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# **Oppression and Resistance in the Global City; Slum Governance in Accra, Ghana.**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Jemimah Agbenyoh, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

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To you all I sincerely say;

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my mother, Esther Domeh, a petty trader who did not go far in education but always wanted her children and everyone else to climb high on the educational ladder.

Thank you Mama!!

## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores how slum governance leads to oppression and resistance in Accra. The study area consisted of two slum communities namely Old Fadama and Glefe, located in the capital city of Ghana, Accra. Employing the concept of slum governance, this study examines how slums are coordinated and managed. Thus, it looks at the decision making and implementation role played by both government and non-government actors in managing and preventing slums in Accra. The study applied a case study approach and only qualitative secondary sources were used to collect, analyze and present the data. The data were sourced from policy documents, scholarly articles and media reports.

The outcomes of the study revealed that slum governance in Accra only take the form of decongestion, eviction and demolition and as such has not yielded any significant results. It was found that evictions are often carried out forcefully through intimidation, coercion, and the use of violence without resettlement and compensation. This act which also violates the human right of housing can be described as an “oppression” of the slum dwellers. In return, the government in charge of slum operations face resistance from the affected slum communities which often than not leads to delays in evictions and slum clearances. The resistance, as found out, comes in the form of protests, disobedience, court cases and negotiations. Shockingly, these interventions of the government have not deterred the squatters nor the poor migrants from moving into the slums, hence, slums have proliferated. It can be concluded that slum governance in Accra is not working despite the actions of the government to deal with slums. Thus, there is poor coordination and management of slums which does not promote safe, inclusiveness and sustainability as suggested by SDG 11.

The study therefore suggested that slum governance should be aimed at slum upgrading and not be used as a means to infringe on people’s rights to housing, and employment. Also, multilevel governance through collaboration and participation, involving all local stakeholders, including slum dwellers must be considered to ensure inclusive and sustainable urban development. In addition, the government should consider the creation of secondary and tertiary cities to absorb the increasing migrants from the rural communities, and building institutional capacity and collaboration to limit slum proliferation in the Accra metropolis.

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

Figure 1 Map of Identified slums in the Accra Metropolitan Area .....	23
Figure 2 Map of Accra with a blue line showing the location of Old Fadama.....	25
Figure 3 Old Fadama Before, During, and After the Demolition Exercise .....	29
Figure 4 Victims protest over the demolition exercise .....	30
Figure 5 Images of Glefe before, during, and after demolition .....	33

## **LISTS OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS**

NUPF - National Urban Policy Framework

NHP - National Housing Policy

NDPC- National Development Planning Commission

MLGRD - Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

AP – Action Plan

MWRWH - Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing

MSWR - Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources

MMDAs - Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies

MDAs - Municipal and District Assemblies

PNDC- Provisional National Defense Council

SAP - Structural Adjustment Programme

AMA – Accra Metropolitan Assembly

TCPD - Town and Country Planning Department

GoG – Government of Ghana

GSS – Ghana Statistical Service

ISSER – Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research

ABWMA - Ablekuma West Municipal Assembly

CSOs - Civil Society Organizations

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations

PD - Peoples’ Dialogue on Human Settlements

SUG - Slum Union of Ghana

COHRE - Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions

GHAFUP - Ghana Federation for the Urban Poor

SDI - Shack/Slum Dwellers International

AI - Amnesty International Ghana

SCALE- UP - Slum Communities Achieving Livable Environment with Urban Partners

WAG - Water Aid Ghana



WAC - Water for African Cities

CPIL - Center for Public Interest Law

BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation

GBC – Ghana Broadcasting Corporation

GNA - Ghana News Agency

CHRAJ - Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice

SEND - Social Enterprise Development Ghana

ICESCR - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

UN- United Nations

SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

MDGs – Millennium Development Goals

OECD - Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PSUP - Participatory Slum Upgrading Project

GUTT – Ghana Urbanization Think Tank

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iii
DEDICATION .....	iv
ABSTRACT .....	v
LIST OF FIGURES .....	vi
LISTS OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS .....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Problem statement and justification of the study .....	3
1.2 Research questions .....	3
1.3 Thesis Outline .....	4
CHAPTER 2- SLUM GOVERNANCE IN GLOBAL POLITICS .....	5
2.1 Slums and SDG 11 .....	5
2.2 From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals.....	6
2.3 Localization of the SDGs .....	8
2.4 Slum governance before the MDGs and SDGs.....	9
2.5 Concepts .....	11
2.5.1 Slum governance .....	11
2.5.2 Oppression .....	14
2.5.3 Resistance .....	14
CHAPTER 3- METHODS: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF SLUM GOVERNANCE .....	16
3. 1 Sources of Data and Methods of Data Collection.....	16
3.2 Case based Analysis .....	18
3.3 Limitations .....	19

CHAPTER 4- CASE STUDY: SLUM GOVERNANCE, OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE IN ACCRA.....	21
4.1 Case study .....	21
4.1.1 Overview of Old Fadama .....	24
4.1.2 Overview of Glefe .....	25
4.2 Incidents, Oppression and Resistance in Accra .....	26
4.2.1 Overview of the types of slums .....	26
4.2.2 Incident 1: The demolition of Old Fadama in 2015 .....	26
4.2.3 Incident 2: Demolition at Glefe in 2021 .....	32
4.3 Local Level policies targeting slums.....	34
4.3.1 Local Government’s Decongestion and Eviction policy .....	34
4.3.2 Decentralization in Ghana and the Mandate of MMDAs in Urban Planning .....	35
4.4- National Policies and Slum Governance.....	36
4.4.1- The National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF) .....	36
4.4.2 The National Housing Policy (NHP).....	39
4.4.3 Link between the Local Decongestion Policy and National Policies .....	43
4.4.4 Assessments of the National Policies after their Implementation .....	45
4.4.5 Challenges to the Implementation of Slum Policies.....	46
4.4.6 Adoption of SDGs 11 in Ghana.....	47
4.5 Discussion – slum governance discussed.....	48
CHAPTER 5- CONCLUSION .....	54
REFERENCES .....	56

## **CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION**

Slums are a growing global urban phenomenon and an increasingly widespread form of human settlements (UN-Habitat, 2009; 2011a; 2013; Di Muzio, 2008). The prevalence of slums continues to be one of the most pressing challenges facing the global cities making sustainable living more taxing. Around the world today, a quarter of the urban population live in slums (UN-Habitat, 2016b; 2016c). This situation has weakened governmental authorities' efforts in providing basic services such as housing for the urban population (Carter, 1981; Hardiman and Midgley, 1982). The rate of slum development in the world especially in many developing countries pose urban planning and management challenges to the government (UN-Habitat, 2003b). Urban slums are characterized by deplorable living conditions with poor land use planning, inadequate social services, inappropriate waste management, high levels of communicable diseases, exposure to fire outbreaks, floods, and violence (Agyarko-Oduro, 2009; Butala et al., 2010).

Slums are a recurring feature of urbanization (Cities Alliance, n. d) and they are inherently tied to threats of eviction (Ocheje, 2007). Under the international law, forced eviction is defined as the “permanent or temporary removal against the will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or the land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection” (UN-CESCR, 1997). The frequency of forced evictions has increased in both developing and developed countries (Ocheje, 2007; Du Plessis et al., 2011; UN, 2014). Statistics indicated that about 2 million people in the world are forcibly evicted every year, while millions are threatened with forced evictions (Du Plessis et al., 2011; UN, 2014; UN-Habitat, 2018). Today, forced evictions have received a global attention as increasing number of people in the Global South, especially Africa, are dispossessed and ejected from their homes, often through the use of force, coercion and intimidation (Datta, 2012; Nally, 2015; Jeffery et al., 2012; Janoshka and Sequera, 2014; Otiso, 2002; Brickell et al., 2017; Olds et al., 2002). Similarly, forced eviction in the Global North has caused social inequality, heightened housing insecurity and violent displacement (UN, 2014; Desmond, 2012; 2016; Purser, 2016; Romanos, 2014; Vasudevan, 2017). According to the United Nations (2014), ‘accelerating urbanization, climate change and globalization, financial and other global crises have contributed to making forced evictions even more acute and complex’.

Faced with the extent and persistence of slums and informal settlements in most developing countries, city government and authorities have implemented several types of ad hoc interventions in governing slums. One of these interventions is forced eviction and demolition without any compensation (Dupont, 2011). Just like Ghana, slum governance is understood to be slum clearance and forced evictions in order to attain a ‘global city status’ and to create more opportunities for tourism and investments (Ocheje, 2007; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018). In most of the cases, bulldozers were found destroying shacks of communities without making provisions for replacement or compensation (Du Plessis, 2005; Ocheje, 2007; Afenah, 2009; 2012; Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018; MoF, 2018). Also, the methods of decision-making, design and implementation and specifically the manner in which the affected people are treated depicts oppression. This is because most of the evictions that have taken place were not devoid of harassments, beatings and some inhumane treatments (Onuoha, 2014; Steel et al., 2014; Abrokwah, 2013; Gillespie, 2017; Osei-Boateng, 2019; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018; Obeng-Odoom, 2011). Similarly, the approach has been described as a serious abuse of human rights and the very opposite of the governments’ stated commitment to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 11 i.e. to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Expecting that demolishing of slums and informal settlements with force will somehow eradicate the slums is at best a delusion, because the only thing forced eviction guarantees in the creation of new slums. Hence, slums will forever remain in cities if the underlying causes for slum formations is not tackled. It is interesting that cases of forced eviction and demolition as a common urban growth have been justified for reasons of infrastructural development, beautification, urban renewal, eradication of slums and inner city regeneration (Du Plessis et al., 2011; UN, 2014), however, this intervention has no altruistic aims, but a clear negative impacts on the wellbeing of slum residents (Gupte et al., 2019). Substantial research done on the effects of forced eviction on social and economic wellbeing of evictee households include economic hardships, disruption of social networks, and a feeling of uprootment (Dupont 2008; Takeuchi et al. 2008; Hazareesingh 2001; Lall et al. 2008 cited in Gupte et al., 2019).

It is against this background that this thesis seeks to analyze oppression and resistance in the global city with a case study of slum governance in Accra. The thesis also aims to assess how these oppressions and resistances come about. Furthermore, the study will highlight how Accra has envisioned slum governance in formal rules and strategies.

## **1.1 Problem statement and justification of the study**

The local government of Accra uses the strategies of forced eviction and demolitions to govern slums. The use of violence and bulldozers, rant of armed police and the military, screams of women, the wails of men, and tears of children (Obeng- Odoom, 2013) are the images of forced evictions in Accra. The number of people who live in slums and work in the informal economy in Accra live in constant fear of forced eviction. Only few of slum management measures have provisions for affordable housing, regularizations of tenancies, urban renewal and slum upgrading exist. However, these measures are unsustainable due to lack or insufficient funds while others tend to oppress the poor than improving their lots. Because of the failure of such designed measures, the local government still resorts to the use of force to evict and demolish slum settlements. The use of Special Task Forces and occasional use of the police and the military have led to several occasions of violations of the fundamental human rights of the people to housing and employments. This has attracted many resistances from the affected people who prevents the local government from carrying out the so-called eviction and demolition exercises. Though some slums may be illegal in Ghana, the Municipal authorities in Accra often turn blind eyes to slum locations and limit the flow of key services and provisions to them. This may be a noncompliance with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 to ensure sustainable cities by upgrading slums. Therefore, the extent to which there is inclusiveness, equity, safety, and broad-based participation to make slums a better place to dwell is questioned. The interest of the local government is not in alignment with that of the international interest of slums upgrading. There is the need to redefine slum governance in Accra and to adopt a more inclusive and sustainable strategies to achieve the goal of making slums a better place to dwell.

Based on the gaps spotted, this thesis therefore attempts to highlight how slum governance leads to oppression and resistance in Accra. It will further probe into how the strategies adopted by the government reinforce oppression and resistance among the slum dwellers.

## **1.2 Research questions**

The indicative research questions for this study are:

1. What are the formal regulations and strategies of slum governance in Accra?
2. Does slum governance lead to oppression and resistance in Accra and how?

### **1.3 Thesis Outline**

This thesis is organized in five chapters. The first chapter introduces the issue of slums and forced evictions from global to local context. It then states the problem and the justification of the study. The research questions of the study then follows. Chapter 2 contains the literature review on slum governance in global politics, and set the context for the whole study. A systematic literature review was conducted with the aim to understand why slums are on the agenda of global politics in relation to SDG 11. It also provide a review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the transitional shift from the MDGs to the SDGs, the localization of the SDGs and slum governance before the MDGs and SDGs. The chapter finally describes the concepts of slum governance, oppression and resistance in relation to the occurrence of forced eviction and demolition from a developing world perspective. Chapter 3 outlines the methods and materials used for the study. A review of the appropriate method adopted for the data collection and analysis was made. The chapter then closes by pointing out the challenges faced in the study and how they were managed. Chapter 4 presents and discusses the findings of the study by first introducing the case. The findings and discussions were made in accordance with the research questions of the study. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the whole study by looking at the possible implications of the findings to the conceptual foundation.

## **CHAPTER 2- SLUM GOVERNANCE IN GLOBAL POLITICS**

### **2.1 Slums and SDG 11**

UN-Habitat estimates that by 2050, 6.4 billion people will live in cities and 3 billion could be living in slums if no practical framework for action is implemented to address the issue (UN-Habitat, 2015; 2020). Currently, about 4 billion people worldwide live in cities, of which 1 billion live in slums (Ibid). Thus, according to the UN-Habitat, there is a large gap between slum dwellers and the rest of the urban population in adequate housing with access to basic services. Slums represent one of the major enduring faces of poverty, deprivation, exclusion and inequality in cities (UN, 2015; UN-Habitat, 2015; 2016b; 2016c). Also, slums are typically associated with several environmental challenges, social and economic exclusion that inhibit people and cities from fulfilling their potential for human development and economic growth (Corburn and Karanja, 2014; Douglas et al., 2008; Brelsford et al., 2018).

The Sustainable Development Goal 11 which was adopted in 2015 by the United Nations seeks to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (UN, 2015; UN-Habitat, 2015; 2016c; Paula, 2016; Odote and Olale, 2021). Particularly, target 11.1 ensure access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for all and upgrading of slums by 2030. The main strategy advocated by the UN to improve the lives of slum dwellers is “Slum Upgrading” and this is clearly stated in Target 11.1 (‘...upgrade slums’). According to the Cities Alliance (n.d) Slum Upgrading is an improvement in housing and surrounding infrastructure; greater access to social provision; ensuring secure tenure and citizenship to slum dwellers without displacing them. Slum upgrading is a crucial part of city (re)development as the process is meant to reduce socio-spatial inequalities and foster social and economic inclusion (Olthuis, et al., 2015). Slum upgrading process has also been argued to promote a spatial justice and tenure security (Uwayezu and De Vries, 2018). One widely championed implementation mechanism is a Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP). In this regard, the SDG indicator for Target 11.1 is set to be measured by the urban population living in slums by the year 2030 (UNGA, 2015; UN-DESA, 2019).

Furthermore, other targets under SDG 11 seeks to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible green and public space as well as affordable and sustainable transport systems for all.



(UN-Habitat, 2016b; UN-DESA, 2016). Addressing issues of housing, transportation, flooding, waste management and sanitation, air, water and noise pollution, amongst others contributes to efforts towards addressing these other related SDGs. Thus, the adoption of a Sustainable Development Goal for cities (SDG 11) represents a turning point in recognition of the importance of cities, not only as sites of development, but also as important actors in global governance and politics (Stepputat and Van Voorst, 2016). In addition, the SDG 11 firmly places urbanization at the forefront of global development policy (Vaidya and Chatterji, 2020). This recognition goes beyond viewing urbanization simply as a demographic phenomenon but rather as a transformative process capable of stirring up various aspects of global development (Ibid). Consequently, specific targets from other goals also apply to slums and fall within its purview, such as poverty reduction (Goal 1), ensuring access to safe water and sanitation for all (Goal 6), reducing waste generation (Goal 12) and strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate hazards (Goal 13) (Vaidya and Chatterji 2020; Croese et al., 2021). Hence, SDG 11 can be seen as a comprehensive outline to guide urban policy makers.

Due to the level of interconnectedness of the SDG11 with other goals, a multi-stakeholder approach and collaboration is required to implement SDG 11. Several authors propose a collaborative approach and inclusivity of all relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the goals (Reed et al. 2016; Waage et al. 2015; van Vuuren et al. 2015). Similarly, the implementation of the global development goals is expected to be carried out at the regional and local communities where the local authorities work for effective implementation (Graute 2016; Koch and Krellenberg 2018; Lucci and Lynch, 2016). Thus there is the need to translate the global goals at the local governance level for implementation since the roles played by the local governments are critical and paramount for the success of the SDGs (South African Local Government Association cited in UNDP, 2014, p. 6).

## **2.2 From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals**

Before the adoption of the SDGs, the MDGs existed and slums have been part of the universal sustainable development agenda since the Millennium Summit. However, it can be argued that the inclusion of slums in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was limited due to poor preparation and inconsistency (Teferi, 2017). The MDGs comprised 8 goals and 21 targets, and the drive of the MDGs was for countries, particularly developing countries, to work towards

eliminating poverty and enhancing development (Nunes et al., 2016; Kumar et al., 2016; UNDP, 2016; Pisano et al., 2015). Within the MDGs, Target 7D aimed to improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers (UN, 2015). In some areas, this target has been achieved, however, slum improvement and reduction have been negatively outweighed by devastating slum development (Perry et al., 2014; UN Habitat, 2013). Although the lives of 320 million slum dwellers have been improved, yet the total number has increased, making poverty eradication a vast challenge to be addressed (UN-Habitat, 2016c). This increasing disparity and exclusion is a result of the failure of housing policies and inadequate investment in pro-poor urban and housing development schemes. Learning from the MDG practice, it is important to continue the assurance for better-quality living standards in slums towards sustainable and adequate housing for all through national targets indicators and monitoring mechanisms. Hence, the adoption of the SDGs.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) came into existence in 2015 as a replacement for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that had been in place since 2000 (Okyere et al., 2021; Tandoh-Offin, 2019; UNDP, 2016; Anafo, 2021). The request for the new initiative was made as a result of the expectations, achievements and challenges of the MDGs (UNDP 2016). The SDGs are ambitious initiatives adopted by the United Nations to collectively address sustainable development issues from ecological, social and economic dimensions (Beisheim and Simon, 2016; Lucci and Lally 2016), and employing the principles of integration and indivisibility (UN, 2015) to capture their interdependencies (Jiménez-Aceituno et al., 2019). The SDGs were adopted by 193 countries and it involved intergovernmental engagements as well as the participation of different stakeholders in the review and agenda development processes (UN 2015). There are 17 goals and 169 targets in the SDGs which aims at addressing development challenges of poverty, hunger, inclusion and environmental sustainability (Lucci and Lally 2016; UNDP 2016), with the vision of “leaving no one behind” (UN-Habitat, 2015; Acuto and Parnell, 2016). The Sustainable Development Goals also encompass the Millennium Development Goals and at the same time incorporate several newer goals (Pisano et al., 2015; UNDP, 2016). Target one of SDG 11 is extremely relevant since it is partly a continuation of the MDG Target 7D (UN-Habitat, 2016c).

However, it is important to note that the SDGs differ fundamentally from their MDGs predecessor. The SDGs represent a more holistic approach to urban solutions rather than isolated, sector-specific tasks. It also obligates all governments both in the Global North and South to solve

problems at home and do all they can to overcome the challenges that faces the world (UNDP, 2016; Nunes et al., 2016; Kumar et al., 2016). The SDGs represent the world's first attempt to capture the breath and indivisibility of shared challenges, thus overcoming one, demands tackling them all (Ibid). Hence, the SDGs recognize this and aim at poverty, injustice, insecurity and environmental degradation that bind and underlie today's challenges. Again, the SDGs have clear expectations that all governments can adapt to their context, following global ambitions and employing disaggregated data wherever necessary (UNDP, 2016).

### **2.3 Localization of the SDGs**

The localization of the SDGs is the process of “taking into account subnational contexts in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda” (GTF et al., 2016). Though the SDGs are global, their achievements depend on cities and regions. SDG 11 is the pivot of the localizing process because SDG 11 is the driver to attaining other goals (GTF et al., 2016; Satterthwaite, 2018; Smith et al., 2018), considering the interlinkages and overlaps among the goals in relation to local development realities (Stephens et al., 2018). Also, the achievement of these SDGs depends to large extent on the ability of local and regional governments to promote integrated, inclusive and sustainable territorial development (GTF et al., 2016). Localizing the SDGs will provide a framework for local development policies and the integration of SDGs within sub-national level planning will be a crucial step in landing the new agenda in regions and cities. Hence, the need for the localization. Nonetheless, the attainment of SDGs in cities differs among counties in Europe, Antarctica, the Americas, Africa, and Asia (Buyana et al., 2022). Particularly, Africa has the fastest urbanization rates in the world (Parnell and Pieterse, 2014) and must therefore consider the diversity of its urban conditions in the implementation of the SDGs. Also, African cities are heterogeneous and varies in terms of history, transitions, cultures, demographic and governance, hence policy coherence and integration cannot be easily pursued and may largely remain abstract as compared to other cities in the globe (Buyana et al., 2022). Moreover, African cities faces social inclusion challenges and the universal SDG principle of “leaving no one behind” may match the interests of some cities but not all types of urban sub-populations in African cities. Hence there may be issues of inequality and possible exclusion of vulnerable groups such as slum dwellers (Ibid). African cities have also been confronted by intra-urban inequalities that stem from intersections of structural, social, economic, and spatial disadvantage (Buyana et al., 2022). Other challenges may include National commitment to follow-up and review systems of the SDGs as well as financial, maintaining peace,

and accountability (Kumar et al., 2016; Buyana et al., 2022) pose as a threat to the effective implementation of SDGs in African cities. Therefore, some scholars and practitioners have called for “tenable and flexibly deployable” approaches to localization of the SDGs for a visible progress by 2030 (Parnell, 2016; Patel et al., 2017; Arfvidsson et al., 2017; Davidson et al., 2019; Croese et al., 2020; Malonza and Ortega, 2020).

#### **2.4 Slum governance before the MDGs and SDGs**

It is important to note that slum governance has been in existence before the adoption of the MDGs and SDGs. Thus, over the years, several efforts have been made by governments, especially in developing countries, to govern slums before the implementation of these global agendas.

In the early 1950s and 60s, most governments in developing countries acknowledged the existence of slums but did nothing or little about them (Duah and Bugri, 2016; UN-Habitat, 2003b). They adopted a policy of neglect or laissez-faire attitude towards slums that were rapidly increasing on account of high rural-urban migration (Arimah, 2011). This approach was based on the notion that slums were illegal and temporary, and would disappear with economic growth (UN-Habitat, 2003b). Hence, slums were seen as an immediate solution that posed no major threats to long term urban development. The neglect of slums and informal settlements was such that they were not provided with basic services or even shown on land use maps, but depicted as blank spots indicative of undeveloped land (Wekwete, 1997 cited in Arimah, 2011).

However, between 1970s and 90s, the attitude of governments changed, by taking an aggressive stance in dealing with slums (Duah and Bugri, 2016). Forced evictions and slum clearance was adopted when it became evident that slums were not about to disappear as predicted by economic models (Otiso, 2003; UN-Habitat, 2003b; Gilbert, 2007; Ghertner, 2008; Obeng-Odoom and Amedzro, 2011; Odote and Olale, 2021). As a result, governments forcibly carried out mass evictions of slum dwellers, accompanied by razing down their homes (IEA, 1993; Durand-Lasserve and Clerc, 1996; UN-Habitat, 2003b). However, the experience of the developing countries shows that slum clearance is not a solution to the proliferation of slums and informal settlements because it focuses on the symptoms rather than the root causes of such settlements (Arimah, 2011; Parry, 2015). Thus, resulting in the displacement of slum dwellers rather than elimination, destruction of fixed capital and livelihoods, loss of social and safety networks, family

disintegration, psychological and emotional trauma, increased poverty and intensifying the housing deficit (Arimah, 2011).

Following criticisms on the inhumane treatment exhibited during forced evictions and slum clearance, authorities introduced programmes of relocation and resettlement in which evicted households were assigned alternative locations on sites away from their former abode (UN-Habitat, 2003b). However, the relocation programmes faced challenges as authorities in most cases lacked the funds to either build low-cost housing or acquire and service sites (Odote and Olale, 2021; Arimah, 2011; IEA, 1993). Hence, this option also did not lead to solving the challenge of slums in urban areas, instead it has intensified the problem (Odote and Olale, 2021; Arimah, 2011).

Slum upgrading programmes were also embarked on, given the failure of previous strategies to effectively tackle the problem of slums and informal settlements (IEA, 1993; Arimah, 2011). Most African countries in the 1980s adopted slum upgrading programmes and they were largely funded by the World Bank (Arimah, 2011). This intervention programmes also marked a radical change in official attitude towards slum and informal settlements through the provision and improvement of basic services and physical infrastructure such as water, sanitation, garbage collection, street lighting, paved footpaths and streets (Abelson, 1996; World Bank, 2000; Arimah, 2011). Although slum upgrading is cheaper than other strategies and have produced some notable results, yet they have been criticized on several grounds including; failing to have a citywide effect; low levels of investment incapable of rectifying decades of neglect and deterioration; the adoption of a project-oriented approach that failed to ensure the necessary follow-up maintenance of upgraded infrastructure; hasty planning which allowed for little or no input from beneficiary communities, thereby resulting in lack of ownership and reluctance to pay for improved services; inability to address the more fundamental supply constraints of land, finance and building materials; weak institutional and financial mechanism as evidenced by the high dependence on external funding; and the absence of any clear focus on poverty reduction (Abelson, 1996; Kessides, 1997; Okpala, 1999; Werlin, 1999; Tebbal and Ray, 2001; UN-Habitat, 2003a; Gulayani and Bassett, 2007). All these have restricted the effectiveness of slum upgrading strategies in Africa (Arimah, 2011).

It is noteworthy to mention that to date, most African countries still resort to forced eviction and slum demolitions (Davis, 2005; Arimah, 2011). Ghana is not exempted from this approach to slum governance as local governments have pursued this approach for many years (Obeng-Odoom and

Amedzro, 2011). In Accra, the city government still carry out decongestion, forced eviction and demolition of slums with the notion that slum dwellers will return permanently to their places of origin (Broadbent, 2012; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018; Adogla-Bessa, 2019). However, forced evictions and demolishing of illegal housing structures in the slums have not achieved the desired purposes (Ekott, 2018; Elrayies, 2016; Psirmoi, 2018; Parry, 2015). This is because, slums still do exist with projections of increased growth and seemingly no hope of eradication due to several challenges such as the lack of coordination and collaboration with city management institutions and the lack of involvement of the slum dwellers in decision making (Amoako and Cobbinah, 2011).

## **2.5 Concepts**

The concepts look into the definitions of the major topic-related terms. This is done to adopt working definitions to suit the research topic and to provide the parameters for the research. Also, these concepts are used as a strategy to search out for literature and analyze themes in the study.

### **2.5.1 Slum governance**

In order to appreciate slum governance, it is important to understand what governance means. Governance is a political approach that relates to processes of decision making and implementation (Obeng-Odoom, 2013). It involves the interaction of multiple actors, including governmental, private and civic society groups (UNDP, 2005; Obeng-Odoom, 2012). The United Nation Development Programme also define governance as:

*“The exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country’s affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences”* (UNDP, 2000 cited in UN-Habitat, 2002).

Hence, slum governance nestles within this wide governance discourse to mean how government at all levels (local, regional and national) and other stakeholders decide how to plan, finance and manage slums in urban areas. Therefore, the working definition for slum governance is the processes and structures through which decisions are made, implemented and enforced in slums. Slum governance is influenced by the creation and operation of political institutions, government capacity to make and implement decisions and the extent to which these decisions recognize and respond to the interests of the urban poor slum dwellers (Avis, 2016). Also, slum governance

determines whether the poor slum dwellers benefit from economic development, how they bring their influence to bear and whether political and institutional systems as well as processes and mechanisms facilitate inclusive and pro-poor decisions and outcomes. In many cities especially in the developing countries, the population has increased faster than the capacity of planners to provide houses and infrastructure and of local businesses to provide jobs (Moretti, 2014). This has led to the emergence of slums and informal settlements (Avis, 2016).

Ni et al., (2014) argued that slum governance can stimulate economic growth. Thus, investment in slum governance can contribute to increased output. According to them, economic development may affect the capacity of public finances, particularly tax revenue, which is an integral part of the national income, as this may directly affect the government's ability to levy taxes. Thus impacting on the level of fiscal revenue and investment capacity of slum governance. They again argued that economic development can affect the demand for housing in the sense that the faster the economic development is, the higher the per capita income level. This will increase the need for more quality and affordable housing for slum dwellers and reduce their overall numbers. Hence, a good slum governance can solve the housing problems of poor residents and improve their living environment (Ni et al., 2014). Also, when slums are properly governed, slum dwellers can invest in their homes to make it a better place to live as well as contribute to poverty reduction, equality, and sustainable cities and communities (including adequate housing). Effective slum governance can further change the employment opportunities of the slum residents. This is because slum dwellers provide a cheaper labor for factories and when more locals are employed, the better their living conditions can be. In addition, the well-being of the urban poor can be improved by facilitating access to economic opportunities, supportive social networks and greater access to land, infrastructure and services. Whether and how these are available to the poor depends to a significant extent on urban slum governance, that is local political processes (formal and informal); the influence of the civil society organizations (CSOs) representing the poor; and the capacity of city government to respond (Devas et al., 2004). Mostly, the poor are affected disproportionately due to ineffective slum governance. Particularly, oppressive regulation of informal settlements can negatively impact upon livelihood opportunities of urban slum dwellers. The UN-Habitat indicated the capacity of slum and informal settlement dwellers to have "access to the benefits of urban citizenship" and therefore in ensuring the delivery of basic and essential services and infrastructure is linked to good urban slum governance (UN-Habitat, n.d). More so, academics (Moir et al., 2014; Parnell

and Simon, 2014) and donors (World Bank, 2009; OECD, 2015; UN-Habitat, 2015) agreed that effective slum governance depends not only on local institutions and actors but also on the framework set by national governments. According to Ni et al., (2014), the success of slum governance mainly depends on the attitude of the government toward slums, which determines governance policies and the status of economic development, that is, the capacity of the slum governance.

Also, several approaches have been used to explain slum governance. According to Lindblom (2020), one of these several models include incrementalism. Incrementalism as indicated emphasizes the variety of actors involved in the policy-making process and predicts that policy-makers will build on past policies and initiatives, focusing on incremental rather than entire changes to the existing ones (Agyabeng et al., 2022). Agyabeng et al., 2022 argued that slums governance driven by incremental approaches are often short-term and based on outputs. They further argued that incremental policy makers may be ‘bounded rationally’ and preoccupied with short-term policy outcome for political convenience. A study by Patel and Killemsetty (2020) reveals that despite several policy interventions to improve the lives of slum dwellers, most programs are short-term, focused on outputs and tend to ignore long-term sustainability. Sandoval and Sarmiento (2020) also indicated that, slums and informal settlements are excluded from formal development processes, making it difficult for them to access services and trapping them in a cycle of poverty and precariousness. Similarly, lack of institutional collaboration and exclusion of slum dwellers in urban slum governance has constrained city managers to enforce policies of city resilience and sustainability (Adamtey et al., 2021). Evidence of the studies above indicate a lack of institutional collaboration and this action limits the governance and the achievement of slum policies. Inclusivity of slum dwellers through incremental policy and programs could serve a great deal in slum governance for their betterment (Agyabeng et al., 2022).

Hence, slum governance is crucial in this study because it focuses on collaboration through widening participation of actors and agencies such as governments, the private sector, civil society and the poor slum communities to become key players in improving and upgrading existing slum settlements instead of slum clearance and evictions in terms of decision making and implementation.



### **2.5.2 Oppression**

The term “oppression” according to Dominelli (2002) is the domination of a powerful group, politically, economically, socially, and culturally over subordinate groups. Barker (2003) also defined oppression as a social act of placing severe restrictions on an individual or group either by government or political organization. Again, Dalrymple and Burke (1995) define oppression as inhumane or degrading treatment of a group or individual based on some defining characteristics. In this study, the working definition of “oppression” is the forceful use of power and inhumane treatment to evict and demolish homes of those who live in slums without replacement or compensation. Thus, oppression happens when eviction, demolition and the method of its execution are done against the will of the people. Scholars indicated that most forced evictions in the Global South especially Africa are carried out through intimidation, coercion, and the use of violence (Brickell et al., 2017; Datta, 2012; Nally, 2015; Jeffery et al., 2012; Janoshka and Sequera, 2014; Otiso, 2002; Olds et al., 2002) of which Ghana is not an exception. The practice of forcibly evicting people from their homes and settlements constitutes a violation of the human right to adequate housing, as stated in several international legal instruments. Also, forced evictions devastate the lives of individuals, families and whole communities and could cause massive trauma, psychological and emotional distress (Du Plessis et al., 2011; Du Plessis, 2005). It does not only take away homes, but it also often leads to loss of livelihoods, and has major implications for economic, social, and cultural rights (Ibid).

### **2.5.3 Resistance**

Resistance according to Merriam-Webster dictionary is an act of opposing, or withstanding someone or something. Some scholars also define resistance as a productive force in a dynamic relation to power, co-constitutive of organizing governance (Erkama, 2010; Grant and Marshak, 2011; Thomas and Hardy, 2011). Resistance involves action and opposition (Hollander and Rachel, 2004). Benjamin (2007) defines resistance as “all those acts or actions in which individual(s) take a stand in opposition to a belief, idea, an ideology, a climate, a practice or an action that is oppressive and damaging to an individual and social well-being”. Therefore, the working definition for resistance in this study is the refusal of slum dwellers to accept forced evictions and demolitions. Resistance is an outcome of oppression. Thus, resistance is the first step towards change after the recognition of oppression. It can be noted that the history of resistance to forced evictions stretches across the globe with a range of responses and strategies by affected

communities, support organizations, institutions, individuals, as well as concerned international bodies, research communities and donor institutions (Du Plessis et al., 2011). Slum dwellers have adopted some strategies in resisting forced evictions. One of these tactics include legal actions. Communities affected by eviction often use legal mechanisms to challenge an impending eviction (Farha, 2011). Courts are generally used to challenge the eviction and to seek injunctions to stop the eviction from being carried out while a broader legal case is prepared (Ibid). In the most African Countries, particularly Ghana, slum inhabitants used legal channels in fighting against forced eviction with the support of the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) (COHRE, 2004; Du Plessis, 2005; Afenah, 2012; Morrison, 2017; Thiele, 2003). Similarly in Kibera, Nairobi, eighty residents filed a case in the High Court against the Kenya Railways, seeking an injunction to restrain the Railways from evicting them from living on the rail line operational corridor and the case was eventually settled (UN-Habitat, 2005 cited in Farha, 2011). Another strategy include the support and solidarity from the international community in addressing evictions in the domestic context (Farha, 2011; Du Plessis et al., 2011). In Accra, the Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and People's dialogue (PD) have obtained a very high level of recognition in this area, with innovative strategies and a great capacity for negotiation (Grant, 2006; Morrison, 2017). Also, a strong mobilization and people-driven processes through protest and direct confrontation i.e. street demonstrations, marching with placards, burning of tires, stone throwing and blocking of streets (Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Morrison, 2017) is another resisting strategy used. This strategy is a way to draw the attention of the media and the general public in order to make their voices heard. Furthermore, disobedience is another strategy that slum dwellers used to resist forced evictions and demolitions (Obeng-Odoom, 2013). Thus slum dwellers often return only few days after forced evictions rendering eviction exercises ineffective (Adaawen and Jørgensen, 2012).

It is important to note that power is pivotal in oppression as well as in resisting oppression. Kumsa (2011) indicated that power is not just the top down force that oppresses but also the bottom up and sideways resistance that liberates. That is why Bayat (2000) argued that in oppressive settings, the urban poor do not remain passive, but rather oppose authorities and the resources they need for their survival.

## **CHAPTER 3- METHODS: EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF SLUM GOVERNANCE**

This chapter focuses on the general approaches and techniques that were employed to investigate the research questions. Thus, the research method for this thesis is the empirical analysis of slum governance as a case study in Accra. It also provides information about data sources and collection. An overview of the type of data used and how it was sourced is given as well. The issue of data management and analysis was also presented with emphasis on qualitative data analysis. The last section provides the limitations of the study and how those limitations were managed to the barest minimum.

### **3. 1 Sources of Data and Methods of Data Collection**

A case study requires a wide array of information and contextual material to provide a detailed, in-depth picture of the case under scrutiny (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Therefore, this study is based on a systematic review of secondary literature using a case study approach. A systematic review is an explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners (Fink, 2019). It is also a review of a clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select and critically appraise relevant research and to collect and analyze data from the studies that are included in the review (Booth et al., 2021). Therefore, a systematic review of existing literature varies from other reviews in the sense that the whole body of work within a defined area is reviewed rather than a single book. This means that an author of such a review cannot choose a particular material to review, but must examine all materials within a research topic and area that meets the established criteria. Thus, clear criteria were given and followed to the end as excluding anything that does fall within the parameters would prevent and hinder the authenticity of the review. This approach allows any researcher to be able to replicate the literature review if given the same criteria.

From January to March of 2022, I collected literature concerning forced evictions and resistance by conducting a systematic literature review from 2012 to 2022. In selecting the literature that was deemed useful for this study, attention was placed more on Ghana. Thus, this thesis only reviewed the collected data that ranges from 2012 to 2022. This time frame 2012-2022 was chosen as it was considered to be a reasonable range because forced eviction is on the increase and could access most recent eviction reports. By collecting data on such an expansive spectrum, I was able to track

and trace the evolutions of eviction research over a vast period of time. However, due to time restraints, the process of collecting the data for this research was conducted with strict and clear criteria. To ensure relevance, the collected literature was sorted according to three criteria: 1) the definition of forced eviction and resistance 2) source, and 3) the geographical area. First, I determined that forced eviction is an act to forcefully remove a person(s) from their dwelling or home and resistance as all actions taken by individuals against forced evictions. The concept of a home for this thesis is limited to only slums and informal settlements.

Second, I collected materials on policy documents, media reports (e.g., online news posts), academic and professional literature, including articles published in peer-reviewed journals, and official documents from UN-Habitat. In addition, materials from organizational websites in Ghana; particularly, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH), Town and Country Planning Department (TCPD), and the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), were also included in the sources for the purposes of understanding how slums are governed, taking into consideration current government initiatives, programs and interventions and methods of slum governance.

Third, I decided to focus on Accra, the capital city of Ghana and exclude works and materials from other cities because of the increasing number of forced evictions and resistance recordings. Also Accra has the highest number of slums as compared to other cities in Ghana.

The data that was assessed for this systematic review was collected via Google and Google Scholar using the search terms: 'forced eviction,' 'evict,' 'evicted', 'resistance', 'resist', and 'oppression'. The following policy documents found in relation to slums were the National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF, 2012), and the National Housing Policy (NHP, 2015). These documents were filed in Adobe PDF version.

The screening of journal articles was done systematically through the following process: First, a quick scan of the abstract and conclusions of downloaded papers was done to grasp its content and later added to the reviewed articles. Secondly, to widen the scope of the search, bibliographies of all included articles were read to further obtain relevant literature for analysis. The data collected on the policy documents aided in answering the first research question while the journal articles and the media reports were helpful in answering the second research question.

The qualitative research strategy was adopted as the main methodological choice. The qualitative methods are the most appropriate approach to this study as they are suited to the in-depth exploration of human phenomena and the best way to capture the new and unexpected insights into slum governance in Accra (Creswell and Poth, 2016)

### **3.2 Case based Analysis**

Data for this study is analyzed qualitatively based on the secondary data collected. During the analysis, the oppression and resistance as a result of slum governance in the urban context were identified. Some broad headings were taken into consideration in the design of the secondary data search guides and these broad headings were in accordance with the objectives set for the research. Data processing for this study began with thorough review of vast literature on the topical issues. Data was immediately reviewed after each search session to aid the selection. Next, a thorough reading of the selected data was done in order to aid rewriting and reorganization of the data in accordance with the research objectives. I later cross-referenced the selected data with the selection criteria just to ensure that the data selected are in line with the objectives of the study. I then categorized data into broader themes to connect and link the data to each research questions. With this, data was sorted on the basis of similarities and relationships between the broader themes to achieve a systematic discovery of patterns, themes, constructs, and meanings in the results.

The study used several data analysis approaches which included literature review / desktop review, qualitative maps and photos depending on the specific objective the analysis seeks to achieve. Socio-economic-related issues were mainly analyzed as reported data from the sources where they were obtained. Also, other materials were obtained on the typography of the case study area and the slum communities where these oppressions and resistances due to slum governance have either occurred or are currently ongoing. The political-related issues were analyzed mainly through desktop review/ literature review. The desktop review was mainly in narratives to present the picture of urbanization, social conflicts and class contradictions in Accra and Ghana which have led to the topical issues discussed in the study.

Secondary data, as mentioned earlier formed the main source of data for this study. Some were reported in their original formats as evidences for most arguments for the present study. They also formed the baseline with which the findings from past interviews conducted by journalists as recorded in YouTube videos during the incidences of the topical issues were compared. It is

believed that to prevent a researcher from becoming overwhelmed with the vast array of secondary data that might be available, there must be a clear understanding of why the data is collected and of what kind of data is required and analyzed (McCaston, 1998). These guiding principles were carefully taken into consideration and most of these data were carefully scrutinized at the very beginning of the research.

Thus the steps that were followed in the data management and analysis included the identification, reading and cross-referencing of all the sources, making initial observations, correlations, and relationships between themes and how they apply to the research questions. Then a review of the data was done again to familiarize the data with the objectives of the study. Later, categorization of the data was done based on the research questions to inform the discussion of the findings. Next, phrase consistency and similarities were established. Data was then sorted into patterns, themes, constructs, and meanings. The final step was the presentation and analysis of the patterns, themes, constructs and meanings, taking into consideration the what, when, why, and how explanations of constructs and assertions. In all cases, though, this research gave contextual details about the case, connecting it back to the literature and concepts, and discussing how it fits into wider patterns and debates.

### **3.3 Limitations**

The researcher acknowledges the limitations of analyzing a case study without conducting primary research. More specifically, the lack of direct accounts from the two communities in the form of primary data presents a significant limitation to this research. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, travelling and gaining access to the field of study became a major problem, hence the study relied purely on secondary data. However, in order to make up for the primary data which could have been used alongside secondary data, past interviews of the affected people by journalists and commentaries given by the local government, NGOs and human right organizations as recorded in YouTube Videos were sourced and treated as useful primary data. Also, accounts of slum governance approaches as reported by the local government ensured a balanced representation of the case.

It is also noted that most of the articles used have different research questions in mind though they discussed the same topical issues. Thus, the secondary data may not have directly addressed the researcher's needs as it pertains to this study. In order to overcome this shortcoming, the researcher

did a thorough review of those articles to understand the contexts in which they were used and those that matches the context of this study were the ones that made it to the selected data. Also, the validity of the articles and other secondary data used were thoroughly verified to ensure reliability for this study.

Despite these limitations, the use of secondary has saved costs, time and energy of going to the field. The researcher does not have to devote money, time, energy, and other resources to this phase of research.

## **CHAPTER 4- CASE STUDY: SLUM GOVERNANCE, OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE IN ACCRA**

This chapter presents and discusses a case study of Accra's slum governance, oppression and resistance. By drawing on concepts and literature, the chapter sets the scene by introducing the case study of slum governance in two slum communities in Accra. Then the incidents of forced evictions leading to oppression and resistance followed. Decentralization system of governance as well as local government's decongestion policy is discussed to help us know the source of eviction and demolition in Accra. A section of this chapter also analyzed two national policy documents along with the localization of SDG11 in Ghana in order for us to understand the formal regulations and strategies governing slums and to have a fair knowledge of the intention of the government towards slums. These are the National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF) 2012 and the National Housing Policy (NHP) 2015. All the findings draw on empirical data taken from the existing literature in the research setting. The findings contribute to answering the questions; what are the formal regulations and strategies of slum governance in Accra? Does slum governance lead to oppression and resistance, and how?

### **4.1 Case study**

The research has applied the case study approach. Gerring (2016) defined a case study as "the intensive study of a single case to shed light on a larger class of cases. Yin (2013) also defined a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context. The two definitions together points to the benefit of the in-depth understandings gained from a particular case study and the aim of extracting lessons that can apply to a larger population. Thus, this study is about the in-depth qualitative case study of slum governance in Accra as a way of extracting issues regarding oppression and resistance in a global city. The aim is to provide new or unexpected insights into the subject matter and open up new directions for future research.

Accra is the capital city and the administrative center of Ghana. It is also the national economic center and the country's main connection with the global economy (Acheampong, 2021). Accra has experienced a rapid population growth with high land and housing prices over the years (GSS, 2012; 2014; 2020; AMA and UN-Habitat, 2011; Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Gillespie, 2021; Cobbinah and Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2021). In 2020, Accra's population stood at 5,455,692 (GSS, 2020) as



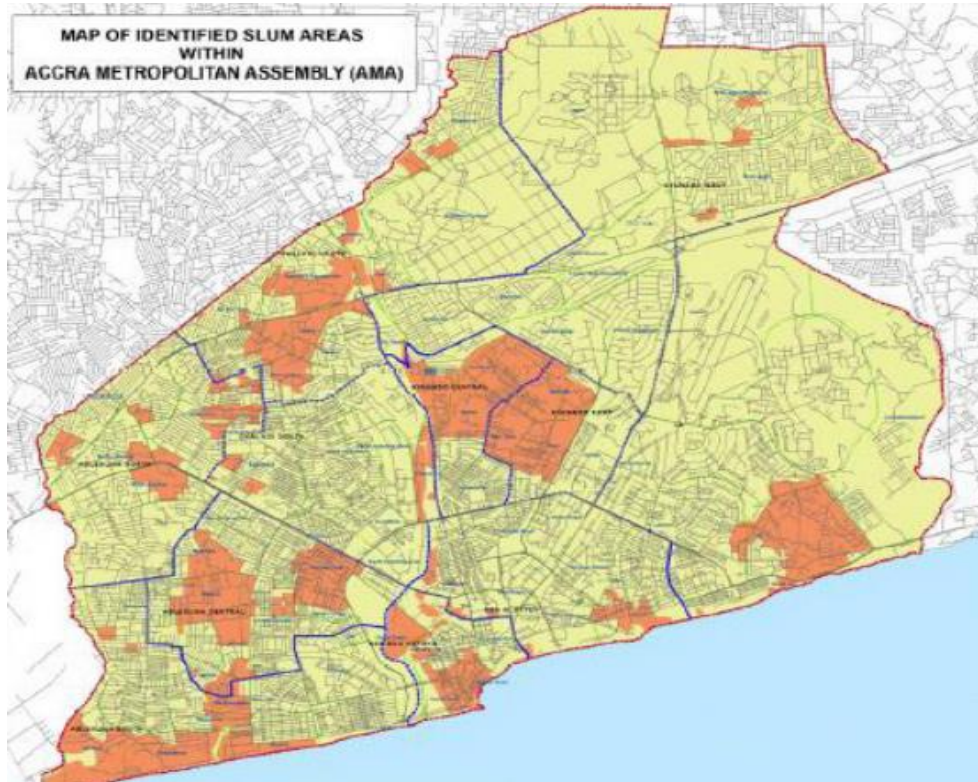
compared to previous censuses organized which stood at 4,010,054 in 2010 and 2,905,726 in 2000 (GSS, 2012). The rapid urbanization and the consequent limited affordable housing leading to the proliferation of slums and informal settlements are caused by rural-urban migration (King and Amponsah, 2012; Yankson and Bertrand, 2012; Cobbinah and Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2021; Gillespie, 2021). About 265 slums have been found at various stages of development in Accra (Peoples' Dialogue, 2016; Daily Graphic, 2018). Of the total slum settlements, 78 are already mature, 116 are in their infantile stage, while 71 have the potential of becoming slums because of the high influx of immigrants coupled with improper planning (AMA and UN-Habitat, 2011; Peoples' Dialogue, 2016; Daily Graphic, 2018) (see figure 1).

Slum governance in Accra is an interesting case because there are recorded incidences and locations where slum governance has led to oppressions and resistances (Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Bob-Milliar and Obeng-Odoom, 2011; Onuoha, 2014; Steel et al., 2014; Abrokwah, 2013; Gillespie, 2017; Osei-Boateng, 2019; Broadbent, 2012; Obeng-Odoom, 2011; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018). The central and local government have considered interventions to make Accra the cleanest city and due to this, slum governance has taken a different turn on the approach that the government has employed over the years. These complexities of slum governance as it applies to Accra is what this study is interested in to investigate in-depth. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that slum governance in Accra has taken on issues relating to evictions and demolitions which are done in forceful ways by hired taskforces. The residents who are affected by these force evictions and demolitions resort to resisting the local government in charge of the eviction exercises. These power displays between the local government and the affected slums residents where forced evictions have occurred gave the author of the thesis the impetus to choose Accra's slum governance as the case study. Two slum communities in Accra namely of Old Fadama and Glefe were chosen for the case study.

The criteria for the selection of Old Fadama and Glefe amidst other slum communities are the fact that first, they are among the largest slums in the capital city of Ghana. Second, they are in ecologically sensitive areas and third, Old Fadama and Glefe are two different slum settlements in terms of their formation and have suffered oppressions and as such displayed resistance due to slum governance. More information on Old Fadama and Glefe are covered in the next section of

this chapter. Meanwhile, the following give a spatial distribution of Old Fadama, Glefe and other slum locations in Accra.

*Figure 1 Map of Identified slums in the Accra Metropolitan Area*



*Source: AMA and UN-Habitat, 2011*

The map above shows the spatial distribution of slums in Accra. It can be seen that the majority of the areas classified as slum settlements are in the western and central parts of the city. Meanwhile, patches of slum settlements can be found along the coast and the North- East. Interestingly, there are no slums in the Eastern part of Accra. Thus, those areas could be classified as residential areas with formal settlements. This observation could be justified by the proper planning going on in those areas.

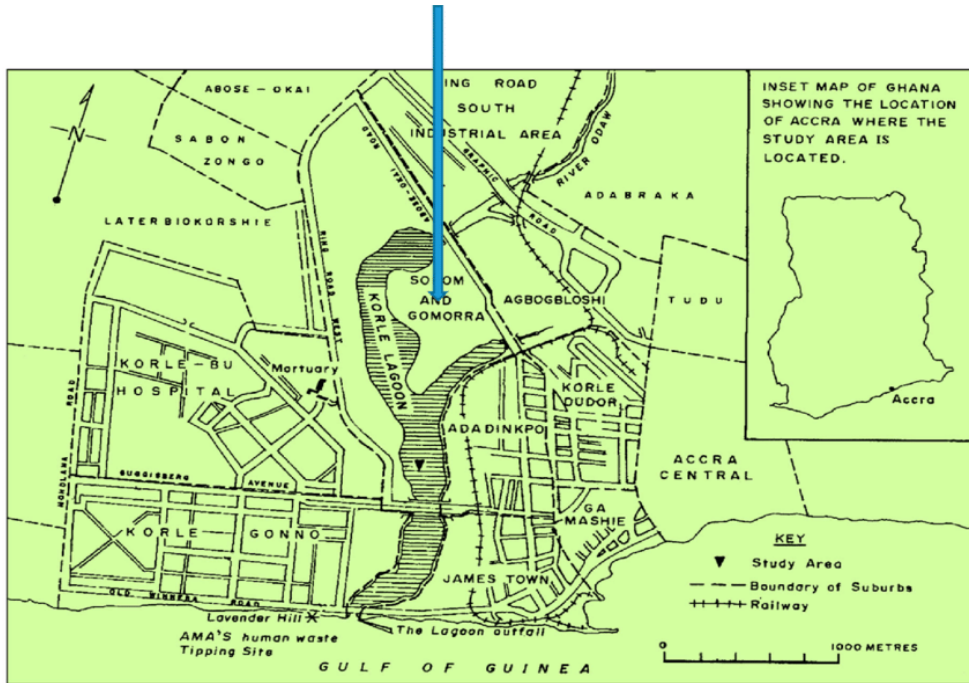
A case study approach is a convenient way to narrow focus. It has also been argued as being a valuable tool for gaining deeper insight into complex social phenomena, as it allows the opportunity to focus on attributes such as social, economic, physical, and community cohesion. According to Yin (2013), case studies are the preferred strategy to adopt in research when “how” and “why” questions are being asked and when the researcher has little control over the situation

whereby the focus is a contemporary problem in a real-life situation. Townes and Shavelson (2002) also comment that the case study method is useful to resolve “either a descriptive question (what happened?), or an explanatory question (how or why did something happen?)”. In this study, the what, when, how and why questions regarding the case are dealt with in the analysis. Though this approach may not be representative of what happens in general, the choice of the design is to explore deeper meanings rather than to quantify or generalize results (Catalano and Creswell, 2013; Walsh-Bowers, 2002). Hence the case study approach employed in this thesis provides the opportunity to gain concrete, contextual, in-depth knowledge about how slum governance leads to oppression and resistance in a global city like Accra (Bryman, 2016; Yin, 2013).

#### **4.1.1 Overview of Old Fadama**

Old Fadama also known as ‘Sodom and Gomorrah’ is an extra-legal slum located at the center of Accra and the largest slum in Ghana (see figure 1) (Farouk and Owusu, 2012). The slum is a heterogeneous community made up of a commercial and residential self-built wooden kiosks, shacks and containers that lacks basic infrastructure such as water, sanitation facilities, access roads, schools, waste management among others (Owusu, 2017). The slum serves as both home and a workplace for the urban poor, due to its low rents and proximity to the city center and central markets (Afenah, 2009; 2012). The slum occupies 31.3 hectares of government owned land (Afenah, 2012, Housing the Masses, 2010). It shares boundaries with the Odaw River and the Korle Lagoon (People’s Dialogue, 2009; Housing the Masses, 2010). The precarious location of the slum exposes the residents to frequent flooding and other environmental hazards (Afenah, 2009; 2012; Farouk and Owusu, 2012). According to the People’s Dialogue Ghana, the community’s population as at 2009 was 79,684. The Metropolitan Planning Director indicated that this population figure keeps changing because of the community’s role as one of the main entry points for unskilled rural–urban migrants into Accra (Amoako and Inkoom, 2018). The majority of the population work in the informal sector (Afenah, 2012). Most of these people are into plastic waste collection, scrap dealing, selling of food stuffs at the markets, and some operate home based businesses within the settlement as their main source of livelihood. The following map shows the location of Old Fadama within Accra as described above.

Figure 2 Map of Accra with a blue line showing the location of Old Fadama.



Source: Boadi and Kuitunen, 2002 p. 303.

#### 4.1.2 Overview of Glefe

Glefe is a slum community located at the coastal part of Accra. It is one of the hardest hit flood zones in the country. Glefe is located between the confluence of two lagoons namely ‘Gbugbe’ and ‘Gyatakpo’ to the north, and the Atlantic Ocean to the south (Bokpe, 2014; Amoako and Inkoom, 2018). It covers a 40-hectare land under the customary ownership of the ‘Sempe’ stool (Ibid). Thus, Glefe is a purchased slum. The slum lacks basic infrastructure and amenities such as potable water, access roads, proper drainage and sanitation among others (Kudiator, 2012; Andoh, 2013). The slum is a heterogeneous settler community with a different ethnic groups from all over the country, notably: Ewes, Akans, Ga Damgmes and some ethnic groups from northern Ghana (Amoako and Inkoom, 2018). The population of the community was estimated around 7,178 (AMA, 2010). The two main sources of livelihood for the community are fishing and salt production (Owusu, 2017).

## **4.2 Incidents, Oppression and Resistance in Accra**

To understand oppression and resistance of slum governance in Accra, this section discussed the incidences of forced evictions and demolitions that have resulted in oppression and resistance in two slum communities, namely, Old Fadama, and Glefe. The section also gave an overview of the types of slum settlement to gain a deeper understanding to why some of these settlements are prone to forced evictions more than others.

### **4.2.1 Overview of the types of slums**

To identify the types of slums in Accra, the study adopted Paller's comprehensive categorization of slums. He documented variation in the land-tenure security in the slums based on settlement patterns. This categorization is adopted for this study because it depicts a clearer picture of the slum formation processes and their assumption of legitimacy in Accra. According to Paller (2015), there are three main categorizations and these are extra-legal, indigenous and purchased slums. The extra-legal slums are settlements viewed as illegitimate and not officially recognized by local and national authorities hence they are mostly labeled as squatter settlements. Communities like Old Fadama, King Shona, Abuja CMB, are some examples. Indigenous slums are settlements that have a traditional inference and gradually become slum settlements due to poor planning and neglect by authorities. Examples are Chorkor, Ga Mashie, Alajo, and Korle Gonno among others. Finally, purchased slums are legal because all formal land purchasing and customary processes have been followed by owners. However, they have become slums because they lack essential services such as water and sanitation. Examples of such communities include; Sabon Zongo, New Town, Nima, Maamobi, Kotobabi, Glefe, Darkuman etc. Among these three continuum of slums, extra-legal slums are the most politically vulnerable, and they continually face threats of evictions. A well-documented example in the literature is Old Fadama (Afenah, 2012; Farouk and Owusu, 2012; Housing the Masses, 2010).

### **4.2.2 Incident 1: The demolition of Old Fadama in 2015**

In 2002, the threat to evict slum inhabitants of Old Fadama by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly had begun. According to AMA illegal occupation of the land, health risks, and uncontrolled building close to the Korle Lagoon and the Odaw River were among the factors that warranted the eviction (COHRE, 2004; People's Dialogue, 2009; Farouk and Owusu, 2012; Afenah, 2012). On 28 May 2002, the AMA served an eviction notice to the community and the Center for Public

Interest Law (CPIL) and Center on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) filed an appeal for an injunction against the eviction exercise but it was rejected (COHRE, 2004). The community sought the support of Slum-dwellers International (SDI) who managed to stop the eviction (Grant, 2006). Since then the attempts of AMA to evict Old Fadama continued. However, the several attempts has failed and the people continue to dwell (Global Development Institute, 2018).

The concept of resistance supports this assertion that some resisting strategies used against forced evictions include legal actions, support and solidarity from the international community (Farha, 2011; Du Plessis et al., 2011; Grant, 2006; Morrison, 2017). This then means that slum dwellers cannot be unconcern should they be evicted from their homes. Hence they will do everything humanly possible to resist the city government. This further indicates that slum dwellers must not be viewed as “encroachers and illegal occupants” of lands in the sense that everyone has the right to housing and this right is a package of rights not just limited to a bare shelter over one’s head. Therefore, city governments must make provisions for slum residents and follow due processes before carrying out any eviction exercise.

On 3 June 2015, there was a flood and fire disaster in Accra and the effects were detrimental, with death tolls reaching 200 (Graphic Online, 2015). According to AMA, the activities of slum dwellers were among the factors responsible for the disaster. The authorities have blamed the slums for polluting the rivers and unlawfully taking land that is necessary for dredging.

On 20 June 2015, AMA has embarked on the demolition exercise in Old Fadama, claiming that the homes were on waterways and had caused floods in Accra (News Ghana, 2015b; BBC News, 2015; CitifmOnline.com, 2015; Graphic Online; 2015; Ghana News Agency, 2015; Okyere et al., 2021). The reports indicated that the AMA has given a three-day notice to the residents informing about the demolishing of homes within 50 meters of the Odaw River (News Ghana, 2015a; CitifmOnline.com, 2015). Interestingly however, some victims claimed there was no prior notice while others said they heard the news in the media (News Ghana, 2015b). News by various media indicated that at about 04:30 GMT, a team of police and military arrived at Old Fadama and began evicting the residents whose structures were along the Odaw River (Okyere et al., 2021). As indicated by the media, over 1000 residents were caught unaware, no sufficient time was allotted for the residents to gather their things, and to find alternative accommodation. Many victims of the eviction specified that they were abused by the task force deployed by AMA. Children were

reported to be choked by teargases. Some dwellers showed rubber bullets as evidences of being shot. More so, majority claimed they were beaten by the police when rushing to gather their belongings.

The concept of oppression is line with this claim that forced evictions in the Global South especially Africa are carried out through intimidation, coercion, force, and the use of violence (Brickell et al., 2017; Datta, 2012; Nally, 2015; Jeffery et al., 2012; Janoshka and Sequera, 2014; Otiso, 2002; Olds et al., 2002). The use of physical violence could result in massive trauma, psychological and emotional distress (Du Plessis et al., 2011; Du Plessis, 2005). All these constitute oppression of the slum dwellers. Also, the use of force, violence and intimidation during forced evictions hinder effective slum governance in the sense that there is no transparency and collaboration in the government action against the slum dwellers.

The Deputy Minister, who is also the Member of Parliament for ‘Ododiodio’ Nii Lantey Vanderpuye, argued that the AMA went beyond the demarcation it agreed with the residents for Saturday’s demolition (News Ghana, 2015b). He explained that, prior to the demolition, AMA officials had met with the residents and it was agreed that only structures 50 meters away from the Odaw River would be demolished. However, houses as far as 300 meters away from the river were demolished. After the demolition, the residents demanded for compensation and asked the authorities to relocate them. The silence from AMA got the residents angry and the groups protested at various spots including Parliament House, State House, AMA office and the Agboghloshie Market, holding placards, vandalizing properties, burning tires, throwing stones and brandishing machetes (Graphic Online, 2015).

This narrative is in consistent with the concept of resistance which indicate a strong mobilization and people-driven processes through protest and direct confrontation i.e. street demonstrations, marching with placards, burning of tires, stone throwing and blocking of streets (Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Morrison, 2017). People will always resist when their rights are being infringe upon without any alternative provisions.

Riot police who came to the scene fired teargas at the demonstrators and about 20 people were arrested during the altercation while a number of the police officers were injured. The police seemed to be overpowered by the protesters who stoned and damaged police vehicles. BBC news



confirmed that gun shots were heard but could not tell if the police were using live ammunition (BBC News, 2015). An interview with one of the residents of Old Fadama indicated that;

*“The government don't think about us. Old Fadama is where some of us have lived for over 10 years, how could the demolition taskforce come and demolish our homes just because there is flooding in Accra? . . . The AMA should remember that we, the residents of Old Fadama are also humans not animals” (An interview of one of the residents, Joy News, 2015, YouTube video)*

It is therefore, consistent with the fact that the victims whose homes were destroyed have developed so much attachment to Old Fadama and are not willing to lose that sense of place which took them years to build.

*Figure 3 Old Fadama Before, During, and After the Demolition Exercise*



*Sources: CitifmOnline.com, 2015; BBC News, 2015*

More cases of resistance continued in the aftermath of the demolition exercise. The Daily Graphic published that on 25 June 2015 some victims have returned to the site (Daily Graphic, 2015). According to the news, the dwellers who first put up temporary structures for accommodation later transformed them into permanent ones indicating a very strong resistance of the people. According to Graphic Online (2017), the act of the residents could be described as a ‘wild goose chase’ by AMA. The residents further attempted to reclaim lands along the Odaw River in order to build for themselves more structures. In October, 2015, the AMA has received a \$100,000 financial support from the Turkish government to build a defense wall that will obstruct the slum community from throwing garbage into the river (Graphic Online, 2020). Though the wall was started but AMA could not finish it. Later, it was observed that part of the defense wall was broken by the residents



to create access to the demolished portions (Graphic Online, 2017). This claim is in line with the concept of resistance, indicating that disobedience is another strategy that slum dwellers used to resist forced evictions and demolitions (Obeng-Odoom, 2013). Thus slum dwellers often return only few days after forced evictions rendering eviction exercises ineffective (Adaawen and Jørgensen, 2012).

*Figure 4 Victims protest over the demolition exercise*



*Source; Graphic Online, 2015*

Figure 3 shows the protest of residents of Old Fadama due to the homelessness and joblessness caused by the demolition exercise. The protest was carried on June 24, 2015. The angry residents marched to the State House in order to draw the attention of the President to their plights. The residents again went to the Agboghloshie market to further cause more destructions. They set cars on fire and blocked the roads leading to the market in order that traders be stopped from going to and fro the market. Agboghloshie market is one of the largest markets in Ghana. The uniqueness of what pertains at the market is the pronounced role women play in it (Danso-Wiredu and Sam, 2019). Commodity-trading associations at the market act as governors at the market. The market associations function effectively because they have political power from the state to operate at the local level.

Again, on 15 April, 2020, amidst the Covid-19 the AMA joined forces with the Ministry of Sanitation to demolish Old Fadama (Graphic Online, 2020; Joy News, 2020; Ghanaweb, 2020). The same part of the slum that was demolished on June 2015 was again demolished to make way for the dredging of the Korle lagoon. The exercise has rendered over 1,000 slum dwellers homeless during the lock down period. Scores of victims of the demolition exercise such as men, women, the old and the young were displeased and abhorred the action of the AMA. According to the

reports, the conditions of the slum dwellers defeated the call for social distancing as a measure to prevent the spread.

The demolition exercises at Old Fadama attracted criticisms from human right advocates as well as NGOs. The Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), has condemned the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), for embarking on a demolition exercise without adhering to international human rights standards (GNA, 2015). The CHRAJ Deputy Commissioner, Joseph Whittal, in a statement indicated that:

*“Eviction should not result in people being rendered homeless or detracted from their basic rights to human existence”.*

Following from the statement of the human right worker, the eviction exercise at Old Fadama has caused many homeless and undermined their basic rights to human existence. The effects are characteristics of oppression on the affected people. People are being rendered homeless and without access to their regular means of livelihood and subsistence.

Again, according to BBC news, Amnesty International has described the demolition exercise during the lock down as “untimely and insensitive” and they urged the government to respect international human rights as they take measures to deal with the spread of the Coronavirus” (BBC, 2020).

Furthermore, the Social Enterprise Development (SEND) Ghana has condemned the demolition of Old Fadama in the following statement:

*“To undertake such exercise at a time that a section of the settlement had been razed down by fire, and at the height of a pandemic, without assessing its ramifications on the vulnerable citizens is most reprehensible and demonstrates government’s insensitivity to the plight of the people. We believe without any shred of doubt, that the way and manner the demolition exercise was carried out, constitute an infringement on the affected citizens’ right to housing, and in particular, non-compliance with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).” (Ghana News Agency (GNA), April 23, 2020).*

The organization was not pleased that the government could carry out a demolition exercise at such a time that the nations are on lock down in order to reduce the spread of the global pandemic. To them, the government could have been sensitive to the plights and concerns of the affected residents especially when they have rights to adequate housing.

The concept of Oppression supports this finding that the practice of forcibly evicting people from their homes and settlements constitutes a violation of the human right to adequate housing, as stated in several international legal instruments (Du Plessis et al., 2011; Du Plessis, 2005). People not only lose their homes and neighborhoods in which they have often invested a considerable amount of their life saving but also they are forced to abandon personal possessions. It therefore follows that demolition exercises carried out in Old Fadama was an abuse of the fundamental human right of the affected people to human existence. Also, it has rendered many vulnerable to the ongoing pandemic at the time which could result in emotional distress and trauma. It reinforces the assertion of the human rights organizations that the government has been untimely and insensitive to the people.

#### **4.2.3 Incident 2: Demolition at Glefe in 2021**

Glefe experienced a demolition exercise on Thursday, 24 November 2021, displacing over 200 residents (ABWMA, 2021; Citi News, 2021; GhanaWeb, 2021; GBC, 2021). The demolition, organized by the Ablekuma West Municipal Assembly (ABWMA) destroyed many structures such as wooden kiosks and metal containers which served as homes for the people. The exercise was part of the steps taken to protect the Glefe lagoon and was supervised by combined security personnel from the Ghana Police Service and Ghana Armed Forces. Excavators were used to demolish the illegal structures along the lagoons. According to the ABWMA, the structures built along the lagoon caused flooding anytime it rained, coupled with the dumping of refuse into the lagoons. The Assembly has engaged the community members verbally since the preceding year, thus informing them of the impending demolishing exercise. In the Assembly's bid to prevent the residents from further encroaching on the area, they indicated that debris from the exercise would be used as a boundary around the lagoon till a permanent solution is found.

The Mayor, Mr. George Cyril Bray in a cited interview with the Ghanaian Times said:

*“People were building near the lagoon which needs to be protected. I cautioned residents to desist from encroaching on the lagoon... the Assembly would not*

*hesitate to demolish structures any day. When they started constructing the structures, the Assembly’s taskforce went there to stop them. I personally went there to engage with them but the recalcitrant ones built on the weekends and holidays,”*

*Figure 5 Images of Glefe before, during, and after demolition*



*Source; Citi News, 2021; ABWMA, 2021; Joy News, 2021.*

Some angry Glefe residents protested against the demolishing. Roads were blocked and tires burnt to delay the exercise which was scheduled to have commenced around 6:30am (Ghanaian Times, 2021). The exercise began around 09:30 GMT after police officers from the Dansoman Divisional Police Command restored peace. The clash between the residents and the task force were given in media reports (GBC News 2021; Citi News, 2021). The affected residents claimed the Municipal Authority did not give them ample time to prepare. In addition, they found no reason to leave the place after several failed attempts by government to protect the lagoon. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic has negatively affected the economy and caused hardship, therefore, pulling down their homes was the most inconsiderate thing to do, especially as the festive season is approaching (GBC News, 2021).

This findings is consistent with the concept of oppression indicating that the forced eviction does not only take away homes, but it also often leads to loss of regular means of livelihoods and subsistence, and has major implications for economic, social, and cultural rights (Du Plessis et al., 2011; Du Plessis, 2005). According to YouTube videos which contained narrations by the affected people, their plights and concerns were that: first, they don’t have enough money to relocate to new accommodation hence they have nowhere to stay. Second, a number of the affected people are mothers of two to six children. They were worried about where to lay them. Third, the short

notice was not fair to them as it did not grant enough time for their evacuation. And fourth, their livelihoods were destroyed rendering them jobless.

Despite the plights and concerns of the affected people, the government is still determined to achieve their agenda. According to the Mayor of ABWMA, the refusal of the residents of Glefe to keep away from the lagoon and also to stop dumping refuse in the lagoon have made the demolition exercise more necessary to the government. The affected people further threatened the government that if nothing is done to remedy their plights and concerns, they will withdraw from voting.

The Glefe demolition and how it has oppressed the affected residents followed the case of Old Fadama. Many became homeless, jobless and violations of their basic right to human existence. It can be established therefore that slum governance in Ghana is a little too harsh on the people.

### **4.3 Local Level policies targeting slums**

It is important to note that the eviction and demolition exercises are policy interventions undertaken by the local government of Accra, thus the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) to curb the expansion of slums. This section therefore introduce the decongestion, eviction and demolition policy intervention of the local government of Ghana. Also, in order to appreciate the source of power of this local government, it presents the decentralization system of governance and the role of the local government provided in the constitution and the Local Government Act. This will help us understand the origin of the decongestion, forced evictions and demolition policy interventions.

#### **4.3.1 Local Government's Decongestion and Eviction policy**

Decongestion, eviction and demolition of slums and informal settlements are not new in urban Ghana. The approaches have their roots in the colonial era with support from legal frameworks that guide urban land use (Larbi et al., 2004). The concept of slum governance confirms this finding that slum governance driven by incremental approach only build on past policies and initiatives, than complete changes to the existing ones (Agyabeng et al., 2022). The legal framework for the Town and Country Planning Act (Cap 84) provides for the “removal, demolition or alteration” of buildings that are inconsistent with or obstruct the operation of the scheme (Government of Ghana 1945: 2). Even though, the board was officially eliminated in 1960 under the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act of 1960 (Act 33) yet, the powers of the board were vested effectively with the Town and Country Planning Department through the powers given

to the Minister (The Town and Country Planning Department (TCPD), 2022). In 1993, the Local Government Act (462) gave planning powers to the District Assemblies and copied CAP 84 (Ibid). While CAP 84 and its amendments set the guidelines of land use planning, the Local Government Act (462) does not provide any system of that sort, except to give the District Assemblies the powers to prepare and approve plans (TCPD, 2022). In Accra, this renewed emphasis on decongestion on spatial order is manifested in the by-law passed in 2011 that prohibits unauthorized structures and petty trading in the city. Furthermore, ‘Decongestion and Beautification of the City’ make up one of seven focus areas in Accra’s development plan for 2014, and as part of this agenda, the city seeks to continue with the removal of unauthorized structures and prevent reoccurrences within the city (AMA, 2014). Over the last decade, several decongestions, evictions and demolitions have occurred and threats of evictions have also been issued in Accra (Afenah 2012).

#### **4.3.2 Decentralization in Ghana and the Mandate of MMDAs in Urban Planning**

Ghana practices a decentralization system of governance. At the heart of Ghana’s current decentralization are the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) who serve as the principal representatives of the President at the local level. The decentralization had its roots from the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) Law 207 of 1988 as part of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and later replaced by the Local Government Act (Act 462) of 1993 after the return of the democratic constitutional rule in 1992 (Ayee 1996; 2003; Ahwoi, 2010; Owusu 2016; Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017). The 1992 constitution of Ghana provided further push to the process of decentralization. Article 240 (2) of the constitution stated that;

*“Functions, power, responsibilities and resources should be transferred from the Central Government of Local Government units; Measures should be taken to enhance the capacity of Local; Local Government Authorities to plan, initiate, coordinate, manage and execute policies in respect of matters affecting the local people; Local government units should have sound financial bases with adequate and reliable sources of revenue; Local Government staff must be controlled by the local authorities; and there should be popular participation in local decision-making” (Ghana’s Constitution, 1992).*

The Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462) also declares all communities in Ghana as statutory planning areas. Hence, the purpose of the creation of the MMDAs is to achieve a broad community based approach to urban planning and development (Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017). In addition to Act 462, other planning legislation such as the National Development Planning Systems Act of 1994 (Act 480) and the National Building Regulation Act (LI 1630) provide a framework for MMDAs to perform urban and regional planning functions at the district and local levels. The MMDAs are mandated without prejudice to:

*“prohibit, abate, remove, pull down or alter so as to bring into conformity with the approved plan, a physical development which does not conform to the approved plan, or the abatement, removal, demolition or alteration of which is necessary for the implementation of an approved plan” (Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462), Section 53).*

This urban planning legislation has given the MMDAs especially the AMA the power to decongest, evict and demolish any structure which does not conform to the approved plan in the cities. This notwithstanding, rapid growth in the urban population over the years presents countless opportunities and constraints to the country’s pursuit of urban sustainable development.

#### **4.4- National Policies and Slum Governance**

To know the formal rules and plans of the government of Ghana towards slums, this section of the chapter discussed two national policies, the National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF) and the National Housing Policy (NHP). It can be noted that there is no specific national policy for slum governance, however, these policies address issues of urban governance in relation to slums. Hence this section will help in answering the first research question to understand the intention of the government towards slums in the urban settings, particularly Accra. It further indicate the link between the national policies and the local government decongestion policy. Also assessments of the two policies were addressed alongside the challenges to their successful implementations. It again discussed the adoption of the SDG 11 and some challenges that could hinder the success of the global goal in relation to slums in Ghana, more specifically, Accra.

##### **4.4.1- The National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF)**

The NUPF was the first ever comprehensive urban policy that was implemented in 2012 and it recognized the need to provide for the increasing urban population vis-à-vis the prevailing urban

challenges in Ghana (Government of Ghana/Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 2012). After a four-year period of technical analysis, draft policy proposals, workshops, extensive domestic and international consultation, the National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF) was launched, along with a five-year detailed Action Plan (AP). Consistent with the scarcity of NUPs in Africa (Portney and Cuttler, 2010, cited in Anarfi et al., 2020), the top-down nature of urban governance and ineffective decentralization in Ghana mean that local authorities do not have the power to independently formulate and implement designed local urban policies for specific towns or cities. Despite this challenge, the National Urban Policy specifically provides a framework and direction for solving the challenges in Ghanaian urban areas by addressing issues of urban development and management; urbanization; urban governance; urban security; urban economic development, with emphasis on the informal sector; urban infrastructure provision, urban environmental improvement and urban planning issues (GoG/MLGRD, 2012). The overall vision of the policy is to lift Ghanaians out of poverty in the shortest possible time and to attain a middle income status. The policy framework therefore aims to improve the cities and towns by:

*“promoting a sustainable, spatially integrated and orderly development of urban settlements with adequate housing and services, efficient institutions, sound living and working environment for all people to support rapid socio-economic development of Ghana” (GoG/MLGRD, 2012, p.21).*

It is interesting to note that the policy will not only promote sustainability in the cities but will also ensure the orderly development of urban settlements, including slums. The policy thus has an “all-inclusive” approach to helping the disadvantaged and the vulnerable group i.e. low-income slum dwellers as we shall come to see in later sections of the chapter. This assertion is in consistent with the concept of slum governance which influences how the poor slum dwellers benefit from development as well as how processes and mechanisms enable inclusive and pro-poor decisions and outcomes. In addition, it seeks to prevent socio-economic and spatial inequalities in the cities of Ghana. The abovementioned goal of the policy thus has the overall potential of improving the housing conditions and extending key services to disadvantaged places in Ghana. More specifically, it may help to upgrade slum settlements in Accra when the policy is well implemented.



#### **4.4.1.2 Objectives of NUPF as it regards slums in Ghana**

NUPF outlined 12 objectives to be pursued in order to attain its goal through an Action Plan. Indirectly, four of the objectives seeks to deal with the issue of slums. They are:

*“To improve environmental quality of urban life” (p. 22).*

*“To ensure effective planning and management of urban growth and sprawl, especially of the primate cities and other large urban centers” (p. 22).*

*“To improve access to adequate and affordable low-income housing” (p. 22).*

*“To ensure efficient urban infrastructure and service delivery” (p. 22).*

From the above, the government has purposed to extend service delivery to slums under the policy objectives. Slums are part of urban life and to improve environmental quality of urban life, the government can certainly not ignore the slum communities, hence the objectives are good for making slums clean. Slum dwellers will now have access to efficient and low-income housing rather than dwelling in their shacks, kiosks, containers and open places. This also shows that the Ghanaian government, through the NUPF identifies the urgency of the housing situation in Ghana and how it impacts quality of life for its urban citizens especially the low-income slum dwellers.

#### **4.4.1.3 Achieving the objectives (Action Plan)**

For the achievement of the objectives, several policy initiatives have been pursued, few of the policy initiatives give recognition to slums. They include:

*“Change the official attitude towards informal enterprises from neglect to recognition and policy support” (p.24).*

*“Prepare and implement sanitation action plans for all ... (p.24).*

*“Upgrade slums and dilapidated housing stock, especially in urban areas selected as growth poles” (p.26).*

*“Explore the introduction of non-conventional housing finance and strategies that benefit low-income groups” (p.26).*

The initiatives above give a general overview of government intentions towards slums/ dwellers. Through the Action Plan (AP), NUPF makes a case for the upgrading of slums in urban areas by

promoting the private sector involvement in slum upgrade and redevelopment. Also, to upgrade slums, and inappropriate housing units in places considered as growth poles in the cities make Accra slums a target in the policy initiatives especially the idea of making Accra clean through appropriate collection, disposal, and treatment of solid, liquid and toxic waste. Furthermore, the government is working to divert the attention of slum dwellers to new forms of housing finance. This could aid the slum dwellers to improve their own living conditions in order to escape health issues, floods, and other natural disasters.

#### **4.4.2 The National Housing Policy (NHP)**

In this section, I presented the national housing policies that give recognition to Ghana urban slums. The findings regarding the housing policy is contained in the National Housing Policy (NHP) 2015. Other supporting findings are taken from scholars who had written about the issue. The section first discussed the policy vacuum created due to the failure of several policy attempts by the government.

##### **4.4.2.1 Policy vacuum and several failed policy attempts**

The housing industry in Ghana suffered many years of policy vacuum. Between 1987 and 1990, the first direct attempt of the government has culminated into the National Housing Policy and Action Plan. However, this only remain a mirage, not seeing the light of day. Again, more attempts by successive governments to adopt formal housing policy ended in futility (UN-Habitat, 2011b; Ansah, 2014; Boamah, 2014; Addo and Mba, 2021). For example, from 1991 to 1992, the National Shelter Strategy Document was prepared in collaboration with the UN-Habitat (UNCHS) but suffered failure as the National Housing Policy and Action Plan. Many attempts followed in 1999, 2000, 2003, and 2005 to review or update the shelter strategy but there were consistent failures as much as there were consistent trials. The housing system in Ghana, therefore, operated on project-based interventions by the government including the construction of houses, giving loans to workers to build houses, and subsidize state agencies (e.g. State Housing Company Limited, Tema Development Corporation, and Department of Rural Housing) to build for the public. The interventions further comprise of Roof and Wall Protection Loans Schemes, Supply of some Building Materials, Construction of low cost houses, Government Estate Houses, and Rural Housing Cooperatives among others. It should be noted that, even the so-called government

interventions in the housing sector were biased towards the low-income segment of the population, including the slum dwellers. It is clear there was no recognition of the average slum dweller.

The findings further indicated that:

*“The activities of most of the state agencies that embarked on housing programmes were directed primarily to housing workers in the urban areas who were formally employed” (p.2).*

Reasons for the consistent failure of successive governments to formally adopt draft housing policies as found out are given below:

*“On the supply side the factors include: Land cost and accessibility; Lack of access to credit; High cost of building materials; Outdated building codes and standards; and Lack of effective regulatory and monitoring mechanisms” (p.9)*

*“On the demand side, it is basically affordability in the face of general low level of incomes of the people” (p.10).*

This proved that the constraints against the nation's ability and capacity to resolve the housing crisis are many as compared to that of the people. It then highlights that the government is to blame for the huge housing deficit as it lacked the institutional capacity to make the housing system work in favor of all including the low-income earners. The government seemed to have failed in solving the many issues of housing in urban cities during those times. As a result, the housing deficit has intensified with higher rents and higher land prices. According to some scholars:

*“The urban poor are then push and pull to the slums where affordable housing is provided” (Addo, 2014; Takyi et al., 2020).*

This finding further highlights that in the absence of affordable housing for the low-income earner, slums will be a safe haven for them. In consistent with the assertion of the scholars, slum locations are places with cheap accommodation despite the environmental issues attached.

#### **4.4.2.2 The National Housing Policy 2015 and the place of slums**

After 3 decades of policy vacuum the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing under the auspices of the Government of Ghana adopted the National Housing Policy in 2015 (Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing, 2015). The general goal of the policy is to provide

adequate, decent, and affordable housing that would be accessible and sustainable by ensuring participation of all stakeholders in decision-making on housing development and allocation in their localities. The policy is meant to address the nation's huge housing deficits in the short term and ensure that low-income households could access housing either through ownership or on a rental basis in the medium term. In order to achieve this goal, it was agreed that:

*“Government has a major role to play in the creation of an enabling environment for housing delivery through a variety of initiatives particularly targeted at the low income” (p. 1).*

The above finding not only recognized the role of the government in delivering the goal of the housing policy but also puts a huge task on the government especially in an environment characterized by thresholds and uncertainty. This may be problematic in case the government fails to deliver.

Also, the policy framework recognizes the right of the people that the policy is intended for. It stated that:

*“Access to ‘adequate’ housing is a right every human should enjoy. Hence, the government is envisioned to provide access to safe, secure, decent and affordable housing either owned or rented” (p.13).*

This assertion supports the international human right which promulgates that everyone has the right to live in dignity and in habitable circumstances, vis-à-vis the right of the individual to choose their own housing needs. The government proposed to deal with issues regarding access so that the average Ghanaian is included in the policy. While the right of choice is important in a supposedly “access” circumstances, the welfare of the people is even more paramount. It is equally necessary to highlight that one of the determinants of people's choices is their level of income. Thus, any policy that will ensure the welfare of the people must take into consideration also the income level of the people. The extent to which “affordability” meets the income level of the people is a missing link in the housing policy document.

#### **4.4.2.3 Objectives of the policy in relation to slums**

There are 8 objectives in achieving the goal of the housing policy. Few are linked to slums and they are presented below:

*“To upgrade existing slums and prevent the occurrence of new ones” (p.14).*

The Government of Ghana recognized slum upgrading as the most proactive and effective way of improving the housing conditions and lives of the low-income slum dwellers. This action will contribute to the progressive realization of their right to an adequate standard of living, and more precisely their right to adequate housing. The issue of accessibility is also highlighted as:

*“To make housing programmes more accessible to the poor (Social Housing)”  
(p.14)*

It is remarkable that the policy will make housing accessible to the poor. This will go a long way to reduce homelessness and its associated problems. Also, it will help improve the psychological wellbeing and health of the poor as they will be able to access water, sanitation and other basic necessities. The objective is therefore good and has the potential of lifting the poor above the poverty line.

#### **4.4.2.4 Achieving the objectives (Action Plan)**

A number of initiatives have been designed to respond to the abovementioned objectives and for the purpose of the study, attention is paid to those that have a bearing on slums. It is envisaged that the combined implementation of these initiatives will lead to the improvement of the housing sector taking into consideration supply and demand, and the efficiency of the housing market. These initiatives are;

*“Establish and operate National Housing Fund as a mechanism to leverage private capital into housing and infrastructure investments (slum upgrading ....  
(p.16).*

*“Encourage the inclusion of rental housing... in slum upgrading programmes through land readjustment and land pooling mechanisms” (p.18).*

*“Formulate and implement slum infrastructure improvement policy ...” (p.23)*

*“Empower low-income slum dwellers to be economically viable to sustain their livelihoods and also participate in decision-making” (p.24)*

From the above findings, it follows that slums will be transformed through upgrading, while slum dwellers will be empowered and participate in decision making. This presents a broader picture

when it comes to slum governance in Ghana that will improve the standards of living for the average slum dweller in the cities. The concept of slum governance reinforces the finding that the success of slum governance mainly depends on the attitude of the government toward slums, which determines governance policies (Ni et al., 2014).

#### **4.4.3 Link between the Local Decongestion Policy and National Policies**

The findings indicated that, though the AMA has the authority to deploy decongestion, eviction and demolition approach to manage slums as indicated in the Local Government Act of 1993, it can be established that not until 2012, those interventions of the government were project-based. According to National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF):

*“In the absence of clearly defined policy direction on urban development, past government interventions in the urban sector have largely been project-based and not comprehensive enough” (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), 2012).*

This implies that slum governance in Ghana has been ad hoc, unguided and project-oriented before 2012. It further means that AMA has been irresponsible in monitoring and correcting issues regarding physical development which does not conform to the approved urban plan of Accra. Obeng-Odoom (2011) argues that these decongestion exercises are often triggered by political events such as anniversaries, and preparation for political visits. The findings stated that stalls in Accra were set ablaze by AMA officials in an attempt to decongest and beautify the city to welcome the United States President, Barack Obama in 2009 (Joy FM 2009). Also, when it comes to elections, the local government would rather halt the decongestion, eviction and demolition exercises in the slums in order to gain the people’s vote. Thus, the issue of decongestion or eviction evaporates during election, a period when activities occupying illegal locations flourish, and political elites become friends with the so-called informal workers or people occupying unauthorized locations (Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017). It is also observed that decongestion exercises are triggered by major disasters resulting from poor urban planning like the eviction case of Old Fadama in 2015.

The concept of slum governance confirm this findings that slums governance determined by incremental approaches are often short-term and based on outputs and that policy makers are bounded rationally’ and preoccupied with short-term policy outcome for political convenience

(Agyabeng et al., 2022). Patel and Killemsetty (2020) also indicated that these policy interventions focused on outputs and tend to ignore long-term sustainability.

NUPF was therefore adopted as a comprehensive policy to bring a turnaround in urban governance. According to the government:

*“The response has been limited, and hence, the increasing challenges confronting the Ghanaian urban sector. To forestall this trend, the Ministry in-conjunction with key stakeholders has formulated this policy to guide the country's urban development programmes and projects” (MLGRD, 2012).*

It suggests that by the adoption of NUPF, the government would clearly define policy direction for urban governance, alongside slum governance.

It is interesting to note that after the adoption of the national policies, the local government still continue with the decongestion policy which raises concerns and criticisms. The decongestion policy of AMA has been critiqued by several scholars. First, it was described as contradictory and disconnected from the national level. They asserted that:

*“From the national policies down to the local policy of decongestion, there seems to be policy disconnection and contradictory policy response between the national and the city level with the introduction of a policy at the city level referred to as ‘decongestion’” (Awumbila et al., 2014; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018).*

Second, they critiqued that nowhere in the urban policy framework has decongestion, eviction and demolition been mentioned. According to the scholars:

*“No national level policy advocate city decongestion. All national policies recognize and support the need for the upgrading and the prevention of slums rather than their removal from the urban landscape” (Awumbila et al., 2014).*

It is clear that decongestion, eviction and demolition exercises have no place in formal housing and urban policies of Ghana as the scholars have noted. After the adoption of the NUPF and NHP, these exercises needed to have been reviewed to conform to the more comprehensive policies that seemed to give direction to slum governance. This gives much concern whether the central government have lost supervisory role over AMA's affairs in carrying out urban planning.

#### **4.4.4 Assessments of the National Policies after their Implementation**

The evaluation of the national policies after years of their implementation indicated that these policies have not yielded the desired result in relation to slums. The findings highlighted the gaps and limitations in the effective implementation of these policies.

According to the findings, the initiatives of the NUPF to address slums have been set right however, the methodology to the implementation is not clear in the policy as there are no indications of how this should be done in practice. A group of scholars noted that:

*“There was no detailed breakdown or specification of actions to be carried out to mitigate or reduce urban poverty and upgrade slum in a coherent way” (Anarfi et al., 2020).*

Second, the policy has faced implementation challenges. According to some scholars:

*“The National Urban Policy Framework of 2012 which prescribe sustainable ways of managing Ghanaian cities particularly Accra suffered implementation challenges... After years of publication and promulgation, the policy remains unimplemented” (Cobbinah and Darkwah, 2017).*

*“The National Urban Policy is far from achieving its goal of promoting a sustainable, spatially integrated and orderly development of urban settlements” (Inkoom et al., 2019).*

Hence, it can be established that the well-intended policy outlines for dealing with the proliferation of urban slums in Ghana could not yield any significant outcome. The findings indicated the limitations of the NUPF after the five years of implementation, hence the need for its revision. These gaps stated that there has not being any increase in housing stock as a result of NUPF (GUTT, 2019; Inkoom et al., 2019). Again, MMDA dependence on external support and consultants as well as limited shift in national budgets to support NUPF has affected the effectiveness of the policy (Ibid). Investment in support to Participatory Slum Upgrading Project (PSUP) has also been limited and the general process remains costly and slow (GUTT, 2019).



Also, the initiatives of the National Housing Policy on the slum improvement policy has not been formulated. The assertions of some scholars to the fact that the housing policy could not achieve its intended purpose and plans are stated below:

*“Affordable housing in Ghana continues to be a mirage... The 2015 housing policy has not recommended measures to ensure that housing units are developed for the most vulnerable” (Apeaning Addo and Mba, 2022)*

*“Accra, the capital of Ghana, is experiencing a housing crisis caused by the failure of both the state and the market to provide affordable shelter for the city’s low-income population” (Gillespie, 2018 p.24)*

Thus these initiatives are only illusions and draft statements of intents. This is because the housing policy only benefits the wealthy and high-income earners. More so, the ineffective policy implementation has contributed to proliferation of slums instead of preventing new ones.

#### **4.4.5 Challenges to the Implementation of Slum Policies**

Even though the national policies for slum governance in Ghana were inspired by the MDGs, it still suffered implementation. Several factors account for the failure and ineffective policy implementation in urban Ghana. The inability of the government to implement these goals can be attributed to change in government, financial constraints, and low citizen participation. These factors are further elaborated below.

##### **4.4.5.1 Lack of Continuity Due to Change in Government**

The findings indicated that when there is a change in government, most former government projects and programmes are abandoned due to the political agenda of the new government to meet their campaign promises. This is because such programmes/projects will not be credited to the new party that assumes power. It is also discovered that government over the years have been more interested in winning elections rather than serving the interest of the citizens and as such each government expects to support its own projects and programmes. This is in accordance with the findings of (Akwei et al., 2020; Agbevade, 2020; Appiah, 2016) indicating that successive government over the years have been compelled to embark on their own projects after resuming power instead of continuing the previous government initiated-ones. Hence, the implementation of most of these programmes and projects have failed.

#### **4.4.5.2 Financial Constraints**

The findings indicated that central government funds are the primary source of funds to run social and economic development projects in the local Assemblies. However, these funds are inadequate. This attests to the finding that the weak financial standing of most of the MMDAs made them overly dependent on central government's transfer (Republic of Ghana, 2016, p.9 cited in Asante and Debrah, 2019). The weak financial standing of the local government is attributed to shallow fiscal decentralization, weak capacity to mobilize Internally Generated Funds (IGF), Citizens' low compliance with local level tax and non-tax revenue mobilization initiatives of the MMDAs. All these have limited the effectiveness of implementing policies and projects at the local level.

#### **4.4.5.3 Low/lack of local participation**

Direct participation of citizens in local government programs helps to shape the decisions that affect them. Based on the findings, it is clear that the citizens were usually given little or no room to contribute to the policy formulation and implementation process and only government officials and policy actors were made to participate. The findings is consistent with Fischer (1993) indicating that in African countries, the domination of political leaders in decision making at the local level disallow local level participation. These policies therefore fail to be client-oriented and get out of touch from the local people, leading to its ineffectiveness.

#### **4.4.6 Adoption of SDGs 11 in Ghana**

Ghana as a signatory of SDG adopted her national goal to conform to target 1 of the SDG 11 to ensure access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all and basic services and upgrade slums. In order to achieve this goal, the Government of Ghana (GoG) has created and delegated the power to a special ministry called the Ministry of "Zongo" and Inner-Cities Development (MZICD) (MoF, 2018; NDPC, 2020) The new ministry is to ensure access to safe and adequate housing for slums and informal settlements. Other ministries that were mandated to support the MZICD in achieving the goal are the Ministries of Housing and Sanitation. The Ministry of Works and Housing (MWRWH) is to create land banks and supply local building materials as a step to close the housing deficit in the cities (MoF, 2018). It will also undertake housing and drainage construction as well as facilitate sea defense construction projects and national flood programmes (Ibid). The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) is tasked with solid waste management and environmental sanitation programmes (MoF, 2018). The aim of the adoption of

SDG 11 is to reduce slums and national housing deficit by at least 10 percent (MoF, 2018; NDPC, 2020).

Nevertheless, the findings indicate some challenges that could affect the governance systems and implementation of SDGs in Ghana. A weak institutions with a feeble state capacity, inadequate partnership, low level of citizen participation with limited transparency and accountability, dysfunctional management systems with shortages of legal and social support systems, fragile checks and balances, and corruption are some of the underlying causes of poor governance affecting the implementation of SDGs in Ghana (Osei, 2020a; 2020b; Sarfo-Kantankah, 2016)

#### **4.5 Discussion – slum governance discussed**

In a global city, slum governance has become an important approach to making the cities and human settlements clean and conform to urban plans and development. In this study the research questions have been: 1) what are the formal regulations and strategies of slum governance in Accra? 2) Does slum governance lead to oppression and resistance, and how? From the case study, the key findings are that in Accra, the local government is in charge of slum governance as indicated in the decentralization clause in the 1992 constitution of Ghana (Nkrumah 2000; Resnick, 2018; Asante 2020). Slum governance is important in urban Ghana, especially Accra to: make Accra a ‘21st century’ city under the Millennium City Initiative, to beautify the city to attract tourists, to deal with perennial floods and to reduce the growing incidences of crimes where slums are seen as places for criminals (Crentsil and Owusu, 2018). The data indicated that, MMDAs perform slum governance only through decongestion, eviction and demolition. These have been their strategies since the colonial era with the Local Government Act of 1993 mandating the MMDAs to decongest, evict and demolish unapproved structures.

Interestingly however, NUPF and NHP were adopted in 2012 and 2015 respectively to give a more comprehensive policy direction to slum governance. The policy directions contained in these policies only emphasized the upgrade of existing slums and the prevention of new ones. This means that slum governance under the new policy direction does not conform to decongestion, eviction and demolition as the Local Government Act of 1993 postulated. It is clear there is policy disconnection in the guidelines for slum governance in Ghana. The policy confusion therefore makes slum governance more difficult and ineffective in the cities of Ghana, especially Accra. The Local Government Act of 1993 also contradicts SDG 11. The SDG 11 highlighted the making of

cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The targets of this goal ensure the access to adequate, safe and affordable housing, basic services for all, upgrade slums and building resilient societies and economies. It also involves improving urban planning and management in participatory and inclusive ways. Thus, a collaborative approach is needed in the SDG 11 successive implementation. This means that SDG 11 and its targets do not specify forced evictions and demolitions as an approach to slum governance but rather slum upgrading. It is worth noting that the Government of Ghana has adopted that SDGs yet the government did not consider that the achievement of the SDGs (SDG 11) could differ from cities to cities. Accra just like other African cities has the fastest urbanization rate and must therefore consider the diversity of its urban conditions in the implementation of the SDGs. Also, Accra varies in terms of history and governance, hence policy coherence and integration cannot be easily pursued and may largely remain an illusion. Though, the Government of Ghana (GoG) have localized the SDGs and put some measures in place for the achievement of the SDG 11, thus creating a new ministry to provide adequate housing for slums and informal settlements and to reduce slums and the housing deficit by 10 percent, yet there is the possibility of ineffectiveness of this global goal. A weak institutional capacity, low level of citizen participation with limited transparency and accountability could affect the success of SDGs in Ghana (Osei, 2020a; 2020b; Sarfo-Kantankah, 2016).

Furthermore, the literature indicated that the policy of decongestion of the AMA not only oppose the international initiative of the SDG11 but also the government's intention in achieving this global goal. Again, the issues and consequences of forced evictions also jeopardize many of the SDGs as these acts contribute to rising inequalities and poverty, and preventing the growth of sustainable and inclusive cities. It is remarkable that the NUPF and NHP addresses the issues of sustainability, safe and affordable housing for the urban poor and slum upgrading just that there are limitations emerging from the NUPF and the NHP. Some of the challenges to the government's inability to implement the targets of the two national policies identified in the study include, lack of continuity due to change in government, financial constraints, low citizen's participation, weak institutional capacity among others. Consistent with the assertion of Cobbinah and Darkwah (2017), it is reasonable to argue that if these policies and plans had been well implemented, the decongestion and eviction exercises as the main strategies of slum governance in Accra would not have been necessary.

Findings from the literature has also shown that the decongestion, eviction and demolition exercises are done with force and violence in the slum communities leading to oppression. Evictions signify a violent type of displacement and housing as a commodity has demonstrated the contradiction between the economic forces of investment and the social needs of inhabitants to live a decent life. When riot task forces are kicking people out of their homes, it is made very clear that the right to housing is violated, and there is the need to stop viewing slum dwellers as illegal occupants, hence local governments must follow the due processes before carrying out any eviction. This is because every stage of the forced eviction process has severe repercussions for those affected as individuals and families live in a state of uncertainty (Farha, 2011). Forced evictions also cause divisions within and between communities, generating social conflict and resulting in community members investing less in their neighborhoods due to the lack of communal identity and certainty about their future (Ibid). As noted by some scholars, decongestions and evictions in Accra by task forces deployed by the AMA has been found to be tantamount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatments (Onuoha, 2014; Steel et al., 2014; Abrokwah, 2013; Gillespie, 2017; Osei-Boateng, 2019; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018; Obeng-Odoom, 2011). Tear gas, fires, rubber bullets, beatings and violence are often used as means to remove the people from their homes just like the case of Old Fadama. Evictions are not only inhuman but brutal as anyone who dares to oppose them is put in jail, and people are being harassed. Again, immediately after forced eviction, residents are traumatized. In many cases, families remain on the eviction site without water or shelter for days, uncertain as to what to do, and where to go. All of this is done to deter resistance. Some scholars relate the demolition and eviction exercises to the failure of urban planning by the local government. According to Cobbinah and Darkwah (2017), decongestion and evictions are merely policy interventions which only give weight to the fact that urban planning has failed to appreciate the nature of urban growth processes in Ghana.

Notwithstanding, slum governance through the approach of decongestion, eviction and demolition have not yielded much results in Accra. The data suggested that these interventions have not deterred squatters nor poor migrants from moving into the slums. The growth of slums has proven that the poor are not helpless in the city but they are willing to invest time, effort and money in their wellbeing be it housing. Slum dwellers see the fight against evictions as an important part of their struggle for the right to housing and the city, indicating that where is oppression, there is

resistance. The residents of the slums therefore resist by throwing stones and sticks at the taskforces and putting up barricades in their streets just to stop the authorities from carrying out the eviction exercises. All the slum dwellers need is for the government to stop interfering and grant them the fundamental human rights of freedom and responsibility. In line with the findings of some scholars, the proliferation of slums and informal settlements have intensified despite eviction and demolition exercises (Steel et al., 2014; Crentsil and Owusu, 2018). From the literature, many people from the slum communities where these exercises are carried out have developed strong ties, in other words, a sense of place, to the localities and the pain of losing a place they have lived over 15 years often lead them to resist the local government in doing slum governance. Apart from the sense of place, the affected residents don't have alternative arrangements for housing. It followed that most often, the task forces take them by surprise and demolish their homes and livelihoods, making the situation very difficult for them. Also, the affected people complained of the government's inability to inform them enough to relocate before the task forces descend on them. This gets them upset and resists the task force from carrying out their operation. This assertion is in line with Amponsah (2021) who stated that oftentimes, these exercises have met fierce resistance from slum dwellers to either stop or delay the eviction and demolition exercise. In Ghana, there is the Slum Union whose role is to ensure that the government reach agreement with the slum dwellers before carrying out any demolition. The role of the slum union is to ensure the welfare of their members by protecting them against eviction. They are usually ready to resist through protests should the government ignore their plights and concerns. Interestingly however, the resistances of the affected slum communities could not stop further demolitions from taking place. The case of Old Fadama proved that the resistance of the affected residents in 2015 could not stop the demolition exercise at Glefe in 2021. It was also highlighted in the findings that slum communities have reached a stage that cannot be uprooted easily by the MMDAs. The analysis identified that the slum dwellers are stiff-necked people who have severally defiled the order of the local government. It was narrated that, usually the slum dwellers ignore the warnings to prohibit from dumping wastes into the water bodies surrounding their communities. It was further highlighted that the slum dwellers do not obtain permits from the TCPD before putting up structures making the place not only congested but deviate from the approved plan of Accra urban development. The local government fears that if slum prevails to the point where it can no longer be controlled, Accra cannot become a global city. Besides, the

government stated that the slum communities are abodes of criminals who cause many unrests in Accra. Thus the decongestion, eviction and the demolition exercise is seen by the local government as the quickest way to solve the slum situation. But this way of looking at slum governance is attacked by many including human right activists, civil society organizations, and NGOs. From the literature reviewed, it was found that these organizations are not totally against the eviction or demolition of slums. Instead, they would want the government to take into consideration the rights of the affected people i.e. the right to housing and not rendering them homeless and jobless. The organizations urged the authorities to consider the timing for the exercise so it does not further compound the situation of the affected people. The organizations are there to ensure that the government respect the fundamental human rights of the people and enjoin the government to improve their standards of living.

In a nutshell, the data suggests that dwelling in slums is a coping strategy of the low-income earners in Accra. Also, the analysis identifies that the government's inability to solve the huge housing deficit by providing adequate affordable housing further contributes to slum proliferation in Accra (Apeaning Addo and Mba, 2022). More so, the data has revealed that the institutional capacity of the local government is weak to monitor and implement policy initiatives to bring structures to conform to the approved plan of Accra. These were among the weaknesses of slum governance in Accra. The weakness of slum governance has often led the local government to taking impulsive decisions to either act or not to act. This finding is consistent with the assertion of Yeboah and Obeng-Odoom (2010) that winning or retaining power is more important to political elites in Ghana than creating inclusive and livable urban environments. Thus during peak political events like election, politicians refrain from carrying out evictions and after, they come back to evict when they might have gained their votes. The slum communities are aware of this strategy of the government so they also vow not to exercise their political franchise of voting and they present this as a threat to the local government before any eviction. Apart from this, the authorities act during major disasters like the flood and fire disaster in 2015 to decongest, evict and demolish like the case of Old Fadama.

In addition, there is the lack of funds, low institutional capacity, lack of anti-slum policies, and politically induced ad hoc decision making from the local government. All these work to weaken slum governance. In order to carry out sound urban planning and development, there is the need

for both the government and the people to work together in decision-making and implementation. This makes SDG 11 important to make slum dwellers inclusive and participate in decision making towards good slum governance. Slum governance in Ghana is therefore not effective to deal with the issues of slums. The place for slums on the policy agenda of the government of Ghana remain an illusion and a draft of intended purposes. The government is not able to control the slum communities neither through policies nor eviction. However, the government is burnt on using force to remove slums and this has often generated resistance from the people whose human rights have been infringed upon.



## **CHAPTER 5- CONCLUSION**

So far, the thesis tried to analyze how slum governance could lead to oppression and resistance in a global city. Accra has been the setting for the case study. The major finding of the study is that slum governance in Accra has resulted in forced evictions and demolitions of slum settlements which has given rise to resistances by the affected slum communities. It has deviated from the global agenda of making cities and human settlements safe, inclusive, resilience and sustainable as proposed by the international community. Rather than upgrading slums to make it conform to what the SDG 11 envisioned, the local government only demolishes and evicts slum dwellers. Thus, forced evictions and slum demolition have become the major options for the local government to ‘clean up’ what they often seen as blight in the city. This approach does not yield any significant result as it rather serves political convenience (Agyabeng et al., 2022).

Other supporting findings of this study are that 1) the approach of slum governance in Accra i.e. forced eviction and demolitions contradict the national policies on slum governance and for that matter it faces implementation challenges such as lack of continuity due to change in governments, inadequate financial resources and low citizen participation. 2) Slums cannot be easily removed from the city of Accra as the people have built a sense of place to the slum communities and 3) Dwelling in Accra slums has been a coping strategy to the poor who cannot afford expensive accommodations in the inner city. At this point, it is expedient that tackling the problem of slums and inadequate affordable housing in Accra requires new approaches and ideas. The reality of slum dwellers necessitates better quality of life options for their integration into the urban setting as a step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 11). Based on the findings, this research suggests that slum governance be geared towards slum upgrading and not be used as a means to infringe on people’s rights to housing, and employment. Also, collaborative, participatory, democratic, and multilevel governance involving all local stakeholders, including slum dwellers is critical to ensure inclusive and sustainable urban development. This will enable the slum dwellers to also benefit from economic growth and prosper. Hence, the solution to improving the lives of slum dwellers is not eviction but inclusion. In addition, to combat further slum development, the government should consider the creation of secondary and tertiary cities to absorb the increasing migrants from the rural communities, and building institutional capacity and collaboration as critical measures in curtailing slum proliferation in the Accra metropolis and other cities in Ghana. Moreover, both the national and local governments in collaboration with the

private and non-governmental organizations should initiate and undertake policies geared towards the provision of low cost environmentally friendly housing with locally made materials to accommodate slum dwellers and the middle income group. This has the tendency of avoiding the proliferation of slums as well as improving the quality of slum dwellings.

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