



## DESIGNING RESPONSIBLE AND FIT-FOR-PURPOSE CUSTOMARY LAND RIGHTS AND TENURE MODEL IN NORTHWEST GHANA

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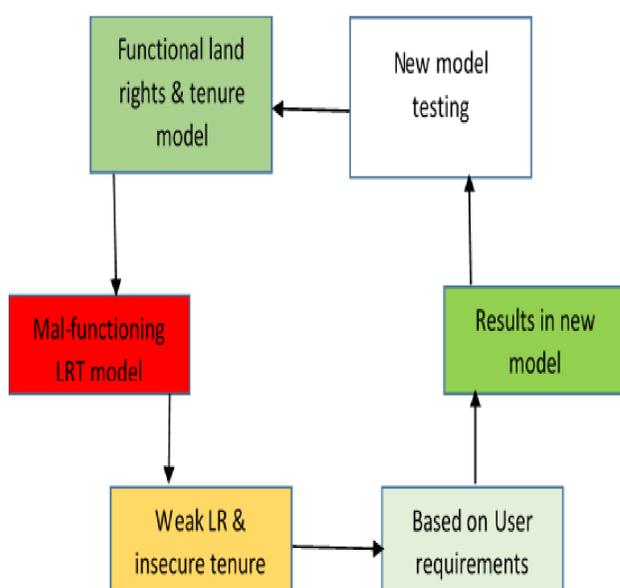
### INTRODUCTION

Stronger land rights and secure land tenure for everyone are prerequisites for productive use of land for the improvement of livelihoods and food security in the world. A lot of literature has focused on largescale farming, land consolidation and associated land tenure security. Scant literature emphasises the importance of small-scale farming contributing to food security. There is no literature available on how to obtain stronger land rights and secure tenure for vulnerable and marginalised subsistence farmers especially settler (migrant) farmers in northwest Ghana. This work aims to examine the current land rights and tenure situation, identify the loopholes and design a responsible and fit-for-purpose (i.e. most appropriate) model from the users' perspective. It adopted the qualitative approach, making use of focus group discussions, interviews, workshops and community forums. There are land rights and tenure security challenges for all categories of subsistence farmers in the area. The challenges include absence of legislation to compel compliance with existing model, low sensitisation on land rights and tenure issues and limited avenues for resource poor people to obtain land rights. This holistic model will be tested for effectively addressing all these challenges and more, either implicitly or explicitly through workshops and community forums.

### MATERIALS | METHODS

This assignment adopted the qualitative research approach. It used focus group discussions to solicit information from various categories of people in the community: males and females, old and young, disabled and abled and, settlers and landowners. Key informant interviews targeted heads of landowning groups, heads of settlers and community level local government officers: assembly and unit committee persons. It interviewed opinion leaders in the communities like retired civil servants and agricultural extension officers residing in the community. Institutional interviews focused on the regional body governing lands for government – the Lands Commission, (LC) and the Customary Lands Secretariats (CLSs) – an association of landowners' common office in charge of facilitating and documenting land transactions at the area level. Private land documentation body that is, Meridia was also interviewed via mail. A second level of group discussions made of representatives from the age cohorts of males and females were conducted to fine-tune the various issues raised in the other interviews and discussions. Then workshops and community fora were used at different stages of the research.

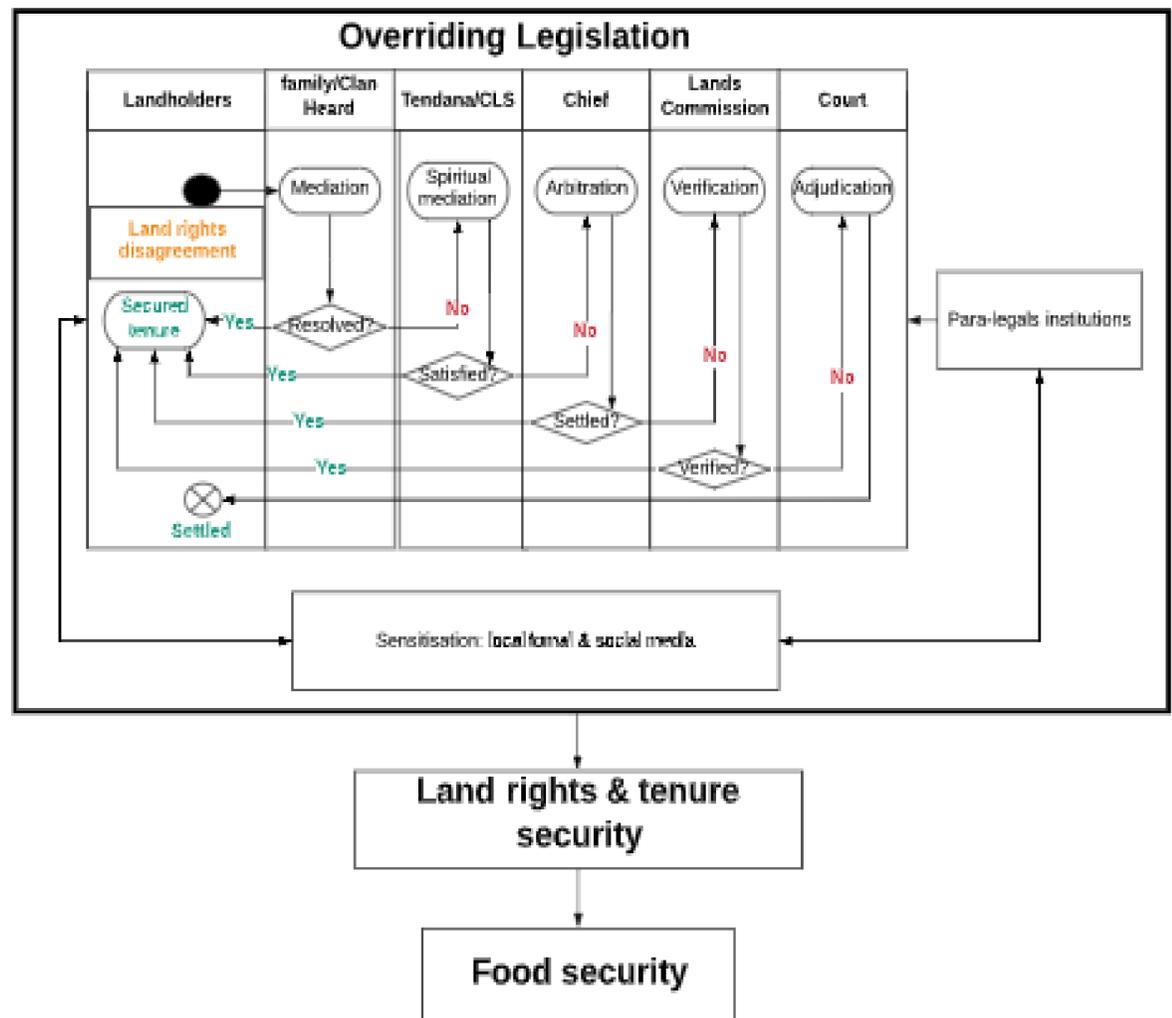
### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### RESULTS



### CONCLUSIONS

The current model remains the core of the new model but strengthened by the inclusion of overriding legislation, media sensitisation and paralegal support. New model has overriding legislation that empowers customary processes, people and institutions. It compels all land rights issues to commence with and follow the existing model. The courts will now become last resort; reducing current burden of courts overwhelmed with too many and long pending land cases. More awareness due to holistic, intensive and sustained sensitisation using both traditional methods of disseminating information and mainstream media including social media. Involvement of paralegal institutions and staff to assist resource constrained persons and implicit adoption of flexible payment terms to facilitate compliance. New model ultimately aims for combined benefits of stronger land rights, more secure land tenure and promoting local farmers' investments in farming to increase production and enhance food security.

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