

Climate Change, Land Grabbing and Threats to Food Security

Blessing Karumbidza, Post Doc - DUT
Food Security Conference (UNW/KAS)

Word on approaches & methods

- Inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary nature of food in/security as a developmental issue
- multi- & inter-agency response & coordination
- Institutional development
- Implementation capacity development
- Democracy – governance, legal, economic, political
- National conversation, national vision (ideology – world view, Theo?)
- As intellectuals, is our knowledge production assisting ...

What is Africa's food history?

- What is the history, political economy and sociology of this phenomena?
- What is the place of food production in the historical-cultural
- Has the process of civilisation ended – the end of history?
- What food? Whose food?

Food contexts and realities

- IBSA
- Africa – will the continued balkanisation work for Africa?
 - Critical fragile states (Theo Venter)
- Do we have a history of food commons?
- what/whose knowledge is being used to deal with developmental challenges?

Climate discourse – a disaster!

- Climate change as an opportunity for capitalist renewal – Kyoto vs Cochabamba
- Biofuel-carbon complex
- The Cochabamba Declaration spells out clearly how a different kind of economic order can satisfy peoples' real needs while protecting the source of our wellbeing – Mother Earth.

Climate adaptation – the capitalist way

- Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)
- Reduction in Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation (REDD)
- Green economy, LULUCF
- Land and green grabbing
- Fracking the water – a food security threat in the Karoo?

Climate change & food security

- **Food insecurity will increase:** 2 degrees warmer world: + 100-400 million hungry people (World Bank, 2009)
- **Crops will decrease** (African countries: 10-30%, Cline 2007)
- **Increased competition** over land and water (FAO)

Climate change & food security cont'd

- **Increase food prices** in 2050 by 90% for wheat, 12% for rice and 35% for maize (IFPRI, 2009)
- **Policy measures** (Do no harm?): Agro-investment & land grabbing, biofuel, REDD: Marginalization of poor people
- **Poor people** will be hardest hit by climate change (Vulnerability, women)

Land: To Grab or to Invest?

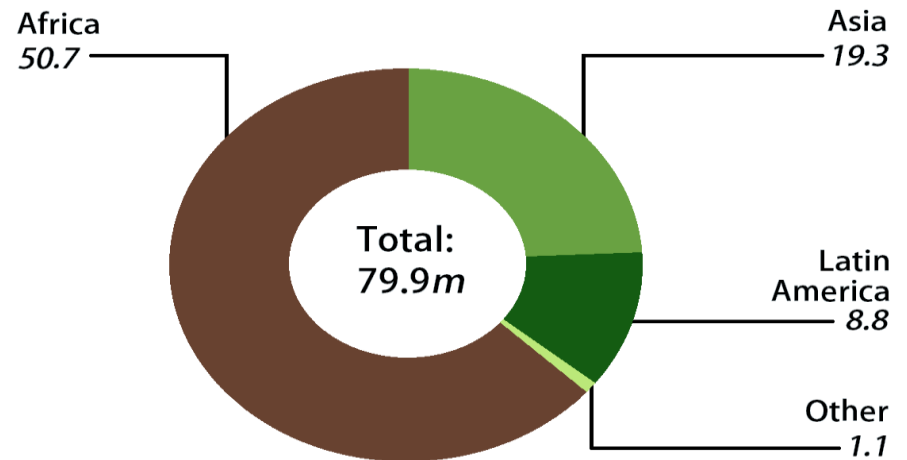
- “Large-scale purchase or lease of farmland (often packaged as ‘idle’, ‘under-utilised’ and ‘uncultivated’) in ‘land-rich developing regions’- Khadija Sharife (2009) - in Pambazuka News - on ‘*Land Grabs: Africa's New Resource Curse*’?”
- “It is the wrong language to call them land grabs. They are investments in farmland like investments in oil exploration“- Kanayo Nwanze, head of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) quoted by Paul Virgo - in IPS (2009) - on ‘*Development: To Grab, Or To Invest*’”

Africa: the Lion's Share. Why?

- Discourse – under-utilised, etc
- climate, soils, proximity to European markets
- Low person/land ratios
- Large areas in extensive/seasonal uses:

Go Africa

Total area of reported land deals*, 2001-11
Hectares, m



Source: Oxfam, CIRAD, CDE at University of Bern, International Land Coalition

*Preliminary estimates

vulnerability

- Many African countries exhibit weak, fragmented land governance, and struggle with corruption in the land sector
- Weak land rights of users render them vulnerable to displacement

Common Misperceptions

There is abundant
“empty” land available in
Africa

Government-owned
land and government
only legitimate party to
deal with the investor

Most small farmers have
clear, secure, and legal
rights to their land

In developing countries
large farms are always
more efficient than
smallholder farms

All large-scale land
investments are actually
“land grabs” by
irresponsible investors

Efforts to create a better understanding are necessary ...

expectations and challenges

1. Modernization--revive stagnant commercial agriculture
2. Access international capital
3. Access technical & management expertise
4. Develop infrastructure, incomes, livelihoods
5. Earn greater foreign exchange from exports
6. Grow state revenue (fees, rents, taxes)
7. Rent seeking / corruption



**Ghana - Peasant farm to
maize monoculture**



How much land is grabbed?

“20 million hectares of African land have been acquired by foreign interests in the

last 3 years” - UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Estimates at the November 2009 Rome Summit on Food Security cited by Paul Virgo in IPS (2009)

“Since June 2008, over 180 deals have been reported, with foreign entities seeking or securing a ‘coup d’état’ over 37 million hectares of land during the past three years. Africa alone has experienced acquisitions to the tune of 30 million hectares, chiefly negotiated between African states – often entire economies, dependent on unearned resource revenues or rents from extractive industries, and private investors. More than 40 per cent of all deals negotiated were South-South” –

Khadija Sharife (2009)

Any pattern in grabbing?

- Cru Investment from the UK “already control more than 2,500 ha of farmland in Malawi and operate another 4,000 ha there through outgrower schemes. The produce is exported to the UK” – GRAIN (2009) on ‘The New Farm Owners Table’
- “As of June 2009,” Emergent Asset Management from the UK controlled over 150,000 ha in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland and Zambia” – GRAIN (2009)
- “A few transactions have received significant publicity, like Kenya’s deal to lease nearly 100,000 acres to the Qatari government in return for financing a new port, or South Korea’s agreement to develop almost 400 square miles in Tanzania”
- “According to media reports, Sudan, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Mozambique are among the key recipients of FDI in land in Africa”

Why Land is Being Grabbed in Africa?

A Clash of Reasons

- Food Security

“States such as Saudi Arabia and China started to look for farmland abroad after a spike in the price of staples such as wheat and rice in 2007-08” – Paul Virgo in IPS (2009)

“‘[L]and grabs’ are motivated by the intent of developed governments in ‘land-poor’ nations and representative corporate entities – composing over 50 per cent of the world’s largest economies, to secure exclusive rights to the assets used to produce food” – Khadija Sharife (2009)

- Energy Security

Though the US squarely laid the blame for increased food prices on scarcity and the rapidly growing ‘middle class’ segment of both China and India – estimated at 650 million – a leaked document written by senior World Bank analyst Don Mitchell, revealed that 65-75 per cent of the increase was caused by the conversion of ‘crops for fuel’ i.e.: biofuels” – Sharife (2009) cf. “Production of liquid biofuels is a key driver of much recent land acquisition” – FAO et al. (2009)

Who is Grabbing Land in Africa?

A Competition for Players

- Certain East Asian (China, South Korea) and Gulf (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates) states emerge as key sources of investment...Private investors from the European Union (EU) and the United States (US) are also active in land investment, though have featured in fewer headlines in the international press” - FAO, IIED & IFAD (2009)
- “China, India, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the Arab Gulf states lead the pack ... In Sudan, South Korea has acquired 690,000 hectares of land to grow wheat. The United Arab Emirates, which already has 30,000 hectares in Sudan, is investing in another 378,000 hectares to grow corn, alfalfa, wheat, potatoes and beans. In Tanzania, Saudi Arabia is seeking 500,000 hectares...China has acquired 2.8 million hectares in the Democratic Republic of Congo to create the world's largest oil-palm plantation...and is negotiating for 2 million hectares in Zambia to grow jatropha. British firms have secured big tracts of land in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Tanzania” - Gwynne Dyer (2009) – in The Korea Times – on ‘African Land Grab’

How Deals Often Happen

- Those with informal (but socially legitimate) rights are ignored
- No meaningful consultation, if any
- Expropriation (for private gain?) and without proper process or adequate compensation
- Inadequate, mostly unenforceable contracts; low prices; and limited access to dispute resolution
 - Lack of transparency and corruption

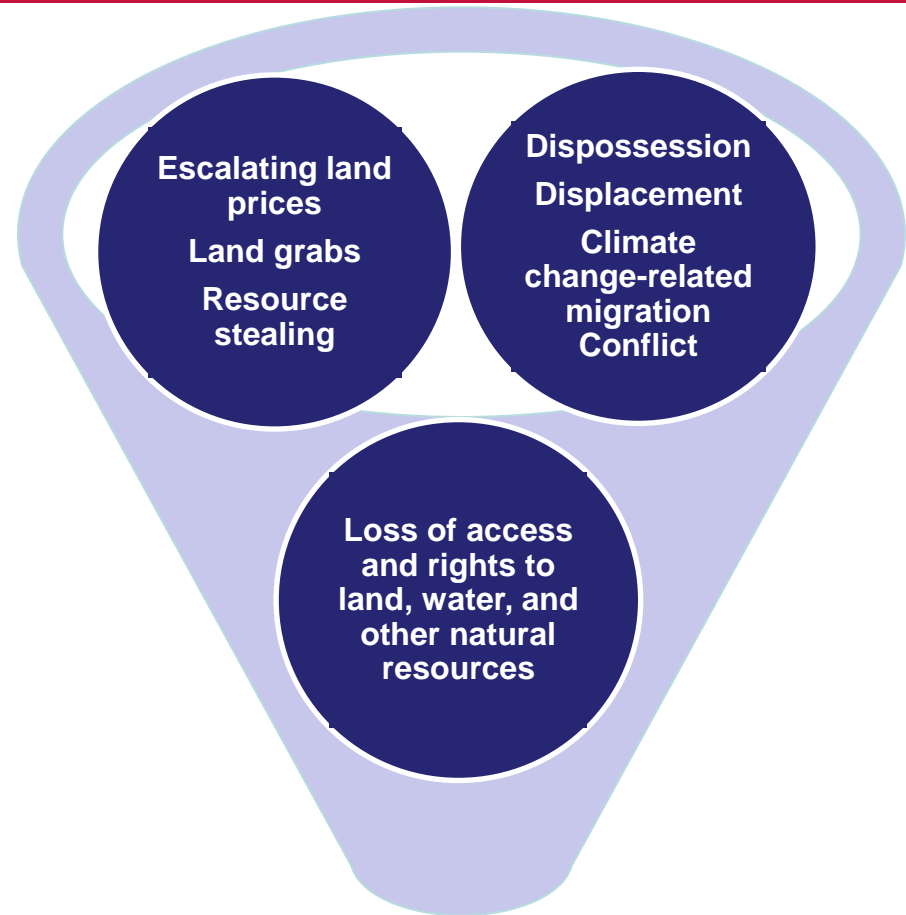


Land Grab or Give Away?

Commercial Uses:

1. Massive agricultural investment is needed to meet global food security needs
2. In 2010, global private sector investment in agriculture reached \$14 billion (OECD)
3. Investment in agricultural land in developing countries has accelerated rapidly in recent years
4. Demand drivers: global food and financial crises, biofuels
5. It's government's responsibility to help meet these challenges

Win-Win Impact or Myth?



Adverse impacts on livelihoods

Integrated approach to resource management

A country cannot develop itself in a “silo” approach

- *Education and human resource development*-the education system has to be clearly linked to the development trajectory of a country.
- Even though the economic mainstay was agriculture and mining-the education system overproduced teachers and nurses-who ended up being unemployed (as well as political scientists)

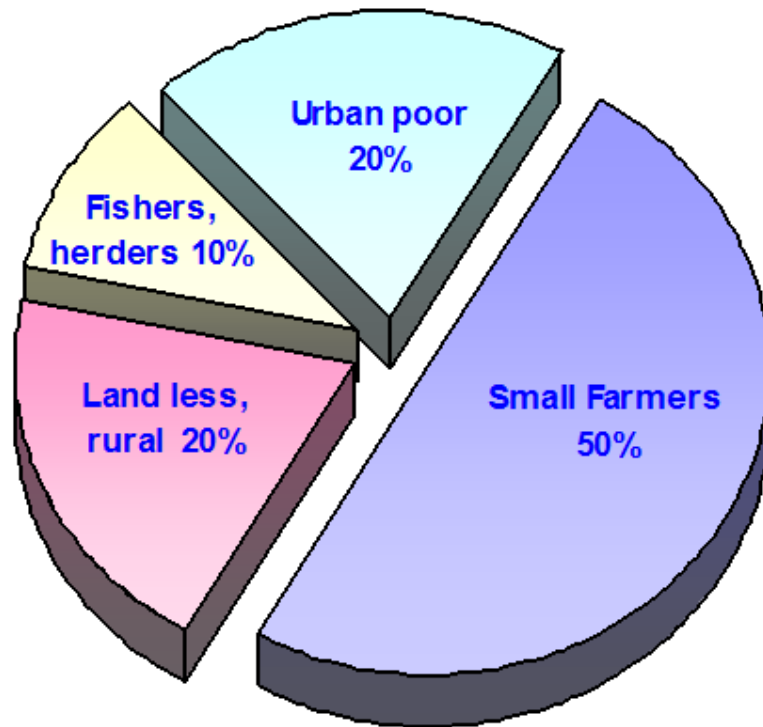
Skills mismatch

- The education did not strategically empower the graduates with agricultural skills to ensure that they could become the backbone of the agricultural economy of the country.
- Today, there is a gap between the agricultural aspirations of the country, land management, and the needs of the people, let alone the economy. The land is there, but not being utilised for the benefit of the people.

The Food Question – a development question mark!

- **Food security drivers:**
 - **Climate change:** decreased production, misguided policies?
 - **Food governance/Food prices**
 - **Scarcity:** Land, water, food scarcity
 - **Bio-economy:** Bioproduction, energy,

Who are the food insecure



Production and non-production related

- ▶ Prod.failure
- ▶ Drought
- ▶ Diet changes
- ▶ Biofuels
- ▶ High oil prices
- ▶ Low productivity
Africa
- ▶ Climate change

- ▶ Speculations
- ▶ Policy failure
- ▶ Trade liberalization
- ▶ Companies profit
- ▶ Structural injustice



Concluding remarks

- Consensus that Africa will be the most negatively affected by climate change;
- What is Africa doing about it?
 - Celebrate the fact that “for the first time, Africa has a common position on climate change-Copenhagen”
 - Based on “urging our partners” to increase funding;

Climate change

- Not taking into account the practicalities of the continent in terms of diversity;
- Individual countries still pursue narrow interests;
- Divide and rule tactics and manipulation by the same “partners”
- Energy and climate change are going to be key determinants of development-and there is need for leadership, research and links to technology development if Africa is to be competitive?
- The victim approach will not work!

Pablo Solón, 2013 World Social Forum (WSF)

There is no single answer, no single campaign nor single approach, to address the climate crisis. Instead, a series of actions that are necessary, including leaving fossil fuels in the ground, supporting small, local, peasant and indigenous community farming, promoting local consumption and production of goods, stopping extractive industries, increasing public transport, and promoting peace and dismantling the military and war industry and infrastructure.

- **Centre for Climate Change, Sustainability & Community Engagement (CCSCE)**