UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

LAND GRABBING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA: THE CASE STUDY OF GAMBELLA REGION OF ETHIOPIA

MEHARI FISSEHA

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHIE

AT THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY & ARCHAEOLOGY FOR

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

PROMOTOR: PROFESSOR GODSWILL MAKOMBE

CO-PROMOTOR: PROFESSOR VUSI THEBE

2022

DEDICATIONS

To my beautiful children:

1. Alazar Mehari
2. Hiyab Mehari
3. Lidiya Mehari
4. Elshaddai Mehari

You came with all the beautiful things that are happening to me, and for you, I am committed to make the world a better place so that you can live safely and happily in it.

With the most profound love of your father.

DECLARATION

I, **Mehari Fisseha**, hereby declare that this extensive doctoral thesis for the Programme in Development studies at the University of Pretoria is my own original work and has not been submitted by me or any other individual at this or any other university. I also declare that all reference materials, used for this study, have been properly acknowledged.

……..

Mehari Fisseha

Student Number: 13391322

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere appreciation and gratitude go to the following people who have contributed to making this great accomplishment a reality:

- My promoter, **Prof. GODSWILL MAKOMBE**, and co-promotor, **Prof**. **VUSI THEBE** for their support and guidance during the course of this research. They have dedicated their precious time to encourage me and moreover gave me constructive insights.
- My children for their support and understanding while I was performing this study.
- My friends and colleagues all over the world
- The University of Pretoria, Faculty of Humanities, for granting me a scholarship to undertake this programme. I have deep respect and gratitude for the University of Pretoria
- My beautiful wife **SOSINA GIRMA WONDEMU** for her support and blessings
- Almighty God for his protection over me while I travelled between Europe and Ethiopia while undertaking the programme and giving me good health and financial provisions. "Be thou exalted, O Lord".

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii
ABSTRACT x
CHAPTER ONE 1
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY 1
1.1 **INTRODUCTION** 1
1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY 6
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT 10
1.3 MOTIVATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY 12
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 12
1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY 13
1.6 OBJECTIVES 13
1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS 14
1.8 THEORETICAL APPROACHES 15
1.8.2 Autochthony 17
1.8.4 Belonging 18
1.8.5 Racism 23
1.8.6 The international dependency theory and land grabs 24
1.9 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS 28
1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE 29
LITERATURE REVIEW 30
2.0 INTRODUCTION 30
2.1 THE HISTORY OF LAND GRABBING AND CURRENT TRENDS 30
2.2 LAND GRABBING IN AFRICA 66
2.2.1 LAND GRABBING IN ETHIOPIA 68
2.2.1.1 History of land use and alienation in Ethiopia 68
2.2.1.2 Land grabs in Gambella 70
2.2.1.3 Land governance issue in Ethiopia 73
2.3 DEBATES ON LAND GRABBING: THE TANGENTS AND KEY ISSUES 77
2.4 LAND GRABBING AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE 88
2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY 94
METHODOLOGY 96
3.0 INTRODUCTION 96
3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH 96

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM 99
3.2.2 Positivism paradigm 100
3.2.3 Critical Theory 100
3.2.4 Interpretivist paradigm 101
3.2.5 Paradigm adopted in this research study 102
3.3.1 Narrative research design 105
3.3.2 Phenomenology research 106
3.3.3 Grounded theory research 106
3.3.4 Ethnographic research 107
3.3.5 Case study research 107
3.4 STUDY AREA 109
3.5 POPULATION 111
3.6 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE 111
3.7 SAMPLING FRAME 114
3.8 SAMPLING SIZE 114
3.9 DATA COLLECTION 117
3.9.1 Unstructured interviews 118
3.9.2 Semi-structured interviews 118
3.9.3 Observations 119
3.9.4 Transect walks 120
3.10 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION 120
3.10.1 Focus Group Discussions 121
3.10.2 Key Informant Interviews 122
3.10.3 Guided walk interviews 123
3.11 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS 128
3.11.1 Qualitative data analysis approach 129
3.11.2 The concept-modelling approach 129
3.11.3 Thematic approach 130
3.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY 132
3.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS 135
3.13.1 Harm and risk mitigation 135
3.13.2 Informed Consent 136
3.13.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity 137
3.13.5 Deception 137

3.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY 137
CHAPTER FOUR 139
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS 139
4.0 INTRODUCTION 139
4.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF LAND GRABBING 139
4.1.1 Category-1: Perception of Land Transfers 140
4.1.1.1 Theme-1: Destruction of Identity 141
4.1.1.1.1 Sub-theme-1: Destruction of Ancestral Philosophies 141
4.1.1.1.2 Sub-theme-2: 'Genocide' 142
4.1.1.1.3 Sub-theme-3: Breaching Dignity 143
4.1.1.1.4 Sub-theme-4: Ethnic Discrimination 144
4.1.1.1.5 Sub-theme-5: 'Colonization' and 'Neo-Colonization.' 145
4.1.1.2 Theme-2: Land Seizing 147
4.1.1.2.1 Subtheme-1: Land Barons 147
4.1.1.2.2 Subtheme-2: Land Corruption 148
4.1.1.2.3 Subtheme-3: Land Grabbing 149
4.1.1.2.4 Subtheme-4: Theft, 'Thuggery' and Robbery 150
4.1.1.3 Theme-3: Land Leasing 153
4.2 CATEGORY-2: CONSULTATION WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS 154
4.2.1 Theme-1: Consultation with Community Members 155
4.2.2 Theme-2: Consultation with Community Leaders 158
4.2.3 Theme-3: Consultation with Other Stakeholders 160
4.3 CATEGORY-3: MEASURES TAKEN 160
4.3.1 Theme-1: Interests of the Local Communities 161
4.3.2 Theme-2: Measures Taken to Protect Rights and Interests 163
4.3.3 Theme-4: Effectiveness of Measures 164
4.4 CATEGORY-4: IMPLICATIONS OF LAND TRANSFERS 165
4.4.1 Theme-1: Eurocentrism Vs. Afrocentrism 166
4.4.2 Theme-2: Positive and Negative Implications 168
4.4.2.1 Subtheme-1: Alienation from Sense of Identity 168
4.4.2.2 Subtheme-2: Loss of Livelihoods 169
4.4.2.3 Subtheme-3: Environmental Exploitation 170
4.4.2.4 Subtheme-4: Breaching of Social Fabrics 170

4.4.2.5 Subtheme-5: Socio-Economic Losses 171
4.4.2.6 Subtheme-6: Psychological Damages 173
4.5 CATEGORY-5: RECONCILIATION OF INTERESTS 176
4.5.1 Theme-1: Clash of Interests 176
4.5.2 Theme-2: Reconciliation of Interests 177
4.6 CATEGORY-6: FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS 178
4.6.1 Theme-1: Benefits Assumed from the Study 178
4.6.2 Theme-2: Security Concerns 179
4.6.3 Theme-3: Involving Females 180
4.6.4 Theme-4: Anger and Belligerence 181
4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY 182
5.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS 184
5.2 CHAPTER SUMMARY 206
CHAPTER SIX 207
CONCLUSION 207
6.0 INTRODUCTION 207
6.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS 208
6.2 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE RESEARCH 211
6.3 WHAT IS LIKELY TO CONDITION THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE LAND USE AND TENURE REFORMS IN THE GAMBELLA REGION OF ETHIOPIA? 215
6.4 THEORETICAL INSIGHTS 218
6.5 CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD 222
6.6 AREA/S OF FURTHER STUDY 224
Semi structured interview guide for the Provincial Government Officials/Foreign company representative 252

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
AU	African Union
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
DFID	United Kingdom's Department for International Development
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FIAN	Food First Information and Action Network
FIAS	Foreign Investment Advisory service
GHI	Global Harvest Initiative
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
HRC	Human Rights Council
IAB	Investing Across Borders
IBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICARRD	International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development
ICC	International Criminal Court
IFAD	International Food and Agricultural Development
IFAP	International Federation of Agricultural Producers

IFC International Finance Corporation

IFIs International Financial Institutions

IIED International Institute for Environment and Development

ILC International Land Coalition

IPC International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty

IRRI International Rice Research Institute

RAI Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment

REDD Reduced Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation

SEZs Special Economic Zones

SIDA Swedish International Development Agency

UN United Nations

US United States

VGs Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security

WCARRD World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development

WFP World Food Programme

WTO World Trade Organisation

ABSTRACT

Since 2008, land grabbing has become trendy, especially in the global South, particularly in Africa. Such a trend can partly be explained by the land rush in the global North, which was spurred by speculations of the global rise in the demand for farmland due to forecasts of food shortages and surges in demand for biofuels, among other issues. This ethnographic study thus documents the Gambella people's contestations, perceptions, and the socio-economic implications of the land grabs to pave way for foreign occupiers. I frame this study within the concept the international dependency theory. I do this in order to analyse the way land is taken from the people of Nilo-Saharan linguistic group called the Nuer origin in the Gambella region and also paying attention on the socio-economic implications of these land grabs on the local people of the Gambella region within a qualitative research methodology.

Key Words: Land Grabbing, Ethiopia, Gambella, Sub Saharan Africa, Human Rights

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Three decades ago, the majority of people in sub-Saharan Africa before the European could boast of owning a piece of land (Makki & Geisler, 2011). Ideally, the land could serve as a perpetual asset that can be used, subject to traditional terms of use. Presently, there is a sense of insecurity in rural livelihoods because many local and foreign investors are acquiring large pieces of land in rural Africa (Makki & Geisler, 2011). The irony is that the land acquisition by investors (both local and foreign), is largely in their favour and has nothing to do with solving the problems of local farm owners (Arts, 2009; Rutherford, 2017; Moyo, Jha, & Yeros, 2019). In some instances, these land acquisitions have been referred to as 'commercial pressures on land', foreign land investment or large-scale land acquisitions (Cotula, 2012). Yet in some cases, these occurrences have been termed land grabs (Alden-Wily, 2012). Nally (2014) defines land grabs as the transfer of one's right to control, use and own land through concession, sale or lease. The International Land Coalition (ILC) notes that land grabs vary from other 'ordinary' ways of land acquisition in that they do not include the informed consent of the original owners of the land. Additionally, when carrying out land grabs, the ILC notes that those who take over the land usually do not carry out a prior assessment of the environmental, social and economic implications of the grabs. The ILC also notes that in most land grabbing deals, the contracts which are concluded in these deals are not clear and are usually non-binding. Alden-Wily (2012) argues that land grabs usually lead to the violation of human rights, notably the rights of women and minorities. Further, land grabs

usually take place without the independent oversight and fair participation of the local peoples (Alden-Wily, 2012).

The emerging global economies such as China, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have prompted them to carry out offshore food production processes in order to feed their surging populations (Nally, 2014; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018). Acquiring foreign land has been seen as the only sustainable solution to the domestic pressures on land and the surging prices of food. Although states have played a speculative role in the land grabs, private multinational corporations have been at the forefront (Goldstein & Yates, 2017). In this context, it is important to differentiate between agro-food private investors and financial capital private investors. The agro-food private players see land grabs as a chance to outcompete and gain parity with market leaders which are more established (GRAIN, 2008; Goldstein & Yates, 2017). In these cases, agro-food private players see land grabbing as an opportunity to transition and scale-up their business in the growing agricultural sector. For some, land grabbing is about horizontal integration and expanding their markets (Nally, 2014). In contrast, financial capital private players are prompted to engage in land grabbing by a combination of surging prices of food, low land costs as well as massive speculation in the biofuels. Land is increasingly seen a commodity in which one can invest in without having to worry about making a loss (Knuth, 2015; Oliveira, McKay & Liu, 2021).

From this, it is clear that land grab mark what Nally (2014) terms a 'point of rupture' when it comes to the management of agricultural resources. Land deals as a result promote a novel neo-liberal governance structure on land and land-based resources. New geographical and political relations as well as fault lines are demarcated and drawn around land grabs. Land deals are mostly and clearly skewed along the South-South geographical partnerships (McKay, 2018). All in all,

land grabs have been creating a platform for a new power redistribution in which the food economy as an established avenue of influence gains ground to new zones of control, influence and authority (McMichael, 2013; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020). This new nexus of governance is arguably more networked and less hierarchized than the old North-South regime (Klinger & Narins, 2018). The new nexus of governance includes a new assortment of actors which include parastatal institutions, commodity traders, NGOs, state agencies and pension funds. From these constellations which are polycentric and assemblages which are particularised, land grabs have been seen (Sassen, 2013b; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019).

According to McMichael (2013: 15) land grabs have also been "…representing're-territorialisation'". This re-territorialisation is aimed at avoiding dependence on markets or market intermediaries. Precisely, the kind of vertical and horizontal integration that some corporations promote is being sought in agriculture by states through private capital and also through public-private partnerships. To these corporations, strategies of market-bypassing are a way of securing supply lines and in the end circumvents perceived and real endowment constrains. Sassen (2013b: 27) argues that "…through capturing and 'endogenizing' the global nature, countries will be in a position to kickback against both natural and national limits to growth".

The politicisation of land grabs especially by civil society organisations through shaming foreign corporations investing in land has led to the creation of avenues aimed at regulating the investments in land. For instance, the World Bank came up with Responsible Agricultural Investment Protocols (RAI), while the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) came up with The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGs). The aim of all these is to urge land investors to accept the realities of land grab and in the end work together to ensure that their worst

effects are mitigated (Oliveira, 2018; 2019a; Oliveira, McKay & Liu, 2021). De Schutter (2011: 275) however argues that these strategies adopted by these organisations only work to finesse the details of land grabs through endorsing the destruction of the peasantry as long as one is being 'responsible' in how s/he does it. The overall effect of this however, is that giving foreign investors the right to use natural resources goes on uninterrupted. Nally (2014) argues that this promotion of what becomes a 'light' regulatory environment should be seen as a wider political regime of liberal governance that comes in place of the rule of law 'codes of conduct'. As a result, the changes of the land governance structures go hand in hand with the far-reaching loss of economic independence of the local peoples. This is usually led by the host governments. The foreign firms are given tax holidays, they are exempted from paying duties, are given free or cheap use of common lands and are beneficiaries of concessional lending practices. Barnes (2006: 21) notes that from this arrangement, "…the foreign investors are given access to a homogenous playing field in which they can freely move raw materials, labour, finished goods, labour, profits and circumventing their obligations to paying taxes".

The land grabbing deals herald a deep penetration of financial markets into the food systems (Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017; Abebe, 2019). As what has been noted by most scholars, agriculture has for a long time been a barricade to capital circulation (Kloppenburg, 2004). For Nally (2014: 10), "…through the exposure of the natural resources to the novel ways of exploitation, land grabbing creates a platform of the 'assetisation' of nature or the changing of farmland into a financial instrument". This in the end valorises the process of land grabbing. In light of this, it is useful to reiterate that 'capital' is no longer satisfied with plundering the available nature. Rather, it is increasingly moving towards the production an inherent social nature as the avenue for new areas of accumulation and production. Land grabs have been opening up avenues

for both spatial and temporal channels of profit realisation by foreign investors (White & Dasgupta, 2010; Oliveira, 2018; 2019a).

Multinational companies invest on extractive industries such as mining and agricultural products processing, foreign governments aim at the assurance of food supply, and domestic investors acquire large tracts of land as a way of broadening their assets (White & Dasgupta, 2010; Goldstein & Yates, 2017). There are several reasons for an increase in land grabbing in sub- Saharan Africa, most of which are economic and political. Even though the financial crisis of 2008 inflated the demand on land, reduction in profitable traditional investment opportunities has, and will continue to increase the overall demand for land in Africa (GRAIN, 2008). Global trends of investment seeking have also increased cases of land grabbing in Africa (White & Dasgupta, 2010). Majority of African countries are being encouraged to seek investment and substitute traditional development grants with private capital, for example hedge funds to develop industrial scale production of food crops (Woodhouse & Ganho, 2011; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018; Peters, 2018). An investigation done in 2010 shows that Western companies have been involved to a greater extent, in land grabbing deals in Africa and other developing economies such as India and China (Zoomers, 2010). Companies acquire large tracks of land since they speculate that food and commodity prices in the world will increase, hence helping them make profits (McMichael, 2012). A number of governments have also facilitated land investments as a way of ensuring that citizenry secure affordable food (World Bank, 2010; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018). Growing evidence suggests that, in fact, land grabbing has done more harm than good in the lives of the people and environmental sustainability (White & Dasgupta, 2010; Levien, 2011; Borras & Franco, 2012). In the context of these land deals which are taking place on a rapid scale in almost all continents, understanding the problems of exclusion, dispossession and the adverse

incorporation faced by local communities has never been more pressing (White et al., 2012). Apart from these immediate issues though, it is also of paramount importance to look into the critical issues of these land deals and what their long-term implications are for both rural and agricultural futures (White et al., 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018). It is of paramount importance to unpack the immediate and dynamics in these land deals in developing countries.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Land grabs in developing countries have been justified from different standpoints (Nally, 2011). First, ensuring the 'food security' is enhanced is one of the key grounds upon which the issue of land grabbing is justified (Nally, 2012). Food security has been mostly used since the mid-1970s in denoting channels to improve food supplies. The issue of food security is used on debates on famine relief to future climate change. According to Nally (2014: 11), "…the issue of 'food security' is usually used as an ideologically neutral concept and as the pre-political idea that is seen as a global good". The concept of food security is used to galvanise public empathy to modern humanitarian reasons. In instances where this concept is used, it leads to the re-narration of a relationship of dominance through the provision of humanitarian help.

Second, besides the justification of land grabs on humanitarian grounds, land grabs are also justified based on the need to close the yield gap (Rutherford, 2017; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018; Peters, 2018). In its report titled: Rising Global Interest in Farmland, the World Bank reported that most land in the Global South, notably in Africa, is not utilised to full capacity and should be targeted for foreign direct investment (Nally, 2014). In this report, the World Bank said this of African 'underutilised' land: "None of the African countries of the most interest to investors is now achieving more than 30% of the potential yield on currently

cultivated areas The ‘yield gap’ argument is then justified by advocacy groups which are led by industry such as John Deere, Dupont, Elanco, IBM and Mansanto under the banner of the Global Harvest Initiative (GHI). Under the Global Harvest Initiative, the ‘yield gap’ is justified by arguing that by 2050, the world population would have grown to 9 billion people and the food demand will be growing exponentially” (Li, 2011: 294).

Given this fact, the Global Harvest Initiative is of the argument that it is wise to use unused land now if the worst effects of food crises and climate change are to be mitigated before it is too late. The Global Harvest Initiative suggests that there is need to move away from the historic disputes which have been pitting traditional crop breeding against biotechnology, convectional farming versus organic farming, fuel production versus food production. The importance and urgency of producing more food in order to save lives is seen as important. The ‘yield gap’ argument does not pay attention to the argument that the food supply argument does not fully explain the reasons why hunger persists. Certainly, it is possible to experience food shortages in the context of a general increase in food production since food shortages are context specific and relative (Nally, 2014).

Third, the logic of depeasantisation is another ground upon which land grabbing is justified. This argument was advanced by the World Bank in its report of 2008 which regards the land takeovers as land investments. This argument is based on the need to ensure that peasants in the global South who are seen as unable to compete in the globalised food economy with large scale farmers should abandon farming and take up wage labour (Li, 2011; Goldstein & Yates, 2017; Abebe, 2019). The notion on the logic of depeasantisation is linked to the ‘yield gap’ argument by Li (2011). The logic of depeasantisation Li (2011) is anchored on the assumption by major financial institutions in the global North that there will be mass urbanisation in the global South as what was seen in the global North during the early centuries. The movement from the countryside to the urban centres,

Li (2011) argued, will be driven by industrialisation and those who will stay in the rural areas will be employed as wage labourers on large farms. This process has of course led to alienation and dispossession of the peasantry of its land. The death of peasant agriculture has in the end led to polarisation between scholars who are against dispossessing peasants of their land and those who support the dispossession (Li, 2011; McMicahel, 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018; Oliveira, McKay & Liu, 2021).

While the left bemoans the death of the peasantry, the right saw the death of the peasantry as a blessing in disguise. For rightist economists such as Paul Collier, peasant agriculture is not well suited for investment and innovation (Nally, 2014: 14). Collier (2008: n.p) argues that "…preserving peasant agriculture is a 'retreat into romanticism' since commercial agriculture is what the world needs going forward". The need to do away with peasantisation by Paul Collier was also seen among Victorian elites during the Victorian era. The Victorian elites despised the Indian ryot farmers, the African peasants and the Irish cottier tenants as not provident, lazy, and anachronistic. To the Victorian elite, peasant agriculture heralded obsolescence and peasants were seen as not capable of agricultural improvement hence the future of peasant agriculture is bleak. It is this argument that was carried over by the progenitors of the Green Revolution since the issue of 'depeasantisation' became the major driver of agricultural improvement (Araghi, 1995; Corbera, Hunsberger & Vaddhanaphuti, 2017; Abebe, 2019).

Fourth, another strategy which is used to justify land grabs is that a free market in which there will be fair, transparent pricing, liberalisation of trade and property rights which are enforceable can be the panacea to almost all problems seen in agriculture (Nally, 2014: 15). This argument holds that policies that promote self-sufficiency cannot solve the problems seen in agriculture today. For the Global Harvest Initiative (2011: 16), "…trade is a tool that can link supply to demand, as a

result, the liberalisation of trade has a very important role to play in the promotion of the world food security through ensuring that global food systems are more effectual. Another initiative promoted by the World Economic Forum, the New Vision for Agriculture, supports approaches to food security and reducing poverty which are market based". The market-based approaches to solving agricultural problems are against small holder agriculture and regard small holder agriculture as not fully pitched to the commercial level hence unable to participate fully in the global markets (Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

What is however important to note is that the clear contrast between subsistence agriculture which is seen as poor and market participation which is seen as important is not at all straightforward. In this context, the World Food Programme (WFP) (2009) came up with a report. This report recommended that food markets enhance proper resource allocation in ways that will not disenfranchise the poor. In today's world, those who carry out agricultural reforms seldom acknowledge the market's tendencies of disenfranchising the poor. Agriculture is increasingly seen as a big business in which the pursuit of profit is prioritised over the needs of the poor. In this regard, land deals are seen as key to the acceleration of the transition to marketization and are thus pursued in a very vigorous way (Knuth, 2015).

Fifth, another ground upon which land grabs are pursued is the power of solicitude (Nally, 2014; McKay, 2018). Under this, land deals are driven by the goal of taking care of those who are neglected and stricken by privation. For those who advance this argument, Africa has the largest number of those who are facing hunger and poverty, the land deals are thus justified on the grounds of the need to feed the starving Africans. To those who support land deals in Africa, food shortages present a serious threat to world prosperity and as such, fully utilising the underutilised land in Africa should be prioritised. For instance, the Jarch Management Group an investment form which

deals with African land is of the argument that investing in African land is part of empowering population who own resources but cannot fully exploit them because others exploit them on their behalf. The Jarch Management Group thus aims to work with the African population in order to come with strategies of ensuring that the African population secures its economic and political rights which are essential for their self-determination (Nally, 2014; Goldstein & Yates, 2017; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

In the case of Ethiopia, which remains the largest food aid recipient in Africa, an Indian Investment Firm called Kauturi Global argues that land deals are in a position to ensure that communities which at risk of food insecurity build 'resilience'. Kauturi Global's 'Corporate Social Responsibility' strategy in Ethiopia includes distributing blankets to the poor and elderly. It also includes distributing food parcels weekly to those facing destitution as well as contributing money aimed at ensuring that the communities in which it operates get clean water. Nally (2011b) refers to this as 'corporate bio politics' in which public welfare is repackaged as corporate welfare. Through this strategy, land grabs are restyled as a gift which is beneficent. In light of this, this study aims to explore the Nuer people of Gambella's contestations, perceptions and the socio-economic implications of land grabbing in the Gambella region of Ethiopia.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The convergences of the world economic crisis compounded by global energy and food shortages have led to a surge of land grabbing in sub-Saharan Africa. A number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa have become host to the grabbing of land and resources in most rural areas. Most land transactions have been done between governments and multinational companies, which are into large-scale commercial farming. The tenure re-arrangements of these transactions have been

favouring international agribusiness. This process raises many issues regarding the land grabs, which are driven by the spatial dynamics of the recent restructuring of agrarian relations through the remaking of places that belong and are used by the rural people but seen by the government as vacant, underutilised or underproductive. Even though land grabbing has been a good investment opportunity in most African countries, the majority of the deals are often carried out without far-reaching local consultation and compensation of local peoples from which the land is taken. These investments have often displaced thousands of indigenous peoples. In the context of this study, the indigenous people are the Nilo-Saharan linguistic groups who call the Gambella region their home. The rights of the indigenous people are also abused, their traditions are destroyed. The indigenous people are forced to abandon their traditional ways of life, and they are exploited of their labour. They have their environment destroyed and are not given adequate compensation when they lose their land. I study the land grabs in the context of the Gambella region of Ethiopia. The Gambella Region of Ethiopia is predominantly inhabited by people of Nilo-Saharan linguistic groups which include the Nuer origin who trace their roots from present day South Sudan. As such, people of the Nilo-Saharan linguistic groups which include the Nuer people who identify themselves as Ethiopians claim autochthonous rights to the land in the Gambella region. Given the fact that the area is largely rural, the Nuer people of Gambella have mainly used the land for subsistence agriculture as their source of livelihoods. Apart from serving as a home to these people, the land has also served as a social safety net for most Nuer people of the Gambella region. In this context, land among the people of Gambella forms an integral part of their identity and belonging in addition to ensuring that sustainable livelihoods are constructed out of it. In spite of this, land in the tenure and security issue of the land has become elusive in the context of land grabs by foreign investors which are sanctioned by the state since the trusteeship of the land is placed under the

Federal government. The land grabs have invoked debates emanating not only from the socio-economic implications and tenure insecurity issues of these on the local people but the issues of autochthony and ethnic discrimination associated with such land grabs. Similar sentiments were shared by GRAIN (2008); Zoomers (2010); Levien (2011); Makki & Geisler, (2011); Borras & Franco (2012); Cotula (2012); Knuth (2015); Goldstein & Yates (2017); McKay (2018); Peters, (2018); Abebe (2019); Moyo, Jha & Yeros (2019); Oliveira, McKay & Liu (2021). This study thus documents the Gambella people's contestations, perceptions and the socio-economic implications of the land grabs to pave way for foreign occupiers.

1.3 MOTIVATION AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

A few studies have analysed the forceful displacement of the local people of Gambella from their land. The rationale of this study is to provide additional insight on the topic of land grabbing through documenting the Gambella people's contestations, perceptions and the socio-economic implications of the land grabs to pave way for foreign occupiers.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Although a number of authors as seen in the works of GRAIN (2008); von Braun and Meinzen-Dick (2009); World Bank (2010); Oakland (2011); Oxfam (2011); Cotula et al., (2009); Anseeuw et al., (2012); Goldstein & Yates (2017); Klinger & Muldavin (2019); McKay, Oliveira & Liu (2020) have documented the extent as well as the location of land deals in recent years, large scale land deals remain a secret. The number of hectares that are parcelled out to foreign owners remain unknown (White et al., 2012; Knuth, 2015; Goldstein & Yates, 2017). Cotula (2012) argues that there is an overestimation and underestimation of the land deals, but the deals are growing and are done on a grand scale. These large-scale land deals are primarily on more than a framework. Under

this, deals between agricultural business companies and local governments conclude deals in which land is purchased or leased. Usually, these deals take years to materialise, resulting in the fencing off of the purchased and leased areas and the resultant dispossessions of the local peoples hence the establishment of new labour and production structures. In most cases, the deals have been leading to large scale land reform programmes in which land is taken away from the poor and given to the rich (White et al., 2012). What remains missing is studying the nuances regarding the contestations and perceptions of ethnic minorities regarding the issue of land grabbing. This study goes beyond what has traditionally been done regarding the issue of land grabbing by documenting the contestations, perceptions and socio-economic implications of land grabbing to pave way for foreign occupiers among the Nuer people in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. This study influences policy by studying the socio-economic implications of land grabbing on the local peoples of Gambella. The study will influence policy by providing insights into how best the interests of local peoples and those of the foreign investors may be reconciled in the future of similar land projects in Ethiopia and other parts of the world.

1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to document the Gambella people's contestations, perceptions and the socio-economic implications of the land grabs to pave way for foreign occupiers in sub-Saharan Africa.

1.6 OBJECTIVES

In order to document the Gambella people's contestations, perceptions and the socio-economic implications of the land grabs to pave way for foreign occupiers on local peoples, the study will:

1. Study the contestations, perceptions of the Nuer peoples in terms of gains and losses from the land grabs;
2. Explore the socio-economic implications of land grabs on the Nuer people of the Gambella Region in Ethiopia;
3. Analyse the policies and measures put in place by the Ethiopian government to protect the interests and rights of the Nuer communities during land grabs;
4. Examine the effectiveness of these measures in protecting the interests and rights of the Nuer people during land grabs in the Gambella region;
5. Study whether the local peoples understand and utilise the protections;
6. Assess how the interests and rights of the Nuer communities and those of the foreign investors may be reconciled in future land projects in Ethiopia.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the perceptions of the local peoples in terms of gains and losses from the land grabs?

2. What are the socio-economic implications of land grabs on Nuer peoples of the Gambella region in Ethiopia?

3. What measures have been put in place by the Ethiopian government to protect the interests and rights of the local Nuer communities during land grabs?

4. How effective have been these measures in protecting the interests and rights of the local Nuer people during land grabs in the Gambella region in Ethiopia?

5. How do the Nuer local people understand and utilize the protections put in place to safeguard their interests?

6. How best can the interests and rights of the local Nuer communities and the foreign investors be reconciled in future land grabbing projects in Ethiopia?

1.8 THEORETICAL APPROACHES

I engaged with the material I gathered through engaging with the concept of Othering, the concept of stangerhood, the concept of belonging, the concept of autochthony the concept of racism crossfertilised with the International Dependency Theory. I start by discussing the issue of Othering in order to reveal the key tangents that are important in this study.

1.8.1 Othering

As a concept, the issue of Othering has been useful when engaging with the issue of belonging as seen in the works of Mead (1967); Fanon (1967); Jensen (2011); Brons (2015) among others. The postcolonial theory popularised the concept of Othering is social sciences. The concept of Othering has been fully captured in studies of land and belonging in Africa as seen in the works of Ceuppens and Geschiere (2005); Geschiere (2009). The concept of Othering has its roots in Hegel's master/slave dialectic which was analysed in detail by Karl Marx. The master/slave dialectic holds that an individual's self-consciousness is always shaped by the ways in which the Self compares itself to the Other. This comparison usually breeds differentiation and what is called distantiation between the Self and the Other. It is through comparing where negative perceptions about the Other are bred hence discrimination and in some cases subjugation of the Other by the Self. The negative perceptions against the Other by the Self leads labelling of the Other as the stranger, and in some cases the orient (Yuval-Davis, 2010; Jensen, 2011; Brons, 2015; Harris et al., 2017).

The concept of Othering has been defined as a process of differentiation between those who are considered as the outsiders by those who consider themselves as the indigenes or original owners of a given place. Through this, those who consider themselves as the original owners or a given place draw lines of differentiation in which they distance themselves from the outsiders. Usually, those who consider themselves as the rightful owners of a given resource or piece of land pull resources together in ways that will make them powerful and be in a position to subjugate those seen as outsiders. Not only minorities are subjected to Othering. In some cases, the majority are labelled as the Other and can be subjected to subjugation by minorities (Lister, 2004). For Brons (2015:70):

> *Othering is the simultaneous construction of the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual and unequal opposition through identification of some desirable characteristic that the self/in-group has and the other/out-group lacks and/or some undesirable characteristic that the other/out-group has and the self/in-group lacks.*

Othering is thus a dialectical concept whereby social groups distance and differentiate themselves from outsiders through the creation of the binaries of 'us' versus 'them'. The issue of Othering is usually the grounds upon which the Other is pathologised as the criminal, the deviant and the causer of trouble. Through the process of Othering, hierarchies are created in the societies. The identities created through the process of hierarchisation usually lead to exclusion of those seen as ethnic minorities, racial minorities among other some categories of differentiation (Bauman, 1991; Yuval-Davis, 2010; Jensen 2011).

What makes the issue of Othering fitting in this study is the way in which it is neatly interwoven with the issue of territoriality. As a strategy, territoriality is seen as a way of engendering Othering

in which those who do not share a spatial attachment to a certain territory are marginalised and excluded from that territory. Territoriality as a way of Othering are achieved through geographical bordering in which those who are seen as not belonging to a certain territory are excluded and criminalised if they violate the borders of a given territory. Territoriality usually leads to social, economic and political marginalisation of the Other. This issue of territoriality is closely linked to the issue of autochtony which I now turn to.

1.8.2 Autochthony

The term autochthony is derived from the Greek words 'autos', meaning self and 'chthon', meaning soil (Geschiere 2009). Translated to English, the term literally translates to mean 'of the soil' or 'born of the soil…born of the earth itself' (Geschiere, 2009: 2; Dunn, 2009: 113). For Yuval-Davis (2018: 231), the term autochthony has been conceptualized as "…an 'emptier' and more elastic notion…that states no more than 'I was here before you'". To Zenker (2011: 63), autochthony is "…the proclaimed 'original' link between individual, territory and group". The term autochthony is based on a given ethnic group's primordial relation to land that is based on 'first-comer' claims. It is the claim that a certain group of people speak of itself as an original inhabitant to a given territory (Van Houtum & Van Naerssen, 2001; Schein, 2009; Muzondidya, 2007; Lentz, 2007; Hughes, 2007; Geschiere, 2009; Dunn, 2009). I now turn to discussing the issue of strangerhood and how it links to the issue of autochthony and Othering.

1.8.3 The stranger

The issue of stangerhood dovetails with what is captured in the issue of Othering. Strangerhood like Othering is a social construct which results from the Self othering people who are seen as strangers of the Other. Strangers are treated as the Other by the Self because they are seen as people who do not fit the aesthetic, moral and cognitive map of the Self. People who are seen as strangers are usually treated with contempt and suspicion by the Self. In order to keep itself safe from the threat of the Other, the Self usually creates boundaries which are aimed at maintaining keeping strangers at bay. These boundaries are usually maintained through the process of social exclusion. The process of social exclusion is usually maintained by the Self through constructing the stranger as contaminating and in some instances as degenerates who are capable of destroying or contaminating the life world of the Self. Due to the real and imagined fear of contamination, strangers are sometimes treated with hostility. Hostility against strangers usually takes place in instances where the Self feel that their homes or land will be taken away from them by the strangers. Though stangerhood may end with time, strangers are constantly treated with contempt and are always put under surveillance by those who regard themselves at the autochthones to a certain area. As a result, those seen as stranger usually occupy ambivalent positions and do not fully belong (Baumann, 1998; Geschiere & Nyamnjoh, 2000; Sanderock, 2000; Marotta, 2002; Harris et al., 2017). The issue of belonging is thus another important concept from which I engage with and the material I gathered. The following section now turns to discussing the issue of belonging.

1.8.4 Belonging

The concept of belonging is usually used in analysing the issue of belonging as seen in the works of Wright (2015); Bennett (2014); Anthias (2013); Yuval-Davis et al., (2018) among others. In all these works, the concept of belonging means different things and is understood differently.

Belonging has to do with the feeling one has as part of a certain group, place or society. Belonging is also understood as an act of identification or self-identification by others. A person can say he or she belongs if there is a feeling of being at home or safe in a given place. Belonging is related with an emotional attachment one has to a certain place. In light of this, belonging is constructed within the realms of what is known as spatial-belongingness or a sense of belonging to place (Fenster, 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Antonsich, 2010; Wright, 2015; Youkhana, 2015; Wright, 2015).

Belonging is fostered though various ways. It is usually fostered through the creation of memories and nostalgia of a certain place when they leave that place or as time passes. As such, places will always remain definitive of one's sense of belonging to a certain place whether he or she leaves the place or in instances of changes in time. A place from which a person belongs is where he or she derives his or her identity. Once the person leaves a place he or she feels belong to, he or she is treated as a stranger and feels strange. In cases where a person feels he or she belongs to a certain place, he or she develops a bond to that place and is usually emotionally attached to that place. Often, an individual's emotive attachment to a certain place goes beyond history is also connected to his or her present and future obligations and entitlement to a given place. To assert their belonging to a certain place, people develop folklores and stories about their historical occupation of the place they feel is theirs. Often, the stories are about the past and how that will shape their future and define their present (Schein, 2009; Bennett, 2014; Miller, 2017).

Rituals in some African societies are performed as a sign of belonging to a certain place. In some African societies, belonging to a place does not cease after one dies. One continues to belong to a certain place even after having died. In such societies, it is important that one is buried in places they would have spent their childhood in. In such scenarios, even in their state of death, people

continue to belong to certain places and are regarded as the custodians of the land the living continue to live. Graves in such societies have a symbolic meaning and connect the dead to the living. As a result, graves are in such scenarios used in legitimising people's claims to certain places in cases of contestations. Graves, ghosts, ruins and other related material landscapes are important when people form an attachment to the land. As landscapes, graves are used by future generations in asserting their belonging to a certain place and present generations pass these to future generations so that it continue asserting their belonging to a certain place (Geschiere & Nyamnjoh, 2000; Schein, 2009; Geschiere, 2009; Fontein, 2011; Mujere, 2012; Bennett, 2014).

To Yuval-Davis (2006) belonging takes place on three different but interrelated levels. Belonging takes place on the social level, the personal level and the politico-ethical level. At the social level, people belong and unbelong based on social categorisations such as gender, ethnicity, race, age, class among other socially defined categories. Through these social categories, people belong to certain social groups because of certain shared characteristics and attributes that are important to their identity. It is based on these social locations where people are socially differentiated and this differentiation forms the basis of their belonging and interaction in a given society. The social locations upon which people are differentiated depend on the historical epochs and contexts in which one finds himself or herself in. As a result, these social locations change with time and are subject to contestations (Harding, 1991; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Trudeau, 2006; Muzondidya, 2007; Anthias 2013).

When people belong on a personal level, they are emotionally attached to a certain place and identify themselves with everything on that place. In order to belong this way, people form relationships with immaterial and material things found in a given place. The things that people

form relationships with can be ideas, other human beings, landscapes and animals found on a given place. Through forming relationships this way, individuals then invest emotions with the things they would have formed relationships and identify themselves with. As a result, belonging becomes relational. As an emotion, it connects subjects into in-groups and out-groups and in the end shape subjectivities as well as people's expressions of a place. Emotions bring people together and, in some cases, set them apart. Through shared emotions, belonging is usually located through the bonds people create and stick together as a collective. Emotions usually flare in instances of real or imagined threat to a people's belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2004; Anthias, 2013; Wright, 2015).

Although belonging is at times understood as a condition, it is also a process. It can be temporal contextual and is also fluid. Since it keeps changing, belonging can be seen as a process or an act of becoming and can be a nurtured experience. Certain social practices are important in keeping social groups together. These are also important in the asserting and maintenance of belonging of people to certain groups and the identities they create thereof. Culture, language, religion, descent as well as shared myths of a common destiny are some of the most important prerequisites of a common belonging. Though some shared values such as religion, culture and language are easily attainable through assimilation into a certain collectivity, some requisites such as race and ethnicity are not. Nevertheless, shared values may be very difficult to conceptualise since people who may be seen as belonging to the same category may have differences. For instance, people who may share the same religious values may have different political affiliations or may be of different ethnic orientations (Geschiere, 2009; Antonsich, 2010; Anthias, 2013; Wright, 2015; May, 2017; Yuval-Davis, 2018).

The issue of belonging is closely linked to the issue of social identity and citizenship. Official citizenship has been intensively used as a legal sub-category of belonging. In this light, the nation state is the most influential project of belonging in which those seen as outsiders are excluded as not belonging if they do not have citizenship. Citizenship in this context is understood as the relationship that a person has with a given state. Citizens develop sketches of an imagined nation based on their communion with fellow citizens. Through this way, citizens draw boundaries against foreigners who are both real and imagined. Those who are not seen as citizens are denied rights and certain privileges that citizens are given and enjoy. Those regarded as citizens to a given nation state enjoy social, economic and political rights that are denied to non-citizens by virtue of them not belonging to a nation state. In instances were citizens to a given nation state feel that their citizenship and the rights they enjoy are threatened, stereotyping and discrimination which in some cases lead to xenophobic attacks of non-citizens have been seen. In these instances, citizenship is transformed into a national project of belonging (Rutherford, 2001; Fenster, 2005; Muzondidya, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Antonsich, 2010; Daimon, 2014; James 2013; Youkhana, 2015; Yuval-Davis et al., 2018).

Regardless of how an individual feels about a certain mode of belonging, there are usually value judgements that are external to an individual which determine inclusion and exclusion in a given territory. The ability to speak the language of a given nation state, the ability to adopt the culture and religious values of a given society in which a foreigner would have moved into is usually used as a yardstick of successful integration of foreigners into a given nation state. What is however important is to note that official citizenship does not always guarantee one's inclusion in a certain nation or society. Those considered as citizens can be excluded in certain social contexts based on intersectionalities such as ethnicity, gender, race and age. Thus, though belonging can be cemented

citizenship and nationalism, there are other attributes which can cement citizenship. Thus, there is need to look beyond legal citizenship constructed around the nation state when conceptualising the issue of citizenship. The issues of culture, one's origin, religion as well as ethnic background and how these shape and construct citizenship must be taken into consideration when conceptualising the issue of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006, 2007; Steen, 2011; Makura-Paradza, 2010; Anthias, 2013; Kufandirori, 2015).

An individual's belonging to a given territory can be constructed through what Antonsich (2010: 649) terms 'the comforting realization of others' absence'. In light of this, belonging to a given society or territory is equated to belonging to a group of people. A person's belonging to a certain society or nation state do not pre-exist in a static way. Rather, belonging is made through them coming together to believe in and defend certain ideals, memories or things. As a result, belonging is in some instances felt, experiences when social actors interact in their social life-worlds. As a result, belonging is not simply defined by an individual's sense of self but also by the society and the norms set by that society. Thus, belonging is influenced and determined by certain hegemonic social factors which are external to the individual (Schein, 2009; Wright, 2015; Yuval-Davis, 2018). This is closely linked to the issue of racism which I now turn to.

1.8.5 Racism

To be sure, racism is an outcome of social practices, discourses at various social levels in a given society. Racism is usually constituted intersectionally and are usually products of an interaction of various social forces which lead to boundary and hierarchy making. The boundaries which are marked as a result of racism are usually violent and dehumanising (Fanon, 1986: 13; Anthias, 2013: 180). In most cases, racism operates through the construction of symbolic boundaries which are usually impenetrable by those who are not seen as outsiders and not belonging to a given racial

group. Binaries of racism usually make attempts in fixing and ensure that the differences between otherness and belonging are natural. In the end, those who do not belong to a given social group are seen as savages and generally degenerates (Hall, 1996: 445).

Today, racism involve hierarchisation of difference, essentialism and culturalism. The key issues which constitute racism today are made up of what are known as the Four Ds. 'Danger' is the first D. Under this D, the Other is mostly seen as a danger to the culture of the Self. The Other is also seen as a general threat to the security of the Self. 'Deviance' is the second D. Under this, the Other is seen as deviant, evil and not fitting to the culture of the Other. The third D represents what is known as 'deficit'. Under deficit, the Other is seen as deficient and not in a position to meet standards of the Self. To this end, the Other is then segregated and excluded from getting access to certain public goods which are only accessible to the Self. In these instances, the Other is stigmatised and stereotyped by the Self. The last and fourth D under the four Ds in which contemporary racism manifests itself is what is known as 'disgust'. Disgust is linked to the issue of contamination and contagion. As a result, certain cultural practices of the Other are usually stigmatised and regarded as contaminating the culture of the Self. In the end, the person who is seen as the Other is racialised, avoided and dehumanised by the Self (Anthias, 2013: 180). I now turn to the International Dependency Theory.

1.8.6 The international dependency theory and land grabs

Land grabbing warrants the use of the logical lenses of archetypal agrarian political economy (White & Dasgupta, 2010). Theoretical frameworks as well as writings on land grabs and the political economy as seen in the works of Li (2011); Woodhouse and Ganho (2011); Alden (2012); Borras and Franco (2012); Cotula (2012); Levien (2012); McMichael (2012); McKay, Oliveira & Liu (2020) echo with, and are still helpful for having a look into the current land grabs. There are

competing theoretical standpoints on the question of global inequalities or occurrences which lead to global inequalities such as land grabs in less developed countries. The Dependency theory emerged as one of these theoretical standpoints (Matunhu, 2011). The dependency theorists employ maxims such as 'the international system' or the 'world system' when discussing issues. The focus of their analysis is in understanding the role of the international system of capitalism and the part it plays in disenfranchising the periphery (Sekhri, 2009; Kay, 2011). The Dependency Theory is anchored on the dichotomy between the 'core' and the 'periphery'. The countries which control the economies of the other form the 'core', and those who are controlled then form the 'periphery' (Sekhri, 2009).

The key argument advanced by the Dependency theory is that underdevelopment in the periphery is mainly because of the peripheral position that these countries always occupy in the global economic order. The Dependency Theory describes dependency as a case where the economies of some countries are heavily influenced and controlled by others (Dos Santos, 1970). This world order dates back to the early 1490s, when the world system began (Tausch, 2010). The Dependency Theory holds that the penetration of foreign capital and the attendant technological dependence of the countries occupying the core create the subordination the periphery finds itself in (Tausch, 2010). The system that is created as a result of the proliferation of technology and foreign capital creates an international division of labour in which the periphery is subordinated by the core (Tausch, 2010). From these definitions, 'dependency' in the international system is used to explain global inequalities. Mainly, the Dependency Theory draws on the part that the capitalist system plays in the underdevelopment of the periphery by the core.

It is critical to note that the theory is a product of a given historical epoch and context. Raul Prebisch is regarded as the main and earliest progenitor of the theory. Key to the ideas by Prebisch

is the argument that the underdevelopment of the underdeveloped countries was mainly because of their excessive reliance on exporting their raw materials to the developed countries. From this standpoint, Prebisch and his crucial associate Hans Singer argued that the participation of the underdeveloped countries in the world trade system was not fair to these countries. The weaknesses of the propositions that were made by Prebisch, rooted in trade pessimism, led to a new variant of Dependency Theory. This movement was led by Osvaldo Sunkel, Fernando Cardoso, Celso Furtado and Theotonio Dos Santos. The movement gave a more structural and historical analysis of events. This school of thought came up with a framework that intricately linked the international issues and internal economic problems of specific countries in a bid to explain inequalities.

Finding a way out of this situation was a critical challenge that a number tried to fashion and explain (Frank, 1966; Dos Santos, 1970). Differing theoretical standpoints informed those who sought solutions in this regard. On the one hand, some theorists supported and felt that global inequalities could only be fixed if there is a socialist revolution. Under this revolution, the workers and peasants overthrow the small elite, which owns the land and other key economic resources. This school of thought was rooted in the belief that only a peasant and workers led government can be in a position to usher in equality. Another school of thought believed that inequalities could only be eradicated after a reform in the international economic system (Herath, 2008). For some, a solution to the seemingly exploitative relationship between the core and the periphery is to delink itself from the core.

Led by Fernando Henrique Cardoso, a new movement that believed in the associated dependency emerged (Kay, 2011). Scholars within this tradition distanced themselves from the crude version of the Dependency Theory, which advocated for a socialist revolution led by Andre Gunder Frank (Kay, 2011). The school of thought led by Cardoso utilised the term dependency in order to

underscore the way in which the politico-economic development of the developing countries was influenced by the global economy led by the developed nations. Key to this school of thought was the notion that dependency was perpetuated by the enmeshed links and ties among varying groups and classes within and between different countries. The school of thought led by Cardoso noted that dependent relationships could change and differ with time. This led to the development of 'linkages'. According to this version of the Dependency Theory, both internal and external forces are responsible for the creation of inequalities and dependency within countries. This version of the Dependency Theory identifies the interests of the middle-class, the military, the businesses and the technocrats as key to the perpetuating of dependency in emerging countries. Conceptually, the study is underpinned by the International Dependency. Land grabs in sub-Saharan Africa are usually controlled by the interests of these classes hence continued dependency and poverty.

In light of what is captured in the Dependency Theory, present-day land grabs can be explained through the analogy of the peripheral global South, which is exploited by the global North. Under this system, resources flow from peripheral states (poor and underdeveloped states) to core states (wealthy states) (Vernengo, 2004). Given the fact that foreign company owners conclude deals with the ruling elite who in this instance make up the middle class, the rural poor from which land is taken through land grabbing are usually at the losing end. As a result, one can argue that the ways in which land is grabbed from the poor perpetuate the dependency of the poor on the elite. The perpetuation of this dependency stems from the fact that once land as a means of production is taken away from them, the only option left for the rural poor is to depend on wage employment offered to them by the new company owners. In cases of land grabbing, Li (2011) argued that the dispossessed peasants were becoming 'surplus people' as the vilest probable social products of massive deals on the land. In some cases, the poor who are dispossessed of their land end up living

on food hand-outs and other forms of humanitarian assistance from the elite. In this sense, I found the Dependency Theory as important in explaining the socio-economic implications of land grabbing among the Nuer people of Gambella.

1.9 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Land grabbing- The term land grabs has been defined from various standpoints and has not had a single meaning. This is because the meaning, substance and form of such large-scale land acquisitions differ. Some land deals (between governments and foreign companies) are as yet projected and not actual. They are dominated mainly by leases rather than sales. Given the fact that the social and institutional agencies of this reconstitution of global property relations also involve local capital and non-Western states unsettle the fundamental tenets and scope of the term 'grabbing' (Makki & Geisler 2011). In this study, land grabbing denotes the forcible acquisition of land from the indigenous owners of the land by large multinational corporations. Usually, in land grabbing, the indigenous people from which the land will be taken away from are not consulted and the land takeovers are permanent.

Land leasing- In this study is the antithesis of land grabbing. It entails the land deals in which there are a mutual agreement between the government and the foreign investors. Land leasing is not a complete giveaway of land. Instead, the land is given to the investors for a certain period through contractual agreements, usually renewable. Unlike in land grabbing, land leases may involve consultations of the people from which land will be taken.

Land dispossession-Like land grabbing, land dispossession in this study entails the forced eviction of peasants from their land.

Socio-economic implications-In this context of this study refer to livelihoods together with issues of dignity and as well as cultural aspects.

1.10 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 4: Presentation of findings

Chapter 5: Discussion and analysis of findings.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The chapter reviews the literature on the issue of land grabbing. The review of literature is theoretical though efforts are also made in unpacking the practical issues that are part of land grabbing. The analysis and discussion of the concept of land grabbing is situated within the various countries (especially developing countries) in which it is mostly taking place. Part one of the chapter traces the history of the issue of lad grabbing since the colonial period in most developing counties with the aim of deducing the continuities and discontinuities on land grabbing during the colonial period and till now. Part two explores literature on land grabbing in Africa first before looking at Ethiopia. The third part then offers a critical discussion of key debates on land grabbing. The last part reviews the literature on land grabbing and global governance.

2.1 THE HISTORY OF LAND GRABBING AND CURRENT TRENDS

For McMichael (2012), if land grabbing was a tragedy during colonialism, it is repeating itself as a farce today. Thus, although it might differ from colonialism in its origin, destination and impact, it shows a crisis of accumulation in the globalizing neoliberal project (Anseeuw et al., 2012). As a term and a concept, grabbing invokes a very long history of enclosures of land belonging to the colonised peoples. The enclosures were usually violent and were aimed at accommodating global capital expansion. The issue of profit-making drives and orients land grabbing. This involves the opening of free markets through the adoption of neoliberal market policies. As sociologists Karl Marx and Karl Polanyi noted, markets are usually politically instituted as expressions of property

relations. In these contexts, it can be argued that governments that accommodate land acquisitions by both local and foreign investors through the facilitation of the assessments done by development agencies and also emerging investor codes are sustaining the widening and deepening commodity relations. McMichael (2012) regards land grabbing as mainly driven by the goal of capital accumulation. To achieve this, systems for capital accumulation is achieved through grabbing fertile land overseas with the aim of maximising profits (McMichael, 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018; Peters, 2018).

Land grabbing provides a lens on the dynamics of contradictions of the food regime, which concurrently situates the land grab as something other which goes beyond a simple enclosure of land for the purposes of capitalist expansion. The recent land deals mask colonial expansionism and land alienation. In one way or the other, these land deals involve novel configurations of the old relations (White et al., 2012; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018). Each of these mechanisms of property accumulation either through selling or leasing land to foreigners lead to various forms of dispossession. These forms of dispossessions have varying end results for rural livelihoods as well as their social and political relations. The anticipation of food insecurity globally has spurred investments in food farming for both humans and animals (Foresight, 2010; Godfray et al., 2010; Goldstein & Yates, 2017). Albeit this is not a novel phenomenon, investment levels surged in the past years. The investments have notably surged in the areas where inputs for industrial production were readily available, markets modestly accessible, and costs of land low (McKeon, 2013; Oliveira, 2018; 2019a; Oliveira, McKay & Liu, 2021).

During colonialism, the major European powers who were involved in the colonisation process carried out land grabs in the territories they occupied (Peluso & Lund, 2011). Differences in how the land was grabbed are incumbent on the crop the colonisers aimed to cultivate. The differences

also depended on the nature of the colony and the time of colonisation (Peluso & Lund, 2011). Historically, land grabbing was not only confined to the global South. The British enclosure systems are well known in history as some of the episodes of land grabbing in the global South and Eastern Europe (White et al., 2012; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017). In most colonial territories, native people were dispossessed of their land after territorial wars. Colonial governments and foreign and domestic corporations would then accelerate dispossessing the natives of their land after the wars. During the height of colonisation, colonial governments became increasingly involved in the selling of large tracts of land belonging to the natives to large scale corporations (White et al., 2012). One key aspect can be seen in the colonial dispossession of the natives of their land. As seen in the English and Irish enclosures of the 17th and 19th centuries, the Anglo-Saxon dispossession of the native Americans of their land, the African land rushes of the 19th and 20th centuries, legal manipulations which were rooted in the notion that land in colonies was empty and un-owned drove and oriented land grabs (Makki & Geisler, 2011).

The decolonisation process led to changes in how the land was held. The achievement of independence changed most land holdings by large scale corporations that owned large tracts of land. Independence led to the land redistribution programmes whose aim was to give the land back to the indigenous owners (White et al., 2012). The major aim of these processes, which were rooted in socialist collectivisation as seen in the Kenyan Swynnerton Plan of 1954, was aimed at correcting some historical wrongs. The land redistribution programmes were also aimed at stemming the radicalisation of the rural poor as a political force (White et al., 2012). It is ironic that the changes which ensued soon after the decolonisation process are suddenly being reversed. Although Ethiopia was not colonised the way other African countries were, foreign companies, especially from the global North, are grabbing land from the local peoples, as seen in the Gambella

region of the country. In most cases, the government of Ethiopia enters into leasing arrangements in which land is taken away from the local peoples and given to the foreign owners (Makki & Geisler, 2011). Various governments and international development organisations seem to be supporting the acquiring of large areas of land through leases and outright purchases, all in the name of ensuring development. As a result, extensive scale capitalist farming, which seemed to have been disturbed as what happened after the Zimbabwean land reform programme of the 2000s with the decolonisation process, has been reappearing under the agro-export model or land grabs (White et al., 2012). However, what are the aims and issues that drive and orient these land grabs?

Numerous scholars and organisations have made efforts in documenting the extent and location of land deals, which have become known as land grabs (GRAIN, 2008; Cotula et al., 2009; von Braun and Meinzen-Dick, 2009; Oakland. 2011; Oxfam, 2011; and Anseeuw et al., 2012; McKay, 2018; Peters, 2018; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019; Abebe, 2019; Moyo, Jha & Yeros, 2019; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020 Oliveira, McKay & Liu, 2021). Land grabbing is characterised by the enclosure of the land and or the displacement of its original owners or users with the sole aim of establishing new labour and new regimes of production (White et al., 2012). Land grabbing is a process that takes years to complete. What is important to note is that the land grabbing deals lead to far-reaching land reform systems which have a global reach. These deals, it can be noted, are characterised by the taking of land from the poor and giving it to the rich. Certain land deals by large multinational companies are done based on speculation. Investors bet on rising land values on a global scale. It is, however, important to note that the central aim of land grabs is to venture into agricultural production (White et al., 2012; Knuth, 2015; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020). Despite the differences in definitions, it is a fact that land grabs are primarily buried in secrecy, and the terms of the lease are not clearly stated (White et al., 2012). Regardless of the secrecy,

incidences of land grabbing are growing in scale and extent (Cotula, 2012; Goldstein & Yates, 2017; Oliveira, McKay & Liu, 2021).

A number of mechanisms are utilised when carrying out the land-grabbing process. These range from direct private-public purchases and public-private leases for mainly biofuel production, especially in countries such as Mozambique (Borras et al., 2012). The extent to the acquiring of large tracts of land for the purposes of conservation and an array of other goals differ (Hall, 2011; Wolford, 2010). In the context of land transactions or deals, the phrase 'global land grab' has been utilised in the description and analysis of the large-scale multinational transactions of land. Undoubtedly, the present-day land grabs show both continuousness and transformation from earlier historical occurrences of enclosures that have been characterising Europe (mainly England). The present-day land grabs also echo what is happening and continue to take place in the colonial and post-colonial scenarios.

The world crisis of food, finance and energy has spurred a sudden re-evaluation of the land tenure systems (Borras et al., 2012 Bellemare & Bloem, 2018; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018). International transnational and other economic actors have made efforts in search of 'unoccupied' land in foreign countries for the purposes of food and fuel production (Moyo, Jha & Yeros, 2019; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020). The search for land for the purposes of fuel and food production is done in the backdrop of the fact that the global commodity volatility leads to price spikes (Borras et al., 2012). The searches for this land have spurred 'land grabs'. Though the 'land grabs' have had a global reach, what is clear is the Western companies are leading in getting this land in developing regions of the world. This, however, does not mean other countries from the non-Western world are not involved in the 'land grabs'. Countries such as Brazil, India and Qatar are

also getting involved (Lavers, 2012; Sassen, 2013a; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018; Peters, 2018).

The surging demands of food and the changing diets in the growing economies of China and India have spurred critical changes in the way food is produced as well as the nature of food produced. This, in the end, has direct consequences on land use. Countries that used to be net importers of food have increasingly seen the need to be involved in direct food production. They have chosen to shun market sourcing of food through the surplus-based food regime that used to exist before (McMichael, 2009a; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017). The ambivalence over the ever-changing and surging prices of fuel, as well as the loss of sovereignty through the take-over of foreigners of energy resources, have spurred the surging reliance on and the demand for new ways of extracting resources (Zoomers, 2010; Goldstein & Yates, 2017; Abebe, 2019). This is done for the purposes of enhancing fuel security and economic development (White & Dasgupta, 2010). In this milieu, there is a surge of a 'biofuel complex' (McMichael & Scoones, 2010). This biofuel complex has been leading to the biofuels revolution in the context of the imagined 'energy crisis' (McMichael & Scoones, 2010). The desire by governments to reduce their dependence on crude oil from the Middle East has been spurring governments to come up with an energy production regime that aims to ensure there is energy security (McMichael & Scoones, 2010).

According to McMichael (2009a), the food regime concept situates the world ordering of the production of food, the way it moves from the producers to the consumers and the way it is consumed within specified institutionalized world-historical conjunctures. What McMichael (2012) terms the 'corporate food regime', which started in 1980 and existed to this day, is a neoliberal project of the liberalization of agriculture through structural adjustment mechanisms. The mechanisms are guided by the World Trade Organisation rules, which encourage global export

of food and obliges developing countries to open their economic doors to the food trade regimes of the first world countries. These mechanisms also encourage developing country economies to remove agricultural protections and instead adopt intellectual property protections (McMichael, 2012; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019). What is important to note in this regard is that all these new rules, which are driven and oriented by the first world countries, have property relations that privilege agricultural business. The privileging of agricultural business comes arguing that mechanised agriculture is more efficient and contributes to the improvement of the world's food security.

In the same vein, the corporate food regime symbolises mercantile practices which trace their roots from the US-centered food regime, which comes in the form of subsidies that are institutionalised by the World Trade Organisation for the energy-intensive agricultural production for the global North. These are also aimed at ensuring that there is an export of artificially cheapened food. This usually has adverse effects on the farmers from the global south as well as the world food security generally (Pritchard, 2009). This has resulted in the casualization of a global labour force for the sake of capital and the depesantization through land grabbing, especially in the global South (McMichael, 2005, Adnan, 2013; McKay, 2018).

Land grabbing came in the backdrop of agricultural business monopoly pricing, surging food prices surging energy costs as well as fuel crops substitutes. These were then transmitted on a global scale under the liberalised terms of trade and finance, and this was associated with neoliberal policies (McMichael, 2009c; Knuth, 2015). The continued surge of food prices in the milieu of surging energy prices heralds a crisis of capital accumulation since capital is not in a position to transform its financial power into novel productive forms of investment besides speculative acquisition of cheap land in the developing countries (Moore, 2010; Goldstein & Yates, 2017). In

this milieu, what is known as land grabs are both a response to the reversals in food prices? This has generated bans on the export of food (McMichael, 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018). Land grabs show capitalists' government intentions to secure profit through farming food and crops for biofuels. They also reflect first world countries' speculative interests in the future of food and biofuel businesses as well as the attendant inflation of land prices (McMichael, 2012). What is critical to note is that these offshore designs supersede the World Trade Organisation free trade principles. This also signals a change of agricultural industry from the first world countries to the developing countries since the coordinates of the corporate food system change in order to exploit the growing costs of land between the first world countries and the developing countries (Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

The shifting terrain of the corporate food regime comes together with the goal to incorporate small scale farmers in the global south into the value chain of agricultural business. This is usually done through a new regime of capitalising farming as a channel of commercial outputs and inputs. Under the banner of agriculture for development usually advanced by the World Bank as well as philanthropic and institutional goals such as the Gates Foundation's Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), developers do combine a variant of land grabbing from smallholder farmers with a similar strategy aimed at countering those against the land grabs. This is done for the purposes of food sovereignty, which is expressed in terms of what McMichael (2012: 683) terms "Responsible Agricultural Investment principles". These are designed to justify and create a platform for the enclosure of both common lands and smallholder farms (Borras & Franco, 2010; Rutherford, 2017). The fundamental justification for these land grabs is that smallholder farms which small scale farmers utilise for agricultural purposes, and land to which they have access, which is known as common land, is seen as low yielding and poorly utilised. The argument behind

the grabbing is that if enough capital is injected, rural incomes are improved by the new foreign company owners, and the global food security problems will be addressed. In this light, McMichael (2012) argues that land grabbing is, therefore, an expression of the restructuring of the food regime.

Borras (2010) notes that the politics of investment codes which happened at the Food and Agricultural Organisation's (FAO's) Committee on Food Security shows a new area of tussle regarding the issue of governance between very distinct coalitions. These coalitions have taken place between coalitions which included the International Land Coalition (ILC), the FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN), La Vı´a Campesina, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), and the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) (Borras, 2010). These struggles are part of a vast agrarian mobilisation around self-opposing principles on re-peasantization, agro-ecology, and food sovereignty, among others. This agrarian mobilisation led La Via Campesina to come up with the United Nations Peasants' Charter (Edelman & Carwill, 2011). In this context, the paradoxes of the corporate food system have been whetted. This has, as a result, deepened the terms of struggle as the land grab (McMichael, 2012). In this light, initiatives which include, Reduced Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation (REDD), the agro fuels project and the US and transnational corporation promotion of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) crops in the name of security have dominated the agrarian world (McMichael, 2012). In actual fact, the land grab does deepen the dynamics that underlie the zenith of the metropolitan agrarian crisis (Kautsky, 1989; Knuth, 2015). The metropolitan agrarian crisis included cheap grains from the developing countries coming into Europe in large volumes. In these situations, the capitalist farmers of Europe lose out and, in the end, countersigning the industrialisation of Europe as a central part of a food regime that is British centred (Friedmann, 1978; Friedmann & McMichael, 1989).

As the successor of the British centred food regime, the US was successful in temporarily resolving the metropolitan food crisis (Mehta, Veldwisch & Franco, 2012). This the US was able to do through what is known as agricultural mercantilism. The agricultural mercantilism was managed through the overproduction of food in US farms and selling them at give-away prices to certain developing postcolonial states. This strategy was adopted by Europe as well, and it was generalised as food dumping by the West into developing markets (McMichael, 2009d). Kautsky (1989) warned that the agrarian crisis is deepening today. It is deepening on a global level given the fact that land leases (which some have called land grabs), give-aways, financialization, subsidies which are closely associated with land grabs, do express plummeting productivity in Western countries (Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020). This, as a result, is extending and deepening cheap land frontiers to their ecological limits (McMichael, 2012). In light of this, the long-term agrarian crisis, which is associated with agricultural offshoring, is deepening as the land-grabbing heralds the changing of the food regime through the acquiring of cheap labour, water and land in developing countries. What this situation represents is a short-term attempt to solve the contradictions of the surging industrial and agricultural costs. The situation also represents the surging food costs of the reproduction of labour on the one hand, although under the conditions of agricultural business. This, however, accelerates ecological and social contradictions, especially in Africa, where most countries have become vulnerable to climate change (Toulmin, 2009). The ecological contradictions are accelerated in that land grabs which result from these arrangements lead to the destruction of large portions of forests to open up land for large scale farming. Social contradictions are also accelerated by the fact that instead of improving the lives of the local people from which land is grabbed, the livelihoods of the local peoples are usually affected negatively (Borras, Franco, & Wang, 2013; Klinger & Narins, 2018).

In the context of this, McMichael (2012) notes that as an expression of the restructuring of the food regime, land grabbing chronicles a new threshold of the changing of farming and arable land into a source of agro fuels food, feed and biomass. This is done in order to serve the interests and needs of an elite global class of consumers who are mainly domiciled in first world countries (Borras, Franco, & Wang, 2013). The key to this change is the role played by finance since financial speculation usually renders crops and land increasingly fungible. This is done at the expense of sustainable farming, which will ensure that there is ecological and social sustainability (McMichael, 2012; Rutherford, 2017).

The global land grabs are driven by the realisation that the human and natural resources of the developing world can be alternative sources of energy and food production (Borras et al., 2012). Land grabs are also driven by national governments in internal colonialism (Borras et al., 2012). Land that is regarded as marginal by the internal governments is put aside for the production of food and energy (Borras et al., 2012). What is clear is that the pace, as well as the extent of these land grabs, is extensive and rapid. Estimates show that hundreds of millions of hectares of land which has been designated as unoccupied has been taken and used for food and energy production (Borras et al., 2012). The major land deals of this nature are in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some of the other areas targeted for commodity crops, fuels crops and ecosystem services are countries in South America, countries that were formerly part of the Union of Soviet and Socialist Republics and countries in Southeast Asia (Cotula et al., 2009; Zoomers, 2010; Visser & Spoor, 2011; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018).

It is important to note that land deals that are done on a large scale show the scale of the surging agrarian crisis globally. This crisis is shown in the growing food insecurities, environmental degradation, landlessness and poverty (McMichael, 2012). The surging prices and scarcity of food

and fuel in 2007-2008, led to protests in some countries. This precipitated protectionist measures by those who have the capacity to produce food. Those without the capacities to produce engaged in expansionist strategies hence land grabs (White et al., 2012). A combination of changes in the climate, agro-industrial development, the extraction of natural resources, increasing urbanisation as well as neoliberal austerity measures has increased land insecurities and vulnerabilities of the rural people globally. It is critical to note that in most developing countries, neoliberal policies have led to the privatisation of what used to be publicly owned. Neoliberalism in these countries also led to the financing of land grabs which were closely related to the novel forms of global capitalism (White et al., 2012; Knuth, 2015).

Arguments by those who are against large scale land leases stated that the power of agricultural business is no longer nested in the control of the land. Rather, the key argument that has been made by these groups is that the power of agricultural business rests in the control of agricultural production. Those who control loans, the supply of agricultural materials, how new technologies are disseminated, those who control both international and national warehousing systems, transportation, the retail and distribution of farm produce to customers do control agricultural business (McMichael, 2012). They also finance land grabs in the global South in order to keep their businesses going. At the same time, what is now known as the triple crisis of food, energy, and finance has changed the landscape in such a way that with the outlook of surging energy and prices of food, the land is again seen as a critical tool of investment (Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). The land is also back on the investment agenda. This has resulted in accelerated land grabbing in areas where land is seen as unused or underutilised (Adnan, 2013; McKay, 2018; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

The realignment of the interest in water and land calls for the examination of land grabs through the prisms of political economy and global ecology. Sachs (1993: 20) defines global ecology as "…the rational planning of how global land and the resources found on it can benefit the first world countries". This came in the aftermath of the Earth Summit of 1992, when forests and other natural resources in the developing countries were supposed to be managed as carbon sinks as well as for the preservation of biodiversity (McMichael, 2012). The Earth Summit of 1992 was aimed at ensuring that the developing countries become the bioregions of ecological value to the accumulation drive fronted by the first world countries. According to Sachs (1993: 13), "…environmental diplomacy, which works within the framework of developmentalism, has mainly concentrated its efforts on controlling what is left of nature".

In the same vein, by classifying the atmosphere and biodiversity as belonging to everyone, those who have supported land grabbing have overridden the claims of the local populations on the natural resources that surround them. They have, as a result, effectively asserted that everyone from any part of the globe could own these natural resources (Mehta, Veldwisch, & Franco, 2012). As a result, the local people have been seen as having no right to claim them. Food security of the global North hinges on the North's presence in the South and is also associated with the world crisis of neoliberal capitalism since crises in food, soil, and oil can only be solved through controlling land and what can be produced from that land. Regardless of the adverse effects of agricultural expansion through the cutting down of trees, the World Bank (2010) sees agricultural expansion through commercial agriculture as a necessary step towards meeting the increasing food demand.

When viewed from a political economy angle, the crisis of accumulation that is taking place under neoliberalism shows itself through controlling what is left of nature through historical perspectives,

which are specific. The restructuring of the food regime is foreseen through the relocation of large-scale agricultural industries to developing countries, such as what is happening in Mozambique, Ethiopia and other countries in the global South (Makki & Geiseler, 2011; Borras et al., 2012). This came in the backdrop of export bans as well as offshore investments following the crisis of food that took place in 2007 and 2008 (Monsalve, 2013). The shift in agricultural production is spurred by poor soils in once-fertile regions of the world, surging costs of inputs as well as cheap land in developing countries, which have become easily accessible through the novel forms of environmental diplomacy. The land has not continuously been appropriated for agricultural purposes. Environmental imperatives which became the 'Great Green Land Grab' have also led to the appropriation of land. Through this approach, the market paradigm is applied to the environment in 'market environmentalism' (Moore, 2011). Through this, people have moved away from their ancestral lands (Schneider & McMichael, 2010; Moore, 2011). This trend which is also known as the 'neoliberalisation' of nature and the environment (Moore, 2011), has led to the creation of novel alliances of actors. It has also led to the creation of new patterns of governance and commodification of land (Heynen et al., 2007; Castree, 2008a, 2008b; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

The imperatives which spur the land deals have seen new NGOs negotiating land deals under climate change-related programmes such as the REDD initiatives-Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation. Some have led to the negotiation of land deals for the lucrative rules of carbon cap and trade programs. Thus, spurred by these opportunities aimed at matching nature conservation with income-generating opportunities, NGOs such as the World Land Trust, Cool Earth and the Wild Lands have been involved in deals in which large portions of and are purchased (White et al., 2012). Such processes trace their history to the colonial processes of

enclosures and land alienation (Fairhead, Leach and Scoones, 2012). These have been done in the name of the environment hence the creation of national parks, forest reserves. In the end, police interventions are put in place with the aim of protecting the interests of the local people. This new market environmentalism also involves novel dynamics of commodification in which the environment is valued for its products and services in the new market. This process has, in the end, led to the essential mechanisms of accumulation which are driven by values of wildlife, carbon, landscapes and ecosystem services on a broader scale (Corbera et al., 2007; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017).

The shift has also been spurred by climate change, food and biofuels crises. This has, in the end, led to agricultural development solutions which have involved land acquisitions and the financing of commercial agriculture in farms developed on the acquired lands. All this is facilitated by the accommodative policies of most developing countries. This has also been facilitated by public-private biofuel complexes as well as public authority governance mandates which are associated with the titling of land. This has, as a result, legitimised novel initiatives for development (McMichael, 2005; Goldstein & Yates, 2017; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

In this context, the crisis of neoliberal accumulation is firmly embedded in ecological contradictions (Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018). These contradictions include the depletion of fossil fuels, as well as anthropocentric changes in climate. When these are combined with the surging prices of food, they lead to the surges in reproductive costs of capital as well as costs in the building of infrastructure for states. Woodhouse and Ganho (2011) critically evaluated the extent to which the process of land grabbing includes the access of flowing water through the building of infrastructure, which monopolises the water to the extent of depriving smallholder farmers.

Neoliberal accumulation does not only justify and spur offshore land investments in the name of addressing shortages in food and alternative energy (Corbera, Hunsberger & Vaddhanaphuti, 2017). Rather, agro-industrial capitalization, which comes out of this, also opens an investment frontier for capital in the context and era of financialization. “To the extent that agriculture and its products are absorbed into financial chains, the mix of physical crops becomes increasingly irrelevant to the financial profit calculus. That is, production decisions reflect a boardroom financial calculus with little concern for allocations between crops for food or fuels and/or environmental integrity. In this sense, the so-called rational planning of planetary resources such as land (and water) is driven as much by financial goals as by material considerations” (McMichael, 2012: 686).

What is critical to note is that land grabbing, which is done in the name of the food which came in the aftermath of the world food crisis of 2008, is undertaken by a combination of development agencies (McMichael, 2012). It is also undertaken by investment banks such as Goldman and Sachs, funds such as the Carlyle Group and philanthropic organisations such as the Gates Foundation and the Soros Foundation. They are also sanctioned by the World Food Summit of 2008. McMichael (2012: 686) notes that hundreds of millions of lands have been grabbed through the funding of these organisations in sub-Saharan countries such as Mozambique, Mali, Ethiopia, among others. On the other hand, land grabbing done in the name of biofuels and biomass are taken mainly by private investors. They are, in some cases, done through state firms and through Sovereign Wealth Funds. The controversies which came over the biofuel claims and the impacts these have had on the local communities have stigmatised biofuels and were seen as ‘a crime against humanity’ by the UN Human Rights Rapporteur Jean Ziegler in 2007 (McMichael, 2012; Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013; Adnan, 2013; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

Land grabbing done either for food or for fuel has led to the need for institutional oversight (McKay, 2018). These include rules as well as certification schemes which include the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels and Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests. The attempts that were made in elaborating the 'Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment' (RAI) led UN Rights Rapporteur Olivier de Schutter's in 2010 to state that land grabs have been 'Responsibly destroying the world's peasantry'(Monsalve, 2013; Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). They have also led to an attempt led by the civil societies to construct more democratic Voluntary Guidelines through the FAO and its Committee on Food Security. Food regime dynamics are, by definition, framed by rigidities between distinctive organizing principles. They are also framed by the contestation over how land should be valued.

Land grabbing includes the prospects of developing the bioeconomy (Levidow, 2011; Klinger & Narins, 2018; McKay; Oliveira & Liu, 2020). Notably, the future development of the bioeconomy is probably the most apparent manifestation of the key-value question which surrounds the land and is spurred by the neoliberalization of nature (Birch et al., 2010). This novel bioeconomy chronicles the prelude of the conversion of the market of liquid fuel to biomass. The new bioeconomy is envisioned by foresters, those who are into agribusiness energy and chemical firms, as well as those into biotech which spurs the continuing enclosure and degradation of the natural environment (Birch et al., 2010). This is done through the appropriation of matter from plants with the aim of transforming them into industrial commodities. This is also done with the aim of refitting as well as redefining ecosystems with the intent of providing industrial support services (ETC, 2010). Those who have propounded the new bioeconomy target developing countries where there is a general perception and belief that land best suited for this is not fully utilised (ETC, 2010; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019).

In the same vein, biofuels production has been presenting a new avenue for profit for agricultural business and the energy sector (McMichael & Scoones, 2010). It is useful to reiterate the alliances which are formed make the boundary between fuels, food and feed blurred. This formation of alliances is done in a vertically integrated way in which relations are formed between the South and the North (Dauvergne & Neville, 2010). It is, however, important to note that multinational corporations are involved in the 'feed-fuel alliance' through the use of genetically modified crops of soy, maize and rapeseeds. The narrative that those involved in land grabbing deals are companies from the North coming to the South is not always accurate. South-South alliances have also been formed in as much as North-South alliances which involve both public and private companies are formed (Dauvergne & Neville, 2010, Cotula, 2012). Global international companies such as Cargill, ADM-Kuck-Wilmar, Synergy Drive, among others, have been involved in some of the major land deals in the global South (Cotula, 2012). For instance, Mozambique and South Africa have formed alliances in which land is grabbed from the local peoples with the aim of growing sugarcane and soy (Borras et al., 2012). The changes in the global food-feed-fuel industry have spurred the creation of novel politico-economic configurations as well as novel types of farming in which advanced technologies and chemicals are used. Not only multinational corporations are involved in the agribusiness leading to the land grabs, small scale operators and non-governmental organisations and small-scale operators are also involved in land grabs (Hunsberger, 2010; Ariza et al., 2010; McKay; Oliveira & Liu, 2020). Ariza et al., (2010) argue that though these investments have different consequences and impacts, they are all lead to a broader political economy on land grabbing.

In 2004, a European report titled: A quick scan of global bio-energy potentials to 2050, made a claim to the effect that the critical requirements for the potential of bioenergy around the world is

that the poor and low intensive agricultural practices should be replaced by 2050 with the best technology and management practices and systems (Smeets et al., 2004). McMichael (2012), however, argued that this notion could, however, be challenged since evidence show that low intensive agricultural practices cause the least environmental harm and can be easily controlled. The observations made by this European report reverberate with the rhetoric by the World Bank regarding the yield gaps and is used to justify the land grabs. McMichaeal (2012) argues that companies from the global North have targeted common land and peasant farms for land grabbing.

Beyond biofuels, biomass is also surging in demand for the production of heat, chemicals, the production of electricity, industrial and manufacturing processes and the continuously expanding range of products and materials. In this context, agriculture is therefore unique in both sides of the debate on energy and food policies. It is poised in both these ends as a source and as a solution to the problems which have ensued. As a result, land grabbing forestalls the surging value of living biomass as the source of inputs into the new bioeconomy. It is in this new bioeconomy where synthetic biology innovation is creating the platform for companies to retrofit the hydrocarbon economy with the aim of accommodating carbohydrate feed stocks (ETC, 2010; Oliveira, 2018; 2019a).

Ostensibly, the bio-economy discourse does suggest that land grabbing is a platform for the restructuring of food and fuel in which the projections and technology of the new bioeconomy is dependent on improving and increasing the access to the production of biomass in order to continue powering economies which are affluent. In the same vein, the past geopolitical relations of the corporate food regime rooted in the US and EU agricultural exporting of commodities in bulk are changing (Murmis & Murmis, 2012). This change is taking place in the context of the losing competitive advantage of first world farms in a global market (Sassen, 2013b). This change is

governed by novel forms of mercantilism since agricultural subsidies tend to be favouring land outside Europe given the fact that land, labour and water is cheap outside the US and Europe (Sassen, 2013a). In a differing pattern from what used to be the case, the new patterns of investment in developing countries favour bulk commodities. Most land which grabbed or leased on a long-term basis is mainly aimed at producing corn, wheat, oil seeds and other feed grains (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018).

Land grabs show an ongoing change of industrial agriculture as well as its political dimensions of the postwar, which are framed within the security discourse of providing food to the world and saving the earth (Adnan, 2013). The surging bioenergy economy, which fuses global ecology and political economy, is dependent on the enabling duty of financialization in the management of a spatial and sectorial change in the accumulation of capital towards a novel extractive regime of food, fuel or biomass which encloses the remaining water and land in the world (Mehta, Veldwisch & Franco, 2012). Speculation governs the extent to which this capital accumulation can underwrite a new radical change, especially as climate change presents a threat to the longevity of such a development (Moore, 2010; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

Land grabbing has coincided with the time of financialization. The contemporary economic and political arrangements create the process of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003; 2005). Through this process, public land is enclosed for the purposes of making a profit for some at the expense of others from whom the land will be taken (White et al., 2012: 627). An analysis of the process of land grabbing through this prism yields one credit in noting that land grabbing is an outcome of interlinked processes of privatisation and financialization, which is central to neoliberal capitalism (White et al., 2012). This neo-liberal capitalism, it should be noted, is spurred by the manipulation and management of crises. These are managed and manipulated in the

discursive emphases on policy debates on scarcities. They are also managed and manipulated in 'state redistributions' (Harvey, 2003; 2005), in which the state gives way to capitalist business. The state does this by giving capitalist businesses tax breaks, offering capitalist businesses concessionary terms and also giving capitalist businesses subsidies aimed at supporting investment (White et al., 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018).

This era of financialisation is characterised by a process whereby investors see it as preferable to have capital in its liquid form and not in its illiquid form. In this context, the land is seen as the best asset in which to invest in order to achieve this. Investors have, as a result, decided to acquire land through land grabbing, mostly in the global South. According to Arrighi (2007: 145), this financialization was a result of the US effort of the 1980s in which it instituted rules aimed at promoting liberal capital markets and attracting capital flows into the US through rising interest rates by deregulating banking (Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). The US has done this in order to fight and overcome the decline in its industrial productive capacity. In this case, this financialization shows the declining hegemony of the US in the economic and geopolitical sphere since its industrial investors change their investment to financial ventures from fixed capital (Monsalve, 2013). The investors' change to financial ventures has spurred securitization, mergers as well as general financial speculation (McMichael, 2012). The financialization that has coincided with land grabbing has paralleled a general worldwide decline in productivity outside the sectors of communications and information. Over the last couple of decades, manufacturing has gradually moved to developing countries in search of cheap labour and cheap land. This land is usually acquired through land grabbing (Monsalve, 2013; Knuth, 2015).

The banking revolution, which included surging consumer debt and profligate mortgage lending, sustained the consumption of offshore products by people from the global North. During the turn

of the millennium, the falling industrial productivity in the global North, together with the collapse in the financial derivatives, led to an accumulation crisis. In this context, capital investment shifted significantly into land, food and biofuel speculative ventures (Holt-Gime´nez, 2007: 10). The inflation in the prices of food in 2007-2008 led to the deepening attention of investors into offshore agricultural investment. Speculation in food deepened through commodity index funds. Through this, investors' targets were on 'agrofutures' (McMichael, 2012: 689). Agricultural contracts were changed into derivatives in the backdrop of pressure by financiers on legislators to ensure that commodity contract business is deregulated during the 1990s. Since then, speculators have joined those who handle agricultural products into a market of agro-futures. As a result, the selling and buying of food futures developed into a derivative market. This, as a result, led to the inflation of food prices (Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). Speculation, which was made possible by computer automation, increased in the mid-2000s in the context of the unfolding real estate market crisis. It was at this point where investors shifted their funds into commodity futures (Kaufman, 2010). The speculative spike which resulted from the food and real estate market crisis, in the end, led to the process in which the mechanisms that were created to ensure that there is stability in the prices of grain was then reassembled into a system of inflating the prices of grains (Kaufman, 2010; McKay, 2018).

Daniel (2009: 5) notes that "…the replacement of hard commodities such as non-renewable metals and oil by soft commodities such as renewable crops in the market investment in the year 2007 was one of the indicators of such a conjuncture". Land and agriculture, in addition to food futures and crops, have instituted a different investment frontier lately. Africa is targeted for agricultural investment since land is seen as inexpensive (Gillam, 2009). Not only wealthy investors are investing in agriculture, conglomerates in sectors such as oil, chemicals, agribusiness and auto are

also investing in the capitalisation of agriculture as a new frontier for fuel (McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

All this signals a significant investment in agriculture (Adnan, 2013). Although agricultural industrialisation is mainly seen in the global North, surging costs in producing food in these countries have led to offshore investment in agriculture where there is cheap land and labour (Mehta, Veldwisch & Franco, 2012). Since industrial agriculture has experienced a decline in productivity biophysically, between the 1950s and 1990s, the expenses of biophysical override rise with the commodity inputs prices (Weis, 2007; van der Ploeg, 2010). This is exacerbated the requirements in energy and irrigation as a result of the declining productivity (van der Ploeg, 2010; Holt-Gime´nez, 2007b). When agricultural returns surge, there will be a prefiguration to offshore investment by investors as they aim to take advantage of cheap land, water and labour in the global South. This, as a result, leads to land grabbing. This grabbing is prompted by financial speculation as well as anticipation of risk, which is evident in climate change. This, according to McMichael (2012), leads to the consolidation of 'world agriculture or what van der Ploeg (2010) saw as the 'interchangeability of large agricultural systems' which leads to industrial crops production or high-input contract farming. As a result, the traditional contours of the food regime, which used to be anchored in the subsidization of agro-industry in first world countries at the expense of farming in the developing countries, are changing. These are changing since restructuring in the agro-industry has been re-spatializing the food regime through the expansion of offshore fuel and food supply zones (Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017).

Land grabs are seen as a solution to the surging prices of food, surging oil prices as a result of shortages mandates on emissions. They are seen as a solution to surging oil prices since it is assumed that the solution to shortages in fossil fuels is seen producing biofuels through growing

jatropha and sugarcane to produce fuels such as ethanol (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013). This is accompanied by an ideology of enclosure which is justified on the grounds of the need to produce food and produce fuels which are environmentally friendly. What is still questionable is whether land grabbing can solve the food and fuel crises. Nevertheless, the answer to this question could be that the rationale behind agricultural financialization is in privileging futures over gains in productivity (McMichael, 2012). Indeed, there is rhetoric by development agencies on the 'yield gap' between what is attained and what can potentially be attained from agriculture from the land in developing countries, particularly African land. For instance, the World Bank (2010: vii) claimed that of all the land cultivated in Africa, the yield produced does not exceed thirty per cent of the potential yield that can be produced. In this context, the European Commission suggested that land reforms in which land is leased or given to those with the financial capacity to produce farm produce to total capacity could be the solution (Monsalve, 2013). The European Commission suggested that there is a need to come up with land policies in which governments in developing countries give land tenure and use rights which are secure to those with the financial capacity to use the land to full capacity and grow cash crops which are not produced by current users who grow crops for subsistence (Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). Furthermore, the European Commission suggested the integration of smallholder farmers into the chain of production (Borras & Franco, 2011).

To Arraghi (2009), the rhetoric of a 'yield gap' is simply an understatement for a form of agriculture that is extractive. It is aimed at catering for the overconsumption of a global minority and can only serve to jeopardize the 'under-production of smallholder farmers (Arraghi, 2009). What is important to note is that the 'biomass' is produced as a corporate product and not for domestic food or fuel sovereignty of people from the global South. Despite the fact that the land

reform suggested by the European Commission may lead to an increase in yields, (McMichael, 2012) argued that as long as what is produced is exported and not consumed where it is produced, it cannot be seen as development for those from which the land is taken. As a result, the general assumption that agriculture, which is highly funded, has the ability to resolve the 'yield gap' is highly misleading (McMichael, 2012). A growing body of literature based on scientific consensus points to the fact that small scale farming or agriculture is as productive and, in some instances, more productive than some commercial and industrial agriculture practices (Badgley & Perfecto, 2007; Hamer & Anslow, 2010). Another surging body of knowledge also points to the fact that smallholder farming along agricultural and ecological lines is sustainable environmentally than large scale and industrial agriculture (Altieri, 2010, Altieri & Toledo, 2011). However, agriculture and land seem to be an immediate answer to the crisis of accumulation (Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). Nevertheless, suggestively the answer to the accumulation crisis fundamentally depends on subsidies to agricultural business, transport companies and energy from the developed countries as well as concessions to investors by developing countries (Monsalve, 2013; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

With these studies in place, Moore (2010) argues that land grabbing for agricultural fuels and certainly biomass production cannot be a solution to the accumulation crisis. The capitalisation of forests and grass with agricultural inputs, which usually come after land grabbing, degrades the natural foundations of production. The production of fertilisers has been on the upsurge since 1996. This trend is now strengthened by agricultural fuels as well as the removal of cellulose fibre from agricultural land (ETC, 2009). In instances where agricultural fuels are going to displace food crop production and when this is paired with financial speculation on agricultural production, the possibilities for capital to use the land grabs as an avenue for cheap sourcing energy and food

resources in order to reduce the cost of production and reproduction may be short-lived but generally devastating (McMichael, 2012). Although the land may be cheap to investors, it has its own value to those who own and live in it. This is a critical point which ties both economics to governance. Mainly, land provides the local inhabitants with the possibility of subsistence. It also provides them with social and ecological resilience, on top of it having spiritual and ancestral value to the local inhabitants (Adnan, 2013; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017).

The acquisition of what is seen as common and unused land from the local inhabitants devalues its cultural and ecological meaning to those it is acquired from (McMichael, 2012). The dispossession of locals, who are seen as not productive, then becomes the basis of what is seen as proper or rational planning by investors and organisations in the global North, such as the World Bank. This is driven by the claims for increase in production, reducing debts, enhancing export of food as well as enhancing rural development (Houtart, 2010; Grajales, 2011). For instance, people in Northern Uganda were removed from their land in order to pave the way for the planting of pine and gum trees. This was done in order to sell these trees to those who will use them to pollute the environment elsewhere. Thus, changing or converting other people's homes into profit-generating land under the pretext of mitigating climate change is an example of the imposition of the 'global ecology' logic for the colonisation of the land. These land takeovers are usually funded by the World Bank, HSBC the Shanghai Banking Corporation, among other financial institutions (Kron, 2011; Oliveira, 2018; 2019a).

In the case of Uganda, the government sanctioned the enclosure of joint and land utilised by peasants in order to pave the way for foreign investors. The end result is the extension of subsidies of cheap and free land to investors at the expense of the social reproduction of the rights of smallholder farmers. Commenting on this, McMichael (2012: 693) noted: "Biomass production,

or carbon offsets, may represent capital's new frontier, but as with most frontier expansions, it is subsidized by home and host governments. Public subsidies for land grabbing contribute to a composite set of 'externalized' environmental, social, cultural and human rights costs. Displacing the social and intrinsic value of such habitat eventually recycles as monetary costs of resettlement, food shortages and ecosystem depletion for governments and development agencies. The 'external' costs of doing agribusiness multiply, with global warming and ecosystem degradation – following the capitalization of nature (via land grabs, oil palm plantations, GM seeds, etc.) – combining to undermine the conditions of capital accumulation in the long run. In these senses, the land grab is not merely a reflex to resolve an accumulation crisis via investment fund management within a subsidy regime. It sacrifices land and its inhabitants to a financial calculus represented as a necessary global good (food yields, green fuels, and even carbon offsets)". In this regard, land grabbing efficiently leads to the dispossession of rural populations of their land. This removal is aimed at paving the way for what a pro-peasant organisation called La Via Campesina sees as the installation of 'agriculture without farmers' when referring to agro industrialisation. In this regard, land grabbing, which is driven by biomass, is a substitute for the management of a crisis of accumulation for the sustainability of natural and human ecology (Klinger & Muldavin, 2019).

Land grabbing is regarded as a form of development by the World Bank and other forms of governance that are proliferating. Land grabbing is seen in this light since it is closely associated with employment creation and other productivity gains. In this context, land grabbing is seen as beneficial since governments from the developing countries which are heavily in debt will, in the end, receive the much-needed foreign direct investment through the conversion of forests and land in their countries into areas of agricultural export. For Cotula (2011), developing countries which

are targets for land grabbing expect infrastructural investments in order to develop a landed property. Nevertheless, Cotula (2011) notes that leasing land or renting it off rents spurs speculative investments by foreign investors. This usually happens since there are usually lease transferability and contracts which are long term.

What informs the land grabbing narrative is the argument the peasant farmers are essentially poor, and the land grabbing will create jobs for them. Cash is in the context of land grabbing is seen as the currency of modernity. Wealth is identified with money, and intact habitat for the peasants, the security of land holding, and common lands are seen as not at all important (Sassen, 2013a). Through its report titled: Rising Global Interest in Farmland, the World Bank (2010) saw large scale land acquisition as an avenue for reducing poverty through creating rural employment. The World Bank (2010) also saw large scale land acquisitions as an avenue for employment creation through contract farming as well as through renting (World Bank, 2010). However, Li (2011) noted that contrary to the World Bank's claim that millions get employment through land grabs, actual statistics in palm oil fields show that only a few get employed in these farms due to mechanisation. Those who would be employed in these fields are usually poorly paid. Usually, the contracts that the farm workers are given are vague and not at all sustainable (Cotula, 2011; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

Enclosures of land in developing countries revitalize the old narratives of modernisation. This old modernisation trope holds that industrialisation is essential for development to take place. The old trope of modernisation which characterised the development era whose prelude can be traced to the late 1940s, led to the industrial bias. This industrial bias was partly shaped by the intervening food regimes. This intervening food regime subsidized Developing manufacturing food imports from the US and Europe, which were cheap. This, in the end, has undermined peasant agriculture

in most parts of the developing. The intervening regime then targeted certain states which are seen as strategic with a green revolution. Strategic states such as India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Turkey, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, the Philippines and Indonesia were chosen for this green revolution and are selected for farmers with the resources to adopt certain technological packages (Murmis & Murmis, 2012; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

In Africa and other parts of the developing, food dependence has, as a result, expanded since food corporations have been able to obtain better access and unrestricted access to domestic markets through the World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules (McMichael, 2005). In the context of protectionism that has arisen as a result of the 2007-2008 food crises, provisioning through the global market, in a neoliberal form of 'food security' is now in question. McMichael (2012) argues that this interruption coupled with the changes of financial capital from manufacturing into agricultural futures, land and agriculture provides the development industry with a new crusade. It also portends a reconfiguration of the old and familiar patterns of what is known as the 'cheap food regime'. It was the first time in a quarter-century for agriculture to command attention from key financial institutions such as the World Bank when the bank advocated 'agriculture for development' (McMichael, 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018).

In this context, the urgency of the energy and food crises has reconfigured the world elite's political and economic vision around the mobilisation of agricultural resources in the wake of fuel, water and food shortages (Dietz, Engels, Pye & Brunnengräber, 2014). Through technification, land in developing countries has become a target for increasing farm productivity (Franco, 2014). In most developing countries, especially in Africa and Asia, the land is owned by the state but is held communally. As a result, it is subject to redistribution by the state once it is seen as idle and potentially rewarding through commercialisation. In this context, global financial institutions and

global development partners have been working behind the scenes to ensure the privatisation of land and attract foreign investment of African land to take place (Jayne, Chamberlin & Headey, 2014; Knuth, 2015).

Developed countries have, as a result, been encouraging investments in agriculture. For instance, the US' Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has been giving grants to certain countries. In return, these countries are expected to implement specific economic reforms. Most compacts signed by MCC with African governments are aimed at improving commercial agriculture. In most of these compacts, a component of land privatisation is central, and the principal aim is in supporting 'market-based solutions to food security' (McMichael, 2012). The provisions given by the compacts signed include the certification of out-growers with the aim of exporting food. The provisions also include building infrastructure with the aim of gaining access to global markets. This is aimed at providing farmers with inputs during the first year of the partnership (McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

For instance, the Gates Foundation, which has been financing AGRA, noted that to improve commercial agriculture, there is a need for 'land mobility' (McMichael, 2012). Additionally, there is a need for mechanised agriculture in which only a few will be employed to operate the machines. This foretells a trajectory of eviction (McMichael, 2012). In this context, the trope of modernising agricultural productivity through enforcing the narrative of depeasantization has been deepening through the radical decoupling of urbanization from industrialisation. This has, as a result, intensified the 'planet of slums' phenomenon (Davis, 2006). This has taken place at a time when global development, which is framed as global ecology through land grabbing, has overridden any remaining pretences of national development (Sassen, 2013b; McKay, 2018).

In these contexts, the displacement of rural populations is anticipated as a result of land acquisitions. Under these land acquisitions, physical development leading to loss of shelter as a result of relocations, loss of assets such as livestock and even access to assets, income and livelihoods are anticipated from the land acquisitions (Daniel 2010). At the same time, it is also anticipated that the land acquisitions may as well lead to the creation of opportunities for the rural populations to participate. It is also noted that the local people may benefit from project-related activities that may be helpful in ensuring that they can fulfill their socio and economic developmental aspirations (Daniel, 2010; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

In this instance, the eviction of the local population will chronicle the start of a monetised or cash economy. This then affirms the violence that is associated with development (McMichael, 2012). Through the sanctioning of the violence that is usually connected to the dispossession associated with development, states are in some instances privatised, as seen in Colombia (Grajeles, 2011). In some countries, paramilitary forces are deployed in order to accomplish the dispossession, as is the case in countries such as Colombia (Grajales, 2011). International organisations which are in support of land dispossessions or land grabs include the World Bank, its affiliated organisation, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) among others (McMichael, 2012). The main focus of land grabbing in which these organisations are actively involved is sub-Saharan Africa (McMichael, 2012; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019).

In addition to the direct investment by the World Banks' operations in agricultural business, the Foreign Investment Advisory service (FIAS), which partners with the IFC, targets 'investment climates' (Murmis & Murmis, 2012). The investment climates are targeted in foreign markets with the aim of creating land registries. In the end, this creates the land registries lead to the easing of

land titling, foreign investment and land leasing. According to the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the greater possibility of accomplishing this comes from countries that lack the capacities and mechanisms aimed at protecting the rights of local people through protecting their livelihoods, welfare and interests (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013; Corbera, Hunsberger & Vaddhanaphuti, 2017).

For McMichael (2012), the haste to possess land is directly matched with the haste to come up with both private and para-statal governance systems. These are all focused on a model of extraction of development that is justified through managed principles of comparative advantage (Jayne, Chamberlin & Headey, 2014). Thus, although the FIAS initiative, Investing Across Borders (IAB), carried out project surveys in a number of countries through targeting information on the technical regulations and licensing information only, it ignored the potential human impacts of land grabs. Instead, the focus was on mapping the comparative 'investment climates' with regard to patterns of land holding, state capacities and power (Daniel, 2010). McMichael (2012) argues that these 'services' done in the name of development make up a wide-ranging infrastructural complex that supports the grabbing of land. According to Friedmann (2005), although a food regime has an institutional framework which is governed by understood rules which appeal to the normative understandings of a developmental ordering of the world, these 'services', with incipient 'guidelines', chronicle an institutional updating of the corporate food regime.

The rules that were set by the WTO institutionalized a 'cheap food regime'. This regime sanctioned corporate subsidies, which legitimised the continuation of Northern food dumping from the earlier regimes of food aid (Sassen, 2013a). Nonetheless, the present-day institutional trends show a reconfigured framework. This framework has two main dimensions. The first dimension has a

multicentric complex of rules and codes of conduct (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013). These rules and codes of conduct emerge through the role played in land grabbing by non-governmental organisations, UN organisations such as FAO and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the WB (Jayne, Chamberlin & Headey, 2014; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

The efforts by these Non-governmental organisations and UN organisations such as FAO are supported by the public and private partnerships when it comes to financing agricultural business, concluding bilateral agreements on access to land, concluding and agreeing on emerging climate change protocols such as the EU's Emission Trading System, the Clean Development Mechanism which has supported the appropriation of land and forests in developing countries as carbon sinks and as platforms for producing green fuels (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013). The second dimension of this framework also involves the promotion of the reversal of circulation patterns centred on developing countries agricultural exporting of food, available biomass and fuel (Jayne, Chamberlin & Headey, 2014). Accessing water, land and labour which is cheap is the cornerstone of such a regime as well as its normative vision of modernising agriculture, enhancing the production of food, incorporating small holder farmers into the value chain, creating rural employments and enunciating innovative agricultural technologies on the farms (Sassen, 2013a). In this context, the food regime and its ideology on 'global ecology' sanctions the final closure of common land in the name of enhancing food security and also under the pretence of saving the planet from carbon emissions as well as ensuring that land degradation is reduced through removing under-resourced peasants from their land (Franco, 2014; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017).

This history has had a profound impact on rural economies and agriculturally based livelihoods. The opening up of export markets and the debts developing countries owe to first world countries created the avenues for land grabbing (White et al., 2012). The corrupt connections among state

officials, politicians, domestic and foreign investors have facilitated the opportunities to seize land from the rural poor (Smalley, 2013). For governments that are financially constrained, land deals in marginal areas give them a rare chance of extending their influence in these areas and, in the end, making sure that they extract rent from these areas (Scott, 2009; Oliveira, 2018; 2019a). Thus, large scale land grabbing deals are driven and oriented by state authority expansionism and control.

Another emerging mechanism to the process of land grabbing involves the formation of extensive infrastructural corridors and Special Economic Zones (SEZs). However, if well negotiated, these can be very helpful for local economic development as what happened in Italy and Germany. These are funded mainly by financial institutions and governments from the global north. These are designed with the aim of helping in the opening up the developing world to foreign private investments, agribusiness expansion and the extraction of natural resources (White et al., 2012). These Special Economic Zones have been developed in growing economies such as India and China. When creating these SEZs, land near towns is expropriated in order to build commercial complexes and the corresponding urban sprawl. In most cases, as what has been witnessed in Ethiopia, conflicts over land have been seen in these countries (Levien 2012; Fana, 2016).

The land deals seen in most developing countries are also spurred by the creation of new financial institutions, which has led to the creation of new instruments of capital accumulation which is intended to reduce market risk (White et al., 2012). For instance, American based equity firms such as Berkshire-Hathaway, are involved in the management of a wide range of investments that are involved in land investments across the globe. Hedge, sovereign and asset funds are increasingly involved in land deals for agricultural investments in Africa. For example, Emergent Asset Management is a firm that once focused on hedge funds but ended up focusing on land

investment in Africa (McMichael, 2012). University pension funds from the United States are also involved in land investments (McMichael, 2012; Klinger & Narins, 2018).

Land deals are also prompted by the incentives and emerging set of rules encapsulated in the international legal frameworks. These are facilitated by aid and lending programmes (White et al., 2012). Globally, international organisations such as the UN and international development financial institutions are creating situations for both demand and supply for resources. This, in the end, is leading to a global rush for resources (White et al., 2012). As a result, misrepresented estimates on the increasing demands for food and fuel lead to speculation in the end. In the same vein, international agencies such as the World Bank have made efforts in creating ample room for significant scale farm investments (Baglioni & Gibbon, 2013; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020). They give money to developing countries under the guise of enhancing rural development and improving rural markets.

There are often contradictory signals in what these organisations do. For instance, the World Bank supports smallholder agriculture and also supports large scale land deals from the International Finance Corporation and insurance with the aim of covering land investments by large scale farm investors (Franco, 2014). Though the support given by the World Bank are in a position to provide the much-needed investment funding in agriculture, the impacts of these have negative implications on the local peoples who are dispossessed of their land. The resulting imbalances between investors and recipients are fuelled by the legal frameworks for land investments which mostly result in inequitable deals. In most cases, the benefits of the deals accrue to the investor while the host government and the hosting communities carry the risks (White et al., 2012; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

The clauses on stabilisation in the treaties signed between large scale land investors and host governments are highly restrictive. In the end, most states remain bound in particular land agreements for very long periods. They will not be in a position to come up with new laws since changing laws will lead to disputes and massive compensation payments (Malik, 2011). Quite a number of bilateral treaties which involve land, which mainly involve the United Kingdom (UK), Germany and the Netherlands, have been agreed upon (Malik, 2011; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018). It is critical to note that most of these treaties create a platform for land investors to bring claims against governments that would have breached treaties to international tribunals. In most cases, the investors have the potential to win such cases.

In some land deals, as was the case in Pakistan, land deals between the government and land investors, which involved 'barren land', have the potential to affect the ecosystem and livelihoods of people who live nearby. In the Pakistani case, the allocation of 'barren land' to investors has not been involving access to water (Malik, 2011). The need for large volumes of water for irrigation purposes entail that investor should look for water in neighbouring communities. This then affects the neighbouring communities, who are left with little or no water for their own use since the investors have uncontrollable access to water use (Malik, 2011). Since most of the contracts are long term leases that usually involve a 99-year lease, the investors usually override all the other rights and other legislations in a long period of time. Any new legislation on labour rights, environmental management, among others, can legitimately be challenged by the investors under most of the terms of the contract. The opportunities for changing the deals are very limited under most of the land deals (White et al., 2012; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

It is critical to note that the reversal of what was achieved in the immediate aftermath of the decolonisation process predates the land grabbing processes that are currently underway. The

conditions for this were laid during the neo-liberal land reforms that developing countries were subjected to during the 1980s. It was during the land reform programmes where state-owned farms were privatised (White et al., 2012). Today, large agribusiness corporations are responsible for the large-scale acquisition of large-scale land for numerous years. As a result, the land grabbing exercise arises from the logic of agribusiness accumulation and not exogenous developments (Amanor, 2012; McKay, 2018). In the end, the process of land grabbing has spurred debates. The following section is a review of these debates.

2.2 LAND GRABBING IN AFRICA

From the 2000s, African land has been a target for land investment from investment funds, governments, companies and national elites from outside Africa. This has mainly been spurred a multiplicity of wide economic pressures, changing political conditions, policy openings and environmental changes. One key issue spurring land grabs in Africa is the surging anxieties over the security of food which is closely linked to the surging prices of food. These food prices surges are closely connected to changes in the environment as a result of changes in climate as well as growing urban populations. This in the end has made agricultural projects an attractive area of investment to numerous investors. Projection of growing populations and decline in the production of cereals as a result of changes in the climate has spurred investors to invest in food production in other countries (Rutherford, 2017).

The European Union (EU) legislation of 2009 which stipulates that about twenty percent of all energy used in the EU and ten percent of each member states automobile fuel should come from renewable energy by 2020 has also led to a great investment in agriculture. Europe has as a result

made significant investment into biofuel production in Africa and other continents. The correct figures of the number of hectares of land transferred in still not known due to poor record keeping and the poor methodologies used in calculating the amount of land transferred from the locals to the investors in Africa. Estimates by the World Bank regarding land transfers is said to be high and gets to millions in Africa. The highest numbers of these transfers are seen in Sudan, Mozambique and Ethiopia in that order. Regardless of the different methodologies in recording land transferred from the locals to the foreign owners, it is generally agreed that Africa has been an area of surging interests in land acquisitions for food production, biofuels, forestry, what are known as carbon credits and the general speculation especially after the 2008 financial crisis.

Though investors on African led are both local and domestic, most of the investors are said to come from outside Africa especially from Europe and Asia then North America and then the Middle East. There are those who see the land transfers in Africa as very important in generating profits and improving the livelihoods of the local communities and countries from which the land will be transferred at large. The purported benefits of such land grabs include the generation of jobs, surges in the demand of different services and products by local producers, high tax revenues as well as more profitable land use (Rutherford, 2017).

In contrast, there are those who decry these land deals and regard the land transfers as land grabs. These transfers are seen as not bringing anything meaningful to the rural Africans from which much land is taken from. Reporters, academics and activists from within Africa and even abroad have as a result raised concerns regarding the land grabs. The displacement of the existing indigenous people, through alienating them from the resources found on the land hence undermining food security in ways that disturb their livelihoods have been raised. Land grabs are also seen as responsible for causing detrimental political, social and environmental consequences.

Those who decry the land grabs in Africa criticize the investors and the African governments for not prioritizing the needs and interests of the local people. The detrimental effects of the land grabs were seen in Tanzania and Ghana when the local people were evicted to pave way for the setting up of jatropha plantations. There were reports of the local people becoming landless and having to see their landscape changed in ways that led them to be economically vulnerable than before. In a similar vein, there were also protests in Madagascar after a controversial land deal by Daewoo. Killings over land transfers were also seen in Ethiopia when the people living in the areas closer to Addis Ababa were protesting against land takeovers aimed at expanding the capital. Crackdowns in Ethiopia have also been seen elsewhere where tens of thousands of people are protesting against their displacements from their ancestral lands. Those who criticize land grabs cite lack of accountability by the governments of Africa (Rutherford, 2017).

2.2.1 LAND GRABBING IN ETHIOPIA

2.2.1.1 History of land use and alienation in Ethiopia

Much of the social, economic and political complexities trace their roots from its highlands which are suited for crop cultivation (McCann, 1995). In contrast, the lowlands are not suited for crop cultivation and are infested with both human and livestock diseases. As a result of the erratic rains, such zones are mainly used for shifting cultivation and what is known as agro-pastoralism. Due to this, state led extraction and presence was mostly possible and seen in the highlands. The Northern highlands are mostly inhabited by what are known as ‘Red people’ who spoke Sematic languages and predominantly Christians. The lowlands western lowlands are inhabited by what are known as ‘Black people’ who speak Nilotic and Koman languages and are animists, Muslim and African traditional believers (Dereje, 2011a). The lowlands are fairly ‘underdeveloped’ and lag behind the

highlands in terms of social and economic indicators as well as the political bargaining power (Markakis, 2011; Young, 1999). The territorial control and successful extraction by the Ethiopian state in the lowlands was poor (Markakis, 2011). To enhance its control, especially its control of Gambella, the Ethiopian state opted for an extractive approach in which businesses were offered concessions in agricultural businesses for commercial agriculture while outsourcing security and administration (Meckelburg, 2014).

During the tenure of the Derg regime (a socialist government which was in power from 1974 to 1991), the lowlands especially those in the west were usually for starting proxy wars with Sudan and coming up with refugee camps. The lowlands were also used for the resettling of the famine-stricken people from the highland and starting state run farms. As a result, the population in the lowlands did not benefit from the development projects of the time. Both the imperial government under Emperor Haile Selassie and the Derg regime which replaced him did not make efforts in coming up with projects that would benefit the population of the lowlanders. State run agriculture in the lowlands was mostly commercial and mechanised. The land governance systems of the imperial government and the Derg regime were different. During the tenure of the imperial government, all land in the lowlands which were seen as the peripheries were seen as the Emperor's land which belonged to the Royal Family. The land was to be distributed and given to the military and civilian leaders loyal to the Emperor.

The local community during this time did not have any say in how land is owned and utilised. They could be driven off the land without any compensation and there were no mechanisms for following up after the dispossessions. The lowlanders were simply seen as homeless agro-pastoralists (Bahru, 2008). As a result of the pressure to distribute land to those who work it by the student movement of 1970s, the Derg government nationalised all land in 1975. The land was

redistributed with each family owning a maximum of ten hectares of land (Bahru, 2014). Much did not change in the lowlands though since privatised commercial land simply became state farms (Abebe, 1990). During the 1980s under the Derg government, land was alienated to establish individual and communal farms for resettled people from the highlands into the lowlands. The lowlanders were not consulted when the resettlements and just got what they saw as their land alienated from them. Under the tenure of the EPRDF, what was seen during the time of the Derg in as far as land tenure issues were concerned did not change much. Though figures and statistics are not static, it is shown that millions of hectares have been leased mostly in the lowlands since the 1990s (Dessalegn, 2011). Under the time of the EPRDF, capital- and labor-intensive commercial agriculture was encouraged in the highlands while mechanised but low labour agriculture which need large tracts of land was encouraged in the lowlands (Deininger, et al., 2011). This for Lavers (2012b) was a political move aimed at ensuring that the land tenure rights of smallholders are not affected and not those of the lowlanders who are politically and economically peripheral.

2.2.1.2 Land grabs in Gambella

Land deals in which foreign companies such as the Indian based Karuturi Global and the Saudi Star Agricultural Development were concluded at the end of 2010 by the Gambella People's National Regional State (GPNRS). At that time, it was stated that around 311,000 and 129,000 hectares of land were leased. Although the true figures are usually made a secret and the available data unreliable, Ethiopia is seen as one of the major land-leasing countries in Africa with the most deals taking place in the GPNRS and the Benishangul-Gumuz Peoples' National Regional State (Anseeuw et al., 2012; Cotula, 2012).

When the land deals were concluded during the tenure of the ruling coalition known as the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) in which the Tigrayan People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is the strongest member of the ruling coalition, it was argued that the investment in land were done as part of the developmentalist mission (Dessalegn, 2011, 2014). The stated aim of this was to ensure that the lowlands such which include Somali, Afar, Benishangul Gumuz and Gambella will catch up with the first tier and more developed regions such as Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples and Tigray (Young, 1999). The land deals in these lowlands are understood from a multiplicity of standpoints. In some cases, they are seen as representing a continuation of the centre-periphery relations (Lavers, 2012a; Makki, 2012). Though there are changes to the centre-periphery relations since 1991, not much has changed in the economic sphere (Dereje, 2013).

The Gambella region is made up of what are known locally as weredas. These weredas are subsets of what are known as zones which are the Anuak Zone, the Nuer Zone and the Majang Zone. On a general note, the land that is leased to foreign companies is by far larger than land leased to local firms. The major foreign companies which are using land leased to them are the Karuturi Global, BHO BIO, Rucci, Saudi Star Agricultural Development and Bazen Agricultural Industry. Land leases in the region peaked between 2008 and 2010 owing to the global land rush spurred by the global financial crisis of 2008. For instance, during the financial year of 2008/9, 335 leases of the total 420 land deals involving foreign firms were entered following in the fiscal years following the 2008 global financial crisis (Fana, 2016: 8).

Most of the land deals are not very clear and are concluded in ways that has raised questions (Baumgartner et al., 2015; Nolte & Vath, 2015). Most of the land leased in the Gambella is said to be 'unused' hence readying it for transfer to foreign investors. Those who were given land during

the tenure of the EPRDF had links to the ruling coalition. During the land grabs, state intervention is ensured in order to ensure a continued accumulation through creating a state agency tasked with the regulation of the land deals and the produce from the farms to the market. This was done with the aim of ensuring that the local population is legible and controllable.

Before the land grabs, processes known as cleansing and readying are done. Through these processes, land in the Gambella region is classified and defined as unused or marginally used. Close to half of the land in the Gambella region is identified and classified as unused land which should be leased (Oakland Institute, 2011). In such contexts, shifting cultivation by the lowlanders is seen as illogical, wasteful and in need of rationalisation (Galaty, 2011). Regardless of this categorisation, evidence on the ground shows otherwise (Lavers, 2012b). Land which is categorised as vacant is taken through satellite pictures which are only verified only after investors complain that the local people are claiming ownership of the land given to the investors. Any form of input from NGOs doing research in the classification of land as unused which covered the whole of Majang in addition to some Anuak and Nuer areas was ignored at some point.

The process through which land is grabbed from the local people lacks technicality. For instance, at some point, the forest area in Majang Zone which was to be a priority forest area that had to be protected through the participation of the local people was in the end transferred to become a tea plantation (Seyoum, 2015). Another area where lack of technicality is seen in how land is grabbed from the local peoples in the Gambella region is the process an investor follows when in need of land. The investor first visits the regional Investment Agency in order to get licensed. The investor first identifies the specific area he or she will be willing to invest on. In the end, the responsible administration gives the land to the investor and in the end a lease contract is entered. After

entering a lease agreement, the regional Investment Agency is given and addressed letter which will be requesting the investor to be given a certificate.

For Fana (2016), the actions beyond the rendering of the lowlands 'unused', entrusting and delegating powers to the federal government as well as including certain areas in the Federal Land Bank largely depends on the extent to which a certain area is politically marginalised based on the ethnic group of a given area. Gambella is subjected to these land grabs because of the ethnic groups that are found in this area. The actual dispossessions found in this area are purely expressions of powerlessness. Gambella is therefore targeted and not other lowland regions such as Somali and Afar because it is the most marginalised area in the current federal setup (Fana, 2016).

2.2.1.3 Land governance issue in Ethiopia

The land administration powers in Ethiopia belong to the Federal Government of Ethiopia. According to Article 50(3) of the Constitution (FDRE 1995), the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the people of Ethiopia own all the land and natural resources of Ethiopia. Sub-article 5 of Article 50(3) states that all pastoralists have the right to freely graze their animals and cultivate land and must not be displaced. However, the next sub-article contradicts this through nullifying what is stated above through stating the government can transfer the land to private investors "without prejudice to the right of Ethiopia's nations, nationalities, and peoples to the ownership of land." Importantly, Article 52(2, d) of the Constitution grants regional states the authority to "administer land and other natural resources in accordance with federal laws."

Regardless of all this, with the aim of promoting the land leases, the federal government has centralised the power of administrating land over "agricultural investment land" from all regional states. This in the end has had asymmetrical consequences. In line with Article 2(2) of Regulation

No. 283/2013 which led to the establishment of the Ethiopian Agricultural Investment Land Administration Agency (EAILAA), the Federal Government was given the power to administer any land that is 'deemed feasible' for agricultural purposes. Regulation No. 283/2013 does not make a distinction between domestic and foreign investors. This is unlike the Agricultural Investment Support Directorate within the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) which existed before the EAILAA. The Agricultural Investment Support Directorate specifically catered for the request of all foreign investors as well as domestic investors through leasing at least 5,000 hectares of land. Before the enactment of Regulation No. 283/2013, the regional government of Gambella delegated all its agricultural investment land-administration powers to the MoA. The Gambella regional government however, managed to successfully reclaim its powers to administer land in mid-2014 after successfully enhancing its capacities to administer land through clearing all rent seeking and corrupt individuals.

Changes such as the enactment of the Regulation No. 283/2013 are made against the constitutional provisions which give states the rights to administer land and provide only for an upward power delegation (Ojot, 2013). The Federal government went against the provisions of the constitution through centralising the land administration powers by ostensibly delegating powers from regional governments. The centralisation was done through executive power. Since the early 2000s land leases in were on a steady rise and peaked during the 2008 period when there was a global land rush only to decline thereafter. Fana (2016: 17) notes that in the early 2000s, the total number of land deals made in Gambella numbered less than five per year. They surged to eight in FY 2006/07 and to 28 in FY 2007/08 and leapt to 140 in FY 2008/09. After this, there was a decline. For instance, a total of 107 were seen in FY 2009/10 and 88 in FY 2010/11. Although things ended up happening not as planned for a number of reasons, "…two million hectares of land were supposed

to be leased in the Gambella region between FY 2010/11 and FY 2014/15" (Fana, 2016: 17). As a result, in terms of both actual and planned and actual land transfers, the land transfers in the Gambella region are fast-tracked.

Another issue which is worth taking into consideration in explaining the ways in which land is transferred in the Gambella region is the ethnic composition of the domestic investors who are given land. Only a few people who are native to the region have been leased land in the region. For Dereje (2013) the imperfect ethnic, cultural and political gains the federal arrangement delivered at the periphery have not been matched to the socio-economic achievements. As a result, it is clear that only a few people native to the Gambella region have the capital, interest and entrepreneurial skills needed to get the land. Applicants who are native to the region are not very few, their applications were just rejected (Fana, 2016). Those whose applications were accepted had to undergo a number of check-ups which were by far stiffer than others. The indigenous people whose applications were rejected decry this move and cite political marginalisation as reasons for the rejection of their applications. Most domestic investors who were given land are mostly Tigrigna speaking.

A key issue that is driving land grabbing in the Gambella region of Ethiopia is the eagerness and readiness of the government through the Ethiopian Industrial Inputs Development Enterprise (EIIDE), to enter into commercial cotton production through buying stakes in private companies given land. This came after the privatisation of state owned farms over the past three decades. In line with Article 5(5) of the Council of Ministers Regulation establishing the EIIDE (No. 328/2014), it is stated that one of the goals of the EIIDE is "…to work jointly with enterprises which are engaged in producing and supplying industrial inputs and raw materials" (Fana, 2016:

19). The major goal is thus to ensure that that there is an increase in the productivity of land in the lowlands by growing cotton through buying stakes in the private cotton farms.

The land grabs in the Gambella region has also come together with the villagisation programme. The local people who are removed from the land given to the investors are driven into villages. The villagisation process is justified by the government of the grounds that it reduces the costs of service delivery through aggregating the local population in nuclear villages. Human rights groups however argue that this move is a ploy of the government to reduce the agency of the local population to fight against the land grabs and ensure that the local population is governable and controllable (Fana, 2015b).

Land grabs in the Gambella region are happening in the name of development. Bahru (1976: 386-387) notes "The onset of the region's insertion into the whirl of capitalism more than a century ago is in its completion phase, after an overextended interval. What was a conveniently ignored space – only associated with proxy wars, refugee flows, political crises, and disaster (flooding) – is now back on the map of new geographies of capitalist accumulation. Capitalist agriculturalists are after Gambella, seeking to pull and annex its coveted resources into the accumulation process. The aggressive leasing of Gambella's land is far from a purely, or even primarily, economic process. In its creeping descent to its lowland peripheries, the Ethiopian state is effectively stripping off the crucial resources relied upon by pre-capitalist and non–surplus producing forms of production practised in the lowlands – that is, shifting cultivation and agropastoralism. Capitalist farmers stand to reap the spoils".

The process of land grabbing in Gambella falls under what is known as primitive accumulation. This to Harvey (2003) is known as primitive accumulation through dispossession. This accumulation by dispossession is mainly achieved through making common resources available at

very low prices. The distinguishing factor which unites various forms of accumulation by dispossession is for Levien (2011) its extra-economic nature. To Levien (2011: 454), it is "…an extra-economic process of coercive expropriation typically exercised by states to help capitalists overcome barriers to accumulation". Additionally, Leiven (2011: 456) also states that another distinguishing factor is the "…deployment of extra-economic means in the process of accumulation".

In the context of the Gambella region, what is captured by Leiven (2011) is vindicated. The Ethiopian state is playing a key role in ensuring that the land resources in the Gambella region are made available for accumulation through enforcing dispossession in a coercive manner. The classifying of land in the Gambella region is a political decision not a technical one (Fana, 2016). In addition Fana (2016) states that the categorisation of land as unused is another political move which is creating a platform for capital accumulation. The speed at which the land grabs are taking place shows the securitisation of development and the goal of initiating economic growth in Ethiopia at a rapid pace. Poverty is seen as a threat to Ethiopia and its people and should be quickly removed through investing in land. The composition of the investors shows the extension of political power into the land leasing deals. Some are favoured based on their ethnicity while some are not based on their ethnicity. The villagisation programmes and the establishment of the EIIDE are purely political decisions which are aimed at ensuring the process of accumulation.

2.3 DEBATES ON LAND GRABBING: THE TANGENTS AND KEY ISSUES

Most countries that are targets for land deals have not been receiving any funding in their agricultural sector either from donors or the national governments (World Bank, 2010). Land deals are then made in the backdrop of the need to boost capital investment, improving infrastructure,

facilitating the access of new technology and providing much-needed employment. However, the failure of most land deals to yield the intended results call for a critical assessment. These questions underline the need for a contextual understanding of the political economy of the new enclosures and the labour regimes that emerge from them (White et al., 2012; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018).

The end result of the enclosures significantly depends on the ways in which the local people are included in the land deals (McCarthy, 2010). It is critical to note that issues such as the ways in which smallholder development schemes work, the ways in which village institutions are controlled in a democratic way, the spatial pattern of villages, the nature of investments, the land is owned and controlled as well as the way in which informal land markets function are all critically important factors. Local people can be included or excluded from the land deals, and this is context-specific. In some cases, the ways in which people are included may have beneficial or adverse effects in the end. Outcomes may differ from one project to the other, though. The outcomes are related to the ways in which local processes influence access to and control over land and the patterns of production. This is also dependent on the powers of exclusion (Hall et al., 2011). These powers of exclusion are made up of the interacting processes of regulation, force, the market, and legitimation that influence the inclusion or exclusion of people from the land (Hall et al., 2011). Accesses to the property are not only a matter of land title and contract. Instead, they are fundamentally matters of power and authority (Peluso & Lund, 2011; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

What is critical to note is that the micro-politics of land control, access and exclusion are done at the local level. It is at this local level where the consequences of land deals on livelihoods should be analysed and assessed (White et al., 2012). Surveys on the issue of land grabbing where they are done show that in most cases, the expected job creation and the net investment expected from

the land deals are not as high as expected (Oakland, 2011; Anseeuw et al., 2012). In most cases, the figures on employment generation are misrepresented and mostly inflated (Li, 2011). The emerging plantation formed out of the land deals are often large-scale ventures which practice mono-cropping. These are usually repulsive to labour and are not dependent on large quantities of cheap manual labour, as was the case with plantation agriculture before (Oliveira, 2018; 2019a).

They are seldom consulted in the land deals and are often not even aware of what will be happening (White et al., 2012). The sharing or distribution of the risks, costs, benefits or any of the land deals is dependent primarily on the type of the business model. They are also dependent on the attendant implications of the ownership, control, access and labour rights (Cotula, 2011). The direction and consequences of land use can be categorised into four broad types of transformation in land use (Borras & Franco, 2012). The consequences and directions are incumbent on whether the transformation on land use is from food to food, food to biofuels, non-food to food, non-food to biofuels (Borras & Franco, 2012). Each of these have different end results for the pastoral settings and the varying flows of the land-based wealth and power (Borras & Franco, 2012). What is important to note is that some of the deals involve forms of distribution. Others involve forms of distribution, other (re)concentration, while others involve non-(re)distribution (Borras & Franco, 2012 Oliveira, 2019a).

Still, five-fold typologies of institutional arrangements through which land deals are structured have also been identified by Hall (2011). All these have critically important historical precedents and also present-day incarnations. They all have varying impacts and varying end results in different milieus. The first model is the extraction model. Under this model, the original land owners are stripped of their resources, as what happens in mining. The consequences of this are usually not sustainable in the long term (Mackenzie, 2009). The second model is known as the

enclave model. Under this model, there is the complete takeover of land and all the resources found therein. These, in most cases, involve the displacement of the people who own that land. It involves the construction of related infrastructure. The construction of infrastructure is done in order to provide inputs to process the output of a commercial enterprise. The infrastructure is also constructed in order to provide the physical and social infrastructure needed for commercial operations to take place (Loewenson, 1992; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

In most cases, the enclave system which leads to enclave economies, as Ferguson (2006) terms them are usually poorly integrated into their surrounding economy and communities. Rather, such isolation acts to focus investment and support in certain areas and zones. The idea behind this is that such areas of growth will start yielding the intended results (White et al., 2012). Another model is called the colonist model. Under this model, commercial businesses take over a block or area of land as former Zimbabwean white farmers did in Nigeria and Mozambique when they were driven from Zimbabwe (Ariyo & Mortimore, 2011). This model is reminiscent of the colonial land occupation strategies where European settlers were given land by the colonial administration as part of colonial occupation (White et al., 2012). Another model is known as the out-grower model. This model involves the development of processing facilities. This is usually done with a commercially operated 'nucleus' estate. Under this scheme, small farmers are incorporated into the value chain under contracts (Amanor, 2008; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

The second model is the commercialisation in situ models. Under this model, small scale producers and other users of land are incorporated into commercial value chains without any core estate or processing facility in place (Amanor-Wilks, 2009). It is critical to note that each of these arrangements are unique. Most of them are variations. As a result, each and every one of them has varying implications on the processes of inclusion or exclusion of the local users. Each one of

them involves different requirements for investment in basic infrastructures such as irrigation systems, roads, schools and health facilities. Each one of them has different requirements of labour. They have varying requirements on the socio-economic relationships between local landholders since each one of them suggests different patterns of accumulation, different patterns of appropriation and different patterns of reinvestment in production (Franco, 2014; ; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

The last two models do not necessarily lead to the dispossession of local farmers. They do not lead to changes in the form of their access to land always although they may sometimes do (Julia & White, 2012). However, they may, in some cases, lead to 'control grabs', which do not necessarily lead to the enclosure. Thus under this arrangement, an investor can source some products under a contract without necessarily grabbing their land and coming up with large-scale, industrial, wage-labour farms (White et al., 2012). Although it is useful to extend the concept of land grabbing or land deals to include only the deals that govern land use and not necessarily access to land, there are also important reasons for taking into consideration the importance and effects of enclosure and the actual corporate acquisition of land (White et al., 2012). Land deals which involve the large-scale purchase or long-term leasing of land are essentially permanent. This is the case when leasehold contracts of 35 or even 99 years expire, and the land rights do not go back to the local people. They rather go to the state. The local people are not even formal parties in these deals. In contrast, however, contract farming deals involve local farmers as parties to the deal. Usually, these are not permanent. Large scale purchases mostly lead to the complete expropriation of land from the locals without any hope for future return to the smallholder farmers (Smalley, 2013; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017).

Given these reasons, it becomes critically important to look into the possibilities, the advantages and the disadvantages of the different business models or labour regimes. This can be done by linking local populations to agribusiness but not involving large-scale land acquisition. This can be done by exploring how value and influence are shared between the business partners. For White et al., (2012: 635), "…his can be done through exploring four closely interrelated aspects, which are 'ownership' (of the business and of key assets), 'voice' (who takes/influences business decisions and how), 'risk' (how supply, production, market and other risks are shared between the parties) and 'reward' (sharing of economic costs and benefits, including market access, price setting, finance arrangements)". Studies done in this respect show that the impact on land deals on smallholder farmers depend not much on the form of the business-smallholder relationship as on how it functions in a given milieu (Oliveira, 2018; 2019a; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019). Rather, the willingness of the company to take into consideration of various business models which are inclusive as a key economic component of their business and not part of corporate social responsibility programmes is a critical factor for the working of more inclusive business models. This also underlies the critically important role of politics and power; hence the negotiating power of smallholders in their relations with government and agribusiness is also of paramount importance (Cotula & Leonard, 2010; Oliveira, 2018; 2019a).

In this milieu, the labour relations involved are crucial. In light of this Li (2010: 66) notes: "...the truncated trajectory of the agrarian transition in much of the global South, one in which there is no pathway from country to city, agriculture to industry, or even a clear pathway into stable plantation work that pays a living wage, is the crucial scale at which to review the land grab debate". The available jobs and the quality of these jobs after land deals have a significant implication for the effects of land deals on social differences, age and gender relations. This applies to all the types of

institutional arrangements after the conclusion of land deals, especially after the 'outgrower' contract model though (Margulis, McKeon & Borras, 2013; Klinger & Muldavin, 2019).

There are a number of impacts that result from such contracts. Some of the impacts include a number of changes in rural class and social relations. They led to the creation of a new 'middle farmer' class at the epicentre of the new schemes. They lead to the processes of differential accumulation and dispossession. This results in the eviction of some peasant farmers from their land. They also lead to the alteration of gender relations and different wage structures, with women getting systematically disadvantaged (Dietz, Engels, Pye & Brunnengräber, 2014). This also leads to broader processes of social dislocation from places where people have historically belonged and come from (Little & Watts, 1994; White, 1997; Julia & White, 2012; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

The land deals which have become known as land grabs are justified through crisis narratives (White et al., 2012). These crisis narratives are linked to the argument that if empty land is not fully utilised, there will be food and fuel shortages (White et al., 2012). It is within this context where it is assumed that the solution to the food, energy and climate crisis can only be solved if 'marginal, empty and marginal land across the globe is captured (White et al., 2012). The assessment by the World Bank also shows that though smallholder farmers may be owners of these lands, their productivity is low. The bank, therefore, argues that large scale investment, which is highly mechanised, remains the only sustainable solution. This situation creates opportunities for outside investment inland. These to the World Bank can be of benefit to the local population (World Bank, 2010).

The analyses made by the World Bank, however, miss a number of critical issues. What the World Bank terms measures of potential production under best practices do not give an accurate picture

of what is possible in these areas given the poor infrastructure, the limited supply of inputs as well as poor market connections. As a result, there is often a misrepresentation of facts and figures hence unrealistic expectations of potential. It is also important to note that the land that is seen as empty may, in fact, be used by small scale farmers for a wide range of livelihood activities such as pastoralism and shifting cultivation (Smalley, 2013). The talks on 'empty' and 'available' land give a wrong impression that the land has no owners (White et al., 2012: 632).

In most cases, the land that is targeted for investment is the best land available in terms of soil fertility, proximity to the market and best available infrastructure (Cotula, 2012). In most cases, land deals are done in the absence of a critical assessment of past experiences and similar initiatives in other countries. For instance, past experiences aimed at mechanising farming through large scale land investments in countries such as Sudan seem not to have yielded the intended results. Despite all these flaws, the calls for the need for urgent action and focused solutions to utilising the 'empty' and 'available' land is powerful (Sassen, 2013a). This has been supported by some national governments, donor agencies, international banks and private sector investors (White et al., 2012; McMichael, 2012; Franco, 2014; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018; Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

Land grabbing has spurred policy debates on how to deal with the challenges that are brought about by global land grabs. On the one hand, some are of the view that land grabs can be harnessed for good and can bring about development. However, cases, where these are achieved have not been seen. This is regardless of the problems associated with land deals, such as the dispossession of people from their land, corruption, unfulfilled job promises, corrupt deals, among others (White et al., 2012). It is, however, assumed that these problems are solvable. The need for the regulation of land deals has spurred the World Bank to come up with a set of principles of responsible land investments (White et al., 2012; Rutherford, 2017).

These principles include environmental, social and political issues. The principles by the World Bank include: "…making sure that food security is achieved, respecting land and resource rights [of the indigenes], making sure that there is transparency, making sure that there is good governance and a proper enabling environment, ensuring that there is consultation and participation [of the indigenes], ensuring agro-enterprise investment, ensuring social and environmental sustainability" (World Bank, 2010: x, 68-91). In spite of these, though, companies involved in these land deals seldom follow these codes of conduct. They do not follow these codes of conduct mainly because their principal aim is profit above everything else.

In most cases, the afore-stated codes of conduct do not question the significant causes of land grabbing (Borras & Franco, 2010). Land grabbing by these companies is seen as unavoidable (Jayne, Chamberlin & Headey, 2014). It is argued by those who support these land grabs that large-scale land investments actually benefit the poor and that large farms are of benefit to the small farms. Those who support land grabs also argued that large corporations will regulate themselves voluntarily and ensure that there is environmental and social justice (De Schutter, 2011; Goldstein & Yates, 2017).

In most instances, land deals that are done on a large scale mostly take place in instances where people do not have formal land rights. They take place across a wide range of regimes of property rights. These are in-state, public, communal, private lands, common property and even in recently resettled areas (Franco, Carranza & Fernandez, 2011). This means that securing land rights through formal land titles is not guaranteed against land grabbing as what is assumed sometimes (Dietz, Engels, Pye & Brunnengräber, 2014). Those who are against land deals and are of the view that land deals cannot be regulated and do not bring the intended results. They argue that land grabbing and current large-scale industrial models of agriculture cannot voluntarily self-regulate and do

their business within the confines of corporate social responsibility (La Via Campesina, 2011). Like-minded civil society organisations and groups which are against land grabbing convened a meeting in Mali and came up with what is known as Mali Declaration against land grabbing. The key position of these groups and these civil society organisations is to reframe the discourse of 'corporate land investments', which has gripped the mainstream discourse around land grabbing (White et al., 2012; McKay, Oliveira & Liu, 2020).

Land grabs have spurred powerful reactions from the state, some corporations and civil society groups who regard these land deals as threatening the livelihoods of the rural poor (Borras et al., 2012). Given the potentially large scale and speed of the expansion of the current land deals, which are more rapid than what happened during the colonial period, the impact of the land deals in reconfiguring the agrarian economies of today are much larger (Margulis, McKeon & Borras, 2013). The impact may also be more remarkable when it comes to altering livelihoods, rural social relations and power dynamics both locally and internationally (White et al., 2012). What is clear is that present-day forms of agrarian changes include investments characterised by land dispossessions through expelling people from farming without making any efforts in absorbing them into manufacturing or anywhere else in the economy. This, in the end, creates a large pool of unemployed masses that would have been driven away from their land (Li 2009; 2010; Araghi, 2010; Knuth, 2015).

Regardless of the opposition to land deals, some see the land grabs as helpful to the rural poor despite the corruption involved in some land deals. Calls from those who support the land deals have been to make sure that there is an improvement of the land market governance. Nevertheless, those who support land deals seldom provide evidence for their support. Between those who support the land deals and those who are against the land deals are a range of intermediate views

given but other scholars and institutions. For instance, the World Bank report of 2010 includes all the various positions on the issue of what it sees as land investments. This report clearly shows that land grabs have taken place mainly in areas where those who purchase the land are in a position to exploit corrupt and governments which are in debt. These governments might not be in a position to regulate or stop buyers from taking land away from the poorest rural communities and, in the end, expel people from their land (Cousins, Borras, Sauer & Ye, 2018).

The key historical issue which informs and underlie enclosures and large-scale farming on the one hand and campaigns for the maintenance of peasant farming, on the other hand is one of the critical issues of the paramount importance of commercial farming vis-à-vis peasant agriculture (White et al., 2012). The debates of this nature trace their origins in the debates between Marxism and agrarian populists and have informed critical agrarian research in the late 20th century (Wiggins et al., 2010). Land grabs are justified and carried out in the backdrop of the advocacy for large farm models for agricultural growth. This is closely linked to the assumed advantages of their advantages in the globalised economy (Collier, 2008). Land grabs envisage the growth of a dualistic agrarian economy. Under this arrangement, large scale farms will be involved in capitalist production for the purposes of exporting. Smallholder farms slowly disappear or are absorbed and become part of contract farming. The former peasants are then turned into labourers who will be providing cheap labour to the new large scale landowners (Smalley, 2013; Bellemare & Bloem, 2018).

Within this arrangement of an integrated value chain of global agricultural production, the critical argument is that large commercial farms or peasant farms conglomerated into giant agribusiness can be in a position to compete and satisfy the standards needed for export (White et al., 2012). For some, an agribusiness-oriented vision for agriculture in which commercial farms are at the

centre and linked in some cases throughout-grower schemes to peasant agriculture is regarded as ideal. It is also seen as the unavoidable extension of global capitalism in the rural areas, which will, in the end, lead to capitalist transformation and agricultural change (Sender & Johnston, 2004; Schoenberger, Hall & Vandergeest, 2017).

These key arguments have caught the attention of national governments and donor agencies. Policy actors have been keen to promote private business investments and also to support peasant agriculture (White et al., 2012). Another arrangement is envisaged as well. This arrangement is characterised by large-scale centred farms in some areas, with small-scale farming carried out in small portions adjacent to the large-scale farms. This arrangement has shown that this dual model of the agrarian structure is not sustainable on both economic and legal grounds in the long run, as seen in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean case shows that numerous peasant farmers have succeeded at producing farm products and selling their products both locally and internationally regardless of a number of impediments (Scoones et al., 2010). Deininger (2011) notes that the only sustainable proposal to the policy in land grabbing is anchored on ensuring that peasant agriculture can and should be connected to extensive scale agriculture through contract farming arrangements. This argument is rooted in the view that this can be workable if there is transparency and operations are done within a broad set of principles of responsible investment (Deininger, 2011). The debates on land grabbing provide ground to review the literature on land grabbing and governance. The following section now turns to review the literature on land grabbing and global governance.

2.4 LAND GRABBING AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

A very critical approach to global governance is needed if one is to make sense of the global rule-making projects around the issues of land grabbing. In this regard, it is of vital importance to

identify the key actors, ideologies and interests that drive specific governance initiatives and also the international political economy context in which such initiatives rise. As a sovereign territory, the land is an essential framework and international norm for understanding the politics involved in global land governance (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013). In the global South, land tenure governance regimes reflect colonial antecedents in the sense that they create a platform for the state to have far-reaching control over the land (Kunnemann & Monsalve Suárez, 2013). Although land grabbing is currently driven by global economic actors, the vitality of national legal frameworks must not be taken for granted since they usually make it easy for land grabbing to take place (Kunnemann & Monslave Suarez, 2013). Borras, Franco and Wang (2013) note that states facilitate land grabs in an active way through first, justification of the need for large-scale land investments. Secondly, states facilitate land grabs by also defining, reclassifying and quantifying what is known as marginal, under-utilized or empty lands. States also facilitate land grabs through identifying empty lands, appropriating this land and finally reallocating the land to the investors. Land grab is usually within the military, legal and control of nation-states (Borras, Franco & Wang, 2013). Sassen (2013a) notes that the global land grabs raise profound questions regarding the issue of territoriality. The global land grabs show substantial structural transformations that are central in the production of very pressing issues regarding the issue of national sovereign territory (Sassen, 2013a). The land has suddenly become a commodity for the global market and is demanded by capitalism. This then leads to the financialisation and commodification of national territory on a national level along the lines of the demands and purposes of foreign firms and governments (Sassen, 2013a).

The issue of global governance was one of the key developments that followed the publicity of land grabbing on a global level in 2008. The current movement towards constructing the issue of

land grabbing as a global governance issue should be contextualized within the global politics on land. After the Second World War, the interstate system primarily dominated by the US made efforts in keeping the issue of land out of the formal international governance and practices (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013). These efforts were primarily aimed at block socialist states from creating international instruments aimed at reinforcing land reform and collectivization. Nationalization of privately owned land and redistributing privately owned land to the landless peasants was a highly ideological and politicized issue soon after the Second World War. The issue of land reform became very contentious during the Cold War. During the 1960s, the US supported land reform on a selective basis by providing help to countries; land reform was seen as a pressing issue which should be dealt with in order to avoid a communist revolution. The US supported this under a programme known as the Alliance for Progress (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013).

The first effort to come up with formal international governance for land took place at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) that was convened by FAO in 1979. The goal of this conference was to come up with an international framework for both rural development and land reform. Regardless of the political momentum, it had gained, WCARRD was not successful. Its failure was mainly due to the fact that the structural adjustment programmes were introduced, and agriculture lost its support as a significant driver of development (McKeon, 2013). The lack of political progress regarding the issue of land on an international level then led to the second efforts in coming up with formal international governance for land through the advancing of social justice-oriented redistributive land policies. These finally led to the conditions that led to the formation of the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform by La Via Campesina and its affiliated organisations. In 1999, the year the Global Campaign for Agrarian Reform was launched; there was a revival of agrarian reform in the official international agenda, notably at

FAO. This, as a result, led to the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ICARRD), which was organized by FAO in 2006.

ICARRD laid the foundation and platform for state and social movements that were rural-based to lay out a basis for future international land governance. These, among others, included the recognition of what is known as collective land rights. These movements also acknowledged the social as well as cultural dimensions of land (McKeon, 2013). The foundation laid by ICARRD brought back to land on the official agenda of FAO and its deliberative bodies (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013). It was around this time where both multilateral and bilateral agencies initiated and came up with their own development and land policies. The EU passed its policy on land and development in 2004, the International Food and Agricultural Development (IFAD) passed its own in 2009, the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) did the same in 2009, and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) passed its own in 2010.

What was regarded as one of the key outcomes of ICARRD was the decision by FAO and other civil society organisations to begin a process for possible voluntary guidelines on land tenure. Nevertheless, political agreement on negotiating international rules was elusive. They only came into the global spotlight when global land grabs surged in the backdrop of the food and fuel crises of 2008. When global land grabs came into the spotlight and became a public matter and an issue of concern, there was political impetus and urgency regarding the global land governance issue (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013). As a result, the Voluntary Guidelines were negotiated and adopted in 2012. In this context, the global land grab then became a critical tipping point in the politics of land and catapulted land governance on the global scale.

This came together with a number of global rulemaking aimed at regulating land grabbing. The issue of land grabbing and governance was taken up in the work of the UN, FAO, the Committee

on World Food Security (CFS) and the World Bank. The issue was taken up at the G8 and G20 summits, at the European Commission, as well as at the African Union's (AU) agenda on the regional land policy framework. The most important global land grabbing rulemaking projects led to the enunciation of the UN Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests. They also led to the enunciation of the transnational negations to develop rules for responsible agricultural investment (Stephens, 2013). Other lands grabbing projects which were enunciated include the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition as well as the World Economic Forum's "Grow Africa" initiative (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013). These governance projects aim at promoting commercial private-sector led investments in the development of agriculture in developing countries. The projects also highlight the gravity of investments relative to policies. In light of these changes, most countries started revising and reforming both local and national planning, their tenure laws, bilateral, multilateral trade, development and investment arrangements. Depending on the nature of their local politics, these countries have been making these changes to either limit or facilitate land grabbing at the national level (Murmis & Murmis, 2012; Wilkinson et al., 2012; Wolford et al., 2013; Perrone, 2013).

In the context of land grabbing, international institutions have an essential part to play in the management of inter-state affairs, unlike before. This has become very prominent in the case of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the EU, and the WTO that can make binding decisions on states and constrain a state's policy space. All emergent global land governance does not appear to involve a formal delegation of land governance from the state to supranational institutions at first glance (Margulis, McKeon, & Borras, 2013). For instance, the Voluntary Guidelines or principles for responsible agriculture investment, which are transnational governance mechanisms,

do not take the form of legally binding international treaties. Nevertheless, multilateral institutions are critical sites for the new politics of dealing with and addressing the issue of land grabbing. Particularly, different actors have been using different multilateral institutions to advance certain objectives. For instance, the G8 countries have made use of the World Bank as their agent for implementing and creating emergent global land governance issues. The World Bank's policy is in support of commercial land investments as a way of improving agricultural output and economic growth. This position fits well in its new agricultural development strategy that has become central to its activities since 2008. In this regard, the G8 countries have provided the World Bank with the impetus to be the key leader in this new area of governance. The G8 countries have, as a result, provided the World Bank with the support it needs to manage the new global agricultural programmes (Murmis & Murmis, 2012).

On their part, global civil society and transnational rural movements have made use of FAO and the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to deal with the emergent global land governance issues. The FAO and the CFS have been willing to include human rights and has explored food sovereignty as another paradigm for global agricultural policy (McKeon, 2011; Margulis, 2012; 2013). McKeon (2013) argued that the CFS has been able to partially fill a governance gap that has been existed for transnational political debate over food security and rural development. However, the CFS has not been the only important platform in which transnational agrarian movements construct global governance in their favour. The CFS has been engaging other strategic undertakings through multilateral institutions, such as the Human Rights Council (HRC), and to advocate a UN Peasants' Charter advanced by La Via Campesina (Edelman & Carwil, 2011).

Non-state actors have also been involved in global land governance issues. Private non-state actors have played an important role in the governing of international financial transactions and economic flows, often through modes of self-regulation. This they have done through using standards and benchmarking, and also private international arbitration of financial and investment deals (Hall & Biersteker, 2002). Transnational social movements and NGOs have also increased their authority in global governance. This is seen in a wide range of areas which include fair trade labelling and certification. They also include developing industry standards for humanitarian relief and also the monitoring and reporting of human rights and environmental abuses (Cashore, 2002). Most non-state actors do not compete with governments when carrying out their activities. They usually get consent from governments through legal approbation of private practices from the state for them to carry out their activities at both national and global levels (Brathwaite & Drahos, 2000). Transnational social movements and NGOs have been playing a speculative role in politics and emerging global land governance. NGOs became the first organisations to bring the issue of global land grabbing to public attention and have managed to transnationally mobilise against land grabbing on a global scale (Margulis, 2012). As a result, NGOs and transnational agrarian movements are contributing to the creation and contesting emergent global land governance (Borras & Franco, 2009).

2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Important literature regarding the issue of land grabbing was reviewed. This was done with the aim of getting a better understanding of the history of land grabbing and the new forms it is taking today. First, the chapter discussed the Dependency Theory as the theoretical orientation which underpins this study. Under this section, various theoretical standpoints on the Dependency Theory are reviewed. This was done with the aim of identifying the various angles from which the issue

of dependency has been understood in literature before making efforts to link these to the issue of land grabbing. Secondly, a discussion of the theoretical framework, the chapter then reviewed literature that discussed the various standpoints from which the issue of land grabbing is conceptualised in literature. Under this section, the various definitions of what has become known as land grabbing showed that the concept is understood differently by different scholars. The various definitions reviewed showed that land grabbing is an occurrence that has various conceptual meanings for different scholars. It was noted that the differences in conceptualising the land grabbing are informed by the goals and intention of the scholar who will be defining the concept. The section on the conceptualisation of land grabbing paved the way for a review of literature on the history of land grabbing and how this compares with the current trends on land grabbing. A review of literature under this section shows that though land grabbing today comes in new forms, it has close affiliations with colonialism. The following section then reviewed the literature on the debates on land grabbing. Under this section, literature on the key tangents and key issues that inform the issue of land grabbing is reviewed. The last section of the chapter finally reviewed the literature on land grabbing and global governance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the methodology for the study. The research approach, the paradigm to research, the sample and sampling technique adopted, the ways in which the quality of the data collected was enhanced, the research design underpinning this study, as well as the ethical considerations are discussed.

3.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

A research approach is a plan that gives the researcher the direction to carry out research in a way that is efficient and systematic (Creswell, 2014). There are three main types of research approaches in social sciences. There is the quantitative research approach, the mixed methods research approach and the qualitative research approach. It is imperative for researchers to have a disciplined, explicit and systematic approach in their quest to get the most relevant results from a given study. When using the quantitative research approach, the data collection process involves the collection of data through formalised, structured and standardised research tools (Leavy, 2017). In this context, the data collection tools used in a quantitative study are standardised to such an extent that the responses options are predetermined. When carrying out a quantitative study, a statistically representative number of participants are involved. Data collected from quantitative studies usually leads to numerical counts from which statistical inferences are drawn (Allen, 2016). Quantitative research methods are mostly related to descriptive and causal research designs and not to exploratory designs (Creswell, 2014). The main goal of quantitative research is to give the

researcher specific facts which can be used by decision-makers in making accurate and gaining meaningful insights or verify and validate existing relationships between variables (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative studies are mainly evidence-based and mainly aim at collecting data with the objective of ensuring an authentic voice of participants (Allen, 2016). Qualitative studies create an avenue for the researcher to have a very critical and in-depth understanding of the social and cultural norms of a given people. When using a qualitative research approach, observations and interviews are used as the primary data collection methods (Leavy, 2017). Open-ended questioning techniques can be used in interviews, and this will enable the participants to respond in their own words, rather than choosing from fixed responses. When using the qualitative research methodology, the researcher is emersed. The researcher enters the contexts and collects data through insights gained from actually being in the field and gaining thick, descriptive, rich and in-depth information (Creswell, 2014).

The qualitative research approach remains the most popular in building gendered understandings of how people in professional, familial relationships strategize to integrate different aspects of their lives (Clow & James, 2014: 96). The qualitative research approach is often used to answer questions about the multifaceted nature of a phenomenon, usually with a determination of describing and understanding this phenomenon from the participant's point of view (Wilson, 2012: 130). However, the quantitative research approach is undertaken using a structured approach with a representative sample to produce quantifiable insights into behaviour, motivations and attitudes (Wilson, 2012: 130), while qualitative research involves unstructured data collection that provides results that are subjectively interpreted (Clow & James, 2014: 96).

A Research that is underpinned by the qualitative research approach mainly explores and aims to get a better understanding of the meanings that the research participants attach to a given research problem (Creswell, 2014: 32). This approach makes it possible for the investigator to gain a clear understanding of how humans behave and, in the end, fully understand their emotions, their values and their belief systems (Frankfort- Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000: 41). The qualitative research approach makes it possible for the researcher to be able to identify very critical and intangible factors to a given study (O'Connor, 2011: 27). Such intangible factors may be norms in their societies, the economic and social statuses, their religious beliefs and other factors that may not be at all apparent.

The processes of data collection in qualitative research are done in a natural world and not a constructed one. The data analysis process in a qualitative study is inductive and thematic in general. A qualitative researcher mainly adopts an inductive style with a particular focus on the subjective meanings of the data that would have been collected (Creswell, 2014: 32). In a qualitative study, the way the participants understand the world in which they live is of paramount importance (Marshall & Rossman, 2011: 42). However, one major shortfall of the qualitative research approach is that researcher bias may interfere with the data collection and analysis process (Marshall & Rossman, 2011: 42)

The ways through which the participants made sense of the issue of land grabbing could be best understood through the qualitative research approach, given the fact that their views were subjective and differed from one person to another. The reason why the researcher adopted the qualitative research over the quantitative research approach is that the quantitative research approach is limited when it comes to pursuing concrete subjective meanings researchers attach to a given social phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Since the quantitative research approach mainly

pursues concrete statistical relationships without necessarily pursuing people's subjective meanings to a certain research issue, the researcher risked not paying close attention to the key issues and tangents to a given social phenomenon (Allen, 2016).

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The word paradigm traces its roots from the Greek word, which can be synonymised with the word pattern (Creswell, 2014). In social science research, the word paradigm is mainly seen as the way in which a researcher views the context or milieu in which they aim to study and fully understand (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012). The word paradigm is, in some instances, conceptualised as the views a given researcher can have on a certain or given research issue and the strategies in which they intend to solve a given problem (Creswell, 2014). In some cases, a research paradigm has to do with the logical worldviews that a researcher brings when studying a given phenomenon. A research paradigm is therefore of paramount importance because it guides a researcher in a study (Creswell, 2014). A multiplicity of research paradigms guides the ways that researches are done in social sciences. Paradigms that a researcher adopts are influenced whether given research will be located within the mixed methods research approach, the qualitative research approach or the quantitative research approach.

Since researchers make given claims regarding what knowledge is, what the values of knowledge are and what it is that makes up knowledge and how to disseminate it to others, what is known as paradigms are the comprehensive systems of belief, viewpoints and frameworks that influence and guide researches in a given area of study (Creswell, 2014). There are quite a number of paradigms that are used in social science research. Some of the paradigms include the interpretivism

paradigm, the critical paradigm, the positivist paradigm, the post-positivist paradigm, among others (Creswell, 2014). In the following sub-sections, three paradigms are discussed.

3.2.2 Positivism paradigm

The progenitor of positivism is Auguste Comte. Positivism emerged when Auguste Comte rejected metaphysics and argued that only scientific knowledge could be in a position to review what is true about reality. As a paradigm in social sciences, the positivist paradigm is a methodological philosophy that is usually utilised in quantitative research. It is a philosophy that is usually applied in natural sciences with the aim of understanding reality (Creswell, 2014). The positivist paradigm is anchored on the assumption that reality is independent of humans. The paradigm assumes that reality is not mediated by people's senses; rather, it is governed and dictated by absolute laws. The ontological basis of positivism is realism. A study rooted in positivism aims to understand a given social phenomenon through carrying out experiments. Positivism aims to understand the cause and effect of an inevitable occurrence or phenomenon. Positivism is mainly concerned with discovering 'the truth' about a given social phenomenon empirically (Creswell, 2014).

Positivism assumes that reality should be objective and should be measurable. In order to objectively measure reality, positivists are of the view that measurable properties which are independent of the researcher should be used in order for the findings to be quantifiable (Creswell, 2014). Positivists believe that researchers should be objective observers and must alter how things are if they are to get an objective understanding of a certain phenomenon.

3.2.3 Critical Theory

The critical theory paradigm was born out of the Marxist school of thought (Creswell, 2014). The paradigm was developed by a collection of social scientists at the Frankfurt University in Germany

who became known as the Frankfurt School scholars. The paradigm is a social theoretical standpoint that is aimed at changing and critiquing society. The aim of critical theorists is to unearth social life with the aim of uncovering the key assumptions that keep a human being from a complete and clear understanding of the ways in which the world works. The critical assumption of critical theorists is that social reality is historically constituted and can be reproduced and produced by human beings. Albeit human beings can act consciously to change their social and economic circumstances, critical theorists recognize that the ability of human beings to do that is inhibited by different forms of political, social and cultural dominations (Leavy, 2017).

The aim of critical theorists is to fully unpack and understand what is seen as taken for granted beliefs, values as well as social structures through making the structures and the problems they produce more visible. Critical theorists aim to arrive at this by encouraging self-conscious criticism through the development of emancipatory consciousness in scholarship (Allen, 2016). The primary goal of critical theorists is to offer a critique of the status quo in a transparent way. Critical theorists' main aim is to focus on conflicts and the constraints that are seen in contemporary society and, in the end, seek to expose social, cultural and political change that would do away with alienation and domination. As a result, critical theorists encourage scholars to critique and question all the political, cultural and gender assumptions which underlie the effectiveness of the instructional product or programme. Thus, critical theorists aim to deconstruct and uncover the 'hidden curriculum' or 'text' with the aim of searching the 'truth' (Creswell, 2014).

3.2.4 Interpretivist paradigm

The interpretive paradigm has it that reality is subjective. Interpretivism believes that reality is constructed socially. According to Creswell (2014), interpretivism is anti-foundationalists who are

driven by the belief that there is a multiplicity of getting to know about the truth. As a result, interpretivism believes that there is no single truth and one prescribed way which can lead one to arrive at the truth. When using the interpretivism paradigm, theories are judged in light of how they are essential and how ideal they are in ensuring that the truth is arrived at.

As a result, interpretivism assumes that meaning and knowledge are acts of interpretation. Intepretivists, therefore, believe that there is no objective knowledge that is independent of human reasoning. The key point of interpretivism is that reality is constructed socially through language, shared meanings and consciousness. The interpretivism paradigm is as a result underpinned by observations and interpretations that one gives to a given social phenomenon. Observing entails the collection of information about events while also interpreting information in order to make meanings of that information through drawing inferences or also judging the match between the information and specific abstract ideas or patterns. The interpretive paradigm aims to understand a certain phenomenon by establishing the meanings that a researcher assigns to a given issue (Creswell, 2014).

3.2.5 Paradigm adopted in this research study

This study was guided by the social constructivist research paradigm. Qualitative researches tend to be exploratory (Cypress, 2017) and based on the notion that reality is a social construction (Packer, 2011; Dube et al., 2014, Makombe, 2017). The constructivist/interpretivist ontology informs this study. This ontology is essentially derived from the personal construct theory of George Kelly and a constructivist understanding of human reason and reality. Using the concepts of epistemology and ontology provides means through which one can reflect on the world, the happenings within it and the nature of the experiences of human beings. This research takes its clout from Aristotelian metaphysics and considers the study in terms of the nature of human

existence (ontology) and the ways in which the condition can be probed (epistemology). The study also marks a return to Aristotelian thinking by creatively unpacking ontology, epistemology and methodology. The aim of doing research is thus to enhance an understanding and interpretation of social phenomena or social occurrences in line with the most valuable means available. This study falls within the domain of 'reflective empiricism' (Nicotera, 1995: 57) and, therefore, calls for reflection. The method of investigation underpinning this study will therefore be qualitative. This approach was chosen among all other approaches since such an approach can allow for greater opportunity to understand the issue under study and all its nuances. Therefore, the epistemology influencing the methodology of this study will be elucidated as a natural significance of constructivist/interpretivist ontology. Usually, the social constructivist paradigm is closely linked to the interpretivism paradigm (Creswell, 2014).

The social constructivist paradigm traces its substratum in the works of Berger and Luekmann of 1967 as well as the works of Lincoln and Guba of 1985 (Creswell, 2014). The social constructivist paradigm states that individuals usually seek an in-depth understanding of the milieu or contexts in which they work and live in. Usually, when people seek an understanding of the world they live and work in, they, as a result, develop meanings that are subjective and in response to what they would have experienced (Creswell, 2014: 38). These subjective meanings are usually different and can often be conflicting. Resultantly, researchers look for the complexity of views.

What is critical to note is that the qualitative research approach is in sync with the epistemological tenets of the social constructivist paradigm, given the fact that emphasis is placed on the subjectivity of reality in a given social setting (Denicolo, Long & Bradley-Cole, 2016: 61). The key emphasis of social constructivism is the subjectivity of social reality. The social constructivist paradigm places much emphasis on unpacking multiple realities and also identifying the various

ways in which social reality is constructed in a given culture. The social constructivist paradigm also aims to understand the various ways in which reality is socially constructed in a given culture and the ways in which people make use of the norms and values that are constructed (Marvasti, 2004: 46). In its quest to fully understand and discuss the issues under study, this study adopted the qualitative research approach since all the issues discussed above are in sync with the main objectives of the study.

In a study informed by the social constructivist research paradigm, the researcher relies as much as possible on the views of the participants in his or her quest to understand a given issue. In order to capture what the views of the participants will be, questions are asked in an open-ended and broad way. The intention of such questioning techniques will be to try, in every way possible, to make sure that the participants will be in a position to construct their own independent and subjective meanings regarding a given situation when they will be engaging with the researcher. Since this study was guided by the social constructivist paradigm, open-ended questioning was used in order to capture what the participants had to say and, as a result, fully understanding the ways in which they make sense of the world in which they live.

Normally, people's subjective meanings of the world are constructed socially. Their subjective meanings are also socially and historically negotiated. Thus, the subjective meanings of the world are not simply imprinted on individuals. Rather, they are fashioned and formed through the interactions that they have with other people. Cultural and historical norms that are found in the societies they live in also influence people's subjective meanings. Therefore, research nested within the social constructivist paradigm mainly aims to address the processes in which individuals interact. Research influenced by the social constructivist paradigm vies to make sense of the particular social context in which people live and work. The aim of this is to understand the

cultural, historical and social settings in which they live (Denicolo, Long & Bradley-Cole, 2016: 78). Researchers take into consideration the ways in which their own backgrounds influence and mould how they interpret what the participants would have shared. Researchers are, as a result, obliged to position themselves in given research with the aim of acknowledging how their interpretation of a given social issue is influenced by their cultural, personal and historical experiences (Denicolo, Long & Bradley-Cole, 2016: 79). The key goal of all this is making sense or interpret the meanings the people studied have on the world they are situated in.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is defined as a blueprint that gives a researcher a specific direction to understanding a given social problem (Creswell, 2014: 42). Denzin and Lincoln (2011: 67) argue that a research design can be defined as a structure of inquiry to a given social phenomenon. O' leary (2010: 56) states that a research design gives a study its structure and acts as a glue that binds it together. In social science research, there are five major types of research designs which are the narrative research design, the phenomenological research design, the grounded theory research design, the ethnographic research design and the case study research design. The following sub-sections give brief explanations of each.

3.3.1 Narrative research design

When using a narrative research design, the researcher collects; analyses and presents the participants' responses in a systematic way without having to alter them in any way. The narrative research design challenges modernist and traditional views of knowledge, reality and the truth. A narrative research design captures accounts of the relationships between the experiences of individuals and their cultural norms and values (Creswell, 2014). The narrative research design captures the ways in which human beings experience the world. The approach offers practical and

specific insights on a particular issue with the aim of unpacking the experiences of individuals in a given cultural setting (Creswell, 2014).

3.3.2 Phenomenology research

A phenomenological research design aims at constructing and generating meanings of the experiences of human beings through an in-depth dialogue with participants in given research (Creswell, 2014: 42). The main goal of a phonological research design is to accurately describe the living experiences of people. A phenomenological study aims to systematically reflect and analyse a given phenomenon in a profound and critical way (Creswell, 2014: 42). A phenomenological study makes an effort in describing social reality from a multiplicity of people's subjective meanings, which underlie their personal and subjective experiences. When carrying out a phenomenological study, a researcher makes an effort to eliminate any prior assumptions and personal biases in order to fully understand the core issues that influence the conscious feelings, thinking and behaviour of the people under study (Creswell, 2014: 42).

3.3.3 Grounded theory research

In a grounded theory study, the researcher aims at discovering and constructs a theory from a given data set. This is achieved through systematic analysis and comparative analysis of a given data set (Creswell, 2014: 42). When carrying out a study rooted in the grounded theory research design, the researcher makes an effort to collect and analyse data at the same time. The process is done by following a systematic set of procedures to doing the data collection and analysis. In such a context, the researcher will be in a position to generate rich explanations of very complex processes and actions (Creswell, 2014: 42). In grounded theory research, the interpretation of data is continuously derived from raw data.

3.3.4 Ethnographic research

The ethnographic research design is located with the qualitative research approach. It is derived from the field of anthropology. The ethnographic research design places much emphasis is studying a given occurrence within the cultural setup in which it takes place (Creswell, 2014: 42). The aim of ethnography is to get a deep understanding of a given culture through getting to know more about the people who live in that cultural context. When carrying out an ethnographic study, observations and in-depth interviews are mainly utilised. Ethnographic research involves very intensive and face to face involvement with participants within their cultural contexts (Creswell, 2014: 43). When doing an ethnographic study, the researcher relies on his or her unique knowledge and engagement to generate insights (theory) and convince the scientific community of the trans-situational nature of the studied phenomenon.

3.3.5 Case study research

Another research design popular in qualitative studies is the case study research design. In a case study, a researcher carries out an in-depth analysis of events, people and relationships. Case studies can be very intensive longitudinal studies of a given social phenomenon which are done at one or more research sites with the aim of getting very detailed and contextualised inferences of a certain phenomenon. What makes a case study unique is that it can be used in an interpretive manner with the aim of building theories. It can also be used in an interpretive manner with the aim of testing theories. One can use case studies in studying a given social phenomenon through a comprehensive description and analysis of a given case. In a qualitative study, case studies can be used in wholly and carefully analysing, observing and examining a specific phenomenon, be it on individuals, families, institutions or the entire community, in order to fully understand them.

This study was underpinned by the case study research design. Through the use of the case study research design, the researcher made efforts in collecting detailed information on the issue of land grabbing using an array of data collecting tools which comprised key informant interviews, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (Rossman & Rallis, 2012: 63). What made the case study research design ideal was its ability to enrich the researcher's understanding and ability to analyse the issues studied in greater detail. The case study research design made it possible for the researcher to have a clear understanding of issues under study, given the fact that the researcher collected data over a sustained period of time. This research design created a platform for the researcher to trace fully and understand the issue under study. Through the use of a case study, the researcher had ample time to interact with participants over a period of six months and fully unpacked the key issues that mould the ways the participants understood the issue under investigation. The case study research design created a platform for the researcher to interact with participants in order to get a complete picture of what the views of the participants were on the issue of land grabbing.

In summary, the case study design was used in this study because it:

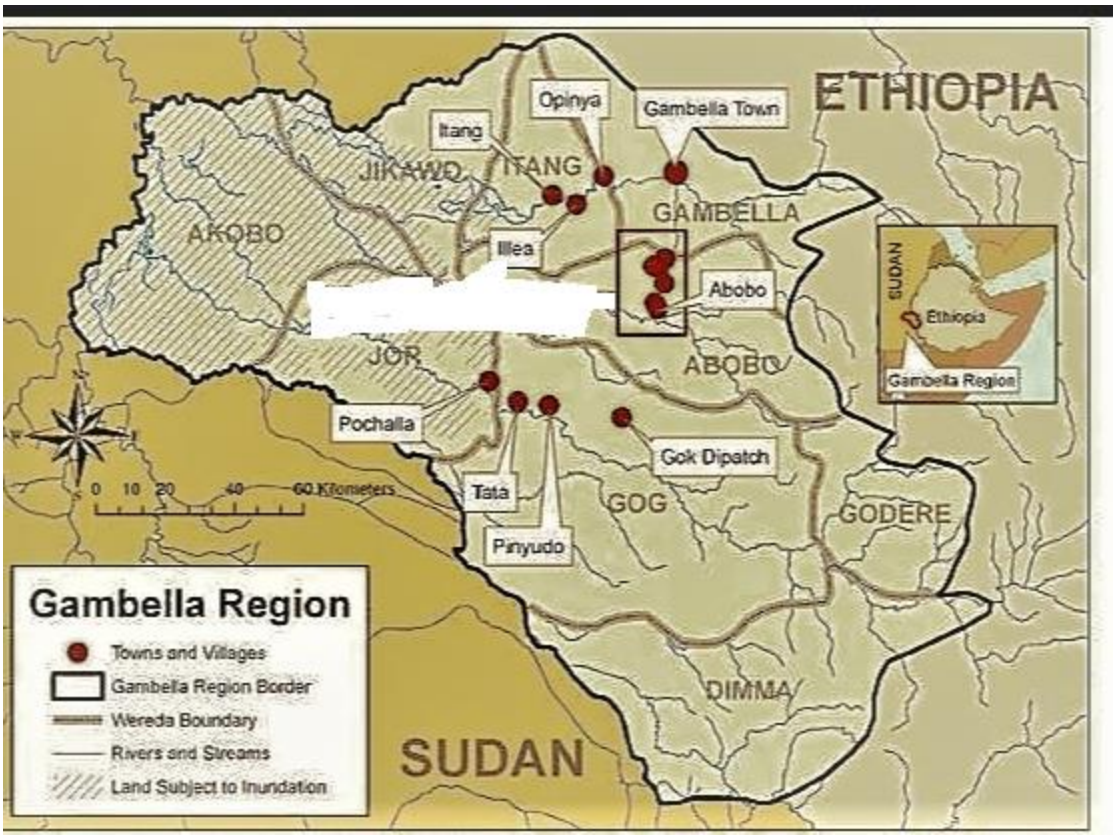
- Enriched the understanding of the researcher on the issue of land grabbing;
- Created the platform for the researcher to get a genuine understanding of the personal experiences of the participants on the issue of land grabbing;
- Permitted the researcher to trace the participants' history and what their relationships were to the land and their environment (Rossman & Rallis, 2012: 64)

The following section discusses the study population before discussing the sampling techniques and the sample size.

3.4 STUDY AREA

The Gambella region of Ethiopia is the area in which this study was carried out. Gambella is situated in the southwestern part of Ethiopia. The Gambella Region has traditionally been a predominantly agricultural community whose livelihoods have been hinged mainly upon subsistence agriculture and fishing. The first people to settle in Gambella were the Anyuak people. The ethnic texture of the Gambella Region, however, changed as a result of the conflicts in Sudan when a large influx of the people of Nilo-Saharan linguistic groups which include the Nuer people of South Sudan migrated to the region. The Gambella Region has traditionally been a predominantly agricultural community whose livelihoods have been primarily hinged upon subsistence agriculture. In instances where the key livelihood strategies of a community are anchored on sedentary farming and fishing, the land is one of the key assets which defines a people and determines their survival. The settlement of the people of the Nilo-Saharan linguistic groups in the Gambella Region dates back to the Axumite civilization, whose history dates back to the first century (Baherru, 2001: 8). The ethnic texture of the Gambella Region, however, has been changing as a result of the conflicts in both Ethiopia and Sudan through history especially during the European invasions. Throughout the history of Ethiopia, people in the Gambella Region have been staying in this region and utilising the land for subsistence farming growing crops and keeping livestock for their sustenance. Efforts of Italian colonial powers to colonise Ethiopia proved futile, and this meant that since the first century, people in the Gambella Region had known no other home. The modernisation drive pursued by the present-day Ethiopian government has altered the historical patterns of settlements in most parts of the Ethiopian countryside. In a bid to spur the much-needed modernisation, the Ethiopian government has been leasing land to foreign investors for either commercial modernised agricultural purposes or massive industrialisation.

The Gambella Region has been characterised by chronic poverty as a result of limited social and educational development, isolation from markets, poor soils and erratic rainfall. Climate change-induced environmental changes, which have been rendering rain-fed agriculture challenging to carry out, explain the susceptibility of the area to food shortages. This, as a result, has made commercial agriculture driven by irrigation an alternative option. Irrigation driven agriculture is, however, not an option for most people in the Gambella Region because it is simply beyond their capacities. As such, the government of Ethiopia seems to have been pursuing land leasing initiatives to foreign investors in a bid to make the most out of the land in the Gambella Region. Such initiatives though plausible, do not enable the people, in the end, to be self-sufficient as most find themselves wage labourers who do not own the means of production, a situation which has not been effectively dealing with starvation and hunger. It seems the strategy of leasing land by the government has not been fully capacitating the people to stand on their own through supporting people to eke out their own livelihoods through perhaps availing them with required resources/inputs. The specific focus area of this study was the Gambella Region, an area that borders Ethiopia and South Sudan. The Region is poorly connected to the outside world, with dust roads that are not accessible during the rainy season. Such poor physical capital, such as poor roads development, is inimical to the realisation of positive livelihoods outcomes as roads are vital for linking an area to external markets. Accessible roads also make livelihood outsourcing viable through unhindered migration of people in search of wage employment elsewhere. Below is the map of the study area.



Source (Google maps).

3.5 POPULATION

Vogt (2011: 82) notes that a population is made up of all the units of analysis in a particular study. Schmidt & Brown (2015: 45) state that a population is the total number of units which are appropriate for analysis in a particular study. The population of the study was made up of all the local people in Gambella, who are about 435 999 though the population keeps changing because of conflict and the influx of refugees from South Sudan.

3.6 SAMPLING AND SAMPLE SIZE

It is not possible to collect data from every unit or individual who makes up the population (Mason, 2010). As a result, a researcher must make efforts in choosing certain units in a given population

for analysis. Vogt (2011: 83) states that a sample is a subset of the total population in a study. Rossman and Rallis (2012: 72) define a sample as any number of objects or persons that a researcher selects to represent a given population in which a given social phenomenon is studied.

Sampling can either be probability or non-probability sampling. Probability sampling relies on the random selection of units in a given study. When using probability sampling, every known element of the population has an equal chance of being selected. When using the probability sampling technique, the aim will be to achieve statistical representativeness (Rossman & Rallis, 2012: 72).

For the non-probability sampling techniques, not all elements have an equal likelihood of being selected. Non-probability sampling techniques do not necessarily afford all individuals in the population of the study and opportunity to be sampled and participate in the generation of data (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). When using non-probability sampling techniques, no probability can be determined or specified that an element will be included in the sample. Most qualitative studies use non-probability sampling techniques, which include convenience sampling, snowball sampling, purposive sampling and quota sampling. Each of these is subsequently briefly discussed.

a) Convenience sampling

When using convenience sampling, the researcher selects participants from an easily accessible population (Mugera, 2013: 1). Convenience sampling creates a platform for a researcher to recruit participants who are easiest to recruit (Mugera, 2013: 1). Usually, convenience sampling is suitable for pilot studies and during pre-testing and may not be suitable for causal or descriptive studies.

b) Snowball sampling

When doing snowball sampling, a key informant is used to identify other potential participants who are not easy to identify. Usually, snowballing sampling is used in very difficult to find

populations and when studying sensitive topics in which participants may not be willing to take part. In addition, snowball sampling is employed in scenarios where the participants' population to a given study is unknown. The technique is also used in situations where there is a risk of non-response to a study.

c) Quota sampling

Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 277) define quota sampling as a distinct form of proportionate stratified sampling. In this case, a predetermined number of elements are drawn from predetermined sub-groups with the aim of ensuring the adequate representation of certain groups of the population. These sub-groups may be predicted on variables like gender, age or race and will be demarcated based on up to date and readily accessible information relating to the population.

d) Purposive sampling

In purposive sampling, participants or units to a certain study are selected in ways that increase the likelihood of all pertinent units to a study to be selected. In this context, a purposive sampling includes the deliberate selection of the sample population of the study based on the judgement of the researcher. Purposive sampling involves identifying and deliberately selecting information-rich sources for a particular study. Purposive sampling makes it possible for one to select unique cases whose distinct characteristics are very significant to a given study. Purposive sampling is mainly concerned with the selection of a small population who have deep knowledge of a given research topic (Mugera, 2013: 4).

In the context of this study, purposive sampling was used. There are a number of sub-categories of purposive sampling (Patton, 1990). One of these is what is known as purposive intensity

sampling, which was used to select all the participants who took part in this study. When using intensity sampling, the researcher makes an effort at collecting some preliminary information before making the actual selection of the suitable participants (Patton, 1990: 171). In the context of this study, the researcher carried out some exploratory work with the aim of determining the variations of the issue under study. The researcher selected the participants in this study based on the following criteria:

- That they were the local people of Gambella who were driven away from their land to pave the way for the foreign companies;
- That they were community leaders who lead the local farmers who lost their land to pave the way for the new foreign owners.

3.7 SAMPLING FRAME

A sampling frame is a list of population elements where a sample can be drawn (Churchill, Brown & Suter 2010: 331). Examples of sample frames include telephone directories, households or institutions, databases of consumers and members of associations (Harmse, 2012: 153). The sampling frame for this study was local peoples in the five settlements of the Gambella Region, namely Amharic (three settlement areas) and Majang (two settlement areas), who lost their land to the new company owners.

3.8 SAMPLING SIZE

The information power model was used to choose the appropriate sample size for this study. The model holds that an adequate sample size in a given study is closely related to the aim of a given study (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2016: 1759). Malterud, Siersma and Guassora (2016: 1759)

argue that the information power model states that a given study's information power is directly linked to the personal experiences of participants on a particular issue, the knowledge of the participants on a given phenomenon and the general characteristics of the population under study. The model states that for a study to have enough information power, a less extensive sample should be chosen which means that the less extensive the sample, the high the quality of data collected. Thus, the issue of specificity is very important when it comes to choosing a sample which is less extensive.

In addition, the information power model states that quality data can be collected from a study when a researcher carries out a high-quality discussion of a given issue with participants. For this to be possible, quality discussion can be collected from a very small pool of participants and not a large pool of participants (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2016: 1759). Thus a few numbers of participants can be able to offer enough information than a very large number of participants (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2016: 1759). The smaller the sample, the more the researcher avoids losing time and resources through collecting irrelevant data in a study. Through using the information power model, the researcher avoids elaborating on data that is not relevant for a thorough analysis of the issue under study (Malterud, Siersma & Guassora, 2016: 1759). The information power model can be presented diagrammatically as shown in Figure 1.

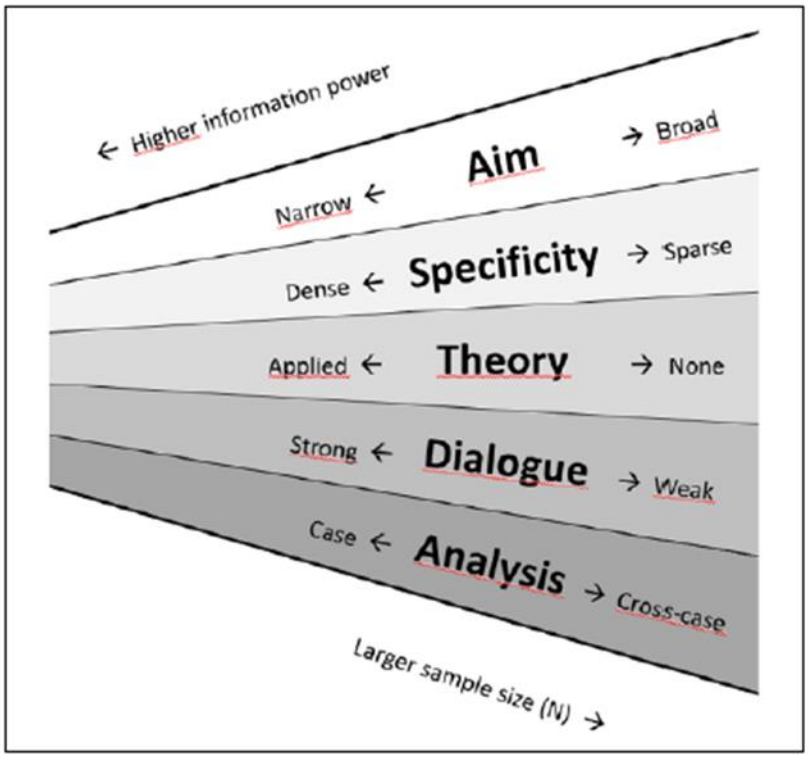


Figure 1: The implication of information power to qualitative sample size. (Source: Malterud, Siersma and Guassora, 2016: 1756).

Given the fact that this study utilised the information power model, the sample that was chosen in this study was neither too small nor too large. The purposive sampling technique was used to select suitable participants in this study. Ten local people (five males and five women) were chosen from each of the five settlements using the purposive sampling technique. One community leader was also chosen through the purposive sampling technique from each settlement to make a total sample of 55 participants. A provincial and national government official and a representative of the foreign companies were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling approach in research that does not randomly select the sample population and it increases the likelihood of all pertinent units in the population being selected at the expense of the irrelevant

units in the population Purposive sampling involves the deliberate selection of the sample population of the study, based on the judgment of the researcher. Thus, purposive sampling involves the identification and deliberate selection of key informants (groups or individuals) with distinct knowledge relating to the study for data generation purposes. Purposive sampling is suitable for the selection of unique cases whose distinct characteristics are significant to the study in question. Purposive sampling is primarily concerned with selecting a small population with expertise in the research being conducted. The sampling technique is concerned with the selection of participants based on the specific purpose of the study and not representativeness per se (Vogt, 2011). Ten local people (all male) were chosen from each of the five settlements using the purposive sampling technique. One community leader was also chosen through the purposive sampling technique from each settlement to make a total sample of 55 participants. A provincial and national government official and a representative of the foreign companies were selected using the purposive sampling technique.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

In quantitative studies, data is usually collected through the use of structured questionnaires (Creswell, 2014). In qualitative studies, open-ended data collection tools which ensure that there is flexibility are utilised. In qualitative studies, in-depth and interviews which are not structured, semi-structured interviews, observations, and transact walks are mostly used to collect data (Creswell, 2014). The following sections briefly discuss the qualitative data collection tools that are used in collecting data in qualitative studies before narrowing down to focus on the data collecting techniques that were used in this study.

3.9.1 Unstructured interviews

Interviews that are not structured are one of the key data collection tools that are used to collect data in qualitative studies. Interviews that are not structured are in-depth interviews that are done without having to use an interview guide or interview schedule (Neuman, 2003: 25). These interviews are very flexible, non-directive and create a platform for the participants to air out their views without interruption. When using these kinds of interviews, the researcher will be in a position to collect very rich data which is nuanced regarding a given social phenomenon (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000: 37). When using interviews that are not structured to collect data, the interviewer is in a position to collect data from participants who may be illiterate or semi-illiterate, given the fact that open-ended questions in which they will be expected to air out their views without hindrances are asked (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000: 37). Interviews that are not structured can be disadvantageous in that the researcher can easily lose track of some of the key issues since there will be no guide to make sure that participants continue to answer questions within given parameters.

3.9.2 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are a qualitative data collecting tool in which the researcher asks questions regarding a certain research topic from a prepared set of questions (O'Leary, 2010: 195). Semi-structured interviews were used as the data collecting tool in this study. During semi-structured interviews, the researcher develops a schedule with a set of questions that are asked the participants for their views on a given research issue (O'Leary, 2010: 195; Fink, 2012: 72). Although a set of questions guide the parameters of the research when using semi-structured interviews, participants are given the platform to explain their issues without any hindrances, as is the case with unstructured interviews. The key advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they

reduce the risk of the researcher going off-topic (O'Leary, 2010: 195). For this reason, semi-structured interviews were used as data collecting tools in this study.

3.9.3 Observations

Observations are another popular data collecting tool that is used in qualitative studies. A researcher can be either be obtrusive or unobtrusive when doing observations (O'leary, 2010: 203). In cases where the researcher is unobtrusive, the researcher observes what the participants will be doing without being seen and without his or her presence being known by the participants she or he will be studying. In cases where the researcher will be obtrusive, his or her or his presence will be known and seen by the participants. When doing observations, whether the observations will be obtrusive or unobtrusive observations, data is collected in the natural world and not a constructed world, as is usually the case in quantitative studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012: 89).

In addition, observations in social science research can be non-participant or participant. In non-participant observations, the researcher is usually detached from the actual event or activity which will be observed. In such instances, the researcher only observes the activity or event as a bystander. In cases where the observation is not non-participant, the researcher will be an active participant in the given event or activity in which she or he aims to observe and collect data. The aims of doing observations in social science research are to capture what the participants will be doing and saying. In a non-participant observation, non-verbal cues will be captured, and the aim will be to get an in-depth understanding of a given social phenomenon.

The key advantage of observations is that when doing observations (usually the unobtrusive ones), the researcher does not influence the reality or the flow of a given event as the events unfold. In such circumstances, the researcher will not be able to hide or try to impress anything from the (O'leary, 2010: 203). Observations which are obtrusive usually lead the researcher to influence the

ways in which the participants behave. In such cases, the data collected will not be a true reflection of how the participants actually behave and carry out their activities (O'leary, 2010: 203).

3.9.4 Transect walks

Transect walks are also some of the popular data collection tools in social science research. Just like observations, transect walks create a platform for the researcher to collect data through observing people and the activities they will be doing. When doing transect walks, the researcher collects data by observing events and happenings in a given locale while taking down notes (Tombindo, 2014: 5). The key difference between transacting walks and observation is that with transect walks, researchers are able to ask questions about a given event or occurrence for clarity. Mostly, transect walks are done with the full knowledge of the participants though there are some instances where they can be done without the people doing certain activities knowing (Tombindo, 2014: 5). One of the key advantages of transect walks is that transect walks are done in the natural world and not a constructed world. When doing transect walks, the researcher does not stop those doing their activities for interviews. However, just like observations, researcher presence can affect how the participants carry out their activities, especially when the presence of the researcher is known to the participants (Tombindo, 2014: 5). The following sections discuss the various data collecting methods which are common in qualitative researches.

3.10 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Some of the key data collecting methods in qualitative studies are Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and guided walk interviews. The following sections discuss these three methods since they were the ones that were used to collect data in this study.

3.10.1 Focus Group Discussions

When using Focus Group Discussions, participants are brought together with the main goal of getting a profound understanding of a particular research issue. Usually, Focus Group Discussions comprise a maximum of ten participants who will be involved in a particular research activity or have certain experiences which they share (Neuman, 2003). Neuman (2003: 34) states that the key aim of a Focus Group Discussion is to collect significant information on a given issue. The main advantage of carrying out a Focus Group Discussion is that the researcher collects data on a specific issue from a group of people hence saving time (Marvasti, 2004: 24). Marvasti (2004: 24). Focus Group Discussions are advantageous in that they create an avenue for participants to remind each other about information that can be easily forgotten in instances where only one participant is interviewed. Participants in a Focus Group Discussion are able to spark off one another and, in the end, suggest dimensions and various nuances to a given study that would be unforeseen during the start of the study. This mostly makes it possible for participants to arrive at a very critical understanding of a given problem. Usually, Focus Group Discussions make it possible for participants to discuss specific issues in a multi-vocal nature and, in the end creating an avenue for participants to remind each other about important information (Tombindo, 2014: 5).

For all these advantages, Focus Group Discussions were used to collect data from local people who had lost their land to foreign companies. In each settlement, one Focus Group Discussion was carried out with male members of the settlements. Each Focus Group Discussion comprised ten males. Efforts to carry out Focus Group Discussions with the female members of the community were fruitless. Since there were political upheavals in the country during the time collecting data, the community leaders advised the researcher against carrying out Focus Group Discussions with women for security reasons. Gender biases in the data gather were inevitable since only men were

only interviewed during Focus Groups. Data gathered was therefore male biased. If I had realized this, I would have had a female research assistant who might have helped me in gathering data from females under such circumstances. The researcher conducted the interviews in person with the help of a local research assistant from a local community who helped with the translations sometimes to the local language of Amharic. The researcher asked questions on the issue under discussion from a semi-structured interview guide. Each Focus Group Discussion took thirty to forty-five minutes to complete. The researcher took down notes in a field diary during the discussions to augment an audio recorder that was used. All Focus Group Discussions were done in the local language of Amharic and were later translated into English with the help of a local research assistant. The places of residence of the community leaders in each of the five settlements were the rendezvous for all the Focus Group Discussions.

3.10.2 Key Informant Interviews

According to Pope and Mays (2000: 123), key informant interviews are standardised data collecting tools that are used in qualitative studies with the main aim of coming up with well-detailed information on a particular issue. Pope and Mays (2000: 123) notes that key informants are experts on a particular research matter who are in a position to give very detailed information on a particular research issue. Usually, key informant interviews are face to face encounters between a researcher and an expert on a particular issue. The main advantage of key informant interviews is that a researcher is in a position to collect vibrant information on a specific matter from only one person or a tiny number of participants. The main disadvantage of key informant interviews is that it is challenging to get the participants for interviewing because most of them are usually busy. Some are simply reserved and will not be willing to share their views, especially on issues considered very sensitive.

In the context of this study, key informant interviews were used to collect data from the government official from the Ministry responsible for the administration of land and the company representatives of the companies that have been given land in the Gambella region. Interviews with these key informants were arranged a week before the interview. The researcher contacted by phone the key informants asking for their consent to participate in the study. After getting their consent, the researcher asked to meet them in person for a quick chat and then phoned the participants for the interviews. Thus, all interviews with the key informants were done face to face. The interviews were done in English and in Amharic, and the researcher personally carried out these interviews. The researcher recorded the interview after asking for permission to record the discussion for the purposes of data capturing. Notes were taken down on the field diary to augment the recorded calls. Each interview took between fifteen to twenty minutes to complete. When interviewing the government officials, efforts were made to get the lease agreements entered between the government and the investors on land but the researcher was not able to get access to the agreements.

3.10.3 Guided walk interviews

Guided walk interviews are also one of the research methods that are used to collect data in qualitative studies. The utilisation of mobile methods of research such as guided walk interviews has been surging (Dube et al., 2014: 1093). The mobilities model contrasts the traditional methods of data collection in which participants are interviewed in situ. In contrast, guided walks involve the physical movement of the researcher and the participants. The mobilities paradigm, which enshrines the guided walk interviews, is a research method in which the individuals' connectedness with the place is prioritised when carrying out research (Sheller & Urry, 2006: 210). When using the guided walk interviews, the researcher interviews the participants while walking together with

the participant from one place to the other (Dube et al., 2014: 1093). When carrying out guided walks, the researcher walks with the participant(s) with the aim of enhancing a profound engagement with the physical and social context in which an inevitable occurrence will be taking place (Sheller & Urry, 2006: 211). When using the mobilities paradigm, the researcher may just observe the participants without necessarily interviewing them when they will be on the move. The researcher can as well interview them when they are moving or when they are doing their daily routines (Dube et al., 2014: 1093).

The guided walk interviews include walking with participants in a way in which the landscapes and the settings around them can invoke a discussion (Anderson, 2004: 250). When carrying out guided walk interviews, the researcher walks with the participants along fixed routes with the aim of gaining vibrant data for an in-depth understanding of a given phenomenon (Evans & Jones, 2011: 851). The global positioning device can be utilised to track the routes which the researcher and the participants may take. When carrying out guided walks, the participants are usually familiar with the routes which are taken, and most of these routes have a special meaning and invoke some memories on the issue, which will be under discussion. Thus, when carrying out the walk-based interviews, participants select the routes that should be taken for the interviews since memory-filled locations and routes are essential in invoking discussions that are meaningful and relevant to the study of a given phenomenon (Dube et al., 2014: 1093).

When carrying out the guided walks interviews, efforts are made in documenting the locations, routes, key landmarks, names of streets since all these are very important in creating a mnemonic scheme which is essential in aiding the memorialisation and recalling of the content of the interviews done. The documentation is also vital in aiding the researcher with the memorialisation of the general atmosphere and milieu in which the interviewing took place and, in the end,

facilitating critical documentation of what would have been discussed. During the guided walks, mobile interactive engagement through walking-based interviews is critical in helping the participants to have a reflection of the contextualised experiences of their daily lives and, in the end, share their experiences and feelings about a specific research subject with the researcher (Ross et al., 2009: 619).

Guided walk interviews were the data collecting method utilised to collect the data among the community leaders. The guided walks with all the participants were arranged three weeks in advance with the aim of giving the participants ample time to plan for the interviews. The researcher developed a semi-structured interview schedule with a set of questions that the participants were asked. All the interviews were done by the researcher who travelled to the places of residence of the community leaders. Though the researcher asked questions from the interview schedule, participants were given the platform to share their views without any interruption. This was done in order to allow the natural flow of discussions and, in the end, pursue interesting tangents which were very important to the study. All community leaders took part in one guided walk interview. The guided walk interviews were carried out per each community leader of the five settlements with the aim of understanding all the key issues that were important to the study. Each guided walk interview session took ten to fifteen minutes to complete.

In the context of this study, the guided walk interviews included the following participants as they carried out their daily activities. Guided walks in the context of this study involved walking with community leaders in the settlements they lead and the places of their residence as they carried out their daily activities. The surrounding landscape and setting in which the guided walks were done invoked discussions about the issue under study. According to Evans and Jones (2011: 851), when doing guided walk interviews, a researcher must take into consideration the knowledge both the

participant and the researcher has regarding the places and settings in which the interviews will be done (Evans & Jones, 2011: 851). When carrying out guided walks, consideration must be taken on who gets to choose the paths and localities taken during the walks (Evans & Jones, 2011: 851). Places are essential to the general aim of the research. Places have an effect on the ways in which data is collected (Dube et al., 2014: 1093). Places are significant to participants since they create a platform for participants to have a deep reflection of their experiences as they share contextualised understandings of their daily life experiences with the researcher (Dube et al., 2014: 1093).

In the context of this study, the participants chose all the routes that were taken for guided walks. Guided walks were done when the participants and the researcher walked in specific routes, which to community leaders were very important and, in most cases, reminded them about certain events linked to what most of them saw as land grabs. Guided walks gave the researcher a unique way of understanding how the participants made sense of their day to day lives and experiences as invoked by place. The guided walks produced rich data, which was very important in making a deep exploration of the views of the participants regarding the issue under investigation.

During the guided walks, the researcher took note of the interaction patterns of the community leaders with the community as well as the routes which the participants chose to take when walking with the researcher. During the guided walks, non-verbal cues and the interaction patterns of the participants were taken note of. The researcher was able to explore what the participants actually do and how they behaved. These observations were carried out in natural settings and not a constructed world. An audiotape was used to record what the participants said. All interviews with community leaders were conducted in Amharic and later translated to English with the help of the local research assistant from a local university who helped with the translations to the local

language of Amharic. Since the interviews were done when the researcher and the participants were mobile, more extensive notes (especially those on non-verbal cues) were taken in a field diary soon after each interview session when the researcher would be more settled. Notes were taken on features and landmarks which the researcher and the participants passed by. Key to each route that was chosen by the participants was the importance of 'place' in recounting each participant's daily lives and experiences as the community leaders. For instance, a route chosen by the Community leader from Settlement 1 passed near the newly erected fences of the new farm. The dwellings of the displaced communities could be seen just across the fence and were still standing. These features invoked an emotional episode from the community leader who wept upon looking at these dwellings. Asked why he wept, the critical informant said the dwellings reminded him of the lost homeland and how painful it was to have lost their ancestral land to the foreigners.

Guided walks interviews have a number of advantages that made them ideal for this study. One of the key advantages the guided walks provided was that they provided the researcher with a unique way of understanding how the participants made sense and described their day-to-day experiences prompted by place. In addition, guided walk interviews created a platform for participants to find time for the interviews while they would be doing their daily activities, given that all of them were busy. As a result, the guided walks minimised the loss of the participants' time, as would have been the case if interviews were done in situ. Since the participants chose the routes that were taken during the guided walks, they also determined the dates when the interviews were done. They also determined where the guided walks would start and end. This, in a way, gave them the avenue to be flexible and choose how, when and under what circumstances the interviews were supposed to be done.

Given the fact that semi-structured interviews were used during the guided walks, there were free-flowing conversations between the researcher and the community leaders. The guided walks created a platform for the establishment of rapport and trust between the participants and researcher. Additionally, guided walk interviews created ample room for context-rich interactions between the participants and the researcher. Participants were able to share their narratives in a relaxed way. Guided walks in this study created an avenue for unexpected conversations, which expanded the researcher's understanding of the issues under study. The guided walk gave the researcher the chance to walk through the day to day lives of the participants as they shared their experiences in words.

Despite the strength of the guided walk interviews, it was in some instances challenging for the researcher to capture what the participants said when passing by a noisy place. There could also be unanticipated interruptions when participants sometimes stopped to greet the community members. To overcome these, the interviewer asked the participants for clarity. In order to overcome the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic during the data collection process, the researcher wore a mask and urged the participants to also wear their masks. All participants were hand sanitised before the data collection process. The social distancing protocols we strictly adhered to. The participants sat one metre away from each other during the Focus Group Discussions. The researcher also observed the social distancing principles during collecting data among the key informants.

3.11 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

It is of paramount importance for a researcher to take into consideration the method of data analysis that should be employed in any a given research. Data analysis involves organising the data into

meaningful units, its interpretation and the actual process of report writing. Data analysis includes the process of coding the data, synthesising it and searching for recurrent patterns (Tappen, 2011: 43). The following sections discuss the three most popular methods in the process used of data analysis before narrowing down and explaining the method that was used in analysing data in this study.

3.11.1 Qualitative data analysis approach

The qualitative data analysis approach includes the classification and interpreting of the linguistic or even visual material with the aim of making statements about both the explicit and implicit dimensions and structures of making meanings from the material collected and what is represented in it (Allen, 2016: 114). Qualitative data analysis usually aims to arrive at a detailed analysis of data collected (Allen, 2016: 115). The qualitative data analysis approach aims at getting generalizable statements from a given data set by making comparisons on a given set of materials of various texts and cases (Allen, 2016: 115). The approach is helpful in describing the issue under study in great detail through identifying differences in the collected data and, in the end, making a comparison. This approach to analysing data is very useful in the development of theory on a given social phenomenon through analysing data from the empirical material collected.

3.11.2 The concept-modelling approach

The concept modelling approach involves two stages which are the analysis stage and the synthesis. The analysis stage in the conceptual modelling approach involves the examination and the breaking down of data into meaningful parts. The analysis of the data is achieved by identifying relevant assertions or statements that a contained in a given data set. These assertions are statements that are made or said by the research participants that will be semantically and logically complete. Assertions can be complicated or straightforward. Simple assertions only make one

statement, and complicated assertions include two or more semantic expressions which have a logical relationship (Creswell, 2014: 11). The mechanics of the data analysis in the conceptual modelling approach involve coding each relevant assertion in line with Glaser and Strauss' (1967) process of open coding.

The synthesis stage in the concept-modelling approach involves discovering relationships between certain concepts in a given data set. The discovering of these concepts is known as the data reduction process, and it involves the grouping of similar expressions under a labelled concept. During the data synthesis stage, specific assertions will be considered as exemplars of discovered concepts as propounded by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The synthesis stage in the concept-modelling approach involves testing the validity of the proposed concepts through the seeking of confirming and disconfirming evidence (Creswell, 2014: 15). When all the relevant concepts are identified and validated, the synthesis is then achieved through carrying out an examination of the relationships between the concepts that would have been developed. The comparative approach is used with the aim of understanding how various statements in a given data set relate to each other. The concept model involves the visual representation of the relationships between concepts and the social situation of the study.

3.11.3 Thematic approach

The thematic approach was used in the analysis of data in the context of this study. The thematic data analysis approach is a qualitative data analysis technique that is anchored on the examination and close analysis of themes that emerge from a given data set. The thematic data analysis approach aims to get the deep meaning to a given data set through a critical analysis of the data rather than simply counting words or phrases in a given data set (Creswell, 2014: 21). The thematic data analysis approach is both an essentialist and realist approach which is useful in the reporting

of the narratives by participants, in the end, extrapolating what these narratives mean (Clarke, Friese & Washburn, 2015: 31). The thematic data analysis approach is a constructionist method in that it enhances the examination of the different ways in which different events and experiences of people in various situations have an impact on the ways in which reality is formed and conceptualised in a given society (Clarke, Friese & Washburn, 2015: 31).

The aim of the researcher when using the thematic approach to analysing data is to identify, analyse and then report specific patterns in each data set (Clarke, Friese & Washburn, 2015: 31). This approach was ideal and desirable in the context of this study in that it created an avenue for the researcher to organise and describe a given data set in great detail. By using this approach in the analysis of data, the researcher was in a position to interpret the various aspects of the issue of land grabbing in greater detail. In this study, the thematic approach was used in search of recurrent themes and patterns in the data that was collected. There were five steps to the analysis of data that were used in this study. These steps included transcription, checking and editing, analysis and interpretation, verification and then step generalisation (Creswell, 2014: 21).

The data were first reviewed for accuracy and familiarisation. The researcher then performed preliminary open coding of what the participants shared. This preliminary open coding was arrived at through notes taking of the meaning of the data in line with the categories under which data was presented. Second, physical evidence from the interviews done with all the participants was then coded. The coding was arrived at by delaminating the field notes made in the field diary. The goal of this delimitation was to extract the information that was appropriated from the data collecting process. The process of coding was done by using NVIVO.

Once the data analysis was completed, the data collected was verified by the researcher through revisiting the notes taken and relistening to the audio recorder. All discrepancies were then

rectified by the researcher. When the data were being analysed, an advisor of the researcher from the Department of Social Sciences in Prague, Prof. Essenza, who is very familiar with Land grabbing issues and development Aid in Africa, gave the researcher valuable advice through peer debriefings. The peer debriefings were done on the social media platform WhatsApp. The researcher first gave the peer the anonymised data for his views. The researcher then phoned the peer, and discussions regarding the study were done. The peer debriefings led to suggestions on the issue of land grabbing, which were very valuable and this, in the end, led to critical reflections on the issue under investigation. Secondly, after the process of data analysis, the researcher made efforts in discovering the relationships of the concepts identified and the data that was collected.

3.12 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY

Ensuring that this study was trustworthy, credible, dependable, conformable and transferable was of great importance in this study since ensuring these would enhance the quality of this study. According to Tappen (2011: 45), a research's quality is closely linked to rigour. Rigour in qualitative research is closely related to the issue of reliability and validity. Morse (2015a: 15) defines the rigour of research as the measure of credibility in a given study. A study's rigour is closely connected to the truthfulness and comprehensiveness of a given study. Given the fact that the researcher in this study captured the narratives of the participants, the issue of rigour was of great importance.

The reliability and validity of the data collected to ensure the comprehensiveness and truthfulness of a given study. It is helpful to reiterate that the reliability and validity of a given study is closely related to its trustworthiness (Schmidt & Brown, 2015: 45). The measure of the validity of given research is incumbent upon the justifiability, significance, rationality and meaningfulness of the

outcomes of a given research. Validity in given research is directly linked to the accurateness of the results of a given study. Efforts must be made to come up with valid instruments for measuring data in order for the results of a given study to be accurate (Golafshani, 2003: 600). The researcher should always make conscious efforts to meticulously record and verify all the data collected in a given study in order for the results of a given study to be valid.

In this study, the researcher made efforts in coming up with a valid instrument for collecting data. A semi-structured interview and a Focus Group Discussion questions guide were created through the help of the aforesaid researcher's advisor and an expert on the issue of land grabbing at the University of Pretoria, at which this study was done. The researcher first drafted the questions before sending them to his supervisors for their views. Discussions on the questions were then done through emails and WhatsApp call. Suggestions made by the peers were then taken into consideration. The researcher also made efforts to carefully recording what was collected through taking down notes in the field diary and also through using an audio recorder to record what the participants had to share. The credibility of the findings in this study was ensured through a continuous engagement with participants weeks after the conclusion of the data collecting process. Follow up interviews were done in order to get clarity on the issues that the researcher had not fully understood. Further, in order to make sure that the results of this study were credible, the participants were asked to authenticate whether what they had captured was incorrect or correct. Two participants from each Focus Group were chosen randomly and asked to authenticate what was captured. Key informants were also given the analysed data for their authentication.

In order to ensure the interpretive rigour of this study, numerous peer reviews were done in line with what was suggested by Rolfe (2006: 312). The peer reviews were done during the peer debriefings done through meetings and deliberations the researcher had with peers from the

university; this study was done. The peer debriefings created a platform for questions and assessment of the various processes of data collecting and analysis. Data submitted to the researcher's peers for debriefing was anonymised in order to protect the identities of the participants. Everything that was suggested by the researcher's peers was then taken into consideration in order to ensure the interpretive rigour of the study.

The transferability of the results of this study was ensured through the recording of all details captured during the data collecting process. All data captured on the tape recorder was transcribed soon after the data collecting process. All the data collected was cross-checked in order to ensure the transferability of this study. The cross-checking was achieved by comparing what was analysed to what was captured in the field diary and the audio recorder. Efforts were also made by the researcher to meticulously go through all the data that was transcribed with the aim of rectifying all the possible errors the researcher could have made during the transcribing.

In order to ensure the dependability of this study, the researcher made efforts in inviting an expert on the topic of land grabbing in order to review the anonymised data that the researcher had transcribed from the audiotape. That expert was helpful in the validation of the findings of this study. With the aim of ensuring the conformability of the findings of this study, a field diary with the relevant field notes that were collected in this study was kept. Ensuring that the researcher's biases would not threaten the validity of the findings of this study was of paramount importance. As a result, the researcher used bracketing to guard against the impartialities, beliefs and assumptions that would threaten the validity of the study's findings (Chan, Fung & Chien, 2013: 3). In this study, bracketing started off before the process of literature review up to the data collection analysis stages of the study.

The researcher also made use of a reflexive diary in which all thoughts of the researcher were written down regarding the topic of land grabbing. The information that was written in the reflexive diary was helpful in the re-examination of the researcher's whenever that was about to affect the validity of the research (Chan, Fung & Chien, 2013: 3). Although the researcher had certain personal viewpoints on land grabbing, efforts were made to set these aside in order to ensure that the validity of the research would not be affected.

The way in which questions were asked in this study was planned carefully so as to avoid situations where the stories that were shared would be diluted and or adulterated. Precisely, the researcher gave the participants the avenue to share their stories without any interruption. The researcher made sure that the questioning remained focused without asking lead questions. In the end, the researcher listened carefully to the stories the participants had to share while at the same time promoting critical self-awareness throughout the whole study.

3.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A researcher must ensure that participants are respected, justice and fairness is ensured and also that the truth is always said to the participants before the start of any study (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000: 121). Ethics include the fundamental principles of honesty, fairness, informed consent, minimisation of harm, and respect for a participant's right to privacy, among other principles.

3.13.1 Harm and risk mitigation

Creswell (2014: 139) states that risk is defined as the likelihood that harm may take place. Harm is also defined as the negative effects that result from given research either in a direct or in an indirect way. Harm and risk include loss of time, loss of privacy, loss of competitive opportunities

for the participants, physical or psychological pain, and financial loss, among other issues. Efforts should be made by the researcher to ensure that all these are mitigated (Creswell, 2014: 139). In this study, the government officials and the company representative risked losing their time during the interviews. As a result, with the aim of minimising the loss of their time, the interviews were done during the most convenient time for the participants. The community leaders and the local people who took part in this study risked being victimized by the government result participation in this study. To circumvent this, the researcher made efforts to conduct the study at the community leaders' houses which were considered safer and where the possibilities of harm and victimization were seen as minimal by the participants.

3.13.2 Informed Consent

Another ethical issue that was taken observed in this study was informed consent. Informed consent is the permission that a researcher is given by the participants for interviewing or carrying out a study with them (Lewis, 2003: 70). Before taking part in any study, participants should be within the legal age limit to take part in a given study. Thus, a participant must be in a position to make independent decisions on whether to take part in a given study or not. All participants who took part in this study were above the age of eighteen. They were, therefore, within the legal age limit (Lewis, 2003: 70) to grant permission to take part in this study and were in a position to understand what the purpose of the study was. Participants gave informed consent in this study verbally. All participants who took part in this study participated voluntarily. Anyone who felt the need to withdraw from this study was allowed to. No payment was given to the participants with the aim of enticing them to take part in this study since doing that would have compromised the principles of voluntarism (Creswell, 2014).

3.13.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Participants in the given research have the right to privacy. In that regard, the researcher must make all the necessary steps to ensure that all private and sensitive information in given research should be kept private and confidential (Lewis, 2003: 70). In this study, all names were anonymised, and pseudo names were used in the place of the actual names of the participants in order to protect their privacy. Since a research assistant helped in the data collection process, the research assistant was asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement in order to ensure the confidentiality of the participants and the data gathered.

3.13.5 Deception

Deception is the deliberate falsification of what the aim of the study is to the participants (Creswell, 2014). In this study, deception was avoided by fully disclosing what the study was all about to the participants.

3.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The foregoing chapter discussed what the roadmap of the study was. The first section of the chapter discusses the research approach underpinning this study. Under this section, a critical discussion of the qualitative research paradigm approach is done. The second section of this chapter discussed what a research paradigm in social science research is. Under this section, the chapter discussed what the positivist paradigm is, what critical theory as a research paradigm is, what the interpretivist paradigm is before thoroughly discussing the social constructivist paradigm as the paradigm adopted in this study. Next, the chapter then discussed the various research designs in social science research. Under this section, the narrative research design, the phenomenological research design, the grounded theory research design, the ethnographic research design and finally,

the case study research design as the research design underpinning this study are discussed. The population of this study is delineated before discussing the issue of sampling. Under discussion on sampling, convenience sampling, snowballing sampling, quota sampling, and purposive sampling as the sampling technique underpinning this study are discussed. Sections on the sampling frame and sampling size then follow. The sections are then followed by a section that discusses the data collection methods. Under this section, interviews are discussed, transect walks and observations are discussed. This section paved the way for a discussion of the data collection methods underpinning the study. In this section, Focus Group Discussions, key informant interviews and guided walk interviews are discussed. The following section is on the data presentation and analysis approaches. Under this, the qualitative data analysis approach, the conceptual modelling approach and finally, the thematic approach as the data analysis approach adopted in this study are discussed. A section on the issue of how the trustworthiness and credibility of the study were ensured then follows. This section is followed by the last section on the ethical considerations which were taken into consideration in the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The findings are presented and discussed using a thematic approach. The themes underpinning this study emerged from the data collected and were generated by the NVIVO software that was utilized to analyse the data collected in this study. This is followed by a presentation and discussion of the various ways in which the issue of land grabbing was conceptualized by the participants with the aim of extrapolating the socio-economic implications of land grabs on the local peoples of Ethiopia. Findings on the perceptions of the local people in terms of gains and loss from land grabbing then follow. The presentation of the findings on the policies and measures put in place by the Ethiopian government to protect the interests and rights of the local communities during land grabs is done next. Findings on the effectiveness of the measures that may have been put in place to protect the interests and rights of the local people in the context of the land grabs and those on how the local people of Gambella understand and utilize these protections in order to safeguard their interests then follow. Lastly, the last part of the chapter presents findings on the best way the interests and rights of the local communities and the foreign investors can be reconciled in future land leases in Ethiopia. The findings are presented under a theme titled: Reconciliation of interests was generated.

4.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF LAND GRABBING

Aiming at analysing the socio-economic implications of land grabbing among the local people in Gambella, the data gathered from FGDs of community members of different settlements,

interviews from leaders of those communities, provincial government officials and foreign company representatives are coded with the help of called NVivo. The data gathered from the different respondents using the two data-gathering instruments have gone through two significant cycles of Coding: ***First Cycle Coding*** and ***Second Cycle Coding***.

In the first cycle of coding, *descriptive coding* was used with an intention to identify conceptual phrases representing the topic of inquiry or research questions from the data corpus. In the second cycle of coding, *focused coding* was used to link the coded data with the most salient categories in the data corpus. Finally, the data analysis was carried out by employing some focusing strategies in line with the five major categories identified from the research questions: (a) implications, (b) measures, (c) effectiveness of measures, (d) perceptions, and (e) reconciliations. In the data analysis, patterns and trends of variations and similarities are also shown across different types of respondents from the study, accompanied by summaries, embedded quotations and direct quotes. In the context of this analysis, *categories* are supposed to be explicit contents of the text directly adopted from the research questions and the objectives of the study. The *themes,* on the other hand, are regarded as implicit and abstract contents directly driven from the participants' words in the data corpus.

4.1.1 Category-1: Perception of Land Transfers

This major category implies how the different respondents, including community members from the settlements, community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives, perceive and conceptualize the land deals in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. Under this category, three major themes were yielded along with further subthemes. Three of those significant themes include '*destruction of identity*, '*land seizing*', and '*land leasing*'.

4.1.1.1 Theme-1: Destruction of Identity

For many of the community members and community leaders, the land deals are considered as an instrument of identity destruction either through the weakening of indigenous perspectives and ancestral philosophies, 'genocide', breaching dignity, ethnic discrimination, and colonization and neo-colonization. Neo-colonialism from what the participants shared is different from colonialism in that unlike colonialism, no arms of war are used to drive people from their land. It includes agreements between the government and the investors without necessarily including force of arms. So, the subthemes compiled under the umbrella theme of the destruction of identity are presented along with the supportive shreds of evidence here below.

4.1.1.1.1 Sub-theme-1: Destruction of Ancestral Philosophies

According to many of the respondents, there is an African philosophy indigenous to Gambella which asserts community land belongs to three types of owners: 'the living living', the living dead, and the future generations. The respondents have indicated that the land should only be transferred, in any case, whenever there is an agreement between and consultation to those groups of owners. As a result, they conceptualize the land transfer as an instrument of breaching such ancestral philosophies. In this regard, most of the respondents have agreed that any giving away of the land to the investors is considered as breaching such a philosophy and betraying their ancestors. In addition to this, respondents have also revealed that land among Gambellans is owned by a community, not a single individual.

In order to describe the intergenerational ownership of the land, one FGD participant from the second settlement has provided a clear account in his local language. The following excerpt well illustrates the full image of the ancestral philosophy.

"…Land among Africans belongs to a community…This community is not just made up of us who are here. The land belongs to three groups of people. The first group is made up of….those who lived before us and died. If a person dies….he does not die completely. One can die physically or in the flesh, but his or her spirit lives on. If one dies, she or he passes on to another world of the dead and becomes an ancestor. These ancestors are the people who will keep overseeing how we live here. They ensure that we are protected from any… harm. We have a duty to ensure what they have…left behind is fully protected. In this instance, this land is something we should defend on their behalf, and they will give us the strength to fight on if we show the resolve to fight on. The next group of people to which this land belongs is this group of people you are currently talking to-the living. We are the custodians of this land, and we have the duty to keep it for the sake of the next group of owners, which is made up of our children…." (FGD Discussion, 02/05/21).

For most of those participants hence, paving the way to the investors to take their lands is an apparent breach of their indigenous philosophy on how land is transferred from one generation to the other generation.

4.1.1.1.2 Sub-theme-2: 'Genocide'

For some of the community members, the land deal is considered as a means of 'genocide' as its own right. Most of the participants believe people in their community do have an ultimate right to own their respective lands. According to many of the FGD participants and community leaders, the land is a very important means of people's survival. In line with this, many respondents have agreed that people will die gradually whenever their primary means of survival falls in the hands of the land dealers. Still, one participant from the FGD has said the crime that the investors are committing in collaboration with the local government is considered as 'mini genocide'.

One FGD participant from the second settlement has described the situation in his local language as follows:

> *"....(የዘር ማጥፋት፤ Ye zer matfat) [which is meant genocide in English] takes place gradually and people die slowly…. With the way people have been dispossessed of their land, lives will be lost slowly but surely. People have an alienable right to sustainable livelihoods….They have an alienable right to food and dignity. But when all that is taken away from them the way the government has collaborated with foreigners in doing so, it means a genocide is being committed…." (FGD Discussion, 03/05/21).*

For many of the respondents hence displacing from their localities and dispossessing their respective land, a primary means of their survival is regarded as an act of 'genocide' or ethnic cleansing.

4.1.1.1.3 Sub-theme-3: Breaching Dignity

For some respondents, the land is considered as a means of preserving one's dignity. If people lose their land, hence they think they will lose that dignity and respect as persons. Most participants have mentioned that land ownership and dignity are inseparable in the sense they have inherited the land from their ancestors to preserve it and inherit it to their children. According to those participants, if the land is taken away from them, the chain of inheritance will be breached, and hence they will all lose their dignity and respect in such a cause. Thus, the respondents stated that they have to keep their land by any means so as not to betray the dignity of theirs, their ancestors, and their children.

In order to corroborate this, one FGD participant from the second settlement has described the situation in his local language in the following way:

"….The land gives people dignity here. If you do not own the land, then you do not have any dignity. Our land gives us dignity because for us to be a people, it is this land. Dignity and respect go hand in glove. Without the land, then everything goes to waste. On this standpoint, therefore, the land gives us our daily bread, the food and well-being that we so cherish as well as our dignity…." (FGD Discussion, 03/05/21).

This evidence thus shows that the way land is transferred from the farmers to the investors is perceived by most of the participants as an instrument of subduing their respect and dignity. For those participants, farmers can't assume dignity and respect without owing their respective plots of farms.

4.1.1.1.4 Sub-theme-4: Ethnic Discrimination

According to some of the FGD participants, the land transfer is regarded as a way of discriminating ethnic groups indigenous in the area against other Ethiopians. According to some of the participants, the people of Gambella are seen as second-class citizens by the authorities in the Federal government and other fellows Ethiopians. Those participants have mentioned that they are perceived as more Sudanese than Ethiopians. For those participants hence the land deals are considered as a means of haunting Gambellan farmers out of Ethiopia in order to control their land resources afterwards.

In line with this, one FGD participant from the third settlement has expressed his emotions in his local language as follows:

"…seriously painful. You should respect people always, try to talk to them, listen to what they will have to say before you act. But these people….they do not see us as Ethiopians. Maybe it could be because we are mostly dark-skinned and live in a border area. They see us as

foreigners, and these land leases could be a way of getting rid of us…." (FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).

These pieces of evidence hence are good indications that the participants perceive the land deals as a means of adverse treatment and discrimination of indigenous Gambellans with an intention to get rid of them from their lands.

4.1.1.1.5 Sub-theme-5: 'Colonization' and 'Neo-Colonization.'

One unique concept repeatedly unfolded from the data with regard to conceptualizations of the land transfers from the FGD participants and community leaders is 'colonization' and 'neo-colonization'. Some of the participants said that the way land was transferred from the local farmers to the foreign investors is reminiscent of the primitive form of colonialism. As per those respondents, the element of force used in the eviction of farmers from their respective farmlands is the significant defining factor in labelling its colonization. The exceptional case with this form of colonialism, as the participants have mentioned it, is that their own local government is collaborating in the process of the land grabs. In addition to this, some of the respondents have shared their humiliation in the failure to defend their lands where their grandparents did it during the height of European colonialism.

In his local language, one FGD participant from the third settlement said:

"….Colonialism [which is 'Kign Gizat' or 'ቅኝ ግዛት' in Amharic] involved forcible eviction of people from their ancestral lands. People got killed; some were not killed per se but could…continue living on the land a coloniser have taken….They were made to pay rent or work as labourers for new owners. It is colonialism that includes violence; people are forced

to move out of the land at gunpoint the same way colonisers elsewhere drive people out of their land. It surely is colonialism…."(FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).

A similar, but a bit different, conceptualization of the land transfer is 'neo-colonization'. For some of the respondents, the land transfer takes the form of neo-colonialism than the primitive form of colonization itself. Those respondents have mentioned that it is a new and different form of colonizing because the Ethiopian government at all levels is dully involved in the process.

In this regard, one FGD participant from the fifth settlement has stated his views in Amharic as follows:

"….*It might be a new form of colonialism [which is 'Kign Gizat' or 'ቅኝ ግዛት' in Amharic] or…the same old type…which is just repeating itself. The whole of Africa was colonized and fought hard to ensure that they are out of colonial bondage. Ethiopia was just fortunate because it was spared of colonialism, but now it is giving itself away to colonisers. Other countries are in the process of claiming back their land from these colonisers….but Ethiopia is busy giving it away. Our brothers in the other parts of Africa will laugh us to scorn upon hearing this…." (FGD Discussion, 06/05/21).*

The evidence presented above indicates how the study participants conceptualize the land deals in terms of colonization and neo-colonization. The participants have likened the situation with colonialism and neo-colonialism because the farmers are forcibly evicted from their farmlands with no adequate compensation for it. So, they have claimed that armed violence and inappropriate accumulation of land resources are two of the crucial yardsticks evidenced to attribute the issue with colonialism and neo-colonialism.

4.1.1.2 Theme-2: Land Seizing

Away from some community members who conceptualized the land transfer in terms of destruction of identity, some others comprehend it as the forceful seizing of land resources. Under this subtheme hence concepts like 'land barons', 'land grabs', 'land corruption', 'robbery', 'theft', and 'thuggery' have unfolded. So, the conceptualization of land transfer in terms of such undesirable labels is reviewed below, along with summaries and supportive quotes.

4.1.1.2.1 Subtheme-1: Land Barons

For some FGD participants, the land transfer is recognized as an instrument of exploitation for the land barons. Some of the FGD participants engaged in the study have agreed that most of the government officials involved in the land deals, starting from the upper ministers to the lower Kebele administrators, are considered land barons. As per the participants, most of those officials use their power and the law enforcement structure improperly to make the farmers surrender to the land deals. They have described that the deals are escorted with corruption where the farmers are also forcefully evicted from their lands at gunpoint in most of the cases.

In the local language, one of the FGD participants from the fifth settlement has stated his concern:

> *"….These government ministers who come here and enter into these deals with these foreigners are the land barons….They are making…a lot of profits out of this land in a very corrupt manner. All these land leases and deals they say they are making on behalf of the people of Gambella are not proper….They are serious rent-seekers who profiteer seriously from these land deals. That makes them serious land barons…."(FGD Discussion, 06/05/21).*

As per the pieces of evidence above, the government officials involved in the land deals at various levels was regarded as land barons because they are using their authority to broker into the land deals for their own personal financial gains.

4.1.1.2.2 Subtheme-2: Land Corruption

Though the two are different, the issue of land barons was closely linked to the issue of land corruption. One commonly agreed upon the label of the land deals among FGD participants, community leaders and provincial government officials as well is 'land corruption'. As per some of those participants, there is an element of bribe in a way land is transferred from the local owners to the foreign investors. In support of this, some FGD participants from different settlements have said the land transfers are deeply rooted in corruption. In the same way, community leaders from those settlements have also agreed that these land transfers are corrupt deals that qualify to be called land grabs. Most of the FGD participants, the community leaders, and some of the government officials interviewed in the study agreed that corruption is pervasive in Ethiopia, especially under the previous government.

As a case in point, one provincial government official in the interviews said:

> *"....Corruption is endemic in Ethiopia, yes, especially under the previous government. But I just feel it is always important to have proof of corruption before you just start accusing someone of being corrupt. People can talk of robberies, yes, but I honestly am failing to see where robbery comes in here...." (Discussion, 10/05/21).*

The evidence presented above indicates that the government officials involved in the land deals at various levels use corruption to facilitate the deals. As per the participants, those officials are engaged in those deals for their personal gains rather than for the common good.

A critical analysis of the claims that corruption was endemic during the tenure of the previous government yields one credit in noting that some of what of the participants said were not backed by prima facie evidence. My questioning of what corruption mean shows that the participants had various definitions of corruption which may not necessarily qualify to be corruption. The participant's answers and allegations of corruption were based on circumstantial evidence and most of what they said was in fact nepotism not corruption per se.

4.1.1.2.3 Subtheme-3: Land Grabbing

Another commonly agreed upon the label of the land transfer across different types of respondents (participants from the FGD and the community leaders' KII, at least) is 'land grabbing'. By considering an element of force from the government and lack of consultation to the original owners, the participants have labelled the way land was transferred as 'land grabbing. In this regard, many of the FGD participants have agreed that land grabbing takes place in instances where farmers are not even consulted about it and are just told to leave by force straightaway. In agreement with the FGD participants, community leaders from different settlements have also mentioned that land grabbing is the correct label by taking the elements of force and lack of consultation into consideration. The community leaders said the way land is transferred can be regarded as grabbing because people were forcibly driven away from their land with the help of the police force.

Using his local language, one FGD participant from the first settlement asserted:

> *"....I personally define grabbing as forcibly taking away something from the owner. There is an element of force in how the government has been taking away land from us. We have not*

been consulted, and the next thing you are told is you need to move away from your land because a new owner is coming…." (FGD Discussion, 02/05/21).

Land grabbing is characterized by forcibly taking away land from the rightful owners without any consultation or agreement in place. For many of the study participants hence the land deals qualify to be labelled 'land grabs' because the farmers are evicted from their holdings by force or without seeking their agreement.

4.1.1.2.4 Subtheme-4: Theft, 'Thuggery' and Robbery

Theft, thuggery and robbery are three of the different labels with shared attributes of 'stealing' and 'violence' in common. In three of the labels, there is an instance of taking something that belongs to somebody else illegally, especially by using force, threats, or violence. In almost all of the FGDs, a number of participants have attached the land deals with theft, thuggery, and robbery, assuming the elements of force and stealing in mind.

Obviously, theft is the act of stealing somebody else's property. In our case, many of the study participants across different FGDs and interviews have reflected that the foreigners have stolen their ancestral land in cooperation with the government and the law enforcement organs, including the police. Some of the FGD participants from the different settlements agreed that the process of the land deals was regarded as an effort to steal large size of land from local farmers. Those participants believe the only intent of the foreign investors was stealing land from the original owners. In order to corroborate this, one FGD participant from the first settlement has spoken his mind in Amharic in the following way:

"…. To me, it is theft! It is first-degree theft. I do not know how you define theft in your context, but if someone takes something without getting permission from the owner, then that is surely theft. You do not loot land the way that they are doing…." (FGD Discussion, 02/05/21).

On the other side, other participants of the FGDs have also attached the situation with 'robbery. Literally, robbery is an instance of taking something that belongs to somebody else illegally. As the FGD participants have mentioned, a triangle of actors was involved in the process of robbing land from the local farmers: government officials, armed forces, and foreign investors. The study participants hence have agreed that the affair with the land occupation is assumed as daylight robbery because farmers were evicted from their respective farmlands by force. As per those participants, some of the people who have resisted the occupation were hence chased away from their lands at gunpoint by the police. There were also some farmers who have lost their lives in the process with a gunshot.

In order to elaborate the situation in terms of robbery, one FGD participant from the second settlement said using the local language:

"….Robbery in our case sums up what these land thieves are doing here. They are literally stealing land away from us...As you might have known, a robber comes to someone's house armed….then forces a person to give…belongings, be it money or goods that are of great value….In [this] case, the government has been using force to take away land from us. They send the police to force us out of the land. The police will be holding baton sticks… water cannons and…armed with guns to ensure that anyone who might want to resist eviction is dealt with brute force…."(FGD Discussion, 03/05/21).

In a related manner, other FGD participants have also been tempted to conceptualize the land deals in terms of 'thuggery'. A thug is a criminal who is inherently brutal and violent. Many participants

from the FGDs regard the process of the land deals as thuggery. Those participants described the efforts of the thugs as mindless appropriation of people's resources without any due respect for their livelihoods, self-esteem, dignity, social, psychological or even physical well-being. They believe those thugs simply do things without any respect and due regard for people's feelings and wishes. What is despairing for the participants here are that the thugs are formally backed by the government structure at all levels. On the other side, some other participants in the FGDs have also attempted to differentiate the thugs from the robbers. Those participants believe that the government is the thug and the foreign investors are the robbers. They have attributed the investors to be thugs because of their concealed identities. Yet, those participants have labelled the government, especially their zombies, the police force and the army, as the thugs because they are known; some of them are even identified as 'kith and kin' for the local farmers.

In order to clarify the situation with 'thuggery', one FGD participant from the third settlement said:

> *"….Thuggery is a form of robbery. What may make it different…is robbers would flee the crime scene and will not want to be known…Most usually come to rob people with concealed identities, but thuggery is something different. Thugs come in broad daylight without…hidden identity with the aim of forcibly taking valuables away from their rightful owners. Thugs do it with the knowledge that those in positions of authority will offer them protection…. No one will ever bring that person to book. This is exactly what is taking place here. The central government…in collaboration with foreign investors is the thugs here. They are robbing the people of Gambella their land with nothing done to avert that at all. That is thuggery!" (FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).*

The above-presented evidence, in terms of summaries and quotes, indicates how participants conceptualize the land deals in relation to theft, thuggery, and robbery. The participants have

indicated that the government officials, law enforcement organs, and foreign company owners are working in collaboration to take land resources from local farmers in Gambella. Yet, such collaboration is overwhelming to the farmers in terms of disrupting their livelihoods by dispossessing their farmlands.

4.1.1.3 Theme-3: Land Leasing

In an opposite manner from the negative conceptualizations of identity destruction and land seizing, the land transfer was also positively regarded as 'land leasing' among some of the study participants. One positive label of land transfer where some FGD participants, community leaders, provincial government officials and foreign company representatives all come to an agreement was land leasing. For most of the FGD participants, the way land was transferred from the original owners to the foreign investors was regarded as gruesome and disappointing. For some others, however, it is regarded as a means of utilizing land resources in a good way.

As a case in point, some FGD participants from different settlements have indicated that the land is transferred through leasing where there is a 'win-win arrangement' between the two parties, i.e. the government and the foreign investors. In line with this, some community leaders have also indicated that they regard the deal as land leasing because the government has leased the land to foreign companies in order to "fully utilize unused land". In addition, provincial government officials from the interviews have also mentioned that the federal government, as the custodian of all land resources in Ethiopia, has the right to lease land to foreign companies on a contractual basis to ensure full-capacity utilization. Those respondents have indicated that the government has the right to renew and terminate the contracts. Besides, foreign company representatives have also stated that land is leased to them for a given period of time in agreement with terms and conditions given by the federal government of Ethiopia.

In order to elaborate this, one FGD participant from the fifth settlement has indicated using his local language:

> *"….The land leases came after a lengthy discussion with the local…and federal governments of Ethiopia. After having seen the level of fertility of this land which was just lying idle and unused, the government saw it fit to collaborate with foreign companies to get this land under commercial agriculture…Local farmers were kindly asked to move to new areas, and most have been absorbed into the workforce and are now working as labourers in these commercial farms. This is how it happened and…how I define land leases….."(FGD Discussion, 06/05/21).*

The above-mentioned pieces of evidence imply the land was transferred from the local farmers to the foreign companies on a leasing arrangement by the Ethiopian government with an intention to effectively utilize land resources to facilitate the development of the country. This leasing arrangement is hence appreciated by some of the FGD participants, community leaders, local government officials, and foreign company representatives as well. For some of the study participants, therefore the land deals are appraised in a positive manner.

4.2 CATEGORY-2: CONSULTATION WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

This category is directly adopted from the research questions of the study that inquire for any consultations made between the government and other stakeholders, including the community members, community leaders and foreign companies regarding these land leases. Therefore, three themes have unfolded under this category: (a) consultation with community members, (b) consultation with community leaders, and (c) consultation with other stakeholders. We will trace the three themes with supportive shreds of evidence from the FGDs and KIIs as follows.

4.2.1 Theme-1: Consultation with Community Members

As far as consultation between the government and the community members on the land deals is concerned, most of the FGD participants and some community leaders have asserted that there were no such platforms for consultation. Yet, some of the FGD participants and community leaders have implied that the government has made serious efforts to consult community members about the land leases through their respective representatives.

The study participants who have asserted that consultation was not made to the community members have agreed that farmers were evicted from their respective farmlands without any discussion with the landowners themselves. Those participants have indicated that they have heard rumours that farmers in the neighbouring settlements were evicted without any discussion. They have mentioned that the same has happened to the theme a few weeks after. They have said at least if they would have consulted them, maybe they could have met halfway and try to come up with a common ground.

In the same way, some of the community leaders have described that there was an attempt to make a discussion with community representatives. Yet, those elders have asserted that it could not be qualified to be called consultation as long as the owners of the land themselves are not consulted. On the other side, there were also few respondents who believe that even though community leaders are consulted, it will not be qualified to call it consultations unless it is consensual between the two parties. These participants have also indicated that discussion with the community leaders alone will not suffice to be called consultations. They rather indicated that intergenerational owners of the land (i.e. the living, the living dead, and the future generations) have to be consulted for that matter.

In order to corroborate this, one FGD participant from the third settlement said in the local language:

> *"…There were no consultations that were done. I personally heard it through rumours. People from the next settlement told us they heard all of us here are going to be cleared away from our land to pave the way for new estates that were going to be established here. We thought it was a joke, but the next thing we got was eviction orders telling us we must leave. What we would have expected was to get formal meetings with the government representatives. What I once heard was people in the first settlement were told, and numerous meetings were held with them to try and persuade them to assent to the evictions, but they denied. Upon realizing that people were adamant and will never allow land to be taken away from them, the government chose to engage in this thuggish behaviour of just driving people away from their land without making any efforts to talk to them and consult them. That is sheer arrogance…."(FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).*

Contrary to the above study participants, some farmers from the FGDs and community leaders have revealed that there was some sort of consultation efforts made. Most of those participants have treated the question in two different ways. The first group of those respondents has implied that the community leaders are exclusive representatives of the community because they are nominated by the community itself. For such participants hence consultation with the community elders are meant consultation of the community members at large. The second group of those respondents, however, has revealed that once the government has made a series of dialogues with community leaders and the leaders, in turn, have brought that discussion back to the larger community. Those participants believe that the central government has consulted the people through the meetings they did with the community leaders and community members as well.

As a case in point, one community leader from the fourth settlement revealed:

"….Consultations were made, yes. As you might be aware, as community leaders, we represent people. We were called for some meetings with government officials and company representatives. I was at the meeting where we were told about what these land leases were all about. We then went to the people and told them about the issues. Some might have disagreed, but I am sure you know whenever there are two or more people, there are bound to be disagreements….So yes, consultations were surely done..." (Discussion, 05/05/21).

As far as the question of whether consultations about the land deals were made or not is concerned, the answers that have been provided by the study participants, including the community members, community leaders, local government officials and foreign company representatives, can be categorized into two: 'Yes' and 'No'. The first conceptual group of respondents who have addressed the question as 'No' can further be divided into two: The ones that have answered there were no consultations at all and those who believe the consultation with community representatives alone will not suffice to be called consultation. In this regard, most of the FGD participants and some community leaders fall in the first group, while some FGD participants and most of the community leaders fall in the second group.

On the other side, participants who have answered 'Yes' can also be further subdivided into two: those who believed the consultation made with the leaders is sufficient and those who believe they have been involved in the discussion meetings themselves. The first group believe that community leaders are consulted about the land deals, and hence the decision made by them is governing to all farmers. This group is composed of some FGD participants, a number of community leaders, local government officials, and foreign company representatives. The second group, however, involves some of the FGD participants who have reflected that they have been involved in the

discussion meetings about the land deals themselves, which was led by the community leaders of their respective settlements.

4.2.2 Theme-2: Consultation with Community Leaders

As far as consultation with community leaders about the land deals is regarded, almost all the participants from the FGDs and KIIs have confirmed that community leaders were consulted about the issue. Yet, most of those same participants have asserted that many of the community leaders have not agreed with the government's proposal, except the local government officials and the foreign company representatives. Here, almost all the study participants, including the community members in the FGD, the community leaders, local government officials, and foreign company representatives, have all agreed that there was some sort of platform where the community leaders were being consulted about the land deals. Yet, the critical debate unfolded in this context, however, is that whether that discussion can be regarded as consultation or not.

For most of the FGD participants and some of the community leaders, the discussion meeting executed cannot qualify to be called 'consultation' because it was not consensual, i.e. most of the community leaders were not in agreement with the government's proposal over the land transfer. Most of those participants have agreed that any discussion has to end up with a consensus between the two parties to be called consultation. Unless consensus is attained, however, the discussion cannot be labelled as consultation for those participants. As a case in point, one FGD participant from the second settlement said:

> *"….If there was no agreement, then we cannot talk of consultation. If you ask someone for money and that person says no, you then go on and take that money from that person through force….Would you say I have consulted that person? I think consultation can only qualify to*

be called consultation if there is [an] agreement. If the community leaders did not agree to that, then there is no consultation to talk of….." (FGD Discussion, 03/05/21).

On the other side, some of the FGD participants and community leaders have agreed that the efforts the government has made to discuss with the community leaders qualify to be called a discussion because those leaders are by any means the representatives of the larger community. Such participants hence have reckoned that the discussions and meetings arranged with the community leaders are consultations as their own rights. Significantly, the local government official and foreign company representative interviewed in the study have asserted that the community leaders have been involved in a series of fruitful consultation meetings. In relation to this, one community leader from the fifth settlement stated:

"….I remember we were called for several meetings in which these issues were discussed at length. As community leaders, we represent the people, but of course, the government makes the final decisions. There was polarization, and community leaders and other sections of the community did not like the idea and regard the land leases as land grabs, but I feel there were consultations yes…."(Discussion, 06/05/21).

The evidence presented above hence suggests that the community leaders were consulted about the arrangement of the land deals. Most of the FGD participants and the community leaders have already substantiated this claim in the FGDs and interviews. Yet, the argument arises on whether those discussion meetings are regarded as consultation or not. For some of the FGD participants, community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives, those discussions are labelled as consultations. On the other side, many of the FGD participants and some community leaders have also asserted that those meetings cannot qualify to be consultations because it wasn't concluded with consensus.

4.2.3 Theme-3: Consultation with Other Stakeholders

Aside from community members and community leaders, some participants of the study have revealed that the federal government and foreign company representatives were also involved in the consultation meetings about the land deals. In relation to this, community leaders from different settlements have agreed that they were called for some meetings with the federal government officials and some company representatives. In relation to this, one representative of the foreign companies has also mentioned that the director of their company has been involved in a discussion meeting that involves government officials at the federal and provincial level and community leaders from different settlements. In addition, one FGD participant from the fifth settlement also indicated that the federal government was included in the consultations. In relation to this, he said:

> *"….The land leases came after a very lengthy discussion with the local and the federal government of Ethiopia. After having seen the level of fertility of this land which was just lying idle and unused, the local government and the federal government saw it fit to collaborate with foreign companies which are into commercial agriculture…."(FGD Discussion, 06/05/21).*

As per such pieces of evidence, we have learnt that representatives from the provincial and federal governments and foreign company representatives were involved in the consultation meetings in addition to the community leaders.

4.3 CATEGORY-3: MEASURES TAKEN

This category, directly adopted from the research questions and the study objectives, emphasizes actions taken by the government to protect the interests and rights of the local communities during the land deals. Under this category, three major themes are addressed: Interests in the local

community measures taken to retain the interests of the community and effectiveness of the measures.

4.3.1 Theme-1: Interests of the Local Communities

Before attempting to explore the measures taken by the government to protect the interests and rights of the local communities with the land deals, it is better to understand what the actual interests of those local communities were. Throughout the FGDs and KIIs, most of the study participants have explicitly indicated that their mere interest is to own their respective farmlands back. Yet, few of the study participants from the FGDs and KIIs have also revealed that they use to aspire for good jobs, better salaries, and good quality of life.

As per many of the FGD participants, the farmlands are the only means of livelihood and survival for the farmers and their families. The participants have reported that they were involved in subsistence farming, including crop production and animal husbandry, in the days before the land deals. As a result, most of the FGD participants have asserted that their only interest is to get their respective lands back. Thus, they believe their interests are going to be better served only when they bring their lands back. This hence was illustrated by different narratives from different participants. As a case in point, one FGD participant from the first settlement said:

> *"….Maybe there are some who see these jobs that they have offered us in the farms they have set up as something they have done in our best interest, but I, for one, do not want to be employed by someone else. I wanted to continue doing my own farming. I wanted to be my own self. I never wanted to work under someone because I see that as highly emasculating. Offering me a job in the name of appeasement is a non-starter. It does not in any way serve my interests…." (FGD Discussion, 02/05/21).*

On the other side, few participants from the FGDs and KIIs have also indicated that the primary interests of the communities' rest upon the need for better jobs, sustainable income, and good standards of living than small plots of land. Most of the time, community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives from the KIIs reflected that the farmers might need decent livelihoods far better than subsistence farming. In line with this, the provincial government official and the foreign company representative have asserted that most of the farmers who managed to get jobs in the industries are having good salaries and comfortable life. They believe the families of those farmers are able to get decent meals, health services, send their children to school and can plan for their futures. In relation to this, one community leader expressed himself in Amharic as follows:

> *"….I think their interests are actually being respected….People have the alienable right to decent livelihoods, clean water and proper housing. With these jobs that we have seen being created, I think their rights are actually being respected, and there is a considerable improvement….I think these land leases have been very helpful in improving the lives of the people; therefore, there is no breach of rights to talk about…."(Discussion, 08/05/21).*

As per the pieces of evidence presented above, the only interest of most of the farmers included in the study is getting their lands back against all the odds. For most of the FGD participants, the industrial jobs and the corresponding income are meant nothing when compared with their previous livelihoods. Yet, some of the community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives believe that the farmers deserve a decent life better than the previous subsistence farming.

4.3.2 Theme-2: Measures Taken to Protect Rights and Interests

In this theme, the measures that have been put in place by the Ethiopian government to protect the interests and rights of local communities during the land deals are addressed. When we see the answers, there is some disparity across different types of respondents. Most of the FGD participants and community leaders have indicated that there are no measures taken to protect the rights and interests of the farmers. Some participants from the FGDs, community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives, however, have reflected that the government has taken adequate measures to protect the rights and interests of the farmers instead. As a case in point, one FGD participant from the fifth settlement has said in Amharic:

> *"....The binaries that we have been talking about will obviously influence the answers....[Some] will tell you that their interests were taken into consideration because [they] now have jobs and can drive cars…the forests which used to harbour snakes and lions were destroyed, and we now have tobacco… because these snakes and lions posed a danger to our lives…But, I will tell you the exact opposite. To me personally, no, our interests have not been protected, and nothing has been put in place to protect our interests...."(FGD Discussion, 06/05/21).*

In the opposite way, one provincial government official has shared his belief that the government has taken measures to get the rights and interests of farmers protected in terms of the right to decent lives. In his own words, he said:

> *"....I think one fundamental right that people have is the right to life. With these land leases, we have given our people the right to not only life but the right to a decent life....we have not in any way breached the rights of people; we have instead respected…through ensuring that something meaningful gets out of their land. Something that I think would not have ever*

happened if we had let them live and work on the land the way they were doing it…."(FGD Discussion, 11/05/21).

As far as the measures taken to protect the rights and interests of local farmers by the government are concerned, the insight that the FGD participants, the provincial government officials and foreign company representatives have is poles apart. The first group believe that there are no measures put in place to protect their rights and interests while the others consider the protection of rights and interests has been addressed through the job opportunities.

4.3.3 Theme-4: Effectiveness of Measures

The effectiveness of measures, at least in this context, implies the helpfulness of the measures taken by the government in terms of protecting the rights and interests of people. Most of the answers of the study participants are directly related to the answers they provided about the interests of the local farmers and the measures being taken to protect those rights and interests. As far as the effectiveness of those measures are concerned hence, most of the FGD participants and the community leaders have indicated either there are no measures being taken or the measures taken are not effective at all. Yet, few participants from the FGDs, community leaders, foreign company representatives and provincial government officials have indicated that the measures are in some way effective. For example, one community leader from the first settlement said he had not seen any of those measures; that being the case, he cannot answer anything regarding how effective they have been.

By the same token, few FGD participants from two separate settlements have implied that the only measures that the government has taken assuming to protect their interests and rights were the '*pity job opportunities*' and provision of small plots of land as a replacement for displaced farmers.

However, these participants have indicated that the measures are not even near to effective because they do not match the needs and interests of the local farmers.

On the other side, few participants from the FGDs have asserted that the measures being taken by the government are effective in terms of offering comfortable life to the beneficiaries through permanent jobs. Those participants agreed some farmers have got high paying jobs and are now driving cars, send their children to good schools, and planning to build giant homes. For those participants hence the stable jobs are relatively effective in terms of improving the lives of the former farmers. The same is true for some of the community leaders. In this regard, one community leader from the fourth settlement has indicated:

> *"….People here have the right to a decent and convenient life…I think the government is trying its best to give them exactly that. What the government is doing here is the best for this community and the country at large…." (Discussion, 06/05/21).*

When we see the responses provided by the study participants, it shows some sort of patterns across different types of participants. Some of the community leaders, the provincial government official, and the foreign company representative all reflected that the efforts made by the government to protect the rights and interests of the farmers were effective. On the other hand, most of the study participants in the FGDs and some of the community leaders have indicated that either there were no such efforts or any of the efforts are not effective.

4.4 CATEGORY-4: IMPLICATIONS OF LAND TRANSFERS

The implication of land transfers, as a category, implies the positive and negative consequences attributable to the land deals on the basis of the appraisals of the study participants. In this category,

therefore, three significant themes have unfolded: Afrocentric Vs Eurocentric views of development, positive implications, and negative implications. Those three major themes, along with their subthemes and corresponding summaries and quotes, are clarified here below.

4.4.1 Theme-1: Eurocentrism Vs. Afrocentrism

In this subordinate theme, the implications of land transfers are traced in relation to the comparative outlook of development from Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives. For some of the study participants, foreign direct investment and national development associated with the land leases is not regarded as a means of growth from an Afrocentric standpoint.

For those favouring the Eurocentric perspective, the implications of development are being measured in terms of stable jobs, financial income, better facilities of housing, health and education, and national development. In this regard, some of the FGD participants, community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives have asserted that the land leases have offered good jobs, better family income, improved facilities in terms of health, education, and potable water, decent meals, and predictability and certainty in the life of the farmers. In addition, they have mentioned the land leases are expected to provide a better gross domestic product, sound foreign currency, and better national development. In order to substantiate this, one FGD participant from the fourth settlement revealed:

> *"….I know people measure success differently, and these land leases may be seen as not in the best interest of the local farmers…. To me, these leases…were done for the greater good of all people in Ethiopia…. I understand we have different definitions of the word development, and the benchmarks we use to measure [it] are different, but Ethiopia should simply modernize….[We] should not have this backward and parochial mind of thinking like hunters*

and gathers. No, the land is in good hands and always belongs to the people of Gambella and Ethiopia at large…." (FGD Discussion, 05/05/21).

On the other side, for most of the FGD participants and some of the community leaders with the Afrocentric views, the job opportunities, improved facilities, predictability and certainty in life, and national development in terms of GDP and foreign direct investment that the land leases are assumed to offer are not meant too much. Those participants believe the gains that they assume from their small plots of land are far better than the above parameters. According to those participants, the traditional ways of farming are better in terms of protecting the environment from exploitation and global warming. In order to corroborate this, one FGD participant from the fourth settlement has declared:

"….The problem is some of our brothers here are too Eurocentric ['Awropawi Eyita' or 'አውሮፓዊ እይታ' in Amharic] and just think development can only be driven by outsiders….We had our own ways of civilization as Africans, and history tells us we developed by far the most complicated way of irrigating crops in the Nile Valley…. People in the other parts of the world actually copied and gentrified our geniuses as Africans. Over the years, we just lost ourselves and can no longer believe we can do anything meaningful on our own….." (FGD Discussion, 05/05/21).

The Afrocentric and Eurocentric views of development in this context have served as a window of weighing at the implications of the land transfers across different types of respondents in the study. In this regard, most of the study participants from the FGDs and community leaders have viewed the benefits and drawbacks of the land leases in terms of Afrocentrism, while some community leaders, provincial government officials, and foreign company representatives weigh it in terms of Eurocentrism.

4.4.2 Theme-2: Positive and Negative Implications

Here, we will divide the implications of the land deals that came out from the respondent's answers under two umbrella themes: Positive and negative implications with further subthemes under it.

Negative Implications: For most of the participants who have conceptualized the deals in terms of identity destruction and land seizing, the negative consequences are far more weighing than the positives. Those participants hence attribute the land deals in terms of some negative implications like alienation from the sense of identity, loss of livelihoods, environmental exploitation, breaching of social fabrics, socio-economic losses (income and food insecurity), and psychological damages.

4.4.2.1 Subtheme-1: Alienation from Sense of Identity

For many of the FGD participants and some of the community leaders, the land leases have brought about negative implications in terms of a total detachment from their senses of self. For example, some participants from different settlements have indicated that their identities are defined by their respective lands, and hence they can't establish a meaningful life where they have lost their identity and sense of self. Those participants believe they are a person because of their lands. Thus, they believe they cannot build a meaningful sense of self while they are driven away from their farmlands. In the same way, a community leader from the second settlement has asserted:

> *"....People have lost their sense of self....the land is where our heartbeat is. Without it, I tell you, it feels like we have been stripped naked. We are Africans, Ethiopians, people from Gambella and Nuer or Oromo, or Tigrinya because of this land. Without the ownership of the land, our ancestors' graves and all the birds, snakes and rivers these lands possess, we are simply nothing...."(Discussion, 03/05/21).*

According to the above-presented evidence, the study participants believe that the land deals have resulted in a complete detachment from their sense of self, and hence they cannot form a meaningful sense of identity. The idea that people will lose their sense of self because of losing their farmlands feels absurd if we look at it from an outsider perspective. Yet, if we can put ourselves in the shoes of the farmers, however, the meaning it conveys may differ.

4.4.2.2 Subtheme-2: Loss of Livelihoods

Another negative implication of the land leases is also unfolded from the perspectives of loss of livelihoods. Some of the study participants in the FGD and community leaders have revealed that farmers were engaged in crop cultivation and animal husbandry before the arrival of foreign investors. Those participants have indicated that they now became either jobless or employed in the industries for small wages. Some of the participants in the FGDs have agreed that many of the farmers were engaged in crop cultivation, animal husbandry, fattening, beekeeping, and fishery on the days before the arrangement of the land leases. Those participants have revealed that the farmers are now evicted from their ancestral lands without any compensation or replacements. In line with this, one community leader from the second settlement has asserted it:

> *"….People have lost their livelihoods as a result of these land grabs. People's livelihoods were anchored on this land. People were into crop cultivation and animal husbandry. This they no longer do because their land was taken away from them. They are simply destitute because of these land grabs….." (Discussion, 03/05/21).*

The excerpt presented above is a good reflection of how the land deals have negatively affected the livelihood of the farmers who have been evicted from their respective plots of land. As per the study participants, the farmers are forced to suffer from poverty because they have already lost their livelihoods.

4.4.2.3 Subtheme-3: Environmental Exploitation

The other negative implications of the land deals that the participants of the study raised were ecological degradation. According to some of the FGD participants and community leaders, the way the investors are doing agriculture is catastrophic both to the environment and the well-established custom of food production of indigenous Gambellans. Those participants have mentioned that the large scale farming that the investors are applying is a real threat to global warming and climatic changes because they are using dangerous chemicals to boost their production. In order to reinforce this, one FGD participant from the third settlement said:

> *"….Look the way they do their agriculture. They use chemicals that are very harmful to the environment….People should live harmoniously with nature, and if we end up exploiting the environment in such a way that animals die in vast proportions, the climate changes for the worse, we no longer have adequate rainfall…. Africans have lived under these so-called backward living conditions, but they have by far protected the environment than these foreigners….." (FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).*

The above-presented quote has explicitly depicted the views of the study participants on how the land leases could negatively affect environmental welfare. According to the study participants, agricultural practices have to be exercised in a way to maintain a balance between ecological protection and sufficient production.

4.4.2.4 Subtheme-4: Breaching of Social Fabrics

For some of the study participants, the leases have also disrupted social networks and a sense of community among the local farmers. Farmers involved in the FGD have indicated that the patterns of settlement and social reciprocation of communities had an explicit meaning before the arrival

of foreign investors. Those participants, however, have agreed that those patterns and interactions built over the long years of their history have been disrupted nowadays. In relation to this, one FGD participant from the first settlement said:

> *"….Socially, we lost quite as well….the land in an African set up like this belongs to the society, not an individual. The way we were living and…our settlements were arranged had meaning socially. But when they came and moved a lot of us from the land they now claim as theirs, our social fabric was significantly disturbed, to say the least…."(FGD Discussion, 03/05/21).*

According to the quote above, land in Africa belongs to society than individual persons. In addition, it has depicted those settlements in African communities are often organized in a meaningful pattern. Whenever those communities are randomly evicted, therefore those meaningful patterns of settlement and the underlying social fabrics are going to be disrupted with no doubt.

4.4.2.5 Subtheme-5: Socio-Economic Losses

Another negative implication of the land deals mentioned within the FGDs and KIIs was a socio-economic loss. People involved in the FGDs and community leaders' interviews have asserted that the land leases have affected their economic foundations in two ways: in terms of income and food security. As far as income is concerned, some of the FGD participants have indicated that their earnings are deteriorating from time to time since those investors have arrived. For those participants, losing their lands is meant losing the land they used to graze their herds of cattle and practice a large amount of crop production. This, in turn, has negatively affected their family income on a permanent basis. In relation to this, one FGD participant from the third settlement indicated:

"....I personally was a budding horticulturalists before these bastards came and took my farm away from me. I was already earning far more than what I currently get. They took me [the land] and made me a manager of their farming operations....If I had not lost my farm, I would have been earning far more. The implications of these land grabs are catastrophic, to say the least. Our lives will never be the same again. We were made poor by these land grabs...." (FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).

Aside from income losses, other FGD participants have also indicated that the deals have negatively impacted the food security of households. According to the study participants, most of the large-scale farms observed in their areas are engaged in the production of cash crops or non-food crops such as tobacco and cotton. Those participants have agreed that the production of such crops negatively affects the food security patterns of residents in their locale and the region at large. This claim came from one FGD participant from the fourth settlement who said:

"....We have seen hunger in most parts of Africa wherever these people set their feet. They tell us to farm what they call commercial crops, flowers, tobacco and cotton, for instance. Tell me who eats cotton, flowers and tobacco?.... Local farmers have been urged...to abandon their traditional crops and farm these so-called cash crops....If they produce tobacco or cotton, it is the outsiders who set the prices. The farmers are literally duped and live under the whims of the world capitalist system in which they are the primary producers who produce for the bigger market....The farmers [however] get into the web of poverty.... It is the people who buy the cotton and produce clothes that the producers of cotton themselves are not even able to buy. You see the conundrum?...." (FGD Discussion, 05/05/21).

If we look at the above summaries and quotes, the study participants have reflected on how the land deals might negatively affect the socio-economic conditions of local farmers in terms of either income loss or food insecurity. On one way, the participants have clearly reported that they are getting wages far lower than what they used to get as a sole farmer. On the other

way, they have also reflected that the products that the investors are producing are by no means benefiting the local community either in terms of income or eradicating food insecurity. Thus, it is better to question what benefits those land deals would connote to the indigenous Gambellans.

4.4.2.6 Subtheme-6: Psychological Damages

Another negative impact of the land deals unfolded from the FGD was psychological damage. The concept of psychological damage in this context is perceived as the negative emotional experiences of farmers associated with the land eviction. Some of the FGD participants have agreed that they have experienced some negative emotions like sadness, anger, and hopelessness whenever they were forced to leave their lands at gunpoint. So, they have revealed that the land deals have negatively affected the psychological makeup of the local farmers as well. In order to elaborate this, one FGD participant from the first settlement revealed:

> *"….People are also affected psychologically…[They] are closely attached to this land...This is where their heartbeat is. If you take that land away from them, it is like severing the umbilical cord from an unborn child. Being removed from your land has a lot of psychological implications that come. People have been emotionally hurt by the land grabs. It might sound silly, but some of them have had psychological problems since then…." (FGD Discussion, 05/05/21).*

The way the study participants have attempted to associate the land deals with the corresponding psychological harm is so remarkable. If we see it rationally, local farmers experiencing psychological damage because they are evicted from their respective farmlands are tenable. Whenever people are forced to leave their locale where they are born and brought, have lived for years, were doing their livelihoods, and rare their children for nothing, it is emotionally disheartening.

Positive Implications: Few of the participants from the FGDs and the KIIs who have attributed the land deals to land leases have asserted positive implications like national development, modernization, potential civilization, corporate social responsibilities, financial gains, job opportunities, effective utilization of resources, foreign direct investment, and 'Gross Domestic Product.

As a case in point, for one of the FGD participants from the fifth settlement, the land lease is meant a good opportunity for employment and improvement in quality of life. He said:

> *"….I landed a job as a foreman in one of the farms here, and I can tell you [that] life is getting better daily. I never dreamt of ever driving a car and be able to send my children to better schools, but that is happening now. I, therefore, should say that the lives of people have improved here because of these land leases…." (FGD Discussion, 06/05/21).*

For another FGD participant [settlement-4] who uses to regard the land leases with positive implications, the situation is a suitable means of getting '*foreign direct investment*'. In relation to this, he said:

> *"…all this area you now see [is] neatly utilized and under beautiful crops….There is excellence here; these foreigners are bringing about the much needed foreign direct investments. Ethiopia is becoming one of the powerhouses in Africa because of the foreign direct investments…." (FGD Discussion, 05/05/21).*

In the same way, some FGD participants from different settlements have attributed the positive implications of the land leases to the proper utilization of resources as well. Such participants believe that the investors are utilizing the lands which were idle before in a better way. In his own words, the participant declared:

"….Ethiopia should simply modernize….We need to make use of each and every resource we have to full capacity….Miles and hectares of land…was simply not utilized, and the government saw an opportunity to make full use of it by inviting people with the technical expertise and capital to use it…. The land is in good hands and always belongs to the people of Gambella and Ethiopia at large….."(FGD Discussion, Settlement 5, 06/05/21).

Similarly, some of the study participants have asserted that the land deals have positive implications in terms of '*Gross Domestic Product*. In line with this, one community leader from the third settlement has said,

"…*We are expecting a huge boost in the Gross Domestic Product of our country and obviously a general improvement in the lives of our people as a whole* [because of those huge investments]…." *(Discussion, 04/05/21).*

Besides, one provincial government official has also asserted that the land leases are good means of getting 'foreign currency' for the country. One FGD participant from the third settlement has also indicated that the investors will come up with projects 'aimed at uplifting the livelihood' of the local communities through their corporate social responsibilities.

In addition to this, one foreign company representative has indicated that those investments have positive implications in terms of getting salaries, acquiring 'decent meals' and 'predictability and certainty in the life of the local people. He said:

"….People…who managed to get jobs in these industries will tell you there is quite an improvement in their lives. These people used to live in absolute poverty and hunger. But that has since changed. At least they now have salaries and are able to get decent meals, and those who can properly plan can plan for the future in a fundamental way. At least there is a bit of predictability and certainty than before. Is that not an improvement?" (Discussion, 11/05/21).

Aside from the negative implications, it is realistic to expect positive implications from the land deals. The above presented excepts hence have indicated that the land deals are also benefiting in terms of employment opportunities and income, proper utilization of idle land resources, foreign direct investment, GDP, implementing corporate social responsibilities, and predictability and certainty among the local farmers. The study participants hence have reflected all those positive implications of the land deals in the different sections of the FGDs and interviews.

4.5 CATEGORY-5: RECONCILIATION OF INTERESTS

This major category is concerned about the clashes of interests between those whose land has been taken (community members) and those who have occupied it (investors) and how they can be reconciled. Here, two major themes have unfolded: clashes of interests and reconciliations of interests.

4.5.1 Theme-1: Clash of Interests

Whenever the study participants are asked if there are any clashes of interests between the farmers and the investors, many of them have asserted that those clashes are inevitable. As most of the FGD participants and community leaders have stated, the interests of the two parties are even poles apart from that, that they can't even get closer for talk of reconciliation. Most of the FGD participants have reported that they can improve their agricultural practices on their respective farms had they been offered small loans and technical supports. In addition, they also want compensation for the loss they have incurred as a result of the dispossession of their lands. Yet, they believe their interests do not mean anything to those foreigners. As per those participants, the

interests of the farmers are most concerned about taking their farmlands back against all the odds, while the investors need to retain them.

On the other side, the provincial government officials, foreign company representatives, and a few of the community leaders agreed that the farmers deserve comfortable life in terms of employment opportunities, better family income, better facilities and infrastructure, and a modern way of living than the small plots of land they had. As a case in point, one community leader from the third settlement revealed:

> *"….There is a clash of interest, of course. The interests of the farmers are to have their land back, and the interest of the foreigners [rather] is to have it. So, it is crystal clear that there is a serious clash of interests…."(Discussion, 04/05/21).*

The above-presented pieces of evidence hence imply there is a severe clash of interests between the farmers and the investors. The government and foreign company representatives believe that farmers deserve decent lives in terms of better jobs and income. For the farmers, however, these things are by no means comparable with their farmlands.

4.5.2 Theme-2: Reconciliation of Interests

As the interests of the two parties are diametrically opposite, talk of reconciliation is going to be a bit difficult. Most of the study participants hence have explicated this in black and white. For example, some of the FGD participants from the different settlements have described that there are no reconciliations unless those investors return the lands to the owners and go back to their native countries. In addition, they also want to request compensations for the losses incurred as a result of the land dispossessions. Most of the FGD participants agreed that they have no interest in talking or negotiating with the investors unless they provide them with their lands back. On the other side,

some community leaders have suggested that farmers against the land leases need to be educated on the importance of those arrangements before discussing the reconciliation of interests at large. In order to corroborate the above claim, one FGD participant from the third settlement stated:

> *"….In as far as we are concerned, there is no reconciliation of interests to talk of here. These people are thieves, and we will treat them as such. We have no interests whatsoever to talk or negotiate with them. These people must just leave. They should leave us alone and go back to their native country. Let them give us our land back and leave. We need to live peacefully and happily as before. We have nothing to do with their investments in so-called development. Let them just ship out. It should be that simple…." (FGD Discussion, 04/05/21).*

As it has been portrayed above, the only interest of the farmers is to take their lands back while the investors are working to retain them. Since the interests of those two parties are far apart, reconciliation is going to be difficult. As it has been suggested by some of the community leaders, any form of platform for discussion of the different parties, educating the farmers about the national importance of the investments, and compensation of their losses has to be arranged in some way.

4.6 CATEGORY-6: FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Four exceptional concerns have unfolded in the whole data corpus. Embraced under the umbrella theme of final recommendations, four of those concerns include: (a) benefits assumed from the study, (b) security concerns, (c) involving females, and (d) anger and belligerence.

4.6.1 Theme-1: Benefits Assumed from the Study

Throughout the FGDs and KIIs, some participants have raised their concerns over the benefits they have assumed from the study. Some of the FGD participants have requested about the benefits that

they might gain as a return to participate in the FGDs. Even if they have realized that they are not going to get any payment for participation, have claimed that they don't want to waste their time on anything. In relation to this, those participants have asked the researcher to arrange some sort of platform to get their voices heard and exert some efforts in a way to help them to get their lands back in the process. In the same way, one FGD participant from the fourth settlement has raised his question in Amharic, saying:

> *"…What we are going to benefit from this….Of course, you said you are not going to pay us for having participated in this study….That is understandable because you are….do not have any money to pay us. What I really want to know is how our land is going to be brought back to us; that is what most of us here are mostly worried about…."(FGD Discussion, 05/05/21).*

It is reasonable that the study participants have raised such questions about the benefits they assume from the study in this context. In relation to this, the researcher has attempted to address the issue during the discussion that they will not get any payment for their involvement or to compensate their time either. Yet, they have also asked how the researchers will help them in getting their voices heard to the rest of the world. This hence is a good message for the team of researchers to cast some sort of platform for the revelation of their pain and grievances.

4.6.2 Theme-2: Security Concerns

Under this theme, the safety concerns that the FGD participants have raised against disclosing some sensitive issues are addressed. Throughout the FGDs and KIIs, some participants have asked the researcher how their safeties are going to be protected against persecution from the government if they provide some sensitive details. Those participants have shared their fears that their lives will be at risk if some personal identifiers are presented in the report. According to these participants, the government have not treated people who dared to speak against these land grabs

well before. In the same way, one FGD participant from the second settlement has shared his concern in the following way:

> *"….There are security-related concerns here. We may be victimized for having taken part in this study. How are you going to make sure that we are safe from any form of threats to our lives and well-being in case things go amiss? I am sure you understand the precariousness of the situation given the political upheavals our country is facing…." (FGD Discussion, 03/05/21).*

As the issue is somewhat sensitive, it is reasonable for the participants to share their safety concerns to discuss the land grabs openly. Even though the FGD moderator has addressed the issue during the discussion, it is worthy of imparting it here, for it has to be given the required emphasis by the team of the researchers.

4.6.3 Theme-3: Involving Females

In the FGDs, some of the participants have raised their desires over females being included in discussion with an assumption that they may even share their different views. Some of the FGD participants believe that the discussion is not going to be complete unless we get the opinions of women about the land deals, which might be different from men in any way. In line with this, one FGD participant from the first settlement said:

> ***"…****Was it not necessary for you to include women in this discussion group as well? They have their own unique challenges they might need to share. We are men; we have our own, and we cannot speak on their behalf…." (FGD Discussion, 02/05/21).*

The FGD participants have shared their concern that the conceptualization of the land deals can be understood differently by different sets of people here. As a result, women may have different

views on the issue in question. So, it was better if an attempt was made to include women in the FGDs.

4.6.4 Theme-4: Anger and Belligerence

Throughout the FGDs, some participants have angrily described that their respective lands are taken from them unfairly, and hence they will retaliate for that in any way. Most of the FGD participants and some of the community leaders have mentioned that farmers whose farmlands have been taken will go into anti-government riots and public uprisings. They believe those riots and uprisings will result in bloodshed. In relation to this, one FGD participant from the first settlement has shared his emotions as:

> *"…..I am sure you can see how things are very complicated here. Things are not as simple as what these foreigners think. There is a lot to this land than they think. This is the reason why blood will be shed if these people continue mistreating us like this. We have a war to fight, and we will not betray the struggle that our forefathers fought and died in the frontlines… The land issue is a very emotive issue, and I am sure you have learnt that people across Africa had to wage armed struggles to reclaim their land….The land is ours, and we will fight for it no ifs no buts….."(FGD Discussion, 02/05/21).*

As per the above shreds of evidence, the farmers who lost their lands have shown that they will enter into any belligerent actions at any point in time unless it is managed with peaceful discussions, or some sort of compensation is not planned. Thus, it is better to manage the situation before it gets worsened.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The foregoing chapter presented the findings of this study. The findings were presented under the themes that were generated from the analysis done on NVIVO. First, the chapter began by giving the background information of the Gambella region. This was done by using secondary sources. The presentation of the socio-economic implications of land grabbing then followed. The socio-economic implications of land grabbing were extrapolated from the way through which participants made sense of what land grabbing is through defining it. The findings of the perceptions of the participants on land grabbing in terms of gain and losses then follow. Secondly, this is then followed by a presentation of the findings on the policies and measures that are put in place to protect the interests and rights of the local people in the context of land grabs. Next, the presentation on the effectiveness of these measures that were put in place to protect these interests and rights then follow before ultimately presenting the findings on the best way the interest and rights of the local people and foreign investors can be reconciled.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This discusses and analyses the findings of this study. In carrying out the analysis and discussion, the chapter critically engages what has been analysed in the preceding chapter with the aim of making sense of what the findings of this study mean. The discussion of the findings comes first. In discussing the findings, efforts are made in thoroughly interrogating what the participants shared and, in the end, establishing what they shared mean according to literature. The discussion of

findings shows that to a larger partaking, the land grabs have had malignant effects on the livelihoods of the local people of the Gambella region. The discussion will show that there is a significant disconnection between what the federal government aims to achieve from what they regard as land leases and what the hopes and aspirations of the local people are. It is within this disconnection that it was noted that there is a need to inquire and understand the different ways in which the land transfer issues are being defined and understood by different scholars in literature. Fully unpacking the perceptions of the local people on land grabbing was vital since it enables how the land transfer issues are applied and understood by different scholars, the local peoples, the government officials and the foreign company owners. Such an enterprise enhances a clear understanding of the socio-economic implications of land grabbing on such transfers. The discussion shows that while the local peoples have registered their disapproval of the way land is being grabbed from them, the federal government has been pressing on with the grabbing. Though it is clear that the process of depeasantisation has not been popular among the local peoples since no sustainable livelihoods have so far been constructed out of the land grabs, the government official who was interviewed expects positive results out of the land grabs. Since the study carried out the analysis through the prism of the International Dependency theory, the discussion will then try to make sense of the findings through the prism of this theory. The discussion focuses on how the International Dependency theory enhances a better understanding of the binaries of the core and the periphery, which are involved in the land grabbing process. Recognising the crucial role of the transnational organisations which come from the global North in perpetuating the old global inequalities will be part of the discussion process. The key aim of this chapter is to build on what was captured and discussed in all the preceding chapters and, in the end completing the whole

picture on the socio-economic implications of the land grabbing on the local peoples of the Gambella region of Ethiopia are.

5.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the data analysed in the foregoing chapter, a number of issues that warrant critical discussion have been noted. What was captured in the first part of chapter one literally summarises what the key issues which drive and orient the issue of ethnicity in the context of land grabbing in the Gambella. I found what the participants captured in the first section of chapter one and most of the data corpuses captured in the fourth chapter of the thesis revealing and important in showing the perceptions of the local people on land grabbing in the Gambella region. From the data that was gathered and presented in the fourth chapter of this thesis, land grabbing in the Gambella region of Ethiopia mean a lot of things. Regardless of the different meanings attached to it, the people of Gambella saw an ethnic twist to it. From the data gathered, I notice that the issue of autochthony feature prominently in the ways the people of Gambella make sense of the ways in which land is grabbed from them to pave way to the foreign company owners.

Through my engagement with the material I gathered, I noticed that land is central to the issue of belonging in most societies in Africa and beyond. There are privileges and entitlements that one can get from owning land. Land ownership in most countries is used to confer citizenship right and thus is the basis for what is known as spatial belonging. In indigenous African societies, land and belonging are usually understood within the context of indigenity, ethnicity and other forms of nativist kinds of attachment to certain regions and locales. The understanding of land through the prism of indigenity and ethnicity is closely linked to the issue of autochthony. It is through making autochthonous claims to a certain piece of land, where people claim belonging to a certain

region or country in most African countries. Autochthonous claims to land and the natural resources in Africa is justified based on a special relationship that is said to exist between what are called the 'living dead' and the 'living living'. Land in some societies in sub-Saharan Africa is believed to belong to the 'living dead' who oversee its protection and good use through what are known as the spirits of the land. Though autochthonous claims became nationalised after colonialism, autochthonous claims in Africa are often localised into ethnic based chieftaincies, identities and micro belonging. As a result, autochthonous claims to a given territory are the grounds upon which those seen as the Other, the Stranger or the allochthones are excluded. Autochthonous claims to land in Africa are usually ethnic based. As a result, ethnicity usually provides a legitimate framework from which land rights and access to land negotiated. Access to land and the rights over it are intimately linked to one's ethnic origin. In this respect, an individual's claim to land is usually linked to one's membership to a certain ethnic group (Cheater, 1990; Geschiere & Nyamnjoh, 2000; Trudeau, 2006; Lentz, 2007; Schein, 2009; Geschiere, 2009; 2011; Zenker 2011; Meiu, 2019).

This explanation of the issue of land and belonging formed the golden thread of what was shared by those who participated in this study. Land grabbing to the people of Gambella is seen as a deliberate move by the government to ensure that as ethnic minorities who trace their roots from South Sudan, are removed from what they see as their ancestral lands. In explaining how they regard themselves as autochthones to the land in Gambella, the people of Gambella explained how much they feel land belongs to the 'living dead' and how them as the 'living living' feel that they are custodians to the land. Participants talked of the landscapes such as the graves and the flora and fauna that surround them and how much that mean to them as the rightful owners of the land.

As ethnic minorities however, the people of Gambella as captured in the first quotes in the first chapter feel they are being unfairly treated through their land being taken away from them by the foreign investors under the aegis of the Federal Government of Ethiopia.

In their explanation of the ways in which land is grabbed from them, the issue of otherism was raised by the local people of Gambella. Due to their history as war refugees from then Sudan to the Gambella region, the people of Gambella region are regarded as the Other. In light of this history, I argue that in the backdrop of the history of the people in the Gambella region having migrated from Sudan as war refugees, their settlement in Ethiopia bred differentiation between the indigenous people of Ethiopia who regard themselves as the Self. This differentiation and the construction of the present occupants of the people of Gambella as foreigners has led to negative perceptions of these people as the Other. Given what was shared by the participants, I argue that the ways in which land is taken away from them and given to foreigners is discrimination and shows the subjugation of the current occupants of the Gambella region as the Other. Land grabbing by the Federal government is justified based on the labelling of the people of Gambella as the orient, the stranger and the Other as what is fully explained in the works of Yuval-Davis (2010); Jensen (2011); Brons (2015); Harris et al., (2017).

My analysis of the way in which land is grabbed from the people of Gambella buttresses the fact that Othering is a dialectical occurrence in which the Federal Government of Ethiopia represented by those who see themselves at the indigenous people of Ethiopia distance and differentiate itself from the people of Gambella who are seen as outsiders. I argue that through their settlement in the Gambella region of Ethiopia from Sudan in which they occupied land there, the Nuer people's origin are pathologised as deviant, criminals and causers of trouble. It is based on these grounds

where hierarchies are created hence exclusion which in this instance come through the process of land grabbing (Bauman, 1991; Yuval-Davis, 2010; Jensen 2011).

The analysis I make in making sense of the ways in which land is grabbed from people of Nuer origin in the Gambella region of Ethiopia also finds expression in the concept of strangerhood. The ways in which land is taken from the Nuer people and given to the foreign owners under the tutelage of the Federal government of Ethiopia is rooted in strangerhood. I argue that since the Nuer people living in the Gambella region of Ethiopia today are migrants from the Sudan, the people are framed and understood through the prism of strangerhood by those who regard themselves as autochthones to Ethiopia. This falls in tandem with the concept of othering in which those who regard themselves as autochthones to Ethiopia regard the Nuer as the Other and strangers. Through viewing the people of Nuer origin domiciled in the Gambella region as strangers, the Nuer people are seen as unfit to enjoy the same rights to land ownership as the Self. The alienation of land the Nuer people are facing through the land grabs shows the treatment of contempt and suspicion by the Self. In the face of what the Self (who in this instance are the original people of Ethiopia who occupied Ethiopia before the Nuer) sees as a threat to its well-being and what it sees as a legitimate claim to the land, I argue that the Self resorted to dispossessing the Nuer of the land through land grabbing. This is a strategy employed to keep the Nuer who are seen as strangers at bay. The complete dispossession of the Nuer of land is therefore exclusion which is driven by the processes of constructing the Nuer people who are strangers as contaminating and degenerates who are not pitched to the level of civilisation as the Self. As a result of this real and imagined threat of the Nuer, the dispossession of land is treatment of hostility since the occupation of the Nuer people of the land in Gambella is seen as a threat. The Nuer people as strangers therefore occupy ambivalent positions as a result of the land grabbing, they

have been facing. They remain strangers and do not feel as if the fully belong (Baumann, 1998; Geschiere & Nyamnjoh, 2000; Sanderock, 2000; Marotta, 2002; Harris et al., 2017). This analysis then leads me to analysing the issue of land grabbing from the Nuer people of Gambella through the prism of belonging.

I argue that the way in which the Nuer people in the Gambella region when land is grabbed from them shows that the belonging of these people is at stake and is always questionable and is constantly questioned by the original people of Ethiopia. The Nuer people in the Gambella region are seen as unbelonging based on the social level in which they are seen as ethnic minorities. Since people are said to belong to certain social groups in which they share certain shared social characteristics which in this instance are their dark skin tone, they are socially differentiated by the light skinned people of Ethiopia. It is this differentiation which has been masking their unbelonging hence the land grabbing that they face.

The ways in which the Nuer people are seen as unbelonging is connected to the way they are viewed as not the citizens of Ethiopia but rather as citizens of Sudan. Since citizenship is usually closely linked to the issue of belonging, In the case of the Nuer people of Gambella, their official citizenship is intensively seen and invoked as a sub-category of belonging. In light of this, the Federal government of Ethiopia has constructed the most influential project of belonging in which the Nuer are constructed as outsiders who are then exclude through the land grabbing it sanctions. The Federal government of Ethiopia thus draws boundaries against the Nuer people who are regarded as foreigners and in the end denies them the right to land ownership through land grabbing since they are regarded as not belonging to the Ethiopian nation state. I argue that through land grabbing, citizenship is transformed into a national project of belong and unbelonging (Rutherford,

2001; Fenster, 2005; Muzondidya, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2006; Antonsich, 2010; Daimon, 2014; James 2013; Youkhana, 2015; Yuval-Davis et al., 2018).

In as far as the Nuer people feel that they belong to the Gambella region; there are some modes of belonging based on value judgements that are external to them as individuals. These in the context of the Gambella determine their exclusion through the land grabs. Although some have managed to speak Amharic, some have continued to hang on to their Nuer tradition and continue to speak their original language known as Anywaa. This has as a result seen by those who regard themselves as autochthones to Ethiopia as unsuccessful integration of the Nuer people into the Ethiopian nation state. I argue that this has as a result led to the exclusion of the Nuer people through the sanctioning or land grabbing of the land belonging to the Nuer people in the Gambella region.

Thus, regardless of them having gotten official citizenship over the years they have stayed in the Gambella region, their official citizenship has not in the guarantee their inclusion in the Ethiopian nation or society. In this instance, though the Nuer are citizens of Ethiopia, they are in this context excluded from the Ethiopian nation state through the land grabs based on the intersectionalities of race (since they are dark skinned) and ethnicity. Their citizenship and belonging in this context is questioned based on other attributes besides them merely having identity documents which make them Ethiopians. This buttresses the argument that when conceptualising the issue of citizenship, the issues of culture, one's origin, one's religion as well as ethnic background should be taken into consideration (Yuval-Davis, 2006, 2007; Steen, 2011; Makura-Paradza, 2010; Anthias, 2013; Kufandirori, 2015).

I also see the ways in which the Nuer people in the Gambella region being dispossessed of land chronicling racism rooted in the binaries of the Self and the Other. This is enshrouded in the issue of ethnicity. I see the land grabbing as rooted in what I call the racial supremacy based on societal

hierarchisation in which the Nuer people as racial minorities are seen and regarded as inferior. The ways the land is taken away from the Nuer people and given to foreigners may be rooted in what is known as the global racial contract or racism. I argue that this global racial contract subjects the black Nuer people to alienation and general dishonour through the land grabs. From my analysis, racism in this instance is a particular virulent form of boundary making which constructs the non-belonging and othering of the Nuer people. In the case of land grabbing in the Gambella region, I argue that racism which is clearly shown through land grabbing is rooted in the practices and discourses that are aimed at inferiorising, subordinating, excluding and exploiting the Nuer people who are in this instance seen as inferior. This racialization process is an outcome of the economic and political project of land grabbing. I see the land grabbing process in this instance as an outcome of what is known as 'race-making' (Anthias, 2016: 180). Race-making in the context of the land grabbing in the context of land grabbing in the Gambella region is created through the collective characteristics of the skin tone, the fact that the Nuer are migrants from Sudan and other collective characteristics such as ethnicity which are undeniable. The issue of racial identity is in this instance understood as a process modelled around the 'Selves' and the 'Others'.

The issue of destruction of identity was raised as a key issue in this study. From the interview excerpts presented in the foregoing chapter, it was noted that it is the land that defines who a people are. In the case of the Gambella region of Ethiopia, the dispossession of the local peoples of their land leads to the destruction of their identities. The issue of identity is vital to people's lives and how they make sense of the world in which they live. My understanding of identity from sociological standpoint shows that identity is something that defines who a person is, and once that is tampered with, people lose their sense of being and cease to exist. Land in this instance is closely connected to people's identities in that it is the land from which people construct their livelihoods.

It is on the land where people bury their dead; perform rituals that defines who they are and how they interact with nature. Land dispossession, as was the case in Zimbabwe first through colonisation and more recently through government-led seizures of white-owned farms, have invoked heated debates revolving around the issue of belonging and memory. 'Land,' just as renowned environmental sociologist Jacklyn Cock (2007) remarked pertaining to 'Nature', is a site of struggle, a social construct upon which different social groups impart competing meanings and values. The land also carries a socio-cultural role as an emblem of a group's notion of 'being'; thus, it is an emblem of identity. According to Mhizha, Tandire and Bvirindi, (2014: 316), throughout history, land has been and still is at the epicentre of political and socio-economic contestations. Intricately linked to land and highly contested with multiple meanings is the concept of 'belonging', for one can belong today but find themselves 'aliens' tomorrow.

The link between land and belonging is evident in the very definition of belonging, which for Mujere (2011:1125), cited in Mhizha, Tandire and Bvirindi (2014: 318), is "… a relational concept which entails among other things attached to a group, place or other categories". Indirectly though, the land leases by the government of Ethiopia seem to have not paid attention to the issue of memory and belonging. With undeniable evidence of complete dispossession of land and cultivation and building in areas which previously had graves for the dead, explicitly leading to the erasure of the memory of the people former farmers of the leased land, some participants, notably former farmers and other government officials were quick to point to the disregard of the rights of local farmers. Most of them tended to acknowledge the disregard of the sacred places of the local farmers by the new farmers, notably through the destruction of the graves for purposes of farming and, in some instances, building dams.

The understanding of the issue of identity and the ways in which the land grabs have led to the destruction of people's identities resulted in the discussion of land ownership and land stewardship. Findings show that land belongs to different sets of owners in which the 'living dead' supersede all the other owners of the land. In this regard, it is essential to note that land issues are very intricate and need a critical understanding if one is to unpack the issue of land grabs in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. The people of Gambella believe that their ancestors should have a say in how the issues related to land ownership are concerned. They, therefore, believed that land grabs are a breach of how the land should be transferred if it has to be transferred from one person to the other.

The issue of ancestral philosophies then dovetailed to a sensitive issue of genocide. Since land defines the identities of the people of Gambella and who they are as a people, findings show that the land grabs are tantamount to committing genocide. In making sense of the issue of genocide, land grabs destroys the tapestry of the people of Gambella on various levels. Since the people of Gambella believe that their identities are defined on both the spiritual and physical levels when they discuss the issues of the 'living dead' and the 'living living', one can argue that the land grabs have negative impacts on both these levels. The negative implications, which in this case lead to what the participants regarded as genocide, leading to their complete annihilation and death on both the spiritual and physical realms of their lives.

Both the spiritual and physical annihilation of the people of Gambella, which came in the form of genocide, leads to the breaching of the dignity of the people of Gambella. Dignity in the context of this study is an issue that neatly interweaves with the issue of identity. My understanding of the concept of the issue of dignity from both a sociological and psychological perspective shows that dignity is of paramount importance to who a person is. It is the social aspect of a person that leads

him or her to fit in a given society and be accepted as its member. The social aspect is fed by the psychological well-being of a person, and an unequal balance between the psychological and sociological aspects of a person leads to negative implications on a person's dignity and identity. Land grabs in this instance, and findings show strips people of their dignity hence negatively affecting who they are as a people. My findings are in line with the issues discussed in depth in the studies by Borras, Franco and Wang (2013) when they discuss the social contradictions which came as a result of land grabs. Borras, Franco and Wang (2013) note that instead of improving the lives of the local people, land grabs have negative implications on the local people, especially when it comes to the construction of livelihoods.

Given the ethnic diversity in Ethiopia, the people of Gambella are of the view that the issue of land grabbing compounds the issue of ethnic discrimination. Since the Gambella region is a border area where most people in the area have ethnic ties with the people of South Sudan, the people in the Gambella region are of the view that they are at the receiving end of ethnic discrimination through the land grabs. I analyse this situation through the International Dependency Theory. In analysing this, I argue that the creation of foreign farms through dispossessing the local people of their land in the Gambella region creates the dominance-dependency structures of control. These dominance-dependency structures emanate from the deep-seated logic of the global mode of production which these international organisations represent. The dominance-dependency structures which are at play in the Gambella region result from the anarchic interstate political systems in which the issue of ethnicity plays a speculative role in which resources are denied or taken away from some ethnic groups and not some.

The issue of ethnic discrimination neatly interweaves with the issues of breaching dignity and genocide noted in the findings. Usually, ethnic discrimination leads to the most extreme forms of

ensuring that those who are seen as the Other or inferior to the Self are exterminated through various methods, which include ethnic cleansing, which in most cases lead to genocide. Ethnic discrimination, which is led to the forcible removal of peasants, was seen in the case of the removal of an ethnic group in Northern Uganda to pave the way for the growth of plantations, as discussed by McMichael (2012). As was the case in Northern Uganda, the removal of ethnic peasants in the Gambella region leads to what McMichael (2012: 16) terms 'externalized' environmental, social, cultural and human rights costs. These costs in the context of this study include the ethnic cleansing of the whole Gambellan population. It can be argued that what the participants term genocide does not necessarily come through the violent killings of people. My understanding of genocide is that it does not have to be violent in all cases. Since a person is defined from a social and psychological perspective, severing the link of the people to their land without necessarily killing them is enough to cause damages which qualify to be called genocide. Through destroying the ways in which people grow their food, though grabbing land, I argue that the land grabs in the context of the Gambella region lead to the extermination of the entire population by depriving them of their right to food. In this regard, my argument is anchored on the fact that though the extermination of the Gambella population may take time and is not as abrupt as other forms of committing genocide in which arms of war are used, grabbing people's land and denying them the ability to produce food lead to a form of genocide which though slow will lead to the complete extermination of a people.

The issue of ethnic discrimination also fed into the issue of colonialism versus neo-colonialism, which is also a crucial factor in unpacking how the issue of land grabbing is understood in the context of this study. The issue of colonialism is a sensitive matter in which the people of Gambella discussed in an emotional way during the data gathering processing. In my analysis of the issue of colonialism, I picked a number of issues that makes the issue of land grabbing very emotive among

the people of Gambella. I realised that since the people who are given the land are foreigners, the land grabs in the Gambella region are reminiscent of the old colonial dispossessions in which people foreign powers often came through the use of arms of war to colonise. In much the same way, force is used in the case of the Gambella region to evict people from the land in much the same way the local populations were removed through force of arms during colonialism of Africa, Asia and Latin America from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Often, the effects of colonialism were adverse to the economic (livelihoods), the social (dignity and identity) and the political (sovereignty) aspects of the indigenous populations. The land grabs, as noted, have a negative implication to all these aspects. These findings, it should be noted, are in keeping with studies done by Makki and Geisler (2011); Peluso and Lund (2011); White et al. (2012); McMichael (2012), among others. In these studies, land grabbing is reminiscent of colonialism, in which force is used to dispossess people of their land in order to pave the way for foreign owners.

The issue of land grabbing as land grabbing also finds expression in the International Dependency Theory. From the literature reviewed, it is crystal clear that the issue of capital accumulation is at the centre of land grabbing, as is discussed in the works of McMichael (2012). I argue that multinational corporations from the global North represent governments in the global North in grabbing land. As noted by White et al. (2012), land grabbing, as was the case with colonialism, has led to the closure of what is seen as unoccupied land with the aim of coming up with new regimes of both labour and regimes of production. The main aim of these closures is capital accumulation in much the same way land was taken through force by colonial powers. In line with the International Dependency Theory, which I use to engage with the issue under discussion, I argue that the reconfiguration of the labour and regimes of production has led to the relinking of the global Southern countries in which land is grabbed into the global order of dependency.

As submitted by the International Dependency Theory that the relationship between the global South and the global North is an unequal one, I also submit that land grabs in the context of the Gambella region have led to the creation of an unequal relationship between the foreign company owners and the local peoples. These relationships mask global inequalities between the global South and the global North, in which the latter will be benefitting at the expense of the former. In line with the propositions of the International Dependency Theory, the Gambella region represent the poor countries are the periphery and serve as areas of resources extraction by the wealthy core. What is happening in the Gambella region of Ethiopia buttresses this situation. In the context of the way in which land is grabbed from the Gambella region of Ethiopia, I argue that the Gambella region, in this instance, is the periphery that serves as a node of extraction for the developed countries. This extraction is facilitated by the companies which conclude land-grabbing deals with the federal government of Ethiopia. My view of the land grabs through the International Dependency Theory perspective yields one credit in noting that the land grabbed from the people of Gambella serves as the periphery, which works as the point of extraction for the wealthy and more advanced countries from which the foreign firms come from.

The farm produce, which is the surplus-value, is in the end channeled or taken away from the periphery, which in this case is the Gambella region. The export of food to the developed countries through vertical trade is usually unequal (Borras et al., 2012; Lavers, 2012; Sassen, 2013a). When the food and the sold in the countries where the companies come from, it will then fetch a lot at the expense of the country where the food would be produced. In light of this, the relations between the periphery and the core are mostly exploitative and continue to be exploitative since the peripheral state (which in this case is Ethiopia) continues to be dependent on the core countries (which in the case of this study, are represented by the foreign companies which are given land in

Ethiopia). This situation is indicated in the context of this study if one takes into consideration the fact that land grabs, as noted by the participants, has had negative implications on their livelihoods, their dignity and identity while the new foreign companies have been producing food for export and making a profit. This, in the end, has created inequalities between the local peoples and foreign company owners in more or less the same way the global North was enfranchised at the expense of the global South during colonialism.

In line with what is discussed in the International Dependency Theory, the vulnerability and food insecurities that have been created by the land grabs have led to the dependency of the local peoples on the foreign companies for their livelihoods. Since some local people have been hired as wage labourers in the new farms, my argument of dependency, which is fully discussed in the International Dependency Theory, is vindicated. Dependency, according to the International Dependency Theory, refers to the asymmetrical structures of relations of control. Under such relations, I argue that the controller, who in the case of this study, are the foreign company owners, work in collaboration with the state with the aim of controlling, changing and maintaining the ways of behaving of the controller. The controlled in the context of this study is the Federal government of Ethiopia and the local peoples of Gambella. I argue that when this relationship is understood and viewed from the standpoint of the controller, this asymmetrical relationship of control chronicles dominance. For the controlled, this relationship of control usually represents exploitation and dependency. In most cases, the capacity to dominate and the weakness that makes exploitation possible does not in its own respect signify dependency. Dependency is only shown and depicted when the controller makes its capacity to change, control and manipulate the ways of behaving of the controller. Dependency then exists when this process is mainly a one-way process. This situation, I argue, is crystal clear in the context of the Gambella region since it is the foreign

company owners who have been in a position to generate profits out of the land by ensuring that the local peoples from which land has been taken are used as wage labourers. Without selling their labour to the people of Gambella, whose land has been taken are not in a position to construct sustainable livelihoods.

I am also of the view that apart from only affecting the local people of the Gambella region, the land grabs in Ethiopia propelled by this foreign investment usually affects in a negative way the economic independence and growth of the developing nations such as Ethiopia. The way in which the Ethiopian economy is organized leads to disarticulation since the relationship it has created with the foreign companies is organized around what is known as the extractive logic of international capitalism, which is articulated in the International Dependency Theory. Further, the disarticulation on the national level can also take place on the local level, which in this case is the Gambella region. Findings show that not all people who were evicted from their land were employed. The disarticulation takes place through the unemployment of the local peoples. This disarticulation usually leads to a dependency of the local peoples on food aid and sometimes cash transfers in order for them to survive.

My analysis goes against the argument by the World Bank that peasant farmers need wage employment for their survival, and land grabbing will lead to the creation of jobs essential for their survival. This view is rooted in the argument that cash is the currency of modernity and poor farmers need it. This view does not pay attention to the security of landholding and sees common lands as not significant (Sassen, 2013a). In line with my argument that land grabbing leads to disarticulation, Li (2011) noted that actual statistics in countries where land is grabbed for growing palm seeds show that very few people get employed in these farms because these farms are highly mechanised. In instances where the poor farmers get employed, the wages they are given are not

at all sustainable, and the contracts they are given are not sustainable (Cotula, 2011). This has been happening in the Gambella region, and disarticulation in these cases is clear.

I also argue that the ways in which the land grabs in the Gambella region have been linked to colonialism mirror what happens in international relations as discussed in the International Dependency Theory. My analysis of land grabs through the International Dependency Theory yields one credit in noting that the foreign companies have reconfigured the asymmetries of power through capital accumulation they have been pursuing after grabbing land in the Gambella region. In much the same way as what has been happening after the colonisation of Africa and beyond, the way in which land has been grabbed in the Gambella region has resulted in the economic accumulation of power by the foreign firms. In the end, the local peoples have lost their sovereignty through losing their dignity and their identities. Apart from the findings on the issue of identity construction, the participants made sense of the land grabs in Ethiopia from different standpoints. The different understandings of land grabbing also fed into how land grabbing is understood in the context of the Gambella region. A discussion of how the land grabs were conceptualised by the local people of Gambella is what I now turn to.

The concept and term have been understood from a multiplicity of standpoints, and the usages of the term denote quite a lot to different stakeholders, as the findings show. Land grabbing in the context of this study has been defined as land seizing in which land barons are the key drivers of this process. I argue that through understanding land grabbing as a process in which land barons take part, the ways in which land dispossessions is understood has shown that the way in which this process is understood as land grabbing in some instances strays from the more common usages of the term. Land barons findings show that corrupt people who enter into land deals with the

foreign company owners with the aim of rent-seeking at the expense of the local peoples. This understanding of land grabbing as a process in which land barons are involved is also feed into the issue of land corruption which was also raised and discussed by the participants in this study. Corruption in the cases of land grabs comes through the lack of transparency in how the land deals are done. Findings show that corruption comes in instances where the government officials who are involved in the transfers of land from the local people to the foreign owners receive bribes. The issue of land corruption and land barons dovetailed into the conceptualisation of the ways in which land is transferred from the indigenous people to the foreign owners as land grabbing. The conceptualisation of these land transfers as land grabbing shows that there is an element of force in which there is no transparency in the ways in which land is taken away from the local peoples to the foreign owners. The force used and the lack of consent from the local peoples led the participants to also label the way land is taken away from them as thuggery, robbery and theft. My understanding of theft, robbery and theft is that in much the same way as grabbing, is that there is force involved. These kinds of labels given to land transfers clearly show the way in which land is taken away from the local peoples to the foreign owners is often forcible, rooted in corruption and not at all transparent.

These findings on land corruption, land grabbing in which force is used to evict the local people from their land to pave the way for foreign owners, has been fully captured in the works done by Scott (2009) and Smalley (2013). Smalley (2013) corrupt land deals involve government officials, political elites and both domestic and foreign investors who seize land from the rural poor. As the findings in this study show, Scott (2009) notes that the corrupt land deals usually help financially constrained governments a scarce chance of ensuring that they extend their power to areas they regard as marginal. Through these corrupt deals, these governments are then able to extract rent

(Scott, 2009). As a result, the large-scale land deals are rooted in authoritarianism and expansionism by governments. This scenario is especially true in the case of the Gambella region of Ethiopia, a marginal area in which ethnic minorities reside.

There is, however, a divergent view regarding the conceptualisation of the ways in which land was transferred from the local people to the foreign company owners. It is essential to pay attention to other critical dimensions and variant understandings and definitions of the land dispossessions which are ongoing. Clarifying and understanding the critical differences in the various definitions of land dispossessions made makes it possible to fully understand these issues. Findings show that some participants viewed the ways in which land is taken from the original owners to the foreign company owners in a positive light. As a result, the land transfers from the indigenous owners to the foreign owners have been conceptualised as land leases. From what other participants supported the way land is being transferred from the local peoples to the foreign company owners, land leases will have positive impacts and will bring much-needed modernisation in Ethiopia. To them, viewing the way land issues are being dealt with by the Federal government as land grabs will yield nothing positive, not correct. This cluster of participants, as the data presented show, should not always be seen as unfavourable. If given time, the much-needed improvement of livelihoods will be achieved through an evolutionary process. Thus, though it will take time for the intended goals to be achieved, the land leases must not be seen a free-floating. Instead, the land leases should be given time for them to fecund the intended results. If the land leases are rather judged without giving the investors time to work the land, the positive results of the land leases cannot be seen. The land leases should be seen as a work in progress that can only achieve the intended results if they are given time. But what are the intended results of the land leases, one may ask? The intended aim of the land leases to the cluster of participants who support them seem

not to take into consideration of the deep philosophical issues that inform how land should be used and kept according to the local people of Gambella. Instead, those who argue for the land leases are of the view that Ethiopia needs to modernise first and foremost. As a result, the issue of dignity and identity, which most local peoples of Gambella hold dear, are not a priority.

My understanding of leasing is that there is consent, and during leasing, the land is not transferred permanently. Instead, the party to which land is leased enters into an agreement with the party which leases the land in which the leased uses the land for a certain period of time and returns the land back to the one who leases the land. The positive light in which land is viewed in this regard echoes the view of the World Bank regarding land use in Africa, for instance. Baglioni and Gibbon (2013) note that the World Bank has been supporting land leases in order to pave the way for significant scale farm investments. The suggestion by the World Bank is made in the backdrop of the argument that there is a lot of unused lands which should be fully used in order to propel development in Africa. In the interest of establishing whether there were consultations done with the local community regarding the issue of land grabbing, data was gathered to the effect. A number of issues were as a result raised by the participants. The following section now turns to discuss the findings regarding this issue.

Findings in this study showed that most community leaders noted that there were no proper consultations were done when land grabbing is done in the Gambella region. Findings show that in cases where no consultations were done, local farmers would just see their houses being destroyed by bulldozers to pave the way for the occupation of their land by foreign company owners. Community leaders, however, stated that although there were meeting done regarding these issues, no agreement was reached. In contrast, foreign company owners and the government representative stated that proper consultations were done. My analysis of these different

standpoints regarding the issue of consultations shows the competing standpoints regarding the goal of land grabbing among the local peoples and the foreign company representatives. These differences also relate to the differences in whether the ways in which land is transferred from the local people to the foreign company owners can be regarded as land grabbing or land leasing.

But how can one express the key issues which inform the current land dispossessions if one intends to go beyond a mere description of the term as what literature reviewed has done, especially in the works of McMichael (2012)? In the global North, the abstract answers to these questions are reasonably consolidated and seem consensual especially given the views by the International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank that land in the global South is underutilised and need investment from foreign investors (De Schutter, 2011; Li, 2011). The views by those who encounter land dispossession are different, varied and essentially parallel from the views of these financial institutions. As noted from these variances in how land grabbing is understood differently by different stakeholders, the practical understanding of land dispossessions by the local people of Gambella gives an undefeatable legitimating symbol of the local claims to land. This was entirely captured and found justification in the argument that land belongs to the 'living dead' and the 'living living' are mere guardians to the land for the sake of future generations.

The issue discussed regarding the issue of consultation is also linked to the issue of how the competing interests between the local peoples and the foreign owners. Given the fact there are diverging views regarding the consultations, findings show that there are diverging interests between these two groups as well. The local peoples aim to keep their land. In contrast, the foreign company owners want to get the unutilised land and produce food out of it. The findings regarding the issue of conflict-of-interest point to the fact that there is a need to search for a new baseline on how best to reconcile the interests of these two competing groups. In my analysis of the competing

interests between the local people and the, I argue that this novel baseline regarding the philosophical issues which are involved in understanding land ownership and the issue of identity which is attached to this thereof should grant feasibility considerations when it comes to coming up with proposals for how best the interest of the local peoples who are dispossessed of their land can be reconciled with those of the new owners. The key issues that should inform the blueprint, which informs the best ways in which the interests of the local peoples can be reconciled with those of the foreign owners, take into consideration of various theoretical issues regarding the vested interests and aspirations of each group are. In such cases, the choice of the specific normative flag that this will carry gives credence to the ambitions of the local peoples. The benchmarks that inform the specific normative flag that informs this blueprint should be informed by the key philosophical issues which inform how the local people understand and conceptualise land ownership.

The key arguments by the local peoples that land belongs to the dead invokes a lot of normative questions regarding how best to reconcile the hopes and aspirations of both the local people and the foreign owners. The issue of contract farming in which the local peoples come in with the needed capital and give it to the local farmers who will keep the land and continue farming can be one avenue to do that. I suggest that this approach may solve the conundrum regarding the conflict between the local people and the foreign owners regarding both usufructs and primary rights to the land. This approach may portray an avenue on land ownership through bringing to the fore micro procedural features that inform the issues which have been driving foreign areas to focus on investing inland and, in the end, finding solutions through taking into consideration the interests of the local people. If the end result of this leads to a win-win situation between the foreign owners and the local peoples, this thesis suggests that this be taken into consideration. This is important

since this can only provide answers to fundamental questions to critically essential questions regarding land grabbing. I argue that this strategy may provide an incremental strategy that would ensure the improvement and legitimation of crucial institutions, which must be put in place to deal with the land dispossession issue.

The approach aimed at striking a balance between the aspirations of the foreign landowners and the local peoples of Gambella should have a step-by-step route for ensuring that the land is fully utilised while also ensuring that the local people's heritage and sense of belonging is left intact. I suggest that proceeding taking land from the local people and giving it to the foreign owners to ensure that the 'idle land' is made productive to its total capacity as suggested by the World Bank but also including the local people's hopes and aspirations by keeping their heritage intact may be the only viable option. This suggestion does not, therefore, promise complete dispossession of the local peoples of their land but seeks to strike a balance between the aims of both camps in the issue under discussion in this case. What, however, remain pertinent are the questions of the nature of the normative propositions of the approach I suggest. In relation to the findings of this study, the neutrality and feasibility of such an approach may be questionable given the position taken by most local peoples regarding letting in foreign owners into their land. The approach should be instrumental and must be versatile and ambivalent. It must be flexed and adapted to suit the needs of the two seemingly hostile camps in this study, as the data presented showed. I argue that the approach should ensure that food is adequately produced from the 'idle land' and also ensuring that the rights of the local peoples to their heritage is kept intact. The approach must be harnessed to achieve any end. The approach must be oriented towards the due process in a clear and straightforward way. The approach must be a tool that will mould and fashion ways through which both parties (the local people and the foreign company owners) can work towards achieving a

common goal. It is critical to note that the common goal should be a contingent feature to which the procedural tools of land use would be attached.

It is essential, however, to admit that striking a balance that can be equal or ensuring that there is democracy could perhaps be too ambitious a goal. At least ensuring that the livelihoods of the local peoples remain sustainable through maybe ensuring that they have been given the first priority in the job openings that may come from the operations of the new owners may be more realistic. Given the negative perceptions the land dispossessions have received from the local peoples, as noted in the data presentation chapter, one is bound to believe that the approach I suggest may not yield the intended results. As a result, one can therefore argue that there would be no sensible reason to embrace the stipulations of this approach no matter the good reasons which might be there to embrace it. In this regard, one may not be able to argue for the importance of taking this approach on board. In order to take a stand on this approach, there is a need for some substantive values to be taken into consideration. It is through a vindication of such kinds of substantive values where one can be able to keep the appeal of this approach.

5.2 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The fundamental goal of this study was to inquire into the socio-economic implications of land grabbing in an African context taking the Gambella region of Ethiopia as a case study. Through doing this, the study aimed to contribute to the conceptual understanding of land grabbing among the local people of the region through the prism of the International Dependency Theory. Through a critical understanding of the conceptual understandings of the issue of land grabbing by asking the local peoples and the key informants what their views were on the land issues taking place in the Gambella region, the normative content of what some termed land grabs and what some termed

land leases were revealed. What has been noted is that the negative implications of what most local peoples see as land grabs far exceeds the positive implications. The critical issues raised regarding the negative implications include inter alia that land grabbing strips the local people of their dignity robs them of their identity, denies them their right to land ownership and heritage and also destroys their capacities to construct positive livelihoods. The main argument by those who support the way land is being transferred from the local peoples and call these arrangements land transfers is that Ethiopia needs these if it is ever going to 'catch up' and modernise. Thus, since these vast tracts of land which are unused are available, those with the money needed to ensure that the land produces what is needed should be given the platform to take the land and invest in it. It is these polarised views that provided the basis for a critical inquiry of these issues through the theoretical lenses I engaged myself and the material I gathered with.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes this study. It starts off by giving a summary of the key findings. It then discusses the key challenges identified in the study are discussed next before discussing the issues that are will likely condition the success or failure of the land use and tenure reforms in the

Gambella region of Ethiopia. Ultimately, the chapter is concluded, and the way forward is discussed.

6.1 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The issue of land grabbing in the Gambella region takes and ethnic twist is which the Nuer people who trace their roots from Sudan feel they are dispossessed of their land because of their foreign origin. They shared that they feel their dispossession is rooted in ethnic discrimination and racism. In this case, they are of the view that they are seen as strangers, the Other or people who do not fully belong within Ethiopia. Regarding the socio-economic implications of land grabbing on the local people in the Gambella region of Ethiopia, the study found that land grabbing leads to adverse effects on the livelihoods of the people of Gambella. Dispossessed of their ancestral land, in what the local farmers have labelled 'land grabs' to pave the way for foreign investors, people in Gambella Region generally see the land leases as unjust and tantamount to breaching their rights. The local people of the Gambella region noted that land grabbing left most farmers with no land to continue farming, let alone live on. Findings showed that the dispossessions left the farmers as wage labourers on the new farms created by the foreign owners. Some are not in a position to get employment and are left susceptible to hunger and, in some extreme cases, abject poverty and destitution. Findings point to the fact that though the government saw the land transfers from the local peoples to the foreign company owners as an important way of making sure that not only people in Gambella benefit from the land leases but the whole population of Ethiopia benefits, most farmers from which the land was taken did not see this measure as helpful and of importance to their interests and needs.

The land transfers from the local peoples to the foreign company owners were perceived differently by the local peoples. Given the fact that most saw the land transfers as having negative implications on their livelihoods, the perceptions of the local peoples of these transfers were most harmful. The local peoples saw the land dispossessions as leading to the destruction of their identities, as having destroyed their identities, their dignity and as rooted in ethnic discrimination. In some cases, the transfers were seen as corrupt deals in which land barons were involved in the parcelling the land to foreigners. These to the local peoples were land grabs which lead to what they called genocide. The land dispossessions were seen as tantamount to the colonisation of the country by foreign powers. In some cases, the land leases were seen as neo-colonialism. Given the force which is involved in land grabbing, the local people stated that land grabbing is tantamount to robbery and thuggery.

Findings show that there were no proper consultations done regarding land grabbing. The local peoples felt that more could be done to safeguard their interests which in this case were not respected. In this regard, there are clashes of interests between the government, the foreign company owners and the local people. Taking into consideration of the divergent ways in which the issue of land grabbing is understood by the local peoples, the foreign company owners and the government official, suggestions can be made regarding how best a common ground can be struck. Though the bulk of the participants were of the view that the foreign owners should leave their land and go, sound suggestions were made by some participants regarding how best to strike a common ground for the benefit of all. As shown in the data presented, a common ground between the local peoples and the foreign company owners can be found if efforts are made, at least involving the locals in the farming schemes that might involve the foreign company owners. I argue that the validity and workability of this suggestion is anchored on the fact that completely

removing the locals from their ancestral land severs them from their attachment from the land where their ancestors are buried. It strips them of their identity, denies them their alienable right to own a piece of land and above all, disturbs their livelihoods. In this case, ensuring that what the locals need and yearn for while also striking a balance with the need to ensure that all the 'unused land' is entirely used for the benefit of Ethiopia as a whole becomes more pressing. It is critical to note that the intrinsic value of this arrangement lies in its ability to ensure that the disgruntlement by the local peoples regarding what they regard as land grabs is fully solved without frustrating Ethiopia's drive and goal to modernise.

One of the key strategies to ensuring that a balance would be stroke between the interests of the local people and the foreigners it was suggested by some participants is to come up with an arrangement where the locals keep the land and work on it while the foreigners provide the needed resources for production to be done to total capacity. I argue that coming up with such an arrangement may lessen the possibilities of land-related hostiles which have bedeviled Ethiopia, especially in areas near the capital Addis Ababa. The quest to suggest the need to ensure that a balance is a stroke between the needs of the locals and the foreign owners is necessitated by the reality that land should be used to total capacity for the greater good of Ethiopia as a country. Though the issues of identity, heritage, and other issues that the local people hold dear are important, the issue of food security for all Ethiopians is critical and should be prioritised.

The solution to the conundrum that stems from the diverging interests of the local peoples and the foreigners comes from the realisation that building a bright future for all Ethiopians should involve the efforts of both the locals and the foreigners. I argue that while local peoples are very useful in ensuring that Ethiopia is food secure, they cannot do it alone. International actors cannot as well do it alone without the involvement of the local actors. Working together harmoniously is the only

sustainable solution. Land and water resources may be available in abundance but mean nothing if nothing is done to ensure that they are fully used for the greater good of not only a tiny community but the country at large. The difference lies in how these resources are used wisely and to total capacity, and proper capitalisation is critical in this respect.

6.2 CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE RESEARCH

The study has identified numerous challenges that continue to negatively affect the local peoples and the successful efforts for the government to ensure that land is used positively for the benefit of all in the Gambella region and beyond. Examining these challenges has been very helpful to identify the major implications and impediments to the successful implementation of the land reform programmes in Ethiopia. One of the significant challenges identified relates to the differences in the understanding of the ways in which land is being given to the foreign company owners by the government of Ethiopia. Findings show that most local people perceive the way land is being given to the foreign company owners as land grabbing in which force is being used against their will. The implications of this to the efforts made by the government are significant. One of the critical implications is that the land way land is being transferred, there is anarchy in how this issue is understood hence polarities and hostilities. The understanding of the way land is being given to the foreign company owners as land grabbing entails that the local peoples do not support the way land is being distributed. This, in the end, has been leading to resistance against the moves by the government to open the doors for foreign investors to use the land by the local peoples. In this regard, violence and, in some instances, sabotage by the local people has ensued as a protest against what the local people regard as land grabs.

In contrast, the government officials, the foreign company owners and some local peoples and their community leaders perceive the way the land issue is being dealt with as land leasing. While it is evident that the differing perceptions of the way the land issue is being dealt with, a critical question one may ask is whether the way the land issue is being dealt with addresses the key concerns and priorities of all the people of Ethiopia, especially those of the local peoples. What has been noticed is that the seeming obduracy of the government and the way it is going on with what is regarded as land leases have led to the lack of local participation hence problems and opposition from the local peoples. Though the protests against the way the land issues in other parts of the country have brought to the fore the opposition of the local peoples of the way land is being taken away from them, the government seem not to have taken heed of this. The critical problem of this stance by the government is that the livelihoods of the local peoples continue to be negatively affected since land as a primary tool to the construction of better livelihoods by the local peoples is being taken away from them.

Thus, the peripheral attention given to the perceptions and wills of the local peoples regarding the issue of land ownership has negative socio-economic implications on the local people. Although it is a truism that the policies taken by the federal government are done after having been debated in the parliament of the country in which the representatives of the people take part, regarding the issue of land, it seems the ordinary people in the Gambella region, in this case, are not in agreement with this. Data collected shows that the government's position regarding land use and ownership are in direct contrast with the views of the local peoples. The danger of this is clear, and the local peoples continue to have adverse perceptions about the way land is leased and do not cooperate with the government's efforts. This issue is critical given the fact that what the government would have agreed and debated in parliament does not always take into consideration and reflects the

hopes and aspirations of the local peoples. Admittedly, the parliament is made up of the representatives of the people, but in some cases, the views of the people on some sensitive issues need to be taken into consideration if possible, through referendums. Since the land is key to people's livelihoods, giving it away without their input usually leads to a number of problems, as seen in the case of the Oromo and Amhara regions of the country.

Another critical challenge identified in the study is the inability of the government to adequately compensate that land would have been taken away from. The efforts to ensure that the local peoples are fully compensated are constrained by a lack of adequate resources partly due to proper planning and corruption in some cases. What then is the implication of this on the local people? The significant implication is that those from whom land would be taken away continue to be vulnerable and fall further into poverty hence defeating the aim of the government of uplifting the most vulnerable members of the society out of poverty. This, therefore, makes it very important for the government to change its approach and be more transparent in its dealings so that the local peoples fully benefit from the deals in which land is involved.

The study has also noted that land tenure changes that come when foreign companies come in are not well clarified to the vast majority of the local people. This, in the end, has been leading the local peoples to have wrong perceptions about how land issues are being handled in Ethiopia. This, in the end, has been noted to lead to negative perceptions of how the land is being dealt with in the country. Efforts in clarifying such issues to the local people may serve two purposes. First, it may enhance a better understanding among the local peoples that the way land is being leased out to the foreign company owners does not in any way breach their human rights, notably the right to owning property. This may help reduce conflicts and hostilities which have emanated from the land issues. Secondly, it may also lead to improved economic and social rights of the people since

this may ensure that the local peoples would understand that the way land is being leased is for the greater good of all Ethiopians. Indeed, this may reduce the tensions that have been resulting from the issue of land ownership and inter-tribal hostilities in a significant way since the people of Gambella see themselves as treated unequally in Ethiopia given their history as migrants from Sudan. The study noted that the critical causes of land-related disputes in Ethiopia as a whole stem from population pressure resulting from land dispossession. This then leads to scarcities of resources and land tenure insecurities since land seems to have been distributed unequally in the country and along ethnic lines hence hostilities.

In this regard, it can be suggested that the government should come up with strategies aimed at ensuring that all the local peoples are given the platform to air out their views regarding land transfers through maybe a referendum before any major decision is being taken regarding this rather sensitive issue. Importantly though, another strategy could also include the strengthening and building of informal and formal legal avenues, which will be helpful in addressing land-related issues in which the majority of the people will be given the platform to air out their views. This is very important since what the local peoples see as land grabbing lead to large scale displacements of people. This has been chiefly leading to demographic pressure in the new and cramped areas in which the local peoples would be sent to are very common hence poverty and conflicts. Conflicts and poverty usually emanate from the reduced housing stock, overlapping claims of the scarce resources, gender discrimination when it comes to accessing land hence tensions and conflict.

The peripheral attention given to the local community leaders and the seeming powerlessness that they have when it comes to influencing the policy direction which the government eventually takes when it comes to the land issues is another thorny issue that should be dealt with amicably if hostilities related to land are to end. It seems the majority of the community leaders in the context

of this study were against the way land is being taken and given to foreign companies. It can be argued that the assumption by the federal government regarding the issue of land use and tenure is that the local people and their views about the land can be an impediment to the modernisation drive the federal government is working towards. It is helpful to reiterate that this assumption is wrong, and efforts must be made in ensuring that the ideas and views given by the local community leaders should be taken into consideration. For instance, it is a truism that conflicts emanating from land ownership can only be amicably solved through traditional dispute resolution systems since land among the people of the Gambella region is communally owned.

6.3 WHAT IS LIKELY TO CONDITION THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF THE LAND USE AND TENURE REFORMS IN THE GAMBELLA REGION OF ETHIOPIA?

After a discussion of the various challenges that have been leading to conflicts between the interests of the local peoples and the foreign company owners in the Gambella region, it is therefore vital to suggest the ways in which these challenges should be addressed. Although it is of paramount importance to note that there are no uniform measures to ensure that the interests of the local peoples and the foreign company owners are reconciled, specific measures to address them given their varying nature and context can be suggested.

As the data presentation has shown, the conflict of interests between the foreign company owners and the local peoples emanate from the differences in how the way land is being leased to foreign company owners is conceptualised. To most local peoples, the way land is being taken away from them amounts to land grabbing. This dovetails with what was noted by Fana (2016). Fana (2016), (2015b) and Seyoum (2015) talks of the lack of technicality and the fast-track nature of the way land is transferred to new owners. This comes together with the villagisation process in which the

local peoples are forced into villages in ways that ensures that they cannot rebel against the moves. Laws were suddenly changed with the aim of taking the land from the locals without their proper participation.

In contrast, the provincial government official and the foreign company owners who were interviewed view this as land leases. In order to ensure that there is no clash of interests between the local people and the foreign company representatives who in this instance are the two hostile groups, it is therefore crucial for reformers to identify and take into consideration of significant points of departures between how the locals define land grabbing and how the government and the foreign company owners define land leasing. This approach, it can be argued, will lead to a situation whereby a common ground can be reached regarding how best the land tenure and use issues can be approached in ways that will be satisfactory to the two hostile parties.

It can also be pointed out that the federal government has been adopting a top-down approach when dealing with the issue of land in the Gambella region. Although it can be acknowledged that although the government has made efforts in calling over the local community leaders the views of the majority community leaders, the federal government does not take their views seriously when it comes to land issues. In order to ensure that the views of the local peoples are fully included in how the issue of land is dealt with, it can be suggested that reformers adopt a bottom-up approach in which the views of the locals drive and orient how the land tenure and land use issues are dealt with. The effectiveness of this approach is that such an approach can significantly contribute to enhancing the cooperation of the local peoples and, in the end, lessening conflicts that may ensue in instances where proper participation of the locals is not enhanced.

The participation of the locals can be enhanced through the allocation of significant resources and ensure that the locals are at the forefront of the agricultural activities on their ancestral land. One

can argue that, albeit it is of paramount importance to ensure that Ethiopia keeps at pace with the global trends as far as development related issues are concerned, this objective must, however, not be achieved at the expense of the aspirations of the local peoples. Enhancing local participation in such issues through maybe carrying out referendums whenever issues related to land tenure and use are on the table should be enhanced. Success in this regard significantly depend on the ways in which reformers incorporate the locals and their institutions in the mainstream governance structures by allocating enough resources as well as continued capacity building of local officials who are critical in the administration of justice and dispute settlement in the communities they lead.

It can also be suggested that enhancing the rule of law can also contribute towards ensuring that the vulnerable local farmers are not mistreated at will by the federal government. A weak and sometimes non-existent legal framework perpetuates the mistreatment of the locals based on gender and ethnicity as what seems to be the case in the Gambella region. All these factors, it can be noted, can lead to continued hostilities and poor cooperation by the locals with the federal government's efforts to ensure Ethiopia reaches its full potential as a country. It is clear that women play a crucial role in the social and economic development of their communities. In this regard, the state and international partners must take deliberate measures to empower them by eliminating major hurdles that inhibit the realization of their potential and actively facilitating their participation in the reform process. Thus, in order to ensure that the land tenure and land use issues will not be the cause of continued conflicts, the rule of law should be enhanced and prioritised in Ethiopia.

6.4 THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

The study was about land grabbing in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. Ethiopia's recent history has been characterised by contestations over land which has ethnic undertones. Thousands of hectares of land are being taken away from the local people of Gambella to pave way for foreign investors in what have been termed land grabs. Resultantly, estimated thousands have been rendered homeless and struggle to reconstruct livelihoods. Historically, people staying in the Gambella are migrants fleeing conflict from present day South Sudan and have settled permanently in the region. The ethnic complexion of the area has mostly been Nuer. Since then, people in this region have claimed autochthonous claims to the area and have regarded the area their ancestral land.

From what has been discussed and analysed in the thesis, a number of theoretical insights can be arrived at. One of the key insights noted is that the land grabs strip the local people of their identity and has an ethnic twist to it. In spite of the fact that the Federal government of Ethiopia has primary rights to land, the local people of Gambella have autochthonous claims to the land and regard the land as their ancestral land. As such, it defines who the people of Gambella are and an asset from which they construct their livelihoods. Such issues which are closely connected to the issue of identity and belonging are constitutive of how the community of Gambella understands itself. This study then unpacked the nuances and unique insights and conditions surrounding land grabs in Gambella. The Nuer people in the region may be considered an ethnic minority in Ethiopia given their history of migration from present day South Sudan as a result of war. In making sense of their history as 'foreigners', the people of Nuer origin actively make sense of the land grabs as persecution and equate the land grabs to ethnic cleansing. Ethnicity and minority status the Nuer people in the Gambella region of Ethiopia features prominently in their narratives as ethnic

minorities since land is taken with little or nothing done to compensate them. Viewing land grabs through this dimension in ways that are shaped by motivations and determination of the ethnic Nuer to nurture and cultivate the discourse of victimhood and unfair treatment brings a new dimension on how land grabbing is documented and understood in literature.

I argue that it is the transmission of such narratives which reveals how a community is constituted, interprets itself and belong together as an ethnic group in the face of land dispossession where one can bring a new dimension on how land grabs are understood in a novel way. The standpoint from which I navigate the issue under study concerns ideas and practices related to identity and belonging. Reflecting upon the issue of belonging and identity in the context of land dispossessions, all relate to, and are formative of how the Nuer people of Gambella understand themselves and their place in Ethiopia. These are fundamental concerns that speak of the experiences of migratory communities not only in Ethiopia but some parts of Africa as well. Experiences of constructing and making a home away from home are common among various communities the world over. In light of this, the issue of authority over land, belonging and identity are very important to study and bring new theoretical insights to the issue of land grabbing. Who belongs where and why have soured moral and political arguments and debates globally. In Ethiopia today, particularly in the context of the new wave of land takeovers by foreigners, controversies regarding the issue ethnic persecution and neo-colonialism have become both passionate and topical hence adding new theoretical insights to the issue of land grabbing.

The other contextually important factor from which the Nuer people of Ethiopia makes sense of the land grabs is the current crises over ethnic issue in both South Sudan and Ethiopia. The Nuer people in South Sudan are pitted against the majority Dinka. The political upheavals in Ethiopia first under the leadership of the Tigrinya leader and recently the Oromo leader have left most

Nuers' position in their country of origin and Ethiopia as a country of adoption precarious. These political upheavals and the real and imagined persecution of ethnic minorities have coincided with land grabs which started after the 2008 global and fuel crises. Large swathes of land in the Gambella region have been taken from the locals and given to foreign investors for agribusiness and other capitalist projects. These government led land seizures has put the government of Ethiopia under stoplight especially during the former government led by the Tigrinya leader. The land grabs have diminished the chances of the local people from constructing livelihoods since it is from the land where most local peoples constructed their livelihoods from. Some are left without any homes and any property. The situation is further aggravated by the withdrawal of donors from the country due to the fighting which has recently broken out between the Tigray People's Liberation Army and the Federal Government of Ethiopia. Though the war is not fought in the Gambella region, international hostility aggravated by the obduracy of the current government against ceasing the hostilities with the Tigray People's Liberation Army and the subsequent withdrawal of food aid equally makes the situation dispossessed of land in the Gambella region quite desperate. This is another important dimension from which the issue of land grabs can be discussed in order to bring new insights to the issue of land grabbing in conflict zones such as Ethiopia today.

These are the economic, social and political contexts in which I situate the dispossession of land among the Nuer people of the Gambella region in this study. I find it important that an understanding is sought regarding the historical, social, political and economic forces that shape and structure the lives of the Nuer people in the Gambella region of Ethiopia. From these contexts, individual stories are then given their meanings through an ethnographic study. The importance of this historical contextualization rooted in an ethnographic inquiry necessitates us to stay close to

the lived subjective realities of the local people of the Gambella region, their actions, belief systems, understandings and the contextual situations of the land grabs they now face hence bringing new theoretical insights to the issue of land grabbing in Ethiopia. Thus, although land grabs are taking place in the context of similar historical incidences such as colonialism (subjugation of people through using arms of war to conquer) the world over, they mean different things to different people due to cultural differences. The approach I take in understanding the issue under study builds on the knowledge I gathered from the lived experiences of the people I studied.

I noticed that although the Nuer people of Gambella have foreign roots, a homeland to them is not just a geographically describable and determinable place, it is still situated and localized, in this case significantly within a territory that other people make rightful claims for. Although the Nuer people have decisively made themselves at home and shared a unifying sense of belonging in Ethiopia, their occupation of the area they now claim ownership as their ancestral land and pace of belong is contested. As a result, the problem with the claims the Nuer make of the Gambella as their homeland can justifiably be contested hence land grabs by the local government. This ambiguity, a double dilemma of sensing a belonging to a place that is taken away and realizing that the belonging is fraught with disquiet and ambiguity brought interesting new nuances to the issue of land grabbing I studied. This was so since this ambiguity seems to call for continuous affirmation and reaffirmation in the Nuer people's self-reflective understanding of belonging.

From what has been presented in section 1.8, it is clear that a novel theory which cross-fertilizes the various theoretical standpoints can be arrived at. Since the issues of land grabbing seem to be taking an ethnic twist as what the current study shows, such an approach can be useful in explaining the issue of land grabbing as was done in this study. In addition to the theoretical positions which

have been amalgamated in this study, including the postcolonial lens in such a theory can also be important in understanding the issue of land grabbing in an African context.

6.5 CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

A critical appraisal of the full implications of the land transfer regime in the Gambella region of Ethiopia to the economy of Ethiopia would indeed involve a far more ambitious inquiry in which economic tests based on tests seen in the field of economics may be able to take this up. Nevertheless, an inquiry this study has done is a good starting point. This study, one can argue, has aided the conclusions which have to date been reached by the various studies done on the topic since the 2008 food, fuel and financial crises. Hence, rather than an apologetic or celebratory account of the issues the study emphasised, the thesis has made efforts in carrying out an empirical inquiry of the socio-economic implications of land grabbing in an African context.

To be sure, the thesis did not intend to recycle the old and tired narratives of the core, which always benefits at the expense of the periphery, which the International Dependency Theory is known for. Nuances of the analysis done aside, however, the key issues which were discussed through the prism of the International Dependency Theory in this study have eventually discussed such issues. As the analysis and literature review has shown, capitalist intentions, which are driven by speculations of a global depression, as well as speculations of food crises, have also been vindicated in how the large firms and financial institutions backed by governments from the global North have been at the epicentre of all this.

The study notes that to a larger partaking, the changes in the land tenure and the ways in which land is used in the Gambella region of Ethiopia qualify to be called land grabbing by the local peoples of Ethiopia. Although there were contrasting views in which some participants saw this as

land leasing whose implications will be favourable to the local peoples of the Gambella region and Ethiopia at large, the majority of the local participants noted that the socio-economic implications of the land grabs have been negative. The perceptions of the local peoples in terms of gains and losses brought about by what they regard as land grabs have been far hostile than positive. The study noted that there were no meaningful consultations were done in order to collect the views of the local people regarding the issues of land tenure and land use in the Gambella region. As a result, the legitimacy and credibility of the way in which the government is dealing with the issue of land grabbing is at stake. In this context, the study noted that the legitimacy and credibility of what the local peoples regard as land grabbing would hinge on the extent to which the local peoples identify themselves with the changes to the land tenure and land use peddled by the federal government. Although it is of paramount importance to ensure that land is used to total capacity in order to ensure that there is food and security for all Ethiopians, the realisation of this goal should not drive those who claim ownership of the land to the periphery.

Rather, the local people should always be at the epicentre of the major decisions which are taken by the government. The programmes in which land is involved should be done in ways that best reflect the views and interests of the local peoples. It is this strategy that ensures that the issues of land use and land tenure are not a cause of havoc and lawlessness as what has been seen when the local people around the capital city of Addis Ababa engaged in civil disobedience when their land was taken away from them without their consent. Thus, although the goal of modernisation and development should be of paramount importance to Ethiopia, it should be pursued in ways that should include the local peoples. It is this strategy that will ensure that tranquillity prevails as Ethiopia tries to catapult itself into the league of developed nations. In this context, it is thus essential to reaffirm the argument that although foreigners can play a speculative role in ensuring

that development is enhanced, the success and failure of these efforts is mainly dependent on the cooperation of the local peoples. The efforts to development will mainly be incumbent upon how the hopes, expectations, concerns and needs of the local peoples are taken into consideration in ways that will reflect their past and commitments to shared values.

While making an inquiry into the socio-economic implications of land grabbing in Ethiopia, the study made this inquiry in the Gambella region, an area that is near the Sudanese border with Ethiopia. This area has been chosen because of the episodes which have taken place in this area regarding the land tenure and land uses which the local peoples have termed land grabs. These occurrences of these land grabs were examined in the context of a surging literature base on such issues prompted by the 2008 food, financial and fuel crises. Although it is too early to get the full picture of whether the changes in the land tenure and land uses systems have been a failure, it is a truism the land dispossessions of the people of Gambella have not yet improved the social and economic aspects of their lives. Insecurities of land tenure in the new areas in which the local peoples have been moved to, poor harvests, difficulties in adjusting to wage labour (for those who accepted jobs in the newly formed farms) are some of the challenges that the local peoples were facing during the period of the research. Efforts to ensure that their rights are taken into consideration through protesting have been faced with brute force from the federal government, a situation that has rendered these efforts fruitless.

6.6 AREA/S OF FURTHER STUDY

Since I did not manage to interview women, new theoretical insights which take into consideration on the gender dimensions to land grabbing cannot be arrived at. If I had realized this issue ahead

of time, I would have included a female research assistant who would have been allowed to interact with the women. Future studies could take cognizance of this aspect so as to include women's perspectives and theoretical insights. Another key theoretical insight can be gained by specifically focusing on the cultural aspects which drive and orient people's perceptions on land and its transfer from one person to the other. The issue of unfair treatment of ethnic minorities also begs further investigation as to its prevalence in other parts of Africa and in other continents where land grabs are occurring or have occurred. In addition, further insights of the issue of land grabbing can be gained by carrying out a study which estimates land grabs in Africa. Another area of further study is finding out what happens to displaced people who do not get employed on the land grab projects as an area of further study. Economists also need to carry out benefit-cost analyses on livelihoods before and after land grabs. Further insights on the issue of land grabbing could be derived from engaging with women. The issue of water grabbing is another area which may need further investigation. It could be very insightful to carry out a study driven and oriented by the question: Does land grabbing also involve water grabbing? A study could also be designed which takes advantage of the power of narratives and stories. This is one of the most powerful ways in which information is passed from generation to generation in the African context. The study might involve more in-depth interviews with a small sample including leaders and non-leaders interviewed several times over a sustained period. e.g. a total of 4 interviewed over 4 to 6 months where understanding the issues is more important than the establishing the prevalence of certain phenomena. If there are persisting narratives and stories, they can be picked up this way.

REFERENCES

Aarts, V. 2009. Unravelling the Land Grab: How to Protect the Livelihoods of the Poor? Master Product for AMID 2009 CIDIN. Radbound University Nijmegen: Oxfam Novib.

Abebe, H. G. 1990. Generating Marketed Surplus of Food through State Farms: A Critical Evaluation of the Ethiopian Experience, MA thesis, The Hague: Institute for Social Studies.

Abebe G. A. 2019. The effects of Land Grabs on Peasant Households: The case of the Floriculture Sector in Oromia, Ethiopia. African Affairs, 119(1): 90–114.

Adnan, S. 2013. Land grabs and primitive accumulation in deltaic Bangladesh: Interactions between neoliberal globalization, state interventions, power relations and peasant resistance. Journal of Peasant Studies, 40(1): 87–128.

Alden-Wily, L. 2012. Looking back to see forward: The legal niceties of land theft inland rushes. Journal of Peasant Studies, 39(3–4): 751–75.

Allen, M. 2016. Essentials of publishing qualitative research. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Altieri, M. A. & Toledo, V. M. 2011. The agroecological revolution in Latin America: Rescuing nature, ensuring food sovereignty and empowering peasants. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38(3): 587-612.

Altieri, M. A. 2010. Scaling up agroecological approaches for food sovereignty in Latin America. In: Wittman, H., Desmarais, A.A. & Wiebe, N. eds. Food sovereignty. Reconnecting food, nature and community. Halifax: Fernwood.

Amanor, K. 2008. Sustainable development, corporate accumulation and community expropriation: Land and natural resources in West Africa. In: Amanor, K. & Moyo, S. eds. Land and sustainable development in Africa. London and New York: Zed Books, pp. 234-253.

Amanor, K. 2012. Global resource grabs, agribusiness concentration, and the smallholder: Two West African case studies. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39(3&4): 345-351.

Amanor-Wilks, D. E. 2009. Land, labour and gendered livelihoods in a ‘peasant’ and a ‘settler’ economy. Feminist Africa, 12: 31–50.

Anderson J. 2004. Talking whilst walking: A Geographical Archaeology of Knowledge. Area, 36(3): 245–261.

Anseeuw, W., Alden-Wily, L., Cotula, L. & Taylor, M. 2012. Land rights and the rush for land: Findings of the global commercial pressures on land research project. Rome: International Land Coalition.

Anthias, F. 2013. Identity and Belonging: Conceptualisations and political framings. KLA Working Paper Series No. 8; Kompetenznetz Lateinamerika - Ethnicity, Citizenship, Belonging.

Antonsich, M. 2010. Searching for Belonging – An Analytical Framework. Geography Compass 4 (6): 644–659.

Araghi, F. 1995. Global depeasantization, 1945-1990. The sociological quarterly, 36(2): 337-368.

Araghi, F. 2009. Accumulation by displacement: Global enclosures, the food crisis, and the ecological contradictions of capitalism. Review, XXXII(1): 113–146.

Araghi, F. 2010. The end of 'cheap ecology' and the crisis of 'Long Keynesianism'. Economic and Political Weekly, xlv(4): 39–40.

Ariyo, J. & Mortimore, M. 2011. Land deals for commercial agriculture in Shonga, Nigeria: The policy challenge. Policy brief. Nairobi/Brighton: Future Agricultures Consortium.

Ariza, P., Lele, S., Kallis, G. & Martinez-Alier, J. 2010. The political ecology of Jatropha plantations for biodiesel in Tamil Nadu, India. Journal of Peasant Studies, 37(4): 875 897.

Arrighi, G. 2007. Adam Smith in Beijing. Lineages of the twenty-first century. London: Verso.

Babbie, E. 2001. The Practice of Social Research. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Badgley, C. & Perfecto, I. 2007. Can Organic Agriculture Feed the World? Renewable Agriculture and Food Systems, 22(2): 80–85.

Bahru, Z. 1976. Relations between Ethiopia and the Sudan on the Western Ethiopian Frontier

1898–1935. PhD dissertation, University of London.

Bahru, Z. 2008. Environment and Capital: Notes for a History of the Wonji-Shoa Sugar State (1951-1974). In: Bahru Zewde, Society, State and History: Selected Essays, Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University Press, pp. 120–146.

Bahru, Z. 2014. The Quest for Socialist Utopia: The Ethiopian Student Movement, c. 1960-1974, Oxford: James Currey.

Baglioni, E. & Gibbon, P. 2013. Land grabbing, large- and small-scale farming: What can evidence and policy from 20th century Africa contribute to the debate? Developing Quarterly, 34 (9): 1558–81.

Barnes, P. 2006. Capitalism 3.0: A guide to reclaiming the commons. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Bauman, Z. 1991. Modernity and Ambivalence. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. 1998. Postmodernity and its Discontents. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Baumgartner, P., von Braun, J., Abebaw, D. & Muller, M. 2015. Impacts of Large-Scale Land Investments on Income, Prices, and Employment: Empirical Analysis in Ethiopia. World Development, 72: 175–190.

Bellemare, M. F. & Bloem, J. R. 2018. Does contract farming improve welfare? A review. World Development, 112: 259–271.

Bennett, J. 2014. Gifted Places: The Inalienable Nature of Belonging in Place. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 2014, volume 32 (4): 658 – 671.

Birch, K., Levidow, L. & Papaioannou, T. 2010. Sustainable capital? The neoliberalization of nature and knowledge in the European knowledge-based bio-economy. Sustainability, 2, 2898–2918.

Borras Jr, S. M., Franco, J. C., Gomez, S., Kay, C. & Spoor, M. 2012. Land grabbing in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3-4): 845-872.

Borras, S. Jr & Franco, J.C. 2010. From threat to opportunity? Problems with the idea of a 'code of conduct' for land-grabbing. Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal, 13(2): 507–523.

Borras, S. Jr & Franco, J.C. 2012. Global land grabbing and trajectories of agrarian change: A preliminary analysis. Journal of Agrarian Change, 11 (2), 34–59.

Borras, S. Jr. & Franco, J.C. 2011. Political dynamics of land grabbing in Southeast Asia: Understanding Europe's role. Discussion Paper, January 2011. Amsterdam: Transnational Institute (TNI).

Borras, S; Franco, J. & Wang, C. 2013. 'The challenge of global governance of land grabbing: Changing international agricultural context and competing political views and strategies. Globalizations, 10(1): 161–179.

Borras, S. Jr. 2010. The politics of transnational agrarian movements. Development and Change, 41(5): 771–803.

Borras, S.M. & Franco, J.C. 2009. Transnational Agrarian Movements Struggling for Land and Citizenship Rights. IDS Working Paper 323: 1-44, Brighton: Institute for Development Studies.

Braithwaite, J. & Drahos, P. 2000. Global Business Regulation. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Braun V. & Clarke V. 2012. Thematic analysis. In: Cooper, H. ed. APA Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, pp. 57–71.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3 (2): 77-101.

Brons, L. 2015. Othering: An Analysis. Transcience, 6 (1): 69-90.

Cashore, B. 2002. Legitimacy and the privatization of environmental governance: How non–state market–driven (NSMD) governance systems gain rule–making authority. Governance, 15(4): 503-529.

Castree, N. 2008a. Neoliberalising nature I: The Logics of De- and Re-regulation. Environment and Planning, 40(1): 131–152.

Castree, N. 2008b. Neo-liberalising nature II: Processes, outcomes and effects. Environment and Planning A, 40(1): 153–173.

Cawood, S. 2011. The Rhetorical Imprint of Nelson Mandela as reflected in Public Speeches 1950-2004. University of the Free State, Bloemfontein (unpublished Ph.D. thesis).

Ceuppens, B. & Geschiere, P. 2005. Autochthony, local or global? Annual Review of Anthropology, 34 (7): 385–407.

Chan, Z. Y., Fung, Y. & Chein, W. 2013. Bracketing in Phenomenology: Only Undertaken in the Data Collection and Analysis Process? Qualitative Report, 18 (30): 1-9.

Churchill, G.A., Brown, T.J. & Suter, T.A. 2010. Basic marketing research, 7th ed. Beijing: Cengage Learning.

Clark, A. & Emmel, N. 2010. Using Walking Interviews. Manchester: Economic and Social Research Council National Centre for Research Methods/University of Manchester.

Clarke, A. E., Friese, C., & Washburn, R. 2015. Introducing situational analysis. In Clarke, A. E., Friese, C. & Washburn, R. Eds. Situational analysis in practice: Mapping research with grounded theory, pp. 11–75.

Clow, K.E. & James, K. E. 2014. Essentials of marketing research: Putting research into practice, 1st ed. London, United Kingdom: SAGE.

Collier, P. 2008. The politics of hunger: How illusion and greed fan the food crisis. Foreign Affairs November/December 2008. Available at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64607/paul-collier/the-politics-of-hunger (Date of access 12 September 2020).

Corbera, E., Hunsberger, C. & Vaddhanaphuti, C. 2017. Climate change policies, land grabbing and conflict: Perspectives from Southeast Asia. Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue Canadienn D'études du développement, 38(3): 297–304.

Corbera, E., Brown, K. & Adger, W. N. 2007. The equity and legitimacy of markets for ecosystem services. Development and Change, 38 (4): 587–613.

Cotula, L. & Leonard, R. 2010. Alternatives to land acquisitions: Agricultural investment and collaborative business models. London: International Institute for Environment and Development.

Cotula, L. 2011. Land deals in Africa: What is in the contracts? London: International Institute of Environment and Development.

Cotula, L. 2012. The international political economy of the global land rush: a critical appraisal of trends, scale, geography and drivers. Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3): 67-89.

Cotula, L., Vermeulen S., Leonard, R. & Keeley, J. 2009. Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa. London/ Rome: International Institute for Environment and Development, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, and International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Cousins, B., Borras, S. M., Jr., Sauer, S. & Ye, J. 2018. BRICS, middle-income countries (MICs), and global agrarian transformations: Internal dynamics, regional trends, and international implications. Globalizations, 15(1): 1–11.

Creswell, J. W. 2014. Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed methods approaches, 4th ed. London: Sage.

Cypress, B. 2017. Rigor or reliability and validity in qualitative research: Perspectives, strategies, reconceptualization, and recommendations. Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing, 36 (4): 253-263.

Daimon, A. 2014. Politics of 'Othering' and the Struggle for Citizenship in Independent Zimbabwe. Voices from Malawian Descendants. Africa Insight, 44 (1): 137-150.

Daniel, S. 2009. The great land grab rush for world's farmland threatens food security for the poor. Oakland: The Oakland Institute.

Daniel, S. 2010. (Mis)Investment in agriculture. The role of the international finance corporation in global land grabs. Oakland, CA: The Oakland Institute.

Dauvergne, P. & Neville, K. 2010. The changing north–south and south–south political

Davis, M. 2006. Planet of slums. London & New York: Verso.

De Schutter, O. 2011 How not to think of land-grabbing: three critiques of large-scale investments in farmland. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (2): 249-279.

Deininger, K. 2011. Challenges posed by the new wave of farmland investment. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (2): 217–247.

Deininger, K, et al., 2011. Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can It Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits?, Washington, DC: World Bank.

Denicolo, P., Long, T. & Bradley-Cole, K. 2016. Constructivist Approaches and Research Methods: A Practical Guide to Exploring Personal Meanings. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. 2011. Strategies of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Dereje F. 2013. "Centering the Periphery"? The Federal Experience at the Margins of the Ethiopian State, in: Ethiopian Journal of Federal Studies, 1 (1): 155–192.

Dessalegn R. 2011. Land to Investors: Large-Scale Land Transfers in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa: Forum for Social Studies.

Dessalegn, R. 2014. Large-Scale Land Investments Revisited. In: Dessalegn, R., Meheret, A., Asnake, K. & Habermann, B. eds. Reflections on Development in Ethiopia: New Trends, Sustainability and Challenges. Addis Ababa: Forum for Social Studies.

Dietz, K., Engels, B. Pye, O. & Brunnengräber, A. eds. 2014. The political ecology of agrofuels. London: Routledge.

Dos Santos, T. 1970. The Structure of Dependence. The American Economic Review, 60 (2): 231-236.

Dube, T. V., Schinke, R. J., Strasser, R. & Lightfoot, N. 2014. Interviewing in situ: Employing the Guided Walk as a Dynamic form of Qualitative Inquiry. Medical Education, 48: 1092–1100.

Dunn, K. C. 2009. Sons of the Soil' and Contemporary State Making: autochthony, uncertainty and political violence in Africa. Developing Quarterly, 30 (1): 113-127.

Edelman, M. & Carwill, J. 2011. Peasants' rights and the UN system: Quixotic struggle? Or emancipator idea whose time has come? The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (1): 81–108.

ETC, 2009. Biomass power grab highlighted as biotech industry meets in Montreal. News Release. Available from: http://www.etcgroup.org/en/node/4696 [Accessed 6 January 2021].

ETC, 2010. The new biomasters. Synthetic biology and the next assault on biodiversity and livelihoods. Available from: www.etcgroup.org [Accessed 6 January 2021].

Evans, J. & Jones P. 2011. The Walking Interview: Methodology, Mobility and Place. Applied Geography, 31 (2): 849–858.

Fairhead, J., Leach, M. & Scoones, I. eds. 2012. Green grabbing: A new appropriation of nature? Special Issue. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (2): 345-353.

Fana G. 2015b. Villagization: Muting Dispossessions and Development in Gambella, paper presented at the 19th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, 24–28 August 2015, University of Warsaw.

Fana, G. 2016. Land Acquisitions, the Politics of Dispossession, and State-Remaking in Gambella, Western Ethiopia. Africa Spectrum, 51 (1): 5–28.

Fanon, F. 1967. The Wretched of the Earth. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Fanon, F. 1986. Black Skin, White Masks. London: Pluto.

Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE). 1995. Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.

Fenster, T. 2005. Gender and the city: the different formations of belonging. In: Nelson, L. & Seager, J. (eds). A Companion to Feminist Geography. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 242–257.

Ferguson, J. 2006. Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order. Durham: Duke University Press.

Fink, A. 2012. How to Conduct Surveys, 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fontein J. 2011. Graves, Ruins, and Belonging: Towards an Anthropology of Proximity. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.) 17: 706-727.

Foresight. 2010. The future of food and farming. Final Project Report. The Government Office for Science, UK.

Franco, J., Carranza, D. & Fernandez, J. 2011. New biofuel project in Isabela, Philippines: Boon or Bane for Local People? TNI Discussion Paper October 2011. Available at:

http://www.tni.org/article/new-biofuel-project-isabela [Date of access, 4 December 2020].

Franco, J. C. 2014. Reclaiming free prior and informed consent (FPIC) in the context of global land grabs. Amsterdam: Transnational Institute (TNI).

Frank, A. G. 1966. The Development of Underdevelopment. Monthly Review, 18 (4): 17–31.

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. & Nachmias, D. 1996. Research Methods in the Social Sciences. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Frankfort-Nachmias, C. & Nachmias, D. 2000. Research Methods in the Social Sciences. 6th ed. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Friedmann, H. & McMichael, P. 1989. Agriculture and the state system: The rise and fall of national agricultures, 1870 to the present. Sociologica Ruralis, 29 (2): 93–117.

Friedmann, H. 1978. World market, state, and family farm: social bases of household production in an era of wage labor. Comparative Studies in Society and History, 20 (4): 545–586.

Friedmann, H. 2005. From colonialism to green capitalism: social movements and emergence of food regimes. In: Buttel, F.H. & McMichael, P. eds. New directions in the sociology of global development. Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 229–267.

Fana, F. 2016. Land Acquisitions, the Politics of Dispossession, and State-Remaking in Gambella, Western Ethiopia. Africa Spectrum, 51 (1): 5–28.

Galaty, J. G. 2011. (Non)Rational Choice, paper presented at the workshop organized on the occasion of the 60th birthday of Gunther Schlee: Roundtable on "Rational Choice and Challenges", 10–12 July 2011, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle.

Geschiere, P. & Nyamnjoh, F. B. 2000. Capitalism and Autochthony: The Seesaw of Mobility and Belonging. Public Culture, 12 (2): 423-452.

Geschiere, P. 2009. The Perils of Belonging: Autochthony, Citizenship, and Exclusion Africa and Europe. Chicago. The University of Chicago Press.

GHI, 2011. Gap Report™: Measuring Global Agricultural Productivity. Available at: http://www.globalharvestinitiative.org/GAP/2011_GAP_Report.pdf (Date of acces 12 September 2020).

Gillam, C. 2009. Investors eye global ag sector for boost, Reuters. 21 June. Available at: http://globlalandgrab.org/5695. [Date of access, 6 January 2021].

Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L 1967. The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. New York: Aldine.

Godfray, H., Beddington, J. R., Crute, I. R., Haddad, L., Lawrence, D., Muir, J. F., Pretty, J., Robinson, S., Thomas, S. M. & Toulmin, C. 2010. Food security: The challenge of feeding 9

billion people. Science, 327 (5967): 812–818.

Golafshani N. 2003. Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. The Qualitative Report, 8: 597-607.

Goldstein, J. E. & Yates, J. S. 2017. Introduction: Rendering land investable.Geoforum, 82: 209–

211.

GRAIN, The 2008 land grab for food and financial security. Barcelona: Grain Briefing Paper Grain Publications.

Grajales, J. 2011. The rifle and the title: Paramilitary violence, land grab and land control in Colombia. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (4): 771–791.

Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M. & Namey, E. E. 2012. Applied Thematic Analysis. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hall, S. 1996. New Ethnicities. In: Morley, D. &. Chen, K. H. (eds.). Stuart Hall, Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies. London: Routledge, pp. 441–49.

Hall, D. 2011. Land control, land grabs, and Southeast Asian crop booms. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (4): 837–57.

Hall, R. 2011. Land grabbing in Southern Africa: The many faces of the investor rush. Review of African Political Economy, 128: 193–214.

Hall, D., Hirsch, P. & Li, T. M. 2010. Powers of exclusion: Land dilemmas in Southeast Asia. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Hall, R. B. & Biersteker, T. J. 2002. The Emergence of Private Authority in Global Governance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hamer, E. & Anslow, M. 2010. Ten reasons why organic can feed the world. The Ecologist, 1 March. Available from: www.theecologist.org. [Accessed 12 January 2021].

Harmse, C.P.J. 2012. Service quality in a landlord-small business relationship in shopping centers. University of Pretoria, Pretoria (Unpublished PhD thesis).

Harding, S. 1991. Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Harris, C. et al., 2017. Attitudes towards the 'Stranger': Negotiating Encounters with Difference in the UK and Poland. Social & Cultural Geography 18 (1): 16-33

Harvey, D. 2003. The new imperialism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harvey, D. 2005. A brief history of neoliberalism. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Herath, D. 2008. Development Discourse of the Globalists and Dependency Theorists: Do the Globalisation Theorists Rephrase and Reward the Central Concepts of the Dependency School? Developing Quarterly, 29 (4): 819-834.

Hesse-Biber, S. N. & Leavy, P. 2011. The Practice of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Heynen, N., McCarthy, J. Prudham S. & Robbins, P. eds. 2007. Neoliberal environments. London: Routledge.

Hofman, I. & Ho, P. 2012. China's 'developmental outsourcing': A critical examination of Chinese global 'land grabs' discourse. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (1): 1–48.

Holt-Gime´nez, E. 2007b. Exploding the biofuel myths. Le Monde diplomatique, July 2007, 10–11.

Houtart, F. 2010. Agrofuels. Big profits, ruined lives and ecological destruction. London & New York: Pluto Press.

Hughes, G. 2007. Community Cohesion, Asylum Seeking and the Question of the 'Stranger'. Towards a New Politics of Public Safety. Cultural Studies, 21 (6): 931-951.

Hunsberger, C. 2010. The politics of Jatropha-based biofuels in Kenya: Convergence and divergence among NGOs, donors, government officials and farmers. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 37 (4): 939–962.

James, D. 2013. Citizenship and land in South Africa: From rights to responsibilities. Critique of Anthropology, 33 (1): 26–46.

Jayne, T.S., Chamberlin, J. & Headey, D.D. 2014. Land pressures, the evolution of farming systems, and development strategies in Africa: A synthesis. Food Policy 48: 1–17.

Jensen, S. Q. 2011. Othering, Identity Formation and Agency. Qualitative Studies, 2 (2): 63-78.

Julia, C. & White, B. 2012. Gendered experiences of dispossession: Oil palm expansion in a Dayak Hibun community in West Kalimantan. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3&4): 567-572.

Kaufman, F. 2010. The food bubble. How Wall Street starved millions and got away with it. Harper's Magazine, July, 27–34.

Kautsky, K. 1988. The agrarian question. London: Zwan Publications.

Kay, C. 2011. Andre Gunder Frank: 'Unity in Diversity' from the Development of Underdevelopment to the World System. New Political Economy, 16 (4): 523-538.

Klinger, J. M. & Muldavin, J. S. 2019. New geographies of development: Grounding China's global integration. Territory, Politics, Governance, 7(1): 1–21.

Klinger, J. M., & Narins, T. 2018. New geographies of China and Latin America relations: Introduction to the special issue.Journal of Latin American Geography, 17(2): 6–22.

Kloppenburg, J. 2004. First the seed: the political economy of plant biotechnology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Knuth, S. E. 2015. Global finance and the land grab: Mapping twenty-first century strategies. Canadian Journal of Development Studies / Revue Canadienne D'études du Développement, 36(2): 163–178.

Kron, J. 2011. In scramble for land, group says, company pushed Ugandans out. The New York Post.

Kufandirori, J. T. 2014. Fast Track Land Reform in Matepatepa Commercial Farming Area, Bindura District: Effects on Farm Workers, 2000 – 2010. Masters dissertation Thesis Submitted to the University of Free State, Center of Africa Studies.

Künnemann, R. & Monsalve Suárez, S. (2013) International human rights and governing land grabbing: A view from global civil society. Globalizations, 10 (1): 180-194.

Lavers, T. 2012. "Land grab" as development strategy? The political economy of agricultural investment in Ethiopia', Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (1): 105–132.

Lavers, T. 2012a. "Land Grab" as Development Strategy? The Political Economy of Agricultural Investment in Ethiopia. Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (1): 105–132.

Lavers, T. 2012b.Patterns of Agrarian Transformation in Ethiopia: State-Mediated Commercialization and the "Land Grab". Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3–4): 795–822.

La Via Campesina. 2011. G20 Agriculture: No to 'Food grabbing' by the richest nations of the world! Press release. Jakarta: La Via Campesina. 16 June 2011.

Lentz, 2007. Land and Politics of Belonging in Africa. In Chabal, P., Engel, U. & de Haan, L. (eds). African Alternatives. Boston, Leiden, pp. 134-150.

Levidow, L. 2011. Agricultural innovation: Sustaining what agriculture? For what European bioeconomy? Co-operative Research on Environmental Problems in Europe (CREPE). Open University. Available at: http://dpp.open.ac.uk. [Date of access, 11 February 2021].

Levien, M. 2011. Special economic zones and accumulation by dispossession in India. Journal of Agrarian Change, 11 (4): 454-483.

Levien, M. 2012. The land question: special economic zones and the political economy of dispossession in India. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3&4): 573-582.

Leavy, P. 2017. Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches: London: The Guilford Press.

Lewis, J. 2003. Design Issues. In Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. eds. Qualitative Research Practice. A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers. London: Sage, pp. 49-71.

Li, T. M. 2010. To make live or let die? Rural dispossession and the protection of surplus population. Antipode, 41(supplement 1): 66–93.

Li, T. M. 2011. Centering labor in the land grab debate. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (2): 281-298.

Li, T. M., ed. 2009. Forum: Reading the World Development Report: Agriculture for Development. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 36 (3): 591–661.

Little, P. & Watts, M. 1994. Living under contract: Contract farming and agrarian transformation in sub-Saharan Africa. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Lister, R. 2004. Poverty. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Loewenson, R. 1992. Modern plantation agriculture: Corporate wealth and labour squalor.

London: Routledge.

Mehta, L; Veldwisch, G. J. & Franco, J. 2012. Water grabbing: Editorial introduction. Water Alternatives, 5 (2): 193–207.

McKay, B. M. 2018. Control grabbing and value-chain agriculture: BRICS, MICs and Bolivia's soy complex. Globalizations, 15(1): 74–91.

McKay, B. M., Oliveira, G. d. L. T., & Liu, J. 2020. Authoritarianism, populism, nationalism and resistance in the agrarian south. Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue Canadienne D'études du Développement, 41(3): 347–362.

Mackenzie, C. 2009. Tristezas tropicais: Further observations of forest governance in Zambezia. Final Report for FONGZA.

Makki, F. & Geisler, C. 2011. Development by Dispossession: Land Grabbing as New Enclosures in Contemporary Ethiopia. Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing April 2011.

Makki, F. 2012. Power and Property: Commercialization, Enclosures, and the Transformation of Agrarian Relations in Ethiopia. Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (1): 81–104.

Makombe, G. 2017. An expose of the relationship between paradigm, method and, design in research. The Qualitative Report, 22 (12): 3363-3382.

Makura-Paradza, G.G. 2010. Single Women, Land and Livelihood Vulnerability in a Communal area in Zimbabwe. PhD Thesis Submitted to Wageningen University.

Markakis, J. 2011. Ethiopia: The Last Two Frontiers, Oxford: James Currey.

Malik, M. 2011. Foreign investment into agriculture: Investment Treaties and the ability of governments to balance rights and obligations between foreign investors and local communities. Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing 6–8 April 2011, organized by the Land Deals Politics Initiative (LDPI) in collaboration with the Journal of Peasant Studies and hosted by the Future Agricultures Consortium at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.

Malterud, K., Siersma, V. D. & Guassora, A. D. 2016. Sample Size in Qualitative Interview Studies: Guided by Information Power. Qualitative Health Research, 26 (13): 1753-1760.

Marotta, V. 2002. Zygmunt Bauman: Order, Strangerhood and Freedom. Thesis Eleven, 70 (2): 36–54.

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. B. 2011. Designing Qualitative Research, 5th ed. London: Sage Publications.

Margulis, M. E., McKeon, N. & Borras S. M. Jr. 2013. Land grabbing and global governance: Critical perspectives. Globalizations, 10 (1): 1–23.

Margulis, M. E. 2012. Global food security governance: The Committee on World Food Security, Comprehensive Framework for Action and the G8/G20. In Rayfuse, R. & Weisfelt, N. eds. The Challenge of Food Security: International Policy and Regulatory Frameworks. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar: 231-254.

Marvasti, A. B. 2004. Qualitative Research in Sociology. An Introduction. London: Sage.

Mason, M. 2010. Sample Size and Saturation in PhD studies using Qualitative Interviews. Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 11 (3): 23-45.

Matunhu, J. 2011. A critique of modernization and dependency theories in Africa: Critical assessment. African Journal of History and Culture, 3 (5): 65-72.

May, V. 2017. Belonging from Afar: Nostalgia, Time and Memory. The Sociological Review, 65 (2): 401–415.

McCann, J. C. 1995. People of the Plow: An Agricultural History of Ethiopia, 1800-1990, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.

McCarthy, J. 2010. Processes of inclusion and adverse incorporation: Oil palm and agrarian change in Sumatra, Indonesia. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 37 (4): 821–850.

McDaniel, C. & Gates, R. 2013. Marketing research. 9th ed. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

McKeon, N. 2013. One does not sell the land upon which the people walk': land grabbing, rural social movements, and global governance, Globalizations, 10 (1): 105–122.

McMichael, P. & Scoones, I. eds. 2010. Biofuels, land and agrarian change. Special Issue, Journal of Peasant Studies, 37 (4): 345-357.

McMichael, P. 2005. Global development and the corporate food regime. In: Buttel, F.H. & McMichael, P. eds. New directions in the sociology of global development. Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 265–300.

McMichael, P. 2009a. A food regime genealogy. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 36 (1): 139– 170.

McMichael, P. 2009c. A food regime analysis of the ‘world food crisis’. Agriculture and Human Values, 26(4): 281–295.

McMichael, P. 2009d. Food sovereignty, social reproduction, and the agrarian question. In: Haroon Akram-Lodhi, A. & Kay, C. eds. Peasants and globalization, political economy, rural transformation and the agrarian question. Routledge, pp. 288–312.

McMichael, P. 2012. The land grab and corporate food regime restructuring. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3-4): 681-701.

McMichael, P. 2013. Land grabbing as security mercantilism in international relations. Globalizations, 10 (1): 47-64.

Mead, G. H. 1967. Mind, Self and Society. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Meckelburg, A. 2014. Large Scale Land Investment in Gambella, Western Ethiopia: The Politics and Policies of Land. In: Mulugeta, G. B. ed. A Delicate Balance: Land Use, Minority Rights and Social Stability in the Horn of Africa, Addis Ababa: Institute for Peace and Security Studies, pp.144–165.

Miller, L. 2003. Belonging to Country- A Philosophical Anthropology. Journal of Australian Studies, 27 (76): 215-223.

Monsalve, S. 2013. Grassroots voices: The human rights framework in contemporary agrarians struggles. Journal of Peasant Studies, 40 (1): 239–290.

Moore, J. 2010. The end of the road? Journal of Agrarian Change, 10 (3): 389–413.

Moore, J. W. 2011. Transcending the metabolic rift: a theory of crises in the capitalist world ecology. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (1): 1–46.

Morse, J. M. 2015a. Data were saturated. Qualitative Health Research, 25: 587-588.

Moyo, S. Jha, P. & Yeros, P. 2019. The Scramble for Land and Natural Resources in Africa. Gateway East: Springer Advances in African Economic, Social and Political Development.

Muchapireyi, G. 2017. An investigation into the challenges encountered by the community during the Tokwe-Mukosi rapid onset flood disaster in Zimbabwe. The North-West University, Potchefstroom (unpublished Master's thesis).

Mugera, W. 2013. Non-Probability Sampling Techniques. Nairobi: University of Nairobi Press.

Mujere, J. 2012. Autochthons, Strangers, Modernising Educationists, and Progressive Farmers: Basotho Struggles for Belonging in Zimbabwe 1930s-2008. PhD Thesis Submitted to The University of Edinburgh.

Murmis, M. & Murmis, M. 2012. Land concentration and foreign land ownership in Argentina in the context of global land grabbing. Canadian Journal of Development Studies, 33 (4): 490–508.

Muzondidya, J. 2007. Jambanja: Ideological Ambiguities in the Politics of Land and Resource Ownership in Zimbabwe. Journal of Southern African Studies, 33 (2): 325-341.

Nally, D. 2011b. The biopolitics of food provisioning. Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers, 36 (1): 37-53.

Nally, D. 2014. Governing precarious lives: land grabs, geopolitics, and 'food security'. Transaction of the Institute of British Geographers, 37 (2): 1-26.

Neuman, W. L. 2003. Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. 3rd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Nicotera, A. M. 1995. The Constructivist Theory of Delia, Clark, and Associates. In Cushman, D. P. & Kovačić, B. eds. Watershed Research Traditions in Human Communication Theory. SUNY Series in Human Communication Processes. New York: State University of New York Press: pp. 44-66.

Nolte, K. & Vaith, S. J. 2015. Interplay of Land Governance and Large-Scale Agricultural Investment: Evidence from Ghana and Kenya, in: Journal of Modern African Studies, 53 (1): 69–92.

Nkonyane, L. 2016. Female students' perspectives on reintegration back into high school after dropping out as a result of pregnancy in the Manzini region in Swaziland. University of the Free State, Bloemfontein (unpublished Master's thesis).

O'Connor, T. 2011. Qualitative Research Methodologies. Available at: http://www.drt.omoconnor.com/3760//ect06.html/E-book. [Accessed: 10 January 2021].

O' leary, Z. 2010. The Essential Guide to doing your Research Project. Los Angeles: Sage.

Oliveira, G. d. L. T. 2018. Chinese land grabs in Brazil? Sinophobia and foreign investments in Brazilian soybean agribusiness. Globalizations, 15(1): 114–133.

Oliveira, G. d. L. T. 2019a. Boosters, brokers, bureaucrats and businessmen: Assembling Chinese capital with Brazilian agribusiness. Territory, Politics, Governance, 7(1): 22–41.

Oliveira, G. L. T. McKay; B. M. & Liu, J. 2021. Beyond Land Grabs: New Insights on Land Struggles and Global Agrarian Change. Globalizations, 18 (3): 321-338.

Oakland Institute. 2011. Understanding land investment deals in Africa. Available at: http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/land-deals-africa. [Date of access 12 February 2021].

Oakland Institute, 2011. Understanding Land Investment Deals in Africa: Country Report: Ethiopia, Oakland, CA/Stillwater, MN: The Oakland Institute/The Solidarity Movement for a New Ethiopia.

Ojot M. O. 2013. Large-Scale Land Acquisitions and Minorities/Indigenous Peoples' Rights under Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia: A Case Study of Gambella Regional State, PhD dissertation, Bradford: University of Bradford.

Oxfam. 2011. Land and power: The growing scandal surrounding the new wave of investments in land. Oxford: Oxfam International Briefing Paper 51.

Packer. M. 2011. The science of qualitative research. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Patton, M. Q. 1990. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Peluso, N. L. & Lund, C. 2011. New frontiers of land control: Introduction. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (4): 667–681.

Peters, P. 2018. Land Grabs: The Politics of the Land Rush Across Africa. Oxford: Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics.

Pope, C. & Mays, N. 2000. Qualitative Research in Health Care. London: BMJ Books.

Rolfe G. 2006. Validity, Trustworthiness and Rigour: Quality and the Idea of Qualitative Research. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 53: 304–10.

Ross, N. J., Renold, E., Holland, S. & Hillman, A. 2009. Moving Stories: Using mobile methods to explore the Everyday Lives of Young People in Public Care. Qualitative Research, 9: 605–623.

Rossman, G. & Rallis, S. F. 2012. Learning in the field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rutherford, B. 2001. Working on the Margins. Black workers, White Farmers in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe. Harare. Weaver Press.

Rutherford, B. 2017. Land Governance and Land Deals in Africa: Opportunities and Challenges in Advancing Community Rights. Journal of Sustainable Development, Law and Policy, 8 (1): 235-258.

Sachs, W. 1993. Global ecology. London: Zed Press.

Sanderock, L. 2000. Negotiating fear and Desire: The future of planning in multicultural societies. Urban Forum, 11 (2): 201-210.

Schein, R.H. 2009. Belonging through land/scape. Environment and Planning. A, 9 (41): 811-826.

Schoenberger, L., Hall, D., & Vandergeest, P. 2017. What happened when the land grab came to Southeast Asia? The Journal of Peasant Studies, 44(4): 697–725.

Sassen, S. 2010. A savage sorting of winners and losers: contemporary versions of primitive accumulation. Globalizations, 7 (1–2): 23–50.

Sassen, S. 2013a. Expulsions: When Complexity Produces Elementary Brutalities. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sassen, S. 2013b. Land Grabs Today: Feeding the Disassembling of National Territory, Globalizations, 10 (1): 25-46.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. 2009. Research methods for business students. Harlow: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Schmidt, N. A & Brown, J. 2015. Evidence-Based Practice for Nurses: Appraisal and Application of Research. Burlington, MA: Jones and Bartlett.

Schneider, M. & McMichael, P. 2010. Deepening, and repairing, the metabolic rift. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 37 (3): 461–484.

Scoones, I., Marongwe, N. Mavedzenge, B., Murimbarimba, F., Mahenehene, J. & Sukume. C. 2010. Zimbabwe's land reform: Myths and realities. Harare: Weaver Press.

Scott, J.C. 2009. The art of not being governed. An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R. 2010. Research methods for business: A skill building approach, 5th ed. London: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Sekhri, S. 2009. Dependency approach: Chances of survival in the 21st century. African Journal of Political Science and International Relations, 3 (5): 242-252.

Sender, J. & Johnston, D. 2004. Searching for a weapon of mass production in rural Africa: Unconvincing arguments for land reform. Journal of Agrarian Change, 4 (1–2): 142–164.

Seyoum M. 2015. Federalism at the Margins of the Ethiopian State: The Lived Experience of the Majang People, unpublished PhD dissertation, Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University, Center for Federal Studies.

Sheller, M. & Urry, J. 2006. The New Mobilities Paradigm. Environmental Plan A, 38 (2): 207–226.

Smalley, R. 2013. Plantations, contract farming and commercial farming areas in Africa: A comparative review. Working Paper 55. Brighton and Nairobi: Future Agricultures Consortium.

Smeets, E. et al., 2004. A quickscan of global bio-energy potentials to 2050. Bio-EnergyTrade, March. Available at: www.bioenergytrade.org/downloads/smeetsglobalquickscan2050. pdf. [Date of access, 6 January 2021].

Sommerville, M. 2011. The global land grab and marginalization in Canada: the case of One Earth Farms. A paper presented at the Land Deal Politics Initiative (LDPI) conference on land grabs, IDS University of Sussex, April 2011. Available at: http//:www.iss.nl/ldpi [Date of access 15 January 2021].

Steen, K. 2011. Time to Farm. A Qualitative Inquiry into the Dynamics of Gender Regime of Land and Labour Rights in subsistence Farming: An Example of the Chiweshe Communal Area Zimbabwe. Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSS).

Stephens, P. 2013. The Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment. Globalizations, 10 (1): 123-140.

Tappen, R. M. 2011. Advanced Nursing Research: From Theory to Practice. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Learning.

Tausch, A. 2010. Globalisation and development: the relevance of classical "dependency" theory for the world today. International Social Science Journal, 61 (202): 467-488.

Tombindo, F. 2014. Understanding Vulnerability and Rural Livelihoods: A Case Study of Riverbed Farming In Negande Communal Area, Zimbabwe. Rhodes University, Grahmstown, (Unpublished Bachelor of Social Science Degree Thesis Degree).

Toulmin, C. 2009. Climate change in Africa. London: Zed Press.

Trudeau, D. 2006. Politics of belonging in the construction of landscapes: place-making, boundary drawing and exclusion. Cultural geographies, 6 (13): 421-443.

van der Ploeg, J.D. 2010. The food crisis, industrialized farming and the imperial regime. Journal of Agrarian Change, 10 (1): 98–106.

Van Houtum, H. & Van Naerssen, T. 2001. Bordering, Ordering and Othering. Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie, 93 (2): 125–136.

Vernengo, M. 2004. Technology, Finance and Dependency: Latin American Radical Political Economy in Retospect, Working Paper No. 2004-06, University of Utah Department of Economics. Available at:

https://web.archive.org/web/20120317085658/http://www.econ.utah.edu/activities/papers/2004_06.pdf. [Date of access 20 October 2016].

Visser, O. & Spoor, M. 2011. Land grabbing in post-Soviet Eurasia: the world's largest agricultural land reserves at stake. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 38 (1): 299–323.

Vogt, W. P. 2011. Dictionary of Statistics and Methodology: A Nontechnical Guide for the Social Sciences, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Von Braun, J. & Meinzen-Dick, R. 2009. 'Land grabbing' by foreign investors in developing countries: Risks and opportunities. Policy Brief 13. April 2009. Washington DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.

Weis, T. 2007. The global food economy. The battle for the future of farming. London & New York: Zed Press.

White, B. 1997. Agroindustry and contract farmers in upland West Java. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 24 (3): 100–136.

White, B., & Dasgupta, A. 2010. 'Agrofuels Capitalism: A View from Political Economy'. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 37 (4): 593-607.

White, B., Borras S. M. Jr., Hall, R., Scoones, I. & Wolford, W. 2012. The new enclosures: critical perspectives on corporate land deals, The Journal of Peasant Studies, 39 (3-4): 619-647.

Wiggins, S., Kirsten, J. & Llambi, L. 2010. The future of small farms. World Development. 38 (10): 1341–1526.

Wilkinson, J., Reydon, B. & di Sabbato, A. 2012. Concentration and foreign ownership of land in Brazil in the context of global land grabbing phenomenon. Canadian Journal of Development Studies, 33 (4): 417-438.

Wilson, A. 2012. Marketing research: An integrated approach, 3rd ed. England: Financial Times Prentice Hall.

Wolford, W., Borras, S.M., Hall, R., Scoones, I. & White, B. 2013. Governing global land deals: The role of the state in the rush for land, Development and Change, 13 (4): 45-56.

Wolford, W. 2010. Contemporary land grabs in Latin America. Presentation at the FAO Committee on Food Security 36th Session, October 2010, Rome. Available at: www.tni.org. [Date of access 21 June, 2020].

Woodhouse, P. & Ganho, A. S. 2011. Is water the hidden agenda of agricultural land acquisition in sub-Saharan Africa? Paper presented at the International Conference on Global Land Grabbing, University of Sussex, 6–8 April 2011.

World Bank. 2010. Rising global interest in farmland. Can it yield sustainable and equitable benefits? Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Food Programme, 2009. World hunger series: Hunger and markets. Earthscan: London.

Wright, S. 2015. More-than-human, Emergent Belongings: A Weak Theory Approach. Progress in Human Geography, 39 (4): 391–411.

Yin, R. K. 2012. Applications of Case Study Research, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Youkhana, E. 2015. A Conceptual Shift in Studies of Belonging and the Politics of Belonging. Social Inclusion, 3 (4): 10-24.

Young, J. 1999. Along Ethiopia's Western Frontier: Gambella and Benishangul in Transition. The Journal of Modern African Studies, 37 (2): 321–346.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2004. Borders, boundaries, and the politics of belonging. In: May S, Modood T and Squires J., eds. Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 214–230.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. Belonging and the politics of belonging. Patterns of Prejudice, 40 (3): 197-214.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2007. Intersectionality, Citizenship and Contemporary Politics of Belonging, Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy, 10 (4): 561-574.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2010. Theorizing Identity: Beyond the ‘Us’ and ‘Them’ Dichotomy. Patterns of Prejudice, 44 (3): 261-280.

Yuval-Davis, N, et. al. 2018. Everyday Bordering, Belonging and the Reorientation of British Immigration Legislation. Sociology, 52 (2): 228–244.

Zenker, O. 2011. Autochthony, Ethnicity, Indigeneity and Nationalism: Time-honouring and State-oriented Modes of Rooting Individual–territory–group Triads in a Globalizing World. Critique of Anthropology, 31 (1): 63–81.

Zoomers, A. 2010. Globalisation and the foreignization of space: Seven processes driving the current global land grab. The Journal of Peasant Studies, 37 (2): 429–44.

APPENDIX

Semi structured interview guide for the community leaders

As the community leaders, how do you conceptualise how land has been transferred from the original owners to new owners in Gambella?

Do you see what is happening in Gambella as ‘land grabs’?

Are there any consultations made between you as the community leaders and the government regarding these land transfers?

What have been the implications of what is happening on the local peoples in your community?

Do you think the rights and interests of community members have been breached as a result of what has been happening?

If yes, are there any measures which have been put in place to protect the interests of the community members in your community?

If yes, how effective have they been?

Do you think there have been any clash of interests between those whose land has been taken and those who have acquired it?

If yes, how best can the interests and rights of the local communities and the foreign investors be reconciled in future?

Is there anything more you would like to share?

Semi structured interview guide for the Provincial Government Officials/Foreign company representative

As the Provincial Government Official/foreign company representative, how do you conceptualise how land has been transferred from the original owners to new owners in Gambella?

Do you see what is happening in Gambella as 'land grabs'?

What has been the role of the government/your company in all this?

Are there any consultations made between the community members and the government/your

company regarding these land transfers?

Have there been any implications of what is happening on the local peoples in this province?

Do you think the rights and interests of community members have been breached as a result of what has been happening?

Focus Group Discussions interview guide for the community leaders

As a community, how do you conceptualise the way land has been transferred to you to new owners in Gambella?

Do you see what is happening in Gambella as 'land grabs'?

Are there any consultations made before the land grabs?

What have been the implications of what is happening to you as the local peoples?

Do you think your rights and interests have been breached as a result of what has been happening?

If yes, are there any measures which have been put in place to protect your interests?

If yes, how effective have they been?

Do you think there has been any clash of interests between you as a community and the foreign people taking the land from you?

If yes, how best can your interests and rights as the local community and the foreign investors be reconciled in future?

Is there anything more you would like to share?