Farmer-Livestock Keepers Land Use Conflicts in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain, Morogoro Region, Tanzania

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my late father, Said Abdallah King'oma, and my sister, Nungano Said. I believe they watch over me with pride and joy, and this achievement is as much theirs as it is mine.

A special dedication also goes to my colleague, the late Miss Maria Emmanuel Manda. Though she departed before completing her journey, her determination, friendship, and dreams remain a lasting inspiration in this work.

Declaration of Originality

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this PhD thesis carrying the title, **Farmer-Livestock Keepers Land Use Conflicts in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain, Morogoro Region, Tanzania**, is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.
3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

Simwana Said King'oma

Date:7/7/2025

Signature …… Date…….

Ethics Statement

As the author of this thesis, I declare that for the purposes of carrying this research, I obtained research ethics approval acknowledging that I have complied with all the ethical standards required. The approval was done by the University of Pretoria Research Ethics Committee and all the relevant departments and farmers groups in Morogoro Region, Tanzania

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Abstract

Six decades of land reforms in Tanzania have reshaped the agricultural landscape, prominently featuring large-scale farms alongside traditional smallholder agriculture. Despite being seen as progressive, these reforms have created a dual legal system that complicates land rights in village lands, reflecting colonial legacies and development policies from other contexts. Smallholders, traditionally viewed as backward and undercapitalized, are in fact diverse, commercially oriented, and reliant on multiple income sources, especially in Kilombero district.

This study critically analysed Tanzania's rural development policies and land reforms from 1980 to 2022, focusing on the tensions arising from legal bifurcation between customary and statutory land systems amid increasing large-scale land acquisitions. Using an ethnographic, actor-cantered approach, the research highlighted how power dynamics and differing stakeholder interests shaped policy processes and outcomes, often marginalizing local communities and smallholders.

Findings suggest that land-use conflicts are complex and driven by multiple factors, including policy weaknesses and socio-economic inequalities among smallholders. The study challenges dominant rural development narratives that assume smallholder homogeneity and expose the gap between policy assumptions and rural realities.

By integrating empirical insights with political economy and legal pluralism frameworks, this research contributes to understanding the root causes of land conflicts in Tanzania and offers policy recommendations. It advocates for inclusive, context-sensitive land governance reforms that recognize smallholder diversity, strengthen customary rights, and ensure equitable access to land. Such reforms are essential for fostering sustainable rural development and reducing land-based conflicts.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CCM	Chama cha Mapinduzi
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KPL	Kilombero Plantations Ltd.
KSCL	Kilombero Sugar Company Limited
KVFP	Kilombero Valley Floodplain
LHRC	Legal and Human Rights Centre
MKUKUTA	Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty
MVIWATA	Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
RUBADA	Rufiji Basin Development Authority
SAGCOT	Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania
TANU	Tanzania African National Unity
UK	United Kingdom
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
US	United States
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development

Chapter One: Invasion is a structure, not an Event

1.1 Introduction and Background

Wolfe (2006) stated that "invasion is a structure, not an event", which summarises the ongoing and systemic nature of settler colonialism[1]. Instead of being a single historical occurrence, invasion constitutes a persistent framework that shapes the social, economic and political realities of colonised territories. This study explored how this concept applies to the sources of land conflicts in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain (KVFP), and how the conflict is also intricately linked to the United Republic of Tanzania's (URT) (Uisso, 2019) radical land reforms and the subsequent National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995), formalised in 1995, which laid the foundation for the Land Act of 1999, (URT, 1999) and the Village Land Act of 1999 (URT, 1999). The policy and the Acts apply to rural land, and can be said to have been influenced by the enduring structures of colonialism.

Tanzania's radical land reforms have been portrayed as successful and progressive in the security of customary land rights (Knight, 2010). The law is considered progressive because it emphasises the security of customary land rights, including those of vulnerable people, which are acknowledged, recognised, and secured. Additionally, it is seen as progressive for its radical approach in devolving power to existing elected village authorities (Knight, 2010). However, from another perspective, the government is seen as having enabled large-scale land acquisitions and appropriations through pieces of legislation (Shivji, 1998).

The existing National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995) is another social development programme generally meant to promote and ensure the maximum use of land and allow broad-based socio-economic development without compromising the environment. Conversely, by overlooking previous claims on land, especially those during the villagisation programme (Tsaka, 2003)[2], the policy sows the seed of its own weakness. While the policy has good goals,

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1 Although Tanzania is not a settler economy in the classical sense, the country experienced colonisation, with a significant settler population that remained to establish a settler colonial economy. Tanzania was primarily a site of exploitation and resource extraction during both German and British colonial rule, with limited European settlement. After independence in 1961, Tanzania pursued policies of African socialism (*Ujamaa*) under the leadership of Julius Nyerere by focusing on rural development and the redistribution of land, further distinguishing it from the settler economy model.

2 Tsaka (2003) reported that villagization involved the resettlement of over nine million peasants in villages. This was largely implemented without consultation with and the consent of the resettled, and without regard for the pre-existing systems of land tenure. Resettlement was implicitly justified in terms of the state's ownership of

such as guaranteeing the equitable distribution and access to land by all, ensuring land is productively used by whoever occupies it, and improving efficiency of land delivery systems in the country (Tenga & Mramba, 2020), it was just a political instrument in a neoliberal era. It must be highlighted that the National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995), was prepared when the 1994 report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994 was still a work in progress. Haulle (2015) argued that the policy only came about as a response to liberal economy concepts of land values, and land markets in relation to existing economic system's "free market". Apparently, it operated without the considerations of previous claims on land, most notably those held during the villagisation programme. According to Haulle, the policy underscored what was set in 1923, depicting that "all land in Tanzania is public and vested in the President as Trustee". The neoliberal era added some aspects that land has value, that fair compensation will be paid, and that the rights of land to people will be taken under laws' considerations. It must be acknowledged that it is the National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995), that ground two currently operating laws as legal frameworks, the Land Act and Village Land Act of 1999 (Haulle, 2015; Kamata, 2012; URT, 1999, 1999). These laws are currently under review for formal amendment (as of 2016).

According to the Constitution of Tanzania (URT, 1977, as amended, 1998), each and every person has the right to own property and the right to have their property protected in accordance with the law. The National Land Policy1995 (URT, 1995) confirmed that all land in Tanzania is considered public land vested in the President as trustee on behalf of all citizens, and hence, the policy instituted the key principles guiding land rights use and management, which maintained centralised control of land. Some of the key principles are that the policy recognises rights based on longstanding occupation of land, encourages productive and sustainable use, notes that smallholders have the same rights to land as other Tanzanians, and promotes transparency and citizen participation in decision-making related to land.

As mentioned above, Tanzania's land laws contain progressive elements, such as recognising customary land rights and granting them equal weight to formally granted (statutory) land rights (Sec. 18[1] of the Village Land Act 1999 [URT, 1999]). These laws also decentralise

land (Ngware et al.,1997). Within the *Ujamaa* paradigm, while customary law rules governed everyday transactions and inheritance, there was an overarching influence of state structures and practices. This led to complaints of abuses of the rights of rural and peri-urban land users, particularly groups such as pastoralists and socially disadvantaged groups within many communities, such as women and the youth (Ngware et al.,1997).

decision-making to the village level, primarily through the village council, an elected body that is required to have 25% women members HAKIARDHI, & Legal and Human Rights Centre,2009; HAKIARDHI, 2017).

However, conflicts of different natures and with diverse dynamics have been increasing in the villages and towns (Bergius et al., 2020; Mwamfupe, 2015; Nindi et al., 2014; Walwa, 2019), and with increasing external influence from the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other donors that state that Tanzania has abundant land that is underused for agriculture production. Following this stance, the international community and under neoliberalism, Harvey (2006) argued that commercial benefits influenced legislation and public policies to the advantage of the market. If necessary, the state recourses to punitive policies and legislations strategies. According to Kamata (2012) between 1995 and 2010, over 100 market-friendly policies and laws were adopted and passed by the government of Tanzania. There are cases where the government was coerced into passing new laws in order to continue to receive investments and enjoy the confidence of donors.

In rural Tanzania, the conflicting interests emanated largely from legal systems, which create confusion and undermine land tenure security. This bifurcation complicates the small-scale land holders' ability to navigate property rights, access resources, and engage in economic activities. For example, customary laws may confer communal land rights, while formal legal systems statutory enforce individual land ownership, leading to disputes and inconsistent enforcement. Examining this bifurcation in the legal application suggests how overlapping jurisdictions and inconsistent legal recognition impact the stability and productivity of small-scale holders, highlighting the broader difficulties of integrating traditional and modern legal practices in rural development.

Thus, this study argued that Tanzania's current land reform processes should not be looked at only from the perspective of progressive land laws enacted to protect the rights of all people on living on the land, even if everyone may be inclined to agree that it put radical land reform back on the political agenda. Rather, an examination of the legal framework and the policy process (Moore et al., 2013) more generally suggests a complex rural development agenda reinforced by an ideological position that did not necessarily reflect the situation on the ground in the majority of rural communities in Tanzania. The study also highlights an important requirement for the incorporation of realities that are embedded in society and guided by years of the villagisation ideology.

At the core of this study was an examination of the conflict between two different communities with competing and overlapping land needs and use rights, and trying to link this conflict to the country's land laws. While it appears that there is a general consensus among national and international actors that land reform was essential, the implications it had for different communities, such as small-scale farmers and livestock herders, whose land-based livelihoods were entirely different, are less widely recognised or and even valued. While land reform in the country could be warranted on ethical grounds, the particular form it took was influenced by the desire to satisfy the demand of donors at the expense of the realities on the ground, and thus, created a terrain for conflict between groups pursuing different land-based livelihoods.

1.2 The Knowledge Gap

The study of the causes of farmers' and livestock keepers' land-use conflicts is not a new topic among scholars focusing on smallholder's property rights. Much has been documented on the topic of smallholders' property rights worldwide. However, few studies on smallholders' access to land in Tanzania, particularly in the Kilombero district, have been done. Furthermore, many of the existing studies addressed land-related conflicts as primarily the result of nation-state weaknesses, resource scarcity, land degradation, and migrant livestock keepers as aggressors (Bergius et al., 2020; Walwa, 2019). However, analysing land conflicts over the expansion of palm oil and sugar cane plantations or mining, as chiefly the result of national inabilities, unfavourable climatic conditions, as well as blaming a particular rural social group, risks side-lining the root causes of those incapacities as demonstrated in the expansion of commodity frontiers and its processes (Martinez-Alier & Walter, 2016). The control over land and its use link various crises of global capitalism with nation-states, structural changes, roles of institutions, and agencies. The linkage is evident in the sectors of raw materials, agriculture, and the environment (Akram-Lodhi, 2012; Harvey, 2003).

Studies on smallholder farmers' property rights in sub-Saharan African countries, Latin America, and Asia suggested several constraints that place smallholder farmers in marginalised positions (Alananga et al.,2024; Bergius et al., 2020; Mwamfupe, 2015; Nindi et al., 2014; Walwa, 2019). The most notable observations include the need to abolish customary laws with bad practices, amend constitutions and provisions in existing laws that are unfair to smallholder farmers' property rights, and enact land laws, including policies, that allow control over resources. Following pressure from land advocacy groups and international organisations, several land tenure reforms from numerous governments in Africa have been adopted in recent

years (1990s to 2000s). These land tenure reforms are of different kinds and are done either by amending constitutions and/or by introducing new land laws (such as in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, and Tanzania) and implementing land formalisation programmes.

Although such changes on land are affected, the problems stemming from it continue. It is undeniable that more studies are needed in the field of smallholder farmers' access to land in specific contexts rather than to broad statements, as exemplified by this work. This study examined the phenomenon in attempt to identify possible local origins of the problems and explore the mechanisms (such as government and non-government structures) as determinations toward addressing the problem. From this view, this research was conducted in the Kilombero district in Kidatu, Mngeta, Sagamanga, Lungongole (Ifakara Council), Namawala, Idete A, and Idete B (from Mlimba Council) to document the existing situation of smallholder farmers' access to land under customary land holding systems. This research also examined how smallholder farmers exercised their use rights, their involvement in decision-making concerning land use and production at the family, clan, or village levels, and the enforcement of their property rights by local governments. I call this the realities on the ground, specific but equally important specific population group.

1.3 The Focus of the Research

This study focused on the different directions of the two land laws under the land reform policy in Tanzania from 1980 to 2022, including the sustained commitment by the government and other actors to the vast commercial farming, in order to examine the multiple realities and root causes of land-use conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers in the context of land reforms and governance in the KVFP. This study linked the KVFP conflict to changing land governance and neoliberal policies affecting land ownership and access. It also connected conflicts and historical injustices of displacement of pastoral communities. It improves understanding conflicts, a topic that has dominated debates in contemporary Tanzania, but remain little understood. By grappling with land governance and the contradictions between traditional and modern, this study adds another dimension to existing land conflicts literature.

Specifically, the study intended to do the following:

- To analyse the local, national, and global processes (actors, causes, & interests) of land-use conflicts from 2012 to 2022;

- To establish the immediate and long-term consequences of land-use conflicts and related neoliberal investments for local livelihoods;
- To examine local people's perceptions of land-use conflicts and large-scale farming investments; and
- To establish the basis of the conflicts and analyse the role of the government resolution of the conflicts from 2012 to 2022.

1.4 Research Questions

In an attempt to prove the hypothesis linking the broader national land processes and the specific neoliberal demands on the government and the land conflicts between the farmers and herders in the KVFP, the study was framed by the following broad question:

- To what extent is the conflict between small-scale farmers and herders in the KVFP linked to changing land governance and neoliberal policies affecting land ownership and access in the country?

The following specific questions were also asked:

- How does land-use conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers in KVFP happen at the local, national, and global levels?
- What are the immediate implications of land-use conflicts and related neoliberal investments for local livelihoods in KVFP?
- How do local people perceive land-use conflicts and large-scale farming investments in KVFP?
- Why land conflicts? And what role has the government played in KVFP in resolving them between 2012 and 2022?

1.5 Commercial Agriculture in Tanzania

Recent commercial agriculture in Tanzania is in a form of commercial vast land possession (Bustos et al., 2023) by actors in the rural areas for agriculture, mining, and the expansion of industries to feed the world with raw materials, food, and other commodities. This has had mixed outcomes. In some areas, it is a catalyst for significant socio-economic progress in terms of physical infrastructure, employment, technological transfer, education, and improved health services, and in others, it does not produce the anticipated benefits and has rather provoked widespread conflicts (Corsi et al., 2020), degradation of natural resources, and food insecurity

(Bergius et al., 2020; Walwa, 2019). The unanticipated outcomes further inform slow progress towards achieving the globally desirable Sustainable Development Goals.

Akram-Lodhi (2007, 2012) presented the unprecedented increase in prices of land, labour, food, and raw materials on the first decade of the 21st century as a trigger to the wave of land rush in the Global South. The rush accommodated a lot of extended actors as well. Most land rush actors were found engaged in financial speculation and capital investment in agricultural land. Their processes by and large assisted in the expansion of industrial agriculture, export-oriented food production, and so-called 'flex crops' (Nolte et al., 2016). Argentina, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica, Ghana, Zambia, South Africa, and the Ivory Coast have witnessed massive expansion of agriculture, agro-industries, and physical and social infrastructure because of land rush processes.

1.5.1 Actors of the global land rush[3]

Conventionally, investors are seen as the primary actors in global land acquisition. Individual investors have predominantly facilitated most of the recent land deals. Next is governments, which are considered direct investors through state-owned farms. private investors include large food agribusinesses, agrofuel firms (a considerable number of them start-up companies), and energy giants (Cotula, 2013). Increasingly, private institutional investors are also involved. They can be referred as "financial organisations that invest large sums of money in securities, real estate, and other assets on behalf of third parties" (Daniel, 2012, p. 704; see also White et al., 2012), such as mutual funds, investment banks (for example Goldman Sachs), pension funds, private equity funds (for example Carlyle Group), and hedge funds[4] (McMichael, 2012).

In terms of the geographical origins of the investors, Schoneveld (2013; see also Schoneveld, 2014), who examined data on more than 500 farmland investments in sub-Saharan Africa

[3] In this study, the global land rush, the literature commonly referred to it as the global land grab, is defined following Nalipia's (2011) description, which refers to massive and rapid investments in fertile land with the intention of transforming it into profitable agricultural enterprises for food production.

[4] Daniel (2012) has discussed the role of private equity funds in the globe land rush comprehensively. Private equity fund managers collect funds from limited partners and invest them in 'target companies' to make profit for their limited partners and themselves. According to McNellis (2009, p.10), "fund managers have the mandate to investing most any asset class in any location provided there turn potential makes investment sense". Their activities are considered to be even less transparent and less regulated than those of other investors as they operate with little regulatory oversight (McNellis, 2009).

between 2008 and 2012, found that most investors are from Europe (particularly the UK, Norway & Germany), followed by investors from the US, India, and Malaysia (Figure 1.1).

Figure 0.1 Origin of transnational investments in sub-Saharan Africa, by total area acquired

(Source: Locher, 2015)

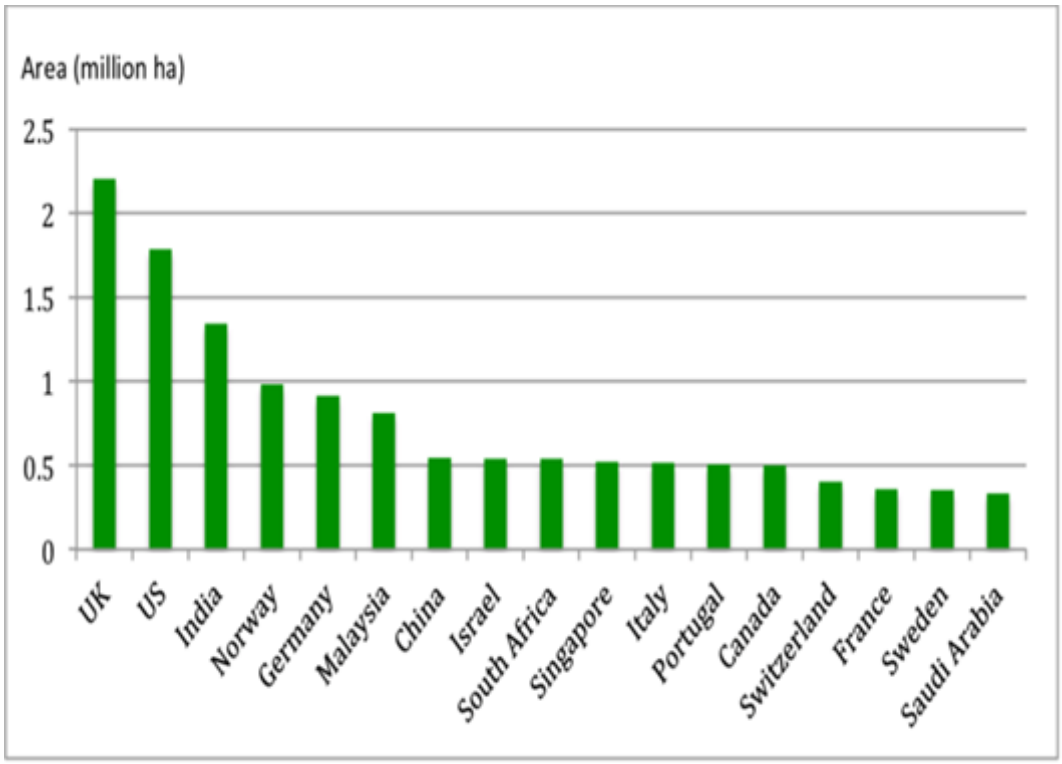

Figure 1.1 only includes data from Category I in terms of reliable data resources, and the top 17 countries of origin out of 47 are shown in 526 analysed investments in 36 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Governments can become direct investors through state-owned firms and sovereign wealth funds; yet they seem to do so relatively rarely. There are only a few cases of land deals reportedly having been signed directly between two states, such as between the governments of Syria and Sudan. Thus, the predominant view, which is often presented in the media, that the investors are food-insecure states may need to be revised. However, governments may support investments through other means such as guarantees or bilateral agreements (Cotula et al., 2009; Daniel, 2012).

International development organisations largely support these land investments, such as numerous members of the World Bank Group, especially the International Finance Corporation

and the Foreign Investment Advisory Service. Others are the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Rice Research Institute (Daniel & Mittal, 2009; McMichael, 2012). These donor organisations support land deals in two ways. Firstly, they promote the establishment of conducive investment environments in receiving states/countries and secondly, a few offer direct funding for land investments "as multilateral institution providing long-term finance for private sector enterprises in developing reforming countries" (Daniel, 2012, p. 721). According to McMichael (2012), the World Bank and the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization support land deals for commercial food production in an attempt to mitigate the world food price crisis. Daniel (2012, p. 725) criticised these types of investments, and highlighted the non-transparent, uncompromisingly profit-oriented activities of private equity fund managers and states. It is into such hands that the World Bank Group places funds while claiming to further its mission of global poverty alleviation.

Additionally, national governments of host/receiving states are involved in land deals in two ways. Firstly, most attract and promote land investments through specific investments incentives, and more commonly, by searching to provide a convenient business climate; and second, national government manage the process of land deals through legal regulations regarding land and (foreign) investment. Furthermore, the role of individual investors in land deals is rather limited. It portrays that government officials and local elites, including local chiefs, influence land deals for varied reasons, and reportedly, frequently in favour of the investors. Potential interests are personal gains, including rent seeking. Prevailing discourses regarding national development are discussed in the following subsections.

Finally, there is the role of local people supporting and opposing foreign investments. While some authors argued that their scope may be limited, they may have a meaningful impact on the results of land rush processes in some contexts; for example, Smalley and Corbera (2012) mentioned two cases in Kays (German et al., 2013; Nolte & Väth, 2015; Vermeulen & Cotula, 2010). Nevertheless, with few exceptions and anomalies in the current literature, there has been inadequate attention on local people's role and perceptions (Evers et al., 2013).

1.5.2 Agrarian development in the Global South

Governments in the Global South have relentlessly promoted land deals as a form of investment in their countries' agrarian sectors. With the exception of Tanzania (Thenkabail, 2015), some African countries and supported donors? have neglected agriculture and rural development

(Cotula, 2013). Rauch (2014, p. 233) argues that "rural development has been entrusted to inadequately capacitated local governments on the one hand, and to the commercial interests of private business on the other". Similarly, environmental conditions pose increasing constraints on agricultural activities in the form of soil degradation and climate change (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, 2009a; Rauch, 2014). Consequently, many rural farm households have reduced incomes and have been forced to diversify their livelihood strategies. In challenging circumstances, they concurrently depend on external sources of income and subsistence agriculture (Bryceson, 2002; Peters, 2013a; Rauch, 2014). Recently, many researchers, governments, and development agencies agreed that some form of investment in the agrarian sector is crucial to attain and retain food security and alleviate poverty (High-Level Panel of Experts, 2013; International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, 2009a; Li, 2014). Yet, there is no agreement on the desired kind of agrarian development, and there are two diverging perspectives on this.

The first perspective favors large-scale farming over smallholder or peasant farming. supporters of this discourse promote industrialized agriculture characterized by capital- and input-intensive production systems and often call for a new green revolution to increase global food supply. Scholars aligned with this model argue that large-scale farming is more feasible and efficient because of the advantages of economies of scale. From a political economy perspective, advocates of large-scale agricultural investments justify these initiatives through claims of enhanced efficiency, productivity, and modernization. Based on the division and specialization of labour, the economic use of equipment, and the deployment of advanced technologies (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013; Cotula, 2013; German et al., 2013; McMichael, 2012), this viewpoint is strongly promoted by what van der Ploeg (2010) describes as global food empires, as well as by certain research institutions and international organizations such as the International Food Policy Research Institute (see Borras & Franco, 2010). Proponents argue that large-scale agricultural projects can bridge the so-called "yield gaps" and make productive use of land labelled as "idle" or "underutilized" in many regions of the Global South (World Bank, 2014). These narrative positions agribusiness-led investments as a solution to global food insecurity and rural underdevelopment. However, critics contend that such framings often obscure the dispossession of smallholders and pastoralists, the undermining of customary land rights, and the deepening of class inequalities within agrarian societies (Borras & Franco, 2010; Hall et al., 2015).

Conversely, the above perspective is criticised because it emphasises the urgency of low external input small-scale farms for food security and poverty reduction in the country side. Small farmers are regarded as more productive than larger farms because of their use of family labour and farming practices adapted to local settings. Those in favour of this perspective believe that small producers contribute a considerable share of the world food production (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013; GRAIN, 2014; High-Level Panel of Experts, 2013; Van der Ploeg, 2010b). However, Rauch (2014) highlighted that the capacity of small-scale farmers to produce efficiently and respond to market dynamics has been reduced because of the current neglect of this sector.

Supporters of small-scale agriculture emphasised the different functions of agriculture, and claimed that it produces not only commodities but can and should also fulfil ecological and cultural functions and provide livelihoods to rural poor (Edelman, 2017; International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, 2009). Therefore, small holdings are considered to stand for a more ecologically viable and socially equitable form of agriculture than large farms (Bernstein, 2014). The small-scale farming approach is encouraged by some researchers, peasant organisations, such as La Via Campesina, and overall, by proponents of the food sovereignty concept[5] (e.g. GRAIN, 2015; High-Level Panel of Experts, 2013; Van der Ploeg, 2010b). Baglioni and Gibbon (2013) contended that the contrast between the two views has moderated in the contemporary era, allowing more room for a detailed debate that allows for context-specific arguments. Consequently, the coexistence and partnership farming models are increasingly being recognised and promoted as a third possible option for agrarian development (e.g. Bernstein, 2014; Collier & Dercon, 2014; International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, 2009; for a description of several possible pathways of agrarian development (see Edelman, 2017).

Overall, supporters of small-scale agriculture explained that the future of agrarian development lies in investment in rural infrastructure. This aligns with Woodhouse's view that it is "an

[5] The concept of food sovereignty (Edelman, 2017) is promoted by the global peasants' movement La Vía Campesina, among others, and can be defined as "the right of peoples and sovereign states to democratically determine their own agricultural and food policies "(International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, 2009b, p. 5). It can be seen as "a critical alternative to the dominant neoliberal model for agriculture and trade" (Wittman et al., 2010, as cited in Bernstein, 2014, p. 2). For critical reflections on the concept see Edelman et al. (2014).

inescapable part of the context for land deals with foreign investors" (Woodhouse, 2012, p. 781 in Locher, 2015) as many African governments appear to claim that they lack the necessary resources to provide the required infrastructure.

Additionally, the governments of many African countries seem to be pessimistic about the prospects of small-scale farmers, and hence, prefer the large-scale farming model, sometimes linking it with the integration of small holders (Cotula, 2013; German et al., 2013; Schoneveld, 2013). Based on this outlook, large-scale land deals and related investments are welcomed (Azadi et al., 2013; Borras & Franco, 2012; Daniel, 2012). Correspondingly, national politicians influence the land deal processes with their visions of national development. For example, Fairbairn (2013) found that government officials in Mozambique were indifferent to peasant agriculture, and therefore, did not support local consultations as they considered them obstacles to investment. Peters (2013b) also claimed that the land prices in Africa are low because African politicians do not consider customary land rights to be full property rights; they would prefer to set aside such land for their ideas of national development. The prevailing view about agrarian development has also moulded policies and institutions, such as legal regulations in land deal processes, as outlined in the next section.

1.6 Policies, institutions, and processes in host countries of the land rush

In order to grasp the nature and outcome of the land rush, it is important to examine how land deals take place. The process of accessing land in Africa are manifold, but they have not been adequately researched (Nolte & Väth, 2015). This study adds to the existing knowledge on the factors that influence land deal processes. These processes include investment policies and institutions, such as land-related legal provisions and processes or implementation regulations.

Several authors stated that neoliberal discourses in recent years have translated into policies that have introduced the conditions that have facilitated and promoted the current land deals (Evers et al., 2013; Fairhead et al., 2012; White et al., 2012). According to the World Bank (2024) the business environment in the respective countries is said to have improved recently and to support increasing foreign investment. For example, governments have institutional regulatory and legal frameworks to protect investors and accounting standards. In countries where the business environment has improved, there are modern markets and a switch from the traditional system of land tenure to Western concepts of property. This is mostly supported by donor funded titling programmes (Daniel, 2012; Evers et al., 2013; Peters, 2013a; Kaag & Zoomers, 2014). Additionally, specific investment policies seem to play a crucial role in the

land rush. In Tanzania, for example, specific agencies are responsible for investment promotion and for designing specific policies to attract foreign investors by providing financial incentives, such as duty exemptions or tax holidays (Daniel & Mittal, 2010; Evers et al., 2013; German et al., 2013; Vermeulen & Cotula, 2010).

Land property concepts, and hence regulations relating to land deals, differ from country to country. Unlike in Western countries where property is held privately, in Africa, governments (with exception of Ghana and Sierra Leone) have legal control of all or some of the land and citizens only hold land-use rights (Polack et al., 2013). In Ghana and Sierra Leone, land is legally held by local chiefs. In practice, land holds in rural landscapes in most African countries base their individual and common rights on customary law. According to World Bank (2024) estimates, only between 2% and 10% of the land in Africa is held under formal *de jure* land tenure, and this is largely in urban areas (Deininger, 2003; Vermeulen & Cotula, 2010). Alden Wily (2011) and German et al. (2013, as cited in Locher, 2015) stated that the legal status of customary land rights varies in each country, and ranges from being unrecognised/unacknowledged to being protected (Mozambique, Ghana, Tanzania and Uganda). The laws in Tanzania and Mozambique acknowledge customary land rights without official documentation. Thus, Fairbairn (2013) found that in Mozambique, the status of unregistered land rights is weaker than land rights with titles. Additionally, when the registration of customary rights is legally possible, for example, in Tanzania, Uganda and Mozambique, its implementation progress tends to be slow (Cotula & Mathiew, 2008; Polack et al., 2013).

Regulations related to land transfers permits the central governments of almost all African states to issue long-term lease titles for up to 99 years to investors (German et al., 2013; Polack et al., 2013). The issue or approval of land deal depends on the acknowledgement of individual common customary land rights. For example, in Cameroun and Ethiopia, the law does not require any consultation with the victim. In other countries, the law compels some sort of consent from the victimised communities as a step in the land transfer process. The laws in Ghana state that all land transfers must be approved by the concerned landholders or by customary leaders. Additionally, the law features stipulations that protect access rights and grant compensation (German et al., 2013; Polack et al., 2013; Vermeulen & Cotula, 2010).

However, in some countries, the expropriation of land for public interest is permissible, but German et al. (2013, p. 7) stated that this "was not observed in practice in the context of vast

agricultural investments". In some countries, including Tanzania and Zambia, the land acquisition process entails a reclassification of the given land plot, and thus permanently erasing customary rights. However, in Ghana, the land remains under customary control under local chiefs during the lease period (German et al., 2013; Kaag & Zoomers, 2014).

The application of the legal basis is challenged by research that contrasted land deal processes and outcomes in different African countries. Weaknesses in the implication at monitoring tend to be prevalent in countries with varying legal frameworks and raise questions relating to informal institutions and governance. Schoneveld (2013) analysed the situation in four sub-Saharan countries with different legal frameworks in terms of respecting customary land rights. The author found that the processes of land deals do not considerably vary among the four countries regarding consultation with local communities and compensation payments, despite the different legal situations. The author further observed that host states' legal safeguards are often ignored or interpreted differently, and are thus ineffective. German et al. (2013) explored the situation in four countries, three of which are considered 'best practice' cases in terms of legal provisions (Alden Wily, 2011), and concluded that it was not the law but the actors in the land transfer process that are important for the protection of customary rights (German et al., 2013). For instance, Burnod et al. (2013) demonstrated that state agents in Madagascar, amid a power struggle, overlooked the forward-thinking land regulations that acknowledge and safeguard local land rights. The agents claimed that untitled land was by default state land, and thus, they rejected the legal rights of local land users. In addition, they reported cases of rent seeking by land officers and local elites in several places, including reports of customary leaders such as local chiefs personally pocketing compensation (Cotula, 2013). It is also alleged that former and actual officials and local elites occasionally informally cooperate with companies by sharing their local knowledge about land governance and their networks with the investors. This normally leads to conflicts of interest when officials or local representatives, who are supposed to safeguard the local population's customary rights, are simultaneously offered incentives to support the investors' claims (Bélair, 2019; 2021). Thus, despite the unsatisfactory results concerning the implementation of regulations, Vermeulen and Cotula (2010) reiterated that strong land laws are essential, though not adequate, to protect local people's land rights.

1.6.1 Land rush in local context

The URT as part of Global South has not been immune to the 21st century land rush waves, its processes, and its consequences. Most places in the country enjoy the benefits of massive

farming, mining, and tourism in terms of physical and social infrastructural development. The Mineral Policy 2009 of Tanzania requires the large-scale miners to give back to communities by contributing to infrastructure development and employment. Mining companies are also required to pay a service levy to their respective local government, which is mostly used to upgrade the level of service provided to the people. However, the land rush has intensified competition for land and led to increases in the number of land conflicts (Abdallah et al., 2014; Askew et al., 2013).

Apart from being the consequences of global political economic changes, manifested in the expansion of commodity frontiers, in Tanzania, the land rush is also associated with the aspirations of the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 (URT, 1999c), the National Five-Year Development Plan, 2016/17-2020/21, and National Agriculture Policy (URT, 2013b). These three domestic guidelines aspire to transform the economy from a predominantly hand-hoe agricultural economy to a diversified and semi-industrialised economy with a substantial industrial sector comparable to that ofthose typical middle-income countries. As ambitious as these policies are, they call for the intensification of use of arable land in the country.

The relationship between these national guides and the conflicts associated with land rush has been further complicated by what Bergius et al. (2020) and Walwa (2019) suggested are central and local governance weaknesses, resource scarcity, land degradation, and migrant livestock keepers as aggressors. Martinez-Alier and Walter's (2016) analysis of the land conflicts associated with the expansion of palm oil and sugar cane plantations, which is similar to the study area of the KVFP, broadens the blame to a host of national inabilities, unfavourable climatic conditions, and rural social groups. The Kilombero case can be an illustration of the linkages between the domestic and global forces of the land rush, and its processes and consequences. In addition, there are strong issues of domestic legal pluralism that can also be influential to better understand the phenomena.

The coexistence of customary and statutory legal frameworks informs some of the conflicts associated with the land rush in the other parts of the world, like in India, Ethiopia, and Australia. Since Tanzania has this pluralism, it can potentially also be used to inform on the conflicts associated with the land rush. Shivji and Kapinga (1998) explained the complexities between the customary ownership of land, the Land Act of 1999 and Village Land Act of 1999 (URT, 1999). The fertile plains of Usangu, Kilombero, Wami, Lwiche, Ruaha and Rufiji and the fact that the areas are rich in gold create the potential for in-depth and rigorous studies about

the relationship between domestic and global forces plus domestic factors and the consequences of the land rush.

Studies in Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Angola indicated elite profiteering (Moyo, 2024, Warf and Warf, 2019 and Van Wyk, 2007)., the misuse of influence over policymaking, and the implementation for land possession. Since the conditions of these countries are very different from the conditions in Tanzania, Tanzania also requires scholarly attention to relate facts with existing theories and to devise localised remedies.

Kilombero is one of the six clusters of the Southern Agriculture Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT). Launched in May 2010, SAGCOT is considered the by-product the *Kilimo Kwanza* (Agriculture First) slogan of action to transform agriculture through enhanced productivity. SAGCOT's blueprint was drawn up by private consulting companies, namely Proustian and AgDevCo from the UK (Sulle, 2020). It is enabled by investments by hedge funds and social security funds. It also attracted about US$1.3 billion from the government and donor partners, plus US$2.1 billion from local and international private investors.

Sulle (2020) highlighted the two forms of SAGCOT's agricultural investment. The first involves the acquisition of land rights through long-term leases or concessions for either nucleus estates or plantations. The process of vast land acquisitions is associated with the direct and indirect displacement of rural communities. Furthermore, from October to November 2012, 'Operation Save Kilombero', which forcefully evicted about 500 livestock keepers and small-scale farmers took place (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2016). These acquisitions impact rural livelihoods, land rights, and the country's economy at large. State bureaucrats, local politicians, and elites had a strong influence over policymaking and the implementation of the process.

Recent Studies suggested that some of these actors are motivated by rent-seeking opportunities, aiming for foreign capital, and direct engagement through lease agreements interests (Belair 2019; Harvey, 2014; Cooksey, 2012). These interests sometimes crash and create disputes over both the overall vision and the practical implementation of investment projects on the ground (Sulle, 2020). Thus, it is paramount to examine the interests of different actors situated in a broad agrarian political economy analysis to ask "Who owns, does, and gets what? And what do they do with it?" (Bernstein, 2010, pp. 22). The global processes described above are shaped by both the modernisation and dependency perspectives, which have guided policies and

practices affecting predominantly agricultural societies, including Kilombero (Rostow, 1960). The assertion that ultimately, capitalist farms will replace small-scale farming by possession through displacement is also manifested in the case. Large capital farms necessitate land consolidation, vertically integrated value chains, and the uptake of modern methods and technologies. It aims to increase agriculture productivity.

Comprehending these old and new relations meant finding ways to transcend the traditional focus on causes of land-use conflicts in certain contexts. It was also important to interrogate the complex field of power and politics that constitute land reforms in post-independence Tanzania. Power and politics are central to land policy and revolve around the reform agenda of neoliberalism and its influence on the country's policy. This study is vital to the government of Tanzania as it relates to the processes of resource governance and ensuring peace and stability among the key land users, such as farmers and livestock keepers.

The current study highlights an increase in large-scale agriculture investments that link to the mutually interrelated processes of various global crises. The crises are climate, energy, and finance. For example, in the Kilombero region in Tanzania, the large expansion of export-oriented farms controlled by large-scale crop farming agriculture has led to increased crises, particularly in energy. These processes happen on land traditionally owned by farmers and livestock keepers (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010).

The theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the current study drew on both materialist and post-structural conceptualisations of the contemporary social world. Bluwstein et al. (2018) argued that in this world, societies govern themselves within structures, and those structures promote a particular social, economic, and political order. The practicalities of various communities and individuals work through political rationalities to dominate, which eventually challenge and remake themselves in the process. It suggests that the influence of power is at the same time socially, economically, and politically classed, gendered, and culturally normative. There is a circular, constitutive relationship between structure and agency, and between the domination of social relations of economic exchange that produces these relations through various practices at the local, national, and global levels. Within power relations and political dynamics, I was interested in understanding how land governance reforms in the Global South are in the control of the top-down elitists, projects of land, and population. Such an analysis had to engage with existent economic and political disparities between land professional institutions and community institutions. Communities experience these realities

as an ongoing primitive accumulation in the "historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production" (Marx, 1976, p. 875). Primitive accumulation along with historical materialism shape contemporary land conflicts and interventions in rural areas across the Global South, particularly in Tanzania (Bergius et al., 2020). In order to make a meaningful analysis of land conflicts in the area, I also used the ideas from anthropology and political sociology that focus on culture and politics. Of late, numerous studies analysed an increasing interest in land and raw materials in the context of multiple crises of capitalism. The current study drew from historical materialism, which is Harvey's (2003, 2017) concept of accumulation by dispossession and Marx's (1976) concept of primitive accumulation.

1.7 Overview of Farmer-Livestock keeper land use conflicts in the Valley

While this study focuses on land use conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain, fieldwork in villages such as Mngeta and Ngombo suggests that these disputes are deeply entangled with wider political, economic, and legal dynamics. The visible tensions, for example, when livestock encroach on farmers' crops or when herders struggle to access water points and grazing areas are not merely local disputes between neighbours. In Mngeta, several farmers reported their rice fields being destroyed by cattle during the dry season. As one farmer explained: *"They drive their cattle through our farms because the grazing lands have been taken; we plant, but the cows come at night and finish everything."*

In **Ngombo**, livestock keepers described being forced to move their herds into cultivated areas after their traditional grazing corridors were blocked by sugarcane plantations and new investor boundaries. A herder shared: *"Before, we used to pass near the river with no trouble, but now the land is for investors, and we are not allowed to pass. So where do we go? We enter the farms."* Such situations often lead to fines, arrests, or violent disputes.

These tensions are shaped by the reclassification of village land for large-scale agricultural investments, the fragmentation of authority between state and customary institutions, and the expansion of agribusiness actors like Kilombero Plantations Limited (KPL**)**. As one local leader in Ngombo put it: *"Our land has been taken bit by bit. Now, even if we want to help solve the fights between farmers and herders, we have no land left to give them."*

This study therefore goes beyond describing individual incidents of conflict; it seeks to show how these tensions are produced and sustained by structural factors, including legal pluralism,

land reforms, and neoliberal investment policies that reshape the landscape of rights and access in Kilombero. By centering the lived experiences of both farmers and livestock keepers, the research highlights how everyday disputes are linked to larger processes of land commodification, state restructuring, and political contestation.

1.7.1 Legal Pluralism and Its Role in Land Conflicts

Legal pluralism refers to the coexistence of multiple legal systems within a single social field, often involving formal statutory laws alongside customary or informal legal practices. In many African contexts, including Tanzania's Kilombero District, this coexistence profoundly shapes land tenure governance and land-use practices. While legal pluralism theoretically allows diverse communities to exercise their rights in culturally meaningful ways, in practice it often generates confusion, overlapping claims, and power struggles that escalate into land conflicts. Tanzania's land governance is marked by a dual legal framework: statutory law codified by the government, and customary law practiced and enforced by local communities. The 1999 Land Act and Village Land Act formally codify statutory land tenure while simultaneously recognising customary rights within village lands. However, the boundaries and authorities of these parallel systems are frequently unclear or contested. Customary land tenure is grounded in community traditions, norms, and practices governing access, use, and inheritance of land. It is typically flexible, negotiated, and adapted to local socio-ecological realities. In contrast, statutory law emphasises formal registration, titling, individual land rights, and market-oriented transactions, introducing more rigid administrative structures.

This duality creates overlapping jurisdictions that foster confusion over who has legitimate authority to allocate, use, or transfer land. For instance, a single piece of land might fall under village customary practices while also being included in statutory land-use plans or investor leases authorized by government agencies. Such ambiguities often lead to disputes. Furthermore, statutory law is backed by the formal power of the state, while customary law relies on local authority structures whose legitimacy may be unevenly recognised. As a result, government actors and investors frequently privilege statutory titles over customary claims, sidelining smallholder farmers and pastoralists whose rights are not formally registered. This dynamic is compounded by the push for large-scale agricultural investments, which often invoke statutory law to reclassify or expropriate customary lands, sometimes without adequate consultation or compensation. In addition to marginalizing rural communities, customary norms themselves may exclude vulnerable groups, such as women and migrants, thereby complicating social relations further. Dispute resolution mechanisms also struggle under legal

pluralism. While formal courts and procedures tend to overlook customary norms, village land councils designed to mediate conflicts locally often lack the capacity, authority, or resources to enforce decisions, allowing disputes to persist or escalate.

In Kilombero, these dynamics are particularly pronounced. The arrival of large-scale commercial investors under statutory leases has collided with long-standing customary claims by smallholder farmers and pastoralists. Customary pastoral land use, which depends on communal grazing and seasonal mobility, often conflicts with statutory land-use plans that favour permanent cultivation or private ownership. The failure to harmonize these systems has fueled disputes, undermined livelihoods, and led to social unrest. Legal pluralism, while potentially enriching in theory, has thus contributed significantly to land conflicts in Tanzania by fostering jurisdictional uncertainty, reinforcing power imbalances, and enabling exclusion. Addressing these challenges requires harmonizing statutory and customary laws, strengthening participatory land governance, and ensuring equitable recognition of all land users' rights. This calls for legal reforms that integrate customary tenure into formal frameworks, capacity building for local institutions, and conflict-sensitive land-use planning that balances investment with community rights. Without such deliberate measures, legal pluralism will continue to be a source of tension and conflict, undermining sustainable land management and rural development.

1.8 Significance of the Study

This study drew on critical debates on land distribution and control. These debates underscore, among other things, how land laws in the Global South are entrenched in colonial and post-colonial state-making (Neumann, 2004). Entangled projects of state control, patronage, and rent seeking promote evictions, displacement, and violence (Bergius et al., 2020), and influence local people through neo-liberalisation. Of late, Shivji (2009), Walwa (2019) and Bergius et al. (2020) reinforced these debates. Drawing on and engaging the ideas from anthropology, political sociology, political economy, climate change, and resource access debates, I formulated a power-political analysis critique of land laws and policies in Tanzania against the backdrop of a continued rural land dependency. This study thus aimed to unpack the land governance inconsistencies in the KVFP in the Kilombero district.

1.9 Outline of the Chapters

This study is divided into eight chapters. As is customary, **Chapter 1** is the introduction and literature review for the study. It offers an overview of the current land acquisition debate, including discussions of its features, actors, related processes and outcomes. Additionally, in this chapter, I give insights into food as a special investment sector. The introduction also presents the objective and research question of this study and concludes with the research design.

Chapter 2 is about the theoretical and the conceptual frameworks that I used to guide the study, a Marxist theory of political economy. Marxist political economy theory claims the flaws in capitalism with its market policies which leads to exploitation and conflicts. The theory examines how the economic systems shape society, highlighting that capitalism inherently creates class divisions, exploitation and conflicts. This theory affirms that society structure and historical development are driven by material conditions. Largely, the modes of production and the relations of power in those economic processes. Core concepts include labour value, profit, class struggle which highlight how capitalisms (who control the land) profit from the labour of workers. Marxist theory advocates for social change, envisioning a classless society where production benefits all equally.

Chapter 3 demonstrates the methodological and research design that were used in this study. It begins by looking at the broad historical and actors' approach, and that the essence of this approach is situating the study on actors' interactions and accounts. The chapter further looks at the framework of analysis, which reconciles different perspectives on policy and laws but generally use the perspective that although policy is a negotiated process, the actors do not possess equal power, and not all the discourse they use in the process is authorised. Finally, the chapter presents the methods used to collect and analyse the data.

Chapter 4 focuses on the essence of the study. It briefly presents Tanzania's historical development of capitalism and relevant land policies in order to present the empirical chapters of the study, and to situate the reader in regards to Tanzania's large-scale commercial investments, the land laws, investment policies, and the current status of foreign land deals. Chapter 4 also presents the analysis of the social, political, and economic contexts in which Tanzania's land reform and socialist policies were developed and implemented. It traces its origins in developing countries and Tanzania, in particular, and discuss how the donor community, particularly the World Bank, has promoted it over the years. It starts by exploring

the origins of pre-colonial communities and the colonial and post-independence eras. Finally, it analyses the post-independence context, including the effects of the country's economic and political crises on land reform after 1990.

Chapter 5 presents the causes and impacts of the conflicts from the household and the case study sites of the research. The case study area was the KVFP, and I selected one district, Kilombero, to highlight the causes of the conflicts in the area. The chapter analyses Tanzania's land policies at the local and national level, and how they are linked to the global investment interest for farmland in developing countries that contributes to conflicts. It highlights actors' interactions in relation to new farmland investments, and how land policies contribute to conflicts. It is through these policies that state officials at central and local levels underpin their authority towards local communities and investors, thereby (re)producing relations of domination and political subjects, which contributes to the conflicts. The chapter seeks to explain a rather surprising finding: While village leaders defended their villagers' land rights in one conflict, they chose to partner with political elites and investors at the expense of villagers in the other. Focusing on the very local set of actors' interactions to structure these conflicts in a specific Tanzanian village, I compare and explain why actors' interactions are different even in the same institutional context. The chapter also discusses the implications of conflicts. It highlights the indirect impacts triggered by new farmland investments in the countries at local community levels rather than the direct impacts. In the case of Kilombero district, Kilombero Sugar Company Ltd. (KSCL) has not been directly causing local conflictual dynamics, yet the investor has significantly transformed the local political economy. As will be explained, it had long-term consequences at the local level because it caused local political schemes that lead to land conflicts, land dispossession and social marginalisation.

Chapter 6 presents the different local people's perceptions of the conflicts and related investments and the way forward.

Chapter 7 further delves into the underlying structural reasons for these conflicts, such as government structures, related policies and laws, and particularly, the legal bifurcation. The legal clash creates a complex interplay between formal statutory laws and informal customary practices that contribute to conflicts in Kilombero. This chapter also highlights the government's role in resolving these conflicts from 2012 to 2022. In addition, non-governmental structures supplement the government's efforts to mitigate these conflicts. In

doing so, the chapter sets the stage for analysing the efforts to resolve the conflicts at three levels, namely local, national, and international.

Chapter 8 gives the summary of the whole thesis . As previously mentioned, each empirical chapter of this thesis focus on a particular set of actors' collaborations. In a defined conflict arena, the study explored the detail of the fundamental relationship between eventualities, structure, and actors' agency that has moulded them. Each chapter stands alone as an independent unit, and it is important to note that the actors' interactions are synergetic, dynamic, adaptive, co-constitutive, and reactive to each other, and are always changing in time and space. Consequently, all these interactions, between and within each level, are interconnected and interdependent.

1.10 Findings of the Research

Overall, this thesis's main findings are as follows. The first finding is the multiclausal nature of land conflicts. The determinants include historical legacies, economic pressures, and political struggles, all of which interact to shape the current landscape of land disputes. The second finding is that while the existing narrative about smallholders considers them homogenic, this thesis found that there are stark differences among smallholders. The difference is based on economic status, land-use practices, cultural backgrounds, awareness of land rights, and political engagement. This diversity influences their perceptions of land, access to resources, and responses to neoliberal policies, and lead to distinct stakes in land governance. The third findings are that the colonial policies play a role in the conflicts. The thesis highlights the enduring influence of colonial land policies and laws, which have established unequal land rights and contributed to a bifurcated land governance system that continues to create tensions between statutory and customary land rights.

The fourth finding is that the issue of land scarcity is paramount in terms of unequal distribution. However, the thesis notes that this scarcity is often manipulated for political gain, further complicating the relationship between different actors in land governance. This fifth finding is the divergent perspectives on land that suggested contrasting views of its usage among different stakeholders. Large-scale farmers tend to perceive land as a commodity to be traded, while smallholders regard it as a vital resource for their livelihoods, and these differences lead to inherent conflicts in land use and ownership. The sixth finding is that the neoliberal policies and structural adjustment programs have exacerbated existing tensions by

reducing state support for agriculture, promoting large-scale commercial farming, and commodifying land, which has marginalised smallholders.

In addition, despite ongoing conflicts and pressures from larger investors and government policies, smallholders display remarkable resilience. Their persistence in cultivating and grazing the land reflects a deep-rooted attachment to their resources and a commitment to sustaining their livelihoods against systemic challenges. Furthermore, there are internal political dynamics from the examination of the ruling party's internal dynamics that have influenced land governance and conflicts. Understanding these internal power struggles can provide insights into the broader context of land disputes. Corruption, governance issues, and overlapping mandates within government institutions were identified as significant barriers to effective land governance, leading to confusion over land rights and increased conflicts. Lastly, the findings showed that the historical mistrust between the government and smallholders, fuelled by past injustices and failures in land reform, continues to hinder effective resolution of land conflicts.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I argued that the purpose of this research was to examine the two land laws under the land reform policy in Tanzania from 1980 to 2022, including the sustained commitment by the government and other actors to large-scale commercial farming. I did this by using the agrarian political economy approach that draws on Marx's analysis of the origins of capitalism in agriculture and the process through which its fundamental characteristics come to be established (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010b) as an overall approach to this study. Shifting class relations are key to the deepening of capitalist development over time. The Marxist concept of class, albeit used variably, is commonly grasped in terms of a conception of a category of people who occupy a common structure position within the social relations of production (Wright & Perrone, 1977).

Agrarian political economy examines "the social relations and dynamics of production and reproduction, property and power in agrarian formations and their processes of change, both historical and contemporary" (Bernstein, 2010, p. 1). As a point of departure, it is thus essential to examine the social relations of production in a particular society in order to uncover the class positions of different actors. The examination of class structure in a capitalist mode of production is centred on two fundamental aspects: Ownership of the means of production by *capitalists*, and sale of labour power by *workers* and purchased by the capitalists (Wright & Perrone, 1977). In addition, in most cases, class societies have people who neither sell their labour power nor purchase the labour power of others but own means of production as petty commodities producers who combine in themselves the class position of petty capitalists and labourers (Neocosmos, 1993).

Considering the focus of this thesis (the social relations and dynamics of production and preproduction on customary owned land in which villagers are both workers and owners of the land and also engage in decision and policy making), the importance and complexity of material conditions are fundamental. In this chapter, I argue that the core contradictions of smallholder farmers and livestock keepers emerge clearly in this context, since the customary owned land also join the class positions, and therefore, underlie conflicts between differing classes and their differing interests of both capital and labour within a single plantation. I also argue that the power and politics on this land cannot be pegged in terms of class identity alone,

and sometimes, it is necessary to analyse processes of political identity formation, and thus, competing 'modes of belonging' to supplement class analysis when exploring the conflicts about the current village-owned land.

This chapter deliberates on theories and concepts derived from Marxist political economy and anthropological and political sociological perspectives. I do not use all these theories and concepts directly in the interpretation of the empirical data presented in the following chapters. However, it is essential to show how theory interconnects in the version of political economy. This is the reason the Marxist approach to agrarian change provides a reasonable account of the underlying dynamics of a large number of phenomena in past and in contemporary economy and society. It is challenging to present only some aspects of the approach and not highlight how they are strongly attached to others.

The chapter commences with clarifying Marx's powerful and suggestive analysis of capitalism as a system of production. Subsequently, it shifts from the economic sociology of class relations to perspectives drawn from anthropology and development to focus mainly on themes of identity formation and modes of belonging. These are factors that influence political agency. These theories and concepts are joined together to develop a conceptual framework for the study. The framework helped explore the broader consequences of the research findings and the prospects for capitalist farms. It underpins my arguments about the inevitability of the pressures and tensions that arise within these arrangements.

2.1.2 Marxist Analysis of Capitalism

Branner (1977) was among the first scholars to define capitalist as a social relation that necessarily involve the process of accumulation (or expanded reproduction), which fosters technological change. Patnaik (1986,1990) explained capitalism as the commodification of livelihoods production for the markets, the use of 'free' wage labour, and the investment of profit to produce technological change. Following Lenin's perspective, Das (2012) suggested that commodity production and the use of wage labour are the primary distinguishing features of capitalist agriculture. According to Das (2012), Marx's concept of consumptive labour under capital is important. Bernstein (2010, p. 1) defined capitalism as "a system of production and reproduction based on the fundamental social relation between capital and labour: capital exploits labour in its pursuit of profit and accumulation, while labour has to work for capital to obtain its means of subsistence". Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010) pointed out that capitalism is

contradictory because it is exploitative in its construction of the differential material interests of capital and labour, but it also has the capacity to develop the material forces of production, a necessary precondition for a more economically prosperous and socially humane society.

2.1.3 The historical materialism and capitalist social relation of production

Historical materialism examines how material conditions, such as land use and economic organisation, influence social relations and conflicts (Dietz & Engels, 2020). It enables the analysis of how large-scale land deals driven by capitalist interests reshape social structure, power dynamics, and local economy.

2.1.4 Marx's historical materialism

Marxist's theory of historical materialism seeks to analyse human nature and development based on the observable physical realities of human existence (Marx, 2013). Marx (2013) highlighted that the physical realities of human existence constitute two major aspects, namely history, the dynamics, and the dialectical character of human labour in which human beings reproduce their own means of subsistence. These are normally used in literature and philosophy to explore and uncover complex ideas through their interactions and conflicts. In the dialectic approach, characters embody different viewpoints or philosophers and their dialogue and confrontations serve to highlight these differences, eventually leading to a synthesis or deeper understanding of the issues at hand (Diaz & Engels, 2020).

In his economic and philosophical manuscript, Marx (2013) stated that human labour is not necessarily an impediment to human development and liberalisation but rather the means by which human beings are able to become free and self-determining. For Marx, labourers initially are unable to recognise the genuinely self-determining and emancipatory character of human labour. At first, labourers cultivate their own productive capacities without knowing that they are doing so. According to Marx, this happens because the labourers' productive activity makes its appearance within their world of experience only insofar as it is embodied in products (commodities) that are consumed and enjoyed by others because of the division of labour within society.

According to Marx (2013) division of labour represents just one stage of human history. Subsequently, it lends itself to further progress in history. In particular, Marx uphold that when human labour is changed to wage labour within the capitalist system, it becomes a commodity

that is bought and sold on the markets. Thus, succumbing the labour to free market forces that seem to operate entirely beyond their own control. Thus, it is the wage systems that corrupt the labourers own productive activity, and therefore, in real life, the wage is not positively changed into a transparent manifestation of human productivity. It is rather turned into a strange and alien force that appears quite hostile to workers.

Hence, the real human existence would be conceivable only when the division of labour is beside private property and wage labour, which is eliminated through the establishment of a communist system. According to Marx, "communism is the riddle of history solved and knows itself to be this solution" (Marx & Engels, 1978, p. 84). The idea that communism could solve the riddle of history by releasing men from the unwilled, unwanted servitude to their own, seemingly alien, products is the metaphysical precursor to Marx's later idea that planned but non-coercive communism would necessarily result from the dissolution of capitalism.

2.1.5 The historical materialism framework

Historical materialism embodies the analysis of the most primitive of human societies. Marxist historical materialism gave an account of the rise and fall of numerous social systems within history, and anticipated that capitalism, the last but only one stage of human history, will ultimately collapse and be succeeded by a communist society. For Marx, in the communist society there will be decision of labour, no private property, no wage labour, no money, no class distinction, and no state. As part of Marx analysis, other different elements were analysed within developed societies. These are elaborated on in the next sections.

2.1.5.1 Analyses of social structure

According to Marx (2013) the material conditions of human life mainly include the forces of production and the relations of production. The fundamental social activity of human beings is production through labour, which involves relations with other humans, both in the labour itself and in the distribution of the product. Based on these relationships, the political, legal, and ideological superstructures are created. To comprehend the politics, law, religion, morality, art, or philosophy of a given society, it is vital to learn the nature of the society forces and relations of production. Marx (2013) voiced moral indignation over the way in which human labour in a capitalist economy are wrongly enslaved to the products of their own making. The author transcended moral conviction in order to provide an explanation of how in a capitalist economy, the forces of production undeniably compel human beings to operate within a social framework

that appears not self-created. Thus, Marx came to highlight how individuals continuously find themselves existing within structures of society that pre-exist the individuals themselves, and these structures falsely present themselves as natural or even absolute frameworks that humans are powerless to alter through their own activity.

2.1.5.2 Division of labour, property, and power

According to Marx (2013), a division of labour occurs when individuals produce products that they themselves do not consume, and consume products that they themselves do not produce (Marxist Economic and Philosophic Manuscript, 1844). Essentially, there must be a system for the extra change and circulation of such products, and there must also be, even if in a rudimentary form, some (political and/or legal) system of property relations.

However, all human history and development remains to be found at the level of production and not in the developing systems of exchange or circulation, or in the legal and political arrangements that are wrongly thought to govern property relations. Property relations, and the accompanying legal and political institutions, are themselves based on the more fundamental productive activities at work in society, and connect the forces and relations of production. The division of labour in human productive activity makes it possible for humans to change the reality, which would have been quite impossible if their labour remained undivided and undifferentiated. The division of labour also makes it possible for humans to change and develop their own productive capacities in ways that can be restricted to undifferentiated labour.

However, since the division of labour also includes a division between those who produce certain products and those who consume those products, it also makes it likely for some humans to accumulate property at the expense of others. This creates the likelihood of exploitation through the use of accumulated property and power (Marx, 2013). Marx (2013) was against the idea that there is a single type of property. Thus, in The German Ideology, Marx & Engels (1947) categorised four main types of property that play an essential role and that exist in primitive societies. These are (I) a minimal division of labour, (ii) state property, such as the roads, public buildings, and stores of grain under the ancient forms of despotism, and feudal property that consists of lands and services controlled by military land owners whose needs are supplied by serfs; (iii) capital that rests on the separation between production and (4) commerce and results in the employment of labourers who work for wages and produce goods that are sold widely in the markets to make profits for the capitalist (Marx & Engels, 1978).

According to Marx (2013), the main power or influence in a society belongs to those who own and control its key features. In tribal society, the property is jointly owned, and hence, power is diffused throughout the society and there is no dominant class. The other types of property involve a distinction between those who control property and those who do not. Those who control a predominant type of property hold the predominant power in society and are able to decide to benefit themselves at the expense of the rest of the population. In a feudal society, for example, the feudal lords are the ruling class, and they are able to access what they want from the serfs who work for them, and even from rich merchants, whose type of wealth is subordinate to landed interests. The interests of serfs, merchants, and lords are not the same, and therefore, conflicts are unavoidable at certain points. However, while the forces of production and the type of property are largely feudal, the feudal lords are able to settle these conflicts in their own favour. Provided that the feudal system operates, conflicts are dealt with on its terms. The political ideas and movements within a feudal society merely express or reflect these more fundamental, underlying conflicts between differing classes and their differing interests.

2.1.5.3 Historical times

According to Marx (2013), since the material conditions of human life are central in the structuring of a society, important changes in the material conditions of life eventually lead to important changes in the legal, political, and ideological superstructures. Marx also held that significant changes in superstructure institutions, such as political and legal institutions, are not brought about by human thought or reflection on those institutions but by means of changes at the level of the more basic (economic) basis of those institutions. According to Marx, all significant social and historical changes begin through changes at the level of human productive activity (through changes to the forces and relations of production) and not through changes at the superstructure or ideological level of human existence (Marx, 2013).

This theory of historical materialism is also a theory of historical eras. According to Marxist thought, human history progresses through successive modes of production. Before primitive communism, society was organised around slave ownership, which was succeeded by feudalism, and later by capitalism. In ancient slave-owning societies, it was the labour of slaves that made possible the art and science of ancient Greece and the commerce, cities, and bureaucracy of ancient Rome. The slave system eventually collapsed, largely due to its inefficiency and wastefulness, and was replaced by the feudal system, which incorporated

elements of the social organisation of the barbarian invaders. Feudalism was based on the ownership of land by feudal lords, with dependent peasants obliged to provide various forms of service (see Marx & Engels, 1848/1978; Bottomore, 1991).

This description of feudal society highlights how urban centres, with their greater division of labour, enabled the accumulation of wealth and the rise of a bourgeois class. These early capitalists organised production in large workshops, employing wage labourers drawn from rural areas to produce goods for expanding markets. By undermining feudal restrictions that bound serfs to their localities, and by seeking to change feudal laws, the bourgeoisie eventually entered into political conflict with the aristocracy (see Marx & Engels, 1848/1978; Bottomore, 1991). They warranted their engagements by arguing that aristocratic distinctions, based, for example, on birth and family connections, conflicted with the irreversible and natural order of universal freedom and equality. This theory of historical materialism is also a theory of historical epochs or modes of production. According to Marx and Engels (1978), human societies have progressed through successive stages primitive communism, slave society, feudalism, and finally capitalism each defined by distinctive relations of production and class structures. In the ancient slave society, the labour of slaves underpinned the development of art, science, and philosophy in ancient Greece, as well as the commercial cities and bureaucratic systems of ancient Rome (Anderson, 1974). However, the slave mode of production ultimately collapsed, partly due to its inherent inefficiencies and social contradictions (Marx, 1976). It was succeeded by the feudal mode of production, which arose out of the social organisation of the barbarian invaders and was grounded in land ownership by feudal lords, who demanded services or rents from peasants tied to the land (Dobb, 1946).

The feudal system was predominantly agrarian, but in towns where the division of labour and trade allowed for greater wealth accumulation emerged a nascent capitalist class. These bourgeois producers, organising labour in workshops and employing wage labourers, began to undermine feudal constraints (Brenner, 1976; Hilton, 1985). By attracting rural labourers into urban economies, they helped to weaken the traditional feudal structure that had confined peasants and serfs to their localities. The bourgeoisie's economic advancement brought them into political conflict with the aristocracy, especially as feudal laws began to obstruct their commercial ambitions. To justify this struggle, the bourgeoisie advanced Enlightenment ideals—such as universal freedom, equality before the law, and meritocracy—as more aligned with the productive forces and social relations of their time (Marx & Engels, 1978; Hobsbawm,

1996). These ideological claims masked deeper material interests in transforming society to suit capitalist accumulation.

The innovative productive techniques and the novel ways that accompanied them expanded, and a social paradigm was gaining momentum with new types of production and trade, which were assumed could come to fruition only if the laws and customs that deterred them were eliminated. Thus, when the bourgeoisie became strong, they took political action to gain economic and political power through a series of revolutions, including the American and French revolutions. Gradually, the bourgeoisie emerged as the ruling class, while the formerly dominant land-owning aristocracy was reduced to a reactionary class. This transformation was irreversible, as the new forces of production had become more advanced than the old ones (Marx & Engels, 2013).

This understanding of the change from feudalism to capitalism reflects the Marxist analysis of political revolutions. Marx and Engels (1848/1978) viewed such revolutions as the means by which a progressive class one that controls newly emerging forces of production transforms the existing relations of production to enable those forces to develop fully. In this case, the bourgeoisie, as the rising capitalist class, overthrew feudal relations that had become barriers to economic growth. Other scholars have elaborated on this framework, emphasising that these revolutionary transformations were driven by contradictions between outdated social relations and advancing productive forces (Lenin, 1917/1977; Bottomore, 1991; Wood, 2002).

Feudal institutions, and in particular, feudal property laws could have subdued the development of the capitalist forces of production. In capturing political power, the bourgeoisie succeeded in establishing relations of production that facilitated the expansion of capitalistic forces of production.

In all historical epochs leading up to and including capitalism, innovations in the forces of production much like new wine in old wineskins lead to social revolutions that burst the prevailing relations of production and thereby call forth a new set of relations capable of containing and sustaining the new forces of production (Marx & Engels, 1848/1978; Lenin, 1917/1977). According to this analysis, the cycle of innovation and revolution in history will be concluded when humanity establishes communistic relations of production that are fully adequate to the forces of production and recognised by humans as transparent expressions of their own productive activity, rather than as alien, dehumanising structures imposed upon them beyond their control (Marx, 1867/1990; Bottomore, 1991).

This understanding of the change from feudalism to capitalism demonstrates the Marxist analysis of political revolutions. Marx and Engels (1978) considered such revolutions as the means by which a progressive class—that is, the class that controls newly emerging forces of production brings about changes in the relations of production that allow those new forces to become effective and grow. Feudal institutions, particularly feudal property laws, could have constrained the development of capitalist forces of production. By capturing political power, the bourgeoisie succeeded in establishing new relations of production that facilitated the expansion of capitalism (Marx & Engels, 1978).

In all historical epochs leading up to and including capitalism, innovations in the forces of production—much like new wine in old wineskins—lead to social revolutions that rupture existing relations of production and give rise to new ones capable of sustaining the emerging productive forces. According to Marxist theory, this cycle of innovation and revolution will ultimately be resolved when communistic relations of production are established—relations fully adequate to the forces of production and consciously shaped by humans as transparent expressions of their own productive activity, rather than as alien, dehumanising systems imposed from outside (Marx & Engels, 1978).

2.1.5.4 A look at the capitalist mode of production

Market economy-capitalism, as the mode of production has three interrelated features, namely generalised commodity production, imperative of accumulation, and primitive accumulation. Generalised commodity production is when products typically take the form of commodities, and the production of goods and services as commodities is geared towards market exchange to make profit rather than for immediate use (Bernstein, 2007). Capitalist social property relation operates within a strenuously competitive environment that drives the innovation and productivity of both labour and land in a systemic development of the productive forces that is unique to capitalism (Bernstein, 2007, 2010). However, the production of social use values, market exchanges, and profit making are intimately interlinked. Just as products embody social use values, that is production for persons' unknown and reached through the market, they are created by social labour in the abstract, by wage workers unknown, hired through the labour market and disciplined within competing firms by the profit imperative (Bernstein, 2010).

On this account, the capitalist mode of production is characterised by the production of social use value and the exchange of the products of concrete labour that exist, and contribute to value, as abstract social labour (Fine & Saad-Filho, 2004). The notion of "generalised commodity production" (Bernstein, 2009, p. 29) does not suggest that all elements of life are necessarily and comprehensively commodified but means that social reproduction cannot take place outside the circuits and disciplines of commodity relations. Marx referred to this as the "dull compulsion of economic forces" (Bernstein, 2009, p. 29).

Secondly, a related key characteristic of capitalist production is its accumulation imperative. In this mode of production, profits serve as the essential driving force behind capitalist enterprises (Harvey, 2006). Capitalists invest productive capital in the means of production and purchase labour power to produce commodities, thereby generating surplus value—a necessary step toward the realisation of profit (Marx, 1976). Labour power and the means of production are presupposed to exist as commodities under capitalism. However, labour power is fundamental because it is the only commodity whose use creates greater value than its own cost, this surplus value forms the basis of capitalist profit (Marx, 1976; Fine & Saad-Filho, 2010).

Profit is then reinvested in an endless cycle of production and accumulation, what Marx referred to as the expanded reproduction of capital (Marx, 1976; Bernstein, 2010). Although capitalism organises production through a specific social relationship between capitalists and workers, the system is also governed by structural imperatives. Capitalists are subject to competitive pressures and the imperative of profitability, which exert social control over their actions (Clarke, 1994; Harvey, 1982). These structural pressures also affect workers, whose subordination is maintained not just by employers but by the wider system of capital accumulation.

Thirdly, 'primitive accumulation' refers to the processes through which pre-capitalist societies undergo a transition to capitalism. This occurs under non-market relations and dynamics, often involving a degree of extra-economic coercion that are distinct from the market-driven compulsion of economic forces (Bernstein, 2010). Notions of primitive accumulation have their analytical basis in the original transition from feudalism to capitalism in England. These are then extended to other parts of Europe, and to the old agrarian civilisations of North Africa and Asia during the period of modern imperialism. The concept of imperialism is complex and

has been used differently by different authors. However, it must be seen in the context of the entire history of capitalism on a world scale (Brewer, 1990).

Primitive accumulation is the prerequisite to the evolution to capitalism. It necessitates the creation of the conditions of 'market dependence', which signifies the necessity of generalised commodity production for social reproduction, the essential condition and characteristic of capitalism (Fairbairn et al., 2014). The logic of a capitalist social property relation, not least the condition of 'market dependence', drives the growth of productivity of both labour and land in agriculture, especially through technical innovations and new technical and social divisions of labour. This is what is termed the development of the productive forces. This is a key attribute of the 'classic agrarian question', which centred on the establishment of the conditions of increased productivity in farming, and was originally conceived as theorising the transition from feudalism to agrarian capitalism. The second aspect of the agrarian question concerns contributions by agriculture to processes of industrialisation. Thus, primitive accumulation can be linked with the dispossession of peasants, together with the growth of productivity in farming required for the development of the manufacturing industry and other non-agricultural sectors (Bernstein, 2010).

Presence of labour as commodity is vital for capitalism. The separation of labour from ownership of the means of production is pivotal for freeing labour so it can be supplied for capitalist development. As demonstrated by the example of the introduction of capitalism in Britain, such separation was imposed by large landowners, the aristocracy, and the state, rather than bringing the accumulation results of individual thrift and devotion to work by small formers and people in the family institution. It constitutes or transfers existing means of production and labour power into their use in capitalist architecture. Once this is established, the process of competitive accumulation takes off.

The secret of what Marx (2013), called the primitive accumulation of capital lay in the expropriation of the agricultural population, as well as the destruction of the rights or customs of independent cultivators. The combined effect of these transformations was to turn the majority of peasants into wage workers, creating a potential source of surplus value (Fine & Saad-Filho, 2004). However, workers can also be redundant to capital, and Bernstein (2007, p. 3, citing Marx, 1976, p. 782, 798) stated the following:

> It is capitalist accumulation itself that constantly produces … a relatively redundant working population, i.e. a population which is superfluous to capital's average

> requirements for its own valorisation, and is therefore a surplus population … The fact that the means of production and the productivity of labour increase more rapidly than the productive population expresses itself...in the inverse form that the working population always increases more rapidly than the valorisation requirement of capital.

Thus, Marx's (1976, p. 875) primitive (or original) accumulation is "the historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production [and subsistence]" and creates the two basic classes of capitalist society (capitalists and workers). Ultimately, Arrighis (2003), building on Luxemburg's (1963) ideas stated that global capitalism experiences cyclical phases of expansion and crisis, shaped by historical processes and systemic contradictions. Arrighi examined how capitalist accumulation drives imperialist expansion and periodic restructuring. He introduced the concept of 'global hegemonies' in which different states or regions lead the global economy at various times. These hegemonies rise and fall based on their ability to manage economic and social challenges, leading to significant structural transformations in global trade, production, and political power. Arrighi's (2003) analysis underscores the importance of understanding these historical patterns to grasp the dynamics of contemporary capitalism.

2.1.5.5 Rural labour categories

Examining rural labour classes suggests the flexibility and uncertain fluidity and ambiguity of such categories of labour as landless labour, tenant farmer, and small peasants (Banaji, 1997, 2007, as cited in Bernstein, 2010). The class differentiation of smallholders also generates ambiguity. Manenzhe (2015, p. 34) stated that "rural labour beyond the farm" is a term applied not only to fully 'proletarianised' rural workers who are landless, and hence unable to farm on their own account, but also to marginal farmers or those too poor to farm as a major component of their livelihood and reproduction, and who therefore have to sell their labour power. Both these categories of rural labour might be employed locally on the farms of neighbouring capitalists and smallholders' producers, or seasonally in more distant zones of capitalist farming elsewhere in their own country and sometimes even in another country (Bernstein, 2010). The concept of 'classes of labour', therefore, refers to the following:

> The growing numbers who now depend, directly and indirectly on the sale of their labour power for their own daily reproduction … They have to pursue their reproduction in conditions of growing income insecurity and 'pauperization' as well as employment insecurity and the downward pressures exerted by the neoliberal erosion of social

> provision for those in standard wage employment, who are shrinking as a proportion of classes of labour in most regions of the South, and in some instances in absolute terms as well (Bernstein, 2006, p. 455).

Bernstein (2010, p. 111) further questioned the meaning of 'poor farmers', and suggested that they can be included in the concept of a "global informal working class"[6], a phrase used by Davis (2006, p. 178). Bernstein (2010) suggested that poor farmers might not be dispossessed of all means of production, but neither do the majority of them possess sufficient means to reproduce themselves, which established the limits of their 'viability' as petty commodity producers. Bernstein (2010, p. 111) described the working poor of the South as follows:

> [They] pursue their reproduction through insecure, oppressive and typically increasingly scarce wage employment and/or a range of likewise precarious small-scale and 'informal economy' survival activity, including marginal farming. In effect, livelihoods are pursued through complex *combinations* of wage employment and self-employment … many pursue their means of reproduction across different sites of the social division of labour.

The integration of wage worker and freelancing are engaged in across various locations of the social division of labour. By means of the notion of "footloose labour", Bernstein (2010) suggested that the social locations that classes of labour inhabit, combine, and move between make for ever more fluid boundaries, where the masses of surplus labour, the informal working class, and formal and informal economies intersect with each other. It thus becomes clear that there is no "homogenous proletarian condition" within the Global South, other than the essential condition of the need for people to meet their reproduction needs through the sale of their labour power (Bernstein, 2007, p. 6). Therefore, Bernstein (2010, p. 111) argued that the working poor of the countryside "defy inherited assumptions of fixed and uniform notions of 'worker', 'farmer', 'petty trader', 'urban', 'rural', 'employed' and 'self-employed'".

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[6] The notion of the informal working class is often used in an urban rather than a rural context, but Davis's book *Planet of Slums* (2006), resonates with what Bernstein (2010) designated as "classes of labour". The notion of 'economic informality' prevalent in Latin American cities since 1980 is allied to what Bernstein terms the 'fragmentation of labour', and is applicable to the country sides of the South in all their diversity.

2.1.5.6 The Political Economy of Agrarian Change

According to Fairbairn et al. (2014), agrarian political economy has increased recently to analyse questions of how capital in the current world is it taking control of land and natural resources, thereby rearranging social and natural relations. Thus, as global capitalism enters agrarian formations and commons in new ways, the theoretical legacy of the "classic agrarian question continues to be reconstructed" (Fairbairn et al., 2014). This section commences by examining the basic characteristics of capitalist agriculture in the current era of capitalist globalisation, where national economies are located within a rapidly changing world economy.

2.1.6 Capitalist agriculture

The body of work on agrarian change indicates that besides the growth of vast agricultural enterprises, some small-scale and household-based farming operations persisted through the era of industrial capitalism in the late 19th century to the present. Therefore, a broad range of farming practices exists across the world of contemporary capitalism. The diversity resonates with the social organisation of farming enterprises; the distribution and degree of concentration of capital in farms; the size and scale of farming; the extent of mechanisation; the variety of modes of integration in markets for means of production and outputs; and the ways in which they are affected by state policies and practices (Bernstein, 1994; Cousins, 2011). The different types of farming in capitalism far exceeds that of the branches of production to which farming is linked, both 'backwards' and 'forwards', that is to economic activity both 'upstream' and 'downstream' of farming itself.

The important feature of capital-intensive, and thus less labour-absorbing, agricultural subsectors include the fact that large land projects must use economies of both scale and scope in the production of outputs. Manenzhe (2015) argued that these are primarily intended for export markets, located largely, but not exclusively, in the advanced capitalist economies. These farms operate in terms of the law of value and the logic of market imperatives, which means they must continually strive to improve their competitiveness by reducing per unit costs and improving per unit yields. These operations forge linkages with agrifood transnational capital operating at various levels in finance, input supply, and food processing, distribution and retailing. The linkages between export-oriented capitalist farms and agrifood transnational capital may be direct through the physical ownership of farms or in the control of production through contract farming. The linkages also manifest indirectly through public or private

middlemen that link on-farm production, global processing, and global wholesale and retail distribution (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010a).

Smallholders producing agricultural subsectors are increasingly attached to the market imperative. Their products are sold on markets subject to the law of value, and they participate in the market for labour power that is productive of surplus value. Members of households from this subsector often straddle both farm and off-farm activities, and many producers have thus become increasingly reliant on income arising from the sale of their labour (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010a).

Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010a) stated that the prevalence of vast capital in world agriculture has produced a global agrarian crisis in which under-consumption coexists with over-consumption. Globalisation represents a new phase of the concentration, centralisation and mobility of capital. It further intensifies the "fragmentation of labour, which pursues its reproduction in conditions ever more insecure" (Bernstein, 2010, p. 111). Bernstein (2010, p. 111) indicated that based on such fragmentation, "wage employment is combined with informal sector and survivalist activity across a range of sites: urban and rural, agriculture and non-agricultural, wage and self-employment". The fragmentation of labour and its consequences, together with increasing demands for greater stability and security of rural livelihoods, appear to drive contemporary struggles over land in the Global South, and inform demands for land by the rural poor in the Tanzanian rural landscape.

Following the continued coexistence across the world of vast commercial farms and petty commodity producers, re-theorisation of the classic agrarian question should focus on understanding of this 'substantive diversity'[7] (Bernstein & Byres, 2001). It is acknowledged that the state forms, economic systems and labour regimes that subordinated peasants in the past have now become incorporated into global circuits of production, trade and finance. The research site in this study, the KVFP, has the character of a highly capital-intensive farming area that supplies global markets, and is thus subject to the dynamics of a globalised agrifood regime. This helps to explain the origins of the land conflicts (see Chapters 4 and 5).

[7] This is a phrase coined by Kautsky in Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2021) that helps understand complexities such as the coexistence of peasant capitalism and large-scale capitalist agricultural sectors and enterprises in a national economy.

2.1.7 Agrarian questions of capital and labour

Byres (1986, 1991) and Bernstein (1996, 2009) recommended the analytical deconstruction of the classic agrarian question into three interconnected broad themes, namely a problematic of 'production', which denotes the development of the productive forces in agriculture in transitions from pre-capitalist to capitalist agriculture; a problematic of 'politics', which entails the role of peasant classes, small farmers and farmworkers in 'agrarian classes of labour' in struggles for democracy and socialism; and a problematic of 'accumulation', which focusses on the contributions of capitalist agriculture to processes of industrialisation (Bernstein, 1996).

The core interest of the classic agrarian question centres on the establishment of the conditions of increased productivity in farming. This has been understood in terms of transitions to fully developed capitalist relations in agriculture, for example, through the 'Prussian path' versus the class differentiation of petty commodity producers (the 'American path'), as well as by various combinations of these two dynamics and other trajectories. Transitions involve the emergence of full proletarianised labour as a result of the dispossession of tenant peasantries by capitalising landed property, and/or from class differentiation of the peasantry (Bernstein, 2002; Cousins, 2011). Such transitions do not occur through uniform and unvarying pathways. State policies and interventions influence the nature of agrarian transitions because of the varying strength of landed property, agrarian capital, agricultural labour, and emerging industrial capital (Cousins, 2013).

The classic agrarian question emerged from the circumstances and processes that explain the transition into fully developed capitalism within a specific social construction. Bernstein (2009) suggested that this can be considered an 'internalist' perspective that is focused on the class structures and dynamics internal to the countryside of particular social formations. Bernstein argued that this 'classic' agrarian question is the agrarian question of capital, which subsumes that of labour, in the sense that its logic accomplishes the social transformation and technical development of capital in ways that contribute to a broader process of industrialisation.

Contentions persists as to whether or not rural social construction where none of the transformations discussed above have taken place are still confronted with an unresolved agrarian question. The concerns are about the emergence of a new or contemporary agrarian question. Some recommended that the continued politics of land and agriculture in the developing world is symptomatic of the continuing salience and relevance of the classic

agrarian question (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010a). Cousins (2013), however, stated that attempts to directly apply conceptual models drawn from classic formulations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe to other places and times constitute a flawed approach. It is challenging, partly because of the ambiguities and tensions inherent in the original illustration of the diverse pathways possible in the development of capitalist social relations in rural economies.

Based on the world historical significance scope of capitalist development, the international factor is central to any reassessing of the agrarian question. Agriculture land, as is illustrated in following chapters, is increasingly dominated by new forms of capital in agribusiness, both upstream and downstream of farming. Agribusiness capital is also increasingly global in its nature. Weis (2007) stated that the high levels of productivity achieved by capitalist agriculture have not eliminated hunger. High levels of waste co-exist with the malnutrition of hundreds of millions of people, including in the rural areas of the Global South. The ecological contradictions of capitalist agriculture have also emerged ever more clearly over time.

Differing perspective of the agrarian question by numerous authors, such as Bernstein (2010), Araghi (2009) and McMichael (1997; 2009), have one thing in common: A belief that the globalisation of capital has had negative impacts on subordinate classes of labour, especially in relation to the terms and conditions of their reproduction. Thus Bernstein (2007, 2009) stated that the agrarian question of capital has now been resolved on a world historical scale, but the current agrarian question is one of labour or of the dispossessed[8], who face an ongoing crisis of social reproduction. This view informed this thesis, especially that of the dispossessed and its presentation of in-depth case studies from KVFP on the causes of land conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers.

The point of departure for examination of the agrarian question of land is the growing dispossession of land, combined with the diverse and varying forms of its differentiation. This realm features the relative decline of land, insecure tenure, and the reduction of real incomes derived from these sources. As mentioned earlier, globalisation expels people from agriculture without absorbing their labour elsewhere in the economy, and therefore, "their labour is surplus

[8] Here Bernstein (2007) suggested that majority of the smallholders such as farmers and livestock keepers lose their land because of capitalist forces and that capitalism causes the differentiation within smallholders by making some prosperous and others impoverished.

to the requirements of a more efficient agricultural sector" (Li, 2009, p. 1). They become 'surplus populations' of the dispossessed when their land is needed but their labour is not (Li, 2009). Similarly, White et al. (2012, citing Arrighi & Moore, 2001, p. 75–76) suggested the following:

> Contemporary forms of agrarian transformation … expel people from agriculture without absorbing their labour in manufactures or elsewhere in the economy, thus making them surplus to capital's requirements for labour … the underlying contradiction of a world capitalist system that promotes the formation of a world proletariat but cannot accommodate a generalised living wage (that is, the most basic of reproduction costs), far from being solved, has become more acute than ever.

According to Bernstein (2007), rural classes of labour include most small-scale farmers in the South. These are classes that are neither dispossessed of all means of reproducing themselves, nor are they in possession of sufficient means to reproduce themselves through their own efforts. They increasingly depend, directly or indirectly, on the sale of their labour power for their daily reproduction. They have to "pursue their reproduction through insecure and oppressive wage employment and/or a range of precarious small-scale and insecure informal sector activities" (Bernstein, 2010, p. 111). This crisis constitutes a new agrarian question of labour, which is shot through by class tensions and contradictions arising from peoples' struggles to construct a precarious livelihood in the face of the further development of the productive forces of capital.

2.1.8 Exploring theories on petty commodity production

Petty commodity production as an idea refers to the following:

> A phenomenal category of commodity producers who possess the means of production necessary to produce commodities and who engage in production on the basis of unpaid household labour alone. It is assumed that such producers are capable of reproducing themselves as private producers of commodities without employing wage labour and without selling (part of) their labour power (Gibbon & Neocosmos, 1985).

Gibbon and Neocosmos (1985) indicated that peasant petty commodity producers, on one hand, and capitalists and proletarians, on the other, are not valid polar opposites. Seeing proletarians and peasants as polar opposites, and peasants as pre-capitalist 'left-overs' does not move us forward. Viewing the peasantry as a pre-capitalist or non-capitalist class is restrictive and fails

to pose critical questions about its contemporary conditions of existence (Neocosmos, 1993). Petty commodity producing enterprises are equally the product of capitalist relations. The class basis of a petty commodity producing petty bourgeoisie is constantly produced by the contradiction between capital and wage labour, the essential production relation of capitalist society (Gibbon & Neocosmos, 1985).

Despite the varied classes of wage labourers and capitalists, there are effects of a relation between capital and wage labour, and collective identities of these kinds need not exist in all capitalist formations (Gibbon & Neocosmos, 1985). The contradictions that underlie the existence of these classes have to be discovered through a process of critical analysis and the explication of their conditions of existence, as follows:

> To suggest that a social formation is capitalist by virtue of being founded on the contradiction between wage labour and capital is not to assert that all—even the majority of—enterprises in this social formation will conform to a 'type', in which capitalists and wage labourers are present, and which constitutes the measure in relation to which all other forms deviate. What make enterprises, and more generally social formations, capitalist or not, is not their supposed essential features, but the relations which structurally and historically explain their existence. (Gibbon & Neocosmos, 1985, p. 169)

In this view, petty commodity producers, whether agricultural or not, are grounded in the opposite foundation mix of capital and labour in a single enterprise (Neocosmos, 1993). Basically, this form of production embodies a combination of the class 'places' of both capital and labour. In the context of farming, capital takes the form of land, tools, seeds, fertilisers, and chemicals, and labour takes the form of family or household unpaid labour. So petty commodity producers own their means of production, unlike, for example, landless workers, and are in this sense capitalists. But they also use their own labour power, unlike capitalists who hire the labour of workers (Cousins, 2011:10).

Bernstein (2010, p. 103) suggested that this is the "contradictory unity" of class places. However, these class places are not evenly distributed within farming households, especially given gendered divisions of property, labour, income and spending within such households. There is a contradiction between capital and labour, and between reproducing the means of production and reproducing the producers. In other words, the contradiction involves having

to decide between the distribution of income to replacement funds and funds of rent, on one hand, or funds for consumption and generational reproduction, on the other.

Cousins (2011) stated that some petty commodity producers seize opportunities to produce a substantial surplus over and beyond the amount needed to secure their simple reproduction as both capital and labour, and then reinvest all or part of this surplus into extending the material base of their production unit. Such producers, therefore, shift from a dynamic of simple reproduction to one of 'expanded reproduction'. This development has implications for labour, because it means that such producers need to begin to hire significant amounts of wage labour. The farm then assumes the character of a normal capitalist enterprise that operates in terms of the logic of profit and loss within the competitive markets of a capitalist economy.

Another implication of the intrinsically conflicting combination of different class places within petty commodity production is the tendency for the differentiation of such producers into numerous classes, such as into wealthy, middle class and impoverished peasants, as suggested by Bernstein (2002). Cousins (2011) suggested that the scale in which petty commodity producers are able to successfully navigate these contradictions, deal with a variety of external risks and shocks, or make use of opportunities for expansion and growth of their enterprises is always uneven. What emerges from these dynamics of petty commodity production is a generalised tendency towards class differentiation in a rural area.

This view on petty commodity production informed my analysis of disputes within customary owned large-scale commercial farm land in Kilombero, where there are workers who are also owners of the land, and thus, combines the class places of capital and labour. The land involves distinctive property regimes and relations of production that tend to generate severe tensions and conflicts, and which ultimately derive from the fundamental class antagonisms of capitalism.

2.2 Conceptual Framework: Property, Power and Production

As noted previously, agrarian political economy embodies the investigations of "the social relations and dynamics of production and reproduction, property and power in agrarian formations and their processes of change, both historical and contemporary" (Bernstein, 2010, p. 1). It is also more broadly enmeshed in the ways in which capital is seizing hold of land and natural resources, in the process both destroying and restructuring social and society-nature relations (Fairbairn et al., 2014). The primary concern of this this study was, as previously stated, to explore how large-scale farm plantations in customary land contexts in Kilombero

transform or modify such relations. As, Bernstein's four key political economy questions (who owns what, who does what, who gets what, and what do they do with it?) were central to my analysis of social relations related to land in Kilombero.

Answering these questions suggestsuggested the tensions and conflicts evident in customary owned land in Kilombero, and explained the everyday politics involved in struggles for social reproduction. From political sociological perspectives, the concepts of modes of belonging, identity formation, and cultural politics suggest dsugested by Rutherford (1997; 2008a; 2008b) provided a distinctive yet supportive perspective on the conflicts evident in customary owned land. Questions of ownership, access to, and control of customary land resource are impacted by the power relations with the 'villagers', which consequently plays a vital role in the social distribution of income and in the social division of labour.

The processes of negotiations were initially facilitated by the same government, and then, by the company to which the government allocated the land. The negotiations took place without fully engaging village authorities. This suggests that the government and respective company have distinct modes of belonging that influence their access to resources.

Normally, the interests of the company collided with those of the village authorities, and the tensions arose because of the contradictions between the needs of capital accumulation and the requirements of the social reproduction of labour. In complex situations, such as those found on customary land, it is always vital to identify the key actors and to assess and compare the interests and trade-offs that arise in the relations with one another. In this thesis, I strived to connect such an analysis across the three interconnected dimensions of property, power, and production. Conflicting motives and strained relations emerged not only in relations but also over the positions of authority and power and over access to gains. These emerged and converged in dominions of conflicts. To use Nuijten's (2005) phrasing, these are social platforms where a wide range of government and non-government actors, representing particular interests and committed to different cultural interests and political trajectories, interact with each other.

Thus, in this study, special attention was paid to how customary land has impacted class of labour, especially regarding relations of property power and production. However, as previously mentioned, the analysis attempted to transcend beyond a narrow focus on property rights to consider issues of "illicit actions, relations of production, entitlements relations, and the histories of all of these" (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 157). The next subsections highlight the

concepts of the dynamics of property rights relations, power relations, and production that I used and sketch how they were applied to the materials from the case studies.

2.2.2 Power relations

Power relations are linked to the relations and dynamics of power. Property is closely linked to authority because it warrants power that validates property rights and engages the capacity of political and legal institutions, such as states and other institutions, like village, community, or religious groups, to influence social actors.

There is a stark difference between Marx's conception of power and that of Weber. While Marx used the concept of power in relation to social classes and social systems as a whole, Weber saw power as individuals' ability to control others, resources, or events (Jessop, 2012). In Marx's terms, power derives from the position of a social class in relations of production and in relations of dominations or subordination of social classes. However,

> To investigate how competition for society's vital resources is organised and structured is to investigate not only how wealth is distributed and how classes of 'haves' and 'have-nots' are made; it is equally to investigate how polities emerge, consolidate, and recede through processes of legitimisation, inclusion, and exclusion (Sikor & Lund, 2009, p. 2).

In order to enhance understanding of power or powerlessness within community-owned farms, an ethnographic understanding of everyday politics is also important in relation to practices of authority and the power relations that underpin distinctive modes of belonging (Rutherford, 2008a). Thus, labour relations and living conditions on farms are mediated by cultural styles of interaction that are recognised as proper decorum on farms, and claims to and decisions over resources are driven by recognised cultural styles. Modes of belonging involve the construction and policing of boundaries of rule (Rutherford, 2008a; 2014). The processes by which identities are contested and negotiated by various actors are significant. The question of power presupposes that some degree of agency exists for the rural poor within the overall dynamics of production and reproduction, property, and power (Long, 2001).

The causes of the land conflicts and social relations of power on customary owned land results in part from what Long (1989) suggests is the social and cognitive struggles that happen between social actors. Questions about who really derives gains from things and through which processes they do so also bring to the surface the power that affect people's abilities from access to resources.

2.2.3 Property relations

Property relations are social relations that involve a pattern of rights, responsibilities, and duties, and the power that controls the behaviour of individuals or groups in relation to one another and to custody possession, use, disposal, and enjoyment of numerous classes of objects (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Sikor & Lund, 2009). Characterising any specific set of property relations should be done based on an analysis of such patterns. 'Access' is a dynamic analytical construct that shows how people or institutions benefit from resources, whether or not they have rights to them (Sikor & Lund, 2009). Ribot and Peluso (2003) stated that access can be distinguished from 'property' because access can be defined in terms of the ability to benefit from things, including material objects, institutions, and symbols. This perspective encourages ability rather than rights. It recommends that analysis should focus on social relationships that constrain or facilitate beneficiation, rather than on older notions of property rights. Thus Hall et al., (2011), drawing on the example of investors' access to land in the 'new' boom crops in Southeast Asia, proposed that powers of regulation, market, force, and legitimation have been used. This necessitates investigating and interrogating the range of processes through which actors and institutions strive to legitimise or vindicate their actions (Sikor & Lund, 2009).

As explained earlier, land claims in Tanzania have resulted in social change within which numerous actors with differing interests play a crucial role in the establishment of property regime and systems of land access and control. Such interests, whether of government bodies, claimant smallholders (farmer or livestock keepers), general communities, institutions of traditional leadership, or large-scale commercial farmers, have been pitched against each other.

Compensation warrants property rights; the government assisted the negotiation of contracts between new landowners and agribusiness in order to regulate access and control. Control refers to the ability to mediate others' access, and thus, the checking and direction of action, and the power of directing and regulating free action (Sikor & Lund, 2009). Literature on property rights in land reform projects ought to engage intensely with the social and cultural discontinuities and ambiguities inherent in these "battlefields of knowledge" that shape relations among actors (Long, 2001). Long used this image to convey the notion of contested arenas where actors' understandings, interests and values are pitted against each other.

2.2.4 Relations of production

Marxists locate the foundation of **class power** primarily in the **social relations of production**, which define who owns and controls productive resources and who sells their labour (Jessop, 2012; Marx, 1976). In Tanzania today, the **agricultural sector** is increasingly integrated into global capitalism, shaped by evolving relations between **agrarian classes** including capitalist landed property, agrarian capital, and wage labour (Ponte, 2022; Amanor, 2010). Highly concentrated **agribusiness capital**, often foreign or transnational, dominates both upstream (inputs, finance) and downstream (processing, trade) segments of agricultural value chains (McMichael, 2013).

Land conflicts in this context cannot be reduced to local disputes; they are embedded in the broader dynamics of **capitalist globalisation**, which involve the internationalisation of agriculture, the global division of labour, and vast circuits of finance and commodity production (White et al., 2012; Borras et al., 2011). These systems of production reproduce and intensify **class inequality**, often under frameworks that still reflect **colonial legacies**. Such legacies include enduring social relations between capital and wage labour, a focus on production for competitive markets, and an imperative of accumulation for economic survival (Bernstein, 2007; Shivji, 2009). Thus, even where policy frames suggest inclusive development, the material relations underpinning rural production often sustain **capitalist accumulation** and marginalization.

2.2.5 Integrating theories and concepts in the analysis

There are at least three dimensions within which I explored the causes of land conflicts in Kilombero, namely property rights, power relations, and the social relations of production. Political economy analysis, especially using the four questions proposed by Bernstein (2010), helped me illuminate the tensions and contradictions emerging from the class relations within customary owned land, and the struggles and contestations around access to and control of land. In addition, processes of identification and cultural politics, and class relations, provided valuable insights through which processes of political action and cultural styles of various actors can be understood. Therefore, I used analytical tools that enabled the analysis of the discourses, practices, and institutional arrangements through which people make claims for resources and rights (Rutherford, 2008a). The core elements in this analysis were the forms of identification that generate a sense of belonging or not belonging, and of entitlement.

A concluding component that completed the analysis was a focus on livelihood outcomes and impacts on social reproduction. This examined how property rights, power dynamics, and production relations are mediated by modes of belonging and related cultural politics, and how these influence livelihood strategies aimed at social reproduction. This goal conflicts with that of ensuring the reproduction of capital within capitalist social relations. The contradiction between profit maximisation and its reinvestment into production processes, and the social reproduction of labour, which constituted the basis of many of the tensions and contradictions discussed in this study.

2.2.6 Through the Frame of the Corporate Food Regime

The large-scale farms signify an international expansion of a corporate food regime. This regime, basically governing relations of agricultural production, is entrenched within broader social business models abstracted as agro-investments. Agro-investments are combined socio-business systems that possess complex relations and interdependencies between humans as social relations, and between humans and the environment as socio-business relations (Vatn, 2005). In this study, I focused on the social relations intrinsic in agro-investments. Before discussing the concept of food regimes, it is essential to concisely expand on the concept of agro-investments.

Agro-investments can be conceptualised as a system that, through some degree of advanced technology and entrepreneurship, has the potential to promote business modernisation and improve the productivity and profitability of farm businesses (Nkosi et al., 2024). Agro-investments also offer more enabling prospects for economic growth, which is significant for the trajectory of poverty alleviation, food security, and job creation (Mtombeni et al., 2018).

The system constitutes numerous and varied components and agents interacting simultaneously. These contacts occur within and between social, business and economic domains at multiple scales, from small-scale farmers at the local level to multilateral national companies and multilateral institutions operating at the global level. These interconnected relationships suggest that events or changes in one part of the system may amorphously destabilise other parts of the system. As such, decisions made by agents within the agro-investments, be it a small-scale farmer, a government institution, a multilateral organisation, or a multilateral national company, are influenced by these reciprocal relationships.

Following this background, I follow Loftas et al.(2021) and Chen et al. (2014) as they encompass many of these inter-linkages that were relevant to this study: according to Nkosi et al. (2024) agro-investments are an apex and integral pillar for improved production output and economic growth in the medium and long term and agriculture investments influences the rate at which businesses can modernise, increase production, use advanced and technical innovations, be ecologically friendly, and acclimatise to technological developments. Swinnen (2018) emphasised that the fundamental objective of investments in agricultural technology and innovation in farm business entrepreneurship should be to explore all potential possibilities and create conducive conditions for the usefulness and application of these technologies to enhance productivity and economic prospects.

This definition recognises that the performance of smallholder farmers is designed capital investment as a driving factor and is a paramount enabler for basic minimal participation in the agricultural value chain from the primary to the tertiary phases (Nkosi et al., 2024). Thus, changes that occurs to agro-investments are normally socially constructed, and could therefore often be otherwise (Davoudi, 2012). As smallholder farmers in agro-investments change forms, there are some who gains while others lose (Vatn, 2005), or in other words, abundance for some might be scarcity for others (Scoones et al., 2014). Who wins and who loses are based on whose interests and whose rights to essential resources are promoted and/or protected. Indeed, this reflects the inherent power asymmetries in society (Vatn, 2005). Such struggles over power are fundamental, not only to define the outcome for various groups and individuals and to determine whether these outcomes are just and fair but also in terms of how a particular issue is framed and approached (i.e. hunger, poverty or climate change). These questions formed the core of the analysis of large farms in this study. In the next section, I develop an understanding of the political economic forces governing the agro-investments.

2.2.7 Relations of production in agro-investments: Food regimes

As demonstrated earlier, the relations of production within agro-investments are administered by political economic conditions. Thus, to comprehend the dynamics and dominating governing forces in this system is to identify winners and losers as the relations of production change. In this study, such changes were demonstrated by the expansion of the corporate food regime in Tanzania through large-scale farms. In this section, I begin to examine the concept of food regimes and how such regimes have progressed over time. Subsequently, I describe the

dominating food regime in the contemporary context in terms of how it is structured, the main actors, and the type of agricultural production it promotes.

First it is vital to explain the concept of regimes. According to Vatn (2005), regimes are institutional structures that regulate society through a variety of means, both in formal and informal ways. Broadly, regimes can be defined as the "principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue-area" (Krasner, 1982, p. 185). Vatn's (2005) idea of regimes is made up of two main components: Firstly, they constitute the rules and norms on the ownership and access to a resource; and secondly, inherent in regimes are the rules and norms that govern how the resource, and the products attained from this resource, can be transacted between varied actors.

Undeniably, regimes are important in shaping the complex web of social and socio-business relations in agro-investments. The prevailing forces that shape this complex web have been termed 'food regimes' (Friedman & McMichael, 1989). The concept of food regimes has been blatantly developed through the work of McMichael and Friedman (Friedman & McMichael, 1989; Friedmann, 2005; McMichael, 2000, 2005, 2009) and is defined by Friedman (1993, pp. 30–31) as a "rule-governed structure of production and consumption of food on a world scale". To put it differently, the concept encompasses the whole agricultural and food value chain, from field to plate, and are thus in consonance with the definition of the agro-investments approaches deliberately use technologies to increase productivity and economic prosperity guarantees food security and sector stability" (Swinnen, 2018). Three different food regimes have been identified from history, each indicating time-specific political and economic structures (Friedman & McMichael, 1989; McMichael, 2009). The emergence and decline of these regimes reflect broad sporadic periods of liberal and organised capitalism within world capitalist development. To exemplify these dynamics, I turn towards Polanyi's (1957) 'double movement' argument.

In his seminal work, *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi (1957) argued that for the modern capitalist economy to function, it must organise its three essential elements, namely labour, land, and money, for sale on the market as fictitious commodities. Fictitious commodities are objects exemplified as commodities but that are not produced for sale. Polanyi argued that if this fiction is left to unregulated markets, it would lead to socio-ecological damage. To assuage such devastating forces and to safeguard the continued existence of the liberal state and capitalist production, Polanyi argued that capitalism contains cyclical phases of unregulated

(liberal capitalism) and regulated (organised capitalism) markets. This is what he referred to as the 'double movement' and described as follows:

> It can be embodied as the action of two organizing principles in society, each of them setting itself particular institutional goals, having the support of certain social forces and using its own distinctive methods. One was the principle of economic liberalism, intending at the establishment of a self-regulating market, relying on the support of the trading classes, and using largely laissez-faire and free trade as its methods; the other was the principle of social protection intending at the conservation of man and nature and productive organization, relying on the different support of those most closely impacted by the adverse action of the market—mainly, but not completely, the working and the landed classes—and using protective legislation, restrictive associations and other instruments of intervention as its methods (Polanyi, 1957, p. 132).

The history of food regimes reflects these two organising principles in the capitalist society. The regime, which is marked by the period between the 1870s and the 1930s, was entrenched in a phase of liberal capitalist development. The development of this regime, also coined the colonial-diasporic food regime (Friedmann, 2005), was inherently associated with the evolving European industrial sector. The regime was portrayed by two sets of food flows, from the colonial territories in the Global South and from the settler states (the US, Canada, & Australia), respectively (McMichael, 2009). Under the auguries of British supremacy, food flows from the colonial territories were linked with "the violent incorporation of colonial lands and peoples into an expanding world capitalist economy grounded on free trade" (McMichael & Raynolds, 1994, pp. 317). This integration involved an extensive re-organisation of economic resources structured to fuel industrialisation processes in Europe.

The deployment of agricultural surpluses in the Global South formed the centrepiece of a post-colonial 'development project'. According to McMichael (1996, as cited in McMichael, 2009, p. 141) this project had as its ultimate aim to expand capitalist markets to contain communism as the "vehicle of 'national' economic growth and modernity". In addition to food aid, which prompted national divestment from agriculture in the Global South, a somewhat contradictory component of the development project was agricultural modernisation through state intervention (i.e. subsidies, protectionism). This entailed land reforms and the selective global spread of the agro-industrial complex via the green revolution, "which injected high-yielding varieties of a few cereals (wheat, maize, rice) coupled with the heavy use of subsidised

fertilisers, pesticides, irrigation and machinery into the agricultural economies of the Global South" (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011, p. 110). This revolution produced uneven results both between and within countries and have been associated with increased rural class differentiation and land concentration (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). While rhetorically promoting the idea of national development, McMichael (2009) stated that the overall reality of the development project was an international expansion of agribusiness value chains of "inputs, technologies and foodstuffs, eroding the coherence of national farm sectors" (McMichael, 2009, p. 146). McMichael (2009) viewed that the food aid is complex, in particular, undermined national strategies for agricultural modernisation. In the 1980s, the international expansion of agribusinesses gained momentum as the post-war government-organised form of capitalism 'removed its gloves', which was marked by the removal of the gold standard in the 1970s, lifting restrictions on capital, and reversing to a (neo)liberal phase. This phase saw the emergence of a new rule-governed structure of production and consumption of agricultural and food products formed through the vision of corporations. It is this corporate food regime that framed the analysis in this thesis.

2.2.8 Revealing the truth: The Corporate Food Regime

The contemporary corporate food regimes came to the fore in the context of the global turn towards neoliberal politics in the 1980s (McMichael, 2005). The occurrence of the corporate food regime must be grasped within the context of this turn. The period of organised capitalism in the 1950s and 1960s had provided macroeconomic stability alongside high economic growth and improved living standards. However, by the early 1970s, the period of incessant growth was followed by stagnation, ultimately throwing the Global North into an economic crisis. In an effort to counter high inflation rates and to revitalise the US economy, the Nixon administration eventually left the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates (the gold standard) in 1973, allowing the dollar to freely vary against other currencies. Concurrently, this process of unchaining capital corresponded with the stockpiling of surplus capital in Northern banks, fuelled by a blend of Eurodollars stemming from the Marshall Plan and Petrodollars accumulated by the OPEC countries as a result of high oil prices (Hanlon, 2009). The failure of the Bretton Wood system enabled uncertainties in world financial markets and brought further disorder to an economy already in crisis (McMichael & Raynolds, 1994).

Thus, in the economic crisis situation and with the low circulation of capital in the Global North, capital was 'pushed' on Global South governments via extremely low interest rates

(Hanlon, 2009). This solved two challenges; Northern banks secured continued capital circulation, while countries in the Global South got access to cheap capital to finance development efforts. By the late 1970s, private loans to Global South governments increased by nearly 50% compared to the early 1970s. Thus, when the US in 1979 raised interest rates to dramatic levels in a bid to quell inflation and attract capital, many countries in the Global South struggled to fulfil their debt obligations (Harvey, 2006). This ultimately resulted in the international debt crisis whereby Global South debt in 1986 amounted to about US$1 trillion (Private correspondences wit A. G. Nilsen, 2013).

It was in the situation of the economic downturn during the 1970s that calls came for government-organised capitalism to advance (Harvey, 2006). In this context, neoliberalism emerged as a prescription seeking to reduce government interference in the economy to revive profitability (Hanlon, 2009; Harvey, 2006). It is important to realise that while it is often claimed that neoliberal policies entail a reduction, or removal, of the government from economic planning, the more correct interpretation is that neoliberalism fosters a restructuring of the role of governments to facilitate a friendly business environment. This includes the privatisation of assets as a means to open up fresh fields for capital accumulation. Sectors formerly run or regulated by the state (transportation, telecommunications, oil and other natural resources, utilities, social housing, education) are turned over to the private sphere or deregulated. The free mobility of capital between sectors and regions is regarded as crucial to reviving profit rates, and all barriers to that free movement (such as planning controls) have to be removed, except in those areas crucial to 'the national interest' (however that may be conveniently defined). The watchword of the neoliberal state is therefore 'flexibility' in labour markets and in the deployment of investment capital (Harvey, 2006, p. 35).

The neoliberal tendencies focus policy responses to the international debt crisis through debt-conditional structural adjustment programs, which emphasize fiscal austerity, trade liberalization, deregulation, and the privatization of state-owned enterprises, often at the expense of social welfare and local economic sovereignty.

Neoliberal policies were, in many cases forcefully, exported to the Global South (Harvey, 2006; Patnaik, 2011). The structural adjustment programs primarily had two aims. Firstly, they were designed to facilitate a restructuring and repayment of debts that had accumulated across the Global South during the 1970s and 1980s (Hanlon, 2009). Secondly, through the liberalisation of trade and privatisation of industries and social services, the structural

adjustment programs sought to establish a less restrictive flow of capital and goods in order to decrease government expenditures and facilitate private investments in important areas of development (Hanlon, 2009). Ultimately, the structural adjustment programs were "packaged and sold as the new development agenda" (D. Moyo, 2011, p. 20). However, what they achieved in practice was a stagnation, or even decline, in per capita GDP, setbacks in health and literacy, reduced food security, increased inequality, and an even further accumulation of debts owed to foreign creditors (Hanlon, 2009; Harvey, 2006; IMF, 2003; Patnaik, 2011).

The shift to neoliberal politics and economic liberalisation created new avenues to corporate control in an attempt to keep capital accumulation on track in a context of economic crisis (Harvey, 2003, 2006). It has enabled a rearrangement of the food regime in which the consequence has been increased control by corporate elites over land and resources at the expense of small-scale farmers (McMichael, 2005; Moyo, 2011, 2013). Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011) viewed this corporate dominated food regime to embody two closely related and simultaneously existing drifts, namely the neoliberal and the reformist drifts. These drifts are the essential bases of the theoretical context in which large-scale farms emerge. On the one hand they express the regime's resilience, while on the other hand, they reflect a societal Polanyian 'double movement' (Holt, Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). By adopting this position, the possibility for food regime transformation hangs on the relative power of the societal counter forces that seek to protect from social, cultural, and ecological misuse.

2.2.9 The neoliberal trend of the corporate food regime

The neoliberal drift of the regime begets resolutely on free trade rhetoric. This can be exemplified by the former philanthropist and chairman of the agribusiness giant Cargill, Whitney MacMillan, who suggested that there "is a mistaken belief that the greatest agricultural need in the developing world is to develop the capacity to grow food for local consumption. This is ill-advised. Countries should produce what they produce best – and trade" (Lynas, 2001, as cited in McMichael, 2005, p. 290). This type of free trade rhetoric intrinsic in the corporate food regime is attached to what Harvey (2006) referred to as the neoliberal state. Here, the urgency is to cater for corporate interests and facilitate good business climates (see above) to attract investments and stimulate economic growth. This is alleged as "the only way to eradicate poverty and to deliver, in the long run, higher living standards to the mass of the population" (Harvey, 2006, p. 25). The neoliberal state attempts to form close alliances with corporate powers to pursue shared goals, often outside of democratic control, through

institutional arrangements such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (Harvey, 2006; McMichael, 2000, 2005).

The neoliberal drift of the food regime represents a powerful consolidation of actors from governments, industries, philanthropic organisations, and global institutions (McMichael, 2000, 2009; Patel, 2012). Their shared interests are institutionalised through the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Agriculture and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). While the Agreement on Agriculture places restrictions on sovereign states—especially those in the Global South—from regulating their agricultural sectors, it allows Northern countries to maintain agricultural subsidies. Meanwhile, the TRIPS agreement grants corporations the right to patent genetic resources, potentially jeopardising farmers' rights to cultivate crops developed through centuries of local experimentation (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McMichael, 2000). The regime capitalises on these agreements to consolidate control over global food systems.

The relations between these actors materialise through a wide range of partnerships and organisations. An example is public-private partnerships in which risk-sharing arrangements are thought to provide necessary funding to finance agricultural investments, improve coordination, and reduce transaction costs, for example, related to land acquisition and transport (Borras & Franco, 2010; McMichael, 2012). Opponents believe public-private partnerships are favoured by the corporate sector for two reasons: Firstly, they offer corporations an opening to directly determine policies that they can benefit from, and secondly, they enable corporations to direct a substantial part of the risks involved to the public sector, while potential profits are privatised (Harvey, 2006). The regime is held in place and promoted through aligned initiatives by philanthropic organisations such as the Gates Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, and multilateral national companies such as Monsanto, Yara, Cargill, Unilever, Syngenta, DuPont, International Finance Institutions, and donor governments. Some of the latest initiatives stemming from the neoliberal trend embrace, among others, the New Vision for Agriculture of the World Economic Forum and the New Alliance on Food Security and Nutrition of the G8, both formed in a bid to further entrench the role of multilateral national companies in global food and energy production (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McKeon, 2014; Patel, 2012; Perfecto et al., 2009). These plans have direct relevance to large-scale farms in Tanzania. Their common meaning is that people's food security is best met through a revival of the green revolution and by uncovering food distribution to the "touch of the invisible hand" in markets, whereby food security is first and foremost determined by purchasing power. Green

revolution types technological fixes primarily focus on quantities (increasing yields), often associated with widespread negative environmental and social consequences, are considered as inevitable as a response to the dual challenges of global food security and ecological security (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McMichael, 2012).

Agricultural modernisation, mechanisation, and technological advancements are thus the foundation of the regime (Scrinis, 2007). As Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011, p. 116) argued, the neoliberal trend "has an unshakeable faith in the power of technology" to meet global food needs now and in the future. Based on this viewpoint, all issues regarding food security are addressed by engineering around productivity constraints via technological fixes (Darnhofer et al., 2010). Putting it differently, in this technocratic universe, nature can always be managed, and clear causes and effects can be identified in order to 'design' an optimal agroecosystem able to feed the world. The designing of these optimal farming systems includes the import and use of external technologies, such as seed varieties that potentials high yields (i.e., genetically modified organisms & hybrid seeds), pesticides, and herbicides to control pest outbreaks and nutrient competition, and synthetic fertilisers to enhance soil fertility (Darnhofer et al., 2010; Perfecto et al., 2009). Certainly, these technologies are what only a few well-financed corporations can afford to manufacture and supply. Furthermore, since small-scale traditional farming systems are viewed as un-progressive within this development, an expansion of the corporate food regime is related to the establishment of extensive mechanised monocultures (Kremen et al., 2012). These technological and spatial solutions centred purely on increasing food quantities are, from the perspective of the neoliberal trend, pondered inevitable if we are to respond to the dual confronts of global food and ecological security.

Yet, the neoliberal drift of the corporate food regime is broadly disapproved for its negative social and environmental results. Holt-Giménez et al. (2006) found that, since the neoliberal turn, African farmers have faced increasing challenges. The forced privatisation of food crop marketing boards—which, though flawed, once guaranteed farmers minimum prices and held food reserves for times of crisis—has removed an important safety net. Similarly, the privatisation of rural development banks, which previously provided farmers with credit to produce food, has left many without access to financing. As a result, farmers are now often without the means to grow food or secure buyers for their produce. Free trade agreements have made it easier for private traders, the only buyers and sellers of food who are left, to import subsidised food from the US and the European Union than to negotiate with thousands of local

farmers. This amounts to ‘dumping’, which drives local farm prices below the costs of production and drives local farmers out of business (Holt-Giménez et al., 2006).

Also, the promotion and increased use of fossil fuel dependent chemicals in agriculture has led to an encroachment on nature, which is at odds with ecological processes. Such advances can be demonstrated by the ‘pesticide treadmill’, the evolution of resistance among pests necessitating continually larger amounts of pesticide, or synthetic fertilisers’ interference with natural cycling processes (Gliessman, 2007). These technologies, regularly connected with green revolution techniques, are eventually disconnecting agricultural production from local natural capital and weaken the natural resource base on which not only the agroecosystem depends but even the overall earth system (Perfecto et al., 2009). Besides, the acceptance of advanced technologies and the deployment of mechanised large-scale farms, they are increasingly changing control of global food, fibre and fuel production from those working the lands towards multilateral national companies. In this situation, Harvey’s (2003) concept of accumulation by dispossession[9] comes to mind.

Accumulation by dispossession originated from Marx (2013) concept of primitive accumulation. Primitive accumulation was espoused by Marx to help explain how capitalist production came into being. Harvey (2003) reviewed Marx’s idea of primitive accumulation as an original form of appropriation that sought to privatise the means of production, such as land, to create a class of surplus landless proletariats “and then releasing the land into the privatised mainstream of capital accumulation” (Harvey, 2003, p. 149). According to Marx (1867, as cited in Akram-Lodhi, 2007, p. 1443), the “expropriation of the agricultural producer, of the peasant, from the soil” was the basis of the whole process. Harvey (2003) expounded on Marx’s idea, and stated that rather than primitive accumulation being just an initial stage, it is a continuous process and a key survival mechanism for capitalism to secure further growth (Akram-Lodhi, 2007). Accumulation by dispossession, then, refers to the gaining of land and eviction of indigenous populations in the name of high productivity and efficiency, that is, large-scale farms.

[9] ‘Accumulation by dispossession’ is an adaptation of Luxemburg’s arguments on primitive accumulation, administered in part through financial institutions (both corporate and public), state powers and what many now refer to as the Wall Street-Treasury-Washington alliance that lies at the core of contemporary forms of imperialism; e.g. the Structural Adjustment Programmes of the IMF (Harvey, 2007).

With the global shift to neoliberalism, land appropriations in the Global South took off on a level not practised since the colonial era. Whereas the colonial-diasporic food regime violently appropriated colonial lands to produce tropical food exports for Europe, accumulation by dispossession in the corporate food regime occurs via the financial power held by corporations in concert with corporate-friendly governments and donor institutions. The sustained reassertion of land dispossession during neoliberal globalisation has made Araghi (2000) call it "the great global enclosure of our time". As Araghi (2000) argued the following:

> Institutionalising agro-exporting regimes, deregulating land markets, and drastically cutting farm subsidies and price supports are measures that have forced millions of subsistence-level rural petty producers to compete with (heavily subsidised) transnational food corporations and highly capitalised producers in the industrial world. That is, labour-intensive local agriculture is pitted against globally organised agro-industrial corporations.

Hence, as world market forces have progressively entered rural areas, millions of small-scale farmers across the Global South have been rendered landless. The depeasantization process emerged to promote migration of 'surplus populations' to less fertile lands or to urban slums (Araghi, 1995, 2000 2009; Davis, 2006; Li, 2010; McMichael, 2012). Here it is important to state that, as White et al. (2012) do, that 'surplus populations' do not invoke Malthusian theories of overpopulation relative to nature's capacity to provide, but rather there is a 'constructed surplus' relative to capitals' requirements for labour. The expropriation of rural land is demonstrated by the demographic milestone of 2007 when the majority of the world's population became urban. Data indicate that as much as two-thirds of urban population growth between 1975 and 2000 is attributable to rural dispossession (Araghi, 2009). Presently, a combination of dynamics around food, energy, climate change and finance has contributed to a further upsurge in accumulation by dispossession popularised by the term 'land grabbing' (Mousseau & Mittal, 2011; Patnaik, 2011; White et al., 2012). Numerous scholars, researchers, and organisation have in recent years exposed a broad range of extensive farms that forced local populations to relinquish their land rights to open corporate investment space (Cotula et al., 2009; GRAIN, 2008; Mousseau & Mittal, 2011). While the level of these deals is noteworthy, there is currently no accurate information on the amount of land that has been acquired.

Nonetheless, over processes of accumulation by dispossession, farmers' autonomy from global market forces are reduced as land, seeds (that is patented germplasm), cultures of production, and in the longer term, local knowledge systems are released into the privatised mainstream of capital accumulation (McMichael, 2009, 2012; Patel, 2012). As Li (2010) pointed out, it is the places and resources and not the people that are valued in these processes as rural areas are seen to contain resources of untapped potential (World Bank, 2007). This is one of the factors that contributed to thousands of Indian farmers committing suicide (Shiva et al., 2000). In response to the negative social and environmental externalities set out above, the corporate food regime institutes mild reforms to make the regime less harmful.

2.2.10 The reformist drift of the corporate food regime

Towards the end of 1990, global neoliberal politics experienced a reform process towards what has been termed 'inclusive neoliberalism' (Porter & Craig, 2004). This reform came against the background of the failures of the neoliberal project, the structural adjustment programs, and the widespread disapproval of it. Briefly, inclusive neoliberalism seeks to incorporate the poor in the global economy and institute protective social reforms for the poorest and most marginalised in the process (Porter & Craig, 2004). As such, neoliberalism is given a 'human face' by responding to social demands for restructurings, while the core neoliberal order is unchanged. The advent of a reformist drift in the corporate food regime mirrors this turn, and effects a more controlled neoliberal order in global capitalism.

Thus, the reformist drift developed in the context of a Polanyian double movement inherent in society (Polanyi, 1957). However, I do not mean that the reformist drift represents a double movement process of re-embedding the market in society; I mean it seems moderate actions responded to social pressure that demanding changes in the structure of production and consumption of food in the world. Such pressure emanated from worldwide social movements (i.e. agrarian based farmers' movements) and compelled the corporate food regime to rearrange its apparatuses and heed some of their demands to make their actions less harmful (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). Certainly, this dynamic pre-empted some of the critique directed towards the corporate food regime and also shows its flexibility. As Harvey (2006, p. 81) wrote, when capitalism confront limits in society or nature, "the elastic powers of capital" modifies to secure continued accumulation. The flexibility of the corporate food regime permits it to adjust without undergoing structural transformation. Thus, the mission of the reformist trend is not

dissimilar from that of the neoliberal trend, which is "the reproduction of the corporate food regime" (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011, p. 115).

There is a dynamic relationship between the neoliberal and the reformist trend. This means that specific initiatives of the regime may contain both trends at the same time. The institutions driving forward the reformist trend and the technologies they promote are essentially the same as in the neoliberal trend, albeit reformed so as to internalise some of the negative externalities produced by the regime into existing market structures (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011). From this perspective, the negative externalities associated with the regime is parsed into components that can be addressed via technocratic measures.

Friedman (2005) criticised this de-politicised approach. She saw the mild reforms adopted by the corporate food regime as a type of "green capitalism", where "a new round of accumulation appears to be emerging in the agrifood sector, based on selective appropriation of demands by environmental movements, and including issues pressed by fair trade, consumer health, and animal welfare activists" (Friedman, 2005, p. 229). Through these selective appropriations, the corporate food regime is able to legitimise its continued expansion. Examples include regulatory and certification systems such as the principles on Responsible Agricultural Investments in Stephens (2013), the FAO voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forest (Seufert, 2013), roundtables for sustainable production of palm oil, soy, and biofuels, and various fair trade and organic food certification schemes (Borras & Franco, 2010; Friedman, 2005; Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011).

Furthermore, in efforts to balance accumulation by dispossession, the reformist drift advocates a value-chain approach to agricultural development in which small-scale farmers become integrated in global value chains through, for example, various forms of contract farming. McMichael (2013, p. 672) highlighted that the value-chain project in the contemporary context is a "corporate vision recycled by development institutions eager to recover and reproduce their legitimacy in overseeing world food security". He also stated that the value-chain concept "proclaims a practical solution to food 'deficits' through an implicit normative reference to 'valuing' producers hitherto marginal to world markets" (McMichael, 2013, p. 672). The value-chain approach, in other words, promises increased productivity and rising incomes for small-scale farmers. Yet, an essential part of it is the 'chain' component, which leads to asymmetric power relationships mediated by debt developing between small-scale farmers and corporations, potentially stifling decision-making and eroding the autonomy of the former.

Such relationships are established via corporations provisioning farming inputs, including seeds, chemicals and credit (McMichael, 2013).

The ongoing reproduction of the corporate food regime relies on the concurrent existence of both neoliberal and reformist drifts. As forces surge to adopt less socially and environmentally harmful production and trade alternatives, the regime has the capacity to rearrange by making minor modifications and institute measures such as those aforementioned. More than being a "new round of accumulation", the green capitalism of Friedman (2005) is rather a natural development of capitalism, and according to Harvey (2006) and Polanyi (1957), an expression of its flexibility.

By believing in a positive sum outcome, where both investors and local farmers (and the environment) gain via new mutely engagements, an expansion of the corporate food regime is according to some interpretations an opportunity rather than a threat (Deininger & Byerlee, 2011; Von Braun & Meinzen-Dick, 2009). Conditioned by minimal oversight, the reformist drift masks green corporate food regime anticipating structural change.

2.3 Climate Change and its role in Farmer-Livestock Keeper Conflicts

Climate change and variability have become significant drivers of land use tensions in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain. The valley is characterized by a complex floodplain ecosystem with seasonal wetlands and river systems that support diverse farming and pastoral livelihoods. Its fertile soils and abundant water resources have historically allowed for mixed agricultural and livestock production, but these ecological conditions are highly sensitive to climate fluctuations. The region has experienced increasingly erratic rainfall patterns, shifts in the timing of wet and dry seasons, and more frequent flooding events.

Reflecting the findings of Nindi et al. (2014), conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers intensify during the dry season months, typically from June to October, when pasture and water become scarce. During this period, livestock keepers move their herds closer to cultivated farms and water sources, raising the likelihood of crop damage and disputes. Similarly, during the rainy season, flooding limits access to grazing lands, pushing herders into more confined areas and sometimes onto farmland.

These seasonal patterns were also evident in the fieldwork conducted in Mngeta and Ngombo villages. Farmers in Mngeta reported recurrent crop damage by livestock during dry months when herders sought pasture near farms. One farmer noted, "In the dry season, when grass is

gone, the cattle come into our fields and destroy what we have planted." Likewise, herders in Ngombo expressed frustration with limited grazing areas, saying, "Flooding forces us out of the usual grazing zones, so we have to enter farm lands, even though it causes conflicts." These testimonies corroborate and supplement the literature, illustrating how climate variability exacerbates competition for land and water, thus intensifying farmer-livestock keeper conflicts in Kilombero.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed intricate discussions on how to theorise capitalism in general, and the more specific context-dependent question of the nature of capitalist agriculture in Tanzania. After reviewing discussions on the classic agrarian question, it also considered the conceptualisation of the current agrarian question as that of 'fragmented classes of labour' facing a crisis of social reproduction. These facilitated conceptualising questions about who is supported and gains, and who is constrained and does not gain, and by what factors, on customary owned land in the Kilombero area.

The chapter concluded that conflicts on customary owned land cannot be understood only in terms of the class analytic perspectives dominant in Marxist political economy. Contributions by anthropologists, especially in relation to notions of the cultural politics of recognition and modes of belonging proposed by Rutherford (2008a), are also useful. These concepts facilitated the analysis of the inherent tensions and contradictions found within customary owned land. The concepts imply that at the root, conflicts stem from the class relations of capital and labour, which are constituted in an extremely complex manner on customary owned land.

Chapter three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The approach adopted in this study of large-scale commercial agriculture, processes of land reform, and people's responses to these in Tanzania focused on understanding the causes of the land-use conflicts behind the land laws and policies adopted after independence, whether the laws consider the reality of rural life as lived by the rural people, and how numerous actors engage with the laws. The study problematised rural development policy and laws, and questioned some scholarship that has vigorously advocated for large-scale commercial farming in the country on grounds of the high productivity and efficiency of smallholder farms. This focus was framed into one major research objective and four specific objectives, and these guided the adopted research approach and methodology.

As outlined in Section 1.3, the purpose of this research was to analyse the multiple realities of the root causes of land-use conflicts in the context of land reforms and governance. In particular, it focused on the extent to which these laws reflect the situation of the rural people, whose claims to land were cited heavily by politicians to support recent land shifts designed to speed up the process of investments. The approach included the understanding that land reform issues in the country are complicated, are political, and involve issues of self-determination, localisation and fairness, and that this complexity must be incorporated into the framework of analysis. The study therefore placed the rural development law-making process within a broad historical and actors' approach.

This chapter presents the approach and methods used in the study. The chapter argues for examining actors, such as smallholder's engagement with the laws, and therefore, the study took a grounded approach, using information from actors at both local and national levels, and linking local-level issues to broader national and international issues. The analysis at national and international levels is referred to as macro-level analysis, and that at local level as the micro level of analysis.

In addition, this chapter examines the framework of analysis, which brought together different perspectives on policies but overall adopted the view that although policy is a negotiated process, different actors do not possess equal power: Some groups' views will be adopted or will become dominant, and not all the discourse used in the process is authorised. Lastly, the

chapter presents the methods used to collect data at macro and micro level, and how the data were treated after collection.

3.2 The Research Approaches

This study was based on extensive field research: A nine-month ethnography approach that I conducted from 6 December 2021 to 5 December, 2022, mostly in the Kilombero district in the Morogoro region in Tanzania. I used ethnographic methods to directly understand investments in agriculture land. This method helped me map out actors' lived experiences and narratives about the causes of land conflicts in the area. The ethnographic methods allowed me to immerse myself in the daily activities of informants (McNeil & Chapman, 2005). Hence, it enabled me to examine social interactions shaped by different cultural backgrounds and habits.

By placing Tanzania's land reform and investment laws within a framework where it is viewed as the outcome of negotiations by multiple actors, a broad historical and actor approach was adopted for the study. This approach placed individual and groups roles and actions and interactions at the centre of the investigation, and adopted the position that any understanding of social reality begins with the understanding of these individual and groups roles, actions and interactions (Dietz & Engels, 2020).

I divided the actors involved in this legal process into three broad categories: Local, national, and international (that take part in the formulation of the laws). The local actors are smallholders and regarded as the targets or recipients of the law. I viewed the international and national actors as being involved in the production of social and psychological reality through the use of discursive practices in their engagement with the law.

The research approach therefore relied on actors' own accounts. However, grounding the study on information from actors themselves did not necessarily mean that no secondary data were used (Robson, 2002). At the macro level, understanding any law processes depended on understanding issues of discourses and narratives that are dominant at the time, and the law reform context, including the socio-political and economic context. And since law making involves diverse groups of people, understanding the role those different actors play and their influence on policy formulation and implementation involved the use of both primary and secondary data. However, at micro level, the researcher may not have the privilege of secondary data. In this situation, the researcher must formulate a "pattern of analysis that makes reasonable sense out of human actions within a given context of a specific time and place" (Fife, 2005, p. 1).

The research was divided into two parts. The first part focused on the national level, which are the general level concerns, before any attempt was made to understand the local-specific micro-level processes, which was the second part. This primarily involved grasping the historical context, including pre-colonial Tanzanian society and the colonial processes, culminating in large-scale land expropriation in the country. This involved the use of secondary materials, both published and law related academic books, articles, and legal documents, as well as the collection of primary data using observations and interviews with key informants. At local-specific level, the approach required me to work over a number of months in two communities and to constantly engage in the daily lives of rural people in order to understand them on their own terms (Worby, 2001).

3.2.1 National-level research

The research began with the analysis of rural development as per the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 (URT, 1999c), with specific emphasis on land law and land-use reforms. Roles and the interest of actors were examined together with their interaction with policies. Data were put in the context of time, from pre-colonial period to date.

3.2.2 Local-specific level research

At the local level, I underpinned the study with rural people's own accounts of their lives. This approach, described by Fetterman (1998, p. 27) as examining real life "under a microscope", concentrated on changes in rural livelihoods, specifically the historical role of agriculture and landholding in rural households and how this role has evolved over time. The analysis included evaluating changes in landholding, such as whether policies have alleviated land pressure in crowded areas or provided land to previously landless individuals. A key issue was how rural households responded to policy opportunities, including offers of investment opportunities, and how they dealt with perceived limitations or took advantage of these opportunities. Mosse and Lewis (2005) suggested that development policy involves more than just analysing dominance and resistance. Fletcher (2001) stated it as follows:

> Amid even the most extreme form of development imposition such as the forced resettlement of 'indigenous' people following dam construction, along with those who confront the contractors out of anger or frustration, there will be some who say 'This will mean a new day for us', 'we will be much better off'.

Mosse and Lewis (2005) highlighted how both project workers and beneficiaries adapt the original project 'script' to fit their own needs. De Certeau (1984) described this process as subversive "consumer practices" that manifest not in the products themselves but in the ways, people use products imposed by a dominant economic system. Capturing these processes is challenging for an external researcher until they become integrated into the community under study.

During my nine-month stay at community level, I aimed to select one community, the smallholders, for analysis, and I randomly chose individual villagers in the community for triangulation. The criteria for selection included differences in land quality and quantity, population density, and livelihood.

The research was divided into two parts, as follows:

- A three-month preliminary phase, leading to the final selection of the 35 households that participated in this study;
- Household visits, which took approximately six months.

I used the following data collection tools:

- Observations of community life and local practices, which Robson (2002, p. 191) referred to as "processes of the people";
- Collection of detailed household case histories;
- Participation in community activities and attending gatherings;
- Key informant interviews; and
- Content analysis.

I used a two-step purposive sampling strategy for the local study: The initial step involved the selection of the study community for detailed investigation, and the refinement step involved the selection of the 382 participating households.

3.3 Research Methods, Data and Tools

As highlighted already, my data collection was divided into two parts. One part focused on policy and land laws analysis at national level, which also included the analysis of the socio-political and economic context under which the policy was framed, and the analysis of the influence and interactions between actors, which played key roles in the country's land reform and resettlement policy. This part of the research first focused on grasping the historical context

and involved the use of secondary sources of data. The second part involved collecting data from two selected rural communities using 1) detailed household life histories, 2) observations of how people in the community live their lives, and 3) participation in community activities. These tools were supplemented with interviews with key informants in the community. The overall aim of the community studies was, as already mentioned, to gain an understanding of "how human lives 'make sense' within the contexts in which they live" (Fife, 2005, p. 1).

3.3.1 The selection of the study area

My study's location was determined more by political developments than by the careful application of a sampling scheme. The selection of Kilombero district (Map 3.1) in the KVFP in the mid-southern Morogoro region was based on the enabling political situation and accessibility provided by the available connections. Kilombero also met the criteria for an area of study because it is semi-arid, with low and erratic rainfall patterns.

Kilombero is situated on a vast floodplain, and divided into two councils, Ifakara and Mlimba. The district is further divided into 110 villages with 33 streets, which I refer to in this thesis as communities. These communities constitute the smallholder farmers and livestock keepers, a major focus of this study. Each of these communities is headed by a headman or *Mwenyekiti*, and officially, each community comprises 10 households.

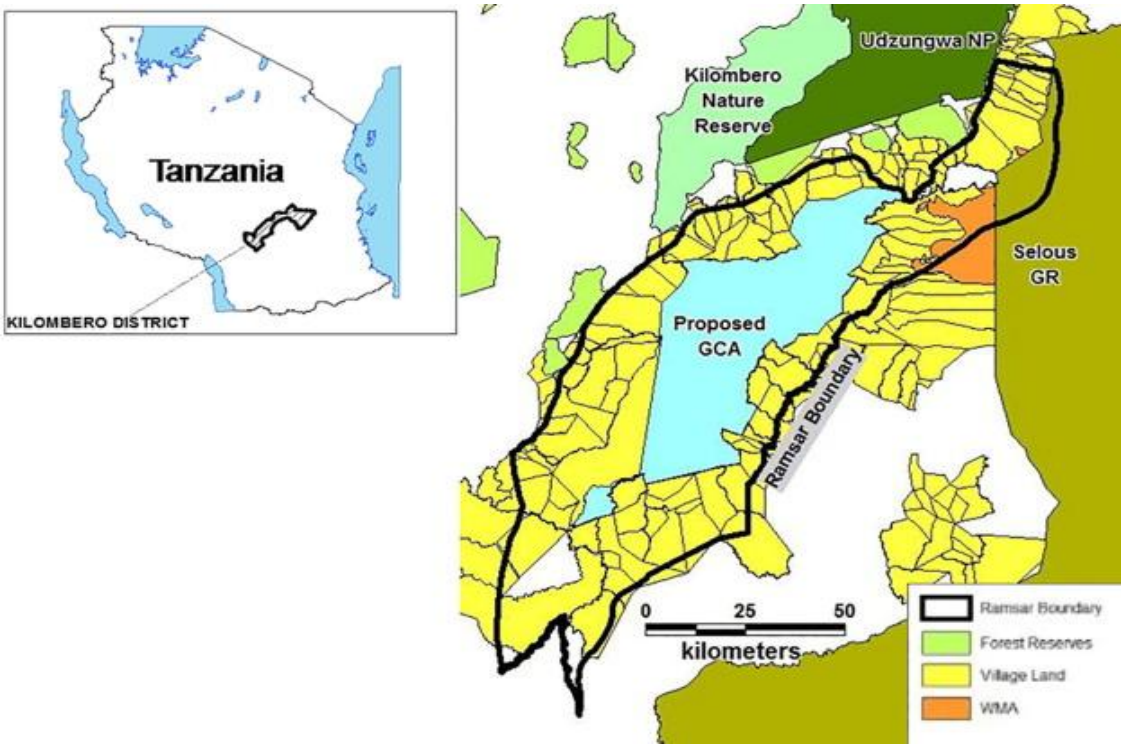
However, these communities are scattered and some have more than the stipulated number of households, while other communities have less. Thus, I purposelessly chose cells, regardless of the total number of villages, and conducted my research. From these cells, I chose villages, and then interviewees. The villages I chose have access to the Kilombero River. There are no demarcated grazing zones, and the livestock keepers graze their animals where grasses are available: They chase them out in the morning, and they come back in the evening. It was challenging to access livestock keepers for interviews. I had to rely on snowball sampling to reach them for interviews. The livestock keepers also share infrastructure, including the Ifakara highway, which connects them to major cities, two schools (a primary and a secondary school), and health and other facilities at Ifakara Town Council, in the middle of the district. The villages also have the same climatic conditions.

Nevertheless, there are significant differences between the two communities, which were crucial to this study. The communities consist of smallholder farmers and livestock keepers, each facing unique challenges related to land use. In the communities of Idete A and Idete B,

which are primarily composed of smallholder farmers, I observed households with access to cultivated land featuring patches of wet, fertile soils. This allows them to grow crops more effectively and supports their agricultural activities. On the other hand, the communities of Lungongole and Sagamaganga are largely made up of livestock keepers who control the land. These households are confronted with acute land shortages, particularly for grazing purposes. The scarcity of suitable grazing land significantly impacts their ability to maintain and support their livestock, leading to more pronounced struggles in managing their livelihoods compared to the small farming communities.

Map 0.1: The study area: Kilombero district study area (left), and the Kilombero Valley

Ramsar site Map (right) (KILORWEMP, 2017)



3.3.2 Choice of households

Given that qualitative research prioritizes depth over breadth, and that saturation is often reached well before 100 interviews, I determined that 100 respondents from the selected households would be sufficient to achieve thematic saturation in this study (Mason, 2010; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). During household visits, actual participants, identified as members of randomly selected households—were assigned codes. The main respondent from 'Household 1', if above 18 years of age, was referred to as 'Hou-Int-1'.

3.3.3 Household visits

At the household level, I used an extended case study method to conduct multiple visits to each household throughout the research period to develop a thorough life history. At each visit, I aimed to collect data on specific activities or events. The case histories included detailed information on various aspects, such as family backgrounds; household livelihoods; broader family strategies; economic and social conditions before and after independence; land needs and perspectives on resettlement; land ownership, usage, value, and significance; changes in the value and meaning of land over time; and the impact of farm-related activities on family incomes.

A fundamental aspect of social research is that the subjects under study are also the producers of their own accounts, which according to Hammersley and Atkinson (1983, p. 105), reflect and construct the social world itself. These accounts should be recorded and thoroughly analysed. To systematically gather information on specific activities during each visit, I used a checklist as a guide. This checklist helped me maintain focus during lengthy visits, which could last a whole day and often required follow-ups. However, the checklist did not constrain the interview process or enforce a rigid question sequence. Instead, it facilitated a non-directive approach in which questions were designed to prompt interviewees to discuss broader topics (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

The checklist was even more important in this study where a single household visit involved a cross-section of household members, ranging from household head to the herd boy, on different aspects of the household. For those households that were headed by migrant male workers, a separate day had to be reserved for another household visit to speak to the male head. At times, a follow-up visits to the city where the man worked was made. Besides conducting interviews with various household members, actual participation in household activities and observation became important parts of every household visit. Since each household visit was long, in an attempt to gain acceptance, I participated in those household tasks that I could perform. These extended visits gave me a chance to engage in lengthy discussions, not only long discussions but also what Kahn and Cannell (1957, p. 149) termed “conversation with a purpose”. One important aspect of any qualitative research is the element of trust (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), and to gain the trust of the people being investigated, the researcher has to be one of them, or rather, to be seen to be one of them.

In a grounded study, observation becomes a major part of the research process. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983, p. 106) argued that "everyone is a participant observer, acquiring knowledge about the social world in the process of participating in it". It is the observation of the everyday, often ignored, issues that shapes the researcher's understanding of people's worlds and adds value to accounts gathered from interviews and discussions. It was important for me to observe how rural people actually lived their everyday lives, especially how they performed agricultural chores and which activities were given priority, in order to understand the importance of these activities in their lives. It was also important that I observed how the community I was investigating valued land and the meaning they attached to it.

Given that the core of my research involved historical data spanning 50 years, it was crucial to understand the present situation in order to accurately interpret past events. To ensure my community-level research was relevant, I needed to observe current trends and compare them with historical accounts.

Participating in community activities was another key aspect of my research. By engaging in these activities, I was able to build rapport and gain access to otherwise difficult-to-obtain information. This participation also provided insights into local livelihood issues. For instance, the six Kilombero communities were involved in a road construction project, including road construction and selling of *mamalishe* (food) to the labourers at the Ifakara/Mikumi highway and to the local school on Mondays to Saturdays. I joined the women who sold food to labourers alongside a local informant, which allowed me to be part of the village community group. This involvement was instrumental in acquiring important information on community beliefs, history, political organisation, and land valuation.

Key informants included a specific group of people who undertook specific tasks or had a particular perspective to add to the research. In total, I interviewed 15 key informants, including village elders, investors, community leaders, religious leaders, farmers, business people, teachers, former and current extension officers, donors, and NGOs. This helped me answer the second and fourth questions of this study. The interviews were explorative and offered me an overview of the case study area and the characteristics of its population. These participants were also assigned code names to protect their identity. All community informants were coded 'Com-Info1', and then assigned a number and a date. Community meetings and gatherings that I attended were also allocated codes.

3.3.4 Participatory observations

While staying in Kilombero, I observed local living conditions and social interactions to a certain extent, which provided me with a better understanding of the social context. During my interviews with local participants, I observed that the conditions of people's housing and general living conditions, which helped me make a broad judgement of their economic situation. I attended village meetings regarding land conflicts and their resolution. Information on the participatory approach helped to answer the first three research questions.

As a researcher, I actively spent time with farmers and livestock keepers in the Kilombero fields and grazing areas. Essentially, I improvised observing the participants and their culture in action. I joined in their daily activities, watched, discerned, discovered, and shared their experiences of their social reality. I also listened to their narratives about their daily lives and their social struggles. Additionally, I observed farm offices to examine interactions and movements.

During my stay, I observed local living conditions and social interactions to a certain extent, which gave me a better understanding of the social context. The notes of the observations provided interesting data. In Case Study A, an older man agreed to show me the plot of land that his family had lost to the company. This land included the graves of his ancestors, which the company had partially planted with seedlings. The visit and the related informal talks gave me a number of insights.

3.3.5 Non-participatory observations

In the non-participant observations, I indirectly participated in social events by being present at the scene and directly observing the scene. This was done to supplement the subjective experience of the collected data on conflicts as highlighted in the Box 3.1. Empirical data and other sources of information for research stages I and II: National setting and land deal situation was relevant as it helped to triangulate the data for the study. The data were collected through field notes and video recordings of incidences. This method enabled me to answer the first research question and supplement the answers for the third research question.

Box 0.1 Empirical data and other sources of information stages I and II:

Research Stage I: Background

- 10 expert interviews with national government officials
- 5 interviews with representatives of civil society organisations
- Legal documents
- Published and unpublished reports
- Investor's webpages

Research Stage II: Case study in Kilombero

- 10 interviews with representatives of investors and donors
- 10 interviews with community leaders and religious leaders
- 15 key informant interviews with regional and district government officials
- 20 interviews with key persons at the village level
- 30 interviews with people of affected villages

3.3.6 Literature review

I developed insights into Tanzania mainly from the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994 and other reports (see Chapter 6). The Commission was mandated to review laws and policies regarding allocation, tenure, use, and land development, and to make recommendations. It was further authorised to examine the nature of the disputes and complaints and to propose measures for their solution. It looked at the land conflict situation in Tanzania and beyond and analysed the case study. Furthermore, the information from legal documents such as the Land Act of 1999 and Village Land Act of 1999 supplemented the insights from the Commission.

I linked the insights about Tanzania with that of a global overview of the land conflicts in newly established databases (GRAIN, 2012; Land Matrix, 2015). In my analysis, I considered insights from scientific contributions, including several special issues in notable reviewed journal articles.

To address the main research question, I identified large-scale investment projects whose land acquisition processes are still ongoing or only recently completed. The projects had to differ in terms of the type of land acquired (individual vs. communal landholding) and the kind of compensation offered (in cash vs. in kind).

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection in Tanzania started in December, 2022 after I had a discussion with Issa G. Shivji, a renowned Tanzanian academic and scholar known for his work in law, in particular land laws, politics, and development studies. He significantly contributed to the study of land rights, legal theory, and the political economy of Africa. Shivji is predominantly noted for his critical perspectives on the impact of legal and economic policies on rural and marginalised communities in Tanzania and in the broader African context. He has been involved in various academic and policy discussions and has authored numerous influential publications in his fields of expertise.

Shivji was instrumental in helping me identify individuals whose information shaped the direction of this thesis, and he introduced me to these individuals. He further offered me some documentation for consultation before and after interviews. This literature contained information about the country's colonial history, the independence era, and certain post-independence political activities, which were pertinent to this thesis. Illustratively, one of these documents was a printed report written by the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994 called *Land Policy and Land Tenure Structure* (Vol. 1). The Commission of Inquiry started in 1991 when President Mwinyi established it to investigate land issues in the country and to develop a policy proposal. By November 1992, the Commission of Inquiry submitted its report to the government (see the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994). Subsequently, the Ministry of Lands, began drafting a new National Land Policy 1995 (URT,1995) focusing on improving land-use planning and administration. In response to rising land tenure conflicts and ongoing land speculation and arbitrary allocations, the Tanzanian Parliament passed Regulation of Land Tenure (Established Villages) Act, No. 22 of 1992 (URT, 1992). This Act nullified all customary land rights in village land areas settled under *Ujamaa* Villagisation, with no compensation for those affected (Shivji, 1994). Simultaneously, the country was transitioning from a one-party to a multi-party-political system. The Commission of Inquiry conducted public meetings in 145 villages and 132 urban centres to address land grievances and make recommendations for new land policy and tenure (Shivji, 1999).

In 1995, the Ministry of Lands issued the new National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995). However, the policy does not tackle post-villagisation litigation issues, and the Regulation of Land Tenure (Established Villages) Act (URT, 1992) faced significant criticism. Consequently, an amendment was made to the Act as Land Tenure (Established Villages) Act, no. 18 of 1995 (URT, 1995), and was passed during the same Parliamentary session as the

National Land Policy 1995 (Shivji, 1999). The revised Land Policy maintained public state ownership of land in Tanzania, recognised the exchange value of land, and promised protection of individual land rights. However, the report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994 was in particular very informative on several issues that the current study focused on, including the viewpoint of Shivji on the country's struggle against colonialism; the land question and land reform process; and the pre-independence and post-independence socio-politico and economic context.

The literature discussed in this section together with archive material from the National Archives; the Chronicle and the Daily News archives; the EastAfrican Newspaper; electronic archives; government statutes and documents bought from the Government Printers office; and other literature sources engaged with at the University of Pretoria libraries during the conceptualisation phase of the research were vital in formulating questions to key informants at national level.

3.4.1 Primary and Secondary Stakeholders

Primary stakeholders in this study are smallholder farmers and livestock keepers. These groups are directly affected by land conflicts and land reform processes, often bearing the brunt of dispossession, eviction, and insecurity. Their everyday experiences embody the complexities of overlapping land laws, contestations, and marginalization in the Kilombero Valley. They are therefore central to the study, as their perspectives reveal the lived realities and consequences of land governance struggles. For example, out of the total 100 households surveyed across seven villages, a representative balance of smallholder farmers and livestock keepers was maintained to capture the nuances of land-use conflict and agrarian transformation.

Village leaders, such as the Mwenyekiti (village chairpersons) and elders—also play a vital role as local authorities responsible for protecting and defending village land interests. They often act as mediators or enforcers of land decisions but may also be complicit in controversial land deals, reflecting the complex interplay between local governance and land commodification. Their insights provide critical understanding of local power dynamics and the practical challenges of land law enforcement at the grassroots.

Secondary stakeholders are actors who influence land laws and policies but are indirectly affected by local land conflicts and reforms. This category includes national government agencies such as the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, the

National Planning Commission, and the Tanzania Investment Centre. These policymakers frame and enforce laws that frequently prioritize investment and development agendas, often mirroring global neoliberal narratives embedded in reforms like SAGCOT (Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania). Their roles largely involve implementing policies that promote agribusiness investments and land commodification.

International actors, including donors and investors, constitute another group of secondary stakeholders. They exert influence through conditionalities, funding priorities, and direct investments, driving neoliberal land policies under the discourse of modernization and development. Civil society organizations (CSOs), NGOs, and academic institutions mostly ally with primary stakeholders by providing legal support, advocacy, and research. Acting as intermediaries, they connect local voices with national and global debates, shaping narratives and legal claims around land rights, as exemplified by figures such as Professor Issa Shivji.

The number of farmers and livestock keepers participated in the study.

Out of the intended 100 livestock-keeping households in the sample, accessing pure pastoralist livestock keepers was challenging due to their frequent migration across the Kilombero Valley. Consequently, I was able to interview 30 agro-pastoralist households engaged in both farming and livestock keeping—and only 10 pure livestock keepers who focus exclusively on pastoralism.

This limitation was mitigated by including agro-pastoralists, who represent an important livelihood group in the area and whose experiences provide valuable insights into land use conflicts and agrarian transformation. Nevertheless, the smaller number of pure livestock keepers interviewed reflects the practical difficulties of engaging highly mobile pastoral communities during the fieldwork perio

While access to many smallholder farmers was straightforward due to their settled lifestyle, a portion of the intended farming households could not be reached. Factors such as seasonal labor migration, market activities, or temporary absence during planting or harvesting periods limited access to some farmers. These constraints resulted in interviewing 100 households. Despite this, the sample remains representative of the farming population across the study village.

3.4.2 Researcher Positionality and Its Effects on the Research Process

During fieldwork, I entered the research context both as an insider and outsider. As a Tanzanian fluent in Kiswahili and familiar with local customs, I shared cultural and linguistic ties with villagers, which fostered trust and eased communication. This insider status allowed me to dress and behave in ways consistent with local norms, enabling closer engagement with community members.

Conversely, my role as a civil servant and academic positioned me as an outsider in some respects. This dual identity sometimes generated suspicion, as some villagers associated my presence with state authority. To mitigate this, I avoided conducting interviews alongside village officials and immersed myself in daily village life to build rapport.

These positionalities had mixed effects on data collection. While they facilitated access to a broad range of informants from grassroots households to high-level actors some participants were reluctant to engage fully due to fear or mistrust. Nonetheless, the majority cooperated, reflecting their hope for resolution to ongoing land conflicts.

3.4.3 The Philosophical Underpinnings of the Study

This study embraces a philosophical position that provides a strong foundation for analyzing the historical and structural causes of land conflicts between smallholder farmers and livestock keepers in Tanzania. It adopts a critical realist perspective, following the work of Bhaskar (1976, 1979) and others (Archer et al., 1998; Sayer, 2000), which bridges the gap between positivist objectivism and interpretivist subjectivism by acknowledging that reality exists independently of human perception, though our knowledge of it is always mediated by historical, social, and cultural contexts.

Ontologically, critical realism asserts that reality is stratified into different levels: the empirical (what we experience), the actual (what happens whether or not we observe it), and the real (the underlying structures and mechanisms that generate events) (Bhaskar, 1979; Danermark et al., 2002). This ontological stance is important for my study because land use conflicts cannot simply be observed as isolated or surface-level phenomena. Rather, they are produced by embedded historical legacies, institutional arrangements, and political-economic power structures that often remain hidden beneath immediate appearances. This position supports the aim of my study to uncover *why* land conflicts persist rather than merely documenting *how* they occur.

Epistemologically, I position the study within a transcendental and explanatory framework. The transcendental approach allows me to move beyond interpretivism, which focuses on understanding participants' meanings, and to identify the causal mechanisms and structures that generate land conflicts (Danermark et al., 2002). This includes processes of reproductionhow unequal relations and patterns of dispossession are systematically produced and sustained over time.

In reflecting Marxist political economy, I draw especially on Harvey's (2003) concept of accumulation by dispossession to explain how land is appropriated through neoliberal reforms and statecapital alliances (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010; Brenner & Theodore, 2002). This lens enables me to move beyond superficial narrativessuch as common beliefs that pastoralists are violent or that conflicts are merely about boundary disputes and instead to reveal how land policies, legal bifurcation, and political interests systematically generate inequality and dispossession (Shivji, 1998).

Methodologically, this philosophical grounding informs my choice of interpretive methods that seek to assess subjective experiences, including semi-structured interviews and narrative inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These approaches enable me to capture the lived realities, perceptions, coping, and adaptive strategies of smallholders and pastoralists in Tanzania while situating these experiences within broader structural contexts. Critical realism's focus on the interplay between structure and agency makes it well-suited to this approach (Danermark et al., 2002).

Overall, I adopt critical realism for three main reasons. First, it allows me to analyze macro-level structures such as neoliberal policies, legal frameworks, and political economy alongside micro-level agency, including the responses of smallholders and pastoralists. Second, it supports the historical embeddedness of land conflicts, including the lasting impacts of *ujamaa*, structural adjustment policies, and state-led investment initiatives (Coulson, 2013). Third, it aligns with a transformative aim: to critique existing power relations and advocate for more equitable land governance by identifying structural connections in need of reform.

3.4.4 Gender in Land Conflict and Reform: Why Women Matter in This Study

Although gender issues cut across many aspects of this study, gender is not the primary focus and will not feature prominently in the analysis. However, it is important to highlight why

women matter in understanding land conflicts and reform dynamics. In Kilombero, as in many Tanzanian communities, women typically gain access to land through marriage, kinship ties, or inheritance within the extended family. Yet this access rarely translates into formal ownership or secure control. Women's rights to land often remain secondary and dependent on male relatives whether husbands, fathers, or brothers making their tenure highly vulnerable to changes in family circumstances.

The existence of a dual legal system, in which both statutory and customary laws operate, further entrenches patriarchal norms that limit women's land rights. While statutory laws such as the Land Act of 1999 and the Village Land Act of 1999 recognize equal rights to land regardless of gender, in practice customary law tends to dominate at the village level and prioritizes male claims. This legal pluralism means that women's rights are frequently subordinated, particularly during critical moments such as widowhood, divorce, or land redistribution, when they are at heightened risk of dispossession and marginalization.

In such contexts, women often lack the legal literacy, financial resources, and institutional support necessary to assert or defend their claims to land. As a result, their ability to make independent decisions over land usewhether for farming, grazing, or other livelihood activities is constrained. This insecurity has significant implications not only for women's economic well-being but also for household food security, given women's central role in agricultural production and subsistence activities in the Kilombero Valley.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Data Analysis Approach

This qualitative study employed a thematic and grounded approach to data analysis, following several stages. First, data were categorized by typesuch as household interviews, key informant interviews, and observations and coded for recurring themes related to land conflicts, displacement, compensation, and responses to investment. Cross-case comparisons explored variations across villages, livelihoods (farming versus livestock keeping), gender, and household strategies. Life histories were treated as narratives to analyze how villagers construct meaning around land, dispossession, and conflict (Bernstein, 2010). Content analysis of key informant interviews identified dominant discourses by actor type, including government officials, local leaders, and investors, revealing narratives of "development," "idle land," or "inefficiency" (Sundet, 1997; Shivji, 1998). Discourse analysis of informal interviews further

examined how smallholders characterized issues such as unproductivity or resistance. Triangulation of interview data with legal texts, policy documents, and field observations enabled cross-checking of narratives and the identification of consistencies and contradictions (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Field notes from participant and non-participant observations including meetings, community activism, and everyday practices were coded for themes such as power dynamics, gender roles, and informal land use negotiations. Finally, observations were interpreted within their cultural and social contexts, examining how decision-making processes in village meetings reflected underlying power relations (Lund, 2008).

The inductive thematic coding process generated subthemes within each data category, which were then synthesized into four major themes. The first theme, **The Colonial Legacy in Land Conflicts**, includes historical land alienation and Ujamaa villagisation (for example, ancestral land loss and forced relocations), continuation of colonial land categorization (such as distinctions between general, reserved, and village land), and legal pluralism leading to customary tenure insecurity. This theme highlights how colonial and post-colonial policies continue to shape tenure insecurity and disputes (Shivji, 1998; Manji, 2006). The second theme, **Neoliberal Investments and Their Implications**, covers the promotion of agribusiness through policy incentives (for example, SAGCOT and land reclassification), displacement and livelihood loss (such as the loss of grazing land and restricted access to resources), and contested compensation practices (including lack of consultation and undervaluation). This theme exposes contradictions between official development narratives and the lived realities of exclusion (Akram-Lodhi & Kay, 2010; Benjaminsen et al., 2009). The third theme, **Local People's Perceptions and Responses**, encompasses adaptation and everyday negotiation (such as sub-leasing and informal grazing arrangements), resistance and mobilization (including petitions, court cases, and land avoidance strategies), and ambivalence or hope regarding development (with some recognizing potential benefits). This theme captures the agency and diversity of rural actors in navigating land struggles. The final theme, **Gaps in Policy and Law Addressing Rural Realities**, reflects top-down land use planning with minimal community input, ambiguous tenure security due to overlapping mandates, and the exclusion of local voices in law-making processes, which contributes to perceptions of elite capture and mistrust (Alden Wily, 2011).

3.6 Ethical Considerations and Limits Encountered During the Fieldwork

The purpose of qualitative studies is to describe a phenomenon from the participants' points of view through interviews and observations (Orb et al., 2001). Therefore, I intentionally listened to the voice of participants and observed them in their natural environment.

However, to interview and observe, I sometimes faced ethical dilemmas. Thus, I was aware of sensitive issues and potential conflicts of interest. All interviews adhered to the rules of confidentiality, informed consent, and privacy for conducting research. Yet, the topic was about the causes of land conflicts and focused on farmland investment, a politically contentious issue in Tanzania. Consequently, my efforts to research it and uncover the hidden political dynamics during the fieldwork encountered challenges. Responses were divided: Some interviewees and informants considered the research a threat and annoying, and others saw it as a solution to their land problems.

Adopting ethnography as a method entailed important ethical and pragmatic considerations that impacted my research process and my findings. Reflexibility was thus instrumental as I was continuously and explicitly as possible assessing my position in the field and its impact on my research process and findings (Berger, 2015; Deane & Stevano, 2016). Thus, to explicitly assess the limits of this study, the following sections consider specific issues, namely protecting my anonymity, and protecting the participants' confidentiality, and ensuring the participants' safety.

3.6.1 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Getting access to the field was not difficult. I arrived in the Kilombero district by bus, and I was warmly welcomed, perhaps because of my credentials as a civil servant. However, the people treated me as their own. My anonymity at that count was not preserved.

However, as an experienced researcher, I was aware of the do's and don'ts of fieldwork. As a researcher, I was supposed to be aware of the way I appear and present myself before the community matters. I therefore did not use a car but used a motorbike like any other villager would. I also always wore my robe, a long dress that most ordinary women in rural areas prefer to wear. It is simple and affordable to most women in the country. However, when I conducted interviews with national and regional informants as well as with investors, I wore formal attire. I chose to wear clothes that allowed me to fit into the community in order to establish relationships, and consequently, build trust. This helped me get insightful information regarding land conflicts in the area.

Government officials recognised that I was a civil servant, but village communities viewed me as same or higher than the local authorities. They saw me as a government official sent there to solve their ongoing conflicts. I gained villagers trust and become closer to them. I was surprised to be warmly welcomed with a lot of information about land-use conflicts in the area.

I was introduced to the villages through the letter from the local authority. The letter was useful to gain access to the communities and their trust. I used the letter to introduce myself to village leaders, but I avoided being accompanied by any local village leaders because I was aware that they might instil both mistrust and fear towards me. Villagers feel uncomfortable and threatened in the presence of political leaders. I explained my intentions based on the informed consent to conduct interviews with the villagers. I normally conducted interviews on an ad hoc basis. This approach helped me secure my independence and that of my participants from leaders, who would have otherwise insisted on accompanying me in the village.

3.6.2 Protect my participants' confidentiality and safety

Confidentiality and safety risks were important to my informants. Tanzania is a relatively democratic state. However, since Magufuli came into power in late October 2015, subjective inclinations surfaced, such as outlawing public demonstrations, censorship of the media, incarceration of opposition leaders, and control of social media. Overall, political dissent was silenced.

I had to determine how to conduct research and obtain the views of marginalised farmers and simultaneously ensure the participants' safety. Some people willingly spoke with me about some very political issues. I protected their identity and information, and they trusted me. However, it is undeniable that participants also remained silent about some of the most important issues for fear of political retribution and violence. Thus, it was challenging for me to determine which stories I was told and which I was not told. Accordingly, it is vital to accept that my findings are limited somewhat by the impacts of the political context prevailing at the time of my fieldwork.

Chapter Four: Broader Context to the Farmer-Herders Conflict

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the history of the development of capitalism in agriculture in Tanzania, and offers a contemporary analysis of large-scale commercial farming. It mostly concentrates on the emergence of large-scale commercial agriculture. This narrative also traces the accounts of various systems of property rights in Tanzania, with a focus on colonial dispossession, and restrictions on land ownership in terms of the Land Ordinance Act 1923. Shivji (1999) wrote about the legacies of stark disparities in land ownership between Whites and Blacks that have been maintained in post-independent society, and this is a powerful symbol of the enduring power inequalities and social exclusion.

Given the key focus of this study, the following underlying question informed the discussion in this chapter: What are the local, national, and global root causes of land conflicts related to large-scale investments between farmers and livestock keepers in Kilombero, and to what extent does these causes affect land governance in the KVFP? I argue in this chapter that large-scale investments as in commercial agriculture should not be interpreted merely as measures to safeguard investors and corporate capital interests but also as part of wider structural shifts in the world economy since the 1970s, as described by Friedman and McMichael (1989). Similarly, Shivji (1987) implied that commercial agriculture in Tanzania must be understood in terms of the dynamics of contemporary capitalist agriculture and its globalising tendencies, in alliance with the local bourgeois classes. Conceivably, more so than in the opposing debates about the strategies pursued by investors to retain their dominant position.

An examination of the structure of relations of property, power, and production on large-scale farms in both the pre-1961 period and after was vital. In this chapter, I begin by exploring the significance of agricultural labour, both as labour tenancy and as wage work, for the development of capitalist farming, a process that state policies strengthen to support farms and mines to secure cheap and abundant labour. Secondly, I explore the nature and dynamics of large-scale commercial farming in Tanzania today. The 1970s was a critical period for large-scale commercial farming in Tanzania, especially with regard to the changing availability and use of farm labour. I discuss how commercial farming responded to wider economic changes at this time. These developments had lasting implications for the programme of land reform and its developmental imperatives. The third focus of this chapter is the programme of land reform initiated in the post-1961 period. Here I briefly explain the nature of the programme, the progress made in achieving its objectives, the challenges it has experienced since 1961, and the changes thereafter.

4.1.1 Land, Labour and Capitalist Development in Agriculture

The emergence of the capitalist mode of production in Tanzania, as elsewhere, depended on the commoditisation of labour so surplus labour could be appropriated by the owners of the means of production (as explained in Chapter 2). In this case, the owners of land were mainly foreigners, and the majority of the sellers of labour power were from Tanganyika. Land dispossession sought to ensure the 'freeing' of sufficient labour from the land, and was thus at the centre of the development of capitalist agriculture.

Tanzania's capitalist development in agriculture is unique because it simultaneously incorporated both African peasant production and the economic interests of colonial powers. This dual trajectory began in the 1920s, rooted in peasant societies and colonial capital, and was driven by the expansion of cash crops such as coffee, sisal, and tea (Iliffe, 1979; Moshi, 2014). Large-scale estates were established to grow these crops for export, particularly in highland areas with fertile soils and favourable climates (Amin, 1972).

The development of capitalism in agriculture must be understood in the historical context of how large-scale commercial farming co-evolved with smallholder production over time. While peasants in regions such as Kilimanjaro and Buhaya developed sophisticated farming systems and integrated into export economies, colonial authorities-maintained control over land, labour, and marketing infrastructure, often to the detriment of African producers (Coulson, 1982; Scott, 1995).

Iliffe (1979) argued that land dispossession during the colonial era was driven by the needs of agrarian capitalism, enabling European settlers and colonial landowners to secure land for plantation agriculture. This process entrenched a dual agrarian structure, with state-supported estates on one side and marginalised peasant economies on the other—an arrangement that persisted into the postcolonial period (Shivji, 1998; Sender & Johnston, 2004).

It is vital to reflect on why and how capitalist agriculture developed in the manner it did and its contributions to the establishment of the capitalist mode of production in Tanganyika. Two elements were crucial to the transformation of the social relations of production in the countryside: Firstly, capitalist relations of production were in existence elsewhere, largely in coffee and sisal plantations, by the late 19th century (Iliffe, 1979); and secondly, citizens, including the transformation of independent petty commodity producers (the African peasantry), were proletarianized into a source of farm labour as share croppers, labour tenants, and wage workers (Shivji, 1998; Iliffe, 1979).

The state-sanctioned process of 'freeing' African labour through dispossession of their land (Shivji, 1998), and the institutionalisation of deprivation of land access and ownership resulted in the proletarianization of rural Africans. It was not until the passing of the Imperial Decree of 26 November 1895 that the philosophy of land ownership under German rule in Crown lands was instituted (The Presidential Commission Report, 1994). Subsequently, during British colonialism, there was slight changes to the central principles of land tenure practised by the former colonial power, with special focus on the development of the colonial economy to facilitate the production of agricultural raw materials, while controlling and alienating indigenous land rights (Maghimbi et al., 2011). The Land Ordinance of 1923 (No. 3) for example, declared all lands to be public lands. Shivji (1998) maintained that this ordinance is still the prime basis of the land tenure regime, and it sought to become this by declaring and defining customary tenure without securing and statutorily entrenching customary titles and rights, and by authorising the governor to make land grants in the form of temporally limited rights of occupancy. This suggests, in practice, the alienation of indigenous lands to settlers and foreign corporations, while simultaneously preserving overarching state control by vesting radical title to land in the state. This state control was legitimised through hortatory legal provisions asserting that land should be used for the benefit of the peopleeither directly or indirectly at the local level. However, compared to other courtiers in Africa, such as Kenya,

the British colonial power in Tanzania alienated less than 1% of the land, few restrictions were placed on what Africans were allowed to grow, and the official policy was to promote cash-crop production by expanding the number of middle-peasant household producers (Iliffe, 1979).

The post-World War II era was characterised by the British colonial rule intensely focusing on the exploitation of colonial resources, such as land to reconstruct Britain's wounded economy. This led to the use of force in the production of cash crops by peasants. A government circular of 1953 (Land Government Circular No. 4 of 1953) highlighted the need for indigenous people to replicate the use of modern methods of production used in non-native lands within the framework of modernisation, and the intention was, among other things, to rationalise the further alienation of land to non-natives (Shivji, 1998). The reason for the colonial land tenure systems in Tanganyika was to eliminate customary land tenure and enhance a freehold system. Through this system, the indigenous peasants and pastoralists were to be alienated from their native surroundings in order to be incorporated into the world capitalist economy through the production of cash crops to address the needs of the colonial power. According to Iliffe (1971, p. 38), "the transition was from native customary tenure into freehold in appropriate areas". This idea was later during independence criticised by Nyerere (as cited in Iliffe, 1971), who claimed the following:

> If we allowed land to be sold like a robe, within a short period there would only be a few Africans possessing land in Tanzania. We would be faced with a problem which has created antagonism among people and led to bloodshed in many countries of the world.

Consequently, this kind of discriminatory legislations was the emergence of a 'dualistic' agrarian structure whose influence remains prevalent today. On one hand, there are the large-scale commercial farms, previously similar to that of colonialists, and these are mostly capital intensive and characterised by abundant agrarian wealth. This sector is strongly integrated into global markets for both inputs and outputs (Shivji, 1998). On the other hand, there are the former peasants who habitually engaged in subsistence farming in their localities. Thus, currently the peasants continue to be, in their present form as customary and communal areas, categorised as underdeveloped and unproductive, and they are dominated by low-input and labour-intensive forms of subsistence/small-scale production as a key source of livelihood (Mbilinyi, 1986). In this sort of capitalist development, culturally exclusive forms of social and

industrial citizenship increased the weakness of the native people. This added vastly to the resultant inequality and underdevelopment (Rodney, 2018).

The basic challenge inherent in these colonial policies can be summarised in Cabral's (1966) words, as "the negation of the historical process of the dominated people by means of violent usurpation of the freedom of development of the national productive forces". Hence, the wish to rapidly increase African peoples' productivity while shackling them to colonialism was contradictory, and colonial governments' efforts to resolve this contradiction by enforced politico-economic measures only intensified it. However, at independence, the government inherited this contradiction.

Bernstein (1981) noted that after independence in 1961, the newly independent state emphasised the benefits of smallholders living together in nuclear villages, as opposed to the patterns of scattered settlement prevailing in most areas of Tanzania. This was the theme of Nyerere's inaugural speech as president in 1962, and was subsequently incorporated into the broad message of *Ujamaa,* introduced with the Arusha Declaration in 1967. Bernstein showed that from 1967 to 1973, the number living in officially designated '*Ujamaa* villages' increased from about half a million to about two million, or 15% of the rural population. The great majority had been 'mobilised' to form villages by local party and government officials, whose recourse to military methods is well documented. According to Bernstein of particular significance in this period was the implementation from 1969 of a number of centrally approved and highly organised 'operations' (a characteristically military metaphor of mobilisation) to move the rural populations of entire districts and regions into nuclear settlements. These operations provided the prototype for the villagisation on a national scale ordered at the end of 1973, and completed by 1976.

According to Araghi (1995, 2000) the contemporary perspectives on the capitalist development in agriculture of the current academic debates over the contemporary agrarian question are framed by an academic reductionism shared by neoliberal and orthodox Marxist perspectives on the transience of the peasantry. They argued that this perspective is governed by the lens of capital accumulation, which essentially means that capitalism follows a path-dependent resolution of social forms into the capital-labour relationship and not the 'peasants'-labour relationships. The reason is that currently it is important to survive in the market or to realise the potential of 'social labour'.

4.1.2 Nature and the dynamics of large-scale commercial faming in Tanzania

Tanzania has a total land area of approximately 945.5 ha, and of this, 61.5 ha is inland water and 884 ha is land area, of which a total of 44 million ha (49.7%) are classified as arable. However, the area actually operated for agricultural production is less than 35% of the total arable land (15 million ha). The area suitable for irrigation is estimated to be about 29.4 million ha, but only about 0.4 million ha are under irrigation. For example, 85–90% of the land under cultivation is used by smallholder farmers (14 million ha), who primarily use the land for subsistence farming. The population of the URT has increased about five times from 12.3 million in 1967 to 57.7 million in 2021. However, agriculture remains an important economic sector that provides food and other products, as Figure 4.1 illustrates, and rural employment, directly and indirectly. The other side of agriculture is the small-scale sector, in which agriculture is extremely important for household food security.

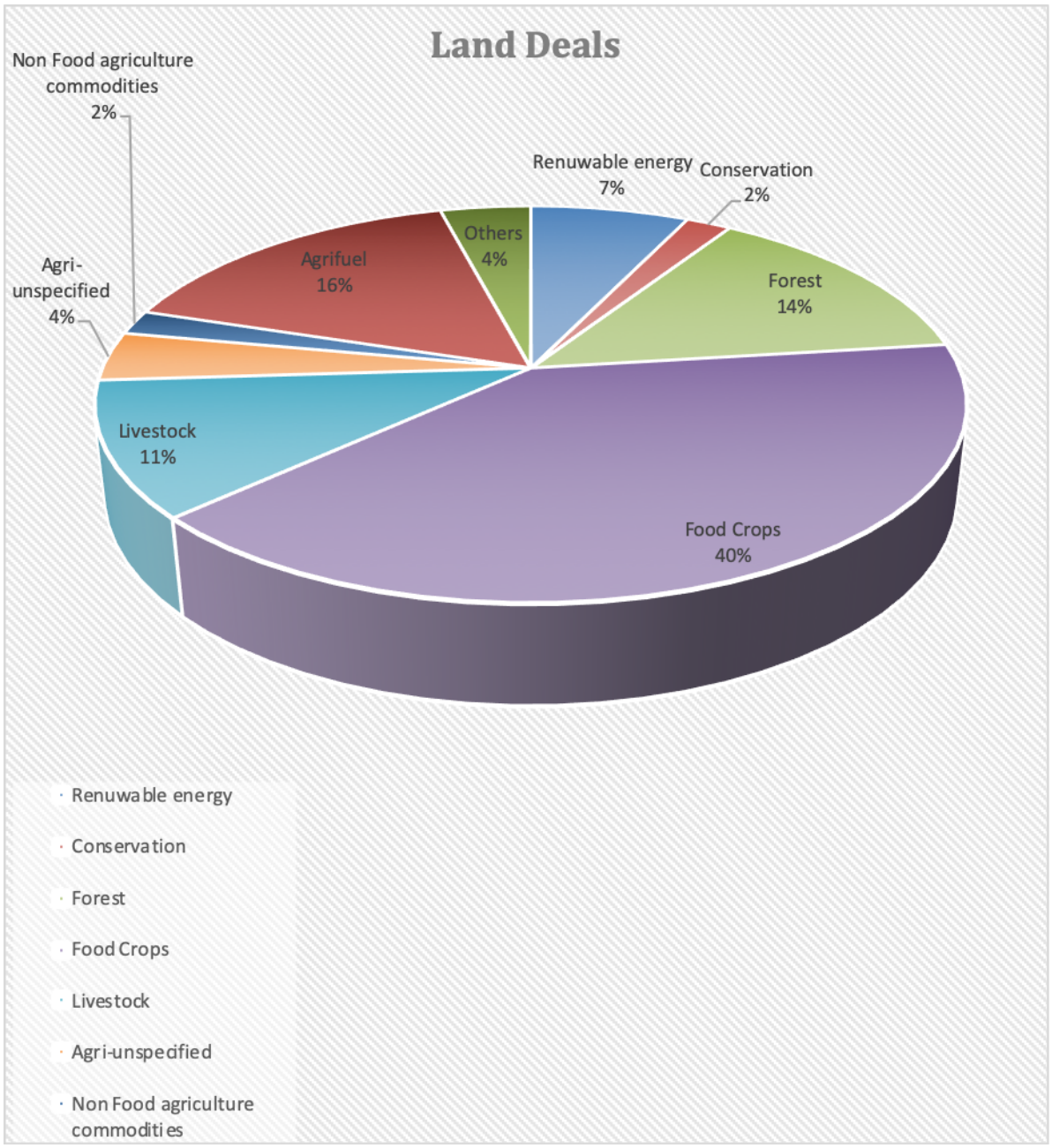
The nature and dynamics of large-scale commercial farming in Tanzania should be understood in the context of the economic history of the 20th century. Drawing from Shivji (1987), it must be traced to the exploitation of the smallholders as peasantry by imperialism in alliance with the local bourgeois classes, in which the overall economy was characterised as a colonial, vertically integrated economy, and the social formation as a neo-colonial, semi-patriarchal one. The colonial state believed that the mechanism of the law and the market economy would vastly increase the cash requirements of the peasantry.

Tenga (1987) highlighted that during the colonial era, the colonial state, through the mechanism of the law and the market economy, greatly increased the cash requirements of the peasantry. The system of imposing fixed flat rate taxes required the peasants, even in the face of declining prices, to increase the production of marketable crops. Tenga pointed out that in tandem with the taxation system, laws were endorsed that obliged the peasants to cultivate a minimum acreage of export crops, and at the same time, marketing arrangements were erected through local government bodies, crop marketing boards, and later, the cooperatives. He explained that under the Native Authority Ordinances of 1926, native authorities made by-laws to enforce agricultural cultivation and land use. This was also accomplished in numerous other crop ordinances, including the Native Coffee (Control and Marketing) Ordinance of 1937, the Plant Pest and Disease Ordinance of 1921 and the Native Tobacco (Control and Marketing) Ordinance of 1940. Regulations were enacted on land use for specific crops, the violation of which was punishable by imprisonment and fines. This situation shows that the peasant was

obliged to undertake economic activity constructive to the colonial economy under threat of criminal sanctions.

Figure 0.1: Highest percentage of food crops production in land deals

(Source: Land Matrix Global Observatory (2016); modified by the author, 2023)



Thus, throughout colonial rule, there existed institutional arrangements and structures that suppressed the peasants' productive activity and perpetuated exploitation in order for them to produce for the colonial economy. After independence, the situation still did not favour the peasant, despite the policy of *Ujamaa*, which many scholars saw as having failed to transform

agriculture and the peasantry (Shivji et al., 2023). The independent state inherited the colonial state's controls over the peasantry. In addition to the statutory controls, the post-independence state adroitly used the ruling party and its organs, as well as explicit political measures, to enhance and deepen its control over the peasantry. This can be seen in the various rural development policies since independence, including the decentralisation of the early 1970s, the forced villagisation of 1974–76, and the establishment of village governments since 1975 (Shivji, 1987).

Maghimbi et al. (2011) established that the commoditisation and the appropriation of land in Tanzania under neoliberalism have also perpetuated the exploitation of the peasants, and have had an adverse impact on their livelihoods. An explicit surge in land grabbing by foreign companies and 'investors' (Section 4.3.1) has not only deepened exploitation but also exposed peasants, pastoralists and local communities to various forms of dispossession and displacement, thus shaping the current agrarian question in Tanzania.

4.1.3 Post-1961 land and agricultural policy shifts and transition

The Tanzania African National Unity (TANU) government that came to power in 1961 inherited some difficult choices in relation to agriculture. The fundamental one was to regain an African social system that had been lost under colonial rule. Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania, confirmed his plans to build (or rebuild) African socialism, which was given the Swahili name *Ujamaa*. Subsequently, Nyerere realised that the economy was not advancing since he took over from the colonial government. He thought that radical changes were required to change the economic situation. He wanted Tanzania to be self-reliant so people could enjoy the fruits of independence. He argued that "independence cannot be real if a nation depends upon gifts and loans for its development" (Nyerere, 1968, p. 239).

To address Tanzania's economic challenges, Julius Nyerere initiated *Ujamaa* (Hyden, 1975; Shivji et al., 2023). Afterwards, as it was time for the introduction of market policies in an economy for development, Nyerere thought he was unable to lead the country under such circumstances as he strongly believed in *Ujamaa*, and thus, he left the presidency in 1985, and President Mwinyi took the reins. President Nyerere went back to his village to write a pamphlet which he called *Ujamaa, the Basis of African Socialism*. Afterwards, he travelled around the country describing and explaining his ideas on *Ujamaa*.

4.1.3.1 Arusha Declaration

Under *Ujamaa* policy, there was a nationalisation programme. In this approach all existing means of production were put under public management, including retail businesses employing large numbers of people. This suggested the public ownership of the means of production. Secondly, *Ujamaa* included the policy of self-reliance. Under self-reliance, the development of the country and the building of socialism was commanded by the needs of Tanzanians. This policy was against dependence on foreign aid as the basis for development and advocated for the halt of foreign aid. Thirdly, *Ujamaa* incorporated education for self-reliance and also free education. Under this policy, free education was provided for primary schooling. More money was spent on primary education, and education focused on agricultural skills and pupils were to help with community work, such as farming, during school hours. Finally, there was the Africanization policy. This policy suggested that more Africans should be employed in the public service, and the economy should reflect the demographics of the country.

In the rural landscape, Nyerere recommended the establishment of socialist villages, popularly known as *Ujamaa Vijijini*. These villages formed the prefect society imagined by Julius Nyerere. This new society would differ from the individualistic method of farming that had been encouraged during the colonial period. Yet, despite all the effort to advance development, Nyerere and TANU were not against the idea of foreign investment or foreign aid by the IMF/World Bank in Tanzania, but they wanted the kind of investment that would benefit the people of Tanzania. Nyerere (1967, p. 145) maintained, "We want capital investment in Tanzania not because we like factories. We want capital investment simply and solely because we want to improve the lives of the people of this country. We want private investment on our terms". The primary objective of the policy of self-reliance was to avoid the involvement of international capitalist institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank in the economic development of Tanzania. However, by the late 1970s, the international oil crisis and declining commodity prices forced Tanzania to seek the support of the big financial institutions. According to O'Neill (1990, p. 16), "there was enormous pressure on the government to negotiate a recovery programme involving the International Monetary Fund and World Bank".

4.1.4 Tanzania's Land Reform Programme

Derman et al. (2007) stated that the issues of land, water, and other natural resources are where ecological, political, economic, cultural, legal struggles intertwine, where the local powers and

less localised power structures interact, and where the political and cultural symbols of powers and authority are brought into play. If the management and resolution of these resources are unclear or lack critical frameworks of analysis, their impact is endless conflicts. Therefore, comprehending conflicts over land is increasingly an intricate process that requires analytical approaches informed by theories and concepts developed by various academic disciplines.

Du Toit (2013) pointed out that land issues are not merely a matter of resources or material realities but are also an "empty signifier", a field of meaning available for appropriation by a wide range of different political projects. These issues serve as strong material symbols amid intense conflictual political processes far surpassing the matters directly addressed in land reform policies. Acknowledging that land reform relates to struggles and antagonisms that extend well beyond their exact and material consequences, means there must be deep deliberations on how land reform is imagined and evaluated. Du Toit argued that if this is not done, questions of equitable transformation and justice are too easily framed in ways that "obscure the terrain of struggles rather than revealing it", and which make complex policy questions harder rather than easier to resolve. The overall analysis of land reform policy can be viewed as an attempt to frame an agenda that appears to reconcile the aims of national reconciliation, global integration, and jobs for the poor (Du Toit, 2013; Hall, 2010; William, 1996). These different projects are framed as elements of a "seamless narrative of enlightened humanist modernisation", but in Du Toit's (2013) view, the consensus has been an extremely fragile one.

While a lot has been documented on the relationship between distribution and economic development, the link between land rights and enhanced livelihoods or economic growth tends to be assumed rather than examined (Walker, 2005). Tanzania's land reform was founded on the country's constitutional framework set out in Article 24 of the Constitution of the URT (1977). The Constitution guarantees the right to own property and ensures any deprivation of property must be for a public purpose and accompanied by fair compensation. The land reforms in Tanzania encompass several key elements aimed at improving land administration, ensuring equitable access to land, and integrating customary land rights with statutory laws. These elements include customary and statutory land rights, land tenure security, equitable access, decentralised land administration, compensation for land acquisition, and land market development. These elements collectively and purposefully create a more just, efficient, and sustainable land administration system in Tanzania to foster socio-economic development and ensure land resources are used in a way that benefits all citizens.

Tanzania's reform was primarily a response to an increasing number of conflicts over land (Maghimbi et al., 2011; Presidential Commission report of inquiry into land matters, 1994). Conflicts were difficult to manage and only few rights to land had been registered. By recognising existing rights to land, the reform sought to improve tenure security. It also aimed to create a market in land that is thought to improve agricultural productivity and economic growth.

4.1.5 Current foreign large-scale land deals in Tanzania

At the onset, it is vital to note that during the fieldwork, it was challenging to access evidence for foreign (and domestic) land deals in Tanzania. However, I managed to get the location and size of transnational land projects in Tanzania, as highlighted in Map 4.1 from the Land Matrix[10]. Perhaps the justification for this encounter resonates with Abdallah et al.'s (2014, p. 51) warning "that procedures for foreign investors to access land for investment have become ad hoc and those Tanzanian institutions do not have a full overview of what is going on in the sector". Through observations and relying on the information from SAGCOT, I could infer the information discussed in this section.

The government of Tanzania intends to increase the number of companies intending to invest in agriculture through SAGCOT as highlighted in Table 4.1. KSCL is already a member. An interview with Tanzania Investments Centre Officials in 2022 suggests dshowed that some companies have already registered and acquired the land, while others are in the process of registering. However, the investments are located on former state-owned land (Abdallah et al., 2014).

The registered companies for agriculture and land deals resonate with food investments as highlighted in Figure 4.2 (remarkably, rice and sugarcane plantations) related to the *Kilimo Kwanza* programme, but there is limited knowledge about the companies. The nature of the relationship between the company and local community, including the smallholders, is that of 'partnership'.

[10] The Land Matrix is a global and independent land monitoring initiative that tracks and documents large-scale land acquisitions, often referred to as land grabs". These acquisitions typically involve foreign or domestic investors acquiring land in developing countries for agriculture, forestry, mining, tourism, or other commercial purposes.

Map 0.1 Location and size of transnational land projects

(Source: Land Matrix Global Observatory (2016)

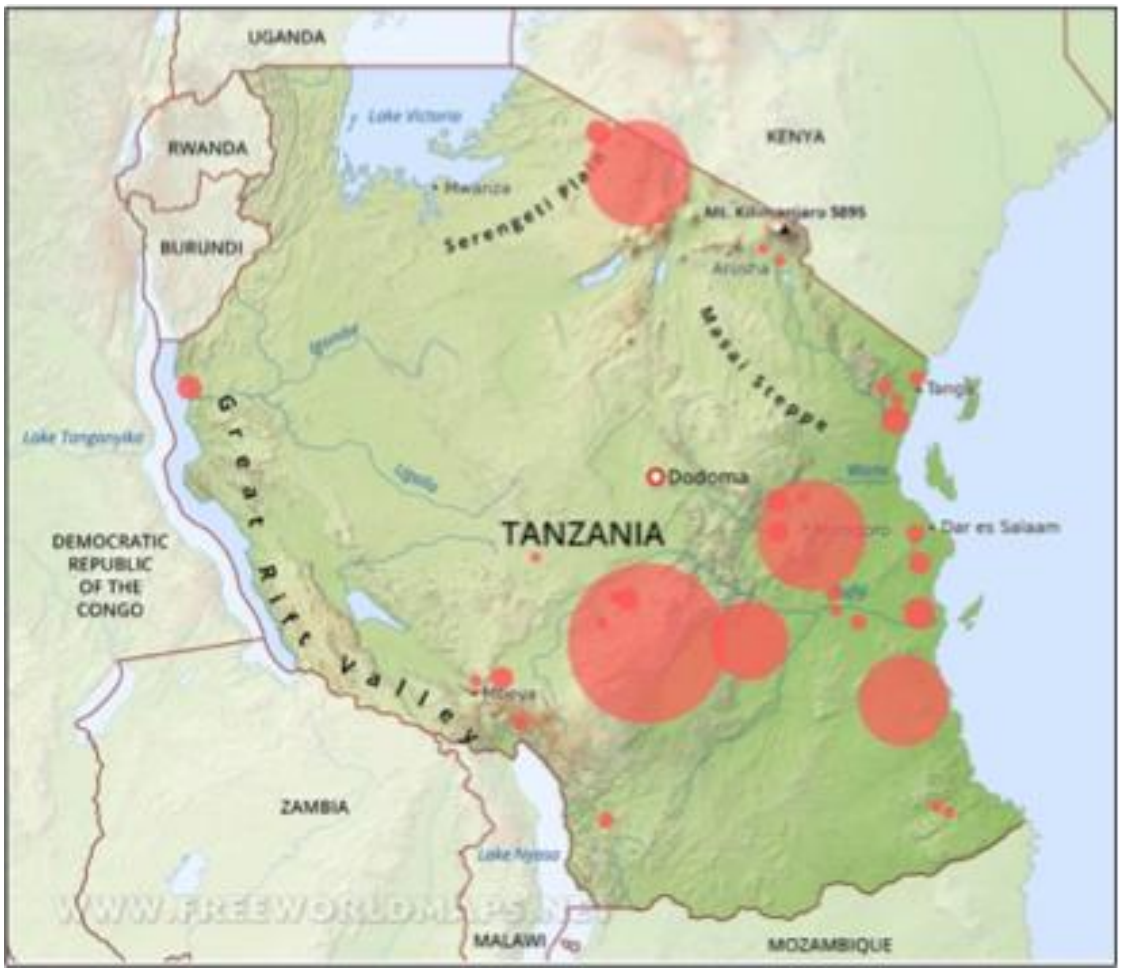


Figure 0.2 Land for food crop production in Tanzania

(source: Land Matrix Global Observatory (2016); modified by the author, 2023)

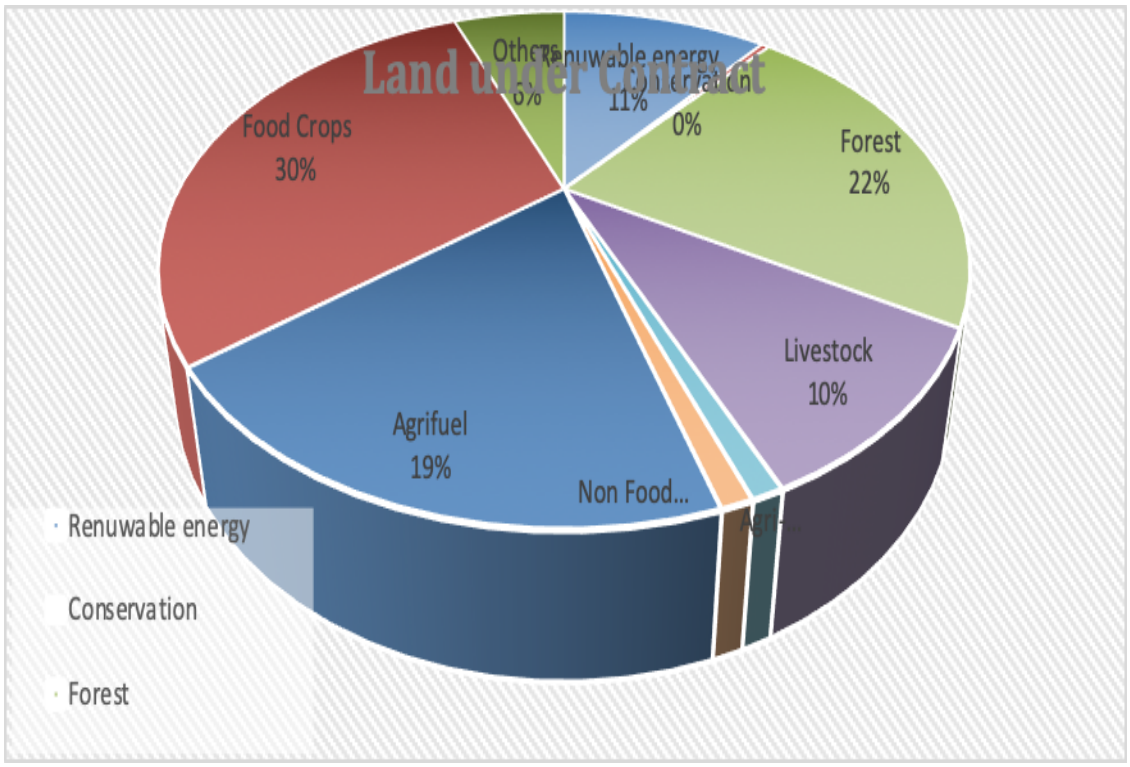


Table 0.1: An overview of investment cases in Morogoro, Tanzania

(Source: Fieldwork, 2022)

Investor	**District**	**Hectares**	**Legislative act/ Policy resulting in dispossession**	**Key actors**	**Status of the investor land title transfer[2]**	**Status of the investment**
Green Resources Ltd.	Kilombero	62 000	Village land-use plan	Central state Norfund District authorities	Partly completed	Operational
KSCL	Kilombero		District/village land-use plan Land bank	Sugar Board of Tanzania Central state District authorities	Completed	Operational
Kilombero Plantations Ltd. (KPL)	Kilombero	58 000	District/village land-use plan	Central state District authorities Agrica Ltd. (previously Inf Energy)	Completed	Not operational (went bankrupt in 2019)
Kilombero Valley Teak Company	Ulanga/Kilombero	28 000	District/village land-use plan	Central state District authorities The Common wealth Development Corporation (CDC) Japan International Cooperation Agency	Completed	Operational
Sugar Development Corporation	Kilombero “The Ruipa Site”	10 000	District/village land-use plan	Central state Sugar Development Corporation (later the Sugar Board of Tanzania)	In negotiations process	Not operational

Investor	District	Hectares	Legislative act/ Policy resulting in dispossession	Key actors	Status of the investor land title transfer[2]	Status of the investment
				Rufiji Basin Development Authority (RUBADA) District authorities Ward authorities		

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The partnerships follow the neoliberal trend that rested firmly on market-based discourse in the 1990s, illustrated by the former philanthropist and chairman of the agribusiness giant Cargill, Whitney MacMillan, who suggested that there "is a mistaken belief that the greatest agricultural need in the developing world is to develop the capacity to grow food for local consumption. However, countries should produce what they produce best – and trade" (Lynas, 2001, as cited in McMichael, 2005, p. 290). The discourse is inherent in the corporate food regime, which Harvey (2006) viewed as the neoliberal state, implying that the urgency is to cater for corporate interests and enable a good business climate to appeal to investors and stimulate economic growth. However, as Harvey (2006, p. 25) argues, proponents of neoliberalism often claim that "the only way to eradicate poverty and to deliver, in the long run, higher living standards to the mass of the population" is through free markets, private property rights, and unrestricted capital accumulation—despite overwhelming evidence that these same mechanisms often deepen inequality and marginalisation.

Numerous actors are involved in the neoliberal project, from governments, industries, philanthropic organisations, and global institutions (Campbell, 2009; McMichael, 2000, 2009; Patel, 2012). Bergius (2014) highlighted the common interests systemised through the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Agriculture and the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. Whereas the Agreement on Agriculture placed restrictions on sovereign states to regulate their agricultural sector (through agriculture liberalisation in the Global South) and maintained Northern agriculture subsidies, the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights sanctions corporations to patent genetic resources that may potentially jeopardise farmers' rights to plant crops that have developed through centuries of experimentation (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McMichael, 2000). Besides, these institutional arrangements constitute an unprecedented market force on which the prominent actors of the regime capitalise.

Following the partnerships framework, private-public partnerships and Tanzania's risk-sharing arrangements are essential funding to finance agricultural investments to improve coordination and reduce transaction costs, for example, related to land acquisition and transport (Borras & Franco, 2010; McMichael, 2012). Opponents argued that the corporate sector is primarily a public-private partnership for two reasons: Firstly, they offer corporations a direct opening to warrant policies that they can benefit from, and secondly, they enable corporations to direct a substantial part of the risks to the public sector while

potential profits are privatised (Harvey, 2006). The regime is embedded in place and promoted through aligned initiatives by philanthropic organisations, such as the Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation; multilateral national companies such as Monsanto, Yara, Cargill, Unilever, Syngenta, and DuPont; international finance institutions; and donor governments. Some of the latest initiatives stemming from the neoliberal trend include, among others, the New Vision for Agriculture of the World Economic Forum and the New Alliance on Food Security and Nutrition of the G8, both formed in a bid to entrench the role of multilateral national companies in global food and energy production (Holt Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; McKeon, 2014; Patel, 2012; Perfecto et al., 2009). These initiatives have direct relevance to SAGCOT in Tanzania. Their shared message is that people's food security is best met through the revival of the green revolution and by exposing food distribution to the "touch of the invisible hand" in markets, whereby food security is first and foremost determined by purchasing power. Green revolution technological fixes primarily focus on quantities (increasing yields) and is often associated with widespread negativity.

4.1.6 The land tenure system in Tanzania

The Tanzanian land tenure system is a combination of the state property regime, communal management, and private property (Shivji, 1998). This situation partly reflects the fact that since independence, mainland Tanzania has not had a categorical policy on land tenure. In spite of such fundamental statements of policy such as the Arusha Declaration in 1967, the land tenure system has fundamentally been governed by the rules underlying the principles of the Land Ordinance of 1923, and is almost unaltered in its essentials from colonialism (Land Commission, 1994). For example, Angelsen and Fjeldstad (1995) highlighted that the Tanzanian Constitution (URT, 1977) has no provisions on land and land ownership, except for defining the territory of the country for purposes of securing the political sovereignty of the state. They further argued that even major policy programmes, such as the villagisation of 1973–76, paid little regard to issues of land tenure. One possible explanation is that after independence, the state wanted to maintain its ultimate power over land, and another explanation is underestimating the importance of property rights.

Thus, the current land tenure system in Tanzania, as in many other developing countries, is based on a parallel system of dualism and hierarchy. The dualism is between the village land governed by customary land tenure under the deemed right of occupancy

(usufructuary rights), and the general land governed by the statutory system, with property rights secured in the written national law. The structure is hierarchical in that the statutory system is considered superior, with far greater security of tenure, than the customary system. Progress in this hierarchy means movement away from the customary to the statutory. In practice, this movement actually involves expropriation of customary land, as has been the case throughout the colonial and post-colonial history (report of the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters, 1994).

4.1.7 Legal bifurcation: Panacea or conundrum?

It is undeniable that the bifurcation of tenure that introduced the main difference between general land and village land, and the associated difference between Granted Rights of Occupancy (and derivative rights) and Customary Rights Occupancy, is the main source of contradictions in the institutional setting of land rights in Tanzania. Transferring village land into general land to facilitate large-scale investments in agriculture and in other activities is normally troubled and disliked.

Like many formerly colonised countries, Tanzania has parallel land administrative and governance structures. These belong to the customary rule system, primarily in rural areas. Tanzania is divided into 31 regions, which is further subdivided into districts, administered by regional commissioners, district commissioners, and district assemblies and councils (United Republic of Tanzania, 2022).

Tanzania's local government is divided into three levels, each with statutory functions for development planning, namely city/municipal councils, town councils, and *Mtaa* (sub-ward) councils. Cities are divided into municipalities, which are further subdivided into municipal wards and then into sub-wards or *Mtaa*. Tanzania's local government system is based on decentralisation, as outlined in the Regional Administration Act, no. 19 of 1997 (United Republic of Tanzania, 1997), the Local Government (District Authorities) Act, no. 7 of 1982 (URT, 1982a), and the Local Government (Urban Authorities) Act, no. 8 of 1982 (URT, 1882b).

Historically, colonial powers preferred the freehold system for land administration, but Nyerere opposed it. After independence, he implemented African socialism and transferred customary land rights from ethnic groups and clans to newly established elected village councils and promoted collective land cultivation. While this approach benefited some,

like women, regarding land rights, it was not conducive to investment, sustainable resource management, or economic growth (Hyden, 1975; Shivji, 2020).

In 1995, Tanzania prepared its first National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995), leading to the Village Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999) and Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999). These Acts provide a legal framework for land rights, recognise customary tenure, and empower local governments to manage village land. This framework creates two main processes for securing land rights: Village lands can be demarcated, and land-use plans created to provide Certificates of Village Land. Once a village has a Certificate of Village Land, residents can apply for Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy.

Customary law, including traditional practices and norms related to land tenure, is crucial in rural Tanzania. The Village Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999) acknowledges and incorporates customary rights, allowing communities to manage land according to their traditions. While this recognition helps bridge the gap between formal statutory law and the lived realities of rural populations, it sometimes poses challenges, especially in rural land administration.

Customary land tenure systems in Tanzania differ and contextually depend on reginal practices. However, under the majority, the definitive ownership of land is bestowed in a collective entity, such as the tribe, the clan, or the family. The income and user rights are contingent on membership of the group. In the current structure, the radical title in all lands, which are declared to be public land, is vested in the President "and shall be held and administered for the use and common benefit, direct or indirect, of the natives of Tanganyika, and no title to the occupation and use of any such lands shall be valid without the consent of the President" (Land Commission, 1994:19).

By law, the President is authorised to allocate the land by the National Land Policy 1995 (URT, 1995) and its revisions in 2013, specified by the Land Act 1999 and Village Land Act1999 in 1999–2000 (URT, 1999). The Acts came into force in May 2001, giving the President significant powers over land, including the ability to grant rights of occupancy and allocate land for public purposes, but in practice, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development administers, allocates and manages land. This suggests that the ultimate control and administration of peasant or village lands are in the hands of the state. Apparently, under the current laws, different land users of customary land face challenges of conflicts and uncertainty in land tenure. However, those with granted rights of

occupancy enjoy statutory security, and this security lasts for as long as they use it according to the prescribed conditions.

Thus, history shows that the villagisation or *vijiji vya Ujamaa* programme (1973–1976) involved a large-scale relocation of cultivators and pastoralists into villages. The programme focused on modes of production. According to the report of the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994 and other literature on the programme, existing customary land tenure systems were not considered effective and the 'new' land tenure system in the new locations was not analysed (Land Commission, 1994:20). In certain circumstances, villagers invaded land held under granted rights that was in practice abandoned or neglected by land holders, without any formal procedures. This suggests that the villagers' or individuals' invasion of abandoned or neglected land within villages signifies the scarcity of land, which is gradually increasing.

Historically, the government as a land owner of abandoned farms and estates started to reclaim its land held under the statutory law, but since it is situated in customary law, this causes conflicts, in particular on village land. To address the widespread confusion and dispute about land tenure in rural areas, in 1987, the ruling party, Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the Revolutionary Party instructed the government to complete demarcation and titling of villages under the law within five years. However, by mid-1991, only 22% of some 8 400 registered villages had been surveyed, and only 2% of the villages' certificates had been registered (Havnevik, & Skarstein. 1995).

From a legal perspective, report of the Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters 1994 highlighted that the whole procedure of preparing land certificates was surrounded with legal and practical problems. Firstly, the existing deemed rights of villagers on village land were not made clear, thus causing double allocation and further confusion. Secondly, the right of occupancy of the village was granted to the village council, a body controlled by the state, and not the village assembly, which is the only democratic village institution.

The government responded to the increasing problems related to land tenure by endorsing a new law, the Regulation of Land Tenure (Established Villages) Act (URT, 1992), which extinguished all rights of occupation of land based on customary law in established villages. However, this law was challenged at the Court of Appeal, and in January 1995, it was ruled the law unconstitutional, and hence, declared it non-valid (Birgegård, 1995).

The government also adopted a decentralisation policy that provides a framework for governance and investment at the local level. It decentralised its political, administrative, and fiscal reforms in order to increase the decision-making capacity and development efficiency of local administrations through the redistribution of powers and resources between administrative levels. The Local Government Reform Programme focuses on improving the delivery of quality services to the public, and is a key aspect of the decentralisation thrust of the government. It comprises changing from centrally planned to locally planned activities, including agricultural development. The different dimensions of decentralisation vary in importance and are implemented in different sequences. Decentralisation reforms very often target public service delivery (such as health, education, transport, water and sanitation) in ways that may relate primarily to the administrative or the fiscal dimension. This may be because of technical and pragmatic concerns about appropriate sub-national government functions, but it may also reflect powerful political and institutional dynamics (Eaton et al., 2010).

4.1.8 Overview of local and central government: An intricate legal system

Likwelile (2018) pointed out that the legal framework currently governing relationships between central and local government in Tanzania is opaque and confusing. For example, local authorities are legally mandated to make and implement their own development plans and find their own sources of revenue, but central ministries are also legally empowered to determine the sources of local government revenue, and can veto decisions made at the sub-national level. The vast power of the minister responsible for local government is suggested by the sheer number of mentions in the relevant legislation. According to Mnyasenga and Mushi (2015), the minister is mentioned 95 times in the 156 sections of the Local Government (District Authorities) Act (URT, 1982a). Most of these mentions are concerned with the control and supervision of local government powers, functions, and finance through approval powers; appellate power; issuance of guidelines, regulations, directives, orders, and direct interventions; appointment and transfer powers of local government staff; disciplinary powers over local government staff; variation of local government functions; and powers to dissolve local government councils. Most of these powers are discretionary and can be delegated by the minister to any public officer.

In practice, research indicated that the central government indeed exercises tight control over local government administrators. Kunkuta (2011) suggestedsuggests the most

frequently used mechanisms are issuing policy statements and guidelines; giving directives and commands that direct the local government administrators to perform or not to perform certain activities; issuing circulars; discipline and transfer of local government staff; and setting budget ceilings. In the opinion of 87.4% of those asked by the researchers, the minister's power negatively influences the autonomy of local government administrators.

Likwelile (2018) drew on the summary of the 1998 reform and found that, in particular, the functioning of local government administrators and their relationship with the central government is that it is an unfinished business. He argued that there is some advancement in the volume of services delivered and in their quality. Still the control of local government administrators over their staff and their total spending is limited because of multiple levels of authority. The same evaluators concluded that up to 2008, the end of the first stage of the reform, local government administrators were not more powerful than they were in 2000. To date, the situation remains more or less the same, or may have slightly deteriorated with the increased control by the central government under the fifth phase and with the recent decision to transfer key staff in departments of land and water to the central government, including the further transfer of local government sources of revenue. Thus, despite the significant devolution of authority and resources to sub-national levels of government, persisting capacity deficits, increased financial dependence on the central government, and political and institutional constraints negatively impact the pace of reforms and also mean that the achievements have fallen short of the intentions of the reform agenda.

4.2 Historical Land Management Legacies and Development Support

Access to land has been a contentious issue in Tanzania for three major reasons: Firstly, most of Tanzania's population live in rural areas; secondly, they practice subsistence farming agriculture; and thirdly, most of them (70%) depend on that subsistence farming agriculture. The country has a total area of 948 740 km2, of which 59 280 km2 are fresh water and 946 270 km2 are land (URT, 2022). Despite having a large area of land, of the total land area, 44 million ha (49.7%) are classified as arable, and the cultivated land is less than this. The area operated for agricultural production is less than 35% of the total arable land (15 million ha). The area suitable for irrigation is estimated to be about 29.4 million ha, but about 0.4 million ha are under irrigation. Between 85% and 90% of the land under

cultivation is used by smallholder farmers (14 million ha), who primarily use the land for subsistence farming (Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

Disputed land in Tanzania is not a new phenomenon, and it started back when Tanzania was called Tanganyika (before independence). The Land Ordinance of 1923 introduced by the British colonial administration was instrumental in consolidating Tanzania land management under the state. Following its enactments, colonial government became solely responsible for land allocation (Shivji, 2006). Afterwards, British authorities considered the recommendations of the African Region Commission, and in 1953–1955 attempted to make another policy titled Individualism, Titling and Registrations, which was geared towards changing the customary land management to allow private ownership of land in Tanzania.

At that time, Julius Nyerere was the party leader and chairman leader of the TANU. He vehemently opposed the colonial idea of land individualism. The opposition of the agenda became instrumental in fighting for independence, among other reasons. In his 1958 pamphlet, *Mali ya Taifa*, Nyerere already presented his vision of what was supposed be the land management precepts of Tanzania:

> In a country such as Tanzania, where, generally speaking, the Africans are poor and the foreigners are rich, it is quite possible that, within 80 or 100 years, if the poor African were allowed to sell his land, all the land in Tanganyika would belong to wealthy immigrants, and the local people would be tenants. But even if there were no rich foreigners in this country, there would emerge rich and clever Tanganyikans. If we allow land to be sold like a robe, within a short period there would only be a few Africans possessing land in Tanganyika and all the others would be tenants. (Julius Nyerere, 1966, as cited in Land Rights Research and Resources Institute, 2010, p. 10)

Hence, in 1961, under Nyerere's leadership, Tanganyika got independence. Politically, Tanzania was born in 1963 from the union of Zanzibar and Tanganyika. Influenced by the Soviet culture, Nyerere accordingly officiated in the newly independent state in a socialist driven system of governance that relied on the total authority of a single party. Nyerere's approach to development was overprotective. The choice was based on the warranted existing suspicion of European institutions, mainly due colonial administration and that

political dissent might have the country's economic development (Wangwe & Gray, (2018).

Subsequently the newly independent state implemented two new land policies, the Land Acquisition Act, no. 47 of 1967 (URT, 1967) and the *Ujamaa* Villa Act, no. 21 of 1975 (URT, 1975). The *Ujamaa* policy was primarily pretested by Nyerere as a means to improve the living conditions of Tanzanians. It also aimed to involve and empower the smallholders for their own development. The villagisation program envisaged the relocation of Tanzania's rural population into government created villages that were deemed more palatable for development in relation to planning, infrastructure, and social services. Politically, the policy also aimed to increase the state's power over Tanzania's rural regions (Hyden, 1980; Iliffe, 1979; Schneider, 2004). Finally, this policy made the Tanzanian state, with the President's prerogative, the sole owner of all Tanzanian land.

Despite Nyerere's official idea and discourses, villagisation was a national project focused on Tanzania's rural population. However, its implementation was marred with discontent (Shivji,1996), which partly contributed to its failure. Although the villagilization program had weaknesses, its impact was undeniably significant and had lasting impacts on spatial relations all over Tanzania. Estimates are that it led to the displacement of no less than 66.6% of the population (Young, 1997). In addition, villagisation's effect on the land tenure system was pernicious. Swantz (1996) noted the following:

> In Tanzania [...] many people were settled on land belonging to other villagers and were uncertain of future claims to the land. The commodification of village land in Tanzania was one of the many unintended consequences of villagisation resulting from the disruption of the land tenure system.

4.3 Emergence of Liberalism

By the early 1980s, the socialist welfare state envisioned by Nyerere had become untenable. A deepening financial crisis and state bankruptcy forced Nyerere to seek international support, as Tanzania could no longer afford to fund its development projects or meet the needs of its population (Kimambo & Maddox, 2019; Shivji, 2023). This opened the door for intervention by international financial institutions. Their involvement was shaped by the rise of neoliberal ideology at the time, which conditioned aid and loans on the implementation of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). Although Nyerere initially rejected these conditions, he eventually conceded. Feeling unprepared for the

profound changes required, Nyerere considered it logical to resign and give another leader the opportunity to lead the country through this transition. He stepped down in 1985, and President Ali Hassan Mwinyi assumed leadership.

During Mwinyi's presidency, structural adjustment programmes were implemented to liberalise the economy, promote free trade, and privatise state enterprises. These reforms were accompanied by the introduction of a multi-party-political system, a reduction in the size of the state, and significant cuts to government expenditure on public services. As part of these changes, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank also mandated the removal of agricultural subsidies, which they viewed as economically inefficient. As a result, fertiliser subsidies were completely abolished between 1994 and 1995. The state's withdrawal from agriculture left Tanzanian farmers in an increasingly precarious position, and the liberalisation period saw a sharp decline in the country's agricultural productivity and output (Skarstein, 2005).As envisioned, the neoliberal reforms in Tanzania did not have the intended effects (Lofchie, 2014; Maruba, 2008) of increasing agriculture productivity and alleviating poverty. Agriculture was impacted by the financial crisis and production was not satisfactory. Economically, structural adjustment led to the growing political use of international funds to ensure a significant withdrawal of the state in social and development policies (van de Walle, 2001). The state's lack of accountability to its donors and citizens, and the fact that not fulfilling the imposed conditions did not diminish the international aid partly explain these results.

In addition, the retraction of the Tanzanian state from social affairs contributed to the worsening of public services. For example, in 1969, 90% of the urban population had access to drinking water. This number drastically decreased from the 1980s to only 56% in 1993. The purchasing power of the civil service dropped by 94% in real dollars between 1969 and 1985 (Tripp, 1997). Furthermore, primary school attendance was at 98% in 1980 and 70% in 1997 (Pinkney, 2001). According to Tripp (1997, p. 130), "schools in Bugurini and Manzese [a neighbourhood of Dar es Salaam] had virtually no textbooks, notebooks, charts, or even desks or chairs. Nor did they have equipment with which to teach vocational skills".

The collapse of the socialist states and the shift towards liberalisation negatively impacted the country's economic development. It also obstructed the relationship between the state and the citizens. Since the Nyerere era, the state grappled to ensure social equality and a

national project of socio-economic development. In the 1980s and 1990s, the state also failed to deliver the desired goals in development which led to citizens' progressive disengagement from the state entity (Ayoade, 1988; Tripp, 1997).

Land rights was at the centre of the newly liberalised government's concerns. However, new land laws drifted from Nyerere's socialist vision, and instead, the neoliberal precepts took the lead. Neoliberal precepts promoted private and individual land rights as a means to foster smallholders' productivity, reduce poverty and ensure economic growth (Skarstein, 2005). In particular, this vision led to two new Land Acts, the Land Act of 1999 and the Village Land Act of 1999 (URT, 1999). They were ratified in 1999, and became effective in 2001, invalidating the 1923 colonial law. Unlike the previous British law, these new Acts established the legal equivalence of granted and customary land rights (Sulle & Nelson, 2009). Another important innovation of this new legislative land framework was that foreigners were now able to acquire derivative Tanzanian land rights. Although these laws still constitute the legal framework governing land rights and ownership in Tanzania, the process of revising the National Land Policy (URT, 1995) is currently underway (see Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on the land policies).

In brief, the Tanzanian state model that developed during this liberalisation period was characteristically binary in nature, and it had uncleared boundaries between public and private spheres, and customary and statutory land laws. Statutory laws took the lead role even when land was owed customarily. This situation led to complex legal bifurcation on the administration of land.

Despite unclear boundaries between public and private spheres, customary and statutory land laws and policies that translated to national land laws and policies, its alignment with the international market forces is evident. As previously stated in section 4.3.2, although the focus was on the potential of agriculture for development, in continuity with past Tanzanian laws and policies initiatives, recent Tanzanian laws and policies has a liberalised economy that adopts and reproduces a dominant international narrative influenced by "global processes that aim to shift agriculture towards an industrial scale, responding to global market demands" (Sulle, 2016, p. 116).

Subsequently, the state under President Mkapa and his successor President Kikwete, conceptualised agricultural development differently: Rather than accentuating development through direct state intervention for smallholders' economic empowerment,

the focus was now on investors and commercial agricultural development, which foster agricultural productivity through capital, technology transfers, and increased employment opportunities. In relations to this argument, Sulle (2016) stated that the current agricultural policy initiatives that have been implemented in Tanzania all demonstrate this paradigm shift, these are such as *Kilimo Kwanza* 2009 SAGCOT 2010, Big Results Now 2012 National Agriculture Policy 2013, and Building a Better Tomorrow-Youth and Women Initiative for Agribusiness 2024 (Bergius, et al., 2020). All of these agricultural policies are rooted within a national framework: Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty or MKUKUTA (Assey, 2007). MKUKUTA I and II were in fact agreements over the strategic funding of policies resulting from a dialogue undertaken between major international donors, such as the IMF and the World Bank, and the Tanzanian government (Tripp, 2012). Both MKUKUTA's plans of action for agricultural development prioritised surveying, registering, and issuing land titles, periodically reviewing the Land Act (URT, 1999a) and associated laws to make them more inclusive.

MKUKUTA II ended in 2015. It was followed by the new United Republic of Tanzania National Five-Year Development Plan, 2016/17-2020/21, which integrated previous MKUKUTA planning frameworks. Regarding land, similar to MKUKUTA II, the National Five-Year Development Plan states that "the current land policy [...] does not facilitate industrialisation", highlighting that land acquisition processes are too costly and lengthy, thereby imposing on investors the high transaction costs, which are deterring new investments. Established priorities regarding land and agricultural development are similar. However, they are now defined in terms of land planning, formalisation of land rights, and centralisation of land management for investments.

Currently, there is the Tanzania Development Vision (United Republic of Tanzania, 1999) to increase the level of productivity in all sectors, including agriculture. The plan is to transform the economy from a predominantly agricultural economy with low productivity to a diversified and semi-industrialised economy with a modern rural sector and high productivity in agricultural production that generates reasonably high incomes and ensures food security and food self-sufficiency. The diversification of the economy must be based on a dynamic industrialisation programme focused on local resource-based industries (agro-industries) and capable of meeting the needs of other sectors, while continuously developing activities that have dynamic comparative advantages. Particular attention is given to investment in infrastructure. This investment must also involve the private sector

and communities in general. In order to promote rural development, investments in road networks, energy, and water are deemed essential. The first section of the Vision includes among the strategies to be implemented to attain high quality livelihood, gender equality and the empowerment of women in all socio-economic and political relations and cultures.

Throughout the history of colonial and post-colonial rule, Kilombero district, and large parts of the KVFP, have been the subject of agricultural programs and experiments. Under German colonial rule, the Kilombero Valley was the site of a cotton production program, and developed extensive infrastructure to support these activities. Nonetheless, the population remained small, and much of the population continued to rely on swidden production. Shortly after independence, President Nyerere implemented a national plan to invigorate rural development across the country by relocating much of the nation's population into concentrated rural settlements. This project, known as Operation Vijiji (Village Operation), relocated, sometimes through force, the Kilombero Valley's population into several small villages, primarily along the main roadway (Jackson and Ching'ota, 2023).

Nyerere envisioned a socialist society where villagers would work collectively on state-owned farms, use cooperatively managed farm equipment, and share harvests equitably across the country. This collectivist vision, known as Ujamaa, has been widely critiqued for its failed utopian vision (Scott, 1998), but it transformed the geography of the Valley and catalysed a demographic transformation. Populations grew steadily in the Kilombero Valley throughout Nyerere presidency's (1964 to 1985). In 1978, the population was 133 043 people in Kilombero district, and the population grew to 187 593 by the end 1988 (United Republic of Tanzania). Even following the abandonment of Operation Vijiji in 1982, the Tanzanian government maintained a policy of agricultural development that subsidised farming sectors through the provision of agricultural inputs and seed.

However, many of these programs were dismantled during the 1990s, when Tanzania underwent major structural adjustment programs that restricted such expenditures. Many migrated into the Kilombero Valley from the more populous neighbouring Iringa region and elsewhere to acquire newly available fertile farmland and to take advantage of it, despite limited infrastructure.

Cooksy (2012) pointed out that there has been renewed interest in promoting agricultural development as a strategy to bolster economic growth and alleviate poverty in Tanzania

and across much of Africa. In supporting the effort, the African Union created the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in 2003, a policy framework that intends to improve food security and economic growth. The Programme offer various approaches to that effect. One is the allocation of 10% of a nation's budget to agriculture and rural development. In 2010, Tanzania endorsed the Programme and officiated the Tanzania Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plan. While Programme stipulates that stakeholder participation is key to planning, several organisations have critiqued both the Tanzania Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plan and the broader Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme for their lack of strategy to support smallholder participation.

In the Kilombero district, three programs affect the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme vision and impact on the valley floodplain. These programs are firstly, the *Kilimo Kwanza* (Agriculture First) program, the Agricultural Sector Development Program, and the SAGCOT. SAGCOT is an international public-private partnership that launched at the World Economic Forum in 2010. This private-public partnership is primarily focused on supporting and mobilising private sector investments to realise the goals of *Kilimo Kwanza*. SAGCOT aims at several specific geographic regions of high growth potential, including the Kilombero Valley. It promotes 'green agricultural growth' (Scherr et al., 2013) by linking small-scale farmers to the global market through a nucleus–out-grower model (Bergius, 2014; Sulle & Smalley, 2015) as a means to support inclusive growth. The smallholders serve as out-growers, and grow their products that they sell to larger farms.

Within SAGCOT, the Kilombero cluster, one of six planned clusters comprising an area of 126 villages, is focused on sugar cane and rice production. The government plans to transform more than 900,000 hectares of potential land for investment (SAGCOT, 2012), but to date no new investments have emerged in this cluster. The observed Mngeta Farm in the Kilombero district, located in the centre of the Kilombero cluster, is an example of how foreign private large-scale investment can have significant consequences on the local economy and villagers' livelihoods. This arises in particular through the generations of land conflicts.

Secondly, the Feed the Future program funds projects in this region as a multi-agency program of the US Government. One of the projects is SAGCOT. Apparently, Feed the

Future funds several projects in the Kilombero Valley, supporting the development of irrigation schemes, infrastructural improvements, technological training (specifically the system of rice intensification), and nutritional education. Other international NGOs that are also shaped by the program and operating in the Kilombero Valley are Caritas Australia, Plan International, and the Gates Foundation (Interview, District Administrative Officer in Kilombero district, 2022).

Thirdly, locally observed organisations, such as the Kilombero Valley Environment and Development Organization, Association of Kilombero High Quality Rice Growers, Rural and Urban Development Initiative, and Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania (MVIWATA) also engage with smallholders to support sustainable resource management and livelihoods enhancement. Broadly, these local organisations have partnered with and funded by international agencies, making it increasingly difficult to discern the boundaries between international NGOs, local non-profits, and government agencies.

4.4 Development support for land reform beneficiaries

Development support for land reform beneficiaries, such as smallholders, has undergone many policy changes. The responsibility is vested in the existing elected local village governments, which are heading the process of recognising existing rights and issuing titles. The reform has been highlighted as a model for other countries to follow because it devolves much power downwards. However, its implementation is marred with challenges such as its slowness, uneven implementation, and being largely project-driven (Turner, 2011). In 2005, the Minister of Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development introduced the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Land Laws to provide a broad framework for the implementation of Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999), Village Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999) and Land Disputes Courts Act, No. 2 of 2002 (URT, 2002). A Land Reform Program was designed to support key activities of the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Land Laws to facilitate the development of a competitive domestic private sector. Support was provided to more urgent activities identified for implementation in the first five years of the 10-year term of the Strategic Plan. The correct procedures for how to implement the Village Land Act 1999 have been established by trial and error over the years. Some simplifications were made; for instance, the number of forms required to apply for and issue a title deed in a village (a Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy) was reduced by the Ministry and by the Property and Business Formalisation Programme (in Swahili known as MKURABITA) projects. However, it largely remained the same, and

implementation remained slow and uneven. Turner (2011) highlighted that unclear legislation is part of the reason for the slowness. For example, the policy indicates that some changes were made without changing the laws. Much of the know-how about the proper procedures, however, has not been made public and access to information is restricted. Citizens and stakeholders therefore depend on the Ministry, even when implementation activities are not part of the Ministry's own projects.

Remarkably, in 2010, the issued Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy were only around 110 000, and less than half of Tanzania's 11 000 villages had received a Village Land Certificate, suggesting that the village authorities had to take over responsibility for administering land in the villages, and only 705 villages had a land-use plan in place, which is a prerequisite for issuing Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy (Turner, 2011).

Another policy, the Strategic Plan for the Implementation of the Land Laws II (URT, 2013b) was introduced to address the challenge of failed land reform projects. It was developed with wide consultation as a comprehensive vision and action plan. It also provided information on the prioritisation and sequencing of activities (considering known constraints and resource challenges). The policy framework considered various costings and financing arrangements for sustainable implementation and identified priority areas and activities to assist the government of Tanzania achieve its broader development goals of poverty reduction, agricultural transformation, and good governance. This suggests that more attention towards improving the implementation of land reform at the local level is essential.

Currently, the focus is on disseminating information about rights to the citizens in the villages. However, the role of authorities, the village councils, and the village assemblies, who are the ones carrying out implementation in the villages, have largely been overlooked. These authorities need more information and training to make informed choices. In doing so, the following aspects of implementation at the local level should be addressed: The citizens' knowledge about the laws; the establishment of village land institutions; and the continuous delivery of land services year after year, not only for short-term implementation periods.

With the land reform in Tanzania, ordinary villagers are expected to take control of the administration of land. For this to succeed will require the rest of Tanzania's land administration structure to change accordingly. Much could be achieved if the existing

institutions change their mode of operation: If district land offices put greater emphasis on training villagers, strengthening village institutions, and facilitating consistent delivery of services; and if the Ministry of Lands and the Ministry of Regional Administration and Local Governance do more to coordinate activities aimed at implementing the Village Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999) in the villages. There is an urgent need to help establish viable village land administration institutions.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter deliberated on the change from pre-capitalist modes of production to the dominance of the capitalist mode of production in Tanzania, and the class struggles and contradictions central to the process. It also highlighted that the gains of this change were unevenly disseminated, resonating to the colonial-skewed land divisions arising from the 1895 and 1923 Land Act. Large-scale commercial farms were exclusively demarcated for colonialists. Such change in farming and agriculture depended on the condition of the human and material resources that eventually contributed to its prosperity. The chapter illustrated that it was the colonial state rather than the market that established the essential parameters of agrarian change, but the logic of capital accumulation steered the core processes.

The level of state sustenance to large-scale commercial farms owned by colonial farmers had contradictory and paradoxical effects. From one perspective, marketing, credit, price support, and other measures played a fundamental role in the change of Tanzania's agricultural industry. Labour policies secured White farmers' access to available subjugated labour force and offered it at below market rates. From another perspective, these policies obstructed the development of a farming sector suitable to the country's environment. The reduced labour costs, inflated prices and credit and tariff legislation encouraged colonial White farmers to use land for agricultural purposes that suited their interests. The exclusion of Tanganyika peasant farmers from any benefits from the various subsidies that the state gave to Whites excluded a basis of cheap food that had been significant during the first stages of industrialisation.

The reflections from the literature on agriculture labour is that changes in agriculture labour have occurred overtime and continue to evolve, with significant implications for food systems at global scale because of technological advances. In Tanzania, transitions from

feudal production, to labour tenancy, and then to wage labour have played vital role in history, but current transformations have equally important implications.

In the context of the flexible adaptation of changing conditions of labour, progressively mechanised production processes, and shifts to less labour-intensive systems of production have important impacts on the flexible employment arrangements that can be created in agriculture. Capitalist businesses adapt to global pressure by lowering wage expenses to stay competitive, reducing their permanent labour forces, and increasing their use of contract labour. This approach creates a predicament to the capitalist businesses themselves in Kilombero because the majority of smallholders who are considered as labour power are also attached to their land. Chapter 5 describes and analyses the legacies of historical land management in Tanzania and the contribution of struggles on the village land.

Chapter five: Causes of Land-Use Conflicts

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 detailed the context of the farmer-herders land conflict, and this chapter presents the causes of the conflicts between two smallholders' groups, namely farmers and livestock keepers in the local context of the KVFP. The causes are deeply embedded in land reforms and governance, and involve a complex interplay of factors rooted in local government structures and influenced by broader national policies and international market forces. Specifically, the conflicts emerged from competition over limited land resources, unclear land tenure systems, and differing land-use practices between farming and pastoral communities. However, before providing the nuances of the causes of the conflicts, it is important to highlight that these populations are internally different, and are not homogenous. The understanding of the internal division helps to comprehend the contribution of the complexity of the conflicts in the KVFP and its resolving mechanisms.

5.2 Understand Place and the People

The Kilombero Valley Plain has a long history of human occupation, and is still a place where archaeologists search for the prehistory of early human settlers and culture heritage. The following summary of Kilombero history is brief; lengthier descriptions and references may be found in Larson (1976), Kimambo and Maddox (2019) and Jackson and Ching'ota (2023).

5.2.1 The Kilombero district area

5.2.1.1 General description of the Kilombero District

As discussed in Chapters 1 and 3, Kilombero is an arid and semi-arid area. This study area is located in Kilombero Valley, a wetland. It is situated in the southern central part of Tanzania. The valley plain is 260 km long and up to 52 km wide, and covers an area of 4 000–6 250 km^2 during inundation at high water level (Nindi et al., 2014). It is acknowledged by the Ramsar Convention because of its exceptionality in terms of rich flora and fauna (Nindi et al., 2014; URT, 2010). The ecosystem accommodates wild life in the Selous Game Reserve and the Udzungwa Reserve and National Park. Natural vegetation is the evergreen forest of the Udzungwa Mountains, riverine forest, and marsh grassland in the broad valleys, which are used for agriculture. It borders with Kilosa and

Morogoro rural districts to the north; Mufindi and Njombe to the south-west; Kilolo district to the north; Ulanga district in the south-east along the Kilombero River; and Songea district to the south.

During the fieldwork, the wetland was part of the Rufiji Basin of southern Tanzania, located in the Ulanga and Kilombero districts, Morogoro region. It lies at the foot of the Great Escarpment of East Africa in the southern half of Tanzania, about 300 km from the coast (Kato, 2007). It covers an area of about 11 600 km^2 (including the marginal hills), with a total length of 250 km and width of up to 65 km. The elevation within the basin is about 300 m above sea level.

Kilombero is beautified by hills, waterfalls, mountains and forest. It has the big river called Kilombero, with tributaries supplying water to other areas. Visiting from Dar es Salaam, I found the place tranquil with a beautiful atmosphere because of all the greenery. It has other small rivers and swampy areas, which make up the largest seasonally freshwater lowland floodplain in East Africa, joining the Great Ruaha, Rufiji and Luwegu rivers (Field observations, 2022; Nindi et al., 2014). The valley is rare and unique and it was designated as a Ramsar site in 2002 because of its international, national, regional, and local importance because of its wide array of ecosystem services, such as waterflow regulation, fisheries, dry-season grazing, tourism, and hunting. Furthermore, it is part of the southern Agricultural Growth Corridor, an area earmarked for future investments in agricultural development (Milder et al., 2013). The area is a key feature in the Selous-Kilombero seasonal wildlife migrations, in which the population of crocodile and hippopotamus in Kilombero links with that of Selous Game Reserve. It also constitutes the Kilombero game-controlled area, which is approximately 7 000 km^2, and the Kilombero Valley Ramsar site, which covers 7 679 km^2. Furthermore, the KVFP is recognised for its high diversity of fish species, following Lakes Tanganyika, Nyasa and Victoria for water bodies away from shorelines. The valley plain is also a tourist attraction.

A significant majority of the population in the KVFP is engaged in agricultural production, which is largely subsistence based. However, observations pointed to a shift into more commercial agriculture. Rice, maize, peas, and bananas are the main food-cum-cash crops, while sugarcane, sesame, sunflowers, rubber and cocoa are grown for commercial purposes. The area is also rich in various other crops, including various types of vegetables (okra, *amaranthus*, tomatoes, Chinese cabbage, sweet potatoes, and cassava) and fruits

(oranges, mangoes, pawpaw, and pineapples; Nindi et al., 2014). During the field work, I observed that most crops are planted either on flat seedbeds or on conventional ridges.

5.2.2 The origins of the district

The present day Kilombero district constitutes Ifakara Town Council, Mlimba Council, and partly Ulanga district, largely situated in the vast floodplain of Kilombero, which historically evolved from Mahenge Militarbezirk (1899–1917), Mahenge district (1918–1936), and Ulanga district (1936–1961). The district originated from the colonial administrative unit called Mahenge. Mahenge came into existence on August 7, 1899, and since then, its boundaries have slightly changed.

Geographically, one of the remarkable features of the district is the river system, part of the Rufiji drainage basin, the vastest in East Africa. The Kilombero River system outstretches the fingers of the river from the Rufiji basin to figurately grasp the district. The Great Ruaha river forms the boundary on the north and the Luhombeo, Luwegu and Mbaragandu rivers cut down to form the eastern and southern boundaries.

The second remarkable feature is the highland area, which is the towering escarpment of the southern highlands to the north-west, the Mahenge Highland in the centre, and the Masagati, Matumbi and Mbarika hills scattered across the south. The Udzungwa Escarpment in the north-west rises to 2 000 m above the Kilombero Valley, both abruptly or in fault steps. This steep rise acts as a precipitation barrier for the rainfall annually, and the natural vegetation? is a semi-deciduous rain forest. From the steep escarpment, many streams run down to the Kilombero Valley.

The biggest part of the district is the KVFP, which is divided into two sub-regions of diverse character, namely inner and outer valleys. The inner valley is bounded by the above-mentioned escarpment, the Ruaha to the north, the Rufiji to the east, and the Kilombero to the south. This forms the natural communications corridor from the inner Kilombero Valley to Central Tanzania. The inner Kilombero Valley is the most significant and complex of the two sub-regions, and it has a total length of 250 km, a width of up to 60 km, and covers an area of about 12 000 km^2. The broad and level floor of this rift valley lies on average 270 m above sea level. Between the edges and the centre of the valley, the average difference in height is 20 m, while the longitude direction the level of the plain has

a differential of only 45 m. At its lower end before entering the Rufiji, the river passes through a gneiss sandstorm formation.

The Haldeman sills act as a weir and bottleneck during the flood season. The Pangani rapids and the *shuguli* falls form part of this same formation, and form an impassable barrier between the Kilombero and Rufiji rivers. As the river exhibits a wide variety of geomorphological features of meander zones, braided river zines, levee zones, papyrus swamps, flood grassland, and alluvial fans, spreading out from the marginal hill areas. Finally, the river reaches its major source area.

Administrative authorities

Currently, Kilombero district is divided into two local government authorities, namely Ifakara Town Council and Mlimba District Council, and into five administrative divisions, 35 wards, 110 villages, 33 streets (*Mtaa*), and 462 hamlets. It is also divided into two electoral constituencies, namely Kilombero Constituency and Mlimba Constituency, and currently, both constituencies are under CCM. This information is shown in Table 5.1.

Table 0.1 Administrative units

# Councils	# Electoral constituencies	# Divisions	# Wards	# Villages	# Streets (*Mtaa*)	# Hamlets
2	2	5	35	110	33	462

Most of the district area occupies the Kilombero Valley, and part of it is in the Rufiji Basin and Mwalimu Nyerere National Park (Selous Game Reserve), which extends to the Udzungwa Mountains National Park. It is covered by miombo woodlands that rise to about 1 700 m above sea level. The district has 38 permanent rivers, which provide high potential for hydroelectric power (Kidatu and Kihansi Hydro Power) and large irrigation schemes.

5.2.3 Geography

The wetland is geographically accessible in three main ways, namely air, from Nduli airport in Iringa; road, from Dar es Salaam to Morogoro; and railway, using Railway Tanzania and Zambia Railway that has the Idete B, Mngeta and Ruipa railway stations in Namwawala, Mngeta and Mpofu villages, which are the nearest station to the reserve (about 1–3 km).

The valley plain forms the main topography of the Kilombero district in Tanzania. It is a flat and fertile landscape, intersected by the Kilombero River, which is vital to agriculture in the region. Informants noted that the plain is very important to the Kilombero people as they regard themselves as people of the valley and use it to fulfil their livelihoods. When a Kilombero person is asked where they live, they usually give the name of the valley where they live during the wet season. Therefore, Kilombero people call the plains 'homeland'.

5.2.4 Ecological classification, biodiversity and ecosystem services

According to survey studies on the ecosystem by Nindi et al. (2014) and Dinesen (2016) in the valley, land in the Kilombero district covers seven agro-climatic zones that contains diverse flora of around 350 species of plants, including both endemic and threatened species. Since 1956, the KVFP and adjacent areas of woodland have been designated as a game-controlled area, and since 2002, as a Ramsar site (Ramsar, 2002).

The principal natural vegetation in Kilombero is miombo woodland, grassland and bushland. Miombo woodland is common in the more elevated parts, while grassland is dominant in the flood plain. Miombo woodland constitutes *Brachystegia* spp. and green forests covered with tall grasses, such as elephant grass (*Penisetum purpureum*), guinea grass (*Panicum maximum*), *Hyparrhenia* spp., and reed (*Phragmites mauritianus*).

The soil is fertile and dominated by fluvisols (entisols), particularly in the flood plain. The varied vegetation provides the unique biodiversity potential of the valley, including 75% of the world's puku, the Kilombero weaver, and the Kilombero killifish (Dinesen, 2016; Ramsar, 2002). The Udzungwa Mountains are home to threatened primates such as the Sanje Mangabey and the Udzungwa red colobus monkey (Struhsaker, 2005). The biophysical interactions with the high biodiversity are the base for a highly productive ecosystem. Some of the key functions of the valley are flood control, water regulation, nutrient cycling, and a water supply for agriculture and domestic use. It is a typical fertile alluvial floodplain with loamy, clay, clay loamy, and sandy soils, and is an important source of nutrients and sediment for the downstream area. The KVFP have 38 permanent rivers that provided high potential for hydroelectric power (Kidatu and Kihansi Hydro Power) and large irrigation schemes for sugarcane plantations. Many of these tributary's flow into the floodplain from the Mahenge Highlands, located in the south of the valley.

5.2.5 Livelihoods

The Kilombero Valley is designated as the 'Breadbasket of East Africa' on account of its prospective for food and cash-crop productions. The main economic activity in Kilombero district is agriculture. Most villagers are engaged in agricultural production associated with the floodplain, and most of these are smallholders, in particular small farmers and livestock keepers doing their farming agriculture for subsistence. Recently, there has been a population increase caused by incursion of pastoralist and agro-pastoralist from the highlands, and agro-business people, from all over the country, because of drought in the highlands and the need to increase agriculture production (Johansson & Abdi, 2020). With this incursion, there is a growing shift towards more commercial medium-scale farming with the use of agrochemicals: Rice, maize, peas, and bananas are grown as food and cash crops, and sugarcane, sunflowers, sesame, and cocoa are grown strictly for commercial purposes.

Livestock keeping is another observed activity for livelihood. Most livestock keepers are recent immigrants (pastoralists and agro-pastoralists). During the fieldwork, fishing was mentioned as the main long-time activity in the area. Among the famous fish mentioned was as *kItoga* and *wali*, also called *ubwabwa*. Most use *kambale*, as shown in Figure 5.1. Fishing is done in the Kilombero River and in small swamps found in the Kilombero Valley because of the low enforcement of protection zoning (Munishi et al., 2017). The Kilombero game-controlled area has been managed by the Belgium Tanzania Corporation (BTC) and the European Union in partnership with the SAGCOT (Mombo et al., 2011). The official narrative about the game-controlled area is that there are ongoing efforts to redefine the borders of the game-controlled area and to create wildlife management areas.

Figure 0.1 A man in Kidatu village selling fish in the streets

(Source: Author, 2006)

5.2.6 Natural environment

As narrated above, Kilombero is green with an excellent atmosphere, compared to Dar es Salam, however it is humid with high temperatures ranging from 26°C to 32°C. The lowlands are warmer with an annual mean daily temperature of 24°C at Ifakara, and the highlands are cooler with an annual mean daily temperature of 17°C. December and January are the warmest months with day temperatures exceeding 27°C in the lowlands and 19°C in the highlands (Pal & Mather, 2003). July is the coolest month with temperatures around 21°C in the lowlands and 14°C in the highlands. Other climatic

variables show similar spatial variation. Relative humidity varies from 58% to 85% (with an average of 75%) in the lowlands, and from 70% to 87% (with an average of 80%) in the Udzungwa Mountains (Pal & Mather, 2003). Annual potential evaporation in the Kilombero is estimated at 1 800 mm per annum. There are trends indicating increasing temperatures and changing precipitation patterns that are expected to cause increased evapotranspiration, reduced runoff, and reduced groundwater recharge (Zhu & Woodcock, 2012).

When I arrived Kilombero in February, it was not the rainy season, but I was told that the rainfall pattern is unimodal and very heavy, and overall, water levels in the Kilombero Valley tend to rise from November to April, and fall smoothly from May onwards. Flood peaks tend to occur during March and April but can happen as early as January and as late as May, and at that time accessing the valley can be very cumbersome. The annual rainfall ranges from 1 200 mm to 1 600 mm (URT, 2010).

I was also made aware that the Kilombero district has sub-humid tropical climate and is characterised by two distinct rainy seasons, a long rainy season from March to May and short rainy season from November to January. Each year, beginning in late November or early December, the river floods and overspills the banks, creating the large floodplain that gradually recedes back to the main channels during May and June. This annual inundation created by the seasonal flooding is the key environmental driver of both terrestrial and aquatic habitat formation. The seasonal nutrient inputs from the run-offs and the flooded marginal areas are crucial for crop production in the area (Wilson et al., 2017).

Through observations, rainfed and irrigation farming characterise the valley plain, and there are reliable small-scale irrigation schemes. Flooding and the application of fertilisers are the primary sources of nutrients in the farming areas. Rainfed agriculture is largely one season farming, while irrigation has two to three farming seasons. Major crops in the valley are rice and maize; and other crops are cocoa, sesame, sunflower, peas, banana, and vegetables. Most villagers cultivate rice and sugarcane in the alluvial fans and maize on the hill slopes. The valley also features demographic pressure. At the present, the larger landscape consists of a mosaic of agricultural fields and intensive farming.

Being part of the Agricultural Growth Corridor, the Kilombero district is a mix of ‘modernising’ influences, both positive and negative, diffused spatially along the road corridor, and Tanzanians from ‘upcountry’ coming south for agriculture, easy

communication, and public education have all been strong influences. Interestingly, most people of the valley still follow their traditional beliefs and customs. They can be seen cultivating fields using hand hoes, collectively and individually, keeping cattle, camels, donkeys, and goats, wearing traditional clothing, and inhabiting huts near the towns.

5.3 Brief history of the Kilombero people

The compelling question under consideration is who the people of the valley are. According to oral traditions, the 'original' people of the valley was waNdamba of the Bantu linguistic family. Traditionally, tribal groups that share close linguistic ties with waNdamba are waMwera, waPogoro, waNgindo, and all the descendants of isiZulu and isiXsoza from Southern Africa. According to Larson (1976), waNdamba neighbours migrated from South Africa and mixed with the indigenous people in the second half of the 19th century. Larson (1976) thought it was wiser to classify the two people into two groupings, namely the Ulanga and Ngindo groupings. An elderly woman from Idete B village described it as follows:

> To be honest, people are getting wrong on who are the original people in Kilombero. Obviously, there must be people who arrived here first. We arrived here in the valley before the German rule. It was bush and forest land. Nobody was living here except the animals and birds. We were here and started living ever since. By then there was plenty of land. You could just wake up in the morning and cultivate any piece of land you preferred. These days no such thing. Everyone is coming to Kilombero to farm, others to graze. The situation is not the same anymore. Life becomes expensive; when I say life, I mean land. I wonder how our grandchildren will live.

Ulanga groupings constituted Gange from Rufiji (or north of Great Ruaha, spreading into the outer Kilombero Valley to the inner parts); Zungwa, who hailed from the north-west out of the southern highlands, spreading to the central; and Changa, who settled in the Masagati and Matumbi hills in the tributaries down to the KVFP.

Ngindo groupings comprised linguistic groups throughout the whole of southern Tanzania, from Rufiji to the Ruvuma, from the coast to Lake Nyasa. The Mahenge were the Ndweve between the Pitu and Luwagu rivers, and the Ndonde were concentrated between Luwegua and Mbaragu rivers. The groupings engaged in social activities such as millet cultivation beekeeping, and hunting. They were commonly known for their deadly arrow poison that they traded with their neighbours.

The social organisation of the two groupings characteristically had a common feature, a unit through lineage. The largest social unit was defined by a territorial small settlement cluster. In that unit, an elder or group of elders had the authority to execute judicial and ritual functions in limited capacity. Conflicts of various natures, such as over land, did exist in those communities, but it was sporadic, limited in magnitude, and non-violent. Two conclusions can be inferred the social organisation during that time: Authority was not territorially organised, and there was no authority figure to effect the transformation among the people in the area.

However, in the second half of 19th century, the situation changed. Population movement, military innovation, conflicts, and the introduction of political and social structures led to transformation. The driving force was Mfecane, which brought the transformations and expansion of the people and their territory. Apparently. Mfecane was the emergence of social, political and military change in South Africa during the second half of the 19th century. Mfecane facilitated the migration of people to southern Tanzania from South Africa because of the population growth in Zululand and the resulting turmoil and conflicts, and military organisation, which was characterised by permanent structures, good weaponry, trained soldiers, and good organisation. The power in Zululand was concentrated in the ruler, Shaka, who created a unified force out of small, divided groups.

When the Europeans invaded the area, they divided people when they visited as missionaries. The Europeans preferred to work with the outsiders, waBena, over the waNdamba, who are the first comers, and this annoyed them. They felt patronised, and decided to fight by any means necessary to restore their territory. History tells us that they eventually did. Subsequently, the Germans and British adopted similar approaches to rule waNdamba for some time (Larson, 1976). However, things turned in favour of waNdamba, with some resistance and fights. Generally, waNdamba are kind, polite, and humble people with humility.

From the 19th onwards, the Europeans, Germans and British invaded and colonialised the districts, albeit in different periods, because of the favourable climatic conditions and its fertile alluvial soil. They conducted several studies in the area for agricultural change, and constructed the Tazara railway station, which subsequently facilitated trade networks, agriculture changes, and labour migration in the area. Larson (1976) drew two conclusions about the circumstances that led to the agricultural changes, labour migration, and trade

networks: Firstly, the African producer in the Mahenge district was making a rational and innovative decision to maximises economic activity within the context of the colonial economy, and secondly, the limitation of the physical environment.

Thus, the migration and resettlements in the area increased the competition for land between waNdamba, waPogoro, and waNgindo and the migrated people. Thus waNdamba, waPogoro, and waNgindo had to develop a flexible social system that worked with agriculture, fishing, and hunting and gathering. The Kilombero district has remained remote since independence as in 1961. The development of this semi-arid and tropical part of Tanzania has always been a priority of the Tanzanian government. However, the construction of the Tazara Railway and the tarmac road to Zambia has accelerated changes in communication and development, and the administrative centre Ifakara now has a population of 290 424 (men: 141 023; women: 149 401; Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

At this point, I must highlight the origin of the word *Ifakara.* As a remote area, before human incursions, Ifakara was just a valley with dense forests and animals living in the forest. There are two diverging views about the story about an animal. Some say the animal was a lion, and others say it was a crocodile, but all agree that it was very dangerous, threatened people, and killed those living in the area and passing by. The endangered creature caused people to be cautious living and passing through the area. The animal died, but despite its death, people were afraid, and therefore, concerned when passing through the area. They asked '*jamani naweza kupita*?', meaning 'can I pass through?'. The people living in the neighbourhood responded in *kindamba*, '*ndio, unaweza kupita, keshafwakala*' (yes, you can pass through, it is dead). The newcomers heard the story, and because they could not pronounce *keshafwakala* easily and properly, they pronounced it Ifakara, which is where the area's name comes from.

Generally, the Kilombero people are joyous, hospitable and hardworking. I observed that they visit one another, stop to chat in Kiswahili on the streets, and sometimes gather in one household, conversing and cooking together in their backyards. I noticed that they have extended families, which underpin the town's social structure. I witnessed many households with multiple generations living under one roof, where the young shows respect to the elders. The Kilombero people attend mosques and churches to pray according to their religious beliefs. I saw a unifying and calming effect in these places of worship. There

are more than three civil organisations representing the people's needs in the area. The Kilombero people embrace a special egalitarian ethos in the community, discouraging the affluent from showing off their success and supporting each other in both joy and hardship.

5.3.1 Causes of the Conflicts

After highlighting the profile of the area and the people's characteristics, and before detailing the causes of the conflicts, it is important to highlight that smallholders as farmers and livestock herders in the KVFP are not a homogeneous group. Their differences reflect their historical, social, and economic conditions. These dynamics shape rural life, production methods, land ownership, and relationships with both the market and the state, ultimately contributing to land conflicts. In the KVFP, smallholders are categorised as high-, middle- and low-income smallholders.[11] Some are able to integrate into the global market, while others remain confined to their local communities. This development is the dynamics that reflect a more profound agrarian transformation underway in rural Tanzania. Scholars highlighted that a new middle class is emerging in the country (Bluwstein et al., 2018; Cooksey, 2012; Jayne et al., 2019; for the KSCL, see Sulle, 2017). Additionally, some smallholder families are headed by women, who are responsible for providing for their households. This diversity highlights the dynamic and complex causes of conflicts in the KVFP.

Low-income smallholders' contribution to the country's economy, internally and externally, from independence to contemporary times, is constantly below average. Currently, over 75% of total agricultural outputs in Tanzania is for subsistence. The 2019/20 National Sample Census of Agriculture report highlighted trends in agricultural activities, and showed that there is a total of 12 007 839 households in Tanzania, and 7 837 405 (65.3%) of these are agriculturists. Out of the total agriculture households,

[11]High-income smallholders are individuals, businesses and families who have significant economic resources, assets, or income. They are locally based or even from other regions in Tanzania They use wage labourers and machines, have the ability to buy more land from time to time, and integrate into global markets. Middle-income smallholders have moderate economic stability. They can access financial resources as capital, but they sometimes face financial challenges executing their farming activities. They have the ability to participate in the market and meet their basic needs, but have limited access to higher-level opportunities or expansion. Low-income or economically disadvantaged smallholders are living in economically disadvantaged conditions. They have limited access to resources, grapple to meet basic needs, and encounter challenges participating in the market or improving their agricultural productivity.

5 088 135 (64.9%) produce crops, 2 589 156 (33.0%) households engage in crops and livestock, and 1 547 290 (2.0%) are involved in livestock only (Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

According to the Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (2022), smallholders' total land area, available either through formal titles or customary rights, is 20 774 267 ha (an average of 2.7 ha per household), though households used only an average of 2.3 ha for agricultural activities during the 2019/20 agricultural year. Nationally, the total used land is 16 717 289 ha, of which 16 547 420 are located on mainland Tanzania. A large part of the land (66.4%) is planted with annual crops (including fallow), permanent or perennial crops occupy about 16%, about 7% is planted with a mixture of annual and permanent crops, and 7% is unplanted or usable land. The remaining land is either planted with trees, rented to others, or under pasture bush. Land sufficiency indicates that only 33% of agricultural households said they had adequate land for their agricultural activities. In Tanzania, the farming instruments reported as being used by smallholder farmers include oxen (27.8%), ox ploughs (26.5%), hand sprayers (17.9%), and tractors (10.2%) (Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

Furthermore, the livestock keepers are different from pastoralists in the KVFP. The pastoralists are purely nomadic, and constantly move looking for water and pasture, driven by changing resource availability. They are fully mobile with multiple homes, which makes it hard to physically trace them. They have stocks of more than 2 500 cattle. Normally, they use arrows and sticks to herd animals. These people are called Maasai in the area. For them, cattle are sources of food and income. They also keep goats and sheep. There are culturally deeply entrenched in livestock keeping, making it their identity, and it is an instrument for their economy and social life. The Maasai consider livestock capital and a source of wealth.

Apart from smallholders, there are also large-scale farmers in the area who own extensive tracts of land, typically 500 hectares and above. These farmers include local and foreign individuals, businesses, and companies, some of which have government shareholding. They use mechanised equipment such as tractors and modern technology. Notable examples include Kilombero Sugar Company Limited (KSCL), Kilombero Plantations Limited (KPL), Kilombero Valley Teak Company (KVTC), and Green Resources Ltd.

Middle-scale farmers own between 100 and 500 hectares of land. They comprise local and national individuals, businesses, institutions, and politicians. Some own tractors, while others rent them, and all employ wage labour to cultivate their farms. Examples include Kanisa la Kiingili na Kilutheri Tanzania (KKKT), Baraza Kuu la Waislamu Tanzania (BAKWATA), Kilombero Farm Hill Ltd., Sanje Farms, Daudi Balali Farm, and Ramadhani Rashid Kuhuka.

Smallholder farmers, whom I conceptualise as agriculturalists in this study, own between 1 and 3 hectares of land. They primarily rely on family labour and hand hoes, and depend heavily on government subsidies for insecticides, fertilisers, and credit to support their farming activities. The conflicts stem the fact that these differing groups view land differently. While large farmers see land as commodity, something to be sold and bought in the markets, the smallholders view land as a resource for their livelihoods. During an interview with a retired employee from KSCL in Kidatu, he explained it as follows:

> Large farmers need more land so they can invest and produce more food and cash crops on a long-term basis; conversely, the smallholders are aware of the value of land. Most do not just sell their land; they keep and cultivate it to sustain their livelihoods.

5.3.2 Household narratives

The household narratives highlighted several causes of land conflicts in the KVFP. Firstly, there is competition for access, use, and control of land. The conflicts occur both among smallholders and between smallholders and other groups. Population growth in the area has intensified these conflicts as land became increasingly scarce, both because of internal factors and immigration. This competition is largely a result of the growing population, which places pressure on the land as its availability diminishes. As a result, communities such as smallholder farmers and livestock keepers are often in conflict over access to limited land for farming, grazing, and settlement. One smallholder farmer from Idete A observed the following:

> As growers, we largely depend on the land to feed our families and make a living. For us, land is life. But the increasing population from other regions in terms of people and animals challenges us to access fertile land for cultivation. During the farming season, March to June or October to December, Kilombero is full of people moving into the area, and the land available to us are shrinking. During this time, there are a lot conflict over land because of informal transactions going on in the villages.

He continued as follows:

> Previously, we had sufficient land to rotate crops and preserve soil fertility, however, currently we are being compelled to cultivate on limited, less productive plots of land, constraining our basic needs. We also encounter conflicts with livestock keepers who want to use the same land for grazing. Once their cattle wander into our farms, they damage crops. Some cattle keepers are inconsiderate of our wellbeing sometimes. We do understand that they also need the land, but we, the farmers, believe that we are the ones who are marginalised. We are compelled to protect the little land we have, and by doing that, we regularly face conflicts with livestock keepers. If the population keeps growing and the land becoming limited, my concern is that the situation will worsen.

A livestock keeper from Sagamaganga viewed the situation as follows:

> As livestock keepers, we traditionally depend on open grazing lands to feed our animals. Previously, there was sufficient land for everyone. We could migrate long distances with our flocks freely, and we coexisted with the farmers. However, as an incursion of people are coming on this valley, land is limited, grazing land is skewed. Traditionally, our herds need space to roam and graze. However, the land is being taken up for farming and settlements. For example, as you have seen yourself in Sagamaganga village, farms are locating side by side with grazing areas without barriers. When our herds stray into farmers' fields, it causes tensions and conflicts. We are blamed for deliberately letting our animals damage their crops, but we are only trying to survive. The land is limited for all of us. We are bargaining for grazing paths and shared spaces. However, it appears like every year we lose more land. With the increasing population, the situation is becoming dire, and we are concerned that without appropriate, timely intervention, these conflicts will intensify into something more serious.

The expansion of agricultural land for large-scale agriculture also increased the competition for land in the area. I realised that because of that expansion, villagers habitually trespass on traditional grazing lands, pushing livestock keepers into smaller, less viable areas. The villagers also invade forests and game reserves, further complicating the conflicts. A livestock keeper in Lungongole said the following:

> The land situation for us livestock keepers are becoming worse. With the expansion of large-scale agriculture, our traditional grazing lands is appropriated by both big farms and local villagers looking for land to cultivate. This has compelled us into smaller, less fertile areas, making it difficult for our herds to survive. We are losing land, and similarly pushed towards game reserves and forests, which further obscures the matter. We are being accused of encroaching on protected areas, but to be honest we, we don't have an alternative. When our cattle can't graze, they get weaker, which threatens our livelihoods. Currently, the issue is not about losing animals, the conflicts have shifted from daily struggles with farmers who blame us of encroaching, more with authorities who punish us for trespassing restricted areas. To be sincere, I must say that the situation is critical with resentments. We, the livestock keepers, feel like we are continually fighting with both the farmers and the

> authorities, and it's exasperating because in the end, we are all trying to earn money for our livelihood.

Secondly, the issues of the competing land rights systems contribute to the conflicts. The conflicts arose because the land rights systems are unclear. Two systems govern and administer the land in the KVFP, namely customary and statutory laws. While customary land rights are recognised and protected by the laws, there are still a lot of simmering tensions and conflicts because these are largely based on traditional practices, such as usufructuary practices. For example, in Mngeta village, the government reclassified customary land to general land for public use as investments, allegedly without proper compensation, contributing to conflicts. An elderly smallholder farmer from Kidatu said the following during an interview:

> As smallholder farmer, we have been cultivating this land for years. We were using the land that was unattended by the government. We consider that since we working and settled on it, the land belonged to us based on the rights we have as villagers. It is within the confines of our community. We cultivated, we grazed cattle, and we established ourselves here. But things became different when the government acted.

A woman from the same village argued the following:

> Unexpectedly, they appeared and claimed the land did not belong to us, that it was 'general land' and legally they had a right to reclaim it. We were bewildered because we understood that it was village land under our customary rights. However, when it was allocated to an investor, everything on the land was confiscated. They claimed we would be compensated, but the process was full of challenges and unfulfilled. While some were unfairly compensated, other did not at all because they identified them as squatters or intruders. How can one be a squatter on land they have working on for years?

Another elderly man in the same village argued the following:

> The reparation process was disorderly. Neither the villagers nor the government knew the entitlements. Rewards were disgruntled. Some of us who used the land for years felt that we have been unfairly compensated. The government controls the land, and when they reclaimed it, we could not resist. We had to yield. Up until today, most of us feel like we were treated unlawfully. Apparently, the whole encounter caused strain among us. The anxiety we felt when it was decided that some were villagers, while others were identified intruders was unbearable to a normal human being, regardless of the fact that they have

> been used the land just as long. Until today, I could not conceive the idea why some villagers were compensated, while others were not. The government's act to take the land and allocate it to the investor without accurately identifying our rights or offering what is rightfully ours has left most of us with the impression that sometimes the government does not care about our wellbeing.

Thirdly, the mobility of pastoralists is considered problematic by other people in the area. These livestock keepers migrated from Arusha-Maasai, Shinyanga-Sukuma, and Tabora and are contributing to the conflicts when they roam looking for pastures and water, damaging crops and sources of water. One of the agriculturists said that "the livestock keepers who migrate from Arusha and Shinyanga are problematic. They are not afraid of anyone. When they come across a farm, they just graze their cattle. They don't care. For them anything green is grass" (Interview, smallholder farmer, 2022). According to Bergius et al. (2020), the seemingly troublesome group of smallholder pastoralists are the Maasai, semi-nomadic livestock keepers found in the Great Rift Valley between northern Tanzania and southern Kenya. From colonial to contemporary times, threats endanger cattle keepers' existence, squeeze their land holdings, and constrain their access to grassland and sources of water. This forces them to turn to subsistence agriculture to sustain their livelihoods.

During the field work, it was difficult to access these pastoralists as they are on the move. Smallholder farmers narrated that "the pastoralists move at night in different remote places, sometimes hiding, making it hard to reach them. They don't have real households, but numerous. They have different wives and families. However, to reach them is cumbersome". Apparently, the Tanzanian government is not in favour of the traditional way of keeping animals. For example, in 2005, President Kikwete stated a zero-tolerance position towards traditional cattle keepers, and said that it is incompatible with the goals of modernising the agriculture sector (Bergius et al., 2020).

The agro-livestock keepers make up the second category in the KVFP. Characteristically, they combine livestock herding and crop farming. They depend on both livestock keeping and agriculture for their subsistence and income. They habitually settle in the area. Sometimes, they move with animals, depending on the water and pasture conditions. In the KVFP, these agro-livestock keepers migrate from Mbeya.

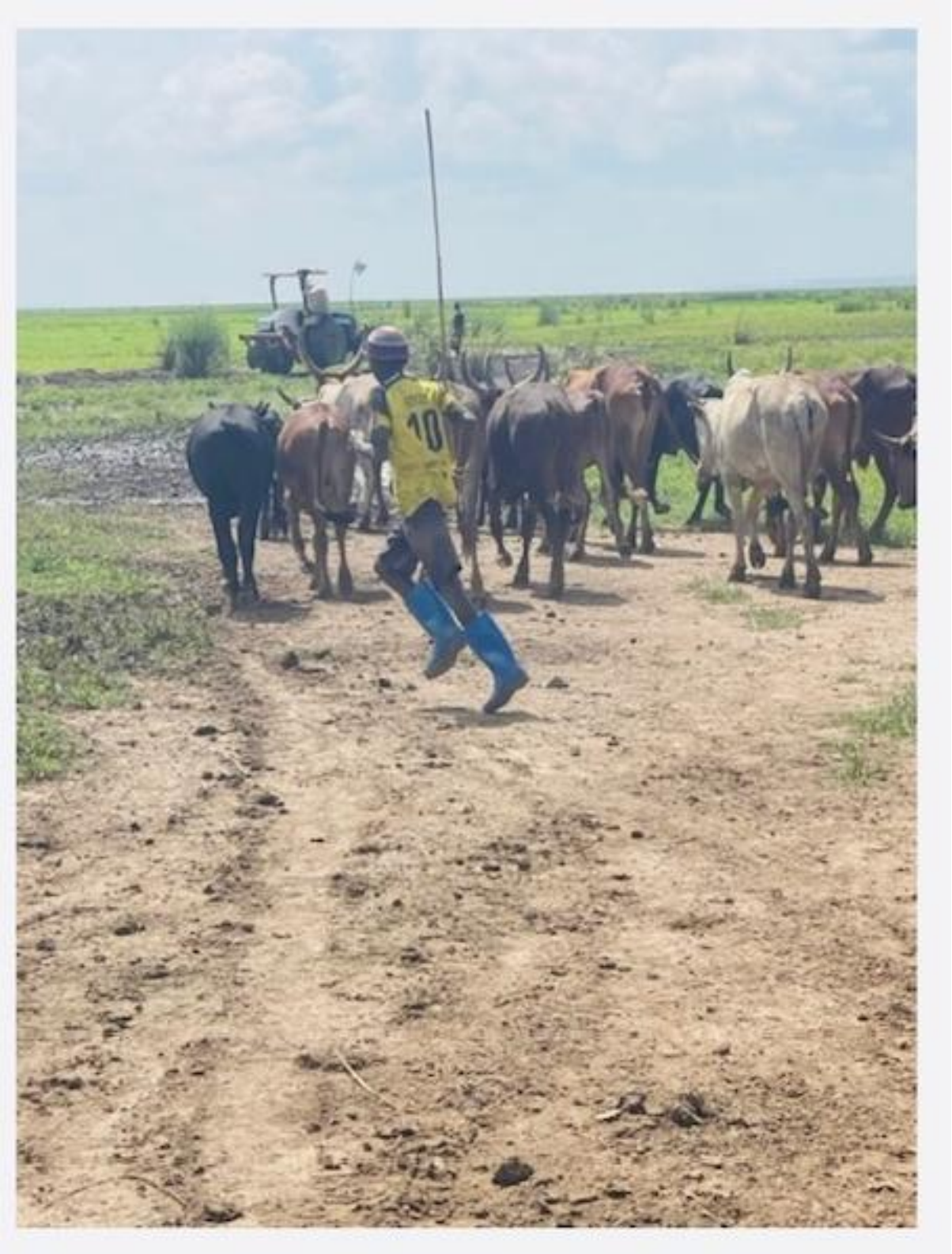
Most farmers argued that livestock keepers would invade farms to graze their cattle, causing conflicts. One farmer quoted a livestock keeper who said that "if it fails to rain,

there will be no pastures available for us to graze, then we will have to clear all the farms, grazing animals with or without crops on it". Furthermore, farmers narrated that the climate changes impact land use through unpredictable, off-season rainfall and rising temperatures. It affects the cultivation and survival of cattle in the area. Currently, the plain is facing a prolonged drought. Farmers divert water for irrigation, while livestock keepers graze and damage the ecosystems around water sources, consequently impacting water flows. The President issued a decree to control human activities in the area, particularly livestock grazing near water catchment areas. Figure 5.2 shows a man whose maize were damaged by trespassing cattle.

Figure 0.2 A man looking at his damaged maize crop on his farm

The crop damage was facilitated by the village land-use planning allocating roads to the grazing area, which are adjacent to farm fields. In Sagamaganga village, the roads are narrow, about 30 m wide or ”35 leg steps” as shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 0.3 A young boy herding cattle through narrow roads between farms



The invasion of farms and damage to crops are related to the recurrent encroachment by smallholders' farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists on protected areas, such as game

reserves, game-controlled areas, and Ramsar sites, which causes conflicts with the authorities and hunting companies. Smallholders further occupy the hoarded land for cultivation. This land has been mostly unused for a long time, and because the smallholder farmers do not have enough land to cultivate, it causes conflicts with the owners. A villager in Mngeta village said the following:

> We do not have land to cultivate because every time we access the land, we are told by the authorities that it is owned by someone or the government, that it is not our land to use, but we have used it since the implementation of the villagisation programme. However, we do not have anywhere to go. We here, we won't go anywhere. We will fight for what belongs to us.

Fourthly, there is alleged corruption in the aftermath of conflicts. Villagers alleged that government authorities favour livestock keepers because they have money. They use their money to bribe officials not to act when cattle destroy the crops. Farmers complained that when the cattle damage their crops, their efforts to report the matter to the police is futile. They argued that cattle keepers bribe officials because they are wealthy. Thus, they no longer report problems to the police, and instead, they take matters into their own hands. Some of the local governments were accused of being uncooperative. To the farmers, the unwillingness of these authorities to act demonstrates their lack of intention to prevent conflicts in the area. Corruption allegedly contribute to conflicts in several ways. Firstly, politicians seized village land in Mkasu village in Kilombero district for personal gain, disregarding the claims of local population Veltmeyer and Bowles (2022), which led to conflicts between village leaders and villagers. Leaders from the incumbent party also sold off a significant piece of land without discussing it with villagers or obtaining their consent. The land that the leader sold belonged to villagers, and they had set it aside for tourism to get revenue for the development of the of their villages. The following is a common view of villagers in Idete A:

> When we realized that part of our land was being sold without our consent, we confronted the leader and demanded answers, but he refused to respond. We have reported the matter to the police, who are currently investigating and deliberating on the issue. We are growing impatient because this act has deeply disappointed us in our leadership, and we no longer trust them. If our property is not returned to us, we are prepared to reclaim it by any means necessary. This conflict goes beyond land alone. we are trying to make the authorities hear our voices. We have many concerns that require their urgent attention. We need them to

> listen, act responsibly, and be transparent in addressing the challenges facing our villages. Often, we are excluded from important decisions. Because of this, we are now suspicious of how many land deals have been made without our knowledge.

In addition, political motives with land conflicts exacerbate tensions about land because candidates use the land conflicts to campaign during elections. An example is the situation in neighbouring Kiberege River in Kilombero district. This river serves the cultivation, livestock, and domestic needs of four villages: Kiberege, Mkasu, Nyamwezi, and Bwawani. However, the river's course regularly shifts, serving one village while depriving others of an important water source. During my fieldwork, I observed that Mkasu village had access to water, while Kiberege, Bwawani, and Nyamwezi were left dry. This disparity continues throughout the year, without real resolutions to guarantee equitable distribution. As the river's flow varies, disputes and conflicts emerge among villages. The water shortage impacts farming, contributes to low production, and puts strain on livelihoods. The situation is further obfuscated when political candidates seize and use the issue to their advantage during election campaigns. As elections approach, some politicians vying for power visit the impacted communities, promising to address the water distribution challenge. They promise that if elected, they will ensure each village has fair access to the river's water. This assurance stimulates expectations and strengthens competition among the candidates, but it seldom contributes to permanent solutions.

Conversely, the assurances made throughout campaigns appear to serve more as a strategy to win votes than to resolve the core issue of fair water distribution. The inhabitants, keen for a solution to the problem, became divided along political lines, siding with candidates who was likely to solve their problem. Evidently, after the elections, the problem remained unsolved, leaving the impacted villagers to continue grappling with access to water, and the cycle of political manipulation will likely appear again in the next election season. The political motives play a vital role in prolonging conflicts over land and water by using the struggles of local communities as a platform for gaining power rather than implementing actual and sustainable solutions.

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Government institutions with overlapping jurisdictions but with no coordination between them also significantly contribute to conflicts in the KVFP. Conflicts happened when numerous institutions with different authorities with deferred interests decided on the area to allocate for a village called Ng'ombo in Kilombero district. The Ministry of Lands, through the National Land-Use Planning Commission, the Land-Use Planning Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, the President's Office, and local village councils all had authority in land management, but the lack of coordination between these bodies contributed to confusion and conflicts. For example, in Ng'ombo village, this overlap in governance became a vivid source of tension and conflicts. The local government authorities were primarily concerned with revenue generation, seeking to impose taxes on land usage to boost local budgets. Political bodies were more interested in securing political constituencies and influence, often making decisions aimed at consolidating political power in the region. These incompatible concerns generated a power struggle, with each institution executing its own rules and regulations over the same land. Villagers were uncertain of which authority to follow. Consequently, there were conflicts about the location of the village, especially when the two districts sought to compete over its administration. This exposes the land users, including smallholders, to inconsistent and sometimes contradictory directives that amplify tensions between different groups. This competition for control over land by various authorities convolute the management of land and drive local political rivalries. The unresolved conflicts over jurisdiction sustain instability and uncertainty for the local communities.

The displacement of villagers from their land worsen the conflicts; for example, within the SAGCOT region, in the Kilombero cluster, the displacement of local smallholders to allow for agricultural expansion has led to tensions and conflicts. Sugarcane and rice farming require vast tracts of land, and when land is allocated for these purposes, it limits smallholders' access to land, making land increasingly scarce. As a result, these

smallholders are forced to compete for the remaining land, intensifying tensions and causing conflicts in the area. One smallholder farmer in Sagamanga said the following:

> We are being chased out our land while we have farmed this land for decades, but currently, for the sake of development, we are being compelled to leave our land. The government say land is needed for sugarcane and rice, but we ask ourselves who the development that they are talking about is for? Why then does it feel like we are left underdeveloped and without land? Honestly, without land, we have nothing; no necessities for survival, now and in future. When we are chased away, we have nowhere to go, except fight for what remains. We are forced to compete with our neighbours for small plots, and the pressure is excruciating. How are we supposed to cultivate enough food on such limited land? I am not for or against development, but our concern is that we are marginalised. The land is appropriated but what are the tangible benefits? The benefits must be paid employment opportunities that they promise to offer for a few people or giving charity to communities. We demand that we villagers must be included as beneficiaries in the managing of these large-scale projects. Otherwise, we' will have to consider our actions".

On the other hand, one livestock farmer in Idete A village in Kilombero district lamented as follows:

> Our foraging lands are diminishing. This land we used to graze our animals is now changed into sugarcane fields and rice paddies. Where can our cattle graze now? We are compelled to share the limited land available with smallholder farmers, yet the land is not sufficient to cater for needs of our herds. As livestock keepers, our traditional way of life is under pressure. We are told to change and modernise. We are told to settle so that we can use small plots of land efficiently. The change will warrant their acts of taking our land and make us lose our traditions and way of life.

Wehrmann (2008) and Peluso and Lund (2011) acknowledged that conflicts in landownership are widespread and a regular occurrence in Africa. Likewise, the value of land can worsen land conflicts. Peluso and Lund (2011) observed that a group of new actors are emerging in the control of land, such as those acquiring land for large industrial crop production for export. According to the authors, the large number of actors increase competition for land. Commercialisation, privatisation and commoditisation of land make the competition for land more intense (Flintan, 2012). The upsurge in the new phenomenon of land grabbing by bigger private corporations for both agricultural, biofuels and infrastructure have also exacerbated land conflicts. Thus, large-scale land acquisitions have

prompted competition for land use. Wehrmann (2008) stated that in most parts of Africa, material value is increasingly attached to land, and land is increasingly becoming private property, prompting people to accumulate as much land as possible, and prompting them to compete for it. Peluso and Lund (2011) explained that the confluence of territorialisation, property rights, and commoditisation of land, resources and space-making enable spatial and more complex forms of enclosure, which contribute to land conflicts and land tenure insecurity. Yaro (2010) pointed out that lands are increasingly commercialised in Ghana for both residential and agricultural purposes, which has not been the case in the past. He stated that the customary land system in northern Ghana is significantly commercialised, especially in terms of access, ownership, control, and mode of transactions.

As mentioned in section 3.3.1, the KVFP is located in the Kilombero Valley. The valley is a wetland recognised as a Ramsar site. The Interviews suggest that the wetland is of international importance, suggesting that it is a protected area because of its unique biodiversity and ecological value. This obfuscates land use because there must be a balance between conservation, agricultural, and community needs and it also places restrictions on land use in parts of the Kilombero Valley to protect wetlands, wildlife habitats, and biodiversity, which reduces the amount of arable land available for agriculture and grazing land. This intensifies competition over land, and leads to smallholders trespassing on the remaining land outside the protected zones. As agricultural expansion pushes smallholders and pastoralists off their land, these groups are forced into tighter spaces, which increases pressures on land and conflicts.

As a wetland and biodiversity, farming activities are expanding in the KVFP. The expansion is very clear in the Kilombero cluster, with a high demand for land for large-scale farming and also for conservation efforts connected to the Ramsar site designation. Some livestock keepers have been chased out of the area to prevent environmental degradation.

This situation is a challenge for both smallholder farmers and livestock keepers because they experience it as a double displacement: On the one hand, they lose land to commercial agricultural projects, and on the other hand, their access to land is constrained. They cannot access land areas designated for environmental conservation under the Ramsar agreement. This dynamic further worsens land scarcity and causes frustration among local communities. As one smallholder farmers said, “The wetlands are protected, and now large

farms are taking up the rest of the land. Where are we supposed to go? We can't farm in the protected areas, but there's not enough land left for us". He continued, "The authorities say the land is being protected for the environment, however when they allocate to an investor, the land and water are depleted. We are dispossessed and it is indifferent". Conversely, one of the livestock keepers in Lungongole village said the following:

> We have been feeding our animals for decades, but today they are depriving us of that right in the name of wetlands. The issue is where do we graze? Have they thought about that? Beyond that we have been living peaceful with nature, the investors come in and use land for their interests, and we are the ones who are bad guys and chased out. How can this be?

Furthermore, it is important to note that in the KVFP, most villages are strategically planned with well-defined jurisdictions, but conflicts arise from the unclear boundaries of individual community farms. This lack of clarity has led to conflicts, notably in villages such as Sagamaganga and Mkasu in Kilombero districts. Here, boundaries are often marked by natural features, like large trees or palms, which fail to provide a concrete definition of ownership. This problem is exacerbated when land is informally transacted, leaving room for misinterpretation and conflicts. The reliance on non-permanent markers create a precarious situation for farmers who may find their boundaries contested. As informal transactions increase, the absence of clear, documented land boundaries leads to tensions within the community. Resolving these conflicts is crucial for maintaining harmony and ensuring the sustainable development of the region. Therefore, establishing concrete boundary markers and formalising land transactions could significantly reduce conflicts and foster a more stable agricultural environment.

5.4 Case studies

The following subsections present three case studies that contributed to the conflicts, namely the KSCL, KPL, and Ruipa Valley. Subsequently, a discussion on other encounters during the field work.

5.4.1 Case study A: The Kilombero Sugar Company Ltd.

In 1960s, the first factory was established in Msolwa called the KSCL. The interview with a SAGCOT official suggested that KSCL was accepted as a SAGCOT member at the time. Villagers explained that the KSCL was entrusted to operate as a nucleus estate surrounded by out-growers who would sell cane directly to the company. Oakland Institute (2011)

reports that International Finance Corporation, the Commonwealth Development Corporation, Standard Bank, and two Dutch financial organisations financed the operations of the factory. During the Arusha Declaration, the factory was nationalised because the government was mandated to take over the management of economically productive industries. In 1998, the factory was privatised, and 55% of the shares was sold to the South African Company, Illovo Sugar Group (currently under the authority of the Associated British Foods Plc) (Oakland Institute, 2011). The government has retained 25% shares in KSCL, and the remainder of shares are owned by ED&F Man, a British commodity trader (Oakland Institute, 2011).

From the onset, KSCL partnered with the out-growers by getting about 9 562 ha (Oakland Institute, 2011) of land from the central government, 8 000 ha of which is under sugarcane, and the remaining land is used for factories, houses, staff houses, and social amenities. The company runs two sugarcane crushing and processing facilities in its compound. The company engages with out-growers through a Cane Supply Agreement, which stipulates the division of proceeds between the company and the out-growers. There are about 8 500 registered out-growers supplying about 45% of the total sugarcane processed by the company (Oakland Institute, 2011).

Since 2017/18, the out-growers received TZS103 000 (US$44.50) per tonne of delivered fresh sugarcane, before adjustments for sucrose levels and actual sales are made. Once all the processed sugar is sold, the company and out-growers share their proceeds at a rate of 40% for out-growers and 60% for the company because the company produces more cane than the out-growers.

Interviews with villagers and key informant small cane farmers suggest dsuggested that the amount of cash revenue received from both the fresh sugarcane and the final proceeds differ from one out-grower to another. The Interviews suggestinterviews suggested that sugarcane with a high sucrose level receives a higher price, but for decades, farmers have criticised the lack of transparency on how their delivered sugarcane is weighed and the sucrose levels determined. Indeed, the lack of transparency remains a key source of contestation between out-growers and the company.

5.4.2 Local land privatisation and market dynamics

Sugarcane production is a profitable business endeavour. It is associated with numerous other opportunities, such as the creation by-products like molasses, ethanol, and bagasse, which can be used for generating electricity. It also stimulates job creation in rural area, benefitting local economies, and support villagers' ancillary businesses like transportation, fertiliser supply, and equipment maintenance. Based on this opportune environment, the KVFP attracts numerous individual businesses that are taking advantage of the opportunities available. During interviews with villagers, I discovered that the cane production has brought numerous gains and disadvantages. One main disadvantage is the declining land for food crop for cultivation. Compared to cane production farms, food farms are pushed further out from the villages where people live and used to cultivate their land.

KSCL is located around the Kidatu village in the Kilombero direct in Morogoro region. Other villages are Ruipa, Msolwa, Mkula, Mang'ula, Kisawasawa, Mchombe, and Mwaya. I observed that villagers from these villages walk from their home to the farm to cultivate maize and rice to produce food for their livelihood. These long distances that the villagers travel because their farm land is far from their villages confirmed to me that land for food crop farming in the area is gradually declining.

5.4.3 Local reactions

Over the years, villagers who live around KSCL have involved themselves with farming sugarcane and other crops. It was suggested d that the pace of farming sugarcane has increased recently through the out-grower model. The Illovo Sugar Group is one of the biggest shareholders, and reclaimed all the land registered in its lease agreement with the government. With the government's blessing, the company has expanded its sugarcane plantations.

The increasing scarcity of agricultural land creates new relations and power dynamics around ownership among large-scale sugarcane growers and small farmers as out-growers who are being pushed out. Field observations showed that medium-scale farmers are able to combine sugarcane production with other activities, including running kiosks, guest houses, and bars in the area. Out-growers minimally participate in the distribution, trade,

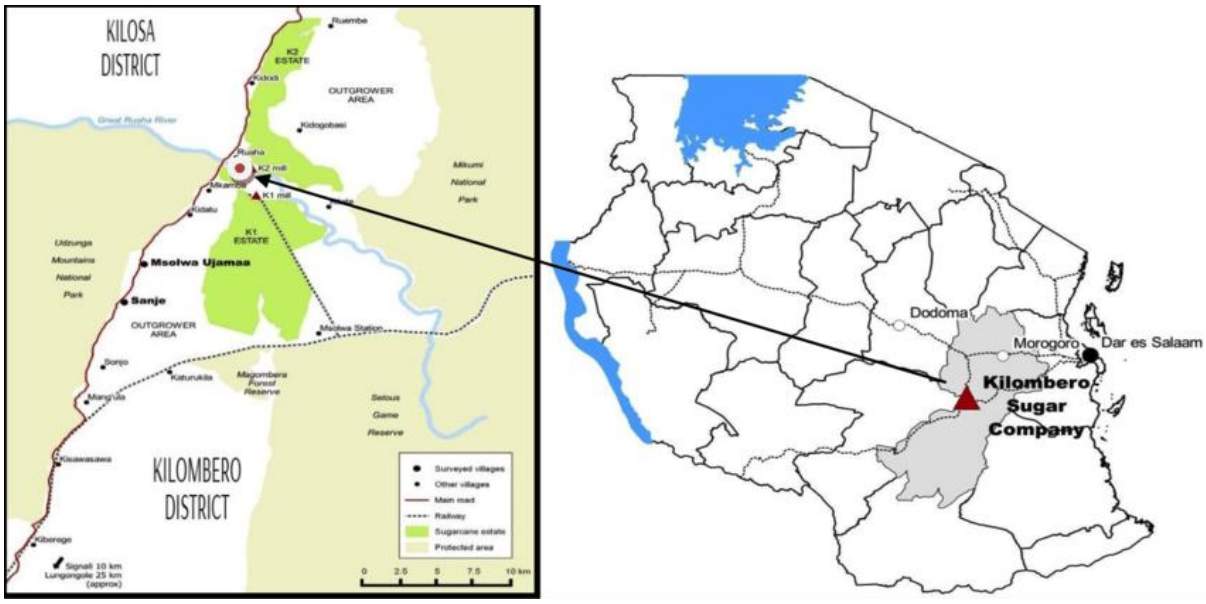
and marketing of the final sugar products because downstream activities are controlled by the company, and the distribution of sugar is done by mostly foreign traders.

In the 2012/13 season, some 65 000 tonnes of out-grower cane and 100 000 tonnes of plantation cane were not harvested and milled (Smalley et al., 2014). The out-growers therefore did not get paid for growing their sugar cane. Smalley et al. (2014, p. 13) concluded that "there has also been insufficient protection for the small farmers who were encouraged to join the out-growers' scheme. After privatisation, the company devolved many services to associations, a process supported by foreign donors". The large areas of sugar cane left unmilled were used by KSCL "as an instrument to optimize the capacity use of mills, and as a buffer against risks of underproduction" (Martiniello, 2015, p. 13). The result was greater food insecurity, with staple crops replaced by sugar cane, and some smallholders losing their farmland because they could not repay debts. Land lost by smallholders was purchased by larger growers (Martiniello, 2015), indicative of social differentiation and capitalist modes of accumulation.

The agribusinesses of the KSCL as shown in the Map 5.1 have incorporated more than 15 000 families into the capitalist system of production and accumulation. Smallholders who have been unsuccessful as out-growers found other employment in the area, such as farm labourers, or in the informal retail or transport sectors. Their food security somehow improved through the purchase of low-price local rice and other food crops.

Map 0.1 Location of the KSCL

(Source: Smalley et al., 2014 , p. 4.)



5.4.3.1 Case study B: Kilombero Plantations Ltd., Mngeta Village and conflicts

The land conflicts of 2008 in Mngeta, a small village in the southern highlands of Tanzania, was comparatively small but as it progressed, it is legal aspects provide a succinct example of the complications of legal bifurcation. Mngeta is located in the traditional village land in Kilombero District. Ifakara is the largest town in the district.

The conflicts about land must be seen in the context of relations of power and social status because the difference in power became instrumental in the conflict, showing that such power inequalities are particularly urgent when resources, such as land, is scarce, and its access depends on power, and perhaps, social status. The power relations between villagers and the government authorities or between government authorities themselves are asymmetrical, allegedly favouring the government. This detrimental power relations of the people from Mngeta village can be attributed in part to colonial times.

The German's Imperial Decree of 26 November 1895 and the British's Land of Ordinance 1923 put all land under the control of the Crown and queen respectively. With colonial control of the land, most individuals and families lost legal rights and social status. However, the government/local authorities profited from this situation, and they supported it through central and local power relations.

5.4.4 The wider political relevance

The conflicts of 2008 were just a small dispute about land. In 2008, during the transition period from when the Korea Tanzania Agricultural Company left the area and until KPL entered the scene, the surrounding villages expanded their land use through settlement grazing and cultivation of the underdeveloped land. This escalation must be considered in the context of a series of smaller and larger clashes throughout the area in 2008 and 2009, until the prime minister visited the area and ordered the local authorities to peacefully resolve the land conflicts. Three villages are adjacent to the KPL plantations, Mngeta, Lukolongo and Mkangawalo villages, and were affected by the redevelopment of the farm. There were evictions related to the development of the farm enforced by the government. They ordered the villagers residing on the farm, which was approximately 25% of the plantation, to vacate the land, and while some villagers willingly complied, others resisted, claiming that they are the rightful owners of the land.

The title was assigned to the government under the control of the President (Chachage, 2010; Pedersen, 2016; Sulle, 2015). The cause of the conflict, according to the villagers, was their claim to land, including traditional customary land and jurisdiction, which is supposedly independent of statutory control. The issues of traditional authority and jurisdiction are intricately linked to land questions, as both colonial powers and post-independence states are the primary actors in land administration. Their jurisdiction, as will be shown, is closely tied to land. These disputes have been ongoing for decades, and the clashes in Kilombero in 2009 must be understood within this broader context. This jurisdictional challenge was also highlighted by Evers et al. (2005) in the struggle for land rights amid multiple normative orders in Tanzania. This is one of the fundamental reasons local communities migrate to other parts of the country, which have spillover effects that lead to conflicts in the regions to which they relocate. As displaced populations settle in new areas, existing tensions often resurface or even escalate, resulting in further competition over land and resources. This migration-driven expansion of conflicts complicates regional stability, ultimately compounding conflicts as new disputes arise over access to land, livelihoods, and jurisdiction.

5.4.5 KPL's Rice production and conflicts

As an example, to other agricultural investors, RUBADA adopted KPL as a model farm. Initiated in the 1970s as a state farm (in cooperation with North Korea), KPL had a rice plantation of 5 818 ha, together with some 6 500 local farmers as out-growers. The RUBADA informant described the project as follows:

> Was a joint venture with a USA investor and RUBADA, but we disposed of our share. Currently, we have 8%. It has been very instrumental and beneficial to Tanzania, and we are proud to be part of foreign investor, and now we have surplus available for export. We now have excess rice production.

This joint venture was a public-private partnership, a development project framework that has recently gained increasing popularity. The impact of the partnership on agricultural productivity was described by one participant during the interviews in Mngeta village as follows:

> Before the coming of an investor, we used to cultivate traditionally. Now we have to cultivate rice based of what they tell us to. To be honest, the rice produce has increased. However, for me the quality is not similar to what we used to produce before the arrival of

> an investor. Back then, the quality was good and it stays for quite a while, but now the quality of what we harvest changes suddenly.

Regarding returns, another smallholder said the following:

> Although the current type of farming gives high-yield rice, they are not as lucrative as the traditional rice. The seeds introduced by the investor do not have a good market. It gives more yields, but lower price than traditional seeds. There is such a difference between those produced by the investor and what we used to produce.

When I arrived in Kilombero in February, 2022, it was weeding time. Therefore, getting smallholders farmers for interviews was uphill task, but I manged to get them in the evening when they were done with farming activities.

In June 2015, the Oakland Institute (Fraser & Mittal, 2017) disseminated its report on land investments deals, the KPL operations, in Mngeta village. Some criticisms were levelled against the deal, and one criticism focused on the underestimation of compensation for houses and land taken by KPL.

The Mngeta village was formed during the villagisation programme in 1973, suggesting that people in Mngeta village lived in scattered settlements. Villagers built houses with mud and sticks with thatched roofs. They had their burial place in front of their homes, with graves usually marked with big trees. Livestock keepers' houses have cowsheds in which they keep their animals across from their houses. Locher, (2016) argues that during the villagisation process, people living in the village moved in different directions, but they came back to their villages. When the people moved back to the area, the government rearranged their land rights.

The village council is the authority solely entrusted to allocate village land. Villagers in Mngeta can access land in numerous ways. They can access it through buying, traditional inheritance, or renting, but inheritance is the most common. For village land, customary law demands that the rights are transferred according to the ancestral land laws after the village council has accepted the traditional inheritance. When I visited the village, villagers suggest dsuggested that there was no land to allocate in Mngeta, whether for individuals or companies. The villager said land is scarce because of the population increase. They hold their land through traditional inheritance over generations, and decreasing land holding size per family household is a challenge.

As mentioned above, the Mngeta farmland case is well documented by other scholars (Chachage & Baha, 2010; Oakland Institute report, 2015). The scholars highlighted the conflicts and concerns about the land. Their findings on the relocation of village land to general land and establishment of the KPL are well detailed. However, during my fieldwork, the conflicts transformed. Although grievances prevailed, their extent has lessened, and land was within the power of the National Service Force.

The plantation was on the village land, and customary law governed the land in Mngeta Farm, which was transferred to general land under the statutory law. RUBADA is the government institution mandated to administer the land. RUBADA could not develop the farm, leaving the land undeveloped for a substantial time, and therefore, smallholders in the village could not cultivate and graze. As the population increased, the need for more grazing and farming land forced villagers to encroach on the abandoned land. According to the law, the invasion is illegal as the land was titled as general land. When asked why they invaded the land, the villagers claimed that property was theirs, they own it, the land is located in their village, and nobody used the land. They asked, if it belonged to the government, why did they not intervene and claim it when the villagers used it? At this point, considering the causes of land conflicts, I can deduce that the villagers' actions towards the land suggest unawareness of the statutory and customary laws with their jurisdictions. The failure to grasp the coexistence of the dual legalisms in the area contributes to the prevailing misunderstanding about the land, which in reality was not theirs as the law is clear that the state legally owns the land, and the villagers trespassing contributed to the conflicts. The conflicts relate to resettlements and compensations that the villagers claimed were unfulfilled and unfairly rewarded by the company (KPL), the authorities entrusted with the ownership through RUBADA.

I was told that land was scarce and that conflicts started as villagers extended their boundaries and had to share the land with newcomers who came after the establishment of the Ramsar site. The newcomers invaded the land and took plots of land for cultivation and farming, worsening the situation.

The effects of this are interwoven land user rights and are still impacting most households in Mngeta village. Most proclaimed that the land is their land simply because it was undeveloped, and that is why the government did not intervene when they invaded and used it, while the government officials and key informants know that the land has a title

that belongs to RUBADA, so there is no way the villagers can own it. In Mngeta village, villagers living in the area, consider themselves to be entitled to that land, the land which part of is regarded as 'abandoned' by the government, who in turn was supposed to pay compensations and provide alterative land for households, farming and grazing.

Elders' views in Mngeta village are that, land tenure is administered through reciprocal or collective recognition. Government agencies have no power over it. Although they recognise that their land has been taken by the government, villagers I interviewed still feel that it belongs to them.

My observations suggest dsuggested that the intricacy of the legal system arises from the existence of the two laws, Land Act and the Village Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999), and this contributes to the conflicts. Even though the laws are clear, I discovered that the villagers do not understand the laws, which contributes to the conflicts. The villagers believed that the Mngeta Farm is located on village land and therefore, belongs to them.

During fieldwork, in particular, in 2022, I also learnt that following the investor's failure to successfully run the Mngeta Farm's maize and rice farm. The farm is under the administration of the National Service Force. The government repossessed the farms formerly owned by KPL. The conflicts and related grievances have lessened.

5.4.6 *Case C:* The conflict in Ruipa Valley

The conflict in Ruipa Valley was about disagreements about land associated with four villages, Namawala, Mofu, Mbingu and Kisegese, in the Kilombero district. The conflicts started in 1976 when Sugar Development Corporation (today known as the Sugar Board of Tanzania) surveyed land in Ruipa Valley in Kilombero, Tanzania. The intentions for the survey were to start a sugar cane plantation. Its centrally situated in the valley and being near the river made it a suitable environment for cane cultivation. However, after the survey, the land was not developed as was expected; it was left unused for a while. Because of this and the population growth, people from the neighbouring villages occupied the land and registered the land as villages. They used the land for settlement, cultivation, and grazing. Nobody, neither the government nor the Sugar Board of Tanzania intervened. Life went on and time passed. In 2009, an NGO went on a fact finding mission and surveyed the project area determined in 1976, and the found that it consisted of six blocks (A, B, C, D, E, & F). Given the lack of development on the site blocks, D, E, and F were later

occupied by people and registered as villages. These three blocks were subsequently left out of the plans by the Sugar Board of Tanzania. The remaining blocks (A, B, & C) make up a total land area of approximately 9 300 ha and cut across four villages (more than 60% of the total land area held by the villages).

In 2005, the Sugar Board of Tanzania renewed its plan for the establishment of the plantation, and found a qualified investor to grow sugar cane. Thus, the revival of the plans in 2005 created enormous disputes in the area. The main source of the conflicts was confusion surrounding land ownership. While some district officials in Kilombero stated that the land title belonged to the Sugar Board of Tanzania, others firmly refuted this, saying that the Sugar Board of Tanzania was merely a promoter of the project and that the land is administered by the village councils. As highlighted in the report by HAKIARDHI, & Legal and Human Rights Centre. (2009), the NGO' s dealing with land right issues in the country, the survey was initiated by the Sugar Board of Tanzania. Since the survey process was incomplete, HAKIADHI explained that the surrounding villages still use the land for farming, settlements, and school buildings. Following this misunderstanding, it was reported that by February 2005, the village councils were ordered by the district authorities to prepare minutes of the village councils' meetings and of the general assembly, and highlight their consent to give land to Illovo Sugar Company (the seemly investor) and later to prepare for valuation for compensation purposes. However, local villagers resisted this because the concerned land provides for their livelihoods. This resistance has led to the arrest and criminal charges against some of the village members. The NGO's report even stated that local villagers have been hiding away in the forest to escape arrest. This is a clear illustration of power relations: The asymmetric power between the local and central government in the governance of land in a rural setting.

The land conflicts eventually led the potential investor (Illovo Sugar Company) withdrawing in early 2012, after waiting more than 10 years for the project to take off. SAGCOT (2012, p. 30) highlighted that the government is looking for a new investor for "investment".

However, during the field work, I visited Namawala village, for clarification about the current status of the conflict, and the Interviews suggest interviews suggested the frustrations and grievances villagers have about the conflicts. They even questioned my presence, and one participant argued as follows:

> We faced the conflicts for about 20 years, until now. What are you going to do about it? … How are you going to help us? This is our land and everybody knows it, the government, district executive directors, the district land officers and NGOs such as HAKIARDHI, Legal and Human Rights Centre, and the media knows it. What are you here for?

Another villager said I should "ask the government official what is behind all these. Why the conflict continued while is explicitly known that it is our land?"

My observations showed Namawala village is densely populated, and there are claims of shortage of land, which contributes to conflicts. The effort of getting the substantiated legal owner of the land was unsuccessful. So, I left with the information that conflicts were ongoing, and the villagers are still resisting giving up their land for investments according to government demands. It was alleged that the government failed to pay the agreed compensations as intended because of lack of finances. Instead, the government integrated the villagers into the plantations as out-growers. This suggests that the grievances that existed about the land were not properly resolved. During the fieldwork, several villagers told me about these grievances. One villager said, "Now, if the government has decided to oppress us, we will do it. There is nothing to do. We continue with other lives". Another villager said that the "government has the upper hand over this land, but we small farmers have no choice but to agree with the wishes of the government".

Despite the circumstances, the villagers continued to cultivate the land, and have started selling land to immigrants, who have also set up permanent residence in the

Overall, the observations and interviews in Idete B village suggest howsuggested subjugated the formal system was subverted by informal power dynamics, where authority was exercised through coercive and advisory mechanisms that reinforced existing boundaries of control.

However, Ruipa's case, they have led to (Ribot & Peluso, 2003) notion that access is different from property because "access is about all possible means by which a person is able to benefit from things. Property generally evokes some kind of socially acknowledged and supported claims or rights—whether that acknowledgement is by law, custom, or convention" (p. 156). Ribot (1998, p. 310) defined access and property as the ability and right to make clear the distinction between access and property as follows:

> The term ‘right’ implies an acknowledged claim that society supports (whether through law, custom or convention). The term ‘ability’, however, is broader than right resting solely on the fact of demonstration without the need for any socially articulated approval. Right is a prescriptive term. Ability is a descriptive term.

As (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 154) envisioned that empirically access focuses “on the issues of who does (and who does not) get to use what, in what ways, and when”, and that access to land and how people benefit from it normally grasped as bundles of power that smallholders and large investors have, and explained as follows.

> These powers constitute the material, cultural and political economic strands within the “bundles” and “webs” of powers that configure resource access. Different people and institutions hold and can draw on different “bundles of powers” located and constituted within ‘webs of powers’ made up of these strands. (Ribot & Peluso, 2003, p. 154)

5.4.7 Other Causes

5.4.7.1 Institutions overlaps

Other causes of the conflicts are the multiple government institutions with different mandates governing village land in the KVFP. A village is a government institution, and administratively has full authority to coordinate and manage development activities. The village registration process begins at district level, where the counsellor assists the director in the central government. The Interviews suggest interviews suggested that a hurdle in the registration process of a village is the non-observance of procedures and criteria, and that the executives are to blame for the mishaps. The Ngombo village in the Malinyi district in the KVFP illustrates the point.

Before Malinyi became a district, it was attached to Ulanga as a ward. The government upgraded Malinyi to a ward. The Ngombo village was under the Kilombero district, administratively and partly geographically. The authorities from the Malinyi district claimed that the Ngombo village exists administratively and geographically on their side. The new Malinyi district registered the Ngombo village by the blessing of the Ministry of Land, Housing and Human Settlement Development (MLHHSD), the President’s Office Regional Administration and Local Governments (PORALG), and a conflict ensued about

its location between Kilombero and Malinyi. Administratively, the Ngombo is in the Kilombero district, while geographically, it is in Malinyi, and this dispute led to conflicts.

The Interviews suggest lack ofinterviews suggested that no cooperation and organisation between districts. The government institutions failed to understand and acknowledge their roles and functions and implement them accordingly. The Ngombo conflict is also associated with political and rent-seeking motives. The researcher received information that there was speculation that an incoming land investor was the motive behind the fight. The informants implied that the respective council might benefit and increase their revenue, and that the political constituency is fruitful for individual political leaders vying for votes.

The case of the location of Ngombo village is a local conflict that implicates the local and central government authorities' motives and decision-making as the causes of conflict. It has three implications for development: Firstly, exact location of Ngombo, either Kilombero or Malinyi is yet to be determined by the respective authorities leaving the smallholders uncertain of their future because they cannot cultivate or produce as required. Secondly, villagers are unsure of where to report; and thirdly, even if the investor is interested in land, the prevailing situation may make them reconsider their investment.

5.4.7.2 Hoarding and speculation

Hoarding and speculation also contribute to conflicts in the KVFP. In as much as villagers are struggling with limited land, many wealthy individuals and businesses bought massive plots and hoard it. In Kilombero, because of the scarcity of land, villagers sometimes encroach on these lands, and cultivate and graze it, which leads to conflict with the owners, such as in the case of the invasion of the Daudi Balali farm in Kilombero. Benjaminsen and Sjaastad (2003) illustrated a cotton-growing farm in Mali, where land has changed from absolute customary tenure to various forms of ownership. As land values increased sharply, hoarders began acquiring fringes from landholders. However, the state does not effectively recognise customary land tenure, leaving landholders in a difficult position. Villagers must either sell their land to speculators to gain some benefit or risk being de facto expropriated by the state (Benjaminsen & Sjaastad, 2003).

5.4.7.3 Unregistered land ownership and protection of rights

Although most villages in the KVFP are planned, most households land do not have formal land titles to their land. Unregistered land in the KVFP makes smallholders susceptible to dispossession. Since available land is limited and there is increased competition for it, local leaders use their position to their advantage. I observed that when villagers wanted their land surveyed and titled, village leaders complicated matters and politicised the process to their advantage. Sometimes local leaders misled and misrepresented the cost of the surveying and tilting process and the legal requirements. It was suggest dsuggested that the villagers did not have the required money to cater for the cost of formalised rights.

Key informants also held views that it will assure villagers of their land, especially current and future traditional owners. Contrary to the ongoing struggles over land, it will help mitigate and resolve the situation of the conflicts that have existed since independence. They claimed that the fear related to the lack of knowledge and benefits is understandable, but that those fears will be dealt with later.

Overall, the findings suggest dsuggested that land conflicts in the KVFP are private companies, such as KSCL, over land access, displacement and compensations. The root cause is the coexistence and use of both statutory and customary legal bifurcation in village land management. The conflicts emerge because these two legal systems have different procedures, principles and priorities. While statutory law in this case prioritises formal land titles to prove ownership of the land, customary laws emphasise traditional practices of the use of land and related rights. The overlapping and sometimes contradictory nature of these systems lead to legal ambiguities and conflicts among villagers, authorities and investors. Yaro (2010) found that similar situation in many parts of Africa, and stated that those pastoralists suffer over the politics and power of land use.

Politics and power are vital in land accessibility and control in the KVFP. The 2022 fieldwork suggest dsuggested that politics and power constrain land accessibility under local and central government officials' authority during decision-making, limit its availability, and ultimately, contribute to conflicts. This along with large-scale land acquisitions in the KVFP provoke struggle for land. There is a causal, albeit not explicit, relationship between politics, and the choices of leaders and struggles over land. Development of and parallel with spatial augmentation of large-scale farms lead to village land areas being used for land accumulation and state acquisitions of tax and rent. This

situation leads to the previous owners of the land losing their land, being deprived of their livelihood, and living with threatened food production and security. Consequently, villagers and small holders of land struggle with limited land, and hence, there are conflicts.

The situation above affirms Marx's (2013) perception that inventors and individual business have substantial economic and political influence, which helps them accumulate and monopolise resources as land for profit gains. From another point of view, smallholders own land and labour. In this relationship, capitalists with ownership of land and capital often manifest in the evictions and displacement of smallholders of land who represent the proletariats or working class.

On 24 November 2022, the President of Tanzania (Christopher, 2022) asked politicians to stop instigating land conflicts and defending land invaders for political purposes, saying the following:

> Some politicians are aware that individuals are encroaching on property that was set aside for another use, but they refuse to do anything about it out of concern for their reputation as "bad guys" and in effort to win and support for upcoming elections, this habit should stop.

Sharing similar concerns, the Prime Minister of Tanzania mentioned that 11 regions are having challenges with conflicts (Shemweta, 2024)[12]. He discussed the issue in a joint session with the sectoral ministers, secretaries, districts, and regional defence and security committees in Morogoro. The discussion was on the challenges of land management within the region. He said, "We have to talk about this because various responsible leaders also participate in conflicts. Leaders should not do that but manage that this does not happen" (Shemweta, 2024, p. 9).

Land conflicts in the KVFP are political and unrestrained. Several factors contribute to the causes as summarized in Figure 5.4, including role of the national authorities decision-making and choices regarding land. The conflicts implicate village chairpersons, councils, and incumbent political party leaders in the area. The leaders constrain villagers' access to land, causing conflicts. This is illustrated by cases such as the Mkasu conflicts the allocation of the Ngombo village Kalenga village, and the corruption allegations by farmers

[12]See also Ubwani (2023) and Chidawali (2023, 2024)

who complained that when cattle damage crops, their efforts to report and follow up on the matter with the police are futile because the cattle keepers bribe the officials. Several interviewees and village leaders in Mkasu, Nyamwezi, Kiberegere, and Bwawani asserted that politics are involved in land conflicts (this case is explored further in the following pages). One of interviewees from Namawala village said the following:

> The conflict is on boundary disputes and violence between villagers in Nyamwezi, Kiberegere, Bwawani with those from Mkasu. It is on boundary line, which is a river. The river shifts due to land degradation. The counsellors in those villages use this anomaly for political gains. Normally it happens during election campaigns, whereby politicians use these conflicts between villages to gain political leverage over their opponents. During the electoral campaigns, councillors running for office made a promise to address the conflict; however, after the campaigns, nothing happens.

Walwa (2019) discussed similar corrupt malpractices in Muyuyu village in Rufiji district in the Coastal region, Tanzania. Here the malpractices were done under the guise of *takrima* (hospitality). It happened when the marginalised pastoralists offered (Walwa, 2019) a bull to members of the education committee and villagers as traditional hospitality, which is a practical living strategy to please villagers and government officials (Walwa, 2019). These village officials were referred to as "authoritative power" Sikor and Lund (2009) to register pastoralists at the village levels.

According to Mittelman (1988, p.13), land is an economic issue and because it is a vital resource, According to Mittelman (1988, p. 13), land is fundamentally an economic issue, and because it is a vital resource, it has historically been highly politicised making agriculture central to struggles over the economy, politics, and power throughout history.

and therefore, it is logical that any investigation into large scale land deals in Tanzania must be grounded in such context. The causes of land conflicts in Tanzania have been detailed elsewhere (see Benjaminsen et al., 2009; Mwamfupe, 2015; Nindi et al., 2014; URT, 1994; Walwa, 2017, 2019) and is outside the scope of this study. However, this part briefly highlights the important role of politics and power and how it has shaped the causes. Informal ways of land acquisition disrupt land transactions and create conflicts. This section analyses the politics and power in land distribution in the KVFP using the following four Bernstein (2010) questions:

- Who owns what?

- Who gets what?
- Who does what?
- What do they do with it?

The analysis used one more question from Laswell (1936) to reach its conclusions, and asked when?

Social relations entail the connection between people expressed in continued interactions. Politics, being any human and social interplay (Tansey & Jackson, 2015) is at the centre of relationships, and impacts the production. During neoliberal period, the production and reproduction of land are political. In essence, politics is the ability to influence and to control (URT, 1993, as cited in Sundet, 1997). In the KVFP, politics is used to manipulate and for personal interests, such as votes and power. The Interviews suggestinterviews suggested that those with authority have the power to influence local government officials, incumbent political party leaders, individuals, companies, and businesses, and this influences the control and access of land in the KVFP. This is done for rent, tax, votes, authority, capital money, knowledge, technology, and infrastructure, and results in strained asymmetrical relations that contribute to land conflicts in the area.

Politics influences the decision-making about land. Different land users use political connections to negotiate and affect access to and control of the land. In the KVFP, villagers, government officials, investors, and individual businesses have different networks and connections. Politically, some smallholders, government officials, investors, and individuals have the leverage to access and control land. Smallholders have relatively few political connections, which leads to a power imbalance in the KVFP. Two categories of power imbalances in the KVFP are: Those between smallholders of land and local authorities, and those between smallholders and investors. The former reflects the local dynamics of land distribution and conflicts, and the latter echoes the national and international variations of the same.

Traditionally, village land belongs to smallholders, but secure tenure security is in jeopardy as their land is increasingly accessed by large companies and investors. A similar situation is found in Kenya (Nganga & Robinson, 2016), where investment projects threaten local communities' tenure security, which also negatively impacts their livelihoods (Nganga & Robinson, 2016). De Haan et al. (2016) made similar discoveries in the Sahel and Sahara

regions of Ethiopia, indicating that tenure insecurity is a widespread challenge in East African countries.

The arrival of many people and companies in the KVFP makes villagers and smallholders concerned about their land. They are insecure, and this insecurity increases as dispossession continues. Yet when investors and political authorities have power over smallholders, it creates animosity, sometimes leading to hostile social relations.

Land is scarce in the KVFP, and demand for land surpasses supply. Under neoliberalism land is a commodity for profit. The profit is not the sole motive of the smallholders who depend on land for food. Smallholders' need for land is not for the interests of profit only but for other survival and cultural needs, such as burial. Investments are vital for the country's development, but there must be the right choices, proper laws, and guidance to make it meaningful and productive for all users and to avoid conflicts in the country. The following subsections answer the political economy questions.

5.4.7.4 Who owns what?

This question is of land distribution in KVFP. In context of Tanzania neoliberalism, there is a widespread transformation of land into private property, and thus, into a commodity (Sulle, 2017). Neoliberal processes include reducing public expenditure, including the elimination of subsidies, the sale of public utilities, job layoffs in the public sector, and the titling and privatisation of property rights in land, water, forests, fisheries, and other resources (Diaz & Engels, 2020). These were previously publicly owned by the state for the people. On land matters, the social relations of land distribution in the neoliberal era coincided with the emergence of more gradual individual and private interference in holding land. This arrangement is contrary to the previous socialist era, which embraced the holding of land based on the collective and not the individual.

Establishing private property rights influences the management of land and related resources. Whereas some informants during interviews argued that privatisation and monetisation promote more efficient use of land, others believed that land, as in nature, is best managed as common property or regulated by governments, and that the market does not place a high enough value on environmental quality or ecosystems. Although land is public in Tanzania, its dynamics in the KVFP show all the symptoms of it being private.

Access and control belong to the government, large-scale investors, and companies, while smallholders have no power except their labour power.

Social relations structure the processes of production and reproduction. For example, the smallholders as farmers and livestock keepers are predominantly smallholders using land for subsistence farming. On large plantations, they are cheap labourers who cultivate the land for profit to benefit the petty bourgeoisie and capitalists abroad. Under the neoliberal framework, the petty bourgeoisie and capitalists privately control the land through derivative rights. They have the required infrastructure, knowledge, capital, and technology to produce in bulk for export and profit.

5.4.7.5 Who does what?

This question looks at division of labour and asks who performs which activities of social development and regeneration in KVFP. The question can be answered as follows:

- The state uses laws to regulate KVFP. It also legitimises decisions made by local and central government authorities;
- Local authorities' laws strengthen authority;
- Smallholders, men, and women own small acreages of land and labour power; and
- Investors and petty bourgeoisie control large tracks of land. They are the employer's offering employment and corporate social responsibility activities, and they influence the decisions over access to and control of land.

5.4.7.6 Who gets what?

This looks at the relations of benefits of income as profit and food; however, the distribution of benefits is unbalanced because KVFP lacks proportionality. Income tilts towards investors; for example, investors do not uphold their promises when taking over the land. Agreements such as employment and compensations are not adhered to, and when they are honoured, they do not reflect the market reality. The unfulfilled commitments and unmet expectations challenge the investors' relations with villagers. This happens at the same time that smallholders face land and food insecurity (Interview with Kilombero district Commissioner, 2022). Thus, food becomes expensive, and sometimes, unavailable in the area and country. This was shown in Bélair's (2020) analysis of farmland

investments in Tanzania: smallholders' land rights are increasingly insecure, constraining their options for warranting livelihood. A similar study by Kariuki and Ng'etich (2016) in Kenya found that over 10 million Kenyans are suffering from chronic food insecurity. At any one time, it is estimated that 2 million people need assistance to get access to food, and during heavy rains, floods or drought, the number doubles.

5.4.7.7 What do they do with it?

Capitalism entails free detachment of smallholders from their land, in Tanzania, and in the KVFP in particular, this did not happen. The smallholders who intentionally turned to labour are still attached to and control land, albeit in small quantities. In this regard, the appropriation of surplus labour with the intention of productive accumulation does not exist. Thus, the relations of consumption and reproduction in the KVFP are not as direct as in a proper capitalist economy. Since the labour is still attached to their land, they view it not as a commodity related to the conditions of capitalistic relations of production but rather as an asset that is traded equally and consumed to satisfy human needs. Conventionally, capitalism encourages the expansion of the need to prevent inadequate consumption from becoming a barrier to surplus value realisation. It produces wage labourers to consume the products. Consumption of particular goods separates capitalists from workers, reinforcing capitalist social relations (Mclntyre, 1992).

5.4.7.8 When does politics impact land allocation?

Political leaders use and manipulate land laws in two ways: Firstly, during the decision-making over access to land allocated village farmland and secondly, political leaders use their influence to access land to gather votes during elections (Bernstein, 2004). Political leaders manipulate land laws in two key ways. Firstly, they influence decision-making processes regarding access to village farmland. Secondly, they use their political power to secure land as a means to gain electoral support, particularly during election periods. This reflects Bernstein's (2004) argument that land is not just an economic asset but a deeply political resource, often used by elites to consolidate power and secure class interests.

For the former, the aim is state revenue as rent and tax, and for the latter, the intent is political power. Table 5.2 is matrix of five questions land issues.

Table 0.2 Five questions land issues in KVFP

(Source: modified from Bernstein, 2010)

	Who owns what?	**Who does what?**	**Who gets what?**	**What do they do with it?**	**When?**
The state	Land	Regulate and allocate the land through land laws and polices	Revenue, tax, and rent	Legitimises decisions over land	When in power and during administration
Local and government officials	Power and authority	Influence decision-making	Rent and power	Influence decisions by making and manipulating laws	During elections and while in positions
Smallholders (famers and livestock keepers)	Land labour power	Cultivate farms and graze	Food, cash crops, vegetables, fruits, and forest		Lifetime
Investors (local and foreign)	Capital, technology, and knowledge	Invest and acquire land	Surplus in terms of profit	Influence decisions on access to and control of land	During land acquisitions or purchase of land

Politics influence the land allocation in the KVFP for revenue and political rewards. As narrated by the Kilombero district Administrative Officer (2022), before the villagisation program in the 1970s, Ngombo was a village like any other. People in Ngombo were living their lives and performing their social and economic activities. The land was at the centre of their livelihoods, and access to land was through family ties and inheritance. Villagers engaged in fishing activities and a bit of farming activities, especially rice, for daily consumption. The Ngombo village has also wet, fertile land that can produce almost any crop.

Physically and geographically, the Ngombo village is in the Kilombero district within the Ramsar site. It is commonly known as the Ramsar site in reserve land and is not in the

Malinyi district, as Malinyi authorities claim. However, during the villagisation process in 1974, the government required villagers to move to other regions of the country to adhere to the requirements. The aim was to collectively farm and increase agriculture productivity for better development (Interview with the villagers of Mkasu on 28 August 2022). However, the program did not materialise as expected, and did not work countrywide. Villagers moved back to their previous lands and continued with their daily lives. Villagers moved back to Ngombo, and the population grew. They engaged in social and political issues. They had to form village authorities and participate in elections. At this point, they needed political recognition, and they asked the Kilombero Council to register the village. The council declined the registration and reasoned that the Ngombo village is in the reserve and control area. A key informant narrated that Tanzania authority has been area managing the area since the program ended.

The council's refusal to register the village did not stop the villagers from pursuing the matter. They turned to the Malinyi district, even though Malinyi district is outside the physical boundaries of the village. Seemingly, Malinyi authorities took their chance and seized the opportunity. The interview suggest dsuggested that the authorities considered the physical and financial potential of Ngombo. Ultimately, the Malinyi authorities registered the village in 1993.

During the fieldwork in August 2022, there was an ongoing conflict between the two districts on boundaries and the precise location of the village. The Kilombero district claims that Ngombo physically and geographically belongs to it, and Malinyi believes Ngombo belongs to them because Ngombo administratively falls under its authority. The revenue and political motives are worsening the conflict, and makes it difficult to mitigate.

5.4.8 The legal relevance of the cases: law as a source of conflict

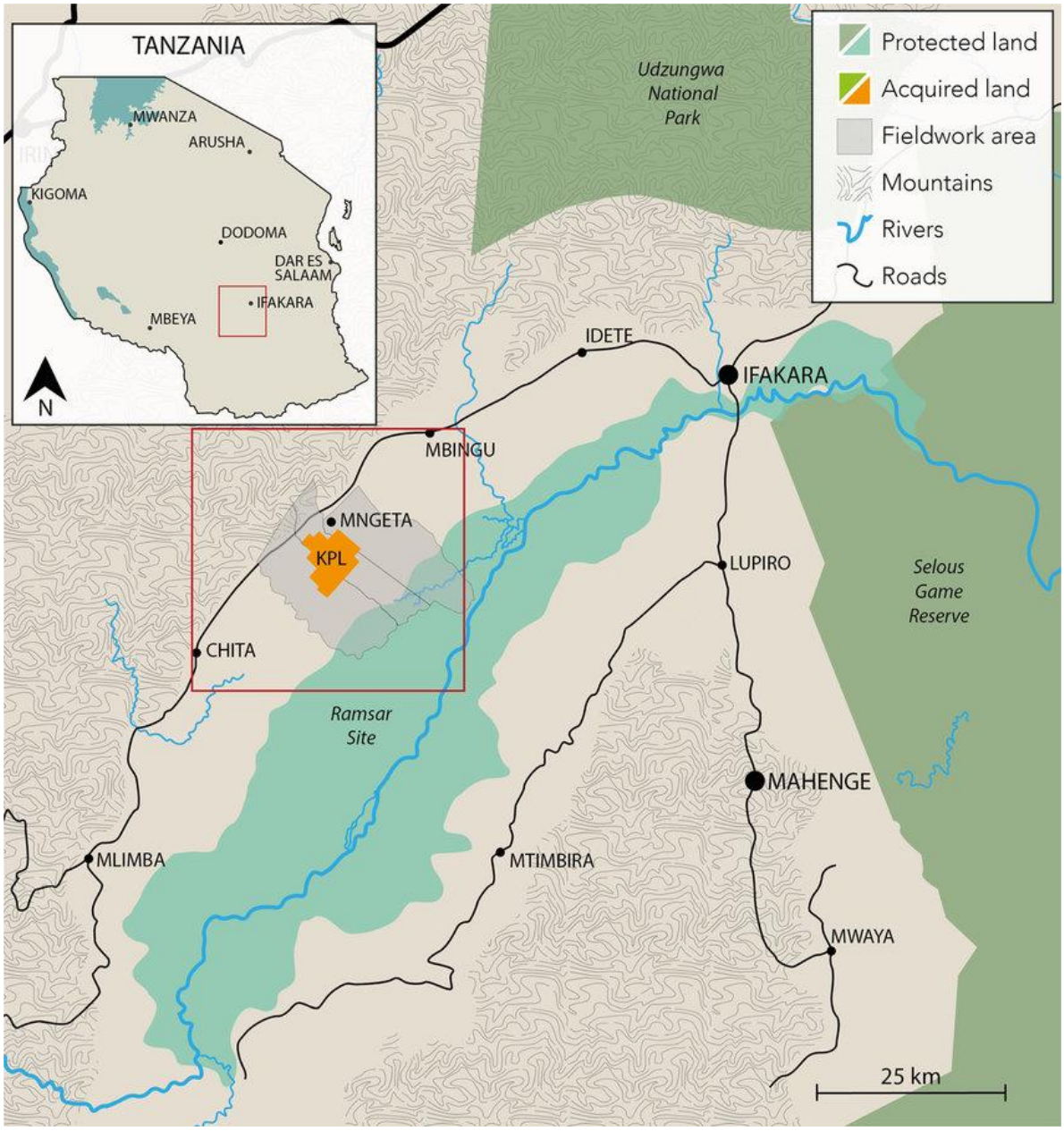
Conflicts about land and about central and local governments and their jurisdiction have to be seen in the context of the territorialisation of 'traditional' rule under colonial administration. The rule and jurisdiction of a local authority, which had previously been restricted in terms of people, is currently designated to a specific territory. The two types of rule, over people and over territory, are presently interrelated in a profound and complex manner that solidifies the existing state. This relationship is the result of interconnections with other legal spheres in the contemporary economic and national administrative context.

Most villagers and whole community groups substantiate their rights referring to customary law that is formally acknowledged by the law of the state and thus ‘legally valid’.

This suggests that in reality, the current land law of the state follow regulations made in colonial times, and assigns the radical title of the village land areas of the Kilombero district to the President and the Executive Branch. This allows colonial and post-colonial states to intervene in villagers. For villagers in Mngeta and Mkangawalo, a numerically small minority in the traditional land area of the Kilombero, the poignant issue is to achieve political and social emancipation from a disputed remnant of the political dominance of colonialism. The conflict is not so much about a disputed administration of land in everyday life but about a formal administrative subordination under state with its embedding consequences. The assignment of the radical title and the subordination that occurred under colonial and post-colonial rule were seen by the colonial administration mainly in terms of ease of administration. Yet it ‘loaded’ the relationship between the different community groups with assorted meanings that became apparent only within the regional socio-cultural context, and that were ignored by the British, and consequently, by the independent state. Villagers in Mngeta and Mkangawalo have challenged this problem largely by questioning the land law, since regulations within this legal sphere are at the root of the continuation of this social and political constellation. Meanwhile, they demand administrative structures that are really separate. The conflict in Mngeta and Mkangawalo is a small part of a bigger scenario, and reflects the relatively typical transformation of the relation of land between different users that have been occurred since colonial times as a result of colonial power politics. Map 5.2 illustrate distribution of land in Kilombero Valley as protected, acquired, mountains, rivers, and roads which contributes to the scarcity of cultivating and grazing; and for smallholders, making the availability of land a challenging issue in the area.

Map 0.2 Distribution of land in Kilombero Valley

(Source: Johansson & Abdi, 2020)



5.4.9 Links to global finance

The two companies which were functioning during fieldwork in the Kilombero Valley (namely KPL and KSCL) have direct links with international finance capital.UK-based Agrica, the parent company of KPL, is supported by three main foreign investors:

- Norfund (or the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries), a Norwegian government instrumentality;
- Capricorn, the asset management fund for eBay founder Jeff Skoll; and
- AgDevCo, a UK-based not-for-profit investor in African agriculture, partly financed by Department for International Development. In May 2014, it provided KPL with a US$ 850 000 loan for installing a rice gasification plant.

An informant who was privy to the situation said the following:

> KPL has a plan for expansion of irrigated farming from the current 500 ha to 3 000 ha, and is in the process of seeking debt financing for this project. Funds for the expansion of irrigation are being sought from OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation], the US governments development finance institution. A greater area under irrigation would allow the growth of three crops per year (Key informant interview, 2022).

In the case of KPL, the links with foreign government funding are from Norway, the US and the UK through Norfund, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and AgDevCo, respectively. The finance link with the Norwegian government is not through the Pension Fund Global, but through Norfund, the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries. Norfund provides equity, risk capital, or loans to companies in developing countries like Tanzania in the energy, agribusiness and financial sectors. The Norwegian government provides capital for the operation of Norfund for the promotion of private sector growth in developing countries. Its operating model has some characteristics of private equity investors, with Norfund accepting higher risks and lower returns than commercial investors (Norfund, 2015). In the case of funding from the US government's Overseas Private Investment Corporation, medium- to long-term funding may be provided through direct loans and loan guarantees, often in situations where conventional finance companies are reluctant to lend Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), 2015). Based in the UK, AgDevCo is an investor in the agriculture sector of Africa, through the provision of "patient capital". Patient capital is "long-term capital made available by the international community on concessional terms. It is used to part-fund the capital costs of irrigation and related agriculture supporting infrastructure" (Palmer, 2010, p. 11).

Illovo Sugar from South Africa has been the majority shareholder in KSCL since 1998. However, Illovo Sugar developed a connection with Associated British Foods in 2006. Associated British Foods is a British multinational food processing and retailing company.

In 2014, the company had a turnover of almost US$ 20 billion, in contrast with Tanzania's GDP of US$ 33 billion. Currently, there are two other shareholders in KSCL, the government of Tanzania with a 25% holding, and ED&F Man, a London-based commodities group, with a 20% holding. KSCL struggled for about 10-years to obtain more land (about 8 000 ha) in the Kilombero Valley for another sugar plantation and an out-grower project, but was challenged by court cases with villagers wanting compensations. Consequently, this project was abandoned in 2012, with the KSCL manager advising that the company has decided to operate in Mali with "friendly investment policies and good incentives" (Daily News, 2012 in Gallagher, 2018). Gallagher (2018) highlights that in 2013, Oxfam criticised the KSCL parent company, Associated British Foods, for taking land from locals in Mali without consultation or compensation (Britain, 2013).

5.5 Implications of the Conflicts

As explained above, land conflicts in the KVFP emerged when various groups or individuals and companies competed for access, ownership, and control over land, creating tensions and conflicts. These conflicts had widespread effects that obstructed economic, social-political, legal, and environmental stability. Grasping the implications of the conflicts is vital to properly address. In the following subsections, I explore how land-use conflicts affect local communities, economic productivity, environmental sustainability, and governance structures. Specific attention was paid to smallholder farmers and marginalised groups, women, and the elderly.

5.5.1 Economic implications

Economic implications are one of the major long-term impacts of the conflicts, and it includes, the disruption of local economies. Observations and Interviews suggest interviews suggested that land in the KVFP is the backbone of not only its economy but the country at large.

The lack of access to land in the KVFP had unfavourable and severe impacts on local people, who are very dependent on the land for their food subsistence. There were negative repercussions that disrupted local agricultural impacted food supply for both region and the country, consequently contributing to a decline in agricultural productivity. An elderly smallholder farmer said the following:

> For us, the land has always been more than just soil to plant crops. It is where our families live, where we raise our children, and where our ancestors are buried. So, when the government reclaimed the land and gave it to investors, it felt like we were losing more than just land. We lost our connection to our heritage, and many of us lost our livelihood. What makes it worse is that there was so much confusion. Some of us were recognised as legitimate villagers, while others were labelled as intruders or squatters, even though we had all been farming the land for years. Who decides who is a squatter and who is not when we have all been part of this community? The division created tension between us, and it's still hard to understand why some got compensation and others did not. … Even for those of us who did receive compensation, it was far from fair. We were given a small amount of money, and now we have nothing left. The land we depended on for farming is gone, and the investor's large-scale farming operation doesn't benefit us. We've seen our economic situation get worse, while the investors make profits from the very land we used to work. What makes it harder is knowing that we had customary rights to the land. The law says that our rights should be recognised, but when the government steps in with statutory rights, it seems like our claims don't matter. We feel powerless, as if the government has all the control and we're left with nothing. Many of us have given up hope of ever seeing fair treatment.

The perpetuated few heavily impacts local economies. This is especially true when the high-income farmers and large investors cater for their interests while marginalising the subsistence farmers, which leads to limited benefits trickling down to the local population, especially the smallholders. This trend creates unequal economic system where local people have minimal control of their land resources.

5.5.2 Political and legal implications

The involvement of various actors in land use, such as the government, investors, political elites, and smallholders, makes land a political and legal issue. Politically, land is a critical resource tied to power, influence, and economic control. Decisions on land allocation, ownership, and use are often influenced by political interests, with the government and elites playing a dominant role in shaping land policies. This leads to imbalances in land access, and there have been occasions when large-scale investors and political elites had the upper hand over smallholders. Consequently, land issues fuel political tensions. For example, in Kilombero district, smallholder farmers felt marginalised and excluded from

decision-making by authorities or when livestock keepers damaged their crops. A young farmer from Kidatu narrated the following:

> We, as smallholder farmer in this district, no longer trust the government. We feel manipulated because the government favours the livestock keepers. Every time we report a case is not acted upon. We are tired of the situation. We have decided to take matters into our own hands and punish the authorities by locking them up in their offices.

While it was challenging to get a livestock keeper's view on the issue, an agro-livestock keeper from the same village said the following:

> To be honest, livestock keepers are trouble makers. They keep large stocks of animals, like 2 500 and 3 000 cattle, and move around. When they come across fields, especially the maize and rice fields, in which the plants are three-month-olds they graze on it without any consideration. They are very arrogant, maybe because they have money. With money you can do anything to get it your way.

Regarding the legal implications in the KVFP, it is undeniable that land is governed by a complex framework that manages ownership, tenure, and disputes. However, there is no proper enforcement, which has led to the manipulation, and contributed unresolved disputes, illegal land grabs, and conflicts over property rights in the Mngeta village. Thus, land governance needs political will to safeguard fair and transparent decision-making, and a robust legal framework to protect the rights of all stakeholders, especially vulnerable groups like smallholders. An elderly woman in Namawala village viewed it as follows:

> What worsened the situation, the division created misunderstanding in which while some of us were recognised as legitimate villagers, others were identified as squatters, despite the fact that we all had been farming the land for generations. The division created tension among us, and it is difficult to comprehend why some got compensation and others didn't. Who has the right to decide who is a squatter and who isn't when we've all been part of this community? Regarding compensations, those who received compensations, complained that it was unfair. We were promised to be given another land; it did not happen. Instead, what they received did not reflect the market price, yet they are supposed make a living. How can they do that while our land is gone. We only depend on the investor's large-scale farming operation, which to be honest the rewards are insufficient to cater for our living expenses. We are here witnessing our economic situation worsen, while the investors make profits from the very land we used to work. What is more distressing is knowing that

> we had customary rights to the land. The law is in our side, but the government override it with statutory rights. It appears like our claims do not matter. We feel helpless, as if the government has all the control over the land, and we do not. Majority of us feel despair. We are pessimistic of being treated fairly when it comes to land matters. Honestly, we are not sure about where the future will take us. When we realized that part of our land was being sold without our consent, we confronted the leader and demanded answers, but he refused to respond. We have reported the matter to the police, who are currently investigating and deliberating on the issue. We are growing impatient because this act has deeply disappointed us in our leadership, and we no longer trust them. If our property is not returned to us, we are prepared to reclaim it by any means necessary. This conflict goes beyond land alone we are trying to make the authorities hear our voices. We have many concerns that require their urgent attention. We need them to listen, act responsibly, and be transparent in addressing the challenges facing our villages. Often, we are excluded from important decisions, and because of this, we are now suspicious of how many land deals have been made without our knowledge.
>
> A few of us have relocated in search of other means to make a living. However, the majority of us remain here, adapting as best we can. All we ask is that our concerns be heard, our rights recognised, respected, and protected. We fully understand the need for development, but it should not come at the cost of our land, our livelihoods, or our lives.
>
> Land is life for us villagers. However, our concerns must be heard, our rights recognised, respected, and protected. We fully grasp the urgency for development, but it should not come at the expense of our land and our lives. For us villagers, land is not just a resource—it is life. This land is where families live, nurture our children, and It is where our ancestors are buried. Thus, when the authority reclaimed the land and gave it to KPL, we felt like we lost more than just land. We detached from our heritage, and many of us lost our livelihoods.

Human rights violations are also implicated in the conflicts because when smallholders lose land without proper compensation, most people viewed it as a violation of human rights, especially the right to property and the right to sustain a livelihood.

5.5.3 Environmental impacts

Large-scale, intensive, and industrialised agriculture are used by investors in the KVFP to ensure maximum yield, but it has severe environmental consequences. For example, the first actions taken in the companies' operations is to clear the land and establish

monocultures, which jeopardises the local biodiversity and decreases resilience to diseases and the ability to adapt to the local conditions and climate in the KVFP. An interview suggest dsuggested that the situation is worsened when the irrigation systems cause the degradation of the soil, reduce the flow of the rivers, and in extreme cases, cause the water resources to dry up due to environmental impacts of previous land-use systems, such as slash-and-burn systems of farming. However, on the whole, the effects of the agricultural systems set up by investors have a far bigger impact on the environment.

In the KVFP, plantations have been expanded, which led to deforestation and changes in local water patterns, impacting agriculture and local ecosystems. Socially, the influx of large-scale investments has sometimes fragmented communities and diminished traditional practices linked to the land.

I looked at the environment regulations guidelines, and attempted to cross-check if the deals had any contracts to regulate environmental matters, such as pollution linked to fertilisers or pesticides. However, the efforts to get the contracts to clarify the international standards, including the Equator Principles, which involve the application of the social and environmental standards developed by the International Finance Corporation, were unsuccessful. This hurdle made it challenging to evaluate any implications. Cotula (2011) highlighted similar situations in Sudan, Senegal and Cameroon. Some deals involve little or no mention of environmental issues. Sudan-2, which includes a forest conservation component aimed at generating income via carbon credits, appears to contain no explicit reference to environmental standards.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the causes of the conflicts between two smallholders' groups, farmers and livestock keepers, by focusing on local context in the KVFP. The causes are deeply embedded in land reforms and governance, and involve a complex interplay of factors rooted in local government structures and influenced by broader national policies and international market forces. Specifically, the conflicts emerged from competition over limited land resources, unclear land tenure systems, and differing land-use practices between farming and pastoral communities. It is important to remember that these populations differ internally and that they are not homogenous. Understanding the internal division gives a better understanding of the complexity of the conflicts in the KVFP and its resolving mechanisms.

The chapter also highlighted the multifaceted implications of land conflicts in the KVFP, focusing on the long-term impacts on economic sustainability, political stability, legal justice, and environmental preservation, emphasising the need for fair land governance and equitable distribution of resources.

The following chapter described and analyses the local people perceptions of these conflicts in the KVFP from 2012 to 2022.

Figure 0.4 Summary of some causes of conflicts at local KVFP

Chapter Six: Local People Perceptions on the Conflicts

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 highlighted the causes of land conflicts, and therefore, it is logical to try and understand people's perceptions of the conflicts and related investments, especially smallholders' understanding of the expansion of cash-crop farming for sustainable development in an increasing large-scale investment in a rural landscape. Tanzania sugarcane development in Tanzania is a historical issue (Oliveira, 2021). Tairo (2020) highlighted that since the 1990s, the country has seen a significant increase in land cultivated with sugarcane. As the country is facing a sugar deficit of 135 000 tonnes, it has set aside some more 294 000 ha to be allocated to companies looking to develop sugarcane plantations (Tairo, 2020). Furthermore, Oliveira (2021) argued that the growing international market mean that sugarcane cultivation in Tanzania is expected to increase in the coming years. Limited land, lack of compensations over land, rising competition, and land prices in the district where the bulk of production occurs have led farmers and investors to seek new land to cultivate. Consequently, the southern region, has become a focal point for sugarcane expansion in Tanzania. It must be acknowledged that the land in question was previously used and owned by smallholders who used it for grazing cattle and goats or cultivated it with food crops, such as rice and maize.

In presenting data from the discussion of smallholder's conflicts in the field of ethnographic studies, evidence is mostly based on observations and perceptions of how people (smallholders' farmers and herders) observe and perceive these changes. Roncoli et al. (2009, p. 87) pointed out the following:

> Culture frames the way people perceive, understand, experience, and respond to key elements of the worlds which they live in. [...] This farming is particularly relevant to the study of climate change [...] Individual and collective adaptations are shaped by common ideas about what is believable, desirable, feasible, and acceptable. [...] Anthropology's potential contributions to climate research are the description and analysis of these mediating layers of cultural meanings and social practice [...]

Therefore, I studied the perceptions, narratives, and observations of smallholders about the presence of the large-scale investors and their resource conflicts. This chapter explores local people's perceptions, especially those of smallholders, of the expansion of cash-crop farming by large-scale investors on village land. It answers question: How do local people

perceive land-use conflicts and large-scale farming investments in the KVFP? At this point, it is vital to highlight that before the coming of investors, these local people have had a special relationship with their land for decades. They used the land for cultivation, grazing, burial, keeping trees for medicine, and settlement.

6.2 Understanding smallholders: Who are they in Tanzania's Kilombero Valley Floodplain?

As explained in Chapter 5, smallholders in Tanzania are a diverse group of people with varied backgrounds, ownership structures, farm sizes, land use, crop type, farming methods, ability, and class. My fieldwork showed that the smallholders are the vulnerable, less favoured people in the country, especially the pastoralists because of their mobility. Smallholders in the KVFP believe that the government turned their land into a commodity for sale in the market, which risks the security of their land. Smallholders include livestock keepers, who are largely pastoralists and make up about 10% of the whole population in Tanzania (Massay & Kassile, 2019). The vulnerability of pastoralists was further evidenced by Walwa (2019) in Muyuyu village in Rufiji district in Tanzania where smallholder farmers complained about the primary courts and accused the officers of accepting bribes from herders. These courts allegedly demanded illegal payments from pastoralists to prolong court proceedings, which in turn discouraged farmers from filing cases and attending hearings. This corruption within the judicial system created an unfair legal environment, putting both pastoralists and farmers at a disadvantage. For pastoralists, the need to pay bribes to secure favourable or delayed outcomes highlights their vulnerability to exploitation. Additionally, this practice fosters tensions between pastoralists and farmers, further complicating resource conflicts in rural areas.

The situation is worse for livestock keepers because the misconceptions about their way of life, both regular and irregular, continue. Besides being vulnerable and marginalised, livestock keepers have seasonal grazing patterns that lead to the misunderstanding that their community land is unused and available for alternative purposes (Bergius et al., 2020; Walwa, 2019).

Smallholders' contribution to the country's economy, internally and externally, from independence to the contemporary era, is constantly below average, and over 75% of total agricultural outputs in Tanzania is subsistence. The report of 2019/20 National Sample Census of Agriculture highlighted the trend in agricultural activities: There is a total of 12 007 839 households in Tanzania (11 659 589 in mainland Tanzania and 348 250 in

Tanzania Zanzibar), and of these, 7 837 405 households (65.3%) are smallholders. Out of the total agriculture households, 5 088 135 (64.9%) produce only crops, 2 589 156 (33.0%) households engage in crops and livestock, 1 547,290 (2.0%) are involved in only livestock, and a few households associate themselves with fish farming (1 358) and pastoralism (1 465), which is less than 1% when combined (URT, 2022).

Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics (2022) reports that total land area available for smallholders, either through formal titles or customary rights, is 20 774 267 ha (an average of 2.7 ha per household), though households used only an average of 2.3 ha for agricultural activities during the 2019/20 agricultural year. Nationally, the total used land was 16 717 289 ha, of which 16 547 420 were located on mainland Tanzania and 169 869 ha in Tanzania Zanzibar.

Large parts of the land (66.4%) are planted with annual crops (including fallow), permanent or perennial crops occupy 16%, about 7% is planted with a mixture of annual and permanent crops, and 7% is unplanted usable land. The remaining land is either planted with trees, rented, or under pasture bush. Land sufficiency indicates that only 33% of agricultural households said they had adequate land for their agricultural activities.

A common feature of small-scale farming in Tanzania is the reliance on traditional methods, particularly the use of hand hoes and arrows. Nationally, 7,477,152 households (95.4%) reported using a hand hoe, while 6,982,450 households (89.1%) reported using an arrow for their farming activities (Leal, 2020). Other farming implements reported by smallholder farmers include oxen (27.8%), ox ploughs (26.5%), hand sprayers (17.9%), and tractors (10.2%) (Leal, 2020; Tanzania National Bureau of Statistics, 2022).

Interviews suggest suggested that the livestock keepers are a seemingly troublesome group because of their livestock. One of the smallholder farmers, who is also a livestock keeper argued that “the big problem with livestock keepers is that for them anything green is grass, be it maize or rice growing. They will put their animals into your farm and damage crops”. The villagers said that the most troublesome livestock keepers are the Maasai, semi-nomadic livestock keepers from the Great Rift Valley between northern Tanzania and southern Kenya. From colonial to contemporary times, threats have endangered cattle keepers’ existence, squeezing their land holdings and constraining access to grassland and sources of water. Based on the situation, they have to turn to subsistence agriculture to sustain their livelihoods.

Apparently, Tanzanian government has negative outlook towards the traditional way of keeping animals. For example, Bergius et al. (2020) indicated that in 2005, President Kikwete stated a zero-tolerance position toward traditional cattle keepers, and declared that it is incompatible with the targets of modernising agriculture (Bergius et al., 2020).

Besides the challenges pertaining to the implementation of government conservation laws and policies, cattle keepers' existence is threatened by the foreign investments in the KVFP. As discussed earlier, vast land acquisitions for agriculture deals invest in supposedly unused land, implying that it is not under use. Thus, the seemingly unused land can be subjugated by government by transferring it to general land. However, the cattle keepers in Tanzania use seasonal grazing, which leaves few marks on the land, and therefore, proving their presence and land ownership is challenging, making their claims harder to prove and making them vulnerable to dispossession Conflict between the state and citizens over natural resources is common across Africa, as illustrated by experiences in countries such as Uganda and Mali. In Uganda, Muhereza (2003) highlighted how laws particularly the selective decentralisation of forest management in Masindi District enabled certain decision-makers and private actors to reinforce state power in rural areas while simultaneously facilitating corrupt practices related to timber exploitation within forests. However, the experience in Mali presents a different dynamic, where decentralisation reforms were, in some cases, more effective in empowering local communities to manage forest resources, thereby reducing state dominance and limiting opportunities for elite capture (Ribot, 1999). Yet, as Kassibo (2005) noted, the Malian government has not, in practice, been sufficiently willing to transfer powers and resources to local communities, which puts community tenure security at risk.

In Tanzania, the government merged smallholders with large-scale producers to work in partnership to increase productivity. The Interviews suggestinterviews suggested the smallholders' concerns about the government's priority being foreign investments over them and the disregard of the conservation laws. They are concerned that large land deals in farmland take over lawfully considered idle or marginal, implying that it is not farmed or settled. However, private companies or individual businesses for large-scale farming can subjugate the supposedly unused land that is used for seasonal grazing or access to water sources. Although the government's intentions to with partner smallholders and large-scale investors are laudable, tensions and conflicts about agriculture land use between the two parties, specifically in the KVFP, are issues of concern.

6.3 Perceptions

6.3.1 General community perceptions and understanding

Local people's perceptions of land conflicts in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain are shaped by a mix of deep historical experience, everyday struggles, and hopes for a better future. For many smallholder farmers and pastoralists, land conflict is not simply about losing a piece of ground to sugarcane plantations or large-scale investors. It represents a deeper loss of historical rights, dignity, identity, and the power to make decisions about their lives and livelihoods. As Shivji (1999) and Alden Wily (2012) point out, land reform in Tanzania is often felt not as empowerment, but as dispossession dressed up as development. During fieldwork, farmers spoke with pain and frustration about how ancestral land was cleared for plantations, while compensation was either too little, delayed, or non-existent. One elder in Idete summed up a common sentiment: "They promised development, but they took our fields and left us with hunger." This sense of injustice echoes Borras and Franco's (2012) argument that many land deals amount to accumulation by dispossession, where state-backed investments serve capital rather than communities. Villagers stressed that land, to them, is far more than an economic resource. It embodies ancestry, survival, and identity meanings that policies focused on productivity and efficiency often ignore.

Across the valley, there is a strong feeling that the government has abandoned its people by siding with investors. Villagers described seeing officials sitting with investors, negotiating deals, but failing to protect local rights. As one person put it: "They wear suits, sit with investors, and forget us." This reflects wider concerns, as noted by Benjaminsen and Bryceson (2012), that the state increasingly acts as a broker rather than a guardian of rural land rights. The complexity of land laws with overlapping statutory and customary systems only feeds this mistrust. As Lund (2011) has argued, land disputes often come down to paperwork, and for communities without formal documents, lived histories and rights are easily erased. And yet, not all land deals are seen the same way. A few villagers, especially local leaders or those with connections, expressed cautious support for agribusiness, hoping for jobs, markets, or infrastructure. But for most, large-scale investments felt extractive, deepening inequalities rather than delivering shared benefits.

Many smallholders and pastoralists spoke with pride about their customary systems of land governance. These systems, they said, are fairer, clearer, and grounded in social values like

kinship, reciprocity, and shared responsibility. As Peters (2004) notes, while customary systems have their flaws, they often carry more social legitimacy than statutory law. However, the coexistence of multiple legal systems also causes confusion. Villagers often struggled to distinguish between village land, general land, and reserved land, reflecting how unclear and inaccessible formal land law has become. Yet, this ambiguity also creates space for resistance. In Lungongole, for instance, pastoralist elders resisted land demarcation by invoking their ancestral ties to the land, saying, "This land has always fed our cows — even before this village was a village." Such statements are more than nostalgic; they are acts of asserting alternative land rights, ignored by law but alive in people's hearts.

Perceptions are not uniform; they differ across gender, age, and class. Women often felt doubly marginalized, excluded from compensation processes and losing secondary rights to land, such as access to vegetable plots or firewood. As Tsikata and Yaro (2014) point out, large-scale land acquisitions often deepen patriarchal inequalities, even when gender equity is claimed as a goal. Young people, especially the landless, expressed a sense of frustration and resignation. Many felt trapped unable to inherit land, unable to build a future in farming, and forced to migrate or take insecure work. Meanwhile, households with salaried jobs or political connections were more likely to see land investments as an opportunity, or at least as inevitable, reflecting how land commodification reshapes class divisions within rural communities (Bernstein, 2010).

At the same time, smallholders and much of the local community expressed both hope and concern about large-scale investments. While they welcomed the idea of government support for investment that could improve land management, create jobs, and build infrastructure, they also called for proper legal frameworks and clear policies to prevent confusion and conflict. Some hoped investors would follow rules and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development through corporate social responsibility for example, by building schools, health centres, and roads. But Interviews suggest significant gaps in knowledge. Many smallholders had no idea about the investors or their intentions. One farmer said, "I don't have any idea about large-scale investors or why they are here. It's none of my business. I just live my life." Even out-growers working with companies like KSCL admitted to having little understanding of how these investments function or

what they mean for their future. As another out-grower explained, “I have a slight idea about the investments... but I don’t have much detail on what the company is doing.”

Ultimately, the views of local people reflect their varied backgrounds, social positions, and lived realities. There is a mixture of cautious optimism and deep-seated fear. Many had high hopes that large-scale investments would bring employment, fair compensation, better services, and infrastructure. But their experiences so far have often been marked by exclusion, unmet promises, and new forms of vulnerability. These perceptions are not simply complaints; they are expressions of political awareness and resistance to systems that prioritise external interests over local well-being. Recognising and responding to these views is essential if land investments are to be truly inclusive and sustainable.

> The evidence suggests thatThe role of the large company, such as KSCL, is to transfer technology, offer expertise, create employment opportunities to the locals. They should also provide social services such as build health centres and education service and build infrastructure. It is called corporate social responsibility. (Interview, smallholder farmer, 2023).

Local smallholders in the KVFP view large-scale investments in rural areas with a blend of hope and fear. They see potential benefits, such as improved infrastructure, increased market access, and new economic opportunities. However, they also have fears: They worry about the loss of their land, which is critical for their traditional farming practices and livelihoods, and have other concerns, such as the environmental impacts of such investments, like soil degradation and reduced water availability. In addition, smallholders cited their concerns about being excluded from decision-making processes in land deals, which sometimes leads to conflicts over land use and resource allocation. Understanding the balance between these potential gains and risks is vital to ensure large-scale investments do not undermine the livelihoods and wellbeing of local communities.

Generally, interviews suggested that smallholders’ perceptions on large-scale investments have both positive and negative impacts. Despite these challenges, local people remain hopeful, believing their situation is similar to how it was before investors arrived. Villagers expect that when investors need land, the government will allocate land outside village boundaries. In the Kilombero Valley Floodplain (KVFP), some interviewees reported that

their land-based livelihoods have been directly affected. One interviewee stated the following:

> My land is lost. I was forced to give it up to allow invertors' developments. Now I don't have a farm or enough space to cultivate. This situation impacts me and my family's livelihoods as we cannot keep enough food, because we have lost the possibility to produce food.

Another interviewee reaffirmed that "the investor would not be a threat if they would follow the agreements, take some, and leave some to us to sustain our livelihoods".

The interviewees had the following expectations of large-scale investments, listed in hierarchical order:

- Employment opportunities;
- Reasonable income;
- Good infrastructure;
- Water delivery, like building wells;
- Education services; and
- Health services.

Local people believe that their government does not have enough financial resources to cater for their needs, and it cannot offer employment opportunities to satisfy the whole community, and therefore, they considered large-scale investments to be crucial for the development of their districts. One elderly interviewee from Kidatu village in Kilombero district who is an out-grower argued as follows:

> I wish to get supplementary labour opportunities to expand our livelihood strategies. Since government provision of employment is inadequate, inventors are supposed to offer new income opportunities in the form of daily labour. I hope that I could get satisfactory salary enough to cater for my family needs.

A young farmer from Sagamaganga village said the following regarding land conflicts:

> Currently, they are talking large parts of our land. If this situation continues, it will be detrimental to our families. Where will our children go when they were born here and have lived here for decades? My children are not familiar with any place apart from here, their place, their home. Whenever you see people fight, it is because they fight for their lives, their children, and sometimes, their whole family. If they are not, then they won't be able

> to survive. This is because of the pressure of land: It's fixed; therefore, it won't increase, rather diminish. Investors have brought changes on availability and ownership on land, which in turn altered the availability and accessibility of land for local communities. The change on land have brought new livelihood challenges that compel us to change and adapt. Since few local villagers have been able to find satisfactory alternatives to supplement their livelihoods to their previous economic activities of farming, fishing and livestock keeping.

Local, ordinary villagers explained that a significant driver of change in their geographical space is an increase in commercial farming to the valley, to the business of large-scale sugarcane and rice plantations by KPL and population growth. This results in small-scale farmers and settlers encroaching on the forests and wetlands. Interviewees also said that water sources, forests, and wetlands have been damaged, encroached upon, and degraded because of the rise of livestock to the area over the ten years. These agents of change have been ascertained over the entire Kilombero Valley (Johansson et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, the local people regardless of hurdles, appreciate investors. The following is an example of the common argument:

> They wish they could follow proper procedure when they want to acquire land in the villages. They hope that when investors acquiring their land to at least respect local land rights and provide the agreed compensation in time, that applies even to the government because primarily the government must pay compensations before it allocates the land to an investor, and that is according to the law.

When interviewees were asked about their preference on foreign or domestic investors, interviewees responded like, "what matters is that an investor does the right thing, be it a foreign or domestic investor".

While in the field, I interviewed the villagers who are past cane association members, farmers worked on the land, or farm-owners who employ labourers. The market for renting land because of cane cultivation has become very important and expanded in the area.

As mentioned above, the local people in the KVFP had their own unique historical relationship with land. They are predominantly an agrarian society, deeply intertwined with their land. They depend on farming for food and income for their livelihood. This relationship with the land is symbiotic, connecting them with the land for sustenance and economic stability. The villagers envisaged that the next generation will inherit and cultivate the same land practices, fostering a sense of continuity and identity linked to their

agriculture practices. Beyond that, the relations encompass social and spiritual dimensions with rituals, traditions linked seasonal cycle of farming. Over time, this relationship has shaped the collective identity and resilience of the general community. For example, the rituals and ceremonies are woven into the agriculture calendar, reinforcing the connection between smallholders, villagers, the whole community, and the cycles of nature. This relationship suggests that land in this context is more than just a means of production. It is a sacred space that shapes the cultural practices and belief systems of the community.

Throughout history, smallholders have depended on land and have developed intricate social structures around their agriculture practices. The shared responsibilities tending the land have fostered tight collective identities and mutual dependency. Traditional farming techniques passed down through generations have become part of the cultural fabric, creating a bond that extends beyond economic necessity. In times of prosperity and hardship, the culture of shared responsibility on land shape collective memory of smallholders. Historical events, changes in ownership, and environmental challenges leave lasting imprints on communities' relationships with land. This intricate interplay between people and their environment has been a defining feature of the historical narrative for villagers in the KVFP.

6.3.2 Small farmers' perceptions of land conflicts

In another round of interviews, farmers, especially the ago-livestock keepers, said that large-scale investments and related land conflicts are an unfortunate occurrence, and that there would not have been conflicts if the proper rules had been followed. One farmer commented that "all these struggles you are told about the investors and conflicts therefore is just unfortunate. They should never have happened". Others blamed the government leaders because they embrace investors' malpractices and they do not act when the cattle keepers are at fault.

During the interviews, the focus on the absence of political will to end struggles was highlighted. The villagers viewed land as an unpopulated resource, geographically, culturally, and economically. As such, land conflicts happen when a geographically special area is violated by another. They argued that historically, they owned that land collectively. It is there for their survival. They cultivate and farm on it. However, when the 'other' comes and interferes with their land, it becomes a problem.

Geographically, they understand that land is everywhere, it is fertile, ready for almost any crop cultivation. Their understanding is that land is everywhere and so they can farm anywhere they want to maximise its potential. For cultivation of vegetable and fruits, smallholders, for instance, like to grow them near the riverbanks for easy access to water.

They argued that throughout history, they have understood land in terms of a collective and family culture, and they have used the land through hunting, gathering, and fishing activities. They believed that there is no need for formal ownership of land because they were born to see the land as theirs, and it will remain so forever.

6.3.3 Livestock keepers' perceptions of land conflicts

Livestock keepers' perceptions and understanding of large-scale investments and related conflicts are also diverse. Livestock keepers' views on conflicts are different from that of local people, especially farmers. For livestock keepers, anything green is grass. Land where the grass is green is a place for them to graze. They will do anything to access and use that grass for their cattle. The livestock keepers' access to migratory corridors leading to pasturelands is consistently restricted to water sources and farms. This proximity makes it easier for them to invade and destroy farms. However, some argued that if this was not the case, their conception of land as everything green as grass caused problems with others who use land for other activities.

As illustrated in Chapter 4, in Kilombero, livestock keepers often move onto farms located near wet pastures routes and destroy the farms. It was observed that this happened more repeatedly during the dry season when access to water and pasture becomes challenging, often compelling pastoralists to rely on boreholes or cross into neighbouring pastoral units in search of water. Drawing from a case study in Sahelian Senegal, Adriansen (2008, p. 215) demonstrated that pastoralists typically migrate to areas where "key resources or 'wet-lands in dry-lands' are highly productive in low-lying areas, along rivers, or lakes."

Space, like livestock movement, is a socially constructed concept, shaped through social processes and interactions that continually define and redefine it. Livestock keepers culturally perceive any land with pasture as inherently meant for feeding their cattle. In their view, such land is naturally designated for their use, irrespective of other possible uses. They tend to overlook the idea that farmland produces crops for human consumption, focusing solely on grass or pasture. This cultural understanding, whereby any unoccupied

land is regarded as no-man's land, often influences their grazing practices on pasturelands. One agro-livestock keeper in Mngeta said the following:

> Livestock keepers think that this land (in Kilombero) belongs to them only. In meetings, they argue that they need much land to graze their animals. They don't joke about it. If they see a rice farm which is green, they graze without remorse. The big challenge in this place is that there is no effective demarcation of the farm land and grazing areas. The government need to separate diligently areas for cattle grazing and farming to prevent cattle from entering onto farms. However, farms are everywhere, and the space made for pathways for cattle is skewed. How do you go to grow crops on a river bank? Where do you expect cattle to move to drink water? This will clearly cause conflicts because the cattle will inadvertently step on your crops, leading to their destruction. This is a big problem that we face here in our village (Interview with an agro-livestock keeper, Mngeta, 20/09/2022).

Another livestock keeper in Lungongole village added the following:

> Nyerere, the first President of this state instilled in our minds that all human beings, be they children, brought up in poor or rich families, or belonging to sinners or saints, or even those whose parents are either slaves or free men, were born to find land in existence. They can neither add to it nor reduce its extent. It is God's gift, given to all His creation without any discrimination... So to me, land in this country is free from God, where I see it with green grass on it, I use it freely.

6.3.4 Community groups' perceptions of land conflicts

HAKIARDHI and PINGO, community groups in the Kilombero District perceived land conflicts as bad thing in any community. They believed that all citizens in Tanzania have a right to land. One interviewee said the following: "Land is the property of official document holders or communities or households or individuals who occupy the land according to traditions and customs as well as herders who use the land for grazing purposes". When land that belongs to a villager is transferred for another use, compensation must be paid accordingly to avoid conflicts. One of the board members of HAKIARDHI argued as follows:

> Under the law, land rights under customary and traditions, although in reality, have the right to occupy and use the land, the land is still a property that is protected by Article 24 of the Constitution United Republic of Tanzania. The seizure of land rights necessitates compensations, which are currently delayed.

They argued that village land belongs to villages, and that the influence and control of the central government, especially the President, is inconceivable and unfair.

IGWIA viewed land conflicts and related large-scale projects as negative occurrences impacting human rights. It believed that the government supports large farmers to the detriment of smallholders' rights (Wolford et al., 2013), especially pastoralists. By moving smallholders from their land, the government commits serious human rights crimes against local communities and inflicts injustices on local communities and smallholders in the rural landscape of the KVFP.

6.3.5 Local leaders' perceptions of land conflicts

Local leaders believed the conflicts exist because smallholders, especially livestock keepers, are stubborn, rigid, and egotistic people who do not want to change. They needlessly keep large stocks of animals, and they destroy water sources, land and farms. They move from one place to another, making them uncontrollable and untaxable. One of the officials from Mlimba Council, Kilombero district said that "livestock keepers are stubborn. They don't follow the rules. The only way to deal with them is chasing them away". When asked where will they go, he responded "where they came from, or anywhere they want. They just have to vacate from our land". The leaders acknowledged that land is scare and that conflicts exist, but argued that the cattle keepers are the biggest problem causing conflicts in the area, and that they are a bigger "headache" than the large-scale land investments.

I also interviewed a chief (name withheld for confidentiality). Chiefs are essentially traditional leaders who are appointed and granted the authority of the traditional administration by the clan or other relevant authority to oversee traditions, customs, morals, cultural resources, forests, and natural areas. They also serve as arbiters of disputes within the community. Conventionally, a chief is born into a royal lineage and assumes the role through both traditional and bureaucratic procedures. The title for a chief in Tanzania varies across communities. For example, among the Chaga, a chief is called Mangi; among the Nyamwezi, Mirambo; among the Hehe and Bena, Mtemi; and among the Maasai, Oleigwenani, depending on the context.

One of the respected traditional leaders I interviewed (name and exact title withheld for confidentiality) served as a chief over a large area in the Ulanga Valley, Kilombero District.

This chief, a Christian, believed that land conflicts in the area stem from those who are "greedy for land and what it can offer." He emphasised that land is the only natural gift given to humanity to sustain life and govern all other creatures. He described land as the origin of his own life. This chief explained:

> If God prepares a plan for mankind for the use of resources such as land, he gave him prohibitions, taboos and morals like he did for man to live in the garden of Eden. The garden of Eden is the reference number one example of investment projects. We must use the land wisely for our garden to flourish (Chief Kiwanga, interview, 2022).

6.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the perspectives of local communities, particularly smallholders, on land-use conflicts and large-scale farming investments in the KVFP. Smallholders in the KVFP hold diverse and often mixed opinions regarding these land conflicts and the impact of large-scale investments in rural areas, and they view it with a combination of hope and fear. While they anticipate benefits such as improved infrastructure, employment opportunities, and better access to markets, they are also concerned about potential risks like land loss, environmental degradation, and exclusion from decision-making processes. Their perceptions vary across different groups based on their backgrounds, social orientations, and economic practices. Despite initial optimism, smallholders did not foresee the conflicts arising from these investments, especially concerning land compensation and access to essential services. Balancing these opportunities and risks is crucial to ensure large-scale investments do not adversely impact the means of living and wellbeing of the local communities.

In the following chapter, there is a detailed examination of the underlying reasons for these conflicts and the role of the government mitigating the conflicts in the KVFP from 2012 to 2022.

Chapter Seven: Conflict Resolution Processes in Kilombero

Introduction

While Chapter 6 examined the specific causes of land-use conflicts in Kilombero, this chapter focuses on the broader structural sources underpinning these conflicts, including government institutions, policies, laws, and particularly the legal bifurcation and the conflict resolution processes in the valley. The legal clash creates a complex interplay between formal statutory law and informal customary practices. This duality often complicates land governance, creating overlapping authorities and contestations that exacerbate local tensions. The chapter further explores the government's role in managing these conflicts between 2012 and 2022, alongside complementary interventions by non-governmental organizations at local, national, and international levels.

Conflict resolution in Kilombero operates on multiple levels. At the local level, mechanisms include village land councils, ward tribunals, district land and housing tribunals, as well as higher judicial bodies such as the High Court and Court of Appeal of Tanzania. Controversial village land-use plans have also been employed as tools to mitigate disputes (Field visit, 2022; District Administrative Officer Interview, 2022). Nationally, judicial and political decisions influence conflict management, notably through land titling, land-use planning, and revocation processes. At the international level, NGOs provide additional mediation and advocacy, filling gaps where formal state interventions are limited.

Understanding the significancegovernment efforts to resolve those conflicts, the conflicts' importance must be acknowledged. Their importance lies in their ability to drive change, foster growth, and uncover the underlying issues that need resolution. This is why conflicts happen: Conflicts suggests issues that have been ignored, hidden, or overlooked. Thus, as the causes for the land-use conflicts in Kilombero have been discuss, this chapter highlights the role of these conflicts is crucial, as they not only reveal existing social and institutional suggest both the strengths and weaknesses but also serve as catalysts for potential reform. Land disputes highlight issues that have been ignored or suppressed, offering a diagnostic lens through which to assess and improve governance frameworks (Derman et al., 2007). As demonstratedsuggested in Chapter 6, these conflicts often emerge from competing interests over land use, disrupting agricultural productivity, and creating legal uncertainty that undermines livelihoods and deters investment.

The land conflict resolution landscape in Kilombero illustrates the tensions between existing legal frameworks and the lived realities of land users. Tanzania's multi-level conflict resolution system, supported by formal legal recognition and NGO engagement, offers pathways for dispute redress. Yet, persistent legal ambiguities, political interference, and socio-economic inequalities limit these pathways' effectiveness.

Addressing land conflicts in Kilombero requires moving beyond managing disputes towards confronting the historical legacies of colonial land policies, entrenched power imbalances, and exclusionary governance practices. Effective resolution must embrace inclusive participation, particularly of women and pastoralists, and seek to harmonize statutory and customary laws in ways that protect local rights and livelihoods.

Ultimately, conflict resolution mechanisms in Kilombero must be embedded within broader reforms aimed at social justice and equitable land distribution. Only then can sustainable peace, economic development, and environmental stewardship be realized in this vital agricultural landscape. Furthermore, the National Land Policy of 1995 (URT, 1995) emphasizes the importance of issuing village land certificates to rightful owners and restoring tenure arrangements to provide ranch lands for pastoralists. However, this latter issue remains unresolved, as nomadic pastoralist communities continue to demand vast grazing areas, competing with other land users amid growing population pressures (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters, 1994).

7.1 The Underlying Source of the Conflicts

As Chapter 6 explained, the specific causes of land conflicts in the KVFP can be traced to colonial land tenure systems and subsequent land law reforms. These systems, inherited by the independent Tanzanian government, have continued to fuel conflicts. Notably, the dual application of laws integrating large-scale farming with smallholder practices on customary village lands has exacerbated tensions, as such lands were historically used by local communities. Historically, the people of the KVFP were primarily subsistence farmers, raising small livestock such as goats, pigs, chickens, and ducks. However, since the late 1990s, the arrival of large-scale investors from the UK, US, and South Africa has reduced land availability and access, intensifying conflicts. These investors, attracted by the KVFP's fertile agricultural land, abundant water resources, and rich biodiversity, have faced strong resistance from some villages determined to protect their land.

Understanding the underlying sources of these land conflicts is essential to identifying their origins, development, and potential solutions. Such understanding provides the factual basis and knowledge necessary to devise effective strategies for resolution, mediation, tension reduction, and conflict prevention. Examining the historical dimensions of land conflicts addresses longstanding grievances and fosters reconciliation, guiding the government in creating improved land management policies and legal frameworks. These measures would address the root causes of conflicts, promote fair and equitable land use, and support the sustainable management of resources, balancing economic development with environmental protection.

Additionally, this understanding informs the planning and implementation of development projects and promotes better engagement with affected communities by ensuring their perspectives and rights are considered in land management decisions. Ultimately, resolving land conflicts contributes to preventing social unrest and displacement, fostering community stability and cohesion.

The government's efforts to resolve land conflicts in Tanzania is appreciated, but it is not enough. More commitment and political will are needed to address the conflicts for the country's development. Indeed, the government has enacted several laws and policies and established committees to deal with the land conflicts. For example, in 1999 the government enacted new legislations, the Land Act 1999 and Village Land Act 1999 (URT,1999). Section 167 of the Village Land Act 1999 introduced a special system of courts to deal with land conflicts. The courts function hierarchically from the top to down, but in this study, I will approach it in reverse, from the bottom up (the context of local-national-international) by focusing on the local level.

Overall, from the information collected from the field, I inferred that the inherited government policies and laws on land administration and governance influenced by global market forces and multinational, transnational companies' vast interests in agriculture land from the colonial era to the contemporary are the underlying sources of the land-use conflicts.

7.1.1 Government role in Resolving Conflicts

As highlighted above, Tanzania is resolute to solve land conflicts, but their efforts have not yet produced the desired lasting results, and the conflicts continue. The following

subsections look at the strategies the government is using to address the conflicts at the three levels. The first section starts by looking at Kilombero before and after the land law reforms.

7.1.2 Local level

This section looks at the legal framework of local land councils, ward tribunals, District Land and Housing Tribunals, the High Court of Tanzania, and the Court of Appeal of Tanzania (Report of the Presidential Commissions on Land Matters, 1994). After the introduction of this new system, the Land Disputes Courts Act (URT, 2002) was introduced to mandate courts to establish land disputes and resettlement machinery for these matters (Report of the Presidential Commissions on Land Matters, 1994).

Thus, village land councils, ward tribunals, and courts were established by law and conferred the legal power (jurisdiction) to administer justice according to law. This right is enshrined in Article 107a (1) and (2) of the Constitution of Tanzania (URT, 1977), which states that courts are the final institutions with a say in the defamation of rights of citizens (including the right to land) in the URT. In this context, courts are expected to receive a claim over an interest on land, proceed to rule on the rights of the conflicting parties by considering the rules of evidence and procedure, and make decisions and issue orders without fear or favour. The parties have the legal duty to accept the ruling and respect the role and decisions of the court to make it meaningful. If and when this does not happen (as in Ruipa Valley land conflicts in Namawala village) the result is endless conflicts and breach of peace and security, and it deters development. These institutions have the power to determine land conflicts according to the law. For example, the councils are designated to ensure the conflicts are resolved timely and fairly and increase people's participation in the processes of resolving the issue. The idea is to decrease the backlog of cases, ensure people's inclusion and participation in the process, and reduce financial expenses related to the operationalisation of the cases.

Unlike in the courts where only conflicting parties are participating in the resolution process, the village councils and ward tribunals allow other people from the village and ward to participate alongside conflicting parties in the resolution process to reach a consensus. At the ward level, tribunals use traditional methods to resolve conflicts through customary procedures, but the courts use legal procedures for such issues.

The village councils and ward tribunals constitute villagers of diverse age, gender, and experience from the village community, and there are usually seven to eight members, and at least three must be women. Participation in the tribunal is voluntary, depending on the willingness of the villagers, and the main task of the tribunal is to resolve the conflicts amicably by finding a win-win solution. Despite the challenges facing the tribunals and the courts in resolving land conflicts, they play a crucial role in dealing with such issues.

There is also the process of the village land-use plan in Kilombero district. Much of the land in the area is held under customary tenure, which means it is governed by traditional rules and may not always be formally titled. The process for converting customary land into statutory land with formal titles is complex and slow. For example, Table 7.1 shows the situation in Ifakara Town Council.

Table 0.1 Status of land-use plans in Ifakara Town Council

(Source: Department of Land, Ifakara Town Council, 2022)

NA	**Village**	**Status of land-use plans**
1	Msolwa Station	Complete
2	Nyange	Complete
3	Sanje	No plan
4	Miwangani	Complete
5	Msufini	No plan
6	Mkula	Complete
7	Sonjo	Complete
8	Sole	No plan
9	Magombera	Complete
10	Msalise	Complete
11	Kanyenja	Complete
12	Mhelule	Expired (need review)
13	Mikoleko	Expired (need review)
14	Ichonde	Complete
15	Kisawasawa	Complete
16	Mpanga	Complete
17	Kanolo	Complete
18	Kiberege	Complete
19	Bwawani	Complete
20	Nyamwezi	Complete
21	Mkasu	Complete

NA	Village	Status of land-use plans
22	Sululu	Complete

In Tanzania, local chiefs historically played a central role in land management, particularly before and during the colonial period. They were responsible for allocating land, resolving disputes, and ensuring land use conformed to customary practices. In 1963, TANU decided that chieftainship should be abolished. The chiefs had traditionally been authorities of land allocation and guardians of customary law (Fimbo, 2004). Since 1962, land allocation has been under the district administrations and villages (interview with District Administrative Officer, 2022).

However, the chiefs' power began to decline during the colonial era as statutory laws and centralised land administration were introduced. The independence, land reforms, and particularly, the *Ujamaa* policy further reduced the chiefs' influence by transferring land management to village councils. Today, chiefs' authority over land has become largely symbolic, but they still serve as important cultural figures and mediators in land disputes, especially in rural areas where customary practices remain influential. Despite their diminished formal role, the coexistence of customary and statutory systems sometimes leads to conflicts between traditional and formal land authorities (Interview, Chief Kiwanga in Kilombero district, 2022).

Chief Kiwanga in the Kilombero district said that chiefs were empowered to exercise some administrative, executive and judicial powers in the areas of their jurisdiction. The chiefs had powers to administer and govern in parallel with the local administration, which is an inactive system with a top-down bureaucracy. The chiefs were groomed to prop up the colonial government. He said that the system of chiefdoms was ultimately abolished in 1972 during the decentralisation process.

7.1.3 National level

At the national level, the Tanzanian government plays a pivotal role in resolving land conflicts through a multifaceted approach (Mwenyi, 2018). At the national level, the Tanzanian government plays a pivotal role in resolving land conflicts through a multifaceted approach (Mwenyi, 2018). As explained in Chapter 4, it employs a comprehensive legal framework, including the Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999) and the Village Land Act 1999 (URT, 1999), to establish procedures for land allocation, registration, and

dispute resolution. In fact, these laws were instituted based of the situation of increasing conflicts in the country in 1992. The judicial system, comprising the High Court of Tanzania and the Court of Appeal of Tanzania, handles land disputes and enforces legal rights. Administrative mechanisms, such as Land Dispute Committees and the National Land-Use Planning Commission, are in place to manage and adjudicate conflicts. The government develops and implements land-use plans to prevent disputes and undertakes land reforms to address historical injustices. Mediation and negotiation are promoted as methods for resolving conflicts, with community engagement playing a key role in understanding and addressing local issues. Regulatory bodies, including the Ministry of Lands, oversee land administration and ensure policies are effectively enforced; while monitoring and evaluation help refine conflict resolution strategies.

At this level there are also land-use plan programmes to address conflict. In conflicts, these plans facilitate the identification of competing interests and address these among various stakeholders, such as developers, farmers, and conservationists, by outlining designated land uses and zoning regulations. By establishing clear guidelines and objectives, land-use plans can prevent disputes by ensuring land is used efficiently and sustainably. In addition, land-use plans facilitate better communication and coordination among different parties, helping to resolve conflicts before they escalate. Ultimately, effective land-use planning promotes balanced development, environmental protection, and social equity, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflicts and fostering harmonious land management.

The purpose of land-use planning is to optimize the use of limited land resources by ensuring equitable distribution, strengthening institutions, and facilitating active local involvement and participation. Coordination is essential due to the growing need to regulate land use and the increasing recognition that land management challenges are best addressed through participatory and integrated approaches. Accordingly, the Land Use Planning Act No. 6 of 2007 (URT, 2007) acknowledges participatory land-use planning and management, establishing planning authorities at the national, district, and village levels.

According to Sections 29–34 of the Act, land-use planning in Tanzania occurs at various levels, including national, zonal and regional, district, joint village, village, sub-village (sectoral management plans), and plot or farm levels. Each level handles specific decisions, has its own institutions, engages stakeholders differently, and uses tailored planning tools.

This study focuses on village-level land-use planning (Section 33 of the Act), which involves the entire village in designating land uses that meet their needs while safeguarding resources for future generations. At this level, agreements and by-laws are developed to enhance village land management.

The Land Use Planning Act (Cap 116; URT, 2007) also mandates District Councils to serve as land-use planning authorities within their jurisdictions, requiring them to establish inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms which facilitates village land-use planning, management and administration.

Apart from the plan, the titling programme is ongoing. The 1990s represent a time of interests for land users in Tanzania as the relationship between the state and neoliberal land reform took a new twist. Perhaps Tanzania is peculiar in this situation because while the neoliberalism emphasises reducing state intervention in public matters, the state still upholds the status quo. On the one hand, Tanzania rejected both neoliberal prescriptions and the recommendations of the highly respected report of the Presidential Commission on Land Matters 1994 to divert power over land from the state to the village communities, and ultimately retained control over land in the state apparatus. Harvey's (2007, p. 29) assertion that neoliberalism is used in the pursuit of class interests is evidenced here as "the principles of neoliberalism are quickly abandoned whenever they conflict with this class project"; in this case, the objective was to retain centralised control over land. On the other hand, the state embraced formalisation of land by promoting it as collateral. When President Mkapa was elected to office in 1995, one of his intentions was to undertake major land reforms with the objective of making land an asset. Promoting the use of land as collateral has been identified as one of the strategies in Tanzania's National Programme for Economic Growth and Eradication of Poverty (NSGRP). Apparently, this idea was borrowed from De Soto's (2000), *The Mystery of Capital*. De Soto asked why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else.

Following the above progresses, the government moved to establish a programme on poverty and business formalisation, which is administered by the Office of the President.

These changes pushed the transformation in the existing land tenure framework, and facilitated the existence of a market in land so citizens are free to sell the land (Kamata, 2003; Shivji, 2023), but the money acquired could buy other land elsewhere. This change introduced a milestone to the land tenure system in respect of bare land. Currently, it is

allowed to sell bare land, while previously it was not allowed to do so. The reason was based on the value of land, which was thought to lie in the improvements made to it as opposed to the land itself (Interview, Administrative officer, 2022).

The government presumes that land titling will reduce conflicts. Titling is akin to granting right of occupancy, including customary rights and its interests on land. The existing difference is that customary titles can only be given on village lands, whereas granted rights of occupancy can be given for all categories of land. Thus, to legally recognise an individual parcel of land is a process that the one who wants the title must initiate. This process is called Individualisation, Titling and Registration. This legal process is beneficial as it makes individuals' ownership easier to prove, and hence, ostensibly strengthens security of tenure. It also facilitates borrowing. However, it is important to highlight that making ownership easy to prove through titles also means it would be easy to change, and hence, security of tenure can be compromised. It can also encourage individualism, and hence, lead to conflicts in land use among people who have a tradition of sharing resources, such as pastoralists (Maghimbi et al., 2011).

Aikaeli and Laseko (2015) argued that land conflicts continue to persist in many areas of Tanzania, and they noted that the government's adoption of the land registration programme is increasing in response to these conflicts. The authors argued that the country's legal framework for facilitation of land registration and titling is not broadly applied in the whole country. In practice, titling has mostly taken place in urban areas, and even in urban areas, there are quite a number of land parcels that are not assigned title deeds. Hence, most land in Tanzania is not titled. Land transfers are mostly conducted informally, especially in rural areas where land is customarily demarcated. Typically, landowners use plants that are accepted as traditional border plants in a given society to show boundaries.

Formally, Aikaeli and Markussen (2017) viewed that the Land Act (URT, 1999a) delivers the right of occupancy of land to, firstly, citizens aged 18 and above. This can be an individual, a group of two or more citizens, whether formed together in an association under the Land Act, or any other. Secondly, foreign citizens are given derived rights for investment purpose as prescribed under the Tanzania Investment Act, no. 26 of 1997 (URT, 1997b). In the context of the Act, all owners of land can register their parcels; however, the process of land registration and titling has been complicated and is too costly for most.

The country's land is not adequately planned, surveyed, and mapped. In practice, getting a land title in Tanzania is a long and complicated process that most ordinary citizens cannot accomplish. The applicant must cover all costs of land titling, including surveying, mapping, and placing the respective piece of land in the specific area's master plan, placing border beacons; costs associated with verifications; and issuance of documents. This is prohibitively expensive for most individual farmers in Tanzania, and is arguably the main reason why rural land in Tanzania has largely remained in the customary tenure system without formal documentation of ownership and rights (cf. Ali et al., 2016). Some villagers in Mlimba Council, Kilombero district said that when the project started, they were told that the exercise would take three years for all the citizens to get a patent, and in fact the exercise has been completed, and now many citizens have documents before the exercise ends. Some specifically expressed:

> We are grateful to our President John Pombe Magufuli and his officials for caring for us citizens and providing us with important services for free, such as customary title deeds. So, we are counting on completely ending land conflicts in our areas (Interview with a villager in Idete A village, in Mlimba Council, 2022).

Others argued:

> The exercise of surveying and giving documents to women will help to eliminate the patriarchal system of owning land because after giving them education, every household agreed to share pieces of land equally, regardless of whether it belongs to the husband or the wife (Interview with a villager in Idete B village, in Mlimba Council, 2022).

Meanwhile, another group believed:

> Land issues and conflicts have been creating tensions among the immediate family and neighbours. I therefore believe that having a legal document indicating the land owner will help in reducing land conflicts arising in the future (Interview with a villager in Namawala village. in Mlimba Council, 2022).

The revocation of titles is also ongoing. It entails the official process of withdrawing or cancelling a title previously granted to an individual or entity (Mkama, 2016). In order for the government to deal with the land conflicts in Tanzania, the President uses their power to revoke the titles of some of the individuals and farms to minimise land scarcity and

address conflicts. The revocation of a title deed is provided for under Section 45 of the Land Act (Chapter 113, [R.E 2019]; (URT, 1999a). This section states that, "if there is a breach in the right of occupancy (title deed), the title deed becomes liable to be revoked by the President". However, it is imperative to understand that the President shall not revoke a right of occupancy except for good cause.

The East African (2017) highlighted that Tanzanian President John Magufuli directed the confiscation of all undeveloped farms in the country and ordered that they be reallocated to other citizens. The President issued this directive during a meeting with regional commissioners at State House in Dar es Salaam. He stated that it was unfair for a few people to hoard large chunks of land while the majority of Tanzanians had none. He said, "You should confiscate all undeveloped farms and allocate them to *wananchi* who will develop them" (The EastAfrican, 2017, June 14). However, in doing so, the President insisted that commissioners should adhere to the country's laws when confiscating the land.

The President added that most of the conflicts between farmers and pastoralists had been caused by people hoarding large tracts of land. He also directed the regional commissioners to find amicable solutions to land conflicts, particularly those involving farmers and pastoralists, in their respective areas. To demonstrate his directive, in 2017, President Magufuli revoked the title deeds for 15,567.6 undeveloped acres in the Morogoro region, following requests from four district councils. The affected 14 farms which were owned by notable figures, including businessman Jeetu Patel, under Noble Agricultural Enterprises Ltd. in Mvumi village, Kilosa, and Esther Sumaye, the wife of former Prime Minister Frederick Sumaye.

In 2021, President Samia revoked the title deeds for 11 farms to address conflicts in the country (Land News Portal, 2021). The total area of land amounted to 24,119 acres in Kilosa district, Morogoro region, which was intended to be allocated to people for various activities, including farming and livestock keeping. The President also endorsed the revival of 49 farms on 45,788.5 acres that had been nationalized. However, residents were uncertain about their status regarding the now dormant farmland, which was going to be allocated to locals for farming purposes. This land was to be given to people who had no land at all and who needed it for income generation. In Morogoro region, people were urged to support President Samia in her efforts to serve the people. In the current financial year, 123 farms were verified in Kilosa, Mvomero, and Morogoro districts, and the

ownership of 24,119 acres was revoked by the President for violating procedures for their development (Land News Portal, 2021).

The government cleared 12 forest reserves, covering 707,659 acres, and 12 forest plantations, covering 46,755 acres, to provide land for agriculture and livestock breeding. This announcement was made on October 5, 2021, in Dodoma by the then Minister for Lands, Housing, and Human Settlements Development, William Lukuvi, at the start of a visit by eight sector ministers to provide feedback on the resolution of disputes involving 920 villages. Minister Lukuvi stated that these forests had already been officially de-gazetted, and the institutions responsible for conservation areas are now required to protect and clearly demarcate the boundaries of their remaining land to prevent encroachment by citizens.

Furthermore, the government established committees to address the land challenge in the country. For example, in 2021, eight sectoral ministers, led by the Minister of Land, Housing and Human Settlement Development, William Lukuvi, visited 10 regions to provide results for the resolution of land-use disputes in 975 villages. Those regions are Dodoma, Manyara, Tabora, Singida, Mbeya, Morogoro, Geita, Mara, Dar es Salaam. Since land is a cross-cutting issue, the ministers hailed from the Ministry-of Lands, Housing and Housing Development, of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, of Environment, Natural Resources and Tourism, of Defence, of Water and the Office of President Tamisemi. Minister Lukuvi explained the purpose of the visit as follows:

> During this visit, our ministerial team will meet with the leaders of the respective regions to get new information related to the use of land in the villages as well as to announce the President's mercy to those who invaded the protected areas to continue their activities without distraction.

However, Minister Lukuvi said that there are some areas in the villages that will be assessed with the aim of identifying dangerous areas, and emphasised that people will not be required to stay in dangerous areas. For a long time, there have been land-use conflicts in villages that were conservation areas where the government was asked to release part of the invaded areas so its citizens could continue their activities, which led to the creation of a special team of sectoral ministers to find a solution to the crisis.

7.1.4 Non-government structures

Various NGOs complement governmental efforts to address land-use conflicts in the KVFP. Locally, organizations such as HAKIARDHI focus on land rights and community empowerment; the LHRC provides legal advocacy and support for human rights issues; and the Tanganyika Law Society offers legal assistance and promotes legal reforms. Internationally, USAID supports development initiatives related to land management and environmental conservation in the KVFP. While these organizations do not have a physical presence in the area, they operate remotely through partnerships and field projects to address land-use issues and assist local communities.

A practical example of NGO involvement in the KVFP is HAKIARDHI's work in advocating for land rights and helping local communities navigate land disputes. For instance, HAKIARDHI has assisted communities in securing land titles and addressing conflicts with large-scale agricultural projects. Their efforts include providing legal support, educating communities about their land rights, and facilitating dialogue between different stakeholders. Similarly, USAID has supported projects aimed at improving land management and conservation practices, which often involve remote consultations and collaboration with local partners to ensure sustainable development in the KVFP.

For example, from 24 to 28 May 2009, HAKIARDHI and LHRC compiled a report following a fact-finding mission they conducted as an intervention in response to an outcry from villagers in Namwawala village, Kilombero District, Morogoro Region, due to the alleged government's plan to take possession of the village land for investment purposes. HAKIARDHI also promotes land rights and equitable land management. The organization facilitates mediation between conflicting parties, advocates for fair land allocation, and works to ensure equitable land governance in the region.

LHRC contributes to addressing land conflicts in Kilombero by advocating for the protection and promotion of land and human rights. It provides legal assistance to individuals and communities involved in land disputes, supports efforts to uphold legal standards, and works to ensure land rights are respected and enforced. LHRC also engages in advocacy and policy influence to address systemic issues related to land conflicts, and promotes awareness of legal and human rights among affected communities. Through these

activities, the LHRC helps foster a more just and equitable approach to land management and conflict resolution in the Kilombero Valley.

The NGOs in Kilombero also offer mediation, advocacy, and support services. They facilitate dialogue between conflicting parties to mediate disputes and reach peaceful resolutions. NGOs also raise awareness about land rights and legal frameworks to empower communities to understand and assert their rights. Through capacity building, they provide training in negotiation, legal literacy, and land management, which strengthens local institutions and enhances conflict resolution. Additionally, NGOs influence land policy and reform by advocating for equitable laws and better management practices. They also offer crucial support services, such as legal assistance and counselling, to help individuals navigate the complexities of land conflicts. Overall, NGOs are instrumental in mitigating land conflicts by promoting dialogue, advocating for rights, and providing essential support.

7.1.4.1 A widower story (R-1)

R-1 lives in Ifakara town in Kilombero district. She is a widow with four children, all girls. She had them with her husband, R-2, who died. Her husband owned 25 ha of land in Lumeo village, Kilombero district, which he inherited from his father, R-3, who also died many years ago. R-2 had two siblings, and they agreed with their father (R-3) giving R-2 the land. Life continued as normal, and when the other two brothers wanted to cultivate the land, they did so. This land was customary. R-3 had two other children, the twins. R-3 had a brother who also had children, one of is called R-4, and he is also a, R-3 sibling by default from a family tree. R-1 and her husband owned the land for many years until he died. She lamented that it is very fertile land located in a prime area on which one can farm anything. Tragedy struck in 2020 when her husband died after a brief illness, R-2's nephew, R-4 sold part of the land and disappeared from the village.

After R-1's husband died, she continued to farm without any problems until a day a man called, R-5 brought the tractor to the farm to prepare part of the farm, and he claimed that it was sold to him by R-4. After witnessing the incident, R-1 could not directly confront the man, but she reported the matter to the *balozi* (the representative of the village 10 cell system). The *balozi* is the intermediate between the government and the people and is responsible for keeping peace. The *balozi* declined to attend to the matter and acted like she did not know what happened. At this point, the whereabouts of R-4 who sold part of

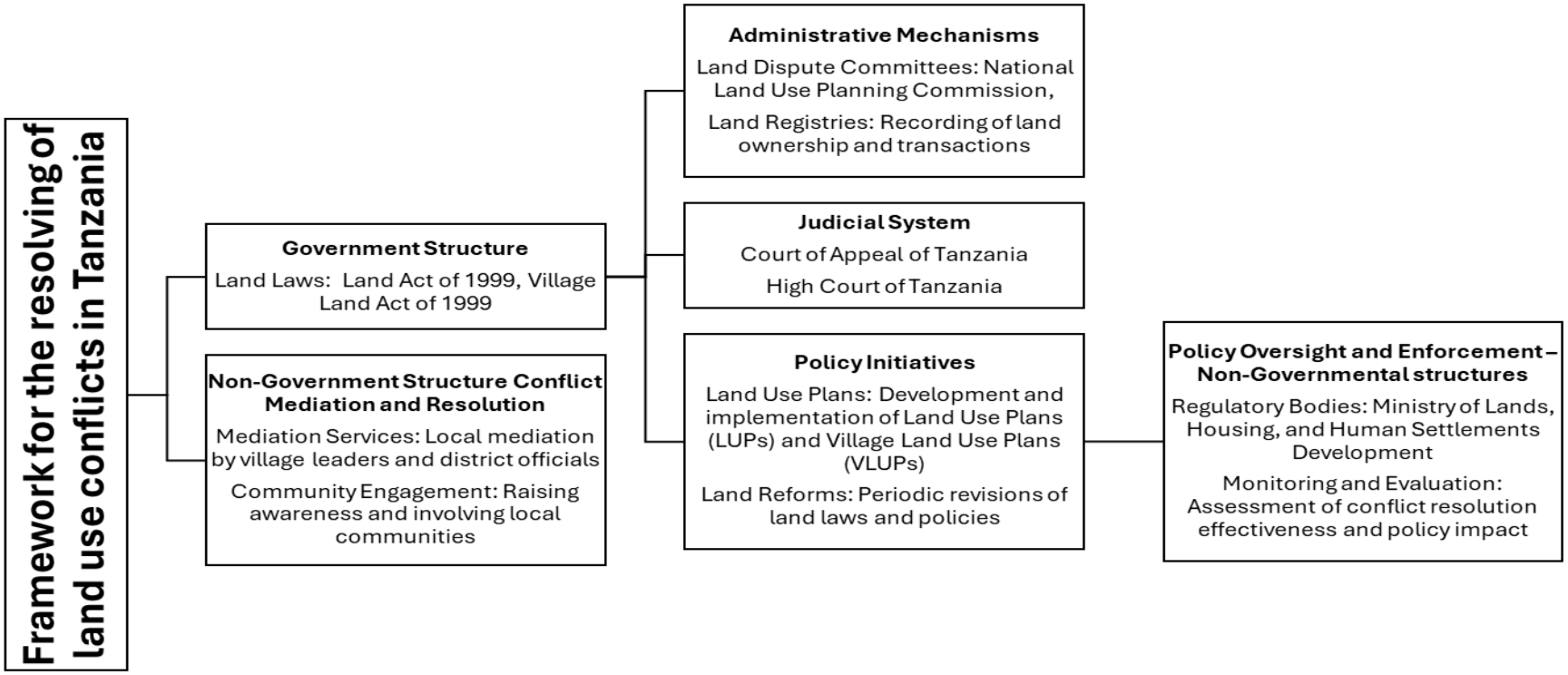
the land was unknown. R-1 followed up her case on the land for several days but was unsuccessful.

R-1 happened to be the neighbour of the Secretary of the Member of Tanzania Parliament. She decided to approach him informally; his name is Mr. Said Libenanga. After analysing the situation, Mr. Said realised nothing would be achieved if they pursued the matter at village level. He decided to approach Regional Commissioner Hanji Godigodi and argue the case. The Commissioner helped R-1 pursue the matter to the court, the District Land and Housing Tribunal of Kilombero. Meanwhile Mr. Said escorted her to several court sessions that she had to attend. They used Mr. Said's motorbike to go to and from the tribunal.

When asked why she did not go to any non-government organisations to help with the matter instead of approaching Mr. Said, R-1 said, "I don't know". When I left the field visit, the case was still ongoing. However, it was challenging to get the documents to verify R-1's story as she did not have any, and only had close relatives as witnesses.

I noted that in the KVFP accessing legal assistance beyond local courts is challenging, and this difficulty might explain why many conflict victims, including individuals like R-1, are unable to seek help. This could be due to several factors, such as lack of resources, limited availability of specialised legal aid, or bureaucratic obstacles. As a result, victims may face significant barriers in pursuing justice or obtaining support. Figure 7.1 shows the framework for resolving resource conflicts in Tanzania, and in particular, the role of the government and non-government structures in resolving resource conflicts in the country.

Figure 0.1 Framework for resolving land-use conflicts in Tanzania



7.2 Balancing Customary Land Rights and Market Reforms: The Role of International Actors

In Tanzania, the debate over land use represents a complex dilemma of balancing preservation with development (Ssekajja, 2024). Land is essential for social, cultural, and economic advancement, particularly in customary settings where food production predominantly occurs. On one hand, La Via Campesina advocates for the recognition and preservation of customary land, emphasising its importance for maintaining traditional livelihoods and community stability. On the other hand, entities such as the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization, Tenure Guidelines for Land, and government initiatives, including the Principles Responsible for Agriculture Investments, push for a market-based approach to land management and natural resources. They argue that reform and commercialisation are necessary to boost food production and economic growth. This conflict underscores the challenge of reconciling traditional land rights with modern economic strategies.

In advocating for traditional land rights and promoting a better food future, La Via Campesina created the concept 'food sovereignty' in 1996, which intends to reclaim the power of food worldwide. It defines the concept as "the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems".

Located in Morogoro, MVIWATA is a representative of the largest network of small-scale farmers in Tanzania. It is a member of La Via Campesina, a global peasant movement that strongly opposes the expansion of the corporate food regime and its associated green revolution technologies. Instead, La Via Campesina advocates food sovereignty and agro-ecological models of production, which they believe ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, territories, water, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those who produce food and not of the corporate sector (La Via Campesina, 2011). Alternatively, La Via Campesina is advocating for a course of agricultural development that is not supported by large-scale investments and commercial agriculture, which promote cooperate interests over local control and smallholder farming, potentially undermining the principle of local food sovereignty.

Land is central to reclaiming control over food production. Gaining dominant control over this vital resource is the starting point for achieving food sovereignty. Tanzania is often seen as having one of the most progressive land legal frameworks in Africa (Knight, 2010), largely because rural communities such as those in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain (KVFP), exercise relative control over their village land through the Village Land Act of 1999 (URT, 1999) and

village assemblies. However, in the current context, the Tanzanian government, together with international NGOs and several multinational companies, supports land policies that conflict with food sovereignty. As a result, it is difficult to imagine how agricultural development based on food sovereignty can thrive. As illustrated in Chapter 6, despite progressive land laws, villagers' land rights and ultimately their food sovereignty are threatened when the government persistently transfers land to investors to promote large-scale farming partnerships.

The Tanzanian government's lack of commitment to food sovereignty is reflected in policies that reclassify village land as general land and increase its share from 2% to 20% in order to promote land-based investments under SAGCOT. Such measures facilitate the consolidation of land among national and global elites and are fundamentally at odds with the principles of food sovereignty (Borras & Franco, 2010). It is crucial to recognise that small-scale farmers, particularly in the Kilombero Valley Floodplain (KVFP), are the most important investors in agricultural land. Rather than promoting policies that enable the reconcentration of land, food sovereignty calls for redistributive land policies directed towards those with little or no land (Borras & Franco, 2010). In Tanzania, this would, for example, involve transferring land that has been left idle by investors back to village communities (Abdallah et al., 2014; Bergius, 2012; MVIWATA, 2014).

Currently, the KVFP Village Land-Use Plan aims to increase general land to 20%. Instead, it should stop identifying land for investors and prioritise village land claims. The Plan should stop selecting land for investors and prioritize village land claims. This approach will ensure as argued by Fisseha (2022), the interests and rights of local communities are properly acknowledged and addressed before considering land allocation for external investment. By focusing on the multiple claims made on village land, planning can be more inclusive and equitable, ultimately supporting sustainable development and respecting local land rights. This approach should also investigate how villagers can invest in their own Land to achieve food sovereign**ty**. This involves ensuring that the land-use planning process is village- and farmer-led, aligned with environmental sustainability principles, and aimed at establishing a diverse and sustainable food-producing hub. A key challenge in this approach is balancing the interests and needs of farmers and pastoralists to prevent conflicts and ensure equitable outcomes for all stakeholders involved.

Needless to say, food sovereignty places producers and democratic principles at the center of the food system. It recognizes food as a right and a public good, rather than a commodity. It

identifies sustainability as essential and promotes it as a core value. Additionally, food sovereignty acknowledges the various layers of discrimination that burden certain smallholder farmers, such as women and youth, and aims to address these challenges to create a more equitable food system. It necessitates bringing all voices to the table and sharing land, seeds, water, credit, and other resources equitably not just with the few corporations that put profits first.

7.3 Chapter Summary

The land conflict resolution landscape in Kilombero illustrates the tensions between existing legal frameworks and the lived realities of land users. Tanzania's multi-level conflict resolution system, supported by formal legal recognition and NGO engagement, offers pathways for dispute redress. Yet, persistent legal ambiguities, political interference, and socio-economic inequalities limit these pathways' effectiveness. Addressing land conflicts in Kilombero requires moving beyond managing disputes towards confronting the historical legacies of colonial land policies, entrenched power imbalances, and exclusionary governance practices. Effective resolution must embrace inclusive participation, particularly of women and pastoralists, and seek to harmonize statutory and customary laws in ways that protect local rights and livelihoods. Ultimately, conflict resolution mechanisms in Kilombero must be embedded within broader reforms aimed at social justice and equitable land distribution. Only then can sustainable peace, economic development, and environmental stewardship be realized in this vital agricultural landscape.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

This thesis questioned the concerns surrounding the causes of Tanzania's land conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers, which are linked to land reform and neoliberal changes in the 1980s. Using a broad historical and actor-oriented approach, my contention was that any analysis of Tanzania's land conflicts should go beyond simplistic analyses of the protection of people's rights to land and the land reform process. Instead, it should focus on the policy and legal processes from the 1980s onward, including actors (both national and international), their interests, motives, and visions, how they pursue those interests, and how those interests are reflected in the final policy and subsequent laws. This questioning led to the central objective: grasping the causes of land conflicts, particularly in the context of large-scale land acquisitions of village land arising from the legal bifurcation between customary and statutory land systems. Driven by external investors or government-backed projects, acquisitions have increasingly targeted village lands, leading to disputes over land rights and ownership. The dual legal frameworks—customary law, rooted in local traditions, and statutory law, codified in formal legislation—often clash and create significant legal ambiguities, suggesting that these policies and laws largely align with the interests and visions of powerful actors. As a result, they have failed to address the primary concerns of the intended beneficiaries, such as villages and the rural population as a whole.

The following is the key question I argue has been ignored by scholarship interested in Tanzania's rural development process generally, and land conflicts in particular:

- To what extent is the conflict between small-scale farmers and herders in the KVFP linked to changing land governance and neoliberal policies affecting land ownership and access in the country?

The specific research questions for the study were the following:

- How do land-use conflicts between farmers and livestock keepers in KVFP manifest at the local, national, and global levels?

- What are the immediate implications of land-use conflicts and related neoliberal investments for local livelihoods in KVFP?

• How do local people perceive land-use conflicts and large-scale farming investments in KVFP?

• Why land conflicts? And what role has the government played in resolving them in KVFP between 2012 and 2022?

8.2 Discussions and Conceptual Issues

This thesis explored various causes of conflicts between smallholders by emphasizing the diverse motives shaping the actions of different actors and their interactions. While it acknowledged the significance of land scarcity as a contributing factor, it also highlighted how scarcity, like many political resources, has been manipulated and exploited in political struggles. Political actors, often driven by self-interest, have used land scarcity as a tool to consolidate power, favour certain groups, and deepen inequalities, as Manji (1998) argued in his work on land tenure reforms, in Tanzania. Manji's insights into manipulation of the rules by elites resonate with the contemporary struggles over land scarcity observed in this thesis.

I employed a Marxist theory of political economy, along with anthropological and political sociological perspectives on agrarian change, to understand the causes of land-use conflicts within the local rural economic structure in rural Tanzania. I argue that the core contradictions between smallholder farmers and livestock keepers emerge clearly in this context as the customary ownership of land intersects with class positions, suggesting underlying conflicts between different classes and their interests in both capital and labor within a particular plantation. I also argue that power and politics over this land can also be grasped beyond class categorization. At times, analysing processes of identity creation, and thus opposing 'modes of belonging', supplemented the class analysis that explored conflicts surrounding village-owned land. The following subsections are conceptual issues that largely informed the study.

8.2.1 Capitalist development

Karl Marx's conceptualization of capitalist development in Europe contrasts with that in countries in the Global South, such as Tanzania. In Tanzania, the transition from feudal to capitalist systems, and the distinction between peasants and the bourgeoisie, are conceptualized differently. These groups or classes do not easily align with Marx's definitions. At the heart of capitalist development in Europe, the transformation from traditional to modern societies (from feudal to capitalist society) involved the 'enclosure system' on land, along with other sometimes harsh land laws, in order to facilitate the industrial revolution. Eventually, peasants

became landless. The goal was to create unemployment by disenfranchising peasants of their land. Once landless, the disenfranchised peasants had only one alternative for survival: to be employed as laborers and workers, the proletariat. This situation increased both the number of wage labourers and the number of unemployed, creating what Marx termed an 'industrial reserve army'. Those fortunate enough to find employment worked in harsh and unfavourable conditions. The presence of a large surplus industrial labour, the unemployed, made it difficult for the employed to strike when necessary, as their positions could immediately be filled by those in the unemployed multitude.

In the context of Tanzania's KVFP, the situation is different. The peasants here, referred to as small farmers in this study, own 1–10 hectares of land. Unlike the peasants in Europe that Marx referred to, Tanzanian peasants still own land, albeit in small quantities, and they also own their labour power. If they become dispossessed, they can relocate and establish themselves elsewhere. This right is protected by the Constitution and land laws of the country, which, as explained earlier in this study, state that land in Tanzania is public, not private. According to these laws, any Tanzanian can access and own land anywhere over a particular period.

Bourgeoisie, as Marxist depicts, refers to the social class that owns and controls capital. Bourgeoisie values profit. However, in the context of Tanzania, the bourgeoisie does not align precisely with Marx's concept. In Tanzania, the bourgeoisie are in the process of transition, and they are often referred to as the petty bourgeoisie. Conversely, there is a small cluster of local capitalists who act as representatives of international capital in one way or another. These individuals have been termed the 'comprador bourgeoisie' (Shivji, 1976). However, the size of both the petty and comprador bourgeoisie is too small to drive the political, economic, and cultural transformation of society. Consequently, these groups are seen as inefficient in transforming society towards development.

8.2.2 Local economies

Large-scale land deals in rural Tanzania, particularly in the KVFP, driven by capitalist interests, have significantly transformed local economies, power dynamics, and social structures. These deals have displaced smallholders, especially livestock keepers, from their land to make way for large-scale investments, contributing to conflicts. For example, on Mngeta Farm, smallholders were displaced to clear land for KPL to farm rice. As land becomes increasingly scarce for smallholders, subsistence farming is undermined, and many are forced to work as laborers on the very land that was taken from them. This shift has created a rural

class dependent on the capitalist agricultural economy, profoundly affecting traditional forms of collective farming and land use.

Furthermore, the change from survival farming to profit making agribusiness has transformed the countryside economy from one based on self-sufficiency to a market-oriented system. Large-scale investments, such as sugarcane agribusiness, often profit at the expense of smallholders, who lose their resource and are compelled to work on investors' plantations, disrupting local economy.

Individualism is a key aspect of capitalist development. The continued dependence on a capitalist agricultural economy in rural Tanzania promotes individualism, potentially undermining collective farming systems. According to Marx (2013), this emphasis on individualism in rural agricultural economies creates distinct classes, with those who control land access and ownership exerting power over those who do not. This situation hinders both rural development and the broader national economy.

8.2.3 Power dynamics

Although village authorities in Tanzania, in particular in the KVFP, are legally mandated to control their property, in reality, large-scale land deals enable control of land in the hands of the state and local elites. Through statutory laws, the state prioritises these investments, thereby controlling vast areas of land. Local elites on occasion benefit from their ability to negotiate these deals. However, smallholders and local communities are the most affected and have minimal negotiating power.

Equality is one of the stated goals of capitalist development. Yet, power dynamics in land reflect Marxist argument on inequality as neoliberal market forces have created disparities rather than equality as a core tenet. The less powerful in the KVFP, smallholders and the broader community, are disadvantaged in benefitting from the land that traditionally belongs to them.

8.2.4 Social structure

The nature of societal forces and relations of production in the KVFP entails the presence of large-scale investors who put pressure on land, which leads to smallholders losing access to subsistence farming when they are displaced. When displaced, these smallholders migrate to

other regions in Tanzania, where they often struggle to adapt and assimilate. They are forced to search for new areas to settle, cultivate, and find employment to sustain their livelihoods. Despite these challenges, many smallholders continue to endure. Some remain on their land, cultivating and grazing, even as land becomes increasingly commodified and conflicts intensify. In this way, smallholders continue to provide for their families and contribute to the country's economy.

8.2.5 Class

The classification of society into, for example, feudal lords and serfs, or capitalists/bourgeoisie and proletariats is irrelevant in the case of Tanzania's KVFP. Class and classless societies do exist, but they are not as well-developed Marxists' sense. Historically, the class society was evident in the interlacustrine[13] region. Both livestock keepers and agriculturists could be found in the area, and there was a loose form of feudal relations of production, with an economically communal form of production, in that region. The 'classless' societies were largely found in central and northern Tanzania, like the Hadzabe, Sandawe, Iraqw and the Barbing, and the people were basically hunters and gatherers.

Indeed, in Tanzania's KVFP, the classification of bourgeoisie and peasants is difficult to discern. However, the struggles and antagonisms in terms of economic competition, such as access to land, exists, albeit differently to those that Marx analysed. Conflicts arise when one group of people move from one place (Jiménez (2017) to another, and when investors are allocated land in the country. For example, in the 1990s, when Tanzania opened up for investments, investors came and were warmly welcomed. During the 2000s, the friendly welcome atmosphere changed. Villagers as owners of land shifted their attitude and began to hate investors, perceiving them as profit-oriented exploiters and land grabbers. They thought that when investors took their land, free money would be pouring into their villages, employment will increase, and social services would be put in place. Instead, tensions arose that led to conflicts between villagers and investors, and in most cases, the state sided with the investors.

[13] In this study, the Interlacustrine Region will be referred to as per Marchant et al. (2018), defining the region in East Africa, which comprises the countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi that border Lake Victoria.

Marx (2013) stated that capitalist development classes emerge after smallholders are successfully alienated from their land and labour, resulting in the formation of different classes, namely capitalists and workers. However, in the Tanzanian rural context, this is somewhat different. The process of class formation is not merely about alienation but also entails a combination of factors from local socio-political structures to historical legacies. In a rural landscape, smallholders maintain some ownership of their land, yet their self-sufficiency is challenged by market forces and external pressures from large agribusinesses. This creates a peculiar dynamic where smallholders are not just passive victims of capitalist development but are also active participants who navigate a landscape marked by both dependence and resistance. Shivji (1976) stated that this duality complicates the understanding of class relations as smallholders may simultaneously embody aspects of both capitalist and worker identities in their struggle for land rights and economic justice.

8.2.6 Labour as a commodity

The detachment of labour from the land, is pivotal for freeing labour so it is available for capitalist development. According to Marxists, the structural determinant is the source of many social discontents including alienation. Under capitalism, workers are devoid of engaging in both the process of creating goods and the yields of their work. To solve this conundrum, Marx (2013) suggested that revolution is key to eradicate private ownership of the means of production (Clegg & Dunkerley, 2013), in order to create a classless society where workers collectively own and control the land.

In Tanzanian context, where majority of labours are smallholders who still own and control land, Marxist critique of detachment of labour from the land appears less directly applicable at first glance. Broadly, the relevance is seen in capitalist market forces that affect smallholders' autonomy and control over their labour. While smallholders own land customarily, the market-driven agriculture policies and land reforms have increasingly commoditised land. Therefore, even if smallholders still hold on onto their land in Tanzania, the resource is subject to forces of the capitalist market. This is the reason smallholders are constantly forced to engage in cash-crop production, such as sugarcane, for export rather than in food production for local consumption. These market forces compel smallholders to succumb to market demands under the neoliberal framework, rather than their own needs and choices. In this context, the separation of labour from capital or land partly exists. It manifests when the market policies

controlling? it aligns with Marxist critique of workers losing control over the means of production and land.

8.2.7 Accumulation by dispossession

From a Marxist perspective, primitive accumulation refers to the process by which pre-capitalist modes of production are transformed into capitalist ones through the dispossession of land and other resources (Wolford et al., 2013). Harvey (2003) expanded this idea into accumulation by dispossession, where contemporary capitalist expansion in the form of market forces continues through similar processes of expropriation. For example, regarding KPL, the authority converted the village land into the general land under statutory laws and offered it to an investor under the guise of 'public interest'.

Harvey (2003) argued that under these circumstances, the National Land Policy of 1995 (URT, 1995) and its subsequent laws have been instrumental in dispossessing smallholders of their land to allow large-scale investments. The National Land Policy 1995 and the two Land Acts of 1999s are particularly responsible for facilitating this process as they prioritise commercial agricultural development and foreign investment over the land rights of smallholders. This legal framework has enabled the commodification of land, turning it into an asset for investors, which in turn undermines the social and economic security of smallholders, leading to their alienation from both land and labour, and contributing to rural inequality and poverty.

8.2.8 Commodity fetishism

In rural Tanzania, the major cash crop is sugarcane (the KSCL's main crop of production), which is increasingly produced by smallholders for local and foreign export. A large portion of the land is dedicated to sugarcane production. However, the relationship between smallholders and sugarcane, which is supposed to be primarily social, is increasingly dictated by market forces. This shift reflects Marx's (2013) concept of commodity fetishism, where the value of sugar is determined by market prices rather than the labour that produced it. This detachment obscures the connection between smallholders and their land and labour, leading to alienation. As smallholders focus on the market value of their crops, they become economically vulnerable and face social inequalities, further disrupting their cultural ties to the land. In this way, the social significance of sugarcane is overshadowed by its status as a commodity, reinforcing the exploitation inherent in capitalist production.

8.2.9 Smallholders' differentiation

The changing profile of smallholders suggest dsuggested the differences across time, whereas differentiation among smallholders illustrated differences within the sector at any point in time. Individual smallholdings differ in structure and potential, while smallholders differ in background, ownership, structure, farm size, efficiency, management styles, land use, crop type, farming methods, ability, and class. The nature and essence of these multidimensional divisions vary between eras and are occasionally interrelated, but particular traits have succeeded overtime.

The sugarcane industry retained large plots of land while smallholders' farmers from Ndamba, Pogoro and Ngindo are constantly at odds with the Maasai and Sukuma livestock keepers about access to and control of land. Transnational companies on large land areas are always a separate agricultural subsector with alternate motives, interests, and lobbying channels over land. Figure 8.1 illustrates the range of ways in which smallholders can be distinguished. It is a simplified portrayal of these divisions, which often overlap and interact but remain incongruent and definable nevertheless.

Divisions among smallholders are mostly balanced by the institutions or overcome by the government in the KVFP. The government structures, cooperative unions, and social institutions have emerged when the government recognised the need for partnerships. The Agriculture Marketing Cooperative Society has become instrumental in regulating and articulating the varied interests of commercial farmers. Normally, farmers consider themselves as a homogenous community with a common goal, identity and viewpoint when it is politically, economically or socially convenient to do so.

Figure 0.1 Historical differences among smallholders

There are also commonalities among smallholders in the area. For example, they shared several factors such as agriculture practices that include producing staple food such as maize and rice; rice cooperative and farmers' associations; access to government services; and cultural and traditional networks. This economy actively created shared interventions among smallholders that strengthen cooperation. Cooperatives and farmers' associations, such as the Agriculture Marketing Cooperative Society, significantly unite smallholders and help them to sometimes assist each other in gaining market access and improve their agriculture production to create solidarity and a sense of purpose. However, government services, such as credits, building roads, and irrigation system strengthen famers' unity and collaborations, especially in cultivation practises in their farm areas. The 1990s' liberation policies, loss of government

support, and exposure to market pressures following the dismantling of socialist policies, the end of subsidies, and the collapse of state-controlled cooperatives left farmers without the resources and protections they had relied on under *Ujamaa*. New cooperatives and associations became a uniting catalyst among smallholders' farmers in the 1990s, ultimately leading to opposition to poor governance during the 2000 and lower prices of agriculture goods in the liberalised market economy. NGOs such as HAKIARDHI also help unite smallholders through providing technical and financial assistance, supporting their education on land rights for sustainable agriculture development and access to market, and advocating for policy transformations.

What is the significance of this diversity for our understanding of the smallholders? To begin with, the diversity demonstrates the existing differentiation in land-use practices, resource access, and power relations. Smallholders vary in terms of background, farming methods, ability, and class, which influence their environmental impact and interactions with larger entities like agribusinesses or governments. Their diversity was suggest dsuggested across political and socio-economic benefits. This differentiation uncovers power imbalances, where wealthier smallholders may dominate land-use decisions, while poorer one's face land tenure insecurity. Recognising these distinctions is essential for making legislations that address the requirements of different small farmers and livestock keepers' groups and for understanding the sources of conflicts over resources, sustainability and land rights.

Furthermore, when considered alongside the evolving profile of the sector, it shows that Tanzania's smallholders are far from the monolithic, static, inflexible, intransigent groups. The differentiated structure also has important implications for land policy because the current policy does not explicitly reflect the different categories of smallholders.

8.3 Contributions of the Study

Do these analyses of smallholders and other actors and their relationships with the state tell us anything more about Tanzania's land conflicts? My study did a micro-level analysis of the smallholders' conflicts and focused more on the interrelations that have been created in the course of such relations, historically and in the present time. I only looked into macro-level analyses when they have an overwhelming influence on the conflict on the ground, such as national policies, land policies and legislation, investment on land, and land allocations to investors. In other words, the state and government have not been left out of the study, despite not being the focus of the study.

The study's findings showed that most of the time, land policies and legislations work top to bottom. Policies and legislations that affect smallholders are created by government agents, who most often misinterpret these policies and legislations. This is done either to benefit themselves or to satisfy the whims and interests of investors or non-resident government agents. In the end, neither the smallholders nor the livestock herders get first-hand information. Some bifurcated information helps fuel the already exploding situation of the peasant-herder conflict over land use.

The state, through the government, may have good intentions with their policies and legislation, but the good intentions are sometimes marred by the very agents who are supposed to carry out and operationalise these legislations and policies. As a result, they have largely failed to resolve the primary concerns of the intended, such as smallholders and the whole rural population.

The study identified sources of conflicts among Tanzanian smallholders, and emphasised that these conflicts are profoundly entrenched in the country's historical and ongoing land reforms and governance. By looking at the evolution of land laws on customary village land, the findings showed how these legal frameworks both shape and obscure the nature of land conflicts.

One of the fundamental contributions is challenging existing, common belief that smallholders are monolithic group: The findings showed that the smallholders are diverse in terms of income background, land-use practices, size, and understanding of land as either a social resource or a commodity. These differences obfuscate the implementation of land reforms and intensify land conflicts as numerous actors pursue competing interests.

In addition, the changing profile of the agriculture sector, its actors, and land-use practices further contribute to land conflicts. As the sector advances under neoliberal market policies, new pressures and dynamics ensue, driving smallholders' access to and control of land (Evers et al., 2013). The differing views and approaches to land by numerous smallholder groups often collide, contributing to conflicts that are not sufficiently handled by current land governance structures.

In conclusion, many different groups of smallholders and the evolving profile of the agriculture sector must be considered to both understand Tanzania's land conflicts and to implement more equitable and applicable land polices. Addressing these conflicts necessitates shifting past the simplistic, blanket treatment of smallholders as "one size fits all" and acknowledging the

multifaceted dynamics at play. This suggests that more transparent, inclusive, and just land governance polices that are conscious of smallholders' diversity and the broader forces reshaping land use in Tanzania are needed.

8.4 Conclusion

As highlighted in Chapter 6, the smallholders in the KVFP differ. Historically, smallholders were subsistence cultivators who cultivated small plots of land, and lived in small communities. They most provided for their households and also for the whole country. They owned the land on which they cultivated, and used and depended on family labour. Eventually these smallholders evolved in size and in character throughout generations. Prior to World War I, they mostly engaged in the cultivation of staple foods like rice and maize, and the government controlled the agrifood system (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2023), including pricing and market access. During this period, smallholders were mainly subsistence farmers focusing on producing enough for their households with minimal participation in commercial agriculture.

With the World War II, the smallholders' roles further changed, and in addition to subsistence agriculture, smallholders were engaged in more commercial agriculture and integrated into the market economy to fulfil the needs of the global economic changes under the British colonialisation. Conveniently, the British colonial authorities had to exert more control over agricultural production during the course of the war. They mandated the cultivation of cash crops, such as groundnuts, alongside foods crops to support the British economy.

The 1967 Arusha Declaration's attention to socialism and self-reliance through the *Ujamaa* policy further changed the roles of smallholders. During this time, the government mandated collective farming through the establishment of the communal villages, resulting in smallholders changing their approach to agriculture. They embraced both the farming of staples such as maize and rice, and cash crops, such as coffee and tobacco. This transformation further integrated the smallholders in the KVFP into the market economy as they increasingly depended on selling their extra produce. In the 1980s and 1990s, the economic liberalisation policies forced smallholders to adapt to changing economic conditions. Most started to also take part in trade, the security sector, entrepreneurship, and other smallholder businesses to add to their income. The shift was influenced by land fragmentation, fluctuating prices for rice, and government policies that advocated for diversity.

Smallholders were deeply affected during the 2007/08 global food, fuel, and financial crises. Faced with soaring prices of essential foods like oil and maize, they had to adapt as best they could, navigating pressures that strained both how they produced and how they fed their families. For some, the crisis brought unexpected opportunities as higher prices meant better returns on their crops. But for many others, it became a struggle just to sustain their livelihoods. The rising cost of vital inputs like seeds and fertilisers made it harder to farm, as these became increasingly expensive or difficult to access. The crisis exposed how vulnerable smallholders are and underscored the urgent need for better market access and stronger safety nets—so they can grow enough to feed their families and still have something left to sell. More than anything, it suggest d the fragility of the global food system. For many smallholders, this was a turning point: they refocused on farming for their own survival while trying to navigate unpredictable markets.

The farm size also changed. Throughout the years, smallholders' landholdings have expanded from 2 ha to more than 3 ha per household. This was largely because of inheritance and purchasing as land was becoming scarce and profitable in the area. Productivity also increased with agricultural intensification, and most were involved in out-grower schemes on their small farms. Apparently, this was made possible with the raising use of modern inputs, such as improved seeds or agrochemicals, and the use of machinery as depicted by (Wineman et al., 2020).

Generally, the smallholders in the KVFP have advanced, adapting to surrounding environmental conditions. Besides agriculture, they also engage in business, such as trade and entrepreneurship, and they balance their farming with income from other economic activities.

8.5 Policy Implications/Recommendations

This study interrogated policy questions about the sources of land conflicts in Tanzania, what could be done to address them, and whether the findings have relevance for other African countries. Several policy lessons emerged from the research, and this concluding section highlights a few of them..

8.5.1 Some wider policy observations

Reducing the Politicisation of Land

Land in Tanzania is intrinsically a political issue. The land debate has become over-politicised, conflicted, and marginalised, which limits avenues for equitable development. As Chapter 6 demonstrated, a lack of transparency in land deals within the Kilombero Valley Floodplain (KVFP) has enabled closed-door negotiations that are prone to corruption and often result in unfair decisions. These decisions disproportionately harm smallholders, undermining their access to and ownership of land. The absence of strong political commitment to fair land governance exacerbates these challenges.

The Need for Stronger Political Will

- To address these issues, stronger political will is essential. This includes:
- Regulating land matters more effectively to safeguard the rights of smallholders.
- Enforcing transparent, accountable, and inclusive land governance mechanisms.
- Implementing policies that mandate open and participatory land negotiations to ensure equitable land access and secure ownership rights.

Align Land Governance with National Development Goals

It is essential for the Tanzanian government to ensure that land governance policies are integrated into the broader national development agenda in a way that balances the interests of both large-scale and small-scale investors. Specifically, policy reforms should:

- Review and rebalance land policies to avoid excessive prioritisation of large-scale capital investment at the expense of smallholders.
- Develop alternative policy approaches that actively protect and promote small-scale investors, who form the majority in most economic sectors in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).
- Promote inclusive and sustainable development by ensuring that land governance frameworks enhance equity, rural livelihoods, and national food security, alongside attracting responsible investment.

Towards Greater Land Tenure Security

Currently, land users in Tanzania face significant uncertainty regarding land possession, with smallholders being the most severely affected. This situation highlights the urgent need for policy reforms aimed at:

- Providing greater certainty in land tenure.
- Facilitating meaningful smallholder investment.
- Enhancing the security of rural livelihoods.

Currently, it seems there is uncertainty with land possession among land users in Tanzania and the worst impacted are the small holders. Should this be a call for policy that provides greater certainty in land tenure to facilitate meaningful investment and security livelihoods

It is imperative to formalise the system of landholding and institute legal protection for smallholders. Smallholders' land tenure security must be strengthened by prioritising their land rights. As outlined in Chapter 6, Tanzania is relatively progressive related to other African countries in recognising and protecting traditional land rights, but with the anticipated influx of investors due to liberal market policies, the government must intensify efforts to safeguard smallholders' land rights. The increasing trend of land hoarding and speculation in the KVFP region necessitates formalisation of landholding arrangements to ensure better recognition, and protection of smallholders' rights. This formalisation should be supported by a robust legal framework that clearly defines land ownership and access rights. By doing so, the government will help prevent land grabs and secure equitable access to land for smallholders. This will foster both rural developments and social stability.

8.5.2 Protect smallholders' interests

Numerous stakeholders participated in the formulation of the National Land Policy of 1995, the Land Act of 1999 and the Village Land Act 1999 (United Republic of Tanzania, 1995; 1999), but the views and concerns expressed by smallholders in Chapter 6 indicated that more needs to be done to increase smallholders' participation in deciding over land matters in KVFP. Development can only be mutually beneficial if the process is inclusive and fair, and if the diverse perspectives of smallholders are incorporated. Strengthening their participation will help protect their interests and contribute to more equitable and sustainable land governance.

8.5.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Currently, when the government, through the Tanzania Investment Centre, finalises land deals with large-scale investors, the process often ends at land allocation. However, as illustrated by the KPL case in Chapter 6, this approach overlooks existing land disputes and fails to consider the ongoing impacts of investment on local communities. This lack of oversight is detrimental

to all parties involved. It is essential that the government implements a robust monitoring and evaluation framework that follows up before, during, and after land investments. This will help identify and resolve any land disputes early on, ensure that investments are conducted responsibly, and create mutually beneficial outcomes for both investors and smallholders.

8.6 Areas for Future Research

Five recommendations for future research are worth mentioning. Firstly, there is a need to further study the ongoing impacts of neoliberal policies on smallholders' land tenure security and land-use processes in the context of commercial use and privatisation of land. This can be done directly using statistics modelling big investments and smallholders' investments.

Secondly, an important aspect to study is the effectiveness of customary land tenure systems in contemporary land governance. This will require assessing how customary land tenure systems are adapting to modern land governance frameworks, and their influence in the escalation and de-escalation of the conflicts.

Thirdly, it is necessary to study how land acquisition impacts smallholders' livelihoods in the long term. The focus should be on the long-term socio-economic and environmental impacts of land acquisitions by large companies and individual wealthy businesses on customary land.

Fourthly, it is logical to study the role of international aid and investments in shaping land conflicts. This should look at the role of international aid organisations, foreign investments, and development projects in shaping land governance and dynamics among smallholders. International actors conventionally play an important role in land reforms and large-scale investments. Therefore, the research should examine how these external forces influence local land conflicts, especially in terms of equity, country preferences, and smallholder inclusion.

Lastly, the effect of climate change related to use of land and smallholder conflicts should be studied. The focus should be on how climate change, specifically drought, floods, and changing rainfall patterns, influence land use, agriculture productivity, and access to land among smallholders. This is largely because of the increasing competition for fertile land and water resources. Understanding the connection between climate variability and resource conflicts is essential to adapt property policies to future development challenges.

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List of Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide for Smallholders

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology

Interview date…….....

District name……..…..

Council……...

Village name…….

Interview No……..

A. General Household Characteristics and Occupation/Livelihood activities

1. Introduction

1.1 What are your primary occupations? Farming, fishing, or

1.2 How much land do you own, and how did you acquire it?

1.3 If you were to leave the area temporarily, would you retain

ownership rights to your land?

- 1.4 Who would inherit your land upon your death?
  1.5 Do you rent land, either in or out? If so, who owns the land you
- aren't?
  1.6. Can you sell or mortgage your land?
  1.7 Do you have that land up to now?

1.8 if you don't have what happed?

2. What is your tribal affiliation (ethnicity)?.....

3. How long have you lived in this village? …….. *(If immigrant, go to: a & b)*

a) If you have moved from elsewhere, where was your previous home?

b) What caused/persuaded you to come/migrate to this village?

B. Mechanisms to gain, maintain, & control access to and use of land resources

4. How do farmers gain, maintain & control access to land resources? (tick all that apply/mentioned)

Right based Access mechanisms		Legal Access □ Title deeds/permits □ Licenses □ Social rights □ Other (mention....)	Illegal Access □ Coercive/force □ Bribe/Corruption □ Stealthy/Theft □ Other (mention....)
Structural and Social Relations	Capital (Finance) □ Pay rent/access fee □ Purchase rights □ Bribe (monetary) □ Equipment & Tech. (e.g., tractors, fencing) □ Other (mention....)	Knowledge □ Formal (e.g., social status, expert, skills) □ Informal (e.g., ritual, indigenous, kinship, beliefs) □ Other (mention....)	Authority □ Influence policy/law (statutory or customary) □ Lobbying & bribing □ Benefit from conflict use of power □ Other (mention....)
	Social Identity □ Leader (e.g., religious, village chief, community) □ Professional status □ Ethnicity (indigenous) □ Other (mention....	Social Relations □ Friendship (e.g., trust, reciprocity, patronage) □ Deception (e.g., kinship & favouritism to relatives & friends) □ Other (mention....)	Markets □ Local, city & regional □ Ability to pay market fees & licenses □ Influence on local rules, regulation/policy □ Other (mention....)

5. How do the mechanisms you described in the previous question, contribute to livestock keepers-farmer "resource-use based' conflicts? If 'YES' how? (Probe: for specific mechanisms leading to conflicts, rank them if possible)

C: Causes of land conflicts

6. What is your relationship with farmers/livestock keepers as far as land use is concerned?

   (Probe the history and causes of conflicts including the interests or motives of the actors).

7. In this village, do conflicts escalate to violence and what causes conflict escalation?

D: Land conflicts and large-scale investments

8. How do farmers/livestock keeper perceive large-scale investment's in land in Kilombero?

9. Currently, how does the distribution of land change upon investments?

10. How do the changes affect the meanings that land has for livestock?

11. What the relationship between livestock keepers and large-scale investors regarding land use?

G: Climatic Changes and Conflicts

12. What does climate change mean to you? How do you determine climate change?
13. What does climate change mean to you? How do you determine climate change?

14. How livestock keepers adapting to these climatic changes? (Probe how adaptation to environmental changes is the influencing conflicts).

E: Implications of land conflicts

15. What are implications of land conflicts for local livelihoods in Kilombero? What are those implications?

F: Mechanisms for resolving land conflicts

16. What are the existing 'resource-use based' conflict management practices for handling and mitigating conflicts in the village *(Probe: involvement of both traditional & formal institutional arrangements & operational procedures)?*

17. What are the existing 'resource-use based' conflict management practices for handling and mitigating conflicts in the village *(Probe: involvement of both traditional & formal institutional arrangements & operational procedures)?*

18. What are challenges have been faced to resolve conflicts and why? *(Probe: for institutional weakness & strength, and suggestions on how best to achieve conflict resolution).*

Appendix B: Interview Guide for Key Informants

Title/Affiliation…….

Date…….…….……

District…….…..…

Council……...……...

Village……...

A: Background

1. Were you born in this area, or did you move here? If so, when, and from where?
2. Are you married? If yes, is your wife/wives originally from here? When did she/they move here, and from where? Why?
3. How many children do you have, and what are their ages?
4. Do your children attend school? Do they assist with farming?
5. What are your wife/wives' responsibilities within the household? What are yours?
6. In the event of your death, who would inherit the land? Your wife/wives, daughter(s), or son(s)?
7. What happens when your son(s) or daughter(s) get married?
8. Do you wish for your son(s) to become farmers?
9. What future do you envision for your children?
10. Were your parents' farmers?
11. Did the villagization program affect you or your family?
12. How did the Tanzania-Uganda War impact you or your family? (Specific to the Kagera region)

B: Responsibilities

What are your responsibilities regarding land administration?

How are these responsibilities divided between the federal and regional governments?

In your view, what should be your role in land administration?

What role should local officials play in land administration?

What should be the role of central government officials in land administration?

What is the role of the Tanzanian Investment Centre (TIC)?

How do you interact with the Tanzanian Investment Centre (TIC)?

Are you familiar with the SAGCOT Initiative (Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania)?

What are the implications of SAGCOT for your district?

Are you involved in direct negotiations with land investors? If so, which ones, and for which projects?

Do customary authorities have a role in land administration?

C: Development Plan and Land Investments

Which areas in the district are targeted for land investments?

How does the administration decide the amount of land to be leased?

Are certain areas more attractive to investors than others?

Do you have specific investment targets? Who sets these objectives?

What types of land are typically leased?

Do you have data on:

a) land already leased to investors?

b) land identified for future investors?

How is land available for investments determined? Who is responsible?

What is the process by which investors acquire land?

How is land ownership determined? What is the mapping process, and who is responsible?

Can investors rent land directly from municipalities or farmers?

Why have so many investments failed?

In your opinion, what are the necessary conditions for the success of agri-food projects?

How can large-scale projects in Rufiji avoid the pitfalls of previous projects?

How do you identify and mitigate flood risks? (For Rufiji officials and RUBADA)

Could you provide more details about the dam project in the Rufiji lower valley? (For Rufiji officials and RUBADA)

D: Conflict

Which level of government is responsible for guaranteeing farmers' rights to agricultural land?

Have land conflicts increased in recent years?

What are the main causes of land conflicts?

What is the judicial process for resolving a land conflict?
Do conflicts sometimes occur between people and investors? If so, why, and how are they resolved?
Do conflicts sometimes arise between farmers and herders or between different local groups? Why, and how are they resolved?
What happens if investors do not fulfil their contractual obligations regarding socio-economic development?

D: Conceptual

From your perspective, what are the biggest challenges for agricultural development in Tanzania?
How can farmers' productivity be improved?
Do you believe foreign land investments contribute to socio-economic development?
Do you think the government's strategy on land investments benefits small-scale holders and herders?
What should the government's strategy be to ensure socio-economic development and agricultural development?

Appendix C: Interview Guide for Inventors

1. What encouraged you to invest in Tanzania?
2. How did you go about identifying the land for leasing?
3. At which level of government did you apply for land acquisition?
4. Can you describe the process you went through to acquire the land?
5. Who were your counterparts in negotiating the contract, and how did these negotiations unfold?
6. What are the key terms of your lease, including lease fees, exemptions, and obligations? Are there any associated development projects?
7. What is the duration of your contract?
8. Did you encounter any challenges during the land acquisition process?
9. Were there any instances where bribes were requested or paid?
10. How long did it take from the start of negotiations to the commencement of production?
11. Have you noticed any discrepancies between the terms of the contract and the actual situation on the ground?
12. Have you successfully begun production? If so, what challenges have you faced?
13. What crops are you currently growing? Was this the original plan, or has it changed?
14. Have there been any conflicts over land use with local communities? If so, what were the causes?
15. Where do you market your produce?
16. Is exporting from Tanzania financially viable for your business?
17. How many people do you employ annually, and how many of these jobs are permanent versus temporary?

Appendix D: Interview Guide for Interviews with NGOs

1. What is your organization's mission and primary objectives?
2. What strategies should the government adopt to promote socio-economic development?
3. How can agricultural development be effectively supported?
4. What are your thoughts on the government's land policy and land administration practices?
5. What benefits does Tanzania derive from land investments?
6. Why is the government prioritising investment as a development strategy?
7. What are the key challenges faced by farmers in your area?
8. Is the land scarcity a significant concern for the community?
9. Do women have recognised land rights in your area?
10. Have you encountered or heard of local land conflicts? Can you specify where, who was involved, and what the issues were?
11. Do you believe the government's land investment strategy is beneficial to small-scale farmers and herders?
12. Does everyone in the community benefit from these investments, or are some people excluded? If so, why?
13. What impact do these investments have on smallholders' access to markets, commercialisation, and food security?

Appendix E: Permit from the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology

Appendix F: Fees for the Permit

Appendix G: Conflicts in the area during the fieldwork

(Need Translation).

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

OFISI YA RAIS

TAWALA ZA MIKOA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA

HALMASHAURI YA MJI IFAKARA

KAMISHNA MSAIDIZI WA ARDHI, 25/05/2022

S.L.P 587,

MOROGORO.

YAH: HALI YA MIGOGORO YA ARDHI NA HATUA ZA UTATUZI HALMASHAURI YA MJI IFAKARA KWA MWAKA WA FEDHA 2021/2022

Tafadhali rejea mada tajwa hapo juu.

Halmashauri ya Mji Ifakara inakabiliwa na migogoro mbalimbali ya Ardhi kama ilivyo katika maeneo mengine nchini.

Migororo iliyopo ni kati ya wananchi na wananchi (mtu na mtu), Taasisi na wananchi, migogoro kati ya wananchi na Halmashauri, Migogoro ya mipaka kati ya Hifadhi na taasisi/Vijiji na Migogoro ya mipaka kati ya Vijiji na vijiji.

Hivyo kwa barua hii naleta kwako taarifa ya migogoro iliyopo na hatua ambazo Halmashauri imechukua ili kutatua migogoro ambayo imeambatishwa pamoja na barua hii.

Nawasilisha.

Mbele A.

Kny: MKURUGENZI WA MJI

IFAKARA

Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi wa Mji, S.L.P. 433 IFAKARA, Simu 023–2934212, Nukushi 023–2934212, Baruapepe: info@ifakaratc.go.tz, Tovuti: http://ifakaratc.go.tz

- 1:9:1 MAENEO YENYE MIGOGORO:

NA	AINA YA MGOGORO	MAELEZO YA MGOGORO	HATUA ZILIZOCHUKULIWA
1.	Mgogoro wa mpaka kati ya Kijiji cha Lungongole na Sagamaganga.	Mgogoro huu ulisababishwa na mkanganyiko wa wananchi katika kutambua mpaka halisi unaotenganisha vijiji hivyo ambao ni mto Lungongole.	Mgogoro huu bado uko katika hatua za utatuzi.
2.	Mgogoro kati ya shule ya Sekondari Ifakara na wananchi.	Mgogoro huu umesababishwa na wananchi kuvamia eneo la shule.	Mgogoro huu uko Mahakama kuu.
3.	Mgogoro kati ya Kijiji cha Msolwa Station na kijiji cha Miwangani kilichopo kata ya Sanje	Vjiji hivi viwili vinabishania umiliki wa kitongoji cha Magombera ambapo kila kijiji kinadai ni kitongoji chake. Hata hivyo kwa mujibu wa uchaguzi wa serikali za mitaa wa mwaka 2019 kitongoji hiki kimesajiliwa chini ya kijiji cha Msolwa Station na sio kijiji cha Miwangani. Kwa upande wa Miwangani	Mgogoro huu umeshaanza kutatuliwa ambapo baada ya kufanya mazungumzo na vijiji vyote viwili na kupitia kumbukumbu za hatua za utatuzi wa mgogoro huu imebainika kuwa Kitongoji cha Magomera kipo katika Kijiji cha Msolwa Stesheni. Hatua inayofuata sasa ni kuvikutanisha vijiji vyote viwili na kutoa ufafanuzi kwa mujibu wa sheria za uchaguzi wa

		wanakitambua kitongoji hiki kama Miwangani ‘C’ na kinapaswa kuitika kijiji cha Miwangani	serikali za mitaa na zile zinazosajili vijiji na vitongoji.
4.	Mgogoro kati ya Kijiji cha Sanje na Msufini kata ya Mkula	Mgogoro huu ni wa mpaka kati ya Kijiji cha Sanje na Kijiji cha Msufini	Mgogoro huu bado haujatatuliwa. Hatua za awali za utatuzi zimeanza.
5.	Mgogoro kati ya mpaka wa kijiji cha Sanje na mmiliki wa shamba la Mbega Farm	Mgogoro huu unahusisha kipande cha ardhi chenye ekari 12.5 ambacho kijiji cha Sanje kinadai kuwa ni eneo la kijiji na sio sehemu ya shamba la Mbega Farm.	Ukaguzi wa eneo uwandani kw ajili ya kurudishia alama za Mipaka ya shamba hilo kwa kushirikiana na Kijiji ulishafanyika. Aidha kinachosubiriwa ni maelekezo kutoka Ofisi ya Kamishna.
6.	Mgogoro kati ya kijiji cha Msolwa Ujamaa na hifadhi ya Udzungwa	Mgogoro huu unahusisha kijiji cha cha Msolwa Ujamaa na Taasisi ya hifadhi ya Udzungwa.	Mgogoro huu unaendelea kutatuliwa ambapo Timu ya Wataalam kutoka tume ya Mawaziri nane wa Kisekta kwa kushirikiana na serikali ya Kijiji cha Msolwa Ujamaa na wataalam kutoka Hifadhi ya Udzungwa, Pamoja na wataalam kutoka Halmashauri ya Mji wa Ifakara wanaendelea kuutatua mgogoro huu.
7.	Mgogoro kati ya kanisa Katoliki (ST. FRANCIS) na wananchi wanaozunguka eneo hilo.	Wananchi wamevamia takribani ekari 400 kati ya ekari 513 na kuishi katika eneo hilo la kanisa kwa muda mrefu na jitihada mbalimbali za utatuzi zilifanyika lakini	Mgogoro huu umeshaanza kutatuliwa ambapo iliamuliwa wananchi wasiondolewe kwenye eneo bali wapimiwe kwa kuchangia gharama za upimaji ili Kanisa wapatiwe eneo mbadala.

		hazikufanikiwa kumaliza mgogoro huo.	