

Land registration and titling and the Rural Grouped Settlement Programme: Experiences of local communities of land tenure security in Musanze District, Northern Rwanda

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Abstract

The paper investigates the influence of the land tenure reform on land conflicts and tenure security of local communities. It specifically analyzes the experiences of local communities on land conflicts due to the implementation of the land registration and titling and tenure security during the implementation of the rural grouped settlement programme respectively.

Findings indicate that land disputes decreased following three different stages of the land registration and titling in the study area (in Kimonyi where LRT was completed, Shingiro where LRT started but not completed and in Gataraga where LRT had not started). Therefore, this paper offered the possibility of studying the periods *before* and *after* the implementation of the land registration and titling programme. Findings also indicate that the RGS programme created tenure insecurity as the exchanged plots to settle new comers were mostly unequal, scattered and located in different places.

Key words: Land tenure reform, land registration and titling, rural grouped settlement, tenure security, land disputes, Rwanda

1. Introduction

Land has long been, and continues to be, central to the lives of most Africans, and to the politics and economies of African countries. Early in the new millennium “the land question” is once more near the top of policy goals for development across Africa and a central focus of cross disciplinary research. It is assumed that the world economy will continue to be influenced by how land and land-related resources are secured, used and managed (Amanor, 2012; Anseeuw & Alden, 2010; Byamugisha, 2013). Land is increasingly recognized as important governance issue and land governance within land administration and land management institutions have been advocated as an instrument of sustainable development particularly in Africa (Palmer et al., 2009; Deininger et al., 2011). It includes the ways property rights to land (for groups or individuals) are defined and can be exchanged and transformed. It concerns the rules, processes and structures through which decisions are made about the use of and control over land. It encompasses the nature and quality of land ownership information available to the public and the simplicity with which it can be accessed or modified; and the way in which disputes are resolved and conflict is managed. It involves statutory, customary and religious institutions (Burns et al., 2010; Deininger, 2003; Deininger et al., 2011; Palmer et al., 2009).

The UNECE defines land administration as referring to “the *processes of determining, recording and disseminating information* about the ownership, value and use of land, when implementing land management policies” (1996). One of the objectives of the land administration systems (LAS) is the legal recognition of property rights, the compatibility between the rights recognized by the legal statutory framework and the rights on the ground that have acceptance and legitimacy in the community (Deininger et al., 2010; Enemark et al., 2014; Williamson et al., 2010).

At the individual, household, and community levels, it is important to understand the poor people’s vulnerability sources, the variety of ways in which they might be affected by processes and land policies, and the multiple ways in which the development interventions may have an effect on livelihood activities. Livelihood provides a framework to focus on poverty within the context of the people who are poor, and on the processes that underlie such poverty (Adato & Meinzen-Dick, 2002; Tham-Agyekum, 2015). Here, ‘sustainable’ implies that rural people have the ability to enhance and ensure their future livelihoods (Tang et al., 2013). However, in many cases, rural residents have been regarded as passive beneficiaries of government policies and donors’ support (Tang et al., 2013).

Over the last 15 to 20 years different models have been initiated in different African countries to formalize customary land rights (Chauveau, 2007; Goldstein et al., 2015; Widman, 2014). In some countries such as Rwanda, formalization of land rights was carried out at the level of individuals or households (Boone, 2007; Fairley, 2013; Goldstein et al., 2015). Despite the fact that all land is

mostly state-owned, people have been provided with individual land title certificates to secure their land.

Land tenure institutions in customary land areas in Africa have been evolving towards individualized ownership as communal ownership systems may be weaker due to unclear and uncertain individual rights. , improve livelihoods of the rural poor in Africa requires strengthening land tenure security of farmers in general and rural small-scale farmers in particular (Deininger & Ali, 2008; Holden et al. 2009; Holden & Otsuka, 2014; Otsuka & Place, 2014).

In post-conflict circumstances, specific difficulties frequently faced include: lack of access to land; the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), often without titles or other proof of ownership; land pressure due to unexpected number of refugee returns. Despite all these problems, it is often recommended that post-conflict land reform is done rapidly to avoid new conflicts at a later date (Huggins et al., 2005; Unruh et al., 2013; Wehrmann, 2008).

In the case of Rwanda, the Government implemented a LRT programme to solve past land conflicts together with the rural grouped settlement programme which aimed primarily at resettling returnees in villages to solve the problem of land scarcity, free agricultural land, and provide infrastructure to the local population (GoR, 2004).

While few reports and quantitative studies described the early stages of the LRT program, assessing the Organic Land Law, the National Land Policy, and the pilot phase of the LRT program, this paper show that through the qualitative research method, the LRT implementation stages determine the percentages of land disputes. Through the same research method, this paper also shows the level of perception of land tenure security by local communities during the RGS implementation.

Based on the above background and considering that the LRT and RGS programmes initiated in Rwanda are much related to some of the land governance issues described above such as land tenure security, access to land, and land use and management., assessing the effects of the two programmes on some of the above areas could provide broader insights. It is of interest as processes initiated to resolve land issues affect social norms in other areas such as tenure security, gender equality and access to land, so that analyzing the effects of interventions in this area could provide broader insights.

The paper aims to examine the influence of the land registration and titling and the rural grouped settlement programmes respectively on land conflicts and tenure security of local communities. It specifically analyzes their experiences and perceptions on land conflicts and tenure security due to the implementation of the land registration and titling and the rural grouped settlement programmes.

2. Land tenure reforms

This section describes the land tenure reforms including the land registration and titling programmes undertaken particularly in the African continent, the land registration and titling in Rwanda and the villagization in Africa and the rural grouped settlement programme initiated in Rwanda.

2.1. Land registration and titling programme in Africa

Since land is the most important means of both subsistence and income generation in rural areas, access to land, security and certainty of land rights are of primary concern to the eradication of poverty. However, customary ownership of land in Africa was not formally registered for land tenure security purpose. Many of the land policy reforms and titling programs introduced after independence during the 1970s and early 1980s often encouraged speculation in land by outsiders, therefore ignoring the ones, the local users of the land, who were supposed to acquire increased security through titling (Bromley, 2009; Bruce & Migot-Adholla, 1994; Peters, 2007, 2009; Place & Migot-Adholla, 1998; Platteau, 1996; World Bank, 2003).

Since the 1990s and into the new millennium, there was a resurgence of interest in land reform in Africa towards land policies that are more “human-centred ... less driven by economic prescriptions ... and pro-poor” (Toulmin & Quan, 2000:3). During that period, influential development agencies such as the World Bank recommended the replacement of the customary systems with land titling and private property rights, which were seen as necessary preconditions for modernization and development (Galiani & Schargrotsky, 2010; Obeng-Odoom, 2012, Peters, 2007, 2009). This rethinking led to a ‘new wave’ of land reform that was supposed to be “decentralized, market-friendly and involved civil society action and consensus” (Cotula, et al., 2004; Cotula, et al., 2007; Peters, 2007, 2009).

Over the last 15 to 20 years, Governments across the continent revised their land tenure legislation, reforming institutions for the administration of rights and experimenting with ways to register individual and collective rights to land and natural resources (Toulmin, 2009; Boone, 2007; Cotula, et al., 2004; Byamugisha, 2013). Such new policy measures were of particular importance Specifically in countries seeking to re-establish peaceful relations between citizens following conflicts, such as Rwanda. One of the intentions of implementing land tenure reform by provision of land tenure rights is to provide tenure security to landowners in order to stimulate investment and use land efficiently (Ali et al., 2014; Holden et al., 2016; Van Leeuwen, 2014).

Past failures of land titling programs to create such investment and tenure security effects may partly be due to inappropriate timing of such reforms, marginalization of the poor, corruption and

high costs of the programme. While the aims and assumptions of land tenure reform efforts differ widely, all purport to increase land tenure security for the rural poor (Deininger, 2004; Holden, 2016; Ghebru & Holden, 2013; Deininger, 2005). Indeed greater formalization of access to land tenure may assist the rural poor in protecting their assets, improve tenure security, and reduce land-related conflict (Ali et al., 2014; Holden et al., 2016; Hilhorst, 2010).

The land tenure reforms in most Africa countries including Rwanda is based on land registration and titling programmes to solve land conflicts by ensuring land rights of local communities through issuance of land title certificates expected to be used as a collateral to invest in land. As stated in a World Bank report in 2003, “Providing secure tenure to land can improve the welfare of the poor, in particular, by enhancing the asset base of those, such as women, whose land rights are often neglected. At the same time, it creates the incentive needed for investment, a key element underlying sustainable growth” (Deininger, 2003:ix).

Formalization of individual land rights by land registration (titling) has usually been initiated to promote greater tenure security, reduce land conflicts and gain a number of economic advantages such as accelerated land markets, investment in land using new title as collateral for loans (Feder & Nishio, 1998; Firmin-Sellers & Sellers, 1999; Whitehead & Tsikata, 2003). As eradicating poverty is the goal, new agricultural investments, new businesses and upgraded residences are the means whereby this will happen, tenure security is the necessary condition, and formal titles have been the means to offer security of tenure (Blomley, 2009; Deininger & Jin, 2006). However, the role of the State is crucial to put in places and enforce legal and independent institutions in order to ensure that land rights are secured through the land title registration process as part of the land administration overall system (Deninger & Feder, 2009; Platteau,1996).

In order to implement the land tenure reform in Rwanda, there was a need to develop legal and institutional platforms to better coordinate land administration and an appropriate land management. This was considered the best way to guarantee security of tenure, to promote investment in land and to enhance sustainable use of land resources and increased productivity for economic growth and poverty alleviation in Rwanda. In this regard, a set of laws and orders have been enacted together with the establishment of a National Land Centre and an Office of the Registrar (GoR, 2005).

2.2. Land tenure reform programme: land registration and titling programme in Rwanda

During the colonial period (and prior to this, in many areas) the monarchy had a centralized and absolute control of land. Written law governed urban plots and land owned by religious organizations especially the Roman Catholic Church. Customary law governed the rest of the land used by farmers for agriculture and land has been state property (UNDP, 2006).

After independence of Rwanda, the 1962 constitution codified colonial land policy, vesting all ownership of land in the State and requiring government approval for sales and bequests. In spite of this, most land remained governed by local customary law, which could be applied arbitrarily by the parallel legal system. Order No. 09/76 of 1976 (GoR, 2004a) which until 2005 was the Land Law functioning in Rwanda, declared the State as the only holder of land in Rwanda, prohibiting subdivision and sale without government approval. Due to the technical difficulty of enforcement and the self-interest of bureaucrats, these regulations went largely unenforced (Fenske, 2011). Therefore, in 2004, Rwanda launched an ambitious land tenure reform programme aiming at increasing tenure security for landowners, reducing land-related disputes, improving land-use management and investment, and introducing an efficient land administration system and transparent land market system. The overarching objective was to reduce poverty and ensure ongoing peace and social stability in the country (Ali et al., 2014; Ngoga, 2019). The Government of Rwanda undertook legal measures to address a history of often land-related conflict, end gender inequalities in land access, and provide a framework to make optimum use of available land resources to contribute to social and economic development (Ali et al., 2014; Byamugisha 2013; Pritchard, 2013).

A new Land law enacted in 2005 by the Organic Law N° 08/2005 of 14/07/2005 “Determining the Use and Management of Land’ in Rwanda, specifically calls for registration of land” (GoR, 2005:30). The law seeks to register all land and issue title certificates on lease, with the aim of promoting large-scale, commercial agriculture (GoR, 2005).

Before the Land Law of 2005, the Rwandan Land Policy was adopted in February 2004 and it puts great emphasis on establishing a land administration system as a key to land tenure security through possibility of registering and transferring land. The Land Policy states that “clarification of land rights is required through the development of appropriate land administration systems, which can guarantee the security of land tenure and promote investments in land” (GoR, 2004a: 21). Improved security of rights to land through the registration process is expected to reduce opportunities for conflict of interest. In fact, it is believed that through the land policy, the only way land could benefit landholders in Rwanda and overcome various land challenges the country has been facing for ages is land tenure reform through a LRT where security of tenure will be increased, help to reduce inequality and contribute to poverty eradication (Muyombano et al., 2018; Payne, 2011).

It is important to state that at the time that the land policy was adopted, livelihood for 90% of the population was mainly based on land. while more than 90% of land was unregistered with very poor land administration and land management systems in the country (Byamugisha, 2013; Ngoga, 2019).

The Government of Rwanda also developed and adopted a “Strategic Road Map for Land Tenure Reform in Rwanda” in 2008. It was a framework for implementation of the National Land Policy and the Organic Land Law (OLL) determining the use and management of land in Rwanda. One of the objectives of the road map was to improve land tenure security through an efficient, transparent and equitable system of land administration national wide and to contribute to land conflict management (GoR, 2007).

The first LRT of most land in Rwanda (land tenure regularization) involves the selection of the area and public information campaign, training of local land committees at cell and sector level and local authorities, land demarcation and adjudication, publication of adjudication records, objections and corrections period, mediation period for disputes, and registration and titling (DFID, 2011). By the end of December 2012, an estimated 10.3 million parcels were already demarcated, adjudicated and digitized (100%), and entered into the Land Tenure Regularization Database (LRTSS), 8.3 million parcels had the required information, 7 million leasehold titles were approved and title certificates printed for distribution, and 4 million leasehold title certificates collected by their owners. Only 11,840 disputes were registered countrywide (Rurangwa, 2013; Byamugisha, 2013; Gillingham & Buckle, 2014).

2.3. Villagization in Africa and Rural Grouped Settlements (RGS) programmes in Rwanda

Villagisation was generally used in land reform attempts and were implemented particularly in Africa for last century to improve socio-economic standards of citizens. During the 1970s and 1980s, the basis for villagisation programmes were mainly ideological, connected with socialist ideals of collectivization in countries such as Ethiopia and Tanzania. Unfortunately, many studies indicate that the concept did not succeed as most of states most failed to provide the basic needs and rights for the people as promised (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2014; Grunditz, 2015; Sheikheldin & Gussai, 2015; Wayess & Nygren, 2016).

In the case of Rwanda and after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, challenges related to housing to resettle a big number of returnees, the scarcity of land linked with poverty of households led the Rwandan Government to adopt a national human settlement policy in December 1996. The policy focused on regrouping settlements (imidugudu) in rural areas to encourage the development of rural centers in order to access social and economic services such as water, electricity, schools, and health centers (Havugimana, 2009). Isaksson (2013) explains that on top of addressing the immediate housing shortage and the problems of land use, a major ambition was for the policy to help diversify the economy. By settling people in clusters the hope was that markets would develop, stimulating non-farm income-generating activities. According to Leeuwen and Hilhorst (2000), grouped settlements would better ensure the security of the people, and thereby alleviate

fears for personal safety after the war, and mixed settlements would facilitate the reintegration of communities, the move towards national reconciliation and the prevention of conflict.

The rural grouped settlement programme was not new in Rwanda. In the 1950s the colonial government started a programme to settle some of the rural population in villages. These villages were known as 'paysannats', which were intended to be settlements on idle land. Families were allocated plots of 2 ha each along the roadside for both agriculture and housing. This system was intended to promote intensive agriculture as well as to achieve a more even distribution of population over the countryside. This policy was still being implemented after independence until the mid-1970s. Although the Government had not yet articulated a formal decree concerning grouped settlement, there was a general understanding among humanitarian and development assistance actors that rural grouped settlement was the Rwandan Government preference based on Arusha (Tanzania) accord signed between the former Rwanda government before 1994 Genocide and the current Government. Given that the 'old caseload' returnees of 1960s had neither homes nor land, the policy of imidugudu was seen as a rational and appropriate solution (GoR, 2004a).

The Arusha Accords specified that imidugudu were to be located on lands not occupied by individuals. Following that provision, most early imidugudu were in fact established on public lands, including in a hunting reserve and a national wildlife park, the Akagera Park. But once the government decreed in December 1996 that all Rwandans would move into an imidugudu it was clear that there was not enough public land available in the country to accommodate all the settlements. When it came to implementing the policy, the Government decided that residents of the imidugudu, not the State, would compensate property owners whose land was taken for building sites (HRW, 2001). With respect to implementation, the central government provided the rules but it was up to local authorities to put the policy into practice (Isaksson, 2013).

As noted above, this paper analyzes specifically the LRT on land disputes and the RGS programmes on land tenure security of local communities. Previous studies did not show that the percentage of land disputes depended on the stages of the LRT implementation stages. This aspect is described and explored through the use of semi-structured interviews, where people stated their perception on the issue. The LRT process has to be studied over time as even though it could be completed, changes or land disputes may increase or decrease due to various reasons, which need to be studied.

3. Methodology

The study area comprised three sectors, Kimonyi, Shingiro and Gataraga of Musanze District which is one of the five Districts of the Northern Province of Rwanda comprising fifteen sectors.

The three sectors were selected based on the fact that they offered the possibility of analyzing the period *before* and *after* the LRT programme implementation.

This paper draws on a mix of qualitative semi-structured collective interviews supplemented by quantitative questionnaire survey. The survey was undertaken in 2011, including 150 questionnaires in each of the three sectors of the study area which were at the following different phases of land registration and titling (LRT) programme. In Kimonyi sector, the LRT programme was completed at the time of the field work while in Shingiro sector, it was not completed. In Gataraga sector, the LRT programme had not yet started. All the three sectors are located in Musanze district, Northern Province in Rwanda (Figure 1).

The survey makes a total of 450 questionnaires. These data provide an overview of land disputes, the type of land acquisition, and perceptions of land tenure security by gender. The face to face interviews during the survey was used to get information from people such as illiterate, blind, disabled, or very old who could not otherwise provide it. Bernard (2012) recommends between 150-200 face to face interviews for one person undertaking a survey in a year in areas that lacks good roads as they are costly both in time and money. The survey was based on Bernard's recommendation and each assistant head in each sector collected 150 questionnaires making them 450 questionnaires in total.

The semi-structured interviews made of collective interviews were carried out in August 2011 and 2012 with groups among the local population as well and with key informants. 7 people were selected for each collective interview. According to Bryman (2012), the typical group size in collective interview is between 6 to 10 members. The smaller number is suggested when participants are likely to say much on the research topic, which is likely to happen when participants are involved in, or emotionally preoccupied, with the topic. This was expected to be the case as the land dispute and tenure security of local communities are major challenges, for which the land tenure reform and particularly the land title registration process in Rwanda was initiated to deal with in Rwanda.

Nine collective interviews were carried out in 2011 and in 2012 respectively, comprising three interviews in each of the three sectors, one with a group of men, one with a group of women and one with the sector land committee. This makes in total 18 interviews (126 respondents). These interviews were supplemented by three additional interviews, one interview with a group of men made of 7 respondents in one sector, one with a group of women made of 7 respondents in one sector, and one with the district land official and zonal operational manager of land tenure reform programme at provincial level (15 respondents), making in total 141 respondents in 21 interviews.

4. Findings and discussions

The following section presents findings on land acquisition in the study area. It discusses the effects of land registration and titling programme on land conflicts, and the effects of rural grouped settlements (RGS) on land tenure security of local communities.

4.1. Presentation of findings

According to Table 1, the major mode of land acquisition in the study area is through inheritance (74.9%). Different modes of land acquisition include the purchase (16%), exchange (4.7%), gift (3.1%), and Government (1.3%). It indicates that the inheritance mode of land acquisition is prevailing as traditionally the Rwandan land tenure system was patriarchal where land was continuously divided and given to sons. The situation has changed since the implementation of the organic land law which allows girls or daughters to inherit from parents.

4.2. Effects of land registration and titling and land conflicts

Data obtained from the quantitative household survey in each sector (Table 2.) indicate that the percentage of land disputes decreased from Gataraga sector (23.8%), where LRT had not started yet in 2011 followed by Shingiro sector (11.5%), where land registration had started but was not completed to Kimonyi sector (6.9%), where land registration had been completed.

Collective interviews carried out in the sectors where land registration had been completed (Kimonyi) support the quantitative data shown in Table 1, confirming that land disputes have decreased in sectors where the LRT has been completed. In Kimonyi sector, where land title registration was completed, when asked about their experience of land title registration programme, a man stated that: “land disputes in families still exist but land disputes have decreased in general”. One of the reasons why land disputes are lower in the sector where the land registration process has been completed is probably due to the fact that all land disputes have to be solved before land parcel is registered and a land title certificate is issued to the landowner.

A sector land committee member in Gataraga, where LRT had not yet started, was optimistic and hoped that land conflicts would decrease after the introduction of LRT, stating that: “The land registration and titling programme will reduce existing land disputes, people will be more secure and will have the opportunities to secure bank loans using their land”.

The findings from Table 2. also shows that in the three sectors, the percentages of non-disputed land decreased from Kimonyi sector (93.1%), where LRT was completed followed by Shingiro

(88.5%) where LRT had started but was not completed to Gataraga (74.2%) where LRT had not started yet. The high percentage of non-disputed land illustrated by quantitative data may not always explain that land disputes and specifically intra-family land disputes have always decreased.

In the same line, a woman in Shingiro sector explained one of the reasons why intra-family conflicts persist: “intra-family land disputes appear among families because of lack of testimony [written land certificate] showing the right land owner. Most of the time these types of land disputes are due to the inequality of the inherited land size between children. In case of any dispute over a plot, the registrars stop registering the land, and it takes a long time to handle such cases”.

The most common reasons for intra-family conflicts are related to men living in polygamous relationships. Findings indicate that on long term, unregistered relationships are not covered by the OLL as stated by an unregistered wife in Kimonyi: “We are second wives and are victimized, for example, I’m called prostitute and my children are not recognized during the land title registration process. Why are they dying with hunger when they are from the same parent (the husband)? We are really ignored by the society”. A man in the same sector emphasized that: “We have seen that if a man has two wives, the officially married woman and her husband are all registered to their land as well as their children, but the non-registered woman does not benefit from it. Her children are registered to the land of their father only if he recognizes them”.

The indicator for perceptions of tenure security with respect to gender was measured by cross tabulating the number of land holdings co-owned by both spouses, the number of land holdings owned by female, and the number of land holdings owned by male with the following three levels of tenure security: much secure, secure and less secure.

As the study area is located in a polygamous region with numerous unregistered marriages, the findings from Table 3 indicate that in general, the percentage showing the perception of tenure security is low for female respondents (8.2%) compared to the percentages of respondents with co-owned status (76%) and male respondents (15.8%). This could be explained by the fact that unregistered women are not registered to the land of her “husband” as she is not protected by the Organic Land Law in Rwanda.

A woman in Kimonyi stated that during land registration process, non-registered wives and their children are excluded: “It’s very often said: ‘Children’s rights’, but they don’t have those rights. For instance, if I am not the first wife I automatically lose right to inheritance, my children are called illegitimate and then must inherit their mother’s land who get a ¼ of the property. And this is only possible when the parents are dead; while still alive they have nothing. Do you understand that the children will only get such land rights after their parents’ death? It’s a pity. Another

problem is that even if you are unfairly treated and go to justice, you are not understood by officials simply because you are not a registered wife.”

A member of the sector land committee in Gataraga indicated that inheritance division of land can be conditioned by a will, written or oral from the husband: “the registration recognizes people who are officially married and their children. However, it is up to the husband to recognize his children from other wives in order to be registered on his land”.

4.3. Rural grouped settlements (RGS) programme and land tenure security

A man in Gataraga described how the implementation of the RGS programme had created tenure insecurity during the exchange of plots: “They measure the size plot in the rural grouped settlement site and the one who is settled gives back the same size of plot of his land elsewhere. Question arise when the size of exchanged plots are not the same and when the one who gives his/ her land in rural grouped settlements has to travel long distance to go to cultivate. Another issue is that sometime the landless has to exchange money with land parcel and when he/she doesn’t have means to pay it conflicts arise”.

Long distance between plots exchanged during resettling in grouped settlement sites was also mentioned by a man in Shingiro sector: “Let me give you a clear example, seven people came and occupied my land in the village, each of them gave me a plot, all those seven plots are not located in the same area. I have to go in different places to farm which is very difficult”.

During the land registration process, the land holder pays 1,000 RFrw per plot. In case he/she has a large area in the RGS site which he/she has to exchange with many people, he/she has to pay registration fee for all exchanged plots, scattered depending on their locations while he/she should have paid 1000 RFrw for the only plot he had in the RGS site. This situation was experienced by a man in Shingiro sector: “Another problem concerns the fees for land registration which is 1,000 RFrw (1.6 dollars) to register each plot. After exchanging and receiving those different plots, suppose they are 10 we must register them for 10,000 RFrw instead and it is difficult to get that amount of money”.

The sector land committees appreciated the RGS programme, although local communities stated that they encountered challenges during its implementation. For instance, a sector land committee member in Shingiro appreciated the way the process of villagization was being implemented and said: “It is a good policy and we are happy that they are increasing in numbers and we have some “model villages” equipped with infrastructure which we are using as examples to build new ones in grouped settlement sites”. In the same line a sector land committee member in Gataraga said:

“until now there is no problem noticed, we encourage mutual agreement during exchanges of plots otherwise cases should go in courts if land disputes are not solved”.

Compensation plans for landowners in RGS sites are not defined when vulnerable groups such as poor landless are given plots as new comers in the grouped settlement sites. A man in Shingiro explained that: “the first problem is that we are given separated plots; the second is that we are not compensated when poor people are settled by the government on our land in the village”.

Between 2008 and 2013, the share of households in rural areas living in RGS in Rwanda moved from 22% to 74.4% (rural grouped settlements include planned and unplanned settlements). However, much needs to be done in the provision of infrastructure and various facilities (water, sanitation, energy, transport and housing) (GoR, 2012), and challenges related to RGS implementation such as compensation plans, exchange of plots and land sharing need to be addressed.

5. Conclusions

The aim of the LRT programme was to analyze the effects of the LRT programme and the RGS programme on tenure security and land disputes of local communities. The paper indicates that land disputes decreased depending on different phases of the implementation of the LRT Programme. One of the challenging issues was that women with unregistered marriage were excluded during the land title registration process. Unless they have their own land, they did not benefit from the husband’s land together with their children. In order for children to inherit land, the father had to recognize them. This situation created family conflicts between wives and children in the study area where the polygamy was prevalent.

The implementation of the RGS programme had created various challenging issues leading to land tenure insecurity of local communities. Exchange of plots with unequal size, long distances to reach exchanged plots, lack of compensation. Traditionally, families were living together and when people are resettled elsewhere, families are no longer closer due to the Resettlement and that cultural aspect should be taken into consideration during the implementation of the RGS.

The contribution of the paper to existing knowledge (Amanor, 2012; Anseeuw & Alden, 2010; Burns et al., 2010; Byamugisha, 2013; Deininger, 2003; Deininger et al., 2011; Palmer et al., 2009) is reflected in assessing the effects of two programmes, the LRT on land conflicts and the RGS on tenure security in three sectors of the study area, which were at different three stages of LRT programme at the time of data collection process. The paper particularly offered the possibility of studying the effects of the LRT programme on tenure security for the periods *before* and *after* its implementation. As some studies (Byamugisha, 2013; DFID, 2011; Rurangwa 2013) with a

quantitative character presented findings at the early stages of LRT programme, in the case of Rwanda, this paper contributes to the existing knowledge by using both qualitative as well as quantitative methods.

Further research is needed to find out its influence on land tenure security and land disputes of local communities including women after some years after LRT programme has been completed in 2013.

The Rural Grouped Settlements (RGS) became a national policy in 1996 but little is known about its impacts on land tenure security of local communities. The paper analyzes its effects on tenure security of local communities in three sectors of the Musanze district in the Northern Province of Rwanda. Further research is needed to investigate this issue in other provinces of the country in order to have an overview of its influence on land tenure security as it is still being implemented in Rwanda.

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APPENDICES

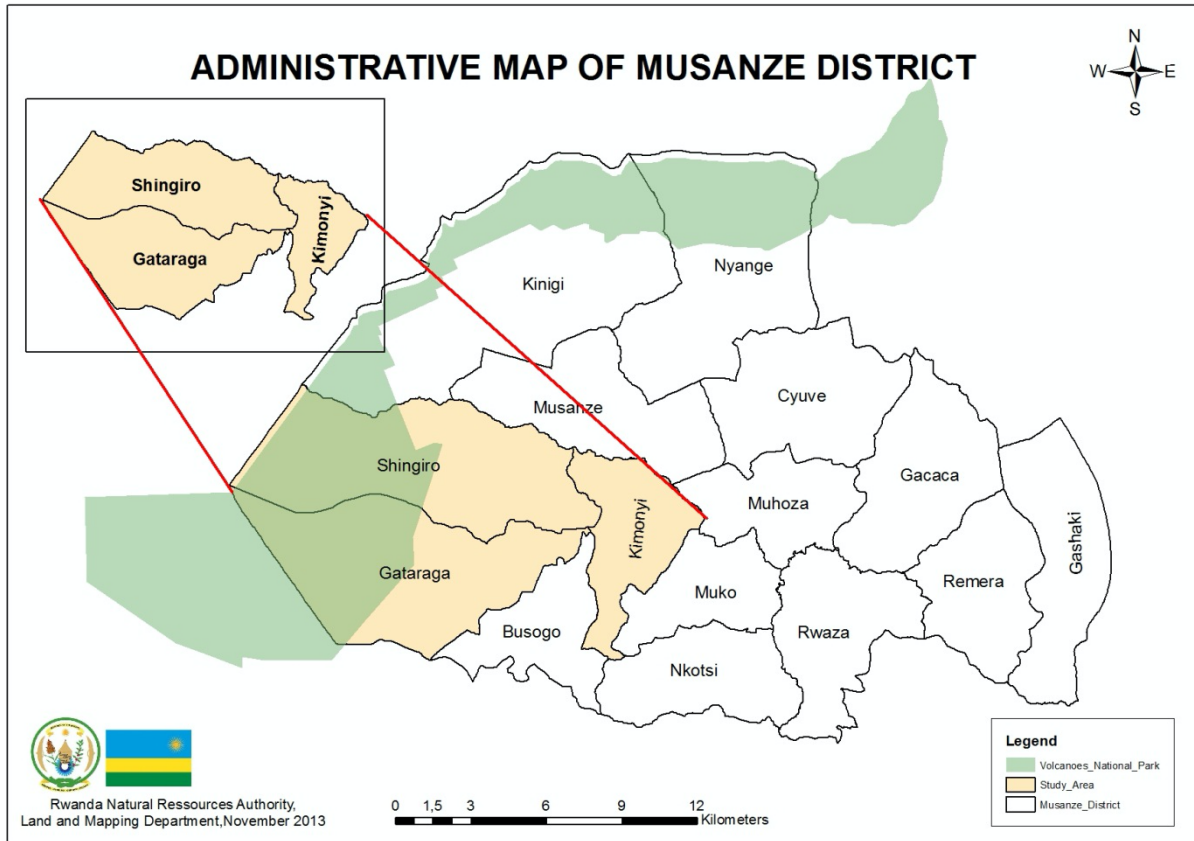


Figure 1. Study area
(Source: Rwanda Natural Resources Authority (RNRA), Kigali)

Tables

Table 2.1. Mode of land acquisition

Inheritance	337	74.9%
Purchase	72	16%
Exchange	21	4.7%
Gift	14	3.1%
Provided by Government	6	1.3%
Total	450	100%

**Table 2.2 Land disputes in three sectors of the study are:
Kimonyi Shingiro Gataraga**

	Kimonyi	Shingiro	Gataraga
Yes	6.9%	11.5 %	23.8 %
No	93.1%	88.5 %	74.2%

N=450

2.3. Table. Ownership type by gender and perceptions of respondents on tenure security

Ownership type by gender		Perceptions of respondents on tenure security	
		Male	Female
Co-owned			
Very secure	Secure	Less secure	
76 %	15.8%	8.2%	