



**The Gender and Equity Implications of Land-Related Investments on Land Access and Labour and Income-Generating Opportunities:**  
**A Case Study of Selected Agricultural Investments in Northern Tanzania**

*Executive Summary*



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## **A Case Study of Selected Agricultural Investments in Northern Tanzania**

### ***Executive Summary***

by  
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## Executive Summary

### Policy Context and Background

The *State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in Agriculture, Closing the Gender Gap for Development* (FAO 2011a, the SOFA), FAO's flagship publication, provides solid evidence showing that gender inequalities in access to agricultural assets, inputs, services and rural employment opportunities are partially accountable for the underperformance of the agricultural sector in many developing countries. It also demonstrates that the gender gap imposes real costs on society in terms of lost agricultural output, food insecurity and poorer economic growth.

At the same time, the global food and financial crises over recent years have led development policy-makers and international organizations to re-prioritize the role of agriculture within both international and national policy agendas. The importance of investing in agriculture and rural development has been widely emphasized, and several international initiatives have focused on ensuring such investment is responsible, sustainable and beneficial to the majority of poor people in rural areas, including the *Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment that Respects Rights, Livelihoods and Resources* (FAO et al 2010, the RAI). Within this context, private investment in the agricultural sector of developing countries, including through foreign direct investment, is considered necessary in order to help raise both productivity levels and total agricultural production.

However, hard evidence on the implications of recent agricultural investments for the poverty status and food security of rural women and men is still limited, particularly from a perspective which looks at gender-differentiated implications and the potential consequences of these investments for rural development. As a result, the Gender Equity and Rural Employment (ESW) division of FAO, in consultation with the International Land Coalition (ILC), and the Trade and Markets (EST) and Climate, Energy and Tenure (NRC) divisions of FAO, has developed a programme of work, entitled *Promoting gender-equitable and inclusive land-related investment policies and regulatory frameworks that contribute to enhance food security, reduce poverty and strengthen the livelihood of poor rural women and men*, to contribute to filling this gap.

### Aims and Methodology of the Case Study

The present report, on agricultural investments in Northern Tanzania, is the first in a series of case studies commissioned under this programme. It is based primarily on a period of three weeks fieldwork in Tanzania in June 2011, in which interviews were held with some 28 key informants and with over 141 people (89 women and 52 men) who were consulted in 16 focus group discussions with local farmers, outgrowers and wage workers. The fieldwork was carried out with the active support of two private sector companies investing in selected sectors in agriculture in Northern Tanzania – Diligent Tanzania Ltd and Multiflower Ltd – and of a 100% private sector apex member-based organization, the Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA), as well as with the facilitation of the FAO Tanzania Country Office and the Government of Arusha Region in the United Republic of Tanzania.

The emphasis of the case study is on agricultural investments which do not rely on large-scale land acquisition; thus four of the five different labour and income-generating opportunities explored during the fieldwork involved local farmers and outgrowers using land they either owned or rented themselves. It is also on good practices from a gender and equity perspective within the businesses examined, rather than on their long-term financial viability. Importantly, this is also a qualitative case study, designed from the outset to be an exploration of issues rather than any kind of systematic or statistically representative quantitative study.

The five different labour and income-generating opportunities explored during the fieldwork occurred in three different businesses from two different agricultural sectors – biofuels and horticulture – and they were selected because they involve land-related investments that are largely foreign-financed and

private sector-led. Further, both sectors are relatively recent additions to agricultural investment and development in Tanzania, and both are export-linked and driven by contemporary global market and economic fashions. However, the main selection criterion for the choice of specific businesses to explore was that they represented a range of different approaches to land-related investments involving farmers, outgrowers and wage workers. In terms of labour and income generation, the selected investments enabled analysis to be conducted of five different opportunities: jatropha seed collection, flower seed production, vegetable seed production, wage work in a horticultural factory, and fresh vegetable production. In terms of business models, the selected investments enabled analysis for group-based outgrower arrangements (in jatropha and fresh vegetables), for individual informal farming (in jatropha), for individual formal outgrower arrangements (in flower seeds and vegetable seeds), and for involvement in agricultural investments as permanent wage workers.

An iterative research approach was also employed during the fieldwork, enabling a constructive engagement to be developed with both the two private sector companies involved – Diligent Tanzania Ltd and Multiflower Ltd. Feedback from the companies was that they appreciated hearing the outcomes of the fieldwork, and the preliminary conclusions, so that they could have a chance to comment and discuss how they might be able to respond.

### **Main Findings on Gender and Equity Implications**

This case study has clearly shown that there are gender-differentiated implications with respect to labour and income-generating opportunities for small-scale farmers and wage workers directly involved in and/or affected by the investments/businesses analyzed. It has also shown that the land-related investments analyzed affect poor rural women and men differently in their access, use and control of land. It is clear that the businesses examined are creating new opportunities for the rural population in Northern Tanzania. However, the precise gender implications depend on multiple factors, such as the type and structure of the business model, the practices of the company (including differences in participation by women and men), the level of maturity and resilience of the business, the crop or product involved, the labour requirements and the amount of land utilized, the socio-economic and cultural status and circumstances of the individual engaging in the labour and/or income-generating opportunities presented, the complexities of intra-household relations, and so on.

In terms of implications for labour and income-generating opportunities, the case study has specifically found the following:

- Women have better access than men to the possibility of earning a small cash income from jatropha seed collection but only because this is still largely considered a women's crop as it produces only low returns – highlighting that different types of crop may have different gender implications;
- Married women who are not vegetable seed or flower seed outgrowers in their own right have increased work loads and do not benefit equally from the investments with their husbands, particularly in the case of higher-return vegetable seeds. This suggests that income generation opportunities that are not specifically targeted at women may increase their workloads while not providing them with the same benefits as men;
- Women who are vegetable and flower seed outgrowers in their own right tend to have fewer resources than men and this limits their possibilities for income generation and for growing their businesses;
- Women have equal and sometimes better access than men to formal wage employment in horticulture but gender division of roles that can lead to segregation between 'men's' and 'women's' work still exist;
- Group-based outgrower arrangements in fresh vegetable production offer both women and men better possibilities for income generation than through casual labour on horticultural plantations;

- Group-based outgrower arrangements in fresh vegetable production provide women in particular with a source of potentially expanding additional cash income to supplement but not replace existing income-generating activities and food production.

In terms of implications for access, use and control of land, the case study has specifically found the following:

- Jatropha seed collection – where jatropha is planted only as hedges and fences to mark boundaries on the land – offers women in particular the opportunity to earn income from land that they farm, even when their husband is considered to own it;
- Women who are contracted as individual flower seed outgrowers in their own right are not necessarily more likely to have better control and more decision-making powers within their household over use of land and the income from it;
- Women contracted as vegetable seed outgrowers in their own right can take advantage of this high-return business justifying the renting-in of additional land instead of substituting land used for own food crop farming, thereby providing a supplementary income source and protecting their own food supply – but they need to have resources available to start this business;
- Women who are farming crops for agricultural investments as wives of contracted outgrowers have enhanced decision-making power over the use of land but access and control of land are still dependent on their husbands;
- Women involved in outgrower groups have better access to land and can avoid having to substitute their own food crops for the crops of the agricultural investment.

### Main Findings on Good Practices

The businesses analyzed in this case study also provide some examples of good practices in relation to employment and land which can be incorporated into regulatory frameworks on investments and policy-making. Notable good practices which deserve to be showcased are as follows:

- In group-based outgrower arrangements for jatropha seed collection
  - Group members decide on share of revenue to individuals and to the group for its costs
  - All group members names are listed on contracts with the purchaser
  - The business utilizes existing resources more effectively, as jatropha hedges otherwise produce no cash income and are not replacing food crops on people's land
  - Possibilities for groups to explore processing activities such as jatropha soap-making, and for members to gain access to improved stoves and jatropha oil for their own use
- In group-based outgrower arrangements for fresh vegetable production
  - Facilitation from sector-specific membership organization to support local groups in getting established and negotiating within the value chain
  - Some financial support is provided to help with start-up costs, dependent on external funding
  - Group structure enables access to land for women who might find this difficult in their own right, and also enables group members to share the benefits distributed to, and inputs required from, each of them according to their abilities and needs – thus providing a social safety net function
  - Some employment opportunities are available for poorer group members who can be paid to work as casual labourers on the group farm as needs arise, although with no guarantees in relation to income
- In individual formal outgrower arrangements for flower and vegetable seed production
  - Provision of inputs up-front – with costs deducted from payments for output later on – eases cash flow problems for small-scale farmers

- Dedicated field officer systems support the outgrowers with information and training on specific farming techniques and requirements
- For flower seeds, contracts in names of individual outgrowers give women some improvements in control of the cash income arising, and also support transparency and help all outgrowers in having better control over the production cycle
- For vegetable seeds, contracts in names of individual outgrowers protect women who have the resources to engage in this business in their own right, but problems remain to be addressed for wives of men contractors
- In permanent wage work in horticulture
  - Industry-wide collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) that go beyond national minimums and help encourage better conditions, due also to competition within the industry
  - Flexible and sympathetic approach to work/life balance issues for women workers supports wage work as a beneficial employment option for women
  - Awareness of sexual harassment issues leading to supervision arrangements that reduce its likelihood
  - Company support for a savings and credit cooperative society (SACCOS) and a subsidized school for employees' children

### Main Conclusions and Policy Recommendations Arising

There remains scope for improvements in the labour and income-generating opportunities explored in this fieldwork, so as to have more beneficial gender and equity implications. For example, in the case of jatropha seed collection, it is to be expected that if cash returns were higher, the crop would generate more interest from men, with potentially negative impacts on intra-household dynamics if women try to hold onto this new source of supplementary cash income for themselves. Any kind of support or initiative oriented to increase the incomes that women get from jatropha seed collection such as expanding market opportunities, removing barriers to the market and helping to reduce costs should need to be gender-sensitive. Jatropha seed collection would also have more beneficial impacts, particularly for women farmers, if processing activities were developed. Concerning vegetable seed production, questions remain as to how the barriers constraining women's access to this high-input, high-return income-generating opportunity can be overcome. The promotion and adoption of special measures to help women outgrowers get started is desirable, most likely through some kind of public-private partnership arrangement involving donor or government support. Concerning fresh vegetable production, there remains a concern that outgrowers may need more training and capacity building to benefit fully from this business – and again this may be dependent on government or donor support through a public-private partnership arrangement, or perhaps through the development of some kind of innovative private sector-led institutional arrangements between farmers, processors and supermarkets. However, if this issue can be addressed, then it is clear that group-based outgrower arrangements with some degree of initial support offer the huge benefit of the open-ended income generation possibilities of self-employment (with accompanying social safety net benefits for poorer and more vulnerable group members) over casual labour opportunities in horticultural plantations – permanent employment opportunities (albeit understandably popular with those benefiting from them) being the exception rather than the rule.

The findings of this case study also suggest some policy recommendations for land-related investments in agriculture, both in Tanzania and globally. Gender is being mainstreamed in Tanzania's national policies and strategies for the agricultural sector, and also, at the local government level, in the District Agricultural Development Plans (DADPs). However, implementation remains a separate issue. For example, it is important for the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen linkages with the districts to ensure that DADPs reflect the gender and equity objectives of national policies, and that adequate budget is associated with their achievement and implementation, with appropriate national monitoring mechanisms put in place and the incorporation of participatory approaches. More collaboration and interaction is also needed between national ministries to more widely support the



establishment of land-related investments that are inclusive of local populations, conducive to rural development and sensitive to gender and equity concerns. This would become easier if gender specialists were recruited in every ministry and their position made stronger within the organizational structure. Consideration is also needed of how to address all these issues through the implementation of the *Tanzania Agricultural and Food Security Investment Plan* (TAFSIP), which was under preparation at the time of the fieldwork.

In the specific agricultural sub-sectors examined during this fieldwork – horticulture and biofuels – valuable initiatives such as the Tanzania Plantation and Agricultural Workers Union (TPAWU) projects to mainstream gender and equity issues in the horticultural sector and the Jatropha Agriculture Nutrition Initiative (JANI) project of the American NGO, Partners for Development, to set up jatropha seed collection groups should be considered for replication beyond these specific sub-sectors and beyond Tanzania, and they should be showcased as good practice. Linked to this, and directly in Tanzania, procedures for setting up local groups and NGOs should be streamlined and the costs reduced so as to allow more groups to benefit from initiatives such as those of TAHA and local NGOs like Faida-Mali, which help link small-scale farmers to market opportunities. More generally, there is also a strong argument to be made for setting up an enabling environment for farmer's organizations to operate in, so as to encourage the development of local groups, and also for encouraging them to actively support equitable gender outcomes in agricultural investments. As TPAWU's recent projects in particular suggest, sharing good practices and raising employers' and employees' awareness on gender and equity issues and labour conditions has proved to have a beneficial effect on raising standards in the horticultural sector as a whole. Meanwhile, in the biofuels sector, it is clear that national policy needs to more firmly address gender issues, as well as being expanded in scope to consider the use and development of biofuels in Tanzania, including solid biofuels and biomass, and including possible price supports for farmers along with a clear tax strategy.

In sum, this study's findings indicate clearly that land-related agricultural investments do have gender-differentiated implications for labour and income generation opportunities for rural women and men, and for their access, use and control of land. This means that the governments and international organizations that are encouraging investments in agriculture need to specifically address gender and social equity concerns, and not just concerns of agricultural and economic growth and productivity. Most specifically, it would be of great benefit to widen the consultation process on the *Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment* (the RAI) to include women's organizations, farmers' and producers' organizations (mixed and women only), trade unions, and private sector companies and organizations that have demonstrated good practices – such as Multiflower, Diligent and TAHA – who can thereby feed their experiences into the broader policy-making process.

The current global policy context, with its high level of interest in land-related agricultural investments and appreciation of the role of the private sector, provides a potentially unique moment in which to push forward gender and social equity concerns onto the mainstream policy-making agenda. Backed by the evidence base presented in the most recent SOFA, there can be no doubt of the central importance of ensuring gender and equity issues are properly and coherently addressed in all agricultural development policies, programmes and strategies. This case study of agricultural investment in Northern Tanzania demonstrates the clear value of bringing ground-level evidence of good practice from the field into these policy debates.

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