

Housing Development, Local Land Conflicts and Sustainable Land-Use Planning in Peri-urban Ghana

Abstract

This paper examines the various ways local land conflicts affect sustainable land-use planning in peri-urban Ghana. The paper is based on intensive fieldwork conducted in Aburaso in Atwima Kwanwoma District, Ghana. In recent years, rapid urbanisation has resulted in a high demand for customary lands in peri-urban areas of Ghana. Housing development is one of the key land uses facilitating the increased commoditisation of land. Housing developers acquire tracts of land and develop them into detached houses, semi-detached houses, flats and storey buildings which they either let them to tenants or occupy them as owner-occupiers. Customary lands are continuously converted into housing uses; leading to eviction of indigenes from their farmlands.

Against this backdrop, this study employed a mixed method approach involving an in-depth qualitative interviews and quantitative survey to collect and analyse data on land conflicts and sustainable land-use planning in peri-urban Ghana. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample the regent chief, three clan heads and five government officials. Simple random sampling technique was employed to gather thirty-one individual household developers in the newly built-up area of Aburaso. The study found that dispossession of indigenes and poor accountability on the part of chiefs create contestations within royal family; local land conflicts between chiefs and other clans in communities; resulting in violence, death and poor land allocation. The ultimate effect of the conflicts is poor land-use planning with houses lacking portable water, proper sanitation and good access to roads in communities. With the increasing interest to control corruption, land dispossession, local land conflicts, and poor sustainable land-use planning in Africa, the insights from this paper will be useful to support the eradication of the problems in the land sector.

Keywords: Land, Housing Development, Local Land Conflict, Land-Use Planning, Peri-Urban Ghana

1.0. Introduction

Land conflict is a widespread social problem that militates against sustainable development. In Africa, a number of studies have found that local land conflicts occur due to scarcity of land emerging from high population pressure (Jones-Casey and Knox, 2011; Kuusaana and Bukari, 2015; Mwesigye and Matsumoto, 2016). The high population pressure makes supply of land limited; causing changes in livelihood strategies and creating competition and struggles over land among people in communities. Other studies also highlight that implementation of neoliberal policies results land conflicts among people in communities (Berry, 2009; Boone, 2017; Agheyisi, 2019; Kalabamu, 2019). Such studies mention that execution of neoliberal policies supports the creation of “traditional hierarchies” in communities and due to land commercialisation, land

investment and land grabbing, traditional authorities use their created power to dispossess the less privileged people from their ancestral lands; creating contestations, litigations and disputes among people in communities. Bob (2011) and Berry (2018), on the other hand, consider land conflicts to occur due to interrelated problems such as high population pressure, land investment, land commercialisation and formalisation of land rights in countries across Africa.

Local land conflicts are found to be highly rampant in communities with diverse ethnic groups and host migrants (Kalabamu, 2019). Conflicts normally occur between families, ethnic groups, farmers and herders ('Lesson 3', 2011). In Botswana, Kalabamu (2019) discovered that local land conflicts occurred due to the implementation of neoliberal policies and the rise of elite class. Also, in Mali, due to scarcity of land at the south, emerging from the rise of sedentary living of pastoralists and the increase in population of people on fertile lands, Jones-Casey and Knox (2011) observed that land conflicts occurred among the people. Local land conflicts cause violence and death, social inequalities, social injustices and poor land management among people in communities (Bob, 2011; Jones-Casey and Knox, 2011).

This paper therefore examines the various ways in which local land conflicts affect sustainable land-use planning in peri-urban Ghana in the context of rapid commoditisation of customary lands for housing development. The paper is divided into five sections: the current section is the introduction. The next section surveys relevant literature on the nature of housing development in Ghana, commercialisation of customary lands for housing development, land administration and local land conflicts, and land sector institutions and land-use planning. The third section investigates the background of the study area and the research methodology. The fourth section presents the discussion of findings and the fifth section presents the conclusion with recommendations.

2.0. Literature review

2.1. Nature of housing development in Ghana

Housing development is one of the key pillars of economic development of countries around the globe. Sufficient supply of housing improves health of people and physical landscape of a country (Awuvafofe, 2013). In Ghana, there are two forms of housing systems, notably informal and formal housing systems (UN-Habitat, 2011). Informal housing system is made up of individual household developers and estate companies that mostly acquire lands from customary land owners and engage small scale contractors to build their houses. Formal housing system, on the other hand, involves government housing institutions that obtain lands and develop housing units for people (UN-Habitat, 2011; GREEDA, 2016).

Informal housing developers supply about 90% of the housing units in Ghana while the remaining 10% is supplied by formal housing developers (UN-Habitat, 2011). Formal housing developers supply houses to people who are typically high middle class income earners and high income households (Abusah, 2004; UN-Habitat, 2011). According to GREEDA (2016), formal housing developers are dormant and their contribution to the control of the 1.7 million housing deficit in Ghana is very low. Housing facilitators also play roles in the housing sector of Ghana; they normally assist in improving dwelling units

of urban low income households. Housing facilitators perform their activities in collaboration with government institutions and land owners (UN-Habitat, 2011).

With the 90% housing supply by the informal housing system, individual household developers deliver 90% of the houses and estate companies supply the remaining 10% (GREEDA, 2016). Individual household developers acquire land from their accumulated income or family supports; engage small-scale contractors whom housing developers normally identify through recommendations by people (UN-Habitat, 2011). Building designs are often not used to construct individual household developers' houses; housing developers often inform contractors to build their houses according to houses known well by the developers (Ibid). The small-scale contractors also work with tradesmen and both are paid by the individual household developers usually on daily basis. Individual household developers provide contractors with building materials and construction halts whenever the individual household developers are experiencing shortage of funds.

UN-Habitat (2011) revealed that individual household developers take several years before they are able to complete their houses for occupation. Averagely, it takes between one to five years before an individual household developer can complete a housing unit for occupation (Owusu and Asamoah, 2005). Yeboah and Shaw (2013) suggest that the challenges of individual household developers are created by land acquisition process, complex and bureaucratic land title registration system, poor implementation of planning laws, high interest rates on loans and low income levels of housing developers to access mortgage. Individual household developers develop detached houses, semi-detached houses, flats and storey buildings which they either let them to tenants or occupy them as owner-occupiers (GREEDA, 2016).

2.2. Commercialisation of customary lands for housing development in peri-urban Ghana

In peri-urban Ghana, lands are highly commoditised due to high demand for land for housing development; farmlands are routinely converted to residential uses (Ubink, 2008; Ubink and Quan, 2008). Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor (2010) posit that the high demand for land for housing development at the peri-urban areas occurs due to urban land prices higher than the surrounding communities' lands. Owusu-Ansah and O'Connor describe that change in tradition of Ghanaians to live in clan compound houses to single household houses; the nobility attached to living in urban communities; the desire of Ghanaian expatriates to own houses at home and the institutional changes such as subdivision of lands at the peri-urban communities cause high demand for lands at the urban peripheries. They concluded that in Kumasi, for example, the high demand for lands for housing development at the peri-urban communities has created "mosaic housing structures" which are poorly spread across the communities (Ibid, 1).

On the contrary, Kleemann *et al.* (2017) consider rapid urbanisation as the cause of high demand for land for housing development in peri-urban communities in Ghana. Urban communities in Ghana are experiencing high population growth due to natural increase, unchecked internal migration and globalisation (Abdulai and Ndekugri, 2007; Barry and Danso, 2014; Kleemann *et al.*, 2017; Siiba, Adams and Cobbinah, 2018). The rapid population growth results congestion especially in housing; escalating housing rents and land prices at the urban centres (UN-Habitat, 2011). Disadvantaged urban dwellers who cannot afford housing in the urban centres search for rental houses and land at the urban

periphery. The urban peripheries therefore become the sanctuary for the urban spilled over (Simon, McGregor and Nsiah-gyabaah, 2004). The communities within the urban peripheries provide their residents good access which enables the residents to daily commute to their workplaces at the urban centres (Cobbinah and Amoako, 2012). The search for affordable houses and land by urban migrants causes the peri-urban areas of Ghana to be implicated in the processes of urbanisation.

The more urban dwellers migrate to the peri-urban communities, demand for rental housing and land increases, land gains value and prices of land become high (Simon, McGregor and Nsiah-gyabaah, 2004). In Ghana, customary authorities own about 80% of the total land area (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Cobbinah and Amoako, 2012). The high demand for land for housing development causes customary land owners to evict farmers from their farmlands and allocate the customary lands to housing developers at high prices. The land prices are usually equivalent to the open market value of the land (Kasanga *et al.*, 1996; Asiana, 1997; Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Fiadzibey, 2006; Ubink and Quan, 2008).

2.3. Land administration and local land conflicts in Ghana

Ghana has a dual land administration where statutory land tenure runs concurrently with customary land tenure (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Sarpong, 2006). According to Article 257(1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, all lands within the statutory land tenure are vested in the president on behalf of, and in trust for, the people of Ghana. Within the state land administration, Lands Commission of Ghana is charged with the responsibility to manage state lands and allocates the lands to prospective developers who make their intentions known to the Commission via applications. Abusah (2004) argues that the state lands are free in principles, however, in practice, the lands are only accessible by senior civil servants, politicians, top army and police officers, contractors, business executives and land administrators. Abusah discusses that this situation has occurred due to the requirements housing developers are expected to meet before they can access state lands (Abusah, 2004). In this regard, majority of housing developers, especially individual household developers access customary lands for their housing development (UN-Habitat, 2011).

Customary lands are owned by stools, clans and in some instances individuals and management of these lands is vested in the occupants of stools, clan heads or religious leaders (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Fiadzibey, 2006; Berry, 2009). Bourret (1949) explains that the creation of stool land ownership occurred during colonialism. In the epoch of colonialism, colonial administration created traditional hierarchies and gave wider powers to paramount and divisional chiefs with no recognition of native councils. Paramount chiefs and divisional chiefs were the only group recognised by law to transact in land while other social groups were considered as land users (Bourret, 1949; Kasanga, 2000; Amanor and Ubink, 2008). Chiefs became landlords and servants of the colonial administrators instead of being custodians of lands of their people (Bourret, 1949; Berry, 2018). Amanor and Ubink (2008) underscore that the stool land ownership aided the chiefs to claim monopoly to alienate land, obtain revenue and evict land users with support of the colonial government. The restriction of other social group in land transactions increasingly created contestations from the early part of the twentieth century (Amanor, 2010).

After independence, the chiefly office was fortified in the 1969, 1979 and the 1992 Constitutions of Ghana. The office was further strengthened with the implementation of neoliberal policies in the 1980s (Amanor and Ubink, 2008). According to Article 36(8) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, traditional authorities (chiefs, clan heads and religious leaders) are recognised as fiduciaries charge with the obligation to discharge their functions for the benefit of their members. However, Asiama (1997) declares that land ownership in Ghana has attained a new dimension; chiefs are considered as landlords instead of fiduciaries according to the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Land ownership now appears to promote and support the private interest of traditional holders than the members of communities (Asiama, 1997). In Besease, for instance, Ubink (2008) observed that chiefs claim land ownership on the premise that land belongs to royal families. In view of that, chiefs frequently assert that they are the rightful persons to allocate community lands to developers.

In Ghana, customs require that traditional authorities must be transparent and accountable in their land transactions for the benefits of their communities. However, Fiadzegbey (2006) identified that chiefs and clan heads allocate lands and collect huge sums of money but they do not account the proceeds from their land disposals to their communities. They also never inform their community members about the land transaction receipts. Lack of accountability and transparency in land transactions develop agitations from youth and community members against traditional authorities (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Fiadzigbey, 2006; Amanor and Ubink, 2008). In Besease for example, Ubink (2008) found that the people were furious against the chief's attitude towards the community members during their land allocations. In that regard, the people took the law in their hands and sold the community lands without the concurrence of the chief. Similarly, in Peki No. 2, the chief's conduct in land allocations caused the local people to chase the chief out of the community with stones (Ibid).

Traditional authorities' failure to perform their roles as fiduciaries in land transactions has created disturbances and contestations in many peri-urban communities in Ghana. In Akokoamong, in 2001, the queen mother faced destoolment due to improper accountability of land transactions (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). Barry and Danso (2014) point out that in communities where lands are contested, land guards are at times hired to defend different claims over land or move farmers away from their farmlands. In other cases, people challenge chiefs' land allocations and seek every opportunity to resist the chiefs or benefit from the proceeds (Ubink, 2008). In situations where chiefs cannot control people, they allow the people to sell their lands and pay signing fees to the chiefs (Ibid). Amanor and Ubink (2008:56) state that chiefs' land ownership is not problematic, however, chiefs can dispossess land users from their land before land reaches the market.

2.4. Government land institutions and land-use planning in Ghana

In the context of the current customary land administration in Ghana, traditional authorities allocate lands with the concurrence of Lands Commission through its planning authorities at the districts (Mireku, Kuusaana and Kidido, 2016). Chiefs must allocate plots of land to developers and provide developers with site plan and allocation note (Kasanga, 2000; Mireku, Kuusaana and Kidido, 2016). The site plan indicates plot number, developer's name, the use of the plot and the adjoining plots. Allocation note, on the other hand, bears stool's name and terms and conditions of the land transaction. Housing developers use site plan and allocation note to apply for building and development permits at District Physical Planning Departments while site plan,

allocation note and cadastres are used by the housing developers to apply for title certificate at the Lands Commission of Ghana (Abusah, 2004).

According to Land Use and Spatial Planning Act 2016, Act 925, government land institutions must prepare base maps and local plans for customary land owners in their land allocations. However, due to inadequate logistics, personnel and high cost of maps preparation, government land sector institutions are unable to fulfil their legal mandates (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Barry and Danso, 2014). In contemporary Ghana, it is illegal to build a house without a site plan and building permits. In this regard, Yeboah and Shaw (2013) found that chiefs and tribal elites usually hire private surveyors to prepare base maps and local plans for them for their land allocations mostly without the approval of District Physical Planning Departments. In cases where even Physical Planning Departments prepare local plans for chiefs, Yeboah and Shaw revealed that due to high demand for land, most chiefs still hire private surveyors to demarcate the lands again in order for the chiefs to obtain more plots for sales (Yeboah and Shaw, 2013).

In other circumstances, planning officers also collaborate with traditional authorities to encroach places earmarked for uses other than residential. In Offinso, Boamah (2010) mentions that planning authorities connived with traditional authorities and encroached other land uses which were not meant for residential purposes. Many studies have found that land-use planning is unsuccessful in peri-urban communities in Ghana especially in places where there are contestations over land disposals (Boamah, 2013; Yeboah and Shaw, 2013; Barry and Danso, 2014; Kleemann *et al.*, 2017). Individual household developers houses are affected and most of the houses lack access to water, good roads and proper sanitation (Osumanu, Kosoe and Dapilah, 2016). In older residential sites, housing units are in death-defying conditions and the aged, the poor and the unemployed people normally suffer in such places (Boamah, 2013).

3. Background to the study area and the research methodology

The study area, Aburaso is one of the research sites the researcher considered for his postgraduate studies. The research methods employed was mixed methods.

3.1. Study area

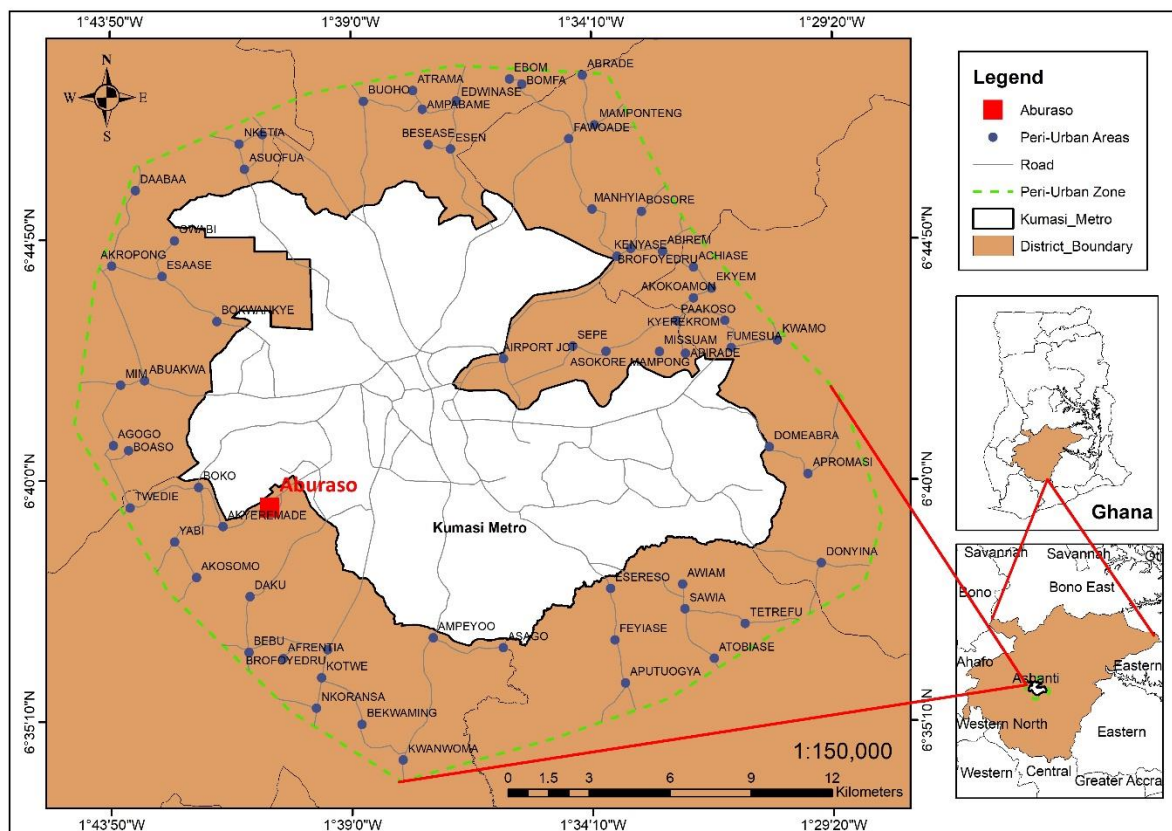
Aburaso is positioned within the peri-urban Kumasi and the Atwima Kwanwoma District in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Peri-urban Kumasi covers a total area which is 40km in radius round from the centre of Kumasi Metropolis (Cobbinah and Amoako, 2012). Peri-Kumasi is currently experiencing tremendous changes due to the influx of urban dwellers from Kumasi Metropolis into the communities (Abass, Afriyie and Adomako, 2013). Kumasi Metropolis has become congested and many people who cannot afford rental houses and plots of land migrate to the peri-urban communities to search for affordable rental houses and lands to build houses (Owusu-ansah and O'Connor, 2010). Peri-urban communities of Kumasi provide easy access to their residents to commute daily to the Kumasi Metropolis; making the communities the target zone for the urban migrants.

Due to the strategic location and proximity of Aburaso to Kumasi Metropolis, most urban dwellers either rent houses or purchase land in Aburaso to build houses. In Aburaso, estate companies are rare; all housing developers are individual household developers. Aburaso had a total household population of 829 and 450 houses and the average household size was 4.4 in 2010 (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The community has

stool land tenure system where chief allocates land to prospective housing developers with the consent of traditional council. The high demand for lands in Aburaso has increased the prices of plots of land, making traditional leaders to allocate lands to individual household developers at high prices.

Presently, Aburaso is facing land conflicts which have created chieftaincy dispute in the community. The conflict has led to the swearing of traditional oath and the placement of court injunction on Aburaso land. Housing developers access land only upon request to Asantehene. The figure below shows the position of Aburaso within the peri-urban Kumasi.

Figure 1: Map of Aburaso in the peri-urban Kumasi, Ghana



Source: Geomatics Engineering Department (KNUST), 2019

3.2. Research Methodology

In order to understand the ways local land conflicts affect sustainable land-use planning in peri-urban Ghana, the study adopted mixed method approach (both qualitative and quantitative research methods). Qualitative methods generate data that are more in-depth but narrow in breadth as compared to quantitative methods which produce rigorous statistical data (Sayer, 2000; Bernard, 2006).

The researcher obtained qualitative data from in-depth interviews. The qualitative data provided in-depth explanations and descriptions about land allocation processes,

accountability of traditional authorities on land transactions, causes of land conflicts within royal family and among community members, effects of land conflicts on implementation of land-use planning. The questions in the in-depth interviews were used to formulate the questionnaire surveys which were used to obtain the quantitative data.

In all, a total of 40 participants, 9 key informants and 31 individual household developers were involved in the study. The key informants included: 1 regent chief, 3 clan heads and 5 government officials. The regent chief is the acting chief of Aburaso while the clan heads are leaders of the respective clans in the community. The government officials were the land sector institutions established by Act of Parliament for the management and administration of land and related matters in Ghana. The regent chief, the clan heads and the government officials were interviewed to obtain the qualitative data. The individual household developers were both migrants and indigenes who had purchased lands and built houses in Aburaso. They were also engaged to gather the quantitative data. Of the 31 individual household developers interviewed, 14 representing 45 percent were female household headed and 17 representing 55 percent were male household headed.

Purpose sampling techniques were used to sample the regent chief, the clan heads and the government officials while simple random sampling was used to sample the individual household developers. The qualitative data was triangulated with the quantitative data. In the study, both qualitative and quantitative data were presented sequentially. The qualitative data was analysed using thematic content analysis and the quantitative data was analysed using SPSS and the tables were presented with the aid of Microsoft Excel.

4. Discussion of Findings

Land commercialisation in the peri-urban Ghana has been identified to emerge from expansion of urban centres into the urban peripheries (Ubink, 2008; Kleemann *et al.*, 2017). The rapid urbanisation causes the conversion of agricultural land uses into residential uses; where farmlands are sold at high prices to housing developers (Barry and Danso, 2014). The findings on commercialisation of lands in the present study confirms this situation in Aburaso in peri-urban Kumasi, Ghana. From the study, the 5 government officials stated that because of the congestion and expansion of Kumasi Metropolis, many urban dwellers migrate from the Metropolis and purchase land in the peri-communities such as Aburaso, Kromoase and Adako-Jackie. The participants highlighted that as a result of the movement of the urban dwellers into the peri-urban communities, the lands gained value and traditional authorities allocate lands to prospective developers at high prices. A participant at the Lands Commission stated that:

The major factor is congestion. The CBD and its surrounding environs are congested and the noise in the CBD is increasing daily. As a result of this, people are moving to get a quiet place. So they move to the peri-urban areas. Also, the high cost of property in the first class residential areas in the Metropolis forces people to get places they can access the same residential use at very affordable prices (Interview with Rhoda, Lands Commission, Kumasi, 25/01/2019).

Further, it was surprising that findings on land ownership in the study were in contradiction with generally accepted views reported in most studies on land ownership in Africa. In Africa, it is widely acknowledged that land ownership is communal. All members of a community are considered as land owners (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001; Amanor and Ubink, 2008; Berry, 2017, 2018). In Ghana, for example, according to the 1992 Constitution, Article 36(8), the state recognises land ownership as communal and the management of lands must benefit the entire community. Even in South Africa and other African countries, chiefs are seen or generally consider as custodians of land. However, in Aburaso, the regent chief and the 5 government officials indicated that all lands within Ashanti Region belong to Asantehene, the traditional head of the Asante nation, and the respective chiefs are caretakers of their lands. The regent chief further mentioned that chiefs account proceeds from land transactions only to Asantehene, royal family members and traditional councils. The regent chief reported that:

The proceeds are divided into four, one is sent to Asantehene to inform him about the land transaction, the stool's share, royal family members' share and a share set aside for community development. A chief who failed to account properly on land transactions could be destooled (Interview with Regent Chief, Aburaso, 28/12/2018).

Nonetheless, Ubink (2008) revealed that proceeds that are set aside for community development normally find their way to finance chiefs' private matters. Ubink argues that most communities do not benefit from proceeds generated from land transactions in peri-urban communities in Ghana.

Again, the findings illustrated that poor accountability on land transactions in Aburaso resulted land conflicts within the royal family. The heads reported that the conflict led to chieftaincy dispute, violence and the shooting of the son of the immediate past queen mother. The findings on poor accountability on land transactions are consistent with some of the challenges that Fiadzegbey (2006) listed in her study. According to Fiadzegbey, poor accountability on land disposals erupts agitations from youth and community members against traditional authorities (Fiadzegbey, 2006). In the current study, it was found that the eviction of indigenes from their farmlands without appropriate compensations led to conflicts between the chief and clans in Aburaso. A clan head in Aburaso declared that:

Due to the chieftaincy disputes and the unwillingness of the chief to give some of the plots to the clans, land allocation has moved into the hands of clans. A clan says I have land and sells to people who want them (Interview with Adusei Opoku, Indigen, 01/01/2019).

This situation is in tandem with the findings from (Barry and Danso, 2014), who mentioned that eviction of indigenes from ancestral lands results contestations, struggles and violence on community land.

Land conflicts are found to lead to the creation of lands guards who are hired to protect claims over land and at times drive farmers away from their farmlands (Nyasulu, 2012; Barry and Danso, 2014). In this study, all participants confirmed that land guards are disturbing both farmers and housing developers. The government officials at the District further reported that because of the chieftaincy dispute in Aburaso, land guards, community members and clan heads are allocating lands to prospective housing developers. A government official at the District Physical Planning Department indicated that:

[...] in Aburaso, there is no substantive chief. Everybody who has access to the land try to sell it. Every family is claiming the part they were farming as theirs. This is because there is no chief. The trend it should have gone; it is not going in that way. Everybody is controlling his own part (Interview with Osei Tutu, District Physical Planning Department, 16/01/2019).

Moreover, it has been reported in many studies that poor land allocations result poor land-use planning (Nyasulu, 2012; Awuah *et al.*, 2014; Barry and Danso, 2014; Kleemann *et al.*, 2017; Agheyisi, 2019). In Aburaso, the government officials in the District Planning Department indicated that land-use planning is poor because of land conflicts on one part and inadequate fund, personnel and equipment on the part of the District. The head of the Physical Planning Department mentioned that Aburaso does not have approved local plan, however, they have a guide for development. The official confirmed that the guide was made in order to control haphazard development and support the District to obtain money from the issuance of permits. The head of the District Physical Planning Department stated that if such thing was not done, people will continue to allocate lands to housing developers; the developers will build their houses and the District will not obtain any revenue.

The poor land allocation and land-use planning were manifested in questions posed to individual household developers on land allocation and documents they possess on their land and houses. From table 1 below, 15 individual household developers representing 48 percent obtained their lands from Aburaso chief while 11 individual household developers equivalent to 35 percent lands were allocated by community members.

Table 1: Land allocation in Aburaso during commercialisation of land (n =31)

People who allocated lands	No. of individual household developer , n=31	Percentage (%)
Chief	15	48
Queen mother	2	7
Clan head	3	10
Community member	11	35
Total	31	100

Source: Field survey, 2019

In table 2, 29 individual household developers did not obtain title certificate for their interest they hold in their lands. Also, 20 individual household developers did not have building and development permits. All the individual household developers illustrated that there are lack of portable water and tarred roads to houses in Aburaso. However, for sanitation site, all the household developers responded that one is available in Aburaso.

Table 2: Compliance with land-use planning regulations by individual household developers, (n=31)

Compliance with regulations	Response	Total	Response	Total
-	Yes	-	No	-
Possession of allocation note	Yes	20	No	11
Possession of site plan	Yes	20	No	11
Possession of title certificate	Yes	2	No	29
Possession of building and development permits	Yes	11	No	20
Access to portable water	Yes	0	No	31
Access to tarred road	Yes	0	No	31
Access to sanitation site	Yes	31	No	0
Supervision of building during construction	Yes	0	No	31

Source: Field survey, 2019

From the two tables, it is explicit that land-use planning regulations have not been successfully executed in Aburaso. Houses do not have portable water and tarred roads in the community. A clan head also indicated that some individual household developers are damming streams and building in waterways.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

From the study, it has been revealed that rapid urbanisation causes commercialisation of peri-urban lands. During the commercialisation, poor accountability on land transactions by chiefs and eviction of indigenes from their farmlands without proper compensation payments bring about land conflicts. The effects of land conflicts were observed to include contestations within royal family, chieftaincy dispute, violence, death and improper land allocations. The ultimate result of poor land allocation is poor land-use planning; where local plans are unapproved, ineffective implementation of planning laws building in waterways and houses lacking portable water and access to good roads.

This paper therefore recommends that checks and balances should be used to control chiefs' land transactions. Council of elders within the traditional governance system duties must be explicitly defined within the laws and their duties must include authentication of land transactions made by chiefs. Additionally, land allocations should be participatory; local people should be massively involved in the allocation and management of their community lands. Further, local plans should be initiated by the government and designing of local plan should be participatory involving all stakeholders and members of community. Also, the Physical Planning Departments in Ghana should be equipped with logistics, funds and personnel. It is again suggested that a further study should be carried out on land ownership in Ghana to understand the contradictions between practices and the law.

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