

STRENGTHENING LAND GOVERNANCE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Highlights of LANDac 2010-2016

Colophon

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PREFACE

Last summer, Grain – the organization that, in 2008, first sounded the alarm about land grabbing on a global scale – published a report entitled *'The global farmland grab in 2016: how big, how bad?'* to provide an update on the situation. The conclusion is clear: worldwide land grabbing persists even though the 'hype' – extensive and sensationalized attention from the media, researchers, civil society, and other actors – has subsided.

Progress in the field of land governance remains crucial for promoting sustainable and inclusive development. As we conclude a successful first phase of LANDac it is time to look back on what we have achieved, as this publication will do. As we enter a new, second phase we will continue to work on the broad range of issues related to land governance and development, promoting the link between land governance and inclusive, sustainable development.

We will look back over the decade since the land grab 'hype' began, revisiting those locations where investments have been made and transformations have taken place and re-evaluating our understanding of the implications of these investment flows for food security, rural livelihoods, and local development. We will also look forward, and assess new challenges, such as land governance in the context of climate change and increasing urbanization, and land in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals, using empirical knowledge to help set the land agenda to 2030. Providing people with secure and equal access to land is fundamental for ending poverty in all its forms.

It is interesting to compare the first phase of the debate on large-scale land acquisitions – driven primarily by investments in agriculture for food and biofuels – with the second: investments that occur increasingly in urban land and infrastructure. In the discussions about large-scale investments in agricultural land, emphasis is placed on affording people the 'right to remain'. The urban debate is broader: it's about the 'right to the city' – citizenship and human rights, rather than property and land rights. There's no mention of land grabbing even though large-scale land appropriation is a factor here and many urban residents are forced to move without being informed or compensated. Rural and urban land issues need to be seen as linked, and not as separate, as is too often the case.

Compared to eight years ago, we now have a much better idea of what is happening in the various countries. There's a dedicated community of researchers in the Netherlands and abroad who, together with civil servants, NGOs and the private sector, try to prevent land grabbing and keep the issue on the agenda. We believe that a multi-stakeholder and participatory approach is the best way to ensure human well-being is at the center of the land agenda. A wide communication network, of which the new and expanded LANDac is proudly part, seems give rise to better options for bringing worldwide attention to local problems.

Annelies Zoomers, Chair of LANDac and Professor of International Development Studies

Guus van Westen, Co-Chair of LANDac and Assistant Professor of International Development Studies

1 WHAT IS LANDAC?

This publication captures the main activities and findings of the first phase of LANDac, the Netherlands Academy on Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development. LANDac is a platform and partnership critically engaged in land governance for achieving inclusive and sustainable development. The first phase ran from 2010 to 2016 and is followed by a second phase from 2016 to 2021. The publication is meant to inform researchers, policy makers and practitioners, among LANDac members as well as outside the LANDac community. It is an invitation to read more and engage with LANDac to improve land governance and make land governance processes more sustainable and inclusive, since ‘land matters’.

1.1 About LANDac

LANDac – the Netherlands Academy on Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development – brings together researchers, policy makers, development practitioners and business professionals in the field of land governance and development. With a focus on new pressures and competing claims on land and natural resources, the LANDac network conducts research, disseminates information, and organizes courses and training. Our guiding question is ***how to optimize the link between land governance, sustainable development, and poverty alleviation.*** LANDac and its partner organizations study the impact of large-scale land deals for agricultural productivity, food and biofuels, urbanization, tourism, nature conservation, and mining. We look at the role of land laws, regulations and reforms, and voluntary guidelines and principles in dealing with new pressures on land. We work together with Master’s and PhD students as well as European and Southern partners to carry out long- and short-term research projects, organize country-specific workshops and host knowledge sharing events.

1.2 Partners

LANDac is one of several ‘IS academies’¹ which have been supported since 2005 by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote cooperation between researchers, policymakers and development practitioners: research inspired by practical questions and practice enriched by (scientific) knowledge. LANDac was launched on the 1st of April 2010 as a partnership between the International Development Studies group of Utrecht University (chair and coordinator), Agriterra, the African Studies Centre of Leiden University (ASC), the Sociology of Development and Change Group (SDC) of Wageningen University, HIVOS, the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Triodos Facet and the

1 Academies for International Cooperation (in Dutch, “Internationale Samenwerking”, hence IS)

Department for Sustainable Development (DDE – now Department for Inclusive Green Growth or IGG) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²

In the second phase (2016-2021), new partners have joined: the Land Portal, Oxfam Novib, VNG International, the Centre for Development and Innovation (CDI) of Wageningen University, and ITC University of Twente. As a consequence of changing priorities within their organizations, Triodos Facet and HIVOS have stepped out.

All partners are based in the Netherlands and are active in the Global South. The LANDac network works with a range of universities and research institutes, producer organizations, civil society organizations, companies and financial institutions, and embassies around the world.

"LANDac unites different organizations that do not always meet each other easily. The platform is on purpose very open to outsiders. Non-LANDac members are always invited to participate in events. LANDac attracts not only seasoned professionals but also students and journalists. Though the threshold to benefit from or to contribute to LANDac is low, the quality and enthusiasm to discuss innovations and experiences is high. All in all LANDac is more and more a hub that is well connected to a broad range of complementary initiatives in the Netherlands and abroad that aim at strengthening land governance for all. ... It aims to share knowledge and promote learning through debates, conferences and publications. This has been implemented by a wide range of committed and enthusiastic actors under the leadership of Utrecht University in a rather cost-efficient way."

Frits van der Wal, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

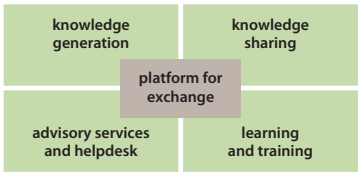
1.3 Key themes and activities

In the first phase, LANDac very much focused on studying the impact of large-scale land deals in agribusiness, in particular concentrating on large-scale investments in food production and biofuels but also in nature conservation, mining, and tourism. Moreover, attention was paid to the role of land laws, regulations, and reforms, as well as voluntary institutional guidelines, in dealing with new pressures on land.

In recent years, LANDac has started to pay increasing attention to emerging themes such as land governance in relation to urban topics including urban expansion and large-scale infrastructure development. It also addresses land governance in the context of climate change, exploring such issues as conflict arising from the implementation of climate adaptation and mitigation mechanisms. Poverty alleviation and inequality will continue to guide the LANDac agenda, particularly now in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

² The LANDac advisory board in phase I consisted of Jun Borras (Institute of Social Studies, The Hague), Paul Mathieu (FAO), Sonja Vermeulen (CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)) and Jaap Zevenbergen (University of Twente, the Netherlands).

The activities of LANDac can be categorized in terms of a number of key functions, as shown in the figure below. This publication will explore these functions further in the following chapters.



Key activities of LANDac (source: LANDac)

2 THE POLICY AND DEBATE CONTEXT: FROM HYPE TO FACTS

Nowadays one can hardly open a newspaper without encountering something about land and land disputes. Land can be acquired for, among other reasons, agricultural investment, infrastructure development, and urban expansion, and conflict ensues in many cases. Conflict over land can be violent and have severe consequences: in March 2016, environmental activist Berta Cáceres was murdered for protesting against a hydroelectric dam project in Honduras.



New road, Kalangala, Uganda

2.1 Land investments and land tenure

The study of investments and their consequences is key in understanding changes in land tenure and policy responses. Whatever form they take and whatever source they originate from, these investment decisions bring about fundamental changes in land ownership structures. A sound policy framework is crucial to regulate those changes. For that to be possible, knowledge of what is actually occurring on the ground is necessary.

The Land Matrix is one of the sources that provides that knowledge. Its worldwide database on land deals shows in real time how many transactions are planned and completed. One may conclude that domestic deals play an important role, and may be even more important than the figures show, since many transactions remain 'below the radar'.³

³ Agrarian change below the radar screen: rising farmland acquisitions by domestic investors in West Africa. Results from a survey in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. Thea Hilhorst, Joost Nelen, Nata Traoré. LANDac, April 2011



Oil palm fields in Kalangala in Uganda

Table 1 *All known land transactions (concluded, intended or failed)*

	International	Domestic	Total
Number of deals	1625	720	2345
Size (hectares)	73 million	22 million	95 million
Average per deal (hectares)	45,000	30,000	40,000

Source: Land Matrix, accessed 5 March 2016 (<http://landmatrix.org/en/get-the-idea/dynamics-overview/>)

In 2016, the Land Matrix also published its ‘Second Analytical Report’⁴, focusing on a part of the total number of transactions presented in the table above: international deals with an agricultural investment intention – which are, in any case, the most frequent ones. In general, much of the international debate and research about land issues – also within LANDac – has likewise had a rural orientation, with much attention for the consequences for smallholder farmers, food security, contract farming etc.

The debate about the impact of large-scale land acquisitions in Africa, Asia and Latin America has evolved significantly since 2010. In the first decade of the present century, much of the publicity and information on the subject was framed in terms of ‘land grabbing’, with the consequence that increasingly, (attempted) foreign land acquisition was viewed critically as it infringed on the rights and well-being of the people living and working on the land in question. While this has no doubt been true in many cases, with only the ‘land grabbers’ benefiting from transactions, it is not the whole story. In recent years, the paradigm related to land governance is shifting with more eye for a nuanced debate and a shift from ‘do no harm’ to ‘do good’.

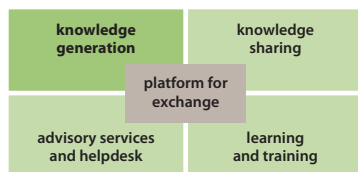
The adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs) by the FAO Committee on World Food Security signified an important step forward towards globally accepted principles and standards for practices on land governance.

⁴ International land deals for agriculture. Second analytical report, Land Matrix, CDE/CIRAD/GIGA/University of Pretoria, 2016.

2.2 A focus on land in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has made 'land' one of its priorities in its development policy in line with the fact that food security is one of its four focus themes. The department for Inclusive Green Growth (IGG) of MFA is an active member of LANDac. Following discussions in parliament in September 2013, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Lilianne Ploumen set up a multi-stakeholder platform (the Land Governance Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, or LG-MSD) after various stakeholders including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, companies and financial institutions, civil society organizations and knowledge institutes expressed their willingness to contribute to improving land governance in countries where Dutch players are active. LANDac has been a member of this platform since its inception, and as of 2016 also acts as its executive secretariat.

3 KNOWLEDGE GENERATION



LANDac not only operates within the changing context of perspectives on land governance described in the previous chapter, but also contributes actively to it, by generating knowledge and agenda-setting. LANDac has produced numerous publications which have scrutinized land issues – for a full list, see the annexes. For instance, LANDac contributed to challenging the prevalent

notions that land grabbing is a new phenomenon, that it is being carried out illegally (see Box 1), and that most land investments come from abroad (see 4.2). Research carried out within the framework of LANDac shows the need for reliable facts and data that go 'beyond the hype'; strong opinions might be welcome, but without equally strong facts to support them, they lose much of their convincing power.

Box 1. LANDac flagship publication *The Global Land Grab: Beyond the Hype*

In their book 'The global land grab: Beyond the hype', Mayke Kaag of the African Studies Centre and LANDac chair Annelies Zoomers of IDS Utrecht University argue that land grabbing has occurred for a long period and that it is in many cases legal. They explored the conditions under which land investments might yield positive results – and concluded that this depends to a large extent on participation and accountability: the degree to which citizens and stakeholder groups are consulted and can hold to account their authorities and private parties.

The literature on the global land grab has so far been preoccupied with theoretical studies, resulting in a lack of in-depth local studies – this book is particularly noteworthy in that it explores cases at the country level. These include: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya, Argentina, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecuador, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines and China.



3.1 Ph.D. research

The Ph.D. research illustrated the many aspects related to land governance. Virtually all research about land governance that was done in the LANDac context has resulted in concrete recommendations to public and private parties about actions they can take (or omit). This way LANDac aims at translating scientific research to assessable forms stimulating research uptake. This also applies for doctoral thesis executed in the framework of LANDac.

Table 2 LANDac Ph.D. research projects

Author	Title	Status
Femke van Noorloos	<i>Whose place in the sun? Residential tourism and its implications for equitable and sustainable development in Guanacaste, Costa Rica</i> (See also LANDac policy brief #1, below)	Defence in December 2012, Utrecht
George Schoneveld	<i>The governance of large-scale farmland investments in Sub-Saharan Africa. A comparative analysis of challenges for sustainability.</i> (See also LANDac policy brief #2, below)	Defence in October 2013, Utrecht
Maru Shete	<i>The impact of large-scale land acquisition on equitable and sustainable development in Ethiopia</i>	Defence in October 2016, Leiden
Alda Salomão	<i>Challenges of participatory land governance in Mozambique: Assessing community spaces, voices, powers and benefits in decisions on large-scale land-based investments</i>	Defence expected in 2017
Murtah Read	<i>Infrastructure development in Beira (Mozambique): governance and local development implications of these externally initiated infrastructure interventions</i>	Started in 2016

George Schoneveld (see also Box 5) concludes his Ph.D. thesis on large-scale farmland investments in Africa by analyzing the opportunities and constraints, as well as the relative advantages, of increasing the development potential of investments, both in host countries and at the international governance level. Likewise, Femke van Noorloos formulated specific recommendations for the Costa Rica national government regarding the regulation of residential tourism in the Northwestern province of Guanacaste:

“...residential tourism adds new elements to the relation between tourism and sustainability: while it is a strong driver of environmental degradation (with its focus on construction, high use of resources and land price inflation), it may also enhance conservation due to the environmental awareness and long-term involvement of residential tourists... The Costa Rican state should greatly improve regulation and control of the residential tourism sector, promote democratic community decision-making rather than centralise and privatize decision-making, and reflect on the model of tourism it is promoting”⁵

3.2 Short research projects

One way in which research was stimulated in the first phase of LANDac was through short-term research projects – projects that, in general, did not require more than a year from start to finish and that were made possible by a LANDac grant. Many of these projects originated from practical questions and needs for knowledge identified by LANDac’s practitioner partners. The studies have helped to put land issues more strongly on the agendas of governments, civil society, businesses and academia; they also helped to develop and strengthen contacts with networks of organizations working on land governance around policy issues and have been an opportunity for student

⁵ Adapted from the abstract of ‘Whose place in the sun? Residential tourism and its implications for equitable and sustainable development in Guanacaste, Costa Rica’. Femke van Noorloos, Utrecht, 2012

Box 2. Large scale land acquisition in Ethiopia

Dr. Maru Shete Bekele from Ethiopia focused his Ph.D. Research on the impact of large-scale land acquisition on equitable and sustainable development in Ethiopia. Shete found that large-scale farming had various negative impacts: (1) it worsened the food security of local populations by separating people from their livelihood activities; (2) it brought negative environmental effects in terms of clearing vegetation cover, flooding and declining soil organic matter; (3) despite the huge expectations that the government had, there was seldom technology spill-over from large-scale farms to the local people; and (4) the local economy generated less economic returns under the current land-use pattern of large-scale plantation agriculture compared to the previous land-use pattern when the land was used by the local population for various livelihood activities.

Key recommendations by Shete to improve the quality of land governance included:

- Before allocating land to large-scale farming, the livelihood situation of the local people should be very well examined. Investments should support rather than jeopardize the livelihood of the local population
- Industry best practices should be adopted to minimize harm for the environment. Investors should be concerned with ethically acceptable business operations and should show some level of corporate social responsibility.
- The selection of investors should take into account their farming experience, and their capacity in terms of financial, material and human resources.
- Concerned government bodies should closely monitor the activities of the investors, and take early corrective measures both in terms of providing any needed support and correcting any mistakes committed by investors.

Shete presented his work in several LANDac meetings. He reflected on his experiences:

"I have benefited much from the LANDac activities by conducting an in-depth study on a very important and topical issue of large-scale farming in the context of Ethiopia. It was so important because there was a continuous debate among researchers, rights groups, policymakers and academicians about the likely impact of 'land-grabbing' with little empirical data from the field. The research conducted by LANDac by focusing on generating empirical evidence from Ethiopia is a very good contribution to the policy debate, and a very good value addition."

Dr. Maru Shete Bekele, Associate Professor, Development Economics at St. Mary's University, Ethiopia.

fieldwork. A total of 20 of these small research projects were carried out: 12 in the very first year (2010), three in the second (2011), three in 2012/13 and two in 2015. In regional terms, the bulk of the studies focused on Africa (13 out of 20); other cases were conducted in India, Cambodia, Vietnam, the

former Soviet Union and Brazil. 11 short research projects studied the consequences of investments with agricultural intentions, and six were studies on investments and large-scale projects in mining; the rest focused on governance (see also annexes). Below are two examples: on domestic investors and on the 'governance gap'.

Who are the domestic investors?

As was mentioned in chapter 3, internal actors are responsible for land acquisition in many countries. Who are these domestic investors that acquire land in their own country? A study facilitated by LANDac⁶ showed that many of them are part of the political-administrative elite including civil servants, officials, and retired military who want their own farm. This research – carried out in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Benin – learned that particularly in Burkina Faso and Niger the proportion of civil servants and politicians as investors was high: over 40% of all the land acquired domestically was in the hands of this group. These investments seem to have contributed little to food security in general as the productivity on the land bought by the new agro-investors remained stable. Another key finding was that most domestic investors acquire land from customary landholders – who tend not to be accountable either to their own family members or to the wider community. The transactions are clouded in secrecy, even within the clan that used to own the land. The flaws in customary custodianship have not yet been sufficiently balanced by new institutions, such as local land commissions or local governments. Conflicts can be expected given this lack of transparency and consultation, and because of the fluidity of contracts, including the possibility of multiple sales and other fraudulent behavior.

Box 3. Communities and power relations

LANDac research, such as that on domestic land transactions in West Africa, has shown that the concept of 'community' is problematic. Whereas in many instances of discourse and publicity 'the community' is presented as the victim of external forces that are beyond their control (national governments, investors and the like), LANDac has shown the importance of considering any community as a heterogeneous group, subject to all the possible conflicting interests and internal forces that often also apply on higher scales. Leaving everything in the hands of 'the community' may just transfer potential conflict to the local level. For instance, a community leader can simply sell land to civil servants from the capital without consulting his fellow-villagers; during the LANDac conference of 2016, for example, it was shown how a communal land titling program for sugarcane production overlooked nuances in intra-community traditions, resulting in the concentration of decision-making process in a few hands*. These findings are also relevant for campaigns focusing on communal land programs, like the recent Land Rights Now campaign, which aims to double the global area under communal tenure by 2020.

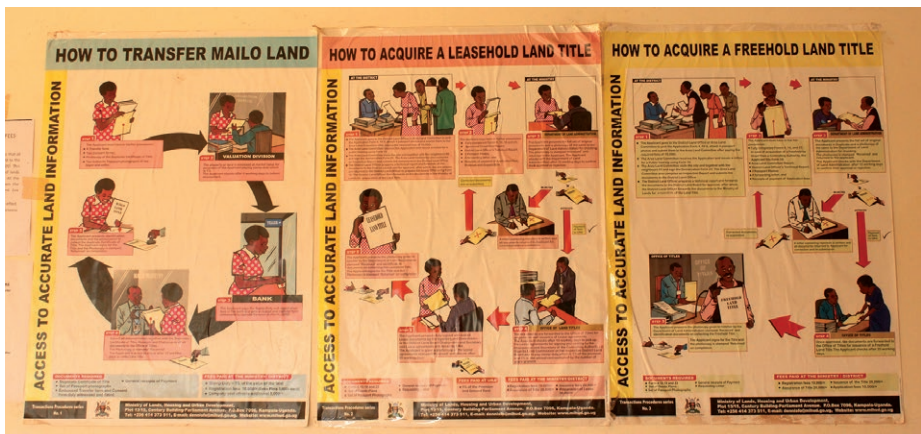
**Exploring the potential of communal land titling: The risks of treating communities as homogeneous entities. Filipe di Matteo, CIFOR/LANDac, 2016.*

⁶ Agrarian change below the radar screen: rising farmland acquisitions by domestic investors in West Africa. Results from a survey in Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger. Thea Hillhorst, Joost Neelen, Nata Traoré. LANDac, April 2011.

Governance and the governance gap

Governance has been the focal point of LANDac's attention in two ways: (1) analyzing the opportunities and constraints of certain political and administrative settings and environments, such as decentralization or different business models (see also Box 6); and (2) making policy recommendations arising from research 'on the ground'. There is limited knowledge on the role that government bodies at local level (municipalities, districts, communes etc.) play in regulating land-related processes. A better understanding of the way they shape the process of land acquisition and balance developmental needs with protection of their wards is necessary.

A study on the role of local governments was carried out by local researchers in five African countries (Uganda, Ghana, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, and Burundi) coordinated by two LANDac partners (KIT and Wageningen University).⁷ It showed that there is an important discrepancy between what local governments can do theoretically when regulating competing claims and pressures on land, and their role in practice. This was referred to as the 'governance gap'. While most local governments have a relatively large formal mandate due to processes of administrative decentralization, in reality higher levels of government often manage concessions and negotiations. Moreover, decentralization processes are often incomplete, meaning that many local governments, regardless of commitment, have a lack of resources and capacity, or are facing political interference from higher government bodies. One of the recommendations of the research was to strengthen both the capacity of local populations and authorities, and the linkages between them.



Instruction posters of how to transfer maillo land and how to acquire leasehold and freehold titles in Uganda, Jinja district land office

⁷ Governing commercial pressures on land in Africa: What is the role of local government? Researchers: Joshua K. Maiyo, Doreen Nancy Kobusingye, Bala Wenceslas Sanou, Rosine Tchatchoua Djomo, Richmond Antwi-Bediako, Alda Salomão. Editors: Gerard Baltissen (KIT-Royal Tropical Institute), Gemma van der Haar (Wageningen University).

"We feel a responsibility to ask attention for the role of local governments in such [land registration] processes. Our experience was that in the dialogue on land management in the Netherlands, the [local] governments are often being forgotten, while they can play an important role."

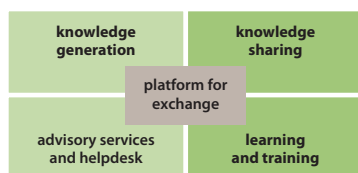
Anouk Lodder, VNG-International

Box 4. Village land use planning in Tanzania – an example of local-level land governance

Dr. Chris Huggins fulfilled a Postdoc research function within LANDac, focusing on village land use planning and commercialization of land. The main findings of this study were captured in the first LANDac Research Brief, on local-level land governance (VLUP, for village land use planning) in Tanzania. Here, a recentralization of authority has occurred, in spite of laws supporting decentralized governance. As Huggins found, resources (funds as well as information) were not readily available at the local level, thereby reducing the area of influence and the autonomy of the village land use planning process. In many cases this resulted in an excessive focus on the management of individual applications for customary ownership of land, rather than on the elaboration of a local vision on development and the land issue. On the upside, thanks to a flexible approach that emphasizes local process ownership, VLUP was found to be a useful tool that stimulated villages to set up village land committees which resolve disputes and encourage particular forms of environmental management⁸.

⁸ Village land use planning and commercialization of land in Tanzania. Chris Huggins, LANDac research brief 01, March 2016.

4 KNOWLEDGE SHARING, LEARNING AND TRAINING



Knowledge generation – both academic and policy- or practice-oriented – as discussed in the previous chapter is only a part of LANDac's work; knowledge sharing and capacity-building between academics, policy makers, CSOs and the private sector is equally important. This is done through translating knowledge into accessible formats, such as by making information available on the

website and through organizing events where participants exchange knowledge face-to-face. The LANDac secretariat functions as a knowledge broker, bringing various organization together and stimulating knowledge exchange.



LANDac workshop on Land Governance and Food Security in Jinja, Uganda, 2015

4.1 Publications

The written output of research produced by LANDac has taken on many forms (see annexes for a complete overview); emphasis here is placed on those related to direct or indirect policy advice and recommendations.

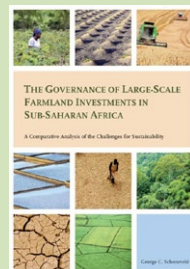
Policy briefs

Some results of LANDac's research and other activities have been documented in a series of policy briefs: these are concise documents with key findings translated into comprehensible recommendations.

1. *Tourism turning real estate: How to deal with residential tourism investment in the global South?* Femke van Noorloos, 2014
2. *Governing large-scale farmland investments in sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and ways forward* George Schoneveld, 2014
3. *The Global Jatropha Hype: Lessons from the boom and bust of a miracle crop* Roeland Muskens and Gemma Betsema, 2015
4. *Mozambique: Land-based investments, inclusive business and food security* Kei Otsuki, 2016
5. *Compensation and resettlement for urbanization in Vietnam* Nguyen Quang Phuc, 2017.

Box 5. The Governance of Large-Scale Farmland Investments in Sub-Saharan Africa

Like LANDac Ph.D. researcher Maru Shete (see Box 2), George Schoneveld found in his Ph.D. research that large-scale farmland investments in sub-Saharan Africa have to date produced largely negative local socioeconomic and environmental outcomes, which he succinctly attributed to eight interrelated factors: (1) deficiencies in the law, (2) elite capture, (3) conflicts of interests, (4) capacity constraints, (5) modernist ideologies, (6) limited contestation, (7) incompatibility of production systems, and (8) misalignment of corporate accountability. Based on this extensive research, Schoneveld was able to provide concise recommendations such as to identify legal and institutional reform needs within host countries, and to establish multi-stakeholder platforms to carry out this task.



Research for policy

In addition to distilling policy recommendations from research, the strengths and weaknesses of certain political and administrative settings can also be analyzed through research; one such example was shown in section 4.2, on the 'governance gap'. LANDac facilitated and published on other short-term research projects like research focusing on the impact of land policy on livelihoods in Senegal, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Burkina Faso.

At the request of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, LANDac conducted a comprehensive study of Dutch support to responsible governance of rural land in developing countries in the period between 2007 and 2014. The study included approximately 75 interventions in various countries looking at the degree of participation of the local population, capacity building, sustainability, and donor coordination. The report concluded that many programs were implemented in direct collaboration with other donors such as the UK, Sweden and the EU, as well as with local organizations. An important next step in further improving this coordination included improved alignment with the Land Governance Program Database in which all donors are regularly uploading their land-related interventions and its linkages to the CFS Voluntary Guidelines.⁹

Based on the report, the Dutch Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation compiled a policy brief which was sent to the Chamber of Deputies in September of 2014¹⁰.

9 Dutch Land Governance Interventions - Inventory and analysis of projects and programs supported by Dutch Ministries and Dutch Embassies to strengthen land governance for equitable and sustainable development in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America. Sophie Blok and Gemma Betsema, 2014.

10 Brief: *De katalyserende rol van Nederland bij het versterken van land governance*, 30 september 2014, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/kamerstukken/2014/09/30/kamerbrief-inzake-katalyserende-rol-nederland-bij-versterken-land-governance/kamerbrief-inzake-katalyserende-rol-nederland-bij-versterken-land-governance.pdf>

Factsheets

The synergy between policy and research, and more specifically between Dutch policy-makers and LANDac is shown by the elaboration of factsheets focusing on the policy and institutional contexts in relation to land governance and food security in (so far) thirteen countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Palestinian Territories, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen. These are the partner countries selected by the Dutch government in 2011 for its development cooperation efforts. The fact sheets were originally compiled in 2012, and were updated in 2015/2016.



LANDac conference, 2015

4.2 Conferences

LANDac has organized several conferences – each year the LANDac conference is organized focusing on a specific theme, while additionally several other meetings are organized. The Annual International Conference is a renowned event in the Netherlands and world-wide, and has attracted hundreds of guests in the years it has been running. Aside from this annual event, LANDac has also organized smaller and more intimate conferences on specific topics.

Table 3 *LANDac conferences*

Year	Title	Participants
2012	Knowledge for Development	120
2013	LANDac Gender and land conference	60
2014	LANDac Jatropha conference	50
2015	LANDac International Conference 2015	250
2016	LANDac International Conference 2016	100
2016	Climate change interventions as a source of conflict, competing claims and new mobilities: Increasing the resilience of communities and cities in the Global South	70
2017	LANDac conference 2017: <i>Leave no-one behind</i>	250 (expected)

Gender and land governance (2013)

Within LANDac, gender has received increasing attention over the years. In many countries in the Global South, the rights of women to land and natural resources are usually not formally recognized, while women are often the primary users of land. The importance of gender is recognized by the

Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and gender is one of the cross-cutting themes supporting the four 'spearheads' within Dutch development cooperation. The 2013 LANDac conference brought together 60 scholars and policy-makers engaged in the gender dynamics of land governance processes, and also served as a launching point for the development of the FAO technical guide *Governing land for women and men*¹¹. The conference resulted in a book 'Global Trends in Land Tenure Reform – Gender Impacts', edited by Caroline Archambault and Annelies Zoomers (2015).



4.3 Learning and training

Learning within LANDac is not confined to a specific setting or course but is intended to occur continuously during conferences, at meetings, and whilst browsing the LANDac website or reading LANDac publications. That said, LANDac also organizes specific learning and training sessions.

Summer school

The annual summer school 'Land Governance for Development' aims to provide participants with a thorough knowledge of current academic and policy debates in the field of land and development. The course is designed for both Master's and Ph.D. students as well as for practitioners from organizations and governments who work directly or indirectly with land rights. Topics addressed include land governance, development studies, natural resource management, spatial planning, human rights and conflict studies. Over the last three years 24 to 26 participants per year attended the summer school. According to an evaluation of the program of 2016, the course was graded 8 out of 10 by participants, while participants agreed it was a valuable module for their study/work (4.5 out of 5) and most participants agreed they were able to apply new knowledge on land governance in a policy context (4.3 out of 5).



Participants of the summer school

¹¹ <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3114e/i3114e.pdf>

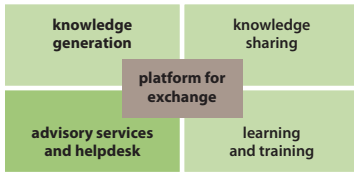


Land for sale in Kampala, Uganda

Learning trajectories

In 2015, LANDac organized, with the support of the Food & Business Knowledge Platform (F&BKP), three country-specific capacity building trajectories linking land governance and food security. The aim was to make the Dutch expertise on these topics widely available, to translate available knowledge into policy and practice in partner countries of the Netherlands, and to enable mutual exchange and learning in and between countries. The trajectories were rolled out in Uganda, Ghana, and Ethiopia with a participation of some 25 professionals each. In all three cases, the project helped to overcome the barriers between the communities working on land issues on the one hand and those working on food security and livelihood-related topics on the other. For instance, a private sector – NGO exchange forum was set up in Uganda, and in Ghana a knowledge platform was created. In 2017/18, the trajectories will have a follow-up in the form of 'learning platforms' in Mozambique, Uganda and Tanzania (see section 6.2).

5 LANDAC AS A PLATFORM FOR EXCHANGE



LANDac is a platform or network itself bringing together various actors including scientists, policy makers, representatives from CSOs and the private sector. LANDac also stimulates setting up platforms on land governance in other countries aiming to facilitate exchange in multi-stakeholder settings. In order to expedite exchange, LANDac also acts as an advisory

services and helpdesk, connecting actors, optimizing linkages, and generally overseeing Dutch activities in the field of land governance.

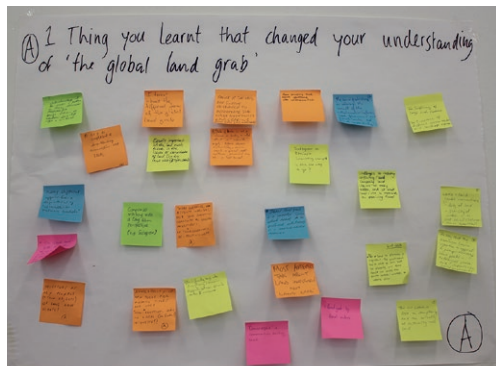
"What I like about LANDac is that it brings together so many fields of expertise, all with land governance as a common denominator. This means that knowledge in one specific field many times also can be useful for another one. LANDac is of added value to many of the thematic debates in those fields. ... it will always be a challenge to keep that added value alive, and to make clear where exactly it lies. We have to keep asking ourselves the question: where can we make a difference?"

Gemma van der Haar of Wageningen University

5.1 The LANDforum

'Good governance' is often the result of dialogue between relevant parties. In many countries which are targeted by foreign land acquisitions, this dialogue is absent or only nominally present, at least at the national level. Hence LANDac collaborated with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to host the LANDforum – annual meetings in the Netherlands (2013-2016) of delegations from five developing countries: Mozambique, Uganda, Ethiopia, Brazil and Indonesia. The delegations consisted of representatives from different sectors who are in some way engaged in their national land debate; multi-stakeholder dialogue is central in the approach of the LANDforum. The leading question was: *under which conditions can European and foreign agribusiness contribute to food security and inclusive and sustainable development?*

Invited experts participated in a personal capacity: they did not formally represent their institution or employer. Much care was taken to ensure diversity within delegations



It's all about dialogue...



Ugandan-owned flower farm, at the shore of Lake Victoria

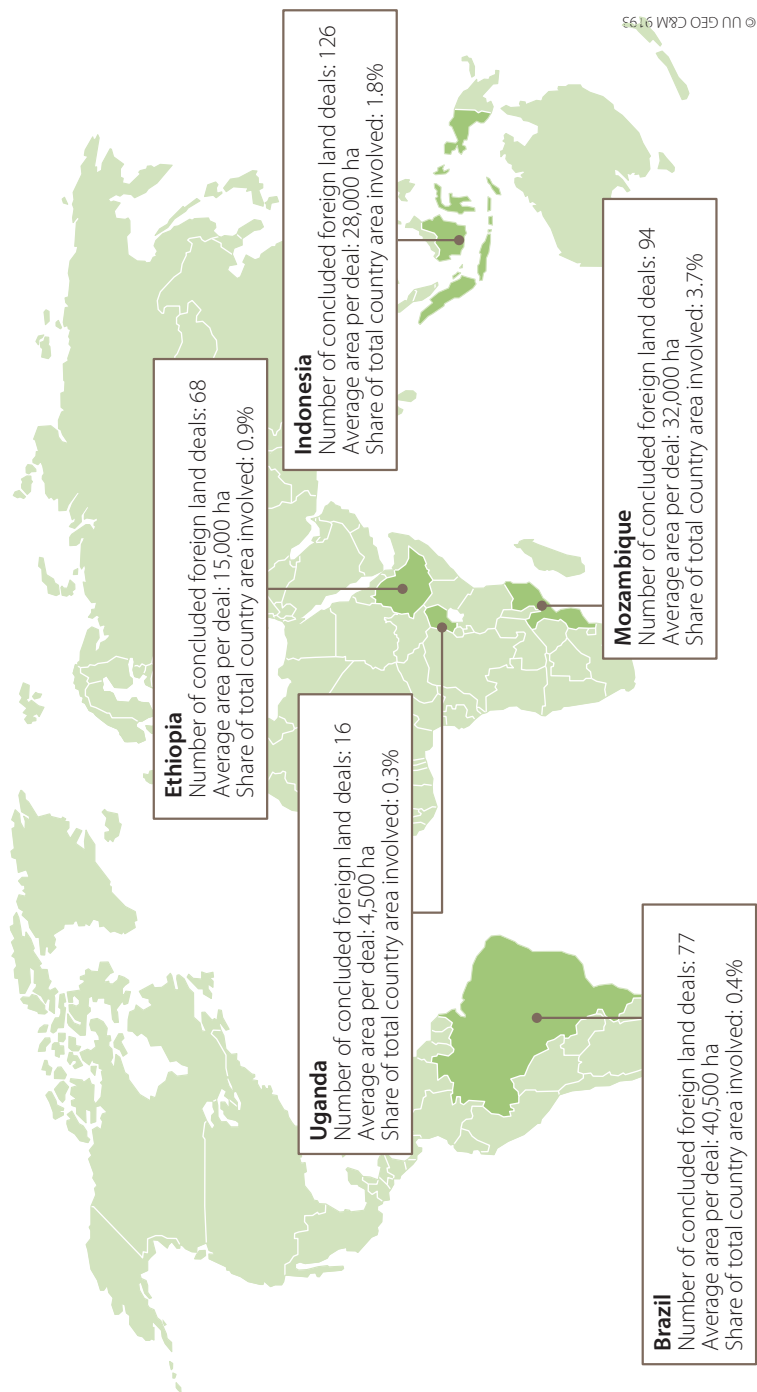
including government officials, investors, leaders of farmers' organizations, representatives from NGOs, and researchers. The idea was that the peer-to-peer exchange between countries would offer new insights to everyone involved, and at the same time a step could be made towards national dialogue in countries that until that moment did not have any kind of platform to that end.

Expectations were fulfilled in the third and most recent LANDforum (February 2016). In three of the five participating countries steps were taken to set up a national multi-stakeholder platform on land: Brazil, Uganda and Ethiopia. That is in itself commendable, but the LANDforum format also allowed for mutual learning. For instance, the Mozambican delegation warned the others, not to see dialogue as a panacea to end all problems, based on extensive experience with such platforms in their country.

"I participated in the 2015 LANDForum in Utrecht. This has been very useful for the organization I preside, the Eastern African Farmers' Federation (EAFF): not only because of the possibilities for exchange with stakeholders from other countries, but also because it enabled us to link up with international organizations that are active in this field. EAFF is now member of the International Land Coalition, we attend the meetings of the steering committee of the Land Policy Initiative of the African Union and we are part of the land committee of the East-African Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). For the success of our mission to defend farmers' rights it is important to move in these circles. Regarding the situation in Africa, in Tanzania and Ethiopia I still see many difficulties, but fortunately in other countries, such as Rwanda and Kenya, there are positive developments, mainly in the field of legalisation of title deeds: 3 million in Kenya! Also Rwanda is champion in land legislation."

Philip Kiriro, Eastern African Farmers' Federation

"Solagrow is a seed potato company in Ethiopia, sourcing directly from smallholders. One of the main challenges in our work is how to deal with difficulties that these vulnerable farmers sometimes have in meeting their contractual obligations. Our company needs to be able to exchange ideas with experts, and to get familiar of good and bad practices in similar projects. That is the reason why we participate, in the LANDac LANDforum since 2013: its unique multi-stakeholder set-up fits us like a glove... You have to try to understand each other; so that you become aware of other positions and interests as well as their limitations. In other words, you have to be willing to learn; and the LANDForum participants meet that profile... One of the main lessons we learnt and shared with others is that for our model to be sustainable, you should not



Land deals in countries involved in the LANDforum (source: Land Matrix, 2016)

Box 6. Inclusive business

In the three consecutive LANDforum meetings (2013-2016), a central concept was 'inclusive business' (IB). Inclusive business is even more inclusive if it does not only include communities but it is initiated by these communities. The possibilities and constraints of 'community-driven investments', and of the positive or negative impact they may have, have been studied in the 2016 LANDforum including cases from Ghana, Ethiopia, Uganda and Indonesia. A distinction can be made between two levels of inclusiveness. Firstly, the targeted population, for instance smallholders, can be included as much as possible in the activities that are part and parcel of projects or investment plans. Secondly, the targeted population can be actually participating in the design and planning of those projects and investment plans. This second level is frequently overlooked, resulting in programs and projects that are less inclusive and successful than they could have been. As the chairman of the Pan-African Farmers' Organization put it during the LANDforum: "Don't invite us to dinner when the food is ready; call us to the kitchen!"

perpetuate the non-commercial funding of extra benefits for the smallholders and their families (schools, clinics etc.). In a kick-off phase this can be adequate, but we should not forget that smallholders are not pitiable peasants but rather strong commercial partners, who in the end shall make their own decisions with their increased revenues. That is true sustainability."

Dutch investor Jan van de Haar, director and owner of Solagrow PLC in Ethiopia, participant in LANDforum

6 LANDAC'S FUTURE: STABILITY AND CHANGE

6.1 Stability: connecting research, policy and practice

At any governance level (from the local to the global), understanding the results of academic research on land issues is important for good land governance, policy making and implementation. In the case of LANDac this has been a central dimension of its endeavors: to make sure that the results of research find their way to policy-makers and practitioners alike, which they can use to contribute to equitable and sustainable development.

"I work a lot on food security and the role of local governments. LANDac has certainly contributed to improve running those projects... If within KIT land governance issues are raised, everyone is looking at me to contribute to the discussion. Because of my involvement in LANDac, I feel much better equipped to do so, compared to some years ago. I can use this knowledge. For example, when preparing proposals in this field, I now have sufficient expertise to be actively involved."

Gerard Baltissen, KIT Sustainable Economic Development

LANDac will continue on this path, but with some new elements: broadening the alliance and paying attention to emerging themes such as those introduced in section 1.3. In this way LANDac aims to maintain a good balance between the necessary stability and the equally necessary openness to change and renewal, ensuring its ongoing political, academic and ethical relevance.

"At the end of a discussion at a meeting in Utrecht, a PhD researcher said "one should not expect much of the private sector. If they are engaged in solving land issues, it will never work." We talked it over after the meeting, I said: "without involving the private sector you will make no progress at all. Especially enterprises have a lot of influence, so if you don't involve them, you miss out an important group and opportunity." It was a really nice discussion. This all brings us a step further. Before, I did not have an understanding that there could be such a strong opinion on not involving the private sector in land issues. You cannot ignore this sector!"

Margriet Hartman, Environmental and Social Expert Royal HaskoningDHV



LANDac workshop Land Governance and Food Security, Jinja, Uganda (2015)



Discussions in the field

LANDac offers a good platform to share our methods and experiences. And we can also gain information which can inspire us to take certain actions."

Anouk Lodder, VNG International

6.2 Change: The way forward for LANDac (2017-2021)

Themes

In the first phase, LANDac predominantly focused on large-scale land acquisition for agriculture, mining, tourism and nature conservation. In recent years, it has also started to pay relatively greater attention to urban aspects and infrastructure development, and issues of mobility in relation to land governance; the LANDac conference of 2016 was titled *Linking the rural and the urban*. The conference¹² did not only pay attention to the multiple relations between (large) cities and rural areas and their implications for land governance, but it was also focused on the fast-changing peri-urban areas and the importance of intermediate towns.

The outcomes of the UN Habitat III Conference (held in October 2016 in Quito, where LANDac organized three side events¹³) will also serve as a frame of reference for LANDac activities in its second phase, as will the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those having to do with poverty alleviation and issues around inequality. For example, the LANDac Conference 2017 will focus on the theme 'leave no one behind', taking the SDGs as the departure point for revisiting the transformations that have taken place in the land debate until now, and assessing what still needs to be done to ensure equitable, sustainable land rights for all.

Approach

The second phase of LANDac will focus even more on exchange between research, policy and practice. One of the new ways in which this will be done is by the 'learning platforms' in Uganda,

¹² Land governance in the context of urbanisation and climate change: Linking the rural and the urban. Conference report. LANDac conference report. Edith van Ewijk (with contributions of Charlotte Ehrhardt, Kaleidos Research-NCDO Foundation), 2016.

¹³ LANDac in Quito: summary of outputs. Report by Gemma Betsema, November 2016

Mozambique and Tanzania. These are comparable to the learning trajectories discussed earlier, the difference being that more emphasis will be placed on bottom-up research and the bringing together of stakeholders at the local level in order to inform policy processes and activities of practitioners. The project will be managed by Gemma Betsema, the former coordinator of LANDac, who will be based in Kenya at the CIFOR office (one of the partners in the project).

"Having coordinated the LANDac network since 2012, I have witnessed first-hand the advantages of bringing together partners in the Netherlands to strengthen collaboration between research, policy and practice, and I think the Learning Platforms are a great opportunity for LANDac to set up structures for similar exchanges elsewhere. The Learning Platforms will look at concrete investment hubs which increase the potential for adaptive learning among the businesses, local people and other stakeholders involved. The platforms build on LANDac experiences and knowledge, and aim to combine a multi-stakeholder approach with bottom-up research, and follow-up activities for implementation and monitoring."

Gemma Betsema, Knowledge Facilitator LANDac, Utrecht University

Vice Versa special: land rights are vital

With the objective of sharing the importance of land rights in development and making the lessons of six years of LANDac accessible to a broader audience in the Netherlands, LANDac financed a special issue of the magazine Vice Versa. The land rights special includes 16 stories focusing on foreign investments, conflict, climate, the city and women's rights and cover countries like Colombia, Iraq, Mozambique, Mongolia and Indonesia. The stories show why land rights are crucial for citizens who depend on the land. The publication is available in both English and Dutch.



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Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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African
Studies
Centre



WAGENINGEN UR
For quality of life



International



Royal Tropical Institute



Royal
HaskoningDHV
Enhancing Society Together

ANNEX: WRITTEN OUTPUT

Published books

- Archambault, C.A. and A. Zoomers (Eds) (2015). *Global Trends in Land Tenure Reform – Gender Impacts*. Routledge Studies in Gender and Development.
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 - Nguyen, Q. P., A. C. M. van Westen and A. Zoomers (2015). ‘Agricultural land for urban development: The process of land conversion in Central Vietnam’ in *Habitat International*, Vol. 41, pp.1-7.
 - Jehling, M. and T. Hartmann (2016). ‘Land governance: the LANDac conference in Utrecht, the Netherlands, 8-10 July 2015’, in: *Town Planning Review*, 87 (1), S., pp. 99-104.
 - Huggins, C.D. and N. Frosina (2016). ‘ICT-driven projects for land governance in Kenya: Disruption and e-government frameworks’, in *GeoJournal*.
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Selected output of short-term research projects (2010-2015)

22 short-term projects were carried out through LANDac, most of them in or on developments in Africa. The results were diverse; a selection is listed below.

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¹⁴ [http://www.aiv-advies.nl/ContentSuite/upload/aiv/doc/webversie_AIV_80_ENG\(2\).pdf](http://www.aiv-advies.nl/ContentSuite/upload/aiv/doc/webversie_AIV_80_ENG(2).pdf)

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- Consultancy for the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in the UK and ECDPM (Maastricht), 2011.
- Background paper for the European Development Report (ERD) for EU. Hilhorst, T. and A. Zoomers (2011). 'Under What conditions can translocal large-scale land acquisitions contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth?'