FARMER-HERDER CONFLICTS: A CASE STUDY OF FULANI HERDSMEN AND FARMERS IN THE AGOGO TRADITIONAL AREA OF THE ASHANTI REGION

BY

IBRAHIM BAIKOO

(10397359)

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JULY, 2014
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that except for the references which have been duly cited, the work presented in this dissertation was entirely done by me in the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. This work has never been presented either in whole or in part for any other degree in this university or elsewhere.

Student:

Ibrahim Baidoo ................................................................. ...........................................................

ID №: 10397359  Signature  Date

Supervisors:

Prof Kojo Sebastian Amanor ................................................................. ...........................................................

(Principal Supervisor)  Signature  Date

Dr Richard Asante ................................................................. ...........................................................

(Co-Supervisor)  Signature  Date
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents Mr. Abdul Aziz Baidoo, my mother Sekinatu Baidoo and my siblings, Adiza, Radiatu and Zakari Baidoo, not forgetting Mrs. Matilda Pokua Duthie and the entire LIC family especially the Joseph Bible Study Group.
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines conflicts over natural resources between pastoralists and indigenous farming communities in Agogo, in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. In recent years, Agogo has gained much coverage in the media over these conflicts. This study attempts to unravel the underlying causes of these conflicts. It argues that the conflicts are shaped by three different interests: farmers, herders and chiefs. The chiefs are interested in gaining revenues from land and natural resources by releasing them to migrants, including herders. This creates pressures on local resources and affects farmers’ management of fallow land. It results in herders encroaching into farming areas and farmers moving into herding areas. The pressure on resources and encroachment of cattle onto farm lands, where they destroy crops, results in increasing tensions between herders and farmers which breaks out into violent confrontations. The study investigates the conditions and arrangements under which lands are released to migrants or herders. It examines specific instances of conflicts, and the moral discourses around migrants and pastoralists. The study employed qualitative methods of research by conducting in-depth and unstructured interviews to solicit information from farmers, pastoralists, chiefs, assembly members and a veterinary officer. The study also made use of policy documents, committee reports and police records. The interview sought to examine the nature of livelihood activities, relations with other groups, types of conflicts, perceptions of conflicts and cultural and moral perceptions of other groups. Media reports tend to exaggerate violent conflicts and engage in ethnic stereotyping while ignoring the structural relations that produce the conflict, which lie in the ability of chiefs to sell and commercialise resources to outsiders without consulting with local communities.
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AK 47</td>
<td>Automatic Kalashnikov 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASP</td>
<td>Assistant Superintendent of Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATC</td>
<td>Agogo Traditional Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATDTF</td>
<td>Agogo Town Development Tasks Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Criminal Investigation Department/Detective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCID</td>
<td>District Criminal Investigation Department/Detective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSS</td>
<td>Ghana Statistical Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCE</td>
<td>Municipal Chief Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>REGSEC</td>
<td>Regional Security Council</td>
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</table>
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of Study

Natural resource conflicts are pervasive in Africa, and the West African sub-region is not an exception. Blench (1996:1) asserts that the rise in natural resource conflicts is as a result of “human population increase and the globalisation of the economy.” According to Blench, resource conflicts can be classified into two, namely point resources including mines, farms and reserves and eco-zonal conflicts including water, grazing and hunting rights (Blench, 1996: 1).

Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers have been noted as an example of “Low Intensity Conflict” (LIC) emanating from environmental degradation, resource scarcity, demographic and climate change (Shettima & Tar, 2008:163). Within the West African sub-region, a large section of the population depend on the production of livestock for their livelihood and survival (Shettima & Tar, 2008:163). According to Shettima and Tar (2008: 164), more than “12 million people in West Africa” depend on the production of livestock as their primary means of support whereas “over 70 million people in the same region also depend on livestock and livestock related enterprises for their livelihood.”

Farmers and pastoralists interdepend on each other for survival. Pastoralists move their herds to graze on farmlands belonging to crop farmers and also acquire the food stuffs produced by crop farmers. Farmers on the other hand require from pastoralists protein and dairy products (Shettima &Tar, 2008: 164). According to Monod (1975) the survival of pastoralists is dependent upon their interaction with sedentary people. Thus both farmers and pastoralists depend on each other for water, fodder, land and other resources. The relationship existing
between farmers and pastoralists therefore makes conflicts inevitable as competing interest arises over the use of natural resources. These conflicts are occasioned by the seasonal weather conditions which forces pastoralists to move from the semi-arid areas in search of pastures further south, which results in competition over access to available land for crop cultivation and grazing pastures for the cattle (Monod, 1975).

The Fulani\(^1\) represent one of the most highly populated groups in West Africa, spreading over from the “Atlantic Coast to the Red Sea” area living in a “more or less continuous zone, corresponding mainly to the climatic and vegetational zone of the Sahel” (Oppong, 2002:3-4). While the Fulani are indigenous to many states within the Sahelian region, they are also predominantly found in Northern Nigeria, the Futa Toro and Futa Djallon regions of Senegal and Guinea and the Macina regions of Mali and eastwards through Niger and Cameroon (Oppong, 2002:3-4).

Although the Fulani are predominantly herders, cattle herding is not the only activity they are engaged in. Some of them are engaged in trading and shop keeping whereas a good number of them have added agricultural activities to their production strategies (Davidheiser & Luna, 2008:78). Others have also “adopted farming as their primary mode of subsistence” (Davidheiser & Luna, 2008:78).

The presence of the Fulani in Ghana dates back to colonial times. Although their presence in the Northern sector of the country, then referred to as the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast was a recent phenomenon, they had begun settling permanently by the 20\(^{th}\) century.

\(^1\) Fulani are referred to by different names in Africa. According to Hagberg (2000:160, note 3) “in countries where French is the official language the Wolof term Peul is widely used. In Gambia and Sierra Leone the Mande term Fula is principally applied. In Nigeria and Ghana they are known by the Hausa term Fulani. Kanuri and other peoples of Chad basin refer to them as Felaata. Their own term for themselves is Fulbe (sing. Pullo), which is also the term employed in German writings”. In this study, I shall refer to them as Fulani or Fulbe in relation to the literature been reviewed.
even though their number was quite insignificant. According to the Lawra-Tumu District census report, “the population of settled Fulani rose from 100 persons in 1911 to about 302 persons in the 1921 census” (Tonah, 2002:18-19). The figure rose to 784 in the 1931 census comprising 400 males and 384 females, an indication that they might have probably moved with their entire families (Tonah, 2005:18-19).

Undoubtedly by the 1920s, the Fulani had permanently settled in the Northern territories and by the 1930s, they “had become the largest ethnic group not indigenous to the Gold Coast district with more households in the area than other migrant groups such as the Grunshi, Hausa, Wangara, Yoruba and Kilpalsi” (Tonah, 2005:19).

Four principal factors were responsible for the attraction of the Fulani to the Gold Coast. In the first place, the awareness of the Fulani of the pastoral conditions in the Gold Coast as a result of their transhumant activities across the borders of the country attracted a number of them into the country. Secondly, the thriving expansion of the cattle trade between the Gold Coast and the Sahelian countries led to the employment of Fulani herdsmen as carriers by livestock traders and the colonial administration. Thirdly, the establishment of the Native Administration Farms by the colonial administration throughout the Northern Territories and the policy of inviting Fulani pastoralists to take care of cattle in the area increased their number in the region and finally, the perennial Sahelian drought of the 1960s and 70s forced a number of pastoralists to seek greener pastures along the coastal countries of West Africa (Tonah, 2005:21).

The attraction of the Fulani to southern Ghana from the savanna areas to the fringes of the humid forest zone began in the 1990s. According to Tonah (2005:33-34), the Fulani entered deeply into the southern portions of Ghana as far as the Afram Plains at the eastern edge of the forest zone. The Afram Plains area, which is a sparsely populated, low-lying plateau east of the
Kwahu ridge, was well drained by several rivers, including the tributaries of the Afram River (Tonah, 2005:33). The decentralization of the country’s political system in the 1980s divided the Afram Plain into four administrative districts namely Sekyere East, Asante Akyem-North, Afram Plains and Kwahu. This development brought in its wake the discovery of the Afram Plains area as an area suitable for large-scale farming. This led to the development of road networks, the provision of electricity, water supply and other social amenities which attracted more inhabitants to the area and opened up the hitherto isolated and wild countryside.

The Fulani who had earlier on “avoided the Afram Plains began to also take advantage of the herding opportunities that had been created by the increasing deforestation and the opening up of the area for human settlement. Fulani herdsmen started sending cattle into the Afram Plains during the dry season to take advantage of the lush vegetation of the area” (Tonah, 2005:34). This development attracted many Fulani herdsmen to the area. The Fulani who moved into the Afram Plain area were initially herdsmen from the savanna zone. The services of other herdsmen were acquired by local stockowners who invited them to the area to tend their cattle on their behalf. These local stockowners were influential in acquiring large tracts of grazing land from their indigenous landowners (Tonah, 2005:34).

With the passage of time, other herdsmen from neighbouring Niger, Benin and Nigeria suddenly invaded the Afram Plains area. These nomadic pastoralists are commonly referred to as alien herdsmen (Tonah, 2005:34). According to Tonah (2005:34), these herdsmen were given refuge by their compatriot in the Salaga district after successfully crossing the Ghana-Togo border south of the Saboba township through Saboba-Chereponi and Gushiegu-Karaga. Unlike the resident Fulani who had settled and taken up residence among the indigenous agricultural population, these alien Fulani herdsmen lived at the outskirts of their neighbouring communities.
and avoided any form of long standing social relations with them (Tonah 2005:34-35). It is believed that, it is the activities of these alien herdsmen that have resulted in the destruction of farmers’ food crops and responsible for the violent confrontations between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in the Afram Plains area, especially the Agogo area of the Asante Akyem North district.

**Statement of the Problem**

In recent years, there have been a number of conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen throughout Ghana which have culminated into violent conflicts and the loss of lives and properties. This came to a serious head in the Asante Akyem North District in Agogo, Ashanti Region, when farmers alleged that herders have been destroying their farms with their cattle, raped women in the area and have attacked and killed farmers in the area resulting in the killing of twenty farmers since 2000-2010 (REGSEC report, 2010:6, 13). This study therefore seeks to examine the underlying causes of the conflicts between farmers and herders by carrying out a case study in the Agogo area.

**Hypothesis**

The interest of chiefs in allocating land commercially results in the decline of fallow land for local farmers which leads to conflicts between indigenous land users and migrants including conflicts between farmers and herders.
Objectives of the Study

The study examines the relationship between chiefs, herders and local migrants and the impact that the commercial interests of chiefs in releasing land to herders have on farmers’ livelihood and on conflicts between herders and farmers.

Research Questions

The main research questions aim to:

a) examine the interest of chiefs in allocating land
b) establish the impact of the allocation of land to herders on farmers
c) investigate the conditions and arrangements under which lands are released to migrants or herders
d) examine conflicts over land
e) investigate local moral discourses around migrants and pastoralists.

Significance of the Study

The study contributes to the academic debate on the varied forms of resource conflicts particularly in relation to the allocation of land by chiefs to migrants and the tension this triggers between farmers and herdsmen over the use of fallow land.

It also helps to gain insight into ways by which minority groups are alienated from the use of natural resources, especially land, in situations where access to land boosts the economic might of these minority population at the expense of indigenous groups whereby their activities are perceived to be inimical to the peaceful co-existence of the society.
Organization of the Study

The study is composed of five chapters.

Chapter one comprises an introduction, statements of the problem, hypothesis and the objectives of the study. It also includes the significance of the study, research questions, research methods and the organization of the study. The chapter argues that conflicts between farmers and herders are quite pervasive in the West African sub-region and that conflicts of this nature can be classified as “Low Intensity Conflict” (LIC). In Ghana, for example, the presence of the Fulani was beneficial in colonial times since the colonial authorities saw the superior skills of the Fulani in livestock rearing as an opportunity to develop animal husbandry in the country, particularly within the northern sector of the country. However, conflicts between herders and farmers have become quite intense in the forest zone of the country as herders move cattle further south in search of pastures for their cattle. It is therefore argued that conflicts between farmers and herders occur as a result of the land use pattern of pastoralists which leads to the destruction of food crops cultivated by farmers.

Chapter two focuses on a review of the relevant literature for the study. The chapter argues that the commercial interest of chiefs in allocating land to migrants engenders conflicts when its leads to shortage of land making it difficult for the local youth to access land. This results in the resentment of migrant population and distrust for chiefly authorities. In addition, the land use patterns of migrants especially pastoralists justifies their transhumant practices as archaic and affirms the received wisdom narratives which provides the avenue for blame and intervention by government and non-governmental organization. Moreover, the creation of the economic migrants makes it difficult for migrants to easily assimilate into localities in which
they find themselves. This situation subject them to codes of good conduct in order to gain acceptance or face expulsion for bad conducts.

Chapter three discusses the methods used in gathering information for this study. The study employed qualitative techniques for gathering information for the research. Qualitative analysis is “the non-numerical examination and interpretation of observations, for the purposes of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships” (Babbie, 2007: 378). This involved the use of semi-structured interviews, reports, photographs and court records for the study. A total of 26 respondents were interviewed through the use of purposive sampling techniques. The semi-structured interview method was used to solicit answers into the nature of livelihood activities, relations with other groups, types of conflicts, perceptions of conflicts and cultural and moral perceptions of other groups.

Chapter four focuses on the findings of the research. The findings of the research established that although the Fulani are blamed for the destruction of farms and other related crimes such as rape and the killing of farmers, the allegations of rape and murder could not be proven as has been amplified by the media. Again, the study pointed out that although cattle owners possess substantial amount of wealth considering the number of herds they owned, they did not have a voice in the societies in which they operated, which hampered their activities. In addition, the study established that cattle ownership in Agogo was shared between people of Fulani descent and inhabitants of Agogo. It was interesting to note that cattle owners from Agogo employ the services of Fulani herdsmen to tend their livestock. Besides, both chiefs and the local government derive a lot of revenue from the activities of the cattle owners but were unwillingly to ensure a lasting solution to the challenges that confronts them.
Chapter five deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendation derived from the findings of the study.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Land, although perceived as a free gift of nature is not as free at it seems. There are people with vested interest in its ownership, in addition to rules governing its usage as well as terms of inclusion and exclusion. The rules of inclusion and exclusion are dependent upon one’s place of origin, descent group and rules governing its accessibility and usage.

Ownership and control of land especially in Ghana varies amongst different ethnic groups although the fundamental principle that governs “customary land laws are generally applicable throughout the country” (Kasanga, 2002:26). Among the Akans for example who practice the matrilineal system of inheritance, chiefs and lineage heads hold the land in trust for their subjects (Berry, 2001:xvii, Austin, 2005:100, Kasanga, 2002:26, Agbosu et al, 2007:31) whereas in the Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions, the ‘Skins’ and ‘tendamba’ are the “customary trustees” who hold the land on behalf of the people (Kasanga, 2002:26, Abudulai, 2002:74).

In addition, the descent of the various ethnic groups also determines holders of allodial titles. Whereas among the Akan matrilineal descent group, allodial title is conferred on the stool with the chief or queen mother as it representative, allodial title to land is vested in the family as in the case of “southern patrilineal descent groups such as the Ewe and the Dangbe” (Agbosu et al, 2007:32). In the Northern Region, allodial title to land is vested in skins whiles the tendamba or earth priest hold the allodial title in the Upper East and Upper West Regions (Kasanga, 2002:26). That notwithstanding, family and individual ownership of land has “co-existed with allodial holdings throughout Ghana” (Kasanga, 2002:26).
Communal right to land is ascribed to all unoccupied and undeveloped land, subject to common right. This land is accessible to all including strangers without consideration to reciprocal benefits derived from the land. Such land are available and accessible in southern Ghana especially in some parts of the Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo and Western regions whereas in the north, the Tumu gap, Nadowli east zonal area (Upper West Region) and most of the Northern Region are places where such lands could be found (Kasanga, 2002:27). Access to grazing land, hunting and fishing grounds is enjoyed by all members of the community with the exception of reserves, sacred pond and rivers, farms and fallow land. In addition, economically viable plants such as dawadawa, kola nut, ebony and shea nuts are freely collected by all members of the community. It is therefore the responsibility of the entire community to ensure the preservation, management and defence of such lands whereas “titular holders exercise administrative functions over communal lands” (Kasanga, 2002:27).

However, there are exceptions to land use right in some communities in Ghana. For instance, among the Asante in the colonial period, there were exceptions to the use of economically viable lands and forest products. Traditional authorities tend to restrict the use of resources such as kola trees and gold deposits from been exploited by strangers whereas citizens were free to exploit such resources. In situations where strangers desired to exploit such resources, they had to obtain permission from the chief who would normally grant their request by charging rent for the exploitation of such resources. In some cases, such requests were totally denied by traditional authorities. Where the request is granted, the stranger is expected to give a substantial amount of their earnings to the land owning stool – usually one third or two thirds of their earnings. (Austin 2005: 102-103).
Among the Akans of southern Ghana, especially the Asante, Austin (2005:100) assert that land alienation was uncommon in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Alienation of land may result from the imposition of fines placed on chiefs by the Asantehene. According to Austin (2005:100), this took the “form of pledging (awowasi) or sale (tramma). However, the motive behind this arrangement was not to encourage the outright sale of land per se. Chiefs who found themselves in this web of affairs could purchase their land back from the buyer with the exact sum of money plus interest.

However, the nineteenth century witnessed a different turn of event as families were drawn into the sale of land as a result of the imposition of court fines placed on them. Families who had access to land resorted to the selling of land to “wealthy functionaries and entrepreneurs” in a bid to relieve their relations from indebtedness (Austin, 2005:100-101). Even though chiefs in the past were considered as not having any individual property of their own, by the early twentieth century this notion has become outdated. The practice of not distinguishing a chief’s personal property from that of the stool created the conducive environment for “chiefly aggrandizement” (Berry 2001:41,54). Even though the practice was abolished by the Asante Confederacy Council in 1943, the stage had already been set for the growing interest of chiefs in the allocation of land. Since then, chiefs have had varied interest in the allocation of land coupled with the privileges conferred on the chieftaincy institution by the colonial administration. This study therefore examines the interest of chiefs in allocating land especially to migrants and the arrangement under which such lands are released to migrants or herders, its impacts on farmers and related conflicts over land. The study also focuses on the moral discourse around migrants and pastoralists.
Interest of Chiefs in Allocating Land

Chiefs have diverse interest in the allocation of land as custodians who exercise control over it on behalf of their subjects. According to Austin (2005:100), “ownership of land is described as a corporate vested in a stool or lineage.” Allodial rights vested in chiefs give them enormous control over the allocation of land. The occupation of Kumasi by the British in 1893-94 for example and the subsequent transformation of the Gold Coast from protectorate to a colony opened up new opportunities that placed chiefs at the forefront to amass enormous wealth through the allocation and sale of land (Amanor, 2008:57-58). The motivation for the occupation of Asante was to command control of minerals which abounded in the interior of the Gold Coast. This development opened up Asante to speculators who begun negotiations with chiefs in order to obtain “valuable concessions at low prices” (Fox Bourne, 1901:41 cited in Amanor 2008:58).

Even though this new development opened up opportunities for speculators to negotiate for concessions in the Gold Coast, transaction of land with foreign concessionaires was not the sole preserve of chiefs. Individuals including concession lawyers and property speculators also accumulated tremendous amount of wealth from land transactions (Amanor, 2008:59).

The colonial government fearing it would lose control over the allocation of land established a policy of Indirect Rule which fostered an alliance between traditional rulers and colonial authorities that ensured that the management and control of land was placed under the authority of chiefs, especially paramount chiefs. Earlier, this system of vesting land solely in paramount chiefs did not exist. According to Amanor (2008:62) the power to alienate land to migrants did not reside with the paramount chief but with town chiefs. However, the introduction of Native Authorities under the Indirect Rule system brought in its wake diverse ramifications of
the interest of chiefs in the allocation of land which was solely vested in paramount chiefs. The British colonial government also “supported the privileges of chiefs and their control over land and natural resources” giving them the recognition as “the only social group who could transact land” (Amanor, 2008:60).

The power bestowed on paramount chiefs as the only social group that can alienate land still pertains even in the post-colonial era. It must be noted that the recognition bestowed on traditional rulers under the Indirect Rule system affirmed the customary principle that land is held in trust by traditional rulers on behalf of the entire community. The new dimension to this principle is made manifest in the benefits that accrue to chiefs in the allocation of land which was limited in the hands of a few privileged chiefs, mostly paramount chiefs. Privileging a few selected chiefs to transact land served two purposes. Firstly, it served as a convenient channel through which the colonial government could implement its policies namely taxation, and governance through paramount chiefs. Secondly, it placed the paramount chiefs in a position to exact taxes, tributes, rent and royalties from migrants and concessionaires (Amanor, 2008:66-70, Berry, 2001:181-182)

The conferment of alodial titles on chiefs put an obligation on them to defend and protect the well-being of their subjects as far as land is concerned. As custodians of the land, they are compelled by custom to defend their subjects in land disputes. As a result, the depth of historical knowledge of a chief is essential as afar as the defence of his people in land litigation cases are concerned. For instance in a succession dispute in Kumawu, supporters of one of the rival claimants to the stool insisted on the reinstatement of a former Kumawuhene – Kwame Afram because of his impeccable rendition of historical account in defence of his subjects and the entire community over disputed lands. According to Berry (2001:50):
Kwame Afram’s supporters also stressed the importance of history to good governance and the welfare of the community. As Kumawuhene, they pointed out Kwame Afram had successfully defended stool lands against rival claimants but, under his successor, Kumawu lost a land case with Asokore because “we had no one capable of giving the history of the disputed land … [N]o one else knows the history.

Berry emphasises that “in Asante, the chief speaks with the voice of the ancestors” by referring to their forebears in establishing claim over a disputed land.” In Berry’s view “chiefs’ syntactic identification with sometimes distant ancestors conflates history with custom, suggesting that authority gains legitimacy in the present from the fact of its exercise in the past” (Berry 2001:50). Kumawuhene Kwame Afram who was seen as an authority in “customary knowledge” was described by Rattray (without mentioning his name).

as a living repository of customary knowledge – one of the most learned exponents of the old Ashanti law, whose words may … be accepted as more than the mere obiter dicta of a learned custodian of the law and be taken as a fairly accurate statement of the traditional rules upon this subject (Rattray, 1965:355 cited in Berry 2001:51).

Finally, chiefs allocate land to migrants to assert their authority over contentious areas or make claim to unoccupied territories within their jurisdiction by encouraging migrants to populate the area. According to Berry (2001:154) “strangers are not necessarily disadvantaged … in terms of access to land.” She explains that recent migrants in the Afram Plains are from northern Ghana who were encouraged by the Kumawuhene to settle on disputed territories on the Plains in the name of the stool (Berry 2001:154). Chiefs assert their authority over contentious or unoccupied areas under their jurisdiction by appointing headmen among migrants population who settle in the area. These headmen serve as representatives of migrants at Traditional Council meetings and are empowered by chiefs to collect tribute on behalf of the stool from their “constituents and settle disputes within their own communities” (Berry, 2001:180-182). In Kumawu for instance, Berry (2001:180) explains that:
Throughout the twentieth century, successive Kumawuhenes have made strategic use of “strangers” as well as citizens to promote and defend the stool’s interests, particularly with regard to land. When “northerners” established the Kumawu zongo, the stool allocated them land for farming and building and encouraged them to stay. Today, northerners are openly admired in Kumawu and at Drabonso for their skill at farming. They also participate in local politics. The Serikin represents zongo residents in dealings with the Kumawu Traditional Council …

The motivation for encouraging migrants to settle in an area apart from asserting one’s chiefly authority was twofold. It was motivated by economic and political reasons. Economically, during the cocoa boom in southern Ghana, a lot of migrants were encouraged to settle in the Asante and Western Regions. Migrants from the Northern Region, and the Sahelian countries were admired for their skills in farming (Amanor, 2008:70).

Politically, chiefs recruited migrants as mercenaries who aided them in their expansionist programmes. In the Northern Region for example, the Mamprusi recruited Kantsosi, Chakosi and Tampolenssi mercenaries who aided them in asserting their authority over the entire Mamprusi Traditional Area under the jurisdiction of the Nayiri. These mercenaries were highly esteemed by the Mamprusi ruling class for their military prowess and were rewarded accordingly. For instance, whereas the leadership of the Kantsosi were “absorbed into the ruling aristocracy as a mark of high esteem in which they were held, their chiefs were also allowed to wear the Burumulsu (red hood) which were worn by the overlord of the Mamprusi Traditional Area” whiles the Chakosi were well treated, allocated farm lands and also fed by the chief and his elders (Tonah, 2003:83-84). It must therefore be noted that the acceptance of migrants in any locality was premised on their acceptance of the authority of the chief and the willingness to fulfill the obligations of the state or the community (Tonah, 2003:84, Berry, 2001:52, Austin, 2005: 99, 101).
The interest of chiefs in allocating land is a very complex issue that must be understood within the context of their customary obligation as custodians of the land. Customary authority confer on chiefs the responsibility of safeguarding the welfare of their people with respect especially to land. As a result, the powers conferred on chiefs by custom sometimes conflicted with their personal interest which made them incur the displeasure of their subjects when they realised their rights to land has been denied and given to strangers or migrants.

In addition, allocating land to migrants established a kind of patron-client relationship between chiefs and migrants from whom certain benefits could be derived which cannot be exacted from the autochthonous population. Payment of rent for example, which cannot be exacted from the autochthonous population because of their legitimate claim to land as citizens can be taken from migrants. Migrants also serve as allies to the chiefs. As clients (migrants) they contributed to the state treasury by paying tributes and rent to the chiefs and as allies they assisted the chief in warding off rival claimants to the land and defended the property of the chiefs. Payment of annual tributes was an acknowledgement of the chief’s legitimate claim over the land (Berry, 2001:181-182, Austin, 2005:101). The interest of chiefs in alienating land to migrants is varied and complex. In this regard, it would be interesting to examine the arrangements under which lands are leased to migrants.

**Arrangements under which Lands are Released to Migrants**

The alienation of land is a subject of scholarly debate among researchers. In Asante for example, Rattray and Busia (cited in Austin, 2005:100) held the view that land ownership was a corporate entrusted to stools or lineage heads on behalf of the “present, past and future members
of the *oman or abusua*. They asserted that the permission of the ancestors as well as the present and future members of the polity and family must be sought before land was alienated. They argued that even when land was alienated it took the form of a pledge (*awawasi*) or sale (*tramma*) and that the land could revert back to the original owners after sale by asking the “purchasers to let them buy the land back, paying the original sum plus a premium” (Austin, 2005:100). They further argued that alienation of land was a last resort. However, Wilks and McCaskie (cited in Austin, 2005:100) share a contrary view to this assertion by Rattray and Busia. They contended that, instances of land alienation abounded in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Asante whereby stools alienated land in fulfillment of financial obligations. These financial obligations were as a result of court fines imposed on individuals and families by the Asantehene which induced them to sell land at the lineage level. Contrary to Rattray’s view, Wilks and McCaskie argued that the reversion of land to the original owner was unlikely “but for the unprecedentedly weak military and political position of the central government at the end of the civil war in 1888 … the new government made restorations—without compensation” (Austin, 2005:100).

Despite these developments in Asantes’ past, the arrangement under which lands are released to migrants has undergone considerable transformations. The development of new frontiers for the cocoa industry resulted in the influx of diverse ethnic groups in the Western, Eastern, Central and Brong Ahafo Regions to take advantage of the opportunities the frontiers offered.

According to Amanor (2008:69), the nineteenth century opened up new frontiers in the cocoa sector which witnessed rapid expansion beginning from the Eastern Region and extending into Asante, Central, Brong Ahafo and the Western Regions. These developments set the stage
for chiefs to demarcate stool lands which they could sell to migrants. The areas designated by the chiefs were stool lands which had not been occupied by the indigenous population. The opening up of the new frontiers compelled chiefs to increasingly alienate land to migrants in a bid to prevent local cocoa farmers from extending their activities into areas which the chief could sell to migrants. Hence, the development of cocoa “created new interest in land for chiefs that had not existed before” (Amanor, 2008:70). Since tenure systems vary from region to region, I shall concentrate on the arrangement under which lands were released to migrants in the forest zone of Ghana.

In the forest zone of Ghana, the commonest arrangement under which lands were released to migrants was the share contract (Amanor & Diderutuah, 2001:1). Kasanga in his work *Land Tenure, Resource Access and Decentralisation in Ghana* identifies two main types of sharecropping tenancy agreements namely the *abusa* agreement and the *abunu* agreement (Kasanga, 2002:27). *Abusa* is a Twi word which means a “tripartite division” in which “an *abusa* labourer is paid one-third share of the value of the cocoa he plucks” (Hill, 1956:8)

Under the ‘*abusa*’ agreement, Kasanga (2002:27) explains that a tenant was allocated a tract of virgin land to cultivate by the landholder. The tenant was responsible for clearing and cultivating the land. After cultivating and harvesting the produce from the land, one third share of the annual produce was paid by the tenant farmer to the landholder.

Polly Hill in her work *Gold Coast Cocoa Farmer* (1956), on the other hand, identifies three different forms of ‘*abusa*’ relations namely the *abusa* labourer, the *abusa* caretaker and a third variant called *abusa* land tenant (Amanor & Diderutuah, 2001:1).

The *abusa* labourer was employed to work on an already established cocoa plantation. He was responsible for plucking, weeding and ensuring that the cocoa beans were fermented and
dried. He was also responsible for marketing the dried beans and for his wages, was given one third share of the proceeds for his labour.

The *abusa* tenant, however, unlike the *abusa labourer*, was a migrant without use right in land. He seeks permission from the chief to be given land to cultivate cocoa. The tenant is allocated a parcel of land which he clears and cultivates with his own resources, labour and capital without any form of assistance in terms of tools, food and seeds from the landholder but is entitled to retain two thirds share of the proceeds and pay one third to the chief.

A third variant of the *abusa* agreement which Hill identifies as peculiar to Akyem Abuakwa involves an arrangement in which the migrant tenant approaches the chief for land and invest his resources in establishing the farm without the support of the chief in terms of seeds, food and tools. The tenant is allowed to cultivate and sell food crops which he plant among the cocoa as shade crops. He is also allowed to keep all cocoa harvested in the early years of fruit bearing. However, the tenant is allowed to take one third share of the cocoa plantation as his own land when the cocoa farm came into full bearing. According to Hill (1956:14), such an arrangement was used to disguise the sale or a grant of land (Amanor & Diderutuah, 2001:1-2, Hill, 1956:12-14).

*Abunu* on the other hand is “a system of sharecropping in which the yield is divided into two parts – one for the landlord and one for the tenant” (Amanor, 1996: vi). Under the ‘*abunu*’ agreement, the landholder in addition to allocating a tract of virgin land to the tenant to cultivate may also provide the needed resources to establish the farm which is taken care of by the tenants, but belongs to the original landholder or donor. After cultivation, the annual produce is divided into two equal halves between the tenant and the landholder (Kasanga, 2002:27).
It must be noted that trends in sharecropping tenancies vary in different parts of the regions in Ghana and at different periods (Amanor, 2008:70, 2001: 25). For instance, in the Western Region, the Sefwi area is noted to have a different arrangement under the *abunu* system whereby the “the farm itself (not the produce) is divided into two or “into some other agreed proportions” (Kasanga, 2002:27). Depending on the conditions of the agreement, the tenant invests his resources in clearing and cultivating the land allotted him by the landlord. After cultivating the land, when crops such as cocoa or coffee grow to maturity, the farm is shared between the tenant and the original landholder. In this case the tenant becomes a landholder of two-thirds share of the donated farmland and ceases to be a tenant (Kasanga, 2002:27, Amanor, 2008:70).

Over the years, chiefs have found innovative ways to renegotiate the terms of the agreements under the *abusa* or *abunu* system when lands became scarce. Chiefs entered into written agreement with migrant farmers in which the terms of the previous agreements were changed and the boundaries redefined. Amanor (2008:71) and Boni (2005:89-121) contended that this resulted in the insecurity of tenure and led to mutual suspicion between migrants and chiefs and set the stage for conflicts between the two groups. Migrants were in most cases disadvantaged as chiefs sometimes incited the youth against them who demanded their expulsion and challenged their legitimacy to claims over land.

Secondly, the alteration of the terms of agreement and the vagueness of the boundaries demarcating the land predisposed migrants to exploitation by chiefs. As the boundaries of the land were re-demarcated, migrants were forced to pay the new fees imposed by the chief or risk losing their right to land to a competitor ready to pay the new fees (Boni, 2005:91-115). In all
these development, how does the allocation of land to migrants impact on farmers who are indigenous to the localities where lands are alienated to migrants?

**The Impacts of the Allocation of Land to Migrants on Farmers**

The impacts of the allocation of land to migrants on farmers who were autochthonous to the locality was both a blessing in some respect and a recipe for land contestation between autochthons and chiefs at the community level and the abandonment of individual responsibility to relations at the lineage level.

The alienation of land to migrants in the first place opened up new opportunities for both chiefs and their subjects. On the part of the chiefs, they amassed enormous wealth in the form of tributes, rents and large acreage of cocoa plantations under sharecropping arrangement without directly investing in labour. Sharecropping arrangements also enabled chiefs to desist from the outright sale of land to purchasers but rather developed new arrangements in which lands were released to labourers in exchange for a share of the produce or farm. With sharecropping arrangements gaining popularity, it led to the emergence of disguised land sale whereby both town chiefs and farmers could engage in the sale of land without been challenged by the paramount chief or members of the lineage as a violation of custom (Amanor, 2008:70-71, Hill, 1956:14).

However, the negative impacts of these tenure arrangements equally abounded. In the first place, alienation of land to migrants resulted in land shortage. The shortage of land was more pronounced among local youth who could not have access to land. This led to the resentment of migrant population by local youth who challenged their legitimacy to land. In Akyem towns in the Eastern Region for example, the youth from Enyiresi and Asamankese were
forced to enter into the basket weaving industry as a result of the difficulties they encountered in accessing farm lands, whereas in the Western Region, the youth of Sefwi Wiawso accused migrants of controlling large tract of primary forest whiles the chiefs also accused them of sub-letting land to other migrants. In some situations, the chiefs were able to manipulate local youth resentment of migrant to serve as catalyst to expel them if they refuse to comply with the directives given by the chiefs on the grounds that the migrants have abused the hospitality accorded them (Amanor, 2006:153, 2008:71, Boni, 2005:102-103).

Again, the alienation of land to migrants led to a growing sense of insecurity on the part of local youth as they saw their position been undermined among the rural poor. The willingness of sharecrop tenants to offer their services at low wage rate made them a preferable option to local youth. This situation created the condition for more demands to be made of local youth and played off by family members against sharecrop tenants if they were unable to comply with the demands of work expected of them. As a result, local youth became increasingly insecure and their participation in family cocoa production became increasingly minimal. Amanor (2008) contends that “this has led to an anti-youth discourse that rural youth are lazy and footloose and unwilling to help their parents on their farms” (Amanor, 2008:71).

Closely related to the above was the breakdown of the family system as youth were displaced by their matrilineal kin after years of labouring to ensure that their fathers’ or uncles’ cocoa plantations thrived. This normally occurs when local youth are displaced from their supposed inheritance following the death of their father or matrilineal uncle when their right to inherit the cocoa plantation is usurped by the brothers of their father. This situation forced many youth to abandon family farms in favour of alternative livelihoods or offer their services as sharecrop tenants elsewhere (Amanor, 2008:71-72, 2006:153).
Conflicts Over Land

Conflicts over land are precipitated by a number of factors namely chieftaincy disputes, changing demographic conditions\(^\text{2}\) agricultural and pastoral encroachment, availability of natural resources and land alienation. The reasons why these conflicts emerge are diverse and underpinned by different historical, economic, political and demographic factors. Whereas some of these conflicts are occasioned by reforms that seek to transform and integrate traditional farming practices into the market under the capitalist system, others arise as a result of competing livelihood survival strategies and the quest to establish and legitimize one’s claim and authority.

Conflicts over land occur where autochthonous groups feel their right to land has been denied them in favour of migrants. The opening up of the cocoa frontiers in the late nineteenth century led to the rise in the value and commercialization of land. This development led to the shortage of land which made it difficult for local youth to access land. As a result, they resented migrants for usurping their birth right (Amanor 2008:68-71, Berry, 2001:181). For instance, in Sefwi Wiawso in the Western Region in the 1980s, the youth of the area who had difficulty in accessing land accused migrants in the area for acquiring large tracts of virgin forests which they have not utilized and had the audacity of subletting such lands to other migrants (Boni, 2005:103).

Pastoral and agricultural encroachment is another factor that engenders conflicts over land. In his work *Straying Fields: Tenure Problems for Pastoralists in the Ferlo, Senegal* Traoré argued that the alteration of traditional systems of land managements between farmers and

pastoralists has occasioned conflicts between the two groups as a result of the increasing mobility of farming groups on pastoral lands (Traoré, 2002:145). He asserted that traditional land tenure systems which regulated the exploitation of natural resources on a rational basis under “supervised rules of access” among various interest groups in the sylvo-pastoral area has undergone significant changes based on modern demands of food sufficiency especially in grain, which has forced many farmers to encroach on former grazing fields. According to Traoré (2002), this has resulted in the recognition of agricultural activities as the only productive use of the land at the expense of pastoral groups making it impossible for pastoralists to access legal recognition for their “pastoral customs and practices – in particular those relating to transhumance,” resulting in violent and frequent conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in the area (Traoré, 2002: 145). Traoré blamed this development on inappropriate state policies. He argued that the power to allocate land which was conferred on the Rural Council to ensure the development of the land led to the disruption of the pastoral areas that were integrated into rural communities whose council exercised control over grazing resources (Traoré, 2002:147-148). According to Traoré (2002:148), this intensified the competition for land between pastoralists and farmers leading to a breakdown in the consensus that governed “cultural and transhumance cycles” as a result of the liberty people had in settling wherever they liked.

In addition, Shettima & Tar, (2008:176) asserted that conflicts over land may arise out of the changing demographic condition of an area. Using the work of Blench (2005) in Nigeria as a reference point, they argued that the population of Nigeria which stood at 140 million as of 2006 if projected back to the pre-colonial era would be “as low as 10 million in the 19th century” which would not result in competing interest in land use. However, the increase in the population

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of Nigeria as of 2006 has led to a considerable demand in land use limiting the area of land available to both pastoralists and farmers resulting in conflicts between the two groups.

Moreover, Davidheiser and Luna (2008:77-78) contends that conflicts over land especially between farmers and pastoralists have been occasioned by changes in land tenure regime and the deliberate attempt of “intervention and legislation that were based on western models to increase production output and market integration.” They argued that farmers and pastoralists have shared complementary roles in their production systems. However, the introduction of land reform schemes based on European models aimed at sedentarising pastoralists and privileging cash crop farming practices above animal husbandry has in the process undermined the symbiotic relationship existing between the two groups and increased the demand for natural resources. This has made land more desirable and scarce and therefore made conflicts between farmers and pastoralists inevitable.

Finally, struggle over the accessibility of natural resources in an area also result in conflict over land. Although interest in natural resources may involve different actors and groups, for example conflicts over mineral and game resources, competing interest in land between pastoralists and farmers is quite pronounced. Conflicts between farmers and pastoralists occur when pastoralists destroy the crops of farmers. This comes about as both farmers and herders try to take advantage of the favourable conditions the residual plains along the banks of rivers offers. Whereas farmers depend on the residual plain along the banks of the Volta Lake for example, for vegetable farming, herders are equally interested in accessing the water point on the Volta Lake to refresh their herds. This inevitably result in conflicts between herders and farmers as cattle consume and destroy the seed crops of farmers coupled with the burning of bushes by
herders in order to obtain fresh grace in the dry season. These competing livelihood strategies between farmers and herders engenders conflicts (Tonah, 2006:160-161, 2002:50-51)

In addition, conflicts over land may also be motivated by political and economic reasons. This occurs when rival claimants to a land try to establish their control over a particular territory by imposing taxes and levies on the inhabitants of an area. Establishing one’s claim over a territory gives him or her access to natural resources which he or she can use to his or her advantage. Politically, it also legitimizes one’s authority to govern an area. For instance in a land dispute between Kumawu, Kwaman and Agogo, the chiefs of Kumawu - Kwame Afram, Barima Otuo Akyeampon and Barima Asumadu Sakyi during their individual tenures in office sought to legitimize their claim to lands at Drabonso and lands north of the Sene River and South of Obosom by imposing taxes and settling migrants in these contentious areas to legitimize their claims (Berry, 2001:177-178).

Local and Moral Discourse Around Migrants and Pastoralists

Migrants and pastoralists are viewed with some degree of suspicion and contempt especially in places not considered their home country. Even though they may reside in host communities and engage in some form of socio-economic activity, the erection of boundaries of inclusion and exclusion limits the extent to which they might be integrated within those societies.

In his work Opening Up New Economic Frontier: Migrant, Rural Integration and Conflicts in Ghana and Cote D’Ivoire, Amanor (2011) contends that West African countries have created societies based on notions of first comers and late comers and have integrated migrants into their societies through long distance trade, conquest and slavery (2011:2). This, he explains, is made evident in the emergence of migrant quarters with their respective headmen in
cosmopolitan cities who have established links based on religious and ethnic affiliations (Amanor, 2011:2). However, Amanor (2011) asserted that the modes of integration have undergone considerable transformations aided by colonial rule. He argues that colonialism altered the initial processes of integration by creating a new category – the economic migrants. This development according to him (Amanor), has created boundaries of exclusion in which the status of the economic migrants is passed on to their descendants who even though may be integrated in the communities in which they find themselves can never claim to have originated from those communities and may still maintain a distant identity through the use of language and custom. As economic migrants, Amanor (2011:2) argues that their presence on the rural moral economy as migrants emerge both as “investors with capital for accumulation and as labourers who facilitate the investments of others by selling their power.” He contended that the presence of migrants open up new opportunities, the introduction of a variety of commodities, commercial food production, production of export crops and the accumulation of capital. “Thus the economic migrant becomes a source of consternation and moral dilemma, which results in attempts to incorporate them into precepts of a moral economy rooted in good citizenship, or to expel them in times of political and economic crisis” (Amanor, 2011:1-2).

Additionally, Amanor explains that conditions for exclusion becomes more intense when migrants through the accumulation of wealth are able to secure natural resources such as land or compete with local population over access to natural resources. Exclusionary tendencies even becomes more heightened when local populations perceive chiefs to be in close association with migrants by allocating natural resources to them at their expense. Similarly, the designation economic migrants confer inferior status on people whose labour is exacted, further aggravating stereotypical tendencies (Amanor, 2011).
The activities of pastoralists on the other hand have been perceived as backward and environmentally destructive. These notions have been entrenched through the narratives of received wisdom. Received wisdom according to Leach and Mearns (1996:8) “is an idea or set of ideas sustained through labelling, commonly represented in the form of a narrative, and grounded in a specific cultural policy paradigm”

Ian Scoones (1996) contends that policies geared towards rangeland management discards indigenous herding practices, regarding them as destructive and unproductive and in its place proposes carrying capacity, destocking and rotational grazing as alternative measures that would ensure healthy transhumant practices (Scoones, 1996:35-38). He contended that the policy of trying to modernise indigenous pastoral practices was economically and politically motivated. Citing a case study in Zimbabwe, Scoones (1996:39-45) asserted that the importation of graded bulls in Rhodesia coupled with effort to improve pasture through “fertilization of natural pastures, veld management and rotational grazing” in 1903 was aimed among other things to contribute to beef export to supply domestic requirement, compete with Argentinian beef or supply Britain and South Africa through preferential trade or lose out in the beef industry (Scoones, 1996:40).

The policy of rotational grazing, and the creation of planned agricultural areas with their respective headmen, Scoones (1996:45) explains, were put into action to enable headmen to collect taxes and promote the development projects of the colonial government.

Elaborating further on the concept of received wisdom, Leach and Mearns (1996) asserted that debates about overgrazing, soil erosion, mining of natural resources, wood fuel crisis and the desertification of dry lands are backed by powerful forces of environmental policy change in Africa. In their view, these notions are strongly articulated in professional circles and
popularised by the media. They argue that the agents through which the received wisdom agenda is propagated include African government, international donor agencies and non-governmental organisations. In their view, the received wisdom narratives are meant to attract support from donor organisations to help curb supposed environmental destruction in Africa (Leach & Mearns, 1996:2). According to them, by portraying African farmers, hunters and herders as agents and victims of environmental change, the narratives create the conducive environment for Africa’s land-use practices to be changed in order to make the environment less destructive (Leach & Mearns, 1996:2).

In addition, Leach and Mearns (1996:9-10) contend that even though the issues brought forth by the received wisdom narrative highlights important realities of problems that confront people because they are based on theories and methodologies that make them credible, they must be evaluated periodically in situation where their findings have been proven to be in doubt.

To ensure a balance, Leach and Mearns (1996:29) argue that there should be collaboration that makes it possible to improve upon the ecological knowledge and competence of African farmers and herders in addition to creating the enabling environment where “local resource management strategies can be pursued effectively.”

Moreover, they asserted that the stance of received wisdom should be explored further through historical and time series dataset which takes into consideration the experience and opinions of inhabitants which would pave way for issues in “new ecology” (Leach and Mearns:1996:29).
CONCLUSION

The interest placed on land as a natural resource is a complex subject that has attracted a lot of scholarly attention over the years. For traditional authorities, allocating land to migrant populations gives them an opportunity to accumulate wealth, an incentive that would be denied them if the transaction is conducted with indigenes. This is because indigenes have a degree of entitlement to land.

On the part of individuals, the emergence of diverse ethnic groups introduces indigenous populations to the world economy through the cultivation of commercial cash crops and food crops. This leads to the opening up of new frontiers to the capitalist economy and the introduction of new commodities.

Migrants also introduce indigenous populations to new occupations which are alien to them and would never have been willing to render themselves for such services had it not been for intense competition with migrants.

However, intense competition between the two groups (indigenes and migrants) creates the condition for resentment and ethnic stereotyping of migrant groups leaving them at the mercy of the state or local authorities to be expelled in times of economic downturn. Besides, the narratives of received wisdom also create the condition for blame and intervention by groups with both economic and political interest backed by strong agencies and governments.
CHAPTER THREE

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter looks at the profile of the study area and the research methodology which focuses on the research design, population of the study, research methods, sampling and sampling techniques.

Source: Geography Department, University of Ghana
A Brief Overview of the Agogo Traditional Area

The historical origins of Agogo are rooted in the dispersal of the people of the Aduana clan from Esumegya, Asantemanso who settled in difference places in the country around the year 1500. Under the leadership of Ansa Sasraku, the group that had settled at Nyanawase advanced and engaged in series of battles with the Akyems and the Gas, and later settled at Akwamu (Agogo Traditional Council [ATC], 1995:4).

Under the leadership of three illustrious chiefs – Ofori Krobon of Agogo, Ntori Nimpa of Kwamang and Effa Kai of Kumawu around 1600, these leaders joined forces under the able leadership of Ofori Krobon to defeat Ataara Finam, the then supreme ruler of the Afram Plains in a war that lasted for three years. After deposing Ataara Finam, the three stools annexed his territory and brought it under their control. This account for the extensive lands possessed by the stools of Agogo, Kwamang and Kumawu extending to the Volta, Brong Ahafo and part of the Northern Region (ATC 1996:4).

The people of Agogo settled at Santenso as a separate independent entity until the union of the Asante state arose. Even though the people of Agogo did not participate in the 1698 Denkyira war that liberated Asante, they contributed men and materials to support the Asante Forces (ATC, 1995:4).

The people of Agogo celebrate the Akogya Siakwan festival. This is a week-long celebration of peace, thanksgiving, love and harmony that the community enjoys. It is an Odwira festival of thanks to the gods of production and protection. This festival is celebrated in December. The festival is celebrated in honour of Akogya, the embodiment of all the gods in Agogo including Afram, Anoye, Tano Kofi and Ntiwa Tano (ATC, 1995:8). The deity Akogya, is both a river and a lake whose shrine is strategically situated at the outskirts of the traditional
The community is made up of people of diverse religious beliefs namely, the African Traditional Religion, Islamic religion and Christianity.

The community is blessed with three tertiary institutions namely Agogo Presbyterian College of Education, Pentecost University College Agogo campus and Presbyterian University College, Agogo campus. The community can also boast of two Senior High Schools namely the Agogo State College and Collins Secondary Commercial School.

**Study Population**

This research was conducted in the Agogo Traditional Area in the Asante Akyem North District of the Ashanti Region. The area attained a district status on February 6, 2012 by sub-section (1) section 3 of the Local Government Acts, 1993 (Act 462). The Asante Akyem North District\(^3\) is made up of a total population of 140,694 people representing 67,673 males and 73,021 females. The total population of the district represent 2.9% of the total population of the Ashanti Region which is 4,780,380 representing 19.4% of the entire population of Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2010 Population and Housing Census).

The Asante Akyem North District covers an area of 13,361 square kilometers which is about 5.6% of the total land area of the Ashanti Region. Agogo lies approximately 80 kilometers east of Kumasi, the Ashanti regional capital.

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\(^3\) At the time this research was been conducted, the population distribution of the various localities at the district level has not been released by the Ghana Statistical Service. Hence the researcher decided to use the population by district, sex, and type of locality as provided by the summary of the 2010 Population and Housing Census.
The vegetation of the district is mainly the tropical rainforest and savannah grassland. The people in the Agogo area are mainly farmers and traders. Crops cultivated in the area include maize, watermelon, cocoyam, groundnut, yam, plantain, cassava and tomatoes. Lumbering and charcoal production is also rife in the area. There are two distinct market days in the area namely, Tuesdays and Fridays.

The majority of people in the district are predominantly Akan (including the mfantse\(^4\) people) and there are also significant migrant population of other ethnic groups such as Ewes, Ga, Frafra, Moshie, Nzemas, Dagombas, Kusasi and the Fulani who form a minority group.

Fulani presence in Agogo is a recent development. According to sources\(^5\), they were first spotted in the area around 1996, even though they had been operating in the Afram Plains portion of Agogo earlier than that.

In recent years, there have been marked conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in the Agogo area resulting in violent confrontations. For instance, between 2000–2010 it was alleged that 20 farmers have been killed by Fulani herdsmen in the area. This study therefore sought to understand the nature of these conflicts between herdsmen and farmers by collecting data through semi-structured interviews.

**Research Design**

Semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to gather information from respondents. The respondents interviewed included chiefs, farmers, Fulani herdsmen, cattle owners and leaders of youth groups in Agogo. These people were selected for the study because

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\(^4\) The mfantse people belong to the Akan ethnic group in Ghana but they are not indigenous to the Ashanti Region.

\(^5\) Interview with Roland Etenang, a veterinary officer at Asante Akyem South who was part of the search team that went to ascertain the presence of the Fulani in the area in 1996. Interviewed in December 4, 2013.
of their involvement in the conflicts. In addition, court records, District Crime Investigation (DCID) records and committee reports submitted to the Regional Security Council (REGSEC) were consulted for the study. Participant observation also formed part of the research process. The research took the form of face to face interaction with respondents in the study area. This was to enable the researcher to ascertain the validity of claims made by respondents and further deepen the researchers understanding of the issues under study.

**Data Collection Procedure**

Some of the respondents served as key informants who led the researcher to other people who had vital information which aided the researcher in the course of this study. Individuals willingly volunteered documents and visual materials to back their claims. These documents and visual materials served as pointers to vital sources of information in the course of the study. The majority of interviews were conducted in the local language using Twi and Hausa. However, the English language was also used occasionally during the entire interview process.

The researcher participated in and observed the social, economic and political life of the people in the community under study based on the information gathered from respondents in the course of interviews.

In the course of the study, the researcher observed Fulani herdsmen taking their cattle to graze in Agogo. Neighbouring communities close to Agogo where cattle were reared included Juansa and Hwidiem. In the course of the research, the researcher observed truckloads of cattle purchased from Agogo been transported out of the town. This observation coupled with information gathered from respondents made it evident to the researcher the thriving cattle business in the area.
In order to ascertain the manner in which cattle are taken to graze on the field, I obtained the permission of Fulani herdsmen and cattle owners to visit some kraals and observed how cattle are cared for and taken to graze. In one instance, I followed the Fulani herdsmen as they took their animals to graze in the Hwidiem area. For more than thirty minutes I observed the tedious processes involved in making sure that the animals do not stray into people’s farms. On this occasion, the herdsman showed me a piece of land in the area where he had cultivated maize and kola nut. This area was close to the site where he sends the animals to graze. This observation gave me firsthand experience of the kind of difficulties the herdsmen encounter when they send the animals to graze at locations situated near farms.

In another instance, I followed the Fulani herdsmen to their kraal in the Afram Plains in a village called Samso. I spent two days in Samso. For more than two hours, I took time to observe and ask questions. I equally had the rare privilege of interacting with the Fulani in their homes and under trees where they (Fulani) normally assembled after the day’s hectic engagements. I visited the abattoirs and market during market days to observe how daily transactions were carried out.

**Sampling and Sampling Technique**

A total of 26 respondents were selected to participate in the study. The composition of the respondents selected to participate in the study are as follows: six Fulani herdsmen, five farmers, four youth leaders, three chiefs of the Agogo traditional area, four cattle owners, one leader of Fulani cattle owners, and one veterinary officer. Two people captured as “others” were also interviewed to ascertain their experiences with Fulani herdsmen. These were a retired farmer and a farm caretaker respectively. The distribution of respondents is given in a table as follows:
TABLE 1.0: A TABLE SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fulani herdsmen</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth leaders</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiefs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle owners</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterinary officer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader of Fulani cattle owners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

The purposive sampling technique was used for the study in the Agogo traditional area. Purposive sampling is “a type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative” (Babbie, 2007:184). The use of the purposive sampling procedure required that people who have certain characteristics and are therefore deemed to be relevant for the study are selected and interviewed in-depth. Some of the characteristics considered within this sample include Fulani herdsmen, farmers, chiefs, cattle owners, youth leaders, individuals and the leadership of Fulani cattle owners. These respondents are the people who are directly affected by these conflicts and were therefore deemed a representative sample to be included in the study.

Semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher to gain answers into the nature of livelihood activities, relations with other groups, types of conflicts, perceptions of conflicts and cultural and moral perceptions of other groups.

Reports of the Dadson Committee and the Agogo Fulani Cattle Evacuation Plan Committee to the Regional Security Council (REGSEC) and records of cases reported at the Agogo police station were consulted during the research. These documents gave the researcher
deeper insight and understanding into the nature of the conflicts in Agogo. They also helped to substantiate or disprove claims that have been alleged by both farmers and migrants.

Photographs from individuals and District Crime Investigation Department (DCID) were also used by the researcher to gain a deeper insight into the subject matter under study.
CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The Agogo traditional area has attracted considerable media and political attention over claims of Fulani herdsmen invading the area and destroying people’s livelihoods. The allegations of murders and the rape of women in the area by Fulani herdsmen have led to calls on government to expel the herdsmen from the area backed by a court order. Matters got a serious head when the youth of the traditional area took the laws into their own hands to register their grievances against the traditional authorities, the outcome of which resulted in three persons sustaining varying degrees of gunshot wounds and the injuring of an Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP).

Background to the April 30, Disturbances in Agogo

On 30th April, 2010, the Agogo township witnessed one of the most devastating and unfortunate development in the history of the Asante-Akyem North District of the Ashanti Region. What was intended to be a peaceful demonstration exploded into violent confrontations between the inhabitants of Agogo on the one hand and the police and members of the Agogo Traditional Council (ATC) on the other hand.

The uproar was as a result of simmering tension over the perceived silence and inaction of the security apparatus of the state to address complaints over the influx of illegal Fulani herdsmen in the Agogo portion of the Afram Plains coupled with accusations of hideous crimes
such as rape, murder, bush fires and the destruction of farm produce allegedly caused by the Fulani herdsmen. The failure of traditional authorities to nip the situation in the bud coupled with the suspicion of members of the ATC who were believed to have connived to allocate lands to the Fulani herdsmen degenerated into the infamous “Disturbances at Agogo” which was initiated by the Agogo Town Development Tasks Force (ATDTF) with the support of the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE), Honourable Thomas Osei-Bonsu.

Prior to the demonstration, the Agogo Town Development Task Force organized a meeting on April 20, 2010 at the Agogo Community Centre involving other affiliated groups to ascertain the socio-economic problems caused by the Fulani herdsmen and their cattle on the Afram Plains portion of Agogo Stool Lands (Report of the Regional Security Council – [REGSEC], Ashanti Region: 1).

The outcome of the meeting outlined the killing of not less than 20 farmers by Fulani herdsmen as a result of their settlement in the Agogo portion of the Afram Plains, the destruction of farm produce, the use of sharp objects such as cutlasses and sophisticated weapons such as AK 47 assault rifle and the closure of the Bebome Clinic since 1998 as some of the challenges confronting the Agogo township as a result of the activities of Fulani herdsmen in the area.

The group also identified the closure of Aberewapong Basic School, threat on farmers to desist from spraying their farms with weedicides and vacate their land, the contamination of sources of drinking water by cattle, the occurrence of bush fires and the degradation of farm

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6 Report submitted by the Committee of Enquiry to the Ashanti Regional Security Council (REGSEC) captioned “Report on Disturbances at Agogo on 30 April, 2010.”

7 The meeting was attended by the Agogo World Wide Association, Agogo Mman Mma Kuo, Accra, Agogo Youth Association, Farmers from the Afram Plains, Agogo Market Women and other Concerned Citizens of Agogo.
lands as a result of over grazing of the plains as some of the problems caused by the activities of Fulani herdsmen.

Moreover, the ADTF also cited the rape of women in communities located on the plains, the deferment of development project by World Vision International as a result of the activities of Fulani herdsmen and the award of a lease spanning a period of 50 years and 25 years respectively as the major challenges threatening the tranquility and socio-economic progress of the area. (REGSEC report, 2010: 1).

The above stated problems underpinned the April 30, demonstration in Agogo in which the ATDTF wrote a letter to the District Police Commander to seek permission to organize a demonstration against the activities of Fulani herdsmen in the Agogo traditional area.

The letter to the Municipal Police Commander dated 21 April, 2010 among other things sought permission to organise a peaceful demonstration against the presence of Fulani herdsmen and their cattle on the stool lands of the Agogo traditional area. The designated routes for the demonstration were Ananekrom lorry station (starting point), Hon. Baah Wiredu Road, 7th Avenue Road, 11th North Street, 9th Avenue Road, Agogo High Street and 11th Avenue Road.

The demonstrators had also indicated in their letter that the demonstration would commence at 8:30am in the morning. This was followed up with a meeting on 26 April, 2010 with the leadership of the ATDTF and the District Police Commander ASP Samuel Kofi Odame who

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8 In a meeting held with representatives of the ATDTF on 21 April, 2010, the designated routes for the demonstration were stated as follows: Ananekrom Lorry Station – starting point, Hon. Baah Wiredu Road, 7th Avenue Road, 11th North Street, 9th North Street, Agogo High Street, 11th Avenue Road and Russian Park. According to ASP Odame, some of the designated route for the demonstration were removed in consultation with the leadership of ATDTF because of the brisk economic activities that takes place on such route (Minute of a Brief Meeting Held with a Representative of Agogo Town Development Task Force: AGD.14/V .6/116)
gave the approval for the demonstration\textsuperscript{9}. The District Commander seized the opportunity to educate the leadership of the ATDTF on the Public Order Act\textsuperscript{10} and entreated them to comply with the agreed routes to ensure a peaceful demonstration. A final meeting which was scheduled on the eve of the demonstration on 29 April, 2010 was unsuccessful as a result of the failure of the leadership of the ATDTF to attend the meeting. The failure of the leadership of the ATDTF to turn up for the meeting was followed up with a call by the Municipal Chief Executive (MCE) to the District Police Commander at about 3:00pm instructing the District Commander that “no police officer should do anything to stop the demonstrators from demonstrating and that he has information that some people are undermining his administration” (REGSEC Report, 2010: 22). Despite the failure of the leadership of the ATDTF to attend the meeting on the eve of the demonstration to finalise issues with the police, the demonstration came-off as planned.

\textbf{The Straw that Broke the Camel’s back}

The event that culminated into the April 30 disturbances was the “supposed peaceful demonstration” embarked upon by the inhabitant of Agogo. On the day of the demonstration, the demonstrators defied all agreement with the police and headed straight to the chief’s palace. Although the demonstrators had indicated that the demonstration would commence at 8:30am in the morning, they began their demonstration at 6:30am. They marched straight to the palace of the paramount chief instead of going through the designated routes for the demonstration. This resulted in a confrontation between the leadership of the ATC and the teeming mob of

\textsuperscript{9} The approval for the demonstration was given by the District Commander ASP Samuel Kofi Odame on 21 April, 2010 after studying the content of the letter and holding a brief meeting with a representative of the ATDTF (Minute of a Brief Meeting Held with a Representative of Agogo Town Development Task Force: AGD.14/V .6/116).

\textsuperscript{10} Public Order Act 1994, Act 491
demonstrators. In a bid to ward off the irate mob from entering the palace, one ɔkyeame (chief linguist) Frimpong gave a warning shot with a hunter’s rifle to disperse the crowd. This action by the ɔkyeame infuriated the demonstrators who started pelting stones at the palace. In the ensuing confrontations the police were called to intervene in the situation.

On arriving at the scene, the police under the leadership of ASP Odame instructed the irate mob to halt their demonstration. In the ensuing exchanges, one Yaw Thomas also known as Gyidi Sɔfo was alleged to have incited the mob to defy the orders of the police to halt the demonstration. This action by Yaw Thomas led to his arrest and was subsequently kept in police custody at the Agogo police station. The arrest of Yaw Thomas infuriated the demonstrators who turned their attention to the Agogo police station to demand his release. This decision by the demonstrators resulted in a scuffle between them and the police authorities. In the ensuing confrontation, the angry demonstrators pelted stones at the police and in the process wounded ASP Odame on his right ear. Sensing danger and a threat on his life, ASP Odame opened fire into the crowd and in the process wounded Ebenezer Nti and two others.

What would have caused the youth to ignore legitimate state protocols and take the law into their own hands to disturb the peace of one of the communities in the Ashanti Region that serves as the bread basket of the country?

Agreement between the Paramount Chief and Four Cattle Owners

The confrontation between the youth and police authorities that altered the tranquil atmosphere in Agogo began with the signing of an agreement between the paramount chief of Agogo – Nana Akuoku Sarpong and four cattle owners.
On May 27 and July 6, 2006 and January 15, 2008, the paramount chief of Agogo, Nana Akuoko Sarpong entered into an agreement to lease lands on the Agogo portion of the Afram Plains to four cattle owners. The cattle owners were Alhaji Ahmed Abdul Karimu Grusah Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of King Faisal Football Club, Alhaji Ali Mamudu, Alhaji Fuseni Hassan and Alhaji Dauda Kassim David. Whereas Alhaji Dauda Kassim David was given a temporary permit at Bebome, the remaining three were granted 50 years lease renewable for another 50 years and 25 years respectively. One of the lessees who was granted 50 years lease renewable for another 50 years was Alhaji Ahmed Abdul Karimu Grunsah – CEO of King Faisal Football Club, whereas the remaining two – Alhaji Ali Mamudu and Alhaji Fuseni Hassan were granted 50 years lease renewable for another 25 years. The acreage of land allocated to each of the cattle owners is given as follows: Alhaji Ahmed Abdul Karimu Grusah – 50.4 acres, Alhaji Ali Mamudu – 30.2 acres, and Alhaji Fuseni Hassan – 50.2 acres. The terms of the agreements between the lessors and the lessees were stipulated as follows:

a) Pay the rent hereby reserved at the times and the manner aforesaid without any deduction whatsoever.

b) Not to use the demised land otherwise than for a Cattle Ranch Farming purpose only.

c) Not to assign sublet or part with possession of the demised land or any part therefore without the prior consent in writing of the Lessor such consent not to be unreasonably withheld.

d) Not to allow in or about the demised land anything which may become a nuisance damage or annoyance to the Lessor or any owner or occupier of the adjacent property.

e) The Lessee is strictly to ensure that the cattle are kept within the area assigned to him and to ensure that the animals do not stray into other areas which will constitute nuisance to other farmers in the neighbourhood.

f) To provide facilities to the cattle in such a way that they do not pollute water bodies outside the area granted.

g) The Lessee is strictly forbidden to extend the facilities offered him under this lease to a third party without the consent of the Lessor.
h) To provide such other facilities to the cattle so as not to create problems which will undermine community cohesion and destabilise the community leadership because of the activities of the cattle.

i) The Lessee has been made aware that there is a large body of opinion in the Agogo Traditional Area which is opposed to this grant for the simple reason that the Fulani Herdsmen roaming illegally in the area on the whole have engaged in anti-social activities which have disturbed farming activities in the area [sic] and has therefore undertaken not to justify these fears by keeping strictly to the conditions of the grant (REGSEC Report, 2010: Appendix 2: Land Documents).

If the terms of the agreement were duly complied with, could it have averted the infamous April 30 disturbances in the Agogo traditional area? If not, what could have aggravated the situation to warrant the alteration of the peace and socio-economic progress that the Agogo township enjoyed? The succeeding paragraphs therefore elaborate on the causes of the conflict between farmers and herders in the Agogo traditional area.
CAUSES OF CONFLICTS BETWEEN FARMERS AND FULANI HERDSMEN

Both farmers and Fulani herdsmen assign different reasons to the causes of the conflicts between them. The farmers on their part advanced the following reasons for the conflicts between them and the Fulani herdsmen:

Destruction of Farm Produce by the Cattle of the Fulani Herdsmen

The destruction of farm produce by the cattle of the Fulani herdsmen was one of the major sources of tension between them and farmers. The destruction of farms and farm produce normally occurs when Fulani herdsmen send their cattle to graze during the day or at night. The animals, sometimes stray without the knowledge of the herdsmen into farms and on other occasions the herdsmen intentionally send the animals to farms to graze\textsuperscript{11}. The destruction of farms normally occurs at night when Fulani herdsmen send their cattle to graze. Their inability to control the movement of the herds at night coupled with the number of cattle under the care of one or two herdsmen makes the destruction of farms inevitable. According to the farmers, the greater part of the destruction of farms occurs during the dry season. This is because in the dry season, water becomes scarce and because crops such as plantain and water melon retain water,

\textsuperscript{11} In an interview with one of the cattle owners, he narrated an incident in which a certain Fulani herdsman sent his cattle to graze in someone’s farm and the farmer accused him (the cattle owner who was my informant) that his herdsmen were responsible for the destruction of his farm. The cattle owner therefore decided to investigate the matter before paying compensation for the damage caused by the animals. He therefore decided to employ the services of three people to accompany him to the said farm to spy on the culprits. So they went to hide in the farm at night and at about mid-night the herdsmen brought the cattle to graze in the farm. They arrested them and sent them to the farmer who accused him (my informant’s) herdsmen of causing the damage to his farm. Coincidentally it turned out that the culprits were actually the herdsmen of the owner of the farm in question.
the Fulani herdsmen depend on these food crops as sources of water for their cattle. In an interview with Kofi Boateng, a farmer in Agogo, he recounted this situation as follows:

Sometimes they enter your farm at night and the by the time you get there they would have eaten your plantain farm. Because the animals are heavier than the plantain trees, they pull down the plantain trees as they move through the farm. It is the Fulani that provoke a lot of the conflicts. The Fulani herdsman would decide to send his animals to graze in the dry season close to your farm. By the time you get to your farm the animals would have eaten your plantain. Because of the dry season plantain always retains water (Interview is Kofi Boateng in Agogo on December 2, 2013).

**Contamination of River Bodies by Cattle**

The contamination of river bodies by cattle was another source of conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen. The rivers Bontre and Asuofu serve as a source of drinking water for communities in villages such as Mpesempese, Mantukwa and Aberewapong. It is within these same rivers that the herdsmen send their cattle to drink and in the process pollute the water with their faecal matter and secretion from the mouth of the cattle. As a result, these communities are suffering from Buruli Ulcer\(^\text{12}\). A farmer in Aberewapong recounting the enormity of the situation stated that:

> We share the same water with the cattle when we go to the farm. By the time you get to the river, the animals would have messed the river with their hoofs and defecated into the water as well. When you drink the water you can have infections (Interview with Kwesi Amoah on November 27, 2013).

\(^{12}\) REGSEC Report, 2010:17
Spraying of Farms with Weedicides and Insecticides

Spraying of farms is an integral part of farming activities and this practice is abhorred by Fulani herdsmen who see this exercise as an attempt to curtail their access to grazing pasture and this indeed was a contributing factor to the tension between farmers and Fulani herdsmen. As a way of controlling weeds and pests, farmers normally spray their farms with weedicides and insecticides to enhance crop yield. However, Fulani herdsmen see this as a counter move to deny them of pasture and deliberately kill their cattle through poisonous chemicals which are sprayed on the weeds.

Raping of Women

Raping of women by Fulani herdsmen was also one of the notable causes of the strained relationship between farmers and herdsmen in the Agogo traditional area. The Fulani are accused of raping women at gun point in their farms. Describing an incident involving a woman who was raped at gun point, Pese Danquah, Chairman of Agogo Concerned Citizens Association recounted that

... in one village called Kowereso, one Kusasi man was going to a nearby village with the wife who was carrying a baby at her back. At gun point they said they want to sex the woman [sic]. They put the gun on the man’s mouth and took turns, this one would sex her, and another would come and sex her [sic], later the woman died. You see, as for raping eh, ei in their numbers [sic]... (Interviewed, November 25, 2013)
Burning of Grassland

The burning of the grassland was also identified as a cause of the conflicts in Agogo. Burning of the grassland was a survival strategy adopted by the Fulani to ensure regular supply of grazing pasture during the dry season. According to the farmers, when the Fulani sets fire into the grass to enable fresh grass to grow, they are unable to control the fire which result in bush fires and burning of farms.

Communication Barrier

Finally, communication barrier was also another contributing factor to the conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in the Agogo traditional area. The majority of Fulani herdsmen who are mostly Nigerians, Burkinabes and Malians do not speak the Twi language which is predominantly spoken in the Asante Akyem area. They can hardly speak English or the pidgin language properly. This makes it difficult for smooth interactions between the two groups\textsuperscript{13}. The farmers accuse the herdsmen of feigning ignorance of the Twi language even though they can comprehend what is been communicated to them. Elaborating further on the issue of communication barrier between farmers and Fulani herdsmen, Kofi Boateng, a farmer in the Agogo traditional area expressed his frustration in the following words:

…if you call the Fulani herdsman, he understands Twi but he would pretend he doesn’t understand Twi. With all due respect, I don’t also speak Hausa. Even if you speak English he would tell you that he doesn’t understand the language so if you want to have a dialogue with a herdsman it would not work. You have no business with someone who doesn’t understand your language. If you call him and he understands your language then you know the way forward (Interviewed December 2, 2013).

\textsuperscript{13} Interview with an Assembly member in the Asante Akyem North District on November 29, 2013.
Cultivating Crops Close to Kraals and Over Routes Plied by Cattle

Despite the barrage of accusations levelled against the Fulani for provoking conflicts in the Agogo traditional area, the Fulani herdsmen and cattle owners on their part blamed the farmers for causing the conflicts. They accused farmers of deliberately cultivating their crops close to kraals. According to them, this makes it difficult for the herdsmen to navigate through the forest without the animals straying into people’s farms. The herdsmen and cattle owners claim that, because farmers are aware that the dung of the cattle enhances soil fertility, they would deliberately cultivate their crops close to the kraal in order to gain access to the dung to fertilize the soil and this, according to the herdsmen and cattle owners, was a major source of conflicts between them.

Closely related to this development was the accusation by Fulani herdsmen of the deliberate cultivation of crops over routes plied by cattle during grazing. According to the herdsmen, this situation makes it difficult to control the movement of the herds resulting in the trampling of crops along those routes. Describing this situation, Ahmadu Musah a Fulani herdsman recounted his difficulty as follows:

They don’t want the cattle to graze on their land. Besides, we use the roadside whenever we send the cattle to graze but they would cultivate the land all the way to the roadside close to the gutter. Where do you expect the cattle to pass? This is my difficulty. If a car is approaching, where do you expect me to direct the cattle to? This is the path, here is the farm, and by all means the cattle will stray into the farm to feed. That is the problem I face in this locality. Even by the roadside, if a man cultivates crops there, at least he must leave some space. If you are building a house, you don’t build all the way to the roadside, at least you leave some space. We share the path. Even if a car stops by the roadside, there is by all means space for another car to pass. You see, but when you are grazing with the cattle, you find a car by the road side and at the same time a farmer has cultivated his crop by the roadside. Where would you pass with the cattle? I am asking you. (Interviewed on November 30, 2013).
Destruction of Farms

In addition, both Fulani herdsmen and cattle owners conceded to the fact that it was the destruction of farms by their cattle that brought about the tension between them. The herdsmen agreed to the fact that the increase in the number of their herds result in the destruction of farms as they send the animals to graze on the field\textsuperscript{14}. However, the herdsmen also accused farmers of deliberately planting crops at the bank of the river where cattle go to drink water. This situation makes the destruction of farms inevitable.

Cattle Rustling and Killing

Cattle owners and Fulani herdsmen contend that cattle rustling contribute in no small measure to the conflicts in the Agogo traditional area. The animals are rustled when they go to graze. According to one cattle owner, the cattle are killed in the forest and the meat is transported to the town market to sell\textsuperscript{15}.

In addition, cattle owners claim dissatisfied farmers shoot cattle that stray into their farms on sight. Recalling an incident in Agogo, Alhaji Usman Mamma indicated that about seven of his cattle went to drink water by the river side and when the animals strayed into someone’s farm, the owner shot the animals on sight even after negotiations have been made for him to pay the necessary compensation\textsuperscript{16}.

\textsuperscript{14} Interview with Useini Kiskiri on December 8, 2014
\textsuperscript{15} Interview with Abdulai Fuseini, a cattle owner at Agogo, November 29, 2013
\textsuperscript{16} The owner of the farm wanted to shoot the animals so the herdsman told him to stop. The animals are mine, the herdsman explained. So the herdsman and the owner of the farm came to report the incident to me. So I told him to
Politicisation of Farmer-Herder Conflicts

Finally, cattle owners and Fulani herdsmen attributed the perennial conflicts between them and farmers to political propaganda employed by politicians who exploit political capital out of these incidence to win the support of the electorate in their constituencies. A cattle owner in Agogo claimed that the conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in the area was political. According to him

all this talk about Fulani issues is politics. We are not involved in politics. We are not politicians. Now that this country is not involved in any political activity (referring to the electioneering campaign) you don’t hear about Fulani issues. Wait until a year or six months to elections, you would hear about Fulani issues. All the issues are based on politics. Expel the Fulani for us, we would vote for you, expel the Fulani, we would vote for you. That is it. Apart from that there is nothing to worry about (Interview with Abdulai Fuseini, Cattle Owner at Agogo, November 29, 2013).

exercise patience, I would compensate him – the owner of the farm. Truly, we both sat on this matter with witnesses to negotiate the terms of the compensation. We did not go to the police station. We negotiated and I told him I will pay him five million and I brought the money and paid him outright. After this incident, he shot about eight of my cattle at the bank of the river (Interviewed December 7, 2013).
THE NATURE OF LAND ARRANGEMENTS IN AGOGO

The nature of the land tenure arrangement in Agogo unlike the predominately known system of land ownership vested in stools, families and individuals, the land tenure arrangement in the Agogo traditional area is dynamic and assumes various forms such as land leasing, share contracts, land hiring and outright purchase. These arrangements can lead to conflicts depending on who the land is given to.

Land Leasing

Leasing land is a pervasive practice in the Ashanti Region and the Agogo traditional area is not exempted from this practice. Land leasing is the practice of releasing land for a number of years not exceeding 25 years and more through a process of documentation establishing the terms of the agreement. This was the type of agreement entered into by the paramount chief of Agogo with four cattle owners in the Agogo traditional area. The terms of the lease spanning a period of 50 and 25 years respectively.

Share Contract

Another land tenure arrangement widely practised in the Agogo traditional area is the practice of share contracts. This takes the form of negotiation between landholders and tenants over access to land, labour and capital. Depending on the terms of agreements, the proceeds of the farm are divided into two equal parts or one third of the proceeds to the tenants and two
thirds to the landlord or vice versa. This arrangement therefore may not refer strictly to share cropping alone.\(^{17}\)

In the Agogo traditional area, all the lands are vested in the paramount chief and all other individuals with their respective family heads are caretakers.\(^{18}\) The paramount chief is the custodian of the land, because according to tradition, he fought to acquire the land. Therefore individuals cannot lease land without the final approval of the paramount chief. However, in the Agogo traditional area, the paramount chief permits individuals and family heads to transact business bordering on land without any form of interference but the individual or family head is obliged to pay one third of the revenue generated from such land transactions to the chief.\(^{19}\)

Similarly, an individual seeking land to cultivate his food crops must consult the paramount chief to allocate a piece of land for him or her to cultivate. This arrangement is made possible by the individual paying the drink money (\textit{aseda})\(^{20}\) and agreeing to pay the annual rent. This arrangement, however, applies only to strangers.\(^{21}\) The annual rent paid is referred to in Twi as \textit{ntɔ}.\(^{22}\) The \textit{ntɔ} takes the form of food crops cultivated on the land, for example maize. The tenant is expected to pay one bag of maize for every acre of maize harvested. This is received on behalf of the chief by the \textit{Adukrofo} and a receipt is given in return as evidence that the tenant has fulfilled his or her annual obligation to the stool. If a tenant fails to fulfill these obligations,

\(^{17}\) See Amanor and Diderutuah, 2001:1 \textit{Share Contracts in the Oil Palm and Citrus Belt of Ghana}. IIED, London

\(^{18}\) Interview with Nana Badu Kaakyire, Nifahene of Agogo Traditional Area, November 26, 2013

\(^{19}\) Interview with Nana Badu Kaakyire, Nifahene of Agogo Traditional Area, November 26, 2013

\(^{20}\) See Amanor (2008: )

\(^{21}\) Interview with Nana Nti Efakwatia, Krontihene of Agogo Traditional Area and Alhaji Issaka, a native of Agogo on November 27 and November 30 at their respective residence in Agogo.

\(^{22}\) Interview with Nana Nti Efakwatia, Krontihene of Agogo Traditional Area at his residence in Agogo, November 27, 2013.
he or she is expelled from the land and the land is given to another tenant to cultivate it. This is known as *nyeafadi*\(^{23}\) in the Twi language.

However, failure on the part of the relatives of the tenant to introduce themselves to the chief following the demise of the person who originally acquired the land, the land automatically revert back to the chief who is the landlord. This is known as *atuogya*\(^{24}\) (meaning to leave it unattended). In the event that the relation of the deceased tenant shows up and introduces himself or herself to the chief, he or she is made to pay the drink money and allowed to cultivate the land.

In addition, a landlord can give out land to a tenant to cultivate in exchange of one third of the produce after harvest. This practice is referred to as *yemayenkye*\(^{25}\) (literally meaning do it and let share). However, if the tenant cultivates cocoa on the land, the produce is divided into two parts between the landlord and the tenant. This system is also known as “*abunu*” (divide into two parts)\(^{26}\).

\(^{23}\) Ibid

\(^{24}\) Interview with Nana Agyei Badu Kaakyire, Nifahene of Agogo Traditional Area at his office residence in Agogo, November 26, 2013.

\(^{25}\) Interview Nana Kwame Boamah, Akwamuhene of Agogo Traditional Area at his residence in Agogo, November 26, 2013. This practice is also referred to as “*dɔmayenkye*”. This is a variant of the *abusa* arrangement. See Amanor and Diderutuah (2001:1), Hill, (1956:8-24).

Hiring of Land

Closely related to the above is the hiring of land by landlords to tenants. In this case the landlord hires the land to the tenant at a fee for a period of time not less than three to six months. The land reverts to the landlord after the produce have been harvested or the terms of the contract renewed for another period of time. The hiring of land for plantain cultivation is on a yearly basis. The current rate for hiring a land in Agogo is forty Ghana cedis (Ghs 40.00 or $11.00) per acre\(^7\).

Land Purchase

Similarly, landlords have the right to sell their land outright to any prospective buyer but this practice is very rare. It occurs in situations where the landlord is cash strapped.

The Taungya\(^8\) System

The taungya system is also pervasively practiced in the Agogo traditional area. This is a special land arrangements made available to tenants seeking land to cultivate their crops on in the Agogo

\(^7\) Interview with Farmers - Akwasi Nkansah, Kwesi Asamoah, Alhaji Issaka, Kofi Boateng and Alhaji Dan Mumuni on November 27 and 30, 2013 and December 2, 2013. The price quoted was the price for hiring land in Agogo as of 2013.

\(^8\) “Originally from a word of Burmese origin meaning a hill farm. Used to denote a system of forest plantation establishment used by the Forestry Department in which food crops are interplanted with trees in the early years of plantation establishment. The main concern is with the production of trees and not the integration of trees and food crops. The land is usually leased to farmers who provide labour in nursing seedlings, demarcating plots and tending saplings in return for access to the land for food cropping. The food crops belong to the farmer and the trees to the Forest Department. In a variant known as “departmental taungya” the Forestry Department hires labourers to establish the taungya plantations” (Amanor, 1996:x).
area. This involves farmers seeking the permission of the Forestry Department to be allocated land to cultivate their food crops, on condition that they would allow the forestry officers to plant teak trees on the land and the tenant farmers would in turn take care of the trees on behalf of the forestry department to maturity. Once the individual agrees to these terms he or she is allocated land for his or her use.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{29} Interview with Farmers - Akwasi Nkansah, Kwesi Asamoah, Alhaji Issaka, Kofi Boateng and Alhaji Dan Mumuni on November 27 and 30, 2013 and December 2, 2013.
DISCUSSION

Over the years, conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen have dominated the airwaves in Ghana with varying degrees of allegations from rape, destruction of farms, armed robbery, murder and bushfires. Were these mere allegations or they were substantiated claims?

TABLE 2.0: A TABLE SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES REPORTED AT THE POLICE STATION FROM JANUARY 2009 - APRIL 2010 INVOLVING FARMERS AND FULANI HERDSMEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Crime</th>
<th>№ of cases</th>
<th>Native of Agogo</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
<th>Fulani</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Causing Damage</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causing harm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat of death</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted rape</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causing damage and causing harm</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted murder</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>75</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Agogo Police Station – DCID/AGD.8/V.9/13

Table 2.0 above shows the distribution of cases reported by natives, Fulani herdsmen and cattle owners at the Agogo police station between the periods January 2009 – April, 2010. The natives recorded a total of 75% of cases involving murder, stealing and threat of death with each case recording 25% respectively. However, the Fulani recorded 100% of cases involving causing damage, stealing, causing harm, attempted rape and causing damage and harm with each case
recording 78%, 4.3%, 8.6% and 4.3% respectively. From the above statistics, the Fulani are in the lead of all crimes attributed to them. However, the natives are equally culpable since the record indicates that they also meted out atrocities of various kinds on the Fulani. The information provided above is by no means exhaustive. The essence is to guide the researcher to ascertain the nature of the conflicts and to validate some of the claims made by respondents.

The Fulani situation in Agogo presents hydra-headed challenges that ought to be interrogated carefully and objectively. Findings from the study established that inhabitants from Agogo, apart from Fulani cattle owners who have settled in the area are also involved in the cattle business. These inhabitants from Agogo employ the services of Fulani herdsmen to tend their cattle.

From the above findings, it is possible to suggest that some of the activities of the Fulani herdsmen are indeed harmful and has the tendency to hamper peaceful co-existence within a community. The practice of sending cattle to sources of river bodies to drink and the burning of the grassland to enable the grass to re-generate itself quickly during the dry season is less desirable since this livelihood survival strategy leads to the destruction of farms. However, rustling cattle by unscrupulous persons and the shooting of cattle on sight by farmers in retaliation is an act that cannot be countenanced either. It must therefore be noted that the livelihood survival strategy of one group should not adversely affect the source of livelihood of the other. Crop farming and livestock rearing are both sources of livelihood for majority of Ghanaians which they jealously protect. However, the Fulani might not be the only group causing bush fires in the Agogo traditional area. During my field work in Agogo, I observed the practice of charcoal burning which is rife in the Agogo area. This practice by itself may also be the cause of bush fires in the area.
In addition, most rural communities depend on river bodies as their source of drinking water as a result of their inability to access portable drinking water. It is therefore unimaginable for humans to be sharing the same source of drinking water with animals since this predisposes them to diseases. Water is the source of life for both humans and animals and conflicting relationships occur because of varying interest in accessing these natural resources.

Secondly, even though accusations of rape were levelled against the Fulani in the Agogo area, such allegations were unsubstantiated. Records from the Agogo police station proved otherwise by indicating that there was only one incident of an attempted rape from the period between January 2009 and April 2010\(^{30}\). Nonetheless, it must be noted that in Ghana, issues involving sexual conducts are shrouded in obscurity and people do not easily disclose such issues to third parties when they are the victims. Besides, rape is an issue that stigmatizes the victim and for that matter many women or young women are unable to disclose this if they find themselves in such traumatic situations because of fear of losing their marriages or risk the chance of getting a suitor in the future. Thus the issue of rape cannot be confirmed or denied by this study since both the police records and the report of the Dadson Committee could not establish it. Besides, my checks from the Agogo Presbyterian hospital also could not confirm any incidence of rape. However, available evidence suggests that allegations bordering on attempted rape were not duly investigated by the police to its final conclusion. The recommendation by the Dadson committee that attempted “rape cases reported by Afia Akyaa and Afia Amoako\(^{31}\)” be investigated affirms this assertion.

\(^{30}\) DCID/AGD.8/V.9/13

\(^{31}\) REGSEC Report, 2010. Pg. 45
Thirdly, although the inhabitants of the Agogo traditional area alleged the murder of 20 people over a period of 10 years from 2000 to 2010, the findings of the Dadson Committee contradicted such a claim. According to the Committee, even though the people of Agogo alleged 20 deaths, the communities investigated during the enquiry alleged seven murder cases out of which only one was established - the murder of Kofi Obeng (deceased), a tomato farmer at Bebuso whose case is pending at the Kumasi High Court. The remaining six whose demise could not be proven included Seidu Busanga, Zakari Kusasi, Alipoli Frafra, Akwasi Akaho, Issah Sisala and Osmanu Umaru (Fulani). The report indicated that those who alleged could not prove the involvement of any Fulani in the murder. However, the Dadson Committee established that most of the serious cases of murder, rape and the use of offensive weapons occurred prior to ‘Operation Cowleg in 2000/2001’\textsuperscript{32}.

In addition, even though the Dadson Committee found in the possession of Fulani herdsmen sharp knives and cutlasses they could not establish the use of sophisticated weapons such as AK 47 assault rifles\textsuperscript{33} as was alleged by the inhabitants of the Agogo community during the period of its investigations. However, the committee was of the view that by the transhumant nature of the herdsmen, the possession of such weapons could be a possibility\textsuperscript{34}. Nonetheless, the inhabitants confirmed their possession of weapons including single barrel guns which they use to defend themselves and their properties from the Fulani\textsuperscript{35}.

\textsuperscript{32} REGSEC Report, 2010. Pg. 6
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid
Fourthly, it is possible to suggest that the terms and conditions governing the lease were not duly complied with by the cattle owners and the ATC did not have any monitoring mechanism to ensure that the terms and conditions governing the lease were duly complied with. According to the Dadson Committee, conveyances of land were made without proper description of the land thus exposing the incompetence of the ATC land administration secretariat. This highlights the challenges of the customary land tenure system in establishing clearly defined boundaries. It can therefore be argued that although chiefs reserved the prerogative of leasing land to tenant farmers, the transfer of such privileges to individuals and family heads made the occurrence of conflicts inevitable because of the possibility of cattle straying into people’s farms in areas where the allocated land to cattle owners shares boundaries with farmers.

Fifthly, the strained relationship between the government and the traditional authorities makes it difficult to effectively co-operate and co-ordinate to nip the perennial conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen in the bud. For instance, the MCE was not on good terms with the Omahene of Agogo and members of the ATC.

Finally, the situation in Agogo is beset with political rivalry in both mainline and traditional politics that makes it difficult to deal with the situation decisively. There is a body of opinion that holds the view that because the Omahene is affiliated to the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC), the government is unwilling to deal with the Fulani issue effectively. This assertion is contrasted with effort made by the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) under the leadership of the late Honourable Kodwo Baah Wiredu to deal with the Fulani
menace in the area. They alleged that members of the top hierarchy of the NDC own cattle within the area, and are therefore reluctant to flush out the Fulani from the area. However, available evidence indicates that government flushed out Fulani herdsmen from the Agogo portion of the Afram Plains after April 30, 2012\textsuperscript{38}.

Moreover, the leadership of the ATDTF is made of persons who are opposed to Nana Akuoko Sarpong in one way or the other\textsuperscript{39}. According to Nana Akuoku Sarpong, it was because he opposed the appointment of Hon. Osei Bonsu, the MCE on grounds of incompetence, hence the move by the MCE to inaugurate the ATDTF to oppose him. Besides, according to the paramount chief, Nana Akuoku Sarpong, the chairman of the ATDTF belongs to the Krotia faction in Agogo which is a rival faction opposed to his reign whereas Pese Danquah – chairman of Agogo Concerned Citizens Association has also sued him (the paramount chief) in court over a case involving the sale of a parcel of land situated at the Agogo Post Office and the Russian Park to private developers\textsuperscript{40}.

**CONCLUSION**

The conflict in Agogo is a social conflict that has attracted much attention among government and civil society organisations. It is an established fact that the activities of Fulani herdsmen cause a lot of destructions to farms thereby endangering other people’s livelihoods. However, both parties involved in the conflicts are to blame for crimes of various kinds

\textsuperscript{38} REGSEC Report, 2012. Pg. vi, 8

\textsuperscript{39} REGSEC Report, 2010. Pg. 10

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid
committed within the vicinity. The exaggeration of tension by the media does not augur well for the peaceful co-existence of the two groups as this has the tendency to cause general resentment and ethnic stereotyping of the Fulani by the general population. As a minority group in Ghana, even though their sale of cattle enables them to amass considerable amount of wealth, they do not have a voice in the country.

Equally important is the involvement of the inhabitants of Agogo in cattle husbandry. These inhabitants have engaged the services of Fulani herdsmen to tend their herds. This therefore demonstrate an issue of patron-client relationship in which the Fulani herdsmen are entitled to protection from their benefactors. This clearly highlights the ineffectiveness of the expulsion of the herdsmen.

The situation in Agogo is also one of political exploitation whereby various interest groups seek to gain political capital out of the Fulani situation in order to gain the support and popularity of the masses. It equally shows the interest of chiefs in allocating land to migrants with the potential benefits that accrues to them. Thus, despite the general body of opinion against the perceived anti-social activities of the Fulani, the traditional authorities still went ahead to lease the land to them.

The conflict situation in Agogo therefore highlights the interest of chiefs in allocating land to migrants and the conflicts that this engenders. This is manifested in the resentment of the local youth against the traditional authorities and migrants and how these resentment leads to ethnic stereotyping and conflicts.
RECOMMENDATION

The problems between Fulani herdsmen and farmers is a structural problem which emanates from the allocation of land by chiefs to herders without consulting local farming communities. To forestall such misunderstandings, chiefs should take into consideration areas they allocate to cattle herders by consulting local communities. A consensus must be reached between farmers and other stakeholders in the community such as the Odikurow (village head) before such transactions are carried out.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

Conflicts between farmers and herders is widespread across the African continent and the reasons for their occurrence are varied, stemming from the incompatibility of livelihood patterns between farmers and herders, alterations of symbiotic relationship, resentment of pastoralists, destructions of farms by cattle and cattle rustling among others (Shettima & Tar, 2008, Davidheiser & Luna, 2008).

Even though not all people of Fulani descent are herders, majority of them pursue a lifelong profession in cattle herding as owners of herds or hired labourers employed to take care of other people’s cattle. They are predominantly found in the regions of Northern Nigeria, the Futa Toro and Futa Djallon regions of Senegal, Guinea and the Macina regions of Mali and eastward through Niger and Cameroon. These regions are noted to be places where the Fulani originate from (Davidheiser & Luna, 2008, Oppong, 2002).

The presence of the Fulani in Ghana is a phenomenon which dates back to colonial times. Their influx and permanent settlement within the Northern territories date back to the 20th century. By the 1920s they had settled permanently in the Northern territories (Northern Region) and their population became significantly felt in the 1930s as they established numerous households in the region. Their ingenuity in raising cattle coupled with the services they offered as cattle drovers persuaded the colonial authorities who had conceived the idea of establishing Native Administration farms in the north to encourage their settlement in the Gold Coast. Other factors that encouraged Fulani settlement in the country included their awareness of the pastoral
conditions in Ghana, the thriving expansion of the cattle trade, the establishment of the Native Administration farms and the drought of the Sahelian region in the 1960s and 70s (Tonah, 2005).

The Fulani have become attracted to the fringes of the humid zone entering into the southern portions of Ghana as far as the Afram Plains and the Kwahu ridges. These places have become attractive to the Fulani as a result of the availability of well drained rivers and adequate pasture to support cattle herding in the area. The opening up of the Afram Plain area through the introduction of road networks, electricity and other social amenities also facilitated the influx of Fulani herdsmen in the area (Tonah, 2005).

These developments have resulted in conflicts between farmers and Fulani herdsmen as cattle destroy farms in the area particularly, Agogo in the Asante Akyem North District of the Ashanti Region. Matters got to a serious head when farmers alleged that herders had destroyed their farms, raped their women and murdered 20 farmers in the area since 2000-2010 (REGSEC report, 2010:6, 13).

This study therefore argued that conflicts between Fulani herdsmen and farmers in the Agogo traditional area of the Ashanti Region have been occasioned by the interest of chiefs in allocating land commercially which has resulted in the decline of fallow land for local farmers and led to conflicts between indigenous land users and migrants including conflicts between farmers and herdsmen. By using ethnographic techniques such as semi-structured interviews, court records and reports, the study tried to examine the interest of chief in allocating land and its impacts on both herders and farmers. It also focused on the arrangements under which lands are released to migrants or herdsmen, the nature of conflicts over land and investigated local moral discourses around migrants and pastoralists.
Chiefs exercise considerable interest in land, and as custodians they hold the land in trust for their subjects which confers on them the responsibility of allocating lands to their subjects and migrants alike. The conferment of alodial titles on chiefs places an obligation on them to defend the interest and welfare of their communities in cases involving land disputes by rendering oral historical account to legitimise their claim over land. Historical account notwithstanding, settling migrants in contentious areas and exacting annual tributes, rent and taxes over land equally served to protect the interest of chiefs in asserting their claim to land. The enormous powers that chiefs wielded placed them in a position to play both their subjects and migrants (Kasanga, 2002, Amanor, 2008, Berry, 2001, Austin, 2005, Boni, 2005).

The cocoa boom in Ghana opened up new frontiers in the Eastern, Western, Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo and Central Regions forcing chiefs to adopt new strategies in alienating land. The rise in demand for cocoa resulted in a correspondent increase in demand for land by migrants. This development prevented chiefs from selling land outright but rather enter into new forms of agreements with migrants populations under the *abunu* and *abusu* tenure arrangement. The effects of alienating land to migrants were a mixed blessing. Even though it prevented chiefs from selling land outright and gave both individuals and chiefs the opportunity to accumulate wealth with minimal investment in labour, it set the stage for mutual suspicion, distrust, insecurity of tenure and the breakdown of the social support system of the families especially among the Akan matrilineal descent groups (Amanor, 2008, Amanor & Diderutuah, 2001, Hill, 1956, Boni, 2005).

Conflicts over land are therefore precipitated by a number of factors namely land alienation, pastoral and agricultural encroachment, changing demographic conditions of an area,
changes in tenure regimes based on western models, access to natural resources and chiefly claims over disputed land (Shettima & Tar, 2008, Davidheiser & Luna, 2008, Berry, 2001).

Equally important is the erection of boundaries of exclusion that makes it difficult for migrants to integrate into societies in which they find themselves. The presence of migrants is a mixed blessing which is exploited by governments and individuals alike. Migrants are a blessing in periods of economic boom and scapegoat in periods of economic recession. The expulsion of migrants has been used in times of economic difficulties in both Ghana and Cote D’Ivoire. In Ghana, the Alien Compliant Acts was enacted by the Busia government to expel migrants whereas the concept of ivorite was equally invoked in Cote D’Ivoire to exclude migrants and dispossess them from occupying land (Amanor, 2011).

In addition, pastoral activities have always been perceived as backward and land degrading by the courtesy of the received wisdom narratives. These narratives are articulated by the media, government, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and donor agencies. They serve as convenient platforms for state intervention in pastoral activities backed by political and economic motives. Even though the findings of these narratives are beset with inaccuracies, the fact that they are grounded in scientific theories and methodologies makes their stance believable and counter research to debunk such inaccuracies receives little attention and are discredited by donor agencies (Scoones, 1996, Leach & Mearns, 1996).

**Conclusion**

Issues of social conflicts with respect to the accessibility of natural resources especially land, is a hydra-headed development that must be examined against the backdrop of the various actors and interest groups involved in the conflicts. The emergence of such conflicts is
occasioned by a number of competing variables, and these variables must be examined on a case by case basis to ascertain the validity of claims or assertions being made.
REFERENCES


‘Migration and Farmer-Herder Conflicts in Ghana’s Volta Basin’.


APPENDIX

Interview with a Fulani herdsman in the Afram Plains: Source: Author, 2013

Interview with a Fulani herdsman at Hwidiem. Source: Author, 2013

Participating and observing. Source: Author, 2013
A headboy who has sustained cutlass wounds. Source: DCID, 2013

A headsman shot by an unknown gun man: Source DCID, 2013

Interview with a farmer. Source: Author, 2013

Destruction of farm produce. Source: DCID, 2013

Destruction of farm produce. Source: DCID, 2013

Shooting of cattle. Source DCID, 2013