



**Building an Effective Advocacy Movement for Sustainable and Equitable  
Agricultural Development in Africa**

**Smallholder Agriculture And Advocacy Groups In Tanzania**

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## Introduction

Stepping out of the hope of freedom and into the arms of the free market, many sub-Saharan African countries, including Tanzania, took on the liberalisation and privatisation packages of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the early 1980s. Tanzania overhauled the post-independence policies of *Ujamaa* and replaced them with policies that were free-market friendly, so to speak. This chapter brings together the major legal, political and economic policies, processes and structures that have fuelled Tanzania's short walk to the global market. The paper is devoted to an analysis of the efficacy of the policies in terms of delivering equitable socio-economic development. Furthermore, the paper examines the role of smallholder agriculture advocacy groups in responding to policy measures that attempt to address agricultural development.

Tanzania relies heavily on agriculture both to support its populace and as a backbone to the country's economy. There are approximately 4,000,000 peasant *families* in the country in a population of 40,700,000 people (Mkulo 2009: 23). Approximately 84% of the population relies on agriculture for employment according to the 1993 Agriculture Sector review and recent figures remain at 80% (Msabichaka 1994: 91). Smallholder peasants with access to an average of 2-5 Ha per household dominate the sector. There are only 1,254 large-scale farms in the country (National Bureau of Statistics 2006: p. 117).<sup>1</sup> Most of the food crops: rice, banana, maize, cassava, beans, millet, sorghum and sweet potatoes are grown by small-scale farmers, while some cash crops such as sugar, tobacco, tea, sisal, wheat, barley are grown in large-scale farms. More recently, there is a trend on the part of large-scale plantations to encourage small-scale outgrowers, especially in sugarcane production (Maghimbi et al. 2010: 54). Recent economic trends show that the agriculture sector has been shrinking in terms of its contribution to the GDP and both the rate of growth and productivity in this sector has either been declining or stagnant.

Availability of and accessibility to land are central to sustainable agriculture. Although there is an obvious abundance of land, the lack of necessary farm implements to clear the land has meant an increase in competition for land even for large-scale agriculture. Only 15% of 883,989 sq km

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<sup>1</sup> This is the last census conducted in Tanzania so far.

of total land area is cultivated (Maghimbi et al. 2010: 40). Land that is not cultivated is delineated as “unused” land. However, there is another caveat to this “unused” land as it is vital for pastoralists who exploit natural biomass such as grass (FoodFirst.com).

The Government of Tanzania (GoT) has undertaken many rural development strategies, both at the national and at the regional level, that reflect the goals of CAADP. It is crucial to understand the context in which these strategies are developed in order to understand the work and impact of advocacy groups. In order to protect the agriculture sector of Tanzania and those who depend on it, an examination of the advocacy groups working to support smallholder agriculture is needed. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section will provide the contextualisation of the problem by placing smallholder agriculture in the wider framework of Tanzanian political economy and the issues affecting smallholder agriculture. The economic framework will be discussed through the lens of budget analysis. The political context will be set by looking specifically at the history of policies related to land and agricultural activities. In this context, the issues facing smallholder agriculture will be discussed by looking at the major pillars of agriculture: land, labor, inputs, markets and extension services.

Section two will discuss some of the major government Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS) that have been undertaken to deal with the problems facing the agriculture sector. Following a discussion of the government programs, the policy implications will be analysed by taking into account how successful the government programs have been in relation to the political and economic framework in Tanzania. Section three will discuss the role of advocacy groups with some examples from Tanzania. The material from this section relies heavily on the interviews conducted with members of the organisations. The results extracted in this section are directly connected to the background given.

### **The Context: State of Agriculture in Tanzania**

Until recently, agriculture was the major sector of the Tanzanian economy. However, the contribution of the agricultural sector to the GDP has been steadily decreasing. In 2004, the sector contributed 46.3% to GDP; in 2005 it decreased slightly to 45.6%. By 2007 there was a sharp decline to 25.8% and in 2008 it was 25.7% (Economic Survey 2006: 124; Economic

Survey 2009: 118).<sup>2</sup> This decrease could be attributed to the decreasing production of crops for various reasons, which will be discussed in depth in the next section. According to sectoral growth, agriculture has grown at an average of 4.4% between 2000 and 2008. This trend will not meet the government target of sustained agricultural growth of 10% by 2010 (PHDR 2009: 7).

The mining sector, on the other hand, is growing at an annual average growth of 15% from 2000 to 2007. It is important to note that this growth in mining does not directly benefit the majority of the Tanzanian population that relies on agriculture for employment. Currently, 37.6% of rural households are below the poverty datum line (Household Budget Survey of 2007: 11). According to the Poverty and Human Development Report 2009, the mining sector has not been able to create new employment opportunities because the linkages between the mining sector and the local supply chains are weak (*ibid*: 7). Hence, while the contribution of the agricultural sector to the economy decreases and the mining sector increases, the majority (80%) of rural Tanzanians, remain unemployed and in poverty.

The government has intervened by enacting several pieces of legislation to cope with the crisis of the peasants. Most of these policies, though, as will be discussed in detail in the next section, have included seeking assistance from private investors, in particular Foreign Direct Investments (FDI). In the last three years, the number of private investors in agricultural activities has increased steadily from 77 in 2001 to 264 in 2007 (Economic Survey 2009: 120). While agriculture is being increasingly privatised to the large-scale investor, the smallholder sectors do not have sufficient mechanisms in place to protect them against the investors who are mostly foreign and working in alliance with state-based elites. Increasingly, most of the smallholders are unable to survive exclusively on agriculture, pushing them to seek other sources of income such as beer brewing, craft, hawking or casual labour. In 2000/2001 rural households, on average, derived 60% of their income from agricultural sources. By 2007, this declined to 50%. Observers give this a positive twist by arguing that this signifies the beginning of the end of peasantry.<sup>3</sup> In reality, there is nothing of the sort. In fact, it is a survival strategy to escape

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<sup>2</sup> There has been much debate around these figures and it has been contested as to how agricultural contribution to the GDP could have dropped so significantly.

<sup>3</sup> While the transition to capitalism has meant increased commodity production, it has not done away with the agrarian question in the peripheries. The conditions set for global capital have meant that the process of primitive accumulation still characterizes the periphery. Hence the agrarian question remains at the forefront despite the changing social relations partly determined by commodity production. With the shift of “proletarianization” of the

poverty and not a very successful one either, because other non-farm employment opportunities are also very limited (PHDR 2009: 24).

### **Issues Affecting Smallholder Agriculture**

This section discusses the issues that affect the smallholder peasants. Some of these issues, especially those dealing with land tenure and peasant organisation, have been discussed in relation to the government policies on land, environment and peasant cooperatives.

#### ***Land Policies***

In order to correctly understand the government policies related to land, a brief look into the colonial history is essential. Tanganyika was a German colony from 1895 to World War One when it lost its territories to other imperial powers. In 1895, the Germans issued an imperial decree, which stated that all lands whether occupied or not were treated as crown land under the Empire. The German colonialists did not recognise indigenous ownership of land while settlers were given ownership of land with documented titles under the metropolitan systems of land ownership based on Individualization, Titling and Registration (ITR). Ownership was given under freehold titles, which meant that the owner could hold land in perpetuity. Indigenous lands were treated as un-owned land, which by virtue of the decree were owned by the Crown since the Germans did not see the indigenous people as having a concept of ownership (United Republic of Tanzania [URT] 1994: 9).

After the defeat of the Germans in World War One, Tanganyika was placed under the British as a trust territory. Under the League of Nations mandate the interests of the natives were supposed to be paramount. The British Land Tenure Ordinance No. 3 of 1923, which was later amended in 1928, stipulated that all lands were public lands under the control of the governor and no land could be used or disposed of without his consent. When the state wanted to give land to immigrants or colonialists, it was given under the right of occupancy which was a right to occupy and use land for up to 99 years. This was a *granted* right of occupancy governed by statutory laws. Land could be granted for up to 99 years and registered under the land registry. However, the statutory definition of right of occupancy included the rights of the native or native

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peasant increasingly marked in the neo-liberal era, arguments have been put forth that this marks the disappearance of the peasantries and a shift towards capitalist production. This would be a positive shift since it would pave the way for industrialization. (see Bryceson, 2000)

community to use and occupy land. This came to be termed *deemed* rights of occupancy by the courts, where the native could occupy land with the implied consent of the governor. Deemed rights of occupancy were governed by customary laws hence, in theory, land could be owned in perpetuity through the customary laws of inheritance. There was no titling of customary lands. Importantly, customary rights over land were seen to be inferior to statutory claims. This led to insecurity of land tenure of customary rights (*ibid*: 9-12).

Between 1953 and 1955, the East African Royal Commission (EARC) attempted to formalize the lands held under customary law through the “formalisation program”. They called for Individualisation, Titling and Registration (ITR) of all land. According to the government paper No. 4 of 1958, customary tenure was considered extra-legal. Nonetheless, this proposal for formalisation did not pass as Julius K. Nyerere intervened stating the pitfalls of formalising all land in his article “*Mali ya Taifa*” (National Property). In it Nyerere stated that:

All human beings, be they children brought up in poor or rich families, or belonging to sinners or saints, or even those whose parents are either slaves or free men, were born to find land in existence. They can neither add to it nor reduce its extent. It is God's gift, given to all His creation without any discrimination (Nyerere 1974: 53).

The model of right of occupancy continued after independence. It was only in 1990s that any serious attempt was made at revising the land laws. In 1991 a Presidential Land Inquiry Commission was created which discussed the state of land tenure in Tanzania and made recommendations for a new land policy in the country. Given their findings, the Commission recommended that the ultimate control of village land should be under village assemblies, while national lands should be under an independent land commission answerable to the national assembly. This measure would create a horizontal form of governance, which would avoid putting all powers in the president. The Commission also recommended that smallholder producers should have security of tenure which would protect their lands from alienation by outsiders, including the government itself.<sup>4</sup> Thirdly, there should be no transfer of land within villages without the consent of the village assembly.<sup>5</sup> This would ensure that communal ownership of land was respected. Essentially, the Commission tried to maintain a democratic

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<sup>4</sup> While customary lands are only transferable under customary laws and from one Tanzanian to another. The state can revoke customary lands.

<sup>5</sup> The Commission recommended that *mbaraza la wazee la ardhi*, elders who would deal solely with land matters, be elected by each village assembly to give consent on the transferability of land.

approach in matters of land by diluting the top-down control of land. As Shivji, the chair of the Commission pointed out, the approach suggested by the Commission was to “modernise tradition in a democratic direction rather than impose modernisation from above by statutory compulsion” (Shivji 1997).

The commission also discussed the issue of gender inequality as one of the problems facing the system of land tenure. Since 80% of the rural community is patrilineal, women had access to land and property by virtue of their relationship to men. They had secondary rights, which are uncertain in duration, not well-defined and subject to change (Mutembei & Tumushabe 2008: 5). The Land Commission addressed this issue by suggesting that there should be an entrenched quorum of women in the village assemblies, so that women are integrated into the decision making process. Both the name of the woman and the man should appear on the village certificate of land. This would prevent the man from making decisions on the land without the consent of the woman. Finally, there should be no transfer of land within the villages without the consent of the village assembly, and if transfer of land does occur then measures should be put into place to ensure that women and children are not left destitute. The Commission sought to address the question of gender in the larger picture of land tenure reform, by placing authority in the village assembly rather than the president (URT 1994: 249-60).

Following the Land Commission’s report, the National Land Policy in 1995 addressed the issue of the discrimination of women in access to land and assets and declared land to be a constitutional right. It focused on four main areas; land tenure and administration, surveying and mapping, urban and rural land use and planning and land use management. The Land Act of 1999 and the Village Land Act of 1999 followed the Land Policy. The Land Act No. 4 1999 and the Village Land Act No. 5 1999 maintained a dual system of land tenure under statutory law and customary law. Customary rights over land and statutory rights were put on the same footing. These changes implied that both *deemed* right of occupancy and *granted* rights of occupancy were secure under the law. Under this Act, land was divided into three main categories: village land, reserve land and general land. Moreover, two new hierarchies, Land Division of High Court and District Land and Housing Tribunals were introduced in the judicial system of land related dispute settlement which already included Court of Appeal, Ward Tribunals and Village Land Councils.



The Village Land Act of 1999 nullified the certificate of right of occupancy to the village councils and instead introduced the certificate of village land to communities. This meant that the local government had limited powers. However, the ultimate control over village land still lay in the hands of the President. The Act stated that all lands in Mainland Tanzania “shall continue to be public land and remain vested in the President as trustee for and on behalf of all citizens of Tanzania” (quoted from Maghimbi et al. 2010: 33). Furthermore, it stated that informal land titles were to be formalised and new certificates called *Hatiya Ardhiya Mila* (certificates of customary land) would be issued for customary lands. The formalisation of land titles meant that land could be transferred or sold without the permission of the village assembly or any other local government body. However, the state still held the authority to repossess customary lands. Theoretically, the formalisation of land titles would mean that if the farmer wanted to get loans from the bank he/she could use the land as collateral (Chachage 2006)<sup>6</sup>.

Many organisations saw this Act to be progressive since it added a clause to emphasise the rights of women over land (Interview with Marjorie Mbilinyi, 4 May 2010). Women are generally poorer than men in the villages. However, it cannot be construed that because of this they do not have access to the land. Certainly, women have access to land as they are the ones who take care of it the most. The problem is that they did not have direct ownership over the land. The Village Land Act of 1999 dealt with this problem by adding a gender clause which stated that family land is to be protected under co-occupancy. According to the Act, co-occupancy means the occupation of land by two or more undivided shares. Therefore, this would allow women to hold land simultaneously with their spouses. While this was an important provision, it did not add anything new to the reality of the situation. There is already an anti-discrimination clause available in the constitution. Furthermore, even if the woman is given rights to ownership, if she remains poor then she will also become a victim of all the issues that face smallholder peasants, including having to sell her land in order to survive. Once the Act was implemented in 2001 it became clear that the main significance of the Act was not to protect women’s rights over land, but rather to allow for the transferability of land.

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<sup>6</sup> However this does not always work in practice since the banks are reluctant to use customary land as collateral, unsure of what to do with customary titles. Also collateral in the form of 2-5 Ha of land is almost insignificant for banks.

In 2004, the Land Act was amended. The Land Amendments Act of 2004 allowed for two main provisions which were not available in the Land Acts of 1999; (i) the sale of bare land and (ii) making it easier to foreclose mortgaged land. Whereas in the Act of 1999 sale of bare land was not permissible, the amendment of 2004 made it possible. Also, in the Act of 1999 the burden of exercising remedies against mortgage in the case of a default lay with the lender. However, the Act of 2004 made it easier for lenders to exercise remedies in the case of default by foreclosing land. Prior to the amendments of 2004, land was regarded as being for use and the security of land depended on its use (usufruct). Rights of occupancy were granted on condition that the land must be developed. Failure to do so would result in land being revoked by the state. Sale of bare land was therefore made virtually impossible since if land were bare then the state would not grant permission to sell it. However, this only applied to statutory lands since the sale of customary lands were regulated by families and communities. The amendment of 2004 changes this and explicitly allows for the sale of bare land by a citizen or non-citizen to a citizen of Tanzania (Shivji 2003: 1-3).

In reality, this meant the commercialisation of land, whereby the market value of land supersedes the agronomic value of land (Riedinger et al. 2001). In conditions of poverty the peasant would be inclined to sell his/her land for immediate gain rather than cultivate it. The titling of customary land therefore would enable a peasant to sell his/her bare land under the customary title and the buyer could choose to convert the customary title into a statutory one making the land marketable. The seemingly progressive gender clause of the 1999 Land Act was overwritten since in practice it meant that any ordinary peasant, especially women who are poorer than men in rural areas, could no longer compete for land in the market. It is important therefore to look at the issue of gender in the context of the issues facing smallholder agriculture. In order to ensure the security of women over land, measures have to be put in place to protect the land through the community. Ownership over land through titling does not guarantee security of tenure; rather it means that land can be more easily sold. Alongside the liberalisation of the Tanzanian economy, these Land Acts have left the smallholder peasant more vulnerable to market forces without state protection.

### ***Environment Policies in Relation to Smallholder Agriculture and Land***

The most important environment policy adopted was the National Environment Policy 1997 which aimed at addressing wider issues of social well-being. The policy linked the issues of poverty and environment for sustainable development. It argues that a healthy economy needs a healthy environment. The relationship that the policy draws between the issue of land tenure and the environment is critical to this discussion. It states:

Resources that belong to everyone easily become the care of none. The ownership of land and land resources, access to, and the right to use them are of fundamental importance, not only for a more balanced and equitable development, but also to the level of care accorded to the environment. It is only when people can satisfy their needs, have control of their resource base, and have secure tenure to land that the longer-term objectives of environmental protection can be satisfied (quoted. from Kamata 2008: 20).

It demonstrates government's attitude towards customary tenure and the fact that its introduction coincided with the Land Policy of 1995 followed by the Land Acts of 1999, suggesting that it had a bearing on the preferred land tenure system. The policy defines the rural poor as the major degraders of the environment. It identifies the problems of the environment as: land degradation, lack of accessible good quality water, environmental pollution, loss of wildlife and biodiversity and deterioration of aquatic systems and deforestation. Of importance to this paper is the concern with land degradation in the policy.

The policy resulted in the establishment of the Environmental Management Act, No. 20 of 2004. This Act clearly stipulates the need to protect flora, fauna, and biodiversity by creating reserves which would be protected by license and permits (*ibid*: 34-37). The Forests Act 2002, the National Parks Act 2002 and the Wildlife Conservation Act 2002 are specifically aimed at the creation and protection of reserves. The Environmental Management Act does not recognize communal methods of protecting the environment, but rather sees communities, especially those living near forest reserves, as being hazardous to the environment. This conflict between the communities and the environment is resolved by detaching the reserves from communally owned lands. An example cited by the survey done by the Land Rights and Resource Institute (LARRI or *HAKIARDHI*, in Kiswahili) in 2007 is the conflict in the Amani Natural reserve between the conservationists and the surrounding communities. The conservationists complained that people were simply stubborn and would start fires that were destructive to the ecology of the reserve.

While the community members argued that there was discriminatory access to the same conserved resources. The survey brought to the surface the inability of the conservationists to understand the frustration of surrounding communities as a result of the land alienated from the community (*ibid*: 75). This case is typical of the conflict between conservationists and environmentalists on the one hand, and peasant communities on the other. For instance, the same survey cited above stated that 63% of the people around various reserves stated that the rules governing the environment were not beneficial to them (*ibid*: 79).

### ***Policy on Peasant and Agriculture Cooperatives***

Cooperatives act to protect the interests of the peasants in the market. As defined in the Cooperative Development Policy of 2002, a Cooperative Society is

an association of persons who have voluntarily joined together for the purpose of achieving a common need through the formation of a democratically controlled organisation and to make equitable contributions to the capital required for the formation of such an organisation, and who accept the risks and the benefits of the undertaking in which they actively participate” (Cooperative Development Policy[CDP] 2003: vii).

Cooperatives were aimed at protecting the peasant from the exploitation of the middleman who linked the producer to the buyer in the markets. Cooperatives thus acted as buffers to help regulate prices and protect the peasant from the forces of free market competition. Cooperatives helped to channel loans from credit agencies to individuals by acting as guarantors of the loans. As a result, the Cooperative Bank of Tanganyika was established in 1962. It changed its name to the Cooperative Bank of Tanzania in 1964 (Maghimbi et al. 2010: 49). Cooperatives bought produce from the peasant and sold it to the market. They also helped the producers to gain access to farming inputs such as fertilisers and seeds by buying inputs and selling them to the peasant on credit. It is important to note that credit was not based on collateral of land; rather the collateral was the crop, a floating charge. Once the crop was sold the peasant could pay back the credit.

The impact of cooperatives has been diminished at various stages in the history of Tanzania. The first cooperative legislation in the country was passed in 1932: Cooperatives Ordinance. The Arusha Declaration of 1967 recognised cooperatives as instruments for implementing socialism and self-reliance in the newly independent Tanzania. In 1976, in an attempt to impose stronger

state control, cooperatives were banned and instead state crop authorities were created to buy the crops of the farmers. The bureaucracy involved in this system soon proved to be inefficient. Since there was an increase in the overhead expenses, the peasant got much less for his/her crop than what was obtained on the world market. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the government reversed its decision on the banning of cooperatives and allowed them to be reformed. This did not last long since the introduction of trade liberalisation and the free market in the late 1980s left the cooperatives non-functional while the state crop authorities were dismantled. The Cooperatives Societies Act of 1991 was followed by the Cooperative Development Act of 1997. Despite these legislations, cooperatives have struggled to operate within a liberalised economy (CDP 2003: 1-2). Cooperatives have been unable to withstand the competition from the private traders and their decline has left a gap in input supply, crop marketing and processing that the private sector cannot fulfill.

In light of this, the Cooperative Development Policy of 2002 sought to, amongst other objectives, “protect cooperative business operations against unfair competition” and “recognize and support small producer group initiatives with the view of transforming them into future economically strong cooperatives” (CDP 2003: 7). Despite these objectives, it has been difficult for cooperatives to gain funding. For instance, after the liberalisation of financial institutions government financing for cooperatives to facilitate collection and sale of members’ crops has been stopped. Commercial banks have been reluctant to give loans to cooperatives. This has left a gap which the private middle traders have tried to fill. The private traders have simply increased the cost of marketing of produce, ultimately reducing the financial returns to the smallholder producers. In response, the policy statement of 2002 recommended that the government institute measures to assist cooperatives financially. The policy statement does not explicitly outline how the government will go about alleviating the cooperatives from financial constraints and restoring them (CDP 2003: 33-34). Recent figures from the Economic Survey of 2008 show that the number Agriculture Marketing Cooperative Societies (AMCOS) decreased from 2,670 in 2007 to 2614 in 2008. This may not be a major decline but the trend is clear. The survey explains that many cooperative unions had to shut down their services due to stiff competition from private buyers (Economic Survey 2009: 123). Furthermore, the budget of 2009/2010 allocates a mere 100,000,000 Tanzanian Shillings (approximately USD\$72,500) to Cooperative reforms and modernisation program out of the 2,516,709,000 Tanzanian Shillings

allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives (all numbers are for domestic funds).<sup>7</sup> This is only 3.9% of the funds allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture. As it is the budget for agriculture is only 0.26% of the total domestic funds (Development Plan 2009: 71; 124).<sup>8</sup> Contrary to the Cooperative Development Policy of 2002, the government, as seen in the budget, seems to be allocating a very small amount to the building of cooperatives.

Following the decline of government intervention to assist cooperatives, the state has been focusing much more on initiating Poverty Reduction Strategies that fit with market liberalisation and privatisation policies. Yet, without state assistance to small producers in terms of implements, loans and protection from unfair market competition, the farmer will remain in poverty. As the Poverty and Human Development Report of 2009 concludes, the poorest households have to diversify into non-farm employment out of desperation and for survival. In any case, they are not able to generate sufficient income from non-farm employment. Given that the majority of Tanzanians will continue to reside in rural areas and derive their income from farming, state interventions must aim at raising agricultural productivity for the benefit of the smallholder producer (PHDR 2009: xxv-xxvi).

### ***Irrigation***

Agriculture in Tanzania is rain-fed. Although the country is not drought-prone, there are periods when it is difficult to harvest crops due to lack of rain. Irrigation is important for sustained and dependable production. While there have been several government policies that have dealt with the issue directly or indirectly, irrigation remains a limiting factor for the development of smallholder agriculture. Mainly because, the smallholder peasant is unable to afford irrigating his/her land independently without the assistance of the state or cooperatives. The irrigation schemes that do exist in Tanzania are mostly based on rudimentary implements and are proving to be increasingly inadequate due to population increase and wear and tear. The main sources of water used for irrigation are rivers, canals and wells.

Only 2.7% of the total agricultural land area with annual crops is irrigable. The figures for irrigated land have remained relatively stagnant over the last four years. In 2003 the planted land

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<sup>7</sup> The government budget segregates domestic funds from foreign sources.

<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that while the Ministry of Agriculture itself receives only 0.26% of the total budget, the agriculture sector might be getting more funds from other ministries as well such as the Ministry for Water and Irrigation.

area under irrigation was 214,054 Ha; in 2005 it was 249,992 Ha; in 2007 it was 273,945 ha and in 2008 it was 289,245 Ha (National Bureau of Statistics 2007: 70-77; Economic Survey 2006: 123; Economic Survey 2009: 120).

### ***Technology and Extension Services***

Only 34% of the total number of crop growing households receives extension services (National Bureau of Statistics 2007: 99; Economic Survey 2009: 120). In 2008, the government employed 544 extension officers, which is a small number in relation to the 4,000,000 households that depend on agriculture. The source of extension services is predominantly governmental (95%), with NGOs filling the remaining gap. Even where crop-growing households receive extension services, the advice given is usually not followed up by implementation since the support services to adopt the advice are inadequate.

The use of technology in the agriculture sector is highly limited, the majority (97.7%) use hand held hoes. In fact, despite several PRS in support of improved technology there are only 6,000 working tractors as compared to 20,000 in 1970. Most of these tractors are used on large-scale farms and sometimes hired by small-scale peasants (National Bureau of Statistics 2007: 117; Maghimbi et al. 2010: 41).

### ***Availability of Credit to Smallholder Producers***

While the cooperatives used to provide loans in farming implements, this is no longer the case as cooperatives have become increasingly weak in the face of competition from private traders. The Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) have increased slightly since 2007. In 2007, there were 4,445 SACCOs and 263 new ones were established in 2008. The increase was necessitated by the lack of banking services in rural areas (Economic Survey 2009: 123).

Also, it is difficult for smallholder peasants to get loans from banks. As discussed under the issue of land titling, banks tend not to give loans to smallholders since smallholders do not have the necessary collateral. Previously cooperatives would use crops as collateral, allowing the peasant to pay the cooperative back once the crops were sold. Banks require much larger and secure collateral.

### ***Market Access***

The recent collapse of cooperatives and the consequent deregulation of agricultural commodity markets contributed towards an increase in the exploitation of smallholders when it comes to marketing their outputs. There has been an increase in the activities of private middlemen (commodity brokers) and they tend to exploit the smallholder (discussed above). In the 2002/03 agricultural season, 70% of all crop-growing households were said to have sold their crops. However, this statistic does not provide sufficient information regarding the fairness of the prices. In fact, according to the census, households reported the main problem of marketing to be low prices (64% households). Another problem was access to markets; either the markets are too far or there is no or costly transport to the markets. Occasionally, the producer does not find a buyer at the market. In such a case, the government does have the warehouse receipt system. In 2008 this system enabled cashew nut growers, for instance, to fetch a better price for their produce. However, the warehouse system has been slow to diversify into all crop-growing sectors (*ibid*, 124).<sup>9</sup> Produce sometimes rots if it does not reach the market on time and wastes in other cases. Those who did not market their crops reported that their produce was insufficient (National Bureau of Statistics 2007: 94-95).

### ***Availability of Inputs***

Inputs such as fertilisers and pesticides are not produced locally and importation and delivery costs make them unaffordable to the majority of the smallholders. As a result, the majority of the smallholders do not use fertilisers in order to minimise production costs, but this has negatively affected crop yields. In fact, the total credit extended by the Agricultural Input Trust Fund to peasants in 2008 declined from 287 in 2007 to 238 in 2008. Of the total credit, the fund extended 157 credits for agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, improved seed drugs and insecticides compared to 176 in 2007 (Economic Survey 2009: 122). The increase in credits was due to a sharp increase in the price of agricultural inputs, especially fertilisers. Since fertilisers were liberalised and no subsidy was provided, the Tanzania Fertiliser Company collapsed and many foreign fertiliser companies have come in to fill in the gap. This has meant that government prices of fertilisers have been subject to the prices in the international markets.

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<sup>9</sup>Warehouse Receipt System essentially means that a farmer can deposit his/her crop in a government warehouse and is issued a receipt which the farmer can use as collateral for advanced payment. Also he/she can deposit the crop until market prices are more suitable.



Private companies are allowed to produce and distribute seeds, such as Cargill Hybrid Seeds and Pioneer Hybrid International. However the GoT is also involved in production and distribution of seeds. The Department of Research and Development has established five foundation seed farms. The Tanzania Seed Company also produces and certifies foundation seeds. Seeds are not as subject to high prices as fertilisers since there is a system of community based seed production. However, even this becomes difficult since the communities rely on extension officers to train them in the multiplication of foundation seeds ([www.tanzania.go.tz](http://www.tanzania.go.tz)).

### ***Labour***

Most smallholders depend on household labour. However, due to current economic trends, members (especially males) of smallholder households have migrated either to urban areas or to look for off-farm employment to compliment on-farm activities. This practice is one of the most common bundles of coping strategies where agriculture on its own is not generating sufficient incomes. Often the off-farm employment does not provide as much income to the household as farming would have. The migration reduces the number of people in the household who can work on the farm, hence further worsening the problem of crop production (PHDR 2009: 24).<sup>10</sup>

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS has also affected availability of labour. In a study done by Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP) on the costs for households caring for HIV/AIDS sufferers, it was found that farming activities had been negatively affected due to illnesses related to HIV/AIDS. Some households said that it was because those who usually engaged in farming activities were either ill or were taking care of the ill. Others stated that it was because much of the family income was diverted to taking care of the HIV/AIDS sufferer and hence they had less money to spend on farming (TGNP 2005: 5-6).

### ***Changing land use patterns and food production***

Many of the problems related to land have to do with land tenure. The Land Acts of 1999 have had a large impact on ownership of land since the commercialisation of land has led to land becoming a commodity with a market value. As a result, private investors have been interested in acquiring land for purposes of profit; to produce cash crops for export, biomass for biofuels, for speculation, even for purposes of mining. Increasingly, policymaking has de-emphasised the

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<sup>10</sup> This has been discussed briefly in the section “State of Agriculture in Tanzania”.

production of food crops given the declines of profits from agriculture vis-a-vis other land based income strategies.

Furthermore, the legal changes pertaining to holding land has made it easy for smallholders to sell their plots. Although statistics are not available, there is reason to believe that there has been an increase in the number of land sales due to desperation. There are possibilities that elite buyers (local and foreign) can accumulate large tracts of land. To date, 640,000 ha out of a total of 4 million ha requested by companies, has been allocated to biofuel production in Tanzania (Sulle& Nelson 2009).

The changes around landholding practice have taken place in a context of increased foreign investments in vast tracks of land for biofuel production. While proponents of biofuels emphasise the environmental benefits of biofuels over fossil fuels, they ignore the environmental hazards of the production of biomass. Monoculture leads to soil degradation. Of course, the first affected by soil degradation would be the smallholder peasant.

SEKAB-Bio Energy Tanzania Ltd., established in 2007 seeks to implement what they call a block farming out grower's franchise. This essentially means a continuous farming area under shared ownership. Advocates of block farming advance that it is a win-win situation since small-scale peasants can take advantage of large-scale farming by acting as out growers. In the case of SEKAB they would be sugarcane out growers (Cotula et al. 2009: 86; Centre for Sustainable Development Initiative (CSDI) 2009: 6). The problem with this is the shift from food to fuel production. In fact, a leaked document written by a senior World Bank analyst Don Mitchell revealed that 65-75% of the increase in food prices was caused by conversion of food crops to fuel (biofuels) (Chachage 2010). In addition there was already a decline in the production of sugar between 2005/06 and 2006/07. Therefore, to focus production of sugarcane on the external market while the internal market is already in a slump will not be beneficial for the country's economy and consequently the small peasant will suffer. While sugar cane production is only one example, it can apply to all agricultural crops. Jatropha is yet another example of an energy plant being used in Tanzania (Eijck 2007). According to a report presented to HAKIARDHI "...biofuel production is characterised by high rainfall, water resources, and rich soils and naturally are fairly densely populated. Thus, suggesting that biofuel production is going

to be accompanied by human displacement and destruction of livelihood supporting activities as land is alienated (Isack 2009: 6).

While proponents of biofuel production dismiss the potential of land alienation amongst the smallholders, claiming that *Jatropha*, the most common biomass, can in fact grow in very unfertile soils, studies have shown that they fare much better on prime land. Many biofuel investors enter into competition with smallholders over prime agricultural land as a result. In many instances, the state has used its power over customary land to claim the land of smallholder peasants and transfer it to the investors as general lands.<sup>11</sup> Recent land use data shows that the net land balance exceeds the land suitable for rain fed crops, so the remaining land has been taken as “idle” land. However, this analysis ignores the existence of pastoral communities-and the manner in which they require access land (especially for grazing) on a nomadic basis. More than 80% of all land allocated for biofuel production is located in productive farmlands and forests. In April 2006, the government established the Biofuels Task Force under the Ministry of Energy and Minerals to deal with issues regarding biofuels. The task force first identified a “land bank” of 2.5 million Ha of land suitable for biofuel projects. Having identified the “land bank”, they allocated 400,000 Ha of prime rice growing land at Wami River on the coast region to a Swedish firm to grow sugar for biofuel production. A report commissioned by Evercare suggested that 5,000 small-scale peasants would be negatively impacted.

Pastoralists have also been negatively impacted by biofuel production. In July 2009, the Maasai of Loliondo game reserve in Ngorongoro district, Arusha suffered from evictions from their land. The Environmental Management Act of 2004 implicitly laid the blame for environmental degradation heavily on the small producers. Hence, the government took advantage of the precedence set in the Act of blaming the smallholder and applied it as one of the reasons to justify the evictions. A Maasai woman from Loliondo narrated that the people of Loliondo were accused of mismanaging the environment, despite the fact that they had been using measures to protect the environment and guarantee the survival of its inhabitants for centuries (African People’s Forum). According to a report produced by the Working Group of Indigenous Population communities in Africa (WGIP), 3,000 people were left homeless as a result of the

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<sup>11</sup> By transferring the land from village land to general land and putting it under statutory law, the government can then sell it to private investors.

evictions (FEMACT 2009). The evictions were carried out on behalf of private investors who claimed that the land belonged to them (Ortello Business). There are many examples similar to this where land is alienated and sold to a private investor leaving the smallholder producer displaced.<sup>12</sup>

### **Poverty Reduction Strategies and their Implications**

This section discusses the major Poverty Reduction Strategies that have been established by the government in order to address agriculture in Tanzania. It incorporates an analysis of how various land policies have evolved within a context of broader development initiatives.

#### ***Mkukuta-National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NGRSP),<sup>13</sup>***

The MKUKUTA program was initiated in 2005 with the major aim of increasing the GDP of the country to an annual growth rate of 6-8% per annum in the next decade, in light of the poverty levels in the country. Furthermore, it set a target of sustained agricultural growth of 10% by 2010 (PHDR 2009: 7). The program also aimed at reducing poverty by improving access to the basic means of production. MKUKUTA places particular emphasis on the poorest and most vulnerable groups, asserting equity and equality through all its three major clusters (Mutembei&Tumushabe 2008: 10). The three clusters of MKUKUTA are:

#### *Growth and Reduction of Income Poverty:*

The 2009/10 Development plan stated that to achieve this first cluster the government would seek to increase the production of food and cash crops and availability of farming inputs, to increase irrigation schemes, to increase exports of goods and services, attract foreign and domestic private investment and to improve the trading environment, development of land and infrastructure, and to improve the economy of the country.

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<sup>12</sup> Mining is yet another threat to the smallholder farmer. According to the sector development figures mining is growing at the most rapid rate. Large tracts of cultivated village land are alienated and given to investors for mining purposes.

<sup>13</sup> Commonly known in Kiswahili as Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umaskini-MKUKUTA

### *Improvement of Quality of Life and Social Well-being:*

This cluster deals with education, health, water and social welfare. Under this section, the Development Plan of 2009/20 shows that some gains were made including: increase in registration of students in primary, secondary and post-secondary education, increase in number of students going on to secondary school after primary school, increase in loans given to students, improvement in health of the mother and child at birth.

### *Governance and Accountability:*

This cluster aims at ensuring improvement in good governance, combating corruption and giving more powers to the local government. This cluster also sought to improve personal and material security and to fight crime. Under the goals of MKUKUTA, especially cluster one, the government has initiated various other programs that deal directly with agriculture (Development Plan 2009: 3-4; PHDR 2009: xxi-xxv).

### ***Property and Business Formalisation Program (PBFM)***<sup>14</sup>

MKURABITA is a government project that was put into place during the third phase of the government (with the project beginning in 2004) under President Mkapa. It sought “to facilitate the transformation of real estate and business assets in the informal (extra-legal) sector to formal entities held and operated within the formal market that is governed by law” (Salema 2007). The program aimed at converting rural property that had not been registered into formal property, and most important to this paper is the formalisation of land. It further aimed to reduce poverty and increase economic growth by incorporating the poor into the formalised sectors of the economy. The program envisioned that the poor would have better access to loans by using their assets as collateral, hence able to improve their livelihoods (*ibid*).

The program’s basis is founded upon the principles of the Institute of Liberty and Democracy (ILD) in Lima, Peru whose chief architect is the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto. De Soto has outlined his theory of dead capital in “*The Mystery of Capital: Why capitalism triumphs in the West and fails everywhere else*”. De Soto argues that the poor remain so because they lack

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<sup>14</sup> Commonly known in Kiswahili as *Mpango wa Kurasimisha Rasilimali na Biashara za Wanyonge Tanzania (MKURABITA)*

access to formal property rights. Poverty is maintained because a majority of the poor are kept in the informal sector outside the legal system of Western capitalism (Benjaminsen 2004: 3). He identifies all property that is not formalised through titling and registration under statutory law as being “extra-legal”. These extra-legal assets could be worth trillions of dollars but they are not represented in the economy hence he terms them ‘dead capital’. Dead capital, according to de Soto, cannot be used to create additional value.

Using this framework and the umbrella of MKUKUTA, MKURABITA aims at formalising all the extralegal property in Tanzania. At the diagnosis stage of the project (*ibid*),<sup>15</sup> it was gathered that 90% of Tanzanians reside and earn their livelihoods in the extralegal sector and 98% of all businesses and 89% of all real estate are extralegal in Tanzania. If formalised, the value of all these extralegal assets would be USD\$ 29 billion (Salema 2007; Mutembei & Tumushabe 2008: 11).

The measure of most relevance to smallholder agriculture is the attempt to fast track land titling under the western system of law, which in the case of Tanzania is statutory rights of occupancy. The program even proposed what they called “blanket titling” of village land to expedite the process. The expected outcome of MKURABITA would include: an expanded economic formal sector, improved business environment, good governance through more reliable information on economic activity and increased income for the government through new tax payers (*ibid*). MKURABITA fits in well with MKUKUTA since both aim to reduce poverty and increase economic growth.

It is important to note that only 2% of rural land is formalised or “legal” under statutory rights of occupancy and these are mostly large-scale farms. The project was first implemented in 2004 and one of the outcomes was the amendment of the Land Act 1999 and Village Land Act 1999, along with several other legislation that have a bearing on property rights in the country.

### ***Agricultural Sector Development Program (ASDP)***

The government adopted the Agricultural Sector Development Program (ASDP) in 2003 in order to achieve a sustained agricultural growth rate of 5% per annum. One of the program goals is to

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<sup>15</sup> The project, under the structural framework proposed by the ILD, works in four stages: Diagnosis, Reform Design, Implementation, Capital formation and good governance.

transform the smallholder sector from subsistence to commercial agriculture. Part of the commercialisation of agriculture includes development led by the private sector. The private sector is encouraged to partake in this venture by creating an enabling business environment.

The ASDP seeks to improve the following:<sup>16</sup>

- The policy, regulatory and institutional arrangements of the agricultural sector
- Agricultural services inclusive of research, advisory and technical services, and training  
Investment through District Agricultural Development Plans implementation
- Private sector development, market development, and agricultural finance.

The Development Plan of 2009/10 states that the ASDP is still in place allowing for an increase in availability of agricultural inputs, improving research and services for agriculture, availability of seeds and food security in the country (Development Plan 2009: 6).

### ***Agriculture First (Kilimo Kwanza)***

In June 2009, The Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs, Hon. Mustafa HaidiMkulo, declared that the catchphrase for 2009/10 would be “Agriculture First” (better known for its Kiswahili term, *Kilimo Kwanza*). He said that the Kilimo Kwanza initiative would operate alongside and with the complementing goals of the ASDP (Mkulo 2009: 15-16). Implementation of Kilimo Kwanza began in June 2009 when the Tanzania National Business Council (TNBC) came together to discuss the policies and strategies of the project and its implementation in agriculture (Kilimo Kwanza Resolution).

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<sup>16</sup> [www.worldbank.org/afir/padi/TZ\\_ASDP\\_PCN%20.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/afir/padi/TZ_ASDP_PCN%20.pdf)

**The ten pillars of Kilimo Kwanza are as follows (*ibid*):**

- i. Political will to push for agricultural transformation
- ii. Enhanced financing for agriculture
- iii. Institutional reorganisation and management of agriculture
- iv. Paradigm shift to strategic agricultural production
- v. Land availability for agriculture
- vi. Incentives to stimulate investments in agriculture
- vii. Industrialization for agricultural transformation
- viii. Science, technology and human resources to support agricultural transformation
- ix. Infrastructure Development to support agricultural transformation
- x. Mobilisation of Tanzanians to support and participate in the implementation of Kilimo Kwanza

The Kilimo Kwanza project stems from the realisation that a majority of Tanzanians depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and thus improving agricultural productivity is central to combating poverty. In order to embark on increased agricultural activity the Kilimo Kwanza project emphasises a green revolution which would entail better irrigation, higher seed quality and better technology in farming inputs. The goal of the green revolution would be to transform Tanzania's agricultural sector into a modern and commercial sector. In order to rapidly modernise the agricultural sector, private investment is encouraged and resources allocated to agriculture should be increased (Mkulo 2009: 41-42; Maghimbi et al. 2010: 60).

The initiative was first seen in practice through the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) which attempts to link foreign investors with local peasants. However, it has been interesting to note that the government has been zealously calling for local peasants with “*idle*, arable land of 500 Ha or above” (emphasis by author) to submit proposals in order to enter into contract with foreign investors. According to the executive director, Mr. Ole Naiko, the TIC with the Kilimo Kwanza initiative aims at increasing and consolidating the production of food and cash crops for export. Moreover, he states that the project would want to ensure that investors are able to get the land they require for agriculture (Kanyabwoya 2010: 2).



## **Implications and Contradictions of Poverty Reduction Strategies and Land Policies**

This sub-section discusses the implications of PRS on the economy of the country, in particular on smallholder production. It takes into consideration the relationship between the PRS and the land policies and the results of the initiatives taken by these various agricultural initiatives. The most relevant results are those in the Poverty and Human Development Report 2009, which is produced by the MKUKUTA monitoring system.

The liberalisation of the economy in the 1980s and 90s transformed land policies and created a market conducive to foreign investment. Part of the liberalisation package sought to reduce government intervention in protecting the peasant (for example providing subsidised inputs). The economy was geared towards incorporating the peasant into the free market. Several initiatives to date have been undertaken to meet these goals. However, they do not seem to be working for the smallholder producer.

The basic aim of the MKUKUTA project is to reduce poverty and increase Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). MKUKUTA sets a goal of increasing the GDP growth by 6-8% per annum and the agricultural growth to 10% per annum by 2010. The current trends show that while the GDP growth has been at its highest historically in Tanzania at 7% per annum; agricultural growth has averaged 4.4% per annum. Given this trend, agricultural growth may not meet the desired MKUKUTA growth rate of 10% per annum by 2010. In fact the most dynamic sector up to 2007 was mining with an average annual growth of 15% (PHDR 2009: 4-7). Therefore, the growth of the GDP is reflecting growth in sectors other than agriculture and perhaps an increased influx of FDI, which is also mainly in mining and finance. Agriculture is lagging behind. In fact, agricultural growth does not even meet the target of 5% annual growth set in the ASDP.

Moreover, income poverty has almost remained the same since 1991, without a considerable change. This would mean that it would not drop to meet the MKUKUTA targets by 2010. While 40.8% of the rural population was solely dependent on smallholder agriculture and lived below the basic needs poverty line in 1991, 37.6% continued to live in poverty in 2007. MKUKUTA aims to reduce the %age of people in rural areas living below the basic needs poverty line to 24% (*ibid*, 12). The levels of poverty in rural areas have not changed much; 1% of the population (a figure unchanged since 2000/01) consumes only one meal a day (*ibid*, 27).

Another pillar common to the PRS of Tanzania is to increase the availability of farming inputs such as fertilisers and good quality seeds. Fertiliser in Tanzania is largely imported into the country. Tanzania had its own fertiliser factory, established in 1968; Tanzania Fertiliser Company Ltd. (TFC). However, in 1991/92 the company collapsed after one of its plants broke down in 1991 and it was never restored. Soon after, fertiliser trade was liberalised in 1992 and by 1994 the subsidies scheme was phased out under liberalisation. This left a weak company to compete with larger international fertiliser companies in the market. The result was higher fertiliser prices and lower consumption of fertilisers in the country. Fertiliser use decreased dramatically between 1994-2003, with only 8% of crop growing households using inorganic fertiliser and 20% using farmyard manure (National Bureau of Statistics 2006: 82). Lack of fertiliser use leads to low productivity. Tanzania's current self-sufficiency in food is threatened by low crop productivity.

The figures above clearly show that the quality of life of the rural peasant and the development of the agricultural sector are not meeting the standards that have been set by the PRS. Privatisation and liberalisation are not helping the smallholder producer since they leave the producer vulnerable to market forces which they are not equipped to deal with. MKURABITA seeks to employ a fast track approach to land titling so as to formalise all informal property. Any property that is outside the legal framework, extralegal, must be formalised. According to MKURABITA, all forms of customary rights and locally adapted arrangements are part of the extralegal sector (Benjaminsen 2004: 7). As discussed in the section on land policies in Tanzania, the Land Acts of 1999 clearly placed customary rights and statutory rights on an equal footing. The logic of MKURABITA, based on de Soto's guidelines, is that property that is held outside the Western legal system is not protected by law. However, the Land Act clearly states that customary properties do fall under the law. They are *not* extra-legal. Although this contradiction was not explicitly addressed by MKURABITA, one of the reports from the President's office on MKURABITA addressed one of the lessons learnt from the first two phases of implementing MKURABITA (since 2004): "There is indeed a need to effect some changes in the Village Land Act 5 of 1999 and the Land Act No. 4 of 1999 along with several other legislation that have a bearing on the property rights regime in the country" (Salema 2007). The Land Act of 1999 placed customary rights and statutory rights on an equal footing to provide an equal legal framework of protection for the small peasant who holds land under customary law.

To change this would undermine customary law and give more importance to statutory law. This was the case from the time of the 1923 ordinance under British trusteeship.

Kilimo Kwanza seeks to encourage local peasants with idle arable land to join hands with foreign investors, in order to rapidly develop this land, presumably with the technology of the foreign investor and the expertise of the local farmer. There is need to deepen analysis of the nature of the envisaged partnership between the local smallholder and the foreign investor. Even though the resolution of Kilimo Kwanza, in theory, seems to aim at developing agriculture, in reality it is really geared towards large-scale farming. For two reasons: (i) the call to submit proposals on idle arable land to the TIC was put at a minimum of 500Ha or above while the smallholder producer has on average only 2-5 Ha; (ii) as discussed in the section of the Land Amendments Act of 2004, bare land cannot be directly transferred under customary law (which in practice applies to all smallholder agriculture). It is assumed that land must be used by the peasant who owns it, and if land is not used then it is given back to the community.

CAADP sets a bold goal of decreasing food insecurity, especially Pillar 3 by paving the way for export expansion. Tanzania's *Kilimo Kwanza* is the local vehicle towards meeting the goals established within the CAADP. However, an emphasis on export expansion will most likely lead to the vulnerability of the market. Developing countries such as Tanzania will be forced to produce "marketable goods" and slowly decline in self-sufficiency of basic food grains. Currently, Tanzania does not produce a surplus of basic food grains, allowing it to switch production to exportable goods. Hence, if food production declines and production of exportable goods increases, the export market may flourish but a large %age of the population will be left hungry. Patnaik explains "[the decline in the basic food staples output per head of population] happens because, with the diversion of food growing land and resources to export crops, the food grains growth rate falls below the population growth rate" (Patnaik 2007: 60). It seems as though the PRS are aimed at protecting the interests of private investors and large-scale farmers. In reality, the small-scale farmer is left vulnerable and is not, integrated in a beneficial manner into the market economy.

## **Advocacy Organisations in Tanzania**

This section combines the results of the research and interviews done with various advocacy groups for smallholder agriculture. The interviews were conducted with the executive directors and members of the organisations. Fortunately, during the course of the study the African People's Forum took place which was a parallel alternative forum to the World Economic Forum, Africa held in Tanzania. Many reports and first hand experiences were presented concerning the issues affecting smallholder producers and the role of advocacy.

In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that the liberalisation and privatisation packages have not adequately resolved some of the challenges faced by the smallholder sector. Inevitably, these policy prescriptions have resulted in food shortages, land evictions and intolerable living conditions for the small peasants but conversely, more land, larger profits and more exports for the large investors. It is important to note that government policies are directed towards protecting the producers, in a context where the majority of the livelihoods are dependent on agriculture. For this to occur a strategic, focused and honest analysis has to be done on the producers and their products. In a country that is still struggling to improve agricultural output, it would be detrimental to export even the little produce that is available, especially when it comes to food. Since the 1980s, under the guise of market liberalisation, Tanzania has joined the global free market and behaves like it was economically and politically on the same footing as the developed capitalist countries. Nonetheless, as has been outlined in this paper, the history of colonialism, that bears its impact even today, has left Tanzania in a position of subordination. The first fundamental step would be to develop the country in a manner whereby it is no longer simply a producer for the Western market but self-reliant. The project of self-reliance began before organisations started playing the "anti-poverty" tunes. At independence, the vision of development did not exist in a vacuum but rather in the context of liberty. Today, the vision of development has only one context, that of liberalisation.

In this light, advocacy in itself has been a neo-liberal project, aimed at fragmenting the issues and dealing with them in isolation. The term advocacy implies a separation between the victim and the saviour where the saviour represents /advocates the voice of the victim. Advocacy does not play a role when the intermediary between the people and the decision/policy makers does not exist. In the case of Tanzania, advocacy groups have come to play a large role because there

is a sharp and ever growing divide between the urban and the rural. This divide has real implications in that the liberal democracy of Tanzania adopts a top-down approach, leaving political representation of the rural poor greatly diluted in the decision making process. To fill this gap, advocacy groups have mushroomed with, in almost all cases, the intent of linking the poor *directly* to the decision makers of the country. However, many of these organisations tend to be composed of urban elites, as they have the resources to bring the issues of the poor to the tables of the policy makers. The only resource that the poor themselves have to affect the decision making process in the context of liberal democracies is the power of the masses. This would imply a bottom-up approach, a shift in the way things are run under a liberal democracy. Hence, to maintain the broad framework of the system, issues are packaged in small parcels and distributed to well-intentioned people and groups to address the issue without contextualizing it. If the source of the problem is not discovered, it is very difficult to eradicate issues of poverty, inequality and injustice.

While these are some of the limitations of advocacy organisations in general, it would be unjust to condemn all the work that has been done by many of the advocacy groups. In Tanzania, there are several local and international organisations that work with smallholder peasants. Some have experienced great difficulties due to funding. Others are well-endowed but they are limited by the agendas of the funders (Cameron 2004: 136-8).<sup>17</sup> However, Land Rights Research and Resources Institute (LARRRI, better known for its Kiswahili term *HAKIARDHI*) has held a consistent and committed stance from its conception; the protection of the oppressed against the oppressor, to paraphrase the words of the organisation's Executive Director (Interview with Yefred Myenzi, 23 Apr. 2010). LARRRI has consistently taken a clear position against the privatisation of land. Most recently, fearing that the commercialisation of land will benefit only a few, leaving the majority small producers landless, it organised an annual land forum debating the pitfalls of the *Kilimo Kwanza* initiative (*ibid*). Moreover, LARRRI tries to advocate for a bottom-up approach to democracy by pushing for greater representation and decision making powers at the village level. It has done this by engaging in various land policies such as the Village Land Act of 1999.

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<sup>17</sup> Pastoralists Indigenous Non-Governmental Organisation (PINGOS) is one such organisation that has fragmented due to contesting agendas in some cases pushed by donors.

International organisations such as OXFAM have taken strong positions in defense of small producers on issues such as biofuels and against land grabbing. However, given that it is such a large organisation and has various branches, they have not been able to have consistent, direct contact with the rural poor in the same way as LARRRI. OXFAM's strategy is more focused on immediate relief. LARRRI, on the other hand, believe that it is the people themselves who need to fight for their rights in regards to land. LARRRI deals more with legal elements of issues related to land while an organisation such as the Network of Tanzania Farmers' Associations (*MVIWATA*) has a more wide-ranging goal. *MVIWATA* tries to provide farmers with immediate ways of accessing fertilisers, seed and other farming inputs. It has joined various government organs for purposes of seed-breeding. In addition to their work on the ground, they have worked directly with LARRRI in questioning the government PRS, more recently in regards to *Kilimo Kwanza* (interview with Steven Ruvuga [Executive Director of *MVIWATA*] 19 Apr 2010). *MVIWATA* has been able to directly impact the decision making process, since it recently was successful in gaining representation in local government.<sup>18</sup>

If we are to take the bottom-up approach to social organisations, it would be beneficial to understand the impact and sustainability of advocacy groups by assessing their engagement with social movements initiated at the grass roots level. It is imperative to understand the difference between the NGO-driven social struggles and people's movements, although NGOs can play a functional role when they are driven by the agenda of the people's movements. In the case of Tanzania, while there have been instances of protracted struggles, we witness what Scott calls "everyday forms of resistance" (as quoted in Moyo and Yeros 2005: 210). Hence NGOs need to be able to recognise these struggles in order to effectively engage with them.

LARRRI, and to a certain extent LHRC have been successful in intervening in the people's movements in relation to land alienation. A brief synopsis of a landmark struggle that has been initiated by smallholder agro-pastoralists will provide the platform to analyse the engagement of advocacy groups, especially NGOs. The Barbaig and Iraqw people of Tanzania come from the Basuto plains of Hanang district in Manyara region. They are an agro-pastoralist people. Theirs has been a long struggle against the loss of their land. During *Ujamaa* in the 1970s, the government alienated massive tracts of land under the process of nationalisation. Nyerere's

politics in developing the rural areas was twofold; i) Large scale: where land was taken by the state for agriculture or ranching through parastatals, ii) small scale through villagization (Shivji 2002). This land was said to be taken from the peasants who tilled it for “public interest”. The Hanang district is the best example of land alienation through the nationalisation process.

With the aid of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the government of Tanzania took approximately 10,000 acres of land and transferred it to the National Agricultural and Food Corporation (NAFCO) for wheat plantations. The people of the district were evicted from the land. The evictions witnessed various forms of resistance through land occupations of the then NAFCO lands and engaging the state through petitions. By the 1970s, room for advocacy for the smallholder agro-pastoralists was limited in that the state saw itself as the sole keeper of the farmer (see section on cooperatives in Tanzania). Nonetheless, the Barbaïq were successful in pressuring the government to form a commission of enquiry into the forced evacuations of the Barbaïq and Iraqw people.

The nationalisation policies of the 70s were overhauled during the phase of liberalisation in Tanzania (1980s and 1990s) and this brought some hope of regaining the land. All land that had been nationalized was privatised under the liberalisation era and given to investors. In 1996, with the collapse of NAFCO, all NAFCO lands were privatised. As a result, the Barbaïq people were once again left without their land. This period also saw a shift in the possibilities for advocacy. Consequently, there was a mushrooming of NGOs, brought about by relaxed sanctions on non-state organisations. The NGOs assisted the Barbaïq in their continued struggle to reclaim their land. Both LARRRI and LHRC played crucial roles in assisting the people of the Hanang district to embark on litigation to secure their land rights. The legal struggle was a protracted one but the courts did not prove favourable to the plight of the people of Hanang. However, other forms of resistance such as continued land occupation eventually pressured the government to ensure that two farms were returned to the agro-pastoralists.

The struggle of the Barbaïq people lasted almost 20 years, with a partial victory. It was a people’s movement. The Barbaïq community organised its life around the resistance to evictions from the land. Advocacy groups such as LARRRI and LHRC were able to effectively engage with these groups because they were led by the agenda of the people. Their role was limited to

providing channels and technical support for the struggle, for instance in the court room and through lobbying (Bernard and Shivji 2010).

### ***Land Rights Research and Resources Institute (HAKIARDHI/LARRRI)***

LARRRI was formed in 1994 and registered as a non-governmental organisation with the aim of promoting and sustaining debate on issues related to land, especially land tenure. The NGO works mainly with the rural poor who essentially comprise of smallholder producers (peasants, miners, pastoralists, hunter gatherers) in rural and peri-urban areas (with consistent focus on women through their partnership with gender organisations) who have been marginalised from the decision-making processes and are negatively impacted by national policies.

As of December 2008, LARRRI had 28 members 10 of whom are women and 5 council members. LARRRI is an effective advocacy organisation because an analysis of some of its involvement reveals that the organisation has been able to successfully join social movements that have been initiated at the grass roots level. Hence, in many ways the organisation has acted as a tool to facilitate a) dissemination of knowledge on affairs related to the land, and b) engagement with social movements in rural areas. Moreover, LARRRI has been set apart from some other NGO organisations in Tanzania in that it has taken a very clear stance since its formation; in favour of the smallholder agriculturalist. The organisation has often taken positions that are critical of the status quo as adopted by government organs and investors, both local and foreign.

### ***History of Policy Engagement***

The program necessitates policy engagement. The aim is to ensure that villagers have access to and understand all policy matters dealing with land. They assist smallholder producers to pursue their cases in court through coaching, drafting and interpretation of court decisions. Workshops and seminars are held consistently to discuss Bills of relevance to land issues. For instance, the government set out guidelines for biofuel production without going through the necessary procedures. LARRRI, with the assistance of other organisations, successfully intervened in the process, so that at present the ministry of energy and minerals must prepare a policy, legislation followed by the guidelines. Furthermore, they engage with policy makers through use of petitions and publications. For instance in 2004 LARRRI launched a campaign on the implications of the Mining Bill which prioritised the interests of the mining sector and left the



smallholder under the constant threat of land grabs. LARRRI presented policy makers with petitions and leaflets explaining their position.

### *Program implementation*

LARRRI holds monthly seminars that generate debates among various farmers' networks. They have produced working papers on issues such as land tenure and bio-fuels and used television and radio broadcasts to publicise issues affecting smallholder producers. In April 2010, LARRRI set out a campaign to create awareness on the Loliondo evictions, using TV shows and engaging in debates via print media. They collaborated on this campaign with other organisations such as the Tanzania Gender Network (TGNP), FemAct, and the Legal and Human Rights Center (LHRC). They also have a good resource center that they maintain, to ensure access to documents concerning land rights issues. Many of the interns work on organising and updating the library. Most importantly, all the papers, many publications and all communication is available in both English and Swahili, making it accessible to all rural communities who use Swahili.

While they are not trained to provide legal representation, they are able to provide legal training as many of their staff members have undergone advocacy training themselves. This puts both the trainer and the trainee in constant dialogue with each other. Their annual general meeting is held in collaboration with the representatives of the various village groups with which they work. Rather than focusing on administrative matters, the annual general meeting is used as a platform for members to engage in debate concerning LARRRI's activities and the way forward.

While this organisation is fairly small in its staff, they have succeeded in implementing their program and engaging in the critical issues affecting smallholder peasants in clear favor of the oppressed groups. They have collaborated with most farming, pastoralist and international advocacy organisations that are specifically interested in marginalised communities. For instance, much work has been done with TGNP, under the FemAct umbrella, OXFAM during the biofuels campaign, MVIWATA and PINGOS during the 1997 Land Bill. Most of their campaigns have focused on creating awareness on the consequences of various Bills in relation to the land and the smallholder agriculturalists.

## **Conclusion**

Advocacy organisations can play an important role in education and the development of the technical skills needed to deal with policy. However, despite the good intentions and the impact that they may have, they must recognise that they are working within the framework of neo-liberalism. Within this framework, there will be persistent problems gnawing away at the poor, especially in the absence of an ideology of self-reliance. For instance, to permanently rid the country of hunger, there is a need to rethink the functioning of the commodity markets to ensure that all food is not either exported or converted into biofuel. One of the strategies would be to expand state intervention in the market through statutorily established state enterprises. However this approach flows against current thinking that espouses the superiority of market protection.

Advocacy organisations are a result of neo-liberalism where issues affecting the poor are addressed in a piecemeal approach. This does not necessarily have to be a limitation however, since as has been noted, there are organisations that have successfully acknowledged the context in which they work. The more effective approach for organisations engaged in policy advocacy is to reorient themselves as a resource to rural communities rather than as their representatives.

Neoliberalism has not only been successful in limiting the economic prosperity of the developing countries but also in suffocating the voice of the rural poor. With neoliberalism the Tanzanian government has accepted the whole package: political liberalism whereby decisions are made by a few for the benefit of the majority, economic liberalism which entails opening the market to become export oriented, and social liberalism where social services are cut down to focus on developing a market friendly environment. Politically, this has meant that the grassroots masses have no direct connection with the decision makers. Hence, often their collective voices are not heard. Economically, food insecurity has left a large part of the population hungry as all that is produced is meant for export. Socially, health and education have taken a backseat to the development of infrastructure for better communication and collaboration with investors.

In an attempt to appease the poor, advocacy has come to play a large role in order to amplify the voice of the poor. However, the voice of the poor can only be heard through the mediums provided to them. This cannot work for a country like Tanzania, since the conclusion to this story can only be a temporary solution. In order to address the crisis faced by small holder peasants, it

is essential to address the direction in which the country is going and adopt an ideology of liberty and self-reliance rather than one of liberalisation and dependency.

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