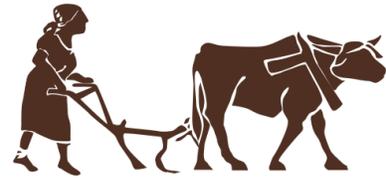


PLAAS

Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies



Redistribution of State Farmlands in Tanzania: Why and in Whose Interests?

Godfrey Eliseus Massay

YARA WORKING PAPER 6

OCTOBER 2021

Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies
Faculty of Economic and Management
Sciences University of the Western Cape
Private Bag X17
Bellville 7535

Tel: +27-(0)21-9593733
Website: www.plaas.org.za
Twitter: @PLAASuwc

Fax: +27(0)21-9593732
Email: info@plaas.org.za
Facebook: www.facebook.com/PLAASuwc



Young African Researchers in Agriculture (YARA) Working Paper 6: Redistribution of State Farmlands in Tanzania: Why and in Whose Interests?

The PLAAS and YARA Working Papers are designed to share work in progress. Please send any suggestions or comments on this paper to Godfrey Eliseus Massay at massayg@gmail.com

**©Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies,
University of the Western Cape, October 2021.**

Author: Godfrey Eliseus Massay

Copy-editor: Ursula Arends

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 ABSTRACT

4 INTRODUCTION

6 METHODOLOGY

7 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

8 FRAMING LAND REDISTRIBUTION NARRATIVES WITHIN
THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND POLICIES

12 KILOSA DISTRICT, MVUMI VILLAGE - THE EPICENTRE OF
LAND RIGHTS STRUGGLES AND REDISTRIBUTION

19 SOME INITIAL KEY FINDINGS

22 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Redistribution of State Farmlands in Tanzania: Why and in Whose Interests?

Godfrey Eliseus Massay

Abstract

Large farmland repossession by the state takes place in leaps and bounds in Tanzania. These are mostly those farmlands that have remained undeveloped for many years. The state has identified purposes for which the farmland redistribution will be used, namely, for community use; investment and industrialisation; and for land banks. Using a case study of Mvumi Village in Kilosa District in Morogoro Region where five farmlands were repossessed and redistributed, this paper seeks to investigate the extent to which the narratives for redistribution promoted by the state, manifest on the ground. The findings are mixed and contribute to the understanding of land reform in Tanzania.

Keywords: farmlands, repossession, redistribution, villagers, Mvumi, Kilosa, Morogoro

Introduction

There have been longstanding state interventions in land reform in Tanzania. In the 1960s and 1970s, the state drove land-concentration programmes through villagisation and exclusions by opening up wildlife conservation areas for tourism (Maghimbi et al., 2010; Rosset et al., 2006). During the same period, there was massive nationalisation of private companies, farms and projects of national economic value through the implementation of the 1967 Arusha Declaration, a socialist and self-reliance policy. Nationalised farms were placed under the administration of the National Agriculture and Food Corporation (NAFCO) and the National Ranching Company Ltd (NARCO). With the introduction of neo-liberal policies, the state reformed its policies to embrace a market economy and privatised most of the farms in the 1990s (Manji, 2006; Shivji, 1998; Tsikata, 2003).

The aftermath of global Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) that were instigated by the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) of the late 1980s, combined with cuts to state agricultural subsidies, stiff competition, and worker demands for better pay, resulted in production and profits falling in most of the privatised farms (Mbilinyi, 1988; Mbilinyi and Semakafu, 1995). Mbilinyi and Semakafu (1995) also highlight the class and gender-differentiating effects of contract-farming practices founded on household production and intra-household relations, as the result of the privatisation of sugar plantations.

The third Tanzanian presidency, of Benjamin Mkapa, starting in 1995, focused on scaling up the market-led economy through privatisation, commensurate with SAP principles, to transform the state-managed economy into a market economy and promote economic growth. The new investment regime saw the enactment of the Tanzania Investment Act, No. 26 of 1997, which must

be read together with the Financial Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Act of the same year.¹ The new Investment Act aimed to correct some aspects of the National Investment (Promotion and Protection) Act of 1990, which restricted potential investors (Maina and Mwakaje, 2004). The Investment Act of 1997 provides more details regarding the investment process and investment opportunities in Tanzania, but has some shortcomings, including the failure to spell out the duties of the investor, and double taxation (Maina, 1994; Maina and Mwakaje, 2004).

Land law reforms in the 1990s were internally driven by increased land conflicts and, externally, by the market economy, and were funded by international financial institutions (IFIs) and donor communities (Tsikata, 2003). The Village Land Act, No. 5 of 1999, prohibits foreigners from owning land in Tanzania except for investment purposes under the Tanzania Investment Act. Land designated for investment purposes must be identified, gazetted, and allocated to the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC), which then creates derivative rights for investors. However, the Village Land Act allows the President to transfer village land to general land for public interest, including investment for national interest (Knight, 2010). The Act purports to protect the interests of the community by recognising individual rights to customary land including rights to sale, that opens up the sale of land to investors and facilitates an alliance of elites and investors to marketise land.

According to the Land Act of 1999, general land includes unoccupied or unused village land.² The Land Acquisition Act of 1967 also allows the President to acquire land for ‘public interest’, which entails fair or a win-win land acquisition in the context of the laws, national development, and poverty reduction initiatives. The land law is also considered as aiding land grabbing (Alden Wily, 2011; Hakiardhi, 2011) Unfortunately, *public interest* has never been satisfactorily defined either by the Constitution or by the land registration regulations (Larsson, 2006).

Other legislation such as that governing mining and insurance, was passed in the 1990s to respond to the market needs. These laws created the environment and appetite for investments, resulting in a huge scramble for land that gave rise to the redistribution of under-utilised commercialised land, but this process also became subject to elite capture. However, this process of land capture has been met with resistance from within the communities. This paper documents the processes of community resistance against elite and commercial capture of land, and the narratives around the policy processes of land redistribution and capture.

Hakiardhi (2009) provides a comprehensive analysis of state farmlands which are under the NAFCO, NARCO and Absentee Landlords’ Farms /Ranches in Tanzania. The study highlights the ownership, extent of development and existing community-farm owners’ resistance. Some key findings from the study are that most farms were unproductive, left idle, and there is growing community resistance about these farms. In a few farms, the study documents the ongoing efforts by the state to redistribute selected farms to communities, such as those living in Hanang district. Other studies (see for example, Greco, 2015; Maghimbi et al., 2010) have documented the resistance from communities surrounding large-scale unproductive farmlands and called for redistribution.

¹ Amended laws include the Income Tax Act, 1973, Customs Tariff Act, 1976, Sales Tax Act, 1976, and Immigration Act, 1995.

² S. 2 of the Land Act of 1999 states that general land means all public land, which is not reserved land or village land and includes unoccupied or unused village land.

Similarly, the government's own commissioned reports (JMT, 2015; URT, 1994) have identified some of the failed investments and growing resistance and conflicts from communities. The URT (1994) had identified one farm located in Tanga Region that it recommended should be redistributed to communities. Hakiardhi (2009) cites the URT (1994) to show that the farm which was recommended for redistribution was yet to be redistributed. The JMT (2015) also contains a countrywide assessment of idle farmlands which caused land-use conflicts, leading to the JMT making recommendations for redistribution.

In 2016, a few months after President John Magufuli came into power, the government announced a countrywide campaign to repossess and redistribute farmlands (*East African*, 2016). Three years after the campaign was launched, a substantial number of farms have been repossessed but fewer have been redistributed (*Citizen*, 2019a). Although there have been few redistribution cases of failed privatised farms in the Manyara (Hakiardhi, 2009) and Tanga (Greco, 2017) regions, Greco (2015; 2017) and Hakiardhi (2009) highlight some gender and class issues in the context of land resistance, land grabbing, and initial stages of redistribution. There are no studies that have looked at the ongoing countrywide land repossession and redistribution.

The purpose of this paper is to explore three dominant narratives used by the state to justify redistribution of the repossessed farms. These are, redistribution for (a) investment and industrialisation; (b) a land bank; and (c) community use. The paper also investigates the processes of redistribution within communities, using the case of Mvumi Village in Kilosa District, where five farms with a total size of 2,661 acres were repossessed in 2017 and redistributed. Kilosa District, as will be shown later in this paper, is the leading district in the country with more repossessed farmlands at the time of conducting research for this paper, and is thus an ideal study site.

To be clear, while the repossession and redistribution of farmlands are ongoing in several parts of the country and in a handful of villages in Kilosa District, the findings of this paper do not represent the general trend across the country. They, however, represent the actual situation and dynamics in Mvumi Village of Kilosa District. The paper shows the manifestation of the redistribution narratives put forward by the state on the ground, the unmet community expectations, and increased tenure insecurity. There is also evidence of elite capture and rent-seeking as well as the delayed land redistribution which is coupled with uncoordinated institutions responsible for redistribution.

The paper is divided into seven parts. The next section highlights the methodological tools employed to gather the data. The third and fourth parts provide the theoretical underpinning used in the paper and the broader framing of narratives. The fifth section provides profiles of Kilosa District and Mvumi Village, showing historical land access struggles, actual land redistribution processes and results. The sixth part delves into the key early findings. The seventh part sums up the paper, highlighting research gaps and providing some policy recommendations.

Methodology

This research employed a qualitative research methodology with the use of interviews and focus group discussions. A total of 10 focus group discussions with village leaders, the land allocation

committee, men, women, and youth were conducted in Mvumi Village. Additionally, 22 key informant interviews were conducted in Mvumi Village, Kilosa District Council, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development in Dodoma, Morogoro and Dar es Salaam, and the Land Investment Unit office in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma. Moreover, key informant interviews were conducted with officials at the Tanzania Investment Centre, civil society organisations in Morogoro, and one development partner who supports the land sector in Tanzania. A total of 67 respondents were involved during the two weeks of field research conducted in August 2019. Both key informant interviews and focus group discussions were used to get insights on the realities on the ground on land redistribution, the processes, the beneficiaries and the impacts.

In addition to the primary sources of data collection, the study also made extensive use of secondary sources to complement the primary data. These sources included, commissioned reports on the condition of state farmlands from the Ministry of Lands, official speeches of the Minister of Lands, official correspondence from the Ministry to the Kilosa Districts and from Kilosa District to Mvumi Village and vice versa, correspondence involving the Morogoro Regional Commissioner's office and those from the President's Office, the minutes of meetings of the Mvumi Village Assembly, and newspaper reports. These secondary sources provided invaluable insights into the state farmlands and state directives and plans.

Farmland redistribution is ongoing in a handful of villages in Kilosa District. However, the choice of Mvumi Village as a case study for this study is purposive. It is the village where five farms owned by Noble Agriculture Enterprise Limited were repossessed and reported to have been redistributed.³ It was therefore an ideal case study to investigate the actual situation on the ground. The next part of the paper highlights the conceptual framework upon which the paper is grounded.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptually, this paper is grounded on the land reform theory. Shivji (2009) identifies two forms – redistributive land reform, which is common in settler and plantation economies; and land tenure reform, which is common in non-settler economies. Griffin et al. (2002: 280) explain that land reform is about redistributing “land ownership from large private landowners to small peasant farmers and landless agricultural workers”, emphasising that it is “concerned with a redistribution of wealth”. Similarly, Fox (1993: 9) explains redistributive land reform as a public policy that “change(s) the relative shares between groups” in society. Borras (2005) argues that, to be truly redistributive, land reform must bring about, on a pre-existing agrarian structure, a change in ownership of and/or control over land resources wherein such a change flows strictly from the landed to the landless and land-poor classes, or from rich landlords to poor peasants. Thus, Borras (2005: 115) concludes that “land redistribution is power redistribution”.

There have been two approaches to redistributive land reform. The first one is the state-led agrarian reform (SLAR), a form of state land acquisition in response to failures of the land market to make adequate and appropriate land available (Rosset et al., 2006) and market-led agrarian reform (MLAR), a voluntary approach to land reform advocated by the World Bank (Deininger, 1995; Deininger and Binswanger, 1999). MLAR is a policy model founded on the ‘willing seller–willing buyer’ principle, whereby landlords are paid 100% spot-cash for 100% market value of their land

³ Interview with senior official at the Ministry of Lands in Dodoma on August 14, 2019.

and where peasant beneficiaries shoulder 100% of the land cost (Borras, 2005). The debate highlighting the critiques of each approach is well discussed in Rosset et al. (2006). This paper discusses the extent to which ongoing farmlands redistribution in Tanzania fits into either or both of the types of redistributive land reform.

Hall and Kepe (2017) investigated the state's practices and approaches with regards to land acquisition, the selection of beneficiaries, and support for farmers in the context of redistributive land reform in South Africa. They also explored factors which shape decisions regarding land acquisition and how the needs of beneficiaries are matched with available land. Their findings show evidence of elite capture and state collusion with agribusiness as well as the absence of secure tenure among beneficiaries. Some of their findings, as will be shown later, relate significantly with the findings of this paper.

Moyo (2010) recounts the agrarian structure of Zimbabwe, showing the character of beneficiaries, including their class nature following the land reform process. He argues that Zimbabwe's agrarian structure comprises four relatively distinct farm categories, based on differences in land size, forms of land tenure, social status of landholders and capacity to hire labour. These include peasants, also called small producers here; middle-sized farmers; large-scale capitalist farmers; and agro-industrial estates, plantations, and conservancies.

Moyo (2010: 944) further argues:

Redistribution enlarged the peasantry and expanded the number of mid-sized farms, while downsizing the number, farm size and area of large-scale capitalist farms, as well as of the agro-industrial estates. Landlessness remains, especially among some farm labourers. This structure has created a platform for new agrarian class-formation processes and struggles.

As will be shown in other parts of this paper, struggle, class formation, and elite capture are some of the results emerging from this study.

Framing Land Redistribution Narratives Within the National Development Agenda and Policies

This section highlights three reasons used to advance the land redistribution agenda, namely: investment and industrialisation; a Tanzanian land bank; and community use. They are framed in the context of the country's wider developmental agenda to show the extent to which they are being legitimised.

Investment and industrialisation

Since the 2015 elections, the trend towards increased state involvement in the economy has been growing in a number of sectors (Pedersen and Jacob, 2019). The second Five-Year Development Plan for 2016/17–2020/21 places greater emphasis on growth, a pro-active industrialisation policy, and transformation. Subsequently, a number of state-owned enterprises have been revived and strengthened and all ministries, agencies and departments have been urged to support the industrialisation agenda of the government (Kamndaya, 2017; URT, 2016b).

Similarly, the government embarked on major investment reforms, including in mining, natural gas, investment policies, and land, to mention just the few. For example, in 2017, three bills challenged foreign direct investment (FDI) by reaffirming national sovereignty over extractive resources and removing companies' ability to go to international arbitration (Jacob and Pedersen, 2018; Woodroffe et al., 2017). This also allowed the renegotiation of natural resource contracts as part of a declared 'economic war' (Paget, 2017). Renegotiation of the contracts with the country's biggest miner, the London-listed Acacia Mining, was sought after a commission had alleged that the company had not paid its due share of taxes. Towards the end of 2017, a special gas sector investigation committee was set up by the Tanzanian parliament, which in 2018 presented its findings from an assessment of the gas deals that the country had entered into with international companies over the last two decades. This was followed by calls for the renegotiation of contracts (Bofin and Pedersen, 2019; *Daily News*, 2018; Pedersen and Jacob, 2019). In 2018, an investment blueprint with proposed reforms on all investment sectors was promulgated with the aim of creating an attractive investment environment in the country.

In 2016 the government started the review of the National Land Policy. This caught many land actors by surprise (Sulle et al., 2016). It was clear from the first 2016 draft policy, that the policy was pushing major reforms to facilitate land access for investment purposes. One of the justifications for the review of the policy states that:

... catering for large land tracts that are required for *large-scale investment purposes*, particularly for mining and agriculture in a manner that promotes sustainable investment which is equitable to investors, the country and the local populations (URT, 2016a: 39) (*my emphasis*).

Around the same period, the Ministry of Lands established the Land Investment Unit, with mandates to identify, allocate, coordinate and monitor land for investment purposes in the country (JMT, 2016: 24-25). The mandates of this unit, I argue, were not established by the law and are almost similar to those of the Tanzania Investment Centre – an institution established by an Act of Parliament. Moreover, in 2017, the Land Act was amended to allow the Export Processing Zones Authority, just like the Tanzania Investment Centre, to have the mandates to identify, allocate, and monitor lands that are earmarked for investment purposes (see URT, 2016c: para 29).

At the heart of these policy and institutional reforms, is the manner in which access and management of investment land is dealt with to facilitate the different investments and industrialisation agendas in the country. Thus, there is a sustained need for earmarking land that can be used for potential investments in the country.

The Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development, Hon. Willian V. Lukuvi (MP), in his budget speech for 2018/2019 at the Parliament in Dodoma, stated that:

Hadi Mei, 2018 ... imetenga jumla ya ekari 127,942.72 kwaajili ya matumizi ya viwanda ...
[Until May 2018 ... a total of 127,942.72 acres have been identified for industrial use ...]
(JMT, 2018b: 15).

On repossessed farmlands he said:

Katika kipindi cha mwaka 2015/16 hadi 2017/18, jumla ya mashamba 32 yalibatilishwa. Baada ya mashamba kubatilishwa, Wizara yangu ilisambaza mwongozo wa namna ya

kupanga na kutumia ardhi ya mashamba yaliyobatilishwa ikiwemo; utengaji wa ardhi kwa ajili ya viwanda, akiba ya ardhi, mahitaji ya wananchi wa maeneo husika na matumizi mengine ya jamii.

[Between 2015/16 and 2017/18, a total of 32 large farms have been repossessed. After repossession, my ministry issued a directive on how to plan and use those farms which include, **for industrial use, for a land bank, for villagers living in the areas where farms are located, and for other community uses**] (see JMT, 2018b: 22) (*my emphasis*).

Land Bank

One of the mandates of the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) was to establish a Tanzanian land bank. However, since its establishment in 1997, the TIC has not been able to establish a functioning land bank. There was an attempt by the centre in 2005 through the Regional Commissioners, to earmark idle lands which can be used for investments all over the country (Vorley et al., 2012). However, such an attempt could not yield any results.

Not having a land bank has remained a hindrance to the TIC and to investors who are in need of land. As a result, many investors have gone directly to villages to look for land, eventually causing conflicts in the process of land acquisition (Massay and Talem, 2014; Olenasha, 2011; Sulle and Nelson, 2009). Until 2016, according to interviewed officials at the Ministry of Lands⁴ and at the Tanzania Investment Centre, there were only two pieces of land for the proposed land bank. With the establishment of the Land Investment Unit, the Land Bank has been housed in the Ministry of Lands. According to one of the senior officials directly involved in the day-to-day work of the Land Investment Unit in the Ministry of Lands:

We are the ministry responsible for land administration in this country. It is therefore our role to know every piece of land and how it is being used. Equally and for the purpose of investment, we have to know which land, and of which size was given to which investor for which purpose and under what conditions. We cannot give this mandate to another entity.⁵

The official documents of the Ministry of Lands, especially the Budget Speech of the Minister since 2016 (see JMT, 2016: 24-25) demonstrate commitment of the government to identify and allocate land to the Land Bank. A big chunk of land was acquired from the repossessed state farms which had remained undeveloped for many years.

Community use

The repossession of land and extractive resources from investors, especially foreign investors, began soon after Magufuli's ascent to power and had a redistributive edge in favour of rural constituencies. In interventions that were covered intensely by the media, underutilised land owned by large-scale investors, at times part of or affiliated with the opposition, was expropriated (Pedersen and Jacob, 2019). The president declared that repossessed land would be distributed for use by ordinary people (*Citizen*, 2017a; 2017b).

⁴ Interview with senior government official at the Ministry of Lands on 13 March 2017.

⁵ Interview with senior official at the Ministry of Lands on 08 March 2017.

President Magufuli had, on many occasions, identified himself as the president of the poor, putting forward the interests of the poor majority of Tanzania. For example, Magufuli ordered government authorities to stop harassing artisanal miners and, in December 2016, he ordered that a prospecting licence issued to Pangea, a subsidiary of the Canadian company Acacia, be revoked and the mining block to be returned to artisanal miners (*Guardian*, 2016). In April 2018, a new mining commission was constituted, in which artisanal miners were represented for the first time (Pedersen and Jacob, 2019). In January 2019, the President halted the process of removing over 366 villages to pave the way for the expansion of conservations and protected areas which have great potential for the tourism sector (*Citizen*, 2019b). He then formed an inter-ministerial committee to investigate the matter and advise him accordingly. In September 2019, the report of the inter-ministerial committee was tabled and decisions were made by the government. The report stated that the 366 villages identified to be removed from protected areas shall not be removed. The committee had discovered that 975 villages, and not just 366, conflicted with protected areas. The committee decided that 920 villages would remain within those protected areas and would be given village land certificates and land use plans would be conducted. Additionally, 7 forest reserves with 46,715 acres would be given back to communities for residential use, agriculture and pastoralism. Furthermore, the Prime Minister approved the sub-division of 14 forest reserves for purposes of agriculture and animal keeping. The Prime Minister also approved the repossession of 16 large farms which had not been developed, for redistribution for farming and for purposes of keeping animals.⁶

In the 2015 Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) Manifesto, the President's party, the government committed to deliver 2.5 million customary certificates of occupancies (CCROs),⁷ the land ownership certificate for rural villagers. In 2016, with support from Donor Organisations, the government launched a multi-million-dollar three-year project for land certifications in three districts of, Malinyi, Kilombero and Ulanga in Morogoro Region with target of issuing 300,000 CCROs,⁸ So far, over 100% of the targets have been met.⁹ The government is in the final process of launching another multi-million-dollar project called "Land Tenure Improvement Project" with funding from the World Bank that aim at issuing 2.5 million CCROs and 2 million Granted Rights of Occupancy, a certificate of land ownership for urban dwellers in five-year period (see JMT, 2019: 59).

In the land redistribution discourse, as it appears in the media and official documents of the Ministry of Lands, community members' interests seem to dominate. The words which are often used are land redistribution to "citizens", "*wananchi*", "villagers", and "those in need". Having gone through the narratives in the broader context, the next two sections provide detailed profiles of Kilosa District and Mvumi Village.

⁶ Official communication from Prime Minister's Office on 23 September 2019.

⁷ See page 43 of the 2015 CCM Manifesto. Available at:

<http://www.dodoma.go.tz/storage/app/uploads/public/5a4/3a5/cb6/5a43a5cb6000c807958630.pdf>

⁸ See page 20 of <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/11716.pdf>

⁹ According to the Project Coordinator, 300,246 CCROs had been issued as of December 2019.

Kilosa District, Mvumi Village – The Epicentre of Land Rights Struggles and Redistribution

The case study is in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region, located approximately 300 km inland from the coast and Dar es Salaam, along one of the old East African caravan routes stretching from Bagamoyo to the eastern part of Democratic Republic of the Congo (Benjaminsen et al., 2009). Today, Kilosa is one of six districts within the Morogoro Region, its 14,245 km² making up about 20% of the region (Beidelman, 1960; KDC, 2010) with a population of 438,175 as per the 2012 National Census. The district lies between 6°S and 8°S, and 36°30'E and 38°E. It borders the Tanga Region to the north and Morogoro District to the east. In the south, it is bordered by the Kilombero District and part of Iringa Region (KDC, 2000). Kilosa District comprises mostly flat lowland that covers the whole of the eastern part called Mkata Plains (Nduwamungu et al., 2004).

Land in Kilosa can be divided into five types: agricultural (37.5%); natural pasture (33.5%); Mikumi National Park (22.5%); forest reserves (5.5%); and urban areas, water and swamps (1%) (KDC, 2010). More than 80% of people in Kilosa depend on agriculture (KDC, 2010) and with its varied conditions, ranging from a plateau characterised by seasonally flooded plains, to mountainous areas with altitudes surpassing 2,000 m, Kilosa District offers a variety of agro-ecological conditions for farming (Maganga et al., 2007). A variety of crops is grown in the district including maize, rice, millet, cassava, beans, bananas, and cowpeas. Besides food crops, the main cash crops are sisal, cotton, coffee, wheat, cashew nuts, coconuts, sugar cane, and tobacco. Some of the food crops are also used as cash crops. Small-scale farming – where the average farmland is less than one hectare – represents 90% of agriculture, with large-scale farming representing the other 10%. The small-scale farm holders are subsistence farmers who produce mostly for domestic use, selling only their surplus (KDC, 2010; Shishira et al., 1997).

Around 46% of households own less than two acres of land (including 31% of landless households), while 25% own between two and four acres and 29% own four or more acres. Landless households are more common in accessible villages, and households owning large portions of land are more common in remote villages. Similar observations are evident when analysing by poverty status with non-poor households resembling households from accessible villages. Regarding household size – while 39% of households with one or two members are landless, the share for households with seven or more members is 17%. In contrast, larger households seem to own larger landholdings more frequently than households with fewer members (EDI, 2007).

The Kilosa District is often referred to in government and development aid reports and in national newspaper articles as an area of land scarcity and conflicts. Benjaminsen et al. (2009) have identified several structural factors that have contributed to the scarcity. First, a number of estate farms for sisal production were established in the colonial period through the allocation of large areas of indigenous land to European settler farmers. Second, these estates attracted a number of immigrant workers from other regions of the country who subsequently settled in the area. Third, conservation areas cover almost one third of the district's total area. Fourth, evictions during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, following the establishment of large-scale agricultural development schemes in the north, such as the Basuto Wheat Scheme in Hanang, caused in-migrations of especially Barabaig pastoralists towards the south and into the district (Brehony et al., 2003).

The sisal estates have played and continue to play a central role in the dynamics around access to land in Kilosa District. In 1967, the sisal estates were nationalised, but during the 1970s and 1980s many of these estates were closed down due to competition from artificial fibre. Following the introduction of economic liberalisation in Tanzania in the early 1990s (Neumann, 1995), the government privatised the few estates that had survived in Kilosa. As the result of the privatisation policy of the early 1990s, the former estates became sites of new land use conflicts. These conflicts might be between individual farmers, between farmers and pastoralists, or between the former owners and the present users. The worse conflict between pastoralists and farmers occurred in December 2000 in Kilosa District where 38 farmers were killed (Massay, 2017). Hostilities reignited in Kilosa in 2008 when eight people were killed, several houses set alight and livestock stolen (Hakiardhi, 2008; Massay, 2017).

The struggles for land access in Kilosa have built a foundational ground for repossessions of abandoned large farmlands. Ultimately, between December 2015 and October 2018, a total of 36 farms have been repossessed by the state countrywide, out of which 16 are from Morogoro Region (JMT, 2018b) and 9 from Kilosa District (JMT, 2018a). Given the growing land use disputes and potential economic values for agricultural and industrial development in Morogoro Region, in 2016 the government focused on implementing land use plans and land formalisations in Morogoro Region. This official position was announced by the Minister of Lands in Morogoro at the National Land Sector Stakeholder Meeting on 04 August 2016 (IPP Media, 2016). In the same year, the government launched the Land Tenure Support Programme, a three-year multi-million-dollar project which sought, among other things, to issue more than 300,000 land certificates in three districts of Morogoro – Kilombero, Ulanga and Malinyi districts (JMT, 2016). There have been several other parallel interventions by the Ministry of Lands in Kilosa District to address land use conflicts and implement land use plans. A team of National Land Use Planning Commission members spent more than a year in Kilosa implementing village land use plans in villages where there were farmer-pastoralist conflicts.

At the time of data collection for this paper, the special research team of the Ministry of Lands was in Kilosa District to monitor the process of redistribution of repossessed lands. A few months earlier, the Minister of Lands transferred all officials working in land departments and appointed new ones in all Districts of Morogoro Region, including Kilosa (*Citizen*, 2019c). The Minister was of the view that, land officials were sources of land use conflicts in the region. In September 2019, the President fired the Morogoro Regional Commissioner (*Citizen*, 2019d). Although the reasons for this firing were not made public, some of the people interviewed during this study alluded to his failure in adequately addressing land issues in his region, as one of the factors. In November 2019, the media reported – ITV news of 09 November 2019 at 20h30 – that the Minister of Lands had ordered the redistribution of 3,000 acres of land to villagers in Kilosa.

Mvumi Village

According to the information obtained from a letter (dated 31 August 2018) from Mvumi Village chairperson, Mr Abdul Alli Tumbo to the Secretary General of the ruling CCM, Mvumi Village was registered in 1975 with registration number MG/KJ/53 and has a total land area of 58,000 acres. The village has a population of 15,734 people according to the 2012 census – 7,480 are men and 8,254 are women. Excluding the recently repossessed farmlands, 27,000 acres are still under

sisal plantations, 17,200 acres are protected areas, and the remaining 10,554 acres are already under pressure. In 2014, a part of Mvumi Village was partitioned to create a new village called Gongwe Village. According to Mvumi Village leaders, the size of Gongwe village and its geographical boundaries are unclear. It is common practice in Tanzania for villages to be partitioned to create new ones for political reasons, which include creating new political positions. This partition has created a tension between a mother village (Mvumi) and the new village over the allocation of repossessed farmlands.

Mvumi Village had a long-standing land use conflict with Noble Agriculture Enterprises Limited, a company which had owned farms numbered 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 with a total of 2,661 acres, all located in Mvumi Village. The company describes itself on its website as,

... comprised of the agricultural activities of the Noble Azania Group. Various farm estates are concentrated on 15,524 acres of prime agricultural land in Kilosa and Bagamoyo District of Tanzania made of fertile black soil with good water retaining properties. The soil is good for cultivating cotton, sisal, paddy, maize, sesame, tobacco and various other commodities/crops.¹⁰

The conflict, according to a Mvumi Village leader, started in 2006 and escalated in 2013 when the company extended its area and grabbed the land that belong to individual villagers.¹¹ As the result of the conflicts, some villagers have been arrested and others have been jailed. Furthermore, villagers were sued for trespassing and the Republic won at the district level but on appeal, villagers won the appeal at the High Court of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam.¹² They complained that some district officials were siding with the company and that there was no one defending their rights.

Mvumi Village also reported the conflict to Kilosa District Council in 2014¹³ and the District Council wrote to the investor demanding evidence showing the actual size of his farms.¹⁴ In the same year, Mvumi Village Council submitted an official letter requesting the revocation of ownership of farms numbered 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 under Noble Agricultural Enterprise Limited.¹⁵ The letter was accompanied by the minutes of the Village Assembly, which contained the grounds for revocation of land ownership and a resolution to present an official request to the Ministry of Lands in this regard. Below are extracts from the minutes, capturing some of the key issues¹⁶:

Kijiji chetu kimebanwa na wawekezaji pande zote, watu hawana sehemu ya kujenga, watu hawana pa kulima, tunakosa pa kuzika watu wetu, kutokana na ongezeko hili tumekuwa na uhaba wa maeneo ya kujenga taasisi za kijamii na serikali kama vile mashule, viwanja vya michezo, kituo cha afya, masoko, msikiti, makanisa na kadhalika. Tumebaki kuzungukwa

¹⁰ See: <http://www.noble-tz.com/agriculture.html>

¹¹ According to the letter dated 26 November 2016 from Mvumi Village Chairperson to the Regional Commissioner of Morogoro.

¹² *Emanuel Selemani, Sharifu Katema, Athuman Kadoro, Amiri Selemani Makeve vs. Republic. Criminal Appeal Number 225 of 2015.*

¹³ The letter is dated 01 April 2014 with reference number KIJ/MV/BR/VOL 11/266&267.

¹⁴ The letter is dated 04 April 2014 with reference number KL/102/11/11/21.

¹⁵ The letter is dated 07 November 2014 with reference number KD/MTH/MV/VOL.11/16.

¹⁶ Minutes of the Village Assembly of Mvumi Village, dated 08 October 2014.

na mahekta ambayo hayaendelezwi kila kona ambayo ni hifadhi ya ngedere, yanapangishwa mifugo, vitu hivi vinazidi kuwa hatari kwa mashamba yetu machache tuliyonayo.

Mashamba namba 32, 33, 34, 35 na 36 yanayomilikiwa na Noble Agriculture na Msowero Farm yapunguzwe kwasababu miundombinu ya umwagiliaji imepita katika mashamba hayo, hadi sasa serikali imetumia jumla ya shilingi bilioni 1.3 kugharimia ujenzi wa miundombinu ya kilimo cha umwagiliaji, hizi ni fedha za walipa kodi wenzetu na wafadhili. Lakini cha ajabu haya ni mapori yasiyotumika kwa kilimo cha umwagiliaji kwa kigezo cha hati miliki.

Sehemu ndogo iliyoendelezwa halimi mwekezaji bali tunakodishwa sisi wananchi. Baadhi yetu tunapogusa mapori hayo tunakamatwa na polisi na kuwekwa ndani. Tumekuwa tukifuatilia jambo hili kwa miaka mingi tangu mwaka 2007 huko wilayani bila mafanikio ... jambo hili lipelekwe ngazi ya Wizara kwa msaada zaidi, tukikaa kimya inaweza kutokea mizozo mikubwa zaidi kuliko iliyowahi kutokea watu walipofariki (uk 1-3).

A modest, direct translation is thus offered:

[Our village is squeezed by investors from all sides. People have no place to build, they have no place to farm, we have no place to bury our people. With the increased population, we have a shortage of places to build communal and government institutions such as schools, playgrounds, health centres, a market, a mosque, etc. We are surrounded by hectares of undeveloped lands that are now home to monkeys and leased to pastoralists; these are all dangerous to our few available farms.

Farms numbered 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 owned by Noble Agriculture and Msowero Farms should be reduced in size because irrigation scheme infrastructures have passed through these farms. Until now, the government has spent a total of 1.3 billion shillings in developing these irrigation schemes; this is tax payers' and donors' money. Surprisingly, these are abandoned bushes which are undeveloped on the ground they are titled.

The small developed areas in the farms are not farmed by the investor, but are leased to villagers. Few of us have been arrested by police after touching the abandoned bushes. We have sought support to resolve these issues from the district government for many years since 2007 without success ... this matter should now be taken to the Ministry of Lands for further support. If we remain quiet, big conflicts will arise, much bigger than the one that caused the deaths of our people in the past (pp. 1–3)].

After years of struggles over the lands and consistent formal requests to the government to repossess the farmlands in Mvumi Village, on 28 March 2017 the President of the United Republic of Tanzania finally revoked the title of farms numbered 32 (949 acres), 33 (500 acres), 34 (285 acres), 35 and 36 (a joint total of 927 acres) with an overall total size of 2,661 acres, which were under Noble Agriculture Enterprises Limited (*Daily News*, 2017). According to the official records, the final notice of intention to revoke the land ownership was issued to Noble Agriculture

Enterprises Limited and expired on 30 May 2016.¹⁷ The following two sections delve into the step-by-step process of land redistribution and key findings.

Land distribution in Mvumi Village

Villagers were very excited after they received official communication from Kilosa District Executive Director (DED) that the President had revoked the title of farms numbered 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36. According to the village chairperson, the communication was made orally to the Village Council on 26 June 2017 by the DED. The DED also urged the Village Council to submit the official request of the repossessed farmlands to the District Council. After the official communication, the Kilosa District Land Department asked the Ward Executive Officers (WEOs) of Msowero and Mvumi¹⁸ to submit to the department, the names of landless villagers in Mvumi and Mambegwa Villages before 03 September 2017. For three days, from 4–6 September 2017, the District Commissioner (DC) was at the village with the Village Council and villagers verifying the names of villagers who needed land.¹⁹ A total of 1,287 landless villagers were identified. The District Executive Director, in his letter dated 13 December 2017 with reference KDC/D.20/123 informed Mvumi Village Council that the District Council had allocated them 1,000 acres to be used by villagers and that the procedure to allocate the said land would be communicated to the Village Council and villagers on Wednesday 13 December 2017 at 17h00.²⁰

In the meeting, the DED was explicit that the village had been allocated 1,000 acres and Gongwe Village, the newly created village was also allocated 1,000 acres. The remaining 661 acres were allocated for investment (500 acres) and a land bank (161 acres) respectively. The decision to allocate land to Gongwe Village sparked dissatisfaction and resistance from villagers in Mvumi.²¹

Nonetheless, the Village Assembly and the Village Council formed a land allocation committee which is comprised of 13 members (4 of them women). The Village Assembly decided that every villager would be allocated 1 acre after paying 5,000 Tanzanian shillings in which 2,000 would be for the land allocation committee and 3,000 would be the contribution to the village development projects. It was also agreed that part of the money would be used for construction of Mvumi Primary School toilets. The land allocation committee, after consultation with the Village Council and considering that more villagers needed land, decided to allocate three-quarters of an acre to one person from each landless household.

Land allocation by the Village Land Allocation Committee was done fairly, considering the needs and the gender of the applicants. The committee later noted that the land was not enough and it was less than 1,000 acres allocated to them. Some district and regional government officials acquired chunks of land and have been constantly providing threats to the village land allocation committee and the village leaders. The Village Council reported the matter to the Regional

¹⁷ According to the letter with reference KDC/L.10/9.VOL 11/19.

¹⁸ Through a letter dated 22 August 2017 with reference KDO/L10/VOL 11/19.

¹⁹ According to the letter dated 31 August 2018 from the Village Chairman to the CCM General Secretary.

²⁰ According to the village Chairman this was an urgent meeting.

²¹ Interview with the Chairperson and 5 members of the Village Council on 19 August 2019.

Commissioner (RC),²² the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG),²³ and the Ministry of Lands.²⁴

Following the complaints from the Village Council and the Elders of Mvumi Village, the Morogoro RC ordered the DED, through a letter, to immediately stop the farmland redistribution exercise in Mvumi Village²⁵ on the grounds that the exercise had fallen short of the directives provided by the Ministry of Lands. In the letter, the RC's office made reference to the earlier letter,²⁶ written to the DED, with clear directives on how to redistribute the repossessed farmlands as provided by the Ministry of Lands. Given their importance, those directives with translations are provided below:

1. *Halmashauri yako itaandaa mapendekezo ya matumizi mapya ya ardhi baada ya kufanyia mpango wa matumizi ya ardho.*
[Your District Council will prepare new proposed land use after conducting a survey of the land].
2. *Mapendekezo ya Halmashauri kuhusu matumizi mapya ya ardhi yatapaswa kuthibitishwa na Sekretarieti ya Mkoa.*
[New proposed land use by the District Council has to be approved by the Regional Secretariat].
3. *Baada ya uthibitisho wa Sekretarieti ya Mkoa, mapendekezo ya matumizi mapya ya ardhi yatawasilishwa kwa kamishna msaidizi wa kanda kwa idhini yake.*
[After the approval of the Regional Secretariat, new proposed land use will be submitted to the Regional Assistant Land Commissioner for approval].

The letter further emphasized that all authorities should ensure that land redistribution includes the following objectives:

1. *Kubaini mahitaji ya ardhi ya wananchi katika eneo hilo, ikwemo maeneo yaliyokwisha endelezwa na wananchi ndani ya ardhi ya mashamba.*
[To identify land needs of the villagers living in the area where farms are located, including already developed lands by villagers within the boundaries of the farms].
2. *Kutenga ardhi kwaajili ya miundombinu ya kijamii na shughuli za kiuchumi ikiwemo uwekezaji wa viwanda.*
[To allocate land for social services and economic activities, including investment for industries].
3. *Kutenga ardhi kwaajili ya hifadhi ya matumizi ya baadaye (land bank).*
[To allocate land to future use (land bank)].
4. *Kuwa na mpango wa ulipaji fidia iwapo kwa mujibu wa sheria mmiliki wa awali atastahili kulipwa fidia.*
[To develop a compensation plan in case the previous land owner is entitled to compensation in accordance with the law].

²² Letter dated 22 February 2018 with reference KD/MZ/MV/01/FEB.

²³ Letter dated 26 February 2018.

²⁴ Letter dated 18 August 2019 with reference number KD/MTH/MV/AGOST2019.

²⁵ Through the letter dated 30 January 2018 with reference number CD.148/175/04/39.

²⁶ Dated 03 October 2017 with reference number CD. 148/175/04/65.

While these changes were taking place, the General Secretary of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) ruling party, Dr Bashiru Ally, during his visit to Kilosa District, intervened and ordered the District Council and the Ministry of Lands to update him on the status of repossessed farmlands and directed villagers who had been using the land to continue using it. The Kilosa District Council prepared a comprehensive report and sent it to the General Secretary of the ruling party. The Ministry of Lands later sent its research team to investigate and record the details of the beneficiaries of land redistribution. The villagers in Mvumi were very suspicious of the work done by the research team from the Ministry.

The Village Council submitted a letter dated 18 August 2019²⁷ to the Ministry of Lands in which it highlighted their concerns over growing land use conflicts emerging from repossessed farmlands, caused by government officials. The letter also contained some specific requests and recommendations. The letter was accompanied by the minutes of the Village Assembly. They requested that, (a) all repossessed farms within Mvumi Village be distributed to Mvumi landless villagers with a consideration of at least 2 acres per person; (b) buildings that are on farms be used as health centres; and (c) 100 acres be allocated for residential use.²⁸ Two other issues were presented by the Village Council, which are worth reproducing below (including translations). These two issues are, (a) the conflict between villagers and the District Council; and (b) 1,000 acres redistributed to Gongwe Village:

Kuna mgogoro unaohusu wananchi waliokuwa wanatumia maeneo yao tangu mwaka 1958 hadi 2017 baada ya Rais kufuta hayo mashamba. Halmashauri ya wilaya wakiongozwa na mkuu wa wilaya kwa kushirikiana na jeshi la polisi kupora baadhi ya wanavijiji mashamba yao. Baadhi yao wana hatimiliki walizopewa na halmashauri ya wilayao leo wanaambiwa wavamizi. Hivi naomba tujiulize toka mwaka 1958 hadi 2017 kabla Rais kufuta mashamba hayo, halmashauri ya wilaya na mkuu wa wilaya walikuwa wapi wakati huo?

[There is a conflict which involves villagers who have been using their land since 1958 up to 2017 after the farmlands were repossessed by the President. The District Council, led by the District Commissioner in collaboration with the police, grabbed farms which were owned by some villagers. Some villagers had title deeds of their farms which were given to them by the District Council but now they are regarded as squatters. We ask ourselves, where were the District Council and the District Commissioners from 1958 until 2017 before the President repossessed those farms?]

Tunaomba wizara iangalie suala hili kwa umakini. Na idadi ya wanavijiji kuwa wengi tunaomba mashamba yote yaliyopo kijiji Mvumi yabaki kijiji cha Mvumi na sio kijiji kingine kipate haswa ukizingatia kijiji hicho cha Gongwe kimezungukwa na wawekezaji ambao wana mashamba pori na tayari kijiji kimeshafikisha maombi ya kufuta milki za mashamba pori yanayozunguka katika kijiji chao.²⁹

[We request the Ministry to carefully look into this matter. The population of the village has increased, so we ask that all farms located in Mvumi Village be used by its villagers and not villagers from another village, considering that the village of Gongwe is

²⁷ With reference number KD/TJ/MV/AGOST2019.

²⁸ As per agenda item number 2 of the Village Assembly minutes.

²⁹ As per agenda item number 2 of the Village Assembly minutes.

surrounded by abandoned farms which the village has submitted the request to have them repossessed and the ownership revoked].

Some Initial Key Findings

Delayed land redistribution

Although repossession of farmlands took place in 2017, the actual official land redistribution has not taken place. Yet, as of now, it is still unclear when the government will finalise the process, as the initial attempt to redistribute the farms has been put on hold. Village leaders and villagers in Mvumi have expressed their disappointment in how long it has taken the government to redistribute the land. Experience from other places in Tanzania where farmland redistribution took place previously such as Hanang District (Hakiardhi, 2009) and Mandeni District (Greco, 2017), shows that land redistribution can take over ten years to complete. The expectation from villagers in Mvumi was that the process would have taken a much shorter time considering that it is part of a countrywide campaign, which has strong support from the President.

There is no land redistribution but land leasing and more land tenure insecurity

The government officials have confirmed that villagers in Mvumi have only been leased land for the 2018 farming season. This however, according to villagers and village leaders, was not communicated to them at the outset. It was communicated after the Morogoro RC and the Ministry of Lands intervened in the process. At the time of this study, the officials from the Ministry of Lands had just completed the verification of beneficiaries. There is also growing fear of land insecurity among the beneficiaries as they are not sure how the process would unfold and whether they would retain the land they are purportedly leasing, in the coming farming season. Worse, is the fact that some villagers who have certificates of land ownership are losing their land on the grounds that such lands are within the boundary of the repossessed farms.

Use of state machinery to create fear, torture, intimidation, harassment and betrayal

There was excessive deployment of state machinery to create fear and intimidation during land redistribution. Members of the land allocation committee were shocked to find out that a big portion of land allocated to the village, had been appropriated by some district and regional officials. They continued to distribute the land, notwithstanding. Some were arrested by the police; others were beaten and their houses and properties were destroyed. Some village leaders were also arrested and placed in police custody for days just because they were defending their land. Two female members of the land allocation committee spent two days outside their homes to escape the police. One man, also a member of the land committee, was severely beaten by the police and had his house destroyed. The Village Chairman and two other men had been arrested by the police more than six times since the land redistribution process started. One member of the Village Council said:

We were so excited when we were told that the President repossessed farmlands in our village. We hoped that, after a long struggle to claim the land, our problems would be no

more. What we have seen and have gone through, since the farms have been repossessed, are far more shocking, inhumane and painful than the situation before.³⁰

The same sentiments were echoed by Dr Bashiru Ally, the General Secretary of the CCM, after he visited Kilosa. He was reported in the media to have said:

*Nimeambiwa kwamba mashamba ambayo yamefutwa badala ya kuwa neema, yamezusha balaa. CCM haitavumilia mtu ambaye atageuza manamba Watanzania na yule anayemiliki ardhi na haiendelezi.*³¹

[I have been told that repossessed farms have caused chaos instead of blessings. The CCM will not tolerate anyone who will turn Tanzanians into labourers and the one who owns land and is not developing it].

Villagers felt betrayed by their Ward Councillor. One of the respondents lamented:

During the struggle to reclaim farmlands, our Ward Councillor was in the forefront and gave us his full support. However, when the farms were repossessed, he turned against us, and sided with district officials and police to grab our land and harass us.³²

All villagers who were interviewed, showed solidarity with and confidence in the Village Chairman in the fight for their land. According to one of the female respondents:

Had it not been for our fearless and uncorrupt Chairman, we would have lost everything.³³

Given the unrest situation in the village and unexpected arrests, the Village Council decided to maintain a system of official documents in duplicates and to store them far away in safer places in Morogoro, Dar es Salaam and Dodoma. For purposes of this study, it was not easy to obtain official documents in Mvumi Village, but they were accessible in Morogoro. Moreover, the Local Government Election which was conducted countrywide in November 2019 in all villages,³⁴ was suspended in Mvumi Village and had not been conducted³⁵ at the time of writing this paper.

State institutions are not coordinated

The Kilosa District issued an official letter for land redistribution to the land allocation committee formed by the Mvumi Village and Mvumi Village Council. However, the Regional Government issued a letter, halting the exercise and demanding that the process should start afresh in line with the guidance provided by the Ministry of Lands. Moreover, the DC, as reported in the letter dated 18 August 2019 with reference number KD/TJ/MV/AGOST2019, in collaboration with the police, used force to evict villagers from farms, on the pretext that they were squatters. At the same time, the General Secretary of the CCM told villagers to continue using the land and urged the District Council to stop leasing land to villagers; instead, it should facilitate expedient land distribution

³⁰ Interview on 19 August 2019.

³¹ Mtanzania, 11 February 2019.

³² Interview on 19 August 2019.

³³ Interview on 20 August 2019.

³⁴ See: <https://africanarguments.org/2019/11/15/why-tanzanias-local-elections-are-more-important-than-they-might-seem/>

³⁵ Interview with Village Chairman on 20 December 2019.

and ownership. In the meantime, the Ward Executive Officer (WEO) and the Village Executive Officer (VEO) are implementing directives from the DED to lease farmlands to villagers at a rate of 10,000 Tanzania shillings per acre, during this farming season.³⁶ This shows that there is poor coordination within the institutions of the government. For coordination in land reform to work, Lipton (2019: 30) argues that, “it has to be backed by procedures and directives or clear structures of authority to make it work and must be supported by resources”.

There is evidence of elite capture and rent-seeking

Villagers and village leaders in Mvumi have the names of district and regional officials who have taken their land. They said that although some of these officials have hidden their identities and are using their agents to develop the farms, they know them by name. Often, they show up on the farms during the evenings or early in the mornings to inspect their farms. They have also seen the way officials have sided with and defended the interests of their agents, above the interests of communities. Thus, they have lost trust in any government official from Morogoro Region and Kilosa District. In a letter dated 18 August 2019, the Village Chairperson submitted an official complaint to the Ministry of Lands about how the government officials had illegally taken their lands.

According to several sources from Mvumi Village, there are four main officials involved in these illegal activities. The first official is represented by three other officials and has appropriated 40 acres. The second official is represented by a security agent and has taken 40 acres. The third official is represented by an intelligence officer and has taken 100 acres. The last one is alleged to have appropriated 240 acres and is working at the police department.

All the officials involved are well connected to the political class at the district and regional governments. They also have support from the WEO and the VEO who are employees of the District Council. The villagers in Mvumi were disappointed after they realised that their VEO, who had received a contribution of 5,000 Tanzanian shillings from every villager who had been allocated land, did not use the money, as approved by the Village Assembly, and did not hold the Village Assembly Meeting to report on the expenditure of the money collected. Even the members of the Land Allocation Committee did not receive any payment for their work. According to villagers, when the DED, who is the employer of the VEO, received complaints from the Village Chairperson, he transferred the VEO to another village and did not act on the matter.³⁷

State-led or market-led redistributive land reform?

To a greater extent, the redistribution of farmlands fits into the description of the state-led agrarian reform. The political-economic and social justice conception of redistributive land reform is the redistribution of land from the landowning to the landless and near-landless people (Rosset et al., 2006). It is clear, at least from the spirit of the intervention, that farmland redistribution in Mvumi Village is state-led. In practice, however, the findings show that there is evidence of elite capture. Scholars (Borras 2005; Fox 1993; Platteau, 1995; Rosset et al., 2006) have argued that a policy does not constitute real redistributive reform when the change in ownership and control over land resources occurs within elite classes (landowning or not). It is therefore fair to argue, in this

³⁶ Interview with three villagers on 20 December 2019.

³⁷ Interview on 19 August 2019.

instance, that there are mixed characteristics of both state-led agrarian reform (SLAR) and market-led agrarian reform MLAR manifested in the Mvumi Village land redistribution process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This paper presented a detailed exposition of the agrarian character of the ongoing redistribution of repossessed farmlands in Tanzania. It highlighted the key narratives for farmland redistribution and showed how such narratives manifest on the ground. The governing CCM party, as argued by Pedersen and Jacob (2019), promotes farmland repossession and redistribution in the interest of the poor citizens as the way to sustain and increase voters, while also driving its investment and industrialisation agenda. However, the reality, as this paper has shown, falls short of the community expectations and made the struggle for access to land and tenure security much more difficult. The Ministry of Lands, the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government Administration, and the Regional Government have made interventions and continue to monitor the situation in Mvumi Village and Kilosa District.

This paper does not claim that the findings reflect the general reality in all areas where farmland redistribution is ongoing in the country. It does, however, conclude that the redistribution of farmlands in Mvumi Village is the result of multiple factors, which include stronger social movement from peasants caused by a historical land scarcity and competing land uses. Similarly, the narratives put forward by the government to justify land redistribution are, to some extent, implemented on the ground, although at varying levels. Moreover, the existence of elite capture and rent-seeking has escalated land use conflicts in the region. The scope of the problem and players involved has not been covered in this paper but it is an area deserving of further research by future researchers.

This paper has noted that the land allocation committee at the village level has 13 members and that the land redistribution plan directed by the Ministry must be approved by the regional office. Given the fact that farmland repossession and redistribution are becoming a national campaign, it would be appropriate for the Ministry to provide much more guidance on the composition, gender consideration, and timeframe of the allocating and approval authorities. Unfortunately, the law does not make provision for this. A specific gender analysis of the beneficiaries is beyond the scope of this paper but it is a recommended area for future research.

The village leaders have recently confirmed the new lease fee of 10,000 Tanzania shillings per acre, which the Kilosa District collects from all villagers who have been allocated land from repossessed farms. Villagers have indicated that this new fee is much higher than before and has been imposed by the District Council. This is contrary to what a renowned scholar, Lipton (2019:27) advised, namely that "radical land redistribution is best attained with a high degree of consensus". Worse still, some villagers who have received land during the previous farming season, have not obtained land during the current farming season. The General Secretary of the CCM has called on the District Council to halt land leasing, as that would create classes of labourers and landlords which he warned, should never happen. The Ministry of Lands and the District Council should consider facilitating land ownership and discontinue the practice of land leasing.

REFERENCES

- Alden Wily, L. 2011. ‘The law is to blame’: The vulnerable status of common property rights in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Development and Change*, 42(3), 733–757.
- Beidelman, T.O. 1960. *The Baraguyu*. Tanganyika notes and records. London International Affair Institute, 5, 255–278.
- Benjaminsen, T. Maganga, F. and Abdallah, J. 2009. The Kilosa killings: Political ecology of a farmer–herder conflict in Tanzania. *Development and Change*, 40(3), 423–445.
- Bofin, P. and Pedersen, R.H. 2019. Challenging prospects for upstream contracting in Tanzania. *Oxford Energy Forum*, 117, 19–21.
- Borras, S. 2005. Can redistributive reform be achieved via market-based voluntary land transfer schemes? Evidence and lessons from the Philippines. *Journal of Development Studies*, 41(1), 90–134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0022038042000276581>
- Brehony, E., Morindat, A.O. and Sakafu, A. 2003. A study on conflict between pastoralist and farming communities, Kilosa District, Morogoro Region, Tanzania. Report for Kilosa District Council.
- Citizen. 2017a. Govt to repossess idle privatized firms. 5 August.
- Citizen. 2017b. Magufuli orders repossession of 14,000 acres in Tanga. 5 August.
- Citizen. 2019a. Billionaire Mo Dewji put on notice over undeveloped farms. <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/Billionaire-Mo-Dewji-put-on-notice-over-undeveloped-farms/1840340-4968560-eg03y4/index.html>
- Citizen. 2019b. President Magufuli’s order against evictions hailed. 24 January. <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/President-Magufuli-s-order-against-evictions-hailed/1840340-4948586-bdjhq5/index.html>
- Citizen. 2019c. Lukuvi orders transfer of all land officers in Morogoro. 18 May. <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/Lukuvi-orders-transfer-of-all-land-officers-in-Morogoro/1840340-5121016-15gxbix/index.html>
- Citizen. 2019d. President Magufuli fires Morogoro RC, appoints several new officials including former TISS head. 20 September. <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/President-Magufuli-fires-Morogoro-RC--appoints-several-/1840340-5281118-qbl7glz/index.html>
- Daily News. 2018. Bunge exposes gas sector rot. 3 June.
- Deininger, K.W. 1995. Collective agricultural production: A solution for transition economies? *World Development*, 23(8), 1317–1334. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(95\)00044-D](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(95)00044-D)
- Deininger, K.W. and Binswanger, H. 1999. The evolution of the World Bank’s land policy: Principles, experience and future challenges. *The World Bank Research Observer*, 14(2), 247–276. <https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/14.2.247>

East African. 2016. Tanzania to seize, redistribute all idle land. <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/Tanzania-to-seize-and-redistribute-all-idle-land-/4552908-3083940-aoakq6z/index.html>

Economic Development Initiatives (EDI). 2007. Kilosa DC CWIQ – Survey on poverty, welfare and services in Kilosa DC. Commissioned by the Prime Minister’s Office – Regional Administration and Local Governance (PMO–RALG), Tanzania. <https://www.edi-global.com/docs/cwiq/CWIQ%202007%20KILOSA%20DC.pdf>

Fox, J. 1993. *The politics of food in Mexico: State power and social mobilization*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Greco, E. 2015. Landlords in the making: Class dynamics of the land grab in Mbarali, Tanzania. *Review of African Political Economy*, 42(144), 225–244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2014.992403>

Greco, E. 2017. Farmers or squatters? Collective land claims on sisal estates, Tanzania (1980s–2000s). *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 17(1), 166–187. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12148>

Griffin, K., Khan, A. R. and Ickowitz, A. 2002. Poverty and distribution of land. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 2(3), 279–330.

Guardian. 2016. Magufuli orders removal of top mining from gold field. 7 December.

Hakiardhi. 2008. Fact finding report on the dispute between pastoralists and peasants in Kilosa District. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Hakiardhi. 2009. The state of the then NAFCO, NARCO and absentee landlords’ farms/ranches in Tanzania. Hakiardhi, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Hakiardhi. 2011. Accumulation by land dispossession and labour devaluation in Tanzania. A case of biofuel and forest investments in Kilwa and Kilolo. HAKIARDHI, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Hall, R. and Kepe, T. 2017. Elite capture and state neglect: New evidence in South Africa’s land reform. *Review of African Political Economy*, 44(151), 122–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2017.1288615>

IPP Media. 2016. Govt puts NGOs on the leash on land matters. 06 August. <https://www.ippmedia.com/en/news/govt-puts-ngos-leash-land-matters>

Jacob, T. and Pedersen, R.H. 2018. New resource nationalism? Continuity and change in Tanzania’s extractive industries. *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 5, 287–292. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2018.02.001>

Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (JMT). 2015. Taarifa ya Kamati Teule ya Bunge Iliyoundwa Kuchunguza Sababu za Migogoro baina ya Wakulima, Wafugaji, Wawekezaji na Watumiaji wengine wa Ardhi Nchini. Bunge la Tanzania. Dodoma.

Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (JMT). 2016. Hotuba ya Waziri wa Ardhi, Nyumba na Maendelo ya Makazi, Mhe. William V. Lukuvi (Mb.), Akiwasilisha Bungeni Makadirio ya Mapato na Matumizi kwa Mwaka wa Fedha 2016/2017. Mei, 2016. Dodoma.

Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (JMT). 2018a. Taarifa ya Mashamba Nchini. Wizara ya Ardhi, Nyumba na Maendelo ya Makazi. Dodoma.

Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (JMT). 2018b. Hotuba ya Waziri wa Ardhi, Nyumba na Maendeleo ya Makazi, Mheshimiwa William V. Lukuvi (Mb) Akiwakilisha Bungeni Makadirio ya Mapato na Matumizi ya Wizara kwa Mwaka wa Fedha 2018/2019. Mei, 2018. Dodoma.

Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania (JMT). 2019. Hotuba ya Waziri wa Ardhi, Nyumba na Maendeleo ya Makazi, Mheshimiwa William V. Lukuvi (Mb) Akiwakilisha Bungeni Makadirio ya Mapato na Matumizi ya Wizara kwa Mwaka wa Fedha 2019/2020. Mei, 2019. Dodoma.

Kamndaya, S. 2017. Shift provides parastatals big role in projects. *The Citizen*, 9 June.

Kilosa District Council (KDC). 2000. The three-year development plan 2000–2003 for Kilosa District. Kilosa District Council, Kilosa, Morogoro, Tanzania.

Kilosa District Council (KDC). 2010. Kilosa District Profile. District Council, Kilosa, Morogoro, Tanzania.

Knight, R. 2010. Statutory recognition of customary land rights in Africa: An investigation into best practices for law-making and implementation. *Legislative Studies*, FAO, Rome, Italy.

Larsson, P. 2006. The challenging Tanzanian land law reform: A study of the implementation of the Village Land Act. Royal Institute of Technology.

Lipton, M. 2019. Land reform contexts: Demography/employment, farms, soil-water resources/authority. In Africa Development Bank, *Rethinking land reform in Africa: New ideas, opportunities and challenges*. Abidjan: African Natural Resource Center.

Maganga, F.P., Odgaard, R. and Sjaastad, E. 2007. Contested identities and resource conflicts in Morogoro Region, Tanzania: Who is indigenous? In Derman, B., Odgaard, R. and Sjaastad, E. (eds.), *Citizenship, identity and conflicts over land and water in contemporary Africa*, pp. 202–14. London: James Currey.

Maghimbi, S., Sokina, R.B. and Senga, M.A. 2010. The agrarian question in Tanzania. State of the art paper. University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Maina, C.P. 1994. *Foreign investments in Tanzania: The mainland and Zanzibar*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Maina, C.P. and Mwakaje, S.J. 2004. *Investments in Tanzania: Some comments, some issues*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Manji, A. 2006. *The politics of land reform in Africa*. London: Zed Books.

Massay, G. 2017. In search of the solution to farmer–pastoralist conflicts in Tanzania. Occasional Paper 257, South African Institute for International Affairs.

- Massay, G. and Talem, K. 2014. Land-based investments in Tanzania: Legal framework and realities on the ground. LDPI Working Paper 56, LDPI.
- Mbilinyi, M. 1988. Agribusiness and women peasants in Tanzania. *Development and Change*, 19, 549–583. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.1988.tb00313>
- Mbilinyi, M., and Semakafu, A.M. 1995. Gender and employment on sugar cane plantations in Tanzania. Sectoral and Working Discussion Papers, Agriculture, SAP 2.44/WP.85. International Labour Organization, Geneva.
- Moyo, S. 2011. Changing agrarian relations after redistributive land reform in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(5), 939–966. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2011.634971>
- Nduwamungu, J., Kajembe, G.C., Malimbwi, R.E., Mbilinyi, B.P. and Luoga, E.J. 2004. Household tree planting in Kilosa District, Tanzania. *Tanzania Journal of Forestry and Nature Conservation*, 75, 99–107. <https://doi.org/10.4314/tjnc.v75i1.40708>
- Neumann, R.P. 1995. Local challenges to global agendas: Conservation, economic liberalization and the pastoral rights movement in Tanzania. *Antipode*, 27(4), 363–382. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.1995.tb00285.x>
- Olenasha, W. 2011. Legal tools for citizen empowerment in Tanzania: A question and answer brief on leading laws governing natural resources. Draft Report for Tanzania Natural Resource Forum.
- Paget, D. 2017. Tanzania: Magufuli's mining reforms are a masterclass in political manoeuvring. *African Arguments*, 17 July.
- Pedersen, R.H. and Jacob, T. 2019. Political settlement and the politics of legitimation in countries undergoing democratisation: Insights from Tanzania. ESID Working Paper No. 124. Manchester, UK: University of Manchester.
- Platteau, J-P. 1995. A framework for the analysis of evolving patron-client ties in agrarian economies. *World Development*, 23(5), 767–786. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(95\)00011-Z](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(95)00011-Z)
- Rosset, P., Patel, R. and Courville, M. (eds.). 2006. *Promised land: Competing vision of agrarian reform*. Institute for Food and Development Policy. Oakland, California: Food First Books.
- Shishira, E.K., Yanda P.Z., Sosovele, H. and Lyimo, J.G. 1997. Kilosa District: Land use and natural resource assessment. Report prepared for Kilosa District Council/Irish Aid. Institute of Resource Assessment, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Shivji, I. 1998. *Not yet democracy: Reforming land tenure in Tanzania*. Hakiardhi, Dar-es-Salaam.
- Shivji, I. 2009. *Accumulation in an African periphery: A theoretical framework*. Mkuki na Nyota, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Sulle, E. 2017. *Of local people and investors: The dynamics of land rights configuration in Tanzania*. Working Paper 10, DIIS. Copenhagen, Denmark.

Sulle, E. and Nelson, F. 2009. Biofuels, land access and rural livelihoods in Tanzania. London, UK: IIED.

Sulle, E., Lekaita, E., Massay, G., Ndiko, A., Baha, B., Kitua, P. and Minani, O. 2016. Making Tanzania's national land policy inclusive and people-centred. 24 November, PLAAS blog, Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies, Bellville, South Africa.

Tsikata, D. 2003. Securing women's interests within land tenure reforms: Recent debates in Tanzania. In Razavi, S. (ed.), *Agrarian change, gender and land rights*. Oxford: Backwell Publishing.

United Republic of Tanzania (URT). 1994. Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters, Vol 1, Land Policy and Land Tenure Structure. Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development in collaboration with the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, Uppsala, Sweden.

United Republic of Tanzania (URT). 2016a. Draft National Land Policy. Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

United Republic of Tanzania (URT). 2016b. National Five-Year Development Plan 2016/17-2020/21. Ministry of Finance and Planning. http://www.mof.go.tz/mofdocs/msemaji/Five%202016_17_2020_21.pdf

United Republic of Tanzania (URT). 2016c. Bill Supplement. https://www.bunge.go.tz/polis/uploads/bills/1478781711-A%20BILL%20-%20THE%20WRITTEN%20LAWS%20_MISCELLANEOUS%20AMENDMENTS__NO.4_%20ACT,%202016%20AFTER%20KB%20_FOR%20PRINTING_.pdf

Vorley, B., Cotula, L. and Chan, M. 2012. Tipping the balance: Policies to shape agricultural investment and markets in favour of small-scale farmers. IIED and Oxfam, London.

Woodroffe, N., Genasci, M. and Scurfield, T. 2017. Tanzania's new natural resource legislation. What will change? Natural Resource Governance Institute briefing, August. Natural Resource Governance Institute.