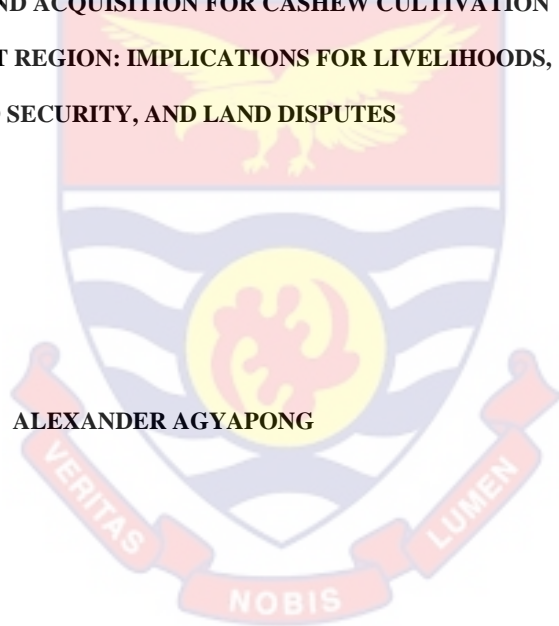


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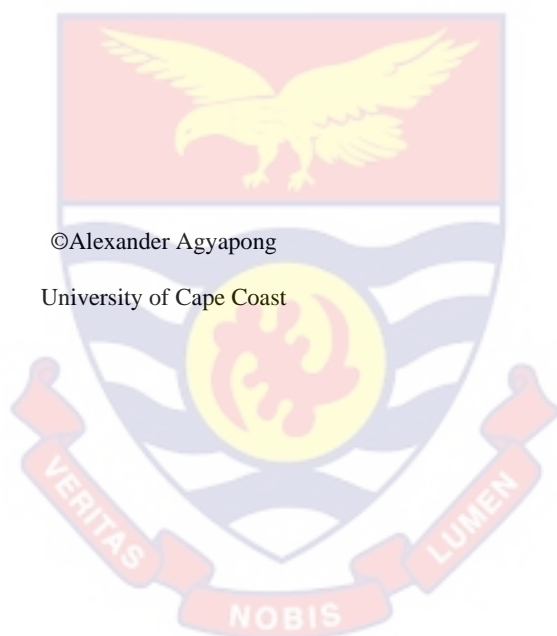
**LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION FOR CASHEW CULTIVATION  
IN THE BONO-EAST REGION: IMPLICATIONS FOR LIVELIHOODS,  
FOOD SECURITY, AND LAND DISPUTES**

**ALEXANDER AGYAPONG**



2025

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LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION FOR CASHEW CULTIVATION IN  
BONO-EAST REGION: IMPLICATIONS FOR LIVELIHOODS, FOOD  
SECURITY, AND LAND DISPUTES

BY

ALEXANDER AGYAPONG

A thesis submitted to the Department of Geography and Regional Planning of the  
Faculty of Social Sciences, College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University  
of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in  
Geography and Regional Planning

MARCH 2025

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my original research and that no part has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Alexander Agyapong

### Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised under the guidelines on supervision of the thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: .....Date:.....

Name: Prof. Simon Mariwah

Co-supervisor's Signature:.....Date:.....

Name: Prof William Boateng

### ABSTRACT

This research, grounded in the pragmatism paradigm, investigates the ramifications of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in local communities in the Bono-East Region. Employing a mixed-method approach, encompassing surveys of 380 respondents and engagement with 30 participants through focus groups and interviews, the study elucidates the multifaceted impacts of such acquisitions.

The findings illuminate a dual effect on farmers' livelihoods: while presenting employment opportunities and cash income, large-scale land acquisition concurrently heightens vulnerability by diminishing available land for food crop cultivation and destabilizing land tenure. Local communities have devised adaptive strategies, such as inter-cropping cashew and food crop cultivation on the same land, to address these challenges.

The research underscores the imperative of formulating a comprehensive land acquisition policy that prioritizes community participation in decision-making processes, ensures fair compensation for affected parties, promotes sustainable land-use practices, supports diversification of livelihoods, encourages collaborative ventures, and enhances transparency in land transactions.

In essence, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in large-scale land acquisition in Ghana and provides practical recommendations for mitigating its adverse effects on local communities while fostering sustainable development.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 ~~1.0~~ Background of the Study

It is widely understood that land, as a natural resource, is crucial to agricultural investment (Lanz, 2022). Because of this, Cotula (2009) asserts that for the past three decades, there has been an increase in the demand for property worldwide for this kind of business, with foreigners showing an interest in purchasing land in Africa for commercial farming (Matebga\_ &\_ Hichaambwa, 2017). A fresh impetus brought about by the food crisis of 2007–2008 compelled foreign investors to search for arable land in Africa for the purpose of producing food (Serrano, 2016). A number of South African nations rely heavily on their land, with agriculture serving as the foundation of their economies. While it is undeniably true that land is a vital resource for the rural poor, not enough has been done to safeguard these people's customary rights and convert them into tangible economic benefits in the context of the commodification and commercial interest in rural lands (de Soto, 2000).

Large-scale land acquisition (LSLA) is the purchase, lease, or other transfer of land use rights to a domestic or foreign investor for a commercial interest (Wikipedia, 2025). Large-scale land acquisition (LSLA) usually involves hostile takeover of the land by a foreign investor in which some or all of the land user's rights to continue in possession are removed (Asongu & NGUENA, 2014).  
~~Land Scale Land Acquisition, or L-S-L-A,~~ is not a recent worldwide phenomenon. Although its shape, character, and manner of acquisition have



changed over time, it is as ancient as recorded history (Robertson & Pinstrup-Anderson, 2010). Concerns have also been expressed over the effects of the current large-scale acquisition phenomena on the socioeconomic well-being, livelihood, and food security of impacted communities, notably in the global south (Yengoh & Armah, 2015).

Africa is becoming the hub for agricultural investment due to its abundance of land (Deininger & Byerlee, 2010). According to figures from the International Land Coalition (I.L.C.), foreign investors bought 80 million hectares of land worldwide in 2011, with half of that property being in Africa. The neo-colonialist practice of acquiring vast swaths of land in several African countries for financial gain was also documented by the Group of Eight Industrialised Countries (G8) (Grain, 2012; Vidal, 2009). Similarly, the Guinea Savanna Zone has a large area of uncultivated land, according to the World Bank (2009). The study also noted that although 400 million of the 600 million hectares of land in the Zone are suitable for agriculture, only 40 million of those hectares are now under cultivation by smallholder farmers. Large-scale land acquisitions have not yet surpassed 30 percent of concessions, despite the study highlighting the availability of fertile land that farmers cannot actually use for cultivation owing to financial and technological obstacles. According to Johnson (2018), one of the biggest challenges of our day is putting land to productive use by growing enough food to feed the world's growing population without putting other resources, including water and land, in jeopardy or lowering local people's standards of living. While L.S.L.A. might boost food production in certain regions of the

world, it can also significantly degrade forest cover, leading to deforestation and land degradation.

Large-scale land acquisitions (LSLA) in sub-Saharan Africa have given rise to disputes in a wide range of spheres of the social, economic, and cultural life of the local populace. Various arguments have been reported, such as instances of suppressing free speech and other human rights (Le Billon, 2013; Claeys\_&\_Vanloqueren, 2013); local populations being excluded from land acquisition decision-making processes; local law enforcement agencies intimidating local residents; and local populations being denied access to essential natural resources (Moreda, 2015; Feldman & Geisler, 2012). ~~According to Marsden, Murdoch, Lowe, Munton, and Flynn (2005),~~ One of the most divisive of these debates is whether or not to deny rural communities access to farming land (where it exists). This is because most sub-Saharan African countries heavily rely on agriculture for a variety of social and economic reasons, and particularly because rural populations depend almost exclusively on farming. Some of the nations in the area experienced varied degrees of food supply shortages and nutritional emergencies even prior to the rush and rivalry to grab enormous swaths of fertile land that have characterised the previous ten years in sub-Saharan Africa (Demissie, 2017).

The regular rises in food costs in many metropolitan areas have not always been sufficiently offset by increases in supply, mostly from the rural agricultural communities. Although farming provides the majority of rural residents with the food and livelihood they need, it is a common observation that many households

struggle to meet their year-round nutritional and food needs (Le Billon, 2013; Marsden, Murdoch, Lowe, Munton, & Flynn, 2005). Families who face ongoing food insecurity are less likely to prioritise investments that have the potential to increase agricultural productivity (both short- and medium-term) and free up capital for longer-term usage (Yengoh & Armah, 2015).

African land acquisition for agriculture has increased dramatically in recent years, sparking intense discussion over the continent's general growth, individual rights, livelihoods, and environment (Cotula, 2012; Tsikata, 2009, 2014). The economic, social, spatial, and ecological development are all impacted in different ways by these land purchases for commercial agriculture (Lambin & Meyfroidt, 2011). These effects are particularly noticeable in African nations with poor land market systems and plenty of potential for illicit financial gain (Woolcock, 2001). Land acquisitions on the African continent have involved several entities, including companies and individual investors. Some negative effects of land acquisition for special agriculture have been reported by specific studies conducted in Ghana (Tsikata & Yaro, 2011; Yaro & Tsikata, 2013, 2014), Uganda (Graham, Aubry, Künnemann & Suárez, 2011), Mozambique (Nhantumbo & Salomão, 2010), Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia (Daniel & Mittal, 2010), and South Africa (Hall, 2011). It has, among other things, resulted in fewer acres available for growing food crops, higher land prices for such crops, and a rise in land conflicts. Furthermore, it has denied access to agricultural land to women and children (Lambin & Meyfroidt, 2011).

In Ghana, the liberalization of the economy and the need for foreign direct

investment have led to commercial investment in agricultural land (Yaro et al., 2016). Following the Government's launch of the 10-year Cashew Development Strategy in 2018, which aimed to boost the cultivation of cashew as a significant exporting cash crop for the country, both local and foreign investors were attracted to acquire large parcels of farmland previously used for the cultivation of food crops in rural areas in the Bono East Region. Woolcock (2001) expressed that the weak land governance system is encouraging high demand for Africa's land. In the process, customary land is transformed into private land where the livelihood of the local people is affected. Studies on LSLA. by foreign investors for commercial agriculture in specific countries such as Mozambique (Nhantumbo & Salomao, 2010), Uganda (Graham, Aubry, Kunnemann & Suarez, 2011), South Africa (Hall, 2011), Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ethiopia (Daniel & Mittal, 2010), and Ghana (Yaro & Tsikata, 2013; 2016) have revealed some of these compounding adverse effects.

Although commercial investment interest in agricultural land can result in several economic benefits, including an increase in export earnings, high income, and improved economic growth, the inhabitants living in such areas where their livelihood is heavily dependent on the land may be adversely affected. Thus, a shift from food crop production to cash crops poses a significant risk as far as food security, land conflict, and sustainable livelihoods are concerned (Schut, Slingerland, & Locke 2010). Also, the customary arrangement for access to and control over land has witnessed a significant shift from inheritance and gifts to sharecropping systems, and presently to renting, leasing, and outright sale (Yaro

et al., 2016). Increased land commercialization affects not only rural livelihoods but also creates gendered and generational tensions and conflicts (Mariwah et al., 2019).

Within the Ghanaian context, land plays a significant role in agricultural investment in every region (Bugri, 2008). The agriculture sector plays a vital role in Ghana's economy by contributing heavily to the Gross Domestic Product (G.D.P.). For example, 45.3 percent of the labour force is employed in the Agriculture Sector alone, and in 2014, it contributed 21 percent to G.D.P. (L.S.S.E.R., 2014). The reasonable political and macroeconomic stability and the availability of large parcels of fertile land, including access to sea transport (Mehler *et al.*, 2012), have contributed to making Ghana a significant agricultural investment destination in Africa. It is estimated that out of a total of 23,583,900 hectares of land in Ghana, 57 percent is assessed to be suitable for agriculture. An estimated 54 percent of agricultural land was under cultivation as of 2009. This implies the availability of unused land for large-scale agrarian investments (Ahwoi, 2010).

Information on the quantity and nature of land acquired for agricultural investment appears not to be precise (Bugri & Coulibaly 2012). However, it is estimated that between 773,358 and 2,172,440 hectares have been obtained for agricultural production since 2003 (Land Matrix Global Observatory 2014; Deininger *et al.*, 2011). According to the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (G.I.P.C.), data from 2003 to 2009 shows that in the 78 registered agricultural projects, inflows of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) amounted to USD 13.5

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billion. With this amount, a total of USD 322.7 million was invested in agriculture (G.C.A.P., 2015). It is estimated that 49.1% of Ghana's population lives in rural areas (G.S.S. 2012), where they depend on land for their livelihood. In such areas, land is readily available for food and cash crop production (Bugri, 2008).

Although commercial agriculture in Ghana has received government support over the years and several interventions have been made under the Food and Agriculture Development Sector Policy ( FASDEP II) of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, several challenges, including land tenure misunderstandings between customary landowning communities and investors in commercial agriculture and the exclusion of women, youth, and migrants in the negotiation process, have been identified as contributing to the failure of commercial agriculture in Ghana ( Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project- G.C.A.P., 2015, p. 1). In Ghana, stools or skins, families, individuals, and the government exercise various rights and interests over land (Larbi, 2006). It is widely acknowledged that while more than 80% of land is held under customary or traditional governance, less than 20% is vested in the State (Larbi, 2006). Ghana operates a legally pluralistic system of land governance where it combines both customary as well as statutory laws in the transaction, management, and adjudication of land (Larbi, 2006).

Land in predominantly rural areas in the Bono East Region is owned by their respective stools and families, and it is used exclusively for agricultural purposes. With population explosion and rapid urbanization, there is heavy competition for agriculture and residential land uses in several parts of the

Region. Although rural communal land is leased out to both local and foreign investors for the cultivation of cashew (Naab, Dinye, & Kasanga, 2013) and the price of land is appreciating now and then in the Region, some investors are oblivious to the principle of caveat emptor, which ensures that in land transactions, due diligence is required, in establishing the authenticity of the dealing, through the conducting of official search on the land to certify that it is free from all encumbrances. This has led to misunderstandings and mistrust of the investors by the local people and has also resulted in generational and boundary disputes (Antwi, 2002).

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The commercialization of land for agricultural purposes has been steadily increasing in the Bono East Region for some time now. According to Mariwah et al. (2019), there has been a significant shift in the Brong Ahafo Region from the production of food crops to cashew, an export cash crop. Even though cashew nuts are in high demand worldwide, it has been observed that in nations like Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, the cash crop can enhance livelihoods and lessen rural poverty (C.I.A.T., 2011: 2). It has been noted that in cashew-growing regions like Wenchi, Nkoransa, and Kintampo, land has been acquired extensively. Large tracts of land for cashew production in rural villages in the Bono East area became attractive to both local and foreign investors when the government of Ghana officially launched the 10-year cashew development strategy in February 2018. Bugri (2008) has observed that cashew farming is replacing the production

of food crops on agricultural land in many areas of Brong Ahafo. This change has been prompted by the increasing demand for cashew nuts on the global market, as well as by the ideal soil, climate, and decreasing yield of food crops (Sarpong, 2011; Evans et al., 2014).

There is little scientific data regarding the effects of these large-scale land procurements for cashew cultivation on the security of tenure, means of subsistence, food security, and land conflict among the local population, despite the fact that cashew cultivation is a major driver of land commercialization in the Bono East Region [\(Yin \*et al.\* 2023; Esakkimuthu & Anitha, 2024\)](#). In the Bono East Region, one of the nation's hubs for cashew farming, this study is being carried out against this context.

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### **1.2 Objectives of the Study:**

The study's general objective is to investigate how large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation impacts food security, livelihoods, and land disputes in the Bono–East Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Assess the nature of large-scale land acquisition in the study area;
2. Examine the effects of large acquisition of land on the livelihoods of affected farmers and food security.
3. Assess the implications of large-scale land acquisition on land disputes between large-scale investors and local farmers; and
4. Evaluate the coping strategies adopted by local communities in response to large-scale land acquisition.



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### **1.3 Research Questions:**

1. What is the nature ~~of large of large-scale land acquisition~~ land acquisition in the study areas?
2. How are people's livelihoods being impacted by the large procurement of land in the areas?
3. How does the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation affect food security in the study area?
4. Why is large-scale land acquisition leading to land disputes?
5. How are local communities coping with the response to large-scale land acquisition?

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

It is the objective of this study to add to knowledge and create a framework for improving large-scale land acquisition for cashew production and its influence on food security, livelihoods, and land conflict around the globe. Additionally, it aims to add to the body of knowledge about conflict restoration plans, food security, and livelihood in Ghana's Bono-East Region. The gathered outcomes will be beneficial in assessing environmental and livelihood sustainability in terms of tackling poverty and gender inequities at the grassroots level, all of which will contribute to successful sustainable development objectives target reporting. Evidence from this study will contribute to the

formation of narratives in academia and better articulate the vision of land commercialization for large-scale cashew production in a global economy that is becoming more and more market-fundamentalist.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

The study concentrated on international and local investors who bought sizable land holdings in Asantekwa, an agricultural town in the Bono East Region's Kintampo North Municipality. The empirical scope of the study included the indigenous people's land dispossession and deprivation, as well as the effects of L.S.L.A. on livelihood, food security, and conflict.

### **1.6 Limitations of the Study:**

Given the increased interest in the topic among various stakeholders, including local smallholder farmers, investors, and state institutions like the Lands Commission, Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands, Municipal Assembly, and Traditional Authority, among others, the study's main challenges were its scope and the length of time it took to gather data. It took a lot of time to go through the bureaucracy and gain access to institutional responses. Those dates had to be rescheduled because farmers at the family level were too preoccupied with seasonal activities on their farms to take part in interviews. Sometimes it was essential to accompany farmers to their farms before conducting interviews. According to the comments of the respondents and participants, the neighbourhood has been feeling the effects of large-scale land acquisition; nevertheless, more extensive study would have given a more complete picture of

the issue. It is inappropriate to generalize the results as large-scale land acquisition processes differ by location.

#### **Operational Definition of Concepts:**

For this study, the following concepts would be adopted and defined:

##### **1.6.1 Land**

Land is defined as “An immovable and indestructible three-dimensional area consisting of a portion of the earth’s surface, the space above and below the surface, and everything growing and permanently affixed to it.” (Black’s Law Dictionary). This definition of land covers not only the physical land but even the airspace and what is under the surface of the earth. Specifically, in this study, land refers to the natural resource that is commercialized for cashew cultivation.

##### **1.6.2 Large Scale Land Acquisition (L.S.L.A.)**

Cotula, et al (2009) are of the view that land transactions involving between 1,000 and 500,000 hectares can be labeled as large-scale. Other authorities delineate it below this figure, while others define it with an attitude of neutrality. It appears that what constitutes large-scale land is determined according to the national or regional context. According to the Environmental Protection Authority of Ghana (E.P.A.), in the context of guidelines for Environmental Impact Analysis (E.I.A.) (a procedure to predict the effects of changes in land use on the environment), any agri- investment project of 40 hectares or more is classified as commercial and needs to be environmentally assessed before implementation, (E.I.A.). Guideline, 1999). This implies that any

land acquisition below 40 hectares is designated as small-scale while any land above 40 hectares is large-scale.

However, the new Land Act, which consolidates all previous enactments on land and seeks to ensure sustainable land administration and management, as well as effective and efficient land tenure in Ghana, defines "large scale land disposition" as "disposition of land or interest in land which exceeds four (4) hectares for residential purposes and twenty (20) hectares for agricultural, civic, cultural, commercial, or industrial purpose." (Land Act, 2020, (Acts 1036)).

In the context of this study, Large Scale Land Acquisition (L.S.L.A.) is defined as any 20-hectare land (about 50 acres) that is commercialized for cashew plantation.

#### **1.6.3 Land Tenure**

The study defines land tenure as the rights or interests that people enjoy or can create in the land. In the study, land tenure encompasses gift, inheritance, lease, tenancy, purchase, rent, sharecropping, and trusteeship. The study further recognizes land ownership and acquisitions accepted by customary and statutory law among the Mo people in the Bono East Region of Ghana.

#### **1.6.4 Food Security**

Food security is defined as the availability, sufficiency, accessibility, and utilization of food for all individuals and households (FAO, 1996). Food security is defined as: "A situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (F.A.O.,

W.F.P.). and IFAD, 2012).

#### **1.6.5 Livelihood**

Livelihood is explained in this study, refers the assets, which are both social and material resources, as well as the capabilities and activities required for living. The study adapts the Sustainable Livelihood Framework and focuses on rural livelihood diversification of rural livelihood (Ellis, 2000) following the shift from food crop cultivation to cashew crop cultivation.

#### **1.6.6 Land Conflict**

Land is an object of competition and conflict. Although the study identifies different land conflicts, it focuses on boundary, inheritance, and generational conflicts.

#### **1.6.7 Cashew**

Cashew is a tree crop and a cash crop, and it is regarded as “property” (Mariwah et al., 2019). The study looks at its cultivation on a large scale and how both local and foreign investors are investing in its cultivation.

### **1.7 Organisation of the Study**

Ten chapters make up the framework of this research. The study's backdrop, issue description, goal, research aims, and questions are all introduced in the first chapter. Important terms used in the research are defined. The study's theoretical and empirical themes are examined in Chapter 2. The study's

conceptual framework is examined in Chapter 3. The methods used for the study is reviewed in chapter four. The survey's sociodemographic details are covered in Chapter 5, the nature of large-scale land acquisition is explained in Chapter 6, the effects of large-scale land acquisition on rural livelihood and food security are examined in Chapter 7, the implications of large-scale land acquisition for land disputes are discussed in Chapter 8, and coping [strategies in response](#) to large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation are discussed in Chapter 9. The study's summary, results, and suggestions are eventually presented in Chapter 10.

### **1.8 Summary of the Chapter**

The chapter included background information on LSLA as well as examples of its occurrence in Ghanaian, African, and worldwide contexts. In addition, it included an overview of the study's importance, goals, research questions, issue statement, and scope. The chapter focused on the large-scale land acquisition that has occurred recently in the Bono East area as a result of the cashew development strategy's introduction and the region's abrupt transition from the cultivation of food crops to cashew. There was emphasis on the operationalization of a number of terminology and ideas, including land, livelihood, land conflict, Large Scale Land Acquisition (LSLA), land tenure, food security, and cashew farming.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

The study's theoretical and empirical review of large-scale land acquisition is presented in this section, along with an overview of the global trends in large-scale land purchase. It goes into further detail into the characteristics of large-scale land acquisition and looks at how purchasing a lot of property affects people's ability to support themselves. This chapter traces four progressive narratives to explore the historical antecedents as well. It also covers the factors that influence large-scale land acquisition, land reforms, and customary tenure in

Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the legal foundations for large-scale land acquisition in Ghana and important clauses pertaining to large-scale land acquisition in the recently passed Lands Act.

It also discusses the political ecology of cashew agriculture, large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana, and the relationship between cashew production and sustainable livelihoods. The chapter concludes by assessing the coping mechanisms used by local people in reaction to large-scale land acquisition. It also emphasises the effects of large-scale land acquisition on food security and land conflicts.

In addition, this section discusses the amalgamation of theories, such as Political Ecology, Property Rights/Neo-liberalism, and Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping, for a study on the struggles to secure access to land in the Bono East region of Ghana due to the expansion of cashew production. Political Ecology examines ecological problems using the ideas and approaches of political economy, while Neo-liberalism focuses on investment and capital accumulation through grabbing resources such as land. Property rights theories, such as the "efficient use" theory, have been used to justify land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana. However, land commercialization has negative impacts on the livelihoods of the rural poor, and the acquisition of land often leads to land grabbing and displacement.

## **2.1 Large-Scale Land Acquisition (LSLA): Towards a Definition.**



Large-scale land acquisition (LSLA) usually involves hostile takeover of the land by a foreign investor in which some or all of the land user's rights to continue in possession are removed (Asongu & L. NGUENA, 2014). Academics who are interested in the topic of large-scale land acquisition have studied the word from a number of perspectives (Daniel & Mittal, 2009; De Schutter; Hilhorst & Zoomers, 2011). Firstly, the pace and extent of recent land purchases are now included under the umbrella phrase "large-scale land acquisitions". Jacques Diouf, the former chief of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, described such land agreements as a sort of neo-colonialism, in which impoverished regimes feed the rich at the expense of their own starving population (Hunt, 2015; Baumer, 2010). Contrary to what some scholars have asserted, such transactions are also covered in a number of academic publications as the 21st century land rush and the third wave of outsourcing (Kugelman, 2013; Hurst, 2010). Several scholars involved in the land economy discussion assert that it is difficult to define precisely what constitutes a large-scale land purchase and to evaluate the ethics of that acquisition (Dell'Angelo, D'Odorico, Rulli, & Marchand, 2017; Moreda, 2015). How to determine the quantity of land purchased in order to gauge the scope of the phenomena is unknown. It's also uncertain what should be included in the definition and what shouldn't.

The main contested elements in the definition of large-scale land acquisitions worldwide are, generally speaking, the size of the acquisition, the purpose of the land acquisition (which could involve, for example, cashew plantations or the production of biofuel), whether the actors are national or

international, and legal issues of ownership and procedure (Cotula, 2013; Deininger & Byerlee, 2011). For example, Cotula (2013) argues that the magnitude of the purchase is the primary criterion for the new wave of land acquisitions. In his view, buying property also means obtaining usage rights, whether they come in the form of concessions or short- or long-term leases. Many studies focus on the role of foreign entities, such as governments, but ignore domestic investors.

Transnational firms or foreign governments are the ones who carry out large-scale, cross-border trades or transactions (Dikova, Sahib, & Van Witteloostuijn, 2010). While some argue against LSLA because to its perceived harmful effects on society and the environment, others contend that it is important for the growth of the agriculture industry (Voget-Kleschin, 2013). The production of crops for export depended on the acquisition or leasing of enormous expanses of land by private investors from primarily poor, developing countries and affluent food-insecure nations (Hunt, 2015). This is similar to the strategy used by the Spanish non-governmental organisation GRAIN in 2008, when their report on "land grabbing" garnered attention worldwide: Large farmlands (over 10,000 hectares) in another country that corporations or states acquire (through lease, concession, or outright purchase) for a long period of time (typically between 30 and 99 years) in order to produce staple foods that will be exported to Spain and its allies (Anseeuw, Boche, Breu, Giger, Lay, Messerli & Nolte, 2012; Hallam, 2011).

Global land acquisition on a massive scale has influenced activists by bringing attention to the extent of changes and proof of unethical behaviour

(Wapner, 2002). However, the term "large-scale land acquisition" is viewed as problematic and has been criticised for its impreciseness and for emphasising the possible drawbacks of land agreements (Borras, Franco, Kay & Spoor, 2014). In a similar vein, Wright and Wolford (2003) maintain that the term "large-scale land acquisition" should only refer to an activity that, via obtaining property through unfair or fraudulent means, leaves the rural poor without a place to live. Although it is empirically difficult to determine when a land acquisition lacks accountability and transparency, labelling it as a large-scale purchase implies that results can be predicted, which is prejudicial (Timmermans & Epstein, 2010). The legality, structure, and results of commercial land agreements can vary greatly, and this might be obscured by a broadly understood reference to large-scale land purchase. In conclusion, not all land transactions in the global land rush have been associated with unethical behaviours, even if there is evidence of unethical tactics in some land purchases that may have resulted in unjust treatment to beneficiary groups (Barnett & Land, 2007).

According to Hall (2011), there is a chance that the focus on foreign parties in big land acquisition deals will overshadow the roles that domestic elites and governments play as participants, go-betweens, and beneficiaries of land deals, whether they do so on their own or in tandem with foreign parties. Paul (2017) challenged this notion, stating that the emphasis ~~need~~needs to be on the landowners' control and the ways in which the property is utilised to disclose these dynamics outside of the context of land ownership transfers. All land purchases, regardless of magnitude or whether they are motivated by domestic or

international demand, should be included by this logic. Victor (2018) argues that understanding the potential effects of land transactions in specific national and local contexts should not be hindered by the size of land transactions overall, the global trend, or the prominence of international actors. Nor should they obscure the role of national actors in facilitating and directly influencing land acquisitions.

At the 2011 International Land Coalition Conference in Tirana, Albania, a global alliance of farmers' organisations, civil society organisations, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organisations, and research institutes specifically defined large-scale land acquisition as land grabbing because it poses a threat to the livelihoods of those affected by the acquisition (Antonelli, Siciliano, Turvani, & Rulli, 2015; Zagma, 2011). Ackerly (2018) claims that the emergence of this equivalent phrase led to the official definition of land grabbing being developed. This definition is an essential benchmark for evaluating the data on how land deals impact the impoverished and in relation to human rights. In the context of large-scale land purchase, the human rights accords give the standards for evaluating the processes and outcomes of specific deals and deciding whether they are morally objectionable. Along with critically analysing itself to avoid assuming anything about morality or power dynamics, the Tirana Declaration also provides a solid argument against corruption in regard to land deals, especially when it comes to large-scale, major land acquisition transactions (Raschke, 2008). As a result, academics who have tried to define LSLA neutrally have differing opinions on what it is and how to define it. They do, however, contend that these transactions can occur in a variety of ways and under various circumstances. The

Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) guidelines for Environmental Impact Analysis (EIA) in Ghana describe any land transaction for an Agric-invest project above 40 hectares (approximately 100 acres) as "large scale," despite Cotula *et al.* (2009) holding the opinion that land transactions involving between 1,000 and 50,000 hectares can be considered as "large scale" (EPA Guidelines, 1999). The current Land Act, however, has defined what constitutes large-scale land disposition in both residential and commercial land uses, without definitively defining it. It has done so by combining all prior laws and enactments on land in Ghana and aims to ensure sustainable land administration and management as well as effective and efficient land tenure in Ghana. The "disposition of land or interest in land which exceeds four (4) hectares for residential purposes and twenty (20) hectares for agricultural, civic, cultural, commercial, or industrial purpose" is recognised under the Act as "large-scale land disposition." (Acts 1036, 2020; Land Act). When comparing this concept to the previous explanations (above) for the composition or structure of large-scale land, one is implying a national or regional context, not a universal truth. Since the study's main focus is large-scale agricultural land acquisition, the Lands Acts 1036 of 2020's 20-hectare (or about 50-acre) restriction is used in this investigation.

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## **2.2 Historical Perspectives of large-Scale Land Acquisition**

This section of the study examines four historical occurrences of large-scale land dispossession in an effort to identify common economic and social characteristics. It details the historical perspective of the Latifundia of the Roman

Republic and Empire, as an experience of ancient colonization that existed well before the development of capitalism; the Enclosures in Britain, as an endogenous dynamic linked to the dissolution of the feudal regime and the emergence of capitalism; the large Spanish and Portuguese colonial estates in the Americas as a product of colonization by external powers, which itself was linked to the expansion of mercantile capitalism; and collectivization in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), as an endogenous dynamic linked to the aspiration to establish a sort of state capitalism within a managed economy and collectivisation in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

The historicity of these transactions, which is fundamentally inductive in nature, aims to emphasize the similarities between each of these historical occurrences and a particular economic and social dynamic (Poovey, 1998). This approach is heavily influenced by the analytical framework for rural political economy, which addresses issues such as who the earliest landowners and users were. Which further social groups were under consideration? What connections these various clusters had on a social level. How was the land purchased, and who was given possession of it? Did the judicial and legal systems approve of them? Was there a particular rhetoric that made them feel legitimate? Which social groupings were represented in the brand-new production facilities? What ties did they have among themselves? What result, and what? kind of working circumstances? How was the wealth generated in this manner allocated later? What purpose did it serve? What effects did these modifications have on the previous users (Reinert, 2019; White, Borras, Hall, Scoones & Welford, 2012; Ross, 2013; Lipton, 1977).

2.3 The Magnitude of Large-scale Land Acquisition in Ghana

In Ghana, large-scale land refers to land measuring more than 20 hectares. The country has become attractive to domestic and international investors for extensive farming due to factors such as a favorable climate, inexpensive labor, political stability, and an inviting investment environment (Anseeuw *et al.*, 2012; Ellis & Allison, 2004). The Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project (GCAP) has facilitated the release of land for agro-investment activities to promote foreign direct investment (FDI) in agriculture (Kuusaana, 2017). Large-scale land acquisitions in Ghana have been associated with the cultivation of bioenergy crops like Jatropha (Ahmed & Kuusaana, 2018). However, reliable statistics on the extent and volume of these acquisitions are limited (Cotula *et al.*, 2009; R. Hall, Scoones *et al.*, 2015). Multinational corporations have purchased land for biofuel production, but the impacts of these land agreements extend beyond biofuels and have led to large-scale land sales (Acheampong & Campion, 2014),

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changes in rural populations' socioeconomic conditions, evictions, loss of control over resources, livelihood changes, and conflicts. The shifting land uses have negative implications for rural livelihoods and food security. While large-scale land acquisitions in Ghana cover less than 9% of the country's arable land, there are negative effects such as displacement of local communities and environmental consequences such as the drying up of water bodies due to agricultural activities.

The Land Matrix has reported 5 top projects in Ghana where large parcels of land have been acquired (see figure 1).

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**Figure 1: Land Matrix data on the 5 top land acquisitions in Ghana**

Source: Land Matrix Global Observatory, 2022



Accessed: February 14, 2023

## 2.4 Determinants of Large -Scale Land Acquisition

According to Cutula et al. (2009) and Zoomers (2010), large-scale land acquisitions (LSLAs) for agricultural investment have been influenced by favorable investment conditions, globalization, land market liberalization, and a rise in foreign direct investment. The demand for agricultural products, driven by population growth and the increased demand for agro fuels, has also contributed to the rise in LSLAs (Watts, 2013; Lal, R. (2009). Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly affected by LSLAs, accounting for 37% of cases (Mazzocchi, Salvan, Orsi & Sali, 2018). LSLAs have both positive and negative implications, seen as opportunities for economic efficiency (Vandergeest & Schoenberger, 2019; Mataen, 2012) and technological exchange (Thomas & Twyman, 2005) but also as a form of neo-colonialism. The global scale of LSLAs is significant, with over 2,800 deals covering more than 100 million hectares of land. High-income, land-scarce countries often seek land in low-income, land-abundant countries (Mwangi, 2020; Du Plessis, 2016). The implementation of LSLAs has sparked development narratives, with some viewing them as a development opportunity and others as land grabbing. LSLAs reflect the imbalance between global land supply and demand, exacerbating pressure on the planet's resources and potentially affecting the poorest and most vulnerable populations. This phenomenon is also causing a shift from customary forms of land ownership to individual private property. Optimal land allocation and effective land governance mechanisms are crucial for addressing the challenges posed by LSLAs (Carter, Manceur, Seppelt, Hermans-Neumann, Herold & Verchot, 2017; Fogel, 2006).

## **2.5 Land Reform and Customary Tenure in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Land reform has frequently been at the heart of initiatives to advance rural development (Sabates-Wheeler, 2002). In fact, throughout the first several decades after World War II, development thinkers looking to improve justice and efficiency were quite concerned about the disputes surrounding land reforms (Stiglitz, 1999). Due to the apparent abundance of land and flexibility of community land tenure systems, this wave of changes had little impact on land relations on the African continent (Manji, 2006). This tendency appeared to have changed by the 1980s, with the World Bank's structural adjustment lending in the area requiring rapid expansion of land policy reforms (Ismi, 2004). Most countries in southern Africa, as well as all of sub-Saharan Africa, have undergone structural adjustment programs and policy reforms aimed at liberalizing the land market since the early 1990s. These reforms have occasionally included the legal recognition of customary rights (Daniel & Mittal 2009; Manji 2006). According to Obeng-Odoom (2012), these reforms have generated debate due to a number of factors, including the perception of a lack of public involvement, the lack of adequate legal protection for the rights of traditional users, the conceptualization of development and related land reforms as market-based enterprises, the easing of restrictions on foreigners' ability to own land, and the potential size of these landholdings.

Unquestionably, land is recognized as a valuable resource for those residing in rural areas (Stiglitz, 1999). However, with rising commodity prices and commercial land interest, the issue of how to safeguard customary rights and successfully transfer these rights into substantive economic benefits for the

underprivileged takes center stage (German, Schoneveld & Mwangi, 2011). There may be two sides to the argument, one supporting the formalization and individualization of customary tenure and the other opposing it. According to the first viewpoint, investments that increase productivity and tenure security are threatened by the vagueness, flexibility, and negotiability of rights under customary tenure. It also argues that formal titling increases the efficiency of land distribution and boosts agrarian productivity and capital accumulation (De Soto, 2000). Since Hardin's seminal publication on the tragedy of the commons in 1968, it has also been argued that customary tenure regimes and the communal resource management practices which often accompany them contribute to resource degradation by failing to regulate predatory behaviour (Noronha, 2000).

The second viewpoint, which argues against formal property registration, is supported by decades of anthropological and political science studies on the institutional underpinnings of sustainable natural resource management (Lund, Weile, Christensen, Rostock, Downey, Bartels & Bliddal, 2008; Ostrom, 1990). This body of research has concentrated on how customary tenure systems are more suited to providing safety nets for women and other marginalized groups than formalized tenure in difficult ecological situations (Gray & Kevane 1999; Niamir-Fuller 1998).

A larger movement to improve government efficiency and effectiveness by transferring significant amounts of authority and responsibility to local levels of government has bolstered trends toward the recognition of customary tenure (Ribot & Peluso, 2003). Decentralization in the land sector is often supported by

policy and the law, according to an assessment of experiences in 20 African nations. Additionally, it discovered data that suggests the more decentralized and locally powerful approaches to land management are most effective at fairly bringing the majority of property interests under formal control (Wily 2003).

However, recent policies that emphasize foreign direct investment as a means of fostering regional and national economic development and an increase in the quantity and size of large-scale land acquisitions raise crucial questions, such as whether intensifying commercial pressure on the land will be compatible with the commitment to recognize customary land rights and whether it will support or impede the trend toward decentralized land and resource management. According to Wily (2003), there are already indications that when governments are faced with the reality of implementation or the loss of authority over the periphery, they do not always maintain their enthusiasm for decentralized systems. Decentralized strategies also don't often mesh well with other contemporary reforms' common goals, like the desire to open up the real estate market.

As espoused by Onoma (2009), Akram-Lodhi (2007) and Deininger (2003), the political will to safeguard customary rights and decentralised land governance may be further undermined by new opportunities for extracting rents from large-scale land developments by political and economic elites who stand to benefit from tenure insecurity and ambiguity or centralized control. Thus, Lund et. al (2008) affirms the view of land rights as a context for negotiation over both the land itself and the authority over land becoming a highly relevant area of

inquiry in its own right. Against this proposition, the land policy of a state is strongly connected to the internal organization of property rights. According to Dell'Angelo *et al.* (2017), three categories of land investment can be identified in LSLAs, considering on one hand the legal title of the expropriated land and on the other its company scale: the acquisition of large commercial companies; that of land belonging to small private companies; and the expropriation of common lands. In SSA community forms of land use survive, resulting in a low level of "official registration" and legal protection (Lund, Weile, Christensen, Rostock, Downey, Bartels & Bliddal, 2008).

Common lands guarantee food security to 1.5 billion people, of which 370 million are indigenous peoples, but only one fifth has legal recognition (Gill, Farrington, Anderson, Luttrell, Conway, Saxena & Slater, 2003). It is estimated that in the SSA the condition of common lands without recognition concerns 70 percent of the surfaces (De Soto, 2000). However, among the African states there are differences: in some of them, for example, the land ownership is always public. Some social and legal issues regarding land ownership remain unresolved: the recognition of acquired rights of occupation on the common lands of ethnic minorities and the discrimination of women in the property rights recognition in many patriarchal societies (Obeng-Odoom, 2012). Moreover, the resilience of small communities for food, water, energy supply, as well as for the agro system in general, are deeply connected to land rights issue (Onoma, 2009; Akram-Lodhi 2007). In addition, in SSA, the relationship between land and institutions is often ambiguous. For example, in certain countries most of the land is owned by the

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state (e.g., Tanzania, Senegal, and Mali), while in Ghana, there is a private predominance, where the authorities exercise a supervision and control role (Hilson & Garforth, 2012; Oya, 2012).

## **2.6 The Statutory and Customary Underpinnings of Large-Scale Land Acquisition in Ghana**

This section highlights Ghana's narrative by outlining the statutory underpinnings of customary rights and how these rights are upheld as far as large-scale land acquisitions are concerned.

In Ghana, customary control accounts for 78% of the total land area, while state control accounts for 20%. The remaining fraction of the land area is under shared ownership in one way or another (Deininger 2003). According to Kuusaana and Eledi (2015), the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution only permits transitory alienation through leasehold titling and forbids the acquisition of ownership of customary land. This section tells the story of Ghana by describing the legislative foundations of customary rights and how these rights are maintained after large-scale land acquisition. In Ghana, customary control accounts for 78 percent of the land area, while state control accounts for 20 percent. The remaining fraction of the land area is under shared ownership in one way or another (Deininger 2003). According to Kuusaana and Eledi (2015), the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution only permits transitory alienation through leasehold titling and forbids the acquisition of ownership of customary land. Customary land is usually administered by a traditional council made up of the village elders

and the Paramount Chief of the area. These councils, known as the "allodial title holders" in Ghana, have the last say over the allocation, revocation, and alienation of user rights as well as the reallocation of land. Therefore, the only body with the ability to bargain with project developers over leasehold conditions is the Traditional Council. The Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC) offers a land bank as a service to investors, allowing them to interact with Traditional Councils that are prepared to alienate property to them. A number of legislative documents, chief among them the Constitution, have delineated the parameters in which Traditional Councils are to manage (and thereby alienate) their landholdings. According to Article 36.8 of the 1992 Constitution, Traditional Councils are held accountable as fiduciaries and have a "obligation to discharge their functions for the benefit respectively of the people of Ghana, of the stool, skin, or family concerned."

The National Lands Policy 1999 declares that "no interest in or right over any land can be disposed of without consultation of the owner or occupier," however land laws implicitly include the concepts of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) (Article 4.3c). Land users can seek restitution from the judiciary, several sectoral ministries, and customary institutions if they have been harmed by the transfer of their land to a project developer (for example, by involuntary expropriation and insufficient compensation for the same).

The main responsibilities and duties of Traditional Councils, together with the procedures of appeal, are outlined in a number of publications. But the existing paradigm doesn't go into enough depth about the processes and



circumstances that justify estrangement. Apart from the state's forced seizure of land, no comprehensive legal measures exist that guarantee the right to compensation for loss of livelihood, create resettlement and rehabilitation (R and R) procedures, or apportion duties to this effect. Land regulations do not set approval criteria; rather, they only specify that the Lands Commission evaluates whether the project is "compatible with existing development plans," even though the Lands Commission is ultimately responsible for approving the project and granting the investor legal leasehold title (Constitution 1992, Land Commission Act 2008).

Project developers are required to carry out a thorough Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before converting more than 40 hectares of land. The EIA takes social and economic variables into account in addition to environmental ones. Laws pertaining to EIAs, however, do not outline the obligations of proponents to project-affected parties (PAP). For instance, although proponents are not legally obligated to account for non-environmental consequences, they must incorporate impact mitigation measures into their Environmental Management Plans (EMPs). Furthermore, aside from land having an officially recognized protected status, no national rules stipulate the kind of land that can be turned into a plantation. Except in cases where they relate to "farming and other activities carried on in a settlement of a population of not more than five thousand," licences for physical improvements must be sought from the local government (Local Government Act, article 51.3[a]).

There has been a notable surge in the number of commercial investors seeking to buy land in Ghana for plantation agriculture since 2005. Approximately 1.2 million hectares have been made available to investors over a period of five years; the bulk of these are situated in the forest-savanna transition zone in central Ghana (Schoneveld *et al.*, in press). But it didn't seem like the Ghanaian government was actively supporting these land purchases. While the government is able to utilise eminent domain to purchase land on behalf of investors, no previous land transactions had made use of this authority at the time the study was conducted. Nor was there any evidence that the government had rented out public property to financiers. In a recent interview with the Director of Research and Food Security of Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Mr Asante Mensah expressed the need for the government to go into agriculture land banking, particularly in rural communities where large parcels of land are available.

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On the nine plantations that Schoneveld *et al.* (2017) examined, all of the land that the investors have access to is on customary property. Investors can get assistance from the Ghana Investment Promotion Centre (GIPC), which oversees a land bank, in finding suitable land and Traditional Councils willing to lease out their land. There was little evidence that government organizations were actively encouraging land acquisition for the businesses the research looked at, although the GIPC assisted two well-known investments in the production of jatropha to acquire access to 150,000 hectares of land in southern Ghana. In these instances, all investors contacted the Traditional Council, not the government, first, with

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some receiving assistance from local middlemen or partners. Traditional Councils subsequently negotiated directly with the investors on the terms and conditions for the leasehold contract. By and large, Traditional Councils were found to be exceptionally responsive and accommodating to investors; in addition to any payments of direct benefit to them, they had consistent expectations that large-scale investments in the area would contribute to job creation, market opportunities and the provision of social infrastructure (e.g. schools, hospitals).

In theory, Traditional Councils are bound by a clear fiduciary duty under the Constitution. In actuality, however, none of the land alienation cases showed proof of any community discussions to ascertain whether the distribution would be "to the advantage of the people" (1992 Constitution, Article 36.8). There was no proof that government agencies or civil society organizations (CSOs) participated in the land acquisition process. The GIPC said that, while it does connect investors with landholders, it does not take part in any subsequent transactions, despite the fact that none of the observed land acquisitions appeared to have been initiated by it.

This apparent absence of intermediaries (and formal regulations promoting this) in the actual alienation process exposes the process to iniquitous and exploitative conduct, from both the Traditional Council and the prospective investor. Investors can exploit the ignorance of Traditional Councils which may be unfamiliar with the true market of land, not attuned to potential long-term implications of alienation and easily swayed by 'development' prospects. For example, four Traditional Councils (for four separate plantations by two different

companies covering 91 500 ha) entered into agreements with the investor to share between 25% and 33% of profits from jatropha seed sales. However, both companies established different limited-liability companies for cultivation and biodiesel refining. With such corporate structures and undifferentiated tax rates in the agricultural sector (with both agro-processing and agricultural production being zero-rated in Ghana), companies can easily concentrate future profits within the refining business to circumvent pay-outs. Moreover, the tendency of Traditional Councils to put their faith in the good will of the investors poses risks. For example, according to a Traditional Council that leased out 14 000 ha in Pru District, it made a verbal agreement with the investor to support the development of social and physical infrastructure in the traditional area's communities and adopt preferential hiring policies. The investor did not live up to this agreement. The failure of the Traditional Council to contractualize these agreements illustrate well the lack of legal literacy of some Traditional Councils.

Despite having the legal right to reject investor requests for formal leasehold titles (due to, for example, disagreement with district development plans or public concerns), the Regional Lands Commission rarely does so in actuality. For instance, the Regional Lands Commission in Brong Ahafo claims that once the paperwork is in order, the application is always approved. Because of this, in reality, the Lands Commission does not evaluate or have any control over the agreements made between traditional councils and investors. Traditional Councils are able to take advantage of negotiations for personal gain rather than serving, in their capacity as fiduciaries, the interests of their community because of a lack of

external oversight and the absence of proper regulations to oversee land purchases. Customarily, when the Chief distributes land, the receiver must provide a sign of fealty, often known as "drink money," for the Chief to take into account. While typically a bottle of vodka, kola nuts, and food items are involved, this can also involve substantial financial amounts. In this way, "drink money" is becoming a more popular term to 'label' what amounts to traditional authorities' rent-seeking behaviour. Drink money falls into a grey area because it is traditionally seen as a social custom rather than income, even though by law, all land revenues must be reported to the Office of the Administrator of Stool Land (OASL) and distributed according to a constitutional formula. As a result, the OASL claims that the nature of these payments is rarely disclosed to the public. Since significant annual rent payments are normally formalized as part of the land lease agreement, there is certainly a risk that Traditional Authorities may opt instead for a less formal one-time gift that benefits specific "big men" or customary leaders.

With high levels of opacity surrounding the nature of negotiations and the payment of drink money, it proved impossible, despite efforts, to collect concrete evidence of these informal agreements. Even community members are frequently found to have not known even the most basic provisions of the leasehold contracts, illustrating well the lack of transparency in the land alienation process. In one case, we observed that communities were only made aware of the land allocation when land occupation and use by investors had already commenced. Communities were forced to give up farmlands at every plantation the authors

evaluated, even if they hadn't publicly agreed to it. At the time of the investigation, neither a direct payment proposal nor a pledge to split future revenue flows had been made by a Traditional Council. It is challenging to predict how well and for what purposes future land earnings will be used, as well as to appropriately assess the Traditional Councils' motivations. However, with the current (legal) institutions of power and control, there is unquestionably a significant risk of elite capture and self-interest.

Land is crucial for Ghana's national development efforts, as it can reduce poverty, manage environmental issues, and promote economic opportunities. The land question examines land resources, governance systems, and the state's role in regulating these systems. The realization of land's potential depends on the nature of land governance, which impacts the democratic process. The land governance context in Ghana is essential for addressing changing social, economic, and environmental conditions.

Land governance refers to the laws, procedures, and institutions that determine who has access to and what can be done with land, how these choices are carried out, and how competing land interests are handled. This occurs in Ghana, which has a pluralistic legal system. There are essentially two types of land in the nation. These are both public and private lands (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1999; Kasanga and Kotei, 2004; ~~2004~~20; and Ministry of Justice, 2003). About 80% of the land area is owned by the customary land sector, which uses a variety of tenure structures (Kasanga, 1988). However, in general, the three

northern regions—Northern, Upper East, and Upper West—have tenure systems that are very different from those of the rest of the nation.

These regions have similar ethnic, cultural, and ecological conditions and occupy a tenure niche in which land inheritance is predominantly patrilineal. Here, a mixture of chiefs and tendamba (earth-priests), depending on the locality, occupy the apex of the tenure group to exercise land governance responsibilities in a fiduciary capacity (Bugri, ~~2007~~2008). On the other hand, in the other regions of the country, popularly referred to as the South, the dominant land inheritance pattern is matrilineal, and mainly chiefs are at the apex of the tenure group, exercising their fiduciary responsibilities in respect of land. In a few areas in this part of the country, for example, the Ga in the Greater Accra Region and Ewe of the Volta; patrilineal land inheritance exists and in the specific case of the Ewe, family heads occupy the apex of the tenure group (see Asante-Ansong, 1978; Kom, 1979; Asante, 1975). The level of urbanization between the northern and southern parts of Ghana also accounts for differences in tenure practices in which the less urbanized north has a predominance of traditional land tenure practices which discourage the sale of land. On the other hand, the more urbanized south has land tenure practices which largely regard land as a saleable commodity. The implication of this difference is that many more land owners and users in the south than in the north patronize state mechanisms such as titling and registration of land to improve on their tenure security.

Conflict between the institutions of customary and state land governance has historically not boded well for the nation's effective land governance

practices. Lack of awareness of the intricacy of customary tenure systems as a result of drastic attempts to replace these tenure systems with western forms of tenure has been a significant factor in the failure of land tenure reform in Ghana. However, since 1999 when a national land policy was formulated as a means of improving land governance, a new spirit of cooperation rather than confrontation and recognition of customary land rights has resulted. The aim of the national land policy is to ensure “the judicious use of the nation’s land and all its natural resources by all sections of the Ghanaian society in support of various socio-economic activities undertaken in accordance with sustainable resource management principles and in maintaining viable ecosystems” (Ministry of Lands and Forestry, 1999).

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## **2.7 The Legislative and Customary Institutional Setups of Land Tenure System in Ghana**

Ghana has statutory laws and customary land laws, which together make up its pluralistic system of land governance. The constitution of Ghana from 1992, namely articles 36(8), 257, and 257, recognizes both systems. In contrast to lands held under customary law, which are held by the appropriate communities or families, public lands are held in trust by the President on behalf of Ghana's citizens. In Ghana, almost 80% of lands are owned under customary systems, and these customary rules, which are only applicable to certain tribes, ethnic groups, and towns, are mostly unwritten (Ubink & Quan, 2008). In their separate traditional domains, traditional land institutions play crucial roles in land administration, land use planning, and allocation (Acheampong, 2012).



Customary land institutions were created in Ghana as a result of proper legislation by various governments. Ghana has outlined issues relating to land use and management in its essential constitutional realm within the legal regulations. Articles 266 and 277 of the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (1992), which deal with issues of customary land law have the following provisions:

(1) All stool lands in Ghana shall vest in the appropriate stool on behalf of, and in trust for the subjects of the stool in accordance with customary law and usage.

(2) There shall be established the Office of the Administrator of Stool

Lands which shall be responsible for;

(a) the establishment of a stool land account for each stool into which shall be paid all rents, dues, royalties, revenues or other payments whether in the nature of income or capital from the stool lands;

(b) the collection of all such rents, dues, royalties, revenues or other payments whether in the nature of income or capital, and to account for them to the beneficiaries specified in clause (6) of this article;

and (c) the disbursement of such revenues as may be determined in accordance with clause (6) of this article.

(3) There shall be no disposition or development of any stool land unless the Regional Lands Commission of the region in which the land is situated has certified

that the disposition or development is consistent with the development plan drawn up or approved by the planning authority for the area concerned”.

On the grounds of revenue from land deals, the Constitution in the same article, puts it that;

(6) Ten percent of the revenue accruing from stool lands shall be paid to the office of the Administrator of Stool Lands to cover administrative expenses; and the remaining revenue shall be disbursed in the following proportions;

(a) twenty-five per cent to the stool through the traditional authority for the maintenance of the stool in keeping with its status;

(b) twenty percent to the traditional authority; and

(c) fifty-five percent to the District Assembly, within the area of authority of which the stool lands are situated.

(7) The Administrator of Stool Lands and the Regional Lands Commission shall consult with the stools and other traditional authorities in all matters relating to the administration and development of stool land and shall make available to them all relevant information and data.

(8) The Lands Commission and the area of Stool Lands shall coordinate with all relevant public agencies, traditional authorities, and stools in preparing a policy framework for the rational and productive development and management of stool lands.

Customary land tenure recognizes a number of interests, including allodial title, usufruct/customary freehold, customary leaseholds, and other lesser interests, in addition to the constitutional provisions on customary land governance systems described above. (Ollennu, 1985; Woodman, 1996; Bentsi-Enchill, 1964).

### **2.8 The allodial title**

The allodial title is the highest interest that can be held in land under customary law, and there is no higher title above it (Sarpong, 2006). The allodial title denotes corporate ownership by the community as a whole rather than the head of the land-owning community's personal ownership. The owners of the allodial title can be communities, clans, or families, depending on the relevant customary law. The allodial title is held on behalf of the entire community by the chief or head of the land-owning community.

### **2.9 The Usufruct or Customary Freehold Interest**

The interest that members of the land-owning group are legally entitled to possess is the usufruct or customary freehold. It is typically obtained through allotment or by occupying and cultivating any land that was previously unoccupied or uncultivated by another member of the community. Other than the allodial title, its superiority transcends all other interests (Agbosu 2007). As long as the superior interest of the allodial title is acknowledged, the customary freehold may be held in perpetuity (da Rocha & Lodoh, 1999). It may be freely transferred to other landowners in the community, but transfers to those outside the community require the approval of the community's elders and customary head (Ollennu, 1998). According to Asante (1969), the creation of the usufructuary interest is attributed to the demand for land that migrants and subjects have for economic activity and habitation, which forces the allodial entities to provide them with land for farming and settlement (Kuusaana, 2016).

### **2.10 Leasehold Interests**

With a leasehold interest, one can purchase land for a specific purpose over a predetermined period of time. Both the start and end dates of a lease must be specified. A landholding right known as a leasehold derives from an allodial title or a usufruct interest and is supported by written contracts (see Ollennu, 1962; da Rocha and Lodoh, 1999:29). Depending on whether they are derived from the common law or customary freehold, leaseholds can be categorized as either customary or common-law leaseholds. In Ghana, both types of lease agreements exist, particularly for agricultural land. In Ghana, leases are recorded with the Lands Commission as deeds of transaction or as land titles (Land Title Registration Division of the Lands Commission) or as deeds of transaction (Public and Vested Land Management Division of the Lands Commission). There are many time frames that apply to the leasing of land for various land use classifications. The land reverts to the allodial group, the usufruct holder, or the lessee who sublets it after the conclusion of the lease period. According to the terms of the lease, the lessee is also responsible for paying the landlord's annual land rent. The leaseholder is permitted to sublet the land to a third party within the restrictions of the main lease instrument, excluding any restrictions in the lease agreement.

### **2.11 Land Sector Agencies and their Roles:**

The Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources (MLNR) is responsible for all land-related matters together with forestry and mines. Customary authorities

(Stools and Skins) are in charge of allocating, managing, and administering more than 80% of the country's lands as allodial title holders (Stools and Skins). The land is held in trust by the traditional authorities for the community and future generations, and they are expected to dispose of it in the community's best interests.

The Lands Commission, which was established by the Constitution and reorganized by Parliamentary Act 2008, is in charge of managing state and vested lands (Act 767). The Survey Department, the Land Valuation Board, the Land Title Registration, and the Public and Vested Lands were merged under the National Lands Commission under the Act. In accordance with the area's approved planning schemes, the Commission gives consent to the disposal of stool, skin, and private lands. As required by the constitution, it must also advise the government, local governments, and traditional authorities on land policy.

Other land-related agencies include the— Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (formerly Town and Country Planning Department) and the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL).

*Table 1: Land Sector Agencies and their Major Roles*

Land Sector Agencies	Major Roles Under the Law
1) Public and Vested Land Management Division (PVLMD)- Lands Commission Act, 1994, Act 483 and Lands Commission Act, 2008 (Act 767).	Managing public lands and offering land delivery services, preservation of public and stool land records, administration of deed registration records, assistance in the management of private land, and development and proposal of land use rules.
2) Land Valuation Division (LVD)- Section 43 of the PNDC Proclamation Supplementary and consequential Provisional Law, 1982 (PNDC 42).	Generation of Capital Valuation for sale and purchase by government, rating valuation, rental valuation for government, compensation valuation, stamp duty assessments, collecting data for government land values.
3) Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA) - Land Use and Spatial Planning Act, 2016, (Act 925).	The Authority's roles are to: (a) ensure judicious use of land; (b) ensure sustainable development of land and human settlements through a decentralized planning system; and (c) advance Ghana's decentralization program, particularly by fostering an environment in which District Assemblies can more effectively carry out their responsibilities for spatial planning and human settlements management.
4) Survey and Mapping Division (SMD)- Survey Act, 1962 (Act 127).	Survey and demarcation of land boundaries, demarcation, and preparation of a composite plan, engineering survey for construction works, and survey and mapping advice to local assemblies.
5) Land Registration Division (LRD)- Land Title Registration Law, 1986 (Act 152).	Responsible for land title registration. Currently operational within the Accra, Kumasi, and Tema metropolitan areas.
Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL) - Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands Act, 1994, (Acts 481). Article 267 of the 1992 Constitution.	Responsible for collecting and disbursing stool land revenue through the operation of a stool land account.

Source: Author's Compilation, 2023.

### **2.12 The Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) and Provisions Relating to Large-scale Land Acquisition.**

The Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) is the latest land law that aims to provide a framework for the acquisition and management of land in Ghana. The Act replaces the previous Land Acts and is intended to address issues related to land, including large-scale land. One of the key issues related to large-scale land acquisition is the potential for land grabbing, which occurs when land is acquired without the informed consent of the local communities or without due compensation. The Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) addresses this issue by requiring that land acquisitions be done in a transparent and participatory manner, with the involvement of local communities and the provision of fair compensation.

Another issue related to large-scale land acquisition is the potential for displacement of local communities. The Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) addresses this issue by requiring that the rights and interests of local communities be taken into consideration during land acquisitions and by providing for the resettlement of communities that may be displaced. The Act also includes provisions for the protection of the rights of women and vulnerable groups in land transactions. The Act also includes provisions for the protection of the rights of traditional leaders and the regulations of the traditional land administration system.

It is significant to note that the implementation and effectiveness of the Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) in addressing issues related to the large-scale land acquisition will depend on the level of enforcement by the government and the willingness of investors to comply with the regulations.

The Land Act, 2020 of Ghana (Act 1036) addresses several key issues related to land acquisition in the country, including those related to large-scale land acquisitions and customary land acquisitions. Some of the main issues addressed in the act include:

- a. Large-scale land acquisitions: The act establishes a framework for the acquisition of land for large-scale commercial, industrial, and infrastructure development projects, including provisions for compensation and resettlement of affected communities.
- b. Customary land acquisitions: The act recognizes the rights of customary landholders and provides for the registration of customary land rights. It also establishes a framework for the resolution of disputes over customary land.
- c. Land administration: The act establishes a new land administration system, including the creation of a new land administration agency, the Ghana Lands Commission, which is responsible for the registration of all land rights and the resolution of land disputes.
- d. Restitution: The act provides for the restitution of land to persons or communities whose lands have been taken without compensation or whose lands have been acquired by state agencies and not put to the use for which they were acquired.



The Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) includes several processes for large-scale land acquisition in rural areas. Some of the key processes include:

- a. Notification and consultation: Before any land acquisition can take place, the landowner and the community in which the land is located must be notified and consulted. This allows local communities to provide input on the proposed acquisition and to raise any concerns they may have.
- b. Feasibility studies: Before any land acquisition can take place, a feasibility study must be conducted to assess the social and environmental impact of the proposed acquisition. The study must also take into account the rights and interests of local communities and the potential for displacement.
- c. Compensation: In the event that land is acquired, the landowner and community members must be provided with fair and adequate compensation. This includes compensation for any crops, buildings, or other improvements on the land, as well as compensation for any potential loss of livelihood.
- d. Resettlement: If any community members are displaced as a result of a land acquisition, they must be provided with adequate resettlement assistance. This includes assistance with finding new land, as well as support for rebuilding homes and restoring livelihoods.
- e. Environmental Impact Assessment: An Environmental Impact Assessment must be carried out before any large-scale land acquisition. It will provide information on the potential impact of the proposed acquisition on the environment and the surrounding area, and allow for decision-making.

- f. Gender and vulnerable groups: The Act also include provisions for the protection of the rights of women and vulnerable groups in land transactions. This includes ensuring that they are consulted and that their rights are protected during land acquisitions.

Although The Land Act, 2020 (Act 1036) does not specifically define what constitutes large-scale land acquisition, it stated "large scale land disposition" as the "disposition of land or interest in land which exceeds four (4) hectares for residential purpose and twenty (20) hectares for agricultural civic cultural commercial or industrial purpose" (Section --). 20 hectares for commercial agricultural land is equivalent to 50 acres and investors who are into cash crop farming requires large acreages of land for their investment ( Bugri, 2008).

Additionally, the Act includes several provisions that are intended to regulate and control large-scale land acquisitions. Section 3 of the Act provides for the regulation of land acquisition by the government, which includes the power to acquire land for public purposes, such as infrastructure development, and the power to compensate landowners. Section 4 of the Act provides for the regulation of land acquisition by private individuals or entities, which includes the requirement for prior notification and consultation with the landowners and the community, the requirement for a feasibility study, and the requirement for fair and adequate compensation.

Section 29 of the Act provides for the regulation of large-scale land acquisition by companies and foreign entities, which requires them to notify the Lands Commission and the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources about the proposed

land acquisition. Section 36 of the Act provides for the regulation of the environmental impact of land acquisition, which requires the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment before any large-scale land acquisition.

It is important to note that even though the Act does not specifically define what constitutes large-scale land acquisition, the regulations and processes required for land acquisition by the government, private individuals, companies, and foreign entities, as the environmental regulations, are all intended to regulate and control large-scale land acquisitions and ensure that the rights and livelihoods of people in rural communities are safeguarded.

### **2.13 Large Land Acquisition for Cashew Cultivation in Ghana**

Land in Ghana and similar in much of the world, represents a productive asset upon which livelihoods are predicated (Amanor, 1999). For centuries, land in Ghana has been tied to the production of food for subsistence, with export crop production expanding from the 18th century onwards. This agricultural transformation was driven by political, economic, and cultural colonization by the British, the outcome of which drove the enclosure of land, and the privatization and commercialization of natural resources (Campbell, 2013). Export agriculture has continued to expand since the early colonial period, including the production of tropical commodities destined for the so-called developed world (Campbell, 2013; Austin, 2007; Austin, 1987; Hill, 1961). Cashew nuts represent one of the most recent commodities to enter the export market. Since its introduction in the 1960s, cashew nut production has significantly increased in Ghana, including

specifically over the past decade. This pattern has also occurred in other West African countries (Evans *et al.*, 2015; Rabany *et al.*, 2015).

The primary site for Ghana's growing cashew nut industry is in the Bono, Ahafo, and Bono East regions (formerly Brong Ahafo region), often described as Ghana's 'breadbasket'. Brong Ahafo has earned this title on the basis that it produces 30% of Ghana's staple foods such as maize, yam, cassava, beans, sorghum and cowpea (Ghana Statistical Service, 2013; Statistics Research and Information Directorate-Ministry of Food and Agriculture (SRID-MOFA), 2015). The Brong Ahafo region has a long history of integration within the global economy, including gold mining and the production of cocoa, coffee, and timber for export. The expansion of cashew production is further extending the region's global market integration (Amanor & Pabi, 2007; Amanor, 2009). Brong Ahafo's participation in the global economy of cashew trading is driving significant social and ecological transformation at the local level. Despite the increasing conversion of land into cashew production for export, there has been little research giving attention to analyzing these changes – except Mariwah *et al.* (2019), Evans *et al.* (2015), Amanor (2009), who have analyzed the changing power and land tenure relations associated with cashew production in the region.

This research advances these existing studies by examining the transformation occurring in the region alongside the expansion of cashew nut production. Through a political ecology approach, this study considers the ways cashew industry expansion is connected to changes in land tenure, including impacts on changing land access and use. It further examines some of the impacts

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of these socio-political changes related to land for local-level social relations and local food production. On this basis, it further details that the transformations associated with Ghana's expanding cashew industry in the Bono East region are concentrating and individualizing land ownership and control, with outcomes that reinforce social differentiation, inequalities, and class struggle. Migrant farmers are amongst some of the most vulnerable. These findings contribute to the nascent literature documenting accelerated cashew production in Ghana and its local-level impacts (Evans *et al.*, 2015; Amanor, 2009).

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#### **2.14 Cashew Cultivation and Sustainable Livelihoods in Ghana**

Cashew is an important cash crop in Ghana, predominantly grown in the Forest-Savanna Transitional Agro-ecological Zone. It has high yields and good market demand, making it a significant agricultural export. Ghana is the fourth largest cashew producer in Africa, with smallholder farmers playing a major role in production. The cashew industry has shown potential as a substitute crop to diversify Ghana's agricultural output. However, challenges such as limited use of good agricultural practices and post-harvest losses affect average yields, which are lower than the global average. Cashew production offers opportunities for intercropping, export diversification, and addressing youth unemployment. The sector faces constraints in markets, processing outlets, production techniques, and business management skills. The industry was initially developed through private sector efforts, and government assistance is increasing. Cashew is native to South America but is grown in tropical countries worldwide. The cashew nut is the main

product, and its shell has industrial applications. Cashew cultivation requires suitable environmental conditions, but the tree is tolerant of drought. Insect pests and diseases pose challenges to cashew production, with various species causing damage. The export of cashew nuts from Ghana has increased due to global demand and quality attributes. The Ghana cashew nut value chain includes several different stages between the farmers and processors which further squeezes the margins of the farmers. Specifically, after the postharvest handling, purchasing is generally handled by middlemen, village shop owners, and collection agents. The product is then transported to either local exporters, seasonal Indian exporters, or to national stockists. National stockists are mostly Ghanaians, generally local businessmen who stand to make a profit by buying, storing, and selling nuts to seasonal Indian buyers. Almost all of the nuts that are purchased are eventually shipped to India for processing. The value chain would need to overcome a number of challenges to enhance wealth creation opportunities: i) marketing challenges, i.e. lack of official cashew buying centres in the Ghana; ii) no processing facilities; iii) farmers and technicians in need of best practices training; iv) no processing done on the cashew apple; v) insufficient and expensive transportation from rural farming areas to urban areas; vi) lack of storage and drying facilities at the farm level. Cashew processing in the Ghana is negligible by processing between 5-10 tonnes annually and large proportions of cashew nuts are exported to processors in India.

With the 165,000 tonnes of cashew nuts that come out of the region, there is an opportunity for companies to set up processing facilities in the Ghana and to

become a major processor in Africa. The advantage of the location is efficient and cost-effective system relative to that of the sub region. Another potential venture would be processing of the cashew apple; this would be a venture for which the input would essentially be free as farmers in the region discard cashew apples away. In some parts of the world particularly the pulp from the cashew apple is prepared to make juice, spirits, and jams.

In general, agriculture provides 25-35 percent of Africa's gross domestic products, 60% of total employment remain the main source of income for people living in rural areas. Cashew production is a global demand; now due to its high price cashew production provide an alternative source of income for farming communities by reducing their excessive dependent on a single cash crop. Cashew production costs are relatively low in the sub region, and the high quality of the raw nut from this area has been well documented and acknowledged among cashew industry stakeholders. Maintaining the high quality of cashew nuts produced in this region particularly Ghana is outstanding to a viable cashew sector development. As more producers choose to establish cashew plantations, adopting the best production, processing, and marketing practices from empirical evidence is central to ensuring that cashew businesses can be transformed into highly profitable ventures for farmers actively engaged in production.

### **2.15 Large-scale land acquisition and Food Security**

Food security are major concern in Ghana, as they are in many developing countries. This section of the study sets out to investigate the food security

outcomes of land acquisitions in Ghana and Africa at large. It begins with an overview of the meaning of food security in relation to food availability, sufficiency, accessibility, and utilization in Ghana, while at the same time exploring the relationships between the four components with a focus on rural areas.

Food security is defined as the availability, sufficiency, accessibility, and utilization of food for all individuals and households (FAO, 1996).

#### **2.15.1 Food Availability**

Food availability in Ghana is affected by a number of factors, including population growth, climate change, and land use changes. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Ghana's population is projected to reach 34 million by 2025, which will put a strain on food production and distribution systems. Climate change is also having an impact on food availability, as it is causing changes in weather patterns and increasing the frequency and severity of droughts and floods. These factors, along with large-scale land acquisitions, are affecting the ability of small-scale farmers to produce enough food to meet the needs of their communities.

#### **2.15.2 Food Sufficiency**

Food sufficiency is a measure of the ability of households to produce or acquire enough food to meet their needs. In Ghana, small-scale farmers make up the majority of the population, and they play a critical role in food sufficiency. However, small-scale farmers in Ghana are facing a number of challenges that are affecting their ability to produce enough food. These challenges include limited



access to credit, limited access to markets, and limited access to technology. As a result, many small-scale farmers are unable to increase their food production to meet the needs of their communities (World Food Programme, 2021).

#### **2.15.3 Food Accessibility:**

Food accessibility is a measure of households' ability to access available food that is available. In Ghana, food accessibility is affected by several factors, including poverty, distance to markets, and inadequate transportation infrastructure. These factors make it difficult for households, particularly access the available food, particularly in rural areas. According to the World Food Programme, more than 20% of Ghana's population is food insecure, and the majority of these individuals live in rural areas (WFP, 2021).

#### **2.15.4 Food Utilization**

Food utilization is a measure of households' ability to use food to meet their nutritional needs. In Ghana, food utilization is affected by a number of factors, including poverty, lack of education, and inadequate healthcare infrastructure. These factors make it difficult for households to access the health services and education needed to ensure proper food utilization. As a result, many individuals in Ghana suffer from malnutrition, particularly children under the age of five, (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2021).

Food security in Ghana is a complex issue that is affected by a number of factors. Food availability, sufficiency, accessibility, and utilization are all critical components of food security. The challenges faced by small-scale farmers, including limited access to credit, limited access to markets, and limited access to

technology, are affecting food sufficiency. Poverty, distance to markets, and inadequate transportation infrastructure are affecting food accessibility. Lack of education and inadequate healthcare infrastructure are affecting food utilization. To address these issues and improve food security in Ghana, it is important to support small-scale farmers, improve transportation infrastructure, and invest in education and healthcare.

Neudert&Voget-Kleschin (2021) found no evidence supporting the claim that large-scale land acquisitions (LSLAs) achieve higher yields per area compared to smallholder farms. The study used a combination of data sources since no methodologically sound comparisons were available. Mechiche-Alami et al. (2021) reviewed LSLA treaties in 14 countries and found a mismatch with food security requirements. LSLAs often fail to deliver better pay, sustainable jobs, and meet local expectations. Muller et al. (2021) analyzed 160 land deals across 39 countries and found that LSLAs were opportunistic, speculative, and lacked consideration for biophysical suitability. LSLAs led to negative local impacts and a shift towards export-oriented flex crops in some regions. Yengoh& Armah (2015) studied a project in Sierra Leone and found increased food insecurity, reduced variety of food, and threats to livelihoods due to LSLAs. LSLAs jeopardize food security, especially in regions heavily dependent on agriculture. Depriving rural communities of farming land worsens food supply deficits and nutritional emergencies. Smallholder agriculture plays a crucial role in ensuring food and nutrition security, as households prioritize meeting their own needs. Food security is a basic human need that should be prioritized.

Hopkins (1986) makes the following claim regarding the significance of food security as a basic human need: "Food security stands as a fundamental need, basic to all human wants and the organization of social life. Access to essential nutrients is essential to both a stable and long-lasting social order as well as life itself. Regardless of a person's or a household's amount of wealth, this importance remains constant. However, depending on the types of personal, social, economic, and even political assets owned by an individual, a household, a community, or a country, different methods may be used to satisfy the food imperative or ensure food security.

According to Richards (2013), there has been an increase in knowledge and data recently regarding LSLA's more general characteristics, such as the size of the territory gained, and the areas or nations involved. He criticizes the lack of knowledge on specific LSLA characteristics, such as the real impacts on the ground, which can help planners and other stakeholders anticipate, avoid, or lessen the practice's harmful effects. Farmland is the primary economic and social asset of small-holder agriculturalists in rural Sierra Leone, and like many other rural areas in SSA, agriculture is not only an economic activity but also a way of life. The potential impact of LSLA's acquisition of land for massive monocultures on this way of life is significant. Some of the effects are gender differentiated. One of the most profound of these effects would be on food and nutrition security.

Given the relative newness of the phenomenon of LSLA, there is still very limited formal knowledge of its implications at the local level. Rulli and D'Odorico (2014), remarked that Large-Scale Land Acquisitions have some level

of positive outcomes on food security. Through technology transfer, LSLAs can help close the large yield gaps that exist between actual and potential yields of major food crops in LSLA host regions. Typically, however, most of the food produced from large-scale land investments are exported to non-host regions and countries.

Additionally, there are several case studies and reports on land investment deals and their effects on welfare in Africa (Daniel & Mittal, 2009; Cotula et al., 2009). For instance, Deininger and Songwe (2009) have emphasized the benefits of significant agricultural investments to host countries but have cautioned that the modernization that results from these investments may not always boost the welfare of locals unless rigorously exploited. By bemoaning the relegation of the poor's concerns about food security from the forefront of the international conversation, Daniel and Mittal (2009) call into question the feasibility of the win-win argument that has been propagated to block the critique of large-scale agro-investments. The potential benefits of land investments have also been noted by Cotula et al. (2009), but they caution that these benefits may not be useful if host governments do not have the institutional capabilities required to negotiate better terms of investments for their citizens. This literature has been expanded by Dessy et al. (2012), who describe the prerequisites for land investment deals that will enhance the experiences of the local populations from which land is leased or purchased.

Smallholders continue to dominate African agriculture, with many of them producing primarily for subsistence. Drechsler (2011) has already mentioned a

few difficulties faced by smallholders in sub-Saharan Africa, such as the inefficient use of inputs including fertilizer, equipment, seeds, financing, and irrigation, as well as issues with the region's climate. In terms of food production, Sub-Saharan Africa already falls behind other major developing regions. According to Schoneveld et al. (2010), the chronically low productivity of African agriculture is caused by a lack of investment in the industry, poor infrastructure, institutional weaknesses, and restricted access to credit and technology. Beyond these listed challenges and many more that plague smallholder production efficiencies, smallholder producers remain relevant for policy attention because they dominate the employment sector, produce the majority of the food yet remain among the majority poor in developing countries.

Notwithstanding the numerous positive promises of agricultural commercialization for local land users, there are also potential negative impacts on local land markets and smallholders. Ghana is an interesting case study because the recent agro-investors are acquiring large tracts of customary land for commercial agriculture, and these have raised tenure concerns due to the unique conception of customary landholding - as a factor of production and cultural identity. Customary land tenure systems and land rights have come under serious stress following growing demand for land in Ghana for agricultural investments. Since a larger amount of land in Ghana is held via traditional land tenure, any disruption in this local market may have disastrous effects on rural peasants whose livelihoods depend on land. When smallholders lose their land, they may be forced to create new types of livelihoods because cultivating nearby is no

longer a possibility (Cotula, 2013). These worries regarding smallholders' vulnerability to growing land markets serve to further emphasize the significance of our study.

Finally, regarding the extent of large-scale land acquisition, most studies address its compounding effects on local food availability. Contrary to fears that devoting land and labour to industrial crops would mean less production of food crops, reports often indicate that food production has been sustained even as industrial crop output has risen. That counter-intuitive result stems from situations where land has been sufficient to accommodate industrial crops with no loss of land to food crops, or where it has been possible to intensify food crop production at the same time as planting industrial crops. In some cases, both of these processes have been assisted by complementarities in the production of industrial and food crops. For example, input delivery and marketing systems for industrial crops have benefited the production of food crops. Earnings from industrial crops have financed inputs and labour to grow food. Skills learned in cultivating industrial crops have transferred to food plots, and roads and other infrastructure for industrial crops have served food crops equally well.

The encouraging result that farmers continue to produce food even as they increase the production of industrial crops is subject to two restrictions. First, in some instances, smallholder farmers choose not to grow food crops since industrial crops offer higher returns. Gross margins are rarely reported, but when they are, they frequently reveal stark distinctions between industrial and food crops. For instance, in Malawi in the 1990s, tobacco yielded returns per hectare

ten times greater than hybrid maize. In the majority of situations where the output of food crops has decreased due to industrial crops, an estate has taken over the areas that were formerly farmed by smallholders for food. Almost all such reports, however, concern the early stages of plantation development, prompting questions about possible compensating changes in the medium term.

#### **2.16 Large-Scale Land Acquisition as a Source of Conflict:**

Land-related conflicts have been a major cause of war and civil unrest throughout history. Issues like lack of arable land, inadequate resource management, and competition over resources often contribute to these conflicts. Weak governance and ineffective land management further exacerbate the problem. Fraudulent land deals, favouring large-scale property acquisition and foreign investors, can lead to tensions with local communities and potential eviction. Indigenous people often face land theft and rights violations, with little support from the government. The global demand for land has increased due to agriculture, biofuels, and conservation, leading to large-scale land purchases that disregard customary rights and harm local communities. Neglecting customary rights can result in resentment, conflict, and violence, posing risks to investments and political stability. Development agencies and international organizations are working to address these conflicts by advocating for consultation, recognition of customary land rights, fair compensation, and responsible investment guidelines.

### **2.17 Large-scale Land Acquisition for Cashew Cultivation and Land Dispute in Ghana**

Large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana has led to several disputes between investors and local communities. According to a study by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), land acquisitions for cashew cultivation have often been carried out without proper consultation and compensation for local communities, leading to disputes over land rights and access to resources (Lamb, 2016).

In the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana, for example, a large-scale cashew plantation was established without the consent of the local community, resulting in the displacement of farmers and loss of access to land for farming and grazing (IIED, 2013). This has led to conflicts between the local community and the investor, with the community demanding compensation and the return of their land.

Another study by the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) found that large scale cashew production in Ghana has also led to conflicts over water resources, as the plantations require large amounts of water for irrigation, leaving local communities with limited access to water for domestic and agricultural use (Nyame, 2017).

Overall, large scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana has led to conflicts between investors and local communities over land rights, access to resources and compensation. It is important for investors to engage in proper



consultation and compensation for local communities to avoid conflicts and ensure sustainable land use.

### **2.18 Coping Strategies in Response to Large-Scale Land Acquisition**

Large-scale land acquisition, also known as land grabbing, is a global phenomenon where private or government actors acquire large tracts of land for various purposes. This often leads to the displacement of local communities and the loss of their livelihoods. To cope with these impacts, affected communities employ various strategies.

1. Resistance: Affected communities oppose land acquisition through protests, legal challenges, and advocacy campaigns.

2. Negotiation and mediation: Efforts are made to reach mutually agreed upon solutions through dialogue and compromise, involving negotiations and the use of mediators.

3. Livelihood diversification: Communities develop new income-generating activities to compensate for the loss of livelihoods, such as training programs, microfinance initiatives, and alternative livelihood projects.

4. Compensation and resettlement: Affected communities receive financial or material compensation or are relocated to new areas. However, issues of fair compensation and adequate access to resources may arise.

5. Diversifying income sources: Small-scale landholders engage in non-farm activities, like petty trade or wage labor, to mitigate risk and increase financial stability.

6. Adjusting cropping patterns: Small-scale landholders shift to drought-resistant or flood-resistant crops, or crops with shorter growing cycles, to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

Accessing credit and resources: Small-scale landholders obtain credit, improved seed varieties, and other resources to improve agricultural productivity and increase resilience.

These coping strategies help affected communities and small-scale landholders adapt to the social, economic, and environmental challenges caused by large-scale land acquisition.

In summary, large-scale land acquisition can have significant negative impacts on local communities, including the loss of livelihoods and displacement. In response to these impacts, affected communities and organizations have developed and implemented various coping strategies, including resistance, negotiation, and mediation, livelihood diversification, and compensation and resettlement. These strategies can be effective in addressing the negative impacts of land acquisition, but it is important to ensure that they are implemented in a way that respects the rights and needs of affected communities.

#### 2.19 Summary of the Chapter

~~This section examines the theoretical and empirical review of large scale land acquisition from a global perspective. The term "large scale land acquisitions" has been used to describe both the speed and scope of recent land sales, but it is challenging to define precisely what a large scale purchase is and to assess the ethics of that acquisition. Cotula (2013) argues that the new wave of~~

land deals' broad criteria is centred on the size of the acquisition, the purpose of the land acquisition, whether the actors are national or international, and legal issues of ownership and procedure. Paul (2017) argued that the focus should be on who controls the land and how it is used to reveal these dynamics beyond the transfer of land ownership. The Tirana declaration makes a strong case against corruption in connection to land agreements, but scholars have divergent views on the definition and nature of LSLA.

Large scale land acquisitions (LSLAs), also known as land grabbing, are a global phenomenon characterized by the acquisition of large tracts of land by private or government actors, often from land abundant countries in the Global South. The Land Matrix database has recorded over 2800 LSLA deals, with two thirds being transnational in nature. LSLAs have significant implications for food, water, and energy resources, disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable populations. There are contrasting views on land reform, with some supporting formalization and individualization of customary tenure, and others opposing it. Decentralization in the land sector is promoted, but policies emphasizing foreign investment raise concerns about the recognition of customary land rights. Ghana, with its primarily agricultural economy, has witnessed foreign interest in its agriculture sector, and land governance is determined by public and private distinctions, with variations in tenure systems across regions. Common lands play a crucial role in food security but lack legal recognition. The historical context of LSLAs is explored, and in Ghana, land transactions exceeding 20 hectares are considered large scale. LSLAs have led to the displacement of communities and

conflicts, particularly in relation to bioenergy crops like *Jatropha*. Sub-Saharan Africa has experienced a significant share of LSLA occurrences, and the global area affected by LSLAs exceeds 50 million hectares. Land governance and tenure practices vary between urbanized and less urbanized regions in Ghana, with the establishment of stool land accounts to manage customary payments.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 2.19 Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks for the Study

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#### 3.0 Introduction

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#### 3.2.19.1 Theories Underpinning the Study

Grants & Osanloo (2014) define theoretical framework as the “blueprint” that underpins the study, dwelling on time-tested theories that exemplify the conclusions of numerous investigations on how phenomena occur. Brondizio, et al (2014) also maintain that the theoretical framework is the specific theory or theories expressed by experts concerning aspects of human persuasion that can be relevant to the study.

Although several theories are available in underpinning the study and discussion on large-scale land acquisition, three theories, namely: Political Ecology, Property rights/ Neo-liberalism, and Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping have been amalgamated and adopted for this study. These theories have considerably occupied literature following the upsurge of large-scale land commoditization in many parts of the world.

#### 3.2.19.2 Political Ecology of Land for Cashew Nut Cultivation

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Benjaminsen & Svarstad (2019) define political ecology as a field within environmental studies that focuses on power and influence over natural assets. According to them, this theory draws from divergent sources such as political economy, post-structuralism, and peasant studies. Several contributions to this field question government, business, and conservation organizations.

Contributions to this field tend to question the status of powerful actors such as governments, businesses, and conservation organizations. In this theory, "ecology" refers to the resources in an environment and how influence and power are employed "politically" in their control, subjugation, and alienation. Neumann (2009) observes that political ecology emerged in the 1980s as an interdisciplinary field that examines ecological problems using the ideas and approaches of political economy. A key feature of this theory is that environmental variation cannot be understood without consideration of the political and economic constructions and foundations within which it is rooted.

An imperative focus of political ecology is analyzing access to and control over what are often highly contested land and natural resources (Swyngedouw & Heynen, 2003). Through a series of ongoing struggles, including material and discursive ones, land, including its use and access, is constituted and reconstituted. According to Budd *et al.* (2004), such attempts to control land, water, and the environment are generally underpinned by unequal power structures. By focusing on specific points of contestation related to land, the understanding of how to use and how to access land and natural resources is being (re)organized alongside the expanding cashew nut sector in Ghana. Specifically, the expansion of cashew production in the Bono East region illuminates the struggles to secure access to land as the basis for participation in the growing cashew nut export economy.

With a political ecology approach, the impacts and drivers of cashew nut expansion in the Bono East region are examined. In this region, cashew is

associated with broad-scale agrarian restructuring and rural transformation, which further compound livelihoods, food security, and land conflicts. This approach emphasizes the socio-political, historical, and economic factors that shape resource management, land access, and use from a broader perspective (Neumann, 2009; Tan-Mullins *et al.*, 2010<sup>7</sup>). Bryant (1998) argues that it provides a framework for analyzing struggles at the intersection of environment and society that are also grounded in a national and global context.

Local struggles play an important part in these struggles, and they are closely related to global capitalist political economies (Boafo et al., 2019). Ghana's agricultural sector has been modernized and industrialized through neoliberal policies (Boafo et al., 2019). In addition to highlighting changes in the forms of access and control over land resources associated with expanding cashew production in the Bono East region, a political ecology approach also enables a detailed analysis of the broader social and livelihood implications (Watts, 2000). In particular, it allows us to identify the social and ecological outcomes of these processes, such as their impact on livelihoods, property regimes, and social relations (Castree, 2001; Escobar, 1999). As a means to explore this, the study will analyze the distribution and control of land in the study community in relation to power relations.

### 3.2.19.3 *Neoliberalism and Property Rights Theories*

Neo-liberalism is a nomenclature that is used to describe the 20th-century renaissance of 19th-century ideas connected with free-market capitalism (Bloom, 2017). Through free trade, globalization, and privatization, individuals or the

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private sector are allowed to freely enter and dominate the market (Goldstein, 2011). The focus of Neoliberalism is on investment and capital accumulation. Achieving this involves grabbing resources such as land and reaping huge profits from the investment. Neoliberals recognize the fact that power and wealth are inherent in government and other local actors, and with their power and financial wherewithal, they can deprive or dispossess people of their basic sources of livelihood. It has been argued that there are both positive and negative impacts of neoliberalism on the acquisition of large-scale land commercialization. On the positive side, land commercialization is seen as a potential for unlocking investment potential in agriculture (Chakravarty *et al.*, 2013). On the negative side, it is seen as detrimental because the livelihood of the rural poor is affected when large parcels of land are controlled, including the destruction of the ecological ambience (Ocheje, 2007).

The Neoliberal movement advocates deregulation, privatisation, and minimal state involvement in the economy, emphasizing the role of the market in driving economic growth and development. Property rights theories, such as the "efficient use" theory, also played a role in shaping land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana. Commercial agriculture has been promoted as a means of economic development and poverty reduction in Ghana as a result of the adoption of Neoliberal economic policies. This has included the promotion of foreign investment in the agricultural sector, including the acquisition of land for cashew nut cultivation. The government has also implemented policies and legal frameworks that facilitate the acquisition of land by foreign investors, including



the conversion of communal land to private property and the granting of long-term leases to investors (Agbese, E. 2010; Deininger, K., & Byerlee, D. (2011). The "efficient use" theory of property rights, which argues that private ownership of land leads to more effective and productive use of land resources, has also been used to justify land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana. This theory suggests that large-scale commercial agriculture is more efficient and productive than small-scale, traditional forms of agriculture and that private ownership of land is necessary to achieve this efficiency (Adomako, 2017).

However, the reality of land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana has often been quite different from the promises of economic development and poverty reduction. In many cases, land has been acquired without the consent or compensation of local communities, leading to land grabbing and displacement. Furthermore, large-scale commercial agriculture has often resulted in monoculture production, which is not sustainable in the long term and has led to the loss of biodiversity and environmental degradation (Erhabor&Dasmann, 2015).

In conclusion, the adoption of neoliberal economic policies and property rights theories has played a significant role in shaping land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana. These ideologies have been used to justify the acquisition of land by foreign investors and the conversion of communal land to private property. This is often at the expense of local communities. However, the reality of land acquisition has often been quite different from the promises of economic development and poverty reduction. This has led to negative impacts on local

communities and the environment. Thus, communities and families, including individuals who possessed title to their land and who had usufructuary interest in land, have been stripped of their right of ownership and possession in several cashew-growing communities in the Bono East Region by investors with financial wherewithal.

#### 32.19.4 *Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress and coping*

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Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress and coping, proposed in 1984, is a theoretical model that can be applied to understand the stress experienced by individuals and communities when facing large-scale land acquisition. According to this model, stress arises from an individual's perception of a situation as a threat or challenge, and their ability to cope with that stress is influenced by their personal and social resources (~~Lazarus & Folkman~~Biggs *et al.*, 2019847).

The model suggests that stress arises from an individual's appraisal of a situation as a threat or challenge. This can be influenced by personal factors such as past experiences and adaptation strategies, as well as social factors such as the support and resources available to the individual. The model also suggests that coping strategies can be divided into two categories: problem-focused coping, which involves actively trying to change or solve the situation, and emotion-focused coping, which involves managing the emotional response to the situation.

In the context of large-scale land acquisition, the model can be applied to understand the stress experienced by individuals and communities who are facing the loss of land and resources. The acquisition of land can be perceived as a threat to the livelihoods and well-being of these communities, and their ability to cope with this stress will be influenced by their personal and social resources, such as access to alternative livelihoods, social support, and the ability to access legal and political avenues for redress (Erhabor&Dasmann, 2015). Individuals and communities facing large-scale land acquisition may use problem-focused coping strategies, such as organizing to resist the acquisition or negotiating with the land investors, and emotion-focused coping strategies, such as seeking support from family and friends, or engaging in traditional healing practices (Adomako, K. 2017; Deininger &Byerlee, 2011).

In conclusion, Lazarus and Folkman's transactional model of stress and coping provides a useful framework for understanding the stress experienced by individuals and communities facing large-scale land acquisition. Understanding the personal and social factors that influence the perception of a situation as a threat or challenge and the coping strategies used to manage that stress can help identify ways to support the resilience of communities and mitigate the negative impacts of land acquisition.

### 32.19.5 *Conceptual Framework for the Study*

The conceptual framework is the researchers' idea or constructs of how the research problem will have to be investigated (Luse, Mennecke& Townend, 2012). While the theoretical framework provides a general representation of

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relationships between variables in a given phenomenon, the conceptual framework (on the other hand) embodies the specific direction by which the research will have to be conducted. Grant & Osanloo (2014) have also shown that the conceptual framework could be in the form of a logical structure, in a virtual or pictorially diagrammatic, displaying the relationships of key ideas or variables in the study.

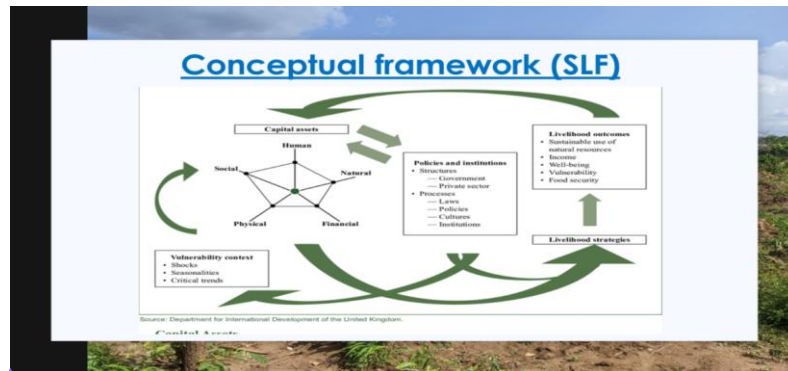
### 2.193.6 *The Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF)*

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This study adapts the Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) as the conceptual framework for the study. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) is a tool for analyzing and understanding the livelihoods of poor people and their strategies for improving them. It was developed by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) in the late 1990s. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework presents key factors that impact livelihood strategies and outcomes in rural communities (Scoones, 2009; ~~Cohn, 2002~~).

Land is regarded as a special asset for rural dwellers and the SLF offers an invaluable framework for explaining the key factors that affect rural livelihoods (Chambers & Conway, 1992). According to the Department for International Development (DFID), a livelihood encompasses the capabilities, assets and activities required for making a living, and a livelihood is regarded as sustainable when it can handle and recuperate from stresses and shocks and still

uphold or augment its capabilities and assets both now and in the future (DFID,1999). (See figure 1).



**Figure 2: The Sustainable Livelihood Framework**

Source: DFID (1999)

The SLF underscores how livelihood assets, including natural, physical, financial, social, and human, are combined to make a living. The combination of these assets is further facilitated and strengthened by other factors, such as institutional systems and procedures, and individual background characteristics for their livelihood activities. The sustainable livelihood framework is a tool used to understand the interactions between different factors that affect the well-being and livelihoods of individuals and communities. In the context of land acquisition, the sustainable livelihood framework can be used to analyze the potential impacts of large-scale land acquisition on the livelihoods of local communities.

The sustainable livelihood framework is composed of five key elements:

**Assets**, are the resources and capabilities that individuals and communities have at their disposal, such as land, labour, and capital.

**Vulnerabilities**: These are the factors that increase the risk of livelihoods being negatively affected, such as natural disasters, climate change, economic shocks, or political instability.

**Livelihood strategies**: These are the actions and decisions that individuals and communities make to make use of their assets and cope with vulnerabilities, such as diversifying income sources or investing in irrigation systems.

**Context**: This includes the broader social, economic, and political factors that shape the opportunities and constraints faced by individuals and communities, such as government policies, market conditions, and cultural norms.

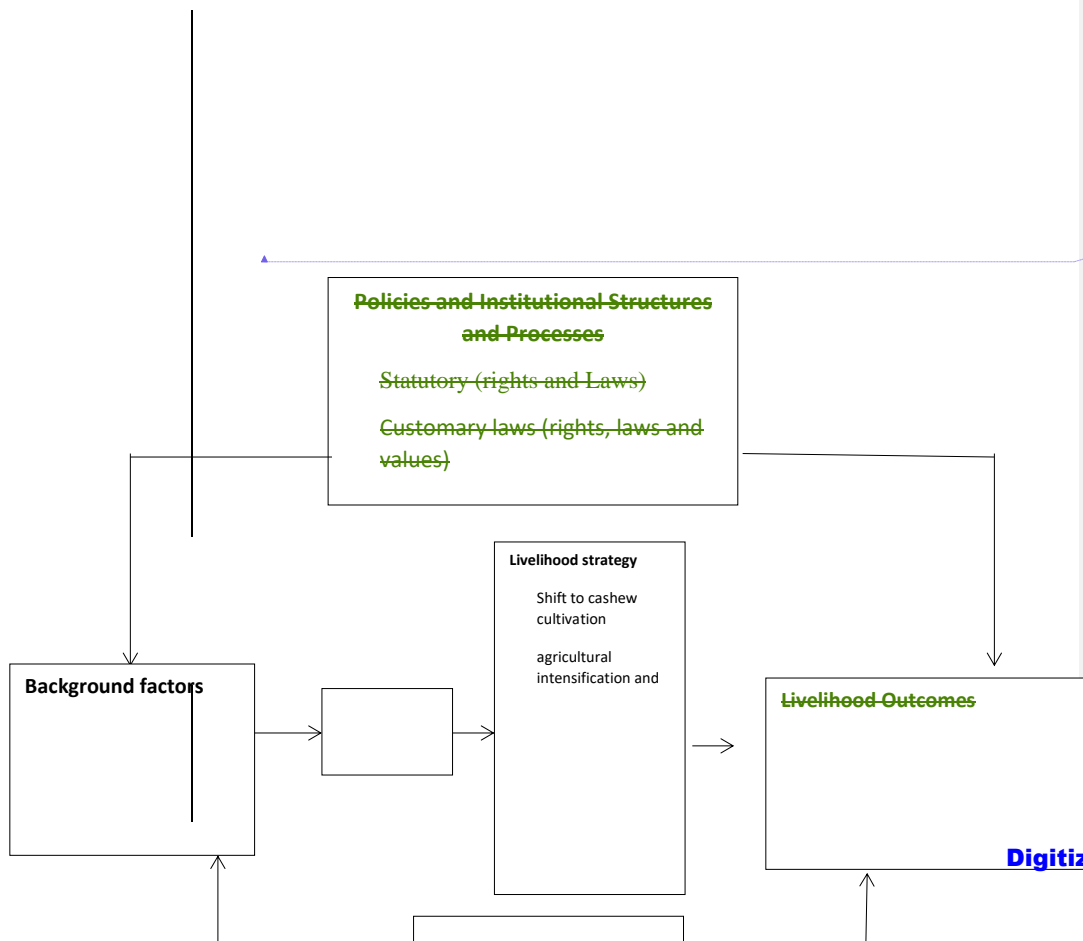
**Outcomes**: These are the results of the interactions between the above elements, such as changes in income, health, and well-being.

The sustainable livelihood framework can be represented in a diagram that shows how these elements are interconnected. The diagram often represents the livelihood elements as a circle with arrows that connect the different elements to one another. The arrows indicate that the elements are interconnected and affect each other (see figure 2).

In analyzing the potential impacts of large-scale land acquisition on the livelihoods of local communities, including its implications for food security and conflict, it's important to consider how the acquisition of land may affect the assets, vulnerabilities, livelihood strategies, context, and outcomes of these communities. For example, the loss of land may reduce assets and increase

vulnerabilities, while government policies that compensate or support affected communities may mitigate these impacts. It is significant to note that the sustainable livelihood framework is not a blueprint for solving the problem of large-scale land acquisition, but rather a tool for understanding the complexities of the problem and identifying potential solutions that take into account the multiple and interconnected factors that affect the livelihoods of local communities.

Although the SLF has been widely adopted, it has been criticized for its propensity to disregard the role of politics and power, as well as the processes of economic globalization, and their impact on transformative shifts in rural economies and hence the challenges of environmental sustainability (de Haan & Zoomers, 2005; Scoones, 2009). Nevertheless, the framework is useful in acknowledging rural livelihood variation and the risks facing small holder-farmers in this study.



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Figure 3. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework  
Source: Adapted from DFID, 1999.

In the context of this study, the dominant livelihood resource or asset is land and that can be used in the pursuit of different livelihood strategies, such as shifting from food crop cultivation to cash crop (cashew) cultivation. Livelihood strategies, through a dexterous deployment of assets, are vital to reducing the vulnerability of households and communities to shocks, trends, and seasonality (Scoones, 2009; ~~Cahn, 2002~~; Carney, 1998). In this case, the negative impact of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation.

From Figure 1, it is evident that land is utilized in the rural community to realize livelihood outcomes in order to mitigate or reduce the vulnerability of rural households or communities to shocks, trends, seasonality, or cultural



/traditional shocks. Access to the livelihood asset (land) is facilitated through the transmutation of institutional systems and procedures, such as statutory / customary laws, cultural and traditional laws, rights, and values, which are seen to be contributing to the livelihood vulnerability.

In this study, the background factors, including economic, socio-cultural, and environmental factors, influence large-scale land acquisitions and how custodians of the land alienate land in large parcels for cashew cultivation. Before the alienation of these used and unused parcels, investors will have to fulfil certain land acquisition and documentation requirements, such as the payment of drink money to the stool (including payments for the issuance of the allocation note-) before a valid grant can be ~~effeeted~~affected. In the study community, the chief, heads of respective families, the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands (OASL), and the MO Land Secretariat are the major institutional players in this regard. The commercialization of land, by converting it from traditional, subsistence-based uses to commercial uses, such as the cultivation of cashew for export, has a range of impacts on rural livelihoods (Carney, 1998; Moseley, 2001). The acquired land can be further agriculturally intensified or intensified. Land intensification involves increasing the productivity of agricultural land through the use of technology and inputs such as fertilizers, irrigation, and improved seed varieties. This often results in higher yields and greater efficiency in food production. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), agricultural intensification has been a key factor in the

"Green Revolution" of the 20th century, which has helped to increase global food production and reduce hunger in many parts of the world.

In the study community, inter-cropping cashew farms with food crops is a popular livelihood intensification strategy. This is achieved by leaving ample space of about 30 meters between cashew trees to allow for inter-cropping with food crops such as yam, maize, and cassava. The findings by Evans et al. (2014) on "Growing cashew nuts in Ghana: land access, food security, and poverty alleviation" in the Jaman North in the Bono region also observed the 30m spacing of cashew plants with food crops as a key coping strategy in one of Ghana's cashew cultivation hotspots. It is therefore observed in the study area that this livelihood coping strategy is unsustainable due to the long gestation period of cashew trees (Guinness World Records, 2021). This is a short-term strategy because when the cashew trees begin to form canopies, other plants or crops cannot grow well under the canopies due to the absence of direct sunlight to allow for photosynthesis. Again, in the vulnerability context, when the land is still subjected to intensive cashew cultivation, it creates a generational problem and a disruption in the moral economy of households in the study area.

Land extensification, on the other hand, refers to the process of expanding the amount of land used for agricultural production, often at the expense of natural habitats and biodiversity. This can lead to the conversion of forests, grasslands, and wetlands into croplands and pastures. According to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), around 80% of global deforestation is caused by agricultural extensification. Cashew cultivation requires large areas of land, and in

the study community, investors purchase large tracts of land for cashew plantations. Vast forested lands are cleared to prepare the land for their commercial enterprise, and in the process, water bodies are destroyed, and flora and fauna are affected.

The sustainable livelihood framework (SLF) is a useful tool for understanding the impacts of large-scale land acquisition on local communities and for identifying ways to mitigate negative effects and promote sustainable development (Carney & Watts 2001). The framework is based on the idea that livelihoods are made up of five capital assets: natural, physical, financial, human, and social capital. Large-scale land acquisition can have significant impacts on these assets, particularly on natural capital (such as the loss of access to land and resources) and on social capital (such as displacement and loss of community cohesion). The SLF can be used to assess these impacts and identify ways to support the resilience of local communities by improving access to other forms of capital, such as financial or human capital.

Additionally, SLF can be used to identify opportunities for mutually beneficial outcomes for local communities and land investors. For example, by promoting joint venture agreements, community involvement in decision-making, or the development of community-based enterprises that can benefit from the new investments (Carletto et al. 2015). The SLF also highlights the importance of considering long-term sustainability and the potential trade-offs of development activities. It can also help to identify opportunities to enhance the social, economic, and environmental outcomes of land acquisition.

Overall, the SLF can provide a comprehensive approach to assessing the potential impacts of large-scale land acquisition on local communities and help to identify strategies for promoting sustainable development outcomes (Shenggen Fan & Xiaodong Yang, 2020).

### 2.20 Summary of the Chapter

This section examines the theoretical and empirical review of large-scale land acquisition from a global perspective. The term "large-scale land acquisitions" has been used to describe both the speed and scope of recent land sales, but it is challenging to define precisely what a large-scale purchase is and to assess the ethics of that acquisition. Cotula (2013) argues that the new wave of land deals' broad criteria is centred on the size of the acquisition, the purpose of the land acquisition, whether the actors are national or international, and legal issues of ownership and procedure. Paul (2017) argued that the focus should be on who controls the land and how it is used to reveal these dynamics beyond the transfer of land ownership. The Tirana declaration makes a strong case against corruption in connection to land agreements, but scholars have divergent views on the definition and nature of LSLA.

Large-scale land acquisitions (LSLAs), also known as land grabbing, are a global phenomenon characterized by the acquisition of large tracts of land by private or government actors, often from land-abundant countries in the Global South. The Land Matrix database has recorded over 2800 LSLA deals, with two-thirds being transnational in nature. LSLAs have significant implications for food, water, and energy resources, disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable

populations. There are contrasting views on land reform, with some supporting formalization and individualization of customary tenure, and others opposing it. Decentralization in the land sector is promoted, but policies emphasizing foreign investment raise concerns about the recognition of customary land rights. Ghana, with its primarily agricultural economy, has witnessed foreign interest in its agriculture sector, and land governance is determined by public and private distinctions, with variations in tenure systems across regions. Common lands play a crucial role in food security but lack legal recognition. The historical context of LSLAs is explored, and in Ghana, land transactions exceeding 20 hectares are considered large-scale. LSLAs have led to the displacement of communities and conflicts, particularly in relation to bioenergy crops like *Jatropha*. Sub-Saharan Africa has experienced a significant share of LSLA occurrences, and the global area affected by LSLAs exceeds 50 million hectares. Land governance and tenure practices vary between urbanized and less urbanized regions in Ghana, with the establishment of stool land accounts to manage customary payments.

### 3.7 Summary of Chapter

Theories such as Political Ecology, Property rights/ Neo-liberalism, and Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping have been amalgamated and adopted for this study. Political Ecology is a field within environmental studies that focuses on power and influence over natural assets. Neumann (2009) observes that political ecology emerged in the 1980s as an interdisciplinary field that examines ecological problems using the ideas and approaches of political economy. Property rights and Neo-liberalism have been adopted for this study due to the upsurge of land commoditization in many parts

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of the world. These theories focus on access to and control over what is often highly contested land and natural resources.

The expansion of cashew production in the Bono East region illuminates the struggles to secure access to land as the basis for participation in the growing cashew nut export economy. A political ecology approach emphasizes the socio-political, historical, and economic factors that shape resource management, land access, and use from a broader perspective. Neo-liberalism is a nomenclature that is used to describe the 20th-century renaissance of 19th-century ideas connected with free-market capitalism. It focuses on investment and capital accumulation, which involves grabbing resources such as land and reaping huge profits from the investment. This study will analyze the distribution and control of land in the study community in relation to power relations.

Land commercialization is seen as a potential for unlocking investment potential in agriculture but has a negative impact on the livelihood of the rural poor. The neoliberal movement advocates deregulation, privatization, and minimal state involvement in the economy, and property rights theories, such as the "efficient use" theory, have been used to justify land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Ghana. Neoliberal economic policies and property rights theories have also been used to justify the acquisition of land by foreign investors and the conversion of communal land to private property. However, the reality of land acquisition has often been different from the promises of economic development and poverty reduction, leading to land grabbing and displacement.



## CHAPTER ~~FOUR~~THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 34.0 Introduction

The methodology provides the foundation for research on how it is carried out. This chapter describes the study area, research design, paradigm, data collection sources, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, pretesting, and data analysis methods. The ethical considerations adhered to in this study are also presented.

#### 34.1 Description of the Study Area

The study area is the Kintampo Municipality in the Bono East Region, Ghana (see Figure 5). The municipality lies between latitudes  $7^{\circ} 45^{\circ\circ\circ}$  N and  $8^{\circ\circ}$   $50^{\circ\circ}$  N and longitudes  $1^{\circ}0^{\circ}-0^{\circ}$ W and  $2^{\circ}45^{\circ}-15^{\circ}$ W (see Figures 2 and 3) with a total surface area of about 5,108 km<sup>2</sup>. It shares boundaries with the Central Gonja District to the North; the Bole District to the West; the East Gonja District to the North-East; the Kintampo South District to the South; the Wenchi Municipal to the South, and the Pru District to the South-East. The area lies between two of the six ecological zones of the country: the Savannah Ecological Zone and Forest

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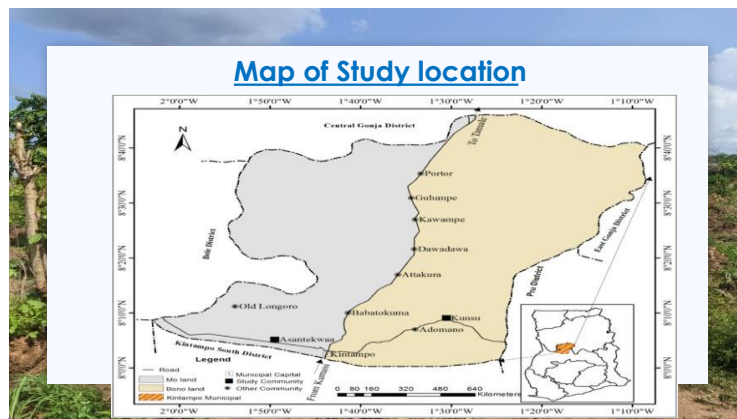


Ecological Zone, in the north and south, respectively (GEF Volta Project, 2013). Due to anthropogenic activities, the area now has lost the original forest cover, and so the vegetation has therefore become more savanna-like as against forest conditions (Pabi, 2007; Codjoe et al., 2011). The monsoon significantly impacts the rainfall pattern with an annual mean between 1000 mm and 1,200 mm. There are two seasons, the major one from May to August and the minor one from September to October (Codjoe et al., 2011). Average monthly temperatures range from 30°C in March to 24°C in August, with relative humidity varying from 90% to 95% in the rainy season and 75 to 80% in the dry season. The Kintampo North Municipality has a total population of 139,508 with 69,988 females and 69,520 males (Population and Housing Census, 2021; Planning and Monitoring/Implementation Unit, Kintampo North Municipal Assembly, 2022). The municipality forms part of the Forest Savannah transitional zone of the country. Agriculture (farming) and charcoal production are the main economic activities of rural communities in the municipality. It is estimated that 71.1% of the total workforce is employed in agriculture and charcoal production, while 28.9% in trade, industry, and services (Aabeyir et al., 2016). The rural folks involved in farming and charcoal production are mainly migrants who have settled in the municipality (Planning and Monitoring/Implementation Unit, Kintampo North Municipal Assembly, 2022).

The choice of the study area was particularly important because of the emerging interests and competition for land by various actors, including smallholder farmers who require large parcels of land to expand their farming

activities. The varying interests have created a high level of competition between the production of cash crops and food crops in the area, and it has been observed that the area is a major farming community where there is a shift from food crops to cash crops (-Bugri *et al.*, 2013).

The Forest-Savanna Transitional Agro-ecological Zone of Ghana, including the Bono-East region, has a suitable climate and soil for the cultivation of cashew. This region is characterized by a semi-deciduous forest climate with annual rainfall of about 1,200 mm, which is suitable for the growth of cashew. The soil in this region is also rich in nutrients and well-drained, making it a suitable environment for the cultivation of cashew trees (Dadzie *et al.*, 2001). The contribution of the Bono, Bono East, and Ahafo regions to the cashew subsector is manifested in the number of processing factories located there. Out of the 13 cashew processing factories in Ghana, 12 are located in the Bono, Bono East, and Ahafo regions ( Boison et al, 2021; Abdoulaye, Bamire, Akinola, &Etwire, 2017); and the surrounding communities such as Sampa, Wenchi, and Kimampo are major cashew growing areas, where there is also an increasing demand for land for the cultivation of cashew. Asantekwa and the surrounding communities such as Tengdene and Old Longoro have now become popular for the cultivation of cashew.



**Figure 3: Study District**

#### **43.2 Research design:**

The exploratory research design was employed since it offers an opportunity to discover new ideas, acquire new insights or expand knowledge on existing and new phenomena including an investigation into the effect of large-scale land acquisition on rural livelihood, food security, and conflict. [Exploratory research design serves as a foundational approach in various fields, enabling researchers to investigate phenomena without predefined hypotheses. It is particularly valuable in management science, where it aids in defining and understanding complex research problems, as highlighted by SakaRahmon Olawale's review of literature on its application \(Olawale, 2023\). Additionally, exploratory research is instrumental in media studies, such as the creation of a people-metric panel for television audience measurement, which involves](#)

designing demographic profiles and utilizing multivariate analysis (Postalovskiy, 2022).

Furthermore, exploratory analyses often emerge from pilot studies or secondary outcomes in larger trials, providing a means to generate hypotheses, albeit with caution due to the risk of Type I errors (Roberts *et al.*, 2023). In agile software testing, exploratory testing allows for adaptive learning and problem identification, emphasizing the need for structured methodologies to enhance its effectiveness (Coutinho *et al.*, 2023). Lastly, mixed-methods exploratory survey research, as demonstrated in studies on translanguaging in classrooms, combines qualitative and quantitative data to address complex educational phenomena (Anderson & Lightfoot, 2022). According to Ozge (2010), this research design offers clarity on an identified phenomenon or problem, and this can be used as a foundation on which other research designs can be developed.

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An exploratory design can be grouped into four themes that reflect various approaches to which knowledge of the problem can be acquired (Creswell, 2012). These groups include experience surveys that require researchers to elicit information from key individuals or expectations about a situation. In the case of assessing the implications of Large-Scale Land Acquisition for cashew cultivation on livelihoods, this research design was deemed appropriate for the study. Aside from this, the remaining three categories of an exploratory research design comprise pilot studies, case studies, and secondary data analysis. In view of justifying the appropriateness of this design, Munhall *et al.*, (2001) cites the ability of experience surveys to produce valuable information within the shortest

possible time as a key attribute that offers researchers a deeper appreciation of respondents' living situations as seen and identified in the research problem.

Like all other research designs, an exploratory research design has also witnessed criticisms and backlashes. These limitations include its inability to generalize on a larger population since the results derived from exploring any phenomenon can be considered tentative but not conclusive enough. Secondly, exploratory research engages a relatively small sample size that cannot be considered representative of the population, hence the researcher's difficulty in generalizing the research findings (Saunders et al, 2016).

### **43.3 Research Paradigm**

A research paradigm is an approach or research model for conducting research that has been verified by the research community for a long time and has been in practice for many years. This text describes the underlying philosophies of the various methodological approaches and methods used to study specific phenomena. It can be broadly divided into positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism. Pragmatism, as a philosophical paradigm, tackles research problems by combining elements of positivism and interpretivism (Sarantakos, 2005; Hothersall, 2019). According to Morgan's account of pragmatism, beliefs, experiences, and interpretations play an essential role in analyzing social issues (Morgan, 2014).

The advantage of the pragmatist approach is that it allows the researcher to employ a philosophical and methodological approach that works best for the specific research problem under investigation. Pragmatism offers researchers the

liberty to deal with societal issues. It therefore, allows the use of mixed methods or multiple methods (Creswell *and Clark et al.*, 2011). The study used a pragmatic research strategy to enable quantitative and qualitative research approaches to investigate the large-scale land acquisition and its implications for rural livelihood, food security, and conflict.

#### **43.4 Target Population:**

The target population for the study comprised household heads, farmers, chiefs, family heads, or landowners. This choice was informed by the fact that family heads, chiefs, or landowners hold lands as the traditional custodians, which makes them central to the acquisition of land for cashew farming. Farmers, on the other hand, constitute community members who are entrusted with land rights to farm on specific land. Indeed, such farmers solely depend on the land for their primary income and life, without which their livelihood and survival will be hugely impacted negatively.

Beyond the demand and supply agents of land for cashew farming, key stakeholders such as the Director of the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands, the Municipal Agricultural Officer, the Registrar of the Municipal Magistrate Court, and Land Agents (all within the Kintampo North Municipality) were also engaged in the study. The 1992 Constitution of Ghana, under articles 267(2, 6-8), defines the roles of the Director of the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands, which includes the mobilization of revenue accruing from the use and occupation of stool lands within the municipality and the disbursement of this

revenue, thus justifying his inclusion in the study. The Municipal Agricultural Officer works with farmers and agriculture-related businesses, helping them in decision-making to boost their yields. He also helps educate the public and sensitizes them on the importance of good farming practices. The court system handles land-related issues of various forms and alternative solutions. Therefore, the Registrar of the Municipal Magistrate Court was also selected.

In addition, older men and women and young adults were also selected for this study to ascertain the gendered and generational issues with access to land. This target group does not comprise farmers but local residents whose lives may be affected by large-scale cashew farming in the study area.

The growing demand for land in the area has created opportunities for land agents who serve as liaisons between landowners and investors interested in the purchase of land in the community. The Real Estate Agency Act, 2020 (Acts 1047), regulates real estate agency practice and commercial transactions in real estate, including the sale, purchase, rental, and leasing of real estate and related fixed assets and provides for related matters. Therefore, land agents were also selected and included in the study because of their in-depth knowledge of land transactions.

Target population	Number selected	Tool
(A) Sample size distribution		

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<del>Household heads who are farmers</del>	<del>150</del>	<del>Questionnaire</del>
<del>Migrant farmers</del>	<del>130</del>	<del>Questionnaire</del>
<del>Property owning youth</del>	<del>100</del>	<del>Questionnaire</del>
	<del>380</del>	
<del>Selection of participants for the qualitative data collection:</del>		
<del>Director of the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands</del>	<del>1</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
<del>Municipal Agricultural Officer</del>	<del>1</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
<del>Registrar of the Municipal Magistrate Court</del>	<del>1</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
<del>Land Agents</del>	<del>2</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
<del>Family heads of land owning clans</del>	<del>7</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
<del>Community leaders</del>	<del>2</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
<del>Focus Group Discussion ( 8*2)</del>	<del>16</del>	<del>Interview guide)</del> -
	<del>30</del>	
<del>Total (A and B): 380 + 30</del>	<del>410</del>	

#### 43.5 Sampling Size and Sampling Procedure



Yamane (1973) for sampling was used in obtaining the study's sample size. The Asantekwa community has a population of approximately 7600. It was appropriate to use households as the unit of analysis and the number of households as an overall sample for this study. A sample size of 380 was used where respondents from the different households answered the questionnaires administered.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

where,  $N$  = Population

$e$  = error of reliability level 95%

$$n = \frac{7600}{1 + 7800(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = 380$$

Farmers from the various households used in the study were selected using the simple random sampling technique. The technique affords every individual from the population a fair chance of inclusion. It was done by self-selecting individuals from the households who were willing to participate in the study (Daniel, 2011). The probability sampling approach guarantees that selection biases are minimized, allowing the study's findings to be more widely generalized. Migrants and youth were selected through purposive sampling techniques.

Since the Mixed Method approach was used for this study, there was a need to supplement the quantitative data with an additional 30 people, comprising 14 interviewees from the study community and 16 participants from two focus groups. The 14 interviewees were made up of the chief, heads of family, the

Municipal Agricultural Officer, the director of the office of the administrator of stool lands, the Municipal Courts Registrar, land agents, and two community elders (a male and a female). The other group of 16, were made up of older males, older females, and young adults contacted, discussions were held, and their responses were secured for the study in a focus group discussion. In all, 410 participants and respondents gave data for the survey.

Interviewees and participants of the focus group discussions were chosen using the purposive sampling technique. This non-probability technique, according to Kumekpor (2002), is used in selecting unique and informative samples. The justification for adopting this technique is that the chosen participants were considered to have in-depth knowledge of land issues and could therefore make a meaningful contribution to the study.

**Table 2: Sample size determination and selection of participants for quantitative and qualitative data collection**

<u>Target population</u>	<u>Number selected</u>	<u>Tool</u>
<u>(A) Sample size distribution</u>		
<u>Household heads who are farmers</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>Questionnaire</u>
<u>Migrant farmers</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>Questionnaire</u>
<u>Property owning youth</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>Questionnaire</u>
	<u>380</u>	
<u>Selection of participants for the qualitative data collection.</u>		
<u>Director of the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
<u>Municipal Agricultural Officer</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
<u>Registrar of the Municipal Magistrate Court</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
<u>Land Agents</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
<u>Family heads of land-owning clans</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
<u>Community leaders</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
<u>Focus Group Discussion ( 8*2)</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>Interview guide)</u>
		<u>=</u>
	<u>30</u>	
<u>Total (A and B): 380+ 30</u>	<u>410</u>	
<u>Source: Researcher's Construct, 2023</u>		

#### **34.6 Data sources:**

The survey relied exclusively on primary data sources with quantitative data dominating. A questionnaire, in-depth interview guide, focus group discussion guide, and observation guide (See appendices) were used in the data gathering for the study. These instruments are discussed in the following subsections.

#### **34.7 Questionnaire:**

Data was collected from the household heads using a questionnaire. This technique is justified because it constituted the most suitable approach for capturing information from the vast number of respondents in this study. The questionnaire contained both closed and open-ended questions. Respondents were afforded the liberty to provide their responses when it came to the open-ended questions, while options were provided for the closed-ended ones from which they were to make a choice. There were six (A-F) segments to a questionnaire addressing the research objectives. The questionnaire included the socio-demographics of each head of household, the nature of Large-Scale Land Acquisitions (LSLA), the factors that influence the LSLA, the impact of LSLA on livelihoods, the impact of LSLA on land conflict, and coping strategies adopted by households. The instrument was primarily drafted in English, but translation provisions were made for participants who did not understand English.

#### **43.8 Interview Guide**

The primary qualitative instrument for this study was the interview guide where selected community leaders, Land Agents, officials from the OASL and MoFA, and Court Registrar were interviewed. The interviews were unstructured to offer flexibility in the data collection method as well as to provide an avenue for probing responses further. Community leaders chosen for the study were interviewed to obtain their views on land and its ownership, mode of alienation, the impact on their livelihood, and its implications for land conflicts. The interview guide was structured to cover the commercialization of land and other vital issues to answer the research questions and objectives. The instrument was primarily drafted in English, but translation provisions were made for participants who did not understand English.

#### **43.9 Focus Group Discussion Guide**

Data was captured from the older males and females and young teenagers through a focus group discussion. A focus group guide covered the scope and impact of large-scale land acquisition at the community level. The discussions aimed to gather information about the research topics in group settings. Three separate focus groups with seven participants each were held, out of whom one serves as the facilitator, moderator, and note-taker. Participants in the focus group discussions were grouped by young adults 18-24 and older persons 25 and above. The focus group discussions were held to supplement the survey respondents' views. According to Sarantakos (1997), focus group conversations allow

significant points of view to be given in a genuine, passionate, and concise manner as spontaneous expressions because of the group atmosphere.

#### **43.10 Observation Guide**

The researcher used an observation guide as a tool to gather information about community resources and infrastructure development that were considered relevant to the research. To depict the type and nature of the community, the design of settlement layouts and the status and grade of infrastructure were also considered. Targeted resources included houses, cashew enterprises, schools, and community clinics. These resources depict gains derived from cashew-related industries hence their selection. The reason for introducing observation as a research tool was to better comprehend and record how participants and respondents interacted with the setting and experiences with the locale. This method was also meant to assist in detecting and documenting instances and difficulties that were routinely elusive for participants and learn about topics they might be reluctant to mention during the interview sessions.

#### **43.11 Validation of Instrument**

To ensure the reliability of the gathered data, this study observed the internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity criteria of ~~Guba (1981)~~. Guba and Lincoln (1994~~89~~) [which](#) pointed out that distinctive principles should be categorized differently to reflect the restructuring of standards in mixed-

method research and the detailed application of reliability standards in the context of project evaluation. As a result, to ensure the credibility of this study, the researcher interacted with participants through interviews and questionnaires to obtain relevant information about the purpose of the study. For reliability reasons, the answers from the questionnaire were compared with data from the community and municipal authorities throughout the interview session for clarity. This criterion was used to cross-reference data from several sources on the same topic. As a result, the study's conclusion accurately reflected the data gathered.

Finally, the interpretation of the data was fixed in the context of the respondents and participants by explaining values. The researchers' biases were "held" to ensure the suitability of the study. It was also a fine-tuning of fieldwork goals to complete the reliability of the questionnaire.

To improve the study's validity, the researcher established the validity of the content by pre-testing the instrument in a community with similar characteristics to the study area. The logical truth of the observation guide was also performed to confirm that the instrument performs its assigned task. These assessments can be seen from the data from the reconnaissance survey, which further supported the documentation of the observation guide.

#### **43.12 Reconnaissance Survey:**

The researcher conducted a reconnaissance survey from March 10 to March 17, 2023, in the study communities to become acquainted with the locality. This first field trip provided information that will aid in planning the major fieldwork.

Permission to brief participants on the substance of the research topic was requested throughout the survey. The Chief, the Heads of Family, the Court Registrar, and the Municipal Agricultural Officer were the selected participants. This trip was necessary to allow the researcher to become acquainted with the research community and orient himself before starting the main fieldwork.

#### **43.13 Administration of Instruments:**

While this study was done under the auspices of the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast, ethical clearance was sought from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast. In pursuance of the Board's approval, all relevant documentation including the research instruments, informed consent forms, and a copy of the study proposal were submitted to the Board for consideration, and subsequent approval was obtained to begin the data collection process.

On gaining approval, the researcher approached the gatekeepers of the community, and the first reference point was the palace of the traditional ruler in the community. Here, the researcher formally introduced himself to the Chief and his elders and observed key community entry protocols. Following their approval, an aide was assigned to facilitate the collection of data since this would reduce participant hesitation in engaging in the data collection. This aide was eventually employed as a research assistant as he helped in identifying all potential respondents and administering the questionnaires. The questionnaires administered were largely administered in the Mo and Twi dialects, and it took between 20-40 minutes for each respondent.



The interviews were carried out in a variety of locations. While the Chief, family heads, elders, and the Assembly member were interviewed in their various homes, the workplaces (offices) of Municipal Court Registrar, the Agricultural Director, and the Administrator of Stool Lands were visited to conduct the interviews. All interviews were conducted individually by recording the responses with a voice recorder. Robson (2002) argues that one-on-one interviews provide an opportunity to correct research questions, pursue exciting answers, and explore the underlying interpretation of events. Relationships with participants were established before the interview.

Except for the Municipal Court Registrar, the Agricultural Director, and the Director from the Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands, who were interviewed in English, the other respondents, thus the community leaders, preferred to be interviewed using the Mo or Twi language to express themselves well. Participants were asked questions on large-scale land acquisition, and they took the time to respond appropriately. As Silverman (2006) suggested, open-ended questions give participants the flexibility to immerse themselves in their perceptions and emotions. Catch-up inquiries were asked as probes and prompts. The length of the meetings varied between members depending on the intensity of the talk and the surrounding setting, but it was for the most part between 30 and 40 minutes.

Participants were divided into groups based on comparable factors such as age and gender for the focus group discussions. Older males, older females, and young adults were identified within the research communities to elicit their

answers to the study's objectives. When participants were chosen using the procedures outlined above, the Assembly Member made a convenient space available for them to sit, and the aim of the meeting was explained. The discussion was scheduled for three days, and participants agreed to meet the researcher in the evenings. There were seven people in each group. Questions were asked in Twi, and replies were captured using a voice recorder. Participants responded to the topics addressed by the study's goals, with the sessions lasting anywhere from 50 to 70 minutes.

The researcher collected photographs of cashew plants and infrastructure developments while gathering data through observation. This strategy was chosen to ascertain whether infrastructure and livelihood development are actively linked to cashew growing business in the community. The observatory technique was demonstrated to be a suitable method for gaining knowledge about the genuine life circumstances of the respondents through the verbal, non-verbal, and situational subtle elements accumulated from observation. By staying around for hours, observing, and listening to their chats, the researcher understood how they were trying to survive in their daily lives. The researcher had field notes in which he recorded all other observations throughout the study.

The entire data collection exercise lasted five weeks, from August 1<sup>st</sup> to September 8th, 2023. The views of the other two groups of 14 and 16 participants were obtained through interviews and focus group discussions.

#### **43.14 Data Processing and Analysis:**

For quantitative analysis, the data collected with the questionnaire was coded and analyzed using the Statistical Software Package (STATA) version MP17.0. The data were further cleaned to ensure there were no missing data and wrong data entry. Descriptive statistics, mainly means, frequencies, and percentages, were generated per the responses to the questionnaire.

Further, inferential statistical tools were used to analyze the data. The chi-square test of independence was used to analyze the major actors involved in LSLA in the area. Using T-test for, before, and after LSLA analysis, the effect of cashew cultivation on food security was examined. T-test was also employed in analyzing the coping mechanisms of respondents.

For interviews with participants, the first step was to transcribe the audio to text. Here, the researcher engaged in verbatim transcription, which helped in avoiding errors that could dilute the data. In doing this, the study engaged the services of MaxQDA, which is a paid program that allowed flexibility in reducing the speed of the audiotapes and also reducing background noise in each recording. In an effort to ensure clarity in the transcripts, repetition of words or phrases, incomplete sentences, and non-relevant contents were also removed.

Analysis began with classifications of transcripts under discrete themes or using MAXQDA software. The essence of coding was to facilitate two different forms of analysis: direct and relational content analysis. While direct content analysis draws its meaning by looking at the presence and number of occurring themes, relational content analysis looks further by considering the relationship

between various themes (Navenc\_& Hirst, 2012). Regarding direct content analysis, the focus was placed on variables like the word or phrase count or several times a theme is mentioned. At all times, anonymized quotation was also inserted to help clarify an issue or subject.

Also, the T-test used is a fundamental tool in statistical hypothesis testing, primarily used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups or between a sample mean and a known population mean. It operates under the null hypothesis, which posits that any observed difference is due to random sampling variability (Smalheiser, 2017). The t-test is particularly valuable in various fields, including medical research, where it aids in assessing the effectiveness of treatments by comparing control and experimental groups (Suvorov et al., 2022). However, its application relies on certain assumptions, such as normality and equal variances among samples, which, if violated, can lead to misleading results (Novak, 2020) Despite its popularity, researchers must be cautious, as accepting the null hypothesis does not confirm group equivalence, and rejecting it does not guarantee scientific validity due to potential biases or confounding factors (Smalheiser, 2017). Thus, while the t-test is a powerful statistical method, its proper application and interpretation are crucial for reliable conclusions (Al-Kassab, 2022).

#### **43.15 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics in research are essential when a researcher probes and/or publicizes people's private issues. Therefore, adherence to research ethics was observed before, during, and after the data collection. This study was conducted under the supervision of the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast. As such, ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast -- ID (-UCCIRB/CHLS/2023/02). In pursuance of the Board's approval, all relevant documentation including the research instruments, informed consent forms, and a copy of the study proposal were submitted to the Board for consideration and subsequent approval was obtained to begin the data collection process.

All respondents were briefed on the purpose, benefits, or losses that may arise from their participation in the study. Consistent with ethics in research work, all respondents who agreed to be part of this study were asked to sign a consent form to authenticate their claim. Before this, respondents were made aware of their right to end an interview or decline a request to record an interview.

Issues of anonymity were also stressed, and no part of the study would offer any indication that may be linked to participants. To attain anonymity, participants were assured of the use of pseudonyms unless participants explicitly requested the use of their real identity. In such cases, participants were requested to sign an authorization form. This form would serve as proof to insulate the researcher from any allegation of breaching such ethical values. In addition, other principles like confidentiality and privacy were made clear to participants.

To ensure respondents' interest, all engagements were conducted in a convenient and safe place. Additionally, all respondents were given an overview of the estimated duration for the interactions since this gave room for both parties to plan and reschedule a different day or time if the current engagement was not concluded or inconvenient.

To encourage participation, all respondents were admonished to speak freely and openly. Here, all interactions were conducted using respondents' preferred local dialects. With the expectation of avoiding any emotional or psychological harm to participants, interviews were conducted in a light-hearted manner so that all would be relaxed and have no hesitations to contribute effectively to the discussions.

#### **43.16 Fields: Experience and Challenges**

There was an instructive interaction between participants and respondents in the community who were eager to share their experiences with the researcher. It made it possible to interact with household heads in a way that boosted data collection. The researcher gained an understanding of the community residents' cultures through the nonverbal and contextual information obtained through interviews and observations. Overall, it was an interesting experience. However, it was challenging to enrol certain participants in the trial. For instance, several household heads rejected the survey because they believed it would be used as a backdrop for media reporting, citing prior interactions with other researchers on various community-based investigative themes. After consenting and planning dates with the researcher, others changed their minds when it was almost time to

begin. Be that as it may, field-informed consent was utilized to assure them that their responses were exclusively for academic work.

#### 4.3.17 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter highlighted the methods used in the study. The scientific basis for choosing Asantekwa as the research community and the members of the households and other significant participants in the study were shown in this chapter. Using random and selective (purposive) selection approaches, data were obtained from a total of 410 respondents and participants, including interviewees and focus groups, to understand the implications of LSLA for cashew cultivation on livelihood, food security, and disputes.

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## CHAPTER ~~FIVE~~FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following chapter and sections talk about the demographics, effects of large-scale land acquisition on rural development and on food security, implications of large-scale land acquisition for land disputes, and coping strategies in response to large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation.

#### 45.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Participants

##### 54.1.1 Introduction

This section provides a presentation and discussion of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, which include age, gender, marital status, educational background, and household size. Background information on respondents and participants in this type of study provides a good understanding of the responses given and reflects the extent to which the data provided can be relied on (Groves, et al 2002). Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics



can have a significant impact on the findings of a research study. This is since different demographic groups may have different experiences, perspectives, and behaviours that influence their responses to survey questions. To ensure that the findings are representative and accurate, the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents must be considered in the research design and analysis (Hox & Habermann, 2010).

Male household heads who are small-scale farmers accounted for 82.11 percent (312 respondents) of those surveyed, while female respondents made up 17.89 percent of the sample (Table 3).

The findings of the study, as displayed in Table 3, reveal that both males and females fall into a variety of age categories. elaborated that Ghana's active labour force was mostly in the 40- to 49-year-old age group. Young people between the ages of 20 and 29 made up only 3% of the sample and were the least represented.

In terms of marital status, 98.68 percent of respondents were married, making a total of 375 respondents. Only 1% of respondents were single, accounting for 5 of the 380 respondents.

According to the education data, 49% of the respondents had no formal education, accounting for 185 of the total respondents. 16% had a basic education, while 7% (25 respondents) had a tertiary education. 20% of those polled held a middle school diploma. Secondary school was 8% of the educational status. Respondents with no formal education and middle school certificate holders dominated the community in general.

According to the findings of the study in Table 3, most respondents were Christians. This means that Christianity is the dominant religion in the study community. Christians made up 78% of all respondents. According to the data, 15% of the Asantekwa community were Muslims. In the community, the African Tradition Religion had the fewest followers. This religion is practiced by only 7% of the 380 respondents.

According to the survey results in Table 3, about one-third of the people in the community were migrants, ~~while 66%~~ while 66% of the respondents (253) were indigenous. 34% of those polled were found to be migrants. This implies that roughly one-third of the Asantekwa community finds the place interesting and a better place to make a living, and thus migration is very high. Knowing and analyzing the respondents' indigenesness or endemism allows you to appreciate the modalities that may have influenced their access to land within the study community.

Most respondents had a monthly income of more than 1000 Ghana Cedis, according to the income section of the data. 78% (295 respondents) had a monthly income of more than 1000 cedis. Those with an income of less than 500 cedis were followed with 16 per cent (62 respondents). Only 6% of all respondents had a monthly income of 500 to 1000 cedis as shown in table 3.

The findings of the study in the Asantekwa community showed that the dominant ethnic group was Mo, representing 68% of the sampled population. People from the Bono ethnic background were the next dominating group with 21%. Sissala had 6% of the respondents while Dagati showed 5%. This result is consistent with the residential status of the people as the Mo people happen to be the indigenes of the community. Sissala and Dagati ethnic groups are migrants

from the Northern part of Ghana and the Bonos are from towns in the Bono and Bono East regions.

According to the study, the average household size in the study community is between 5 and 7 people. Households with five people accounted for 72.30 percent of all households. The six-member household category had the second-highest percentage at 26.91 percent, representing 102 respondents, while the seven-member household had the lowest percentage at 0.96 percent.

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Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	312	82
Female	68	18
<b>AGE (years)</b>		
20-29	11	3
30-39	38	10
40-49	217	57
50-59	63	17
60 and above	49	13
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>		
Married	375	98.68
Single	5	1.32
<b>EDUCATIONAL LEVEL</b>		
Basic	61	16.32
Middle School	76	20
Secondary	301	78.16
Middle School	276	72
Tertiary	20	5
No formal education	186	49
<b>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</b>		
Christians	286	75
Muslims	57	15
African Traditional Religion	296	77.8
<b>RESIDENTIAL STATUS</b>		
Indigenous	57	15
Migrants	129	34
<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME (GHC)</b>		
Below 500	251	66
500-1000	129	34
Above 1000	23	6
<b>ETHNICITY</b>		
Sissala	23	6
Mre	295	77.8
Dagala	258	68
Bono	198	52
Household size	868	22.8
5 one	19	5
Household size	274	72.13
7	102	26.9
6	474	124.3
7	102	26.9
7	4	0.96

Source: Authors' Construct, 2023



#### 54.1.2 *Summary*

This research was designed to assess Large-Scale Land Acquisition (LSLA) for Cashew Cultivation and its Impact on Livelihood, Food Security, and Disputes in Kintampo North, Bono East Region of Ghana. The study was designed to collect data from 380 respondents, including household heads, farmers, Chiefs, family heads, and landowners) and 30 other participants for interviews and focus group discussions. Descriptive analyses of the data were conducted using Statistical Software Package (STATA) version MP17.0. Further, inferential statistical tools were used to analyze the data, that is, the Chi-square test of independence and T-test. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and participants were considered in the research design and analysis to ensure that the findings are representative and accurate.

The study found that the majority of respondents were married, and most of them were men. The majority had no formal education, followed by those with a secondary school diploma, basic education, and middle school diploma, and the least with tertiary education. Christianity was the dominant religion, and the least of the Asantekwa community was Muslims. The study found that roughly one-third of the Asantekwa community finds the place interesting and a better place to make a living, and thus migration is high. Households with 5-7 people accounted for the majority of all households, with the 6-member household category having the second-highest recording and the 7-member household having the lowest recording.

The dominant ethnic group was Mo, Sissala and Dagati ethnic groups were migrants from the Northern part of Ghana, and the Bonos were from towns in the Bono and Bono East regions. Households had a monthly income of more than 1000 Ghana Cedis.

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#### 45.21 Nature and Influencing Factors of Large-Scale Land Acquisition

##### 54.2.0 *Introduction*

The section examines the nature of large-scale land acquisition and its contributory factors in the study community. It structurally consists of thematic sections, including land ownership and acquisition, actors involved in LSLA, and future projections and regulations for LSLA in the study community.

#### 45.2.1 *Land Ownership in the Study Community*

Customary land ownership is prevalent in Ghana, accounting for more than 80% of the land (Campion and Acheampong, 2014; Abubakari et al., 2016). It is regarded as a means to foster social connections and holds significant spiritual value for the living, deceased, and unborn. The customary land system encompasses various rights, including allodial, usufructuary, share tenancy, and lease rights, with chiefs and family heads serving as trustees for allodial interests. Chiefdoms, characterized by a hierarchical structure (Campion and Acheampong, 2014; Abubakari *et al.*, 2016; Elhardary ~~and~~ & Obeng-Odoom, 2012), from the King to paramount chiefs, divisional chiefs, and caretaker chiefs (referred to as "Odikro" among the Akans), are where these positions are found. Usufructuary interests are tied to private land ownership by specific families or groups, granted indefinitely and inheritable. Individuals have the freedom to utilize their land for personal purposes, such as settlement and crop production, which are categorized as customary freeholds. In the community, land usage is controlled by families, led by the head of the family, and chiefs. "Family land" is defined under the new Land Act as land for which a family holds allodial title, benefiting its members in accordance with customary law. The highest title in land is the Allodial title, which can be held by the state, stool or skin, clan or family, or an individual

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(Agyei, 2015). The acquisition of this ultimate interest in land can occur through various means such as compulsory acquisition, conquest, pioneer discovery, settlement, gift, purchase, or agreement. The land ownership arrangement in the study area aligns with customary land ownership in neighbouring communities and other rural areas in Ghana, where stools or families may assert allodial, usufructuary, or leasehold interests based on the mode of acquisition.

Ownership or title to the land is transferred from one generation to another. This study revealed that land ownership is held by the chiefs and the family heads of the respective clans. Out of the 380 respondents, 98.68% attested to the fact that land is held in the community by families, with family heads acting as trustees on behalf of their particular clans. Consequently, families hold a large majority of the land. Only 1.32% thought that chiefs were the true landowners (see Table 8).

**Table 4: Land Title/ Allodial Ownership**

Allodia (highest title) land in the community	Gender			
	Male		Female	Total
Chief	5	1.60	0	0.00
Family heads of respective clans	307	98.40	68	100
Total	312	100	68	100

*The first column has frequencies, and the second column has percentages*

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2023

The results of this study concur with those of Boafo & Lyons (2019), who found that in the Kintampo Area, farmland belongs to particular families among the Mo ethnic group. Every Mo ethnic group member is permitted to use any area of their family land for farming when it is unoccupied and under the terms of the customary arrangement. However, it was noted in the research community that, as one participant noted, the chiefs are not excluded from the area's land ownership.

*Although some of the lands in this area belong to respective families who farm on them and can also give them to migrants to farm or sell to others, some of the lands here belong to the chiefs. And the Chiefs have the authority to do whatever they want with the land. (Abeo Respondent, a 46-year-old male participant, February 10, 2023).*

This finding is supported by Aobeyir&Agyare's (2020) assertion that land in the Asantekwa community in the Kintampo area is communally owned, where individual families acquire portions for farming. –A Land Agent commented on the extent of the migrants' rights to land as they are also allotted portions of land to farm:

*"Migrants are also allotted parcels by family heads to farm freely but could lose such parcels of land anytime the family heads decide to make any grant to an investor who comes in with huge sums of money. This is because the migrants do not own the land or have title to the land they farm. They are thus regarded as squatters, and they could be evicted anytime without prior notice."*  
(~~Addee~~Respondent, Land Agent, February 11, 2023).

The Lands Act, 2020 (Act 1063) recognizes that "a chief, tendana, clan head, family head, or any other authority in charge of the management of stool or skin, or clan or family land, is a fiduciary charged with the obligation to discharge the management function for the benefit of the stool or skin, or clan or family concerned, and is accountable as a fiduciary" (Section 13 (2)). The provisions of the Head of Family (Accountability) Act, 1985 (P.N.D.C.L. 114) also apply to this Act, which states that lands belonging to a family may not be disposed of or alienated without the consent and concurrence of the family's principal members.

The new Land Act also designates chiefs, tendanas, clan heads, family heads, or other authorities in charge of the management of stool, skin, family, or clan lands act as fiduciaries, with a duty to discharge their functions for the benefit of the stool, skin, family, or clan. As fiduciaries, the law requires them to make decisions affecting land in a transparent, open, fair, and impartial manner. To encourage compliance, any such fiduciary who fails to comply with his or her fiduciary duties will be sanctioned by way of a fine and /or imprisonment. The fine is between 5,000 to 10,000 penalty units (currently, between GHS 60,000 and GHS 120,000 on the basis that one penalty unit equals GHS12). These improvements in the Land Act in setting out the legal framework for customary land rights, including the prescription of punitive action against custodians of customary land, will promote transparency, fairness, and impartiality in customary land deals.

#### 5.4.2.2 *Farmland Acquisition Arrangement*

Land acquisition and ownership in Ghana have always come under communal and private proprietorship (Kasanga & Kotei, 2004~~20~~<sup>20</sup>). This has led to what has generally been regarded as the plurality of the land tenure system, and this has resulted in a series of contradictions and land altercations. Successive governments have enacted laws (with the latest being the passage of the Lands Act, 2020, Act 1063) to streamline land ownership and acquisition processes by circumventing the technicalities and complexities in land transactions in the country. In this study, the arrangement between actors of land for the cultivation of cashews is affected by both communal and private arrangements. These land

acquisition arrangements involved purchase, inheritance, migrant land grant, and

~~lease.~~ Table 5 reveals how land is acquired in the study community.

According to data on farmland acquisition, 359 of the ~~respondents~~ respondent's own farmland in the community. Almost half (49.47%) of the respondents (188 in total) inherited these lands from their grandfathers, with family land accounting for 10.26% of farmland ownership. The proportion of respondents who owned farmland acquired through purchase was 17.89%, and through migrant land grants was 17.11 per cent.

**Table 5: Farmland Acquisition Arrangement**

How respondents acquired the land.	Respondents land ownership:					
	Male		Female		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Purchase	57	1	11	0	68	1
	82.6	1.4	16	0	17.89	1.4
Inherited	153	6	35	1	188	7
	78.5	3.1	17.9	0.5	49.47	1.84
Family land:	31	0	8	0	39	0
	79.5	0	20.5	0	10.26	0
Migrant land grant:	55	9	10	3	65	12
	71.4	11.7	13	3.9	17.11	3.16
Total	296	16	64	4	360	20
	77.9	4.2	16.8	1.1	94.74	5.26
Overall Total:	312		68		<b>380</b>	

**First row has frequencies, and the second row has row percentages**

**Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2023**

It was revealed in the study that 21 respondents were not fully entitled to ownership of farmlands, although they do grow crops on available spaces in the community. It was confirmed through interviews that these farmers did not acquire and grow their crops on a sharecropping arrangement (popularly known as “do ma yenkye” or “ebunu” and “abusa”), as this type of land acquisition which

is prevalent in several farming communities in the country (Baah & Kidido, 2020; Nsiah-Gyabaah, 2009) is not widespread in the study area. On the question of the land tenure arrangement that people use to access land for farming in the community, a participant's response revealed why sharecropping is not a common practice in the study community:

*"In the Asantekwa community and its surrounding areas, sharecropping or abunu and abusa as practiced in other farming communities is not a common practice used to access land for farming. This is because there are vast uncultivated lands here. Natives have their family lands where they grow their crops. Every member of the family is allocated a parcel for farming. Migrants who have settled there are given portions to farm after giving "drink" money to the head of the family. The land is not sold. Things are changing now. There are now agents who have been buying lands from the family heads and later sell to investors to cultivate cashew. Other investors also approach the family heads and buy lands from them directly. The migrants and some families are now being allocated farther away to farms because the land has been sold to other people to grow cashew." (Representative of Ministry of Agriculture, Kintampo North, 2023)*

It was found that migrant farmers from the north of the country who have lived in the community and took part in the study do not have long-term land tenure security because they rely on other land rental agreements to obtain farmland from the indigenous people. Due to the possibility of gaining access to land through inheritance or traditional tenure systems, the natives or indigenous people enjoy a comparatively stronger sense of tenure security. This was accentuated in the following comment during the focus group discussion: "

*The family head is responsible for allocating a portion of this land for subsistence farming to family members." This process of allocating family land stems from a tradition in which food was regarded as a basic need, and thus each member of the family was guaranteed access to land to produce food to meet basic subsistence needs. In short, regardless of gender, social status, or age, each family member was guaranteed usufruct rights to the family land* (~~Adogo~~Respondent, Focus Group Discussion, 2023).

The illegality of alienating family land or a plantation on family land as property to one's children upon one's death was explained in a focus group discussion as a key issue in the right of ownership, possession, and occupation of customary/family land in the study community: "

*The Bono tradition of land inheritance forbids the individualization of family land, based on the tenet that land belongs to all members of the family, including past and future generations. No one can obtain exclusive possession under this system of land tenure. While the farmer may have exclusive rights to the produce from tree crops (including cashew nut trees), he or she cannot transfer their land use rights to their descendants under any circumstances. While both food and cash (tree) crops could be grown on family land, the farm would revert to the family when the farmer died. It is also illegal to pass on family land or a plantation on family land as property to one's children"* ([Respondent John](#), FGD, 2023).

#### **54.2.3 Widespread nature of Cashew Cultivation**

The widespread nature of cashew cultivation in the Kintampo North district has been growing from time to time. Results from Table 6 suggest that almost 96 percent of 380 respondents were very sure that land acquisition for cashew cultivation in the community is spreading very fast in the area.

**Table 6: Widespread nature of Cashew Cultivation**

How widespread is land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community?	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Very widespread	267	70.26	70.26
Widespread	98	25.79	96.05
Not all widespread	15	3.95	100.00
Total	380	100.00	

**Source: Field Survey, (2023)**



Land acquisition for cashew cultivation is expected to increase in the years to come. From Table 407, 96.05 percent are very certain that land acquisition will significantly increase in the next ten years in Kintampo North district, while only 3.95 percent, representing 15 respondents, expect it to increase marginally.

In the in-depth interviews with community members in Kintampo North, a prevailing theme emerged, shedding light on the rapid proliferation of cashew cultivation. Participants echoed a shared sentiment, capturing the essence of this burgeoning phenomenon. A seasoned farmer with decades of experience articulated the transformative nature of cashew cultivation during our discussions. He expressed,

*"Back in the day, you wouldn't have seen so many cashew farms around here. Now, it's like the landscape is changing. Everyone's talking about cashew, and you can't blame them. It's everywhere."* (Kwame, a 56-year-old farmer).

This sentiment was further echoed by a community leader who noted during our interview.

*"I've seen the shift happening right before my eyes." More families are converting their land to cashew farms. It's becoming a symbol of progress, a way to secure the future."* (~~Amadu~~Amadu, ~~61-year-old~~61-year-old community leader).

These qualitative insights align with the quantitative findings, as expressed in Table 7, where a substantial 96 percent of respondents affirmed the rapid

spread of cashew cultivation. The narratives from the respondents provide a nuanced understanding, capturing the local perspectives on the transformative impact of cashew farming on the community landscape.

**Table 7: Cashew Cultivation in the Next Ten Years**

How will you describe land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community?	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative
Will increase significantly	365	96.05	96.05
Will increase marginally	15	3.95	100.00
Total	380	100.00	

**Source: Field Survey, (2023)**

#### 5.2.4 *Actors Involved in Large-Scale Cashew Cultivation*

In the Bono East region, LSLA for cashew cultivation is carried out by local elites (investors), international investors, migrants, and natives of the place. By using the unequal distribution of wealth in society, local elites are able to impose their authority on lesser classes of society. Due to the privileges, they receive from the social structures that already exist, local elites are able to exercise power. These political and social connections of agrarian production are further characterized by class difference, which has the effect of further marginalizing already vulnerable groups like smallholder and migrant farmers as well as indigenous peoples (Nyantakyi-Frimpong & Bezner-Kerr, 2017).

Tree crops like cashew require safe access to land in order to be produced. Land is communally owned and used in the Bono East area where the study was done. Because of this, obtaining long-term access to land for cashew production occasionally necessitates alienating — or evicting — other communal users

(Amanor, 2009). Separation between landowners, local elites, and migrant farmers frequently results from the eviction of other communal users from property, including land that was once used for subsistence activities. Indeed, these social processes are now an integral component of the local politics of production and the differentiated nature of modern agrarian development (Nyantakyi-Frimpong & Bezner-Kerr, 2017).

It can be seen from Table 8 that indigenes, foreign investors, local investors, and migrants are all involved in cashew cultivation in the study community. Generally, 38.16 percent of both males and females, representing 147 respondents, were indigenes involved in cashew cultivation. ~~About 27.44~~ percent were Ghanaians/ local investors, while foreign investors accounted for 22.63 percent in their participation in cashew cultivation. It is evident that the majority of actors involved in Large-Scale Land Acquisition are both local investors (27.11 percent) and foreign investors (22.62 percent) making a total of 50 percent. The Pearson Chi-Square test was conducted to examine the association between gender and role in cashew cultivation, yielding a chi-square value of 5.31 and a p-value of 0.1503. Since the p-value is greater than the 0.05 threshold for statistical significance, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is no statistically significant association between gender and role in cashew cultivation at the 5% significance level, implying that gender does not play a significant role in determining individuals' involvement in cashew cultivation activities.

**Table 8: Major actors involved in cashew cultivation in the study community**

Who are those involved in cashew cultivation?	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Indigenes	113	32	145
	36.86	47.06	38.16
Foreign investors	77	9	88
	24.68	13.24	22.63
Local (Ghanaian) investor	81	22	103
	25.96	32.35	27.11
Migrants	41	5	46
	13.14	7.35	12.11
Total	312	68	380
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Pearson  $\chi^2 = 5.31$ , Prob = 0.1503

First row has frequencies, and the second row has row percentages.

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2023

In-depth interviews conducted provided valuable insights into the actors driving large-scale cashew cultivation through Land-Scale Land Acquisitions (LSLA). The intricate web of stakeholders involved in this transformative process was unveiled, showcasing the dynamics of power, privilege, and social structures. A local investor shed light on the role of local elites in this agrarian transformation.

*"Cashew is the new gold here. Those of us with resources see it as an investment opportunity. We have the connections to make things happen, and things are working out so well for us."* (Mr. Osei, a local investor).

These sentiments were echoed by an international investor who said:

*"I came here seeing the potential for cashew cultivation. The local agents play a crucial role. They have the influence to navigate the complexities, and that's why we collaborate with them."* (Ms. Johnson, an international investor).

However, these narratives also brought to light the consequences of this power dynamic, as a smallholder farmer voiced her concerns during a Focused Group ~~Discussion~~, Discussion.

*"The big players get all the support, and we, the small farmers, are left struggling. The system isn't fair. We feel ~~sidelined~~ side-lined and powerless."*

These qualitative data confirm the assertions in the main text, depicting the influential role of local elites and international investors in large-scale cashew cultivation. The narratives highlight the unequal distribution of power and resources, emphasizing the challenges faced by smaller farmers and indigenous peoples, as also documented by Nyantakyi-Frimpong & Bezner-Kerr (2017). The interviews underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of the social and political dimensions shaping the landscape of cashew cultivation in the region.

#### 5.4.2.5 *Land Sizes Acquired for Cashew Cultivation*

Table 9 contains information about investors and their land investments, including the type of investor, the total number of investments, and the size of the land they have. Focusing on data provided by a land agent through interviews, the analysis discerns distinctive land sizes acquired by foreign investors, local investors, and

~~local institutions~~ local institutions. Investor institutions tend to make larger investments, as evidenced by the larger land sizes. The data shows that some investors have made multiple investments. The land sizes acquired vary widely, with some investors acquiring smaller plots (e.g., 100 acres), while others have acquired larger plots (e.g., 640 acres). The largest land acquisition is by "Investor Institution 1" with 640 acres. The total number of investments made by all investors indicates a significant level of foreign investment in land. While the total land sizes acquired over the last decade remain elusive, the data at hand offers invaluable insights into investor behaviour. The table provides an overview of the scale and diversity of foreign investments in terms of land acquisition over the last two years. It may be useful for policymakers, researchers, or stakeholders interested in understanding the distribution and impact of foreign investments in land.

**Table 9: Land size for cashew cultivation**

Type of investors	investors	<u>Land-sizeLand</u> <u>size(acres):</u>
Foreign investor		
(Burger) (3),		
Investor	1	100
Investor	2	120
investor	3	200
Local investor (4),		
Investor	1	150
Investor	2	100
Investor	3	200
Investor	4	100
Institution (2)		
Investor Institution	1	640
Investor Institution	2	250
Total	9	1860

**Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2023**

During interviews, it became evident that their interest in cashew cultivation was largely driven by the potential for profitable returns and the growing global demand for cashew nuts.

*"We identified this region as suitable for cashew cultivation due to its climatic conditions. The initial investment in a smaller plot was a cautious approach to test feasibility, and upon successful yields, we expanded our landholdings."*  
(-Mr. Kwame Kubi, a foreign investor)

This illustrates a strategic approach of foreign investors starting with smaller plots and gradually scaling up based on the success of their initial investments. A resident in the community remarked in a Focused Group Discussion (-FGD) :

*"I've seen the landscape change drastically with these large cashew farms. While it brings some benefits, it also raises questions about the impact on our environment and the balance between modern agriculture and preserving our traditional way of life (-Kwame Dapaah, community resident).*

#### **5.4.2.6 Factors responsible for Large Scale Land Acquisition**

In this section, the factors responsible for large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation are presented. Initially, a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, and neutral) was used to gather information

from respondents on their perceptions of the factors that have resulted in the rise of large-scale land acquisition for the cultivation of cashew. For ease of understanding as well as the purpose of presentation, however, a 3-point Likert scale (agree, disagree, and neutral) was adopted, where agree and strongly agree responses were collapsed into one (agree), while strongly disagree and disagree responses were also combined into one (disagree). (See Table 9).

**Table 10: Factors informing large-scale land**

FACTORS	Level of agreement					
	Agree		Disagree		Neutral	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
High demand for cashew on the international market	100.00	100	0		0	0
Land availability	100.00	100	0	0	0	0
Poverty of landowners	100.00	100	0	0	0	0
Weak management	100.00	100	0	0	0	0
Demand for land by farmers	8.68	8.68	0	0	91.32	91.32
Investment and development vision of landowners	100.00	100	0	0	0	0
Poor land fertility for food crops	0.26	0.26	99.74	99.74	0	0
Greed on the part of family heads	100.00	100	0	0	0	0

**The first row shows frequencies, and the second row shows row percentages.  
Source: Field Survey, (2023)**



In Table 9, all respondents agreed that high demand for cashew nuts on the international market, availability of land in the area, weak farmland management, and poverty of landowners are the major factors responsible for large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in the study community. Brong-Ahafo is characterized by a favourable growing climate (Cobbinah & Anane, 2016), which corroborates the claim by Bugri (2008) that land is highly needed for investment purposes, and in areas such as the Bono East Region where there are favorable conditions, cash crops such as cashew also perform well. Ghana's growing cashew nut production is largely driven by the high global demand for cashew nuts (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTD, 2021)). The Brong Ahafo Region is the top cashew grower, even though cultivation has expanded to the northern part of Ghana (Boafo et al., 2019). The growing cashew demand worldwide and government commercialization strategies are driving up production of cashews in Ghana. For example, the government of Ghana has since 2018 launched a 10-year Cashew Development Plan with the goal of increasing the country's current processing capacity from 65,000 metric tons to 300,000 metric tons annually while increasing the production of raw cashew nuts from 70,000 metric tons to 300,000 metric tons annually (Boafo & Yeboah, 2022). By far, the largest importers of raw cashew nuts from Ghana are India and Vietnam. The nuts are processed in India and Vietnam before being shipped to the global North for further processing and consumption.

On the other hand, 95 percent disagreed that poor land fertility for food crops is the reason cashew cultivation is increasing in the area. The respondents'

disagreement is supported by the findings of Ofori-Frimpong (2018) and Owusu (2017) that the Bono and Ahafo regions are often referred to as the food basket of Ghana due to their rich and fertile agricultural lands, which support a diverse range of crops, including maize, cassava, yam, plantain, rice, and other food crops. These regions are known for their abundant food production, which contributes significantly to the national food supply and food security in the country.

Moreover, all the respondents (100%) also viewed greed on the part of family heads as a factor that has triggered large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. A participant attested to this during an interview:

*Lands here belong to families, and the family heads oversee the allocation of lands to the family members for farming and housing purposes. Unfortunately, some of them are so greedy that they take huge sums of money from investors and sell out the lands to them. As I speak with you now, there are several family in-fighting because the family heads and a few principal elders have shared the proceeds from the family land among themselves and have refused to render accounts to the whole family" (Kwansah Respondent, 56-year-old respondent, 2023).*

This viewpoint, which is supported by the quantitative data, is consistent with the findings of Cotula (2007), Chauveau *et al.* (2006), and Chamberlin *et al.* (2021) that, in most rural agrarian communities, heads of respective families hold

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land in trust for the families and, in the course of acting in their fiduciary roles, take advantage of the situation to benefit themselves. This is also precipitated by the increasing commodification of land and the rising demand for land (-Kidido *et al.*, 2017). This finding is consistent with the findings of Evans *et al.* (2015), who report that older generations in the Brong Ahafo Region's Jaman North District were privatizing family lands through cashew production, which is the detriment of young people.

Who has access to power and control over resources, as shown in the political ecology analysis paradigm that underpins this study, is a key determinant in the commodification of land. Older generations, who are primarily the caretakers of customary land and have authority due to their age (heads of respective families), are the social groups that are involved in the alienation of land for cashew cultivation. The older generation consolidates their strong position and control over customary land by selling land to investors for cashew plantations. The general narrative in the policy literature that young people are disadvantaged in terms of obtaining land is further supported by the fact that this is affecting young people's capacity to access land for farming and support their livelihood (AGRA, 2015). Additionally, this argument observes how agricultural land is commercialized and how other class and social divisions become the beneficiaries, including the appropriation of land and eviction of vulnerable people (Amanor, 2009; Austin, 1987; Campbell, 2013). The older generation, who tends to have power and control over productive assets such as land, is

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actually reaping the benefits connected with increasing large-scale land acquisition for cashew production in the region.

#### 54.2.7 Land Regulation:

From Table 11, 95.61% strongly agree that land acquisition should be regulated to help preserve land for future generations. Most of the respondents who believe that regulating lands will reduce conflict also strongly agreed that there should be land regulation in Kintampo North. [Majority of respondents \(95.6%\) strongly agree that land acquisition for cashew cultivation should be regulated in order to preserve the land for future generations. Also, 84% of the respondents said that to reduce land conflicts, land acquisition for cashew cultivation should be regulated.](#)

**Table 11: Land Regulation**

	To what extent do you agree that land acquisition for cashew cultivation should be regulated?		
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Total
If you agree, why do you want the regulations?			
To preserve land for future generations	283	13	296
	95.61	4.39	100.00
To reduce land conflicts	84	0	84
	100.00	0.00	100.00
Total	367	13	380
	96.58	3.42	100.00

**The first row has frequencies, and second row has row percentages**

**Source: Field Survey, (2023).**

#### 54.2.8 *Summary of the Chapter*

The chapter discusses land ownership in the Kintampo Area of Ghana, where 98.68% of the land is owned by families, with chiefs having some ownership. The new Land Act designates authorities in charge of land as fiduciaries with a duty to manage it transparently and impartially. Sharecropping is not common due to uncultivated land, and migrant farmers have less land tenure security. Cashew cultivation is done by elites, investors, migrants, and natives, further marginalizing vulnerable groups. Land acquisition is expected to increase, and most respondents believe it should be regulated to preserve land and reduce conflict.

**CHAPTER ~~FIVE~~<sup>SIX</sup>****~~5.1.6.1~~ EFFECTS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION ON RURAL  
LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY****~~5.1.6.1.0~~ Introduction**

This chapter examines the positive and negative effects of large-scale land acquisition (LSLA) for cashew cultivation on rural livelihoods. It analyzes the positive impact of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation on rural livelihood with respect to income, social status, security, children's education, savings, employment, and infrastructure. Additionally, it examines the negative effects of LSLA for cashew cultivation on rural livelihood with respect to land

food crop farming, the cost of land for food crops, food insecurity, and the cost of food crops.

#### **6.15.1.11 Positive effects of Large-Scale Land Acquisition on livelihoods**

Due to the wide-ranging effects of large-scale land transactions, evaluating the negative impacts resulting from large-scale land acquisition (LSLA) is extremely important. Economic, social, and environmental discussions have been triggered by large-scale, cross-border transactions, which are frequently led by foreign governments or multinational enterprises. Critics voice worries about the negative impacts on farming techniques, local communities, and ecosystems. Decision-making, policy-making, and sustainable development all depend on having a thorough understanding and assessment of these detrimental effects. The necessity of closely examining the effects of LSLA to address threats to food security, livelihoods, and general well-being is emphasized by a large number of studies and research papers.

In Table 12, improved income is seen as a positive impact on the lives of the people in Kintampo North. 93.95 percent of both males and females who own do farming activities agreed that land acquisition has improved their incomes. Knudsen (2007), and Kielland and Tovo, (2006) found that young people spend their time as pay-day to earn income, hence, cashew cultivation smoothen income of the people. 6.05 percent were also very sure that the income of the people has significantly increased. The study showed that 99.21 percent of the respondents in Kintampo North were neutral as to whether cashew cultivation has

improved the social status of the people. Only 0.79 percent, representing 3 respondents, however, strongly agreed that it has improved the social status of the people.

In the table, 93.68 percent of the respondents, both males and females representing 356 people, strongly disagreed that there has been an improvement in food security as a result of cashew cultivation. These respondents are of the view that lands which could have been used for growing food crops such as yam, maize, and groundnut are being replaced by cashew cultivation. This has reduced the amount of food availability and increased the prices of food crops. However, 6.32 percent believe that there has been an improvement in food security in the area.

In taking care of educational needs, 96.58 percent were strongly determined that cashew cultivation has nothing to do with their children's education. This means that, the famers do not receive much from cashew cultivation to provide the basic needs of their wards. Although, the presence of cashew cultivation on a large scale has improved income but the effect does not stretch outwards to education. More so, 3.42 percent representing 13 respondents attested to the fact that they can take care of their ward's education through cashew cultivation activities.

It has been acknowledged that land commercialization increases savings and access to credit from financial institutions. One study, for example, found that in rural China, households that had commercialized their land were more likely to have savings and to use formal financial services such as banks and cooperatives



than those that had not commercialized their land (Wang, Cheng, & Liu, 2014). Another study, focusing on smallholder farmers in Kenya, found that access to credit was positively associated with participation in agricultural markets, which often involved the commercialization of land (Mwai & Wanjohi, 2017). Also, Boison *et al.* (2021) found out that cashew-growing communities in the Wenchi Municipality in the Bono region contributed to positive outcomes such as improving income and social status for the inhabitants. This finding is contrary to the findings in this study where the respondents (100 percent), both males and females who own farmlands or not, strongly disagreed that large-scale acquisition of land for cashew was increasing savings in the area. It is important to note that the relationship between land commercialization and financial outcomes is not always straightforward, and there are cases where commercialization can lead to negative outcomes such as indebtedness and loss of land tenure (Bourgeois, Lambin, & Pfeffer, 2016).

Table 12 shows the statistical results of the association between large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation and employment provision. Results showed that all the people in the study attested that cashew cultivation has fully brought employment in the area. 100 percent of the respondents who own or do not own farmland agreed that employment opportunities have been created from cashew cultivation.

There have been several studies investigating the impact of large-scale land acquisitions for cashew cultivation on employment opportunities in rural communities in the global south. The evidence, however, is mixed and context-

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specific. One study conducted in Tanzania found that large-scale cashew cultivation resulted in increased employment opportunities, particularly for women and youth, in the form of wage labour and self-employment in ancillary activities such as food vending, transport services, and informal sector activities. The study also noted that cashew cultivation creates employment opportunities beyond the farm gate, in processing and marketing, and that the increased income generated from cashew cultivation has positive spillover effects on local economies (Ashton *et al.*, 2016).

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Another study conducted in Ghana, however, found that large-scale cashew cultivation resulted in limited employment opportunities for local communities. The study attributes this to the high capital-intensive nature of large-scale cashew cultivation, which limits the number of people required for cultivation, as well as the limited involvement of smallholder farmers in the value chain (Kwakye *et al.*, 2019). One study that examined the employment impacts of large-scale land acquisitions in rural Tanzania found that while the acquisitions did create some employment opportunities, the benefits were unevenly distributed and tended to favour more skilled and educated workers over unskilled and informal workers (Amanor, 2011). The study also found that many of the jobs created were temporary and did not provide long-term, sustainable employment. Another study that examined the employment impacts of large-scale land acquisitions in Ethiopia found that while the acquisitions did create some employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, many of the jobs were low-paying and did not provide a living wage (Hurni *et al.*, 2015). It was found out in

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the interviews in the study community that some of the residents end up as caretakers or managers for the cashew farms while others are hired and paid a minimal fee during land preparation and harvesting of the cashew fruit.

In the table, 99.74 percent representing 379 of the total respondents strongly agreed that since the cultivation of cashew in the area, there have not been any social facilities such as schools, toilets, or clinics that has been provided with funding from cashew activities.

**Table 12: Positive effects of Large-Scale Land Acquisition on livelihoods**

Positive impact	Level of agreement (%)					
	Agree		Disagree		Neutral	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Improved income	100	100	0	0	0	0
Improved social status	0.96	0	0	0	99.04	100
Improved food security	4.81	13.24	95.91	86.76	0	0
Ability to take care of children's education	1.28	13.24	98.72	86.76	0	0
Increased savings	0	0	100	100	0	0
Provision of employment	100	100	0	0	0	0
Provision of basic social infrastructure in the community	0.32	0	99.68	100	0	0

**Source: Field Survey, (2023).**

#### **6.15.1.2 Negative ~~Impact~~ Effects of Large-Scale Land Acquisition**

The assessment of the negative ~~impacts-effects~~ of Large-Scale Land Acquisition (LSLA) is essential for understanding the broader consequences of extensive land use changes, particularly in the context of cashew cultivation. As the demand for cashew continues to drive significant land acquisitions, it becomes crucial to examine how such practices affect local communities and their traditional agricultural activities, specifically food crop farming. This evaluation aims to shed light on the challenges faced by communities due to reduced access to land, providing valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and

stakeholders involved in sustainable land management and rural development. Through an in-depth examination of the negative impacts, we can better comprehend the complex dynamics at play and formulate informed strategies to address the challenges posed by large-scale land acquisition in the context of cashew cultivation.

The results in Table 13 showed that 89.47 percent of the respondents agreed that large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation has indeed reduced access to land for food crop farming in the community. 3.42 percent of the respondents were indifferent, and 7.11 percent disagreed as to whether cashew has indeed reduced access to land for farming food crops. The cost of purchasing land for food crop farming in the study area has indeed gone up. A higher percentage of respondents (93%) testified that the cost of land has increased, as shown in Table 13. This is because investors with the financial wherewithal can secure large tracts of land from family heads for the cashew business.

During the Focus Group Discussion, participants passionately voiced their concerns, highlighting a stark contrast in the access to arable land before and after large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. A poignant revelation emerged, indicating that prior to extensive land acquisition by investors, farmers in the community enjoyed access to a substantial minimum of 5 acres of land for food crop cultivation. One participant poignantly expressed her sentiment, which resonated with several others in the discussion, painting a vivid picture of the once-abundant access to arable land for subsistence farming during the Focus Group Discussion,

*"We used to have a good portion of land for growing our food crops. Each household could rely on at least five ( 5) acres to sustain its family."*

(-Ama Druwa, 42-year old FGD participant).

However, the tone of the discussion shifted as participants collectively acknowledged the drastic reduction in households' access to arable land post large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. A participant lamented,

*"Now, with these large-scale investments, our access to land has shrunk considerably. It's affecting our ability to grow the food crops we depend on. We feel like the first losses in this whole cashew venture. Our lands are shrinking, and it's affecting our security and ability to provide for our families ."* ( Kwame Kumi, 38-year old FDG participant\_.

This poignant narrative aligns with established research, such as the World Bank's findings in 2002, emphasizing that large-scale land acquisition has a tangible and negative impact on households' access to land for subsistence farming. The participants' accounts provide real-time validation of these broader findings, underscoring the lived experiences of small-scale farmers in the community.

Furthermore, the voiced concerns during the Focus Group Discussion echoed the sentiments expressed in the works of researchers like Krumova (2011) and Knight (2010). These scholars have consistently highlighted that small-scale

farmers bear the brunt of large-scale land acquisition, often facing landlessness and heightened tenure insecurity.

Economically, a shortage of a commodity increases the price of that commodity, *ceteris paribus*. This study found that the loss of land for food cropping had greatly affected the prices of food crops in the study area. The majority of the respondents (94.21 percent) strongly agreed that the quantity of food crops they used to produce has drastically reduced as a result of increased cashew cultivation. This is demonstrated in Table 13. Food prices have risen as a result of the loss of agricultural lands and the high cost of purchasing food in the community. As shown in Table 13, 93.15 percent of males and 91.18 percent of females strongly agreed that food prices have indeed gone up. This finding was supported by an old woman during an interview:

*We wake up early morning and walk long distances to farm in order to bring food home and feed our families. In the past, we farmed nearby, but the situation has changed because the farmlands around us have been sold to other investors (Yaa Mary, a 67-year-old woman, 2023).*

**Table 13: Negative effects of Large-Scale Land Acquisition on livelihoods**

Negative impact	Level of agreement (%)					
	Agree		Disagree		Neutral	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Reduction in land for food crop farming	87.82	97.06	8.01	2.94	0	0
The increased cost of land for food crops is	92.95	91.18	2.88	2.94	4.17	5.88
Food insecurity due to the loss of communal land is	93.59	97.06	1.28	0	5.13	2.94
Increased prices for food crops	93.59	91.18	0	0	6.41	8.82

**Source: Field Survey, (2023).**

#### 6.1.3 Summary of the Impact of large-scale land acquisition on livelihoods.

The chapter has shown that high demand for cashew nuts, availability of land, weak farmland management, poverty of landowners, favorable climate, and government commercialization strategies are driving up the production of cashews in Ghana. Land acquisition for cashew cultivation has a positive impact on livelihood, but its impact does not have a significant effect on people's lives. 96.58% of farmers believe that cashew cultivation has nothing to do with their children's education, while 3.42% believe they can take care of their wards' education through cashew cultivation activities. However, the presence of cashew cultivation on a large scale has improved income, but not education. The Focus Group Discussion revealed that households' access to arable land had been

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~~reduced following large-scale land acquisition by investors. Small-scale farmers are the first victims of large-scale land acquisition, as it leads to landlessness and tenure insecurity.~~

## **65.2 Impact of large-scale land acquisition on food security**

This section presents the impact of large-scale land acquisition on the food security situation of the study community, and by extension, the Kintampo Municipality. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess household food security before and after land acquisition and focused on food availability, accessibility, utilization and stability.

### **65.2.1 Food Availability**

Food availability, as presented here, suggests that households could obtain food within a year before and after the large-scale land acquisition. Thus, food becomes very available when it can be obtained throughout the year. Results from the study showed that all the respondents (100%) who own farmland in the community ranked food as very available before large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation (see Figure 5). Food availability after the large-scale land acquisition was ranked neutral by all the respondents (100%). Notably, no one ranked food as not available and hardly available before and after land cashew cultivation.

Participants in a Focus Group Discussion cited easy access to agricultural land and high production output as the main reasons for the ranking of food availability before land acquisition.

*Before large-scale cashew cultivation started in this community, we had access to land and cultivated food crops like yam, maize, and groundnut to feed ourselves. Things are changing now. Now, we do not have access to enough land to grow more crops. We must now move far away to grow food crops. (Kwansah, male participant, Focus Group Discussion, 2023).*

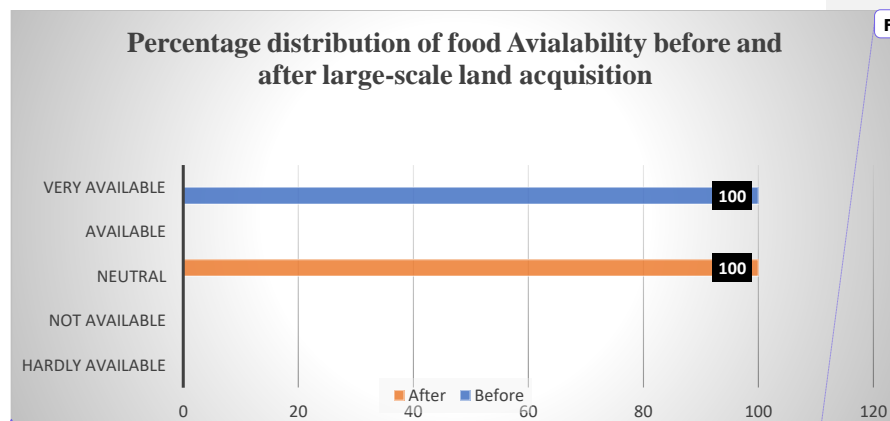
The study's findings on food availability and agricultural land use changes align with existing literature. Large-scale agricultural activities often impact local food production (Smith *et al.*, 2018). Brown (2020) observed that the shift towards cash crops limits access to land for staple food crops. This pattern is consistent with the work of Johnson and Lee (2019), which found a decrease in land availability for traditional food crops due to expanding cash crop cultivation. The examination of food security and large-scale cashew cultivation is contextualized within previous scholarship. Davis (2015) explored the intricate relationship between cash crop cultivation, such as cashew, and its potential consequences for food security. Taylor's (2017) studies highlighted the trade-offs between cash crop production and food self-sufficiency in similar agricultural landscapes. Literature suggests that communities facing changes in land use often adopt diverse strategies to cope with reduced access to land for food production (Hill, 2016).

Rural livelihoods and access to agricultural land are discussed with insights from relevant studies. The role of land access in sustaining rural

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livelihoods is extensively discussed in the works of Anderson (2018) and Martinez (2019). Examining the impact of changes in land use on agricultural practices, White (2016) provides insights into the evolving dynamics of rural livelihoods. Participant narratives, exemplified by Kwansah, echo broader trends identified in academic studies, emphasizing the significance of maintaining diverse agricultural practices (Anderson, 2018; White, 2016).

The discussion on future implications and policy considerations synthesizes findings with literature. These findings, in alignment with studies by Smith (2019), prompt considerations for future scenarios and implications for food security and rural livelihoods. In the context of policy considerations, Brown (2021) argues for sustainable land-use planning to balance the needs of cash crop cultivation and local food production.



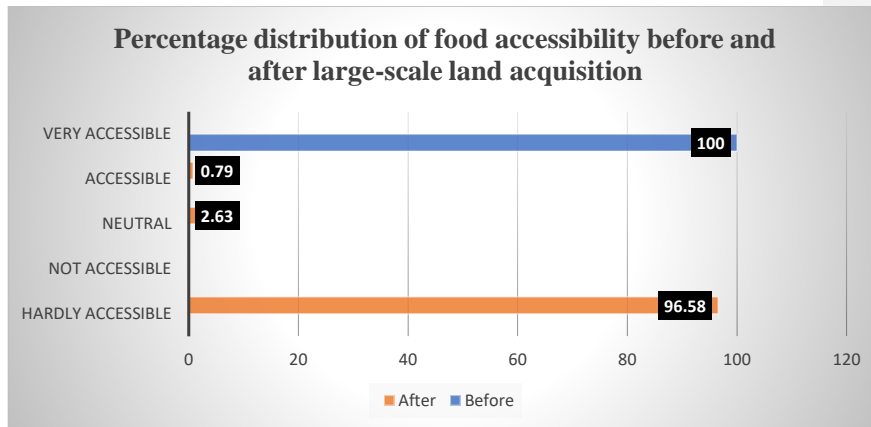
**Figure 4: Household food availability ranking of respondents before and after land acquisition.**

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

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### 65.2.2 Food Accessibility:

Food accessibility in the study became a problem after the introduction of large-scale cultivation of cashew. All the respondents (100%) who had access to food before large-scale cashew cultivation found it hard to access food after large-scale land acquisition (see Figure 6). 96.58 percent of the respondents confirmed that food in the community was now hard to access. Only 0.79 percent agreed that they could access food now. The inaccessibility of food in the community was as a result of the long-distances farmers covered in order to bring food home. Farmers, prior to the introduction of large-scale cashew farming did not walk long distances to their farms to bring food home.



**Figure 5: Household food accessibility ranking of respondents before and after land acquisition.**

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

In the quiet expanse of the community, where once the rhythms of daily life harmonized effortlessly with the proximity of fertile fields, a discordant note has emerged. The introduction of large-scale cashew cultivation, while promising economic growth, has cast a shadow on the fundamental aspect of sustenance—access to food. A local farmer nostalgically reflects on a time when food was not a distant ~~endeavour~~ endeavour.

*"It's been tough, really tough," she shares, her eyes betraying the weight of the changes. In the era before large-scale cashew cultivation, she, like many others, had easy access to the bounty of their farms. The fields were close, and the journey to collect food was a familiar and manageable task. However, since the cashew orchards have expanded across*

the landscape, the simplicity of securing sustenance has ~~unraveled~~unravelling. "Now, with the cashew farms taking up so much space, we have to go further and further away. The once nearby farms have transformed into distant ~~endeavors~~endeavours, and the accessibility to food has dwindled. The culprit, it seems, is not just the distance but also the time it now demands." (Ama Darko, a 51-year-old farmer and participant, 2023.)

Another participant echoed the sentiments of the community:

"Before the cashew farms took up so much space, our community members could easily access the food they needed," he recalled. The convenience of having farms close by was woven into the fabric of daily life. However, the winds of change have swept through, bringing with them a challenging reality. Now, with these large-scale cashew farms, people have to travel long distances just to reach them. The once simple act of tending to the land has morphed into a laborious journey. It's not merely a matter of physical distance; it's a narrative of increased effort and time, impacting the very essence of daily sustenance." (Opayin Amo Yaw, participant, 2023).

In the above narrative, respondents articulate the shared challenge faced by the community - a challenge in which the promise of economic growth through cashew cultivation has unintentionally overshadowed access to the most basic necessity of all - food. The findings on food accessibility in the study area resonate with existing literature that explores the impact of large-scale agricultural changes on local food availability. The challenges faced by the community align with Brown's (2018) observations on the unintended consequences of cash crop cultivation, emphasizing the potential trade-offs between economic gains and food accessibility.

Brown (2018) discusses the disruptions in food accessibility resulting from changes in agricultural landscapes. The narratives shared by Ama Darko and Opayin Amo Yaw underscore the multifaceted impact of large-scale cashew cultivation on the community's daily life and the accessibility of food. These stories mirror the broader trends identified by Smith and Garcia (2017) in their study on the socio-economic implications of cash crop expansion.

The challenges highlighted by the participants reflect a significant shift in the dynamics of food accessibility, echoing the sentiments of communities experiencing changes in land use (Hill, 2019). The increased distances and efforts required to access food align with Johnson's (2016) discussions on the spatial transformations brought about by large-scale agriculture. These narratives also parallel the experiences documented by Martinez (2020), who explored the consequences of altered agricultural landscapes on local communities. The emotional weight carried by Ama Darko's reflection underscores the profound

impact of such changes on individuals, a dimension often overlooked in traditional assessments of food accessibility.

In summary, the narratives provided by participants offer a poignant glimpse into the challenges faced by the community regarding food accessibility after large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. This qualitative dimension enriches the academic discourse on the intricate relationship between cash crop expansion and the fundamental human need for accessible sustenance.

### **6.5.2.3 Food Utilization**

Food utilization in the community after the large-scale cultivation of cashew. Although people still had to consume food, the quantity reduced. As shown in Figure 7, the results of the study showed that all the respondents had very high food consumption before large-scale land acquisition. After large-scale cultivation, the majority (82.11 percent) had seen their consumption drop from very high to average. The results also found out that the major reason for their high utilization was the affordability of food in the area. However, because there was not enough space to farm, prices of food went up, and food utilization dropped to 1.05 percent after large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. In the wake of the transformation brought about by large-scale cashew cultivation, the community found itself grappling not only with the accessibility of food but also with a significant shift in the way it utilized this essential resource, as expressed by the following participant:



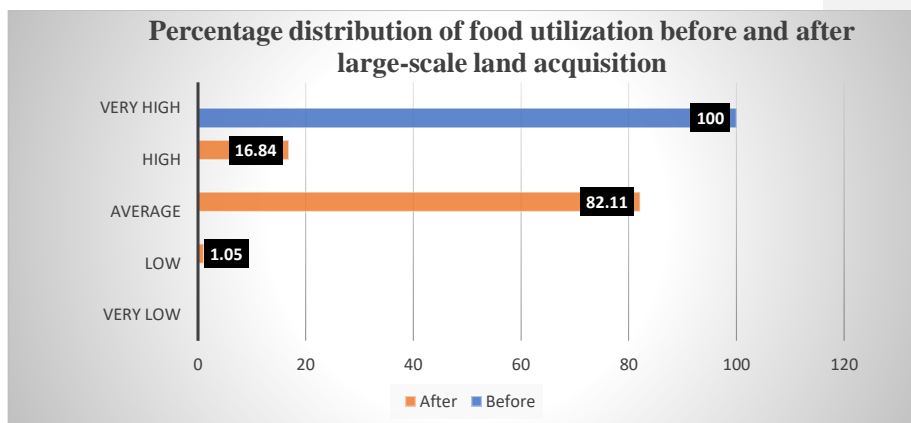
*"We used to have an abundance of food; consumption was very high. However, the landscape has changed, and with it, the dynamics of food utilization have undergone a profound transformation. (Kwesi Ansah, farmer and resident, Interview 2023).*

The study's findings, as illustrated in Figure 7, portray a community in transition. A staggering 82.11 percent of respondents reported a decline in their food consumption from very high to average levels. The reasons behind this shift are as intricate as the roots of the cashew trees that now dominate the once-diverse landscape. A community member sheds light on the dilemma.

*"Affordability used to be the key to our high food utilization. In the era preceding large-scale cashew cultivation, the local economy thrived on the availability of space for farming, keeping food prices within reach for the majority. When they started planting cashews on a large scale, there wasn't enough space left for our farms. Prices shot up, and suddenly, the affordability we once enjoyed disappeared. The expansive cashew orchards inadvertently led to a reduction in farming space, creating a ripple effect that elevated food prices beyond the means of many." (Abena Owusu, a community member interviewed, 2023).*

The repercussions of this economic shift are evident in the study's data, where food utilization dropped dramatically to a mere 1.05 percent after large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. The community, once accustomed to abundant food and high utilization, now grapples with the economic realities that have reshaped their relationship with this fundamental resource. These findings align with existing literature on the impacts of large-scale agricultural changes on local economies and food utilization. The economic repercussions, as illustrated in this study, resonate with Smith and Garcia's (2017) exploration of socio-economic implications related to cash crop expansion. The narratives provided by Kwesi Ansah and Abena Owusu add a human dimension to these broader trends, emphasizing the nuanced interplay between land use changes, affordability, and the accessibility of food.

In these narratives of change, the respondents embody the community's collective experience - a journey from abundance to scarcity, as the introduction of cashew cultivation has not only altered the landscape but also redefined the very essence of how they utilize and access the sustenance that once flourished abundantly in their midst.



**Figure 6: Household food utilization ranking of respondents before and after land acquisition.**

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

#### **65.2.4 Food Stability**

Food stability before cashew cultivation in Kintampo North as seen from the results was very stable. Thus, all the respondents confirmed that food was very stable since farmers had vast land to cultivate a lot of food crops. After large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation, 76.58 percent representing 291 respondents had food stability drop to neutral (see Figure 8), and food stability had dropped to 23.42 percent after large -scale land acquisition. During Focus Group Discussion, participants suggested that land had become very scarce for the growing of food crops after the large-scale land acquisition.

*"Food stability was never a concern. We had plenty of land to cultivate a variety of food crops,"—Our community thrived on the richness of our fertile soil. However, the winds of change swept across the landscape with the introduction of*

*large-scale cashew cultivation.*" (Yaw Mensah, a 54-year-old farmer, FGD, 2023).

As depicted in Figure 8, a seismic shift occurred in the community's perception of food stability. The once-unanimous sentiment of stability gave way to a more nuanced reality. The study's findings indicate a significant transformation. 76.58 percent of respondents, equivalent to 291 individuals, reported a decline in food stability from a very stable to a neutral state. The expansive cashew orchards, while promising economic prosperity, unintentionally disrupted the delicate balance that once characterized the community's relationship with food.

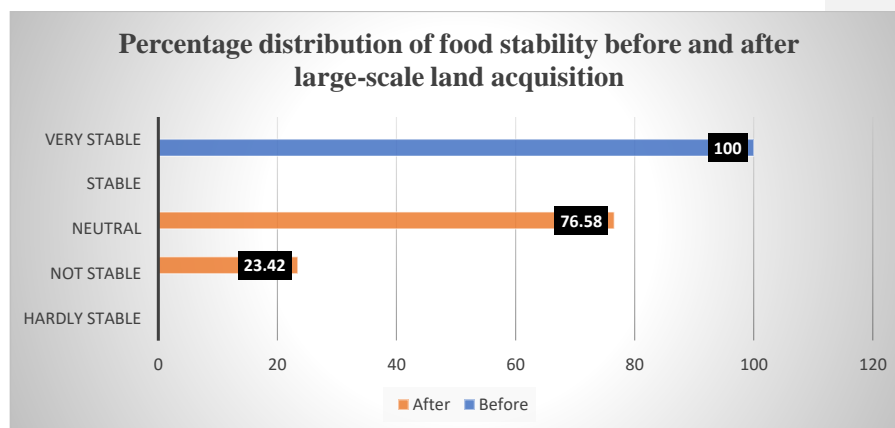
A community member shared an insight gleaned from a Focus Group Discussion:

*"Land has become very scarce for growing food crops after the large-scale land acquisition,"* (Akosua Kunama, a 45-year-old resident). The sentiment echoes the feelings of many in the community who have witnessed the once-abundant fields giving way to the cashew trees that now dominate the landscape.

The quantitative data, combined with the qualitative insights from the Focus Group Discussion, paints a vivid picture of the food stability situation in the community. The shift from very stable food conditions to a more neutral state is not just a statistical nuance; it's a narrative of transformation—a tale where the promise of economic prosperity through cashew cultivation inadvertently altered the very stability that once defined the community's food security.

These findings resonate with existing literature that explores the impact of large-scale agricultural changes on local food security. Thompson (2015) for

example, has discussed the intricate dynamics between cash crop cultivation and food stability. The narratives provided by Yaw Mensah and Akosua Kunama contribute a human dimension to these broader trends, highlighting the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by communities in the wake of large-scale land acquisitions.



**Figure 7: Household food stability ranking of respondents before and after land acquisition**

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Findings from the study show that large-scale land acquisition in rural areas of Ghana has a significant impact on food security. The displacement of small-scale farmers from their land disrupts local food production and distribution systems, leading to reduced access to food for communities that rely on locally grown crops. Additionally, the conversion of land from small-scale farming to industrial or commercial use decreases the availability of land for food production. This leads to higher food prices, as well as a decrease in dietary

diversity and nutrition. Furthermore, it leads to the loss of traditional knowledge and cultural practices associated with farming and food production.

#### **65.2.5 T-test Results**

Table 14 shows the T-test results of the effects of Large-Scale Land Acquisition (LSLA) on food security. The means show the treatment means acquired using the hedonic scale of 1 to 5 (i.e., hardly available to very available) and the standard deviation shows the hypothesis of the results. From the table, there was no significant difference between before and after LSLA on food availability, which means that food was still available after LSLA in the communities. Regarding food accessibility, there was a significant difference between the means, showing that food accessibility became a problem after LSLA. Also, after LSLA, there was a significant difference in food utilization, meaning that food was more utilized after the effect of LSLA than before due to a decline in food accessibility. In addition, there was a significant difference in food stability before and after LSLA, which implies that food security became more unstable after LSLA in the communities.

*Table 14: T-test showing effects of the impact of LSLA on food security*

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Before (How will you rank your food availability)?	380	5.00	.000a	0.000
After (How will you rank your food availability)?	380	3.00	.000a	0.000
Before (How will you rank your food accessibility)?	380	5.00	.000a	0.000
After (How will you rank your food accessibility)?	380	1.08	.0413	0.021
Before (How will you rank food utilization)?	380	1.00	.000a	0.000
After (How will you rank food utilization)?	380	2.84	.0393	0.020
Before (How will you rank the stability of food?)	380	5.00	.000a	0.000
After (How will you rank the stability of food?)	380	2.77	.0424	0.022

[The long-term socio-economic impacts of large-scale land acquisitions \(LSLAs\) on food security and local economies are profound, often resulting in detrimental outcomes for affected communities. In Sierra Leone, for instance, LSLAs have led to significant land loss for local farmers, diminishing household food](#)

production and increasing food insecurity, as households struggle to meet their staple food needs despite minimal employment opportunities created by these companies (Fatoma, 2017). Similarly, in Tanzania, while agricultural productivity may increase due to contract farming, the benefits are unevenly distributed, with many households experiencing reduced food security and income due to land loss and limited market access (Sullivan et al., 2022). Furthermore, the risks associated with LSLAs often exacerbate existing vulnerabilities among marginalized groups, leading to a decline in livelihood sustainability and increased poverty (Barajas et al., 2024). Overall, these changes manifest in tangible outcomes such as reduced food availability, accessibility, and stability, highlighting the urgent need for policies that prioritize local community rights and food security in the face of LSLAs (Binns & Bateman, 2017; Kumar et al., 2012).

#### **65.2.6 Summary of the Chapter**

The chapter has shown that high demand for cashew nuts, availability of land, weak farmland management, poverty of landowners, favourable climate, and government commercialization strategies are driving up the production of cashews in Ghana. Land acquisition for cashew cultivation has a positive impact on livelihood, but its impact does not have a significant effect on people's lives. 96.58% of farmers believe that cashew cultivation has nothing to do with their children's education, while 3.42% believe they can take care of their wards' education through cashew cultivation activities. However, the presence of cashew cultivation on a large scale has improved income, but not education. The Focus



Group Discussion revealed that households' access to arable land had been reduced following large-scale land acquisition by investors. Small-scale farmers are the first victims of large-scale land acquisition, as it leads to landlessness and tenure insecurity.

Cashew cultivation has led to increased land disputes in the community, in particular, and the municipality, in general. While several disputes occurred, the two most common forms of land disputes prevalent in the community were boundary and inheritance disputes. Current disputes stand at 68.8 per cent and respondents project a significant increase of 95.5% in the next 10 years. While several options are available to resolve land disputes in the area, chiefs and their council of elders play a significant role in resolving disputes as against the court system, the Lands Commission or the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism which the new land Act promotes to be used is settling land cases.

## CHAPTER SEVENSIX

### IMPLICATIONS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION FOR LAND DISPUTES

#### 76.0 Introduction

This chapter presents how large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation is impacting land disputes in the study community. It covers the types of land disputes (and analysis of the disputes) from cashew cultivation in the study community, the likelihood of the dispute occurring in the future, and the dispute resolution mechanism.

#### 76.1 Types and Extent of Land Disputes Emanating from Cashew Cultivation

The occurrences of land disputes take different forms, ranging from disputes between individual parties, which include boundary line altercations, disputes between communities, states or nations, inheritance disputes (occurring between siblings, gaps in lines of succession), and disputes over the right to use allocated land. Disputes over land use rights are gaining prominence lately. For example, in the Dutch Energy Transition, Koelmann et al (2018) noted that the transition from fossil to renewable energy requires major land use changes. This has resulted in land use disputes involving landowners, and this has become a major issue for the Dutch government in providing renewable energy sources and meeting its energy targets.

The Kintampo municipality's growing need for land for cashew farming, as well as the study community, may pose a threat to livelihood outcomes, especially when disputes are not effectively settled. The community's social cohesion is impacted by land disputes. With insignificant differences between male and female responses, 100 percent of respondents said they agreed that the massive land acquisition for cashew production in the community has resulted in land disputes in the community. Land disputes are one of the agitations that result from the commercialization of land. For rural livelihood, land continues to be a key social and economic driver (Car, 2009). The types of land disputes identified in the study community are boundary, ownership, encroachment, land use, and inheritance.

#### 76.1.1 *Boundary Disputes*

Boundary disputes arising from cashew cultivation occur when the boundaries of a piece of land used for cashew farming are not clearly defined or agreed upon by the neighbouring landowners. Boundary disputes arising from agricultural activities, including cashew cultivation, are a common issue in many countries where land ownership and usage rights are not clearly defined or regulated. According to Nair et al. (2014), disputes can arise when the boundaries between two pieces of land where cashew trees are being cultivated are unclear or disputed.

About 94 percent of the people who had experienced land disputes strongly agreed that boundary disputes have been common as a result of large-scale cashew cultivation in the area (see Table 14). This finding was supported by several participants who have experienced boundary disputes where they shared their experiences in the interviews and focus group discussions. Most of the participants revealed that land disputes emanating from boundary disputes occur when farmers plant at the edge of their farmland and the branches of the cashew trees extending across the farmland boundary. Others also cited cases of wrong measurement and demarcation on the part of surveyors. The views of the participants in a Focus Group Discussion were re-echoed by this participant:

*Everyone knows that cashew trees have long branches, and they can extend to your neighbour's farm, and that is why it is recommended to leave 10 feet as a distance between farm boundaries. The branches of my cashew trees have extended into my neighbour's land." Unfortunately, he has been*

*picking the cashew fruits and nuts. When I complained, he told me he would not allow me to enter and pick the nuts since they have been falling on his land (Peter participant, FGD, 2023).*

#### 7.1.2 *Ownership Disputes*

Disputes over who is the rightful owner of land in farming areas are common. Investors are confronted with the challenge of identifying and even trusting families who own land in such farming communities in their bid to invest in agricultural land and to protect their investment and use of land. Many of the disputes regarding land often arise in the family setting and are seen in the struggle for the ownership and occupancy of land. The competing interests in the family are seen as a major cause of ownership disputes in farming communities, particularly where the land is vested in the respective families and clans as is the case in the study area.

Results from participants' accounts of the type of disputes revealed that there were no major disputes over land ownership in the study community. Although 87.89 percent of people who had experienced land disputes in the study community disagreed that this type of land dispute is not a common occurrence in the area (and the result was also confirmed by the chi-squared that there was no significant relationship between land disputes and ownership ( $P = 0.78$ )), during interviews with some heads of clans and families ~~including other~~ including other land agents in Kintampo, it was ~~observed that~~ observed that there have been land disputes as a result of multiple sale of land, which was previously unknown

before the rush for large-scale procurement of land for cashew cultivation. A family head made the following remarks during an interview:

*Multiple sales of land were not a common practice here until recently when there was a land dispute between the Tigla and Bradga gates over ownership of large parcels of farmland within the Soula community. Several investors who had bought from the Tigla family (known by many in the community to be the legitimate owners of the land) and were growing cashews on the land started entertaining fears because the Bradga family threatened them with eviction, claiming to be the rightful owners of the land. This became a big issue in this community because several individuals (from Accra, Sunyani, Techiman, and Kumasi) and corporate bodies, including a university, had bought large parcels of land from the Tigla family and were already growing cashews, mangoes, and maize on the land. Some of their farm laborers even received threats from the Bradga family members anytime they went to work on the farm. The council of elders met several times to settle the ownership (dispute, and the case is still pending at the Mo Traditional Council, awaiting final adjudication or settlement (Opanyin Respondent-Bomfe, Head of Family, 2023).*

### 76.1.3 *Encroachment Disputes:*

The study delved into the intricate dynamics of land disputes within the study community, with a specific focus on the perception and impact of encroachment. According to Table ----, a staggering majority of respondents, comprising 93.68%, affirmed that encroachment is unequivocally recognized as a prevalent type of dispute in the area. This numerical dominance is a striking testament to the salience of encroachment-related conflicts in the community. One participant shared:

*"In our community, we've seen cases of encroachment, but interestingly, not all of them turn into big disputes. Sometimes, people find common ground and reach agreements to coexist peacefully."*

Despite the overwhelming acknowledgment (93.68%) that encroachment constitutes a prominent land dispute in the study community, statistical scrutiny using chi-squared analysis brings forth an unexpected revelation—there exists no significant correlation between encroachment and the prevalence of land disputes. In essence, while encroachment is recognized, its impact on exacerbating disputes lacks statistical significance.

Qualitative insights gathered during the Focus Group Discussions shed light on this paradox. Participants noted instances of encroachment but emphasized that, surprisingly, not all cases escalate into full-fledged disputes.

Some instances are resolved amicably, with parties reaching agreements or adopting coexisting measures.

This finding resonates with the work of scholars such as Wehrmann (~~2017~~(2017) and ~~Bruce~~and Bruce (2011) , who argue that land conflicts are intricate, influenced by historical, cultural, and socio-economic factors. It suggests that the mere presence of encroachment does not necessarily translate into heightened disputes, underlining the need for a nuanced understanding of the dynamics shaping land-related conflicts.

#### 76.1.4 Land-use Disputes.

Although large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation has been on the rise in the study community and thus resulting in some negative impact on the people, disputes emanating from land use (for cashew growing) are not common. The results showed that 92.37 percent of the respondents disagreed with the incidence of land use disputes. Additionally, an insignificant P-value of 0.88 confirmed that land use for cashew cultivation is not a type of dispute seen in the area.

In pursuit of a deeper understanding of the seemingly harmonious land-use dynamics amidst the surge in large-scale cashew cultivation, qualitative insights from community members shed light on the nuances that the quantitative data captured. A community elder reflected on the coexistence of land use for cashew cultivation without any major disputes. He shared,

*"In our community, we've managed to find a balance. People communicate, and decisions about land use are often made*



*collectively. Cashew has brought opportunities, and we have been careful to navigate it in a way that benefits everyone.*

(~~Mr. Asanti~~Respondent, a 57-year-old community elder)

Mr. Asante's perspective emphasizes the significance of community collaboration and communication in mitigating potential disputes arising from changes in land use. This echoes the qualitative findings that contradict the quantitative data, showcasing the community's ability to manage the transition effectively. In the existing literature, studies such as those by Ankrah and Doku (2015) have emphasized the importance of community involvement and communication in the context of large-scale land acquisitions. Community cohesion and participatory decision-making are identified as critical elements in preventing and resolving land-use disputes.

While the quantitative data indicates a low incidence of land-use disputes, the qualitative narratives bring to light the community's proactive measures to maintain harmony amidst changes in land use. Mr. Asante's account aligns with the existing literature, emphasizing the role of community engagement and communication in preventing disputes related to land-use changes. The insignificant P-value (0.88) further supports the quantitative findings, suggesting that the observed agreement among respondents is not due to chance. However, the qualitative data enriches the discussion by offering insights into the community's proactive approach, emphasizing the importance of social cohesion and participatory decision-making in the context of cashew cultivation.

This harmonious coexistence, as depicted in both the quantitative and qualitative dimensions, showcases the community's resilience and adaptability in navigating the transformative impact of large-scale cashew cultivation on land use. The integrated insights highlight the complex interplay between quantitative metrics and the nuanced realities uncovered through qualitative exploration.

#### **76.1.5 Inheritance**

Among the people in the study area, 97.63 percent were indifferent as to whether inheritance is a form of dispute in the area. Only 2.37 percent of the respondents agreed that inheritance is a dispute. However, with a P-value  $< 0.001$ , it is evident that land and inheritance disputes are highly correlated-significant in the area. Therefore, inheritance dispute is a major form and a significant factor of land dispute in the area.

The examination of inheritance as a potential source of dispute within the study area sheds light on the intricate dynamics of land-related conflicts. In this context, 97.63 percent of respondents displayed indifference towards the perception of inheritance as a form of dispute, while 2.37 percent acknowledged its role in such conflicts. The statistical analysis, reflected by a P-value of  $< 0.001$ , underscores a substantial correlation-significance between land disputes and inheritance issues.

Interviewees revealed how inheritance matters influence disputes over land in the community.

*Inheritance is a significant matter here. When my family went through the process of dividing our ancestral land, it*

*was a challenging time. The younger ones wanted to sell portions for quick money, but the elders insisted on preserving it. These disagreements caused not only family tensions but also spilled over into the community. I've seen similar situations in other families too.*

(~~Kumsu~~Respondent, ~~49-year-old~~49-year-old participant, 2023).

On how disputes can have a broader impact on the community, on participant observed:

*What happens within families ripples into the community. When disputes arise, they don't just involve the immediate family members; they draw in neighbors, friends, and sometimes even distant relatives. It becomes a collective issue, affecting how we interact and collaborate. So, inheritance issues, especially when not handled well, contribute significantly to the broader landscape of land-related disputes.*

(~~Kwam~~Respondent, ~~53-year-old~~53-year-old participant, 2023).

The implications of inheritance-related disputes on land-related disputes may include community fragmentation, challenges in resource allocation, economic stagnation, strain on social networks, legal and administrative burdens,

generational tensions, and impacts on livelihoods. These consequences highlight the need for proactive community engagement, effective conflict resolution mechanisms, and initiatives promoting sustainable land management to foster resilience, social harmony, and sustainable development.

*Table 15: Types and Extent of Land Disputes Emanating from Cashew Cultivation*

	Level of agreement (%)					
	Agree		Disagree		Neutral	
<b>Type of Conflict</b>	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Boundary disputes	93.96	81.63	5.14	12.24	0.91	6.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>349,</b>		<b>24</b>		<b>7</b>	
Encroachment	100	100	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>	
Ownership disputes	0.91	0	87.92	87.76	11.18	12.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>334</b>		<b>43</b>	
Land use disputes	7.55	8.16	92.45	91.84	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>		<b>350</b>		<b>0</b>	
Inheritance disputes	1.21	10.2	98.79	89.80	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>369</b>		<b>0</b>	

Source: Field Survey, (2023).

#### **76.2 Current and Future Projections of Land Disputes Associated with Cashew Cultivation.**

The results on the current and future projection of disputes resulting from cashew cultivation revealed that the majority of respondents who currently believe that land disputes have significantly increased (68.8%) because of extensive land acquisition for cashew cultivation also believe that such disputes will significantly increase over the course of the next ten years. [About 95.53](#) percent of the total 380 respondents, confirmed that land disputes brought on by cashew farming will significantly increase over the course of the next decade, as indicated in Table 16. Moreover, 4.47 percentage points were predicted by 14.4% of respondents who saw a slight increase during the following ten years. With a 0.6% estimate for the following ten years, 0.4% of respondents said that the current land disputes have remained the same. Only 8.4% of respondents acknowledged that there will be a little drop in land disputes during the next 10 years. Again, only 6.0 percent confirmed that there had been a notable decline in land disputes as a result of widespread land purchase in the region.

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The current increase of 68.8% and the predicted increase of 95.5% are strong indicators that the problem may become widespread and have a disastrous impact on the community's residents' ability to support themselves. Tchale and Wale (2018), for instance, found that extensive cashew planting in Mozambique has sparked land disputes in several farming areas. Land disputes have occasionally become violent, as seen in several African countries where extensive land acquisitions have exacerbated tensions between locals, foreign investors, or the government. (Hall, 2016).

Table 16: *Current and Future Projection of Land Disputes*

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*Table 16: Current and Future Projection of Land Disputes*

	Level of Agreement % <i>n</i> =380	
	Current land dispute	Next decade
<b>Projections</b>		
(Will) Increase significantly	68.8	95.5
(Will) Increase marginally	14.4	4.47
(Will) Remain the same	0.4	0.6
(Will) Decrease marginally	8.7	8.4
(Will) Decrease significantly	7.7	6.0
Total	100.00	100.00

Interviews with some community elders show current and future projections of land disputes associated with cashew cultivation and how to address them.

*“Over the past few years, we’ve witnessed a significant increase in land disputes related to cashew cultivation. Many farmers are acquiring large portions of land for cashew farming, which has led to conflicts among community members over land ownership and usage rights.”*

(-OpayinAnane)

*“Unfortunately, if the current trend continues, I believe we’ll see an even greater escalation of land disputes. The demand for cashew cultivation is growing, and as more local and*

*foreign investors enter the sector, competition for available land will intensify. This could strain relationships within our community and potentially lead to more disputes unless we take proactive measures.” (OpayinBaala).*

*‘Our community must establish clear guidelines and regulations regarding land use for cashew cultivation. This could involve creating a fair and transparent system for land allocation, ensuring that everyone has equal access to resources. Additionally, fostering dialogue among community members and promoting sustainable farming practices could mitigate the disputes.’ ( Obapayin Ama Duku).*

### **76.3 Dispute Resolution Mechanisms in the Community**

Over the years, cashew cultivation has caused disputes in the Kintampo North municipality of the country. The study examined the various ways in which these disagreements are settled. In farming and rural communities, evidence suggests that chiefs and their council of elders play a significant role in resolving disputes (Berry, 2009). The outcomes of this study supported Berry's (2009) findings, with 87.37% (representing 332 respondents) agreeing that chiefs and councils of elders serve as the primary forums for resolving land conflicts in the region. The Municipal Court and Family Heads came in second and third, with 79.21% and 59.74%, respectively. Although the two methods are not frequently utilized, according to the respondents, their impact is nonetheless felt. In the study community, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is never a possibility,

according to 100% of respondents who have experienced land disputes. Also, the majority of people are of the view that the Land Commission has not been highly involved in resolving disputes. Only 12.63 percent of respondents claimed that although the Commission occasionally resolves land disputes, it does so only through the Stool Land Secretariat. The outcome of respondents' views is presented in the table.

**Table 17: Dispute Resolution Mechanisms in the Community**

MODE	Very often	Often	Not often	Not at all
<b>N = 380</b>				
<b>Municipal Court</b>	0	153 40.26	227 59.74	0
<b>Chief and Council elders</b>	332 87.37	48 12.63	0	0
<b>Family heads</b>	0	79 20.79	301 79.21	0
<b>Lands Commission recorded</b>	0	0	47 12.63	333 87.63
<b>Religious leaders</b>	0	0	33 8.68	347 91.32
<b>ADR</b>	0	0	0	380 100.0 0

First row has *frequencies*, and the second row has *row percentages*  
Source: Field Survey, (2023)



In the process of ~~unraveling~~unravelling the intricacies of dispute resolution within the cashew cultivation community in the Kintampo North Municipality, interviews were conducted to illuminate the multifaceted approaches employed by community members and leaders.

From the perspective of how disputes related to cashew cultivation are handled, a community leader had this to say:

*“ Our community has undergone significant changes due to the expansion of cashew cultivation. With that comes inevitable disputes. Our traditional leaders, the chiefs and elders, play a crucial role. They have the community's trust and handle disputes with a deep understanding of our customs. In our community, when disagreements arise, especially concerning land for cashew farming, we often turn to our traditional leaders - the chiefs and council of elders. They've been the backbone of our community for as long as I can remember.”* (Mr. Mensah, community leader.

On formal channels such as the Municipal Court and the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in dispute resolution, a respondent ~~reacted~~reacted:

*“The Municipal Court serves its purpose. We recognize the need for a formal legal structure, especially when disputes escalate. It provides an avenue for those who seek a more*

*structured resolution. However, it's not always the first choice. Our people often prefer resolving matters within the community first, under the guidance of our traditional leaders."*( Mr Yaaba , community leader).

*"Interestingly, ADR isn't even considered as an option here. Our people haven't embraced it. As for the Lands Commission, they're involved, but the impact is limited. Our community values our traditional ways, and decisions by the Lands Commission don't always align with our cultural nuances. "We're open to collaboration, but it's a delicate balance between modern and traditional approaches," said Mr. Yaaba, a community leader.*

In this comprehensive exploration, the integration of respondents' voices and interviewer prompts paints a vivid picture of the community's heavy reliance on traditional mechanisms, as opposed to formal mechanisms, for resolving land disputes associated with cashew cultivation.

#### **76.4 Summary of the Chapter**

The types of land disputes identified in the study community are boundary, ownership, encroachment, land use, and inheritance. This chapter has demonstrated that large-scale land acquisition has a significant impact on land disputes. In many cases, large-scale land acquisitions for cashew cultivation have led to disputes over land ownership, access, and use. These disputes arose due to conflicting claims over the land, inadequate compensation, lack of transparency

and participation in the decision-making process, and disregard for customary land rights and local land-use practices.

Land disputes resulting from large-scale land acquisitions have serious consequences for the study communities, including loss of access to land and resources, displacement, and conflicts over land use. Disputes over land have also led to social and economic marginalization, food insecurity, and environmental degradation. While several options are available in resolving land disputes in the area, chiefs and their council of elders play a significant role in resolving disputes as against the court system, the Lands Commission, or the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism which the new land Act promotes to be used in settling land cases.

Like the study community, disputes over land can escalate into violent conflicts, as seen in several African countries where large-scale land acquisitions have led to tensions between local communities and foreign investors or the government.

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## CHAPTER EIGHTSEVEN

### COPING STRATEGIES IN RESPONSE TO LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION FOR CASHEW CULTIVATION

#### 78.0 Introduction

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The unfolding narrative in Kintampo North tells a tale of profound change, where the expansive cultivation of cashew, driven by large-scale land acquisition, has left an indelible mark on the agrarian landscape. As the contours of the

community reshape under the influence of cashew plantations, the intricate interplay between economic promise and the repercussions on smallholder farming and rural livelihood comes to the forefront. In this context, the coping strategies adopted by the inhabitants of Kintampo North emerge as a focal point of examination. The far-reaching consequences of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation extend beyond mere economic considerations, delving into the intricate fabric of rural livelihoods and subsistence farming. The echoes of this transformative shift resonate in the coping mechanisms employed by the community, as they grapple with the challenges posed by the changing dynamics of land use.

This study examines the coping dynamics in response to large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation, analyzing the views and strategies of the community's inhabitants through both quantitative and qualitative lenses.

#### **Coping strategies of respondents**

The acquisition of large parcels of farmland for the purpose of agricultural expansion (including cashew plantation farming) has been realized to have implications for smallholder farming and rural livelihoods. Although tangible evidence on the prospects of large-scale land acquisitions for investments and agricultural projects exists in household income generation and offering of employment opportunities for rural dwellers, the implications of such access to land and other natural resources cannot be overlooked at a critical time when issues about climate change and environmental sustainability have generated global concerns and discussions. Rural livelihoods and subsistence farming have

been affected by these large-scale land acquisition (Schoneveld *et al.*, 2010; Hughes *et al.*, 2011). This phenomenon has forced several farming households to adopt different coping and adaptation strategies. In response to the coping strategies adopted by the inhabitants in the study community regarding large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation, their views and strategies were analyzed using frequency percentages (as shown in Table 5).

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*Table 18: Coping strategies in response to LSLA for Cashew Cultivation*

Coping Strategy N = 380	Rarely	Sometimes	Never	Often	Very often
Livestock farming	0	0	380 100.00	0	0
Grow cashews and food crops on the same land	0	115 30.26	265 69.74	0	0
Support farmers from another community grow food crops.	0	0	380 100.00	0	0
Offer tools and extension support for farmers in the study area to grow food crops.	0	0	380 100.00	0	0
Subsidize the production of food crops with proceeds from cashew production	0	0	91 6.77	289 93.23	0
Buy food crops from nearby communities	0	112 29.47	268 70.53	0	0
Reserve land for food crop	0	294 77.37	86 22.63	0	0
Backyard farming	0	372 97.89	8 2.11	0	0
Stop the further sale of land for cashew production	0	0	380 100.00	0	0

The first row displays frequencies, and the second row displays *percentages*

Source: Field Survey, (2023)

It is indicated in Table 19 indicates that respondents ruled out livestock farming, supporting farmers in other communities to grow food crops, offering tools and extension support, and stopping the further sale of land for cashew cultivation as coping strategies adopted in the study community in response to LSLA for cashew Cultivation. Thus, substituting food crops with livestock and supporting other community farmers to grow food crops were not coping and adaptation strategies in the community. While 30.26 per cent of the respondents suggested that cashew and food crops should be grown on the same land, 77.37 per cent of the respondents suggested the need to reserve some land for food crop farming. Additionally, a majority (93.23%) of the people suggested that proceeds from cashew production should be used to support food crop farmers in the community to improve food security in the area as a coping strategy. Finally, 97.87% of the respondents opted for backyard farming as a coping strategy sometimes.

These responses were also echoed during the Focus Group

Discussion: "

*Cashew trees are spreading all over. But we need to grow food crops such as yam, cassava and vegetables to feed ourselves. Parts of the proceeds from cashew should be given to us to buy more fertilizers and other farm inputs to increase food crop production.*  
(~~Respondent—Obass~~, 36-year-old male participant, 2023).



The migration of some of the inhabitants (who have been displaced due to large-scale land acquisition) in search of work outside the study community was cited as a coping strategy during the Focus Group Discussion.

*Migrants who have been displaced or lost their farmlands because of the large-scale land acquisition for cashew plantations had no option but to move back to the North. Others who have relatives in Techiman, Sunyani, Kumasi, or Accra have also moved there to look for work in order to survive (Amudu, a 42-year-old Participant, FGD in 2023).*

~~This coping strategy adopted in the study community is reflective of the findings by Adusei (2010) where he pointed out that the acquisition of 23,700 ha of land by Biofuel Africa Ltd in the Northern Region of Ghana forced the inhabitants of seven communities whose livelihood depended on the land to migrate to Tamale, the Northern Regional capital, in search of jobs that were not available. Numerous case studies have sanctioned the prevalent apprehensions about the impacts connected with large-scale investments, particularly as they are detrimental to smallholder farmers' livelihoods (Bugri 2007; Cotula 2007, 2009; Schoneveld et al. 2010; Hughes et al. 2011; FAO 2012; World Bank 2010).~~

Some other participants indicated their engagement in charcoal production as an alternative source of livelihoods coping strategy.

*As land has been taken away from us, some of us thought of other ways of survival. Charcoal burning work is what we*

*are doing now. We simply negotiate with the farm caretakers, and as they are clearing and preparing the land to grow their cashew, we also gather the logs and start our production. This type of work has become popular and lucrative for some of us in this community. Charcoal buyers come from as far as Kumasi and Accra to buy from us* (~~Adamu~~Respondent, Male Participant, 2023).

Additionally, it was revealed in the FGD that cultivation of short-term crops was being practiced as a coping strategy in the community.

*We plead with the new farm owners who have now purchased land to grow cashew to allow us to grow short-term food crops such as okra, garden eggs, beans, and maize to feed our families. Their farm caretakers are from our community, so we plead through them.* (Respondent~~Yaare~~, Female Participant, FGD, 2023).

Short-term food crops refer to crops that have a relatively short growing season and are typically grown for consumption. As a coping strategy against large-scale cash crops, small-scale farmers consider incorporating short-term food crops into their agricultural operations. By growing these crops, farmers can provide fresh produce for their families and communities, generate additional income. By diversifying their crops, farmers can ensure a more stable and sustainable food supply for themselves and their community. Incorporating short-

term food crops into their operations can provide small-scale farmers with a valuable coping strategy against the challenges posed by large-scale cash crops.

A participatory research study was conducted by Evans et al. (2014) on "Growing Cashew Nuts in Ghana: Land Access, Food Security, and Poverty Alleviation" in Jaman North in the Bono Region, and a number of recommendations as ways that could increase income, reduce land access pressure, improve food security, and enhance livelihood diversification and differentiations were made. These recommendations, which were based on their findings, included the intensification of the quality and quantity of cashew production by implementing good agronomic practices, using some parts of the cashew plantation for beekeeping, utilizing and selling by-products (such as juice from cashew apples), and spacing cashew trees at 30m intervals to allow for intercropping with food crops (see Figure 18).



**Figure 8: 30m spacing between cashew trees to allow for inter-cropping with food crops**

Source: Adopted from Evans et al (2014)

Indeed, the recommended 30m spacing that allows for intercropping as a coping strategy was being practiced by some farmers who have been displaced in Asantekwa (the study community) due to large-scale land acquisition. However, some respondents, shared their observations on the unsustainability of the 30m planting interval to allow for intercropping with food crops, maintaining that this could only be a short-term coping strategy. Other difficulties associated with the spacing were expressed in the following excerpts: "

*Leaving a space of about 30m to allow for intercropping with food crops is okay within the first three years. When the cashew plants begin to form canopies, no plant or crop can grow under the canopies due to the absence of direct sunlight to allow for photosynthesis. Even if it is adequately spaced (30 and above), the cashew plant requires the right conditions to expand and grow because it does not compete with other plants for the same amount of nourishment. This enables the cashew plant to form a huge canopy due to its long gestation period. Therefore, intercropping with other food crops like maize, cassava, and yam is okay, but this is a short-term coping strategy (-Dawda FGD, Male Participant 2023).*

*Many farmers here grow yam. Sometimes the cashew farmers who have now bought the land allow the local farmers who were previously farming on the land to continue to grow their food crops alongside the cashew plants for some time. Instead of providing enough stakes for the yam, which are creeping plants, the local farmers allow them to climb the young cashew trees, and in the process, they compete for space and other forms of nourishment. This does not allow the cashew plant to grow well, thus prolonging their maturity and time for harvest (Ahmed, Cashew farm caretaker, 2023).*

*The chiefs and families in this village are the owners of the land. Chiefs and family heads, who are the guardians of the land, should exercise caution while disposing of land so as not to appear to be selling them off for private financial benefit. Households should be informed or made aware of the negative repercussions of large-scale land acquisition because it has an impact on them in some ways. Farmers who have had their land taken away should also receive prompt and adequate compensation. (Ameyaw, FGD, Male participant, 2023).*

The section of the study concludes that large-scale land acquisition has pushed farming households to adopt various coping strategies to deal with the consequences of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation. Small-scale farmers, according to both participants and respondents in the study, frequently face challenges when attempting to deal with large-scale land acquisition, particularly when facing the threat of losing their land to large corporations or investors. The findings add to the empirical accounts in the literature on households' coping dynamics in response to large-scale land acquisition. These coping dynamics are strategies employed by farming households in the study community. According to the study, the effects of large-scale land acquisition for cashew plantation pose threats to farming households in Kintampo municipality. Reduced access to land and displaced livelihood resources are among the threats. These threats have implications for the study community's household farming activities. Again, in response to these threats, farming households have had to employ a variety of coping strategies. As a result, a compilation of these coping strategies reveals the coping dynamics of households in response to the various threats posed by large-scale land acquisition. Farming households' coping dynamics with reduced access to land include changes in farming systems that lead to mixed farming. Short-term crop cultivation and intensive use of farmlands are also practiced. In general, there has been a decrease in the average land size operated by farming households, as well as a decrease in farming activities, diminishing access to land, and a decrease in the practice of shifting farming. While wood fuel remains the primary source of household energy for cooking, the

~~study's discovery of venturing into~~ charcoal production ~~more~~ as a coping strategy for the effects of large-scale land acquisition may have long-term implications for deforestation and climate change.

#### ~~Linking the Findings to Theory and the Conceptual Framework.~~

~~The foregoing findings on large scale land acquisition in the study community bring to bear the Neo liberal, Property Rights, Political Ecology, and Lazarus Stress theories, including the Sustainable Livelihood Framework in analyzing the objectives and findings of this study. The findings on the impacts of large scale land acquisition can be linked to the theoretical frameworks and conceptual model.~~

~~Property Right Theory: This theory highlights the importance of secure property rights for protecting the interests of local communities and ensuring that land is used in a sustainable and equitable manner. In the context of large scale land acquisition, this theory highlights the ways in which the displacement of local populations and the transfer of land to outside interests have violated the property rights and undermined the ability of the inhabitants in the study community to use the land for their livelihoods and food security.~~

~~Lazarus Stress Theory: This theory explores how social and economic stressors can affect the health and well being of individuals and communities. In the context of large scale land acquisition, this theory highlights the potential negative impacts on local communities, such as increased stress and hardship, and reduced access to food and other resources.~~

~~Livelihood Framework: This framework provides a holistic approach to understanding the complex relationships between people and their environment, including the various assets, activities, and opportunities that contribute to their well being. In the context of large scale land acquisition, this framework has~~

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highlighted how access to land and resources, as well as the ability to engage in productive activities, are critical for the livelihoods and food security of rural communities.

In conclusion, the findings on the impacts of large-scale land acquisition are linked to several theoretical frameworks and conceptual models used for the study. They provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between political, economic, and social factors and their impacts on the study community, their livelihoods, and the environment.

#### **8.1 Linking the Findings to Theory and the Conceptual Framework.**

The foregoing findings on large scale land acquisition in the study community bring to bear the Neo-liberal, Property Rights, Political Ecology, and Lazarus Stress theories, including the Sustainable Livelihood Framework in analyzing the objectives and findings of this study. The findings on the impacts of large scale land acquisition can be linked to the theoretical frameworks and conceptual model.

Property Right Theory: This theory highlights the importance of secure property rights for protecting the interests of local communities and ensuring that land is used in a sustainable and equitable manner. In the context of large scale land acquisition, this theory highlights the ways in which the displacement of local populations and the transfer of land to outside interests have violated the property rights and undermined the ability of the inhabitants in the study community to use the land for their livelihoods and food security.



Political Ecology: This framework emphasizes the role of political and economic power in shaping the distribution of resources and environmental outcomes. In the context of large scale land acquisition in the study area, this theory highlighted how powerful actors, such as local and foreign investors, have driven the acquisition of land, at the expense of local communities and the environment.

Lazarus Stress Theory: This theory explores how social and economic stressors can affect the health and well being of individuals and communities. In the context of large scale land acquisition, this theory highlights the potential negative impacts on local communities, such as increased stress and hardship, and reduced access to food and other resources.

Livelihood Framework: This framework provides a holistic approach to understanding the complex relationships between people and their environment, including the various assets, activities, and opportunities that contribute to their well being. In the context of large scale land acquisition, this framework has highlighted how access to land and resources, as well as the ability to engage in productive activities, are critical for the livelihoods and food security of rural communities.

In conclusion, the findings on the impacts of large scale land acquisition are linked to several theoretical frameworks and conceptual models used for the study. They provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between political, economic, and social factors and their impacts on the study community, their livelihoods, and the environment.

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### **87.12 T-test on Coping Strategies**

The table below shows the t-test analysis for the respondents' coping strategies in response to large-scale land acquisition. The means were deduced from a hedonic scale of 1-5 (i.e., never - very often) with their standard deviations showing their hypothesis. From the table below, very often, respondents migrate in search of work and engage in non-farming activities for survival in the community. Sometimes, the respondents venture into improving livestock farming, supporting farmers in other communities to increase food production, subsidizing the production of food crops with preceding from cashew production, and stopping further scale of land for cashew cultivation. In ~~addition, respondents~~ addition, respondents rarely grow cashew and food crops on the same land, buy food crops from other communities, reserve or dedicate land for food crop production, nor encourage small-scale farming or backyard gardening in their homes.

***Table 19: Coping strategies in response to LSLA for cashew cultivation***

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Improving livestock farming	380	3.00	.000 <sup>a</sup>	0.000
Grow cashew and food crops on the same land	380	2.70	0.460	0.024
Support farmers in other communities to increase food production	380	3.00	.000 <sup>a</sup>	0.000
Offer tools and extension support for farmers in the study area to grow food crop	380	3.00	.000 <sup>a</sup>	0.000
Subsidize the producing of food crops with proceeding from cashew production	380	3.03	0.228	0.012
Buy food crops from neighboring communities	380	2.71	0.457	0.023
Reserve or dedicate land for food crop production	380	2.23	0.419	0.021
Encourage small scale farming or backyard farming in homes	380	2.02	0.144	0.007
Stop further scale of land for cashew production	380	3.00	.000 <sup>a</sup>	0.000
Migrate in search of work	380	4.98	0.135	0.007
Engage in non-farming activities for survival in the community	0 <sup>b,c</sup>			
Source of funding to the off-farm business activity	0 <sup>b,c</sup>			

a. Sum of squares is computed because the sum of squares is less than or equal to 1.  
b. Cannot be computed. There are no valid cases for this statistic because all responses are not positive.

### 87.32 Summary of the Chapter

The acquisition of large parcels of farmlands for agricultural expansion has had implications for smallholder farming and rural livelihoods. This phenomenon has forced several farming households to adopt different coping and adaptation strategies in response to these interferences. These strategies include growing cashew and food crops on the same land, subsidizing the production of food crops with proceeds from cashew production, and offering tools and extension support for farmers in the study area to grow food crops. 30.26% of respondents suggested that cashews and food crops should be grown on the same land. 77.37% suggested the need to reserve some land for food crop farming, and 93.23%

suggested that proceeds from cashew production should be used to support food crop farmers in the community to improve food security. Some participants engaged in charcoal production as an alternative source of livelihood.

Short-term food crops are being practiced as a coping strategy against large-scale cash crops, providing fresh produce for families and generating additional income. A participatory research study conducted by Evans et al (2014) found that intensification of cashew production by implementing good agronomic practices, using some parts of the cashew plantation for beekeeping, and adequate spacing of cashew trees at 30m intervals allows for intercropping with food crops.

Households should be informed or made aware of the negative repercussions of land acquisition, and farmers who have had their lands taken away should also receive compensation.

It was found that these coping strategies include changes in farming systems, short-term crop cultivation, and intensive use of farmlands, as well as a decrease in farming activities, diminishing access to land, and a decrease in the practice of shifting farming. The study also found that charcoal production as a coping strategy may have long-term implications for deforestation and climate change. The Property Right Theory highlights the importance of secure property rights for protecting the interests of local communities and ensuring that land is used in a sustainable and equitable manner. Political Ecology emphasizes the role of political and economic power in shaping the distribution of resources and environmental outcomes. Lazarus Stress Theory explores the ways in which social and economic stressors can affect the health and well-being of individuals

and communities. The livelihood Framework provides a holistic approach to understanding the complex relationships between people and their environment. The findings on the impacts of large-scale land acquisition are linked to several theoretical frameworks and conceptual models used for the study, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between political, economic, and social factors and their impacts on the study communities, their livelihoods, and the environment.

## CHAPTER ~~NINE~~EIGHT

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 98.0 Introduction

The study aimed to examine large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation and its implications for livelihood, food security, and land disputes in the Kintampo North Municipality. The pragmatism paradigm was the philosophical underpinning for the study, and the mixed-method research design was employed to gather data from 380 respondents (household heads, farmers, Chiefs, family heads, or landowners) and 30 other participants (interview and focus group discussion).

Descriptive analyses of the data were done with Statistical Software Package (STATA) version MP17.0. Further, four main inferential statistical tools were used to analyze the data. The Chi-square test of independence was used to analyze the relationships between land acquisition for cashew cultivation and land disputes in the area. Multivariate logistic analysis was used to explore the major types of land disputes in the area. In analyzing the impact of cashew cultivation on food security, a crosstabulation for before and after analysis was implemented. This chapter presents the summary of the key findings from the study, conclusions and recommendations. Additionally, the suggestion to inform future research on the subject is also presented.

### **98.1 Summary of Key Findings**

The major findings that emerged with regard to the objectives of the study are summarized below:

### **Nature of large-scale land acquisition in the community**

- 1) Land in the community is recognized as stool land, and it is vested in respective families/ clans and the chief. The respective families and the chiefs hold the allodial title to the land. 98.68 percent is held in families in the community and family heads hold the land in trust for their respective clans.
- 2) Family members exercise their usufructuary interest by farming on the lands allotted to them, while family heads of the respective clans and the chiefs are responsible for alienating land to migrants and cashew investors.
- 3) Sharecropping tenancy is not a common landholding or farming arrangement in the area. The reason is that migrants who settle in the area are allocated parcels of land to farm because of the availability of land there. Migrants who settle in the community are allocated parcels of land to farm but could lose the land any time an investor comes to buy from the family heads or chiefs. The increased cashew cultivation had resulted in the dispossession of migrants' and family members' farmlands.
- 4) Yam and maize are the dominant food crops cultivated on the land and are grown by the indigenes and migrants, while the dominant cash crop cultivated is cashew, which is grown largely by local and foreign investors.

- 5) Comparing recent large-scale land acquisitions, 68.8 claims that this practice has significantly increased, while 8.7 claims it has marginally increased.
- 6) Equally, the majority (95.5 percent of the respondents pointed out that the acquisition of land for cashew cultivation will significantly increase in the next 10 years.
- 7) To preserve land for future ~~generations, particularly~~ generations, particularly for the cultivation of food crops, the respondents indicated that heads of families and chiefs should regulate land in the community.

#### **Factors influencing large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation**

- 1) The availability of land in the study community and the high demand for cashew nuts on the international market were seen as the key factors that have precipitated the increased interest in the acquisition of land in the area.
- 2) Whilst 100 % of the respondents agreed that the high demand for cashew nuts on the international market and the availability of land in the community ~~were~~was responsible for the rise in large-scale land acquisition, 99.47% disagreed that poor land fertility for food crops in the area has precipitated the shift in land use from food crop to the cultivation of cashew (cash crop).
- 3) All the respondents (100 %) confirmed that weak land management and greed on the part of heads of families and chiefs (who are the custodians



of the land and are responsible for its alienation) are important factors responsible for the increased large-scale land acquisition in the area.

#### **The impact of large-scale land acquisition on rural livelihoods**

- 1) Cashew cultivation has brought employment to the area. People who own or do not own farmland agreed 100 percent that employment has been created from cashew cultivation.
- 2) 99.74 percent (representing 379 of the total respondents) strongly agreed that since the cultivation of cashew in the area, there have not been any social facilities such as schools, toilets, or clinics that have been provided with resources from cashew activities.
- 3) Access to land for food crop cultivation has been reduced, resulting in increased food insecurity, loss of land for future generations, increased inheritance and land disputes, and depriving women and children of access to land.
- 4) Land that could have been used for growing food crops such as yam, maize, and groundnut has been replaced by cashew cultivation. This has reduced the amount of available food and increased food prices.

#### **Effects of large-scale Land Acquisition on the household food security**

- 1) The study found that all respondents (100%) agreed that food was very available before the large-scale land acquisition for cashew. Additionally,

all household heads mentioned that food was accessible before the land acquisition, but a significant proportion (96.58 %) ranked food not to be accessible after the land acquisition. After large-scale cultivation, the majority (82.11 percent) had seen their consumption drop from very high to average. 100 percent of the respondents confirmed that food was very stable since farmers had vast land to cultivate a lot of food crops. After large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation, it had reduced to 23.42 percent.

- 2) Findings from the study show that large-scale land acquisition in rural areas of Ghana has a significant impact on food security. The displacement of small-scale farmers from their land disrupts local food production and distribution systems, leading to reduced access to food for communities that rely on locally grown crops.
- 3) Additionally, the conversion of land from small-scale farming to industrial or commercial cash crop production, such as cashew, decreases the availability of land for food production. This leads to higher food prices, as well as a decrease in dietary diversity and nutrition. Furthermore, it leads to the loss of traditional knowledge and cultural practices associated with farming and food production.

#### **Implications of large-scale land acquisition on land dispute**

- 1) Cashew cultivation has led to increased land disputes in the community, in particular, and the municipality, in general.

- 2) While several disputes occurred, the two commonest forms of land disputes prevalent in the community were boundary and inheritance disputes.
- 3) A significant proportion of respondents (95.5%) projected that land disputes resulting from cashew cultivation will increase in the next 10 years.
- 4) While several options are available in resolving land disputes in the area, chiefs and their council of elders play a significant role in resolving disputes against the court system, the Lands Commission, or the use of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism which the new Land Act promotes to be used is settling land cases.

**Coping strategies in response to large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation:**

1. While 30.26 percent of the respondents suggested that cashew and food crops should be grown on the same land (mixed farming), 77.37 percent of the respondents suggested the need to reserve some land for food crop farming.
2. Also, the majority (93.23 percent) of the people suggested that proceeds from cashew production should be used to support food crop farmers (through the purchase of agrochemicals) in the community to improve food security in the area.
3. Additionally, other coping strategies reported in the interviews and FGDs included:

a) *Backyard Farming*: 97.89% of respondents opted for backyard farming as a coping strategy. The prevalence of backyard farming suggests a local, household-level approach to ensuring food security and livelihood sustainability.

b) *Migration as a Coping Strategy*:

Participants mentioned the migration of displaced inhabitants seeking work outside the community as a coping strategy. Migration becomes a pragmatic response to livelihood disruptions caused by large-scale land acquisition.

c) *Charcoal Production*:

Some residents engage in charcoal production as an alternative livelihood strategy. Charcoal production emerges as a pragmatic and economically viable alternative for those affected by land acquisition.

d) *Cultivation of Short-Term Crops*:

Participants expressed the plea to cultivate short-term food crops alongside cashew plant. Emphasizing the importance of incorporating short-term crops signifies a nuanced approach to sustaining food production alongside cashew cultivation.

## **98.2 Conclusions**

The increasing demand for agricultural land, driven by population growth and global demand for cash crops such as cashew, has led to the acquisition of large tracts of land by foreign and domestic investors. In Ghana, cashew

cultivation has become a major driver of large-scale land acquisition. Cashew is an important cash crop for the country, and many investors have acquired land for cashew production in areas such as Kintampo.

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions have been drawn covering each of the specific objectives:

The study finds that large-scale land acquisition for cashew plantations in the Bono–East Region has a diverse and multifaceted nature. The acquisition process involves the sale of land to investors, leading to a significant transformation in the agricultural landscape. The methods employed in land acquisition, including sales, negotiations, and agreements, contribute to the complexity of the phenomenon.

Large-scale land acquisition has brought about a dual impact on the livelihoods of farmers in the study area. On one hand, there is a positive effect manifested in increased employment opportunities and income generation for local inhabitants who serve as caretakers and farm labourers in the cashew farms. On the other hand, it has exacerbated vulnerabilities, resulting in challenges such as reduced area for food crop cultivation and heightened land tenure insecurity.

The study reveals that large-scale land acquisition has a detrimental impact on food security in the Bono–East Region. The reduction in land available for food crop cultivation contributes to greater food insecurity among local communities. This phenomenon represents a shift from traditional subsistence farming to a more specialized cashew plantation model, leading to a decreased capacity to produce diverse food crops locally.

Land disputes, particularly in the form of boundary and inheritance conflicts, are prevalent in the study community. The sale of lands to large-scale investors has affected those with traditional usufructuary interests, leading to heightened tensions, land tenure insecurity, and challenges to the general livelihoods of inhabitants. The findings underscore the critical need for effective mechanisms to address and mitigate such disputes in the wake of large-scale land acquisition.

In response to the challenges posed by large-scale land acquisition, local communities have developed various coping strategies. These strategies include growing cashew and food crops on the same land, subsidizing food crop production with cashew proceeds, and offering tools and extension support for food crop farming. Additionally, migration for work and engagement in alternative livelihoods such as charcoal production emerged as coping mechanisms. The diversity of these strategies reflects the adaptability and resilience of the community in the face of transformative change.

### **98.3 Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made:

#### *1. Developing a Comprehensive Land Acquisition Policy:*

To address the intricate challenges of large-scale land acquisition, the government, spearheaded by the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, should take the lead in formulating a comprehensive policy. This policy must

intricately delineate the process, criteria, and legal framework for large-scale land acquisition. By doing so, it ensures transparency and fairness while incorporating robust provisions for the just compensation and resettlement of affected communities.

*2. Involving Local Communities in Decision-Making:*

Recognizing the intrinsic value of local perspectives, local government authorities, relevant ministries, and investors bear the responsibility of actively involving communities in the decision-making process for land acquisition. Meaningful consultation, participation in impact assessments, and the integration of community insights into planning and execution are crucial for fostering a collaborative and inclusive approach.

*3. Providing Fair Compensation:*

In the pursuit of equity and justice, government agencies overseeing land transactions, in collaboration with investors, must ensure meticulous oversight of the compensation process. Active participation from investors is essential to providing fair and just compensation for losses incurred due to land acquisition. This dual responsibility guarantees a comprehensive and balanced compensation framework.

#### *4. Promoting Sustainable Land-Use Practices:*

With a focus on environmental impact and community rights, investors, in collaboration with relevant government bodies, should embrace and encourage sustainable land-use practices, such as agroforestry. Government bodies, such as the Ministry of Land and Natural Resources and the Forestry Commission, should bear the responsibility of providing clear guidelines and incentives to create an environment where sustainable practices can thrive.

#### *5. Developing Programmes to Support Livelihoods:*

Recognizing the socio-economic implications, the government, along with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), should take the initiative to develop and fund programmes that support the livelihoods of affected communities. Government agencies must provide training in new skills and income-generating activities, while NGOs collaborate in the implementation and monitoring of these programmes.

#### *6. Supporting Local Communities:*

Large-scale investors should shoulder the responsibility of actively contributing to the welfare of local communities. This encompasses providing employment opportunities, offering training and extension services, and contributing to infrastructure development in the affected areas. Through these initiatives, investors play a vital role in mitigating the adverse effects of land acquisition.



*7. Encouraging Joint Ventures or Partnerships:*

Fostering collaboration and mutual benefit, large-scale investors, local small-scale farmers, and community leaders are jointly responsible for exploring and promoting joint ventures or partnerships. This collaborative approach enhances trust, ensures mutual benefits, and actively involves the community in crucial land-use decisions.

*8. Building Transparency and Accountability:*

Prioritizing openness and accountability, large-scale investors, in conjunction with regulatory bodies, must ensure transparency throughout the land acquisition process. Regular reporting on activities and progress should be easily accessible to local communities and stakeholders. Regulatory bodies play a crucial role in enforcing and upholding these transparency standards.

*9. Recommendations for Community Leaders and Family Heads:*

Acknowledging their pivotal role in safeguarding community interests, community leaders and family heads should actively engage in the land acquisition process. Their responsibility extends to advocating for fair compensation and transparent processes, fostering collaboration with investors to ensure the well-being of community members. Through these efforts, community leaders and family heads become instrumental in shaping the trajectory of land acquisition outcomes.

#### **98.4 Areas for Further Study:**

- I. An analysis of the current government policies and laws related to large-scale land acquisition, and recommendations to mitigate the negative impacts on rural households.
- II. Research on the environmental impacts of large-scale land acquisition in rural communities, including the extent of deforestation, changes in biodiversity, and water availability and quality, would be important for understanding the implications for the environment and sustainable development.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRES

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Dear Participant,

I am a PhD student at the University of Cape Coast, undertaking a research project on **large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in Kintampo North: Implications for livelihoods, food security, and land disputes**. The study is purely for academic purposes; hence, an honest and sincere response will contribute to the research. Participating in this research work is voluntary. All information provided by you will be considered completely confidential. Therefore, your name will not appear in any report, publication, or presentation resulting from this study. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOUSEHOLD HEADS AND CHIEFS****Instructions:**

Please read carefully and select the response that best expresses your idea about each statement from sections A-F by ticking (✓) the appropriate box and writing where necessary.

**Section A: Demographic Data of Respondents**

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Age: less than 20 yrs [ ] 20-29 yrs [ ] 30-39yrs [ ] 40-49yrs [ ] 50-59yrs [ ] 60yrs and above [ ]
3. Education Level: Basic [ ] Secondary [ ] Tec /Voc [ ] Tertiary [ ] None [ ]
4. Household Annual Income Level (in Ghana cedis): below 500 [ ] 500 -1000 [ ] above 1000 [ ]
5. Household Size: .....
6. Housing Pattern: Cement block building [ ] Mud-brick building [ ]

7. Marital status : Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐  
Widowed ☐

8. Religious affiliation: Christianity ☐ Islam ☐ African Traditional  
Religion ☐

None ☐ other, please specify.....

9. Residential status in this community: Migrant ☐ Indigene ☐

Others, please specify.....

10. What is your ethnicity? Bono ☐ Mo ☐ Other Akan ☐ Ewe ☐

Others, please specify.....

## **SECTION B: NATURE OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITIONS IN THE STUDY AREA**

1. Who owns the allodial title ( highest title) in land in this community?

2. a.

a. Chief ☐ b. Elders ☐ c. Family heads of respective clans ☐ d. Private  
property owners ☐ e. Others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you own farmland?

4. a. a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

5. If yes, how many acres/ hectares of farmland do you  
own? .....acres/hectares.

6. How did you acquire it?

7. a. a. Purchase ☐ b. Inherited ☐ c. Family land ☐ d. Inherited ☐ e.  
Sharecropping ☐ f. Others, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

8. If not, by what arrangement do you access land for farming activities?

- a. Lease/Rented ☐ b.Sharecropping ☐ d. Inheritance ☐ e. other,  
please specify .....
9. Is the land fully registered with the necessary documentation? a. Yes  
☐ b. No
10. If it is leased/rented, please specify the unexpired  
term ?.....
11. What major crops do you cultivate on the necessary documentation?  
Specify.....
12. How widespread is land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this  
community? a. Very widespread ☐ b. widespread ☐ c. Not  
widespread ☐ d. Not all widespread ☐
13. Who are those involved in cashew cultivation? a. Indigenes ☐ b.  
Foreign investors ☐ c. Local ( Ghanaian ) investor ☐ d. Others,  
please specify .....
14. Have you been disposed of your land due to Large-Scale Land  
acquisition cashew cultivation? A. Yes ☐ b. No ☐
15. If yes, were you paid any compensation? a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐
16. How will you describe land acquisition for cashew cultivation today  
compared with the last ten years?  
a. Has increased significantly ☐ b. Has increased marginally ☐ c. Has remained  
the same ☐ d. Has decreased marginally ☐ e. Has diminished greatly ☐
17. How will you describe land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this  
community in the next ten years? a. Will increase significantly ☐



b. Will increase marginally [ ] c. Will remain the same [ ] d. Will decrease marginally [ ] e. Will decrease considerably [ ]

18. To what extent do you agree that land acquisition for cashew cultivation should be regulated in this community? a. Strongly Agree [ ] b. Agree [ ] c. Disagree [ ] d. Strongly Disagree [ ] e. Not sure [ ]

19. If you agree, why do you want the regulations? a. To preserve land for future generations [ ] b. To prevent famine in future [ ] c. To reduce land conflicts [ ] d. Others, please specify.....

#### FACTORS INFORMING LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION

On the Likert scale, indicate/select your level of agreement on the factors informing large-scale land acquisition in this community?

Kindly select your degree of acceptance on the Likert scale as presented below:

[SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - Neutral]

No.	Issues	SA	A	S D	D	N
1	High demand for cashew nuts on the international market					
2	Availability of land in this area					
3	The poverty of landowners and their willingness to alienate their land					
4	Weak farmland management system/ease of					

	farmland acquisition procedure					
5	The willing demand for the land by the farmer					
6	The investment and development vision of the landowners					
7	Poor land fertility for food crops					
8	Greed on the part of family heads					
9	Political and economic domination					

List three factors you consider the most important for your household or community and what is your justification?

1. ....  
.....  
.....
2. ....  
.....  
.....
3. ....  
.....  
.....

### SECTION C: EFFECTS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION ON RURAL LIVELIHOODS

To what extent do you agree with the following **POSITIVE IMPACT** of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community?

Kindly select your degree of acceptance on the Likert scale as presented below:

[SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - Neutral]

No	Positive impact	SA	A	S D	D	N
1	Improved income					
2	Improved social status					
3	Improved food security					
4	Ability to take care of children's education					
5	Increased savings					
6	Uncultivated lands are put into productive use by the investors.					
7	Ability to diversify Investments					
8	Provision of employment					
	Provision of a ready market for cashew.					
	Provision of basic social infrastructure in the community					

Which **ONE** of the positive impacts above is the most important for you and your household, and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

To what extent do you agree with the following **NEGATIVE IMPACT** of large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community?

Kindly select your degree of acceptance on the Likert scales as presented below:

[SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - Neutral]

No.	Negative impact	DA	A	SD	D	N
1	Reduction in land for food crop farming					
2	Privatisation of communal land.					
3	The increased cost of land for food crops is					
4	Food insecurity due to the loss of communal land is					
5	Loss of land for future generations					
6	Increased prices for food crops					
7	and land conflicts					

8	Increased generational tension					
9	Depriving women of access to land					
10	Deprived children of access to land					

Which **ONE** of the negative impacts above do you consider to be the most important for me and my household, and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

**SECTION D: Impact of large-scale land acquisition on food security.**

How does large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation affect the household food security of farmers within the study area?		
	BEFORE (cashew cultivation)	AFTER (cashew cultivation)
What major crops did you cultivate?		
How would you rank your food <b>availability</b>	Hardly available NOT available Neutral Available	Hardly available 2. NOT available Neutral Available

	Very available	Very available
Reasons for your choice of ranking above?		
How would you rank your food accessibility? 1.	Hardly accessible 2. NOT accessible 3. Neutral Accessible Very accessible	Hardly accessible 2. NOT accessible Neutral Accessible Very accessible
Reasons for your choice of ranking above?		
How would you rank food utilization? 1.	Very high High Average Low Very low	Very high High Average Low Very low
Reasons for your choice of ranking above?		

How will you rank the <b>stability</b> of food?	1. Hardly stable 2. NOT stable 3. Neutral 4. Stable 5. Very stable	1. Hardly stable 2. NOT stable 3. Neutral 4. Stable 5. Very stable
Reasons for your choice of ranking above?		

#### **SECTION E: IMPLICATIONS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION ON LAND DISPUTES**

1. Have you experienced any land dispute due to large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Indicate your level of agreement with the following type of conflict that emanates from Large Scale-Land Acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community?

[SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - Neutral]

No.	Type of Conflict	SA	A	S	D	N
1	Boundary disputes					
2	Encroachment					
3	Ownership disputes					
4	Land use disputes					
5	Inheritance disputes					

How would you describe the land conflict resulting from cashew cultivation today?

- a) It has significantly increased
- b) It has increased marginally
- c) Remained the same
- d) Decreased marginally
- e) Decreased significantly [ ]

How would you describe the land conflict resulting from cashew cultivation in this community in the next ten years?

- a) It will increase significantly
- b) It will increase marginally
- c) It will remain the same [ ]
- d) It will decrease marginally
- e) It will decrease considerably [ ]



Indicate your level of agreement with how land conflict is settled/  
addressed in this community:

[SA - Strongly Agree, A - Agree, SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, N - Neutral]

No.	Conflict Resolution Mechanism	SA	A	SD	D	N
	-					
1	Through the Municipal courts -					
2	By chief and council of elders -					
3	Family heads					
4	Through the lands Commission -					
5	Through religious Leaders -					
6	Through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) - Through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)					

In your opinion, how can you reduce land conflict resulting from large-scale cashew cultivation in this community? Select all that apply.

- a) Farmland boundaries should be properly demarcated. [ ]
- b) Proper documentation and recording of all land transactions. [ ]
- c) Chiefs, landowners, and agents should refrain from multiple land sales. [ ]
- d) Part of the farmland in the community should be earmarked for food crop cultivation. [ ]
- e) The community should be involved in land transactions and decision-making. [ ]
- f) Regular community/investor forums should be held. [ ]
- g) Encouragement of mixed farming in the community [ ]
- h) Other (Specify)-----

**Section F: Coping strategies adopted by local communities in response to large-scale land acquisition.**

Kindly indicate the extent to which you engage in the following coping strategies.

No	Coping Strategies:	Rarely	Sometime	Never	Often	Very often
1	Improving livestock farming					
2	Grow cashews and food crops on the same land					
3	Support farmers in other communities to increase food production.					

4	Offer tools and extension support for farmers in the study area to grow food crops.					
5	Subsidise the production of food crops with proceeds from cashew production					
6	Buy food crops from neighboring communities.					
7	Reserve or dedicating land for food crop production					
8	Encourage small-scale farming or backyard farming in homes..					
9	Stop the further sale of land for cashew production.					
10	Migrate in search of work.					
11	What kind of work? ..... ..... . ..... .					

12	Engage in non-farming activities for survival in the community.					
13	Indicate the type of off-farm activity ..... ..... .....					
14	Source of funding for the off-farm business activity:  a. Personal        [   ] b. Bank            [   ] c. Social group    [   ] d. Family          [   ] e. Group savings [   ] f. Other            [   ]					

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

**A. Interview Guide for Foreign and Local Investors****Socio-demographic data****Sex****Age****Educational background****Interview Questions:**

1. How many acres of cashew farmland have you acquired? .....
2. How did you acquire it? Was it by purchase/ Leased inheritance, land/sharecropping, or other acquisition modes?
3. Is the land registered? If yes, explain the processes involved.
4. Why did you acquire land in this community? .....  
.....  
.....
5. How would you describe the process of land acquisition? Was the process easy or cumbersome?
6. Has your large-scale land acquisition benefited the community?
7. What are some of the positive impacts/ benefits?

.....  
.....  
.....

- .....
- .....
8. Have you experienced any land disputes since the acquisition, and could you describe the type of land conflict?

### **Section B**

Interview guide for the Municipal Agricultural Officer

Socio-demographic data

1. Sex
2. Age:
3. Office rank:
4. Educational background:
5. How long have you been working with this institution?
6. How long have you been working in your current position?
7. Is your office responsible for implementing agricultural land-use policies?
8. If YES, what are some of the policies?
9. What land tenure system do people use to access land for farming activities (Probe by assessing whether they are on purchase widespread in this area? (Probe by determining the terms (very widespread, widespread, not widespread, or not at all widespread.
10. Do you offer education or training on cashew cultivation in this area?
11. If yes, what is the mode of education or training?
12. Apart from the education given to cashew farmers, what other livelihood sustainability measures do you advocate or provide to them?

13. Have your contributions been successful? (If so, please explore by percentage.
14. What are some of the effects of LSLA on the livelihoods of the Tangene and Asantekwa communities?
15. Are there any land conflicts resulting from cashew cultivation in this community? And what are they?
16. What conflicts arise from large-scale land acquisition in this community?
17. What coping strategies are the inhabitants adopting in response to the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

### **Section C**

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Interview guide for the Land Institutions (Office of the Administrator of Stool Lands)

Socio-demographic data

1. Sex
2. Age
3. Office rank:
4. Educational background:
5. How long have you been working with this institution?
6. How long have you been working in your current position?

#### **Interview Questions**

#### **THE NATURE OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION**

7. Who are the owners of land in this municipality?

8. What forms of arrangement do people use to access land for cashew cultivation? (Probe by assessing whether they are on purchase, lease, sharecropping, rent, or other means)
9. How widespread is land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this municipality? (Probe by assessing the terms "very widespread," "widespread," "not widespread," or "not at all widespread.")
10. How is land acquired for cashew production?

#### **FACTORS INFORMING LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION**

11. What factors are responsible for the large-scale acquisition of land for cashew cultivation?

#### **EFFECTS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION ON RURAL LIVELIHOODS**

12. How has the large-scale acquisition of land for cashew cultivation been a blessing to this community?
13. Are there any possible side effects or adverse outcomes of such acquisitions?

#### **IMPLICATIONS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION ON LAND CONFLICT/ COPING STRATEGIES**

14. Kindly share some recent accounts of land disputes from cashew cultivation in this municipality? (What about the case of Tandele and the community?)



15. In what form did these conflicts take? (Probe by assessing the condition of registration, be it boundary, encroachment, ownership, land use, or inheritance disputes.)
16. If you compare the rate and intensity of land-related conflict between now and ten years ago, what would be your observation?
17. What coping strategies are the inhabitants adopting in response to the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

#### **Section D**

##### **Interview guide for community leaders**

**(Chief, Elders, Family Heads)**

Socio-demographic data

1. Sex
2. Age
3. How long have you been a chief/ elder/ family head /assembly member?

Interview Question

##### **THE NATURE OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION AND DOCUMENTATION**

4. What processes are involved in land acquisition and documentation in this community?
5. What has been the history of land acquisition in this community? (Explore the changing nature of the acquisitions, what accounts for the change, if any?)

6. How widespread is land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this municipality? (Probe by assessing the terms "prevalent," "widespread," and "not widespread.")
7. Has there been an increase in land acquisition in the last ten years?
8. What factors are responsible for large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community? (Probe by identifying the factors that inform their decision.)

#### **EFFECTS OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION ON RURAL LIVELIHOODS**

In your view, how has the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation been a blessing to this community?

Are there any possible side effects or adverse outcomes of such acquisitions?

#### **IMPLICATION OF LARGE-SCALE LAND ACQUISITION AND CONFLICTS**

3. Kindly share some recent accounts of land disputes emanating from large-scale acquisitions for cashew cultivation in this municipality?
4. Who were the disputants involved in the conflicts?
5. In what form did these conflicts take? **(Probe by assessing the condition of registration, be it boundary, encroachment, ownership, land use, or inheritance disputes.)**
6. If you compare the rate and intensity of land-related conflict between now and ten years ago, what would be your observation? **(Probe to assess**

whether it will increase significantly, increase marginally, remain the same, decrease marginally, or decrease significantly.)

7. How are land conflicts addressed in this community? (**Probe by assessing whether land disputes are settled through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms, the Municipal courts, chiefs and council of elders, family heads, the Land commission, or religious leaders.**)
8. What coping strategies are the inhabitants adopting in response to the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

#### **Section E**

##### **Interview guide for the Municipal Court Registrar [**

Socio-demographic data

1. Sex
2. Age
3. How long have you been working in your position?
4. Has there been an increase in land acquisition in the last ten years?
5. What factors are responsible for large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation in this community? (**Probe by identifying the factors which inform their decision.**)
6. Kindly share some recent accounts of land disputes emanating from large-scale acquisitions for cashew cultivation in this Municipality?
7. Who were the disputants involved in the conflicts?

8. In what form did these conflicts take? **(Probe by assessing the cause of the conflict, be it boundary, encroachment, ownership, land use or inheritance disputes).**
9. If you compare the rate and intensity of land-related conflicts between now and ten years ago, what would your observation be? **(Probe to assess whether it will increase significantly, increase marginally, remain the same, decrease marginally, or decrease significantly.)**
10. Are the land disputes reported to your court resolved on time? And what is the duration for settling such land disputes?
11. Does your unit liaise with other land institutions in settling land disputes?
12. How has large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation been a blessing to this community?
13. Are there any possible side effects or adverse outcomes of such acquisitions?
14. What coping strategies are the inhabitants adopting in response to the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

**Section F****INTERVIEW GUIDE****Interview Guide for Land Agents**

What accounts for the increased land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

Who are the buyers? Are they local or foreign investors?

How do you assist them in the acquisition and documentation process?

Have there been any land conflicts as a result of multiple sales?

How were they addressed, if any?

How has the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation been a blessing to this community?

Are there any possible side effects or adverse outcomes of such acquisitions?

8. What coping strategies are the inhabitants adopting in response to the large-scale land acquisition for cashew cultivation?

## Section G

### Focus Group Discussion Script

The focus group discussions will occur in an informal setting with two (2) groups ranging from five to ten participants. The discussion will be facilitated with the under-listed sets of questions as a guide:

1. Are there any local or foreign investors, groups, or individuals who have acquired large acres of land for cashew plantations in this locality? If so, has the acquisition affected the life of your family or yourself positively or negatively?
2. Do you know who was using the land before it was acquired and what crop(s) were cultivated there?
3. What process did the investor use in acquiring the land?
4. Do you know if any of the villagers or agents assisted or supported the investor in finding land?
5. Do you know if any local farmer has lost their land following the arrival of the investor? If so, do you know if they received any compensation for the land loss? Were they given land elsewhere to farm?
6. Has the community benefited from the LSLA?
7. Do you think that the investor acquired the land legally? By looking at this investment, are you satisfied with how the Land Commission, through the Office of Administrator Stool Land protected the community's interest? Why?

8. By looking at this investment, are you satisfied with how the traditional authorities (Mo Land Secretariat, protected the community's interest?
9. Do you foresee any intergenerational conflict arising from the large-scale land acquisition in this community, and why?