



## **SOCIO-POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND IMPACTS OF LAND GRABBING IN LOLIONDO DIVISION, NGORONGORO DISTRICT, TANZANIA**

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### **KeyWords**

Land Access, Ownership and Control Over, Land Acquisition, Land Grabbing

### **ABSTRACT**

Land grabs also refers to as land acquisition is a growing challenge in the developing countries (DC). This challenge has been worsening due, inter alia, to increased flows of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) to DC, which implies a need for more land to cater for such investments. In several cases, the acquisition of land to cater for the needs of foreign investors has affected the access, ownership and control over land to many local communities in DC particularly in countries where land tenure systems is not well defined. The critical literatures that respond to this emerging phenomenon have emphasized the importance of examining it by looking underlying socio-political dynamics in areas where the phenomenon is prevalent. To contribute to this line of research, the study was undertaken in Loliondo Division, Ngorongoro District, Tanzania, in order to investigate the socio-political dynamics and impact of land grabs on the livelihoods of the local communities using political ecology thinking. The study involved 112 respondents who were sampled through systematic random and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected through structured interview, documentary review, participatory rural appraisal, in-depth interviews and remote sensing. Moreover, several modes were used to analyze data including cross tabulation, regression analysis, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and content analysis. The study revealed that land in the study area was acquired by both local communities and investors for different use. However, the study revealed that overlapping in government's Acts, particularly the Village Land Act of 1999 and the Wildlife Conservation Act of 2009, conflicting political power systems as well as failure of the formal power system to recognize the existing evidence of land ownership and control in the area have contributed to the current appropriation of local communities' rights to land access, ownership and control. This phenomenon has adversely affected the traditional land use systems in the area and therefore affecting the livelihoods of the local communities. The study therefore concluded that land acquisition through investment have been attributed by lack of secure land ownership among the local people and failure of the legal bodies such as government land policies and Acts to address the responsible government organ in controlling over land resource in the study area. The prevailing situation is therefore reflects land grabbing.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background of the Problem**

Land grabbing by private companies, private investors, governments and national elites for investment purposes is an issue of global concern (Liversage, 2010:6). It is the form of Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) that usually target developing countries with abundant supply of land

and weak land tenure systems (von Braun & Meinzen-Dick, 2009). Although such kinds of investments have existed for quite some time, they have recently expanded as a response to the convergence of multiple crises such as food, energy, climate change, finance (Borras *et al*, 2012), and in the context of improved development of protected areas, nature reserves and eco-tourism (Zoomers, 2010: 436). Although land acquisition through FDI intended to increase levels of rural employment and improving local infrastructure in African countries, it has also posed critical questions regarding access, ownership and control over land resources among local communities (Anseeuw *et al*, 2012).

Tanzania has a national movement to attract huge local and FDI in its land in sectors such as agriculture, mining, biofuel production and tourism (Katundu *et al*, 2013:2). As a result, from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century to date, Tanzania has been witnessing the mushrooming of investment companies in different sectors that acquire land from the local people, causing deaths and loss of settlement to victims (Kitabu, 2013). The current debate surrounding the topic of land grabbing is a dichotomy of two general positions; land grabbing as an opportunity and land acquisition as risks. However, critical literatures of land grabbing have emphasized the importance of examining it by looking the sociopolitical dynamics in areas where the phenomenon is prevalent.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Land is a fundamental livelihood asserts for the Maasai pastoralists. For centuries, the Maasai have been residing at Loliondo which borders a corner of the famous Serengeti National Park (SNP) and Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA) by practicing livestock keeping and crop farming (Vihemäki, 2007:6). Since 1990s, wildlife tourism investment in Loliondo GCA has emerged to be a new form of land use system (Rurai, 2012). This new form of land use system has been reported to be incompatible with the traditional land use systems and therefore posed a serious question regarding the access, ownership and control over land resources in the area. Consequently, the livelihood activities such as livestock keeping, crop farming and settlement of the Maasai pastoralists of Loliondo now face blink future due to land use change upon which it depends. Many scholars such as Rurai, (2012); Kitabu, (2013); Nordlund, (2013); Nelson *et al*, (2012) and Ojalammii, (2006) have reported in several studies about the Loliondo land acquisition. However, none of these studies explored sociopolitical dynamics and impacts of the phenomenon by applying political ecology thinking. It is within this perspective that this study was conducted and filled in the existed knowledge gap.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study was to provide an understanding on socio-political dynamics and effects of recently land grabbing on people's livelihoods. The specific objectives were to:

#### **Specific Objectives**

- i) Identify the Socio-political dynamics that contributes to recently land grabbing in the study area
- ii) Analyze the Socio-economic impacts of recently land grab on peoples livelihood in the study area

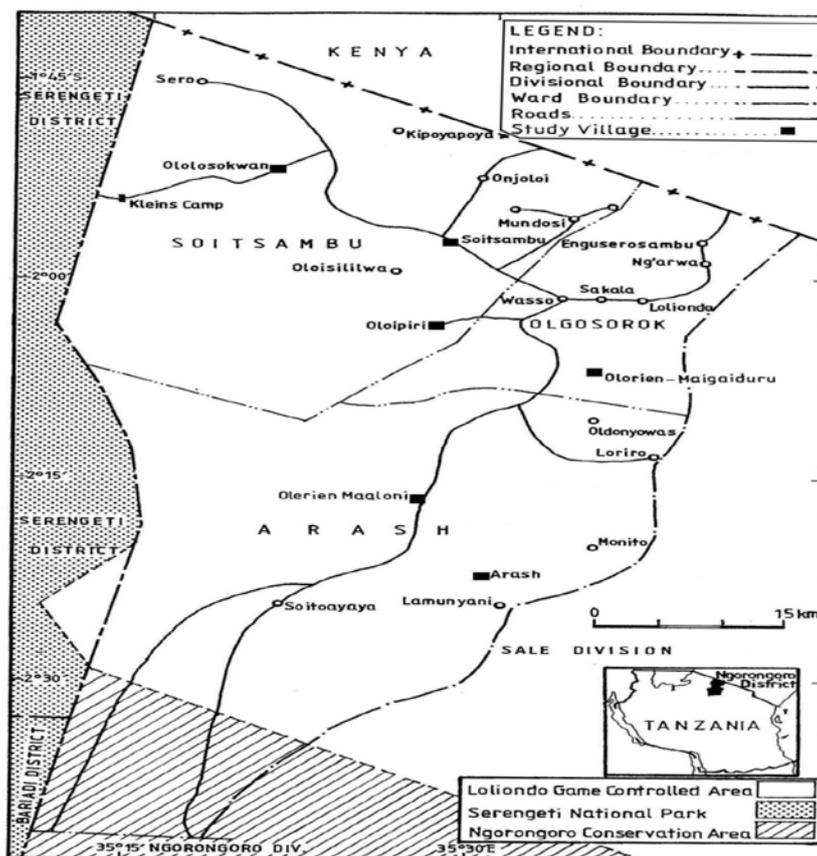
### **Research Questions**

- i) What are the Socio-political dynamics that contribute to recently land grabbing from loval people in Loliondo Division?
- ii) What are the Socio-economic impacts of land grabbing on peoples rural livelihood in Loliondo Division?

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was conducted in 6 villages in Loliondo Division (based on title deeds issued by the Ministry of Lands in the late 1980s/early 1990s) in Ngorongoro district, Arusha region, Tanza-

nia. These villages were Arash, Loosito-maalon, Olorienmaigaiduru, Oloipiri, Soitsambu and Ololosokwan. The division extends between Latitudes 1°45' and 2°30' South and between Longitudes 35°15'0" and 36°0'00"East. Besides, Loliondo Division borders Kenya to the North, SNP to the West, NCA to the South Sale Division, to the East (Kimati, 2013) (Figure 1)



**Figure 1:** Location of the Study Villages in Loliondo Division  
**Source:** UDSM cartographic Unit (2013)

### Research Design

This study employed socio-economic survey design. Socio-economic survey design considered appropriate for this study for numerous reasons. First, it attempts to collect data from members of population in order to determine their current status with respect to one or more variables. Second, it is capable of capturing dynamic qualities of the environment and community in general. Besides, it collects information from large number of respondents and relies on the individual self-report of their knowledge and attitudes.

### Description of the Sample and Sampling Procedures

The study used systematic and purposive sampling procedures to obtain different samples. Systematic sampling procedure was used to obtain 98 household heads of selected villages. Moreover purposive sampling procedure was used to obtain 14 key informants from different categories. In total, the sample consisted of 112 respondents who participated in the study.

### Description of Data Collection Methods

Structured interview, remote sensing, in-depth interview, direct observations, documentary review and Participatory Rural Appraisal were used to collect data for the study. Structured interview involved the use of questionnaires that were administered to selected heads of households. The satellite images covering the study area, i.e., Land sat Thematic Mapper (TM) of 2003, 2009, 2010 and 2014 sourced from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) was analyzed

to determine land cover changes. Moreover in-depth interview was conducted to selected key informants while direct observation and documentary review was used to collect information about social, political and economic dynamics in relation to land in an area

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

Data collected during the study were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The questions from a questionnaire that generated numerical data were coded into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 and Microsoft Excel. Thereafter, numerical responses from questionnaires were entered into the codebooks and analyzed quantitatively. Similarly, Data generated during in-depth interviews and FGDs, for example, was analyzed through content analysis. Data from Land sat TM of 2003, 2009, 2010 and 2014 that was geo-referenced using ARC GIS 10 and ERDAS IMAGINE 2013 supported the findings from the study

### **Presentation and Interpretation of the Findings**

Data was presented both qualitatively and quantitatively. On the one hand, qualitative data was presented in frequency tables, charts and graphs. The linear regression line to illustrate the trend of pasture and agricultural land, for example, was presented on a graph. On the other hand, qualitative data was presented in quotes to depict some themes. Other ways of presenting qualitative data included photographs and maps/diagrams e.g., those which show land cover and the study area.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

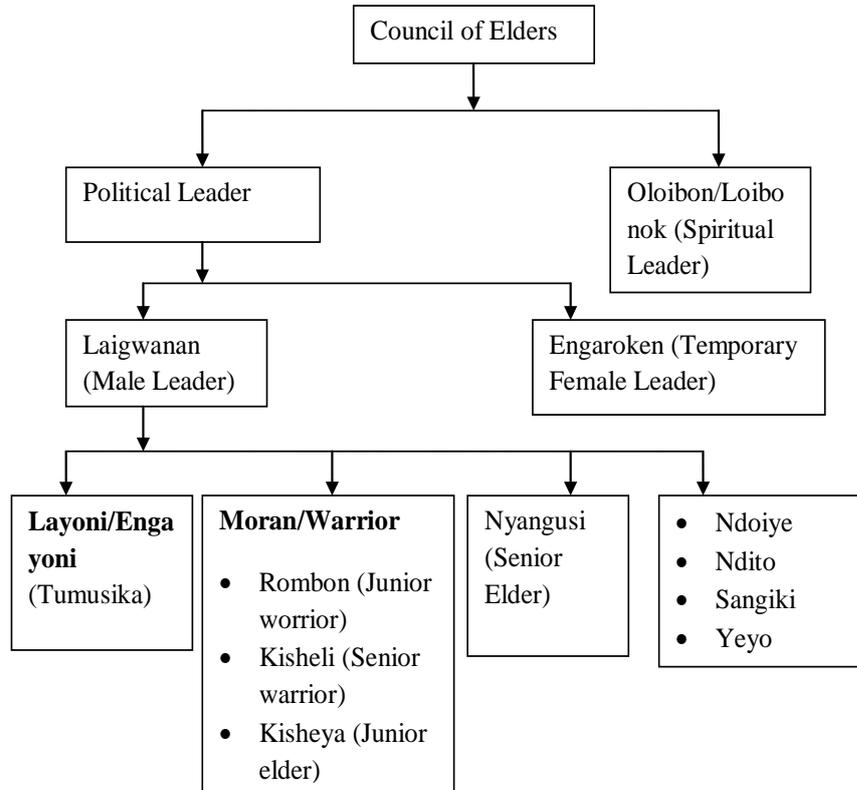
### **Socio-political Dynamics that Contributes to Recently Land grabbing in the Study Area**

The field survey revealed that the recently appropriation of indigenous land by local and foreign investors is attributed by different sociopolitical dynamics. The findings showed that most of these dynamics emerge from existing conflicting power systems as well as the existing legal government Acts that guide resources access, ownership and control in the area. The study therefore identified the three socio-political dynamics that contributes recently land grabs in the study area

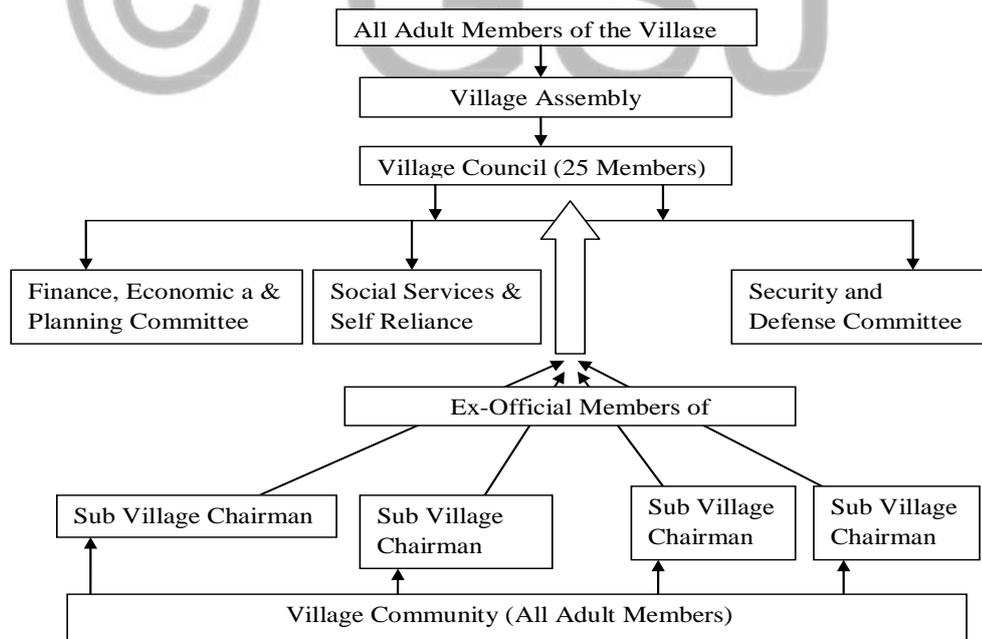
#### **1. Uncoordinated Traditional and Formal Power Systems Toward Land Resource Governance**

The study revealed that political power relation in the population is the central unit in understanding the nature of resource acquisition, ownership and control. With regard to the power relation in the study area, the findings revealed that there are two forms of power systems that control resource acquisition and control. These systems are formal governance system and the traditional governance system headed by Maasai (Figure.2 (a) and (b)). The findings showed that the two power systems conflict each other when it comes to land resources governance in the study area. The study noted that such incompatibility to greater extent it has opened the door to local private investors to grab the contested land in the area in recent times.

The study found out that Maasai traditional governance system is based on the age group and is male dominated. The study found out that in controlling and managing the land resource the traditional government has divided its communities into three sub-clans namely Purko, Loita and Loitayok. Each of this sub-clan owns through inheritance its known territorial boundary of land and therefore become responsible in the control and administration of all resources within the territory. On the other hand the formal government system was found to consist of two major organs namely Village Assembly (VA) and Village Council (VC). The study found out that all decision about land acquisition by local communities or foreign investors originate from VC. The study noted that during leasing the land to investors the traditional government system has never been involved, the phenomenon reflect land grabbing



**Figure 2 (a) : Maasai Traditional Governance Structure**  
 Source: Field Survey (2013)



**Figure 2 (b) : Formal Governance Structures (b) in Study Area**  
 Source: Field Survey (2013)

**2. Spatial Overlapping between Village Land Act (VLA) no.5 of 1999 and Wildlife Conservation Act (WCA) of 2009 on Control over Land Resources**

The findings showed that 96.9% of the respondents argued that the land in the study area is under the control and management of the village while 3.1% of the respondents argued that the

land in the area is under Game Controlled Area (GCA) and therefore it is under the control and administration of the Director of the Wildlife (Table 1).

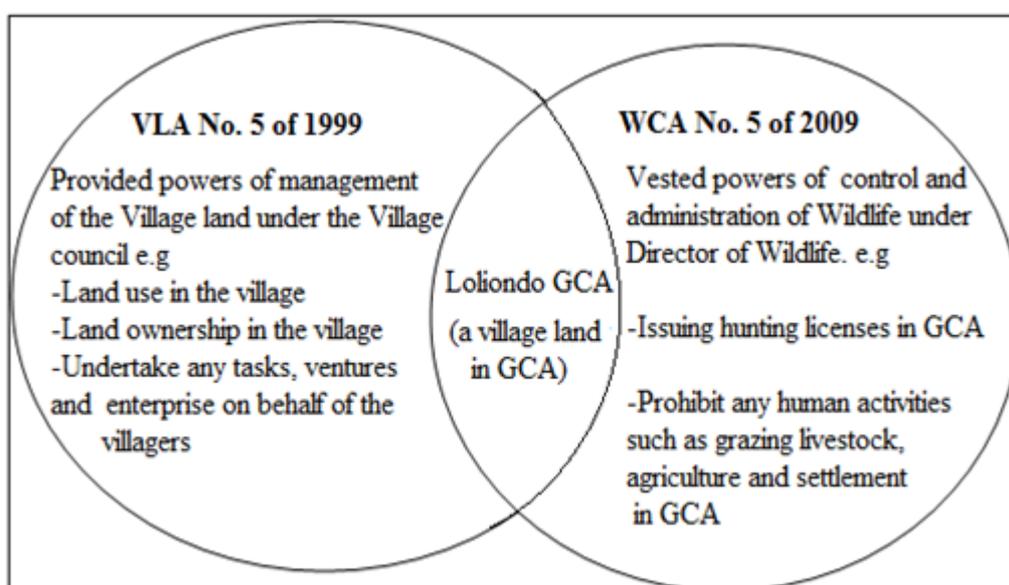
**Table 1: Local Community’s Response on Control Over Land**

Power to Control Land	Ethnicity				Total	
	Maasai	Chagga	Sonjo	Iraq	Frequency	Percentage
Village	85	2	5	3	95	96.9%
Director of Wildlife	0	2	0	1	3	3.1%
Total	85	4	5	4	98	100%

**Source:** Field Survey (2016)

The field survey noted that despite of the fact that the land in Loliondo Division is the village land but according to the Tanzania laws governing conservation issues it falls under the category called GCA for purely wildlife conservation. The study therefore revealed that the study area is characterized by spatial overlap between VLA of 1999 and WCA of 2009 (Figure.3). This overlap in government legislation was also observed by PINGO’S Forum (2011) who commented that the WCA No.5 of 2009 and VLA no. 5 of 1999 are in conflict.

The study noted that WCA of 2009 has placed power of control and administration of Loliondo land under the Director of Wildlife. The Director of Wildlife has sweeping power in issuing hunting licenses in GCA. With WCA human activities such as settlement and livestock grazing are strictly prohibited in GCA. This situation completely contradict with the powers that VC have been given under the provision of the VLA No.5 of 1999. Moreover, the related study conducted by TNRF (2011) in Loliondo revealed that WCA does not define a GCA, and its provision does not very well illuminating regarding to the status of the person who lives within these areas. It therefore, the presence of spatial overlap between the Village Land and GCA in the study area implies contradiction in power to control the land between the VC and Director of Wildlife. It is due to this contraction in powers to control the area some pieces of land have been leased to the investors without the consent of the local communities, a phenomenon that reflect land grabbing.



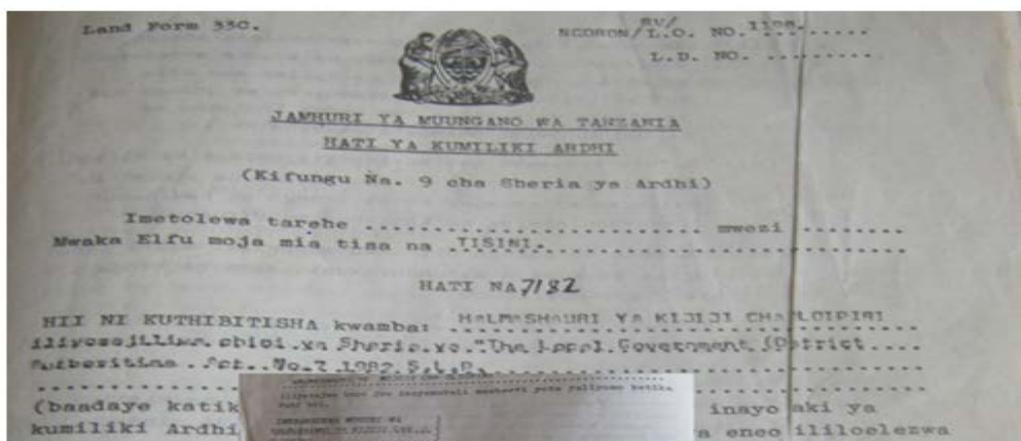
**Figure 3:** The Spatial Overlap of WCA of 2009 and VLA of 1999.

**Source:** Field survey (2013)

### 3. Failure to Recognize the Existing Evidence of rights of Ownership and Control over the Land

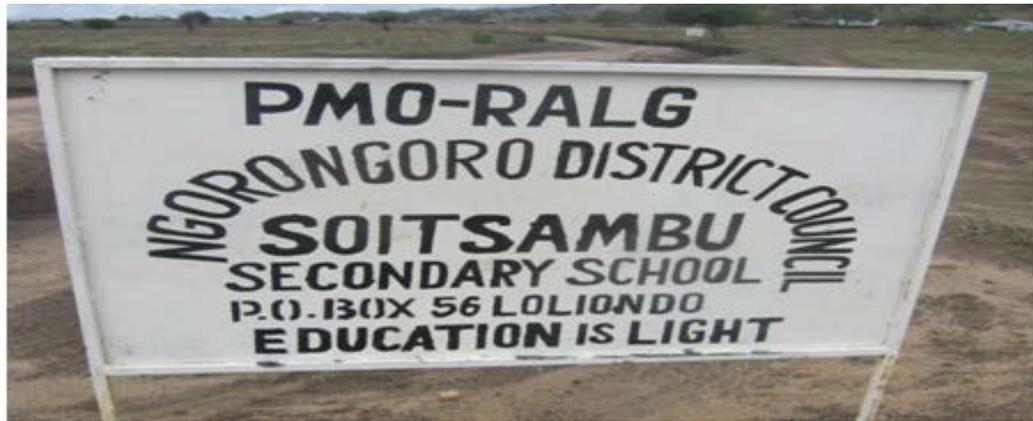
The study revealed that all villages in the study area own the hard copies of the title deeds granted to the them by the Ministry of Land in 1990s (Plate 1 (a) ). The presence of the title deed indicated that these villages were registered legally hence the land management including access, ownership and control should be under the VC. The finding showed that despite the presence of these title deeds still the ministry of land and wildlife do not recognize them. This situation has accelerated land to be acquired by local and private investors without the consent of the local community. Again this phenomenon reflect land grabbing

Moreover, The observed field data showed that the study area contain some permanent infrastructures such as primary and secondary schools, health service centers, local government of-fices and permanent buildings (Plate 1 (b)), which according to the Local Government (District Authority) Act No. 7 of 1982 it recognizes this area as the part of village land and therefore its ownership should be under the VC. This finding concurs with the information from VEOs who argued that the schools in their villages have been registered legally by Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The study therefore noted that the decision to leased the land to private investors without the consent of the local community implies land grabbing. This finding concurs with the findings of TNRF (2011) which also showed that Loliondo is under Village Land. TNRF (2011) added that, by recognizing this ownership in 1990 the government through Ministry of Land granted the title deeds to the all 6 villages bordering the SNP. Besides, apart from title deeds owned by all study villages, the presence of permanent infrastructures such as schools, government offices and health centers implies that the area is under Village Land therefore it is under the ownership of the VC.



**Plate 1 (a) :** Copy of the Title Deed for Oloipiri Village granted by the Ministry of Lands in 1990

**Source:** Field survey (2013)



**Plate 1 (b):** Permanent infrastructure in the study area.

**Source:** Field Survey (2013)

## **Socio-Economic Impact of Land Grabbing on Peoples Livelihood in the Study Area**

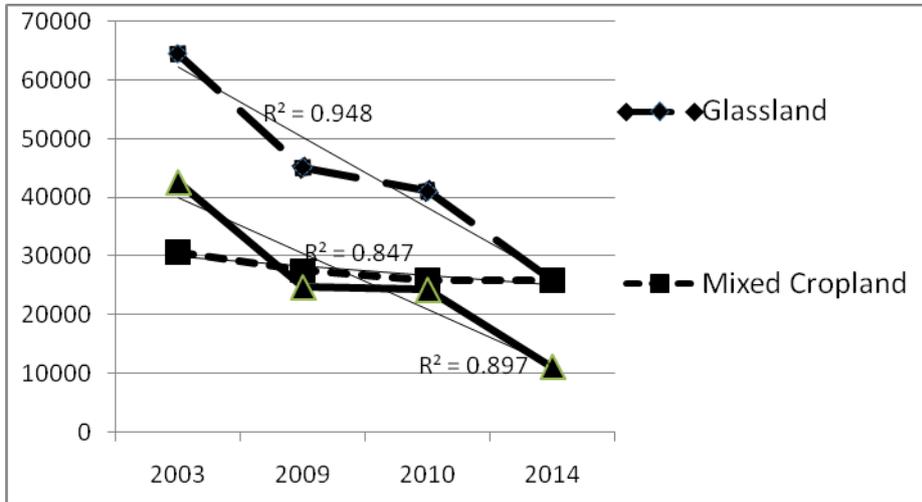
### **Negative Implication of Land grabbing**

The findings showed that land acquisition for investment purpose have resulted into; 1) Shrinking of arable and pasture land, 2) Land use change. The findings showed that these stated outcomes have negative implication on the livelihoods of local communities in the study area.

#### **(1) Shrinking of Arable and Pasture Land**

The findings showed that there is a relationship between land acquisition for investment and declining of the pasture land. The results from the interpretation of satellite image LANDSAT TM of 2003, 2009, 2010 and 2014 that was tested by regression line showed that there is a decrease in grassland (pasture land) and crop land (arable) cover from 2003 through 2014. The findings showed that the grassland declined by the rate of 0.948 per year between the year 2003 and 2014. Besides, the grassland with scattered crop land has declined by the rate of 0.897 per year while mixed crop land declined by the rate of 0.847 per year (Figure 3). This findings concur with the data collected during FGD that showed that most of the land that was used for crop farming and grazing has been acquired by investors the process that have affected the agricultural production and livestock keeping systems the in the study area.

Moreover, the findings from satellite images interpretation of the LANDSAT TM 2003, 2009, 2010 and 2014 (Fig. 3, 4, 5 and 6) showed that the pasture land (grassland) declined by 19,337 hectares between 2003 and 2009 and by 4,091 hectares between 2009 and 2010 while between 2010 and 2014 the grassland declined by 32,876 hectares. Moreover the grassland with scattered cropland declined by 17,872 hectares between 2003 and 2009 and by 400 hectares between 2009 and 2010 while between 2010 and 2014 there is a declining of 13,174 hectares. About arable land (mixed cropland) the findings showed that between 2003 and 2009 the land declined by 3,220 hectares and by 1642 hectares between 2009 and 2010 while between 2010 and 2014 the mixed cropland declined by 86 hectares (Table 2). The field survey revealed that the decrease of mixed cropland and grassland that are key livelihood resources for grazing and farming in the area was largely caused by the land acquisition for investment.



**Figure3.** The Trend of Agricultural and Pasture Land after Land Acquisition through Investment from 2003 to 2014

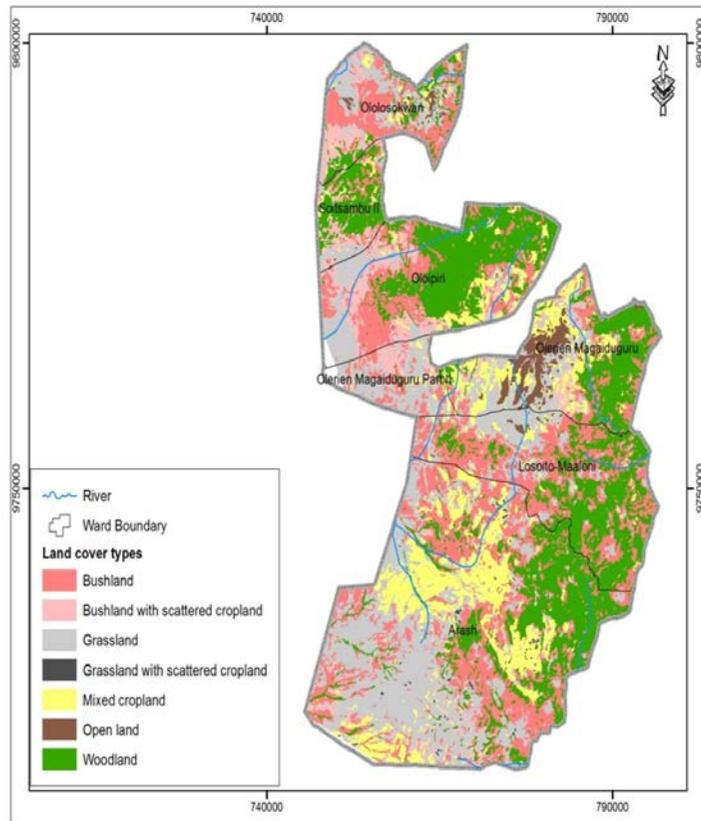
**Source:** Field Survey (2013)

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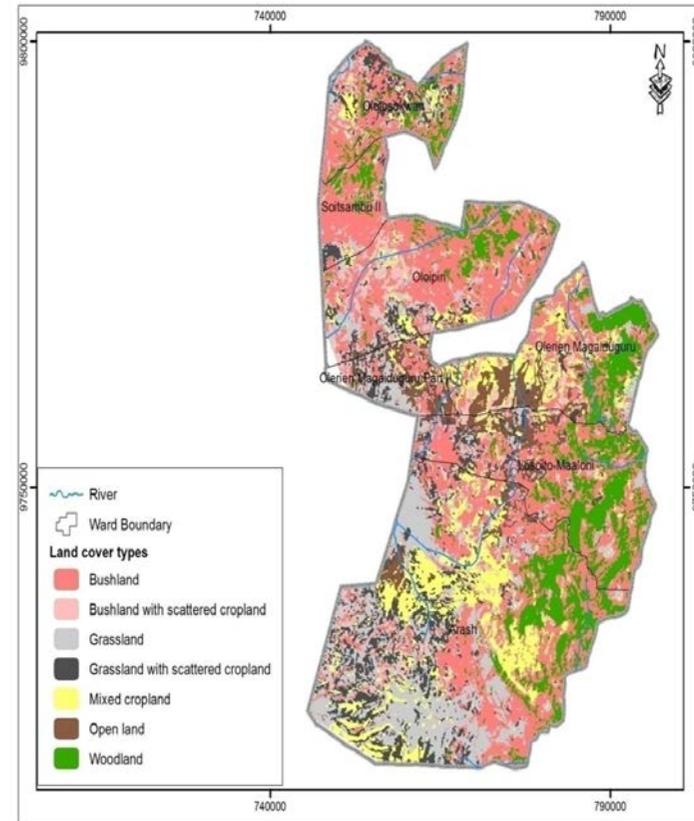
**Table 2:** Summary of Land Cover Change from 2003 to 2014

Land Cover Types	Land Cover								Land Cover Change					
	Year: 2003		Year: 2009		Year: 2010		2014		2003-2009		2009-2010		2010-2014	
	Ha	%	Ha	%	Ha	%	Ha	%	Ha	%	Ha	%	Ha	%
Bushland	68,038	27	92,725	37	93,533	37	60,657	24	24,687	10	808	0	-32,876	-13
Bushland with scattered cropland	15,259	6	12,540	5	13,643	5	22,635	9	-2,719	-1	1,103	0	8,992	4
Grassland	64,469	26	45,132	18	41,041	17	25,890	10	-19,337	-8	-4,091	-2	-15,151	-6
Grassland with scattered cropland	42,624	4	24,752	2	24,352	2	11,178	1	-17872	10	-400	-4	-13174	-9
Mixed cropland	30,782	12	27,562	11	25,920	10	25,834	9	-3,220	-1	-1,642	-1	-86	-1
Open land	4,888	2	12,813	5	10,635	4	6,427	3	7,925	3	-2,178	-1	-4,208	-2
Woodland	67,048	27	35,388	14	37,105	16	48,293	19	-31,660	-13	1,717	1	11,188	4
	250,910	100	250,915	100	250,914	100	250,914							

**Source:** Field survey (2013)



**Figure 3:** Loliondo Land Cover 2003  
**Source:** USGS (2003)



**Figure 4:** Loliondo Land Cover 2009  
**Source:** USGS (2009)



### **Land Use Change**

The findings showed that there is a relationship between land acquisition for investment and land use change in the study area. The interpretation from the satellite images LANDSAT TM of 2003, 2009, 2010 and 2014 (Fig 7, 8 and 9) showed that between 2003 and 2009 about 5,635 hectares of grazing land (grassland) was changed to open land while between 2010 and 2014 about 73 hectares of grassland has changed to open land. Similarly, 59 hectares of grassland with scattered crop was changed to open land between 2003 and 2009 while between 2010 and 2014 about 97 hectares was changed to open land.

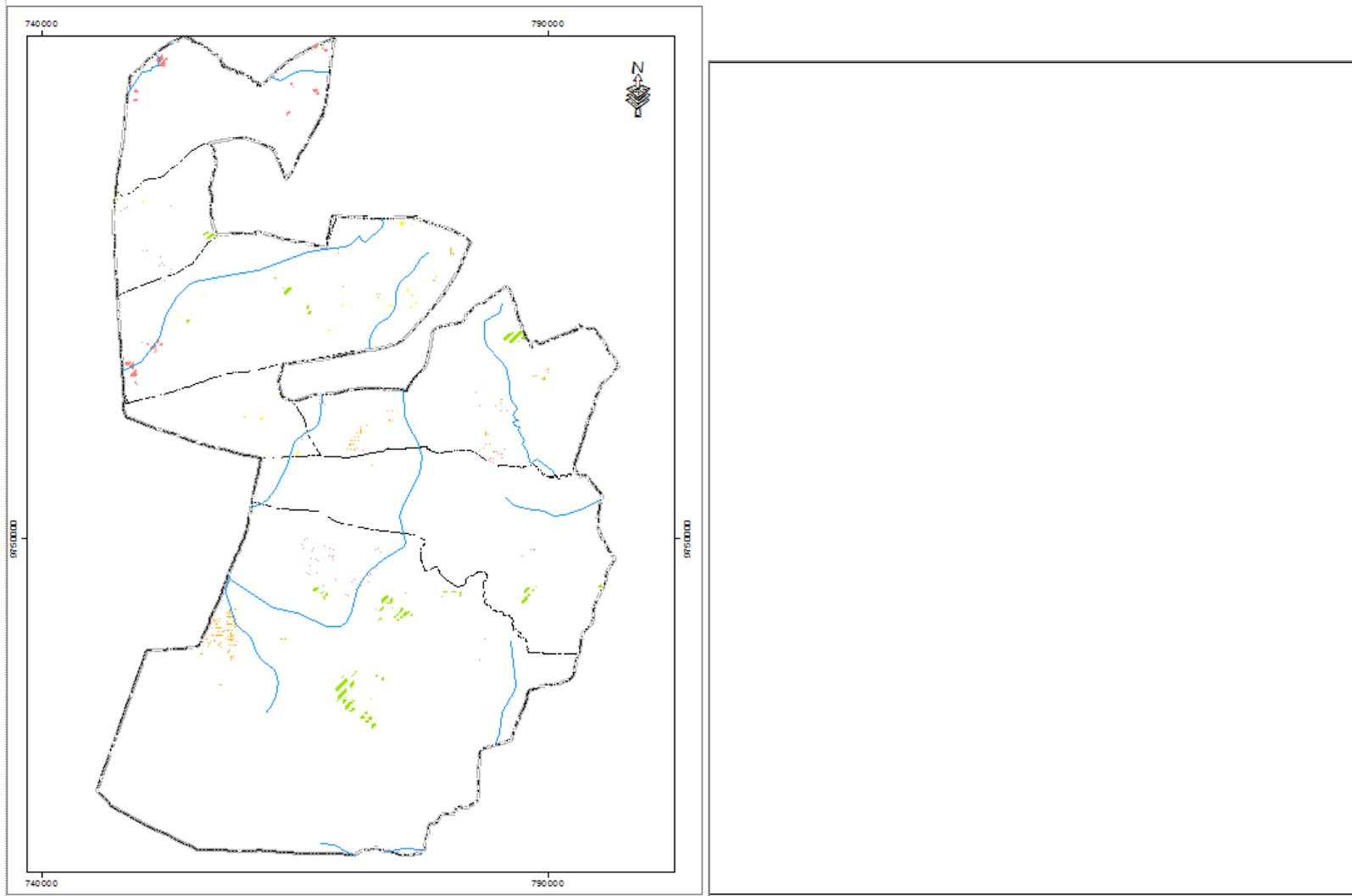
The finding showed that although change in land cover can be caused by multiple of factors but land acquisition stand to be the main factor for such change. The results showed that open land is highly favored by photographic tourist investors as it simplify the process of photograph taking during photographic and hunting safari. Therefore it is because of that reason that have made rapid change in land cover from other forms to open land in order to favor the tourist investment.

This finding was supported by the information from FGD and in-depth interviews by various stakeholders who showed that the change in land cover especially between 2003 and 2009 was associated by land acquisition that occurred in the area where during acquisition the OBC also burnt all grassland and some homesteads hence creating large size of open land. However, it should be noted that this kind of acquisition of land tourism investment in the area have also affected the livelihoods of the local communities around.

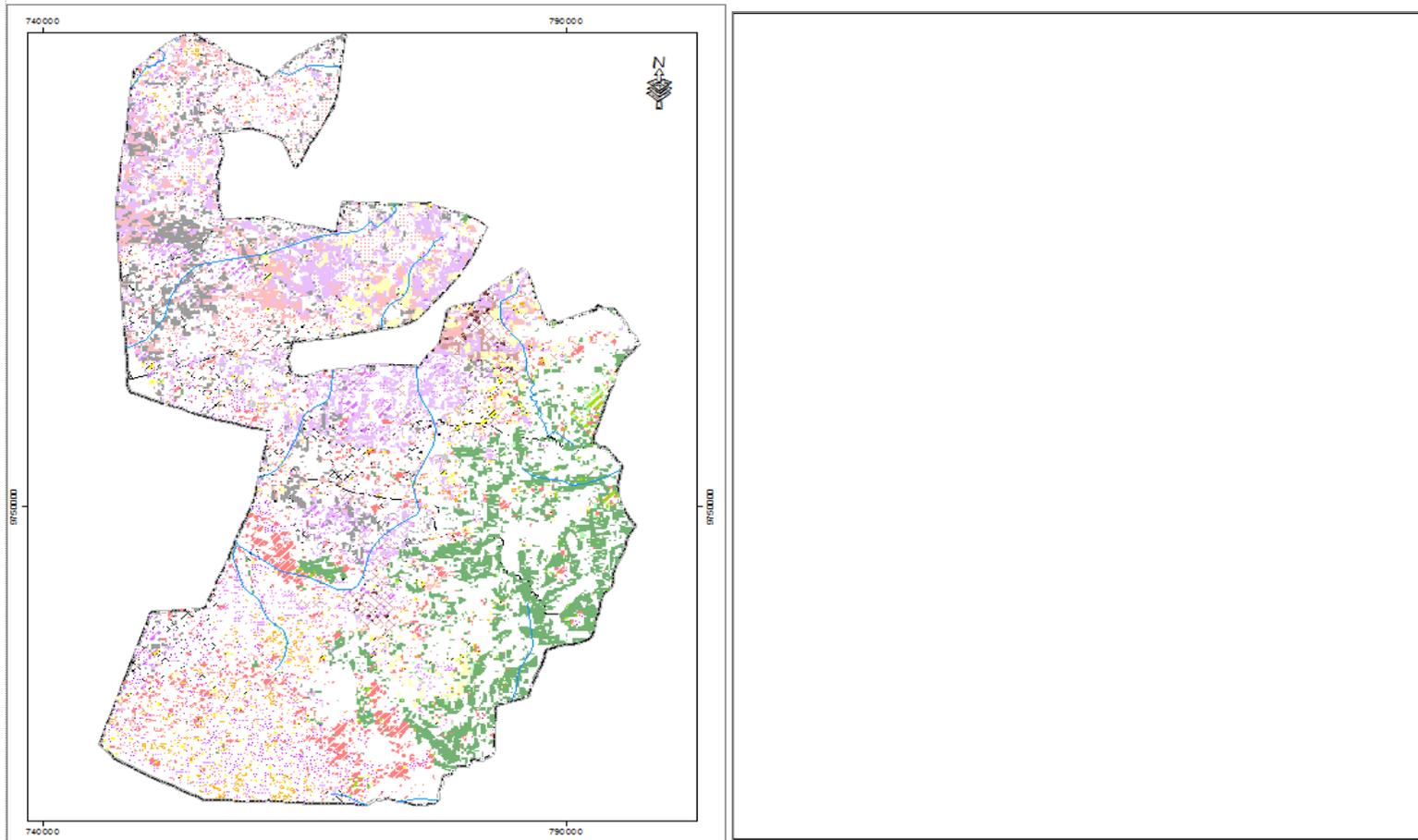




**Figure 7:** Loliondo Land Use Change 2003 to 2009.  
**Source:** USGS (2014)



**Figure 8:** Loliondo Land Use Change 2009-2010.  
**Source:** USGS (2014)



**Figure 9:** Loliondo Land Use Change 2010-2014.  
**Source:** USGS (2014)

## Positive Implication of Land Grabbing

The findings from WEO and VEOs in selected villages revealed that most of the investors in the study area pay direct money to the communities as annual fees. Much of this money is used to support the village development projects. For example at Oloipiri village the OBC have supported the village by constructing some classrooms in Oloipiri primary school and support the construction of the office and house of the VEO (Plate 2(a) and 2(b)). Similarly at Ololosokwan village, And Beyond has donated by building the dining hall at Ololosokwan primary school (Plate 2 (c)).



**Plate 2(a):** One of the classrooms at Oloipiri Primary School Built under the OBC in Support for Community Development.

**Source:** Field Survey (2013)



**Plate 2(b):** The Oloipiri VEO Office Donated by OBC at Oloipiri Village

**Source:** Field Survey (2013).



**Plate 2 (c):** The Dining Hall at Ololosokwan Primary School Donated by And Beyond  
**Source:** Field Survey (2013)

Apart from the donating infrastructures in the study area the study found out that the investors contributes to the community part of their profit generated from the tourism investments. For example the study revealed that in 2009 photographic tourism companies have paid a total of \$ 82,000 to six villages in the study area and \$142,000 in the year 2010. The hunting companies on the other hand paid a total of \$ 150 US to the village government in 2010. Other noted benefit of land acquisition through investment was employment of the local people in the investment company. The study noted that some local people are employed as drivers in tourist car while others are working in the tourist campsites.

### Conclusion

The above findings have highlighted that the recently land appropriation by private and local investors for wild-life conservation and in particular tourism investment has adversely affected the conventional systems. The prevailing situation is therefore reflecting land grabbing. The fact that government is developing a land use plan for the Division in order to alleviate conflicts ties up hand-in-glove with the above statement.

The results have demonstrated that such land acquisition through investment have been attributed by lack of secure land ownership among the local people and failure of the legal bodies such as government land policies and Acts to address the responsible government organ in controlling over land resources in Loliondo Division. The findings further proved that issue of land acquisition in Loliondo Division is anchored on the cultural economic and ecological setting. This is manifested by the government policy and laws guiding resource utilization in the area. It may be therefore stated that multiple land use systems in Loliondo requires striking a delicate balance between the need and aspiration of the local community on the one hand and the requirement of tourism investors on the other.

### Acknowledgment

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