

**Farming in the Shadow of the
City: Changes in Land Rights
and Livelihoods in Peri-Urban
Accra**

by

**Daniel Maxwell, Wordsworth Odame
Larbi, Grace Mary Lamprey,
Sawudatu Zakariah, and Margaret
Armar-Klemesu**
February, 1998



**Cities Feeding People Series
Report 23**

ARCHIV
631 (1-21)
IS
rept. 23

**Farming in the Shadow of the City:
Changes in Land Rights and Livelihoods in Peri-Urban Accra**

Daniel Maxwell,* Wordsworth Odame Larbi, Grace Mary Lamprey,***
Sawudatu Zakariah,*** and Margaret Armar-Klemesu*****

*Food Consumption and Nutrition Division
International Food Policy Research Institute
1200 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-3006

**Lands Commission
Ministries Post Office, Private Bag
Accra, Ghana

***Nutrition Unit
Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research
University of Ghana
P.O. Box 25
Legon, Ghana

February, 1998

Farming in the Shadow of the City:
Changes in Land Rights and Livelihoods in Peri-Urban Accra

Abstract

Contending perspectives have interpreted the impact of rapid growth in peri-urban areas in very different ways. One school of thought characterizes peri-urban growth as leading to the development of new markets, and the conversion of property rights in such a way as to transform the local economy, leading to greater entrepreneurialism. Another sees the destruction of agricultural livelihoods without necessarily replacing them with any alternative form of economic activity.

This paper reviews the literature on peri-urban land use, property rights change, and livelihoods, and then compares four cases within the peri-urban periphery of Greater Accra, the capital and largest city of Ghana, to assess the impact of rapid urban sprawl on the area immediately surrounding the city. Cases examined include the loss of land to housing, the protection of agricultural land from urban sprawl, environmental degradation as a result of urbanization, and the commercialization of peri-urban agricultural production as a result of changing market demand. The paper ends with recommendations for policy and programmatic interventions.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research at the University of Ghana and the Ghana Lands Commission for institutional support during field work, and the International Food Policy Research Institute for assistance in the collection of secondary information. A number of individuals were helpful in the fieldwork, but special thanks are due to Mr. Attoh, the District Agricultural Officer for Ga District, and members of his staff. We would also like to thank the Ga District Assembly, and especially the chief executive, for their interest in the study. Mr. Isaac Darko of the Abokobi Presbyterian Agricultural Project was very helpful in the case study of Abokobi. We would also like to thank the chiefs and elders of all the villages visited, and all participants in the various focus groups and interviews carried out for the study. We are grateful to assistance from Joyce Maxwell and Eileen Ni Cleary in accurately recreating and scanning the PRA diagrams used in this report. This study was carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre of Canada, and we gratefully acknowledge this financial support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I	Introduction	..1
II	Review of Literature	..2
	Brief Overview of Land Ownership in Ghana	
	Accountability	
	Peri-Urban Land Conflicts	
	Rapid Growth and the Lack of Planning	
	Changes in Property Rights	
	Livelihoods and Women's Tenure Security	
	Environmental Impacts of Urbanization	
III	Issues Arising for Research	..9
IV	Case Studies	
	Case 1. Loss of Farmland as Housing Rapidly Expands: Ngleshie-Amanfro	..9
	Background	
	Changes in Land Use	
	Changes in Property Rights	
	Changes in Livelihoods	
	Case 2. Protecting Agricultural Land From Urban Sprawl: Abokobi	.15
	Background	
	Changes in Land Use	
	Changes in Property Rights	
	Changes in Livelihoods	
	Case 3. Sand Winning: Nsakina	.19
	Background	
	Changes in Land Use	
	Changes in Property Rights	
	Changes in Livelihoods	
	Case 4. The Commercialization of Small-Holder Agriculture: Samsam-Odumasi	.24
	Background	
	Changes in Land Use	
	Changes in Property Rights	
	Changes in Livelihoods	
V	Summary Synthesis of Case Studies	.28
VI	Policy Recommendations	.30
	Planning	
	Land Use Policies	
	Environmental Damage	
	Programmatic Interventions	
VII	References	.33

**Farming in the Shadow of the City:
Changes in Land Rights and Livelihoods in Peri-Urban Accra**

Daniel Maxwell, Wordsworth Odame Larbi, Grace Mary Lamptey,
Sawudatu Zakariah and Margaret Armar-Klemesu

I. Introduction

Cities in Africa are growing rapidly. While some of this growth is manifested in ever higher population densities in the city center, much of the growth is taking place at the peri-urban fringe. Contending perspectives have interpreted the impact of rapid growth in areas surrounding large cities in very different ways. One school of thought characterizes peri-urban areas as consisting of "dynamic markets, dynamic places" (USAID, 1995). This perspective sees the rapid growth in population leading to the development of new markets, and the conversion of property rights under customary tenure into various forms of privately held rights. Both of these forces lead to greater entrepreneurialism, and the transformation of the local economy from sleepy agrarianism to a bustling, dynamic free market of commerce, services, small-scale industry and commercial agriculture.

Another school of thought sees the pushing out of a relatively self-reliant subsistence agriculture without its replacement by any economic system that guarantees community or individual survival. Loss of agricultural livelihoods leads to the rapid growth of a semi-proletarian informal economy that often grows only by absorbing more participants without an accompanying increase in overall economic output. Lack of capacity in management and planning leads to unplanned urban sprawl and rapid environmental degradation. Fortunes may be made by this process, but rampant poverty is also spawned (Konate, 1993).

The privatization of land holdings in and around large urban centers in Africa is a process that has been happening for a number of years (Dickerman, 1984), but which has speeded up in recent years after becoming a major objective of urban development policy (Farvacque and McAuslan, 1992; Maxwell, 1996). Evidence abounds of a land market that has developed much more rapidly than the administrative or regulatory machinery required for a sound legal underpinning to that market (Aronson, 1978; Mabogunje, 1992; Kasanga et al., 1995). Competition for land use between agriculture and housing is intense in the peri-urban fringe, and landlessness is a growing problem (Boucher et al., 1995; Swindell and Mamman, 1990).

In Accra, the capital and largest city of Ghana, rates of population growth dipped as low as 3.0% per year during the worst of the economic crisis of the early 1980s, but have presently increased to about 4.1%. In peri-urban Ga District, however, growth rates are about 6.0% per year, and in the southern tier of the District-- northern and western fringes of Accra itself--the growth rates are in the order of 10% per year (Ministry of Local Government, 1992).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of this rapid growth on changes in land use, property rights, and livelihoods in the peri-urban areas of Accra. This is one part of a study on

urban and peri-urban agriculture in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area, which is itself part of a larger study of food and nutritional security in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area. Field work for this study was carried out between August and November, 1997. The paper will briefly review the literature on peri-urban land tenure, land use, and land conflicts to synthesize contemporary research and policy issues. Then four cases studies are presented and analyzed, each representing some facet of the problems identified through the literature review. The paper closes with a summary synthesis and policy recommendations.

II. Review of Literature

Several major themes emerge from a review of available literature on peri-urban Accra, including a characterization of the distinct features of customary land tenure in the area, rapid growth and the lack of planning, changes in tenure and property rights resulting from the rapid growth, women's tenure security and livelihoods, land conflicts, and the environmental degradation resulting from rapid growth. This section will review each of these themes.

Brief Overview of Land Ownership in Ghana. Land ownership in Ghana can broadly be divided into three categories: customary ownership, state ownership and a partnership between the state and the customary owners (split ownership). The fundamental principle upon which ownership of land in Ghanaian traditional communities is based is collective ownership by a community or group. Customary ownership occurs where "the right to use or to dispose of use-rights over land rest neither on the exercise of brute force, nor on the evidence of rights guaranteed by government statute, but on the fact that they are recognized as legitimate by the community, the rules governing the acquisition and transmission of these rights being usually explicitly and generally known, though not normally recorded in writing" (Bower, 1993). Such ownership may occur in any one or a combination of the following ways: 1) discovery and long uninterrupted settlement; 2) conquest through war and subsequent settlement; 3) gift from another land owning group or traditional overlord; or, 4) purchase from another land owning group.

Acquisition of land through any of the above means is usually a group activity. The following distinct scheme of interests exist in communal ownership: the allodial interest, which is the highest proprietary interest known to exist in customary land. It is equivalent to the concept of freeholds in the English conveyancing system. Such interest may reside in a stool (chieftaincy), a clan, a family, an earth priest or a private person, depending on the mode of acquisition of the land. Other lesser interests that flow out of the allodial interest are the usufructuary interest, tenancies, licenses and pledges. Although the allodial interest is usually vested in the community, the right is exercised by the head of the community (who may be a chief or a head of family) who "holds the land in trust for the entire community and who manages the land together with the principal members of the community."

Members of the land owning community enjoy the usufructuary right in the land. This includes the right to occupy any portion of the communal land which has not been occupied by another member either for farming or for settlement. It also includes the right to enjoy all the natural

products of the land such as the right to collect snails, firewood and fetch water. They are also entitled to a share of the economic rent of the land. The members of the community may transfer land among themselves but they cannot transfer it to a stranger. Only the person in whom the allodial title is vested can transfer land to a stranger, but he must act with the concurrence of the principal elders of the community.

The person's use of the land (subject usufruct) is enjoyed *ad infinitum*,¹ the only caveats being that the beneficial user should always acknowledge the sovereignty of the stool; the land should not be abandoned; and the subject's family should not become extinct. So long as these caveats are met the subject's use of the land is guaranteed. In fact, the chief cannot alienate a portion of the stool land occupied by a subject to another person without the prior consent of the subject. Neither does the chief control the subject usufruct in any other way in terms of the use to which the land can be put. The implication is that so long as a portion of the stool land is in the occupation of the subject it is effectively out of the domain of the stool land properly so called. Thus the interest of the community in the land occupied by a usufruct is that of a reversion in the rare cases of abandonment or extinction. The interest of the subject in the land is therefore secure and can run in perpetuity. The stool however, continues to exercise jurisdiction over the land.

Strangers, in customary parlance, are those who are not members of the land owning group. Strangers cannot occupy a land owning community's land as a right, but require an express grant from the head of the community. A grant from a community subject to a non-community subject requires the consent of the community authority. It has been pointed out that so long as it is understood that the community's allodial interest in such land does not pass with a transfer, the community subject may deal with his interest in the land as he pleases (Bentsi-Enchill, 1964). Strangers must occupy only the land they have been allocated and may use the land for a specified use. The rights of a stranger usufruct in land can devolve upon his heirs who can continue exercising such rights so long as they recognize the sovereignty of the community. Strangers cannot transfer the land to another stranger without the prior approval of the community authority, neither are they entitled to any of the economic rent of the land that accrue to the benefit of the land owning community. They pay for land use, either in cash or in kind.

Accountability. The proceeds from the sale of land are apportioned among the principal members of the community, usually among the council of elders who in turn distribute their share among their kinsmen. This is, however, done after any outstanding community debts, such as legal fees, have been settled. The irony is that if the land belongs to generations unborn then it is expected that proceeds from it should be put to such use as will benefit posterity: finance development projects such as schools, markets or even public toilets. That is the principle of community ownership. But the evidence points to the contrary. The proceeds are shared among the living and are often squandered.

¹Subject usufruct refers to the use rights in the land of a member of the land-owning community. Stranger usufruct refers to the use rights on an outsider or nonmember of the land owning community.

Another paradoxical situation under Ghanaian customary law is that the stool occupant (chief) is not accountable to the living beneficiaries with regard to the trust property. He is rather accountable to the ancestral owners. Neither the chief nor head of family could be sued for specific performance of his fiduciary duties--an action for account is unknown to native law. In other words junior members of a community cannot call the head of the community to account. There are several decided cases to support this principle. Thus the only remedy available to the subject of a stool in the event of a "breach of trust" is to depose the chief and install another one--a recipe for chieftaincy disputes. Asante (1975) sums up the situation in these words: "The courts of Ghana have squarely addressed themselves to the extent of the head's obligation to members and have unequivocally and repeatedly proclaimed a policy diametrically opposed to that of equity." Immunity from accountability has been one of the major causes of continual land disputes in the country. The Head of Family Accountability Law (PNDC Law 112) seeks to address this problem. But the law is applicable to only head of families and not occupants of stools (chiefs).

Peri-Urban Land Conflicts. Land disputes in Ghana in general have a long history. Meek (1946, quoting Lord Harlech) described land litigation as a curse on the country. The phenomenon is prevalent wherever proprietary rights in land are being commodified and commercialized but in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area, it seems to be on the ascendancy. Larbi (1994) estimated that there were over 6600 plots under litigation in Accra which would have otherwise been suitable for construction of housing--a figure that has doubtless increased by now. Land disputes usually start when two rivals lay claim to a single proprietary land unit. They can broadly be divided into boundary disputes and title disputes.

Boundary disputes occur where both parties agree that each has land in the disputed area but they disagree on where the boundary should be. It is generally caused by absence of properly surveyed and demarcated plans. Where the parties to the conflict derive their title from the same grantor the parties can go back to the grantor for a proper determination of the boundary. On the other hand, the parties may derive their titles from different grantors in which case they can either settle the dispute peacefully or go to their respective grantors for determination of the boundaries between them. This type of boundary dispute eventually lead to title dispute as both grantors begin to assert ownership over the entire land. With this type of situation purchasers cannot have their disputes settled until their grantors have settled their boundaries. Conflicts of title are traceable to four main causes: 1) conflict between rival stool claimants for the allodial title; 2) conflict between stools and families for the allodial title; 3) conflict between rival factions within a stool or family; and 4) conflict between customary owners and the state over lands compulsorily acquired but for which compensation has not been paid.

The first three causes are traceable in part to a misunderstanding of the Gã customary system and in part by chieftaincy disputes. The literature points to the fact that present day Accra developed as separate settlements with no centralized government and no military organization (Field, 1940; Manoukian, 1964). Settlements were in scattered small clusters, each cluster made up of a family unit or an extended unit and headed by the Wulomo (Fetish Priest). It is in these family units and the Wulomo that the allodial interest in the land resides. The clusters later joined up to

form quarters which were an organization for military purposes only. Threatened by extinction due to slave raids, the quarters later joined together to form towns, again for military purposes.

Each Gã town is an independent political unit. These towns created stools for themselves and appointed "Mantsemei" to lead them in times of war, copying the practice from neighboring Akwamu and Fante with whom they had been associated for a long time. All the major settlements: Ga Mashie (Accra), Osu, La, Teshie, Nungua were along the coast and the boundary of each quarter or town was limited to the land it occupied (Manoukian, 1964). The allodial interest in these case settlements may be vested in the quarter or the stool, depending on the particular settlement under consideration. Ownership of the allodial interest in these settlements is not in dispute.

Farther inland, beyond the coastal settlements, are the places where there is much conflict--the area that today constitutes the peri-urban periphery of Accra. Settlements sprang up from hunting activities of individuals and during the migration of the Gãs from the beach area. Lands acquired during these expeditions became the property of the families of the hunters and heads of the settlers. Since these families also belonged to the established groupings in the towns, the political heads in the town exercised jurisdictional control over the lands to the north. With the advent of colonial rule, and more particularly the adoption of indirect rule by the colonial administrators, this jurisdictional control matured into ownership. The chief came to be looked upon as the person in whom the allodial interest in the land reside. This notion has been carried across all the vast expanse of land occupied by the Gãs producing a bizarre situation where families and stools are always contesting for the allodial right (see Asante, 1975). A glance at the customary land holding systems in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area gives a mosaic structure of stool, family, stool family and private ownership systems operating together. The situation is confusing, even to the professional in estate management. The attempt here is to provide a broad overview of customary land ownership in the area, so as to provide a context within which the peculiar situation of peri-urban Accra is discussed.

It needs to be emphasized that the courts have not been very helpful in rectifying the situation. Different judgements have been given by different judges regarding the status of adjacent lands. For example, in *Owusu versus Mantse of La* (1933, 1 WACA 278)--a claim for compensation for compulsory acquisition of land at Nkwantanang--it was held that all La rural lands were owned by the stool and not the Kotei Amli family that founded the settlement. In *Nartey versus Mechanical Lloyd* (GLRD 1987-88, 86), however, it was held by the supreme court that the Agbawe family (also of La) of Frafraha were the owners of the land and not the Stool. The two other causes of this type of conflict are just extensions of this phenomenon to conflicts between rival stool or family claimants. The underlying historical claims are usually the same.

The next major cause of peri-urban land conflicts is the situation where the state has compulsorily acquired land but for which compensation has not been paid. Non-payment of compensation has arisen principally due to: 1) conflicting claims usually submitted by claimants--the issue at the root of ownership conflicts, discussed above; and, 2) the non-functioning of the State Lands Tribunal, which is the agency to adjudicate these claims. It must also be emphasized that the precarious economic situation of the country in the 1970s and 1980s

forced the government to put a temporary stop to the payment of compensation. The result has been confusion regarding the status of such lands.

In some circumstances the original customary owners have entered the land and sold portions to developers. However, since the acquisitions have not been nullified, purchasers of such land cannot obtain valid documents for their transactions. This is the fate of the land acquired for the National Sports Complex at Abeka, Police Depot at Ofankor and the Ofankor Residential Area.

Such conflict is temporary as eventually the issue of compensation will be dealt with but it is still not clear what to do with the numerous “unauthorized” development on these lands. This state of affairs poses a difficult situation for potential developers. It is not easy to identify which traditional authority owns the allodial interest and with whom to negotiate for land.

Rapid Growth and the Lack of Planning. A major theme in the literature on peri-urban land in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area is the rapid rate of growth, and the uncontrolled nature of urban sprawl. Overall population growth rates have already been briefly noted. For the period of 1970-84, the population of Accra increased by 59.8%. During the same period, a number of communities in southern Ga District on the northern outskirts of Accra, grew in the range of 140%-250% (Kufogbe, 1996). The rate at which land is being converted from agricultural to urban uses is equally high. In the period from 1990 to 1993, Larbi (1996) estimates that roughly 2,100 hectares of land per year were being converted from agricultural to urban use. Between 1993 and 1997, this estimate shoots up to over 2,600 hectares per year.

But planning for the land delivery system, and for servicing all this land, is far beyond the capacity of local authorities. The problem of access to land is highlighted in various studies that have pointed out the inefficiencies in the land delivery system in urban Accra. Antwi (1995:1) argues that “the causes of the urban land market problems are mainly due to principles of policy implementation which are contrary to the economics of the market,” and notes that land policies cannot resolve the problem if they do not incorporate basic market economic principles. However, the inadequacy of planning and control over the rapid change in land use, rather than the market principles underpinning these changes, is the greater concern of most analysts. Larbi (1996) highlights the weak planning controls in Accra, and notes that land management has received little attention under the various World Bank projects to support urban development. This is further complicated by the fact that most of the rapid growth is now occurring outside the Accra Metropolitan Assembly boundaries (mostly in Ga District), where planning and development management capacities are even weaker.

Changes in Property Rights. A major study of the change in land tenure and property rights in land in the peri-urban area of Accra (Kasanga et al., 1996; Roth, 1996) characterized very different and highly localized impacts of rapid urban growth. Despite the general recognition that customary systems of land ownership predominate in peri-urban areas, there is no uniform method of tenure transformation. In some peri-urban communities, most notably Gbawe, customary tenure has evolved in such a way as to promote urban development without undermining the economic viability of the livelihoods of the indigenous population (Kasanga, 1996). Located about 10 kilometers west of downtown Accra, and well within the built-up

zone, Gbawe is one of the Gã land-owning families. The family head is the allodial title holder of the land, but the family has registered all the land in accordance with PNDC Law 152, and even has its own surveyor. As such, there are few reports of conflicts over land within the community. The land market is seen as an important stimulus for development: proceeds from land sales are used to pay for community improvement such as roads and infrastructure. Outsiders can acquire land, but only through leasing. When land is leased to an outsider, its usage is specified, and use for another purpose is grounds for cancellation of the terms of the lease. Women are actively involved in land transactions. Kasanga et al. (1996) suggest that elements of the adaptations made in the customary land tenure system in Gbawe could and should be emulated elsewhere in Ghana. Elsewhere in the peri-urban area, the transition from customary tenure to various forms of private or public ownership has been less smooth. Land has been expropriated by the state, in many instances without compensation--the most egregious case having occurred in Ofankor, to the north of Accra, but elsewhere as well. The administrative machinery for intervention in tenure change is beset with problems, and has resulted in creating distortions in the land market.

Roth (1996) characterizes the peri-urban area of Accra as one where a robust land market has emerged, that is rapidly converting farmland into urban property. A variety of tenure systems underlie this rapidly emerging market, and a variety of different ownership categories have emerged as a result. The constitution recognizes both public and customary (including private) tenure. Government is empowered to acquire land for the public good, but compensation for public land is rare. Throughout the peri-urban area, land is primarily being acquired by relatively well-to-do, middle aged men, although overall about one-fifth of land acquirers are women. Most of the land buyers are strangers in the locality. By contrast, the indigenous (land selling) communities are dominated by elderly households heads, some one-third of whom are female, and who have much lower educational and wealth status. In the indigenous communities in all three cases studied, two-thirds of respondents said they realized little or no benefit from land sales. The primary purpose of land acquisition is for residential or commercial purposes. Almost two-thirds of all transactions in land have occurred since 1990, an indication of the rapid expansion of the land market in recent years. Roth concludes:

“The data [for three peri-urban communities in Greater Accra Metropolitan Area] suggest a segmented land market, one involving commercial transactions to land acquirers typically outside the community, the other administrative allocations to community residents. The land market is thus enabling urban growth and relatively robust land rights or interests in land. On the darker side, the land market can only be expected to benefit ‘exit’ households if adequate compensation is paid, and households have the necessary skills to enter urban employment. The dependency of households on quarry work and reports of high unemployment raise serious doubts about the validity of these assumptions.”²

²Roth, 1996:3.

Livelihoods and Women's Tenure Security. Roth's paper raises the issue of employment and livelihoods. A study of one multi-ethnic community (Ngleshie-Amanfro Study Team, 1996) highlighted the issue of livelihoods, and the potentially negative impacts of rapid changes in land tenure and land use on peri-urban livelihoods. Several issues were specifically noted by that study. First, the land is being sold off at a very rapid rate. Second, virtually all this land is being bought by people from Accra for the purpose of housing. Almost no land is bought for agricultural purposes. Third, customary land users are never compensated for the loss of their usufruct rights. Fourth, there is little accountability for the money that is generated by the sale of land, and little evidence that it is being used for community improvement. Fifth, the loss of livelihood in agriculture is not being in any way compensated. Some displaced farmers move out to remaining lands, but housing is a fixed asset, and farm lands are getting increasingly distant from the housing. Others move into casual labour, and work on housing construction, go into informal trade, or else migrate to Accra.

It is not clear whether women are any more adversely affected by the land sales and change in land use. It would appear that both men and women farm in all three of the ethnic communities in Ngleshie-Amanfro, but the minority ethnic groups tend to be more vulnerable, since they have little recourse with the chief, and no reciprocal claims on any of the proceeds from land sales.

Elsewhere in Ghana, the land rights of women are insecure in peri-urban areas. Benneh et al. (1995) note that women's access to agricultural land in peri-urban Kumasi is reasonably guaranteed under customary tenure and inheritance systems, but Kasanga (1996) notes that unemployment is higher among women in the same area, and that women are often the first to lose their land rights when land is converted from customary tenure to private, individual tenure.

A major change in livelihoods in some parts of the peri-urban area has been the rapid growth of a market for export agricultural commodities, most notably pineapple (Daddieh, Arhin and Little, 1995). While pineapples have long been grown in the area on a small scale, the rapid growth of the export market in the 1980s has led to changes in land use, marketing, labour hiring, and property rights.

Environmental Impacts of Urbanization. A final topic, touched upon only slightly in the literature on peri-urban lands in Greater Accra, is the impact on the environment of rapid urbanization. In addition to the outright loss of agricultural land due to urban expansion, there is growing evidence of the destruction of the agricultural resource base through sand mining ("sand winning") in the areas around the city (Yankson, 1996). Similar situations have been noted at the peri-urban periphery of other major African cities, including Kumasi, Ghana's second largest metropolitan area (Kasanga, 1996). However, little of this phenomenon is directly attributed to changes in property rights in the existing literature, and only passing reference is made to its impact on livelihoods in the peri-urban area (Roth, 1996).

III. Issues Arising for Research

The major themes arising from the review of literature include the emergence of land markets as a result of urbanization; the intensification of conflict over boundaries and ownership; and the impact of these changes on land use, customary tenure, and property rights. These have profoundly affected the primary livelihood in the peri-urban area, which traditionally consisted of subsistence agriculture and some market-oriented production. In some cases, the literature implies that changes in the property rights in land are resulting in emergent landlessness and the outright loss of agricultural livelihoods. The emergent landlessness may result from either the loss of land for housing as the city sprawls outward, or it may be a result of environmental damage. The impact of the loss of land for farming has not been investigated in depth. In other cases, intensified market-orientation has resulted, and subsistence agriculture has been transformed into more productive, outward-looking systems.

To further investigate these factors, this study undertook four village-level case studies in the peri-urban periphery of Accra. The cases selected included one site where land was rapidly being lost from agriculture as people from Accra bought plots and built houses; one site where a village had deliberately sought to protect some portion of its land from urbanization; one site where environmental degradation had occurred due to the surface mining of sand for the construction boom, resulting in the destruction of agricultural land; and one site where the proximity to a major market had transformed subsistence agriculture into export-oriented production.

Data for the paper were collected by rapid assessment methodology, including the use of key informant interviews, focus groups, community mapping, and land-use transects. In one of the cases, circumstances permitted two separate data collection exercises, over a year apart, in order to capture some of the dynamic trends. In the other three cases, data collection was possible only during one time period. The study was carried out collaboratively by staff from the Noguchi Memorial Institute at the University of Ghana, the Ghana Lands Commission, and the International Food Policy Research Institute. The remainder of the paper presents brief sketches of the changes in land use, property rights, and livelihoods in each of the four case sites, offers a summary synthesis of issues arising, and makes recommendations for policy changes and interventions.

IV. Case Studies

Case 1. Loss of Farmland as Housing Rapidly Expands: Ngleshie-Amanfro³

Background. Ngleshie-Amanfro is at the far western edge of Ga District, about 20 kilometers from downtown Accra, adjacent to the main road to Winneba just before the market town of

³This section draws on “Ngleshie-Amanfro: A Participatory Rapid Appraisal of Food Security in a Peri-Urban Community” (Ngleshie-Amanfro Study Team, 1996) and on subsequent field work in 1997.

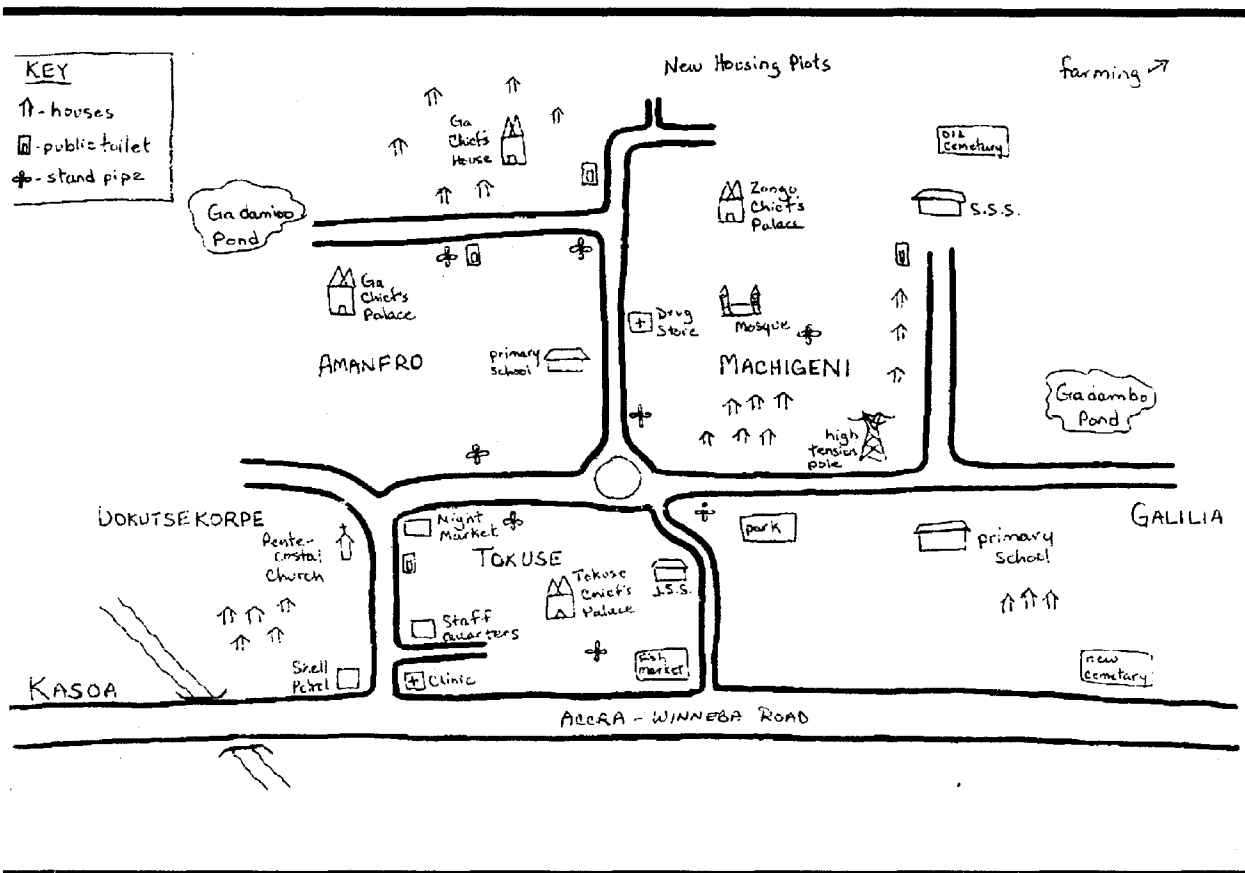
Kasoa. It is a village made up of several communities. This settlement was created in the mid-1970s when the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation (GWSC) dammed the River Densu near Weija to create a lake as a reservoir for the Western part of Accra. Gã people of the Amanfro stool are the allodial land owners. Hausa migrants from Northern Nigeria arrived in the late 19th Century. Ewe migration into the area began in the early 20th Century and has continued up to the present. The Gãs were traditionally farmers, the Ewes farmers and fishers, and the Hausas farmers and livestock keepers.

At the time the dam was built, the current residents of Ngleshie-Amanfro were living in separate places within the area that was flooded by the reservoir, and all the residents were resettled to the current location by GWSC. The current settlement consists of the three separate communities already mentioned, as well as two newer ones: one the result of in-migration in the 1980s as Kasoa market opened up new possibilities for trade. Since about 1992, another wave of new migrants has arrived: virtually all of them come from Accra, and they are sufficiently well off to be able to afford buying land and putting up a house in which to escape the city. This group is likewise ethnically mixed, and not particularly linked into the local economy. Ngleshie-Amanfro was first visited by the study team in May, 1996, and again in October, 1997. Rapid change occurred in the community over this short period of time.

Estimating the rate of population growth in the community is difficult, because village names have changed, and there hasn't been a census since 1984. In 1996, the chiefs estimated the population at around 6-7,000, not counting the new residents from Accra, many of whom had not yet taken up permanent residence in the community. This would reflect, at a minimum, a growth rate on the order of a six-fold increase in population in a 12-year period. The actual figure is quite likely to be higher.

When first visited in 1996, various groups ranked community problems and priorities differently, but at the top of the list for virtually all groups lists the same concerns appeared: loss of land to housing construction and the decline of agricultural livelihoods, and unemployment. The Gã community, and the Amanfro Stool in particular, are well situated to capture profits from the sales of land to outsiders, and farming has become less important to their livelihoods as the area has urbanized. In theory, revenue from land sales is shared among the families that comprise the stool. The Hausa and Ewe communities were still dependent on farming and fishing as the core of their livelihood in 1996. But given their "stranger" status--despite the length of time they had lived in the community--their access to the resource base was rapidly shrinking. By late 1997 in the estimation of virtually all respondents, farming had ceased to be the major livelihood for the majority of residents in the community--in almost all cases because of the loss of land. In the space of about five years, a large area of land has been sold off, and this land has included much of that previously being farmed. A participatory map, drawn by members of each of the three ethnic communities, is presented in Figure 1. A land-use transect prepared by members of the research team is in Figure 2. Both these were drawn in June, 1996. By October, 1997, all the area depicted in the land-use transect as being used for agricultural purposes had been taken over by housing, and agriculture had been pushed farther afield.

Figure 1: Community Map of Ngleshie-Amanfro



Changes in Land Use. Land was plentiful when Nii Akrama welcomed the first migrants to the area 100 years ago. It was still plentiful when GWSC resettled residents from Lake Weija to the current location in the late 1970s. It is, in fact, only since about 1994, that a shortage of land for farming near the settlement has arisen as a serious concern. The Amanfro Stool controls the land in the area--some 40.2 square miles according to their surveyor's report. Up until the late 1980s, virtually all the land outside the immediate area of the "Quarters" was used for farming. The agriculture was typical of the low-input, rainfed bush-fallow system found elsewhere in Ga District. Maize had always been the main staple food crop, but cassava, beans, and groundnuts are also grown. Some small-scale cash crop production was common--pepper and tomatoes in particular.

Beginning in about 1990, plots of land, averaging about one-sixth of an acre, were sold off to prospective house builders. The exact amounts of land sold are not known. The area appeared to be 1.5 square miles in 1996 that had been built on, or had pillars marking the land (indicating that it had been sold). In 1997, the area that had been built up or demarcated extended another

Figure 2: Land Use Transect Matrix for Ngleshie-Amanfro

Zone	Swamp	Housing	VRA	Commercial	School	Road	Macnigen.	Agric	New Houses	Open
Land Use	—	Housing: low income migrants who came in 1980s	VOUTA RIVER AUTHORITY HIGH TENSION LINE	- Shops - roads - housing - businesses - bars	- school - agro-forestry - playing fields	ROAD FROM HIGHWAY TO AMANFRO	Housing: Hausa resettlement area from Lake Weija	- farming	Housing: new houses under construction. Very few completed.	- farming - open - grazing
Land Ownership	Stool	Private		Private	Stool		Hausa Chief usufruct rights in perpetuity	- stool - private	Private	Amanfro Stool and a few private plots
Livelihood	Brick making	Petty trade Artisans casual labour Retired		Towing Construction Services	Teachers		Brick making Petty trade Farming Livestock	Farming	Farming Construction	Farming Hunting
Environmental Conditions	Swamp	Poor drainage No toilet facilities No refuse collection					Well drained Low water pressure Broken down public toilet	Variable	Variable: Some poorly drained swampy areas	Sand pits (Sand winning is banned by chiefs)

half to three quarters of a mile. Most of that land had been sold off since about 1992. In 1996, many farmers had not lost their land, but virtually everyone was worried. As one of the Ewe elders put it, "it is really... the lack of alternatives that makes us vulnerable..." By 1997, his fears had been confirmed.

The revenues from land sales go to the Amanfro Stool, where the same body that approves of the land sales determines how proceeds will be used. Given the size and price of the plots being sold, it is clear that a tremendous source of revenue is being generated through the conversion of agricultural land into land for housing.⁴ Even deducting the transaction costs, this revenue is potentially a tremendous asset in diversifying the economic base of Ngleshie-Amanfro. To date, however, there is little evidence that revenues generated from land sales are being used in this manner. There is also no particular provision for planned development of the housing plots. The new Resident's Association had to build its own road, for example, although they subsequently brought pressure on the Chief to help recover some costs.

⁴There are roughly 6 plots per acre, or over 3,500 in a square mile. It is not known exactly what proportion of the area is actually sold off as plots, but if, for example, 20% of the area were reserved for roads and other services, the revenue generated from the sales of one square mile was estimated at around \$2 million in 1996 at then-current prices.

The Amanfro Chief insisted that there is still land available, and that farming is still a viable livelihood. There is indeed still land, and some of it has been allocated to farming. But the kind of farming envisioned is mechanized, large-scale farming, not small-holder, rainfed agriculture. In 1996, there was little evidence of any land sale or lease being carried out where the purpose of the land acquisition was commercial agriculture. However, by 1997, there was more discussion about the development of commercial farming on stool land. But that discussion was mainly among the leaders of the Amanfro stool, and did not involve the "stranger" communities who had been the most reliant on farming previously. The available land is far from the residential village, and the residents of Hausa and Ewe communities are not permitted to build houses outside the "quarters" area. Most respondents noted that they had tried to get land beyond the area where the new housing construction is taking place. In some cases, they had been turned down; in others, there had been vague promises about allocation, but given their recent experience in losing not only land, but also the crops growing on the land, they are understandably reluctant to invest money and labour until they are certain they have some kind of rights to the land, even if only on a seasonal basis.

Changes in Property Rights. All the land belongs to the Amanfro Stool, however land was set aside for the "quarters" of the other two communities. Land in those areas was granted in perpetuity to the Hausa and Ewe communities for their residential use, although the land may not be alienated. Land sales by the stool elsewhere in the community have privatized land ownership, first in the area settled along the main road by in-migrants in the 1980s, and later in other parts of the community.

Until recently, the Amanfro chief would allocate land to "strangers" for farming for a very small amount of "drink" money. The abundance of land meant that there was plenty of land for farming, indeed until a very few years ago, most people agreed, land was so plentiful that shifting cultivation was practiced. With the influx of land buyers from Accra, the Amanfro Stool began selling off plots, usually 70' x 100', for prices in the range of 1 million to 1.5 million Cedis (\$650-\$1000 USD in 1996). A prospective buyer still presents the chief with some "drink" money, and is then told the plots available and terms of sales, which is supposed to be a 99-year lease.

Multiple incidents were mentioned of two sellers selling the same plot to different buyers, or even a single seller selling the same plot to multiple buyers. There has also been a conflict over who has the power to authorize sales of stool land. But this is a conflict among the elites (land owning families), not between the elites and the common people who benefit very little from the sales of land. Cases were cited in 1996 where other chiefs from the other (non-Gã) communities "sold" land to newcomers, but in many cases such sales were reversed and even housing demolished if land sales were not approved by the Amanfro Stool. These incidents all serve to make rights to newly acquired land tenuous. One new resident whose family bought plots of land in 1994 explained how their plots were subsequently shown to other prospective buyers. He noted, "almost all of us [new settlers] have guns in our houses... We are ready to defend our land and our property." There is clearly more urgency in establishing the legitimacy of ownership through local recognition of ownership than through the legal machinery of land registration in Accra. Leases are supposed to be registered with the Regional Land Secretary in

Accra, but many are not--physical presence and local recognition of ownership are more important than documentary evidence of title.

Upon the sale of a plot, whoever is farming there is simply told to quit the land--if the new owner is considerate, the farmer is allowed to harvest his or her crops first. The obligations to "strangers" do not require compensation for the loss of use rights of the farmer. A woman farmer in Machigani who had learned of the loss of her land the same week said, "They just say 'I'm sorry, someone else has bought the land--you have to go.' They don't even compensate you 5 Cedis." However, most members of the Gã community don't see any benefit from the land sales either. The "Head of Family Accountability Law (PNDC Law 112) is supposed to empower people to demand an account of the stewardship of land assets and sales, but few members of the Gã community were able to say anything about where the revenues went, and those who were in position to know were very reluctant to talk about it.

Changes in Livelihoods. The link between loss of land, livelihood and vulnerability is painfully obvious. One Hausa woman described her loss of farmland to housing plots in 1996: "I am in a terrible situation. Now I have no land to farm... I have no one to turn to. My whole living is destroyed." A year later, she was reduced to selling ice water along the road; her two children had been forced to drop out of school, in part because there was no money for fees, and in part to help supplement her meager income. In 1997, much of process of the land loss that had been noted in 1996 was complete. The impact on livelihoods is devastating. One elder who has commuted to Accra to work for many years noted, "We could never live on only one job--you always had to have several. But now the land has been taken away, it is very difficult, even for those of us who have another job." Fishing has not suffered the dramatic decline that farming has, but Lake Weija is being over fished. The Ewe chief observed, "Fishing is now bad. Too many people go into fishing, making the income less."

Particularly in the Hausa community, by 1997 farming had ceased to be the backbone of the economy for the most part. Unemployment is a major problem, and those able to find work had to support a much larger number of relatives than previously. Whereas once virtually every household had been engaged in farming, by 1997, the chief and elders estimated only about one-third of the households were still earning any portion of their livelihood from farming, and those still farming were doing so on a much reduced scale. And they were still very vulnerable to losing the land they still held. Due to religious traditions, women had mostly farmed with their husbands. When their land was sold, the men were forced to find other work, but it is largely not work that their wives can also do, so unemployment among women is very high. The youth and the men have mostly resorted to casual labour in the construction business, in some cases slowly acquiring a skill such as masonry. Many have gone to other places in search of land for farming, or work, including hunting, sand winning and quarrying. A few of the younger men have returned to Nigeria. Some of the women have resorted to working as porters in the market at Kasoa, or even Accra, some 20 kilometers away. A few are reduced to sweeping up the spilled grain or beans in the markets, either to sell or to consume. These are jobs that most people are ashamed to mention, and in fact, some preferred to be perceived as unemployed, rather than admit resorting to this kind of labour.

The market at Kasoa offers alternative opportunities in petty trading, and indeed this trade was one of the magnets that attracted some of the migrants who arrived in the late 1980s. As farming has grown more precarious, more women have entered petty trading, at least on the "market days" at Kasoa, or on a smaller scale within Ngleshie-Amanfro. Other related small-scale service occupations, such as food preparation, tailoring, hairdressing, etc. have opened up with the influx of more people. The housing boom that has accompanied the up-surge in land sales has created employment opportunities in the construction trades--brick-laying, carpentry, etc. But both the construction industry and the market have created opportunities mostly only in casual labour.

Trade provides a reasonably stable income, depending on the commodities being traded. Construction and casual labour usually offer erratic income, and depends on the owners of the new houses having sufficient surplus cash to keep working on their houses. Few houses are constructed on credit, and some take years to complete. Hence, most of the new employment or income-generating opportunities that have arisen in Ngleshie-Amanfro with the influx of new populations make good supplements to an agrarian or fishing economy, but not a good replacement. However, in most cases these new opportunities do not represent any improvement in livelihood, income, or food consumption if not supplemented by farming, and leave people worse off, at least in their own perception, if access to land for farming is lost as a result.

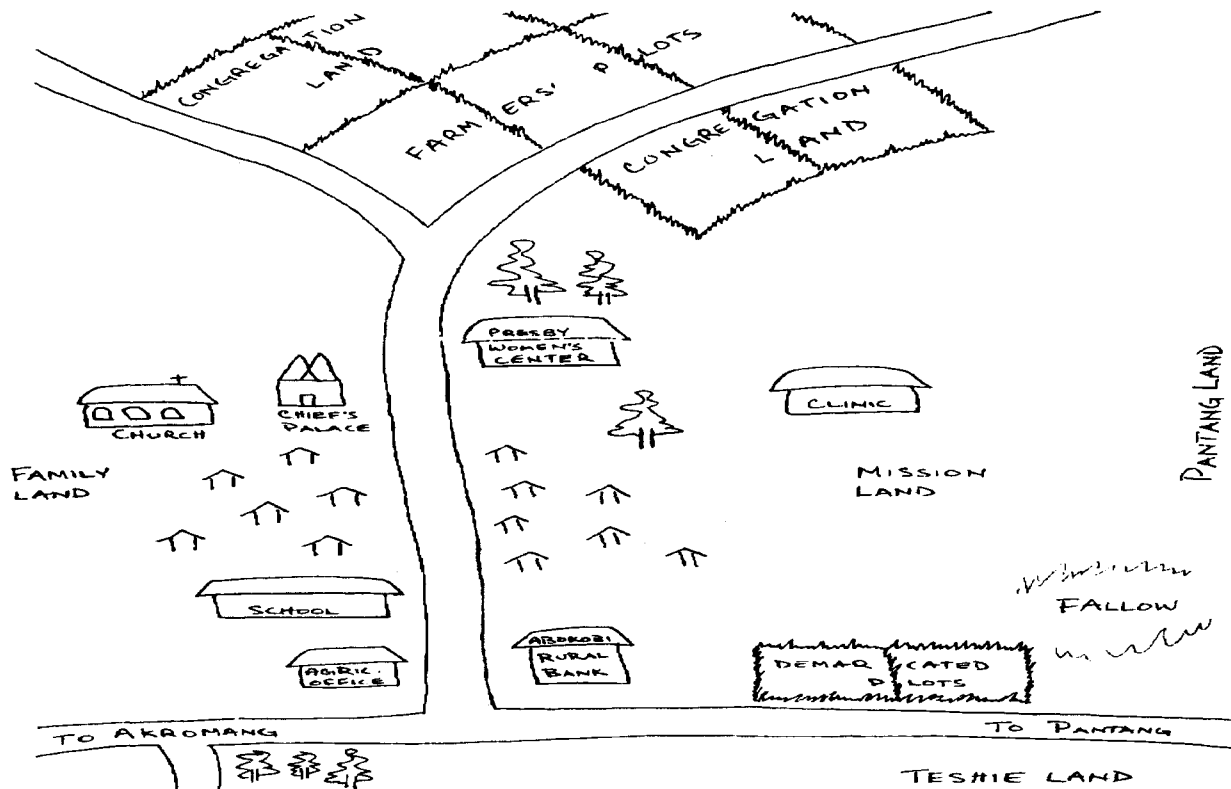
Case 2. Protecting Agricultural Land From Urban Sprawl: Abokobi

Background. Abokobi village lies at the foot of the Akuapem escarpment, some 18 kilometers north of downtown Accra, four kilometers west of the main road from Accra to Aburi. Lying some half way between the sea coast and Akropong, the village was started in the 1850s by the Basil Mission, and virtually the entire population of the village is Presbyterian. The missionaries tried to establish a coffee plantation at Abokobi, and bought land from the Berekuso stool for the project, but they were recalled to Basil after attempting to run the plantation on slave labor. On their departure, the land was sold to the local congregation, which still owns the land, although the Presbyterian Church of Ghana holds the documents, together with other lands turned over to the Church at Independence when the mission officially pulled out. Thus there is a distinction in Abokobi between "mission land"--land turned over to the church when the mission left; and "congregation land"--land that was bought by the local congregation from the intended coffee plantation. Legally, the Church owns both, but a distinction is made within the village. The presence of the Church is heavily felt in the village: the chief is enstooled in the church, and the church runs a major development project in the area. Land issues are settled by the "Session," or governing board of the church. Given this tightly organized control over land, however, the course of development in Abokobi is rather different than in other nearby villages.

Some of the land in the village is owned by the Obedeka family; land which was never sold to the missionaries or the church. And the village is surrounded on all sides by stool land or family land from other groups, Osu stool to the south, Teshie stool to the east, Pantang to the west, and Berekuso stool to the north atop the Akuapem escarpment. All this area except Berekuso is now


undergoing rapid urbanization, with growth rates in some of the nearby settlements in the range of 300-400% in the past ten years. Figure 3 is a community map of Abokobi. Figure 4 is a land-use transect.

Figure 3: Community Map of Abokobi



Changes in Land Use. Particularly to the south and east of Abokobi, land has been sold off by the allodial title holders, and land use is rapidly changing from farming to housing. The land is being sold in part because high demand is pushing the price per acre higher, and in part because absentee land-owners are not tied to the land for their own livelihoods. Villages heavily affected by urbanization are Adenta to the east, Madina, Agboogba and Pantang to the south, and Ashongman to the west of Abokobi. In these places, virtually all the farmlands have been converted to land for housing, and there is little chance even of encroaching informally on land for farming.

Figure 4: Land Use Transect Matrix for Abokobi



ZONE	VILLAGE CENTER	"JERUSALEM" OLD VALLEY	CHURCH/ COMMUNITY CTR.	EARMARKED FOR BUILDING	RESERVED FOR FARMING	FOOTHILLS OF AKWAPIM MTNS.
LAND USE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Shops • Project Facilities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Center • Community Health Ctr. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable Farming • Bush Fallow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop Farming • Bush Fallow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grazing
LAND OWNERSHIP	"Mission Land"	"Mission Land"	"Mission Land"	"Mission Land"	"Congregation Land"	"Congregation Land"
LIVELIHOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trading • Project Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House-based Petty Trade • Street Food 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming • Grazing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming 	
ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well drained and demarcated • Serviced plots 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well drained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some well drained • Some marshy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep Slope

A typical example is the village of Pantang, which shares a border with the western side of Abokobi. Pantang is owned by a clan from Teshie, and although the people of Pantang have a chief residing in the village, he has no authority over the land, he is merely a custodian of the land. The real owners are living in Accra.

New land owners buy the land without necessarily any intention to build on it, at least in the short term. It is a form of investment fueled by the rapid inflation of land values in and around Accra. Therefore these lands just lie fallow apart from a few parcels which the farmers have rented from the new landowners at higher prices. There is almost no encroachment by the farmers on the land lying fallow, because they say the land owner would just come and clear the land of all the crops. Some of this land was sold ten years ago, and nothing has yet been built there. As much as ninety percent of the farm land in these villages has been sold but to people in Accra for housing purposes. Traditional agriculture is not able to compete commercially with housing or other higher-value land uses. Because of these changes in other nearby villages, the Session (governing council) of the Presbyterian Church decided, in 1989, to protect the "congregation land" in Abokobi for agriculture in perpetuity, and continues to name the village of Abokobi as the custodians. Some of the land in the village has been earmarked for residential development, although, at the present, this is only for use by residents of the village itself.

Outsiders cannot buy--or even rent--plots for housing. Much of this earmarked land is still used for farming at the present, some of it is even under bush fallow.

An agricultural project, begun by the church in 1975, continues to promote agriculture as a livelihood in the area, and actually has more farmers cooperating with the project now than it did in 1984. For the time being, the "congregation land" is protected for farming for the current users, and for future generations in the village. However, with plots for housing fetching between two and five million cedis (\$1,000-2,500), even the most intensive agriculture can scarcely compete for land use unless protected by some kind of policy decision. As land pressure continues to grow, the pressure to sell the land for housing and other uses will continue to grow on the church. As one knowledgeable observer put it, "We can't be sure how long this decision [to protect the 'congregation land'] will stand."

Changes in Property Rights. For some time, a person had to be both a member of the village, and a Presbyterian, in order to qualify for acquiring land either for housing or for farming in Abokobi village. Now, one must still be a member of the village to acquire land for housing, but outsiders and non-Christians can apply to rent land for farming. Five-acre plots have been demarcated, and most are rented out on an annual basis. Village members pay a lower rent than outsiders, but in either case, the rent is minimal (less than \$3.00/acre per year, even for outsiders, and less than \$0.50/acre per year for residents). Land is allocated by a board of the church, which interviews prospective renters. Although land is technically rented on an annual basis, once someone occupies land, the practice is to let him or her continue to rent it until they choose to leave. Rarely, if ever, have tenants who are actually farming the land been asked to leave, or failed to have their rental agreement renewed. The conditions of rental are that only annual crops can be grown, and that any other improvements become the property of the Session after the occupant moves out. There is no shortage of land as such, but in some cases, particularly women renters have doubled up on the 5-acre plots, in order to make full use of the land, and in order to have plots closer to the residential village. Very occasionally, some of this land is taken out of agricultural production and used for other purposes by the church--the construction of the Presbyterian Church Women's Center being the most recent example.

In surrounding villages, no such mechanisms exist, and there is very little that farmers can do to exercise any control over the sale of land, since very few of them come from land-owning families. The sale of these lands is done by owners, who live in elsewhere in Accra, without the consultation of either the custodian resident chief or the people farming on the land. As one farmer in Pantang put it, "When you go to the farm and see pillars on your farm, then you should know that your farm has been sold". These pillars mark the land by plots for the new owners. Farmers are not compensated for the loss of land. The loss of land for farming therefore constitutes a major shock to the livelihood of people who have farmed for most of their lives.

Changes in Livelihoods. While the combination of the land policy in Abokobi, and the Abokobi Agricultural Project run by the Presbyterian Church, have protected and promoted agricultural livelihoods in Abokobi, livelihoods in much of the surrounding areas have undergone profound change in recent years. The Abokobi Agricultural Project serves much of this area. However, the farmer's groups are smaller, and outside Abokobi village itself, much of

the agricultural land in the project area (a circle with a radius of some nine kilometers from Abokobi) has been taken over by housing in the past decade. Whereas in the past, food crops were promoted by the project, it now promotes the intensification of agriculture, to enable people to produce higher value products on smaller parcels of land. Large tracts of government land also exist in that area, including university land at Legon, and the Post and Telecommunications land at Agboogba. While this land will not be sold for housing, it can only be used for agricultural purposes informally or illegally. Farming is carried out on much of this land, sometimes by employees of the respective government institutions, sometimes by the general public. But the illegal or informal status of land access makes it impossible for the Abokobi Agricultural Project to provide support.

Farmers who have lost land turn to other jobs as casual laborers working on building sites, or try to learn other trades like masonry, plumbing or carpentry. But even with these trades, there are few permanent jobs because of the erratic nature of the construction industry. Others have moved out in search of farm lands; some go to Abokobi to try to rent congregation land for farming. However, it is not easy to rent land formally if one is not a member of the village. Another way is to sub-let from inhabitants of Abokobi, who have leased lands and not farming on it, or not farming all of their allocation. Parcels of land acquired in this manner are inevitably smaller than parcels previously farmed.

A few farmers have switched to more intensive farming enterprises such as swine or poultry. But the situation is bleak even for this group, because keeping livestock is capital intensive, and farmers have little access to capital to improve or expand their operations. When they had their own farms, the cost of feeding livestock was significantly less, but now they have to buy the feed for their livestock. The Abokobi Agriculture Project has been promoting various forms of farming which do not demand a large farm area like snail farming, mushroom farming, grasscutter farming and pig farming but all these calls for a substantial investment of capital, and credit is very difficult to obtain.

Clearly, without mandated protection of a certain category of land and project support, agriculture would rapidly die out as a livelihood in Abokobi as it has in nearby villages. The extent to which the experience of Abokobi can be repeated elsewhere is questionable, because the nature of land holding and decision-making over land in Abokobi is quite unique.

Case 3. Sand Winning: Nsakina

Background. The village of Nsakina lies in Ga District some fifteen kilometres northwest of downtown Accra, or about five kilometres beyond the edge of the currently built-up area on the northwest side of the city. It is connected by road both to Accra, and to Amasaman, the Ga District Headquarters. The inhabitants of Nsakina are predominantly Gã, whose ancestors migrated there from Asere and Ngleshie. Until recently, virtually the entire population of the village was engaged in farming, with cassava and maize the main subsistence crops, and okro, tomatoes and especially watermelon the main cash crops. Despite good road connections, little in-migration or building of houses for Accra residents has taken place in the village, and the

village has the characteristics of much greater isolation than actually exists: levels of education are very low, and there are few commuters who go to Accra or even Amasaman to work.

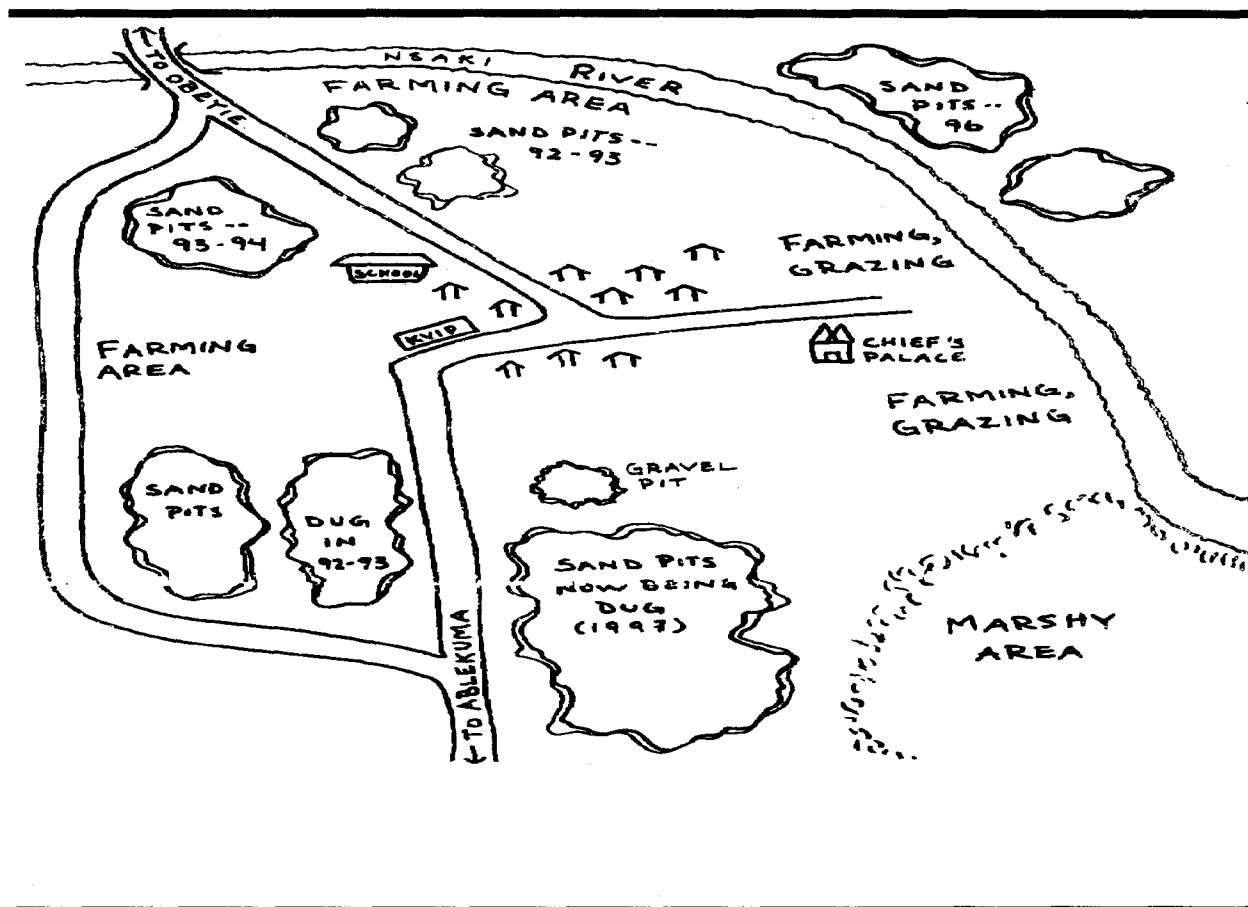
The village stool controls a substantial amount of land, and in the past 20 years, land was plentiful enough that it was given out to other villages for various purposes. All members of the Nsakina village were entitled to land, and all land was occupied strictly on a usufruct basis. Community members could farm in perpetuity and could build houses, but there was no individualization of land holdings under customary tenure. Over time, certain families came to exert control over large tracts of land, although any dealings in land had to be conducted with the chief. It became common for these families to lease land, but only with the permission of the chief.

Women customarily gained access to land through marriage and farmed with their husbands. A common arrangement was for men to be engaged in cash crop farming, while women both helped their husbands, and had small farms of their own where they concentrated on subsistence crops. Raising livestock (small ruminants and poultry) and domestic work constituted the remainder of their livelihoods. Even unmarried women had access to land. A community map, made in 1997 is shown in Figure 5. The 1997 land-use transect is in Figure 6.

Changes in Land Use. Several events coincided in the 1980s and early 1990s that brought about major changes in land use in Nsakina village. The first of these has already been mentioned--the leasing of land to individuals from outside the community. A second was the importation of cattle to a neighboring village, and the use of bush fallow land for the grazing of cattle. A third was a long-term but gradual increase in population. The fourth was a construction boom in Accra and the surrounding areas beginning about 1990--and a concomitant increase in the demand for building materials. Finally the fifth was a gradual decline in on-farm earnings, due in part to declining soil fertility and in part to a prolonged period of drought. Both led to poor crop yields. The first of the droughts occurred during the nation-wide drought in 1983, but they recurred in the early 1990s. These various factors led to members of the community to seek to supplement their income through various other means. From about 1990 onwards, this included the digging of sand, or "sand winning" to meet the increased demand for construction materials in Accra.

At first, the sand winning was strictly on an artisanal basis, done on a very small scale, and almost in secret. Villagers, particularly young men, would dig the sand by hand from underneath land that was not suitable for farming, and sell it by the pick-up truck load. When some parties objected to the District Authorities on the basis of the potential environmental damage, the authorities agreed, but noted the need for jobs, particularly for the youth, and the practice was tolerated. As the demand for sand continued to grow, and as it became increasingly clear that the authorities were not going to intervene to stop the practice, it became more widespread.

Figure 5: Community Map of Nsakina



Beginning in about 1994, commercial operators and private sand contractors started digging sand, using payloaders and heavy lorries, rather than spades and pick-up trucks.

Large areas of unreclaimed waste land now surround the residential village--land that has been dug down to the underlying hard-pan, which is unusable for farming, and is pockmarked with trapped water pools that serve as breeding grounds for malarial mosquitoes. The expressed intent is to use such land for housing, and it is anticipated that within a few years, the demand for land for housing in Nsakina will go up as the boundaries of Accra stretch ever outward. But the land is less suited for housing now than it ever was, and will require substantial investment in reclamation before housing becomes a viable land use.

Changes in Property Rights. An unfortunate conjunction of the above trend combined with changing property rights brought a situation in which now nearly half the village land has been laid to waste by sand winning. In the 1980s, an individual leased a large tract of land from the village for farming purposes, but was unable to turn a profit, and eventually sold the lease to a private firm. The firm also tried to farm the land and also failed, and the land sat fallow, still under lease to the firm, for several years. During this time, a number of villagers encroached on the lease to practice small-scale farming. At about the time that sand winning began on a large


scale elsewhere in Ga District in the early 1990s, some of these squatter farmers were chased off the land by the lease-holder, and these farmers--mostly youth--appealed to the chief to take back the land so that people in the village would have a place to farm. The chief and elders made a plan to buy out the remaining lease, by raising funds through the digging of some of the sand that underlay the leased parcel of land.

Unfortunately, the contractor consulted about the value of the sand was a personal friend of the leaseholder, and the latter was tipped off about the value of the sand underlying the land that was legally leased to him. So rather than accept the offer to buy back the lease on the unused land, he began digging the sand himself. Technically, it was illegal to change the land use (agriculture) stipulated under the terms of the lease, but the village leaders did not know they had any legal recourse, and the authorities governing the extraction of sand are not directly concerned with the terms of leases. As a result, a large area under lease has been strip-mined by heavy machinery.

Faced with this sequence of events, the village elders decided to get some of the revenue from sand elsewhere in the village, and entered into informal, oral contracts with other commercial sand diggers. Some revenue was raised in this manner--a school building and a public latrine have been built for the village--but when it became clear that there was big money to be made from sand winning, boundary disputes with neighboring villages erupted. Much of the revenue earned from the sale of sand was spent on court costs in litigation over these boundary disputes, and the oral contracts have proved unenforceable. For example, according to the village elders, the contracts stipulate that after digging the sand, the land should be leveled or returned to its original topography, and the top soil returned so that the land could still be used for farming. Instead, the land remains exactly as it was when the sand was exhausted, and the top soil actually turned out to be more valuable than the sand, for landscaping purposes in Accra, so it too was hauled away. Large swathes of Nsakina land now lie decimated and useless. Thus unenforceable contracts, boundary disputes, and a poorly understood form of leasehold tenure overlaid on the customary land tenure system--combined with a virtually endless demand for sand--have brought about the wide-scale destruction of the village's natural resource base, as depicted in the land-use transect in Figure 6.

Changes in Livelihoods. Virtually all the villagers were at one time farmers--both men and women. Now the destruction of a large part of the village land has led to emergent landlessness. It is not known how many hectares of land have been destroyed, but various different groups of respondents including men's groups, women's groups, and the village elders, estimated that about half the usable farm land is gone. People are reluctant to talk about landlessness, and at first, most groups claimed that no one in the village had lost their agricultural livelihoods. However, on detailed questioning, it became clear that several things have happened. A number of people have lost sizable farms, and on average, farm size in Nsakina is much smaller today than it was five years ago (and even then, agriculture was a vulnerable livelihood--that was why

Figure 6: Land Use Transect Matrix for Nsakina



ZONE	VILLAGE	BUSH FALLOW	SAND PITS: NOW BEING DUG		ALREADY MINED LAND	AGRICULTURE
LAND USE	• HOUSING	• BUSH FALLOW	• SAND WINNING	ABIEKUMA	• NO USE FOR MOST OF AREA • HOUSING NEAR ROAD	• FARMING: CASSAVA WATER MELON MAIZE • BUSH FALLOW
LAND OWNER- SHIP	• VILLAGE STOOL	• VILLAGE STOOL • SOME IS ON FOMIBUS LEASE	• LEASED TO PRIVATE FIRM FOR AGRICUL- TURAL USE	OBEYIE TO	• VILLAGE STOOL	• VILLAGE STOOL FAMILY OCCUPANCY USUFRUCT FARM- ING
LIVELI- HOOD	• TRADING • STREET FOOD: PREPARATION & SALES	• FARMING • GRAZING • BRICK- MAKING	• SAND WINNING • EMPLOYS FEW PEOPLE FROM THE VILLAGE.	FROM	• NONE	• FARMING
ENVI- RON- MENTAL CONDI- TIONS	• MOSQUITOES	• GRAVEL PIT • SAND PITS • BUSH FALLOW	• EROSION • LOSS OF TOP SOIL • VEGETATIVE COVER	ROAD	• EROSION • HARD PAN EARTH • STANDING WATER • NOTHING GROWS	• SANDY SOIL • LOW RAINFALL

the sand winning started in the first place). Many men have had to go to neighboring villages to acquire land for farming. Many women have been displaced out of agriculture altogether--unable to commute long distances to farm and still manage their domestic chores. They have taken up petty trading, or the preparation and sales of street foods, but most fear to go to Accra to carry out these activities. So they stay in Nsakina where they compete with each other for a very limited market in any of the goods they are trying to sell. Only a few families have left the village outright in search of livelihoods elsewhere. "Farming is in our blood," was heard from many respondents when asked about the possibility of looking for employment in nearby urban areas. Yet the possibilities for farming in Nsakina are growing more scarce all the time. Meanwhile an estimated one third of the men in the village can only support themselves by acquiring land from neighboring villages, and their access to this land is very insecure--they have verbal permission to use the land on a season-by-season basis. The wives of many of these men have no land at all on which to raise subsistence crops.

The elders have now banned any further land from being leased or contracted out for sand winning. While this will protect the remaining land from the same fate, the amount of land remaining is too small to meet the needs of the village population, and the ban on sand winning in Nsakina only increases the pressure on neighboring villages to permit sand contractors to dig

sand there, making less likely the continued access by Nsakina men to the land of neighboring villages, and making more likely the emergence in those villages of the kind of partial landlessness now extant in Nsakina.

The Ministry of Minerals and Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency are responsible for overseeing the extraction of sand, but are apparently powerless to enforce agreements pertaining to land reclamation. Village elders insist that letters to both authorities requesting intervention have been ignored. In the meantime, heavy lorries move along the main road at the rate of 20-30 per hour during the day, some of them hauling soil, most hauling sand. Each vehicle pays a 2,000 Cedi fee to the Ministry of Minerals and Energy. These fees are ostensibly collected to finance the eventual reclamation of the land, but given that the top soil has been hauled away along with the sand, there is little material with which to reclaim the land, and to date, almost none of the land on which sand has been dug has been reclaimed. Ga District authorities, who vigorously object to the destruction of land in the District, are virtually powerless to force a stop to the practice, or to force the Ministry to reclaim the lands on which it approved the sand winning and for which it collected revenue. The irony is that the practice of sand winning was initially tolerated--despite its obvious environmental hazards--because of the need for jobs and diversified livelihood strategies in the peri-urban area. Now, the artisanal sand winners have been displaced by heavy machinery, and very few people from Nsakina are employed at all in the sand winning operations taking place on village land. Far from helping to diversify livelihood strategies in the peri-urban area, the practice is a major threat to the future of farming--long the backbone of livelihood strategies in the area.

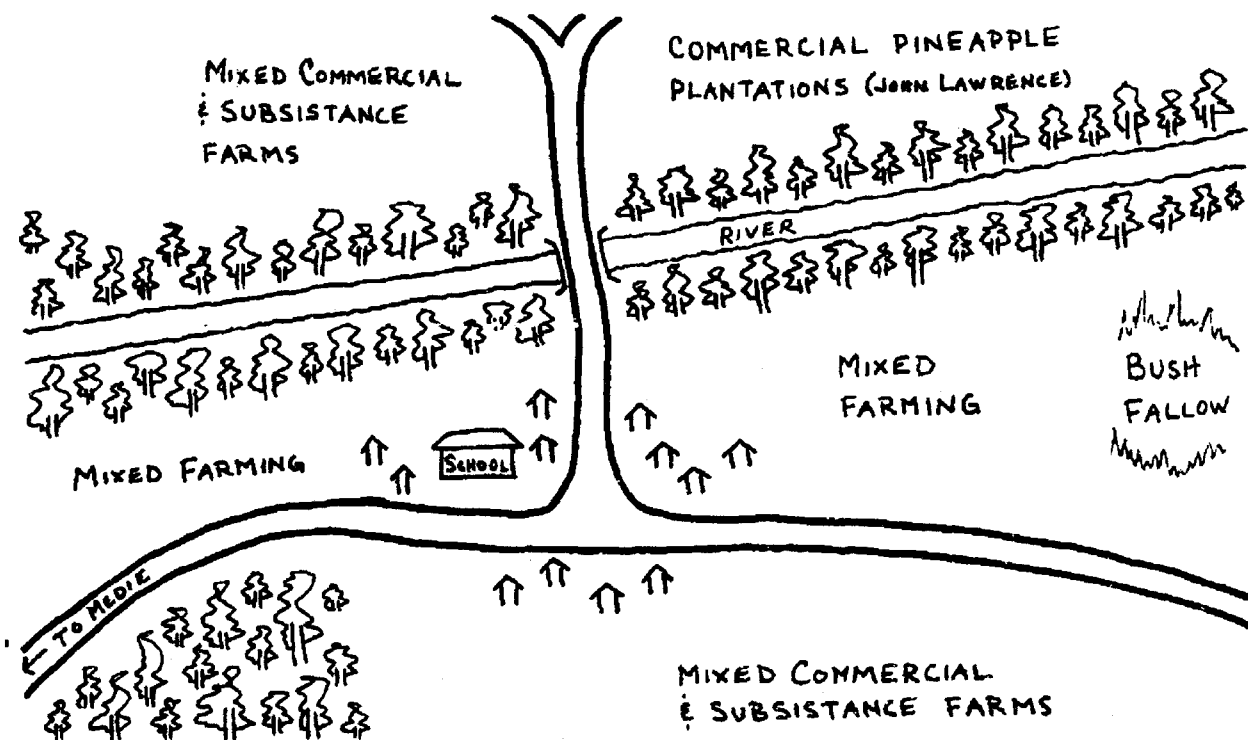
Case 4. The Commercialization of Small-Holder Agriculture: Samsam-Odumasi

Background. Samsam is an area of four villages in the Akuapem hills, at the extreme northern end of Ga District, some four kilometers off the main Accra-Kumasi road. Gã is the predominant language spoken, but considerable inter-marriage between the Gã and Akuapem peoples has taken place in the area. The land in this area was bought by a single individual from the Akuapem in the 19th century, and it is the descendants of this man who are the land-owning families in the village. About two-thirds of the village land is owned by these families, the remainder was kept by the initial buyer, and became “stool” land upon his death. While urban sprawl has engulfed some of the area along the main road, there is no pressure on land in the Samsam area for the expansion of housing.

Pineapples have been grown for a long time in Samsam, mostly on a very small-scale basis, using traditional methods. In 1979, some Accra-based entrepreneurs began to export pineapples by airfreight on a very limited basis. Following the onset of structural adjustment policies that promoted export-oriented agriculture in the mid-1980s, the demand for high quality, uniformly ripened pineapples increased dramatically. Much of the Akuapem hills area is ideally suited climatically for pineapple production, receiving somewhat higher rainfall than the Accra plains, and being extremely well-drained soil. The proximity of the area to the international airport in Accra gives it a comparative advantage over many other climatically similar areas in the south of Ghana. From the mid to late 1980s onwards, this area has undergone a “pineapple boom.” This includes both the commercialization of small-scale agricultural production, as farmers move out of subsistence crop production and into higher-value pineapple production, as well as the


commoditization of land, as outside entrepreneurs move in, and acquire land for large-scale pineapple production. A community map, drawn by members of both men's and women's focus groups, is presented in Figure 7. The land-use transect for Samsam-Odumasi is in Figure 8.

Figure 7: Community Map of Samsam-Odumasi



Changes in Land Use. Samsam has always been a farming community. Oil palm was the original cash crop in the area; later cocoa was intensively cultivated. Thus, there is a long tradition of commercial crop farming in the area. Pineapples have also been grown in Samsam for a long time, but not on a large scale until recently. The extension officer for the area noted that they have long advocated a mixed farming strategy in the Akuapem Hills area, combining cash crops and staple food crops. With the pineapple boom, this effort has intensified. As one farmer noted, "We used to grow staple food crops, but now we all grow pineapples."

Figure 8: Land Use Transect Matrix for Samsam-Odumasi



ZONE	VILLAGE	FARMING	FOREST	RIVER	FOREST	PINEAPPLE PLANTATION
LAND USE	• RESIDENTIAL HOUSING	• MIXED COM-MERCIAL AND SUBSISTANCE CROP FARMING	• FOREST	• RIVER	• FOREST	• PINEAPPLE FARMING
LAND OWNER-SHIP	• FAMILY LANDS • HOUSING; USUFRUCT RIGHTS IN PERPETUITY	• FAMILY LAND RENTED ON ANNUAL BASIS TO USER	• STOOL LAND		• STOOL LAND	• FAMILY LAND LEASED TO PLANTATION OWNER
LIVELIHOOD	• TRADING • STREET FOODS	• AGRICULTURE	• NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS			• PINEAPPLE PRODUCTION • REGULAR WAGES & CASUAL LABOR
ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS		• CROP ROTATION • BUSH FALLOW • SLIGHT EROSION	• UNDISTURBED FOREST TO PROTECT RIVER	• NO EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS POLLUTION	• UNDISTURBED FOREST TO PROTECT RIVER	• HEAVY USE OF AGRIC. CHEMICALS • CONTINUOUS PINEAPPLE CROPPING

While both large-scale and small-scale cultivation of pineapple is very much in evidence in Samsam, it would not be accurate to state that the majority of land is under pineapple cultivation. Forest, bush fallow, food crops and other cash crops are also very evident, but it is clearly the pineapple export boom that is driving the change in land use and property rights.

Pineapple production has seen an increase in “scientific” management in recent years--careful management of plant population, fertilization, disease control and the induced ripening of the pineapple to ensure a uniform crop for export--and therefore higher incomes. There have also been changes in farm size--farms are now larger, with more acres devoted to pineapples. Production of other cash crops is increasing as well, notably peppers, which are also grown primarily for an export market. With the increased acreage in pineapple, and especially the establishment of several very large-scale pineapple plantations, increased amounts of forested lands have been put under production. Commercial entrepreneurs lease large tracts of land, and increasingly, medium-scale entrepreneurs from Accra have been seeking to rent land for pineapple production. The production of food crops has not stopped, but has declined in terms of economic importance, and in terms of the proportion of land devoted to it--and probably in terms of outright land area devoted to it. To date, there has been little pressure on Samsam in terms of demand for land for housing by Accra residents. It is too far from the main road, and too far from Accra to make commuting a possibility.

Changes in Property Rights. The majority of the village have access to land for farming under a modified customary tenure practices, whereby a “drink” was offered to the chief or elder of a land-owning family, and some “rent” would be paid either at harvest, or at festival times (which usually

roughly coincided). Today this system is somewhat more codified: Land is measured in terms of “ropes” and the unit called an “acre” in the local dialect is slightly larger than one hectare. This amount of land is rented out at ₡25,000 (about \$12.00) per year. Everyone in the village acquires land for farming through this practice, with the exception of members of the land-owning families, who in effect pay the same price through contributions at festival time. There is also some stool land, which is allocated by the chief in a similar manner. Income from stool land rental is used for community improvement projects.

Since the beginning of the pineapple export boom, people from outside the village have begun acquiring land in the village as well. The process is similar for them, but most prefer to “lease” the land on a longer-term basis--paying for up to ten years “rent” at the outset. No land can be sold outright, and the elders insist that, at the present, they won’t even lease any land for longer than five years (although ten-year leases have been granted in the past). These leases are renewable, and to date, no lessee has been refused a renewal of a lease on land improved for pineapple production. Leasing began in the late 1980s, concurrent with the beginning of the pineapple boom, and the arrival of “stranger” farmers--mostly medium- to large-scale operators.

Under either of these systems (“renting” or “leasing”), trees can be planted, and other improvements made, although they belong to the land owner, not to the user. Rights to continued use are customarily recognized, though not necessarily legally recognized. These rights can be inherited. Some limited individualization and privatization of land holdings has taken place under the customary tenure system, but land alienation is still out of the question--only rental and leasehold tenure are permitted. While some large-scale commercial farmers have set up operations on village land, no significant land concentration has taken place.

Changes in Livelihoods. In the past 12 years, men in the village have tended to move out of staple food crop production, although many maintain a small amount of land under food crops, to protect themselves from sudden market shifts in pineapple production. Pineapple production remains a risky business, and most families maintain a diversified farming portfolio. In order to maximize income, the crop must be ripened simultaneously, and at such a time as it can be harvested and moved rapidly to the airport for export. If the buying agent doesn’t like the looks of the pineapples, if transporter is late, or if the exporter fails to hire an aircraft, then the whole crop has to be sold on the local market, at a much lower price. Under these circumstances, a few large producers have begun acting as their own export agents, and operate out-grower schemes among the local small holders. To date, there has always been sufficient land for both the local population and the “stranger” farmers. Land has even been plentiful enough to accommodate the expansion of some local farmers into large-scale commercial operators themselves, along side the large-scale “stranger” farmers.

Women have tended to be less involved in pineapple production than men. This is partly because of the capital requirements in pineapple production, partly because women are still responsible for the provision of food for their households, and partly because it actually requires more money for women to go into pineapple production than it does men: given their other responsibilities and the labour requirements of pineapple production, women invariably have to hire more labour on their pineapple farms than men do, which requires greater start-up capital and lowers income from pineapple production. Also, one must be prepared to wait twelve months after investing capital

before any income is earned from pineapples. While virtually all members of the men's groups interviewed produce pineapples in some quantity, only about 3 out of 10 women do. However, these focus groups were not necessarily a representative sample.

Women have continued to produce food crops, and some women are investing in small-scale commercial production of other crops, most notably peppers. While women have always had access to land, the limited privatization and individualization of holdings has opened up avenues for women to control greater amounts of land, and to have sole control over their production. As one noted, "At least now I have my own farm--I can get something at the end of the season..." Land is thus somewhat more expensive to "rent" than it used to be, but more easily accessed by women. To date, no one has been pushed off their land for food crop production in order to make room for a pineapple producer.

The commercial farmers do hire wage laborers, although for the most part, the hiring is not done from within Samsam-Odumasi village. This is partly because there is no large pool of labour in the village. However, many people from the village, particularly the women, work as casual laborers, to earn some extra cash or when in a cash-flow crisis. Relatively good wages (\$2.50 - \$4.00 per day) can be earned, depending on how hard one works--virtually all casual labor is paid on a piece-rate. Income from pineapples has been invested in more diversified occupations as well--taxis, corn mills, etc. have been purchased by the wealthier members of the community, which both increases income and contributes to improved facilities.

All groups interviewed noted that, on the whole, the pineapple export boom has had a positive impact on the economy and community of Samsam. Men were somewhat more emphatic about this than women. The major benefits include greatly improved village infrastructure: roads built by the pineapple exporters, better access to other villages, a school built with rental income on stool lands, improved water access and the possibility of getting electricity, increased income, no unemployment, and increased general community welfare. To date, no landlessness has emerged as a result of the intensification and specialization of agricultural production; despite the influx of "strangers," no major environmental degradation has yet emerged, despite the shortening of the fallow period, and continuous cropping on some of the land.

V. Summary Synthesis of Case Studies

The impact of urbanization on land use, property rights, and livelihoods in the peri-urban area of Accra is highly variable. In fact, a clear cross-cutting theme emerging from both a review of the literature, and the four case studies presented, is that the fate of any given community in the process of urbanization depends heavily local leadership. In cases where leadership is well informed, and willing to act in the best interest of the community, the increase in the value of land can have a positive impact on the community. Such is the case that Kasanga et al. (1996) and Roth (1996) make for Gbawe. However, if the leadership is unable to control the force of rapid change, or if it sees fit to safeguard only its own narrow interests, then the community is bound to suffer both the loss of land and the loss of livelihoods, as several of the cases explored above make clear.

The system of customary land ownership, processes of commodification of property rights and the use and accountability of proceeds from the sale of land, absentee allodial owners, the rights of strangers, and the economic value of the usufruct, all need to be reviewed. It is inappropriate legally and morally that the proceeds from the “common estate” are shared among only the principal elders of the community, whilst the majority of “shareholders” do not benefit in any way. It is even more ironic that until the passage of the Head of Family Accountability Law they could not be held to account for their stewardship. The flaw in the Law however, is that it is applicable only to families and not to stools. Hence stool elders who are behaving in the same manner cannot be held to be accountable to their subjects. The logical expectation of outsiders is that since the lands that are being urbanized were leaving the communal domain for at least the period of the lease, the proceeds of the lease could be used to undertake ventures that will benefit the entire community, such as the provision of social infrastructure e.g. schools, health centers, public toilets, markets, etc. The expectation of local leaders and the community is often that central or local government should provide these facilities. Where the communal ownership of land is vested in a stool, this latter expectation could be justified as 55% of the revenue accruing from stool lands goes to the local authorities to finance development projects. Family land, which is the main mode of ownership in the peri-urban areas, is subject to no such taxation.

If the impact of urbanization is a change in market demand for agricultural production, rather than an increased demand for the resource base (land) on which the production takes place, intensified agriculture can generally benefit a whole community through higher incomes, better transportation and improved infrastructure. In other cases, wise leadership can at least blunt some of the worst impacts of rapid change, and protect the livelihoods of some members of the community. However, it is clear from the foregoing that the examples of positive impact are fairly few and far between in peri-urban Accra. Rather, the picture that emerges is one of rapid loss of land from agriculture, both for housing and for purely speculative purposes, or else the destruction of the agricultural resource base to meet the endless demand for building materials. As a result, landlessness is fast becoming a serious problem in Ga District, particularly the middle belt of the district--away from the immediate built-up area, but in the area where property rights are now rapidly changing. Perhaps landlessness was inevitable for “stranger” communities in peri-urban Accra, given the nature of land law which recognizes allodial rights only among the original settlers on the land. But the Nsakina case study makes clear that *de facto* landlessness is emerging among the indigenous people as well.

Tenure transformation in the peri-urban areas of Accra that has arisen due to rapid urbanization has created more hardships, economically and socially, for the most vulnerable in the society. While there appears to be no major difference between men and women in these communities as to whose land is being lost, women clearly have fewer alternative livelihood options when faced with the loss of land for farming. Cultural factors prevent Muslim women in Ngleshie-Amanfro from taking up other livelihoods; in Nsakina it is the distance that must be traveled to find new land for farming, or new markets for trading. As a result, when women fall out of agriculture, they are more likely to lose their livelihood, even if it is not specifically women’s land that is being targeted for sale or sand winning.

The emergence of landlessness is a nascent process--up to now farming communities have reacted largely by pulling back, squeezing in a bit, and shortening the fallow cycle in order to cope with

decreased land for farming. But the process is rapidly approaching a kind of critical mass beyond which more of this kind of coping will not be possible. The question is, when that point is reached, what will people do who depend on agriculture? The cases analyzed above indicate a relatively narrow range of choices that include intensified natural resource-base extractive activities--either no fallowing altogether, or sand winning--both of which are unsustainable, or else petty trade and casual labour. Education or skills among these groups of people are not sufficient for other activities, and indeed, even trading and construction skills may have to be learned. Enlightened leadership might see the need for some amount of the proceeds from the sale of land or sand to go into the search for alternative livelihoods--either training or attraction of employment-intensive industries--but to date there is scant evidence of this, even in relatively well organized communities like Gbawe.

Rapid urbanization usually is accompanied by the provision of alternative forms of livelihood either through industrialization and manufacturing or an expanded commercial activity. Thus those who lose their agricultural source of livelihood are able to obtain alternatives in the form of more permanent jobs either as factory hands or other long term engagements in manufacturing. The situation along the peri-urban areas of Accra is not like that. The rapid rate of urban sprawl is mainly for purposes of housing provision, itself the result of the persistent demand by landlords for high rent advances. Urban sprawl is therefore not able to provide the alternative forms of livelihoods, with the exception of small-scale service occupations, for example, petty trading and food preparation. Other jobs provided by the rapid construction activities are temporary but also require training and skill. They include masonry, carpentry, plumbing, house wiring, etc. The level of poverty in these areas prevents the majority of the displaced farmers from retraining. They therefore find alternative jobs in casual labour which makes their situation more precarious. As Rakodi (1993) points out, the daily functioning of a city should facilitate economic activity of all kinds, and enable residents to meet their basic needs for access to shelter, utilities and services, and income-generating opportunities. Where this is lacking then, a big question mark hangs over the ability of the city to fulfill its role in a nation's economic development.

VI. Policy Recommendations

Planning. The rate of urbanization, the loss of land, and adverse changes in livelihoods in the peri-urban areas of the Greater Accra Metropolitan Areas call into question the efficacy of planning in these areas. It is clear that planning and development control have completely broken down in the peri-urban areas as development is ahead of planning. Under such conditions it is not easy to protect agricultural lands, as there is no capacity to enforce planning proposals. Generally in the planning of urban areas no consideration is made for the preservation of space for agriculture. However, agriculture has been found to have the potential both as a diet and as an income supplement for the urban poor, even under conditions of severe limitations on space. It has been established that in the Indian context 6 m² of space can potentially produce all the vegetables needed for a family of four for a year; 200 m² of garden would provide one-fifth of the food intake of a family of five. In Buenos Aires, a successful garden could save between 10 and 30 percent of the cost of an appropriate diet for a family (Rakodi, 1993).

Closely linked to the issue of planning is the whole concept of economic ideology and economic development. Wherever an unfettered market approach is adopted as the means of allocating scarce resources, land will tend to be allocated to its highest and best use. Under such conditions agricultural land cannot compete with residential land. Opportunities for urban agriculture become less as the land markets become characterized by speculation and spiraling prices. Land which could even be used for agricultural purposes is intentionally kept out of the market, creating further distortions. This is the situation in Pantang near Abokobi. Unless there is a deliberate intervention in the operation of the land market to reserve land for agricultural purposes, as has been done in Abokobi, there is very little chance that peri-urban agriculture will survive. The extent to which such a policy can hold will be tested through time, but it needs to be emphasized that the alleviation of malnutrition and urban poverty require such simple but pragmatic approach to planning and the operation of markets, among other things, to succeed.

Lack of clear policies on tenure transformation, land use, and the use of land sales revenue, may be perceived to be at the root of the problems explored above. Land law and land policies, as they now stand, were intended to permit local flexibility, rather than a rigidly and centrally controlled set of guidelines for these processes. The lack of capacity in planning and enforcement in Ga District also exacerbates the problems created by the lack of clearly defined policies. However, simply upgrading the technical capacity of Ga District in planning and enforcement, while it would help, would not resolve problems alluded to above. Replacing the authority of relatively autonomous chiefs with relatively autonomous bureaucrats not only increases the likelihood of rent seeking, it does little to increase accountability. The necessary checks and balances to make land use planning a democratic process, in which stakeholders truly have a voice, may lie as much in the realm of electoral politics, at both the District Assembly and Unit Committee (village council) levels, as in greater technocratic efficiency in the planning units of local government. Thus all stakeholders--land owners, strangers, settlers, policy makers and implementers--should be part of the urban and peri-urban land development process. The top-down approach to planning should give way to a more horizontal and participatory approach where all stakeholders are consulted.

Land Use Policies. While specific policies guiding the use of land for particular purposes tend to run counter to the current era of economic liberalism, there are clear advantages to some kind of land-use incentives in the peri-urban area. The most obvious one would be the promotion of “vertical” development in housing (high-rise construction), rather than “horizontal” development (housing on individual plots). The cost of infrastructure to service the latter, and the land requirements per unit of housing for the latter, are both significantly higher. Thus the cost of new housing is higher, *and* more land is taken out of agriculture, by the current “horizontal” mode of peri-urban housing development. Short of strict planning and enforcement, which are both expensive and counter to prevailing economic policy, the best incentive for achieving a change in the kind of housing development occurring is in a different rate of property taxation. However, local authorities (Ga District, in this case) have limited room for maneuver on property taxation, since rates are set by national law.

Environmental Damage. A clear policy on quarrying and sand winning, and clear enforcement capacity are urgently needed. The growth of the city is spoiling the immediate surroundings of the city, and the answers to a number of questions are not clear: Who is controlling authority? Who

licenses and taxes such activities? Are taxes sufficient to reclaim land? Who polices the land-use clauses in lease agreements? At the present, it appears that the Ministry of Mines and Energy is empowered to raise taxation from extractive activities, but do not enforce reclamation activities, and the District is powerless to make the Ministry enforce land reclamation agreements.

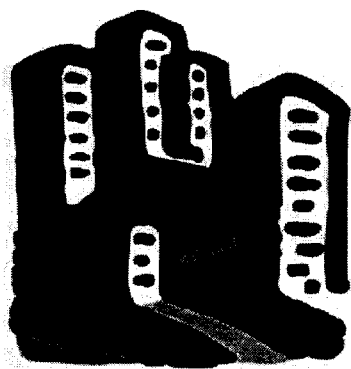
Programmatic Interventions. Two simultaneous and intensive efforts are required to protect and promote livelihoods in the peri-urban area. First, in terms of agriculture, the commercialization and the intensification of production must be promoted as rapidly as possible, along the lines already being advocated by (Presbyterian) Abokobi Agricultural Project. Some of this is already being done--Sasakawa 2000 has a project in Ga District, and District authorities are also making an effort in this direction. But there is scope for much more of this kind of effort. Access to increased skills, to capital, and possibly to water for irrigation are all necessary for an intensified agriculture that can compete on an economic basis for the use of land.

Second, possible kinds of support for alternative livelihoods in the peri-urban area must be devised and implemented. Low levels of education, fear of the city itself, little exposure to other livelihoods in indigenous (and some stranger) communities, all work to prevent the diversification of peri-urban livelihoods prior to the loss of land. The real “losers” in the struggle over tenure change and land use conversion are those with few options outside agriculture. While viable alternatives are few, efforts must be made to equip people for those alternative livelihoods that are viable, both in terms of training and in terms of access to the capital they need for starting up.

VII. References

- Antwi, Adarkwah. 1995. "An Economic Perspective of land Development Policy Implementation in a Developing Economy: The Case of Accra, Ghana." London: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.
- Asante, S.K.B. 1975. "Property law and social goals in Ghana: 1844-1966." Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Benneh, George, R. Kasim Kasanga, and Doris Amoyaw. 1995. *Women's Access to Land in the Household: A Case Study of Three Selected Districts in Ghana*. FADEP publication. Legon: Department of Geography, University of Ghana.
- Bentsi-Enchill, K. 1964. "Ghana land law: an exposition, analysis and critique." London: Sweet & Maxwell.
- Bower, P. 1993. "Land tenure policy and development." Paper presented at a conference on international land tenure organized by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in December, 1993, London: University of East London, London.
- Daddieh, Cyril, Kwame Arhin and Peter Little. 1995. "Pineapple Production and Labor Relations in the Peri-Urban Area of Accra, Ghana." Binghamton, NY: Institute for Development Anthropology.
- Field, M.J. 1940. "Social organization of the Ga people." London: Crown Agents.
- Kasanga, R. Kasim. 1996. "The Role of Chiefs and Tendamba in Land Administration in Northern Ghana." London: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.
- Kasanga, R. Kasim. 1996. "Interim Report: Urbanization, Land Markets, and Gender Insecurity in Peri-Urban Kumasi, Ghana." Report to the Mazingira Institute, Nairobi, GUE Research Programme.
- Kasanga, R. Kasim, Jeff Cochrane, Rudith King and Michael Roth. 1996. "Land Markets and Legal Contradictions in the Peri-Urban Area of Accra, Ghana: Informant Interviews and Secondary Data Investigations." LTC Research Paper No.126. Madison: Land Tenure Center.
- Konate, Yacouba. 1993. "Land Issues in the Peri-Urban Zone of Bamako, Mali: A Case Study in Kalabancoro." *Development Anthropology Network*, 11(2):1-7.
- Kufogbe, Sosthenes. 1996. "Urbanization and Changing Patterns of Land Use in the Peri-Urban Zone Along the Airport-Ayimensah Transect of Accra, Ghana." London: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

- Larbi, W. Odame. 1996. "Spatial Planning and Urban Fragmentation in Accra." *Third World Planning Review*. 18(2): 193-215.
- Larbi, W. Odame. 1995. "The Urban Land Development Process and Urban Land Policies in Ghana. London: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.
- Larbi, W. Odame. 1994. "Urban land policies and the delivery of developable land in Ghana." PhD thesis, Reading: University of Reading.
- Manoukian, M. 1964. "Akan and Ga-Adangme peoples." London: International Institute.
- Maxwell, Daniel. 1996. "Highest and Best Use? Access to Urban Land for Semi-Subsistence Production. *Land Use Policy*. 13(3): 181-195.
- Meek, C.K. 1946. "Land law and custom in the colonies." London: Oxford University Press.
- Ministry of Local Government. 1992. "Strategic Plan for the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area." Volume 1: Context Report. Department of Town and Country Planning, Ministry of Local Government.
- Ngleshie-Amanfro Study Team. 1996. "Ngleshie-Amanfro: A Participatory Rapid Appraisal of Food Security in a Peri-Urban Community." Legon: Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research.
- Rakodi, Carol. 1993. "Planning for whom?". In Devas, N. & Rakodi, C., editors, *Managing Fast Growing Cities: New Approaches to Urban Planning and Management in the Developing World*. Harlow: Longman.
- Roth, Michael. 1996. "From Administrative Allocations to Commercial Land Transactions: Factor Market Constraints to Economic Growth in Three Peri-Urban Household Economies." Madison: Land Tenure Center (mimeo).
- USAID. 1995. "Dynamic Markets, Dynamic Places: Understanding Land, Labor, and Capital Markets in Peri-Urban Economies of Sub-Saharan Africa." Seminar held at USAID, Bureau for Africa and Global Bureau. December 1, 1995.
- Yankson, P.W.K. 1996. "Population and the Environment: Issues and Challenges in Ga District." Population Impact Project, Department of Geography. Legon: University of Ghana.



“Cities Feeding People” Program Reports

“Initiative Agriculture urbaine” Rapports de recherche

1. **Urban Agriculture Research in East and Central Africa: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Camillus J. Sawio, University of Dar es Salaam (1993).
2. **Urban Agriculture Research in East Africa: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Davinder Lamba, Mazingira Institute (1993).
3. **Urban Agriculture Research in East & Southern Africa I: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Kadmiel H. Wekwete, University of Zimbabwe (1993).
4. **Urban Agriculture Research in East & Southern Africa II: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Admos Chimbowu and Davison Gumbo, ENDA-Zimbabwe (1993).
5. **Urban Agriculture Research in West Africa: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Souleymane Diallo, ENDA-Tiers Monde, Dakar (1993).
6. **Urban Agriculture Research in East & Southeast Asia: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Yue-man Yeung, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (1993).
7. **Urban Agriculture Research in Latin America: Record, Capacities and Opportunities** *by* Julio Prudencio Bohrt, UNITAS (1993).
8. **Urban Food Production: Evolution, Official Support and Significance** *by* Luc J.A. Mougeot, IDRC (1994).
9. **Promoting Urban Agriculture: A Strategy Framework for Planners in North America, Europe and Asia** *by* Paul Sommers and Jac Smit, The Urban Agriculture Network (1994).
10. **Urban Agriculture and the Sustainable Dar es Salaam Project, Tanzania** *by* Camillus J. Sawio, UNCHS-IDRC Project Coordinator (1994).

11. **Une histoire de deux villes: Comparing Canadian Community Gardening Programs in Montreal and Toronto** *by* Sean Cosgrove, Toronto Food Policy Council (1994).
12. **Urban Agriculture: Can Planners Make a Difference?** *by* Timothy Greenhow, SWEDEPLAN/Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning (1994).
13. **Agricultura urbana en América Latina: evaluación in situ para iniciativa regional** *por* Julio Prudencio Bohrt, consultor del CIID (1994).
14. **L'agriculture urbaine en Afrique tropicale: évaluation in situ pour initiative régionale** *par* Kando Golhor, consultant du CRDI (1995).
15. **Cities Feeding People Project Fact Sheets** *by* Pascale Dennery, IDRC Intern (1995).
16. **Urban Agriculture in Canada: A Survey of Municipal Initiatives in Canada and Abroad** *by* Michel Frojmovic, IDRC Consultant (1996).
17. **The Third Meeting of the Support Group on Urban Agriculture (SGUA): Proceedings, March 18 - 19, 1996** *by* IDRC and the Urban Agriculture Network (TUAN) (1996).
18. **Urban Agriculture, Progress and Prospect: 1975 - 2005** *by* Jac Smit, The Urban Agriculture Network (TUAN) (1996).
19. **Urban Agriculture: A Survey of Academic Expertise and Programs in Canada** *by* Rita Lindayati, IDRC Intern (1996).
20. **Managing Urban Agriculture in Dar es Salaam** *by* Camillus J. Sawio, University of Dar es Salaam (1998).
21. **Gender Capacity in Urban Agriculture: Case Studies from Zimbabwe, Uganda, and Ghana** *by* Kaneez Hasna, IDRC Intern (1998).
22. **CFP Program Initiative Program Summary (1997 - 2000)** *by* IDRC (1998).
23. **Farming in the Shadow of the City: Changes in Land Rights and Livelihoods in Peri-Urban Accra** *by* Daniel Maxwell (International Food Policy Research Institute, USA), Wordsworth Odame Larbi (Lands Commission, Ghana), and Grace Mary Lamptey, Sawudatu Zakariah, and Margaret Armar-Klemesu (University of Ghana, Ghana) (1998).
24. **Peri-Urban Livestock Production Systems** *by* O.B. Smith (IDRC, Senegal) and E.A. Olaloku (International Livestock Research Institute, Ethiopia) (1998).



25. **Urban Agriculture in Canada: Capacities and Experiences of Canadian NGO's**
by LifeCycles, British Columbia (in progress, 1998).
26. **Gender Resources for Urban Agriculture Research** *by* Alice Hovorka, IDRC Intern
(1998).

Copies can be obtained free of charge by writing to Brenda Lee Wilson, Cities Feeding People Series, Programs Branch, IDRC, PO Box 8500, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3H9, Canada, by e-mail to BLWilson@idrc.ca or by visiting the CFP website: <http://www.idrc.ca/cfp/reports>

Pour obtenir gratuitement les rapports ci-haut, prière de s'adresser à Brenda Lee Wilson, Initiative Agriculture urbaine, Direction générale des programmes, CRDI, BP 8500, Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 3H9, par courrier électronique: BLWilson@idrc.ca ou par l'Internet: <http://www.idrc.ca/cfp/reports>