



GHANA CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

THEMATIC BRIEF



LAND USE

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**GHANA STATISTICAL SERVICE
AUGUST 2023**

FOREWORD

The 2017/18 Ghana Census of Agriculture (GCA) is the fourth census of agriculture carried out in the country. Earlier agricultural censuses were conducted in 1950, 1970 and 1984/85. Unlike the previous censuses, the 2017/18 GCA was an electronic census that deployed tablets and the Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI) technique to collect nationwide information on households and institutions engaged in agricultural activities.

The GCA was conducted to provide benchmark data for planning and monitoring the national development agenda-the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies 2017-2024 and the Medium-Term National Development Policy Framework 2018-2021. The census will help policymakers set targets to assess progress towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Agenda 2063. Additionally, the GCA will enhance the understanding of the effectiveness of the various agricultural interventions and other national policy initiatives, such as the "Planting for Food and Jobs" with its five modules by government and development partners to improve the livelihood of citizens and ensure food security for the country.

The census was a collaboration between the Ghana Statistical Service and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. The data collection consisted of two broad phases. Phase one-the Listing Phase -entailed listing of all structures to identify all agricultural households and institutions. Phase two consisted of the administration of the core and community modules, and the collection of data on all agricultural households and institutions identified in Phase one. Appropriate statistical procedures and controls were put in place during the data collection to ensure that data from the census are of high quality.

This thematic brief presents land tenure arrangements, legal status and size of parcels of land used by persons engaged in agriculture as disaggregated by sex and type of locality of holders.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

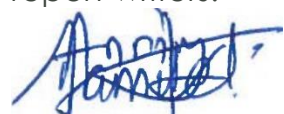
The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) acknowledge the invaluable contribution of institutions and individuals to the successful implementation of the 2017/18 Ghana Census of Agriculture (GCA).

Special gratitude goes to the following: The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Bank (WB), the Government of the Netherlands, and the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom for financial and technical support. Further gratitude goes to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Technical Support Services (METSS) of USAID for logistical support. We further acknowledge the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ghana and the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) of the same University, and the Birth and Death Registry for their material and technical support during the preparation and implementation of the GCA.

We acknowledge with thanks the support of the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Communications; the Ministry of Information; the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development; and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. In addition, sincere thanks and acknowledgement are extended to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development; the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Natural Resources; the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection as well as the Regional and District Management Committees of the GCA.

The Management of GSS is grateful for the exemplary and inspiring leadership provided by the National Steering Committee and in particular the Minister for Food and Agriculture, Honorable Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto, the Chairman of the Steering Committee and his co-chair, Honorable Vincent Sowah Odotei (MP) and Deputy Minister for Communications. The passion and technical support provided by the GSS Board made an indelible impact in ensuring the successful conduct of the GCA.

Finally, GSS is particularly grateful to Prof. Simon Mariwah whose reviews and comments have contributed to enriching this report. We are indebted to all who contributed in diverse ways to the successful implementation of the Census, especially management of GSS, the data processing and analysis team and report writers.



PROF SAMUEL KOBINA ANNIM

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ACRONYMS

CPESDP	Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FASDEP	Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy
GCA	Ghana Census of Agriculture
GSS	Ghana Statistical service
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NLP	National Land Policy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WCA	World Census of Agriculture

1. INTRODUCTION

The land tenure system in Ghana refers to the legal and customary frameworks that govern land ownership, use, and transfer in the country. The customary Land Tenure System is based on traditional customs, norms, and practices that have evolved over generations. These lands are owned and controlled by traditional authorities such as chiefs and local communities. On the other hand, the legal land tenure is governed by statutory laws and regulations enacted by the government. These lands include public lands and vested lands owned by the state, as well as lands held under leasehold or freehold by individuals or entities. The government has the authority to acquire, allocate, lease, or transfer statutory lands through established administrative procedures and institutions.

Though there is no Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) specifically dedicated to land tenure, there are several goals and targets that are indirectly related to land tenure systems due to their importance for sustainable development. One of such relevant targets is SDG Target 1.4, which seeks to, by 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular, the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property with the aim of reducing poverty.

Further, SDG 2 focusing on Zero Hunger, and its target 2.3 seek to, by 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists, and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

More so, Target 5.a of SDG 5 on Gender Equality focuses on undertaking reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws. This relates to making sure that women have equal access to agricultural inputs including seeds, fertilizer, and technologies in the agricultural setting. Additionally, it entails expanding women's access to markets, loans, agricultural extension services, and other support networks that raise their productivity and income-generating capacity.

One of the indicators of this target, Indicator 5.a.1 is divided into two sub-indicators. Sub-indicator (a) is defined as the prevalence of people in the agricultural population with ownership or tenure rights over agriculture land; and Sub-indicator (b) is defined as the share of women in the agricultural population with ownership or tenure rights over agricultural land.

Indicator 5.a.1 aims to monitor the gender balance on ownership / tenure rights over agricultural land. This indicator has two sub-indicators that are based on the same data to monitor ownership/tenure rights from two different angles. While sub-indicator (a) uses the total male/female agricultural population as the reference population, and it gives information on how many male/female own/hold agricultural land, sub-indicator (b) focuses on the agricultural population with land ownership/tenure rights, and it gives information on the share of women among this population.

Ownership or Tenure rights over agriculture land refer to satisfying three conditions: the presence of legally recognised documents in the name of the individual; the right to sell; and the right to bequeath¹.

Under the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (CPESDP) of Ghana (2017 to 2024), the government of Ghana has recognized the importance of land tenure reform and sustainable land management. The key strategy underpinning growth and development under the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies are: (i) Revising the economy, (ii) Transforming agriculture and industry (iii) Strengthening social protection and inclusion (iv) Revamping economic and social infrastructure, and (v) Reforming public service delivery and institutions.

Thus, efforts have been made to address land tenure issues and promote land tenure security, including the development of the National Land Policy and the implementation of land administration reforms. The CPESDP incorporated strategies and initiatives related to land tenure that are aligned with the goals of the National Land Policy (NLP). The NLP aims to address challenges related to land acquisition, registration, and management. It seeks to ensure equitable access to

¹ <https://www.fao.org/3/cb5965en/cb5965en.pdf>

land, enhance land tenure security, and promote sustainable land use and management practices.

In the FASDEP framework of MoFA, the relationship between agriculture and industrialization is recognized as the driving force for rural development. According to the policy document, there are inequalities and unfairness in access to land, and women are noted to have limited access to farmland in Ghana due to cultural and traditional practices. As a result, women are always disadvantaged because they don't have legal ownership of assets including farmland.

The government of Ghana recognizes the importance of land tenure reform and has initiated efforts to streamline and modernize the land administration system, strengthen land rights, and provide more secure land tenure for individuals and investors. These reforms aim to address issues of land tenure insecurity, promote sustainable land management practices, and support socio-economic development in the country.

From the findings of the 2017/18 GCA, about three-quarters (75.2%) of parcels used by holders to produce crops during the cropping season are owned (52.2%) or inherited (23.0%). Land used for share-cropping constitutes 8.9 percent whereas parcels held in trust (2.1%) and squatting (1.8%) are not very common types of tenure arrangements disaggregated by sex and type of locality of holders.

This brief presents land tenure arrangements, legal status and size of parcels of land used by persons engaged in agriculture as disaggregated by sex and type of locality of holders.

2. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS, DATA SOURCES AND ESTIMATION

2.1 Definition of Concepts

Agricultural activity: Agricultural activities include the cultivation of arable crops, tree crops, forest trees and the rearing of livestock, aquaculture, and capture fisheries.

Agricultural household: A household with at least one of its members engaged in an agricultural activity.

Agricultural land: This is defined as the sum of arable land, land under permanent crops and land under permanent pastures.

Agricultural institution: An institution engaged in an agricultural activity.

Agriculture: The production of plants and animals, including fresh water and marine species, for food, fuel, fibre or medicine.

Agro-ecological zones: Geographical areas exhibiting similar soil and climatic conditions that support rain-fed agriculture.

Arable crops: Crops that mature within a short period, usually less than one year. Examples of arable crops are plantain, cocoyam, cassava, yam, etc.

Arable land: refers to all land generally under rotation whether it is under temporary crops, left temporary fallow or used as temporary pastures.

Enumeration area (EA): A small geographic area that one census officer is expected to cover in data collection within the specified period allotted for the census exercise.

Field: A piece of land in a parcel separated from the rest of the parcels by easily recognisable demarcation lines, such as paths, cadastral boundaries and/or hedges. A field may consist of one or more plots.

Freehold : This is a type of tenure which involves the holding of registered land in perpetuity or for a period less than perpetuity which may be fixed by a condition, that is owning a piece of land for a period of time that is not limited.

Head of household: A member of the household who takes general responsibility for the up-keep, wellbeing and security of the household and is recognised and acknowledged by the other household members as such.

Holder: Agricultural holder (Farm owner) is a person who takes the major decisions regarding resource use and exercises management control over the holding.

Household: A person or group of persons who normally live together and are catered for as one unit. Members of the household may or may not be related.

Inheritance: It is the practice of passing property, title, debt, right and obligation of the death of an individual land received by members of collective holding for individual use

Institution: A non-household entity engaged in commercial or non-commercial agricultural activities.

Land tenure: The relationship, whether legally or customarily defined, among individuals or groups that define how access is granted to rights to use, control, and transfer land, as well as associated responsibilities and restraints. (FAO).

Large-scale farming: Land area greater than or equal to 5 acres for arable crops and greater than or equal to 10 acres for tree crops.

Leasehold: A piece of land that can be used for a limited period of time according to the arrangement in the lease.

Locality: A distinct population cluster (also designated as inhabited place, populated centre, settlement) which has a NAME or LOCALLY RECOGNISED STATUS. It includes fishing hamlets, mining camps, ranches, farms, market towns, villages, towns, cities and many other types of population clusters, which meet the above criteria.

Medium-scale farming: Land area greater than 2 acres but less than 5 acres for arable crops and greater than 5 acres but less than 10 acres for tree crops

Parcel of land: A piece of land under one land tenure arrangements, entirely surrounded by features such as other land (not under the same land tenure arrangement), water, road, or forest. A parcel may consist of one or more fields or plots adjacent to each other.

Plot: The section of a parcel or field used for cultivating a specific crop or a mix of crops.

Protected forest trees: Endangered species (availability near extinction) and whose harvest is regulated by law.

Relationship to head: Persons are related either by blood, marriage or by legal means. Examples of blood relations are son/daughters, Parents, Sisters/Brothers, etc.

Respondent: This is the person from whom information is being obtained, e.g., head of the household or any adult member (15 years or older) of the household.

Share-cropping: A system of land-use arrangement that functions in two main prominent ways, namely, abunu and abusa. Abunu: the completed farmland is physically divided into two with the tenant and the landlord taking equal shares of the harvest or the cropped land. Abusa: the proceeds of the land are shared in the ratio of 1:2 with the landlord taking one part and the tenant two-thirds.

Small-scale: Land area of sizes that are less than 2 acres for arable crops and less than or equal to 5 acres for tree crops.

Squatting: The practice where a holder is using a parcel of private or public land without any clear ownership and/or permission of the owner.

Structure: A separate and independent building or an enclosure, either completed or uncompleted with a roof and walls and may be permanent or movable. It can be constructed with different materials such as concrete, brick, mud, metal, plastic, cardboard, wood, glass, grass, straw and bamboo. Some examples of a structure are: house, factory, school, church, mosque, office, hotel, store, supper-market, kiosk, container, etc.

Tree crops: Crops that are cultivated for two or more years for fruits, without the need for replanting each year (e.g., mangoes, pears, etc.).

Trusteeship: A situation in which someone's land or property is managed by another person or organisation on behalf of the owner.

2.2 Data Sources

The statistics on patterns and correlates presented in this brief are generated from the 2017/2018 Ghana Census of Agriculture (GCA) Regional Thematic Tables on Land Use.

3. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE SELECTION OF CORRELATES OF LAND USE

3.1. Locality of Residence

Place of residence has a strong relationship with land ownership or type of land tenure system practice in agriculture in Ghana. It is general belief that freehold and inheritance systems of land tenure are largely practised in Ghana and the two systems of land tenure system are largely common in rural areas than in urban areas.

3.2. Type of crop farm

Types of crop farm and for that matter the tenure system in practice has direct bearing on the ecological zone that the crop is farm. While arable crops are expected to dominate in savannah regions, tree crop and forest crops are expected to be common in regions in the forest and semi deciduous forest zones.

3.3. Sex of the holder

In a country with men dominate in almost every activity, agriculture activity is also expected to be dominated by men. Less female participation in agriculture could be due to lack of access to land, and low status of women in society. In traditional African society, women are not allowed to own properties such as land.

3.4. Status of land documentation

Land documentation particularly agriculture land is not popular in Ghana. It is expected that documentations of all types of farmlands will be low. This so due to extreme difficulties one has to pass through in documenting agriculture land. It is also because, mostly, farmlands are acquired by inheritance and freehold. For that matter documenting it is not easy because it does not belong to one person but to the entire clan or extended family.

3.5. Land tenure system

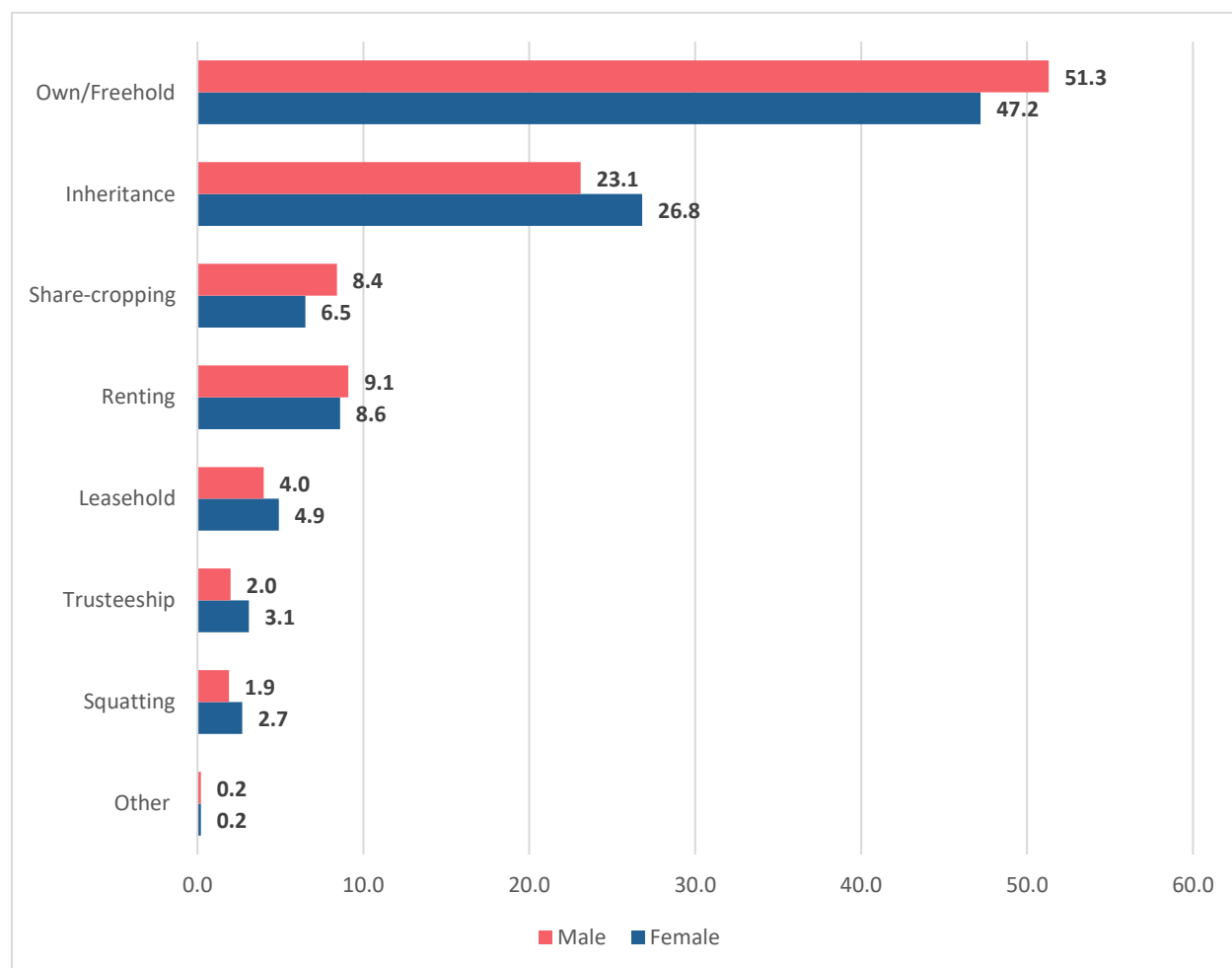
The type of ownership of agricultural land has a strong relationship with type of residence of the owner, educational level, level of the investment of the owner. In Ghana since most of agriculture practised are small scale few people take the challenge to document the parcel of land. Also, because the land belongs to the entire clan, no one owns it and it is there for generations yet to be born. Also because of the land tenure system where different clans own different land, it is difficult to acquire huge land for commercial farming.

4. KEY FINDINGS

4.1. PATTERNS

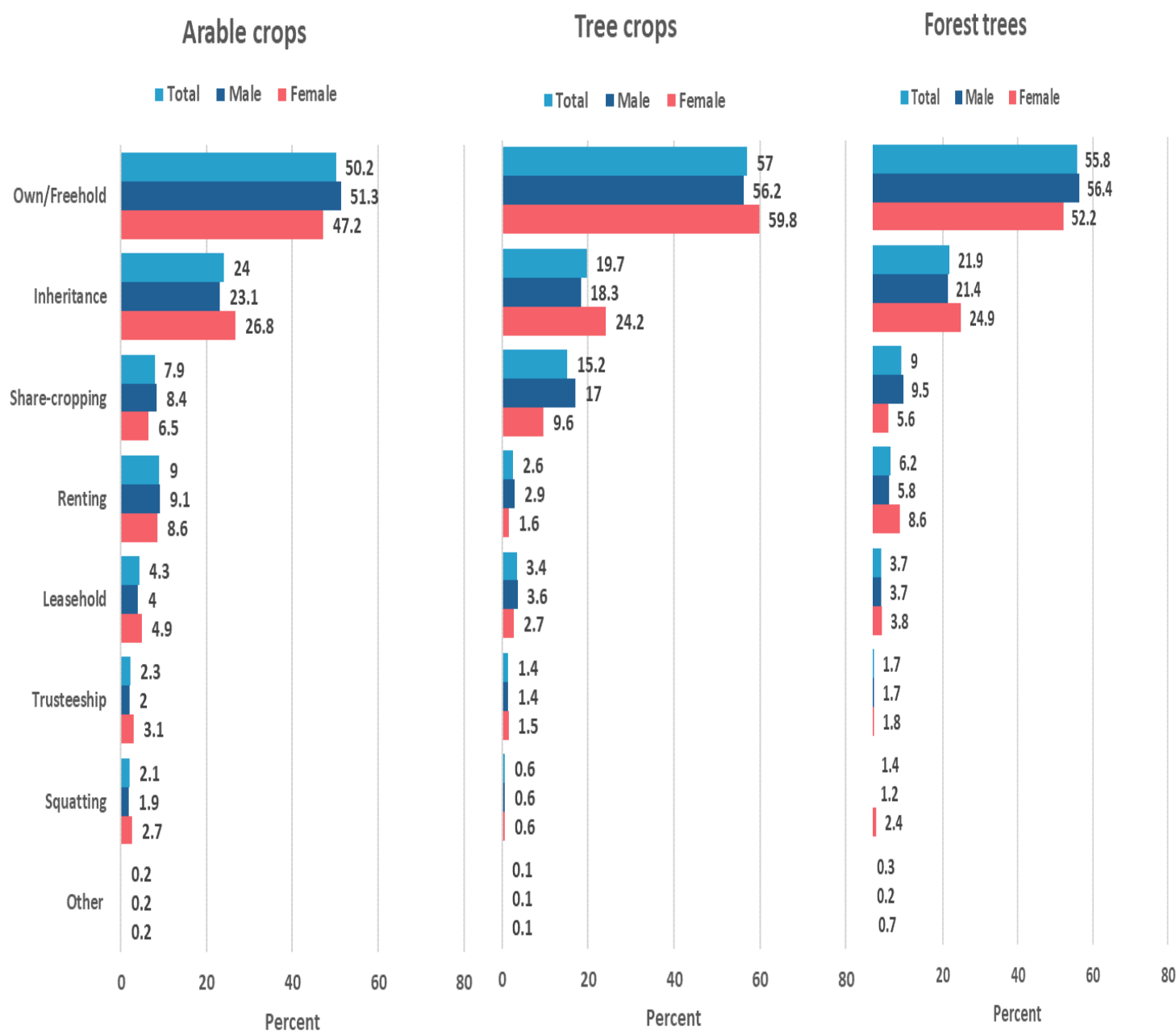
Land tenure is dominated by freehold/own and inheritance, with more males having freehold (51.3%) while more females have access to land through inheritance (26.8%).

Figure 1: Type of land tenure arrangements of agricultural holders 15 years or older by sex (percent)



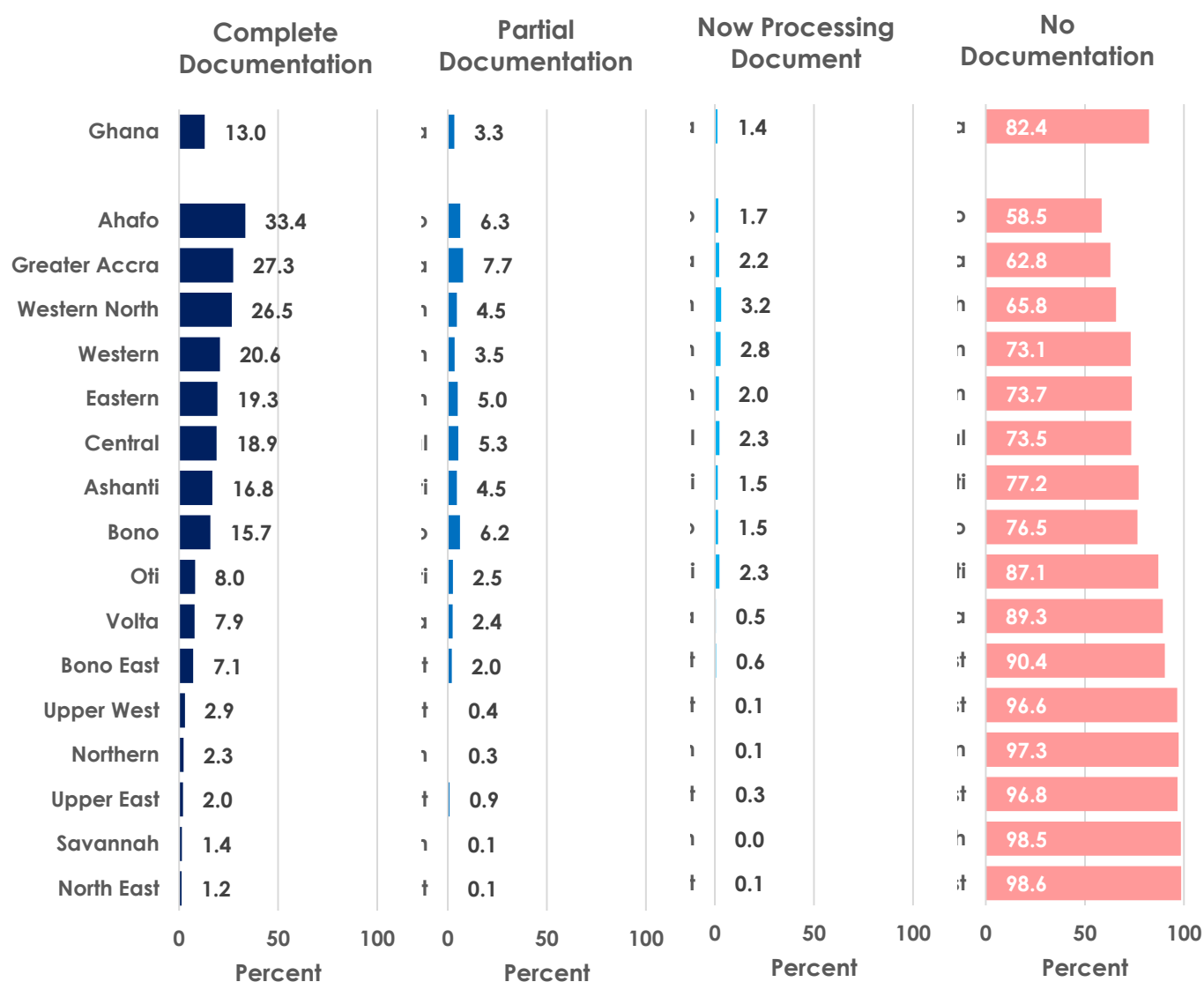
For all types of crops (arable crops, tree crops and forest trees), freehold/own is main source of land for agricultural activities.

Figure 2: Land parcels for agriculture by type of tenure arrangement and type of locality, and by type of agricultural activity



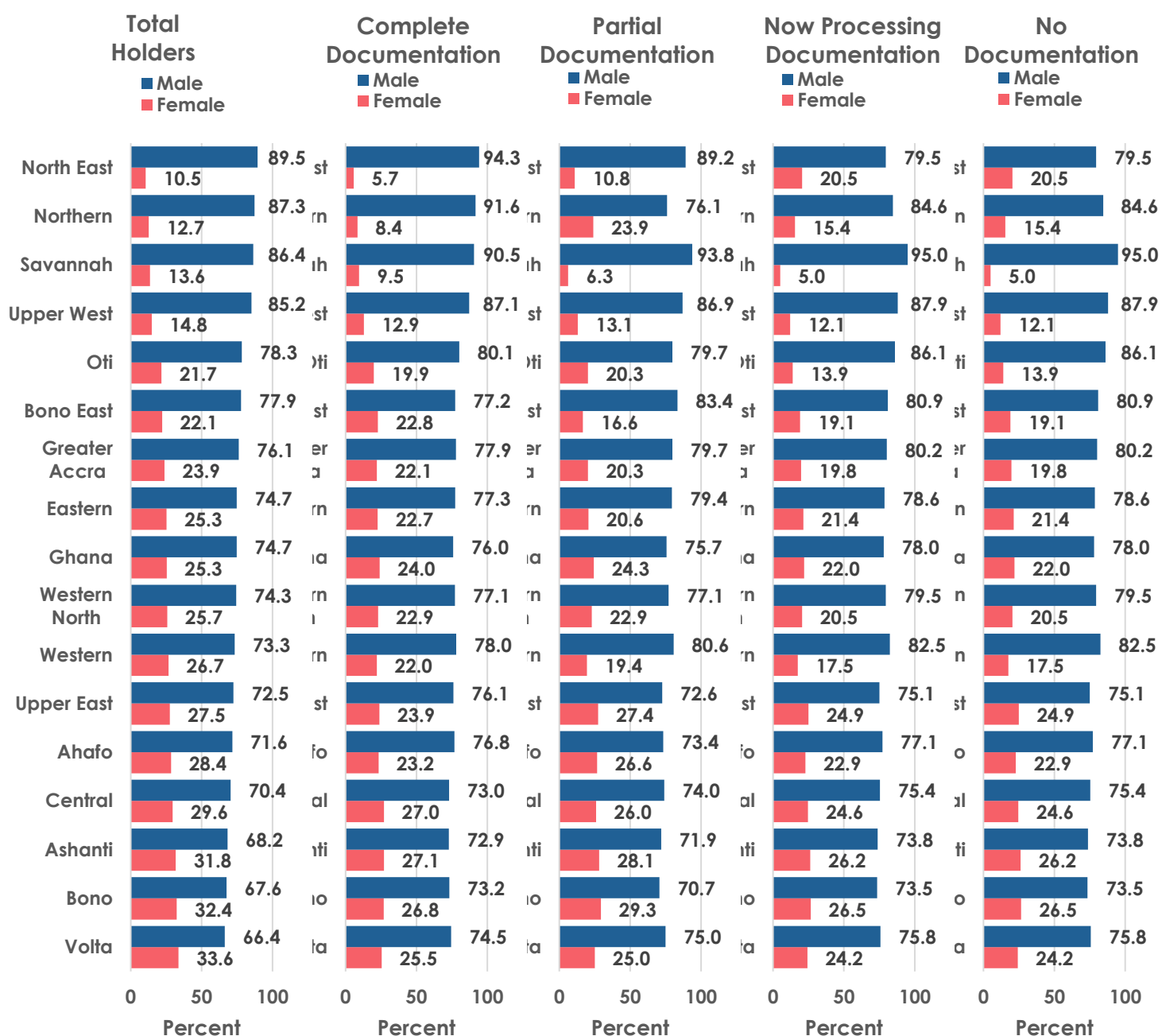
Out of 3,130,492 holders who responded to status of documentation on their holdings, the proportion of non documentation of holdings is highest in the five regions in the Northern zones - North East (98.6%), Savannah (98.5%), Upper East (96.8%), Upper West (96.6%) and Northern (97.3%).

Figure 3: Land holding by status of documentation and region



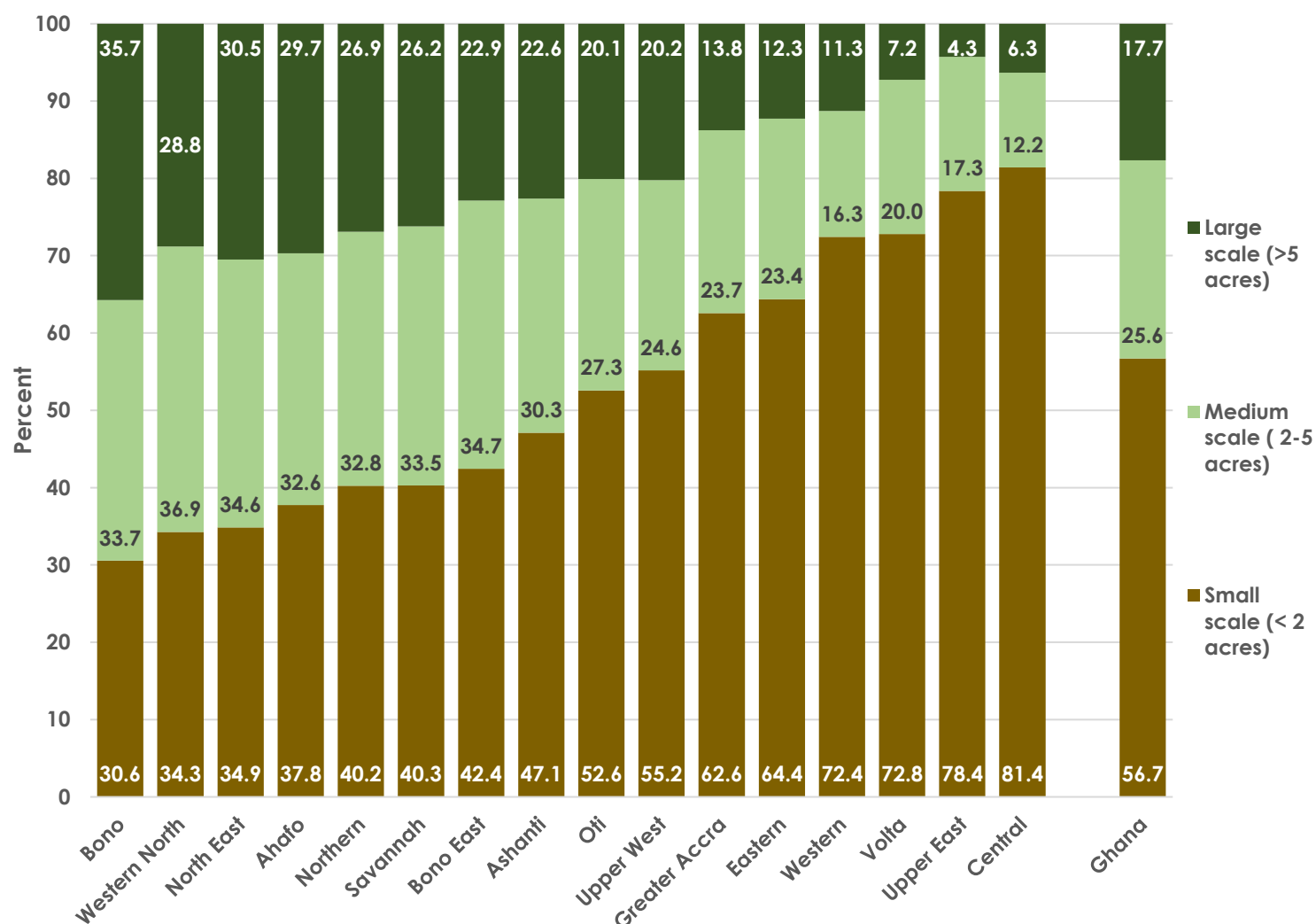
The proportion of male parcel holders is about three quarters (74.7%) compared with female (25.3% holders). The pattern is the same for all the status of land documentations where males dominate their female counterparts.

Figure 4: Land holding by status of documentation, sex of the holder and region



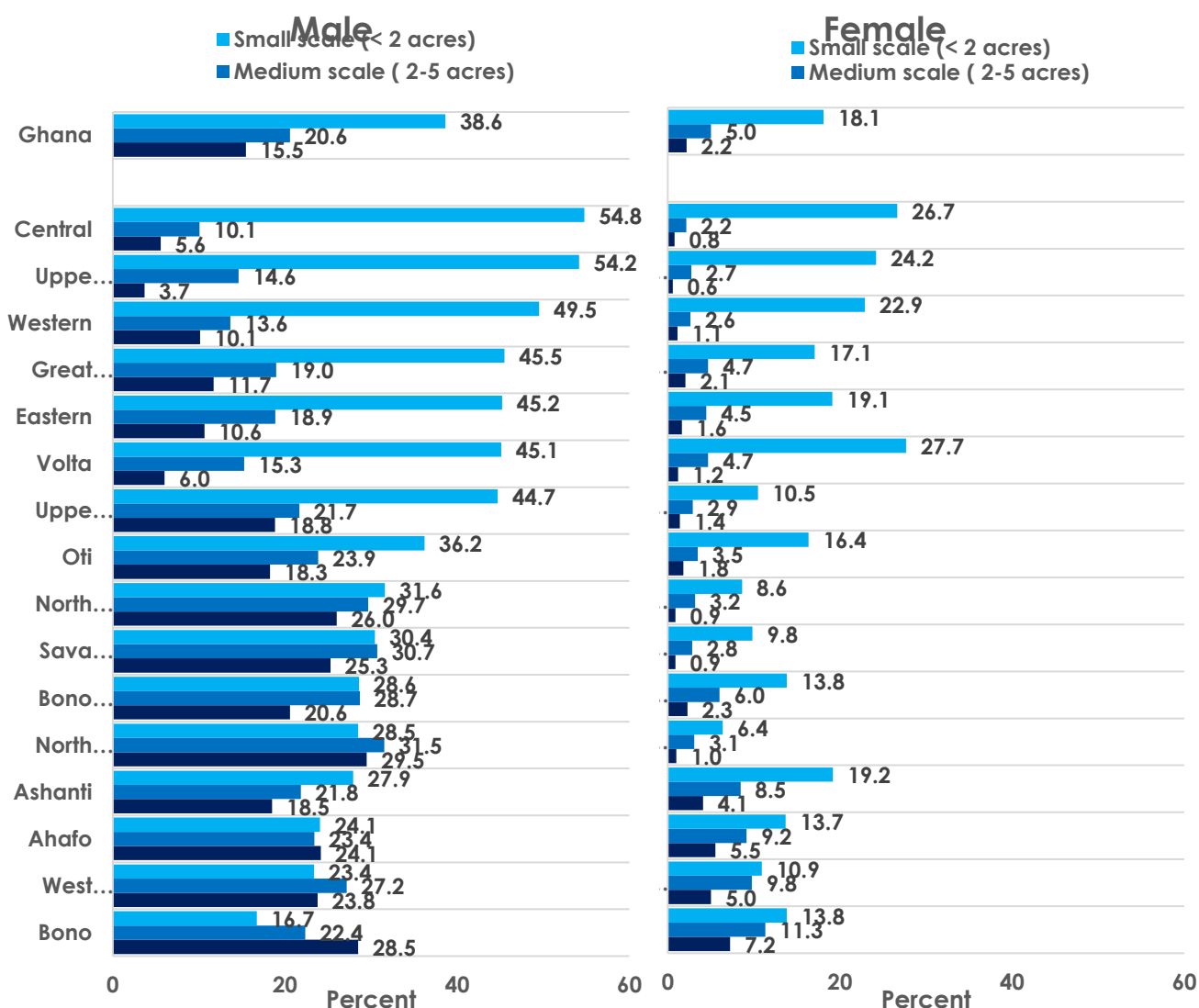
More than half (56.7%) of parcel holders in Ghana are small scale holders and large-scale parcels holders constitute less than one fifth (17.7%). From a region perspective, Central region has the highest percentage of small-scale parcel holders (81.4%) and Bono region has the highest proportion of large-scale parcel holders (35.7%).

Figure 5: Land parcel holders by size and region



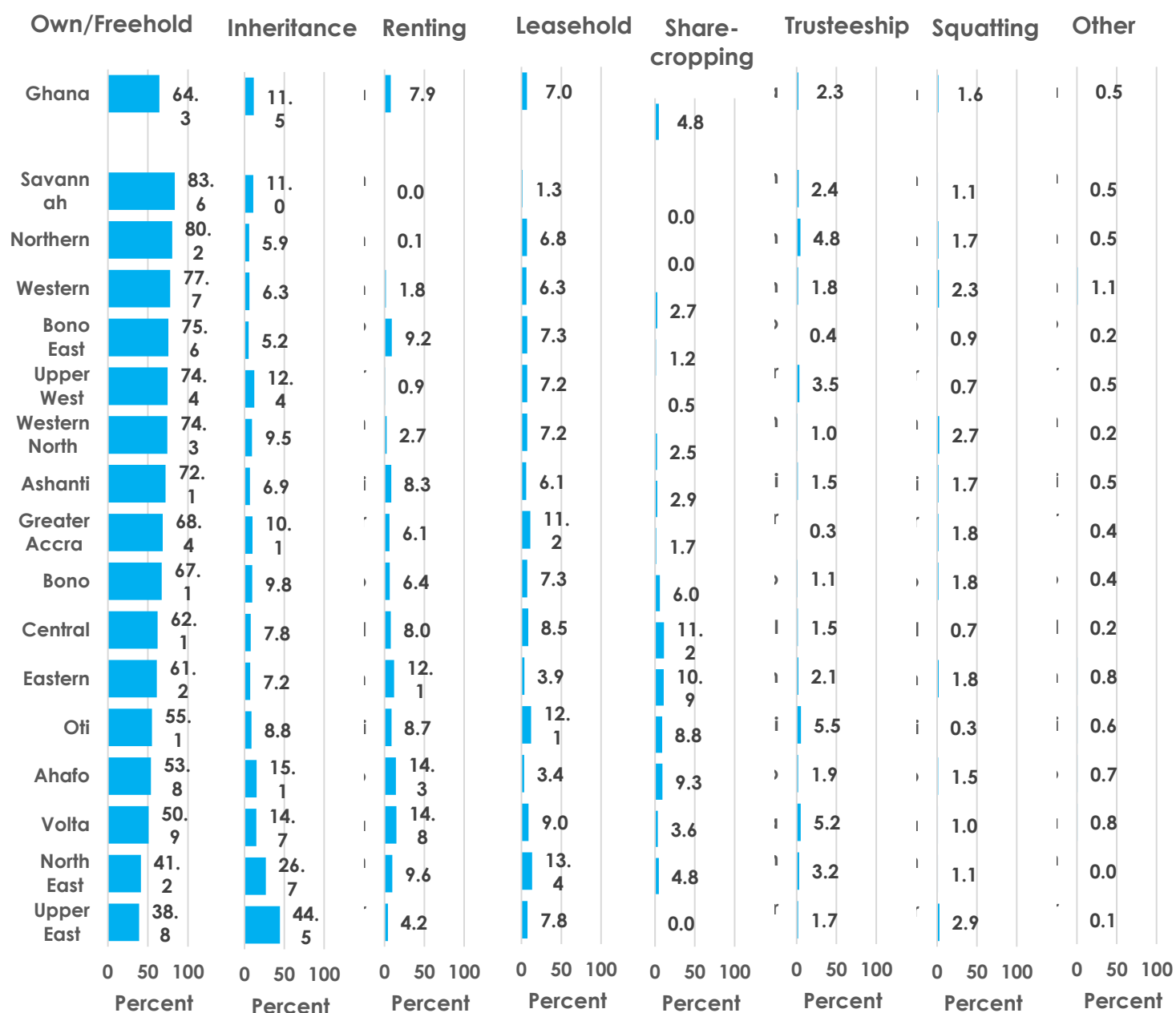
More males in Central (54.8%), Western (49.5%), and Upper East (54.2%) regions are engaged in small-scale farming than their female counterparts. On the other hand, more holders in Bono (28.5%), Northern (26.0%), and North East (29.5%) regions are engaged in large-scale farming.

Figure 6: Land parcel holders by size, sex of holder and region



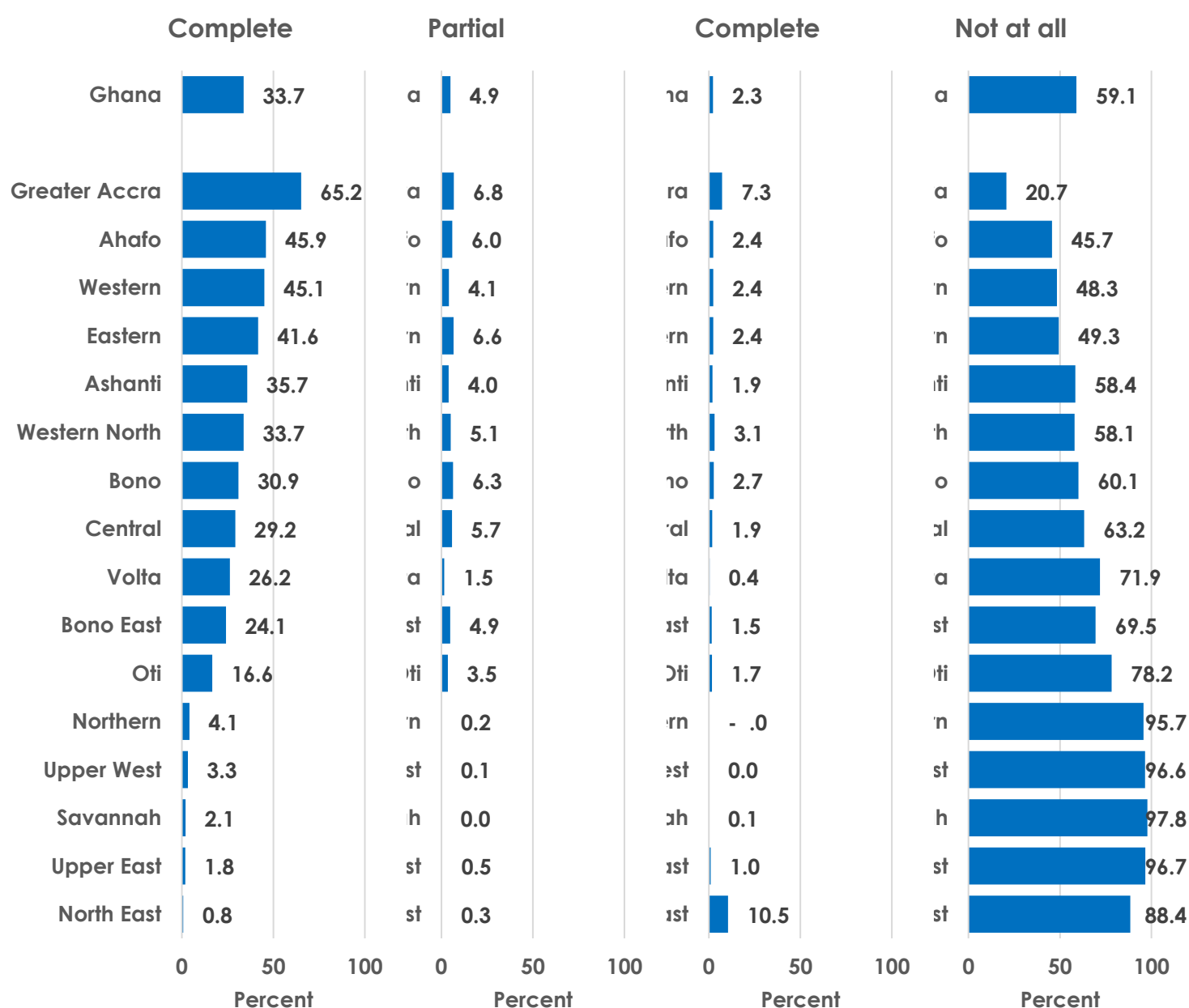
Out of total of 16,945 agriculture institutions in Ghana, 64.3 percent have freehold tenure, followed by inheritance (11.5%) tenure system. Freehold land tenure system is popular among the 16 regions except Upper East (38.8%) and North East (41.2%) regions.

Figure 7: Agriculture institutions by type of locality, by type of agriculture activities and region



Of the various types of land tenure system and documentation, only 33.7 percent of the Institutions have completely documented their land. Across the regions, Greater Accra (65.2%) and Ahafo (45.9) are the regions with highest agriculture institution that have completed the documentation of their land parcels.

Figure 8: Agriculture institutions by type of documentation of tenure arrangement and region



Complete documentation of land by agriculture institutions is higher in rural (55.3%) than Urban (44.7%) areas in Ghana.

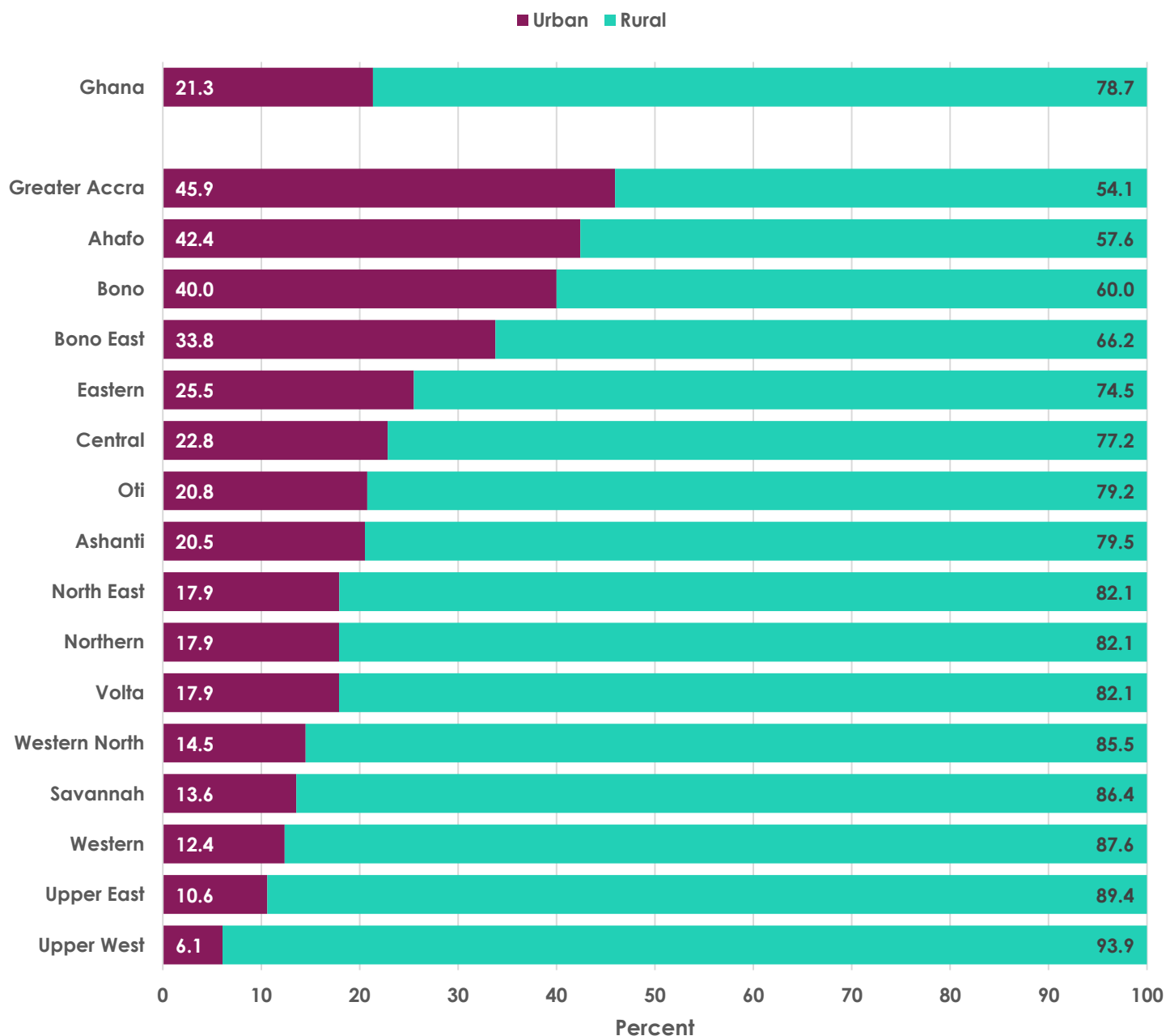
Figure 9: Agriculture institutions by type of locality and by type of documentation of tenure arrangement



4.2 CORRELATES

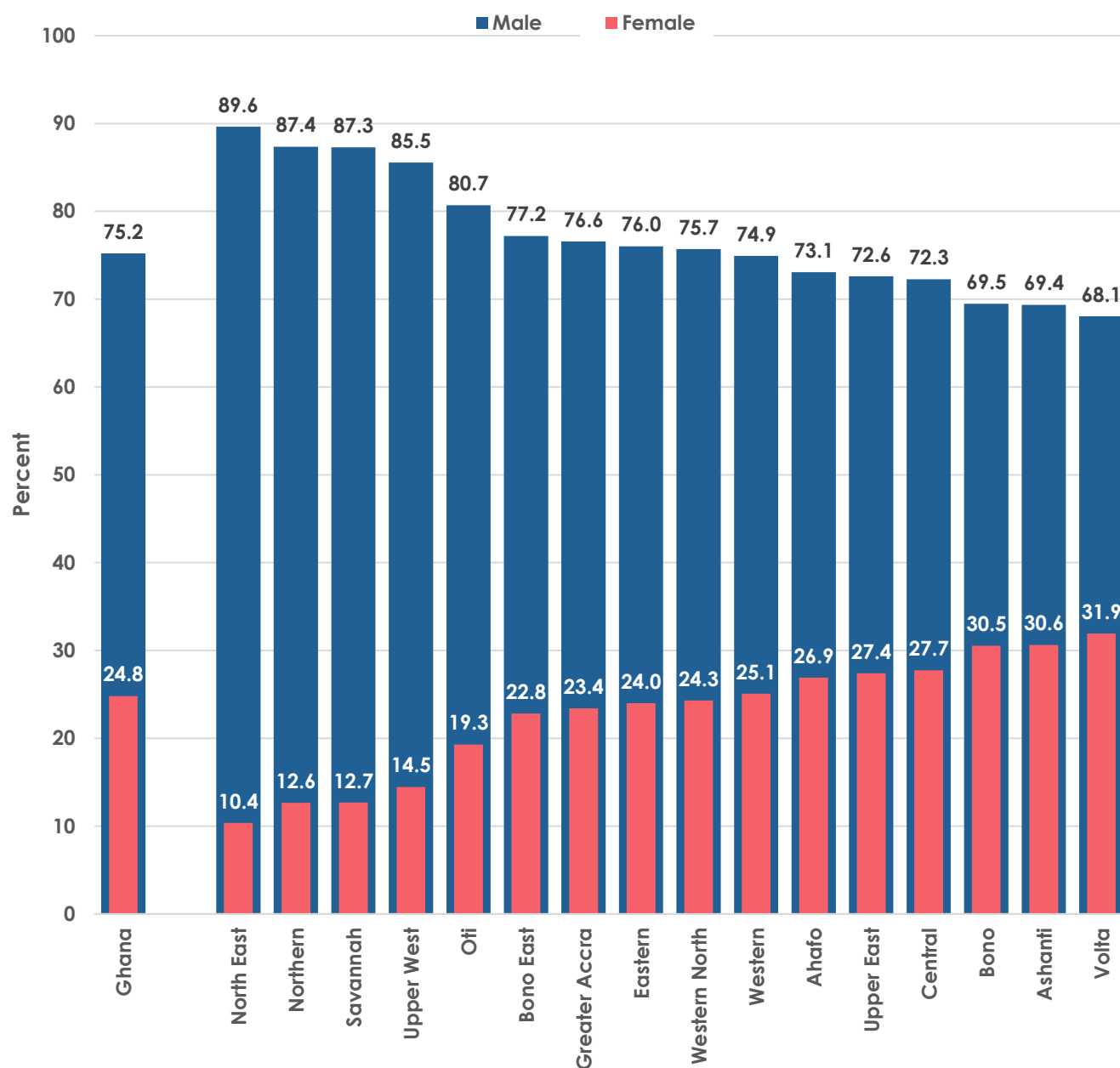
Agriculture land parcels in rural areas is more than three quarters (78.7%) of the agriculture land parcels in Ghana.

Figure 10: Land parcels by locality and region



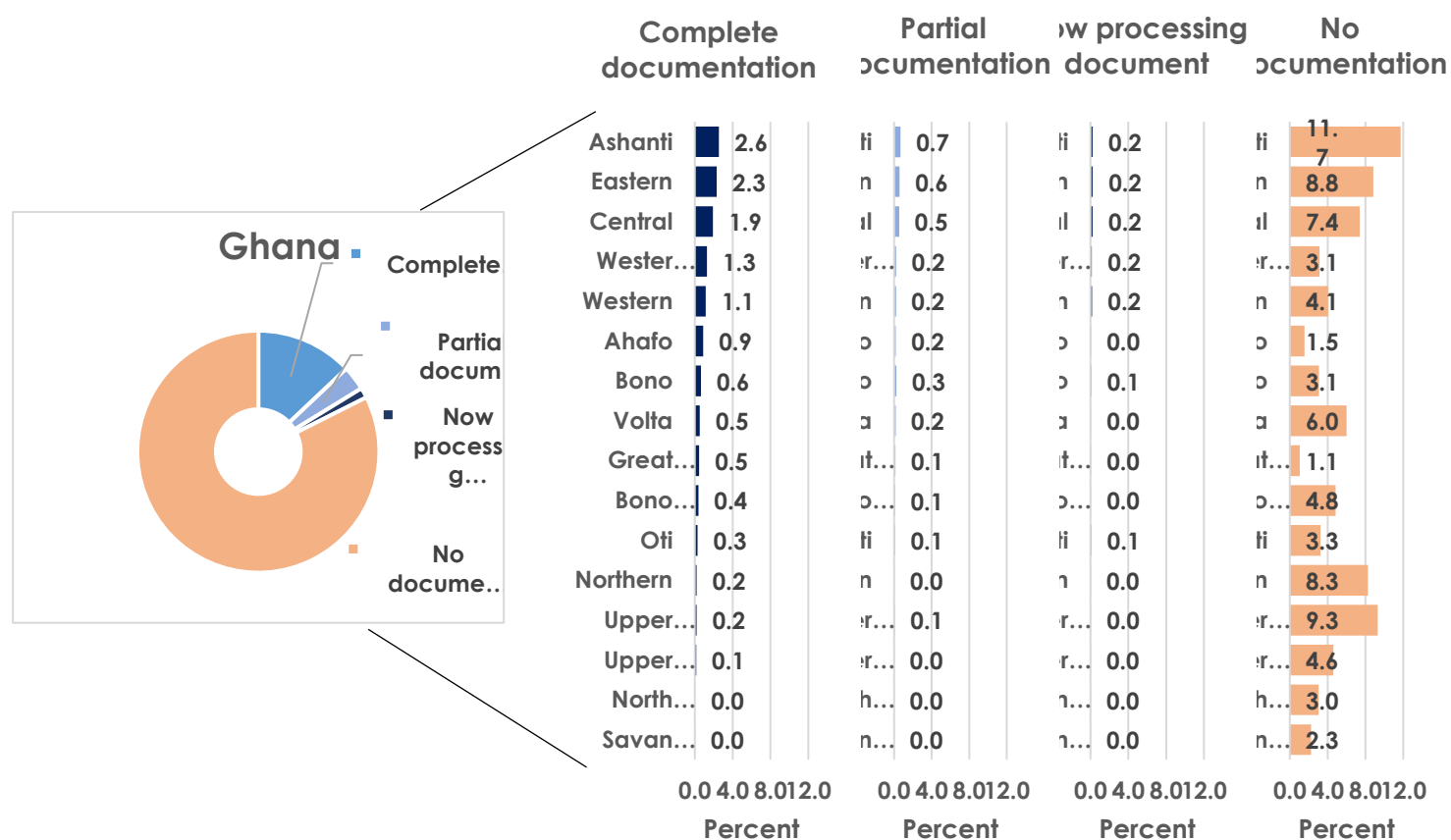
Ownership of land in Ghana does not favour women with about a quarter (24.8%) as land parcels holders. the same pattern occurs across all the regions.

Figure 11: Land parcel holders by sex and region



Land parcel documentation is a challenge in Ghana as more than four-fifth (82.4%) are undocumented as against 13.0 percent of agriculture lands that have complete documentation.

Figure 12: Status of land documentation by region



5. CONCLUSION

Agriculture is the main stay of rural economy. This stems from the fact that rural localities own about four fifth of the total agriculture lands in Ghana. The picture is the same for gender dimension in land ownership where out of the 3,130,492 parcel holders, males own about three quarters. Agriculture land documentation is not a common practice in the country as about 82.4 percent of total number of holders do not document their parcels.

More than fourfifth of land parcels in the country are not documented. Ashanti and Upper East are the two leading regions where land documentation is a challenge. Again, more than half of agriculture parcels in the country are small scale. While Upper East (4.3%) is the region with the least proportion of large scale holders, Bono (35.7%) is the region with largest proportion of large scale holders.

Males dominate their female counterparts in all sizes of holdings, however, comparing female small scale holders in the 16 regions, Volta, Central, Upper East and Western regions female stand out. Arable crop is the most practised of the three types of farming in Ghana. While arable crop type is mostly cultivated in the Northern Savannah Zone regions, tree crop cultivation dominates in the forest zone regions.

More than three-fifth of agriculture Institutions cultivate arable crop type as compared with the other two types. While these Institutions that practice arable crop cultivation are more in rural than urban areas, they are predominantly in Volta, Upper East and North East regions. Again, more than three-fifth of the Institutions have free holding land tenure system, and only about a third of these Institutions documented their land parcels.

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