

Investigating how the customary, freehold, and leasehold land tenure systems in Ngora district can be reformed to increase agricultural productivity

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ABSTRACT : This study aimed to investigate how customary, freehold, and leasehold land tenure systems in Ngora District, Uganda, can be reformed to enhance agricultural productivity, with a focus on identifying effective strategies and potential reforms. By examining the three prevalent land ownership systems, this research provides critical insights into policy and practice improvements that could benefit the agricultural sector, local communities, and the broader economy. The study was conducted in a district characterized by overlapping and unclear land tenure systems, which have led to frequent disputes and hindered the adoption of modern farming practices. A mixed-methods research design was employed, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, to thoroughly assess the effects of these land tenure systems on agricultural productivity. Advanced coding techniques, statistical methods, and analytical tools were used to systematically analyze the data, revealing patterns, themes, and relationships between the variables. The study achieved a high response rate, with 92% participation in in-depth interviews and 99.3% in the quantitative component, with a higher representation of male respondents (71% in the expert group, 63% in the larger sample). The findings underscore the importance of secure and well-regulated land tenure systems in promoting agricultural productivity and addressing poverty and food insecurity in Ngora District. To improve agricultural outcomes, the study recommends the adoption of sustainable farming practices and crop diversification, alongside collaborative efforts by central and local governments to secure and protect land rights under all three tenure systems.

KEYWORDS : Customary, Freehold, and Leasehold Land Tenure Systems

I. INTRODUCTION

Land Tenure Systems as defined by Deininger, K. et al. (2003) and Bourke, (1994) respectively, refers to the systems of rules, customs, and laws that govern the ownership, use, and transfer of land and other resources (Deininger et al., 2003) (Bourke, 1994). They can range from informal, custom-based, culturally based systems to formalized systems with written laws and regulations. Land Tenure Systems govern how land is used and managed and can have a substantial effect on the sustainability of land resources. Key elements of land tenure systems include Land tenure security, Land use rights, Access to credit and Access to land markets. Land tenure security is the legal and/or customary rights to access, use, and control land and its resources that an individual or group possesses (World Bank, 2020b) (Boudreaux & Sacks, 2009).

Agricultural productivity is defined as the amount of output produced per unit of input in the agricultural sector. It is typically measured in terms of yield per hectare, kilograms of produce per worker, or other indicators (FAO, 2017a) (Jimenez, 2016). Agricultural productivity is an important factor in determining a country's economic development because it directly affects the amount of food available to its population, its ability to export agricultural products, and its ability to feed itself (USDA, 2018) (World Bank, 2018a). Increasing agricultural productivity is critical to global food security and is a top priority in many developing countries. Farm size and output, crop yield, market access, monetary value of farm produce, food security, and resource use efficiency are some of the measurable elements of agricultural productivity. A number of factors, including farm type, location, climate, soil quality, technology and management, and resource availability, determines the size and output of a farm. Larger farms are generally more productive because they have more resources and space for efficient farming practices. Smaller farms, on the other hand, are frequently more profitable due to their ability to specialize in niche markets and use resources more efficiently (USDA, 2019) (Bumgarner, 2019) (Ferris, 2018). The type of farming done, as larger farms may be required for livestock production, whereas smaller farms may be better suited for vegetable and fruit production, also determines the size of a farm.

The availability of resources such as land, water, and labor has a substantial effect on agricultural productivity in Uganda (African Economic Outlook, 2019) (Nalumansi, 2008). There is, however, a limited supply of arable land because of population pressure, deforestation, and soil degradation, affecting agricultural productivity. Climate change and a lack of infrastructure make it more difficult to obtain water, which is essential for agricultural productivity. Irrigation systems, which would allow farmers to continue growing crops despite drought or other water shortages, are not widely available (USAID, 2019b) (Ezati, 2012) (Kizito, 2010). Poor quality inputs, such as seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides, are also a significant factor affecting agricultural productivity, resulting in decreased crop yields and soil fertility. Many farmers in Uganda do not have access to modern machinery and equipment, which limits their ability to increase agricultural productivity.

In Ngora district, where the majority of residents are subsistence farmers who depend heavily on their land. In comparison to other districts in the country, agricultural productivity in the district is relatively low (Osinde et al., 2017) (Webaza & Prasad, 2013). Most of the farmers rely on traditional farming techniques because they lack access to modern inputs and technologies. This has led to low crop yields and decreased profitability for farmers. These factors have created a situation in which agricultural productivity is below its potential (Sekabira et al., 2011) (Baryomunsi et al., 2010) (Breisinger et al., 2009). Whereas the Ugandan government has taken steps to boost agricultural productivity in the district, including the introduction of improved seed varieties and the provision of agricultural extension services; more needs to be done to ensure that the agricultural output of Ngora district reaches its maximum potential.

In Ngora district, three land tenure systems are in operation: customary, leasehold, and freehold (Bigirwa, 2015) (Kwesiga, 2009). The customary tenure system has been in use in the district for centuries. It is still the most prevalent form of tenure, and research suggests that it is associated with higher agricultural productivity than freehold or leasehold tenure (Kizito, 2016). This tenure is linked to improved access to land resources, enhanced participation in decision-making at the community level, and enhanced opportunities to obtain credit (O'Sullivan, 2013) (Ng'weno & Okello, 2013). There is a relationship between having freehold tenure and participation in the land market as well as economic growth. Although the leasehold tenure is associated with greater security of tenure and lower transaction costs, it does come with certain risks, such as the possibility of being evicted from the property.

Although customary land ownership is the norm in Ngora district, it is important to learn about the freehold and leasehold land ownership models also in use there. In the form of tenure known as freehold land tenure, a private person or entity can own land indefinitely. The owner of the land may do whatever they like with it, including develop it, sell it, or give it away. Ownership of the land is retained by the landowner under a leasehold tenure, but the landowner provides another party the right to use or occupy the land for a finite length of time. After the lease term ends, the landowner has the right to reclaim the property. Overall, both freehold and leasehold land tenure arrangements have the potential to help Ngora district by increasing tenure security and allowing more people to access land. However, it is critical to guarantee that the systems are well-regulated and that all stakeholders' rights are protected. The district should also evaluate the possibility of land speculation, which might erode land rights and produce land tenure disputes. Finally, it is critical to guarantee that the processes are transparent and that all stakeholders' rights are protected.

II. Literature Review

2.1.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Rural Accessibility Theory of Agricultural Productivity

The rural accessibility theory of agricultural productivity (RATAP) is an economic theory that states the economic productivity of a rural region is highly dependent on the accessibility of that region to markets, other rural regions, and transportation infrastructure. This theory was developed by Adekunle Folayan in 1985 to explain why rural areas tend to have lower levels of economic productivity than urban areas. According to the theory, farmers have the potential to earn more money when they have access to multiple markets and other locations, but they have the potential to earn less money when they do not have access to multiple markets and other locations. This theory has been utilized in an attempt to explain why less accessible areas typically suffer from lower agricultural productivity than more accessible areas (Folayan, 1985) (Srivastava & Pandey, 2014). In an effort to boost agricultural productivity and stimulate national economies, the theory has been used to inform rural policy and development initiatives. The theory is grounded in the idea of 'access to resources,' which refers to rural households' availability of and access to inputs like land, labor, capital, and technology that are crucial to agricultural productivity.

2.1.2 Reforms to the Customary Land Tenure System

Despite the potential advantages of customary land tenure, there are also some disadvantages. A possible disadvantage of customary land tenure is that it is frequently insecure and susceptible to external threats (Mwesigye & Barungi, 2021) (Dickerman et al., 1989). This may be the result of a lack of legal protection or recognition, as well as shifting political, economic, and environmental circumstances. This can result in land being

taken without legal recourse from those who have traditionally owned it. In order to increase agricultural productivity, reforms to customary land tenure systems are required. The emphasis of the reforms should be on enhancing land tenure security, clarifying rights and responsibilities, and enhancing land management capacity. First, reforms should be implemented to improve the security of land tenure by providing those who work the land with clear and secure land titles (Chauveau et al., 2016). This will reduce the risks associated with land investments and ensure that farmers can hold on to their land for the foreseeable future. Second, reforms should also clarify the rights and obligations of those who work the land. This includes defining who has the right to use the land, how it can be utilized, and who is responsible for its maintenance (Dickerman et al., 1989). This will ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities and can collaborate to maximize productivity. Third, reforms should also focus on enhancing the capacity for land management (Chimhowu, 2019) (Rights et al., 2015). This includes enhancing the availability of information about the land and its resources, providing farmers with training and resources to better manage their land, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. By implementing reforms to customary land tenure systems, governments and communities can ensure that all stakeholders can benefit from an increase in agricultural output. This is essential to ensuring that the land is utilized in a sustainable and equitable manner.

2.1.3. Reforms to the Freehold Land Tenure System

Although there are numerous potential advantages of freehold land ownership, there are also some disadvantages. The purchase price of a freehold property is significantly higher than that of other forms of land tenure, which is one of the principal disadvantages. Land titling and registration: Land titling and registration systems should be improved to ensure that land ownership is clear and secure, allowing farmers to gain access to the financing and other services necessary for increased agricultural productivity. Governments should implement well-functioning land registration systems that provide accurate information on the titles and boundaries of land parcels in order to strengthen land registration systems. Such systems must be accessible and transparent to encourage farmers to register their land. Strengthening tenant rights should be a top priority, given that freehold land tenure systems frequently leave tenants vulnerable to eviction, displacement, and other forms of discrimination. Access to credit should be improved so that farmers have access to the resources they need to invest in their operations in order to facilitate increased agricultural productivity. Governments should implement programs and policies that facilitate small-scale farmers' access to credit and other resources. These programs should consist of agricultural input subsidies, market access, and technical assistance. Enhanced dispute resolution mechanisms: Enhanced dispute resolution mechanisms should be developed and implemented to ensure that disputes between landowners and tenants are resolved expeditiously and fairly. This will improve land dispute resolution. Included in this list should be dispute resolution systems, mediation, and arbitration. These systems must be transparent, impartial, and accessible to all disputing parties. Improved land use policies: Land use policies should be reviewed and updated to ensure that land is used in the most productive manner possible and that farmers have access to the resources necessary to produce the highest quality products. Improving land use planning: Governments should implement land use planning policies to ensure that land is used in a sustainable manner. These policies should include zoning regulations, land management and conservation practices, and rules ensuring small-scale farmers have access to land.

2.1.4. Reforms to the Leasehold Land Tenure System

Studies have revealed that despite the potential advantages of leasehold land ownership, there are also some disadvantages. For example, one of the greatest disadvantages of leasehold land tenure is that it restricts the lessee's rights relative to those of a freeholder. The lessee of land leased from a freeholder may not be able to alter or improve the property without the freeholder's permission. Another disadvantage is that the leasehold's rent may be uncertain. The lessor may increase the rent at any time, even if the lessee cannot afford it (Shafir & Ormiston, 2015) (Land Use Policy, 2016). Typically, the leasehold tenure is for a set period of time. At the conclusion of the lease term, the freeholder may terminate the lease, removing the lessee's legal rights to the property. The lessee has no security of tenure because the freeholder may at any time terminate the lease or increase the rent. This can lead to the lessee's financial insecurity. Leasehold land is typically more costly than freehold land because the lessee must pay for both the land and the lease agreement. This can make it challenging for buyers to acquire leasehold properties. Leaseholds can be restrictive, preventing farmers from making long-term investments in their land and undermining the incentives for farmers to increase yields and productivity (Smith, 2019) (Hodge, 2006). To increase agricultural productivity, reforms to the leasehold land tenure system are required. The majority of agricultural land in many countries is held under leasehold land tenure systems, which can reduce the economic incentives for farmers to invest in their land and increase agricultural productivity. Reforms to the leasehold land tenure system should prioritize increasing economic incentives for farmers to invest in their land and boost agricultural output. Farmers should have the right to transfer land to their heirs and access to credit and other financial services as part of these reforms.

2.1.5. Research gap

There is conflicting and inconclusive empirical evidence regarding the relationship between specific land tenure systems and agricultural productivity (Deininger & Binswanger, 1999) (Reinikka & Mackinnon, 1999) (World Bank, 2015). For instance, which of the three investigated land tenure systems (customary, freehold, or leasehold) has the greatest impact on agricultural productivity? The answer to this question is context-dependent. Depending on the particular economic, environmental, and social factors at play, different land tenure systems have varying effects on agricultural productivity. Some studies suggest that freehold tenure systems, in which individuals or corporations own land outright, can increase agricultural productivity (Dercon et al., 2001) (Nkonya et al., 2008). Other research indicates that customary tenure systems, which involve communal or traditional land ownership, can increase agricultural output (Pender & Twyman, 2003) (Roquia & Yaro, 2018). Other studies indicate that leasehold tenure systems, in which individuals or businesses lease land from the landowner, can increase agricultural output (Deininger & Jin, 2006) (Gill, 2016). Ultimately, the context will determine which land tenure system is most advantageous for agricultural productivity.

III. Methodology

3.1 Philosophical Assumptions

The research was based on a series of philosophical assumptions that formed the fundamental beliefs and principles shaping the approach to data collection, analysis, and interpretation. These assumptions encompassed ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodological considerations. They provided a basis for the researcher's comprehension and interpretation of the topic, directing the selection of research methods and the study's overall trajectory. By acknowledging and integrating these philosophical assumptions, the research achieved a more thorough and balanced understanding of the subject matter.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This study is guided by the pragmatist research philosophy. Pragmatism emphasizes the use of ideas, experiences, and experimentation in real-world contexts (James, 1907b; Thayer-Bacon, 2003). It is based on the notion that truth emerges from the outcomes of practical experiments and applications, rather than being grounded in abstract theories. Pragmatism values the practical implications of ideas more than their theoretical foundations and serves as an effective approach for addressing and resolving issues in the most efficient and effective manner.

3.3 Research Design

A mixed-methods research design was adopted to explore the research problem and address the study's research questions. This approach combined both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis, effectively addressing the research objectives. The mixed-methods design proved beneficial as it allowed for a thorough examination of the research problem, providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004a). To evaluate the "effects" and "impact" of customary, freehold, and leasehold land tenure systems on agricultural productivity, the study employed a combination of household and expert surveys. These surveys collected both quantitative and qualitative data, which were subsequently used to analyze various factors related to land tenure.

3.4 Sample Size:

Cochran's sample size formula was utilized to determine the appropriate sample size for this study (Cochran, 1997). Initially, an estimate for a sample size appropriate for an unlimited population was calculated using the unlimited population formula, based on the researcher's estimations of the z-score (confidence level), population proportion, and margin of error. However, since the number of farming households in Ngora district was limited to 21,391 (refer to Table 3.5.1 above), the initial sample size estimate for an unlimited population was adjusted using the formula for a finite population, as outlined below. The unit of analysis for the survey component of the study was the household. Consequently, the total population of interest—32,100 household units—was considered to generate a more precise sample size estimate for the study. Unlimited population sample size calculation:

Where:

n = the sample size.

z = the z-score,

study.

\hat{p} = the population

ϵ = the margin of error

to be 0.05 for the study.

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 * 0.50(1 - 0.50)}{0.05^2}$$

considered to be 1.96 for this

proportion, 0.5 for this study.
(confidence interval), taken

$$n = 385$$

Where:

$z = 1.96$ (based on a 5% margin of error. Data are assumed two-tailed (i.e., a margin of error of 2.5% on each end of a normal distribution curve), thus a value of 0.9750 was looked up within the z-score table).

\hat{p} = 50% or 0.50 (this value is often pulled from previous research/ literature. If unsure, 50% will be used).

ε = 5% or 0.05 (same value used to get the z-score estimate but provided as a decimal/ percentage).

Finite population (32,100 households) sample size calculation:

Where:

n = the sample size.

z = the z-score.

\hat{p} = the population

ε = the margin of

N = the population

$$n' = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{z^2 * \hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{\varepsilon^2 * N}}$$

proportion.
error.
size.

$$\text{Sample Size, } n = 381 \text{ household} \quad n' = \frac{385}{1 + \frac{1.96^2 * 0.50(1-0.50)}{0.05^2 * 32,100}} \quad \text{Units}$$

3.5 Data Management:

The research process commenced with the researcher obtaining an introductory letter from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Kampala International University, which allowed access to the field for data collection using questionnaires and interview guides. Quantitative data was collected solely through the questionnaires, which first needed to be organized for effective interpretation. The raw data was cleaned, sorted, and coded to ensure proper organization and clarity. This coded data was then entered into a computer system, verified for accuracy, and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This facilitated the production of both descriptive and inferential statistics.

IV. RESULTS

4.1 Investigate how the Customary, Freehold, and Leasehold Land Tenure Systems in Ngora District can be reformed to Increase Agricultural Productivity

To collect qualitative data on these areas, household and expert questionnaire survey was employed. Thematic content analysis on NVivo 12 was used to analyze qualitative data collected through the questionnaire survey.

4.1.1. Whether or not Land Tenure Systems in Ngora district should be reformed

While some study participants supported the concept of land reform in Ngora district, many expressed concerns about "a hidden land grabbing agenda in any land reform efforts," citing "previous failed State efforts to do blanket free surveying of communal land." Participants underscored the importance of transparent and inclusive processes, as well as measures to protect the rights of vulnerable groups such as women and marginalized communities, to alleviate these concerns. Reforming the customary, freehold, and leasehold land tenure systems in Ngora district for increased agricultural productivity is thus contentious, with some research participants branding it a land grab. Any reform would require a series of carefully planned stages.

Land reform is necessary to improve agricultural productivity, but it should be done in a transparent and inclusive manner to avoid any hidden agenda of land grabbing. -District leader, Ngora district.

We have experienced failed attempts by the government to survey communal land without consulting the local communities. This has caused conflicts and mistrust, so any land reform must involve the community from the beginning.

-Community leader, Ngora district.

Women and marginalized communities are often excluded from decision-making processes regarding land. Any land reform must consider their rights and include them in the discussions.

-Female community leader, Ngora district. Reforming land tenure systems is a sensitive issue in our district, and it is often seen as a land grab by the powerful. A participatory approach is necessary to gain the trust and support of the community.

Land reform advocate/Farmer, Ngora district.

Participants also emphasized the importance of proper land transaction record-keeping and management to avoid disputes and conflicts over land ownership. Other key recommendations included strengthening the capacities of local land management institutions, promoting alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and providing access to legal aid to those who have land-related grievances. Before land reforms can be implemented, the general public must be educated about the cause and goals.

-Farmer, Ngora district.

Participants in the study made a number of recommendations to the Ugandan government and the Ngora Local Government, including the need for a participatory and consultative approach to land reform, the adoption of a gender-responsive land reform policy, and the allocation of adequate resources for effective implementation. Other valuable insights and concerns of farmers in Ngora district are presented in the sections below, which can help to inform the development of a fair and transparent land reform policy.

If at all land tenure reform is necessary, the government must educate the public about the reasons for land reform and its goals. This will help to gain their support and understanding.

-Sub-county/district leader, Ngora district.

Land reform policies should be gender-responsive and consider the needs and rights of women who are often marginalized in land ownership and management.

4.1.2. How Land Tenure Systems should be reformed to Increase Agricultural Productivity

Whereas "maintenance of the status quo" with no change to the prevalent customary land tenure system was generally observed across the district, a few participants recommended "mindset change" through education and sensitization on the benefits and drawbacks of reforms before implementation. They mentioned using churches and mosques to spread this message to the masses.

Any land tenure system reforms in Ngora district that increase agricultural productivity should be carried out in such a way that:

All relevant stakeholders must gain a better understanding of each land tenure system's impact. Involves a mapping of land ownership, occupancy, and access would be required to better understand who has what land rights in the district or a given community.

-District Land/Agriculture Expert, Ngora district.

Reforms to Customary Land Tenure System: Customary land tenure reform opportunities in Ngora District include increased land security and socioeconomic development for local communities. Currently, customary land tenure in Ngora district (and Uganda at large) is largely undocumented, and rural communities' land rights are only partially recognized. This has resulted in issues such as land grabbing and encroachment, which can jeopardize local people's livelihoods. As noted by respondents to the study below:

Customary land tenure reform should entail formalizing land ownership and establishing a clear legal framework for land rights, providing landowners with increased protection and security.

-Community leader, Ngora district. With documented land rights, we will have more control over our resources and be able to plan for the future. This will help us to improve our standard of living and invest in our children's education. Customary land users should be educated on their rights, the importance of registration, and the legal requirement of a form of documentation. All this should be undertaken in a way that considers the customary land rights of local communities and protects their interests.

-Clan leader/farmer, Ngora district.

A specific registration mechanism for documenting customary land rights should be devised. This process should be accessible to uneducated and marginalized groups, and it may entail localized land registration offices and mobile land registrars. Due to increased population pressure on land and the possibility for land conflicts, leaseholds should only be made available to private investors when and if necessary. This should be done in such a way that local communities retain control of their property and government institutions offer appropriate regulation.

-District land office, Ngora district.

As a woman, I am particularly excited about land tenure reform because it will also address issues of gender equality in land ownership. Now, women will have equal rights to own and inherit land, which will empower us to contribute more to the growth and development of our community. The lack of documentation of our land rights has made it difficult for us to access credit and loans for development projects. With land tenure reform, may be, we will have the necessary documents to prove our land ownership, allowing us to invest in our community's development.

-Community leader, Ngora district.

However, there are several obstacles to customary land tenure reform in Ngora District. One of the most significant obstacles is opposition from traditional leaders and communities who may see formalizing land ownership as a threat to their cultural practices and traditional authority. This opposition can obstruct the implementation of land tenure reform and may necessitate extensive community sensitization and awareness-raising efforts.

As traditional leaders, we have always relied on our customary practices to guide land ownership and use in our communities. Implementing formal land tenure reforms would disrupt our traditional ways and could lead to conflict among community members.

-Clan leader/farmer, Ngora district.

Another challenge is a lack of local resources and capacity to effectively implement and enforce land tenure reforms. This includes the requirement for trained personnel to conduct land surveys, manage land records, and resolve land ownership and use disputes. The success of customary land tenure reform may be limited in the absence of adequate resources and capacity.

We simply do not have the resources or trained personnel to properly manage and enforce land tenure reforms. Without support and assistance from the government, it will be difficult to see these reforms through. I believe that community involvement and participation is key to the success of these reforms. We should be consulted, and our voices heard, as it directly affects our land and livelihoods.
-Community elder, Ngora district.

There may also be issues with competing land rights and overlapping land use practices. Local communities, large-scale agricultural investments, and protected areas may have competing interests in Ngora district, which could lead to disputes and conflicts over land use. For the successful implementation of customary land tenure reform, appropriate mechanisms for resolving these conflicts and balancing competing interests would be required.

Conflicts over land use and ownership are already common in our district. Introducing formal land tenure could only exacerbate these issues. We need mechanisms in place to effectively resolve disputes and balance competing interests. -Community leader, Ngora district.

Overall, while customary land tenure reform has potential benefits and opportunities in Ngora district, it will also necessitate careful planning and consideration of the challenges to ensure its success. In order to address these challenges and create a sustainable and inclusive land tenure system that benefits all stakeholders, community consultation and participation will be critical. Based on the above submissions, Ngora district local government should strengthen its land governance frameworks and establish effective administrative capacities in order to properly implement the reforms, if at all. Effective dispute resolution mechanisms, clear and efficient land administration and recording systems, and strong enforcement against land grabbing should all be included.

Without strong administrative capacities and effective land governance frameworks, these reforms will not be implemented effectively. The government needs to take action and provide the necessary resources and support. Land grabbing is a major issue threatening in our district, it threatens our communities' livelihoods. Strong enforcement against land grabbing is crucial for the success of land tenure reform. - Community Elder, Ngora district.

Reforms to the Freehold Land Tenure System: Although it is less common in Ngora district, some respondents advised specific reforms to the freehold land tenure system to boost agricultural production. These included the supply of government-protected clear land titles, the adoption of communal and individual land use planning, and the development of community-based land management projects. Other reforms suggested were the use of technology for land use planning and mapping, the promotion of agricultural intensification and diversification, and increased access to finance and insurance for farmers. Finally, it was suggested that the implementation of contemporary agricultural practices and technologies could aid in increasing agricultural output in Ngora district.

As a farmer, having a clear land title would give me a sense of security and enable me to invest in my land without fear of losing it. I believe that promoting agricultural intensification and diversification can benefit both the farmers and the local economy in Ngora district. Implementing contemporary agricultural practices and technologies is necessary for keeping up with the changing demands and trends in the global market and improving our district's agricultural productivity. The use of technology and modern agricultural practices can help small-scale farmers compete in the market and improve their livelihoods. -Commercial farmer, Ngora district.

Reforms to the Leasehold Land Tenure System: The leasehold tenure system in Ngora district involves a person leasing land from local government for a set period of time, usually up to 99 years. However, this system has faced numerous challenges over the years, negatively impacting the livelihoods of those who rely on it. The potential for more secure land rights is one of the key opportunities for leasehold land tenure system reform in Ngora district. The current system has been criticized for being prone to abuse by rulers, who frequently have the authority to evict leaseholders and seize their land. Land tenure reform could include measures to ensure that leaseholders have secure and legally recognized rights to the land they are leasing, thereby providing a more stable foundation for livelihoods and land investment.

The current leasehold system is unstable and does not provide enough security for us as landholders. Land tenure reform could greatly improve our lives and livelihoods. Without secure land rights, it is difficult for us to access credit and invest in our land. Land tenure reform could open up more opportunities for economic growth in our district. Our district has a lot of potential for agricultural development, but the current leasehold system limits our ability to make long-term investments in our land. Land tenure reform could unlock this potential and benefit our entire community. - Agricultural cooperative member, Ngora district.

Land tenure reform is necessary for recognizing and protecting the rights of both leaseholders and landowners. It could lead to a more equitable and sustainable land tenure system in Ngora district. I have struggled to access loans and credit due to not having absolute ownership rights of my land. Land tenure reform could open up new opportunities for me and my family. - Leaseholder and small business owner in Ngora district.

Another possibility is increased credit and investment access. Landholders do not have absolute ownership rights under the customary tenure system, making it difficult to use the land as collateral for loans. Reforms could include mechanisms that allow leaseholders to use their land as collateral, potentially leading to increased land investment and economic development in the district. Leasehold tenure, like freehold land tenure, is less common in Ngora district, and several respondents advocated for particular reforms to enhance agricultural productivity. Among these reforms were: Allowing renters to access a portion of the land under lease to plant or start small businesses, Implementing flexible tenancy arrangements that allow tenants to relocate, transfer, or improve their lease, Establishing comprehensive dispute resolution systems in the event of a landlord-tenant issue, Forming a committee to keep records on leasehold property and register new leases so that all agreements are formal and explicitly controlled, and Ensuring tenure security, includes establishing specific rights to tenants to whom land is leased, to ensure the tenant's investments are secure.

V. CONCLUSION

Land tenure systems have a significant impact on agricultural productivity in Ngora district. The district's main land tenure systems are customary, freehold, and leasehold. Each system has advantages and disadvantages that play an important role in shaping agricultural productivity. The dominant system in Ngora district, customary land tenure, has several advantages. It promotes traditional values and practices that are deeply ingrained in the local community's culture. This not only contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage, but it also ensures that traditional farming techniques and knowledge are passed down from generation to generation. Customary land tenure also provides farmers with access to land, which is necessary for them to cultivate crops and raise livestock. It ensures that land is not left idle, contributing to the district's overall agricultural productivity. Furthermore, customary land tenure fosters a sense of community and collective responsibility for land management, which contributes to social stability. However, there are some disadvantages to customary land tenure. One of the most significant challenges is the lack of or weak legal recognition. Because customary land is not legally recognized, farmers find it difficult to obtain formal credit and other financial services. This limits their ability to invest in modern agricultural techniques and technologies that could boost agricultural productivity significantly. Furthermore, customary land tenure impedes women's, marginalized groups', and vulnerable populations' rights to access and own land, perpetuating inequalities.

5.2 Recommendations

Secure land tenure, credit, modern farming techniques, and access to land markets should be prioritized in Ngora district development strategies. The district's customary land tenure system, which is preferred by many, should be recognized for its benefits such as communal ownership and the preservation of traditional culture. Steps should be taken, however, to address its shortcomings, such as a lack of legal protection and access and use barriers for marginalized groups. Efforts should be made to formalize and document customary land ownership in order to avoid land disputes and provide farmers with access to development resources. To prevent land grabs and encroachment, customary land rights should be recognized and protected through policies and regulations.

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