mainly, but not solely, around the large-scale production and export of food and biofuels. According to Wily (2012), companies seeking lands to grow jatropha, sugar cane, and particularly palm oil on an industrial scale to replace a percentage of oil use with biofuels caused an explosion in commercial land transactions. Industrial economies (which now include Brazil, Russia, India, China, and Middle Eastern countries) were identified by Wily (2012) as countries involved in acquiring lands on a commercial scale in rural communities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Land Matrix (2020) notes that these lands are being used or intended to be used to produce food and energy crops, conservation, timber plantations, tourism, and industries.

The land grab phenomenon is two phases. According to Borras et al. (2011), the first phase witnessed the colonial scramble for lands in the developing world by the imperialist North. On the other hand, the current phase is characterized by an emerging 'South-South' dynamic with economically powerful non-Northern countries such as China, Brazil, India, Singapore, Malaysia, and Qatar getting involved in the new scramble for land, especially in Africa. However, a study by Cochrane and Amery (2017) downplayed the scale of acquisitions by some of these emerging countries. Their study, which focused on the Gulf states (including Qatar), found that land acquisitions by these emerging countries were not significant compared to the investments by traditional global powers such as the United States and the United Kingdom.

The work of Dell'Angelo et al. (2017) outlined certain vital elements of land grabs. The first is that the ongoing land acquisitions worldwide are associated with a change in the production system, from subsistence and smallholding to commercial farming, which entails

fundamental social transformations. Secondly, these acquisitions target common lands and land with multiple access and use claims and turn them into private property or concessions for the exclusive use of the investors. Finally, the acquisitions are marked by unequal power ties and are not without dispute. Combining these elements in global land acquisitions led to the conclusion that land grabs inherently have negative implications for host communities and vulnerable groups. In addition to this, these communities and groups are often alienated from the land purchase negotiation process, inadequate or no payment of compensation, and sometimes forced evictions only compound the negative impact of these deals on people in host communities.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other civil society groups have been vital in drawing the world's attention to land grabs and their consequent impact on communities. For instance, an NGO, Genetic Resources Action International (GRAIN), is credited to have been the first to declare a global trend in land grabbing linked to ramped-up biofuel promotion and food-for-export initiatives (Borras and Franco 2012). These activist groups paint the picture of foreign entities dispossessing peasants and indigenous peoples and ruining the environment. However, Edelman et al. (2013) contend that land grabs include domestic and international players, and locals are not often removed or displaced from their territories, as many activists say. According to their research, locals are often subsumed into contract farming schemes or other collaboration agreements that do not deprive them of their livelihoods. This observation notwithstanding, other scholars (see Davis et al. 2014; Cochrane 2011; Oberlack et al. 2016; Mabe et al. 2019) believe that land grabs potentially affect incomes with implications for food security, poverty levels, and urbanization. Also, Ward and Baldinelli (2020) note that the phenomenon of land grabs can lead to land inequality, which directly threatens the livelihoods of an estimated 2.5 billion people worldwide involved in smallholder

agriculture. Such findings underscore the devastating impacts of the global land grab phenomenon on the environment, communities, and livelihoods.

2.2 Land grabs in Africa

> There is now no denying that Africa has become a sought-after-continent in a short space of time, thanks to its strategic importance, today Africa really matters **...** if the United States and Europe are serious about biofuels, they must turn to the South for their supplies…Africa is an unexploited resource for biofuels development (Carmody 2011:140).

To a considerable extent, the above observation represents the motivations for the scramble for lands in Africa for alternative energy sources. As a result of such incentives, several countries in Africa have seen some interest in land acquisitions for biofuel production. In Zimbabwe, for instance, 40,000 hectares of land were acquired from local households to grow sugar cane for bio-ethanol production by the year 2009 (Thondhlana 2015). Around the same period, Ethiopia saw more than 400,000 hectares of land acquired for industrial biofuel development for large-scale Jatropha plantations for biofuel production (Tufa et al. 2018).

On a broader scale, the Land Matrix (2020) reports that 64,678,512 hectares of land have been acquired in Africa. According to the Land Matrix (2020), the natural appeal of the continent lies in the perceived availability of land and other natural resources, geographical, cultural, and historical reasons, and market opportunities. These notwithstanding, it is worth noting that domestic policy plays an essential role in promoting land grabs in Africa. A case in point is Ethiopia, where the government fashioned out deliberate policies and entered into agreements designed to specifically attract investors into the country's agriculture sector (Dejene and Cochrane 2021; Hules 2017). As noted by Dejene and Cochrane (2021), the Ethiopian government was actively seeking out foreign investors and offering attractive incentive packages. According to Hules (2017), Indian companies investing in Ethiopia agreed with the Ethiopian government to export 30-40 percent of their harvest to India. This case introduces a new narrative suggesting that countries in Africa, through domestic policy,

occasioned land grabs in Africa. Another actor whose activities have dominated the literature on land grabs in Africa is China. While seminal works like that of Carmody (2011) position China as a significant player in the scramble for lands and resources in Africa, others such as Bräutigam and Zhang (2013) opined contrary positions concerning China's role in Africa. They argued that land acquisitions by Chinese companies in Africa have been quite limited and focused on production for African consumption. They further contend that Chinese investment in Africa is not part of a coordinated Chinese strategy to secure land in Africa to grow food for China. Instead, they reflect the uncoordinated plans of several different firms to explore commercial investment opportunities across multiple sectors on the continent.

However, the literature seems to agree on the effect of these land investments in Africa. According to Oberlack et al. (2016), land grabs result in the marginalization of people who are already in difficult situations, agribusiness failure, and only offer temporary employment. In specific terms, Wily (2012) found that dispossessed locals in Rwanda saw a plunge in their incomes and loss of land. Similarly, Tankari (2017) concluded that land grabs to produce cash crops negatively impact the welfare of farm households in Senegal.

Some scholars have also explored the gendered dimension of the impact of land grabs (see Daley and Sabine 2014; Ndi 2019; Mariwah et al. 2019; Reem et al. 2019). The studies conclude that women are more likely to be negatively affected than men in the event of a land grab. This situation is primarily due to their lack of access to productive resources, relative income poverty, and low participation in the decision-making process in many African countries. To a considerable extent, the African land grab situation mirrors the worldwide crisis. A key point of departure is that though the increase in food prices has occasioned land grabs worldwide, governments in Africa have, through deliberate policy, facilitated the land grab situation in Africa. One such country is Ghana. The following section primarily focuses on a thematic review of the scholarship on the land grab phenomenon in Ghana.

2.3 Thematic analysis of land grabs in Ghana

From the onset, it should be noted that since 1844, various Gold Coast/Ghanaian governments have had policies aimed at attracting viable agricultural investments, with varying degrees of success (Ahwoi 2010). This ranged from non-interventionist policies (1844-1956) to complete state interference through the entire value chain (1957-1966). In the 1980s, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) established the position of the private sector in attracting viable agricultural investments (Ahwoi 2010). Attracting investments into the agricultural sector is not a new phenomenon in Ghana. Governments have encouraged commercial investment in Ghana's agricultural sector through deliberate policy and cooperation with the private sector. The influence of these projects on host communities was the primary focus of the literature reviewed for this study. Other themes in scholarly works on land grab in Ghana, however, included discussions of the land tenure regime in which these land grabs occur and the involvement of customary institutions in the land grabbing process. The following section gives an overview of the main themes that emerged from the Ghana review.

2.3.1 The concept of land grabs

The phenomenon of land grabs has attracted lots of attention in the scholarly literature on land grabs in Ghana. The concept itself is viewed from two perspectives: the neo-colonialist paradigm and the development optimism narrative (Boamah 2014). The neo-colonialist perspective sees these land deals as a new attempt by foreign companies to grab indigenous lands with negative livelihood outcomes. In their descriptions of land sales, supporters of this narrative conjure images of illegality and theft on the part of these corporations. On the other hand, the development optimism narrative sees these deals as a win-win situation with positive outcomes for both the investor and the local populations (Boamah 2014). As such, depending

on one's orientation, the quest by a foreign company to acquire lands in agrarian communities could either be deemed a land grab or a profitable land transaction.

However, it is worth noting that much of the definitions found in the reviewed literature tilted towards the neo-colonialist perspective. To this end, it has been defined "as taking possession of and controlling a scale of land for commercial/industrial agricultural production which is disproportionate in size compared to the average landholding in the region (Boamah 2014:324). On its part, the International Land Coalition cites an acquisition as a land grab when it violates human rights, does not seek free and prior informed consent disregards socioeconomic and environmental impacts, and is not based on democratic planning and participation (Ahmed et al. 2019). The neo-colonialist narrative reflects these definitions, primarily identifying international land deals as land grabs. As a result, it can be concluded that these land deals, especially those involving foreign entities, favour foreign capital while restricting locals' access to land, which is their primary source of income. As a result of the acquisitions' negative livelihood consequences (the case of Ghana is no exception), they can rightly be defined as land grabbing.

2.3.2 The Actors and Drivers of Land Grabbing in Ghana

There are varied driving forces behind the phenomenon of land grabs in Ghana. However, a key finding by Cotula et al. (2011) highlights the importance of the host government in any land deal. According to the authors of a multi-country study that included Ghana, most acquisitions were carried out by international private entities or government-owned firms. Another set of actors revealed from the reviewed literature is domestic investors who are either directly engaged in the land grabs themselves or serve as facilitators of land grabs by foreign companies. A study by Cotula et al. (2014) revealed that Ghanaian investors account for 4 out of 15 of these land grabs. A study by Cochrane et al. (submitted for publication) found that domestic actors (from Ghana) have acquired 222,961 hectares of land

in Ghana. This acquisition constitutes 16.8% of the land deals recorded in the country by the Land Matrix (2020). Though this number is smaller than the situation in Ethiopia, where 80% of land deals were found to be undertaken by Ethiopian nationals, it only underscores the fact that these land grabs are not exclusive to foreign interests (Cotula et al. 2014).

Another finding worth noting from the reviewed literature is the list of countries of origin for the recent land grabs in Ghana. Traditionally, land grabs in Africa were carried out by the colonial bloc of Europe (United Kingdom, France) and the United States. However, the reviewed literature suggests that emerging countries and their affiliates have become dominant actors in the phenomenon of land grabs in Ghana. Prominent among these is the influence of Norwegian and Chinese interests in Ghana. A study by Bull (2009) revealed that a Norwegian company Scanfuel AS leased some 400,000 hectares of land for 50 years in Ghana. This land size acquired in comparative terms constitutes half of the total arable land available in Norway, pegged at 805,130 hectares as of 2016 (World Bank 2016). However, this assertion about Norway has been countered by Cochrane et al. (2021), who found that the actual lease agreement signed was for 13,000 hectares in 2009.

The story of Chinese investment in Ghana's agricultural sector took an unexpected turn. Cook et al. (2016) found that Chinese investments were mainly driven by independent actors with little to no funding from or even interaction with the Chinese government, contrary to the opinion of scholars such as Cotula et al. (2011) that China was engaged in a quiet war with the West in the scramble for African resources. As a result, this finding refutes the notion that Chinese investments were made as part of a predetermined state-sponsored scheme to compete with traditional forces in the race for African territory. Beyond the agricultural sector, a study by Hilson et al. (2014) on China's involvement in Ghana's mining industry also suggests no evidence to indicate that the Chinese government is involved. According to them, the Chinese government's participation was limited to dialogue with the Ghanaian government to provide

fair treatment to its people and a willingness to fund return flights for those detained for illegal mining in Ghana.

In addition, the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme in 1983 encouraged land grabs in Ghana, according to the reviewed literature. The agricultural sector changed due to this programme and the subsequent market liberalization policies. Takane (2004), for example, pointed out that laws like the Land Title Registration Law (1986) were put in place primarily to protect investors' property rights. Furthermore, the creation of investment promotion agencies (such as the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre in 1994) carried out government policy to attract investment, especially foreign investment, into the country. Their position included, among other things, facilitating land access for potential investors and, on occasion, directly allocating land to investors. This new regime provided a favourable climate and eliminated the risks associated with large-scale farming. As a result, in the 1980s, the country's production of large-scale farms resulted from this deliberate state policy (Ahwoi 2010). The policy inevitably encouraged land grabs in Ghana.

In addition, the government's decision to attract investments into the country was driven by the desire to increase exports, control inflation through appropriate fiscal and monetary policies, achieve and sustain economic growth, and transfer state-owned enterprises into private hands. The purpose was to expose state enterprises to competitive market forces and stimulate more cost-effective and financially responsible management (Mmieh and Owusu-Frimpong 2004). Aside from the overall economic imperative, the government's decision was borne out of the desire to bring in some efficiency into the operations of state enterprises. The quest for alternative energy sources, which saw biofuels being promoted as a solution, was also a driving force behind land grabs in Ghana. Globally, investors and governments, including Ghana's, adopted deliberate policies to gain access to lands for biofuel development. Ghana drafted the Strategic National Energy Plan (SNEP) in 2006 to "secure and

increase future energy security by diversifying sources of supply through fuel substitution and complement alternative fuels to achieve 10% penetration in supply mix by 2015 and 20% by 2020" (Ahmed et al. 2017:134). Therefore, this policy objective saw the influx of investors into the biofuel sector. By 2009, 1,075,000 hectares of land had been set aside to produce biofuels from jatropha (Nygaard and Bolwig 2018). The primary resource on which the locals relied for their survival was these lands. As a result, the change in land use affects the people's livelihood choices in the host communities.

The global land rush has been blamed on rising demand for food, fuels, a shrinking resource base, trade liberalization, the quest for mineral resources, and renewable energy solutions through biofuel production. The global land rush has been blamed on rising demand for food, fuels, a shrinking resource base, trade liberalization, the quest for mineral resources, and the search for renewable energy solutions through biofuel production. However, in Ghana, deliberate government policy of market liberalization pushed for large-scale agricultural investments.

2.3.3. The land tenure regime and land grabs in Ghana

The land tenure regime within which these land grabs occur in Ghana has also been one significant theme discussed by the literature on land grabs in Ghana. The land tenure system in Ghana has undergone several changes dating back to pre-colonial times. Kuusaana and Gerber (2015) traced the trajectory by noting the phases of land tenure regimes in Ghana. They first acknowledged the passage of the Land Bill in 1894, which entrusted idle, un-owned, and unused land under the control of the colonial government. In 1928, the Native Administration Ordinance was followed up, which sought to administer the then colony under the indirect rule policy. The post-independence era also saw several legislations which formed the basis of land reform in Ghana. The legislation, according to Kuusaana and Gerber (2015) includes the Land Registry Act 1962 (Act 122), Administration of Lands Act 1962 (Act 123), State Lands Act

1962 (Act 125) and Survey Act 1962 (Act 127), the Land Title Registration Law 1986 (PNDCL 152) and the Ghana Land Policy (1999). The key feature of these legislations is that the government of Ghana has maintained a non-interfering stance in customary land markets to protect the sanctity and independence of customary land institutions (Kuusaana and Gerber 2015). However, the views expressed in Ahwoi (2010) point to the fact that beyond these legislations, the state has to the contrary, become an active participant in promoting land deals. This meddling in land deals by successive governments is motivated by the economic imperative to attract foreign investments into the economy.

Regarding the forms of land ownership, the literature revealed that the legal regime in Ghana recognizes three basic types of land ownership (Kirst 2020). These are state lands appropriated in the national interest, vested lands that are remnants of land inherited from the colonial era, and customary lands that are often legitimized through the first settlement of a group in an area (Kirst 2020). Therefore, there is shared ownership of lands in Ghana between the state and the various customary structures represented by chiefs. In this regard, Kasanga and Kotey (2001) noted that the state owns part of the land, but 80-90% of all undeveloped land is held under customary tenure through chieftaincies act as legal entities. Therefore, the management of these lands is under the auspices of the state and the customary structures. The state acquired management responsibility for vested lands as a function of law, while the management of customary lands is in the hands of the chief, who receives rents for land usage (Nolte and Vath 2015).

Therefore, Ghana's land tenure regime can be said to be pluralistic. This is because both customary and legislative structures are recognized and perform similar functions. This legal system has resulted in a situation in which traditional authorities and the state share sovereignty (Lambrectht and Asare 2016). Hence, the interests and rights in land emanated from customary laws and enacted legislation, giving rise to what has been termed customary

(communal) and statutory land tenure system. The distinction between customary and statutory land tenure is reflected in their characteristics and management styles. Customary lands are under the control of traditional authorities represented by stools, skins, and family/clan/community heads and are generally governed by the customary practices prevailing in communities. On the other hand, state lands' laws are codified into statutes and regulations based on laws (Aha and Ayitey 2017). Also, Tsikata and Yaro (2011) revealed that the relationship between these two tenure systems is that the Ghanaian state regulates and legitimizes customary land transactions. This is to ensure some form of uniformity in describing land tenure interests. This interface between the state and customary structures in managing lands in Ghana meant that customary landowners in Ghana have more legal rights regarding land transactions. The Constitution (articles 267 and 270) and the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands Act 1994 (Act 481) recognize the traditional roles and authority of chiefs, elders, and priests when it comes to land administration (ElHadary and Obeng-Odoom 2012).

Thanks to the acceptance of the customary land tenure system, this pluralistic land tenure regime has the advantage of not alienating people from their ancestral lands. However, it can exacerbate tensions between the new legal system and the traditional land management system. In the specific case of land acquisitions, conflicts are likely to occur over jurisdictional issues when negotiating land transactions with investors. This weakness of the plural land tenure system often leads to situations where investors exploit the loopholes to the disadvantage of locals in project host communities. For instance, Andrews (2018) reveals Newmont Ghana Limited refused payment of compensation to owners of unused lands in their mining project area in Ghana. This was made possible over the unclear nature of roles and rules within the land tenure system. In a bid to forestall future occurrences, Ghana passed the Land Act 2020 to revise and consolidate the laws on land, with the view to harmonizing those laws

to ensure sustainable land administration and management, and effective land tenure systems. An interesting component of Act 2020 is the restrictions placed on land acquisition by a non-citizen, as captured in Article 10 (1) of the Act. Among others, it stated that a person could not create an interest in, or right over, land in Ghana, which vests in another person who is not a citizen of Ghana. Therefore, a company or corporate body is not a citizen if non-citizens hold more than 40% of the equity shareholding or ownership. This act, therefore, seeks to secure domestic actor participation in the acquisition of lands in Ghana while curtailing the influence of foreign investors. The Act 2020 also aims to create a fair and efficient mechanism for registering land, strengthening institutional capability, harmonizing statutory and customary law, and improving land dispute resolution in Ghana (Landlinks.com Ghana profile 2021). Therefore, the new regime seeks to mitigate the negative impacts of these acquisitions and their attendant consequences such as conflicts while strengthening the institutional mechanism that ensures efficiency in land acquisitions.

2.3.4. Customary land institutions and land grabs

A significant number of scholarly works on land grabs in Ghana was dedicated to the role of customary institutions (traditional authorities) in the processes leading to land grabs (see Ablo and Asamoah 2018; Ahmed et al. 2018; Amanor 1999; Antwi-Bediako 2018; Boamah 2014; Campion and Acheampong 2014; Kirst 2020; Nyari 2008; Obeng-Odoom 2016; Tsikata and Yaro 2011). The volume of work around the role of traditional institutions is a result of the prominent role they play in Ghana's land tenure regime, as discussed above. Their role in Ghana is further enhanced because agricultural land is either under the control of land-owning families, with most family heads, elders, and chiefs (Tsikata and Yaro 2011).

Writing on the role of chiefs in land administration in Ghana, Ahmed et al. (2018) argued that they have two primary roles: serving as custodians of the land and the interface between donors and investors. The performance of these roles, especially the latter, has

increased the chiefs' growing involvement in land politics. The neoliberal policies of successive governments to open up the country to investors enabled chiefs to engage directly with developers, investors, and donors. And with most of the lands under the control of customary law (Kirst 2020), the acquisition process involves negotiation with the local chief and his council of elders. This system's traditional ownership of lands was designed to ensure that land is distributed fairly for use in the area (Kirst 2020). However, the literature revealed that the chiefs, in most cases, entered these negotiations over the land sale with self-serving ambitions. Kasanga and Kotey (2001) found that chiefs often make decisions on land and the sale of it without any community involvement. The resultant benefits in terms of compensation, be it monetary or otherwise, are further appropriated. This view is further reinforced by the recent work of Kirst (2020), which also concluded that when it comes to allocation of lands, Chiefs do not adhere to the principles enshrined in the law but rather operate by the authority yielded to them in their communities. According to Kirst (2020), the chiefs are a significant contributor to conflicts over land grabs in Ghana. These studies (Kasanga and Kotey 2001; Kirst 2020) have revealed how the institutional framework at the local level has alienated the people in the land acquisition process.

It was also observed that the increased investments in the biofuel sector saw a corresponding rise in the power of chiefs to allocate lands. Boamah (2014) revealed that many Ghanaian chiefs have allocated large land areas to investors, mainly from Italy, Norway, Israel, and Canada, for biofuels and other agricultural projects in Ghana during the last decade. This increased role relegated state institutions to confirm and register the agreements between chiefs and investors. Although estimates of biofuel land deals are often contentious, it nonetheless suggests that the authority of chiefs in land allocations has increased in recent times relative to that of the state. The involvement of state institutions in land allocations now merely takes confirmation and registration of the agreements reached between the chiefs and investors. The

implication of this is that chiefs in Ghana have become facilitators of land grabs in Ghana. This position, therefore, empowers them to manipulate land-acquisition processes, benefiting in ways that go beyond their mandates. In many cases (as cited in Kirst 2020), the resultant effect could lead to alienation of the people, community resistance, and eventually conflicts. Antwi-Bosiako (2018) has however sought to clarify the position of the chiefs when it comes to taking the blame for problems associated with land grabs. His study identified challenges such as the state's non-interference policy in these negotiations, the insecure nature of land ownership, and the annexation of lands by brokers. These brokers often deceived chiefs into releasing large tracts of lands for development to turn over such lands to investors for personal profit. Therefore, the consequent dispossession of lands leading to the loss of livelihoods should not be blamed solely on the chiefs.

However, as noted in Ahmed et al. (2018), chiefs do have an onerous responsibility placed on them by the state. Chiefs being custodians of land are expected to determine how land and its resources are used and receive royalties on behalf of their people. The role of chiefs regarding land sales is further reinforced in the Lands Act 2020. Article 13 (3) of the Act charges chiefs to be transparent, open, fair and impartial in making decisions affecting the specified land. Failure to do this has punishment prescribed in Article 13 (4) including summary conviction to a fine of not less than five thousand penalty units and not more than ten thousand penalty units or a term of imprisonment of between five and ten years or both penalty and imprisonment. By implication, though chiefs are quite powerful in selling lands within their jurisdictions, legal restrictions have been placed on them to check arbitrary use of discretionary power. In the performance of the fiduciary roles, they are expected to act in ways that will protect the interest of the people. However, as noted in the previous section, the pluralistic land tenure regime operational in Ghana negatively affects the people concerning processes leading up to and after land acquisitions by investors. The overlapping roles of the

state and the traditional authority in land acquisition processes often create loopholes for the investors to exploit.

2.3.5. Effects of Land Grabbing in Ghana

The reviewed literature highlighted that significant scholarly work about land acquisitions in Ghana was dedicated to examining the impact of the projects on livelihoods. However, it is worth noting that the conclusions arrived at portrayed the outcomes of these as largely negative, though some positives were also highlighted. For instance, Gordon and Botchway (2017) contend that Chinese mining involvement transformed the sector and introduced mechanization and technology transfer to local artisanal miners in Ghana. The intensification of gold production due to these new techniques reflects a phenomenal increase in the contribution of small-scale gold mining to total gold production.

Also, Twene (2017) notes that the construction of the Bui dam helped improve the conditions of the affected people, including improvement in roads, educational and health facilities, and access to good drinking water. The negative impacts, such as loss of access to land and water resources and consequent food security implications, made the author conclude that the project negatively affected livelihoods in the project area.

Some studies (Alhassan et al. 2018; Alhassan 2020; Madueke 2019; Schoneveld et al. 2010, 2011; Yaro and Tsikata 2013) explored the specific impacts of large-scale farming on local livelihoods. Schoneveld et al. (2011) examined the local effects of biofuel feedstock plantations and found that the host communities lose access to vital resources, especially forests and land. Vulnerable groups, such as women and migrant farmers, were negatively impacted. Formal employment opportunities on the plantations, on the other hand, were found to have a net positive effect on employee households' livelihoods by improving income flow stability and welfare. However, the loss of community access to vital resources, especially forests and land with the consequent food security and the threat to the people's income-earning potential,

were negatives that outweighed the supposed benefits of the project. A similar study by Madueke (2019) found that the activities of Herakles farms damaged the host community economically, socially and destroyed the environment. In particular, the impacts included population displacement, loss of autonomy, breakdown in social cohesion, and environmental degradation. The findings of this study are supported by Alhassan et al. (2018, 2020), who found that land grabbing harms smallholder farming households' livelihood outcomes in Ghana. Even though incentives are provided, they favour the government and related agencies rather than the impoverished rural communities where these land grabs occur.

To better understand the impact of land grabs on host communities, Mabe et al. (2019) conducted a study to assess the effects of land grabs on communities without these acquisitions and those where these acquisitions have taken place. Their study concluded that households in communities without the investments and projects had higher livelihood security (HLS) index in terms of food security, health, economic, and sanitation than the communities where the acquisitions have taken place. The non-participation of the people and the failure of the actors involved in the land deals to achieve consensus, according to Yaro and Tsikata (2013), is the reason most of these land deals fail to achieve their stated objectives. To worsen the situation of the people in host communities further is the finding by Schoneveld et al. (2010) that the institutional mechanisms which enable these land grabs are incapable of acting to mitigate adverse impacts of the projects. The authors noted a variety of factors that cause this situation. The first issue is the chiefs' lack of oversight and responsibility. There is also a lack of coordination among the various government agencies responsible for the sector. Finally, traditional authorities tend to act without consequence and a lack of appreciation of the actual value of the land. Together, these factors undermine any efforts to leverage simplified processes for enhancing local participation to ensure maximum benefits.

According to the literature, land grabbing has also occurred in the mining industry, negatively affecting livelihoods. Ayelazuno (2014) contends that Ghanaian governments have promoted large-scale mining by transnational mining companies (TMCs) as a fundamental development strategy. However, the implementation of this strategy comes with attendant effects, including land dispossessions, loss of access to water resources, and environmental degradation. According to Andrews (2018), the dispossession experienced undermines the potential contribution of mining to the absence of sustainable livelihood outcomes for people in host communities. The operations of the large-scale mining companies have also become a source of conflicts within the host communities. The local small-scale miners felt their livelihood source had been threatened due to the takeover of mining concessions. This, therefore, culminated in violent confrontations between small-scale operators, the new investors, and the security forces often deployed to protect the concessions acquired by the large-scale mining companies (Aubynn 2009).

2.3.6 Differentiated implications of land grab in Ghana

Commercial farming projects resulting from land grabs have differentiated impacts on various segments of society. A study by Kuusaana (2017) found that chiefs, local elites, speculators, and some government agencies were perceived to benefit in various ways from land transactions. This contrasts the experiences of groups such as migrant farmers, women, poor community commoners, and the title-less smallholder farmers who were worse off in a land grab process. Boamah (2015) discovered that the differentiated effect of biofuel investments on the livelihoods of individuals and social groups was dependent on how individuals and social groups interacted with changing social and political institutions, as well as how investors (re)negotiate with local socio-political institutions in the implementation of biofuel projects. The impact these large-scale projects have on the various segments of the host

communities depends on one's status and the level of power and influence they wield within the community.

Mariwah et al. (2019) noted that different segments of people in the host communities tend to have varied concerns on the implications of land grabs in their respective communities. They discovered in a study that while young people and women were concerned about the long-term effects of allocating too much land to cashew plantations, the middle and older generations were concerned about their poor bargaining position during negotiations over land sales. This study sought to gauge the people's perceptions on the commercial projects reveals how one's status in the community could lead to a differentiated impact of the project on their livelihoods. For instance, the youth could benefit by way of possible employment avenues created by the project. The elderly could lose access to their ancestral lands, and the fortunes of women could become a lot worse by their marginalized status in Ghanaian society. Therefore, the reviewed literature had some scholarly works assessing the gendered implications of land grabs in Ghana (see Bukari and Kuusaana 2018; Hausermann et al. 2018; Nibi 2012; Tsikata 2014; Williams et al. 2012).

For instance, Hausermann et al. (2018), in a study, concluded that land-grabbing for gold resulted in deeper gender inequalities and social differentiation. This is because the compensation paid to men for the destruction of their farms far exceeds that of women if compensated but in most cases rarely compensated. According to the authors, this disparity exploited the already existing customary land tenure systems that are socially and structurally biased against women. The structure enabled men to cultivate lucrative cash crops such as cocoa, rubber, and rice. In contrast, women planted subsistence crops for food preparation. Tsikata and Yaro (2014) found these inequalities in the land tenure systems have contributed to the fact that women routinely have smaller and less fertile land and experience challenges with productivity and livelihood outcomes. As a result, even though both men and women

depend on the land for their livelihoods, the loss of this asset widens the gender gap in host communities.

This assertion is further affirmed by the research findings of Nibi (2012). In her study on the effect of large-scale agrofuel production on women in Northern Ghana, she discovered that expanding agrofuels into areas where women have poor tenure protection due to patriarchal systems and norms serves to exacerbate the situation through a process she calls "double-dispossession." This double-dispossession means “a situation where women lose both their rights and access to land for cultivation and secondly to the natural resources for food, income, medicine, and fodder” (Nibi 2012:33). This research, therefore, reinforces the view that the phenomenon of land grabs exposes the weaknesses of Ghana’s land tenure system; the only difference in the context of this research is that women tend to bear the brunt of this phenomenon.

The inability of projects resulting from land grabs to reduce gender inequalities in the control of livelihood resources and incomes was explored by Tsikata and Yaro (2014). Their research into the operations of the Integrated Tamale Fruit Company found that the company’s activities worsened women’s reproductive burdens through the loss of forest resources closer to their homes. The new time and transportation costs and the need to negotiate access to new sources of forest resources were a threat to the livelihood prospects of women. It must be noted that the pre-existing inequalities inherent in the land tenure system notwithstanding, the failure of projects to take these into account or to mitigate them contribute to exacerbating the gender inequalities within the host communities of these projects.

According to Huggins et al. (2017), the attempt to address these concerns only exacerbates the gender inequality problem. Their study contends that the government's attempt to contain and regulate small-scale artisanal mining in Africa only reinforces existing gender inequalities. They assert that the emphasis by governments on the formation of associations in

mining communities creates male leaders to the disadvantage of women working in and around mining sites may be less likely to have such a platform for negotiating with other stakeholders.

2.3.7. Land grabs and conflicts in Ghana

The history of Ghana is replete with conflicts and contestations over shared commons such as land and water. According to Campion et al. (2012), recent natural resource conflicts in Ghana are associated with land related to expropriation, ambiguous land ownership systems, and tenure arrangements, unfair or unpaid compensation, and abuse of power. To the specific issue of how land grabs play a role in these resource conflicts, the study found that biofuel investments deprived communities of using resources on which their livelihoods depend. The situation is further compounded by the non-payment of compensation or provision of alternative livelihoods. These minuses form the basis of discontent among the local people, often resulting in resistance and, ultimately, conflicts.

Kasanga et al. (2019) add other considerations, such as the undocumented existence of group land borders, tenancy history, and legislative intervention by the state and its agencies, to the view that land grabbing acts as a precursor to land disputes in Ghana. In recent times, the increasing value of land in response to the rush for lands in Ghana has only exacerbated the underlying problems associated with land management in Ghana. According to a study conducted by Kuusaana and Bukari (2015) in the Asante Akim North District, while there are issues regarding land ownership, access, and usage of customary land that trigger conflicts in the region, the situation has worsened due to rising land prices and scarcity as a result of commoditization, individualization, and commercialization of land in a new era of land grabs.

However, an exciting finding in the literature points out that some of these investors have sought to mitigate some of these conflicts through corporate social responsibility (CSR). Abubakari et al. (2020) found that implementing CSR interventions and benefit-sharing mechanisms has had de-escalating effects on land conflicts in two selected communities that

have experienced land grabs (i.e. Agogo and Kpaacha). In Agogo, for example, the researchers discovered that steps such as the investor's decision to shift investment focus from biofuel to food crops, the establishment of a structured rent payment system, and the operation of flexible and rotational work schemes for community members were all taken to reduce the risk of conflict. Similar interventions in Kpaacha including, infrastructure development and de-restricted communal access to unused land spaces and economic trees for local livelihood sustainability, softened local discontent and served as a mitigation measure against the outbreak of conflicts.

2.3.8. Conclusion

A review of the literature on land grabs conducted above reveals that the nature of land deals with their largely negative effects on host communities qualify the acquisitions in Ghana to be termed as land grabs in line with the neo-colonialist perspective as noted in Boamah (2014). It was also discovered that successive governments had been the main drivers of land grabs in Ghana by establishing an enabling atmosphere to draw foreign investments into the agriculture sector through deliberate policy. For instance, the Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project launched in 2013, for example, targeted commercial enterprises engaged in agricultural production, agro-processing, and other activities along the value chain. The goal was to improve the investment climate for agri-business and develop inclusive public-private partnerships (MOFA 2020). Therefore, the consequent rise in commercial farming projects can be attributable to this deliberate government policy. Regarding actors involved in the Ghanaian land grab, the existing literature acknowledged the role of traditional land grabbers of the United Kingdom and the United States. It was also worth noting that countries such as India and China have emerged as significant competitors in Ghana. These acquisitions took place for various reasons, including food crops, biofuels, forestry, and mining.

Due to its inherent institutional weaknesses, the Ghanaian land tenure system has also been faulted for overseeing bad deals and being inherently too weak to supervise the companies engaged in commercial agricultural projects in the country. At the base of institutional weakness is the overlapping roles of the state and customary institutions (chiefs) over the processes leading to land acquisitions in Ghana. It will be interesting to determine how the new Land Act 2020 will harmonize the rules governing the land acquisition processes to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities between the institutions. The weakness of the institutions was further cited as a cause of the negative effects of land grabs in the country.

The negative effects revealed in the various studies were varied. They include a threat to food security, income loss to families, displacement, a threat to social cohesion, conflicts, and environmental impacts. Specific attention was also paid to how these land acquisitions affect different segments of the various communities. Studies such as Hausermann et al. (2018), Nibi (2012), Tsikata (2014), Williams et al. (2012), and Bukari and Kuusaana (2018) examined how land grabs affected women in the host communities and found that women were generally worse off in terms of livelihood outcomes as a result of land grabs. Their low status within the social structure disables them from owning lands that could earn them some form of compensation. The role of chiefs in the processes of land grabs was also explored in the existing literature. It was noted that in various communities where these acquisitions occur, chiefs had become significant sources of conflict.

From the above, there seems to be a significant amount of literature on the phenomenon of land grabs in Ghana. However, there is a need for more work on the phenomenon, particularly concerning how the host communities are coping with the identified negative impacts of land grabs. Also, more research needs to be carried out to understand how these land grabs affect different segments of the community's social structure and their response mechanism. Some scholars have explored the sustainable livelihood question in this research

within the Ghanaian context (see Fredua et al. 2017; Tanle and Abane 2018; Mensah et al. 2019). With specific reference to the impact of land grabs on livelihoods, the study by Suhiyini et al. (2018) concluded that land grabs posed a threat to development as the disadvantages outweigh the advantages of the livelihood outcomes of the households. While the study is relevant, it did not consider how institutional and regulatory frameworks contribute to the land acquisition process and impact smallholder farmer livelihoods.

Additionally, the study did not consider how land ownership status, community status, gender, incomes, availability of livelihood alternatives, and availability of farmers' support groups predict the impacts of land grabs on livelihoods. Furthermore, the study did not focus on how livelihood alternatives and institutional interventions predict the likelihood to cope well with the phenomenon of land grabs in farming communities. These are the knowledge gaps this study seeks to fill using insights from the study areas.

A study by Quaye (2008) sheds light on coping strategies in response to food insecurity to include migration, support from relatives and friends, sales from livestock and household valuables, and food intake reduction and consumption of less preferred food. Her study outlined the broad mechanisms households adopt in response to a specific impact of food insecurity. A further differentiated examination of the coping mechanisms adopted would have enhanced our knowledge of how individuals are likely to respond to food insecurity challenges based on characteristics such as gender, income, and community status.

2.4 Conceptual framework

The study employs the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (see Chambers and Conway 1992; Scoones 1998) to understand how farmers are experiencing and responding to the phenomenon of land grabs. This framework helped to understand better the livelihood outcomes of land grabs on individual farmers. Other frameworks have been used to study the phenomenon of land grabs and associated livelihood outcomes. Two of such frameworks

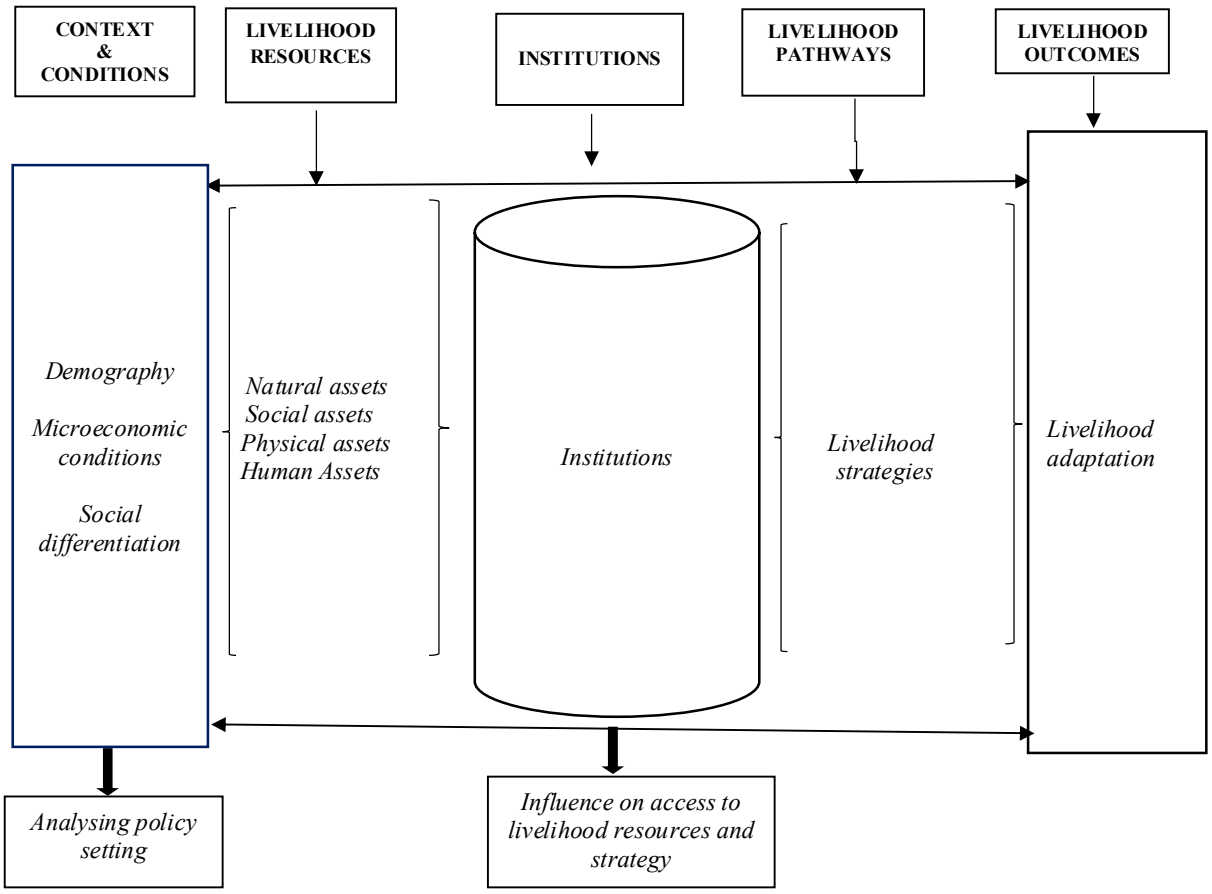
include political ecology and socio-ecological frameworks. A study by Adams et al. (2019), for instance, combined political ecology with the hydro-social cycle to discover the socio-political factors that underlie land-water grabs. The choice of political ecology enabled the research to examine the multiplicity of actors involved in the process and to understand the motivations and power relations that underlie land and water grabs as one socio-environmental process through which society and nature shape each other. Similarly, Ndi (2017) adopted the feminist political ecology framework to understand the gendered perceptions of large-scale land acquisitions.

Oberlack et al. (2016) also utilized the socio-ecological framework to explain livelihood changes due to interactions between system components such as resource systems, resource units, governance systems, and actors. This framework allowed them to examine the factors and processes that generate different livelihood outcomes in large-scale land acquisitions in a study covering four different continents (Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe). Olalekan et al. (2012) also applied the socio-ecological framework to understand the relationship between people, land, and water resources in Ghana. The choice of this framework was relevant as it enabled them to investigate how the complex systems link social, economic, and political settings and related ecosystems. The application of political ecology and socio-ecological framing allowed previous researchers to examine the phenomenon of land grabs at the macro/micro level, including the consequential impacts and how the phenomenon connects to the multiple sectors and actors within the societal ecosystem (see Ahmed et al., 2019; Ndi 2017; Oberlack et al. 2016; Olalekan et al. 2012). In other words, these conceptual frameworks enabled an understanding of the complexities surrounding issues related to environment and development. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework as implemented by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and other relevant studies (see Mabe et al. 2019; Owusu 2019; Sobeng et al. 2018; Suhiyini et al.

2018) is most appropriate for this study. This study investigates how individual farmers encounter and react to livelihood changes at the micro-level. Notably, the application of this framework enables me to examine the livelihood outcomes of land grabs in host communities.

The DFID has used this framework to understand and analyze the livelihoods of the poor (DFID 1999). A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and resources or assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation. It is comprised of the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access), and activities required for a means of living (Chambers and Conway 1992; Scoones 1998). According to Jongschaap et al. (2007), these assets could be in physical assets such as infrastructure, housing, equipment, and livestock or a form of human assets such as education, health, knowledge, and skills. They could also be social assets, including community relationships, involvement in political and social activities, involvement in decision-making, and the platform of representation. Water, soil, and environmental resources are all considered natural assets. Individual assets thus serve as the foundation for their competitiveness and long-term viability. The main components of this framework include the vulnerability context, livelihood assets, policies, institutions and processes, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes (GLOPP 2008). This study adopts three framework components: livelihood assets, institutions, and livelihood strategies and outcomes to achieve the stated objectives *(see Figure 1 below).*

Figure 1:Institute of Development Studies' Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Framework (Adapted from Scoones 1998; Sobeng et al. 2018)



The livelihood assets referred to above include land, which serves as a source of livelihood to the people through subsistence farming. The land is an asset that enables rural communities to have improved and better livelihoods. Therefore, dispossessing rural communities of their lands through large-scale land acquisitions can render them landless, thereby depriving them of their livelihood. Gironde and Golay (2015) noted that the dislocation of people due to the land acquisition might mean that they must restructure their livelihood from losing their assets. Through the phenomenon of land grabs, a change in access to this

asset impacts their livelihood. Therefore, focusing on this component helps to document the conditions that currently affect livelihoods in the communities.

The adoption of the livelihood strategies and outcomes component of the framework would provide the context to describe the mechanisms adopted by the community members in response to the change occasioned by land grabs. Institutions play an essential role in this framework. Davies (1997), cited in Sobeng et al. (2018: 161), views institutions as "the social cement which links stakeholders to access capital of different kinds to the means of exercising power and so define the gateways through which they pass on the route to positive or negative [livelihood] adaptation." Similarly, Hodgson (2006) views institutions as formal or informal entities normally established and constituted by binding laws, regulations, conventions, and norms embedded in traditional social practices and culture. In this research, the role of the state and customary institutions (chiefs) is examined to assess how their conduct determines and shapes livelihood outcomes of people affected by the phenomenon of land grabs. Institutions at these two levels are important because, as noted in Lambrecht and Asare (2016), oversight over lands management in Ghana is jointly managed by the state and traditional authorities at the local levels. Therefore, to a considerable extent, their conduct determines how people respond to the livelihood changes occasioned by land grabs. The state is represented through agencies such as the ministry responsible for lands and natural resources and the Land Commission. According to the Chieftaincy Act (2008), a chief is a person who hails from the appropriate family or lineage, has been validly nominated, elected, or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage. Therefore, these two entities (state and the chiefs) have a legitimate basis to act in the administration of lands in Ghana. As a result, a better understanding of the role of these institutions allows this study to look at the mechanisms that help or hinder the achievement of sustainable livelihoods in the selected communities.

This framework has been applied in various studies. For instance, Sobeng et al. (2018) adopted it to examine the effect of forest management on the livelihood of communities living near the Tano-Offin forest reserve in Ghana. Also, Owusu (2019) utilized it to investigate the livelihood situation of small-scale coastal fisherfolk in the Western Region of Ghana. Similarly, Mabe et al. (2019) employed it to estimate the household livelihood security index for households living in communities with and without large-scale land acquisition in Northern Ghana. In their respective studies, the authors emphasized different aspects of the framework. In their study, Suhiyini et al. (2018) emphasized the vulnerability component to establish a correlation between land grabs and negative livelihood outcomes. Similarly, Owusu (2019) also focused on the vulnerability context to understand the changes in the external environment and how they affect or influence people's livelihoods. A more related application of this framework is contained in Sobeng et al. (2018). Their study highlighted how institutions serve as barriers to and opportunities for achieving sustainable livelihoods.

Similar to the application of the framework by Sobeng et al. (2018), this study emphasizes the role of institutions. This is because institutions' decisions over who has access to a natural asset (i.e., land) could significantly alter the livelihood options available to locals in a community. Land constitutes a significant asset for farmers; therefore, losing such a resource will affect their livelihood outcomes. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework provides a helpful frame to understand the impact of these land deals on farmers, how they respond to the phenomenon, and the role institutions play to either aid or constrain these response/coping mechanisms. This study examines the effects of land grabs and the coping mechanisms adopted by farmers in communities where these acquisitions have either failed, been successful, and are being contested. This classification improves our understanding of how institutions act and affect livelihood outcomes under different circumstances.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the procedures that were followed to carry out the research. It describes the methodological approach and the methods used for data collection, including how primary data was collected and analyzed for this thesis. Specifically, the chapter entails information about the types and sources of data, sampling techniques, methods, and tools for data collection and the techniques employed for analyzing the data. However, the concluding section will briefly reflect on the data collection processes and protocols amidst the COVID-19 pandemic due to the unique circumstances in which this research was conducted.

3.1 Methodological approach

To achieve the objectives of this study, I adopted an exploratory research approach using mixed methods to collect data for this thesis. This approach offers a broad-ranging, purposive, systematic, prearranged undertaking designed to maximize the discovery of generalizations leading to description and understanding of an area of social or psychological life (Stebbins 2001). Swedberg (2020) contends that at the core of exploratory research is an attempt to discover something new. Through an extensive literature review and field data collection on the phenomenon of land grabs, the exploratory research approach helps fill the gaps in knowledge by generating new insight into how farmers in Ghana are coping with the processes of land grabs.

Regarding data collection, I employed a mixed-method research approach. Mixed methods refer to a research design that integrates qualitative and quantitative research methods (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017). I chose this approach because it ensures a more profound, broader understanding of the phenomenon under study and gives readers more confidence in the results and conclusions they draw from the study (McKim 2017). Also, the mixed-method

approach is appropriate in conducting global analyses of issues as it encompasses both micro and macro dimensions. It allows a researcher to pair interviews with target groups with quantitative data (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017). Therefore, this approach is suitable for this study as it seeks to understand how a global phenomenon such as land grabs affects people's livelihoods in specific local areas.

The mixed-method approach has been applied to undertake related studies. For instance, Santos and Brannstrom (2015) adopted it to demonstrate that recent fishery agreements with a marine extractive reserve in Cassuruba (Brazil) contradict fisherfolk livelihood diversification strategies and produce differentiated impacts on households. Smith (2014) also applied it to provide an overview of Kenya's ethical sourcing, gender, and sustainable livelihoods. Similarly, Okpara et al. (2016) employed it to examine the phenomenon of lake drying and livelihood dynamics in the context of multiple stressors using Lake Chad as a case study. These examples highlight the utility of this methodological framework for my proposed research.

The mixed-method approach applied in this study is evident in data collected, data analysis, and presentation and is explained as follows. First, a field survey was conducted, which formed the quantitative component of the data for the study. The data collected from the survey was then analyzed using the statistical data analysis software Stata. According to Tiong (2017), Stata is a complete, integrated statistical software package that helps with data analysis, data management, and graphics and is particularly useful for managing large datasets. For this thesis, Stata 16.1 was used to group the variables into various categories, estimate proportions, and generate graphs for the selected variables. The results of the quantitative data analysis are presented in tables and graphs in the results section of this thesis (Chapter 4). The qualitative component of the data was generated through three methods, namely focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and document analysis. The focus group discussions were held at

designated public places within the communities. It was followed by interviews with key informants on the subject matter of land grabs in Ghana. Finally, I carried out document analysis on policies, reports, and various legislations governing land administration in Ghana to augment the previous two techniques. The data from the qualitative component was categorized into themes and analyzed using the qualitative data analysis software, MAXQDA. This software allows researchers to organize and categorize data into various themes, code and retrieve coded segments in a click (Marjaei et al. 2019). The results from the qualitative data analysis are presented in quotations under various respective themes in the chapter. The findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data were triangulated across the different data sets (e.g., survey and interviews) and alongside existing scholarly works to gain a nuanced understanding of the processes and outcomes of land grabs in Ghana.

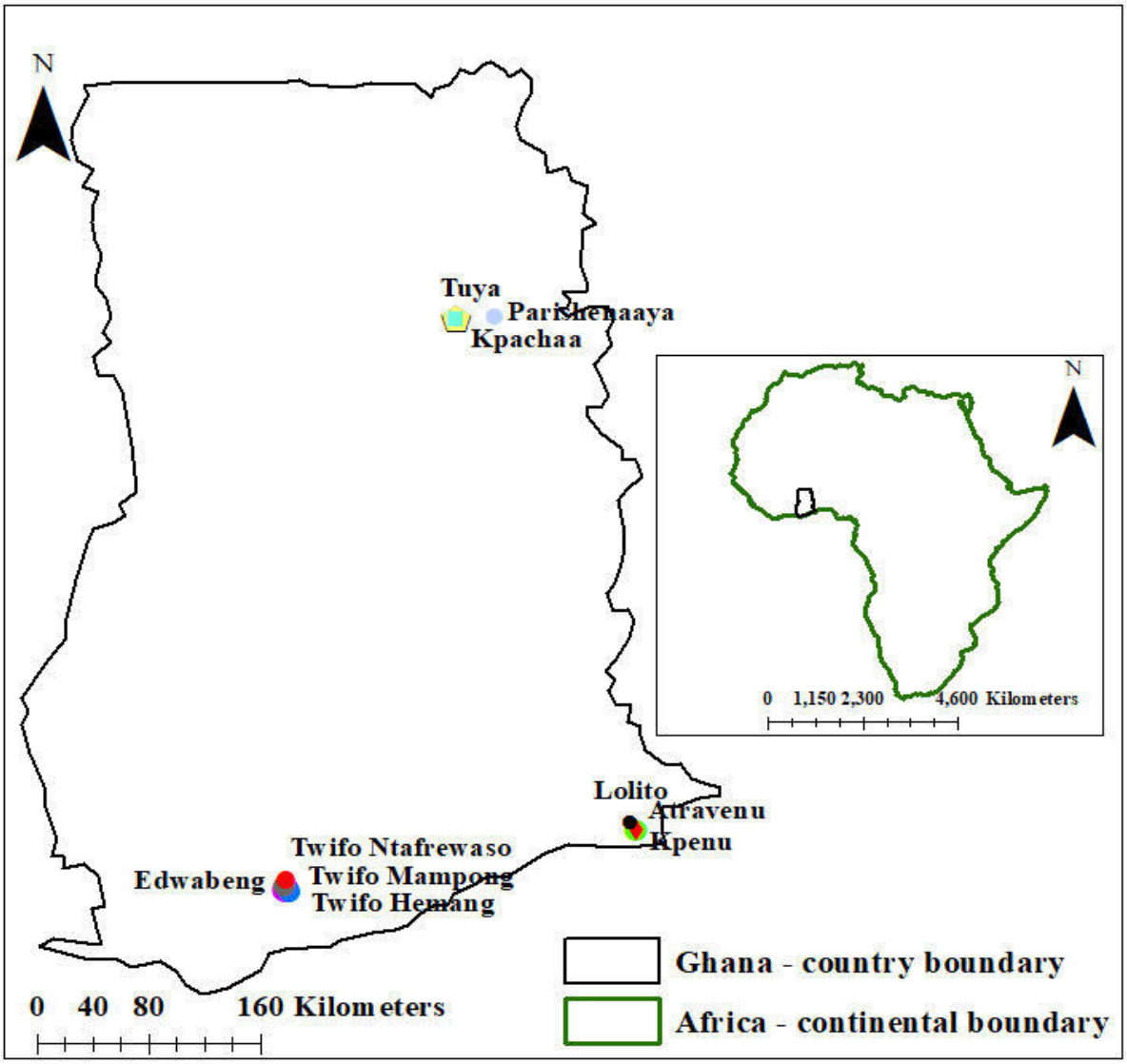
3.2 Case study selection, locations, and sample population

This project entails exploratory research that uses a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the relationship between land grabs and livelihood outcomes. A case study is defined as an intensive study of a single unit to understand a larger class of similar units (Gerring 2004). In other words, a case study allows for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Yin 2003, 2009). By adopting a case study approach, this research can construct cases from a single unit while remaining attentive to inferences that span similar units outside the formal scope of the investigation (Darian-Smith and McCarty 2017). This method was used to learn how farmers in Ghana's agrarian communities deal with and react to land grabs in their communities.

For this case study, I purposively selected communities in three regions of Ghana: the Northern region, Central Region, and the Volta Region (see Figure 2). These communities were chosen for the following reasons. First, the selection was based on the presence of large-scale land investments. Second, there is information about the respective projects and a dimension

of land grabs. According to the Land Matrix (2020), these three regions have recorded 41 separate land deals with an estimated land size of 209,406 hectares. The selection allows the analysis of livelihood outcomes in communities where investments have been largely successful (Central), contested (Volta), and failed (Northern). These classifications are informed by the varied outcomes and responses the various projects elicited from host communities. Preliminary research on the selected sites revealed that the projects in the Northern region were abandoned midway, hence the classification as a failed project. The project in the Central region was deemed successful due to the continuous execution of the project with little or no resistance from the people in the host communities. The project in the Volta region has come under tremendous contestation and protests from the people thereby justifying the tag of being a contested case. The findings of this study as contained in Chapter 4, coupled with the discussions in Chapter 5, justify these study locations' pre-fieldwork classifications. Thirdly, according to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, these regions share a common feature of their local economies being driven by subsistence agricultural activities. According to the census figures, the total number of agricultural households was 13,366,340, accounting for 54.2% of the total population. Out of this figure, rural areas (including the study areas) accounted for 73.5% of the agricultural households (Nortey 2013). Specifically, the Central and Volta regions have 73.2 % rural population, while the Northern region has 89.9% rural population. As such, the purposive selection of respondents from these populations enabled the research team to collect representative data on farmer experiences and responses to the processes of land grab in the respective communities.

Figure 2: Study locations.



Notes: Map representing study areas-

The communities where the data was collected were plotted using the coordinates chosen during the data collection process. The coloured icons represent the specific communities visited in the various regions. In this regard, in the Central region, the communities include Twifo Ntafrewaso, Edwabeng, Twifo Mampong, and Twifo Hemang. In the Volta region, the communities include Lolito, Atravenu, and Kpenu while the Northern region includes Tuya, Kpaacha, and Parishenaaya.

In selecting the participants for this research, snowball sampling techniques (Ranjit 2011) were adopted. For the sample, farmers in the respective communities above the age of 18 were selected; some officials were also interviewed. Out of the 902 respondents, 478 were men, and 424 were women. The selection of the farmers was built on the criterion of people present in the selected communities and engaged in farming. Therefore, farmers who satisfied the above criterion at the household level were selected. This was done through the help of community leaders and some of the farmers in facilitating the identification of various households. Selected farming household's heads were interviewed. Where the heads of households were unavailable, their spouses were interviewed instead. Seven interviews were also conducted with officials whose selection was based on their role in the processes leading up to land acquisitions. The choice of the institutional respondents was based on the criteria that first, that the institution got involved in land acquisition within the study area. Secondly, the institution performs functions connected with land acquisition or administration in general. To this end, data were collected from the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands, Lands Valuation Unit, Lands Commission, the respective corporate entities, and traditional authorities in the study areas. Additionally, six focus group discussions were held in the communities. The selected communities included Kpachaa, Parishenaaya, and Tuya (in the Northern Region), Twifo Hemang, Twifo Ntafrewaso, Mampong, and Edwabeng (in the Central Region), Atravenu, Kpenu, and Lolito (in the Volta Region).

3.3 Data collection

The data for this research was collected between September and November 2020. A survey instrument was utilized to collect quantitative data, while focus group discussions and key formant interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Quantitative work rests on observing and measuring repeated incidences over several cases. This, according to John (2010), allows for generalizations to be made about the empirical world. Therefore, it is a

valuable method in conducting this type of research that seeks to understand the respondents' attitudes towards the phenomenon of land grabs. On the other hand, the main focus of qualitative methods is to understand, explain, explore, discover, and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people (Ranjit 2011). The qualitative methods used (i.e. key informant interviews and focus group discussions) allowed us to gain insight into people's thoughts and feelings concerning the phenomenon of land grabs.

3.3.1 Survey

The survey method was employed to address research objectives #1 and #2, to examine the livelihood outcomes of land grabs on smallholder farmers (including food security, income, and land access) and examine the coping mechanisms that have been adopted. A survey, according to Kelly (2003), refers to the selection of a relatively large sample of people from a pre-determined population (the 'population of interest'; this is the broader group of people in whom the researcher is interested in a particular study), followed by the collection of a relatively small amount of data from those individuals. In designing the questionnaire, the research team opted for closed-ended questions. Closed questions provided 'ready-made' categories within which respondents reply to the questions asked by the researcher, which ensured that the information needed by the researcher is obtained to achieve the study objectives (Ranjit 2011). Respondents were therefore offered options to choose from in answering and sharing their experiences with the processes of land grabs in their respective communities. Information was solicited from respondents through the administration of semi-structured questionnaires. Respondents were allowed to express themselves and express their views on land acquisition issues. The questionnaire was grouped into sections aligned with the research questions to establish consistency with the study objectives. In total, 902 surveys were administered across the three study regions. To collect survey data, the team used KoBo collect software. The software enabled the team to collect the data using mobile devices such as mobile

phones and tablets. The recurring themes from the survey were then used to guide subsequent focus group discussions and interviews.

3.3.2 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group is "a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment upon, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research" (Stokes and Bergin 2006:27). The data generated from this interaction can be detailed, and the forum used to explore a wide variety of issues. In this regard, the focus group discussions were utilized to achieve objective #3 of the research, which sought to examine the institutional and regulatory frameworks within which the processes of land grabs take place. The focus group discussions presented an opportunity for the farmers to provide more context and detailed information to complement the data from the survey.

Participants were chosen from the local population of various socioeconomic statuses in each community. A total of six focus group discussions were held, two in each identified fieldwork location. Given the negative impacts of land grabs on women as outlined in the literature review above, deliberate steps were taken to elicit women perspectives in this research. To this end, two separate focus group discussions were held for women to air their views on the livelihood outcomes of land grabs in their communities. Due to the patriarchal nature of these communities, it was anticipated that having men and women in the same group discussions would not afford the women the opportunity to express themselves in ways that reflect their realities freely. Having separate group discussions for women yielded significant results in shedding insight on how women in the respective regions have experienced and dealt with the phenomenon of land grabs. Details of these findings are captured in Chapters 4 and 5 of this study. A discussion guide containing nine questions was utilized to clarify the respondents' perspectives. The research team took notes to complement audio recordings of the discussions.

3.3.3 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews involve interviewing a select group of individuals who are likely to provide needed information, ideas, and insights on a particular subject (Kumar 1989). The interviewees were selected because they believe that they possess knowledge or ideas to enable the researcher to achieve objective #3 of the research, that is, to examine the institutional and regulatory frameworks within which these land grabs occur. There were seven interviews conducted to elicit data from institutional respondents. These interviews were meant to help understand in a deeper context the role of institutions in aiding and or constraining the ability of smallholder farmers to cope with the phenomenon of land grabs.

3.3.4 Document Analysis

To further triangulate my findings, I also conducted document analysis as part of the research. Bowen (2009) defines document analysis as a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating both printed and electronic documents. According to Jentoft and Torunn (2019), data triangulation reveals a social phenomenon's complexity by providing a fuller picture, thereby making the research more complete. To this end, I reviewed various documents about land grabs in Ghana. These include policy documents, legislation, technical reports from funding agencies, and information found on websites. The aim was to gather information to aid the content analysis that would enhance the findings from the fieldwork. The analysis of these documents provided information on the processes which aid the phenomenon of land grabs and details on how the activities of land governance institutions in Ghana aid or constrain the ability of farmers to cope with the consequent livelihood changes.

3.4 Concluding Remarks: COVID-19 and the Limitations of Data Collection

My thesis has been carried out as a component of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Insight Development Grant project on "The Global Land Rush,

Inequalities and Livelihoods: Enabling Environments for Strengthening Food Security in Ethiopia and Ghana." The project seeks to understand the legal, policy, and regulatory regimes and processes that form an enabling environment for the private sector to strengthen food security, improve livelihoods and promote economic growth for all using the case studies of Ethiopia and Ghana. This project received ethics approval from the respective universities of the lead researchers, that is, Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A (CUREB-A) and University of Northern British Columbia Ethics board.

On the other hand, my research seeks to highlight the livelihood outcomes in communities where land grabs have occurred in Ghana. Therefore, I was contracted to assist with data collection for the project and contribute by working on selected research questions as a master's degree student at the University of Northern British Columbia. As a student, my duties included conducting literature reviews and assisting with primary data collection between June and August 2020. The outbreak of COVID-19 within this originally stipulated period of primary data collection and the consequent international travel ban meant alternative means had to be used to collect the primary data from Ghana. To this end, a Ghana-based research team (based at the University of Development Studies) was employed to assist with data collection between September and November 2020. Meetings were held between the Canada research team (my supervisors and I) and the Ghana research team to apprise them about the project and its expected outcomes, the various methods of data collection to be adopted, the selected locations for the data collection, and ethical consideration and training for the Ghana research team. The Ghana research team then visited the chosen locations to collect the data. The research team's knowledge of the study locations enabled them to engage in seamless community entry, identify potential respondents according to the sampling frame, and seek their written and verbal consent from the respondents. They then proceeded with the data collection in the respective communities.

The raw data from this team was subsequently shared with us at UNBC (myself and my supervisor) to screen, clean, and analyze for both the bigger SSHRC project and my thesis. I signed an agreement with the project team to have access to the primary data and use portions relevant to understanding the coping mechanisms employed by farmers in agrarian communities where land grabs have taken place.

However, my inability to participate in the data collection process directly presented certain limitations. Generally, the personal nuances that I could have drawn from engaging in the various aspects of the data collection process were lost. Specifically, I could have drawn certain inferences from the administration of the questionnaires to inform the subsequent focus group discussions were missing due to my absence. Another challenge resulting from my absence from the field is the consequent inability to make certain observations in the study areas and keep a daily journal of occurrences. Moreover, it would have helped significantly to work directly with local experts who know the context and are well placed to contribute to knowledge production. These personal interactions on the field could have provided further context and insight into the data collected.

The surveys were conducted at the individual households of the respondents at their convenience. The focus group discussions were held at designated places within the respective communities. The interviews were conducted with key informants at a location and time convenient. Amid COVID-19, the team took steps to adhere strictly to the guidelines put in place by the National COVID-19 team in Ghana. These steps included wearing face masks, hand washing and sanitizing, and adhering to social distancing protocols. This was a requirement adhered to by both the respondents and the researchers. The Ghana research team that collected the data was paid an amount agreed upon by both parties. However, no compensation was paid to the respondents, but this did not significantly impact the quality or quantity of the data collected.

In the context of the constraints within which this study was carried out, as highlighted above, there were certain limitations worth noting. For instance, my inability to travel for fieldwork robbed me of the opportunity to apply the Sustainable Livelihood Framework's various components fully. This was particularly evident when analyzing the qualitative data. One aspect of the framework which was not fully explored has to do with how people's social assets, manifested in how one's social relations and connections to the centres of power, affect their ability to respond to the livelihood changes brought about by land grabs. Also, there was a limitation in seeking more detailed answers further to interrogate some of the issues during the interviews and focus group discussions. A case in point has to do with the specific activities the people engaged in post land loss. I would have delved deeper to understand whether the activities mentioned were complementary to their earlier occupation of farming or were new initiatives occasioned by the loss of land, which curtailed their farming activities. However, by focusing primarily on natural assets (i.e., land), the study was able to highlight how the conduct of institutions affects people's livelihood opportunities in the face of competing interests from external sources.

Chapter 4: Results

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings from the survey, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and the analysis of documents. The study examined how farmers respond to the processes of land grabs in selected communities in Ghana. Communities were selected from three regions in Ghana following a methodological typology that classified these cases as 'failed' (i.e., Northern region), 'successful' (i.e., Central region), and 'contested' (i.e. Volta region). The reviewed literature highlights the absence of discussions on the alternative livelihood options adopted by farmers in response to land grabs and the intervening role of institutions in the process (Cochrane et al., 2021; Suhiyini et al., 2018).

The main themes that emerged from the analysis covered how land grabs affect access to lands, impacts on food security, the community status and gender dimensions, and the roles of institutions in mediating livelihood outcomes. These themes will form the basis of the discussion in this chapter. It can be concluded that though communities in the three regions were negatively affected due to land grabs, the farmers in the Northern region are particularly left worse off in terms of losing access to their lands. Another insight is that alternative livelihood options employed by people in these communities are not sustainable and therefore do not guarantee their sustainable livelihoods.

The findings are presented using descriptive statistics (mostly frequencies and percentages), including quotes and rephrased statements. The first part is dedicated to presenting findings that speak to the study's first objective (i.e., to document the impact of land grabs). Then I present findings on the second objective, which examines the coping mechanisms. Finally, results highlighting the role of institutions in land grabs and livelihood outcomes are presented. To provide a context to how I arrived at the data for these findings,

Table 1 provides a sample of the questions asked during the survey and their corresponding theme(s), whereas the detailed questionnaire is included in the appendix.

Table 1: Thematic Breakdown of Sample Survey Questions

Theme	**Questions**
Land grabs and access to lands	Did you lose farmland to a commercial farm project?
	If yes, what has been the effect of the loss on your farming activity?
Land grabs and Food security	Compared to your current situation, how was the food security in your house before the foreign investment?
	Overall, do you find that foreign investment has reduced your access to food?
Responding to the processes of land grabs	Have you engaged in other income-generating activities after the loss of land?
	Do you think this is a better alternative to farming activities?
Role of institutions	Were you compensated for the loss of land?
	Did the traditional authorities offer any form of assistance?
	Did the government provide an alternative source of livelihood?

4.1. Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents

This first section contains demographic information on the respondents in the three regions where data was collected. The information includes gender, age, level of education, marital status, income levels, and the community membership status of the respondents. As contained in Table 2, the collection of this data helps to understand better how the social composition of the respective communities impacts the views expressed by the respondents.

*Table 2:*Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

Item		**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Sample size		902	100
Gender	Male	478	52.99
	Female	424	47.01
Age	18-30	124	13.75
	31-40	269	29.82
	41-50	302	33.48
	Above 60	207	26.57
Educational level	None	363	40.24
	Primary	333	36.92
	Secondary	137	15.19
	Technical	27	2.99
	Tertiary	42	4.66
Marital status	Single	150	16.63
	Married	691	76.61
	Divorced	61	6.76
Community Status	Indigene	615	68.18
	Migrant	287	31.82
Monthly income (*1CAD= 4.5254) 02/ 9/2021*	Less than 400 cedis	788	87.36
	401-500 cedis	9	1
	501- 600 cedis	13	1.44
	Above 600 cedis	92	10.2
Source of income	Farming	748	82.93
	Other	154	17.07

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents captured above offer an insight into the living conditions of people in these communities who are also subject to the processes and impacts of land grabs. For instance, the high level of illiteracy (77.17%) recorded among the respondents confirms the findings of the 2017/2018 Ghana Census of Agriculture report. The report indicated that more than four-fifths (i.e. over 80%) of persons engaged in agriculture have either never attended or attained a basic level of education for all types of agricultural activities (Ghana Statistical Service 2020). Also, the Gender and Agriculture Development Strategy (GADS II) estimates that 52% agricultural workforce are women and 30% of the country's households are female-headed (GADS II 2015). This existing information

contextualizes why 47% of the survey respondents were women – even within this rural and supposedly patriarchal environment.

Further analysis of the data revealed that 82.92% of the respondents indicated that farming was their main source of income. This confirms the rationale behind the selection of the study locations. As indicated in the case study selection, Farming is the main occupation of the people in the selected communities. Therefore, the high number of respondents who indicated farming as a source of income supports this study's respondents' characterization and their communities as agrarian. However, it is worth noting that the farming activity undertaken was not exactly lucrative as 87.36% of respondents earned less than $100 a month. Taking away the opportunity to earn this minimal income through land grabs ultimately leaves the people in a precarious living condition. This situation is also true for the respondents in the higher income bracket of respondents (i.e., those who earned above 600) because 90.22% also relied on farming as their main source of income. However, it is worth emphasizing that most group (85.87%) were surveyed in the Central region where the respondents indicated that they had an opportunity to work under the company's smallholder farmer scheme, albeit with a monthly income is sligh

4.2 The impact of land grabs in Ghanaian communities

This section addresses the first objective of this study: to document the impact of land grabs on livelihoods in Ghanaian farming communities. The rationale for this objective is to assess the lived realities and experiences of the respondents in these communities amidst processes of large-scale land acquisition. To this end, this section examines findings on the general impact of land grabs on the respondents, the gendered dimension, and the effects these projects have on food security in the respective study areas.

4.2.1 Land grabs and access to lands for farming: a regional breakdown

The study found that across the regions which constituted the study area for this research, 48.23% lost access to their asset (i.e. land) through the processes of land grabs, while 51.77% indicated that they did not lose access to their lands. These figures suggest that less than 50% of the respondents noted they had lost access to their lands. These were lands they were hitherto cultivating for food and to earn some income. This finding is contrary to popular literature reviewed as part of this study, which suggests that land grabs lead to a high level of land dispossessions in host communities on a broader level. However, further disaggregation of the data on regional bases reveals the extent of land deprivation caused by land grabs in the selected communities.

To better understand the impact of the land grabs in the respective study communities, I further disaggregated the figures presented above to understand the regional impact of land grabs regarding access to lands. From Table 3 below, communities studied in the Northern region recorded a high percentage of loss of 86.97% (247), the Central region had 42.95% (131), and the Volta region recorded 28.43% (89).

Table 3:Regional Breakdown of the loss of farmlands

	Central		**Northern**		**Volta**	
Effect	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	131	42.95	247	86.97	89	28.43
No	174	57.05	37	13.03	224	71.57
Total	**305**	**100**	**284**	**100**	**313**	**100**

The high rate of losses recorded in the Northern region (86.7%) confirms why community resistance to the projects leads to their eventual collapse or abandonment of projects, as shown in Figure 3 below. The reasons for this were noted by a participant in a focus

group discussion who stated: “a lot of farmlands were taken from farmers, which nearly caused hunger during that period. Looking at how the company was operating if they were to continue, hunger would have befallen us” (Male participant, Tuuya/Northern region, September 2020). The power of the chiefs in allocating lands to investors was evident in the Northern region. The investors contacted the chief of the area, and land allocations were made without the people's consent. This was evident in an interview with a sub-chief of Tuuya (Northern region) who noted, “the *Tijorinaa* (paramount chief) gave the lands out to the company because he [oversees the land]. So if he comes to tell you that he has given the lands out and for that reason, you have to nothing to say” (Sub-chief, Tuuya/Northern region, September 2020). This situation where the chief's power is unilaterally exercised leaves the people worse off in any transaction over land, which serves as their main source of livelihood.

Figure 3: An abandoned project site in the Northern region

This view taken by the respondents bears testimony to the importance they attach to the role land plays in achieving their livelihood objectives. The operations of the company in the area and the means through which they acquired the lands for their project displeased the farmers. A male focus group participant noted, “the best thing they should have done was to get a small land somewhere and use it as a test so that we can see but it was not so; they just came and took over the lands with the consent of our leader” (Male participant, Tuuya/Northern region, September 2020). The processes that led to the company's land grab and the lack of active participation with community representatives in decision-making processes deprived the citizens of their lands and the ability to pursue other livelihood opportunities. In this context, as the local authority, the chief placed himself in a position to directly negotiate with developers over the leasing of lands in the community, disregarding the people's interests. The decision as to the type and size of the lands to be leased out to the investors was the sole decision of the chief who presided over the area.

The case of the Central region, which recorded a 42.95% loss of farmlands, presents a unique case on how the processes leading up to land acquisition and the actors involved could determine whether people lose access to lands or not. The project in question, Twifo Oil Palm Plantation (TOPP), was initiated by the Government of Ghana with land acquired for commercial cultivation of palm fruits (Ghana Investment Promotion Council 2021).

*Figure 4:*A picture of the palm plantation managed by TOPP

Source: (http://www.toppghana.com)

Participants in a focus group discussion in the area confirmed the role of government in the acquisition process: "we were working on the land that belongs to our grandparents for farming cocoa before the government came to take over and handed it over to the company that is TOPP" (Female participant, Twifo Mampong/Central region, October 2020). The government's power to acquire lands in Ghana is stipulated in the 1992 Constitution, which states in Articles 1(a) that "the taking of possession or acquisition is necessary in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, public health, town and country planning or the development or utilization of property in such a manner as to promote the public benefit." Further, Article 1(b) states that "the necessity for the acquisition is clearly stated and is such as to provide reasonable justification for causing any hardship that may result to any person who has an interest in or right over the property" (Constitution of Ghana 1992).

The interpretation of this constitutional provision is that the government can acquire lands in the name of national interest compulsorily. However, Article 20(3) of the Constitution mandates the state to protect the interests of people whose lands were being taken. The mandate is to ensure that:

> Where a compulsory acquisition or possession of land effected by the State in accordance with clause (1) of this article involves displacement of any inhabitants, the State shall resettle the displaced inhabitants on suitable alternative land with due regard for their economic well-being and social and cultural values (Constitution of Ghana 1992: 35).

To this end, deliberate steps were taken by the state to ensure those to be affected by TOPP operations were resettled, as confirmed by some respondents: "TOPP company acquired the land in this community, and they gave us ten (10) acres for each one of us after an interview" (Male participant, Twifo Mampong Central region, October 2020). Another respondent shed further light on the operations of TOPP, stating that "before the company can take over the land completely, they planted their seeds on the farm on which we were working and so the company and we the farmers were managing the farm together (Male participant, Twifo Mampong-Central region, October 2020).

This land redistribution post-land grab by the state best explains why in this region, respondents who lost access to lands were in the minority compared to the Northern region. According to the policy statement of TOPP cited by the study, the redistributed lands formed the basis of the Twifo smallholder oil palm project. According to TOPP, this project aims to settle displaced farmers following the establishment of TOPP and reduce poverty among farmers within the Twifo community (TOPP Ghana 2021). It must be added that this project undertaken by TOPP augments the categorization of land acquisition in the Central region (at least in the context of the communities included in this study) as largely 'successful' despite some community concerns.

According to the Land Matrix (2020), the Brazil Agro-Business Group, which operates in the Volta region, is owned by Brazilian farmer Frademir Saccol who invested in the Lolito enclave of the Volta region. The company estimated that its rice harvests correspond to 2,220 hectares annually, with the potential to produce up to 155,400 tons of rice (Ghanaweb 2017).

Figure 5: Brazil Agro rice mill in the Volta region.

The low percentage of respondents in the region (28.43%) who reported losing their lands in the survey makes an interesting read compared with the available qualitative data sources. According to a 2015 report by farmlandgrab.org, about 600 farmers were displaced because of this investment in rice. This report was confirmed by participants in a focus group discussion one of whom stated that "a lot of farmlands were taken from farmers as well as their fishponds destroyed and nearly cause starvation …if you calculate the number of people whose farmlands were absorbed by the operations of the company, it is uncountable" (Male participant, Kpenu/Volta region, November 2020).

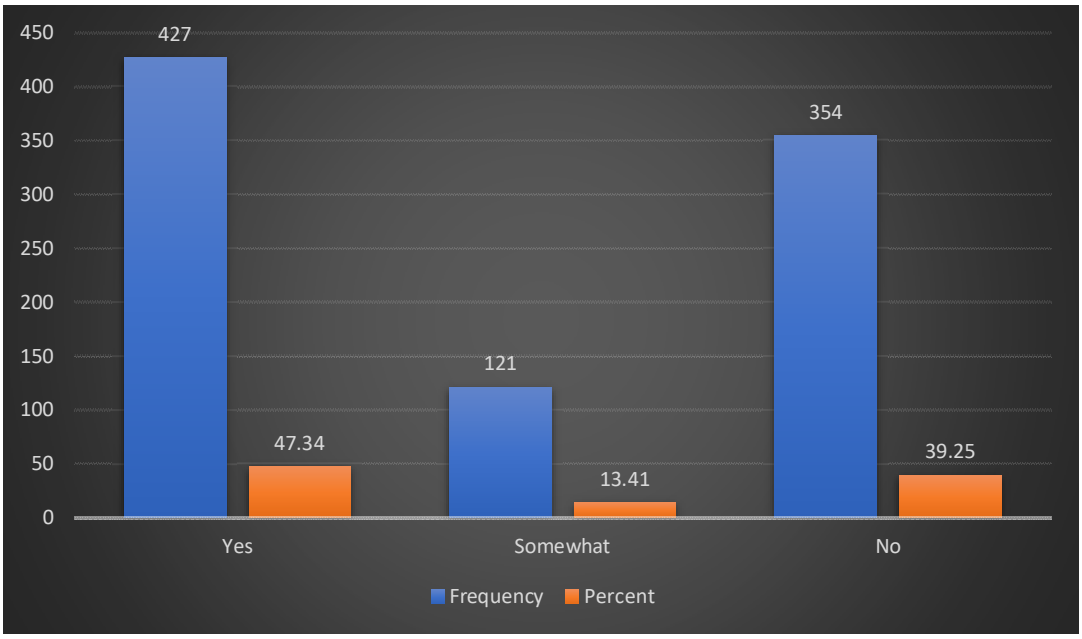
This assertion by the people in the discussion contradicts the recorded low figures regarding the respondents who lost their lands. The finding from the survey is further intriguing when one places into context the fact that this project has been a subject of protests from the people, as reported by farmlandgrab.org – even with a case currently awaiting the court decision. The seeming discrepancy in the quantitative and qualitative data can be attributed to two factors. First, I noted from a review of the news portals (Ghanaweb, farmlandgrab.com) that the company had to start its operations on portions of land that were not the subject matter

of court litigation while awaiting the outcome of the court verdict. This could explain why the number of respondents who confirmed losing their lands to the project during the survey was low. Secondly, the protests that greeted the company's operations in the area can be ascribed to the nature of land transfer between the earlier company (Biofuel Africa) and the new company (Brazil Agrobusiness group). Having failed in their initial project at biofuel production on the same portions of land, Biofuel Africa transferred the land ownership to Brazil Agrobusiness group for rice production. This transfer appeared to have angered the locals, who most probably felt ownership of the land should have reverted to them for personal use, hence the protests. The anger that greeted the onset of the project most probably found expressions during the platforms offered during the focus group discussions and the interview sessions. They provided respondents with an opportunity to fully air their views and grievances, unlike the limited scope of the surveys. The points raised here support the classification of this case as contested.

4.2.2 Impact of land grabs on food security

To examine the effect of land grab on food security, the respondents were asked to assess their food security situation after the inception of the projects in the respective communities. From the survey, most respondents (60.7%) indicated that the land grab in their communities negatively affected their food security situation, as depicted in the graph below.

Figure 6: Impact of the Project on Food security



Further analysis of the data revealed that food insecurity was occasioned by two factors: land loss and the type of crops produced on the acquired lands. A key informant with the Land Secretariat noted, "the farms where people fetch their food from are taking by the company and because of TOPP's investment, people tend to farm oil palm rather than food crops" (Male participant, Central region, October 2020). Similar sentiments were expressed during a focus group discussion in Tuuya in the Northern region. A participant noted, "even the farming of food crops we do is not enough, and you come and take our farmlands not to cultivate maize but Jatropha" (Male participant, Tuuya-Northern region, September 2020).

The institutional respondents at the local level and individual farmers believe that these land grabs have harmed people's food security based on the above findings. According to the data, land loss and how newly acquired lands are used harm household food security. This finding contradicts the laid-out institutional policy document guiding such land deals in Ghana to ensure food security. The first of these is contained in section (d) of the Land Commission's guidelines for large-scale land acquisitions, which enjoins the investor to "ensure that the investment does not harm food security and sustainability of livelihood of the affected

communities but rather strengthen them" (Land Commission Ghana 2015:9). Also relevant is the policy document by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA 2015) to regulate large-scale land-based investments under the Ghana commercial agriculture project. According to the policy guidelines, affected communities are to among others, "in exchange for their land, receive assets that will allow them to be equally or more well-off than they were before the investment benefit from a scheme that provides broad-based, long-term food security and income-generating potential for the community" (MoFA 2015: 42). Therefore, it can be deduced that though an elaborate policy framework exists to ensure that host communities benefit post the acquisition of their lands, evidence from this research proves otherwise. In particular, the respective projects the study found have worsened the food security situation of the people.

4.2.3 Land grabs and social differentiation: gender and community status

This section presents findings on the effect of land grabs on gender and how one is impacted based on one's status within the community either as an indigene from the area (i.e. 'son/daughter of the soil') or a settler/migrant. The objective is to determine the extent to which different segments of society are affected by the processes of land grabs.

The Gender and Agricultural Development Strategy (GADS II 2015) recognizes the potential of different segments of the society, including men, women, the youth, and persons living with disability, in accelerating agricultural growth and development of the country. This study, therefore, sought to examine how these commercial investments in agriculture impact the different segments of the respective communities under study. Further disaggregation of the total of 902 respondents in this study indicates that both men and women were affected. Table 4 shows that 51.88% of the men lost farmlands because of land grabs, while 51.65% of the women reported the same experience. This demonstrates that access to lands became restricted to both men and women in the study areas. This is an important finding because, in

rural communities such as those covered in this research, access to land invariably determines one's access to income-generating activities as well as one's access to food. As a result, we can conclude that land grabs pose a danger to household income and food security by their very nature, with 60.7% of respondents stating that the projects harmed household food security.

Table 4: Gender and loss of farmlands

	Men		**Women**	
Effect	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	248	51.88	219	51.65
No	230	48.12	205	48.35
Total	**478**		**424**	

The implications of the loss of farmlands noted above are that 73.52% of women experienced a reduction in the size of the farmlands available to them and consequently their income. This represents a higher percentage than those of their male counterparts which amounts to 63.71%, as indicated in Table 5 below.

Table 5: The gendered implications

	Men		**Women**	
Effect	**Frequency (m)**	**Percent**	**Frequency (f)**	**Percent**
Reduced Farm Size	66	26.61	39	17.81
Reduced Income	20	8.06	18	8.22
Both	158	63.71	161	73.52
Other	4	1.61	1	0.46
Total	**248**	**100**	**219**	**100**

The outcome of the analysis of the survey data reveals that both men and women have borne the brunt of the phenomenon of land grabs. However, the high figure recorded for women across the three regions is a worrying statistic. This is because 52% of Ghana's agricultural workforce are women (GADS II 2015). Data from a female focus group discussion in the Volta region, on the other hand, shows an intriguing relationship between the women in the area and the land grab project. According to the data, women in the study locations within the Volta region, unlike in the other areas, benefit from the project located in the city. This benefit comes from the opportunity to trade in the company products to earn an income. The company, the Brazil Agro group, outlined a policy objective to produce rice for sale locally and for export (Ghanaweb 2017). A female focus group participant noted that "this company has been very beneficial to us women. It helps us earn some income to take care of our families (Female participant, Atravenu/Volta region, November 2020). This initiative, therefore, created an avenue for women to sell the rice milled at the company as a source of income while the men, mostly farmers, lost their lands on which they farm to earn a living. A sub-chief and a male participant noted the following: "they gave work to our women as they can trade in their produce…our wives had the opportunity to trade in the processed rice produced at the company" (Sub-chief, Kpenu/Volta region, November 2020).

The role reversal brought about due to the onset of these projects had a telling effect on family relations. The men complained about how the projects have threatened their status as heads of their families. A respondent contended that "they have made our wives not respect us and feel superior because they have more money than we the men nowadays due to unemployment in the area" (Male participant, Kpenu/Volta region, November 2020). Aside from the women's economic empowerment in the area that supposedly threatened family relations, other men working with the companies (primarily migrants) were also accused of further destroying marriages. A focus group participant alleged, "men who were taking big

monies from the company were now those dating our wives, and so as believers, we prayed that the company collapses, and it did" (Male participant, Tuuya/Northern region, September 2020).

It is worth noting that though results from the survey data across the three regions indicated that women were also negatively affected by the projects, the insights gained from the focus group discussions in the Volta region offered a different perspective. Women in the region have been economically motivated due to earning money by trading company goods. However, this empowerment was misinterpreted by men as a challenge to their dominance and patriarchal role in society. It should be noted that this conclusion is based on an examination of qualitative data from the Volta region and thus does not apply to all cases.

On the theme of migration, the Ghana Statistical Service, in its 2010 population report, found an influx of people into rural areas. The first group of migrants includes people from urban areas who lack job opportunities in the cities, engaged in what they termed 'return migration to rural areas (Ghana Statistical Service 2010). Aside from this, people also move into rural areas searching for fertile lands to engage in agricultural activities. These new settlers often entered into various agreements with landowners in the communities they settle to carry out their activities. Both indigenes and their guests (migrants) depend on the land to earn a livelihood. I, therefore, explored how the processes of land grabs reflect in the lives of these two groups of people in host communities. One area examined is how the projects affect their food security situation. Table 6 indicates that the food security situation of migrants worsened because of the onset of the various projects compared to that of indigenes. A high score of 68.99% of migrants indicated experiencing food insecurity while 37.24% of the indigenes stated the same.

Table 6: Community status, the project, and food security

	Indigenes		**Migrant**	
Effect	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	229	37.24	198	68.99
Somewhat	74	12.03	47	16.38
No	312	50.73	42	14.63
Total	**615**	**100**	**287**	**100**

To understand how one's status within the community determines the extent to which the investment affects access to farmland, I further segregated the data from the respondents. As shown in Table 7 below, though there were losses on both sides, 57.24% (352) of the indigenes suffered higher losses than 40.07% (115) of migrants. The high rate of land loss among the locals can be explained by the fact that inheritance is the most common method of land acquisition in Ghana. In a paper, Annan and Grant (2004) reported that in the Volta region, for instance, access to land was primarily through inheritance and sharecropping. Inheritance accounted for 61% of land acquisitions, while sharecropping arrangements (typically open to migrants) accounted for 14% of land acquisitions.

Consequently, any process that results in land loss would disproportionately affect indigenous peoples rather than migrants. This is because indigenes had a higher proportion of communal lands under their control than migrants whose rights were limited under sharecropping agreements. Also, of the total number of respondents surveyed in this research, indigenes constituted 68.18% of the sample population. Therefore, the indigenes are more likely to be recorded as having lost lands to the processes of land grabs.

Table 7: Community status and loss of farmlands

	Indigenes		**Migrants**	
Effect	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	352	57.24	115	40.07
No	263	42.76	172	59.93
Total	**615**	**100**	**287**	**100**

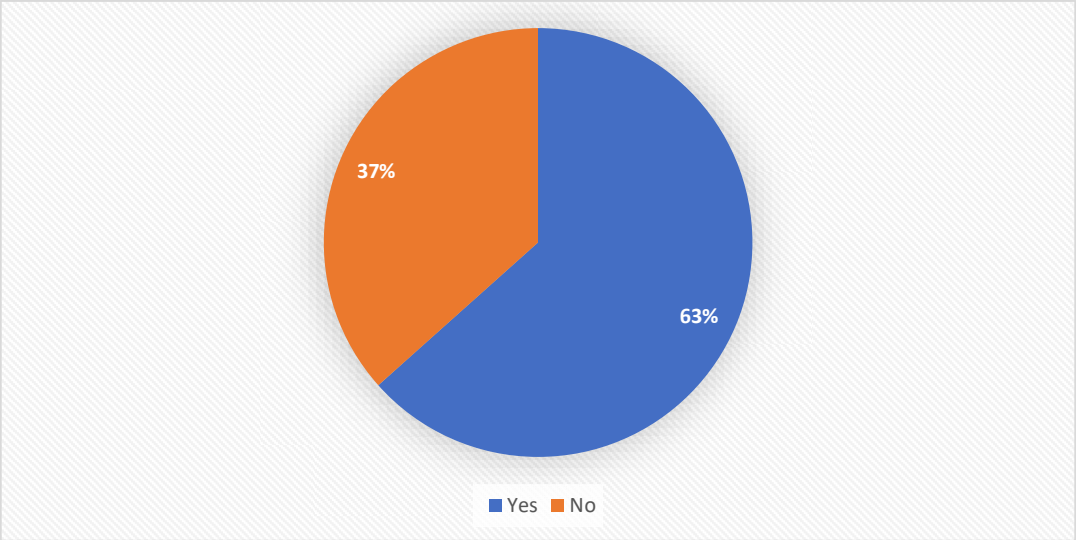
The phenomenon where people move from their communities and settle in other areas of Ghana is common. From the last population and housing census in 2010, it was noted that 9,866,774 people moved into rural areas in Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service 2010). Out of this number are farmers who migrate to farming communities to cultivate food and cash crops. The main attraction is to be close to fertile lands, which they lack back at home. In the communities where they resettle, the standard farming practice is to either lease lands or engage in sharecropping. Therefore, it is understandable that 59.93% of the respondents did not lose farmlands to land grabs. The high rate of food insecurity recorded among migrants (68.99%) after the inception of these commercial projects is indicative of their fragile status within these communities and the extent to which engaging in agricultural practices sustains their livelihoods.

4.3 Responding to the processes of land grabs

This section addresses objective 2, which seeks to examine the coping mechanisms adopted by individual farmers and communities to mitigate land grabs. The aim is to gauge the alternative livelihood options adopted by the farmers in response to the livelihood changes resulting from the land grab phenomenon in their communities.

The respondents were also asked to rate how well they have coped with the livelihood changes caused by land grabs in their communities. From Figure 10, 63.41% (572) said they had found ways to cope, while 36.59% said 'no.'

*Figure 7:*Ability to find alternative livelihoods



From the gendered perspective, 70.5% (337) of men from the aggregate figures in the three regions responded positively to coping well with the livelihood change compared to 55.42% (235) of women whose response was negative. This indicates that while both men and women have found ways to cope, the high percentage of men could be attributable to the fact that the men are generally expected to provide for their families even though women, in many cases are also take up such roles. This accounted for the drive by the male respondents to find alternative livelihood sources when dislocated from their farms by the phenomenon of land grabs. Men in these communities feel entitled to receive the available wage labour, especially when the jobs require mechanical equipment or manual labour. For instance, in the Volta region, a participant in a focus group discussion asserted that "they (company) picked us to do part-time jobs especially when they needed people to sow their rice or apply fertilizer" (Male participant, Kpenu- Volta region, November 2020). Before purchasing lands for the

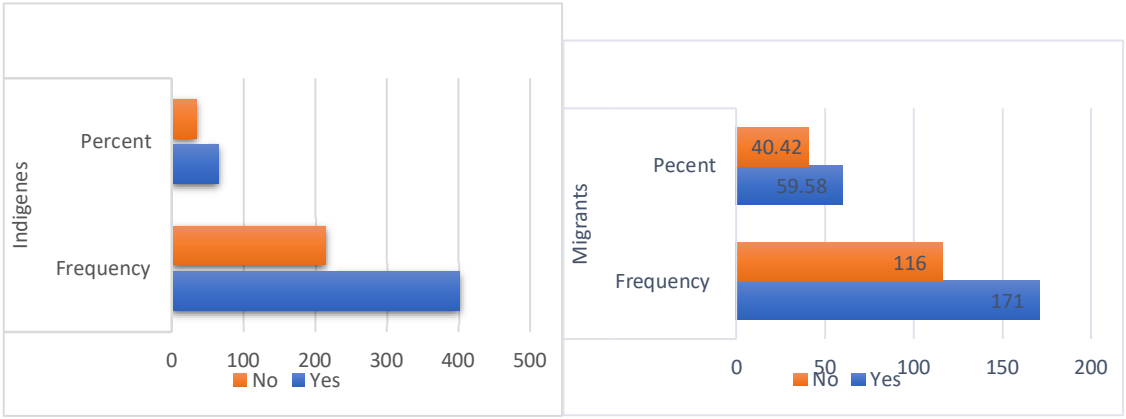
commercial rice farm project, men in the area used to plant rice and apply fertilizers. As a result, when the company required farm hands to complete these tasks, the men were ready for the temporary alternative.

Table 8: Gendered representation of the perception of coping strategies

Gender	**Men**		**Women**	
Effect	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	337	70.5	235	55.42
No	141	29.5	189	44.58
Total	**478**	**100**	**424**	**100**

Results in Figure 8 show that both migrants and indigenes from the three regions have coped well with the livelihood changes occasioned by land grabs. However, indigenes had a higher percentage of 65.2% than the migrant population, which stood at 59.58%.

Figure 8: Community status and the ability to cope



4.3.1 The coping strategies in response to land grabs

The aggregated data from this study suggest that respondents reported a loss of land to the processes of land grabs in the three regions surveyed. In these instances, the people adopt appropriate coping strategies to promote continuous sustainable livelihoods. The study

assessed the various strategies adopted by the respondents. It can be seen from Table 9 that the respondents resorted to other income-generating activities in response to their livelihood changes. Petty trading constituted 27.44% (76), artisans were 11.91% (33), 7.22% reported being employed by the project, and 10.47% of the respondents engaged in other forms of agricultural activities such as livestock rearing. Also, 9.03% (25) of the respondents found alternative employments while 7.22% (22) remained farmers but on a much smaller scale. The respondents had no choice but to resort to these alternatives as their main income source after losing their lands. To further ascertain the direct benefits of the projects in terms of employment opportunities for both men and women, I segregated the data on the respondents who indicated the project employed them. Out of the 20 people who indicated the projects used them, 85% (17) were men, while only 15% (3) were women.

This suggests that men tend to have more opportunities for direct employment than women after they have both lost farmlands to processes of land grabs. According to a sentiment expressed in a focus group discussion in the Volta region, men had a better chance of being hired by these firms. A male participant noted, "we were just employed as labourers on a part-time basis when they need people to sow their rice or apply fertilizer" (Male participant, Kpenu/Volta region, November 2020). It reflects that the available jobs were labour-intensive, and such jobs were historically considered to be the domain of men in these communities. As a result, it explains why, according to a focus group participant, men were in a stronger position to get hired by the companies, even if just part-time.

Table 9: Coping strategies in response to land grabs

Alternative livelihood	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Artisan	33	11.91
Petty trading	76	27.44
Project employment	20	7.22
Casual work	5	1.81
Diversified agriculture	29	10.47
Reduced farming activity	20	7.22
Alternative employment	25	9.03
Indeterminate	65	23.47

The number of people who indicated the respective projects employed them suggests the promised jobs often used as the marketing strategy to attain general social acceptance for these projects failed to materialize. A male respondent confirmed this assertion by stating:

> First, there was no truth between what the company said in the beginning and what they are doing afterwards. The truth is that, when the company came, we were told it was going to plant rice for which they would employ some of us to work in the company. But most of the people they employed were from other parts of the country and the region.(Male participant, Kpenu- Volta region, November 2020).

A similar sentiment was expressed in the Northern region when a participant in a male focus group discussion noted:

> They said that they were going to employ us the villagers so we can benefit from the company. But most of the people they employed were from Tamale, the regional capital. These were the people who took good salaries even though we had the same level of qualification and for those that were doing the part-time jobs were paid 60 to 70 Cedis at the end of the month. Can this amount be used to buy necessities and sustain the family? So, there was no truth in what they promised (Male participant, Tuuya/Northern region, September 2020).

From the above data, it can be inferred that the people whose source of livelihood was directly affected by the citing of the projects in the communities did not benefit from the

respective projects in terms of offering direct employment. As a further insight, an interview by Jose Leor Valer (Owner, Brazil Agro company, Volta region) a decade ago speaks to the employment issues: "the challenge facing the company now is the lack of skilled manpower to work on the farms" (Modernghana 2010). For the few who got employed by the companies, there was no security of tenure as their services could be disposed of at any time. A respondent noted that: "for here, it was part-time jobs they (company) picked us to do. That is when they needed people to sow their rice or apply fertilizer and lay us off at any point in time they feel like doing so (Male participant, Kpenu/Volta region, November 2020).

It was therefore not surprising that when asked to assess their level of satisfaction with the alternative livelihood options post the land grabs, 60.98% (550) of the respondents were not satisfied with the alternatives compared to 39.02% (352) of them who said they were satisfied with the options they chose.

Regarding how both men and women view the alternatives they resorted to, as indicated in table 10, 54.6% of the men were not happy with the other options. In comparison, 68.16% of the women indicated their disapproval. This shows that most of the women were not satisfied with the available alternative livelihood options they have access to in response to the processes and impacts of land grabs in their respective communities.

Table 10:Gender perceptions on the alternative livelihood options

	Men		**Women**	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	217	45.4	135	31.84
No	261	54.6	289	68.16
Total	**478**	**100**	**424**	**100**

Therefore, it is worth noting from the above that, in as much as the people in the host communities found alternative means to mitigate the negative impact of the land grabs on their livelihoods, these alternatives were temporary, non-satisfactory, and unsustainable. The net effect of this is that not only have the people suffered a loss of an important asset, but they are unable to cope with the consequent livelihood outcomes.

4.5 The role of institutions in mediating livelihood outcomes

The results presented below address this study's third objective, which seeks to investigate the institutional and regulatory frameworks that aid or constrain the coping mechanisms in local communities. The aim is to understand the nature of the regulatory frameworks for land investments in Ghana while examining the role played by institutions to help farmers in the study areas cope with the livelihood changes. To understand the role of institutions in this regard, I reviewed policies that govern land administration in Ghana. The findings from this review are presented here to provide the context within which the data gathered from the respondents are analyzed.

4.5.1 The state, land grabs, and rural livelihoods

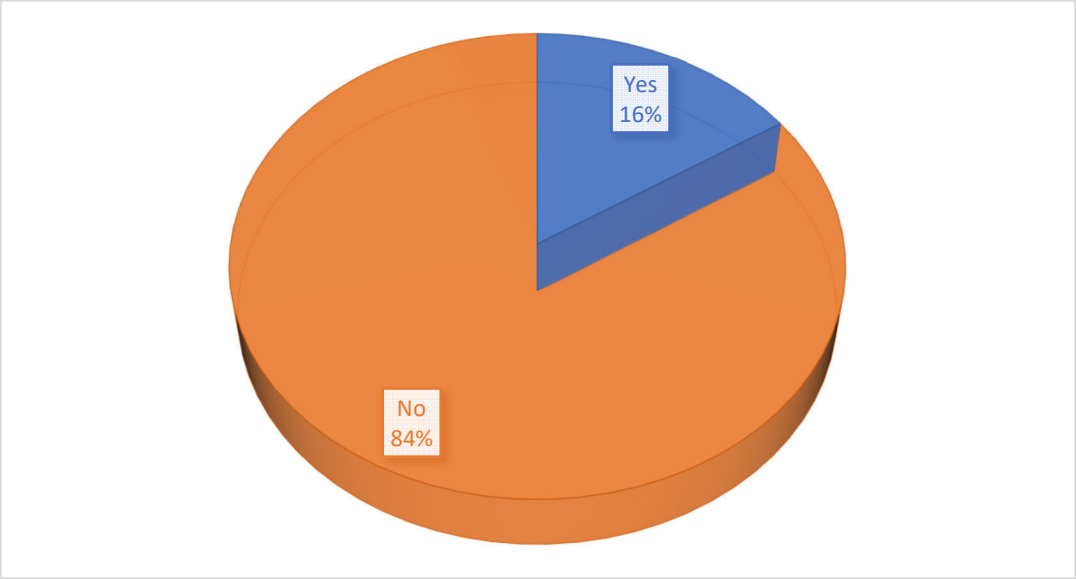
The state is empowered to undertake acquisitions of properties belonging to individuals or facilitate the same. This finds expression in the Constitution of Ghana in various sections of article 20 (a) empowers the state to, in the public interest, take possession of lands to be utilized for the benefit of the people. However, article 20 (b) mandates the state to provide reasonable justification for causing any hardship that may result in any person who has an interest in or right over the property. To do this, the Constitution expects the state to, as stated in Article (2a), ensure the prompt payment of fair and adequate compensation and in Article (3) resettle the displaced inhabitants on suitable alternative land with due regard for their economic wellbeing and social and cultural values.

Within this constitutional framework, the state has fashioned various policies to guide land acquisitions in Ghana. To harmonize land laws in Ghana, the National Land Policy (1999) was formulated to ensure uniformity of laws with clearly defined roles for the various actors within the land management space. Regarding land acquisitions, the policy provided that "when necessary, the government may intermediate in facilitating investors' access to land owned by stools, skins, clans, families, or individuals" (Ghana National Land Policy 1999: 13). Significantly, two objectives of the policy include "protect the rights of landowners and their descendants from becoming landless or tenants on their lands and "ensure the payment, within a reasonable time, of fair and adequate compensation for land acquired by the government from stool, skin or traditional council, clan, family, and individuals" (Ghana National Land Policy 1999: 7). And to ensure fairness in the compensation payment, the Land Act 2019 in article 258 (2) provides that an expert should represent a claimant for assessing meaningful compensation (Ghana Land Act 2020: 131).

It can therefore be concluded that the current regulatory regime envisages a role for the state and its actors in the acquisition of lands in rural communities for large-scale farming. The state is enjoined to ensure appropriate compensation is paid to the affected landowners. The intent is to ensure that though they are being deprived of land, there is some form of support to cope with the livelihood change. However, evidence from the data collected in the study areas suggests that the people are worse off despite the policy regime. From Figure 9 below, 84.26 percent (760) of the respondents declared no compensation, while 15.74% (142) indicated they received some payment. The non-payment of the compensation packages to the respondents is further worsened by the fact that the respondents faulted the state for not providing them with an alternative source of livelihood. Although numerous policy documents reviewed made provisions for compensation payments, the data from this study shows that the reverse is true when it comes to implementation. Those in charge of enforcing regulations

ignore them, which highlights wider shortcomings on the part of the state and its institutions and the position of traditional authorities, both of which are discussed further below.

Figure 9: Compensation payments



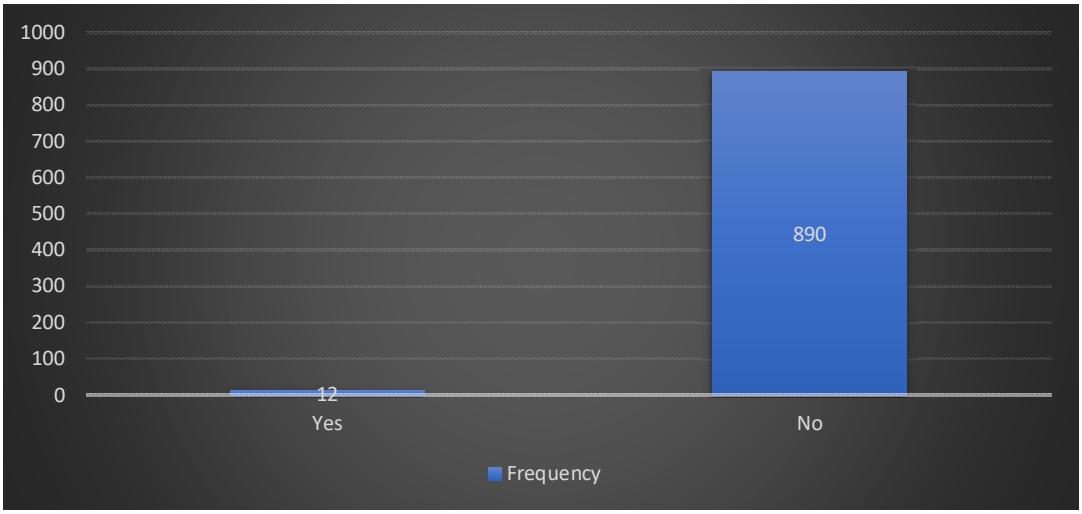
Interviews from the field confirmed the fact that even in situations where compensations were paid, the amounts involved could not guarantee sustainable livelihoods. A sub-chief in an interview, for instance, lamented, "we were compensated but it was not enough, and we cannot say anything, but it was insulting. How can you give 20 cedis to a family head as compensation for taking away his farmland?" (Sub-chief, Kpenu/Volta region, November 2020). Another respondent intimated that there were problems with the compensation payment process, which resulted in fatal consequences:

> We were working on the land that belongs to our grandparents for farming cocoa before the government came to take over and handed it over to the company that is TOPP and we were being interviewed before some portion has been given to we the farmers. The amount that was supposed to be given to us was not paid in full which led to the death of most of our grandparents, elders, and parents because of shock (Female participant, Twifo Mampong /Central region, October 2020).

The respondents from the table below indicated that the state failed to provide them with alternative livelihood options. Figure 10 shows that 98.67% (890) of the respondents indicated

that the government played no role in helping them cope with the livelihood changes while 1.33% (12) indicated to have received some assistance from the government.

Figure 10: Government and alternative livelihoods



The inability of the state to ensure the payment of compensation and the failure to provide suitable alternatives does not only deprive the people of their livelihood, but it also goes against the dictates of the 1992 Constitution. Article 36 (8) states that:

> The State shall recognize that ownership and possession of land carry a social obligation to serve the larger community and, in particular, the State shall recognize that the managers of public, stool, skin and family lands are fiduciaries charged with the obligation to discharge their functions for the benefit respectively of the people of Ghana, of the stool, skin, or family concerned and are accountable as fiduciaries in this regard (Constitution of Ghana 1992: 45).

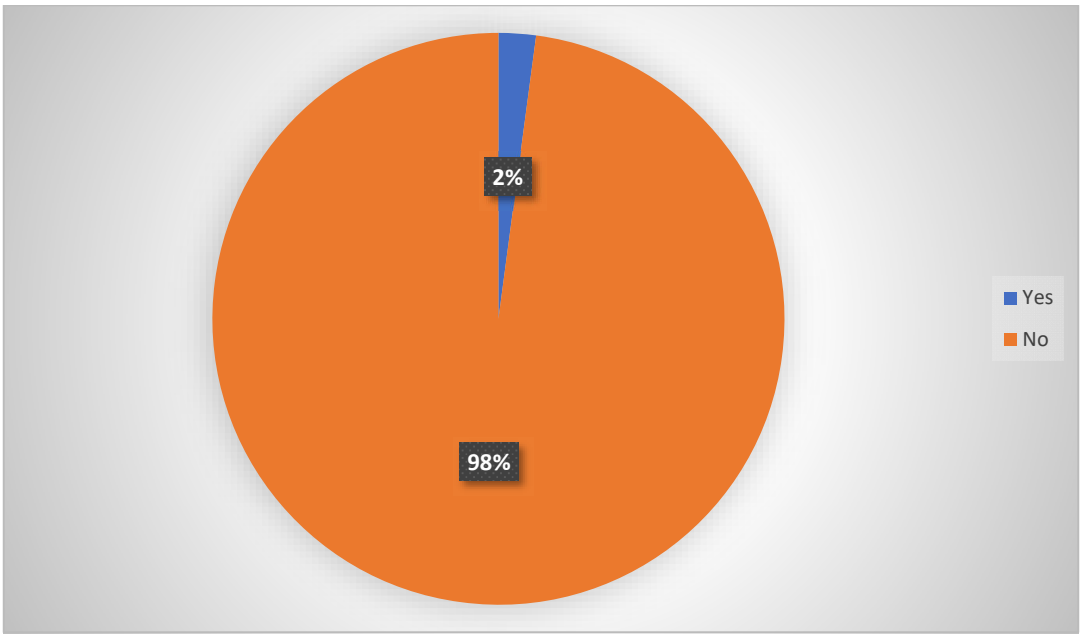
Also, it goes against the 2015 Land Commission policy guideline governing large-scale land transactions in Ghana. Among other things, the guideline aims to safeguard the interests of local communities by preventing situations in which individuals who buy vast tracts of land usurp the general public's rights. However, the evidence shows that the various law and policy provisions are not strictly followed. As a result, host populations suffer a worsening of livelihood outcomes.

4.5.2 Traditional authorities, land grabs, and rural livelihoods

The architecture of Ghana's land governance system is structured to accommodate customary institutions (Chieftaincy) in the administration of lands in the country, as noted in Article 36(8) quoted on page 76 above. Besides, the Chieftaincy Act, 2008 (Act 759) mandates the traditional council to manage stool (skin) land. The creation of the Customary Land Secretariats (CLS) under the Land Administration Project (LAP I and II) further enhanced the role of customary authorities. The CLS created paramount chiefs and served as an institutional bridge between the traditional authorities and the land sector agencies (Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project 2015). Based on the above legislative and policy backing of the chieftaincy institution coupled with the establishment of the various regional and national houses of chiefs, the position of chiefs within the national political structure has been greatly enhanced. Consequently, chiefs play important roles during land transactions, from the negotiation stages to signing the deals. This power in negotiating land deals has transformed chiefs from being custodians of lands to the status of owners. It is, however, expected of them to act in the interest of the people during the processes leading up to land acquisitions within their jurisdictions. The respondents were therefore asked if they received support from the traditional authorities.

The results shown in the table below indicate that 2.11% (19) answered yes to receiving support. In comparison, 97.29% (833) responded no to whether they had some support from their respective traditional authorities.

Figure 11: Support from traditional authorities



Despite the enhanced status and role of chiefs, the evidence from the study suggests that they did not use their positions to protect the people's interests when negotiating land deals in their jurisdictions. The enhanced status only enabled them to negotiate deals favourable to them and not the generality of the people. More so, the evidence from this study suggests that they offered little or no support to affected community members to enable them to cope with the livelihood changes resulting from land grabs.

4.5.3 Land grabs, the investment environment, and rural livelihoods

An aspect of the institutional discussion under this section has to do with the enabling environment for foreign investment in land and agriculture. The climate in Ghana regarding attracting investments into the country saw a sea change in the early 1980s with neo-liberal policies such as the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). Aside from the policy framework under the SAPs, specific institutions were created to facilitate the entry of investors. In furtherance of this goal, the Ghana Free Zones Act, 1995 (Act 505) was passed, which set up the Ghana Free Zones Authority (GFZA) mandated to provide a range of incentives to

encourage inward investment Ghana. Besides the GFZA, the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) was set up under the GIPC Act, 2013 (Act 865) to encourage and promote investments in Ghana, to provide for the creation of an attractive incentive framework and a transparent, predictable, and facilitating environment for investments in Ghana. Therefore, these two institutions play vital roles in encouraging, regulating, and legitimizing large-scale land investments.

At the ministry level, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) contributes to large-scale land acquisitions by providing help to access suitable agricultural land and other advisory services to investors. In 2012, MoFA launched GCAP to facilitate access to appropriate agricultural lands for investment in commercial agriculture (MoFA 2012). This policy shifted from a subsistence-based smallholder system to a stronger market-oriented system that larger commercial enterprises drive. The setting up of the GFZA, the GIPC, and the GCAP framework has provided the enabling environment for investors to acquire large tracts of land in rural communities to engage in commercial agriculture.

The investors, however, have certain responsibilities stated in the Land Commission's 2015 policy guidelines for large-scale land acquisitions as follows: "ensure that the investment does not harm food security and sustainability of livelihood of the affected communities but rather strengthen them" (Land Commission 2015: 9) As demonstrated above, the investments examined in the study areas negatively affected household food security. Additionally, the respondents' non-payment of compensation and the failure of the various institutions to provide alternative livelihood options suggest that these projects have not contributed to the sustainability of livelihoods in the study areas.

However, the study found that certain aspects of communal life saw some positive results despite the negative livelihood outcomes experienced in the study areas. For instance, in the Northern region, a respondent confirmed that "the only benefit we got from the company

was the dam they dug for us, which we drink [water from] during the dry season (Male participant, Tuuya-Northern region, September 2020). In the Central region, respondents noted some of the project benefits to include the following: "they have schools, clinics, a police station and a hospital in their yard which we use, and a local information centre where people announce missing items, selling of items and upcoming and ongoing programmes to be held outside or within the community" (Female participant, Twifo Mampong /Central region, October 2020). Additionally, the respondents also confirmed how the company had enabled them to access credit facilities to finance their basic expenses. A participant revealed that the project in the area benefited them "because we can educate our children and trade too by taking a loan from the bank, and an amount is deducted from the little we earn from the company every month till we are done paying the actual amount and the interest as well" (Female participant, Twifo Mampong -Central region, October 2020). These observations highlight the social differentiation involved in the distribution of harms and benefits from large-scale land acquisition, implying that even in places where most people have experienced the negative consequences of land grabs, individual experiences vary depending on their access to capital, employment opportunities, and social networks.

4.5.4 Conclusion

The data obtained in the three study areas are summarised in this chapter. Three conclusions can be taken from the findings. First, land grabbing has had adverse effects on the communities surveyed, such as land dispossession, food shortages, and loss of income. Second, the study shows that, while people find other ways to cope with changes in their livelihood, these alternatives were neither adequate nor long-term. Significantly, the study discovered that the much-touted employment prospects associated with land-grab projects were practically non-existent in the communities. The few people who worked on the projects were not guaranteed a job. Finally, the findings indicate that institutions played little to no role in

offering appropriate alternative livelihood choices. Instead, the current laxity in enforcing existing regulatory provisions has exacerbated the plight of communities, particularly smallholder farmers, whose livelihoods and well-being are already at risk.

Chapter 5: Discussion of study results

5.0 Introduction

The agricultural sector has always received global research attention because of its role in sustaining rural livelihoods. Many governments, including those in developing countries, have shown an interest in investing in agriculture in the last decade. Therefore, these governments have implemented various policies to attract and regulate investments into the agricultural sector. Flowing from the presentation of results on the impact and the responses to these investments in Ghana, this chapter discusses specifically the results presented in Chapter 4 and seeks to examine the effects of land grabs on rural livelihoods, the strategies adopted in response and the influence of institutions on the coping processes. This chapter also reflects the linkages between the study results and the conceptual framework that underpins this research. I conclude this chapter by offering recommendations to guide policy and future research.

5.1 Land grabs and the impact on rural livelihoods

Subsistence agriculture is the mainstay of the local economies in the three study areas, (i.e. Northern, Central, and Volta regions). Therefore, lands and their resources play a critical role in helping people achieve their desirable livelihood outcomes. Having access to land, therefore, is a matter of survival. As such, the debate on the negative and positive impacts of large-scale land acquisitions on local populations is still up for discussion (Edelman et al., 2013). Therefore, the understanding that large-scale land acquisitions can negatively affect local people is not new. Madueke (2019) draws attention to the socio-economic and environmental damages they pose to host communities. Also cited is the loss of access to vital resources (Schoneveld et al., 2011) as a precursor of conflicts (Kasanga et al., 2019). In a

related study, Alhassan et al. (2018, 2020) concluded that land grabbing has adverse effects on the livelihood outcomes of smallholder farming households in Ghana.

This study expands on the above literature on the impact of these land deals on Ghanaian farmer households. To this end, three key findings have been made regarding the impact of land grabs in Ghana. First, it was observed that farmers lost access to lands. Secondly, they suffered food insecurity, and lastly, they witnessed a reduction in their income. This ultimately worsened their livelihood options.

5.1.1 Land grabs and land dispossession

In this report, land dispossessions are discussed in light of the concept of economic dispossessions by Magdoff (2013). The author points out that neo-liberal agreements are one-way economies that are opened up to investment, among other things. According to Ahwoi (2010), Ghana's introduction of the western-backed Structural Adjustment Programme in the early 1980s resulted in significant investments in the agricultural sector, which had various consequences, especially on host communities. According to Rutherford and Addison (2007), commercial farmers only seek to maximize their profitability in a neo-liberal environment in agriculture – an environment such as the one created by the Ghanaian government. This profit motive most often comes at the expense of the people living in host communities. A nuanced analysis of the data revealed certain interesting trends on the implications of this on the people in the study areas captured in this thesis. For instance, regarding the loss of access to lands, the acquisition mode largely determines the outcome. The decision by the government to undertake what can be described as dispossession for redistribution for the TOPP largely explains why in the Central region, the issue of land lost is less pronounced than in the Northern region. The approach to giving back some portions of the land to the original owners solves two problems posed by land grabs: displacement of landowners and the prevention of hostility towards the investor by the host communities. This approach to land grabbing ensures it serves as a

mitigation measure in the host community. The relatively positive role of the land grabbers (government and the investor) to ensure that the people are not deprived totally of their livelihood assets (i.e. land) is a key highlight of the findings. This provides an insight into how land grabbing can be carried out to ensure an arguably positive outcome and supports Zhan et al. (2015)'s conclusion that the negative effect of land grabs on jobs and profits, land rights, and the environment is mainly dependent on government and investor decisions.

However, the study revealed that institutions played a role in depriving the respondents of their property, despite this exception. In Ghana, land governance institutions, especially chiefs, have been identified as key players to dispossess the people from their lands. According to Ahmed et al. (2018), chiefs often acted as landowners, sellers, expropriators, negotiators, and compensation recipients in addition to their traditional positions as land custodians. According to Kirst (2020), this enhanced role of chiefs serves as a major source of conflict in Ghana. This is a view supported by Peña-Huertas (2017), who argued that the exclusionary nature of the institutions that regulate the access and assignment of property rights. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that in the study areas, chiefs were faulted for negotiating and selling lands without the involvement of the primary land users, that is, the people.

This study's discovery of land loss resulting from land grabs backs up previous research on the effect of land grabs on host communities. Aha and Ayitey (2017) discovered that international biofuel projects in Yeji (Brong Ahafo district, Ghana) resulted in the displacement of indigenous farmers. The findings of Schoneveld and German (2014) also confirm that local farmers have been displaced as a result of foreign corporations' biofuel ventures. In an earlier study, Aha and Ayitey (2017) found that institutions (Chieftaincy) facilitated the dispossession of farmers from their lands in the wake of biofuel investments. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that land grabs, especially by foreign entities, resulted in the loss of lands in the respective

societies, which had a disastrous multiplier impact on livelihoods. This is due to the critical position that land access plays in rural communities.

5.1.2 Land grabs and food insecurity

Food security is a significant public policy concern in every country. This explains why different governments make deliberate policy decisions to ensure that their citizens have adequate and nutritious food. The World Bank, for example, has called for foreign direct investments as a means of alleviating food supply problems in developing countries, but as Häberli and Smith (2014) discovered, these investments often result in the displacement of local agricultural farmers in favour of the investor, resulting in food insecurity. As a result, food insecurity has been linked to land grabs. This is supported by the fact that in most developing countries, such as Ghana, the policy system guiding land grab deals and land-use decisions appears to favour the investor over the local community (Atuoye et al., 2021). Governments pursue a pro-investment strategy that prioritizes the production of export-oriented goods over domestically consumed goods. Another explanation for food insecurity, as Rulli and D'Odorico (2014) stated, is that these land grabs appear to exclude the local population from potentially highly productive agricultural land, even without significant investments.

The investments made in the three regions had interesting consequences for food security, as identified in this study. Lands that were previously used for food crop production in the Northern region were purchased by an investor who used the land to cultivate a non-food crop, namely jatropha. Palm trees were planted on the purchased lands in the Central area. People were also encouraged to go into palm production as part of the redistributed land scheme to meet the factory's needs. The acquisition of lands for commercial rice production in the Volta region deprives them of their right to decide their land resources to meet their household food

needs. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that, on aggregate, 60.7% of the respondents indicated they experienced food insecurity.

The cause of this food insecurity is not far-fetched. For example, switching from food crop production to jatropha, for example, on such a large scale ensures food insecurity. This confirms an earlier study by Renzaho et al. (2017), which found that the social and economic benefits of biofuels initiatives heralded by foreign entities do not always accrue to local communities. According to the authors, the host communities for these projects suffer negatively. According to Lisk (2013), the evidence from East Africa also points to the fact that land-based foreign investments have left African smallholder farmers particularly vulnerable to dispossession and local communities at the risk of increasing marginalization and threat of food insecurity. The case was not different in Ghana, as this research found similar impacts on household food security. This was especially evident in the Northern area, where opponents of the biofuel project claimed, among other things, that the jatropha plant, particularly the seeds, posed a threat to people and livestock and that the project resulted in extensive deforestation and the loss of income from gathering forest products like shea nuts (Nyari 2008). As a result, the people had to deal with losing access to their source of income while also worrying about the jatropha's devastating effect on their climate, livestock, and ability to feed their families. The lack of access to lands and the replacement of food crop production for biofuels resulted in food insecurity in the Northern region, as evidenced by this study.

The situation in the Central and Volta regions offers a somewhat different perspective on land grabbing on food security. Though lack of access is a common denominator across the three regions studied, the main impact of land grabs in these two regions is how the phenomenon leads to a rise in land prices, leading to rising food prices. As a result, people in host communities cannot compete for arable land and, even though food is grown in their communities, they cannot afford it. People in the Volta region, for example, were forced to

look for alternative sources of income or rely on their wives for survival after their lands were lost to the rice project. Residents could not afford to look for alternative agricultural lands or buy the food they were previously producing to feed their families because of their low income. This confirms an earlier study by Zain et al. (2015) that poverty is a major cause of food insecurity. Poverty, the authors argue, combines with other socio-economic issues such as small landholdings, a lack of input, and ineffective agricultural methods, which results in reduced food production. The redistribution of lands in the Central region due to TOPP's start of the oil palm project had two consequences for food security. The project reduced the amount of land available to farmers, and the ready demand for palm fruits provided by TOPP under the smallholder scheme made the people concentrate less on food crop production. As a result of the cumulative impact, less food is produced, resulting in a rise in food prices, and with the majority of people earning less than $100 per month, they will struggle to feed their families.

5.1.3 Land grabs and loss of income

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of land in rural households and economies. The explanation for this is that land is the most important asset for rural people who depend on farming to live. According to the findings, farming was the primary source of income for 82.92 percent of those surveyed. As a result, having access to land is crucial in deciding household income in these areas. As a result, the loss of land and subsequent inability to participate in agricultural activities significantly impact their household income. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of land in rural households' economies. The explanation for this is that land is the most important asset for rural people who depend on farming to make a living. According to the findings of this study, farming was the primary source of income for 82.92% of those surveyed. As a result, having access to land is crucial in deciding household income in these areas. The loss of land and subsequent inability to undertake agricultural activities significantly impact their household income. In a study, Jiao

et al. (2015) found no evidence of positive income effects land deals on households in host communities.

This backs up Alhassan et al.'s (2018) findings that land grabbing harms farmer profits. As 84.92% of the respondents in this study live on less than $100 per month, losing their livelihood assets (i.e., land) puts them in a precarious economic situation. It's worth noting that the negative consequences of land grabs found in this study are linked in a complex way (i.e., loss of farmlands, lost income, and food security). This is because, for people who depend on the land to earn a living and maintain household food security, a loss of access to land inevitably means a loss of income, putting their food security in jeopardy. This is because residents of host communities cannot grow food crops to feed their families, nor do they have sufficient income to buy these household necessities.

5.1.4 Land grabs and gender

The role of women in the agricultural value chain in Ghana cannot be underrated. Higgins and Fenrich (2012) pointed out that they constitute 52% of the agricultural workforce and account for 70% of those involved in the production of subsistence crops. Yet, women generally have limited access to and control over land and other resources necessary for economic development. This unequal access to productive resources has led to a feminization of poverty in Ghana (Higgins and Fenrich 2012). The status of women within the Ghanaian context was due to the culturally defined roles which place men as the primary producers and owners of the production system. Kent (2018) shows this system puts women in a subordinate position and secures their access to productive resources through men. Therefore, women mostly suffer land tenure insecurity because of this derivative right created by communal institutions. As Buss et al. (2017) found in their study, women's livelihoods are woven into the social and institutional contexts within which the activity takes place. In the specific case of Ghana and the access of women to lands, Bawa (2016) contends that women's access to land

is dependent on their social status as wives, sisters, and daughters. Therefore, a woman's 'good' relationship with people connected to land plays a crucial role in her ability to gain farmland if she lacks the financial resources to buy or rent such land herself. Hence in most of these communities, women most often find themselves living off the periphery of lands owned by their male relations. As a result, previous studies have concluded that the privatization of common assets through land grabs does not bode well for women. For example, Darkwah et al. (2017) conclude that land dispossession exacerbates gender inequalities because women are less likely to be compensated for land lost and are less likely to be recruited as farmhands when investors take over their community lands. Women lack alternative livelihood opportunities, especially concerning wage labour on newly established plantations. Another study by Hausermann et al. (2018) found that when it comes to compensation payments to people harmed by land grabbing, men receive much more money than women for losing their farms. According to Nibi (2012), land grabs in the Northern region have resulted in women losing both their rights and access to land and the natural resources needed for food, income, medicine, and fodder. Similar findings were made by Tsikata and Yaro (2014) that projects resulting from land grabs worsened women's reproductive burdens by losing forest resources closer to their homes.

It is against the background of these negative findings on the impact of land grabs on women that the finding by this study in the Volta region is a significant contribution to knowledge on the subject matter. The aggregate results from this study reveal that 73.52% of women lost access to farmlands and income due to the land grabs which took place in their communities. However, a review of the qualitative data from the Volta region brings an exciting perspective on the impact of the project on women in the area. According to the women, the company's operations (Brazil Agro group) have been a blessing financially. This finding offers a fresh perspective on how projects arising from land grabs can empower women

who, as previous studies found, tend to be disadvantaged when land grabs occur. The case from the Volta region highlights the fact that if properly targeted, there could be positive outcomes of land grabs. The dominance of literature on the negative consequences of land grabs further makes this finding significant in understanding the socially differentiated impacts of land grabs in host communities.

However, this research finding has socio-cultural implications for perceptions around the sustenance of the family system in the host communities. The complaint by men of "disrespect from their wives" indicates the threat they perceive the economic empowerment of their wives posed to their primacy as family heads, ultimate decision-maker, and home provider. The financial independence attained by women due to the income earned from trading in the rice produced by the company frees them from the control of their husbands. The negative interpretation given by the men to the newly found status of their wives demonstrates their emotional attachments to the patriarchal norms governing gender relations in these communities. Beyond mere emotional attachments, Dery and Akurugu (2021) contend that such narratives perpetuate men's heteronormative breadwinning role as a model of masculinity. According to Dery (2020, 2019), society requires that men earn respect, achieve social power and positioning in the gender hierarchies by adequately fulfilling varying ideals of masculinity. This places enormous pressure on men to fulfill their obligation to the household. And with the situation as found in this research where men are rendered unemployed and their position as breadwinners is threatened, there may be little incentive to embrace any form of women empowerment. Therefore, it is not surprising the level of disquiet expressed by the men regarding the new status of the women when it comes to contributing to household income.

5.2 A struggle for survival: coping with the phenomenon of land grabs.

The response mechanisms to the phenomenon of land grabs vary. For instance, in rural Cambodia, Park (2019) noted that the response came with violent protests. A protestor captured

in her study stated, “land grabbing is so painful that we are not afraid to die. Our lands are our lives. We are not afraid to risk our lives to get the land back” (Park 2019: 30). Given the importance of land in rural livelihoods, it is understandable that losing access to this valuable resource could result in various reactions, including the violent protests seen in Cambodia. In Ghana, studies indicate that more than 60% of the population is engaged in agriculture as a source of livelihood (Anang et al. 2020). Similarly, other studies on Africa find that rural households essentially depend on agriculture (Davies et al., 2017; Cunguara 2011).

Despite their reliance on agriculture, this study finds a high poverty level in these areas. The study revealed that 84.15% of the respondents indicated they earned less than 400 cedis (less than $100) a month. The people's inability to access livelihood resources (i.e., land) harmed their income and household food security in this case. This finding is similar to Scoone's (1998) evidence, which shows that rural communities depend on natural resources for their livelihood. The lack of access to these resources limits their livelihood pathways. Similarly, Lee and Neves (2009) argue that rural poverty and natural resources are inextricably linked because the rural poor depend on agriculture or other natural resources to make a living. Because of the high levels of poverty in these areas, commercial projects made possible by land grabs harms the people's livelihoods.

Hence, they had to adopt alternative strategies in response to the challenge posed to their source of livelihood. According to Scoones (1998), they have three options: agricultural intensification/extensification, livelihood diversification, and migration. This means that the people in response can intensify their capital and labour investment into agricultural activities or put more land under cultivation, diversify to other off-farm income-earning activities, or move away and seek a livelihood. However, the findings from this research point to the undeniable fact that the affected people are limited to these options. The reasons for this are not far-fetched. Land grabs by their very nature deprive people of their access to lands; hence

the first option of intensifying production or expanding the size of their land use is off the table, and even in instances where a few still had access to their lands, the low-income levels reported in the study areas makes it almost impossible for them to intensify capital investment into agriculture to boost productivity.

The study, therefore, found that the people had to diversify to other off-farm income-earning activities as a livelihood strategy. As indicated in Table 9, the other options the respondents resorted to includes petty trading, artisanship, serving as labourers, finding alternative employment, or being in the employment of the companies engaged in land grabs. This finding agrees with Harmenoo et al. (2018) that large-scale land acquisition tends to push farming households into adopting different coping strategies. According to Banchirigah and Hilson (2010), smallholder farmers have to branch out into non-farming activities in response to the low earnings from farming activities, especially in the liberalized market. The liberalized market has ensured the dominance of commercial interests in direct competition with smallholder farmers over land. The discussions around the response mechanism of smallholder farmers could be situated with the related concepts of de-agrarianization and de-peasantization. De-agrarianization, according to Hebinck (2018) manifests itself in rural communities where there is a shift in occupation from farming activities, thereby reducing the contribution of smallholder farmers to agricultural production. De-peasantization, on the other hand, manifests in situations where peasant farmers are dispossessed and replaced by out-growers and contract farming schemes or corporate large-scale farming operations. This is particularly true in the cases examined in this study. This is because governments and corporations are spearheading land grabbing to the detriment of small-scale farmers.

The farmers, therefore, had to shift to survive. According to Singh and Bhogal (2014), this shift can be classified into two categories: growth-led shift and distress-induced shift. The growth-led shift is related to developmental factors like the mechanization of agriculture,

increasing employment and income, and state intervention for generating employment opportunities. According to the authors, these factors attract the workforce from farming to more lucrative non-farm activities. On the other hand, distress-induced transformation is based on hardship or crisis-driven factors such as falling productivity, increasing costs, and decreasing returns on unemployment, forcing the workforce from farming towards non-farm activities to eke out their livelihood. The findings of this research fit into the classification of distressed induced transformation. Due to the processes of land grabs, the smallholder farmers in the study areas were forced into seeking non-farming alternatives such as petty trading, artisans, casual work, and seeking alternative employment in other sectors. Despite the peculiar case of the Central region where the state, through direct intervention, sought to promote mechanized agriculture to increase income and generate employment, we can conclude that the shift witnessed in the region was intended to be a growth-led shift. The Volta and Northern region situation tends to mirror the second category, that is, distress-induced shift.

The process of de-peasantization, however, has its own set of issues. According to Warr (2021), the problem stems from the fact that rural people are often directly or indirectly reliant on agriculture; as a result, they are emotionally attached to the land, which provides for their basic needs through agriculture. The socio-economic significance of land in the lives of the rural people, to an extent, explains why the majority of respondents surveyed (60.98%) revealed they were not satisfied with the non-farming alternatives they resorted to in response to land grabs. This level of dissatisfaction and the fact that they received no livelihood alternatives from the government (98.67%) or their chiefs (97.29%) suggests that the study areas cannot cope satisfactorily with the challenges posed by land grabs. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that the livelihood options adopted by the people as a coping mechanism did not yield sustainable livelihood outcomes. Besides, the failure of institutions to provide suitable alternatives further worsens the plight of the people negatively affected by land grabs.

As conceived in the Sustainable Livelihood Framework, institutions are to mediate livelihood strategies and pathways of the people; however, the study found the opposite to be true.

5.3 Ghana's institutional framework, land grabs, and rural livelihoods

The policy and constitutional reforms adopted by respective governments have created modern statutory laws on land governance which complement the traditional land practices. According to Akolgo-Azupogo et al. (2021), these two systems are employed to determine land usage in the country. These systems often run parallel to each other and, at times, are disconnected from each other. It is within this institutional complexity that land grabs took place in the host communities. Livelihoods within the research areas are therefore governed by a complex web of institutions and processes that determine people's livelihood outcomes to a considerable extent. As noted in Lewins (2004), the nature and function of institutions are key in influencing how livelihood opportunities may (or may not) manifest themselves to the poor and define the gateways through which they pass towards a negative or positive livelihood adaptation. Through this research, I discovered that Ghana's processes of land grabs are governed by a multi-layered institutional and policy system. The adoption of market liberalization policies, Berry (2009) notes, democratized governance, led to widespread changes in governing structures and contributed to a proliferation of both individual and institutional competitors for power and resources, and of fora in which people seek access to property and authority. It is within this competitive institutional environment that the land grabs in the selected case studies occurred. The table below outlines how institutions from the colonial era have collaborated to administer lands in Ghana till the present competitive environment between the state and chiefs.

*Table 11:*Phases of land administration in Ghana

Source: Author's compilation

Era	Objective/Activity	Policy/Regulatory framework
	*Placed idle lands under the control of the colonial government. *Lands administered through native authorities. *Strengthened role of Chiefs in the control of customary land.	Land Bill (1894)
		Native Administration Ordinance (1928)
		Watson and Coussey Committee reports (1948-1949)
Post-independence	*Accelerated land privatization and commoditization. *Aid in land privatization and securitization *Develop reliable, simple, cheap, speedy, and suitable methods of recording customary transfers or interests	Land Registry Act 1962 (Act 122),
		Administration of Lands Act 1962 (Act 123)
		State Lands Act 1962 (Act 125)
		Survey Act 1962 (Act 127)
		Conveyancing Decree 1973 (Act 175)
Post the SAPs	*To clean up legislative and institutional challenges that persist in the land market. *To consolidate and harmonize the laws on land. *To ensure sustainable land administration and effective land tenure systems	Land Title Registration Law 1986 (PNDCL 152)
		1992 Constitution
		Ghana Investment Promotion Centre Act, 1994 (Act 478)
		National Development Planning Commission Act, 1994 (Act 479)
		Ghana Free Zones Authority Act 1995 (**Act** 504)
		National Land Policy (1999), Land Administration Project (2004)
		Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) 2007
		Lands Commission Act, 2008 (Act 767)
		Land Act 2019

The three phases of land administration depicted in the table above correspond to Ghana's phases of land administration. The colonial period was defined by the struggle to determine who controlled which lands. Under the indirect rule scheme, the colonial government gave chiefs direct control. After that came the post-independence period, when market-driven imperatives ruled. The land was given a high monetary value to privatize it. Following the implementation of the SAPs, some institutions were established to regulate the

land market and create an enabling environment for land investment. However, the study's findings indicate that these systems have done little to help people in host communities find better ways to make a living. According to the results of this study, Ghana has adequate laws and institutions to handle lands in the country's various uses. This structure is intended to direct land acquisition processes and protect the rights of citizens in host communities. In terms of institutions, the study discovered that, in line with previous studies, chiefs in these societies have transitioned from land custodians to landowners, making land deals mainly for personal gain (see Kirst 2020; Lanz et al. 2018). The situation is exacerbated by the fact that state institutions that should have acted as a check on the exercise of traditional authority have either failed to do so or have yielded to the chiefs' authority when it comes to land transactions.

Some reasons have been provided to explain why chiefs tend to have an overbearing influence within the scheme of land transactions. Ahmed et al. (2018) note that Ghana's weak, undocumented, and largely discretionary land administration system allows chiefs to bypass both customary and statutory land laws. Another factor is what can be referred to as the 'electoral magnetism of chiefs. In Ghana, the power of chiefs in deciding electoral outcomes makes it much more difficult for public officers to act as a check on chiefs. According to Gyampo (2009), the political class understands that chiefs can easily organize and manipulate their subjects to vote for them, whether subtly or overtly. According to the author, chiefs' influence in elections stems from their ability to get their favoured candidates elected unopposed by persuading or coercing rival candidates to step down or mobilizing their sub-chiefs and sections of the electorate behind his preferred candidate. Being aware of this inherent influence they wield, the chiefs exploit it to their benefit. Individual landowners are the losers in this situation since they have been stripped of their lands and are left to fend for themselves.

The situation is further worsened because the various land policy measures to protect rural livelihoods (1992 constitution, the 2020 Land Act, Land commission policy documents)

remain beautiful laws without the necessary implementation or enforcement. As a result, investors are under no real pressure to ensure that they provide people with long-term livelihood options beyond a few developmental and public relations-driven ventures like schools and water facilities to boost their brand image. One area where there has been a lax in implementing laws is compensation payment. Although there are established policies for paying compensations, most affected farmers received no compensation for property loss, demonstrating the lack of compliance that has hampered Ghana's land acquisition processes. Further, the dissatisfaction expressed by the few respondents who said they were compensated reveals a need to determine fair compensation, a point also discussed in Twerefoo (2021). According to Twerefoo (2021), this fair compensation should be sustainable compensation, which she defines as an income-generating activity or asset rather than a one-time reward. According to Obeng-Odoom (2012), the justification for the payment compensation is attached to the notion of taking either through the compulsory physical acquisition of land or a reduction in the market value of the land.

However, according to Obeng-Odoom (2012), to assess compensation, three essential elements must be considered: namely, compensation warranted or necessary, current laws protect property rights by providing for compensation, and does the state pays compensation, and if so, to whom? Andrews (2018) further reiterates this, noting that discussions about compensations should move beyond determining the value of the economic trees on the land or the land itself to settling the question of who deserves to be paid for the land use deprivation. The groups studied follow the criterion outlined above. They have lost their lands and are entitled to compensation outlined in the constitution and various laws addressed in this study. The farmers are a distinct community that can be separated to decide who gets paid. As this study discovered, people's livelihoods are dependent on their access to land. As a result, debates about compensations must be viewed through the lens of providing sustainable livelihoods to

the affected farmers, rather than simply satisfying legal criteria for the compensation to have a substantive effect.

5.4 Reflections on the linkages between the research findings and conceptual framework

The effect of land grabs on host communities, their response mechanisms, and the role institutions play in assisting or hindering people's ability to cope with livelihood changes were all examined using the Sustainable Livelihood Framework. In terms of the approach to this research's human asset aspect, the presence of the projects in the respective areas provided some job opportunities for the citizens. In addition, providing school facilities (as seen in the Central region) helps boost the human capital base of communities, while establishing a rice mill (as seen in the Volta region) can help with value addition. However, the low level of education in the respective communities had a significant impact on the human assets of the households. This is because education contributes to the efficiency of a household's human assets. As a result, the skills and knowledge required to boost household economic activities and improve their livelihood were minimal. As previously mentioned by Leor Valer of Brazil Agro, this harmed their job prospects because they lacked the skills required by the companies (Modernghana 2012).

The natural asset (land) is a valuable resource and a factor of production, particularly in subsistence agriculture. The presence of these commercial ventures adversely impacts farmers who lose their land. This harms household income, which decreases. As a result, the research finding that household income fell after the projects took off backs up the conceptual framework. This is because the land taken for these commercial farms deprives the people of their primary source of income. Due to the lack of farmland, there would be little or no productivity, resulting in low wages.

The findings of the study, which show that people's access to their land is harmed as a result of land being taken for commercial ventures, are consistent with the sustainable

livelihood context. This is because people depend on assets like land to allow them to participate in activities that provide them with a long-term source of income. As a result, the discovery of household food insecurity and resulting income loss resulting from land grabbing corroborates the conceptual framework's dictates that deprivation of one's assets contributes to negative livelihood outcomes. In terms of social assets, the livelihoods of local people, especially women, have improved, and their income levels have increased as a result of the company's rice trading, according to a study conducted in the Volta region. This, on the other hand, tends to cause social tension among household members (e.g. in marriages).

The argument is made in the scholarship that engages with the Sustainable Livelihood Framework that institutional policies and procedures, such as the decision to lease vast tracts of land owned by local farmers, restrict their access to their natural asset, land. The role of land governance institutions in the processes leading up to land grabs demonstrates that when they fail, as this study discovered, livelihoods suffer. As a result, the failure of institutions limits rural people's ability to cope with the changes in their livelihoods brought about by land grabs. This study contributes to the Sustainable Livelihood Framework by demonstrating how institutions and their processes form the essence and extent of land grab effects and their responses to coping with livelihood changes brought on by such events.

The study also reveals that most households are involved in farming, which provides them with income to support their families. According to the findings of the livelihood study of household activities, most farmers who lost their land saw a significant drop in their income. The decline in their income level affects their livelihoods, which explains the levels of poverty observed in the communities studied. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework used in this study is people-centered in that it focuses on what people have (e.g., assets or capital) and what they do (e.g., livelihood activities), diverting attention away from what they lack and allowing them to improve their capabilities (Bebbington 1999). According to Jongschaap et al. (2007), these

assets owned by individuals form the basis for their productivity and sustainability. As a result, institutions must ensure that citizens have access to their assets (land) while also helping them develop their livelihood activities (i.e., farming) rather than facilitating the process of denying them access to their lands. The role of institutions in the sustainable livelihood system must be examined because, as Sobeng et al. (2018) point out, institutions bind the other components of the framework, such as livelihood resources, livelihood strategies, and outcomes.

5.5 Policy and future research recommendations

While Ghana has laws and policies to protect the interests of citizens in host communities where land acquisitions occur, this study shows that the implementation mechanism needs to be improved to ensure compliance. The compensation regime is one area that requires special attention. Simply requiring businesses to pay compensation does not guarantee that the affected population will be handled equally. The majority of respondents in this study said they were not compensated. Even those who said they have been paid complained about the sums involved, which they felt were insufficient. I recommend that precise timeframes be established for negotiation, agreement, and payment of appropriate packages mutually agreeable to all parties (the investor, the state, and the host community members). It will ensure that the reimbursement programme is tailored to the needs of those who have been negatively affected.

In addition, Chiefs' roles in land negotiations should be re-examined. The trustee positions conferred on have been seconded to the chiefs' interests during negotiations, according to Kirst (2020) and Lanz et al. (2018). This leaves the people "stranded," as neither the government nor the chiefs protect their interests. In this study, respondents unanimously agreed that their chiefs did not help them in their efforts to deal with the challenges posed by land grabs. As a result, it is recommended that the agencies involved ensuring that impacted people's informed consent is obtained immediately from the planning stage to the project's

implementation. This can be done as part of a community-focused social and environmental impact evaluation. To this end, Andrews and Essah's (2020) process of "Open, Prior, and Independent Deliberate Discussion" (OPIDD) are especially useful. The authors argue that the government should play the country's primary role in ensuring the well-being of its citizens. According to the authors, the OPIDD process allows for community engagement, ensures deliberate dialogue that reflects what communities can expect from companies, and allows communities to be informed before communicating with companies.

The focus on the government's position in the OPIDD process emphasizes the role they must play in the framework for sustainable livelihoods. Institutional behaviour can significantly impact the livelihood results of communities where these acquisitions occur. At both the national and local levels, institutions can plan well-thought-out comprehensive livelihood enhancement programmes before project implementation to ensure long-term coping mechanisms. It should include the skill set needed by the upcoming business to train employees for opportunities that will arise due to the company's launch. It will ensure that the people, especially the youth, are safe.

This study identifies certain areas for future research on land grabs in Ghana. This includes areas on migrants and land tenure security and a deeper examination of the gendered dimension discovered in this research. It will be interesting to explore in detail the power dynamics in these communities, which could affect one's ability to respond effectively to the processes and outcomes of land grabs. With the limited literature on women and land grabs, the finding from the Volta region could be further explored to ascertain the extent to which the finding represents the generality of women's experiences in this region.

5.6. Conclusion

This thesis has contributed to knowledge in the following ways: First, the study found that the projects for which these lands were purchased posed severe threats to the people's livelihoods. The threats include loss of lands, less income, and household food insecurity. Secondly, the non-farming coping strategies such as petty trading or professional artisanship resorted to by the people did not produce satisfactory livelihood outcomes. Thirdly, the study further found that though there needed institutional and policy framework to protect farmers' interests, people feel left out and worse off financially when the projects finally took off. The lack of oversight on the process and the non-involvement of the people in decision-making around the projects account for this situation. Further, the finding that women appear to have benefited from the project more than their male counterparts, especially in the Volta region, provides insight into how these projects can empower women economically. Additionally, the land redistribution model implemented in the Central region presents a unique way to find a middle ground in acquiring large tracts of lands for societal benefit while ensuring individuals are not deprived of their core livelihood asset (i.e., land).

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework allows us to see the impact of development activities at the local level, connecting micro-level, situated particularities of poor people's livelihoods to larger-scale institutional and policy framings at the district, provincial, global, and even international levels (Scoones 2009). As a result, when making decisions about rural livelihoods, the goal should be to take a livelihood perspective. Successful community engagements will ensure that sustainable alternatives are offered before starting these ventures, serving as a mitigating measure against the potential negative effects of land grabs in these communities. Exploring the data gathered for this analysis has revealed new areas that need further research. The relationship between land grabbing, community exclusion, and land rights is one such field for future study. The current literature on how land grabs impact migrant

farmers in Ghana in settler communities is limited. This will give policymakers some insight into the diverse experiences of migrant farmers in Ghana, allowing them to craft policies to protect their rights. It will also shed light on the ethnic aspects of land grabs and how communal relations are organized both during and after land grabs.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Land Grabs and Livelihood Outcomes: exploring the coping mechanisms adopted by farmers in agrarian communities in Ghana.

Questionnaire no:

Village:

District:

Background of respondents

1. Gender of respondent a) Male b) Female
2. Age a) 20-30 b) 31-40 c) 41-50 d) Above 50
3. Level of education a) None b) Primary c) Secondary d) Technical/Vocational e) Tertiary
4. Marital Status a) Single b) Married c) Divorced
5. Community membership status a) Indigene b) Migrant
6. How much do you earn a month? a) Less than 400 b) 401-500 c) 501-600 d) Above 600
7. What is the size of your household? a) 1-2 b) 3-4 c) 5 and above

Impact of land grabs

1. Do you own a piece of land? a) Yes b) No
2. If yes, what was the mode of acquisition? a) Inheritance b) Gift c) Purchase
3. If no, how did you get land for farming? a) Rent b) Sharecropping c) Other
4. Is the land registered? a) Yes b) No
5. What type of farming are you engaged in? a) Commercial b) Subsistence c) Other
6. What is the source of finance for farming activity? a) Banks b) Credit Union c. NGO d) Savings and Loans Co e) Personal

Savings f) Family & Friends

7. What is the main source of your household income? a) From farming b) Other sources please specify…….

8. Did you lose farmland to a commercial farm project? a) Yes b) No

9.If yes, what has been the effect of the loss of land on your farming activity?

a) Reduced farm size b) Reduced income c) Both d) Others, specify……

10 Compared to your current situation, how was the food security in your house before the foreign investment:

a)Much better b) Moderately better c) Same d) Worse e) Much worse

10. Overall, do you find that the foreign investment has reduced your access to food (e.g. farm produce)?" a) Yes b) Somewhat c) No

11. Do you belong to some farmer association or farmer support group? a)Yes b) No

12. Are you aware of entitlements for compensation due to the loss of land to a commercial agricultural project? a) Yes b) No

13. Were you compensated? a)Yes b)No

14. If yes, how were you compensated? a) Cash b)Relocated to different land c)Employed by the company d)Other

15. Are you satisfied with the compensation a)Yes b)No

16. If No why?.....

17. Was the Local Assembly involved in negotiating compensation package a) Yes b)No

18. If yes, what role did they play……

19. If you belong to a farmer association/support group, did the group play any role in negotiating a compensation package? a) Yes b) No

20. Were you informed about the intended benefits of the farm project? a) Yes b) No

21. If yes, is the company living up to your expectation? a) Yes b) No

22. Do you have any issues with the operations of the company? a)Yes b)No

23. If yes, are you aware of any dispute resolution processes? a)Yes b)No

Coping mechanisms

1. Do you still have access to another piece of farmland of your own? a)Yes b)No
2. If No, are you are renting? a)Yes b)No
3. How would you rate the impact of the company's farming project a) Positive b)Negative
4. How are you coping with the outcome of the project?

……
…..

5. If there is a farmland loss or reduction in farmland size, have you engaged in other income-generating activity a) Yes b)No
6. If yes, specify…….....
7. Do you think this is a better alternative to farming activities? a)Yes b)No
8. Did the local government provide an alternative source of livelihood for approving the project which is likely to impact you, smallholder farmers? a)Yes b)No
9. If yes, specify……
10. Did the traditional authority provide an alternative source of livelihood for approving the project which is likely to impact you, smallholder farmers? a)Yes b)No
11. If yes, what type of assistance was offered a) Acquisition of different land for farming b) Financial assistance c) Employment opportunity d)Others, specify……
12. Are you satisfied with the alternatives provided? a)Yes b) No
13. Is there anything you wish is done by the local government to improve livelihoods in the community ……
14. Is there anything you want traditional authorities to do for farmers in the community?
15. Any additional comments……

Interview guide for traditional authorities and government officials

Interview guide for traditional authority

Position in the community.....

Impact of the project on the people

1. Was there a compensation package?

2. Did every farmer receive payment?

3. If no why?

4. Were there any promises and explanations of the benefits the community members would get from the project?

5. If yes, what were some of the promises?

6. What are the impacts of the company's operation in the community?

7. What are some of the main challenges affecting farming and other land resource-related activities after the project started?

Coping and adaptation mechanisms

1. What measures have been put in place to help the farmers adjust to the changes in land use and access to land?

Interview guide for company representatives

1. Position in the company.....

2. How long has the company been operating in the area?.....

Mode of land acquisition

3. How was the land acquired? ……..

4. How much was paid in the land acquisition?.....

5. Who was the payment made to? ……..

Impact of company's project

1. What is the total land size of the community……

2. What is the total size of land taken over by your company?.....

3. Out of the total land taken by your company, what is the size of the land which is presently being utilized by the company?.....

4. How many farmers are affected by the land acquisition process?.....

5. What form of compensation did your company give to the affected farmers?.....

6. Does the company have an idea about the number of people affected by the company's operations?.....
.....

Coping mechanisms

1. How does your company cater to the farmers who lost the lands to the company?

2. Which entities did the company involve in negotiating alternative livelihoods for affected farmers?

3. Is there a mechanism through which the company interacts with the farmers?

4. Is there any policy document that guides the company's interventions in the community?

5.If yes, is the document available to the members of the community? ……..

Interview guide for national-level institutional representatives

1. How long have you held your current position?
2. What role does your institution play in large-scale land acquisitions?
3. What goes into selecting the land for the investors?
4. Are there any livelihood impact assessments carried out before the start of the project?
5. What law governs large-scale land acquisitions in the country?
6. Are there any statutory obligations these companies must fulfill?
7. What level of community engagement takes place before signing a land deal?
8. Are there any monitoring mechanisms during project execution by your outfit?
9. Are there avenues through which the host community can report concerns? If so how?
10. Are there any improvements you would like to see concerning how large-scale land acquisitions are carried out in Ghana?