

Land Use Consolidation as a Tool for Sustainable Rural Development in Kenya: *A Case of Tabaka Ward, Kisii County*

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Abstract

This study examined land use consolidation as a strategic planning approach to advance sustainable rural development in Kenya, with a specific focus on Tabaka Ward in Kisii County. It highlights how agricultural land fragmentation and conversion—driven by population growth, inheritance customs, and prevailing land tenure systems—have eroded productivity and weakened rural resilience. Adopting a qualitative case study design, the research employed document analysis, field observations, and interviews with community members and key informants. Data were obtained from 27 households and five experts, who were purposively selected for their knowledge and experience. The collected information was analysed using NVivo for thematic coding and ArcGIS for spatial interpretation to identify key patterns and relationships. The findings revealed four major impediments to sustainable rural development: socio-cultural norms, economic disparities, speculative land markets, and weak governance structures. The study concludes that community-led, voluntary, and tenure-responsive land-use consolidation initiatives can significantly improve rural productivity and lay the foundation for inclusive and sustainable land management policies in Kenya.

Keywords: Human settlement, community involvement, land use consolidation, participatory planning, sustainability, rural development, land-use management, customary land tenure

INTRODUCTION

For decades, rural development across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has lagged behind urban planning (Epstein & Jezeph, 2001), largely due to limited policy focus and inadequate oversight of spatial planning. This neglect has resulted in rampant land fragmentation, reduced agricultural productivity, and growing threats to rural resilience (Udemezue & Osegbue, 2018; Newman & Saginor, 2016). Land fragmentation often precedes land-use changes and the conversion of rural areas into urban development (Agheyisi, 2018). One emerging response to this challenge is land use consolidation (LUC)—a planning approach grounded in the New Ruralism concept—which promotes the integration of land uses without altering ownership patterns (Martindale, 2021; Louwsma et al., 2017). Through coordinated land use rather than ownership amalgamation, LUC seeks to harmonise rural development and agricultural preservation for long-term

sustainability.

In this study, land use consolidation (LUC) refers to the coordinated management of adjoining land parcels for joint planning and utilisation without changing ownership rights. Ownership consolidation, in contrast, involves the merging of legal titles. This distinction underscores the study's focus on use-based integration, particularly significant within tenure-sensitive rural settings such as those found in Kenya.

Globally, countries including Lithuania and Rwanda have adopted LUC or land ownership consolidation initiatives with considerable success. Lithuania's model emphasises participatory planning (Hepperle et al., 2020), while Rwanda's experience demonstrates that voluntary land-use consolidation can enhance food security (Nilsson, 2019). These examples provide valuable insights

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for Kenya, where numerous legislative and policy reforms—from the colonial-era Swynnerton Plan of 1954 to post-independence frameworks such as Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 and Vision 2030—have sought to address rural land challenges. Nonetheless, land fragmentation remains widespread, particularly in agriculturally rich regions like Kisii County (Songoro, 2020).

Tabaka Ward in Kisii County exemplifies this problem. Despite its high agricultural potential and vibrant economic activities such as soapstone mining, the area continues to experience unsustainable land subdivision (Museleku, 2018) and declining agricultural productivity (Songoro, 2020). Attempts to promote LUC in the region have encountered resistance arising from socio-cultural traditions, economic inequality, and complex land tenure systems (Asiama et al., 2021). Previous studies (Obonyo et al., 2016; Ongechi, 2016; Kebaso, 2017; Museleku, 2018; Songoro, 2020) acknowledge the extent of land fragmentation in Kisii but fail to comprehensively examine the barriers to effective LUC implementation. This research, therefore, explores community perspectives and the structural obstacles influencing LUC adoption in Tabaka Ward.

THEORY

The theoretical and empirical framework provides a foundation for understanding the complex interlinkages between land-use consolidation (LUC) and sustainable rural development. It situates the study within established theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence that explain how spatial planning, socio-economic behaviour, and institutional systems influence land management outcomes. The framework integrates concepts from rural development theory, land tenure systems, and participatory planning to demonstrate how these perspectives converge to shape LUC processes in Sub-Saharan Africa, specifically in Kenya. Through this synthesis, the section underscores how global and regional experiences inform the local realities of Tabaka Ward, guiding the formulation of context-specific strategies to promote inclusive, tenure-responsive, and sustainable land-use planning.

Rural Development Planning

Ashley and Maxwell (2001), together with Adisa (2014), describe rural areas as regions where

human settlement and infrastructure are dispersed, while agricultural land, forests, pastures, water bodies, and mountains dominate the landscape. Ekong (2010) further distinguishes rural and urban typologies, noting that rural spaces are typically characterised by agricultural livelihoods, minimal social stratification, low population density, and slow socio-spatial transformation. As Wubayehu (2020) observes, the understanding of rural planning and development varies across nations and has evolved over time in response to prevailing national priorities. Consequently, rural development is a dynamic, multidimensional concept that continually adapts to overarching development agendas (Anríquez & Stamoulis, 2007).

Rural planning in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has historically been marginalised and insufficiently incorporated into national development frameworks (Bradshaw, 1990). Newman and Saginor (2016) point out that many developing countries now face a crisis in rural planning, despite the global policy momentum that accompanied the Millennium Development Goals (2000–2015) and continues under the Sustainable Development Goals (Ovchinnikova & Vodolazskaya, 2021). Zaheri et al. (2019) emphasise that participatory rural planning helps communities realise their economic potential, preserve cultural heritage, and protect ecosystems. They further stress that collaborative planning and community partnerships are essential pillars for achieving sustainable rural development. Ultimately, these approaches aim to enhance the quality of life and well-being of rural populations.

Popa et al. (2024) conceptualise rural development as an integrative process shaped by multiple interdependent elements, including agriculture, infrastructure, education, environment, governance, and social relationships. While agriculture remains central to most rural economies, Davis (2003) argues that diversification into non-agricultural sectors and investment in infrastructure contribute significantly to job creation and income generation. Within this framework, cultural and social networks serve as cohesive forces that strengthen community resilience. Education also plays a transformative role by equipping individuals with the skills necessary for meaningful participation in local planning and decision-making. Moreover,

ecological sustainability remains a guiding principle for ensuring the long-term viability of rural environments.

Factors Hindering Land Use Consolidation

i) Socio-Cultural Practices

Le Polain de Waroux et al. (2021) define culture as a collective set of norms, values, beliefs, and knowledge systems that shape how communities interact with their environment and make land-use decisions. These socio-cultural attributes often manifest through informal institutions that influence resource use (Ostrom, 1990). Meyfroidt (2013) explains that environmental cognition—people’s perception and interpretation of their surroundings—plays a critical role in shaping land-use behaviour. Similarly, Geist and Lambin (2002) identified cultural factors among the underlying drivers of deforestation, illustrating that values, attitudes, and beliefs deeply influence individual and collective land-use decisions.

Comparative studies have shown that differences in land-use patterns across communities can be linked to cultural variations (Le Polain de Waroux et al., 2021; Garrett et al., 2017; Chi et al., 2013). Klepeis et al. (2009) and Aguilar-Støen et al. (2011) note that traditional identity and heritage shape land-use preferences and conservation attitudes. Likewise, Chapman et al. (2019) demonstrate that understanding farmers’ relational values helps explain their willingness to engage in conservation initiatives, such as installing riparian buffers. Thus, socio-cultural norms can significantly influence the success of land use consolidation (LUC). Asiama et al. (2019) add that the interaction between cultural practices, land tenure systems, and social mobility can either facilitate or hinder LUC implementation, sometimes increasing fragmentation rather than consolidation.

A long-standing tradition of land inheritance has been identified as one of the principal causes of declining farm sizes in SSA (Mayele et al., 2024; Djurfeldt, 2020; Jayne et al., 2019; Abubakari et al., 2019; Paul & wa Githinji, 2018). In many communities, land is inherited patrilineally, resulting in continued subdivision across generations (Coldham, 1978; Kihima, 2017; Bizimana, 2009). As populations expand, this system results in increasingly small, scattered plots. Mayele et al. (2024) recommend that cultural inheritance norms be re-evaluated to

reduce fragmentation pressure, while promoting communal land-use practices that minimise waste and enhance productivity.

Rapid population growth compounds this problem, exerting pressure on limited land resources (Smith & Cabbage, 2024). Empirical evidence indicates a strong correlation between population growth and increasing land fragmentation (Mayele et al., 2024; Herrmann et al., 2020; Colsaet et al., 2018; Kihima, 2017). Over successive generations, this pattern leads to smaller, more dispersed holdings (Prabhakar, 2021). Furthermore, expanding rural populations drive demand for infrastructure, housing, and commercial spaces, often at the expense of arable land and forests (Smith & Cabbage, 2024).

ii) Economic and Market Dynamics

Land market studies in SSA (Jayne et al., 2021; Abay & Chamberlin, 2021; Chamberlin & Ricker-Gilbert, 2016; Holden et al., 2009; Woodhouse, 2003) indicate that speculative activities have driven land prices to unprecedented levels, creating inequalities in access. Such distortions limit smallholders’—particularly youth and women’s—ability to secure arable land, thereby impeding land-use consolidation (Amanor, 2018; Yaro et al., 2017; Chitonge et al., 2017; Hall et al., 2015; Foster & Rosenzweig, 2011). However, Abay and Chamberlin (2021) suggest that speculation can sometimes open new opportunities by enabling land transactions that promote investment in value chains and non-farm employment (Chamberlin & Jayne, 2020; Burke et al., 2020; Wineman & Jayne, 2019).

Urbanisation further accelerates land-use change as rural areas convert agricultural land into residential and commercial developments (Kogo et al., 2021; Greiner et al., 2021; Nyamamba et al., 2020; Musa & Odera, 2015). Kenya’s population, projected to surpass 91 million by 2050, will intensify these pressures, particularly in counties such as Kisii, Kiambu, Vihiga, Murang’a, and Nyamira (UNDESA, 2023). These transformations frequently target fertile land with favourable terrain, soil, and infrastructure, while increasing urban sprawl and reducing agricultural potential. Moreover, rising education levels and shifting economic aspirations have diversified rural livelihoods, encouraging migration to service-oriented sectors (Mayele et al., 2024; Kangethe,

2023; George Stanley & Nafiu, 2021). Nonetheless, as Smith and Cubbage (2024) observe, urban sprawl has led to new patterns of rural land fragmentation around towns as wealthier families seek peri-urban residences.

Persistent economic inequalities continue to undermine LUC initiatives in SSA (Nsabimana et al., 2021; Wegerif & Guereña, 2020; Lumumba, 2020; Asiama et al., 2017). The FAO (2017) reports that most rural dwellers depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and remain highly vulnerable to shocks. Many smallholders are compelled to sell or lease land to wealthier individuals, leading to land concentration and social stratification (Chimhowu, 2019; Chitonge et al., 2017). Consequently, the widening gap between rich and poor farmers fuels social differentiation and exacerbates the risk of dispossession (Amanor, 2012, 2018).

iii) Land Tenure Systems

In Kenya, land is classified as public, private, or community-owned (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). Private land refers to property held by individuals under freehold or leasehold tenure (Anjarwalla & Khanna, 2012). Arnason (1999) describes private tenure as a statutory framework granting landowners the rights to use, access, transfer, and control land. However, several scholars (Gyapong, 2021; Djurfeldt, 2020; Steel et al., 2019; Leonardi & Browne, 2018; Woodhouse, 2003) criticise private tenure systems for promoting commodification and speculation, which increase fragmentation. Similarly, Wamukaya and Mbathi (2019) argue that private tenure frameworks, imported from colonial models, often conflict with traditional communal systems.

Despite the growing formalisation of land markets, customary tenure remains predominant in many rural areas (Mayele et al., 2024; Payne, 1997; Bruce, 1993). Under customary systems, inheritance follows family lineage, typically dividing land equally among male heirs (Coldham, 1978). This practice, exacerbated by population growth, has led to smaller, less productive land parcels (Asiama et al., 2019; Muyombano et al., 2020; Diao et al., 2014). Consequently, agricultural output and rural livelihoods have suffered (Bizoza, 2021; Nilsson, 2019; MoFA-SRID, 2016).

SSA's land tenure landscape exhibits dualism—

customary systems that sustain traditional livelihoods coexisting with formal legal frameworks derived from the colonial era (Adam & Dadi, 2024; Chitonge & Harvey, 2022; Jayne et al., 2021; Wiley, 2011; Akaateba, 2018; Wehrmann, 2008). Rising land values have intensified pressure on customary lands, accelerating sales to external buyers (Jayne et al., 2021). Scholars such as Wamukaya and Mbathi (2019) advocate integrating customary and formal tenure systems to enhance sustainable development. Likewise, Asiama et al. (2019) promote tenure-responsive consolidation strategies that align with indigenous management practices.

Relationship (and Controversies) between Land Use Consolidation and Rural Development

Recent discourse recognises LUC as a critical policy intervention for addressing food insecurity and rural challenges in the 21st century (Ntihinyurwa & de Vries, 2021). Evidence from the Green Revolution in Asia demonstrates that strategic investments in LUC significantly improved agricultural productivity and income levels (Dethier & Effenberger, 2012). Similarly, Molnárová (2023) views LUC as an adaptive spatial planning instrument that fosters comprehensive rural development.

Empirical research across Asia, Europe, and South America links LUC with improved land governance (Weith et al., 2021), sustainable rural growth (Martindale, 2021; Pašakarnis et al., 2010), and enhanced productivity (Nsabimana et al., 2023; Du et al., 2018). However, these benefits often stem from supportive agroecological conditions and advanced technologies—factors that are less prevalent in SSA, where farmers rely on rainfed systems and face market uncertainties (Zhang et al., 2018; Asiama et al., 2017a; Ali et al., 2014). Studies from Kenya, Ghana, and Rwanda show that the failure to incorporate local contexts and community needs has hindered LUC outcomes (Ntihinyurwa et al., 2019; Chigbu et al., 2019; Abubakari et al., 2016; Huggins, 2013; Pritchard, 2013).

Smith and Cubbage (2024) contend that LUC can balance infrastructure expansion with ecosystem conservation by preserving green corridors, biodiversity, and cultural landscapes. Nilsson (2019) reports that Rwanda's LUC programme expanded landholdings, raised productivity, and

improved food security. By enabling economies of scale, LUC allows farmers to mobilise resources and adopt modern technologies (Du et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2005). Bizoza and Havugimana (2013) further note that LUC's multifunctional nature enables farmers to engage in both subsistence and market-oriented production, enhancing economic resilience.

Conversely, other studies highlight the advantages of fragmentation. Nilsson (2019) observes that small-scale farmers in Rwanda prefer multiple plots to mitigate risk. Cioffo et al. (2016) and Carletto et al. (2013) find that fragmented farms often achieve higher productivity through diversification, intensive cultivation, and risk management. Sheng et al. (2015) argue that productivity can be improved through technology adoption rather than by expanding land area. Ntihinyurwa (2019) also notes that fragmentation may reduce land conflicts, while Konguka (2013) finds it contributes to food security by cushioning farmers against environmental shocks. Consequently, De Vries and Chigbu (2017) propose a balanced approach, recognising both LUC and fragmentation as context-specific land management strategies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative, descriptive case study design focused on Tabaka Ward in Kisii County, Kenya. The site was selected due to its agricultural importance and the long-standing incidence of land fragmentation. Primary data were collected through key informant and household interviews, direct observation, and a review of relevant secondary materials, including planning and policy documents.

A purposive sample of 27 households and five key informants was drawn to capture diverse perspectives and experiences. Data saturation was reached after these interviews, as no new themes emerged. Semi-structured interview guides were used to steer conversations, and responses were recorded with prior consent. Field observations were documented using structured checklists to capture land-use patterns, conflicts, and the extent of local infrastructure.

Qualitative data were coded thematically in NVivo, following open, axial, and selective coding to develop analytical categories. Spatial data were

processed and visualised in ArcGIS to produce land-use and fragmentation maps. Descriptive visualisations, including pie charts and bar graphs, were prepared in Excel to summarise categorical data and frequency distributions.

All procedures adhered to institutional ethical standards. The National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) issued the research permit, and JKUAT's Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee granted ethical approval. The study prioritised the physical, social, and psychological safety of the researcher, assistants, and participants. Participation was voluntary; informed consent was obtained for audio recording or note-taking, and confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained.

RESULTS

The study's findings indicate that land use in Tabaka Ward is highly fragmented, with most farms measuring less than 1 acre. This has hindered mechanisation, reduced agricultural yields, and exacerbated rural poverty. The study established that inheritance practices were the main driver of fragmentation in Tabaka, as land was passed down and subdivided among male heirs across generations. This finding aligns with earlier research by Mayele et al. (2024), Djurfeldt (2020), Jayne et al. (2019), Abubakari et al. (2019), and Paul and Githinji (2018), who identified the culture of land inheritance as a key factor contributing to the decline in arable land sizes across sub-Saharan Africa. As shown in **Figure 1**, inheritance accounted for the majority of land acquisitions among households in Tabaka Ward, confirming the dominance of hereditary land transfer as a local practice.

Strong socio-cultural ties to ancestral land were also found to be a major obstacle to land use consolidation (LUC) in Tabaka Ward. For many residents, land represents family lineage and heritage, which makes voluntary consolidation a highly sensitive and often resisted process. From an economic perspective, income and financial resource inequalities have driven speculative land purchases, further complicating efforts to implement consolidation. As shown in **Figure 2**, most households in the ward own land parcels of less than 0.9 acres, highlighting the severe fragmentation in the area.

Land Acq Description	
Inheritanc	24
Land Purc	3
Donation/	0

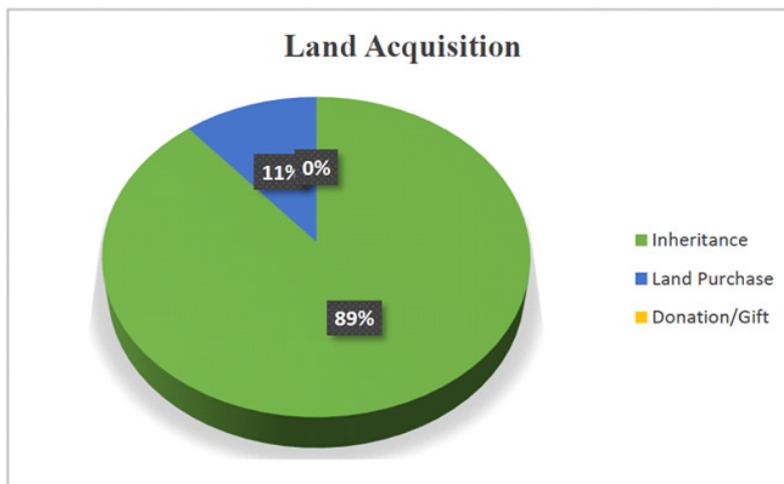


FIGURE 1
Summary of household land acquisition in Tabaka Ward
Source: Author’s Analysis, 2025

Land Size Description	
Very Sma	20
Small (1-2	4
Medium (2
Large (5-6	0
Very Larg	2

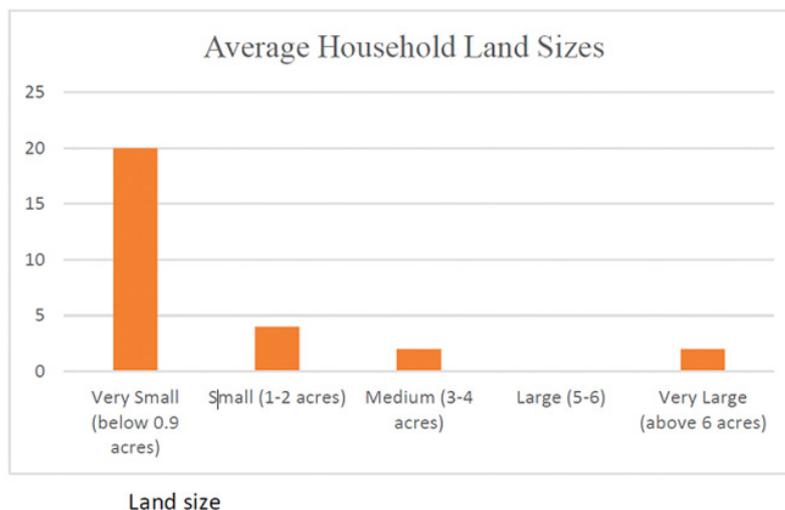


FIGURE 2
Average household land sizes as reported by respondents
Source: Author’s Analysis, 2025

The findings further revealed that the absence of well-defined mechanisms for resolving land-related disputes has intensified tensions among community members, as many respondents anticipated potential conflicts over land allocation, usage rights, and benefit-sharing. Several household respondents expressed concern that joint land-use consolidation (LUC) might compromise individual ownership rights, particularly in the absence of reliable conflict-

resolution mechanisms.

At the institutional level, the study found that weak coordination frameworks and limited local government capacity to enforce planning regulations have contributed to uncontrolled land subdivision, informal land transactions, and encroachment on riparian areas. Respondents expressed a lack of confidence in government-led initiatives, preferring community-based,

participatory approaches similar to those practised in the Mara Naibosho Conservancy. As summarised in **Figure 3**, participants underscored the need for governance reforms that strengthen participatory planning, enhance community-led dispute-resolution mechanisms, and tighten development control to improve the effectiveness of LUC implementation.

A comparative review of Rwanda’s land use consolidation (LUC) programme, the Mara Naibosho land-conservation model, and Lithuania’s land-consolidation framework revealed that the success of LUC largely relies on context-

specific, tenure-responsive planning supported by robust legal and institutional structures, as well as active community participation. Rwanda’s approach—emphasising voluntary land-use coordination while maintaining ownership rights—was identified as a potentially suitable model for Tabaka, provided it is adapted to local realities. Conversely, the Mara Naibosho initiative exemplifies a home-grown, community-managed conservation effort, particularly relevant to pastoralist settings. As illustrated in **Figure 4**, the majority of respondents expressed a preference for a voluntary and blended LUC model that harmonises customary land-use traditions with

Measures	Description
Communi	9
Policy imj	11
Public ed	6
Technolog	1

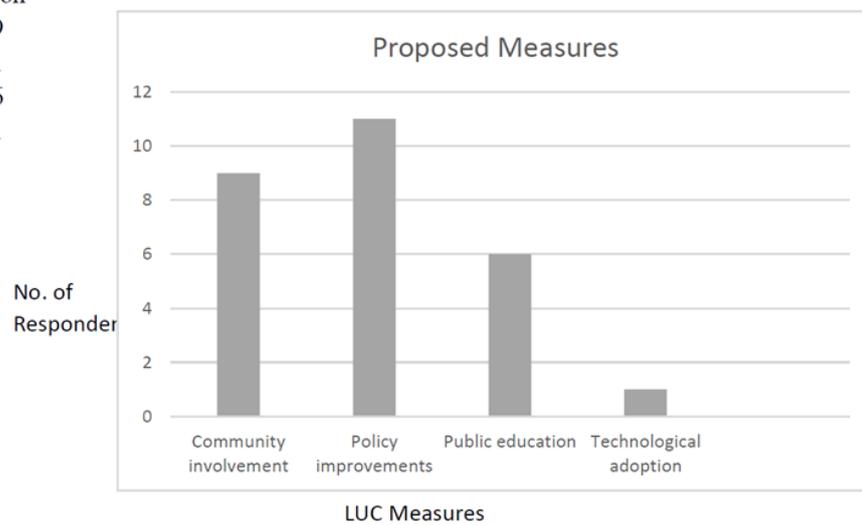


FIGURE 3
 Proposed Governance measures to improve Land Use Consolidation (LUC) in Tabaka Ward
 Source: Author’s Analysis, 2025

Prefered M	Description
Use Cons	20
Ownership	5
Both	2

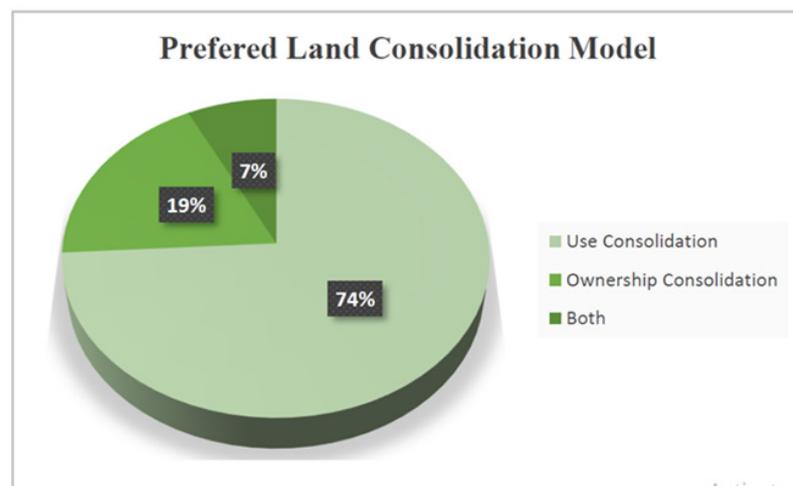


FIGURE 4
 Respondents' preferred model of land consolidation
 Source: Author’s Analysis, 2025

formal spatial planning systems.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that land fragmentation in Tabaka Ward is driven by a complex interplay of socio-cultural and institutional factors. Deep-rooted inheritance traditions, strong emotional attachment to ancestral land, and weak governance mechanisms collectively constrain the adoption of land use consolidation (LUC). These findings align with Aguilar-Støen et al. (2011), who observed that cultural identity and kinship ties to land often discourage voluntary consolidation efforts in rural communities.

Economic disparities further exacerbate the challenge. As documented by Nsabimana et al. (2021), Wegerif and Guereña (2020), and Lumumba (2020), unequal access to credit, markets, and productive resources in Tabaka fosters speculative land transactions and erodes public trust in LUC initiatives.

Institutional weaknesses in Tabaka mirror broader Sub-Saharan African trends identified by Ntihinurwa et al. (2019) and Chigbu et al. (2019). Limited inter-agency coordination and inadequate community engagement have undermined the effectiveness of consolidation programs. Respondents emphasised the need for inclusive, participatory policy frameworks, echoing Asiana et al. (2017) and de Vries and Chigbu (2017),

who advocate for hybrid governance models that harmonise customary land tenure with formal land administration systems.

Drawing on a qualitative case study design and comparative lessons from regional and international contexts, the study offers practical insights and policy recommendations for advancing LUC as a sustainable rural-planning strategy in Kenya. Its originality lies in the integration of spatial planning principles, community perspectives, and governance considerations to generate locally grounded solutions that address both national and global rural-development challenges.

Figure 5 depicts the interconnections among socio-cultural, market, and tenure-related drivers of land fragmentation, the barriers and enablers shaping voluntary and tenure-responsive LUC adoption, and the resulting rural-development outcomes of productivity, equity, and resilience.

In summary, the discussion underscores that the success of land use consolidation in Tabaka Ward depends on voluntary participation, tenure-sensitive frameworks, and community empowerment. Comparative evidence from Rwanda and Lithuania illustrates that consolidation initiatives achieve the greatest impact when supported by institutional trust, participatory planning, and coherent policy frameworks—principles that should guide Kenya's pursuit of sustainable and equitable rural

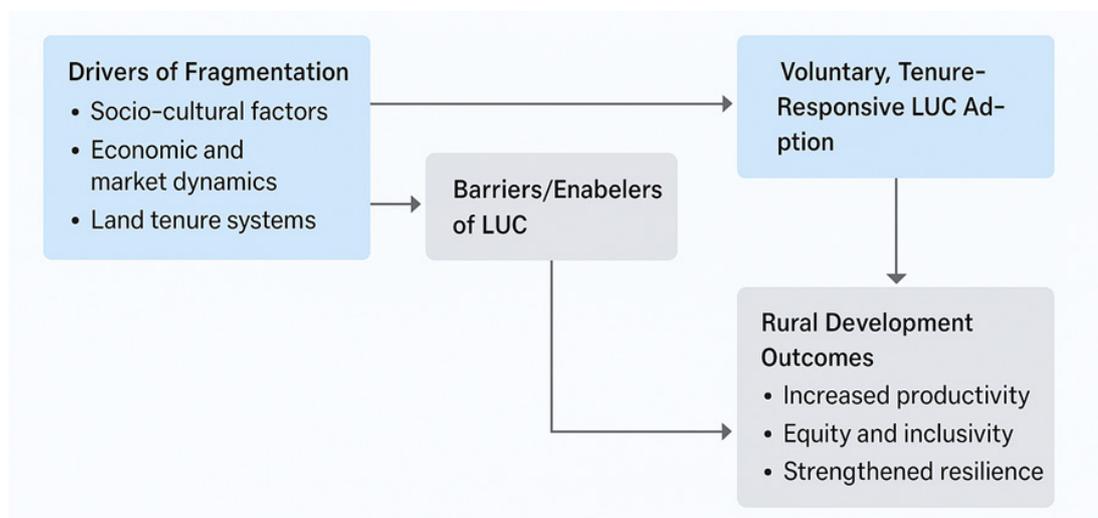


FIGURE 5

Conceptual framework for Land Use Consolidation in Tabaka Ward

Source: Author's Analysis, 2025

development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that land use consolidation (LUC) is a practical and transformative approach to advancing sustainable rural development in Kenya, particularly in agriculturally active regions such as Tabaka Ward. Nonetheless, its implementation faces a range of intertwined challenges—including socio-cultural traditions, economic inequalities, and weak governance systems. The persistence of land fragmentation remains deeply rooted in inheritance practices, individual tenure arrangements, and speculative land markets.

Resistance to consolidation is largely shaped by emotional and cultural attachment to ancestral land, limited awareness of the potential benefits of LUC, and mistrust of externally driven programmes. Achieving effective and sustainable outcomes, therefore, calls for adaptive, participatory, and tenure-responsive strategies tailored to local contexts and community priorities.

Drawing from the findings, the successful implementation of LUC in Tabaka Ward will depend on:

- i. Building public confidence through inclusive and transparent planning processes.
- ii. Embedding tenure-responsive principles within land-use policy frameworks.
- iii. Enhancing the capacity of local authorities to implement and enforce spatial planning regulations.
- iv. Promoting awareness of both the socio-economic and environmental advantages of land consolidation.

Overall, the research demonstrates that when guided by inclusive, community-led approaches, LUC can significantly enhance agricultural productivity, equity, and resilience across Kenya's rural landscapes—offering a pathway toward sustainable and integrated rural transformation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommendations are;

Enhancing Community Awareness and Building Capacity: Develop community-based education programmes to inform residents about the social,

economic, and environmental importance of land use consolidation (LUC). These initiatives should actively involve local leaders, farmers, and youth groups to foster understanding, acceptance, and meaningful engagement in LUC activities.

Promoting Voluntary and Incentive-Led Participation: Encourage communities to adopt LUC through incentive-driven and participatory approaches that reward collaboration. Drawing lessons from Rwanda's Crop Intensification Programme (CIP), strategies such as expanding access to affordable credit, improving rural infrastructure, and providing agricultural inputs can motivate collective action and strengthen local ownership of the process.

Strengthening Tenure-Responsive Legal and Policy Frameworks: Design and reinforce tenure-sensitive legal and policy mechanisms that safeguard property rights while promoting joint land-use arrangements among neighbouring households and extended families. These frameworks should ensure tenure security while fostering cooperation for sustainable and inclusive land management.

Enhancing Institutional Capacity and Governance: Build the capacity of county and local land-governance institutions to implement development control, manage disputes, and oversee spatial planning effectively. Greater interdepartmental collaboration and institutional accountability are essential for achieving transparent, coordinated, and durable LUC outcomes.

Integrating LUC into County Development and Spatial Plans: Incorporate LUC principles into County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and complementary spatial planning instruments. This process should employ contemporary spatial planning methods such as participatory mapping and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to support inclusive, evidence-based, and transparent decision-making at the county level.

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