



HAWASSA UNIVERSITY

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**Challenges and Opportunities of Farmland Ownership Registration
and Certification in Kokosa Woreda, West Arsi Zone**

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**Challenges and Opportunities of Farmland Ownership Registration and
Certification in Kokosa Woreda**

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requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Geography and
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BY

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Declaration

This is to certify that the thesis conducted by HamedRenki entitled Challenges and Opportunities of Farmland Ownership Registration and Certification in KokosaWoreda, West Arsi Zone, is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of master of art in Geography and Environmental Studies complies with regulation of university and meets the accepted standard concerning originality and quality.

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ABSTRACT

Farmland registration and certification are the current issues, and the government has implemented massive measures to guarantee landowner safety at different levels. This study is intended to assess the opportunities and challenges of farmland ownership registration and certification practices in Kokosa Woreda, Oromia region. A mixed research approach with a cross-sectional survey was used for this study. Simple random sampling was used to select both analysis Kebeles and sample household heads. Primary data were collected from respondents through a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview, and a focused group discussion, whereas secondary data were collected from different published and unpublished materials. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean percentage and thematically displayed using figures and tables. The study reveals that farmers in Kokosa Woreda have a good level of awareness about farmland registration and certification. However, it is crucial to note that land registration and certification are ongoing processes that require continuous efforts to ensure secure land rights. Similarly, the study shows that land registration and certification help to secure land rights, reduce conflicts, and access financial opportunities. Besides, this indicated that land registration and certification protect female landholder rights, reduce conflicting claims, and provide an official and transparent framework for land transactions. Also, it is shown that women gain legal proof of their rights, which can help overcome discriminatory practices, enhance bargaining power, and improve household food security, livelihoods, and overall well-being. Technical challenges, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited technical capacity, inadequate data management systems, corruption, and a lack of political will, discourage the smooth process of land registration and certification in Kokosa Woreda. This study concludes that Kokosa Woreda farmers know about farmland registration and certification, which secures land rights, reduces conflicts, and provides financial opportunities, particularly for female landholders. Therefore, it is recommended that Woreda land administration officials address these challenges and utilize modern technology to improve the land registration and certification process.

Keywords: Land Certification, Tenure Security, Land Ownership, Kokosa Woreda

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Land is one of the most significant assets of human beings (Emebet, 2020). The land is an influential and productive resource for the livelihoods of millions of agrarian households around the globe (Gedefaw et al., 2020). Land is the main resource supporting most rural lives in developing countries. About 70% of the African population secures their livelihoods from land and the utilization of natural resources. It is a means to achieve food security and sustainable development (ibid.). In addition, land significantly contributes to the region's economy and comprises the majority of the GDP and employment opportunities (UNDP 2015).

For this reason, land plays a significant role in socio-economic development, food security, and poverty reduction. Like other developing countries, land resources play a vital role in economic growth in Africa. A large body of existing literature shows that land contributes to a significant share of gross domestic product and employment in most countries and constitutes the primary livelihood basis for a large portion of the population (Behaylu et al., 2015). Studies documented that more than 70% of the African population secures their livelihoods from land and the utilization of natural resources (Melkamu, 2017).

Rural land is an endowment for the country's economic growth, and the majority of the Ethiopian population depends on agriculture. Hence, the overwhelming majority's means of subsistence is a significant function of the size of land they are endowed with and the level of security they feel about it (Eyerusalem, 2019). In Ethiopia, agriculture remains the most significant contributor to the country's economy, having a share of about 41% of the GDP, accounting for almost 90% of export earnings, and providing three-fourths of the raw material requirement for agro-based domestic industries (Behaylu et al., 2015; Enyew et al., 2014). Therefore, the above facts demonstrate that most of the country's economic activities rely on land resources. Nonetheless, due to a lack of land tenure security in Ethiopia, rural small holders are underinvested in their agricultural land and experience conflict over land use and ownership (Cochrane & Hadis, 2019). Similarly, land tenure insecurity was indicated as a significant factor in land degradation and unsustainable land use (Behaylu et al., 2015).

Therefore, land tenure security plays a vital role in encouraging investment in land. According to Eyerusalem (2019), African governments have adopted policies and programs aimed at increasing land tenure security for farmers dependent on it to foster agricultural investment and productivity. While land registration in Africa is still at low levels, it cannot sustain the transformation of Africa's agriculture (Eyerusalem, 2019). Nevertheless, the good news is that Rwanda and Ethiopia's national land certification and registration programs have succeeded.

In Ethiopia, the tenure system in the imperial period was characterized by the provision of land rights to the landlords through the Rist-Gult-System and restricted the rights of the tenants either to sharecropping or to the decisions of the landlords (Melkamu, 2017). After the dawn and fall of the imperial regime, the "Derg" declared all rural lands to be the state's property and officially ended tenancy relationships in the country in March 1975 (Daniel, 2014). As a result, most rural families have been given the usufruct right to land through frequent distributions (Alemu, 2013). Today, according to the FDRRE Constitution, Article 40(3), the land is vested in the state and the people of Ethiopia and is not subject to sale or exchange (FDRE Negerit Gazeta, 1995).

Disputes with relatives over inheritance claims can cause tenure insecurity, expropriation of land by government agencies without adequate compensation, redistribution forced on communities by their administrators, and restrictions on the amount of land that can be rented out and short periods for land leases (Behaylu et al., 2015). To address these issues, starting in the late 1990s, the government introduced a land-certification program that would grant land-use rights while maintaining ownership of all land (Cochrane & Hadis, 2019). The land certification program is reported to have resulted in many positive impacts, including reduced conflict, improved investment, and natural resource management, as well as some improvements in women's control of the land. In its sustainable development and poverty reduction strategy, the Ethiopian government emphasizes that a certification process that guarantees land use and transfer rights ensures tenure security and is a vital incentive for farmers to invest in their land and improve production.

The ultimate objective of registration and certification is to guarantee landholders long-term holding rights, develop farmers' confidence in land use rights, encourage long-term investments, and protect marginalized groups of society (Enyew et al., 2014). According to rural land administration reports, since 1998, more than 22.248 million land registrations and nearly 14.53

million certificates have been delivered in Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, SNNPR, Benishangul Gumuz, and Gambela (Eyerusalem, 2019). The federal and regional rural land proclamations that form the basis for land reform aim to increase tenure security, strengthen women's rights to land, and ensure more sustainable use of land resources. The justification for rural land registration is to enhance the security of farmers. Therefore, secured land rights can, in turn, promote land management, increase land productivity, and reduce land disputes (Emebet, 2020). The land certification program has been implemented in Ethiopia since 1998. Nevertheless, the challenges and opportunities of land ownership were hardly studied. This study assessed rural land registration and certification challenges and opportunities in the Oromia regional state in Kokosa Woreda, West Arsi Zone.

1.2 Statement of the Study

The growing rural population, agricultural land degradation, and competing demands from different users have increased pressure on land. Consequently, land scarcity has been a focus of attention for economists and political agendas in Ethiopia (Melkamu, 2017). Existing literature shows that land administration in Ethiopia has been threatened by the absence of land inventory, corruption, and duplication of roles and responsibilities among the different parties (Melkamu, 2017). Similarly, it is believed that the insecurity of land rights exacerbates land degradation, overgrazing, and the poor performance of agricultural activities (Kebede, 2017). Moreover, the indicators of poor performance of the farming sector under the existing tenure system are insecurity of holding rights, reduction of holding size, and subsistence farming practices (Kebede, 2017). To solve such land security problems, land ownership registration and certification play a significant role (Emebet, 2020).

The certification and registration program's increased tenure security is expected to have short- and long-term impacts on enhancing productivity (Kebede, 2017). Similarly, another study shows that after land registration and certification, women are more empowered and confident to rent out because they can claim their lands back easily since holding certificates supports their claims (Tsa-edu, 2013). Besides, the result of studies by Deininger et al. (2011) and Tsa-edu (2013) shows that rural land registration and certification have shown essential effects in

building a sense of security in farmers that will, in turn, encourage farmers to invest more in their land.

Enyew et al. (2014) noted that previous attempts to solve tenure insecurity and land degradation and achieve sustainable land resource management did not bring significant results. Therefore, the land administration system in Ethiopia has been at the forefront of policy debates for generations. The land was concentrated in the hands of absentee property owners for decades during the imperial period, and arbitrary evictions posed a significant threat to tenant farmers (Alemu, 2013). Rahmato (2004) documented that land certification will not ensure tenure security and bring sustainable rural development.

The FDRE government has been facilitating rural land registration and certification programs to address problems such as conflict, lack of investment, and lack of land management practices. Certification in Ethiopia is an effort commenced by the government to deliver land tenure security. As mentioned, land tenure security is believed to play an essential role in improving investment in land, land management, and the sustainable use of natural resources (Belay, 2010). One reason for poverty and unsatisfactory agricultural development is the absence of sufficient investment, which resulted from the lack of private ownership of land (Rahmato, 2004). Also, the current land tenure system, vested in the public and under the control of the state, is considered an obstacle to achieving long-term land improvement activities (Belay, 2010). Most of the studies on land certification deal with the effects of the certification on investment land, land transactions, and tenure security (Berhanu, 2009; Kebede, 2017; Tsa-edu, 2013).

Despite initiating land registration and certification in the Kokosa Woreda in 1998, there is a lack of comprehensive studies assessing the challenges and opportunities associated with this process in the region. While existing literature discusses the broader issues of land tenure security, degradation, and the impact of certification programs in Ethiopia, there is a specific void when it comes to understanding the local dynamics and the effectiveness of the land registration and certification initiatives in Kokosa Woreda. The statement emphasizes that no study has been conducted regarding these challenges and opportunities since the implementation of land registration and certification. Thus, this study was designed to understand better the challenges and opportunities of land registration and certification in the study area. Therefore, this study

aims to assess land registration and certification challenges and opportunities in the Oromia regional state in the Kokosa Woreda, West Arsi Zone case. Accordingly, this study is intended to fill the knowledge and literature gaps about land ownership registration and certification challenges and opportunities in the study area.

1.3 Objective of the study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to assess the challenges and opportunities of farmland ownership registration and certification in Kokosa Woreda

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

More specifically, the study aspired to:

1. Assess the awareness of farmers regarding land ownership registration and land certification in the study area;
2. Analyze the challenges in land ownership registration and land certification in the study area and
3. Identify the land ownership registration and land certification opportunities in the study area.

1.4 The Research Questions

Based on the proposed objectives, the study attempted to answer the following questions.

1. What was the awareness of farmers toward land ownership registration and certification in the study area?
2. What are land ownership registrations and certification challenges in the study area?
3. What are the opportunities for land ownership registration and land certification in the study area?

1.5 The Significance of the Study

Land ownership registration and certification have been implemented in different regions of Ethiopia. However, farmland ownership registration and certification challenges and opportunities have been hardly investigated. Thus, this study assessed the challenges and opportunities of farmland ownership registration and accreditation in Kokosa Woreda. Therefore, the results of this study are expected to have several significant implications. Firstly, the result of this study will contribute to expanding the existing knowledge regarding the challenges and

opportunities of farmland ownership registration. Secondly, it helps stakeholders and other development practitioners understand the challenges and opportunities of land ownership registration and certification programs. Thirdly, in the academic arena, the result of this study will add knowledge to existing literature. It will contribute to the prevailing literature about land ownership registration and certification challenges and opportunities. Finally, the result of this research will help policymakers as a recommendation to frame policies that will be used to solve problems related to the challenges and opportunities of land ownership registration and certification.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Due to the multifaceted nature of farmland ownership registration and certification, this study delimited spatially and thematically. Since it is difficult to study the opportunities and challenges of land ownership certification in large regional areas, this study spatially delimited Kokosa Woreda. They were thematically delimited to assess the opportunities and challenges of land ownership certification.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The study focuses on land registration and certification challenges and opportunities in Kokosa Woreda. It focused on farmers' awareness of the opportunities and challenges of land registration and certification. Therefore, the literature dealing with the procedures of the process mainly depends on the few available sources. Besides, during the data collection, the Woreda Land Administration office took no field work, and office activity was restricted to documentation and settling customer complaints. Thus, registration and demarcation activities were not observed on the field. Finally, a lack of relevant government data limits the study's findings.

To improve the reliability and depth of a study, the researcher can address limitations such as restricted literature sources, absence of fieldwork during data collection, limited government data, diversity of data sources, triangulation of data, and adopting a longitudinal study design. By broadening the literature review, scheduling follow-up data collection, collaborating with the Woreda land administration office, incorporating stakeholder perspectives, using a triangulation approach, and adopting a longitudinal study design, the researcher can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities of land registration and certification in Kokosa Woreda. These tactics will strengthen the study, alleviate its limits, and

contribute to a more thorough understanding of the land registration and certification process in Kokosa Woreda.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This thesis will consist of five chapters. The first chapter introduces the background of the study, problem statement, objectives, research questions, Significance, and the scope of the study. The second chapter reviews related literature. The third chapter presents the methodological approach of the research and methods of data collection instruments. The fourth chapter deals with data presentation and analysis. The final chapter makes concise conclusions and recommendations for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the related literature review regarding the existing condition of land ownership registration and certification, the opportunities of land ownership certificates, and the challenges that affect land ownership registration and certification.

2.1. Concepts and Definition of Land Registration, Certification, and Land Tenure System

2.1.1. Concepts Land Registration

Various literatures try to define land registration that has more or less similar concepts. Marquardt (2006) defines land registration as the official recording of legally recognized interests in land. The guideline for real property of UNECE (2004) also defines land registration as the process of recording rights in land either in the form of a register of deeds and other documents associated with the ownership of the land rights or in the form of a register of titles to land. Another definition is that land registration is a process of recording rights on land, which provides a safe and certain foundation for acquiring and disposing of rights in land (Solomon, 2006). Moreover, it is defined as recording matters concerning ownership, possession, or other rights in land in legal form (usually with a government agency or department) to provide evidence of title, facilitate transactions, and prevent unlawful disposal (Proclamation No. 456/2005).

2.1.2. Land Certification

Land certification is a process of registering land under holding and issuing the certificate as evidence that such rights in land are legally secured (Getahun, 2008). The literature shows that the essence of land certification is an attempt by the government to provide security of tenure and protect the use rights of land users by registering their holdings and issuing certificates that guarantee to holders from facing another loss through land redistribution, at least for 20-30 years (Nzioki, 2006:80). Land certification is the most potent legal form that registration of land rights can take, with titles usually guaranteed by the state. It is the most expensive form of registration to carry out, requiring formal surveys and checking of all rival claims to the property (Nazneenet

al., 2005:6). Land certificate defines (Proclamation No. 456/2005) whether the land registry issues a document to the owner of registered land as a proof of ownership with no mortgage on it. The land certificate is the prima facie evidence of the truth of the matters in the certificate.

2.1.3.Land Security System

Different conceptual definitions of land tenure could be used by different scholars (Belay, 2010). But it seems imperative to have a working definition of land tenure. FAO (2002) defines land tenure as the relationship, legally or customarily defined, concerning land among people, individuals or groups. Land tenure is an institution, i.e., rules invented by societies to regulate behavior. Rules of tenure define how property rights to land are allocated within societies. They define how access is granted to rights to use, control, and transfer land and associated responsibilities and restrictions. Put, "land tenure systems determine who can use what resources for how long, and under what conditions (FAO 2002).

Land tenure security can be defined to exist when an individual perceives that they have rights to a piece of land continuously, free from imposition or interference from outside sources, as well as the ability to reap the benefits of labor and capital invested in that land, either in use or upon transfer to another holder (Zevenbergen, 2013). Security is defined as long-term, continuous rights free from imposition or interference from outside, along with the ability to reap benefits of labor and investment either in use or upon transfer to others(Eyerusalem, 2019)

Another definition of ECA (2004) states that land tenure is a social construct that defines the relationships between individuals and groups of individuals by which rights and obligations are described concerning control and use of land". Moreover, the centrality of land in all dimensions of rural life in the context of Africa means that the analysis of land tenure issues should be broadened from its traditional links with issues such as land use, agricultural production efficiency, and access to credit, conflict management mechanisms, fragmentation of landholdings and the like, to include all aspects of political and social situations (ECA 2004).

2.2.Land Security Systems in Ethiopia

As the ultimate goal of land certification programs is to increase landholders' tenure security, the discussion of tenure security creates room for assessing the historical progress in Ethiopia. Land tenure security can be defined to exist when an individual perceives that they have rights to a piece of land continuously, free from imposition or interference from outside sources, as well as the ability to reap the benefits of labor and capital invested in that land, either in use or upon transfer to another holder (Eyerusalem, 2019). A land tenure system involves a set of legal statutes, customary rules, and administrative practices. It also encompasses how land-based resources are used, how they are categorized, and how access to them is acquired, maintained, and lost (Alemu, 2013). To comprehend the present land tenure system, surveying the previous land tenure frameworks is essential.

2.2.1.Landholding Condition during the Imperial Period

Tenure relations in Ethiopia have a long history of state interventions. Being the source of power since the imperial regime, the land policy has been the center of policy debate concerning property rights on land (Melkamu, 2017). It was noted that before 1974, Ethiopia had a complex land tenure system (Sayeh et al., 2016). The land tenure system in Ethiopia during the Imperial regime was not uniform across the country. Rist, Gult, Gebbar, Church land, and Maderia were the common tenure systems of the imperial regime.

During the imperial period, land tenure types refer mainly to the imperial administrative classification, which was usually distinguished between communal (rist), grant land (gult), freehold, or sometimes referred to as private (Gabbar tenures), Church (Samon), and state (maderia, amongst) tenure regimes. The country's geographical, ethnic, and cultural diversity were mentioned among those factors that produced highly differential land utilization and ownership (Belachew, 2013). It was when over 70% of the agricultural land was possessed exclusively by 1% of the landowners of the whole population in Ethiopia (Leulseged, 2011). The three most important consequences of land privatization were the eviction of many peasants, the spread of tenancy, the emergence of absentee landlordism, and the displacement of pastoralists. The severe problems of the Pre-1974 land tenure in Ethiopia include exploitative

occupancy, land concentration and utilization, tenancy insecurity, diminution, and discontinuity of property (Kassa, 2011).

2.2.2.Landholding System during the Derg Regime

After the collapse of the imperial regime, one of the radical measures taken by the revolutionary government of Ethiopia, which came to be known as the Derg, was the reform that appropriated all land and abolished the diverse tenure system during the imperial regime (Kumsa, 2011). The socialist government of Ethiopia, however, did not issue laws that deal with expropriation and compensation; instead, it applied the expropriation process on previous land and house owners without paying compensation in the name of justice and equity income distribution (Alemu, 2013). The "Public Ownership of Rural Land Proclamation" nationalized all rural land and set out to redistribute it to its tillers and to organize farmers in cooperatives, thereby abolishing exploitative landlord-tenant relations so pertinent under the imperial regime (Kumsa, 2011).

The introductory provisions of Proclamation No.31/1975 were public ownership of all rural lands, distribution of private land to the tiller, prohibition of transfer of use rights by sale, exchange, succession, mortgage, or lease, except upon death and only to the wife, husband, or minor children of the deceased. This proclamation declared all rural land to be the property of the state Article (3), without any compensation to previous rights holders and prohibited all tenancy relations Article 4 (5). Rights holders were allowed only to use rights over the land they were cultivating, which they could not sell, mortgage, lease, or contract out. Because of these problems, the landholders could not get fair and reasonable compensation for the property taken by the government. On the one hand, the government expropriated the property owners without compensation and replacement; on the other hand, the satisfaction of the housing needs of most of the urban population could not be adequately addressed.

2.2.3.Landholding System since 1991

In the present government, like in the former government, the land is possessed publicly. Nevertheless, property rights and payable of compensation for properties compulsorily taken are enacted in the constitution, expropriation, and payment of compensation and land administration laws (Kassa, 2011 & Sayeh et al., 2016). The 1995 Ethiopian Constitution draws a broad

framework for land policy in the country and enshrines the concept of public land ownership and the fact that there are no private property rights inland. The 1995 Constitution proclaimed land to be the property of the state and the People of Ethiopia, in which people have just usufruct right. Article 40 (7) of the constitution states the rights to the compensation installments for investment on land in case the "right to use expires," every Ethiopian will have the full right to the fixed property he builds and to permanent improvements he achieves on the land by his work or capital. As per Article 40 (7), this right shall include the right to estrange, bequeath, and, where the right of use expires, to eliminate his property, move his title, or guarantee to pay for it. The current government's land policy, unlike that of the "Derg," is enshrined in the constitution. Hence, the government effectively removed land policy as a variable instrument that could be used to address the changing circumstances that affect the rural economy.

Some researchers argue that there is no significant difference between the legitimate system of the Dreg and the current government of Ethiopia on rural land issues (Alemu, 2013). In addition, if those policy changes made by the Dreg following its 1990 "mixed economy" version are taken into consideration, there is more progression than change. As per Belachew (2013), from a pragmatic viewpoint, there are more similarities in land administration between the two systems than contrasts. Many researchers have questioned if the 1995 constitution gave any distinctions to the Land Change Proclamation of 1975 (Rahmato, 2004). There are, nevertheless, some notable differences between the declaration of 1975 (Socialist government) and 1995 (present government). The 1975 proclamation prohibited the lease of land and hiring of labor and concealed the maximum land size per individual to 10 hectares; such provisions are absent in the 1995 legal document (Adal, 2002). It is accepted that rent has been set up as a basic land-holding framework to move urban land to appropriate users.

2.3.Rural Land Registration and Certification in Ethiopia

Land registration is a process of registering land under holding and ensuring the certificate as evidence such rights are legally secured (Berhanu, 2009). Well-planned and implemented land titling and certification are believed to improve tenure security among landholders (A. Melkamu, 2017). In those countries where private ownership of land is exercised, landholders are given full titles to the ground, including the right to sell or mortgage. Registration and certification of rural

lands is the milestone element in rural land administration and use laws of Ethiopia to improve tenure security among farming households (Eyerusalem, 2019). In Ethiopia, land certification has been implemented since 1998 and has helped supply over 5 million certificates. This is the greatest transport of non-freehold rights in a short time duration in Sub-Saharan Africa (Emebet, 2020). The Ethiopian certification program, initiated in response to significant concerns over land tenure insecurity related to kingdom land ownership, has contributed to the greatest delivery of non-freehold land rights.

2.3.1. First-Level Land Registration and Certification

The land registration and certification held in Ethiopia is one of the world's largest, lowest-cost, and most decentralized approaches (Melkamu, 2017). The cost of the first-level certificate in Ethiopia is very low, even compared to other developing countries. Land registration in Ethiopia began with a registration program in Tigray in 1998-99 followed by one in the Amhara region in 2002. The other two highland regions, Oromia and the Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples initiated registration in 2004 (Melkamu, 2017). According to the Rural Land Use Directorate at the Ministry of Agriculture, more than 90% of farming households in these regions received land certificates through first-stage registration (Gedefaw et al., 2020; Sosina & Stein, 2014).

According to Bezu and Holden (2014) about first-level land certification, parcel details were agreed to by parties participating in the process and recorded on Paper forms. Literature reveals essential benefits of the first stage: land certification first level land registration enhanced tenure security due to a reduced risk of land redistribution; improved plot boundary demarcation through the use of witnesses and thus a reduced risk of encroachment by neighbors; and improved transferability of land through the rental market (Sosina & Stein, 2014). Nevertheless, the certification process did not map individual plots, and limited spatial detail compromised the security of the land right, and thus, investment and the lack of computerized land registries, so certification did not enable effective management and updating of registration records (Eyerusalem, 2019).

2.3.2.Second Level-Land Registration and Certification

The purpose of second-level land registration and certification was to address the weakness of first-level land registration and certification. Under the first registration level, farmers receive temporary certificates with no geo-referencing or mapping of land parcels. Therefore, the more permanent second-stage certificate seeks to rectify the weaknesses in the first-level land certification, particularly the need to geo-reference and map individual parcels to avoid or minimize boundary disputes (Sosina & Stein, 2014). The second-stage certificates produced through the pilot programs thus far have often been distributed to farmers free of charge. Currently, more than 22,248,908 million land registrations and 14,525,984 million certifications have been delivered to Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples, Benishangul Gumuz, and Gambela based on a cadastral survey (Eyerusalem, 2019).

2.3.3.Impacts of Land Registration and Certification

Kebede (2017) conducted a study highlighting the positive impacts of secure land tenure on investment and land values in rural areas, with evidence from China, Thailand, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa. In Ethiopia, where land registration and certification programs have been implemented, the low-cost nature of these initiatives has been explored (Kebede, 2017). One significant benefit identified by Kebede (2017) is the potential reduction in the cost of renting land through affordable access to reliable information about individual land ownership via a public registry. This reduction of rental expenses allows landowners to tap into new sources of income while retaining ownership of their land for insurance, old age protection, or consolidating and cultivating larger farm areas.

Furthermore, issuing a land ownership certificate plays a vital role in alleviating concerns about the security of rental land. It reassures landowners that the land cannot be arbitrarily taken away, whether by the government through redistribution policies or by tenants who fail to vacate at the end of the rental period. This certainty and security of land tenure promote trust and encourage landowners to engage in rental arrangements, stimulating rental markets and facilitating economic activities (Kebede, 2017).

The impacts of land certification programs in various African countries have demonstrated diverse outcomes regarding access to credit, smallholder investment, and overall agricultural production (Eyerusalem, 2019). For instance, studies conducted in Zambia revealed that land registration and certification led to increased fixed assets and prompted farmers to make more profitable enterprise choices. Similarly, research conducted in Uganda showed that the likelihood of making new investments on certificated land was twice as high as on merely occupied plots by owner-cum-occupants (Deininger et al., 2008). In Mozambique, the agricultural production resulting from long-term land-related investments, such as soil conservation structures, was significantly enhanced through land certification (Berhanu, 2009).

Numerous studies have advocated for land certification programs in the Ethiopian context that incentivize landholders to adopt sustainable land management practices. These initiatives encourage activities such as tree planting, the construction of stone terraces, and other practices aimed at improving land productivity and environmental sustainability (Eyerusalem, 2019). The integration of land certification with these practices not only secures land rights but also promotes responsible land use and resource management. Like many other developing countries, Ethiopia has regarded land registration and titling as potential solutions to address tenure insecurity and stimulate increased levels of land-related investments (Enyew et al., 2014). Certification programs offer a foundation for economic growth, social stability, and poverty reduction by providing legal recognition and documentation of land ownership. Access to credit and financial services is often linked to land ownership, and having a recognized title can unlock opportunities for farmers to obtain loans and access investment capital for agricultural activities and business expansion.

2.4.Challenges of Land Registration and Certification in Ethiopia

Several challenges and constraints of land registration and certification have been identified in Ethiopia. This section discusses technical, institutional, and legal challenges confronting farmland registration and certification.

2.4.1. Lack of a Land Transaction Record-Keeping System

One of Ethiopia's significant land registration and certification challenges is the lack of a comprehensive record-keeping system for land transactions (Kebede, 2017). This technical challenge hampers the efficient access and updating of registered data, particularly for transactions related to inheritance, gifting, and divorce (Melkamu, 2017). Without a reliable mechanism to record and track these transactions, the effectiveness of land registration and certification processes is undermined. Additionally, the value of certificates diminishes over time due to the absence of regular record updates (World Bank, 2012). Inconsistencies in the accuracy levels of registration further compound this challenge, as different regions in Ethiopia display varying levels of precision (World Bank, 2012). To address this issue, it is essential to implement a robust land transaction record-keeping system and promote public awareness regarding the importance of formal transactions. Best practices from other developing countries suggest reissuing land certificates upon life events, accompanied by accurate updates in the land registry books (Melkamu, 2017).

2.4.2. Inadequate Infrastructure

The weak institutional capacity within the land administration sector poses a significant obstacle to Ethiopia's land registration and certification process. (World Bank, 2012). Insufficient infrastructure, such as the lack of broadband telecom network services, hinders the smooth functioning of computerized systems and data management (Melkamu & Shewakena, 2010). The absence of reliable and efficient communication networks limits the effectiveness and efficiency of the land administration authorities (World Bank, 2012). Establishing the necessary infrastructure, including robust telecommunications networks, is crucial for enhancing institutional capacity in handling land registration and certification. Traditional methods of plot measurements and demarcation, lack of a mechanism for accessing and updating registered data, shortage of skilled workforce, and the absence of monitoring and evaluation systems in all regions (Berhanu, 2009).

2.4.3.Misplacement and Loss of Records

Another institutional challenge is the land administration sector's misplacement and loss of files. This issue further exacerbates the difficulties faced in land registration and certification processes (World Bank, 2012). The loss of essential documents and files can lead to delays, disputes, and inefficiencies in the system(Kebede, 2017). Establishing proper file management protocols, including digital storage systems, is imperative to ensure the safekeeping and accessibility of essential land-related documents.

2.4.4.Financial Limitations

Financial constraints also hinder the effectiveness of Ethiopia's land registration and certification programs (World Bank, 2012). Limited financial resources impede the expansion of first-level certification in regions such as Oromia and SNNPRS (Melkamu & Shewakena, 2010). Insufficient funding prevents the necessary human resources, technology, and infrastructure investments to strengthen the land administration sector(World Bank, 2012). It is essential to allocate adequate financial resources and explore innovative financing mechanisms to address these constraints and improve institutional capacity(Kebede, 2017).

2.4.5.Scarcity of Qualified Human Capital

The scarcity of qualified human capital at various administrative levels poses a significant challenge to land registration and certification in Ethiopia. Except for the Amhara region, which has assigned land administration experts to critical technical and administrative positions, other areas lack the necessary human resources (Melkamu & Shewakena, 2010). The shortage of skilled professionals in land administration limits the capacity to handle the complex processes involved in land registration and certification(Kebede, 2017). Efforts should be made to attract and train qualified personnel to fill these crucial roles and ensure efficient and effective land administration services(World Bank, 2012).

2.4.6. Insufficient Communication and Strategy Representation

A critical challenge in the land registration and certification process is the tendency to rush the certification without adequate communication and clear strategy representation (World Bank, 2012). Scaling up pilot programs while maintaining quality within a short period presents significant challenges (Kebede, 2017). Insufficient communication with landholders regarding their obligations, opportunities, and constraints can lead to confusion and misunderstandings (Melkamu, 2017). It is crucial to engage in thorough public awareness campaigns and ensure that landholders are well-informed about the certification process and its implications (World Bank, 2012).

2.4.7. Challenges in Scaling Up Pilot Programs

Expanding pilot programs to cover larger areas while maintaining quality is complex (World Bank, 2012). The hurried implementation of land certification can result in mushrooming post-certification land disputes (World Bank, 2012). These disputes often arise due to variable and imprecise land measurement systems used, the individualistic nature of the program, and the lack of proper planning and execution (Melkamu, 2017). A comprehensive and well-planned approach is required to address this challenge to ensure accurate land measurements, good documentation, and adequate stakeholder communication (Kebede, 2017).

2.4.8. Conflicting Formal and Traditional Tenure Systems

Conflicts can arise among family members who collectively own land, particularly when formal tenure systems conflict with traditional land rights (World Bank, 2012). The registration process, which assigns land to specific individuals, can create family tensions and disputes (Melkamu, 2017). Reconciling formal and traditional tenure systems is crucial to address these conflicts and ensure equitable land registration and certification (Kebede, 2017).

2.4.9. Tensions and Disputes in Collective Land Ownership

The issue of collective land ownership also contributes to conflicts in the land registration and certification process. Family members or peripheral land claimants may vie to have a parcel of land registered in their name (Melkamu, 2017). This competition can lead to tensions and

disputes among individuals seeking to secure their rights to the ground (Kebede, 2017). It is necessary to establish precise mechanisms for resolving conflicts and ensure transparent and fair processes for land registration and certification (World Bank, 2012).

2.5. Opportunities for Land Registration and Certification

Farmland registration and certification are supposed to have several opportunities. In this study, two possibilities for land registration and certification have been discussed. These opportunities include the reduction of conflict and the rise in women's empowerment. Existing literature indicated that registering rights and certification should prevent disputes from arising in the future since, at the time of first registration, formal procedures should be followed that will resolve uncertainties (Deininger et al., 2008). In Ethiopia, as in many other developing countries, land registration and certification have been taken as a solution for tenure insecurity and low levels of land-related investments (Melkamu, 2020). Therefore, land-related conflict has decreased due to the clarification of boundaries and field-based adjudication by the social court and land administrative committee. Land-related disputes could be of two types. This includes disputes between individuals and conflicts between individuals and the administration. The formal deals with the term adjudication as a dispute resolution mechanism usually referred to as ascertainment of existing land rights for registration. Whereas disputes between individual citizens and the administration refer to conflict that arise during interventions that can result in the expropriation of the landholder when land is needed by the government for urban expansion or other public purposes (Kebede, 2017).

The second significant land registration and certification opportunity raised in this study is women's empowerment. Women traditionally have a weaker position than men within households as well as in society overall. The husband is considered the head of the household, and women become heads of households only if they have no husband. Women in Ethiopia are less involved in farming activities than in many other African countries (Stein & Tewodros, 2008). Traditionally, they are not allowed to plow with oxen, although they do the planting, weeding, and harvesting. The husband is in charge of the farming activities in most cases. Land registration and certification have affected traditions and changed women's position and decision-making power in agricultural production (Deininger et al., 2008). Many studies

conducted on women's land rights generally realize that gender differences in access and control over land across Africa are universally taken as a common problem in both research and policy literature. It has been shown clearly that women's rights over land and other farm resources are inferior to those of men. For instance, in Zambia, Uganda, and Burundi, it is reported that most males can give land rights to family members, whereas fewer than five percent of women can (Stein & Tewodros, 2008).

2.6 Empirical Literature

2.6.1 Land Registration and Certification Practices in Ethiopia

Implementing land registration and certification procedures in Ethiopia in 1998 was a turning point in the country's efforts to implement land reform. The pieces of evidence show that in 2020, more than 5 million certificates were issued as a result of this enormous project, which included Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, and the Southern Nations and Nationalities (Adenew and Abdi, 2005; Emebet, 2020). The seminal work by Deininger and Ali (2008) has played an essential role in mounding our understanding of the broad-brush complications of farmland registration and certification in Ethiopia. This study substantially contributes to the country's continuing land reform efforts by highlighting land registration's critical role in ensuring secure land tenure and resolving land disputes.

Holden et al. (2009) also illuminated the micro-level effects, providing insights into how farmland registration affects investment trends and the means of subsistence for Ethiopian smallholder farmers individually. Their research emphasizes how crucial stable land tenure is to raising agricultural output at the local level. However, there is a critical void in our knowledge of how technology and farmland registration intersect in Ethiopia. Deininger and Jin (2006) address this issue and emphasize the need for further study to examine how technological interventions affect Ethiopia's registration process, considering variables like cost and rural communities' level of computer literacy.

Government reports, one from the Government of Ethiopia (2017), provide invaluable official viewpoints on the developments and results of agricultural registration, giving readers a thorough grasp of the Ethiopian policy framework. However, there is still a significant lack of research on

the socio-economic effects on various demographic groups in Ethiopia, particularly the deprived areas. Subsequent studies have to endeavor to comprehensively analyze how multiple sectors of the Ethiopian populace perceive and profit from the registration of farmland.

International institutions that have evaluated the broader socio-economic effects of farmland registration in Ethiopia, such as the World Bank (2015), have substantially contributed to the empirical research. Within the particular Ethiopian context, their study highlights the potential of these reforms in reducing poverty and promoting food security and sustainable development. Still, there is a clear void in the long-term sustainability of the sound effects found in Ethiopia, which calls for more research on how resilient the registration system is in the face of specific environmental and economic difficulties. According to Ayenew and Larson (2012), Ethiopia's research institutes and university research centers are essential to expanding our knowledge of the social dynamics of agricultural registration in the Ethiopian setting. However, there is a lack of research on the intersections of gender dynamics in Ethiopia. More research is required to determine if the reforms promote gender equity in land ownership and how gender dynamics interact with Ethiopia's registration procedure. Further research initiatives should give a more sophisticated focus to this critical issue.

2.6.2 Land Registration and Certification Practice in Oromia Regional State

An in-depth examination of land registration in the Oromia region is required to assess its effectiveness. Essential factors to consider include equity, socio-economic impacts, sustainability of the environment, community perceptions, technology integration, and the long-term sustainability of positive outcomes. When evaluating the efficacy, it is essential to consider how land registration has fulfilled its stated objectives, including lowering land conflicts and granting secure land tenure. The review is motivated by the findings of Adenew and Abdi (2005) and Emebet (2020), which emphasize the extent of land registration initiatives in the area. In addition, the equity and social implications analysis includes a look at how land registration has impacted vulnerable populations and marginalized communities in the Oromia area, especially concerning gender equity in land ownership and availability. While specific studies into the Oromia region are necessary to discern nuanced experiences, in line with the call for specialized empirical research, Deininger and Ali's (2008) research insights offer a foundational

understanding of the positive impacts of land registration on tenure security (Adenew and Abdi, 2005).

Holden et al. (2009) provide valuable insights on the socio-economic effects of land registration, such as its impact on agricultural productivity, investment patterns, and the lives of smallholder farmers. Changes in income levels and general economic well-being brought about by land registration measures should be taken into account in this evaluation. Additionally, evaluating the use of technology in the land registration process, drawing inspiration from Deininger and Jin's (2006) research, involves analyzing the technology's impact, usefulness, and accessibility while accounting for the digital divide and Oromia's distinct agro ecological zones. Inspired by the work of Ayenew and Larson (2012), environmental sustainability considerations necessitate a review of alignment with environmental conservation efforts and an examination of the ecological effects of land registration methods in Oromia's varied habitats. Assessing satisfaction, awareness, comprehension, and local attitudes about the land registration procedure are all part of the community perceptions component. To guarantee a thorough study, it is essential to assess public involvement and inclusion in the land registration process and the suitability and efficiency of the institutional and legal framework. This evaluation framework offers a comprehensive view of the difficulties associated with land registration in the Oromia region and provides insights for improving and refining policy.

2.6.3 Research Gap and Lesson Learned

Ethiopia's land certification and registration system highlights essential research gaps requiring more investigation. According to Deininger and Jin (2006), there is a clear knowledge gap regarding accessibility and technology integration concerning land registration. It is also essential to look into how well technology works in isolated or underdeveloped areas. The socio-economic effects of land registration for marginalized people represent another significant research gap; papers from the Government of Ethiopia (2017) offer a broad overview but fall short of a detailed examination of benefits and fair access. Given Ethiopia's particular economic and environmental constraints, the sustainability of the beneficial effects of land registration has not received enough research and needs to be examined over an extended period (World Bank, 2015). Despite the seminal work of Ayenew and Larson (2012), gender dynamics and equity

within land ownership and access have not been thoroughly investigated, highlighting the need for more in-depth study. Extant literature highlights land registration's macro-level effects on tenure security, as evidenced by Deininger and Ali's (2008) research.

Furthermore, the significance of secure land tenure at the grassroots level is highlighted by Holden et al.'s (2009) explanation of micro-level implications on livelihoods. The World Bank (2015) and other international contributors emphasize the potential of farmland registration changes in Ethiopia's efforts to reduce poverty and increase food security and sustainable development. Understanding the social dynamics of farmland registration in Ethiopia is further enhanced by recognizing the critical role that research institutions and university centers play, as demonstrated by Ayenew and Larson (2012). Generally, filling in the research gaps will be essential to developing responsive, sustainable, and inclusive land registration laws in Ethiopia. These lessons highlight how important it is to have secure land tenure and how addressing the complexity of the Ethiopian environment requires a nuanced, context-specific approach.

2.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The general conceptual framework of this study shows the challenges and opportunities of land ownership registration and registration and the relationships between them. The conceptual framework for the dynamics of land registration and certification revolves around the central challenges that impede the effectiveness of the process. At the core of this framework are the Challenges of Land Registration and Certification, representing the barriers and difficulties encountered in establishing a secure and efficient land ownership system. Surrounding this central element are Opportunities for Land Registration and Certification, which are potential solutions to the identified challenges. These opportunities include issuing a Land Ownership Certificate, a tangible proof of ownership resulting from a successful registration process. Moreover, the framework acknowledges key positive outcomes, such as the Security of Land Rights, bolstered by proper registration, leading to reduced Land Disputes.

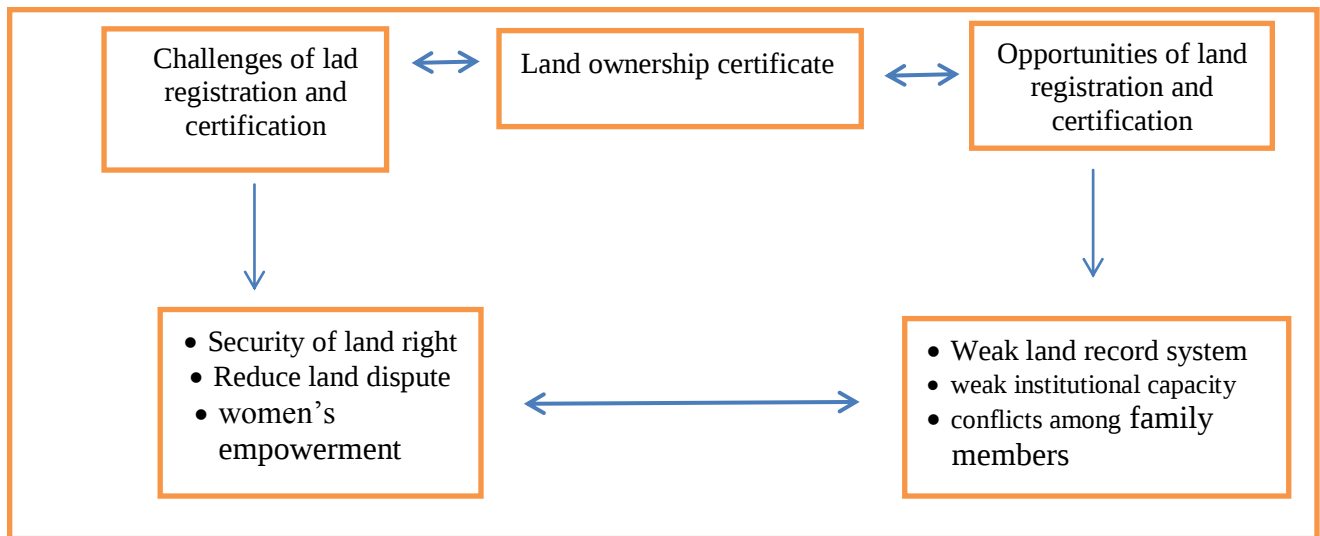


Figure 2.1: conceptual framework of the study

Source from researcher own illustration

Additionally, the process contributes to Women's Empowerment by providing them with recognized ownership rights. Two critical factors must be considered to address the challenges: overcoming the Weak Land Record System and strengthening Weak Institutional Capacity. Finally, Conflicts among Family Members, often stemming from unclear land ownership, can be mitigated through comprehensive registration and certification practices. This interconnected framework underscores the importance of addressing challenges to unlock positive opportunities and outcomes in land registration and certification.

CHAPTER THREE

STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Description of Study Area

3.1.1 location of study area

This study was conducted in Kokosa Woreda, in the West Arsi Zone, South East part of Ethiopia (Seyoum et al., 2018). Kokosa is located between 6°20' - 6°50' N and 39°10' - 39°40'E. Considering the relative location, the Woreda is bordered by Kofale Woreda in the North, ArbaGona in the Western and southern, and Nan-Sabo Woreda in the Eastern direction.

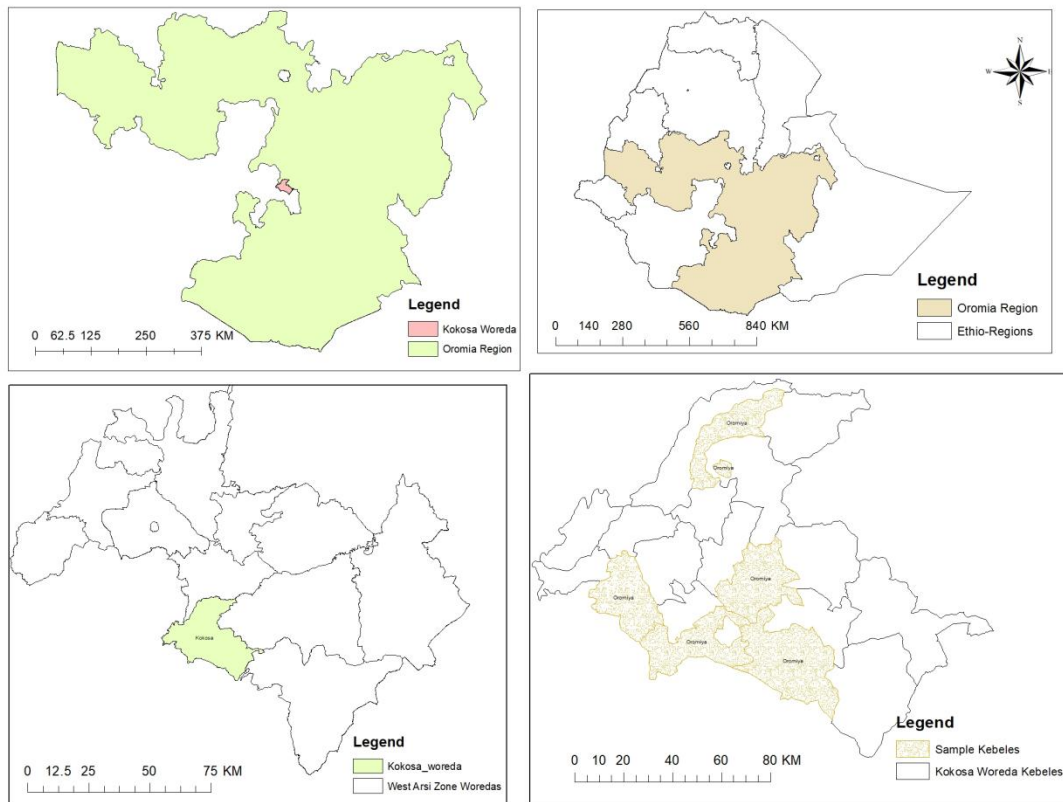


Figure 3.1: location map of the study area

Source from Ethiopian Shape File GIS

3.1.2 Topography and land uses

The site is part of the southeast Ethiopian high lands. The Agro ecology of the Woreda is 98% Dega (high ground) and 2% Woina Dega (middle high ground) with an altitude range of 2300 to 2800 m a.s.l. About 65% of KokosaWoreda is of hilly mountainous landscape, whereas the remaining 30% is plain land (Seyoum et al., 2018). Survey reports on land use types of the Woreda show that 28% is arable land, 45.3% is pastureland, 21.1% is forestland, and 5.5% is wetland (Seyoum et al., 2018). The area is part of the southeast Ethiopia highlands (Seyoum et al., 2018).

3.1.3 Climatic Condition

The agroecology of the Woreda is 98% Dega (high land) and 2% WoinaDega (middle high ground) with an altitude range of 2300 to 2800 m a.s.l. About 65% of KokosaWoreda is hilly and mountainous, whereas the remaining 30% is plain land. The mean annual temperature is between 15⁰c and 20⁰c, and the total yearly rainfall varies from 2,100 mm to 3,200 mm(Seyoum et al., 2018).

3.1.4 Soil and vegetation

According to Seyoum et al. (2018), the dominant soil types in the KokosaWoreda are Vertisol and Cambisol. The forest in KokosaWoreda is dry Afromontane type with high-value commercial tree species like *Juniperusprocera*, *Podocarpusfalcatus*, *Hageniaabyssinica*, and highly threatened *prunus Africana*, *Maytenus*, and highland bamboo(Seyoum et al., 2018).

3.1.5 Economic Activities

People in the KokosaWoreda engaged in different economic activities to support their livelihood. According to the Woreda Economic and Finance Office (2017) cited in Gotu (2017), Crop production, animal rearing, and mixed farming are people's primary activities. Nevertheless, agriculture is the dominant economic sector that supports the most significant proportion of Woreda people (Guto, 2017).

Agriculture is characterized by traditional mixed farming, which includes crop production and livestock rearing, dependent on rainfall and fragmented land. Crop production has been the main economic activity supporting the livelihood of most of the population for several centuries. It is mainly of the rain-fed type, bounded by risks and uncertainties arising from the unpredictability of weather, particularly rainfall. Among the crops cultivated in the Woreda Enset are maize and Barley are some of the crops. Enset is the principal crop in the Woreda and the primary food source for most people. The farming plots are small, with an average of 1ha per house per household (KWARDO, 2017).

Livestock production is another agricultural practice in Woreda. It is one of the essential components of agricultural activities since it is used as a source of income, savings, food, means of transportation, organic fertilizers, and milk and milk products for household consumption (Guto, 2017). Livestock is a vital insurance substitute during the productivity of cropping times. Nevertheless, generally, it is practiced by smallholder farmers, is a low input type, and is characterized by low productivity (KWARDO, 2017).

3.1.6 Demographic Characteristics

Kokosa Woreda is one of the Woredas found in the West Arsi Zone, Oromia region. The population of the woreda has been rapidly increasing from time to time. For example, the figures published by the Central Statistical Agency in 2005, this woreda has an estimated total population of **122,811**, of whom 63,512 are men and 59,299 are women; 3,188 or 2.60% of its population are urban dwellers, which is less than the Zone average of 13.5% (CSA, 2005). Similarly, in 2007 national census reported a total population for this woreda of 144,549, of whom 70,022 were men and 74,527 were women; 3,224 or 2.23% of its population were urban dwellers (CSA, 2007). Besides, the Central Statistical Agency (CSA, 2016), the study area has a total population of 180,886 projected for 2016, of which 175,929 live in rural areas and 4,957 in urban areas. Recent CSA report shows that in 2021, the total population of the woreda raised to 200,510 of which 96,816, were male and 103, 694 were female (CSA, 2021).

3.2. Research Methods

3.2.1 Research Design

Research design is a comprehensive plan for data collection and a blueprint for empirical research to answer specific research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research design utilized for this study is a mixed-research design (Concurrent/parallel triangulation design). The concurrent mixing design is used to collect and analyze the data simultaneously. In this study, the mixed research design qualitative method is more significant. A quantitative design addresses information that cannot be obtained through the qualitative method. Research design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions (Phuong, 2007). According to (Phuong, 2007), research design deals with a study's questions, data relevance and collection, and data analysis and interpretation of findings. From the survey design the cross-sectional survey design was employed for this study. A cross-section design is the most popular form of survey design used in education. It is a technique for obtaining data from a selected sample within a defined period at a particular point (Creswell, 2012).

3.2.2 Source of Data

For the successful accomplishment of this study, the required data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Most data needed to answer research questions were collected from the primary sources. Therefore, preliminary data was collected from farmers, *Woreda* administrations, Kebeles leaders, development agents, and *Woreda* land administrations. Secondary data sources were collected from published and unpublished materials, books, reports about land registration and certifications, legal documents, and study reports.

3.2.3 Data Collections Techniques

Since the study is cross-sectional, it primarily focused on quantitative data gathering from sample households. Quantitative and qualitative data for this study were collected through a survey questionnaire, critical informant interviews, and focused group discussions.

Survey Questionnaire: A questionnaire is considered a crucial and appropriate primary data collection tool, enabling the researcher to get detailed answers from respondents. A household survey was conducted using questionnaires aligned with the stated research objectives. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to collect household characteristics and views of

households regarding the impact of land registration and certification, challenges of land registration, and opportunities for registration from selected households' heads. Likewise, families were asked about land ownership rights and the process of land registration certification in KokosaWoreda.

Critical Informant Interview: Semi-structured interview data were also collected from key informants knowledgeable about a particular topic due to their position in the community or government offices. Key informant interviews were used to get the diverse views of the study participants. The interview was used to collect qualitative data from selected key informants. In the study area, 18 key informants who participated in the study were determined using a purposive sampling technique. According to eight experts from Woreda land administration, two experts from Woreda development agents (Das), five land experts from the registration committee, and three individuals from kebele officials were selected.

Focused Group Discussion: Focused group discussions are one of the powerful instruments of primary data collection from one of the primary data sources. Focused group discussions allow people to be active agents in research, where they can interact with each other, share opinions, and discuss the topics posed during the debate. One focused group of discussants was held from each kebele, comprising five households. Therefore, five respondents were interviewed in a common location at each Kebele.

3.2.4 Sampling Technique

The simple random sampling technique was designed to select study kebele and household heads in the study area. Since the challenges and opportunities of land registration and certification were similar within KokosaWoreda, a simple random sampling technique was used. In simple random sampling, each population unit had an equal probability of inclusion. First, five rural Kebeles were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Accordingly, from 23 Kebeles of KokosaWoreda, five kebeles, including Gutu, Diki, GerbaHurufa, Hebeno, and BoroKebeles, were selected using a random sampling technique. Then, a random sampling method selected households' heads. According to the KokosaWoreda land administration, in 2020, the total number of households of Gutu, Diki, GerbaHurufa, Hebeno, and BoroKebeles was 4973. Following Kothari (2004), at a confidence level of 95% with a sampling error of 5%, the sample size (n) for a finite population will be determined using the following formula;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot p \cdot q \cdot N}{e^2(N - 1) + z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

Whereas

p = sample proportion, $q = 1 - p$

z = value of the standard variate at 95% confidence interval ($z = 1.96$)

n = size of the sample;

e = Standard error (0.05)

N = total households (4,973)

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5 \times 0.5) \times 4,973}{(0.05)^2(4973 - 1) + (1.96)^2(0.5 \times 0.5)} = 357$$

P here is the proportion agreeing, and q ($1 - p$) is the proportion not agreeing against questions of a survey in a study, which is the assumption this formula is based on. Using $p = 0.50$ is always a good way to calculate the needed sample size in studying a new research topic because $p \cdot q$ is at its maximum possible value when p and q equal 0.50 and $p \cdot q = 0.25$ (Getaneh, 2017; Kothari, 2004).

Table 3.1: Total of Households and Sample Size by Kebele

Sampled Keble	Total number of households	Sampled households
Gutu	694	50
Diki	1,367	98
GerbaHurufa	1,199	86
Hebano	870	62
Boro	843	61
Total	4,973	357

By substituting in a formula given (Kothari, 2004), 357 required sample sizes were selected. Therefore, the required sample size were proportionally determined from respective kebeles. Accordingly, 50 samples were chosen from Gutu, 98 were chosen from Diki, 86 were selected from GerbaHurufa, 62 were chosen from Hebano, and 61 were selected from Boro kebele (Table 3.1).

3.2.5 Method of Data Analysis

The unit analysis of this study was household heads. This research used both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods. The discussion was analyzed and interpreted by qualitative data collected from secondary sources and through interviews and focused groups. The quantitative data collected from the household survey was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS version 25). The result was analyzed and interpreted using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentage, and cross tabs.

3.2.5. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, instruments were developed under the close guidance of the advisor, intensive consultation of relevant literature, and a pilot study was carried out to pre-test the instruments. Therefore, after being examined with an advisor, the draft questionnaire pilot test in Kokosa Woreda on a sample of 2 % out of the total farmers randomly selected, which were not included in the study of 357 respondents. Based on the comments from the advisor and respondents, some modifications were made to the questionnaire to make it clear and precise for the primary respondents to obtain the most reliable information. For data quality control, the researcher checked the internal consistency of the research questionnaire.

3.3. Ethical Consideration

The ethics of research concern the appropriateness of the researcher's behavior concerning the research subjects or those affected by the result of the study. Since research in the real world inevitably deals with people and what involves them, ethical issues can arise at the research planning, implementation, and reporting stages. Research ethics refers to the moral principles guiding research. It is the science of morality and researching a responsible and morally defensible way (Creswell, 2012).

In this study, the interests of the participants and the community at large were protected at all levels of the research procedure. Concerned bodies, including community members, were informed of the study's objectives. A letter from the university declared the researcher's engagement in the research activities, and the data collectors read this letter to the research

participants. In addition, this letter created trust and creditability of the researcher among the research participants. Trust and respect with the participants were also established during the survey, which was carried out to check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Adherence to ethical principles is important in research because it increases the reliability, integrity, generalizability, and validity of research findings (Sileshi, 2020). In addition, the purpose of the study, the participants' duties and responsibilities, and the participation risks were discussed with the participants to obtain oral informed consent. Similarly, names were not mentioned in the study to keep anonymity and confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The chapter attempts to present and analyze the data gathered from the respondents, the interviews conducted, and the documents reviewed to answer the basic questions and address the study's objectives. The chapter is comprised of three subsections. The first part deals with the socio-demographic awareness of rural households about land registration and certification. The second part deals with the challenges of land registration and certification. The third section focused on opportunities for land registration and certification in the study area.

4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

The survey was carried out on rural landholders who have had land registration and certification. The socio-economic backgrounds of the respondents are essential for various reasons. Therefore, this part of the study describes some of the crucial socio-economic profiles of the sample households. The following Table 4.1 describes the general characteristics of sampled rural farmers. This study assessed farmland ownership registration and certification challenges and opportunities in Kokosa Woreda. To better understand the demographics of rural farmers in the study area, the study surveyed 357 households from different Kebeles of the Woreda. The study results provide insights into the gender, ethnicity, marital status, educational status, age, and family size of the surveyed farmers. The study found that 87% of the surveyed farmers were male-headed households, while the remaining 13% were female. This gender disparity is consistent with the broader trend in Ethiopia, where women face numerous barriers to accessing education, healthcare, and economic opportunities.

Table 4.1. Sex and Age of Sample Farmers

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	311	87
Female	46	13
Total	357	100

Sources: field survey, 2023

Age is an important variable that determines the practices of farmland ownership and registration. As it is shown in Table 4.2, the age of the mean age of the respondents is about 41 years of age. This implies that most sample respondents are in productive age classes.

Table 4.2. Age of the sample farmers

Variable	Measures	Value
Age (Years)	Mean	1.2
	SD	14.5

Sources: field survey, 2023

Regarding ethnicity, the study found that the Oromo ethnic group encompassed the largest share of farmers at 94%, followed by the Sidama ethnic group. This is not surprising, as the Oromo people are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, accounting for approximately 34% of the population, and the Sidama people are the fifth largest ethnic group in the country (Table 4.3). Regarding marital status, the study found that 86% of the surveyed farmers were married, 9% were single, and 6% were divorced. This finding reflects Ethiopia's cultural and social norms, where marriage is highly valued, and divorce is generally stigmatized.

Table 4.3: Ethnicity and Marital status of sample farmers

No	Item	Frequency	Percent
1	Ethnicity (%)		
	Oromo	336	94
	Sidama	14	4
	Other	7	2
	Total	357	100
2	Marital status (in percent)		
	Married	307	86
	Single	29	8
	Divorced	21	6
	Total	357	100

Sources: field survey, 2023

The study also examined the educational status of the surveyed farmers and found that 53% had no formal education, while 47% had acquired some formal education. This finding highlights the need for more significant investment in education in Ethiopia, particularly in rural areas with limited access to education. The mean age of the household head was 41.2 years, indicating that

the differences in age among sample household heads ranged from 20 years to 81 years (Table 4.2). Most of the surveyed farmers belonged to the 31–43 age categories, suggesting that farmers in this age range are more likely to be actively engaged in agricultural activities.

Table 4.4: educational level and family size of sample households

The academic group of farmers	Frequency	Percent
No formal education	189	53
Formal education	167	47
Total	357	100

Sources: field survey, 2023

Finally, the study found that the average size of the family in the study area was 5.8 (Table 4.5), which was more significant than the national average family size of 3.5 (CSA, 2017). This finding has important implications for household dynamics, as larger families may face more significant challenges in meeting their basic needs, such as food, shelter, and healthcare. The study provides valuable insights into the demographics of farmers in the study area, highlighting the challenges farmers face in accessing education and economic opportunities and the impact of cultural and social norms on household dynamics. Addressing these challenges will require concerted efforts from policymakers, development organizations, and civil society to promote inclusive and sustainable growth in Ethiopia's agricultural sector. On average, the households possess 2.02 hectares of land, which is reasonably much lower than the national household average landholding size of 1 hectare (CSA 2017).

Table 4.5: educational level and family size of sample households

Variable	Measures	Value
Family size	Mean	5.8
	SD	2.74

Sources: field survey, 2023

4.2 Farmers' Awareness of Land Registration and Certification in Kokosa Woreda

Land registration and certification have become increasingly important for farmers because they protect their rights, access government programs, financial products, and subsidies, and enhance their agricultural enterprises. Farmers are also aware of land registration and certification

benefits, such as government grants, agricultural loans, and crop insurance, which can boost productivity and reduce risk. Land certification also creates legitimacy and streamlines land transactions, confirming ownership status and boundaries for potential buyers, investors, and financial institutions. Farmers seek information and advice to improve their knowledge and understanding of these processes, seeking guidance from authorities and participating in awareness-raising activities and training courses.

According to the results of this study, about 91% (325) of respondents indicated that they owned a piece of land, while just 9% (32) did not. About 88% (315) of the farmers owning land plots in the survey had registered their holdings. Sampled farmers have asked about their knowledge of land certification and registration processes. Accordingly, the data collected from farmers indicated that about 91% of respondents thought that land ownership registration is necessary for landholding, demonstrating an understanding of the legal significance of land registration. In addition, 82% of the respondents said they were sufficiently aware of the land registration and certification process and knew how to obtain the certificate. This implies that farmers in the Kokosa Woreda have a good level of process expertise, more or less.

However, it is essential to note that building awareness about land registration and certification can be a long-term process. It requires access to accurate information and education about the legal framework and procedures involved. This is particularly important in areas where access to information is limited or where there are cultural or linguistic barriers to understanding the process. In addition, other factors may affect farmers' willingness to register their land, such as mistrust of government institutions or concerns about the costs involved. These factors will need to be taken into account when designing and implementing land registration and certification programs.

Table 4.6: Farmers' Awareness of Farmland Ownership Registration (descriptive results)

No	Item	Responses	Frequency	Percent
1	Farmland owning	Yes	325	91
		No	32	9
		Total	357	100
2	Status land registered	Yes	315	88
		No	42	12
		Total	357	100
3	Awareness of land registration Benefit	Yes	325	91
		No	32	9
		Total	357	100
4	Awareness of land certification	Yes	294	82
		No	63	18
		Total	357	100
5	fear of land redistribution	Yes	126	35
		No	231	65
		Total	357	100
6	fear of the government land expropriation	Yes	84	23.5
		No	273	76.5
		Total	357	100
7	certificate impact on holding right	Yes	325	91
		No	32	8
		Total	357	100
8	Presence of community consultation about the land regulations	Yes	115	32
		No	242	68
		Total	357	100
9	Personal participation in land registration awareness-raising programs	Yes	199	55.7
		No	158	44.3
		Total	357	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2023

Similarly, respondents have asked whether they fear the government's redistribution of farms in the future. Accordingly, the result depicted that about 65% of respondents said that they do not fear land redistribution, which may come in the future, and 35% indicated that they fear future land redistribution (Table 4.6). About 76.5% of respondents have also shown that they don't fear the government taking their land at any time. Likewise, about 91% of respondents believed that landholding rights are secured to farmland registration and certification in the study area. Furthermore, the results show that about 68% of respondents said there was community consultation about land registration laws, regulations, and procedures of land registration. And

55.5% of respondents were informed about land ownership registration procedures before implementation.

Furthermore, the data collected from the focused group discussion (FGD) sheds light on the challenges and opportunities associated with land registration and certification. Accordingly, one crucial aspect highlighted by the participants is the need for awareness and knowledge about the land registration process and the steps involved in obtaining a certificate. This suggests that educational initiatives and outreach programs are essential to ensure that individuals understand the benefits and procedures of land registration. Table 4.7 illustrates farmers' farmland ownership and certification acquisition process in the study area.

Table 4.7. Farmers' farmland and certificate acquisition process

No	Item	Responses		
		Year	Frequency	Percent
1	year of your land certification	1997	84	26.6
		2004	134	42.6
		2012	97	30.8
		Total	315	100
2	Way of land acquisition	Renting	37	10.4
		Inherited	131	36.7
		Sharing	178	49.9
		Other	11	3
		Total	357	100
3	Types of certifications	Temporary	28	9
		Primary	40	12.6
		Secondary	247	78.4
		Total	315	100

Sources: Field Survey, 2023

The results of this study have shed light on the land registration and certification situation among farmers in the study area. It was found that a significant proportion of farmers, about 26.6%, 42.6%, and 30.8%, had received their certificates in 1997, 2004, and 2012 E.C., respectively. This indicates that the land registration and certification process has been ongoing for several years and has reached a sizable portion of the farming community. Regarding how farmers acquired their land, the result revealed that 10.4%, 36.7%, and 49.9% of respondents had obtained their land through renting, inheritance, and sharing, respectively (Table 4.5). This

suggests that there are different pathways to land ownership in the study area and that some farmers may face more challenges than others in obtaining land.

The study also found that 9% (28), 12.6% (40), and 78.4% (247) of respondents held temporary, primary, and secondary certifications, respectively. This indicates that most farmers in the study area have a more secure legal status regarding their land ownership, which can help them access credit, engage in land transactions, and plan for the future. Overall, the study results suggest that farmers in the study area have a good level of awareness about farmland registration and certification. This is an important finding, as it indicates that farmers know the legal framework for land ownership and have sufficient confidence in the process. This can help to promote more secure and sustainable land use practices in the study area and beyond. In addition, the study found that land certification positively impacts farmers' attitudes toward land ownership. Interviews and discussions with farmers revealed that land certification helps build confidence and avoid fears about potential future disputes. This suggests that land certification can help to promote more harmonious relations among farmers and reduce the risk of conflicts over land.

However, it is essential to note that land registration and certification is an ongoing process that requires continuous efforts to ensure that all farmers have secure and recognized land rights. There may be challenges in reaching out to more remote or marginalized communities and addressing cultural or linguistic barriers to understanding the process. Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that land certification is accompanied by other measures to promote sustainable land use and rural development. This could include providing support for agricultural productivity, access to credit and markets, and promoting community participation in decision-making processes related to land use. In general, the study results indicate that farmers in the study area have a good level of awareness about farmland registration and certification. This can help to promote more secure and sustainable land use practices, reduce conflicts over land, and build farmers' confidence regarding their land ownership. However, it is essential to ensure that land certification efforts are accompanied by other measures to promote rural development and address the needs of all farmers in the study area.

4.3 Challenges of Land Registration and Certification in Kokosa Woreda

Land registration and certification is a critical aspect of land administration and management. It is a process of recording and establishing the legal rights of landowners. Land registration and certification are essential in agriculture to develop land tenure, which is necessary for land use planning, agricultural productivity, and investment decisions. But, the process of land registration and certification presents several challenges.

Table 4.8. Challenges of Farmland Registration and Certification

S.N.	Items	Frequency		Percent
1	Presence of challenge in land certification	Yes	210	59
		No	147	41
		Total	357	100
2	Presence of a long land certificate process	Yes	283	79
		No	74	21
		Total	357	100
3	land certification challenges	Yes	231	65
		No	126	35
		Total	357	100
4	Personal experience of unfair action process land certification	Yes	189	52
		No	168	48
		Total	357	100
5	Presence of transparency in the woreda assurance office	Yes	126	35
		No	231	65
		Total	357	100

Source: field survey, 2023

This study assessed the challenges of farmland registration and certification in Kokosa Woreda. Therefore, farmers were asked questions about farmland registration and certification challenges. The above tables illustrate the response result (Table 4.8). The farmers asked if there was any challenge in getting a land ownership certificate. Accordingly, the result shows that 59% of respondents said 'Yes' and the rest, 41% responded 'No'. This implies that there are some challenges in the process of land registration and certification.

Similarly, the result shows that about 79% of respondents indicated a long process in land certificate acquisition. In contrast, the rest, 21%, said there is no long process in land registration

and certification acquisition. This result also indicated that there is a problem in the process of land registration and certification process. Thus, about 65% of landowners faced challenges obtaining ownership certificates, and 52% of respondents faced unfair action in the land registration and certification process. In addition, about 65% of respondents think the Woreda landowner assurance is not transparent.

The result shows that technical challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited technical capacity (lack of skill), insufficient data management systems, corruption, and lack of political will to implement land reform policies are some challenges that discourage the smooth process of land registration and certification in the study area. For instance, the lack of infrastructure in rural areas, such as roads and electricity, makes it challenging to carry out land surveys and mapping. Limited technical capacity also hinders the adoption of modern land surveying and mapping technologies. Additionally, inadequate data management systems lead to poor land information management and insufficient monitoring of land use changes. Furthermore, the problems of Woreda offices related to land registration and certification include giving many certificates over the farmland, lack of current information about land ownership, and lack of skilled human resources.

Moreover, the result of FGDs shows many problems associated with land registration and many certifications in Kokosa Woreda. The FGD participants brought attention to the existing problems with the land registration and certification process. They pointed out that the current system lacks technological support and remains incomplete. Additionally, land disputes have resulted in the issuance of duplicate certificates to different farmers for the same piece of land. These issues underline the need for an improved and more reliable land registration system incorporating technological advancements and ensuring accurate record-keeping.

The weaknesses in the land registration and certification process were also highlighted. One major weakness is the lack of comprehensive and reliable data on registered land holdings. This implies a gap in the availability of accurate information regarding land ownership, which hampers effective land management and planning. Furthermore, there is insufficient documentation on the size and types of land, including forest, cultivated, and grazing land. Addressing these weaknesses would require efforts to enhance data collection and management

systems. The FGD participants mentioned several challenges associated with land registration and certification. These include a lack of skilled human resources to handle the process effectively and farmers hiding parts of their farmland due to concerns that the government might take away the extra land. Overcoming these challenges would necessitate implementing training programs to build the capacity of personnel involved in land registration and strategies to establish trust and transparency between landowners and the government.

Generally, the FGD revealed essential insights into the challenges and opportunities surrounding land registration and certification. Enhancing awareness, adopting technology-driven solutions, addressing disputes, improving data management systems, and investing in human resources is crucial to overcoming the identified challenges. By doing so, the land registration and certification process can become more efficient, reliable, and supportive of landholders' rights, leading to economic growth, reduced conflicts, and improved land management practices.

4.4 Opportunities for Land Ownership Registration and Certification in Kokosa Woreda

Land registration and certification are vital in promoting secure land tenure, facilitating investment, and enabling sustainable land management. To assess the opportunities for land registration and certification in Kokosa Woreda, questionnaires were prepared for sample farmers to assess the opportunities for farmland ownership registration and certification, and required data were collected accordingly. Data were also collected through interviews and focused group discussions. Then, the discussion about farmland ownership registration and certification opportunities is presented below.

One of the potential opportunities of land registration and certification is to make rural farmers feel secure about going far from their farms for other employment (Birhan, 2009). Therefore, land registration and certification should enhance the tenure security of individual land. Through land registration and certification processes, landholder farmers gain legal recognition and protection of their land rights, reducing the risk of land disputes, encroachment, and forced eviction. Secure land tenure empowers landholders to make long-term investments in their land,

such as improving agricultural productivity, establishing businesses, or accessing credit and financial services.

Table 4.9 opportunities of farmland registration and certification

No	Items		Frequency	Percent
1	Do you believe your land ownership certificate has benefits?	Yes	357	100
		No	0	0
		Total	357	100
2	Did the land ownership certificate help you in the process of land ownership from one person to another?	Yes	315	88
		No	42	12
		Total	357	100
3	Have you faced any land disputes before? Land registration and certification?	Yes	99	28
		No	158	72
		Total	357	100
4	Have you faced land disputes after land registration and certification?	Yes	44	12
		No	313	88
		Total	357	100
5	Do you believe that your holding is secured because of the certificate?	Yes	294	82
		No	63	18
		Total	357	100
6	Did you feel the female holding right is secured due to the land holding certificate?	Yes	262	73
		No	95	27
		Total	357	100
7	Did you believe that land ownership registration and certification have opportunities?	Yes	304	85
		No	53	15
		Total	357	100

Source: field survey, 2023

It also fosters a sense of ownership and belonging, contributing to social stability and community cohesion. In all of Kebeles, the household survey shows that about 73% of farmers believe their holding is secured due to land registration and certification (Table 4.9).

This finding is in agreement with the result of data collected through focused group discussion. Accordingly, the data collected from the Focused group discussion shows the sense of security that land certification provides. They expressed confidence that once they possess a certificate, the government cannot seize their land without providing compensation or an alternative plot.

This highlights the role of land certification in safeguarding land rights and instilling a sense of protection among landowners. The participants also acknowledged the importance of owning a land certificate. Apart from establishing ownership, the certificate enables landowners to access financial opportunities, such as borrowing money from banks using their land as collateral. This highlights the economic benefits of land certification, as it opens avenues for financial growth and development.

Land registration and certification contribute to the reduction of land disputes and conflicts. Formalizing land rights through land registration and certification processes establishes clear boundaries and ownership records, minimizing ambiguity and misunderstandings that often lead to disputes. Registration and certification systems reduce the likelihood of conflicting claims and unauthorized land occupation by providing an official and transparent framework for land transactions. Resolving land disputes can be lengthy and costly, resulting in social unrest, economic losses, and hindered development. Through land registration and certification, governments can proactively address land-related conflicts, promote peaceful resolution mechanisms, and ensure equitable access to land resources.

Among the respondents, approximately 72% reported that they had not faced any land disputes before land registration and certification (table 4.9). This suggests that land registration can contribute to reducing land-related conflicts and disputes. By establishing clear ownership records, boundaries, and rights, land registration helps minimize ambiguity and potential disputes over land. The result shows that only 12% of respondents reported facing land disputes following land registration and certification. This indicates that land registration plays a role in minimizing conflicts even after the formalization of land ownership. Registration can help deter encroachment, unauthorized land occupation, and conflicting claims by providing legal recognition and clarity on land rights. By addressing land disputes, these processes contribute to social stability, enhance investor confidence, and create an enabling environment for sustainable development. They also promote trust and cooperation among landholders, communities, and various stakeholders involved in land governance. Moreover, land registration and certification can help prevent land grabbing and unauthorized land transactions, protecting vulnerable groups and marginalized communities from exploitation and dispossession.

In general, land registration and certification offer opportunities that extend beyond secure land tenure and economic development. They contributed to improved land management, strengthened women's land rights, conflict resolution, and the reduction of land disputes. Governments and policymakers should recognize the potential of these processes and prioritize their implementation to create a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable land governance system. By harnessing the opportunities provided by land registration and certification, societies can unlock the full potential of their land resources, promote social justice, and support the well-being and livelihoods of individuals and communities. Furthermore, the result of FGDs shows that land certification was recognized as a means to reduce border disputes and provide a sense of security for landholders. By ensuring the right to use the land, the certificate can enhance productivity and encourage investment in land-related activities, leading to increased agricultural output or other forms of land utilization.

Land registration and certification can be crucial in strengthening women's land rights. In many societies, women face significant challenges in accessing and controlling land. Land registration and certification processes can ensure that women's rights to land are recognized and protected, promoting gender equality and empowering women economically and socially. By obtaining formal documentation of land ownership, women gain legal proof of their rights, which can help overcome discriminatory practices, enhance their bargaining power, and provide access to resources and services. Strengthening women's land rights can improve household food security, livelihoods, and overall well-being. Most respondents (73%) felt that female holding rights are secured due to landholding certificates (table 4.9). This perception highlights the potential of land registration in promoting gender equality and empowering women in land ownership. Secure land rights enable women to access resources, participate in decision-making processes, and contribute to agricultural production and rural development.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter summarizes the significant findings drawn from the discussions and states conclusions based on the results. In addition, possible recommendations were provided for improving the registration and certification process and minimizing the significant challenges faced.

5.1 Conclusions

This study assessed the opportunities and challenges of farmland ownership certificate in Kokosa Woreda. The study examined various socio-economic characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, marital status, educational level, age, and family size of the farmers. Additionally, it assessed farmers' awareness and perceptions of the importance of land registration and certification. The study revealed that 87% of the surveyed farmers were male-headed household, and the remaining was female-headed farmer households. As far as marital status is concerned, the findings indicated that 86% of farmers were married, 9% were single, and 6% were divorced. The study found that 53% of farmers had no formal education. The mean age of the household head was 41.2 years, with the majority falling within the 31–43 age range.

Moreover, the family size was 5.8, surpassing the national average of 3.5. The study also examined farmers' awareness of land registration and certification. The findings indicated that 91% of respondents said that they have understanding of land registration and certification in the study area.

Furthermore, 82% reported having sufficient understanding of the process and knowing how to obtain it, indicating a good level of knowledge among farmers in the study area. However, building awareness about land registration and certification is a long-term process, requiring access to accurate information and education about the legal framework and procedures involved. Factors such as limited access to information and education can hinder the building of awareness and can be a challenge for farmers in the study area.

The study examined farmers' awareness of land registration and certification. The findings indicated that 91% of respondents said that they have understanding about land registration and certification in the study area. Furthermore, 82% reported having sufficient understanding of the process and knowing how to obtain it, indicating a good level of knowledge among farmers in the study area. However, building awareness about land registration and certification is a long-term process, requiring access to accurate information and education about the legal framework and procedures involved. Factors such as limited access to information, cultural barriers, mistrust of government institutions, and cost concerns can influence farmers' willingness to register their land. These aspects must be considered when designing and implementing land registration and certification programs. Additionally, the study revealed that 35% of respondents expressed fear of land redistribution in the future, while 23.5% feared the government taking their land at any time. Farmers' confidence in land ownership was strengthened by the belief that holding a certificate secures their land rights.

The study's focus group discussions revealed that educational initiatives and outreach programs are essential to ensure individuals understand the benefits and procedures of land registration. The findings also revealed the challenges associated with the process, including technical obstacles such as inadequate infrastructure, limited technical capacity, data management deficiencies, corruption, and a lack of political will to implement land reform policies. The study further explored farmers' experiences with the land registration and certification process. The findings indicate that approximately 59% of respondents faced challenges in obtaining land ownership certificates, while 79% identified a long process for acquisition. Moreover, 52% reported unfair actions during registration, and 65% believed the Woreda landowner assurance office lacked transparency. The study's findings provide valuable insights into the socio-economic profiles of rural farmers in Kokosa Woreda. The gender disparity, educational gaps, and larger family sizes identified highlight the challenges farmers face in accessing education and economic opportunities. Policymakers need to collaborate to address these challenges.

5.2 Recommendation

The land registration and certification program has been launched in Ethiopia to register land holdings and grant holding certificates to increase the security of farmers' land rights. It is believed to enhance farm households' perceptions and confidence in land tenure security. However, some challenges still hinder the smooth implementation of the program. To solve the problems and difficulties of farmland registration and certification in Kokosa Woreda and to improve the quality and effectiveness of the registration and certification process, this study suggested possible recommendations. Based on the provided abstract on challenges and opportunities of farmland registration and certification, here are some suggestions:

- The finding shows challenges to the technical capacity of land registration and certification. The study discovered technical challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, limited technical capability, and insufficient data management systems. It is recommended that the Woreda land administration officials invest in training programs and capacity-building initiatives to enhance the skills and knowledge of staff involved in land registration and certification processes. This can help address technical challenges and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process.
- Inadequate data management systems can hinder the smooth land registration and certification process. It is recommended that the government invest in modern technology solutions, such as digital databases and Geographic Information System (GIS) tools, to streamline data management and ensure accurate and accessible land records. Implementing efficient data management systems can reduce errors, improve transparency, and facilitate timely land transactions.
- The study highlights corruption and a lack of political will as land registration and certification process challenges. The government must prioritize anti-corruption measures and create a transparent and accountable system for land administration. Moreover, policymakers and relevant authorities should demonstrate strong political will and commitment to the process, ensuring that land registration and certification initiatives receive the necessary resources and support.

- While the study indicates a good awareness among farmers about farmland registration and certification, continuous efforts are required to maintain and enhance this awareness. It is recommended that the government, in collaboration with local organizations and stakeholders, conduct awareness campaigns and outreach programs to ensure that farmers are well-informed about the benefits and procedures of farmland registration and certification. This can help encourage more farmers to participate and reap the advantages of secure land rights.
- The study emphasizes the importance of involving all stakeholders, including farmers, in land registration and certification. Establishing platforms for collaboration and meaningful participation, such as regular consultations, community meetings, and inclusive decision-making processes, is recommended. This can ensure that the concerns and perspectives of different stakeholders are considered, leading to more effective and sustainable land registration and certification outcomes.

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Appendix I

Survey Questionnaire for the Sample Farmers

This questionnaire is prepared to collect data on land ownership registration and certification and challenges and opportunities in Kokosa Woreda, West Arsi Zone. The objective is to collect information about the challenges and opportunities of farmland ownership registration and accreditation for the academic fulfillment of a master's degree in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies from Hawassa University. Dear respondents, your genuine responses would be valuable in providing about the challenges and opportunities of farmland ownership registration and certification in your area. Hence, you are kindly requested to give relevant information for the research's success by providing explanations in the provided spaces.

I appreciate your cooperation!

Part I: General information

No	Question Item	Response Option	
1	Gender	1) Male 2) Female	
2	Age of respondents		
3	Marital status	1) Married 2) Single 3) Divorce 4) Widowed	
4	Household type	1) Male-headed 2) Female-headed	
5	Educational level	1) Can't read and write 2) Read and write 3) Elementary school completed 4) High school 5) Certificate holder 6) Diploma holder and above	
6	Total household size	1) Under 15 years old _____ 2) 15 years and above _____	
7	Total land holding in hectares	1) Before certification _____ hectare and plots the number of plots _____ 2) After certification _____ hectare and number of plots _____	

Part II: Questions on Farmers' Awareness of Land Registration and Certification

8. Do you have your land A) Yes B) No
9. If your response to question 8 above is "yes," how did you get your land? (Multiple responses are possible) Through renting, B) inherited, C) Through sharing, D) Other
10. Are your parcels registered? A) Yes B) No
11. Do you think land ownership registration is important for your holding? A) Yes B) No
12. Did you receive a certificate for your holding? A) Yes B) No
13. If your answer to question 12 is 'yes,' what did you feel about getting certificates?

14. When did you get the map and plan certification for your land? _____
15. Are you well aware of land certification and how to get it? Yes B) No
16. Which level of certificate of holding you got?
 - a) Temporary certificate (paper)
 - b) Primary book of holding
 - c) Secondary book of holding
17. Do you fear that land redistribution will come in the future and lose your farm?
A) Yes B) No
18. Do you fear the government at any time taking your land? A) Yes B) No
19. Do you believe your holding rights are secured due to the certificate of holding?
A) Yes B) No
20. Were there community consultations about land registration laws, regulations, and procedures? A) Yes B) No
21. Have you been informed about the procedures of land ownership registration before implementation? A) Yes B) No
22. How do you evaluate the efforts made by the Woreda office to make you aware of land registration?

Part III: Questions regarding the challenges of land registration and certification

23. Is there no kind of challenge to get a land ownership certificate? A) Yes B) No
24. Is there a long process in land ownership certificate acquisition A) Yes B) No
25. Did you face any challenges obtaining a land ownership certificate in the area? A) Yes
B) No

26. If your answer to question 25 above is yes, what challenges have you faced?

27. Did you face unfair action in land ownership registration and certification? A) Yes

B) No

28. Did you think the landowner's assurance office of the Woreda is transparent to the clients?

29. In your opinion, what are the main challenges of land ownership certificates in Kokosa Woreda?

Part IV. Questions on Opportunities of Land Ownership Registration and Certification

30. Do you believe that your land ownership certificate has benefits? A) Yes B) No

31. Did the land ownership certificate help you in the process of land ownership from one person to the other? A. Yes B. No

32. Have you ever faced a land dispute before land registration and certification?

A) Yes B) No

33. If you say yes, which type of dispute did you face? A) Inheritance dispute B) Boundary disputes C) Divorce dispute D) Compensation disputes

E. Others _____

34. Have you faced land dispute after certification A) Yes B) No

35. Do you have confidence that your holding is secured because of a certificate? A) Yes B) No

36. Do you feel that women's landholding right is secured because of a certificate?

A) Yes B) No

37. Do you believe that land certification has opportunities? A) Yes B) No

38. If your answer is yes for Q37, What are the opportunities for your land certification?

39. How do you evaluate the productivity status of your farmlands after certification?

Appendix II

Interview questions prepared for Woreda land administration experts and D.A.s.

1. How do you evaluate farmers' awareness of land registration certification in your Woreda?
2. How do you explain the overall procedure of land ownership registration and certification?
3. Do you think that the registration and certification cover all individually held parcels in the Woreda?
4. What challenges were observed regarding land ownership registration and certification in your Woreda?
5. What are possible opportunities created by land ownership registration and certification in your Woreda?
6. How can you evaluate the effectiveness of land certification in increasing farm productivity?
7. How do you compare and contrast the land-related disputes before and after land registration and certification?

Appendix III

Interview questions prepared for to land registration committee

1. What is your role in the land registration and certification process
2. How do you assess the farmers' awareness during the registration process?
3. How do you evaluate the overall process of land registration in your area?
4. Have you faced any difficulties and challenges during registration? If your answer is yes, how did you manage such challenges?
5. What are the opportunities you expected from land registration and certification?

Appendix IV

Interview questions prepared for kebele officials

1. What was the role of kebele officials during land registration?
2. How did you support the land registration committee during land registration?
3. What was the awareness of farmers regarding land registration?
4. Did you face resistance from farmers?
5. What are the challenges and opportunities of land registration and certification in your Woreda?

Appendix V

Checklists for focused group discussion

1. Did you have awareness about land ownership registration and certification and how to obtain it?
2. Do you fear the government might at any time take your land?
3. Did your farmland register? If yes, have you received a certificate for your registered plot of land?
4. How do you evaluate the overall land registration and certification process in your Woreda?
5. Have you observed the weakness of land registration and obtaining a certificate?
6. What are the challenges of land ownership registration and certification?
7. Do you think the certificate has important to your holding? If yes, how?
8. Do you believe that land certification has opportunities?
9. Do you have confidence that your holding is secured because of a certificate?
10. What are the challenges and opportunities of land ownership registration and certification?