

Access To Farmland And Farm Outputs In The Context Of Peasants' Household Food Security In Nanumba Land

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Abstract: This paper examined the farmland allocation modes in the Nanumba traditional area and how these influenced peasants' farm output and therefore, peasants' household food security. It used a mix of qualitative and quantitative data from questionnaire, focus group interview and key informants interview instruments. The results showed that though free gift and inheritance were the major modes of peasants' access to farmlands, peasants largely relied on farmland size of two acres for the upkeep of their households of eight on the average. This affected their efforts in meeting the food needs of their households, leading to persistent food shortages, especially, in June-July, yearly.

Keywords: Access; Land tenure practices; Peasantry; Household food insecurity

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Ghana statistical service report on the 2010 population and housing census, 79.4 percent of the population of Nanumba north district is into full time subsistence agriculture (GSS, 2014). However, peasants in the Nanumba traditional area hardly get access to fertile farmland due to the nature of land tenure system of the area. Land has a centralized control system in the traditional area, making access difficult for all who need land for survival. As in other societies, land and its resource endowment serve the livelihood needs of a majority of people (FAO, 1996). It remains a key source of survival to the poor and the marginalized in societies across the globe. It further constitutes an asset, a store of value, and upon which wealth of the ethnic groups is determined (Lastarria-Cornhiel and Frais, 1992; cited in Quansah, 2012). Dittoh, (2002) thought that land plays significant roles in supporting livelihoods among rural households, except that chiefs were becoming perpetrators of access denials and restrictions to land interests and access. Land is still an indispensable resource for survival of multitudes of people today. However, this gift of nature has been under the control of a few privileged people in Ghana, especially, the northern regions. There seemed to be growing interests in land holdings due to its emerging value as a

commodity (Tsikata and Yaro, 2014) leading to its alienation from the reach of vulnerable groups in societies across Sub-Saharan Africa.

As in other parts of Ghana and some other Sub-Saharan African countries, chiefs and clan or family heads are in control of about 80% of land (Kunbun-Naa Yiri II, 2006), while the state controls the rest. In northern Ghana, and especially, in the Dagbon traditional area, the chiefs, clan or family heads and private individuals play the leading roles in land management, control and distributions. Land Tenure refers to sets of rules and regulations incorporated into a society's customs to regulate how its members as well as strangers should be allocated with land rights within the society in the pursuit of their livelihoods. Customary Land Tenure Practices include the traditional authority's exercise of the obligatory roles (Article 36(8) of the 1992 republican constitution of Ghana) in determining ownership interests in land, allocating land to natives and strangers, regulating land use rights, and ensuring the perpetuation of land to unborn generations (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013).

Access to farmland is a struggle for all peasants in the Nanumba traditional area. Most of the peasants who are not natives of the Nanumba land seem to be those severely affected by the central hold of the farmlands in the area. This does not only affect their ability to access fertile farmlands to

increase their earnings, but leads to disputes over farmlands allocated to them. Preliminary findings showed that native peasants are likely to suffer the same fate in search of fertile farmlands as non-native peasants in the wake of the just calmed intra-ethnic conflict in the area.

Cursory study around the traditional area noted that customary tenure rights held by members of the communities have undergone some changes over years. Initially, stools or skins in Sub-Saharan Africa societies held lands absolutely in trust for the welfare of subjects. Members only had usufruct rights of land use, and gathering resources of the land. Just like earlier studies in the southern Ghana observed (Agidi, 1976), all persons in the Nanumba traditional area had equal rights of access to the resources of the communal lands. Hardly was it possible for individual members of the communities to claim rights of possessions over parcels of communal land (Pomevor, 2014). Mabogunje (1980) earlier noted that land under customary tenure in Africa; especially Nigeria served the communal needs of members of the communities and was not subject to being alienated through sale. Similarly, Lentz, (2010), observed that the traditions of the ethnic groups in the Sisala traditional area in Ghana outlawed land sales, for fear of alienating their ancestral links. According to Pomevor, (2014) usufruct rights held by indigenes of traditional areas in Ghana was indefinite, and only reverted to the stool or skin upon abandonment. He observed that families and individuals could hold this rights and transfer to their lineages.

However, recent studies in the Sub-Saharan African societies have observed changes in the land ownerships, distributions and disbursement within societies. These changes were observed to result from scarcity due to population explosion (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013). This phenomenon led to changes in the rights the community members had in the use of the skin or stool lands held in common (Agidi, 1976; cited in Pomevor, 2014). Pressures from commercial agriculture and urbanization have also brought about land markets and the consequent crowding out of small scale peasantry, especially around the suburbs of larger towns (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Pomevor, 2014). Likewise, extensive participation in agriculture came with its attendant competitions for fertile land. Also, the growth in settlement again inflamed the evolution of land markets (Yaro, 2012; Senu, 2016). Therefore, population growth as noted is a key factor to increasing demand for land (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013) both for agricultural activities or for estate development. They held that population growth causes derived demand for housing, recreational fields, infrastructural development and rising drive for arable land for food production. Meanwhile, Dittoh, (2002) had noted this earlier on when he called for stronger policy measures to shape land management in line with the increasing population growth. Peasants are likely the worst affected by the consequences of these developments. This is because when land attracts high prices, landlords would not hesitate to evict peasants to make land available for commercial agricultural and estate development (Devendra & Chantalakhana, 2002).

Another changing trend that mounts stress to land availability and accessibility is the attitudes of allodial title holders to divert communal land to private interest holdings.

Some chiefs allotted portions of communal lands to exclusive use by their royal lineages (field Data, 2016). The lands in question are now owned and controlled by families of such chiefs, making family and clan heads sub-title holders of land. This practice had likely impacts of weaning off landless peasant households from decent livelihoods. The act threatens livelihoods of the landless members of the communities. In the midst of this scarcity, members of landowning families with usufruct interests in communal lands gradually turned such lands into clan and family lands (Dittoh, 2002; Pomevor, 2014). The success of this trend facilitated further coveting of land previously held in allodial interest by families and clans into individual land holding interests (Pomevor, 2014). In effect, usufruct rights holders have entrenched their holds onto such lands to ensure tenure security.

As noted above, settlers and other landless categories of peasants had to access land for livelihoods through these sets of interest holders in the community. Settlers, strangers and other landless people within the community would enjoy only secondary usufructory rights to land in the community through gifts, tenancy or if they can, purchase. These modes of access vary among traditions and between lineage systems, and falls short of ensuring peasants' tenure security.

The access of these peasants to fertile farmlands would be subject to the set of customary rules governing their relationships with the farmlands. According to Dittoh, (2002), families could give conditions attached to the benevolent gestures, mindful of the traditional or customary rules of the areas. This implies that customs and traditions construct rules and regulations to govern land deals within the traditional areas. He however ruled out any direct demands from the landowning families as compensations for giving land out to landless people in the northern regions of Ghana. However, Lentz, (2010) noted a demand by Tindamba in the Lambunssie district for Dagaba settlers to supply animals meant for pacification of the earth-gods on lands under their usufruct interests. The payment of compensation is likely to constitute leakage from the peasants' meager capital.

This study examined the land allocation modes under the customary land tenure practices of the Nanumba traditional area, and how these impacted on the peasants' farm outputs. It therefore, determined and explained if, and the extent to which levels of access to farmlands influence peasants' farm output, income levels and land holdings. The study also examined the levels of peasants' household food security and mitigation measures they adopt in times of food shortages.

II. CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

A. LIVELIHOOD

Livelihood of a people have very strong bond with the environment within which they live and subsist. The Malthusian theory posits that expanding populations are inversely related to environmental resource sustainability with eminent resultant hunger and malnutrition among peasant households. Even though this position was flawed, it constituted a standpoint that called for integrated approaches to tackling the impending livelihood threats. The notion one

gets is that poverty, hunger and malnutrition could be reduced by improving upon the environment (Sunderlin et al, 2005). Environment has series of components including the physical, social and the cultural aspects of it. The natural environment refers to land and its associated resources that serve the purpose of human survival worldwide.

Land as a major component of the natural environment is also beset with ownership challenges. The customary ownership of land poses problems as it undergoes changes from its known role as a social safety net for women, youth, migrant and settlers alike (Sunderlin et al, 2005). Some of the known changes include commoditization of customarily owned lands, rising prices of agricultural land (Yaro, 2012), declining trends of share cropping in areas known for such practices and increased use of land sales as the main modes of land deals. These practices of the customs entail livelihood implications with time. These bring in their wake, rising tenure insecurity and crowd out women, youth, migrant and settlers, as well as other low-income individuals from farming opportunities (Carter and May, 1999).

Nations' desires of making livelihoods sustainable called for more attention on the factors and processes which either constrain or enhance poor people's ability to make a living in an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable manner (Krantz, 2001). Carter and May, (1999) noted that the prevalence of limited assets and constrains to effective usage of such assets make poverty a reality. Approaches to sustainable livelihoods therefore seek to address the linkages between poverty, the environment and other structures, thereby resolving the shortfalls that have characterised poverty analyses (Sporton 1998). Studies noted earlier on that the neglect of traditional structures in intervention programmes explained the failure of past projects (Lele, 1975). Earlier intervention projects concentrated on the rural economies because a majority of the dwellers are in peasantry productions (Krantz, 2001).

The fear of the unknown future and what it brings to bear on livelihoods prompted calls for livelihood sustainability (Chambers and Conway, 1991). This fear is much more frustrating, thinking for developing countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa where rural poverty is on the ascendency. According to Conway and Chambers (1991) the future of rural poor is bleak with 'no one to turn to'. Livelihood as seen by chambers and Conway, (1998) is a means to earning a living. Studies hold that the poor can increase their incomes by increasing their productivity (Lele, 1975) through mainly agricultural activities. Previous interventions rooted their efforts through agriculture by providing inputs and subsidies aside training of farmers. These efforts failed to meet the desired outcomes because land and human related challenges were not targeted and resolved. The cultural practices of societies, together with land issues need to be factored in when planning interventions.

Chambers and Conway (1998) gave a tentative explanation of sustainable livelihood, which the Danish Department for International Development (DFID) adopted and modified as follows;

"A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses

and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base," (DFID, 2000).

B. DFID CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD STUDIES (DFID, 1999)

Livelihood sustainability revolves around people, their life and threats to their lives as they hope for the unknown future. The DFID framework for sustainable livelihoods highlighted assets, vulnerabilities, structures and institutions, livelihoods strategies and outcomes of peasants as parameters stakeholders must focus on while seeking to empower rural development (DFID, 2000). It therefore forms the basis for this study because it emphasizes traditional institutions and community assets as focal entities in rural livelihoods.

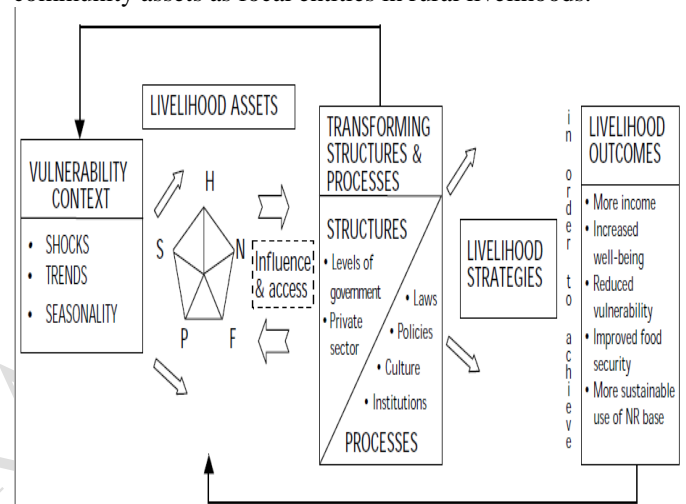


Figure 1: DFID Framework (1999)

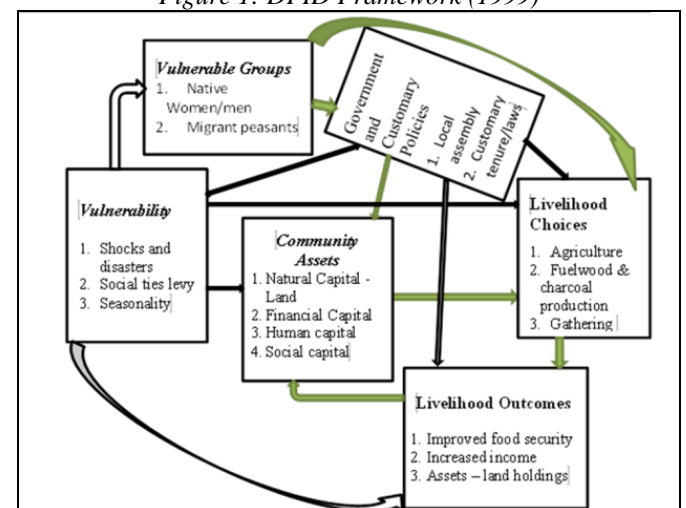


Figure 2: DFID Framework (Modified)

a. CUSTOMARY AUTHORITY IN PERSPECTIVES

Customary lands are lands owned by stools, skins, clans and families and Tindamba in Ghana. Customary lands cover around 80% of all lands in Ghana (Kumbun-Naa yili II, 2006), largely rural lands and some urban lands. According to Kumbun-Naa yili II, (2006) traditional leaders are life line drivers of customs and could play complementary roles in the

government's desire for good governance and poverty reduction among the people. Yeboah and Shaw, (2013) acknowledged this viewpoint as they quoted Article 36(8) of the 1992 constitution of Ghana. As allodial title holders or custodians of stool and skin lands, they are capable of ensuring real access to land, security of tenure and wise use of land resources. These land control and allocation roles constitute the mandatory practices expected of customary authorities (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013).

The roles of customary authorities are much more decentralized compared to the state influence in land deals (Kumbun-Naa Yili II, 2006). By its structure, it has the tendency to serve as safety-net (Thoms, 2008) for the food insecure households. Customary authorities serve to uplift the quality of life and livelihood status of rural households by offering secondary rights to landless peasant households to farm, graze farm animals, gather firewood, crops and fruits that grow in the wild (Thoms, 2008). Traditional leaders are therefore, life-line drivers of customs, and could play complementary roles in the government's desire for good governance and poverty reduction among the people (Kumbun-Naa Yiri II, 2006; Scoones, 2009). As allodial title holders or custodians of stool and skin lands, they are capable of ensuring real access to land, security of tenure and wise use of land resources (Kumbun-Naa Yiri II, 2006).

However, the roles expected of the traditional authorities vary across regions and traditional areas. In most jurisdictions land allocation is specified under the customs and traditions of the areas. The traditions and the customs of these areas prescribe such dispositions (Yaro, 2012), which do not actually serve to mitigate the inequalities among subjects in their allocation of land rights in families. As noted earlier, Yeboah and Shaw, (2013) pointed out how traditional authorities in Kumasi and its environs as well as Tamale and Savelugu actually appropriated lands in their allodial tenure to their benefit, at the expense of the subjects. This disposition of chiefs creates equity challenges in land distribution and affects landless peasants in societies. Due to the arbitrariness of the way traditional authorities exercise and apply customary laws regarding the use of customary lands, influential members of the landowning families join in to divert communal lands to themselves. Traditional institutions therefore serve to obstruct vulnerable people's access to farmland as posited in the DFID framework (DFID, 2000).

Adhikari et al (2004) examined this issue of equity in access to communally held forest resources in Nepal and concluded that poorer people rather had limited access to such community assets. It is therefore in evidence that the influences of traditional heads are capable of mitigating livelihood challenges of subjects, as the framework suggests. However, they are largely responsible for land resource denials and diversions, per their core roles in land allocations, control, inheritance and land use as custodians (Yaro, 2012).

b. CUSTOMARY LAND TENURE PRACTICES IN THE NORTHERN REGIONS

In northern Ghana, customary tenure lands are vested in the skins, clans and families and Tindamba. Land allocation in the three northern regions is primarily by inheritance (ISSER,

2003: Kuusaana et al, 2010), followed by free gift and outright purchases. Due to patriarchal nature of lineage system, males assume dominance in land transfer or inheritance. In Upper West Region for instance, 41 percent of lands is controlled by the family, 35 percent by individuals and 23 percent by Tindamba (Kuusaana et al, 2010). Even though land is vested in the chiefs and Tindamba, families constituted largest interest holders of land, with Tindamba representing the least. In northern Ghana, land allocation is through patrilineal inheritance (ISSER, 2003). However, there are noted drifts of land ownership from the communal modes as held by chiefs towards individualized modes such as family and individuals across northern Ghana.

The Global Land Tool Network at UN-Habitat defines land tenure as "the relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among people, as individuals or groups, with respect to land" (UN-Habitat, 2010c). Payne et al preferred an earlier explanation of land tenure given by the UN-Habitat report (2008) which defined it as "the way land is held or owned by individuals and groups, or the set of relationships legally or customarily defined amongst people with respect to land". They therefore perceived land tenure as a social relation comprising of interwoven sets of rules governing the use of land and how land is owned. This befits the expectations of this study as it makes clear the role of customs and state in establishing policies to guide how members relate with land in terms of acquisition, ownership, use, control and transfer within the communities (Payne and Durand-Lasserve, 2012). It again brought out the two main interests recognized in land ownership – customary and statutory. According to Payne and Durand-Lasserve, (2012), tenure refers to processes of land holding, while property rights deals with those who exercise authority over the uses to which land can be put. The regulations the traditional authorities define to govern land control and allocations are the modes limiting poor people's access to farmlands (DFID, 2000).

c. CUSTOMARY LAND TENURE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS

Customary land tenure system is widely recognized to be the largest tenure sector of land holding in Africa (DFID, 2000: Devendra & Chantalakhana, 2002). Statutory tenure is assumed to be foreign and unknown to the continent from inception of land holding system. According to this viewpoint, statutory system of land holding first entered the cities of Africa through colonialism and spread to remote areas through urban sprawl into adjoining peri-urban centres (Payne and Durand-Lasserve, 2012). Some earlier studies have described the statutory land tenure system as centralized and remote to locals (Kumbun-Naa Yili, 2006). Rights of individuals to land under customary land tenure system is determined by customary authorities at the community levels.

Customary land tenure system has maintained its control over land as communal property over centuries amidst several challenges of social, economic and political orientations (Kasanga et al, 1996: Woodman, 1996). According to Pomevor, (2014), communal heads like chiefs, family and clan heads in the communities assume allodial rights over communal lands while members of the communities hold

usufruct rights. Usufruct is a form of right or interest in land held by a member of landowning family, or a stranger who has been granted such an interest, to make a living from the use of the land. Pomevor, (2014) described this right held by members of the communities as derived rights in land. In referring to judgment passed by Ollenu in law suits, he enumerated four modes of allodial land acquisition – by purchase, gift to the stool or skin, pioneer settlement and conquest. Sources of customary rights to land by traditional authorities include one or a combination of these modes. The most predominant modes in northern Ghana is the pioneer settlement and the conquest (Lentz, 2010: Tsikata and Yaro, 2014).

The ministry of food and agriculture has categorized these rights into use, control, and transfer rights. Studies show that the flexibility in the customary mode of land management is the source of its weakness (Devendra & Chantalakhana, 2002). Other studies have noted that the rights of individuals that guarantee access to land takes the form of use right, control and transfer rights (Ostrom and Hess, 2007).

d. USUFRUCT RIGHTS OR INTEREST IN CUSTOMARY LAND

The framework highlights the barriers poor people face in accessing community the assets. Land is the main resource of interest to this study. The dominant interest in land recognized under the customary tenure is usufruct interest in land. Pomevor, (2014) interchangeably used usufruct title for a type of land ownership bestowed on subordinate member of a family, clan or community by the customs. The use rights only permit the peasant to benefit financially or otherwise from extracting the resources of land. Peasants with use rights are normally settlers or junior members of landowning families (Devendra, & Chantalakhana, 2002). In most communities in Ghana, women or female members of the landowning families and settlers can only have use rights to land through secondary ownership.

Peasants with use rights to land are normally settlers or junior members of landowning families. Other studies noted that these settlers and junior members of the community acknowledge the allodial ownership of land by traditional authority under which they pay allegiance (Pomevor, 2014). Some other studies refer to it as determinate estate or title (Ollenu et al 1985) since its conferment to the subordinate members of the customs of the community does not in any way affect the interest the community holds in the land (Pomevor, 2014). As held by Ollenu, (1962) and Woodman, (1996), indigenes of the traditional area could use any land not occupied within the community, with the permission of the head of the clan or family, in the case of family or clan land. These rights of access which indigenes and other people have do not alienate the allodial interest the skin or stool holds to the land.

The settlers and native peasants who rely on secondary rights to land face the risk of falling into circles of food insecurity, malnutrition and the perpetual poverty brackets. Poor people have been described by Beuchelt, and Virchow (2012), as the marginalized groups of people constituting women, youth, landless peasants and migrant workers.

Peasants' real access to farmland could ameliorate their poverty, while a denial has the tendency of worsening it.

Poverty in this case is a situation of inadequacy in the access to land, and or lack of adequate capacity to manage available resources in the community to one's level of needs (Carter and May, 1999). Landed resources constitute a safety net for the livelihoods sustenance of these groups of people in a society. There is a link between the survival of these people and the nature of rules and regulations set up by customs and traditions with regards to land deals (Devendra & Chantalakhana, 2002). The ways the rules are applied determine the nature of exclusions these people will suffer from.

The control rights are on the other hand is limited to the allodial title holders or senior members of the families. By way of order, use rights holders of land obtain their rights from those with control rights. The third rights – transfer rights – empower the holder to alienate the land and its resources. These are done through land sales, mortgaging or allocations to others (Ostrom and Hess, 2007). Someone with transfer rights has the authority to change ownership of the land completely from the original ownership by transferring both use rights and control rights to the third party.

e. LAND TENURE SECURITY IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER

Land tenure security in most cases refers to a guarantee a farmer has to use land continually without interference from other persons (Bugri, 2008: cited in Kuusaana et al 2010). This conception best describes the tenure security of usufruct users like women and settlers mostly. In most traditional areas the peasants who are not from the landowning families require renewals of their requests for land (Kuusaana et al, 2010). Creating firm and honest relationships as well as being appreciative to the landowners' gestures cement the tenancy and guarantee the use right.

Chiefs are empowered constitutionally to assume allodial interest holdings to lands in trust for their subjects. Yeboah and Shaw, (2013), in reference to Article 36(8) of the 1992 Ghana republican constitution, highlighted the constitutionally mandated roles bestowed on traditional authorities, but pointed out some dilutions, per their observations. The article 36(8) recognized the social obligatory roles of traditional authorities in the service of their communities and the state in land ownership and possession for the utmost benefit of their subjects (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013). These communal leaders formulate rules to govern land under their customary tenure and to determine how land should be retained within the communities as heritage. These rules regulated how the female members of the community relate with the land, but they vary from one tenure system to another, and also, across management systems (Owusu et al, 2007). Traditional areas that are patrilineal in inheritance exclude females from land inheritance for the fear of alienating their ancestral heritage to other people (Agarwal, 1989: Rugadya et al, 2004: Owusu et al, 2007: Kuusaana et al, (2010).

f. *CLAN AND FAMILY HEADS AS KEY ACTORS IN LAND DEALS*

Yeboah and Shaw (2013) acknowledged that customary land tenure practices across traditions have varied over time and space. Initially, chiefs, in collaboration with Tindamba, presided over land and allocate land to meet livelihood needs of the subjects, and also settle disputes and other issues relating to land allocations, ownership, use and transfer (Lentz, 2010). These practices of the traditional authorities were meant to ensure enhanced livelihoods and development at the rural and peri-urban communities. As time passed by the traditional authorities began to engage in land deals that safeguarded their interests at the expense of their subjects (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013). Communal lands under their allodial hold came under the ownership and control of the clans and families of royal lineages (Field Data, 2016). Earlier on, Dittoh (2002) chiefs are only presiding over land, but clans and families are in charge of actual land allocations to their members and strangers. According to him, chiefs only preside over uncultivated lands and could only give out unoccupied lands to settlers who request for land.

There are debates as to whether communal or individual interest holdings in land could provide best welfare services to landless peasants (Chimhowu and Woodhouse, 2006). While some propose individualization of land rights for the purpose of enhancing productivity and clarity in title registration (World Bank, 1975; de Soto, 2000), others think that promoting communal interests in land will guarantee the secondary rights of landless poor people (IIED, 1999; Toulmin and Quan, 2000; Toulmin et al, 2002; cited in Chimhowu and Woodhouse, 2006). Wading into the arguments, the study think that while individualized title interest allows clarity of ownership and gives tenure security, in equally monopolizes access to land as land is passed on to lineages as heritage. Peasants that are not related to landowning families would have to depend on the goodwill of these families for farmlands (Field Data, 20116).

C. *MODES OF LAND ALLOCATION IN NORTHERN GHANA*

Peasants' access to farmlands is subject to the set of customary rules governing their relationships with the farmlands. According to Dittoh, (2002), landowners attach conditions to members and landless peasants' access to communal lands under their hold, mindful of the traditional or customary rules of the areas. He however ruled out any direct demands from the landowning families as compensations for giving land out to landless people in the northern regions of Ghana. However, Lentz, (2010) noted a demand by Tindamba in the Lambunssie district for Dagaba settlers to supply animals meant for pacification of the earth-gods on lands under their usufruct interests. The payment of compensation was instituted to remind the settlers at all times of their status to avoid future litigations on such lands.

As noted earlier in literature, there are several modes of land allocation across Ghana. The prominent modes in northern Ghana are free gift, inheritance and outright purchase (Owusu et al, 2007; Kuusaana et al, 2010). On the contrary, the

traditions in southern practice share tenancy aside inheritance and outright purchase, as in northern Ghana purchase (Owusu et al, 2007). Share tenancy is a structured compensatory mode used by landlords in most southern communities to benefit from the use of their land. Share tenancy is a rental status depicting landlord-tenant relations under customary law, containing the contract between landlord and the tenant (Pomevor, 2014). The most widely used forms of shared tenancy are the Abusa (1/3) and Abunu (1/2). In the case of Abusa (1/3), the tenant bears the cost of production and so the landlord is entitled to only one-third of the profit accruing from the output. In the other case the landlord bears the cost while the tenant only manages the farm. In sharing the proceeds, they both part with one-half (1/2) of the profit (Pomevor, 2014). These tenancy agreements are a predominant practice in the southern Ghana, among the Akan ethnic communities (Appiah, 2012).

Landless peasants will only take whichever tenancy regime between the two, that the landlords decide to practice. Research shows that Abusa is the dominant practice in these communities (Agidi, 1976; Appiah, 2012). The studies observed that most landlords are not capable of prefinancing the contractual demands required under the Abunu share tenancy. Landlords rather preferred that peasant tenants take the risks involved in production (Pomevor, 2014). They therefore opt for the contractual agreement of Abusa. This pushes the peasants into taking the risks of farming, mindful of the share accruing to the landlords.

D. *SUMMARY*

Despite the high expectations that Ghana entrust in the Nanumba traditional area as food basket, to salvaging her from threats of food insecurity issues, lots of the farmers in this area operate on subsistence basis due to land tenure issues based on customs, litigations and conflicts. Land commoditization is emerging within the area and this has served to heighten issues of ownership and control to land (Yaro, 2012). Even within family levels, clan and family heads embark on deals leading to alienations and exclusions of family members from land access. This appears more serious when females within land owning families are denied direct access to landed assets of families. Settlers and females as well as males from landless families seem to suffer same fates of difficult access to farmlands.

Literature has been extensive on roles of traditional authorities in land deals and how landless people' access to land could be affected. Studies have also questioned the poor people's access to farmland, and how that poses as threats to improved productivity and livelihoods in the agrarian economy (Okojie & Shimeles, 2006). The conceptual framework demonstrates clearly, the influences landowning agencies could have on peasants' chances of enhancing livelihoods. It was expected that literature links these impacts to specific aspects of livelihoods that are affected by the activities of these traditional authorities. A gap exists on the impacts of access to farmland on farm outputs of peasants as well as on peasants' household food security drive. A threat on peasants' household food security is a recipe for widespread hunger, inequality and deprivations in communities of the

northern Ghana (Yaro, 2012). The prevalence of these ills in Nanumba traditional area constitutes an affront to rural development as they impact on the livelihood sustenance of the peasants in the traditional area.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. STUDY AREA

Nanumba traditional area extends across Nanumba north and south districts. Bimbilla is the traditional capital with two key delineated areas aligned to the two gates of the traditional area. Three quarters (88.2%) of households in the district are into agriculture, while 97.7 percent of peasant households in the area are into crop farming (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Yam, maize, groundnuts, cassava and beans production require good soil for bumper outputs. Nanumba traditional area is well noted for its contributions to food supply in Ghana. Land as a factor of production, therefore, constitutes the bedrock of livelihoods in the Nanumba traditional area.

The study structured Nanumba traditional area into three sub-area, according to the two gates of chieftaincy lines, and the apex throne – the paramountcy – in Bimbilla. The ascendants to the throne at Bimbilla are from the two gates – Gbogma-Yili and Bangdi-Yili. Each of these gates has a line of rotation in ascending order to the apex skin in each gate. The study area is categorized into Bimbilla, Bakpaba and Dokpam sub-traditional areas. Bimbilla has a household population of three thousand nine hundred and fifteen (3,915) households, with three thousand three hundred and eighty five houses.

Bakpaba is a high skin for the Gbogma-Yili (Gbogma – Lions; Yili - village or settlement) gate. Bakpaba is about 18 km north of Bimbilla, towards Yendi, with a population of two thousand eight hundred and eighty-three (2,883) people. It has a total household population of three hundred and eighty (380). Bakpaba was selected because the apex skin at Nakpa was yet empty. This area is predominantly a peasant community. Bakpaba is predominantly integrated with Konkomba settler ethnic group, however, there were other minority ethnic groups.

Dokpam is among the seats of the highest skins in the gate of Bangdi-Yili (Bang – Wrist-ring/bangle) family. It is situated about 17 km from Bimbilla, along Salaga road. It has a total population of one thousand six hundred and ninety-one (1,691) with male population of 52.6 percent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014)). According to Ghana statistic service report, (2014), the household population is about one hundred and eighty-eight (188), with two hundred and eighty-eight (288) houses. Dokpam seat was yet empty and awaiting a substantive occupant. This community is well integrated with settlers for centuries. The major settler ethnic groups are the Konkomba, Basare and some smaller ethnic compositions. The 2010 population and housing census (2014) gave a total population for the entire study site as thirty one thousand, four hundred (31,400). Female population is about 51.4 percent of the total population of the community (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The characteristics of the study areas that

informed their choice include being the holders and perpetrators of nanumba traditions and customs.

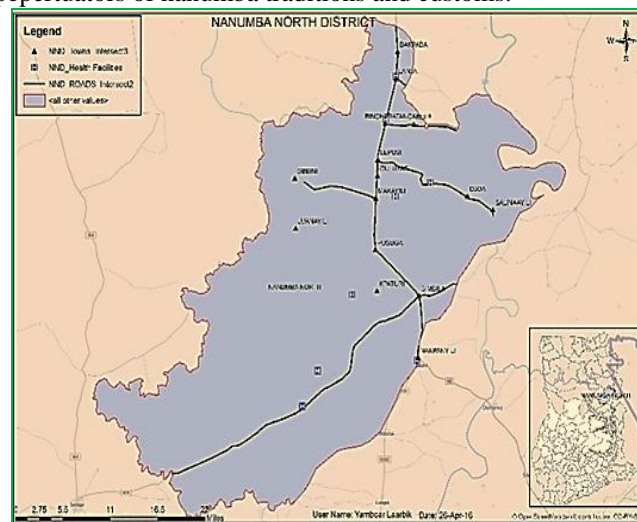


Figure 3: Map of Nanumba North District (GSS, 2014)
Adopted

B. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopted a case study design. Case study is a type of design used in research to do detailed and focused examination of a single phenomenon within a specified coverage (Rubin, & Babbie, 2007). According to Abbey, & Eckstein, (2002), a case study is a technical issue on which researchers concentrate on some aspects of it to report and interpret their observations. For Yin, (2003), it is an empirical study on contemporary issue within its real-life context.

This study employed a blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches to describe and interpret the peasants' modes of access to farmland in the Nanumba traditional area and its influences on peasants' farm output. The essence of this combination was to compensate for the inadequacies of each technique, and also for the fact that a mixture of descriptive or attribute and numerical data will serve to triangulate findings emerging from each method.

The study had a reference household population of 4,483. It selected respondents using multiple techniques such as purposive sampling to determine the categories of respondents – household heads, chiefs or representatives and key informants; stratified sampling technique to categorize the study sites into three; and proportionate representative sampling to ensure equitable sizes of respondents from each study site. It collected data using multiple sources and techniques of data collection. The sources were the primary and secondary data, while the techniques included questionnaire, interview and focused group discussions (FGDs). The use of case study enabled the collection of data with different instruments to enhance triangulated analysis and interpretation of phenomena from the worldview of respondents.

C. DATA ANALYSIS PLAN

The analysis was largely descriptive, basing emerging arguments on issues on the opinions and viewpoints of

respondents as they were displayed on tables of frequencies and percentages, and figures. The study adopted statistical analytical techniques like descriptive statistics, using tools like frequencies and cross tabulations to establish and discuss the relationships among variables of quantitative nature as well as a blend of qualitative and quantitative variables. It also used figures and graphs or charts to display pictorial data for further analysis.

IV. RESULTS

The study was purposed to examine modes of farmland allocation in the Nanumba traditional area and how equitable it had been from the perspectives of peasants. It sought to identify and explain if the allocations posed some challenges to peasants' farm outputs and consequently, peasants' household food security. It focused on peasants' mode of access and ownership of farmland, mode of Access to Farmlands by locality (study sites) and, demand for compensation by locality, ownership of farmland by Locality of respondent, mode of access to land by gender, household size and residential status, and several other parameters. It considered peasants' farmland sizes, farm outputs and personal farmland holdings as variables that underpin the livelihood strategies and outcomes of peasants. It examined the linkages among these variables from the perspectives of the peasants in terms of peasants' ability to meet their income needs while maintaining household food security (Myers, 1997: citing Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994).

A. ORIGIN OF RESPONDENT AND FARMLAND SIZE BY STUDY SITES/LOCALITY

The study explored land allocation modes and how these modes were likely to influence peasants' farm outputs. Table 1A-E displays the results of the analysis.

(A) Locality	Origin of Respondent	Modes of Access to Farmland		
		Inherited	Freely Given	Purchased
All	Native	51.1% (72)	48.9% (69)	0
Localities	Settler	28.7% (27)	68.1% (64)	3.2% (3)
Bimbilla	Native	48.8% (60)	51.2% (63)	0
	Settler	23.8% (19)	72.5% (58)	3.8% (3)
Bakpaba	Native	50% (6)	50% (6)	0
	Settler	33.9% (3)	66.7% (6)	0
Dokpam	Native	100% (6)	0	0
	Settler	100% (5)	0	0
(B) Locality	Origin of Respondent	Farmland Size by Origin		
		1 – 4 Acres	5 Plus Acres	Total
All	Native	63.8% (90)	36.2% (51)	141
Localities	Settler	77.7% (73)	22.3% (21)	94
Bimbilla	Native	65% (80)	35% (43)	123
	Settler	81.2% (65)	18.8% (15)	80
Bakpaba	Native	50% (6)	50% (6)	12
	Settler	44.4% (4)	55.6% (5)	9
Dokpam	Native	66.7% (4)	33.3% (2)	6
	Settler	80% (4)	20% (1)	5
(C) Locality	Sex of Respondent	Farmland Size by Sex		
		1 – 4 Acres	5 Plus Acres	Total
All	Male	62.1% (108)	37.9% (66)	174
Localities	Female	90.2% (55)	9.8% (6)	61
Bimbilla	Male	64.4% (94)	35.5% (52)	146
	Female	89.5% (51)	10.5% (6)	57
Bakpaba	Male	35.3% (6)	64.7% (11)	17
	Female	100% (4)	0%	4
Dokpam	Male	72.8% (8)	27.3% (3)	11
	Female	0	0	0
(D) Locality	Origin of Respondent	Estimated Annual Farm Output		
		Up to 2,700	2,800 or More	Total

Locality	Origin of Respondent	Estimated Income (GHS)	Personal Land Holdings in Acres			
			No land	1 – 4	5 – 10	11 or More
All	Native	71.6% (101)	28.4% (40)			141
Localities	Settler	71.3% (67)	28.7% (27)			94
Bimbilla	Native	70.2% (87)	29.3% (36)			123
	Settler	73.8% (59)	26.2% (21)			80
Bakpaba	Native	75% (9)	25% (3)			12
	Settler	66.7% (6)	33.3% (3)			9
Dokpam	Native	83.3% (5)	16.7% (1)			6
	Settler	40.0% (2)	60.0% (3)			5
(E) Locality	Estimated Income (GHS)	Personal Land Holdings in Acres				
		No land	1 – 4	5 – 10	11 or More	
All	Up to 2,700 or less	42.9% (72)	36.3% (61)	15.5% (26)	5.4% (9)	
Localities	2,800 or More	37.3% (25)	31.3% (21)	16.4% (11)	14.9% (10)	
Bimbilla	Up to 2,700 or less	43.8% (64)	37% (54)	13.7% (20)	5.5% (8)	
	2,800 or More	35.1% (20)	33.3% (19)	15.8% (9)	15.8% (9)	
Bakpaba	Up to 2,700 or less	53.3% (8)	26.7% (4)	13.3% (2)	6.7% (1)	
	2,800 or More	50% (3)	33.3% (2)	0	16.7% (1)	
Dokpam	Up to 2,700 or less	0	42.9% (3)	57.1% (4)	0	
	2,800 or More	50% (2)	0	50% (2)	0	

Table 1: Cross Tabulation of Peasants' Farmland Access and Farm Output Relations

Table 1A showed that inheritance and free gifts were the dominant modes of peasants' access to farmlands in Nanumba traditional area. Free gift appeared to be the dominant mode (56.6%) of peasants' access to their farmlands. However, there was a dichotomy of dominance, as natives were observed to claim inheritance to their farmland, while settler dominated in the free gift mode of access to farmlands. It revealed that both natives (30.6%) and settlers (11.5%) could claim some level of inheritance to their farmlands. This claim reflected across all the study sites, especially, in Dokpam, where all the peasants (100%) laid claim to inheriting their farmlands from their families. However, the analysis showed that settlers across the study sites had fair share of farmlands as natives, so there was no significant difference between settlers' access to farmland and those of natives.

B. FARMLAND SIZE OF PEASANTS BY LOCALITY

Table 1B gives indications that peasants had challenges accessing large farmland sizes for farming. 69.4 percent of the peasants could only lay claim to farmland sizes up to 4 acres (see table 1B). A greater proportion of peasants in both Bimbilla (71.4%) and Dokpam (72.7%) had very small farmland sizes to pursue their livelihood prospects. Table 1B showed that both natives (63.8%) and settlers (77.7%) face similar challenges of access to farmland for livelihood strategies.

As shown in table 1C, the study explored the gendered access to farmland across the localities under study to identify and explain any inequalities in access. The examination of farmland sizes by gender across the study sites shows that a majority of peasants in both sexes could only access farmland sizes ranging between 1 and 4 acres across the localities (see table 1C). However, the analysis showed a remarkably gendered variation in the levels of peasants' access to farmland (5 or more acres of farmland - 37.9% against 9.8% male and female respectively). While Bimbilla and Bakpaba present bleak picture for female's access to farmland, there

was no data from the Dokpam study site due to non-participation of females due to challenges of traditional norms of the area.

C. PEASANTS' ESTIMATED ANNUAL FARM OUTPUTS BY LOCALITY

In pursuing the relationships between the size of farmland and income generated from farmland, the study examined the estimated incomes of the peasants using cross tabulations. Table 1D shows the estimated incomes of peasants from the three localities. The analysis shows a generally low farm outputs earnings of a larger proportion of peasants across the three study sites. Results from table 1D shows that peasants (71.5%) generally earn incomes far below GHS 2,800.00 annually. Likewise, 28.5 percent of the peasants across the study sites claimed to earn incomes above GHS 2,800 from their annual farm outputs. However, analysis showed an exceptional case of 60 percent of settlers from Dokpam claiming to earn annual incomes within this category.

D. SIZE OF PERSONAL LAND ASSETS AMONG INCOME GROUPINGS OF PEASANTS BY LOCALITY

The study further explored the impact that the income level of a peasant could have on the ability of the peasant to secure landed assets. It aimed at understanding the land tenure practices in the Nanumba traditional area in the context of its influence on landless people's ability to farm, increase income and secure landed assets for themselves. Though, land is held in common by allodial titles and is inalienable in the traditional area, land sales around the urbanizing towns are in operations (see table 1A). Peasants facing evictions sometimes had opportunities to express their interests in purchasing the land parcels. It therefore looked at the various income levels as against the size of landed assets of peasants by the study sites. Table 4 displays the results of the findings.

A. 4.5 Level of Incomes and Peasants' Personal Asset Holdings

In general, table 1E showed that 41.3 percent (97) of peasants across the income groupings could not lay claim to any landed assets to their households. The study observed that up 42.9 percent of them (235) were peasants who earn incomes up to GHS 2,700.00 or below. Despite the earlier claims of ownership to farmlands, landlessness among peasants was observed across the study sites. The interview results showed that some of the peasants in this category were settlers who had just spent less than four years in the area.

Examining those peasants who claimed they possess landed assets of 5 -10 acres and above 11 acres, the ratios were 15.5 percent against 16.4 percent; and 5.4 percent as against 14.9 percent for lower and higher income earning peasants respectively. These observations point to the conclusions that incomes earned by peasants had influence on the asset holdings of peasants. It shows that peasants who earned higher incomes from their farms were likely to afford more assets than those who are not.

B. 4.6 Prevalence of Households Food Security

The study looked at some demographic data of respondents as obtained from the questionnaire instrument. The essence of this data was to give the study a clearer understanding of the background of the respondents in terms of household size and residential status, and several other parameters to explain the ability of peasants in the traditional area to provide food needs of the households across the farming seasons (see table 2). The study also looked at how peasants managed farm products, whether households ran shortage of food, nature of the food shortage in the neighbourhoods of participants, and how they managed the shortages (see table 3).

Locality	Household (HH) Size	Residential Status of Respondent				Percentage Per Size of Household
		Rented tenant	Own house	Family house	Rent free	
All Localities	Bimbilla	1%	34%	46.8%	5.9%	
	Bakpaba	0%	47.6%	52.4%	0%	
	Dokpam	0%	100%	0%	0%	
Bimbilla	HH of 5 Or Less	6.7% (2)	17.4% (12)	13.0% (12)	33.3% (4)	14.8% (30)
	HH of 6 - 10	23.5% (28)	26.9% (32)	42.9% (51)	6.7% (8)	58.6% (119)
	HH Above 10	0 (25)	46.3% (29)	53.7% (29)	0	26.6% (54)
Bakpaba	HH of 5 Or Less	0	28.6% (2)	71.4% (5)	0	33.3% (7)
	HH of 6 - 10	0	54.5% (6)	45.5% (5)	0	52.4% (11)
	HH Above 10	0	66.7% (2)	33.3% (1)	0	14.3% (3)
Dokpam	HH of 5 Or Less	0 (3)	100% (3)	0	0	27.3% (3)
	HH of 6 - 10	0 (3)	100% (3)	0	0	27.3% (3)
	HH Above 10	0 (5)	45.5% (5)	0	0	45.5% (5)
Percentage per Residential Dwelling		12.8% (30)	38.3% (90)	38.7% (91)	5.1% (12)	

Table 2: Demographic Data of Respondents

Peasants in the Nanumba traditional area are observed to have very large household sizes (see table 2). The household size of peasants is dominated by household range of 6 to 10 persons (56.6%), followed by household size of more than 10 persons (26.4%). However, Dokpam sub-traditional area was observed to be predominantly made of household size range of more than 10 memberships. Table 2 also showed that peasants housed their households either in family residence (38.7%) or in their own houses (38.3%). The study noted that rented residence was observed only in the urbanized community like Bimbilla. While peasants in the Dokpam (100%) sub-traditional area lived largely in their own houses, those of the Bakpaba (52.4%) and Bimbilla (46.8%) sub-traditional areas resided largely in houses built by family members.

A - Locality	HH Output OK	Incidence of Food Sale in Households (HHs)		
		True	False	Not sure
All Localities	Yes	95.7% (225)	3.8% (9)	0.4% (1)
Bimbilla	No			
	Yes	95.6% (194)	3.9% (8)	0.5% (1)
Bakpaba	No			
	Yes	95.2% (20)	4.8% (1)	0
Dokpam	No			
	Yes	100% (11)	0	0
B - Locality	HH Output OK	Prevalence of Food Shortage among Neighbours		

		Mitigation Measures Taken during Food Shortage		
		Borrow Food	Seek Help	Sale of Labour/Animals
All Localities	Yes	66% (155)		34% (80)
	No			
Bimbilla	Yes	66% (134)		34% (69)
	No			
Bakpaba	Yes	66.7% (14)		33.3% (7)
	No			
Dokpam	Yes	63.6% (7)		36.4% (4)
	No			
C - Locality	Incidence of Food Shortage			
All Localities	Yes	26% (61)	23.8% (56)	38.3% (90)
	No			
Bimbilla	Yes	22.2% (45)	25.1% (51)	40% (81)
	No			
Bakpaba	Yes	52.3% (11)	9.5% (2)	19% (4)
	No			
Dokpam	Yes	45.5% (5)	27.3% (3)	27.3% (3)
	No			

Table 3: Cross Tabulation of Household Food Security

On the question of whether peasants' farm output could feed the households till next season, 71 percent (167) of the peasants responded in affirmation. However, 95.7 percent of these peasants confirmed that they sold food stuff to supplement the income needs of the households. The study also observed issues of food shortages among peasants (66%), especially between June and July each year (see table 3B). Table 3C showed that peasants either borrowed food from friends and produce buying agents or sold labour to mitigate the impacts of the food shortages on their household nutrition needs.

Emerging concerns: Why couldn't peasants who inherited land claim land as assets? The situation here seemed bad, but could the impressions of communal land tenure interest holdings be the cause for them not claiming ownerships to land under their holdings?

V. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

The study had targeted two hundred and fifty participants for the study. The success rate was 94 percent, with two hundred and thirty-five (235) participants taking part in the study. Aside this number, twenty-two (22) participants were used for the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. They were two groups (5 and 6 membership) of male participants and one group (7 members) of female participants used for the focus group discussions. The study separated females from males because preliminary investigations showed that female participants would not express their views if they were mixed with males in same discussions. Five other key informants were used for the in-depth interview.

A. MODES OF LAND ALLOCATION IN NANUMBA TRADITIONAL AREA

Analysis from table 1A indicated that both settlers and natives inherited their farmlands from their immediate families. However further findings from table 1E showed a larger proportion of landless peasants. The results from the interviews showed that settlers who maintained perfect

relationship with their landlords had the opportunity of maintaining their use rights to lands given them. Likewise, such usufruct right holders could pass on their usufruct rights to their descendants. A specific question was posed as to whether settlers who maintain good standing with their landlords have opportunity of holding such parcels of land as long as they can. In response he said,

"It will not necessarily be declared to you a settler to own the land. The landlord will not disturb you, so far as you comport yourself by respecting the tenure agreement and also do not interfere in their internal affairs" (field data, 2017).

Settlers, as have been noted already, could only inherit the usufruct interest the traditional authority granted to the parents. This explains why the settlers could claim inheritance to communally held lands of the traditional area.

During the interview sessions with a representative of the traditional authority from one of the gates, he indicated,

"Landowners in this area will claim lands given to usufruct users if they must expand their farms, or cater for the request of a member of the landholding family (Field data, 2017).

This statement goes contrary to earlier observations by Pomevor, (2014) that usufruct rights were held in perpetuity and only reverted back to community upon abandonment. This confirms the changes in land deals noted by Yeboah and Shaw, (2013), which they attributed to population hikes. Likewise, the study revealed milder access challenges in smaller communities.

A 41 year old peasant in one of this traditional towns remarked;

"Land belongs to families and no stranger is allowed to own any portion of it. If settlers own our land we cannot banish such persons if they are found to exhibit anti-social characters. We rather give the land free to the settlers" (Field Data, 2017).

The customary position at the rural settlement varied divergently from what pertained in semi-urban areas where population growth drives settlement expansions. This statement bothers significantly on the tenure security of usufruct right users of land in the traditional area. It is probable that settlers' land sizes may continue to dwindle due to some of these acts by landowners. It also proves the point that landowners can confiscate farmlands of strangers and give it to family members.

B. FARMLAND SIZES OF PEASANTS BY LOCALITY

The incidence of widespread meager farmland sizes was observed among peasants across the study sites (see table 1B). The study showed a modal farmland size used by a peasant as 2 acres. Despite the prevalence of fair access to farmlands by all peasants, natives were observed to have better access to farmlands than settlers. The study showed that 77.7 percent of the settlers had access to a maximum of 4 acres of farmland for their farming businesses, compared to 63.8 percent of the natives. This had the tendency of limiting the livelihood choices of the peasants, given the modal farmland size observed among the peasants' farm sizes. The study observed that households' ability to diversify their income earning is a necessary condition to building resilience against external

threats and shocks. As noted by Barrett et al, (2004), assets availability is a key factor to rural households' ability to diversify livelihoods. Farmland access difficulties affect the decisions of the peasants in deciding on what crop to grow, or type of animal to rear. It is possible that the size of farmland could influence households to engage in more than one crop production or animal farming. It could also allow for extensive farming of yam, a cash crop, most preferable in the area. This crop requires vast farmland size to allow for rotation annually or biannually. Even though all peasants suffer from these impacts, settlers dominated. As it was observed, a settler could be evicted to allow landowner expand his farm. This limits the level of investments peasants put into the farming business in trying to improve upon the fertility of the farmlands (Field Data, 2017).

The study further observed some slight variations in the impacts across localities (study sites). In Bimbilla sub-traditional area peasants were all affected, however, there were slight variations in the levels of impacts with regards to number of peasants involved. While 35 percent of natives could lay claim to 5 or more acres of farmland sizes, only 18.8 percent of settlers were observed. This situation was better in the Bakpaba sub-traditional area. While 50 percent of natives had 5 or more acres of farmlands, settler peasants claiming similar farmland sizes were in the majority (55.6%). The Dokpam sub-traditional area observed a marginal difference in farmland sizes between settlers (33.3%) and natives (52.4%).

The variations in the level of access peasants had to farmlands could be explained by availability of farmlands in the traditional area. According to the report of Ghana Statistical Service, rural areas in the Nanumba north district have more farmlands than the urban centres (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014)). In effect, peasants in the Bakpaba sub-traditional area had relatively better access to farmlands and stood greater chances of practicing fallow systems as is the norm in farming areas.

The study thinks that the decisions chiefs, clan and family heads in the Nanumba traditional area take with regards to land ownership; control, use and transfer have some level of impacts on the livelihoods of peasants in the area (Owusu et al, 2007).

C. GENDER OF PEASANTS AND FARMLAND SIZES

The study examined the farmland sizes of peasants in relation to whether a peasant is male or female. From literature, females have equally greater responsibilities as the males in terms of household upkeep. Also, the background information of the peasants showed that females were household heads, and recorded large household sizes. The total of peasants who could farm up to 4 acres of farmland was 163, constituting 69.4 percent of the peasants under the study. The study observed that 66.4 percent of this number was male peasants. However, among a total of 72 peasants who claimed they had farmlands of sizes 5 or more acres, only 9.8 percent were females as against 37.9 percent of males (see table 1C). As corroborated by opinions of the participants of both in-depth interview and FGDs, the customary land tenure practices in the study area do not regard women on land deals (Field Data, 2017). This scenario was observed in other places

in Ghana like the Upper East and West regions of Ghana (Agbosu et al, 2007; Owusu et al, 2008), and even in Uganda (Rugadya et al, 2004).

Again, relating this observation to the modal farmland size observed, females were not better off in terms of livelihood struggles. It was further observed that no female in the Bakpaba and Dokpam sub-traditional area recorded farmland size in that range. Within the lower range of farmland sizes about 90 percent of the females were found, despite the enormity of their responsibility. This phenomenon puts the burden of women in a perpetual fix, with no or limited alternatives for their livelihoods. Table 1C reveals that places that experience some levels of urbanization and settler infiltration, like Bimbilla and Bakpaba sub-traditional areas, had female involvement in land related livelihoods. As noted earlier, native females barely engaged in farming activities. In Dokpam sub-traditional area, no female responded to the instruments. Likewise, very few females had farmland sizes above five acres of land. Juxtaposing this with the population structure of the traditional area, there may be marginal influences on the total output from households (Owusu et al, 2007) in this area. The economy of the area invariably excludes the contributions to production of 51 percent of its population.

D. ORIGIN OF PEASANTS AND OUTPUT FROM FARM

The study also examined the outputs peasants derived from their engagement in the farming businesses in the traditional area. Generally, the study observed low farm output among peasants and across localities under study. It observed that 71.5 percent of the peasants earned income of GHS 2700.00 or lower. This seemed to reflect the size of farmlands the majority of the peasants used for the farming businesses. Natives dominated in this category of income earners with 51.8 percent, while settlers constituted 35 percent. The difference was likely to be explained by the differences in the representations on the sample. The study observed that peasants from Bimbilla sub-traditional area constituted 86.9 percent of the low income earners.

On the other hand, the study did not observed any significant difference in incomes earned by settlers and natives in the Bakpaba sub-traditional area. However, in Dokpam sub-traditional area a majority of settlers were observed within the high income category. Juxtaposing the household sizes of a majority of the peasants observed (6 and 10 members) and the level of farm output recorded point to a prevalence of lack in a majority of the households of the peasants. Asset accumulation comes when savings occur in a society. What is the nature of asset formation among peasants in the light of low outputs from farms?

E. PERSONAL LAND ASSETS OF PEASANTS BY LOCALITY

The study further examined the land asset holdings of peasants in respect with their farm earnings. The essence was to ascertain if the willingness or otherwise of landowners to release land to peasants impacted on the asset holdings of peasants. It was observed that 41.3 percent (97) of the

peasants had no claim to any land asset at all. The study revealed that a majority of high income earners in Bakpaba and Dokpam sub-traditional areas were settlers. This presupposes that this category of peasants would have challenges purchasing land since land sale was not practiced in the areas. This was different in the Bimbilla sub-traditional area, as sale of land was an emerging issue and farmer evictions (70.4%) were gaining momentum due to urbanization issues.

The UN human development index reports showed that increased income from livelihood strategies of households is capable of enhancing the asset holdings of households (UNDP, 1990; cited in Desai, 1991). The study showed that peasants whose farmlands were 5 acres or more dominated in the higher income categories of the peasants income classifications. These groups of peasants had much claims to wielding larger acreage of personal land assets. Farmland size therefore had significant linkages with higher incomes earned from farm outputs as well as asset holdings.

F. PEASANTS' HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY

The peasants in the Nanumba traditional area were observed to have very large household sizes. This situation was observed across the study sites. This finding corroborated the assertions of the census data that observed average household size of 9 persons in the Nanumba district (GSS, 2014). The traditional area practices and cherishes extended family ties as against nuclear family system (GSS, 2014: Field Data, 2017). Given the large household sizes and the food and income requirements of such households, peasants found it difficult meeting their household needs. The peasants had to sell food stuff to raise income for health, clothing and education needs of households, aside the utility bills. These put much stress on the food stocks of peasants, causing seasonal food shortages among peasants' households. As noted by Carter and May, (1999), the peasants' food and income poverty stemmed from inadequate access to farmland and maybe, lack of requisite skills to manage the available resources to them.

VI. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. SUMMARY

The most predominant modes of land allocation in the Nanumba traditional area were observed to include free gift, inheritance and purchase, in order of prevalence. It was also observed that both natives and settlers relied largely on free gifts for their farmlands. It also came to light that both natives and settlers could claim some levels of inheritance to their farmlands from their immediate families. However, data triangulation from FGDs and key informant interviews explained that communally held lands of the traditional area was inalienable from the allodial hold. Peasants' claim of ownership and inheritance were tenable under usufruct rights bestowed on settlers and natives alike based on the levels of

their integration in the traditional area. The peasants only inherited the use rights and not ownerships of the farmlands.

It was also discovered that peasants had difficulties accessing large acres of land for their farming endeavors. Both settlers and natives were observed across the study sites to exhibit similar level of access difficulties, though, settlers were heavily disadvantaged. Likewise, female members of the landowning families suffered similar fates as settlers in accessing farmlands.

The study further explored the relationships between the peasants' farm outputs as against the farmland sizes. Peasants were observed largely to earn annual incomes of GHS 2,700 or lower. In effect the low income earning peasants were dominated by those who could not inherit farmlands.

However, peasants who inherited their farmlands were observed to be in the majority of peasants earning more than GHS 2800.00 annually. They constituted 35 percent, while peasants who could not inherit farmland were only 15 percent. The observations propelled a tentative conclusion that peasants with rights to inherit farmlands stood greater chances of earning more than those who could not. A contribution by Lele (1975) to reasons why interventions on rural developments failed to effect real change in the livelihoods of rural peasants was a way of acknowledging the impacts of farmland size on income earnings of peasants. She therefore suggested that rural development projects should inculcate land tenure issues on their policy plans to ensure peasants had adequate farmland sizes to work on (Lele, 1975). As posited by DFID framework (2000), the study showed that access to land is key to success of agricultural projects aimed at livelihoods enhancement.

Further analysis showed that those whose farm output was GHS 2,800.00 or over were composed of 35.4 percent of those who had free gifts of their farmlands and 24 percent of those who inherited their farmlands. Still, in examining within income levels, out of the 168 peasants with low income, those who inherited their farmlands were 38 percent, while those with free gifts of farmlands constituted 60 percent. This shows that mode of land access has some form of relations with level of income earned, since the farmland size was slightly influenced by the mode of access. For instance peasants who had better relations with land owners had relatively larger farmland sizes, and in consequence, earned higher outputs from their farms.

Comparing the earnings of the same categories of peasants, those who inherited their farmlands (52%) had dominated in the high income categories, while those who were given farmlands were only 47.8 percent in the high income category. The mode of access to farmland influenced the size of farmlands peasants could farm on. This might have explained the variations in the income levels of peasants.

Likewise, if peasants succeeded in increasing their earnings from farm activities, they stood better chances of securing land parcels for their households as wealth and store of value (DFID, 2000). It was observed that 41.2 percent of the peasants had no personal land at all. However the study noted that 74.2 percent of these peasants without personal land holdings earned incomes below incomes GHS 2800.00 annually. The study further observed positive links between peasants' mode of access to land and farmland size; and the

size of farmland and annual incomes earned by peasants. As posited by UN human development index reports (1990), increased household earnings are a necessary condition for households' ability to expand asset holdings.

The study also showed that peasants in the Nanumba traditional area had challenges meeting the food requirements of their households yearly. The demand for household income, health and education needs of wards of peasants, and the social responsibility expected of peasants as members of social groupings in the community put much stress on the meager farm outputs of peasants. Aside school fees, they had to meet the clothing needs of the households especially children during festivals. Others cited hospital bills as some of the challenges that compel them to sell the food stuff. Likewise, the spirit of oneness that informs the extended family system of the area serves to compel peasants, just as other members of the community, into assisting one another in weddings, outdoorings, and funerals. These occasions require fervent monetary contributions from others as forms of support. According to the interview results, the prevalence of the occasions is the main drain of the finances of households (field data, 2016).

B. CONCLUSION

- ✓ The dominant modes of peasants' access to farmlands were free gifts followed by inheritance. Settler peasants access farmlands largely through free gifts, while native inherited their farmlands. The modes of land access limited peasants' chances of diversifying their livelihood choices to only food crop farming. Peasants access only smaller farmland sizes, a maximum of 4 acres. However, a majority of peasants in this category of farmland size actually operated modally on 2 acres farmland sizes across the study sites.
- ✓ Farmland sizes were observed to correspond positively with levels of farm outputs leading, in most cases, to peasants claiming some improvement in asset holdings. Peasants who were observed to have large farmland sizes had claims to higher returns from their farms. Higher incomes from livelihood strategies were also noted to enhance asset holdings of households. The research concludes, therefore, that farmland sizes have strong relation with enhanced asset holdings of peasants.
- ✓ Female members of the landowning families had similar difficulties in accessing adequate farmland sizes, and are the most affected in the access challenges.
- ✓ The prevalence of food shortages among peasants' households was widespread across the traditional area. Peasants' inability to diversify income earnings limited their capacity to meet the income needs of their households without depleting their food stocks. The study concludes that households of peasants in the Nanumba traditional area are food insecure and could be open to further impacts of poverty and deprivation.
- *6.3 Recommendations*
- ✓ The study recommends that the government of Ghana, through the local governance system should make conscious policies to enhance farmland holdings of peasants. Similar agrarian land reforms have been pursued

in other countries like Egypt (Margold, 1957) to assist peasants own farmlands. This will improve upon land access, which impacts largely on peasants' farm outputs and consequently on incomes and asset holdings of households.

- ✓ As a long term measure, the gender desk officers at the education directorates and education institutions need to device teaching and learning strategies that challenge traditional customs and values that strengthen gender inequalities in the communities. In the mean time, females need to be supported with inputs and farmlands to engage in production to increase their incomes.
- ✓ The ministry of agriculture through the division of Planting for Food and Jobs, in collaboration with development agencies in the local government area within the traditional area should help peasants to diversify the income sources and improve prices of farm products to enable peasants meet their income, health and education needs of their households.

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