

# LEARNING PLATFORMS

## on inclusive business, land governance and food security

SYNTHESIS REPORT

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## REPORT

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In 2017, LANDac, Shared Value Foundation, CIFOR and the Food & Business Knowledge Platform jointly set out to initiate multi-stakeholder Learning Platforms around land-based investments in Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda. The project included in-depth local research, multi-stakeholder meetings and follow-up activities in these three countries. This synthesis report presents the methodology, outcomes, experiences and lessons learned throughout the project. It is based on data collected throughout the project and a year of fieldwork activities conducted by two researchers in collaboration with locally-based researchers in each country.

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# Executive summary

Over the last decade, an increase in large-scale land-based investments has shown that deals often lead to conflicts between investors and local populations, with negative consequences for local livelihoods and food security. A main issue in these conflicts—both as a cause as well as an obstacle to finding solutions—is a lack of information at and knowledge about the local level (Kaag & Zoomers 2013). This shortage of information, occurring among and between different stakeholder groups, is in play before and during the investments. Based on this, LANDac, Shared Value Foundation, CIFOR and the Food & Business Knowledge Platform jointly set out in 2017 to design and implement three multi-stakeholder Learning Platforms around land-based investments in Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda. The project aimed to bring different stakeholders together, improve the quality and flow of information between these actors, and generate new ideas for creating shared value. With this objective, we conducted in-depth, local research, organised multi-stakeholder meetings and conducted follow-up activities in each country. This synthesis report presents the methodology, the outcomes as well as the experiences and lessons learned throughout the project.

**Chapter one** introduces the background of the initiative and presents the objectives of the project. In debates around land-based investments in developing countries, companies, policy makers, researchers and civil society stakeholders have given much attention to making business models more inclusive. One popular approach to making land-based investments in agriculture and forestry more inclusive is the use of multi-stakeholder processes. By purposefully bringing together different actors and enabling dialogue, different stakeholders exchange views and so become more aware of their different positions. From such increased understanding, a more holistic and inclusive process of planning and implementation can help pave the way toward shared value creation between private and public partners as well as local populations. However, what is less clear in current dialogue processes are the impacts experienced at the local level, especially in terms of development and food security, and existing expectations and priorities. Furthermore, in many multi-stakeholder processes, local communities are underrepresented; if they are represented, it is often presented as one voice (Zoomers & Otsuki 2017). This initiative aimed to address these gaps.

The objective of the Learning Platforms is to create the conditions for companies and investors to engage in a process of adaptive learning while more strongly including local communities, contexts and development priorities in multi-stakeholder discussions around land-based investments. In terms of adaptive learning, the Platforms aim to create a space where the investments can be discussed and where an up-to-date account of developments or setbacks in the neighbouring communities can come forward to enable investors to adapt their operations with the changing circumstances in the communities.


**Chapter two** elaborates on the design of the Learning Platforms: the activities, approach and methodology used during the project. The Learning Platforms were implemented in the Kilombero Valley in Tanzania, the Beira Corridor in Mozambique, and the Jinja-Kampala Corridor in Uganda. The site selection criteria were dependent upon the presence of large-scale investments in agriculture and forestry, the presence of strong civil society organisations (CSOs) on the ground, and the existence of government incentives to attract investments to the areas in the future. Prior to bringing together different stakeholders, research was conducted in the surrounding local communities to gather information about investment impacts as well as local priorities and expectations for the future. This information was brought into two-day



Learning Platforms in each country. The main steps to start a process of multi-stakeholder collaborative learning and planning were adapted from Brouwer and Woodhill (2016) and included: connection, shared language, divergence, co-creation, convergence and commitment. The two-day meetings were followed-up with monitoring activities which consisted of site visits, focus group discussions in communities, and succeeding platform meetings. The elements of local research and multi-stakeholder exchange, coupled with follow-up and monitoring activities, formed the backbone of the project.

**Chapter three** presents the outcomes and outputs of the three Learning Platforms. Each platform resulted in detailed Action Plans, a result of the collaborative planning process between a company and community representatives from a specific area. These plans address the challenges and issues that emerged through the local research and platform discussions; each features a number of concrete activities proposed for follow-up at the local level. In chapter three, and before continuing to describe how communities responded to the proposed activities and how plans were adapted following those responses, we analyse why some challenges were more popularly addressed than others. The analysis found that where there were clearly-identified benefits for both companies and communities, addressing a challenge was easier. We additionally found that issues related to sub-optimal communication and transparency led to clear negative implications for both companies and communities; as a result, each were thus popularly addressed in all platforms. Challenges that gave room for solutions related to technological innovation (for example a mobile application) were a second driver for action as was linking up with or building upon things companies were already doing (for example increasing the range of participants who would attend trainings or workshops). In short, in addressing challenges and formulating plans, popular solutions were supportive of the current structure of the business. In fact, the better an activity links to a company's core business, the higher the chance of it being implemented. The downside of this is that the proposed activity is likely to prevent more innovative or out-of-the-box ideas to surface. In addition, easily-aligned actions may not respond to more structural, sensitive or fundamental issues or challenges identified in the research—for example land scarcity and tenure insecurity in Uganda or land scarcity and the resultant conflicts with pastoralists in Tanzania. However, in all three investment hubs, these issues played a central role in the discussions, which we think contributed significantly to raising awareness and helping stakeholders to better understand each other's perspectives and challenges. Ways forward around these more conflictive topics possibly include the introduction of different techniques, including conflict mediation activities, together with longer-term engagement and trust building among platform members. At the same time, we need to understand that, in most instances, high-level persons or institutions are involved and are in some cases benefiting from the current situation. Here a local-level platform is by itself not enough to achieve positive change.

- In terms of impacts, we see the most concrete implementation happening in Tanzania. Some factors contributed to this: the longer period of engagement in the area; the fact that fewer companies are present, which creates a stronger feeling of responsibility towards community development; and finally, a strong buy-in to the process and commitment to implementation by higher levels of management (a General Manager) as well as community liaison officers. Although it remains to be seen how far the generated ideas will materialise, all stakeholders perceived the Learning Platforms to be a needed vehicle to enhance company-community alignment. It is promising to see that discussions about the Action Plans are still ongoing today.



**The fourth and final chapter** deals with the lessons learned and touches on opportunities and limitations of the approach. First, we discuss the value of research. Conducted ahead of multi-stakeholder learning meetings, in-depth study was crucial toward developing the solid foundation needed to further discussions around the main issues and challenges facing investors and local communities. The information gathered went beyond the usual starting point for many existing multi-stakeholder meetings: research uncovered more detailed information about diverse groups within communities, the differences in impacts on different communities, and the way in which investor impacts would sometimes be reinforced or weakened by the interventions of others or by outside developments. The research also exposed local ideas and grounded perspectives on more inclusive and beneficial ways forward. Second, the importance of neutrality and open stakeholder identification emerged to be important. Over the course of the year, participants continued to stress the neutrality of the Learning Platforms as one of the main strengths of the approach. Third, in order to create a sense of co-ownership of the platform and legitimacy, it became clear that stakeholder identification needs to be an ongoing and transparent process. Finally, a last lesson relates to a recognition of existing power relations between stakeholders and the ways this influences the platforms. The project dealt with power differences by continuously raising awareness on the importance of different types of knowledge—both ‘expert’ and local—while also taking into account power imbalances in the design of the multi-stakeholder platforms. This was namely done by placing local research findings at the centre, by setting up break-out sessions and group work in ways that allowed all stakeholders to express themselves, as well as simultaneously adapting platform facilitation based on experiences throughout the year. One example of such adaptive learning occurred when we noticed that companies and government officials were almost always given the chance to speak first during discussions. We subsequently adjusted by explicitly giving community members the opportunity to speak first.

Because ‘normal’ community members were invited (as opposed to people in leadership positions), we also found that the Platforms themselves generated questions within the communities. The follow-up village visits and focus group discussions were essential avenues for discussing concerns and increasing a wider understanding through the sharing of platform discussions, Action Plans and proposals. By providing a larger number of community members the opportunity to comment and make suggestions on the existing action plans, a wider sense of co-ownership was created.

The chapter finally offers a reflection on the extent this project has led to collaborative learning and, ultimately, more inclusive large-scale land-based investments. We acknowledge that the Learning Platforms are not a silver bullet against all of the challenges that come along with these investments. We are however convinced that the combination of in-depth, local research and collaborative learning and planning combined with continuous follow-up and monitoring activities enable stakeholders in close proximity to investment hubs to better address challenges together. The Learning Platforms have provided local groups, businesses, NGOs and governmental organisations the opportunity to explicitly identify, express and exchange their concerns, ideas and priorities, as well as work on solutions together. This process, in small steps, contributes to better alignment of the investments with local needs and ultimately, to an increased likelihood of shared benefits.

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# 1. Introduction

## *Land-based investments and inclusive business*

### 1.1 Background

Over the last decade, an increase in large-scale land-based investments has shown that deals often lead to conflicts between investors and local populations, with negative consequences for local livelihoods and food security. A main issue in these conflicts—both as a cause as well as an obstacle to finding solutions—is a lack of information and knowledge (Kaag & Zoomers 2013). In 2017, LANDac, together with the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), Shared Value Foundation (SVF) and the Food & Business Knowledge Platform (F&BKP) conducted in-depth local research on the impact of large-scale land investments on local communities in three investment hubs in Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda. Research findings were presented at three multi-stakeholder Learning Platforms to initiate a process of collaborative learning between different stakeholders involved in, or impacted by, land-based investments in agriculture and forestry. The project aimed to bring different stakeholders together, improve the flow of information between these actors, and generate new ideas for creating shared value. During the platforms, particular attention was given to the voice of local population groups, which is often underrepresented during multi-stakeholder processes. The Platforms were then used to formulate concrete actions to maximise the positive impacts of the investments. This document is based on our experiences with the Learning Platforms; we discuss the approach taken by the project team for the piloting of the three Platforms as well as reflect on lessons learned throughout the process.

### 1.2 Land-based investments and inclusive business in Sub-Saharan Africa

Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have seen a strong increase in domestic and foreign land-based investments. In terms of Foreign Direct Investment, two sectors in particular have seen a large increase: agriculture and forestry. These investments are often made in geographical areas that are attractive in terms of climatic conditions and soil types, or located in areas where there is a perceived abundance of available land. National policies also play a catalytic role through the explicit identification of investment priorities—whether geographical or sectoral—and the provision of private sector incentives, for example improved infrastructure or access to finance. This leads to geographical spaces within countries that can be identified as 'investment hubs': those areas where we see a concentration of land-based investments and where a mix of domestic and international players are visibly backed by preferential policies and incentives. It is also in these investment hubs that we often see a strong in-migration of other actors, people looking for jobs or—similar to the investors—those attracted by the favourable climatic conditions, perceived availability of land, or government incentives. In fact, investment hubs garner the attention of international development institutions and NGOs interested in opportunities for public-private partnerships or concerned with the environmental and socio-economic impacts of investments. Finally, these areas are often viewed as promising development 'corridors' and thus often stand apart as a result of the interest of local to national level government agencies.

Land-based investments often take place where private sector-led development is high on the agendas of both international donors and aid-receiving countries. As a consequence, agricultural projects are often (partly) financed by funding schemes which aim to contribute to economic development and food security objectives; forestry investments are often funded to realise climate change mitigation and green growth objectives. Inclusive business is one popular approach to link for-profit businesses with local economic development, food security and green growth objectives. An inclusive business approach is characterised by business models which integrate local people into commercial value chains. The International Finance Corporation defines inclusive business as, 'a private sector approach to providing goods, services and livelihoods on a commercially viable basis, either at scale or scalable, to people at the base of the economic pyramid by making them a part of the company's core business value chain as suppliers, distributors, retailers or customers' (IFC 2018). Van Westen et al. (2018) have identified three key areas that determine a business model's level of 'inclusiveness', namely the characteristics of:

the value chain (crop and market); the investment model and investor decisions; and the local context (institutions, stakeholder landscape, local priorities). Because of the strong interdependence of different stakeholder groups in these landscapes, multi-stakeholder approaches have been identified as one means to optimise the inclusiveness of a business model.

### **1.3 Multi-Stakeholder approaches**

Within development generally, and specifically around territorial issues and competing claims over land and natural resources, multi-stakeholder approaches have gained in popularity. Examples include a wide range of initiatives, from private sector-driven commodity platforms including the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and the Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS) to numerous public-private partnerships such as IFAD's Vegetable Oil Development Project (VODP) or the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT). Additional examples are evident in landscape approaches such as the Land Use Dialogue (LUD) and the IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative. Dubbed 'the collaborative paradigm', multi-stakeholder approaches, as a response to state and market failures, are an increasingly important way of governing complex situations. Reasons for taking a multi-stakeholder approach include the identification of a common problem, a shared opportunity or ambition, or an existing conflict. Many initiatives have shown a combination of these drivers for collaborative action (MSP Guide 2015).

The Learning Platforms are based on the premise that investments can better align with local development needs and expectations when local priorities, diversities, and dynamics on the ground are recognised and discussed. By starting an open exchange, innovative approaches and new ways of doing things can be identified and used to improve investment impacts locally. Communities have better information about the investments, while investors increase their knowledge about what is happening in the area; each creates a solid foundation for collaborative planning. However, although the Learning Platforms as discussed in this report departed from the idea of identifying shared opportunity, existing conflicts or common problems became additional drivers for collaborative action in the different investment hubs.

Existing multi-stakeholder initiatives are criticised as it is not always clear how diversities and stakeholders at the local level are represented in discussions. As such, the Learning Platforms under this project placed locally-lived realities at the centre (Zoomers and Otsuki 2017). This bottom-up approach was combined with a broader-than-usual focus on local development, including local perceptions, expectations and aspirations, development priorities, and people's sense of participation and communication. In addition, specific attention was given to different groups and community members beyond those working with the companies including youth and the elderly, women and men, migrants and non-migrants among others.

Much attention in this project was also given to follow-up activities including community focus group discussions; these discussions were used to disseminate and validate outcomes of the multi-stakeholder meetings, to engage face-to-face with different platform participants, and to conduct follow-up platform meetings with the same group throughout the year. Ad hoc support and monitoring of proposed activities took place on a day-to-day basis. This continuous process for follow-up and monitoring, combined with the bottom-up research approach, provided the basis for the Learning Platforms.



*Picture: field research in the  
Jinja-Kampala corridor,  
Uganda*



## 2. The Learning Platforms

### *Approach and methodology*

Against the background of land-based investments, inclusive business and multi-stakeholder initiatives, this project started a joint process of collaborative learning through our Learning Platform approach in Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda throughout 2017. This chapter first presents background information on the investment hubs and then elaborates on the activities and methodology, namely in-depth local research, two-day multi-stakeholder meetings, and follow-up activities.

#### 2.1 Location

The first step of the Learning Platforms in each country was to identify suitable investment hubs. Focus was placed on areas where several investments in agriculture and forestry were in place, where different civil society organisations were active, and where the national government was actively promoting investments. Potential partner companies were identified and then visited to introduce the initiative and to garner interest in joining the process. At the same time, additional development stakeholders were approached to determine levels of interest. Civil society partners and the government additionally provided a good overview of local initiatives suitable for stakeholder engagement; this reduced the likelihood of duplication and ensured linkages with relevant initiatives and key players. The process started with local, bottom-up research once the companies expressed an interest.

Map 1 shows the investment hubs selected for the project across the three countries: the Kilombero Valley in Tanzania; the Chimoio Region in Mozambique; and the the districts of Jinja and Busoga in Uganda. Over the last few decades in Tanzania, the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor (SAGCOT) has been considered one of the priority growth regions for the government and as such has seen a rise in investments. Here the project focused on investments in forestry and sugar in the Kilombero Valley. In Mozambique, bottom-up research formed the basis of the Learning Platform held in the central part of the country and around the region of Chimoio where investments in horticulture, sugar and forestry have been made. This region is also part of a planned national growth corridor called the Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC). Lastly, in Uganda we selected the districts of Jinja and Busoga in collaboration with NGOs and others. The area is part of the Kampala-Jinja Corridor, an important trade route which has hosted large-scale investments for decades. In all three locations, forestry and sugar investments were the basis for the Platforms. Both types of investments require a significant amount of land and the cultivated crops are, in nearly all cases, meant for export with diverse impacts on food security. In addition, the selection of these investments allowed for cross-country and cross-sector comparisons and exchange.

In the next section we outline the main characteristics of the project's approach and methodology. The overall process is first introduced and contextualised followed by more detailed information about each step along the way: preparations, multi-stakeholder dialogue and follow-up.

Map 1. Learning Platform locations.



#### 2.2 In-depth research



The point of departure for the Learning Platforms was empirical data; this data was collected for a minimum of six weeks through in-depth fieldwork within the communities located in the investment hubs. The research aimed to map the realities on the ground and the impact of the investments on local groups, as well as identify new ideas and suggestions from communities on how to make the investments more inclusive and better aligned with local realities.

For each investment hub, seven or eight villages directly or indirectly impacted by one or more investments were selected. Site selection was done in close collaboration with key local informants including community leaders, community relations officers of the companies, and agricultural extension officers of the government; each had a good overview of the investment area as a result of sustained local engagement. Methods to collect data in the communities included community profiling, in-depth interviews and household surveys. Community profiling was conducted with the village leaders and was useful for obtaining a general understanding of the village including its history, demography, infrastructure and services, land ownership and use, and expectations and priorities for the future of the village. To ascertain a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of the investments on land governance, food security, and the future expectations and priorities of the residents, a total of 356 household interviews were conducted in the villages. Household survey respondents were identified by village leaders as well as from key characteristics distilled from the community profiles and stakeholder interviews; this included a mix of research participants including women and men, migrants or not, from different age categories. In addition, respondents were either directly involved with the companies or not. Detailed findings per investment hub are presented at the end of this report. The research team also engaged with other stakeholders related to the investments such as investors, policy makers, government officials and civil society representatives. Asked if they had specific questions or challenges for the research team to consider, the process of exchanging with these stakeholders also created buy-in for the Learning Platform process. Open communication with all stakeholders during the assessment work offered a platform for quick triangulation and validation of data from different groups. More importantly, early engagement with the private sector and others contributed to a sense of ownership of the Learning Platform.

Table 1 shows an overview of the data and the stakeholders from the three Learning Platforms in Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda in 2017.

Table 1. Collected data and respective stakeholders

	<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>Mozambique</b>	<b>Uganda</b>
Communities	7 villages 85 household surveys 7 community profiles 13 Focus group discussions	8 villages 142 household surveys 7 community profiles 8 Focus group discussions	7 villages 129 household surveys 7 community profiles 11 Focus group discussions
Investments	✓ Sugar company ✓ Forestry company	✓ Sugar company ✓ Forestry company ✓ Fruit company	✓ Sugar company ✓ Forestry company
Government actors	- Kilombero District - Uganda District	- Manica Province: Cadastral Office and Food Security Office	- National Forest Authority (NFA) - Jinja District - Busoga District
Civil society and academia	- Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF) - Belgian Development Agency (BTC) - Africa Rural Development Support Initiative	- MICAIA Foundation - Community Land Initiative (iTC) - Rural Support Organisation (ORAM)	- LANDnet Uganda - PELUM - Makerere University

Figure 1. Dialogue steps and process.  
Adapted from Brouwer & Woodhill (2016)

## 2.3 The Learning Platforms

Once completed, the research results fed into the second step of the process: two-day multi-stakeholder meetings with the companies, several community representatives, NGOs, government officials and other stakeholders identified during the research phase. Each meeting, attended by 20-30 participants, was professionally facilitated in the main local language (i.e., Swahili in Tanzania, Portuguese in Mozambique and English in Uganda). Each meeting had three main objectives:

1. Establishing contact between different stakeholders;
2. Initiating collaborative learning by creating awareness of other stakeholders' activities and priorities;
3. Starting a process of collaborative planning in which the members of the Platform were asked to think about concrete activities that would address challenges identified during the assessment phase.

### Box I: Creating a Shared Language

Research around a forestry investment in Busoga District, Uganda found that communities are living within the borders of a National Forestry Reserve which is managed by a commercial forestry company. Through the Learning Platform, several community challenges were identified including a lack of electricity and the absence of a nearby school. In addition, the communities have faced tenure insecurity for years, not knowing if they can stay or if they will be evicted from the land they have been cultivating.

At the Learning Platform, this latter issue was highlighted during the presentation of preliminary research findings. After the presentation, one community member stressed the importance of this issue by stating:

*"We were displaced when the tree plantation expanded. The company, they would destroy our plants and the collaboration we expected didn't come to pass. We wonder whether the company wanted to work alone or if they wanted us to leave. People tried settling in the hills, but they were still displaced by the company; it looked like the company did not need us around."*



### 2.3.1

#### Learning Platform

##### design: Collaborative learning and planning

A range of sources were consulted to design the multi-stakeholder meetings including academic literature as well as more practice-based material such as handbooks and guidelines such as the Field Guide to Human-Centred Design (2015). The MSP Guide (Brouwer & Woodhill 2016) in particular provided keen insight to structure the meetings as well as how to get into a process of collaborative planning. In addition to this, other methodologies provided inspiration for the diversity of working methods we employed throughout the process. For each meeting, a new and tailor-made programme was designed and based on: 1) the issues that arose during the local assessment phase; 2) the characteristics of the participants, and 3) earlier experiences from which to build.

Each meeting went through six main stages (see Figure 1): connection, shared language, divergence, co-creation, convergence, and commitment. We describe each of these steps and their respective activities below.

### 2.3.2 Identifying issues: Collaborative learning

#### Connection

In the connection phase, each of the Learning Platforms started with a short introduction session where the participants became familiar with each other. Next, the organisers explained the background of the project, why people were invited, and what was expected, including the main objectives and envisioned outcomes. At this point the neutrality of the Platform and the approach were stressed. This was also the moment to discuss the ground rules, for

example the need to listen and respect opinions. The facilitator also asked people to put aside their formal status and positions of power for the coming two days so that the discussions could take place in an open and equal setting.

### *Shared Language*

The next phase, dealing with shared language, provided information and knowledge of the issues at stake. Here the research team presented the research results generated in the different communities surrounding the investments; results and analysis—based on at least six weeks of in-depth fieldwork at the local level—were prepared separately for each investment. These findings included information about existing development challenges and priorities, knowledge about and expectations of the investments, and local entrepreneurial ideas and suggestions to make the investments more inclusive. After the overall findings and conclusions were presented, the floor was opened for questions.

Pointing towards some of the main issues and ideas encountered in the field, the research findings offered a sound basis for meaningful discussion. Community members, always invited to respond to the presentation first, sometimes added information or stressed something that was already mentioned (such as the example provided in Box I). All participants were then invited to ask questions or make comments. In most cases, participants sat together in smaller multi-stakeholder groups to discuss key questions and to focus on creating a shared understanding of the issues at stake.

### *Divergence*

Following the shared language phase, the group carried out an exercise to highlight any divergences between the different sectors. Here, we asked participants to sit together in single-stakeholder groups comprised solely of community representatives, the private sector, government representatives or NGOs and academia. Each group was asked to first distill and then present to the wider group the key issues from the previous session. To finish and prepare for developing a common future on day two, another strategy required each single-stakeholder group to take the position of another stakeholder group and make assumptions about their priorities and challenges.

## *2.3.3 Moving forward: Collaborative planning*

### *Co-creation*

Through a session on co-creation, the start of day two focused on working towards a shared future through collaborative planning: developing ideas and options to address some of the issues presented on day one. Ideas were to be something new in their context, as well as realistic and implementable; they should create value for different stakeholders, define responsibilities for different group members, and align with the current activities and mandates of participants. From this point onwards, participants worked in multi-stakeholder groups, with each group focusing on one of the companies. Together, the groups created Action Plans, the most tangible

### **Box II: Co-creation**

In Tanzania's Kilombero Valley, the research showed that local communities were extremely unsatisfied with the amount of information provided by the company as well as possibilities for them to engage with the company. From the local perspective, the company remained in their ivory tower, unwilling to communicate with the surrounding communities. During the Learning Platform, a group—consisting of company representatives, community members, as well as district government and civil society representatives—sat together to address this challenge. The group generated the following ideas: a company newsletter; a regular exchange mechanism; guest lectures at both primary and secondary schools in the area; and a land management model whereby the company and community could jointly co-manage the area's conservation land, in close collaboration with local NGOs.

### **Box III: Commitment**

After the Learning Platform in Uganda, participants discussed how to move forward with the Platform and who would be able to take the lead in moving forward. Based on the suggestion of a sugar investment representative, the local district NGO forum committed to take the lead by forming a steering committee and drafting a work plan for the group work to continue to meet.

output of the two-day meetings. The plans resulted from a collaborative planning process between a company and community representatives from the respective area. An example from the Kilombero Valley in Tanzania is provided in Box III.

### *Convergence*

In the following session, participants were asked to reflect on the co-creation process and results of the Action Plans of another group. In one example, a group of government officials provided feedback and suggestions on each of the Action Plans. In this way, the group worked on convergence, or refining the planning process.

### *Commitment*

Finally, each group presented their ideas and plans in a plenary setting. This provided an excellent opportunity to also move towards commitment and continuation of the Platform. This was as simple as asking certain group members to take responsibility for certain parts of the plan and then jotting down agreements on a flip chart. However, more formal actions were also taken, such as a statement of principles or declaration of intent. Box III illustrates how commitment was shown to sustain the Learning Platform during the two-day meeting in Uganda.

## **2.4 Follow-up and monitoring**

To monitor progress and the continuation of the platforms, a SVF researcher returned to each of the communities and companies to elaborate on the existing plans, to provide reassurance that the ideas were realistic as well as reiterate a willingness to work on them. With the elaborated plans in hand, the team would re-visit the communities and organise follow-up focus group discussions. The discussions were an important means to give feedback on the platform, to check whether the proposed actions made sense, to gather suggestions on how to ensure plans fit local realities, or to collect additional ideas for companies to take up. This crucial follow-up allowed Action Plans to be further refined. One example of such discussions is provided in Box IV.

Two to three months after the Learning Platform, a follow-up meeting was organised with the same group of stakeholders. This meeting was held to ensure that change processes were being implemented and monitored. During this meeting, different actors updated the group on activities and shared some of the findings and challenges from the process. In between the first and second Learning Platforms, additional field visits were conducted to ensure that actions were being implemented and that there will indeed be lessons learned to share at the second Platform.

As stated previously, the project team made a point of identifying strategic local partners in each country; these partners were organisations working within investment hubs on related themes (e.g., sustainable development, public-private partnerships, and land governance). By engaging strategic partners from the start, for example by collaborating in the local assessment phase or by discussing the framework of the Learning Platforms, the team was able to link with the ongoing work of these organisations. This enabled the team to avert duplication of efforts while building on existing knowledge and creating a platform that was strongly connected to existing local structures and stakeholders. This collaboration could potentially lead to a more sustainable Learning Platform in the longer term to continue beyond the one-year pilot phase of the current Platforms.

The next sections present some of the main outcomes and outputs of the three Learning Platforms. More detailed information about the topics, Action Plans and follow-up work can be found in the country reports at the end of this document.

### **Box IV: Follow-up**

Continuous follow-up activities, conducted in all three countries, led to new information about how activities were experienced in the communities. In Tanzania, community members from one village were happy with the increased efforts of the company to work with outgrowers, however neighbouring communities felt left behind. In the follow-up Platform meeting, this was something shared with the company. In Mozambique, some Platform participants worked together to set up an outgrower association to make working with the company more open and transparent. In the follow-up Platform, suggestions came forward to increase the effectiveness of this. For example, the newly established association could organise public meetings to make more people familiar with the association.



Picture:  
Learning  
platform in  
Chimoio,  
Mozambique



## 3. Outcomes

### ***Prioritisation and adaptive planning***

In this section, we describe the different outcomes and outputs which have resulted from the Learning Platforms. Table 2 presents a long list of activities—organised along the main discussion topics that initially came out of the collaborative planning process. For each country, the brief overview includes priority challenges, proposed activities, community responses, and adaptive planning. More detailed information about the processes from each country can be found in the appendixes at the end of this report. The section closes with cross-country outcomes.

*Table 2. Proposed activities during the Learning Platforms.  
Source: Learning Platforms (2017)*

	<b>Main activities proposed</b>
Communication and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing a mobile app (TZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Increasing community participation in trainings (TZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Increasing farmers' understanding of the whole value chain (TZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Bringing together different stakeholders, including weighting and compliance agencies (TZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Creating regular feedback mechanisms through periodic questionnaires (TZ-timber)</li> <li>• Creating a bi-monthly newsletter (TZ-timber)</li> <li>• Creating multi-stakeholder forums (MZ-timber)</li> <li>• Improving grievance and complaint mechanisms (MZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Clarifying terms of contract between company and growers (MZ-fruit)</li> <li>• Organising additional meetings to increase familiarity with the company (MZ-fruit)</li> <li>• Improving public relations (community sensitisation; employment of locals; expanded CSR activities) (UG-timber)</li> <li>• Establishing a round table for stakeholders (UG-sugar)</li> </ul>
Agricultural production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing outgrower system (TZ-timber)</li> <li>• Developing outgrower scheme for eucalyptus (MZ-timber)</li> <li>• Establishing block agriculture in agro-forestry setting (MZ-timber)</li> <li>• Setting up additional sugar cane associations and expanding cultivation areas (MZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Training in certification requirements; facilitation of certification (MZ-fruit)</li> <li>• Accompanying farmers during the growing season (MZ-fruit)</li> <li>• Searching for alternative markets for lychees and processed lychees (MZ-fruit)</li> <li>• Carrying out capacity building and trainings (UG-sugar)</li> </ul>
Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping out support for increased tenure security for communities (MZ-timber)</li> <li>• Implementing projects for income generation, provision of funding (MZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Supporting non-sugar agricultural activities to make communities less dependent on the sugar company (MZ-sugar)</li> <li>• Identifying alternative economic livelihood activities (UG-timber)</li> </ul>
Environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a model to jointly manage conservation land by company and community (TZ-timber)</li> <li>• Organising a community Waste and Biomass Challenge (TZ-timber)</li> </ul>
Youth involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing educational trainings at primary and secondary schools (TZ-timber)</li> </ul>

#### **3.1 The Kilombero Valley, Tanzania**



Four priority topics important to local development and company-community relations were identified through bottom-up research and Platform discussions with 25 participants in Ifakara, Tanzania (Map 2). These topics were: 1) weak communication; 2) low trust and transparency; 3) weak leadership, governance and accountability; and 4) limited involvement of local youth in the investments. In the Platform, two groups embarked on formulating Action Plans to address these and other challenges. Each group gathered stakeholders, including company representatives and community members, around each of the two participating sugar and timber companies.

The Action Plans indicated a strong preference for addressing two of the four identified challenges, namely weak communication and transparency. Activities to address complaints and challenges included introducing a newsletter, developing a mobile application, creating a regular feedback mechanism (a standardised survey), and directly including additional community members in trainings and meetings (beyond local leaders). Two priority issues—governance and accountability and youth involvement—received much less attention; this was especially true for the problem of weak village governance and accountability, for which no activities were proposed. The issue of youth was taken up by one company through one concrete activity: the organisation of guest lectures at local primary and secondary schools. Although this activity will not create jobs for local youth, the lectures could address the extremely low level of education in the community which has presented challenges to the company in terms of locating qualified employees.

Looking at the priority challenges taken up by the teams, we find that there are several criteria for a problem to be addressed. First, it helps when there are clearly identified benefits for both the companies and the communities. In the case of youth involvement for example, we find that the urgency was more acute for communities than for the companies. Although the companies acknowledged the benefits of involving more local youth (for example increased social acceptance and opportunities to employ more locals), the topic was much less urgent in comparison to problems around communication and transparency. Problems of communication and transparency were believed to have negative multiplier effects and were thus viewed to be especially pressing. Second, challenges that could be solved through technological innovation (such as a mobile application) that linked to current business activities (such as increasing the number of trainings and meetings), and whose solutions supported the current business model (such as a newsletter), were preferred. In short, popular plans and solutions were those that supported the current structure of the business. This makes sense within the approach of the Learning Platforms which placed a strong focus on company Action Plans and implementation and uptake

Map 2. Learning Platform location and communities in the Kilombero Valley, Tanzania.



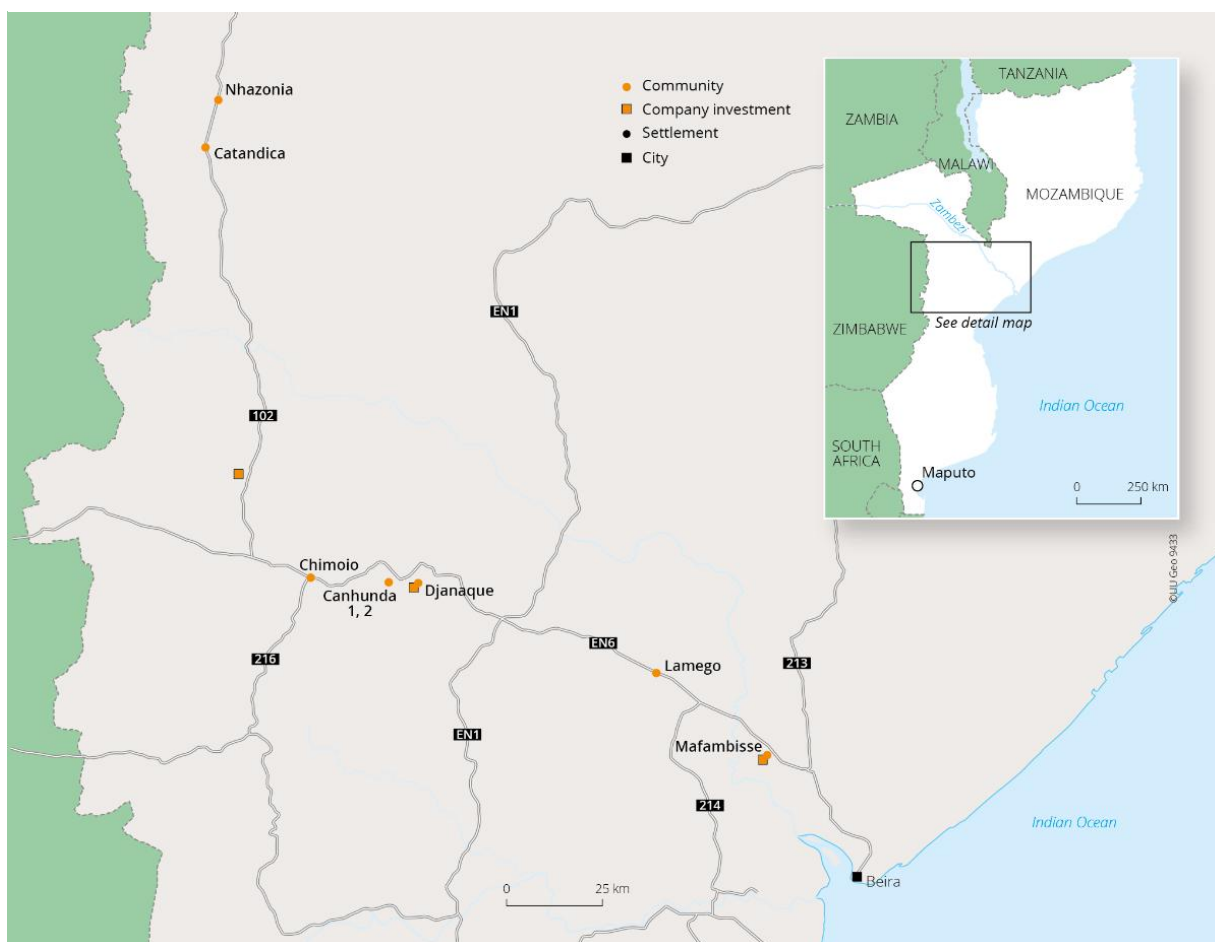
responsibilities with participating institutions This compares to other multi-stakeholder processes where new structures are put in place, and where outside funding is possibly made available.

After the Action Plans were developed in the Platform meetings, the project team returned to the Kilombero Valley communities to monitor impacts. The team found that the proposed plans were viewed positively, especially in two areas. First, the community surrounding the sugar company appreciated the plan to improve transparency by bringing together different government agencies as neutral and trusted stakeholders. Second, communities stated a strong preference to also have a representative present during the sugar weighing process at the factory; this was subsequently taken up by the sugar company in their adapted Action Plan. In relation to the forestry company, follow-up visits revealed a strong community discontent that the Plan did not address the lack of transparency around contracts. This issue was subsequently taken up in the elaborated Action Plan whereby the company and government officials pledged to collaborate and link the issue to a government-led land tenure initiative in the area. The main idea was to see whether tenure programme could incorporate communication about the company's contracts in the area as well as issues related to the boundaries between company and village land.

### 3.2 The Beira Corridor, Mozambique

Mozambique's Platform (Map 3) kicked-off with an elaborate presentation on the local research findings to 26 participants. By discussing the research and exchanging experiences between communities, companies, government and civil society, priorities were identified in the multi-stakeholder setting of the Platform. Four main challenges were prioritised by participants in Chimoio, Mozambique: limited employment opportunities, communication problems, lack of opportunities to improve and expand agricultural activities, and limited possibilities to start businesses. Three groups were formed around company participants who are active in sugar,

Map 3. Learning Platform location and communities in the Beira corridor, Mozambique.





timber and fruit.

A striking feature of the Mozambique Platform was that no activities were proposed to address local communities' interest in securing jobs with the companies. In general, companies saw the number of jobs created as a given, determined by the way the business is organised, and so outside of the scope of the Learning Platform. While the companies perceived local employment opportunities to be an important issue, it was not necessarily viewed to be the company's responsibility. Arguably for the companies, there were no clear benefits to be derived from addressing this challenge. Local job creation is not easily achieved as it requires more structural changes to be made to the business model.

Activities related to communication and agricultural production were most popularly addressed in the Action Plans. Examples of activities which focused on communication included: the organisation of more community meetings, the creation of a multi-stakeholder forum, and a reviewing of grievances and complaint mechanisms. Examples of activities centred on agriculture included: the provision of agricultural extension services, the development of an outgrower scheme, and the provision of support to establish additional producer associations. The fact that these activities were most popular aligns with the findings from Tanzania; these issues can clearly create benefits for both the company and the community and can offer concrete, practical solutions that companies easily can take up within the current structure of their operations. In terms of entrepreneurship, two activities were proposed albeit somewhat less concretely: potentially supporting increased tenure security and projects for income generation through the existing Social Forum of the company. The latter aimed to use an existing company-community platform to identify potential entrepreneurial ideas in the communities and—if economically viable—the provision of start-up loans. Entrepreneurship proposals were fewer in number as well as less concrete in their description; here companies did not feel responsible for this local priority as they did not see the direct benefits.

Responses to the Mozambique Action Plans varied per plan. For the fruit company, community members were enthusiastic about their proposal to train more farmers in certification requirements and to accompany growers throughout the season. People were more sceptical about activities focused on contract clarification as well as the idea to increase the company's visibility by organising more meetings. Local community members indicated they had not yet been involved in such meetings; moreover, they felt that the company was still working with a 'select few'. One positive development since the first Learning Platform was that the growers had established a formally-registered association, however most locals were not yet aware of this. The association leader, as a response, pledged to work strongly on outreach in the coming months. An additional issue raised in the context of this company was the need for irrigation. This was taken up by the company in the Action Plan by partnering with a social impact investor. Since the timber company representative was not present at the follow-up meeting, no actual adaptations were made to this plan. Upon return visits to the communities, responses to the Action Plan were mostly negative. Community members were sceptical about the plans because the company reportedly had made several other promises, so far unmet. Community members were not convinced the proposed activities would be implemented. Rather than adapt the Action Plan, two activities in the existing plan were viewed to hold enough potential to resolve the negative environment: the establishment of a communication forum for the company and the community as well as a proposal to assist communities in accessing DUATs (formal land rights documents) to increase their tenure security. While these activities were discussed with the company after the Platform meeting, no concrete implementation occurred. The third Action Plan, around the sugar company, was met with mixed responses. Communities appreciated the Plan's ability to increase the number of outgrowers however concerns about sufficient land availability were raised. Community members however appreciated the company's proposal to assist with the creation of new grower associations, both for sugar and other crops, including food crops. One activity from the initial Action Plan, reviewing the grievance and complaint mechanism, was dismissed. People indicated that they were happy with the current structure which was also rooted in existing community institutions. This was therefore removed from the Action Plan.

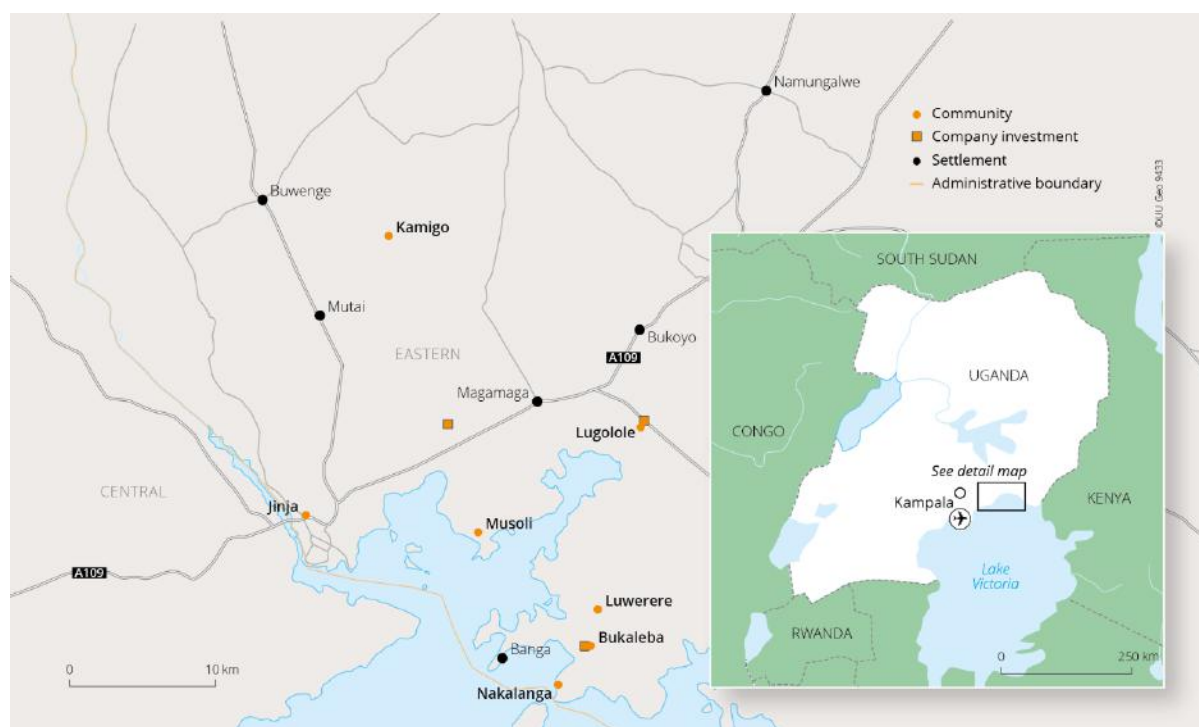
### **3.3 The Jinja-Kampala Corridor, Uganda**

In Uganda, 28 people involved in or affected by land-based agriculture and timber investments in the districts of Jinja and Mayuge engaged in discussions about local research findings in the area (Map 4). This led to the identification of three priority challenges: the lack of quality education; land issues; and limited community involvement and participation in the investments.

Three Action Plans, focused on each of the challenges, came out of the collaborative planning work on the second day. The task was to better align company activities with local priorities through new and practical ideas for each investment. Contrary to the process in Tanzania and Mozambique, the group decided that they did not want two action teams around the two companies. Instead, the group wanted to take the three issues as the main point of departure. This led to one education Action Plan for both companies, one community participation Action Plan for the sugar company, and one land issues Action Plan for the forestry company.

Several proposed activities targeted the low quality of education including: stronger engagement with the sugar company to discuss options for non-employees to send their children to company schools as well as lobbying work to involve the companies in improving local schools. These activities were not so concrete or detailed. The second priority challenge, related to land issues and the timber company, featured activities including: the provision of micro loans; the introduction of high-quality animals and bee keeping; the employment of locals in the company; and finally the intensive sensitisation of communities on several issues related to legal land use, forestry services and wetlands. As can be seen from these proposed activities, most are focused on increasing the number of livelihood options for local communities living inside the forestry reserves. This was meant to release pressure on land in the area and offer alternative livelihood opportunities that required less access to land. During the Platform discussions, this issue was where different stakeholders had shared interests and so could find each

Map 4. Learning Platform location and communities in the Kampala-Jinja corridor, Uganda.



other despite the actual conflict around land being something much bigger—politicians up to the highest level had been involved, as well as judicial institutions. The solutions for expanding people's livelihood options were also the type of solutions that were popular in Tanzania and Mozambique: possible innovations (the introduction of high-quality cattle); the ability to link up with the company's current activities (employing locals); and finally, solutions that were supportive of the current structure of the business (continuing community sensitisation).

The third topic addressed by an Action Plan was that of limited community involvement and participation in the activities of the sugar company. This also linked up with weak communication lines between the sugar company and surrounding communities. The main idea for addressing this was the establishment of a company-community round table. Another idea was periodic training and information sharing, in line with the current outgrower extension services. For the round table initiative, the group really wanted to take the Learning Platform as a means to build their round table concept on what would be achieved at the end of the year. As a result of a recent development in the area—the establishment of a range of competing sugar factories—the company felt invested in this activity and that there would be strong benefits for them. Some of the new factories were sourcing from the

same outgrowers but not providing any extension services or other community benefits. The company felt that by establishing a round table and making an effort to understand what was happening at the local level, they would be able to work better with the communities and outgrowers.

Responses to the Action Plans at the community level were generally positive. One aspect brought up in relation to the forestry plantation was the fact that the plan did not directly address land conflict. People felt that this issue was very urgent; it was currently put on the agenda of the district government and community members were waiting for the government to come with a solution. At the same time, activities that would increase livelihood options were appreciated. Adding to these plans, communities additionally suggested fishing as an alternative livelihood and the need for fishing nets; this was taken up in the improved Plan. Finally, people were very positive about the round table idea, especially as it would provide a way to voice concerns and complaints. Since this idea was received very positively, the team who developed this plan continued detailing its set up and how it would function in their new Action Plan.

### **3.4 Learning Platforms for adaptive planning**

#### *3.4.1 Type of activities proposed and potential for adaptive planning*

The objective of the Learning Platforms was to contribute to a process of adaptive learning for companies and investors while also addressing the need to more strongly include the local context and local development priorities in multi-stakeholder discussions around land-based investments. The three trajectories in Tanzania, Mozambique and Uganda provide us with a number of lessons regarding adaptive learning and planning where local priorities form a central part of the discussion. As stated previously, the first driver for activities were those challenges which had obvious and direct negative impacts on both company and community. A second driver for activities were those challenges that gave room for solutions related to technological innovation (for example a mobile application) or the ability to link up or build on current company activities (for example increasing the range of participants attending trainings or workshops). In addressing challenges and formulating plans, popular solutions supported the current structure of the business. More structural or conflictive issues and challenges that surfaced from the research were less directly addressed in the Action Plans. Activities were therefore more opportunity-driven than conflict-driven. Some pointers for ways forward in conflict-driven solutions include longer-term engagement and trustbuilding, combined with an approach involving mediation and conflict resolution techniques—although our findings also show that conflicts are often the result of complex histories and in most cases involve high-level people who are in some cases benefiting from the status quo. In these cases, local-level platforms are not the best way to achieve positive change.

A second overall conclusion refers to stakeholder involvement in the different activity plans. Although the ideas were created within a multi-stakeholder setting and are the result of exchange between different groups, the actual activities hold a clear preference for mutual interests (mostly the interests of companies and communities) rather than multiple interests. With a strong focus on company-community engagement, this was a consequence of the Platform set-up. On the other hand, it seems that it is much easier to define responsibilities for one stakeholder than it is to create truly collaborative activities.

All proposed activities are in some way either new or additional to existing practices. When issues showed the non-functioning or adverse impacts of certain policies, there is more reluctance to address this. Innovations were seen as something positive while adaptations were seen as critique. Finally, as also shown in the country case studies, Platform exchanges and discussions were quite broad and open. The local research findings especially contributed to bringing exchanges beyond a narrow focus and into broader discussions on development. Mozambique discussions for example were initiated around the entrepreneurial ambitions of communities. However, when actual concrete activities needed to be defined, these tended to remain largely in line with the current way of doing business.

After each Platform, monitoring and follow-up activities were a tool for adaptive planning. As can be seen in each country, findings from the focus group discussions were taken into account and incorporated into the Platforms to varying degrees. In some cases, the follow-ups brought in new community challenges. In other cases, problems that had surfaced before but hadn't been included in the Action Plans were brought in. In that respect the follow-up and monitoring activities show potential as a way to raise new issues and respond to real-time developments on the ground as well as a means to check for priority topics that should not be ignored.

### *3.4.2 Impacts on the ground*

In terms of impacts, we see the most concrete implementation in Tanzania. Some factors contributed to this: the longer period of engagement in the area; the fact that fewer companies are present, which creates a stronger feeling of responsibility towards community development; and finally, a strong buy-in to the process and commitment to implementation by higher levels of management (a General Manager) as well as community liaison officers. Some concrete activities in the Kilombero Valley included: the development of a mobile application, the establishment of a newsletter, the organisation of an open day at the company, kick-starting the buying of timber from local producers, and the engagement of government compliance agencies in making sugar weighing and sucrose level measurement procedures more transparent. Some of these activities had been ongoing independently of the platform; here Platform discussions did contribute to cross-checking with local priorities, providing additional suggestions, or simply stimulating quicker uptake. Our follow-up meetings in villages showed that some of these activities were being noticed in the villages and were already benefiting local stakeholders. On a more critical note, we found more benefits being generated in villages where representatives were able to communicate directly with the company and represent village interests at the Learning Platform.

Compared to Tanzania, less concrete uptake of the plans occurred in Mozambique and Uganda. As mentioned above, this was mainly caused by the shorter period of engagement in the areas, the fact that more companies were present, and reduced involvement of higher-level company management in some cases. In terms of pushing for some of the proposed activities to be implemented, the level of influence differed per company based on the hierarchical position of the representative, for example the head of CSR, or an outgrower manager. Two activities materialised after the first Platform meetings in Mozambique and Uganda: the creation of a grower association in Mozambique which contributed to increased transparency of company-grower affairs, and, second, initial steps toward the establishment of a company-community round table in Uganda. In addition, the sugar company in Uganda pledged to a long list of smaller activities after the General Manager's assistant participated in the Platform.

### *3.4.3 Potential for continuation*

Based on the above, the Learning Platforms brought together a diverse group of stakeholders who do not usually meet. This new composition, together with the research presentations, brought new dimensions to discussions on inclusive business, land governance and food security. New alliances were made with proposals for continuance beyond the current Learning Platforms. In Tanzania, this will be led by a local NGO and possibly in collaboration with the Yale University's Land Use Dialogue. Continuance in Mozambique is also led by two locally-based NGOs and again potentially in the context of the same Land Use Dialogue. Finally, in Uganda, the district NGO forum pledged to continue with organising the group of stakeholders to build on the Platform discussions. Although it remains to be seen how these ideas will materialise, the Learning Platforms were seen to be needed vehicle to enhance company-community alignment. Discussions about these plans are still ongoing today.





Picture: learning  
Platform in Jinja,  
Uganda

## 4. Lessons learned

In this final section, we introduce a number of lessons about generating more positive impacts from large-scale land-based investments. The lessons are based on our experiences in organising and implementing three country-specific Learning Platforms as well as feedback from participants and outcomes in the three investment areas. In the following sections we discuss the need to bring in local perspectives; the need for a multi-stakeholder approach; the need to balance power relations and facilitate consensus building; and finally, the opportunities and limitations of Learning Platforms to generate new ideas.

### 4.1 The need for local perspectives

Local research findings were positively received in all three countries; participants especially appreciated the balanced and neutral way the findings were presented. These presentations also provided a solid foundation for further discussions around the main issues and challenges between investors and local communities. In fact, the information went beyond the usual starting point of many existing multi-stakeholder meetings: based on empirical evidence, our Learning Platforms contained more detailed information about diverse groups within communities, variations in impact on different communities as well as the way in which investor impact would sometimes be reinforced or weakened by the interventions of others or by outside developments (for example climate change or the introduction of new laws). Furthermore, based on bottom-up research, our Learning Platforms offered local ideas and perspectives on more inclusive and beneficial ways forward. One example is provided in Box V.

#### Box V: The value of local research

When local research findings were presented in Tanzania, one company representative learned of the many complaints the local community had about outgrower communication. The representative indicated that while the company had taken several measures in the past few years to address similar complaints, they were very interested in hearing about the local assessment findings, to know why some of their earlier measures had apparently not worked, and how they could adapt and strengthen their ongoing efforts.

The cross-country information was a specific component of the Learning Platforms that was appreciated by all participants (see Box VI). After organising the very first Platform meeting in Tanzania, we started each subsequent meeting with brief updates and the main findings from the other countries. It was encouraging for participants to know that there are other countries where people are encountering similar problems and working on challenges. Participants also expressed a strong interest learning about the differences between investment hubs, particularly related to land governance arrangements and business models.

### 4.2 The need for a multi-stakeholder approach

In each investment hub, we entered into landscapes where investments were already established. As a result, all stakeholders had pre-existing ideas and assumptions about each other. Over the course of the year, participants continued to stress the neutrality of the Learning Platforms, both the research part as well as the multi-stakeholder part, as one of the main strengths of the approach.

One important change was made to the set-up of the multi-stakeholder events after the first meeting in Tanzania. We wanted to make sure that break-out sessions were facilitated by a few participants who were not only fully aware of the whole programme, but also of the intended outcomes of each session. Therefore, we decided to create facilitation teams: these small groups consisted of someone from our team, a professional event facilitator, and three to four relatively neutral participants from the stakeholder group. Facilitation team members, involved prior to

#### Box VI: Cross-country exchanges

At the end of each Learning Platform, participants were asked to give feedback on the information they appreciated the most. One of the most valuable aspects consistently mentioned across all Platforms was cross-country learning. Platform participants were especially interested in the experiences of the other countries: areas where people were working on similar issues and experiencing similar challenges. There was also a strong interest in the activities and Action Plans being proposed in other contexts as well as the differences in government policies and investment models.



the meetings, would contribute to the design of the programme through input and suggestions. One day prior to the meetings, the teams met to discuss any remaining questions or issues as well as to give detailed instructions for the break-out sessions. Once implemented, this new set-up worked well.

Busy investment hubs are more complex stakeholder landscapes. For example, Tanzania's Kilombero Valley features three large-scale investors, a handful of civil society organisations, and district government officials. In this less-complex case, all stakeholders were invited to join the Platform and to engage in the local assessment and dialogue preparations. In Mozambique and Uganda however, the investment hubs were more complex with the presence of numerous investors and other stakeholders. In these landscapes, we therefore focused on some of the more impactful investments by looking at the amount of land involved and number of people employed as well as investments that were interesting in their approach to inclusive business. For these platforms, we made explicit that it would not be our intention to involve all stakeholders in the landscape, but rather to create a diverse Platform to address investment-related challenges and issues; we also aimed to initiate an open discussion across sectors and between communities that could potentially involve a larger number of stakeholders in the future.

Throughout the year, we kept the process of stakeholder identification as open as possible, with new members joining in follow-up meetings. We also made sure that the group would not grow too big or that too many new faces would show during follow-up meetings as this could jeopardise the continuity of the process. However, throughout the year we did not have to refuse a new Platform member because of this criteria. By inviting current Platform participants to suggest new members, participants felt more ownership and new perspectives and ideas at the table were appreciated.

#### *4.3 The need to balance power relations and facilitate consensus building*

Linked to stakeholder identification, we also briefly touched on power relations in a multi-stakeholder dialogue setting as described in Box VII. Much has been written about power relations in multi-stakeholder dialogues (Brouwer et al. 2013). A key question is how the diverse voices of local communities can be heard. In existing multi-stakeholder dialogues, communities are either represented by their local leader or are represented by a third party in the form of a civil society organisation. With the Learning Platforms, we tried to change this by inviting individual community members from several villages around the investments. We intended to involve diverse representation from the community level, including women and men, older and younger community members, members of different socio-economic status, as well as those involved or not with the investment in the area. This has led to positive outcomes, including community members who appreciated the opportunity to sit at the same table with the companies they normally had difficulty reaching. Other stakeholders also saw the value of having community members and their voices in the group. At the same time, much can still be gained if community members are better capacitated prior to the meetings. Taking part in discussions and trying to convince others of a perspective is nothing new for most government, company and NGO staff. Some community members in contrast were hesitant to speak during plenary discussions or in break-out sessions. To generate open and equal participation and to ensure that local perspectives are not easily dismissed as being 'wrong' or the result of lacking education, a capacity-building component could be built into the Platforms to prepare the stakeholders. See Box VII for an illustration of this.

We also received several questions and comments from

#### **Box VII: Power relations in dialogue settings**

After learning about local perspectives, companies, NGOs and government officials were frequently triggered to 'explain' to community members how community perceptions were wrong because they didn't have specific knowledge. As a result, experiences or expectations at the local level were not taken as a given, but instead labeled 'misconceptions'; this weakened the critical reflection of these stakeholder groups and prevented a discussion on how to deal with these challenges at the local level. During the Platform meetings, we continuously tried to make people more aware of the value of every stakeholders' knowledge and experience. The presentation of local research findings was one way to create a basis for this. In addition, the facilitation team was also asked to address such power imbalances while chairing their break-out sessions. Some exercises during the Platform were also organised around mixed stakeholder groups (e.g., NGOs, companies, government, communities) who sat together and later presented their discussions in a plenary. This resulted in another 'legitimate' platform for the different groups to share their insights and ideas.

community members during our follow-up visits. These members were suspicious or envious of the community members who participated in the Platforms. For example, after the Uganda Learning Platform, all cattle rearing in the forestry plantation was banned completely, which was then attributed to the individual community member who attended the meeting. Community members felt that he was responsible. Our follow-up visit and focus group discussion in the village proved to be an important avenue to explain what had been discussed at the meeting and to stress that the new prohibitions were not a consequence of the meeting. More generally, several community members expressed their own interest in joining the Platform in the future and were wondering why they were not chosen to participate. Again, the fact that the team organised follow-up visits to the communities was helpful in addressing some of these complaints. The visits were appreciated and made people feel more included in the process. During the follow-up focus group discussions, we also asked the person who had attended the Learning Platform to briefly introduce the meeting as well as the topics that were discussed. The main strength of inviting random community members was the fact that they could share their own experiences and realities; they also felt more responsible about bringing some of the outcomes of the meeting back to the community. In fact, most Platform participants shared what had been discussed at the event with their community leaders.

#### *4.4 Type of activities proposed*

The Learning Platforms and the preceding fieldwork exercises were intended to bring stakeholders together in a neutral environment. Based on empirical data collected at the local level, we aimed to discuss concrete actions that would result in the investments being more inclusive of local priorities. In all three investment hubs, the project has succeeded in bringing together 79 stakeholders over the course of one year. It has brought community members to the table by giving them a direct voice and a central place in the research and the Learning Platform. We now have a network of actors who are able to connect and find each other in the pursuit of sustainable solutions.

The outcomes to date show a preference for communication and transparency activities. Other types of interventions proposed as a result of the collaborative planning process are in the context of agricultural production (such as increasing productivity or quality of products), and to a lesser extent related to entrepreneurship, environmental sustainability and youth involvement. For these issues, the Platforms have facilitated a discussion and raised awareness about the topics, and in some cases have already showing concrete impacts on the ground as was shown in the previous chapter.

Although the proposed Action Plans and activities can enable better interaction between stakeholders as well as lead to improvements in existing activities and current processes and the identification of new activities, they do not address more structural, sensitive or fundamental issues or challenges identified in the research—for example land scarcity and tenure insecurity in Uganda or land scarcity and the resultant conflicts with pastoralists in Tanzania. However, in all three investment hubs, these issues played a central role in the discussions, which we think contributed significantly in raising awareness and so helping stakeholders to better understand each other's perspectives and challenges. Ways forward around these conflictive topics possibly include the introduction of different techniques, including conflict mediation activities, together with longer-term engagement and trust building among Platform members. Nonetheless, we need to understand that, in most cases, high-level persons are involved and are in some cases benefiting from the current situation.

We acknowledge that Learning Platforms are not a solution to all the challenges that come along with large-scale land-based investments. We have seen however that the combination of in-depth, local research, multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaborative learning enables stakeholders in investment hubs to address challenges together. The Learning Platforms have not only provided local groups, businesses, NGOs and governmental organisations the opportunity to express and exchange concerns, ideas and priorities, they have also created the conditions to work on finding small solutions together. This process, in small steps, helps investments to better align with local needs and ultimately, to increased shared benefits.



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# Appendix I

## The Kilombero Valley

*Case study*



# Contents

- A. Introduction**
- B. Research findings**
- C. Impacts of the investments**
- D. Learning platform: the Kilombero Valley**

# A. Introduction

The Kilombero Valley in Tanzania was selected for the first Learning Platform. The area hosts several large-scale land-based investments in agriculture and forestry. The impact of a forestry company and a sugar company on surrounding communities was the focus of the in-depth research in the Valley. The research also explored local challenges, priorities and expectations to bring into a Learning Platform. This section provides a brief overview of the local context, the communities and the two companies.

## 1. Local context: the Kilombero floodplain

The Kilombero Valley is in Morogoro province, about 400 kilometres southwest of Tanzania's main city Dar es Salaam (see map 1). It is bordered to the east by the Selous Game Reserve and to the northwest by the Udzungwa Mountains National Park. It is home to the Kilombero Valley Floodplain (KVFP), vast wetlands that are recognised as an internationally important ecosystem under the UNESCO Ramsar convention and as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The area, including the districts of Kilombero, Ulanga and Malinyi, has attracted investments and migrants from other areas of Tanzania due to its favourable climatic conditions and fertile soil.

Most people in the Kilombero Valley originate from the Bantu tribe, including the major ethnic groups of the Ndamba, Mbunga and Ngindo. Pastoralists from other ethnic groups, like the Masai, Sukuma and Barbain, travel through the valley, and over the years many of them have settled and become farmers (Nindi et al., 2014). Now, most household livelihoods depend on agriculture: smallholder farmers growing mainly sugarcane, rice, maize and a range of vegetables.

Over the years, the major in-migration to the Kilombero Valley by both people, cattle and investments in, for example, sugar, commercial forestry and mining, has resulted in increased pressure on natural resources such as land and water, as well as significant land use changes: major areas of wetlands have been converted to arable land (Wilson et al., 2017). This has led to conflicts over natural resources among farmers, immigrants and pastoralists and even to forced evictions to halt encroachment into protected areas. This is considered by different governmental frameworks as vital to ensure the sustainability of natural resources in the valley, to avoid conflict

Map 1. Research area, investments and communities in the Kilombero Valley, Tanzania.





and to positively contribute to local livelihoods. However, this conflict and the forced resettlements, such as a major operation undertaken by the government in 2012, has left many families landless, displaced and in severe poverty; most of these people were formerly pastoralists or agro-pastoralists. Several civil society organisations argue that evictions have been carried out without respect for human rights and that pastoralists are unrightfully blamed for the degradation of the wetlands, while the role of commercial companies and the government's mining activities remains unquestioned (IWGIA, 2013). These events and the current complex relation between the conservation of the wetlands and the livelihoods of thousands of people call for an integrated approach that safeguards sustainable natural resource management while also ensuring that local people share benefits and participate in the decision-making processes (Nindi et al., 2014)

## 2. The Kilombero Valley: an investment hub

The Kilombero Valley is part of the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), a public-private partnership that aims to develop the Tanzania agricultural sector through identifying sustainable investment opportunities. The Valley was identified as one of three priority clusters where the efforts of the partnership will be focused (SAGCOT, 2012). Below, two of the large-scale investments under review for this study are described.

### Company 1: Sugar

In the 1960s and 1970s, the Tanzanian government identified the Kilombero Valley as a suitable location for the state-based production of sugarcane by smallholders. The company it started was privatised in 1998 and is now a joint venture between two companies and the Tanzanian government. The main shareholder (55%) is a South Africa-based sugar company that owns agricultural and manufacturing operations in six African countries and that claims to be Africa's biggest sugar producer. In 2016, Associated British Foods (ABF), one of the biggest food companies in the world, acquired the South Africa-based company and took full control of the company's sugar production in six African countries. Another 25% of the company is owned by the Tanzanian government; the remaining 20% is owned by ED&F Man, a UK-based merchant in agricultural commodities.<sup>1</sup> Today, the company operated a 10,700 ha sugarcane plantation in the districts of Kilombero and Kilosa, in addition to sourcing from 13,300 ha of land under smallholder sugarcane production. The company has 870 permanent employees and reports that it hires more than 2000 seasonal agricultural workers at peak periods.

### Company 2: Teak

The second company that participated in the Learning Platform is a forestry company that was initially funded by the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) - a development finance institution owned by the UK

Table 1. Company characteristics		
	Company 1	Company 2
<b>Main crops</b>	Sugarcane	Eucalyptus and pine trees
<b>Year established</b>	1960s	1992
<b>Business model</b>	Plantation and outgrower scheme	Plantation and outgrower scheme
<b>Owned land</b>	10,700 ha	8000 ha
<b>Planted area</b>	10,700 ha	6500 ha
<b>Outgrower area</b>	13,300 ha	250 ha
<b>Location</b>	Ulanga and Malinye districts	Kilombero and Kilosa districts
<b>Source: fieldwork (2017)</b>		

government's Department for International Development (DFID) - to establish a sustainable forestry business in the Kilombero Valley. Its mission is to 'reduce poverty and create sustainable economic growth through private sector development in emerging markets'.<sup>2</sup> Since its launch in 1992, a total of US\$ 25.4 million have been invested in the company. After a feasibility study, the company received land titles (through a 99-year

lease contract) to over 28,000 hectares in the districts of Kilombero and Ulanga, of which nearly 8000 hectares are

<sup>1</sup> Company website, 19-04-2018

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cdcgroup.com/Documents/Annual%20Reviews/cdcdevelopmentimpactreport2009.pdf>

currently in use as teak plantations while the other 20,000 ha are managed as conservation forest. In 2008, a sawmill was built to process the produced teak. The plantation sites are spread out and are surrounded by 17 villages, in which the company also runs an outgrower scheme. Approximately 250 members of staff are employed, and through working with local contractors, an estimated 350 people work on the plantations daily.

# B. Research findings

## 1. Methods

To obtain a better understanding of the impacts the two companies have on their neighbours, and to explore how community priorities link to those of the companies, in-depth field research was conducted in seven of the communities neighbouring the companies in Kilombero and Ulanga districts. Villages were selected to include communities at different distances from the company and to represent the diversity of the communities in which the companies operate. Based on our household survey (N=85), participatory observations, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in six communities, this section describe these communities, people’s challenges and priorities, and discuss the locally perceived impacts of the large-scale land-based investments on the lives of people residing in the Kilombero Valley.

Table 3 presents a brief characterisation of the communities under review. All are located within the Kilombero Valley, although some communities are further away from the company's headquarters than others. Most households living close to the investments are smallholder farmers growing mainly sugarcane, rice, maize and a range of vegetables. Farming families have diversified incomes: in addition to farming, they also fish, keep cattle and/or trade goods. Some of our respondents had been living in the communities for over 65 years, while others had moved in more recently.

About 95% of respondents, particularly those living close to the companies, were aware of nearby investments. Thirty-six households neighbouring the sugar company and 49 neighbouring the teak company were interviewed. Table 1 shows the different ways our respondents had been involved with both the sugar and teak investments. What is striking is that only one out of 85 respondents mentioned being or having been permanently employed by one of the companies. In the following sections, we further elaborate on the communities neighbouring both companies.

Table 2. Respondents’ involvement with companies 1 and 2					
	Not involved	Involved as casual worker	Involved as a smallholder farmer	Involved as permanent worker	Total
<b>Company 1</b>	7	1	27	1	36
<b>Company 2</b>	30	18	1	0	49
<b>Total</b>	37	19	28	1	85
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>					

Table 3. Overview of selected communities		
Village	Neighbouring investment	Description
<b>Msolwa Ujamaa</b>	Company 1	Msolwa Ujamaa is the closest to the company and the wealthiest of the three villages that were surveyed in the local research. It has approximately 5000 residents. The community is a sugar community with many resident outgrowers for the company. Farmers also grow other crops like rice, maize and vegetables.
<b>Sanje</b>	Company 1	Sanje is home to more than 4500 people; is the next closest to the sugar company and is enclosed by several large-scale sugar estates and the Udzungwa Mountains National Park. Residents grow maize, rice, sugarcane and keep livestock such as chicken, goats, etc.
<b>Sonjo</b>	Company 1	Sonjo is the furthest of the three villages from the company and has more than 1300 residents, who also grow rice, maize and sugarcane.
<b>Mavimba</b>	Company 2	Mavimba is the closest village to the teak company's headquarters and sawmill. The majority of its approximately 7500 residents are involved in growing food crops, including maize and rice.
<b>Igumbiro</b>	Company 2	Igumbiro is one of the few villages where a community teak plantation was established; the majority of its approximately 1000 residents are involved in growing food crops, including maize and rice. Several also involved in teak planting.
<b>Mbasa</b>	Company 2	Mbasa is one of the more urbanised settings, with numerous rice and maize mills. The village has approximately 1350 residents, but it borders the urban centre of Lupiro. The majority of the residents are involved in growing food crops, including maize and rice, and several are employed in rice and maize mills and other businesses.
<b>Namhanga</b>	Company 2	Namhanga is very rural and located close to one of the company's plantation sites; the village is home to approximately 9650 people, the majority of whom are farmers and livestock keepers.

**Source: Fieldwork (2017)**

## 2. Findings from the communities

### Company 1

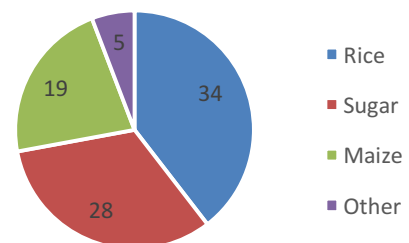
#### Company relations

The company is located in Ruaha in the Kilombero Valley. The villages under review included Msolwa Ujaama, Sanje and Sonjo, which are briefly characterised in table 2. Most of the respondents included in the research (27 out of 36) were households involved with the company as smallholder farmers. As shown in figure 1, sugar is the second most common crop grown by our respondents, after rice, followed by maize and a diversity of fruit and vegetables.

As smallholders, farmers are members of one of the 17 associations whose leaders organise the harvest and the selling of the product to the sugar company. The company usually buys sugar at the farm gate and measures the weight of and sucrose levels in the sugarcane at the factory, according to which the farmer is paid a certain price. Then, fees for transportation, the association and inputs (if given out) are deducted and after a few weeks the farmer is paid. When asked about their satisfaction with these arrangements, farmers generally responded positively ('I'm

**Figure 1. Common crops**

Villages around company 1  
Number of farmers growing  
(N=36)



Source: Fieldwork (2017)



happy as long as I sell my sugarcane'), although in the two villages further away from the factory (Sanje and Sonjo) many farmers said that they consider the company's deductions for transport too high and some farmers mentioned corruption among the association leaders. Furthermore, 13 respondents stated that the weighing and sucrose measurement process is not transparent enough and that they would like to see farmer representatives present during these processes. A male farmer from the community of Sanje explained:

*'The company orders the sugar cane and comes to harvest it and they take it to the factory. But we have no idea about how those measurements are being done. We do not know what influences the sucrose level and why some canes have more and others less.'* (Male respondent, Sanje)

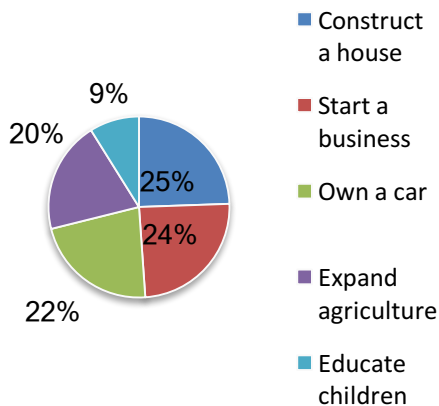
#### Local livelihoods and priorities

The respondents' perceptions about the investments in relation to local development differ per community. The village closest to company 1 (Msolwa Ujamaa) has a hospital, public and private primary and secondary schools, and a vocational training centre. Individual respondents said that they felt that the village will continue to develop strongly in the coming years, and that the company contributed to the development of the village and their personal development primarily by providing a market for sugarcane. In addition, respondents from Msolwa Ujamaa said that the sugar company had assisted the village in the construction of a school. They also said that the company set up a community social fund, the Kilombero Community Charitable Trust (KCCT), an NGO that serves the communities around the company. Further, the company also contributes to the construction of schools, hospitals and other developments in the villages. Respondents acknowledged KCCT as contributing to their community development.

All respondents from Msolwa Ujamaa also mentioned high numbers of migrants in their village, which they attribute to the investment in the area and consider positive:

*'People move to Msolwa because of the good [business] conditions. It is a benefit for the village, because they come with ideas'* (Male respondent, Msolwa). The opposite is the case in the communities of Sanje and to a lesser extent Sonjo (the village furthest away from the company), where respondents said that many young people had moved away due to land scarcity to find job opportunities elsewhere. In Sonjo, many respondents mentioned several challenges to their personal and community development, including wildlife destroying their crops, people being displaced from their homes due to the construction of a new road, the lack of basic facilities (hospitals, schools) and distrust of the leadership.

**Figure 2. Respondent's development priorities**  
(N=45)



Source: fieldwork (2017)

When asked about their own priorities and ambitions (see figure 2), respondents in the villages around the sugar company said that they want to construct a modern house (25%) or start a business (24%). In addition, 22% of respondents indicated a desire to own his or her own mode of transport. As one respondent explained: *'I would like to own my own car or motorbike. People who own their own transport are seen as "wealthy" in the village. It would increase my status.'* (Male respondent, Sanje). Other priorities often mentioned included expanding farms or diversifying their crops

(e.g. bananas, sugar and cocoa) and sending children to good schools.

Most respondents in Msolwa Ujamaa said they are highly positive about potential new investments and mentioned welcoming industries (e.g. dairy or fruit processing) and other sugar companies to come to the area to increase prices and competition in the area. In Sanje and Sonjo, respondents said they would welcome investments but also have reservations because of land scarcity:

'We are afraid that more investors will come. We are afraid that they will take away our land'. (Male respondent, Sanje)

'There is no land left. We do not even have space to expand our cemetery. Now, when someone dies, we have to bury people on top of each other, because there is no space. Same goes for the school: we have many students, but the school is too small.' (Female respondent, Sanje)

## Company 2

### Company relations

This company is located further to the south in the Kilombero Valley, close to the villages of Mavimba, Igumbiro, Mbasa and Namhanga. A brief characterisation is given in table 2. The company does not involve many of our respondents as smallholder farmers, but grows teak on its nucleus estate. It has a 99-year lease contract with the government, and acquired the land under the condition that the company assists nearby communities. This support is in the form of structural contributions to a social fund, which is used for community development.

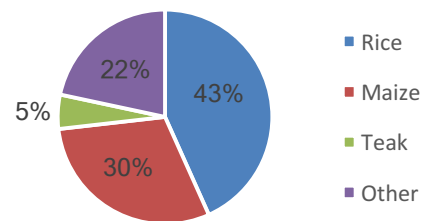
At the time of research, nearly 60% (30 out of 49) of the respondents living close to the company reported not being directly involved in any way with the investment. Although some households (5 out of 49) also grow teak (and more would like to do so), respondents reported not having access to enough land to plant teak and being unsure whether the company would buy it. Instead, most farming households in the three communities grow rice and/or maize (see figure 3) or run a small business or retail shop. About 37% of the households reported being involved or having been involved as casual workers. According to respondents, casual work included planting teak, arranging logs, cleaning or pruning. The opportunity to work for the company and earn additional income is much appreciated, but many respondents also had their reservations about long working hours and low wages:

*'In [the company], I was working with the green chain, to grind wood and deal with rejects. I worked there for 4 months in 2011 (...) I really enjoyed the work. I left because the contract does not give security to its workers; for instance if you get sick or injured, there is no compensation. Cultivation pays more than working with the investment.'* (Male respondent, Mavimba)

Through the social fund, the company has contributed to several facilities in the surrounding villages, such as an HIV training programme, schools and boreholes. Overall, respondents said that they are happy about these contributions, but many also said that this did not live up to their expectations and the promises made by the company:

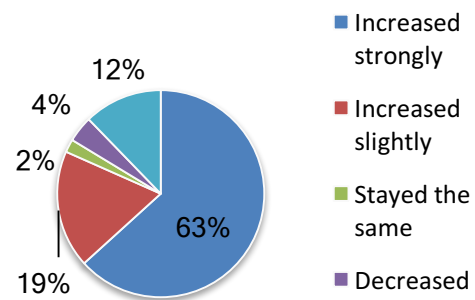
*'(...) they made very many promises to build many schools, hospitals, roads, boreholes, but they have not fulfilled them. At the beginning they were very polite but they are not anymore. They keep postponing.'* (Female respondent, Mavimba)

**Figure 3. Common crops Villages around company 2**  
Number of farmers growing (N=49)



Source: fieldwork (2017)

**Figure 4. Perceptions of in-migration flows**  
(N=49)



Source: fieldwork (2017)

*'I'd be proud to be [more] involved. I'm a farmer who has been here for a very long time. But people who kept records are now employed by the company and are therefore not critical anymore. I would like to remind them about what they promised'. (Male respondent, Namhanga)*

#### Local livelihoods and priorities

Like respondents in the villages neighbouring the sugar investment, respondents in the villages around the teak company have experienced a lot of migration into their villages. Over 80% (see figure 4) of the respondents said that the number of in-migrants had increased slightly or strongly. When they were asked whether they consider this a positive or a negative development, the answers differed. Several respondents mentioned positive aspects, for example *'they are a source of development'* or *'[migrants]contribute to economic growth'*. However, others said that the in-migration of pastoralist groups had contributed to conflict in the area and that pastoralists contribute to environmental degradation and deforestation:

*'Pastoralists, farmers, they have caused some conflicts, as the migrant pastoral communities graze their cattle on agricultural areas.'* (Female respondent, Mavimba)

*'I don't like it. The Waha, Sukumas, they come and cause deforestation, they overgraze. One person can own maximum of four cattle but some people have many.'* (Male respondent, Namhanga)

When asked about their priorities for the future (see table 4), an overwhelming majority of respondents said that they wanted to expand their agricultural activities. Possible ways to do so are through buying more land and growing more of the crops they are already growing, or by diversifying and also growing fruits, cassava or cocoa. Second, respondents wanted to start a business, for example tailoring, running a retail shop, or keeping and trading cattle.

<b>Table 4. Respondent's development priorities (N=49)</b>	
<b>Priorities</b>	No of times mentioned*
<b>Expand agriculture</b>	22
<b>Start a business</b>	13
<b>Construct a house</b>	12
<b>Educate children</b>	5
<b>Own a car</b>	1
<b>*Respondents could state multiple priorities</b>	
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>	

## C. Impacts of the investments

The two investments described in the previous sections are both large-scale land-based investments that directly impact on the land availability in the area. However, because of the companies' different business models, their indirect effects on and engagement with local communities differ. The sugar investment involves smallholders who produce sugar and sell to the company directly. Farmers appreciate that they always have a market for their sugar, but they are less satisfied with the way the company decides on the sucrose levels and determines their prices. Because it has its own plantation, the teak company mostly involves communities by offering them casual employment opportunities. In addition, the social fund for community development is highly appreciated by the interviewed community members. Although the opportunities for casual labour are welcomed, low wages and bad labour conditions result in many people ignoring the opportunities and cultivating their own crops. For communities around both investments, few of the livelihood opportunities available to the respondents offer a stable income: job opportunities are mostly for casual labour, and land scarcity combined with the perceived deteriorating climatic conditions leaves farming households in the communities vulnerable and often unable to realise their priorities. Below, we elaborate further on the locally perceived effects of the investments on local livelihoods, related to land governance and food security.

### 1. Land and water governance

The 12,000 hectares of land that are now sugar plantations and the 28,000 hectares of land leased by the teak investment used to be village land, wetlands and forests used by both sedentary farming communities and pastoralists (on a seasonal basis). Ever since the land was earmarked for sugarcane production by the government in the 1970s, there have been conflicts over land (Nindi et al., 2014). As a result of the investments, the increased in-migration in the entire Kilombero Valley and the increasing number of cattle, land is scarce in all communities under review. To sustain their income and provide for their families, local people try to find available land. As a result, this study found that forests are cleared and wetlands are occupied or small farmers increasingly rent small plots far away from their villages. A study by Landesa (2017) shows that it is often women and women-headed households who are most negatively affected by these developments because, for example, they generally already have access to smaller plots and they have to walk further to get to their plots or to gather firewood. In addition to farmers, pastoralist groups are also in need of grazing land for their cattle.

In short, companies, communities, pastoralists and conservationists are competing for land. With the planned increase in investments under the SAGCOT initiative, it is expected that land scarcity will only increase in the future. To make matters more complicated, it is important to note that the area is bordered by national parks and there is a need to protect the already degraded wetlands, protect biodiversity and counter deforestation. As described by Wilson, McInnes, Mbagwa and Ouedraogo (2017), agricultural expansion is happening at the cost of the Kilombero Valley Ramsar site - which is intended to preserve the available wetlands and biodiversity. As argued by the Pastoralists Indigenous Non-Governmental Organisations Forum (PINGO Forum), nature conservation is also used as an argument to evict pastoralist groups from the Kilombero Valley. The increasing number of cattle (the forum denies any such increase) is considered by the national government a threat to the conservation of wetlands and biodiversity and a major factor that causes the depletion of wetlands, resulting in conflicts and forced evictions of pastoralists in the past decade (PINGO Forum, 2013)<sup>3</sup>.

It is important to note that besides land, water is another natural resource in the area that is affected by the presence of the companies - especially in the dry season. Large amounts of water are used by large-scale investments that produce water-intensive crops, such as sugar and teak. For example, as indicated in the sugar company's impact report during 2016-17, the sugar investment abstracted nearly 113 billion litres of water<sup>4</sup> from

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.pingosforum.or.tz/index.php/about-us/reports/current-reports/activities/17-kilombero-valley-final-june/file> 12-02-2018

<sup>4</sup> Company website 13-02-2018



nearby water catchments, up from 85 billion litres in 2012-13<sup>5</sup>. Although much of the water used to produce sugar is recycled and used for irrigation, the amount of water used by the investments is high. And with the future SAGCOT developments, water use levels and the amount of land under irrigation are expected to increase, according to the Tanzanian government's environmental and social management framework.<sup>6</sup> The government is currently working on the Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Plan to improve water management in the area. In addition, the forestry company reported that is working on innovations (e.g. drip irrigation) to make its water use more efficient.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. Food security

Stimulated by the investments in the area, smallholder farmers have increased their production of cash crops, often replacing food crops. Because of the land use change from food to sugar and teak cultivation, one may expect a decrease in access to food for farming households. First, as indicated in the sections above, most farmers grow multiple crops, including food crops. But despite this, table 4 below shows that 75% of our respondent households do experience a decrease in the availability of food compared to 10 years ago. Some said that nothing had changed, and a small percentage (8%) indicated that they have more food available than before. However, the reason given most often by farmers for this decrease in the amount of food are climatic conditions and their dependence on rain-fed agriculture:

*'The amount of food has decreased strongly. That is due to climate change. We depend too much on rainfall and the rain is sometimes delayed'. (Male farmer, Sanje)*

<b>Available food</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>% of households</b>
<b>Decreased</b>	65	76
<b>Stayed the same</b>	11	13
<b>Increased</b>	7	8
<b>No answer</b>	2	2
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>		

Droughts, delayed rains and higher temperatures are the causes most often mentioned by farmers. A small number of farmers attribute the changes in climate to the deforestation that has taken place to make space for the teak plantations. In addition, some farmers also attribute the decrease in availability of food directly to the presence of the investments in the area. For example, farmers have been increasingly growing sugarcane instead of food crops, resulting in less food being grown in the area and no land to expand cultivation. This is also perceived to have contributed to rising food prices. In the village of Igumbiro (near the teak company), respondents mentioned population growth and the related scarcity of land as important reasons for less food availability. Those who indicated that they had more food available compared to 10 years ago had taken specific measures to continue growing food. For example, some had changed crops over the years, while others had acquired more land for cultivation.

<sup>5</sup> Company Website, 13-02-2018

<sup>6</sup> <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/253081468313229504/pdf/E30750v10REVISED0AFR0ESMFOP125728.pdf>, page 21, 01-05-2018

<sup>7</sup> Company website, page 23, 13-02-2018

# D. Learning platform: the Kilombero Valley

## 1. Introduction

In the following, we elaborate on the Learning Platforms that were organised in Ifakara. We then discuss the challenges prioritised in the platform meeting (on the basis of the local research findings that were presented and discussed), the Action Plans that were developed, the responses to the Action Plans through follow-up community engagement, and the subsequent changes made as a result of community inputs. We finalise by briefly discussing aspects of adaptive learning during the process.

From February until December 2017, the team engaged with a group of 25 participants in the Learning Platform in the Kilombero Valley. In total, 85 household surveys were conducted; one 2-day kick-off meeting and two 1-day follow-up events were organised; and 13 village-level focus group discussions were held for follow-up. In addition, continuous face-to-face meetings took place with company officials, district government officers, village government members and local NGO staff. The timeline below shows the sequence of events in the year-long engagement in the area.



Figure 5. Timeline of the Learning Platform

The kick-off meeting in April drew together 23 participants from private companies (7), community members from the villages surrounding the investments (5), civil society organisations with projects in the area (5), district government officials from Kilombero and Ulanga districts (3), and researchers (3). Over the course of the year, the same people remained involved except for two company officials who changed jobs; their places were taken over by their replacements. One more civil society organisation was added that worked specifically on setting up community-based organisations in the districts, an issue that came up a few times during the kick-off meeting. From the government side, a representative from the Ministry of Lands, stationed in Ulanga District, was added to the team. This was based on discussions during the kick-off meeting around the role of village land-use planning to increase access to land and improve food security locally. The Ministry representative shared some of their activities in the area, under the Land Tenure Support Programme, and continued to participate in the platform thereafter.

## 2. April: 2-Day Learning Platform kick-off

On the first day of the kick-off meeting, platform participants focused on introductions, emerging issues and local challenges. Stakeholders presented their company's or institution's state-of-the-art approach to inclusive development and highlighted their biggest challenge in contributing to inclusive development in the Valley. The findings of the local in-depth research were shared with all participants. Through different exercises (priority

setting and stakeholder analysis), the following challenges were identified by the group and served as a basis for continued discussion:

- **Communication issues** were identified as an important challenge for all stakeholders involved in the Learning Platform. For the company with outgrowers, communicating clearly and efficiently with its growers has a direct impact on the productivity and satisfaction of your suppliers. The company without outgrowers felt that the lack of direct contact with the surrounding villages meant that people perceived the company more negatively and were often unaware of the benefits the company was bringing to the area. Community members, on the other hand, also showed a strong interest in more direct contact with the company, either as growers (benefiting through their productivity and thus income) or as neighbours (a strong call for simply knowing more about what the company was doing in the area, the company's future plans, and ways to increase shared benefits). Besides company-community communication, there were also complaints regarding weak company-government and government-NGO communication. These contributed to a mismatch in expectations from different stakeholders: businesses want to do business and expect the government to contribute to an enabling environment, while the government expects businesses to contribute to more development and local communities expect businesses to deliver on development objectives (schools, hospitals, roads, etc.). The activities of NGOs and the government sometimes overlapped, with government agricultural extension workers going to villages where NGOs had just been for similar purposes, or vice versa.
- A second, high priority issue that arose during the prioritisation exercise and platform discussions was the lack of **transparency and trust**, with a focus on company-community relations. For the company working with outgrowers, this was mainly linked to weighing and measurement processes, which directly affected the price farmers get for their produce. For the company not working with outgrowers, transparency issues arose around the legality of the land ownership. Villagers questioned where the contracts related to the agreement between the company and the government were, why they were not publicly available, and what agreements had been made about company contributions to community development.
- Issues were also highlighted with regard to village and **leadership governance and accountability**. In one part of the investment area this was focused on the role of producer associations, which were taking a very prominent position in managing company-community affairs. Stakeholders reported corruption, fraud, nepotism and self-enrichment, and a general lack of functioning of the associations in carrying out their role. For community members this meant receiving less money for their produce, and uncertainty concerning having their produce picked up in time by the company. For the company, the non-functioning of the associations was a major obstacle to their communication with growers, and reflected on it negatively concerning its performance towards growers in general. In another part of the investment area, complaints focused mainly on village leadership, though this strongly differed per village. Some villages were very critical about their leaders, whereas other villages felt truly represented and were satisfied by the way their interests were being defended by the leadership. In both cases, the company was perceived in a rather negative way; in villages where people did not feel represented it was said that leadership was not taking their concerns to the company; in the other case, villagers felt that their leader was not taken seriously by the company. The company indicated that weakness in local leadership and accountability was working against them, since it made it harder for it to communicate with villages through its existing governance structures.
- Lastly, a priority issue that emerged less strongly from the research findings, but that was raised rather prominently during the Learning Platform discussions and priority setting phase, was the involvement of the local **youth**. Especially in discussions and brainstorming about how communities could potentially benefit more from the company's existence, stakeholders raised the position of young people. For community members this was a concern since some of the youth were no longer interested in working in agriculture (either because of the nature of the work or because of a lack of access to land) and an increasing number of young people were not economically active. Because the companies regard local youth as their future neighbours, and potentially employees, they are a crucial group to include in strategies for the future. The fact that this was not happening was perceived as a potential risk.

With the four main challenges above – namely communication, transparency, village governance and youth involvement – the platform participants started a process of collaborative planning on day 2. The second day focused on identifying a common agenda, exploring possible solutions and ideas for future implementation, and concretising follow-up activities. The different stakeholder groups split up and were asked to reflect on their own roles and to brainstorm about what they could contribute to addressing the four challenges and any other challenges they wanted to highlight. This led to the formulation of Action Plans addressing one or more of the four identified challenges, as well as other issues.

<b>Table 6. Priority issues in the Learning Platform</b>		
<b>Priority issue</b>	<b>Company 1</b>	<b>Company 2</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exchanging information between investment and communities through a mobile application</li> <li>- Community participation in company training programmes</li> <li>- Increasing farmers' understanding of the sugarcane value chain and encouraging them to become information seeking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create feedback mechanism from community to company through regular questionnaire</li> <li>- Bi-monthly newsletter</li> <li>- Company 25-year anniversary celebration</li> </ul>
<b>Transparency and contracts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bring together different stakeholders, including weighing and compliance agencies</li> </ul>	
<b>Village governance &amp; accountability</b>		
<b>Youth involvement</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educational training at primary &amp; secondary schools</li> </ul>
<b>Activities addressing other challenges</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other activities: Waste and Biomass Challenge</li> <li>- Develop external log purchasing system (outgrower system)</li> <li>- Develop a model through which the company's conservation land can be managed jointly by company and community</li> </ul>

The Action Plans show a strong preference for addressing two of the four identified challenges, namely communication and transparency. Activities that were addressing complaints and challenges in these areas included: introduction of a newsletter, development of a mobile application, creation of a regular feedback mechanism through a standardised survey, and the inclusion of more local stakeholders in trainings and meetings. For challenges around communication and transparency, it was very clear what the negative effects were for each stakeholder involved. Moreover, platform participants agreed that problems related to communication and transparency had strong negative multiplier effects on all other aspects of company–community relations. Moreover, improving communication and transparency allowed for solutions in the field of technological innovation (mobile application), linking up with things the company was already doing (expanding the number of participants in meetings), and were non-threatening to the existing structure of the business (newsletter) and therefore not threatening to the existence and legitimacy of the company being in the area.



Two priority issues received much less attention. This was especially true for the problem of weak village governance and accountability. Though it was clear how these problems led to negative impacts for all stakeholders involved, zooming in on the issue revealed how some stakeholders in the field experience strong benefits from the existing structures. There was also agreement on how weak village governance and accountability led to negative multiplier effects in other areas of company-community relations. However, participants couldn't identify concrete solutions to address weak village governance and accountability. While the group also felt less responsible for addressing this issue. This was linked to the fact that any solution or new idea addressing village governance and accountability would have an impact on the status quo, potentially threatening the existence and legitimacy of stakeholders.

The youth issue identified during the priority setting part of the Learning Platform was taken up by one company with one concrete activity: the organisation of guest lectures at local primary and secondary schools. The lack of enthusiasm for addressing this issue might be because the lack of youth involvement was not having a direct negative impact on the stakeholders in the group.

### *3. Learning Platform follow-up*

After the 2-day Learning Platform and the drafting of the Action Plans (one plan for each company), the team returned to the villages that had been part of the initial assessment. Community members who had been interviewed previously were invited to focus group discussions. Depending on attendance, the group was extended with other interested villagers. Most often a member from the local village government would be present, as would the community members who had attended the Platform meeting in Ifakara (if from that specific village). If a person who had been present at the meeting lived in the village, he or she would introduce the focus group discussion by briefly talking about the platform in Ifakara and mentioning some of the most prominent take-aways or outcomes. After elaborating on the Platform meeting, the Action Plans were presented, opening up the discussion around each activity proposed by the company active in their area.

#### **Company 1**

During the follow-up discussions, community members were very appreciative that they had been given feedback. They also agreed with all the suggestions and said that they thought they could contribute to improving the farmer-company relationship. However, regarding the mobile application, they were doubtful about its usability because of the shortage of smartphones in the villages, and instead suggested more intensive use of text messages. Having a representative at the factory during all the weighing and measuring was also an aspect they felt had not been addressed, even though they had pointed it out as an important issue many times during the interviews prior to the Platform. In addition, several new ideas and suggestions were raised, including improvements to the payment system, the lack of competing companies in the area, inequality in profit margins for villages closer by and further away from the company, and the general sense of feeling left behind by government who were favouring big investors over small farmers.

#### **Company 2**

Responses to this Action Plan were more critical. Community members said that they felt that the suggested tasks could be helpful but were sceptical about whether they would be put into practice. Another important issue that according to them was not addressed concerned the contracts the company has that permit it to operate on village land. This is something they have reportedly been asking for for a very long time but it has not been delivered.

### *4. November: 1-day Learning Platform follow-up*

#### **Company 1**

It was clear from the focus group discussions that some of the suggestions made to create better links between the company and the communities were and could continue to be useful when put into practice. Benefits of the improved communication between the company and communities especially stood out. One example is that some community members reported having translated increased knowledge on agricultural production into higher productivity on their farm and thus increasing their profits as outgrowers. As a priority for future discussions and interventions, issues related to sucrose level measurement and the governance of associations remained at the top of the list. The new challenges highlighted, including the new pests and climate change, were also added to the discussion points in the Platform.

On the basis of this feedback, the company complemented the existing Action Plan by including a proposal to have community representatives at the company during the measurement of sucrose. A major obstacle to current company-community communication was the malfunctioning of associations and the corrupt leadership. Following discussions on this issue, it was reported that the company and the government had had several meetings (a process already ongoing prior to the start of the Learning Platform) to discuss the option to move from associations to cooperatives. Villagers, however, reported that they were not aware of these discussions. It was therefore included in the current Action Plan to continue village meetings on the pros and cons of cooperatives as an alternative to associations. A further suggestion was that meetings such as these could be held regularly and could also involve teaching farmers about the sugarcane value chain and also address new challenges such as how to deal with the new pests.

## **Company 2**

Limited transparency and communication with neighbouring communities were highlighted as the major hiccups in the relationship between the company and its neighbours. In the suggested Action Plan, several tasks to address the communication gap were recommended and many were already being implemented. For instance, the outgrower system had been tested in some communities, a first edition of the newsletter had been published, and the company had already hosted community members at the factory to learn more about their operations. Many of the community members who were involved or had heard about any of the actions appreciated the efforts and thought that if continuously implemented, the company could make a positive difference in their communication with neighbouring communities. However, the concerns about contracts permitting the company to operate in their communities were not adequately addressed.

During the follow-up platform meeting, the group working on this Action Plan concluded that disputed contracts were a critical issue to include for this company. The group therefore proposed scoping the possibility of linking the contract issue to the Land Tenure Support Programme, an ongoing government initiative supported by the UK, Denmark and Swedish departments of international development to, for example, survey and mark village land boundaries and enable communities to receive certificates of customary right of occupancy (CCROs). This programme is implemented by the central and district governments, which are perceived as influential and trusted by communities. One of the programme representatives has been part of the Learning Platforms since September. Another avenue for increasing transparency around contracts was through the newly established newsletter, although community members said that they were not aware of such a newsletter. Therefore, for the idea to work, the newsletter will have to be made more visible in the communities by releasing more printed copies and distributing those among the villages.

## **Aspects of adaptive learning**

A number of positive findings can be derived from the process of the Learning Platform in the Kilombero Valley. First, there was sincere appreciation of the fact that the group returned to the villages that had been surveyed for the local research. In the communities, there had been much talk of researchers and development practitioners who had come to get information and but had not returned to give feedback. Second, we saw that problems that were raised a second time were hard to ignore: the contract issues around company 2 that had been raised during the initial assessment were not taken up in the first Action Plans, but did receive more attention from the company when they were raised again in the follow-up focus group discussions. Third, experiences in implementing suggested actions were tested and then adjusted if needed. For example, the newsletter was

reported not to reach the villages, and this was communicated to the person in charge of giving out the newsletter. Lastly, we generally received positive responses from community members to the proposed activities, and in those cases where they thought it would not work so well in reality, they came up with additional ideas to make it fit the local context better (for example, more intensive use of text messages in addition to the newly developed mobile application).

On a more critical note, we saw a bias towards benefits for those villages that had representatives at the Learning Platform: *'If there is an issue now, I can call the company community relations officer directly'*. And despite the local embeddedness of the proposed activities, still not all initiatives are noted on the ground. This may be because there was only a short interval between the implementation and the team's return to the villages to monitor experiences. Regarding the types of activities proposed in Tanzania, many were aligned with the company's core business. It has therefore proven more difficult to have the groups really think out of the box. This could be linked to the perception that implementing out-of-the-box thinking would require substantial resources, such as extra money or staff time, that may not be available or that the parties are not willing to commit without tested results.

### *5. Potential for continuation*

The work in Tanzania has been aligned with a strong NGO with a presence on the ground. This NGO is currently collaborating with the Land Use Dialogue, Yale University, the national government and other stakeholders in the context of higher level multi-stakeholder dialogues focusing on other parts of the country. They also have ongoing work with each of the companies participating in the Learning Platform and are physically located in the Kilombero Valley. During the final platform meeting, they expressed a clear interest in continuing with the current Learning Platform, while also expanding the number of participants and the topics to be covered. This NGO is linked to a larger, international NGO that has funding available to support such initiatives.





# Appendix II

## The Beira Corridor

*Case study*



# Contents

**A. Introduction**

**B. Research findings**

**C. Impacts of the investments**

**D. Learning Platform: the Beira Corridor**

# A. Introduction

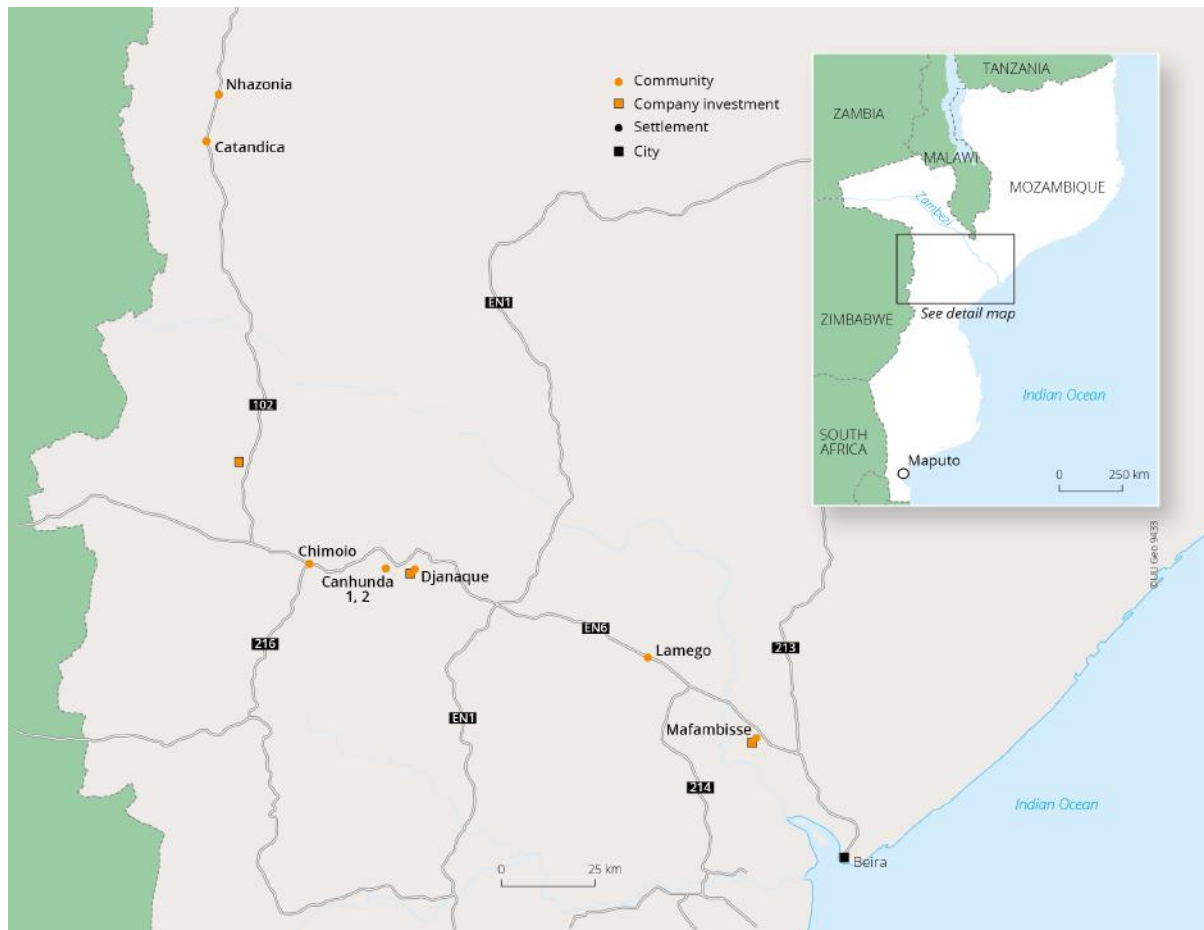
The second Learning Platform took place in Mozambique, in the Beira Corridor. In 2009, the Mozambican government, donors and private sector partners teamed up to stimulate commercial agriculture through the establishment of the Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC). The Learning Platform focused on the area around the city of Chimoio, where a diversity of fruit, vegetable and forestry investments are present. A second focus area was Mafambisse in the province of Sofala, where there has been large-scale sugar production since the 1960s.

## 1. Local context: Manica and Sofala provinces

The provinces of Manica and Sofala in central Mozambique are located roughly 1000 kilometres north of the country's largest city, Maputo. The area is bordered by Zimbabwe to the west and the Mozambique Channel to the east (see map 1).

The provinces are an important part of the BAGC. The corridor connects Mozambique's second largest city, Beira - which is in the east of the country on the Mozambique Channel coast - with the city of Chimoio to the west and, further north, the city of Tete. The initiative 'aims to stimulate a major increase in agricultural production in the corridor and improve the productivity and incomes of smallholder farmers'.<sup>8</sup> Some major investments are currently taking place in the area, and these are presented by the BAGC initiative as 'anchor investments'. They

Map 1. Research area, investments and communities in the Beira Corridor, Mozambique.



<sup>8</sup> [https://www.agdevco.com/uploads/reports/BAGC\\_Investment\\_Blueprint\\_rpt19.pdf](https://www.agdevco.com/uploads/reports/BAGC_Investment_Blueprint_rpt19.pdf) 09-03

include investments in coalmining, infrastructure (railways, roads, the Beira port) and agriculture (fruit production, sugar, biofuels, livestock) (BAGC, 2016). After Maputo province, Manica province hosts the largest number of agricultural investments (Di Matteo & Schoneveld, 2016).

Alongside these developments, some parts of the area saw a strong increase in violent conflict in 2016, due to political tensions between the FRELIMO-led government and the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) opposition group. UN travel restrictions were implemented as a response. At the time of the local research, all roads had been re-opened and ceasefires between the fighting parties were holding. The opposition leader promised to sign a peace accord with the government by early November 2017. The implementation of agricultural and forestry investments has stalled because of the conflict, but is expected to pick up when the peace accord is signed.

## *2. The Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor: an investment hub*

Land-based investments in the provinces are characterised by a mix of large-scale and smaller-scale agriculture investments and forestry plantations. The Learning Platform focuses on the area around Chimoio, where a diversity of fruit and vegetable investments are present, as well as cotton and tobacco investments. In Mafambisse in Sofala, a different type of commercial agriculture has been established: large-scale sugar production with smallholder outgrowers. Below, we briefly describe the three investments that were involved in the Learning Platform, with a focus on their business models (see table 1).

### **Company 1**

This company is a multinational supplier of subtropical fruits (e.g. avocados, mangos and oranges) and related processed products to international markets. The company has growing and/or processing facilities in southern Africa (Mozambique and South Africa), Europe (Austria, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom), the United States and South America (Chile, Colombia and Peru). The company's operations in Mozambique are based in Manica province, and focus on avocado and lychee production. The company has acquired around 398 ha of land and sources most of its produce from smallholder producers in the area. Its reliance on outgrower producers is high compared to the other two companies.

### **Company 2**

The company was founded in 2009 by a European paper and pulp company. It is responsible for setting up Mozambique's largest forestry project for producing paper, pulp and energy. The company was granted 356,000 ha of land over a renewable period of 50 years in the provinces of Manica and Zambézia. The company plans to plant forests in a gradual process over a period of 15 years, using a mosaic model - that is, planting two thirds of its land and allowing local people to remain on the other third - in order to avoid the resettlement of local communities. The company has not yet started exporting but has run a couple of trials. In its business vision, the company sees a role for smallholder outgrower producers, though there is currently no sourcing from smallholders. In 2014, the International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group) acquired a 20% stake in the company and invested more than US\$ 30 million to acquire land and support its operations.<sup>9</sup>

### **Company 3**

This agricultural company is the largest agriculture and agri-processing business owned by a South African company. It has sites in 27 locations across six African countries: South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland, Namibia and Botswana. The Mozambique operations, which are mainly focussed on growing and processing sugarcane, were acquired in 1998 and are located inland of Beira. Today, 85% of the business is owned by the South African company, while the remaining shares are owned by the government of Mozambique. The company is operational on around 29,000 ha in total, with a total of approximately 2000 smallholders involved on 3,610 hectares, mostly through associations.

<sup>9</sup> <https://ifcextapps.ifc.org/IFCExt/pressroom/IFCPressRoom.nsf/0/8E1B01D6A756285F85257DAF006B30B1?OpenDocument> 09-03-2018



<b>Table 1. Company characteristics</b>			
	<b>Company 1</b>	<b>Company 2</b>	<b>Company 3</b>
<b>Year established</b>	2014	2009	1965
<b>Business model</b>	Outgrower scheme	Plantation	Plantation + outgrower scheme
<b>Main crops</b>	Lychees	Eucalyptus	Sugarcane
<b>Owned land</b>	398 ha	183,000 ha of areas spread around Manica province (2/3 of which is expected to be planted)	29,000 ha
<b>Planted area</b>	398 ha	1,700 ha	29,000 ha
<b>Outgrower</b>	Around 30 farmers	0 ha	3,610 ha
<b>Location</b>	Manica province	Manica province	Sofala Province
<b>Source: fieldwork (2017)</b>			

# B. Research findings

## 1. Methodology

We conducted in-depth field research to identify challenges, priorities and expectations in several villages in the districts of Bárúè and Gondola (Manica province) and the districts of Dondo and Nhamatanda (Sofala province). The villages selected (see map 1) are situated near the land-based investments participating in the platform.

For Company 1 the local assessment focused on the company's main sourcing areas: in and around Catandica, a middle-sized town in Bárúè district. Because of its more urban nature, a second village about 12 kilometres from Catandica was selected. The local assessment for Company 2, a forestry investment, focused on the villages of Canhonda, Canhonda-2 and Djanaque, all of which are in Gondola district. Some inhabitants of these villages have given up land for the establishment of the timber plantations in that area. In each village, we interviewed people who had given up land and people who had not given up any land. Around Company 3, the researchers selected, in collaboration with the company, two villages near the sugar factory in Mafambisse where farmers are not involved in growing sugarcane, but are involved with the company either through direct employment or indirectly through the company's CSR activities (Mafambisse and Mutua). A fifth village (Lamego, in Nhamatanda) was selected where villagers are involved in growing sugarcane for the company.

In each of the villages, a community profile was drawn up with the help of a local authority or someone with a central position in the community. In addition to the community profiles, household surveys were administered with individual respondents. The respondents were selected based on several criteria, including an equal distribution in terms of gender, age, time spent in the village and involvement with the investment. An overview of the number of surveys conducted is presented in table 2 below. A total of 142 household surveys were administered and seven community profiles were drawn up. Table 3 shows a characterisation of the communities.

Table 2. Survey sample			
Investment	District	Village	Households
<b>Company 1</b>	Bárúè	Catandica	27
		Nhazonia	23
<b>Company 2</b>	Gondola	Canhonda	27
		Canhonda-2	16
		Djanaque	6
<b>Company 3</b>	Dondo	Mafambisse	15
		Mutua	10
	Nhamatanda	Lamego	18
<b>Total</b>			<b>142</b>
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>			

**Table 3. Overview selected communities**

<b>Village</b>	<b>Neighbouring investment</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Catandica</b>	Company 1	The company operations are based in Chimoio. The majority of the company's suppliers are based in Catandica. Lychees are a popular crop in the community, as are other crops, particularly fruits and vegetables such as avocados and tangerines. The community consists of approximately 45,000 inhabitants and is relatively urban. Thus, other economic activities such as banking and retail shops are seen in the area.
<b>Nhazonia</b>	Company 1	Nhazonia is more rural compared to Catandica. The community has about 1980 inhabitants. One of the lychee growers' associations is based in the community. Other crops grown in the village include maize, beans, peanuts and vegetables. Though on a much smaller scale compared to Catandica, other economic activities include livestock keeping, carpentry, mechanics and trading in food crops.
<b>Canhonda and Canhonda - 2</b>	Company 2	The company has plantations in Canhonda and Canhonda-2. The entire community, including Canhonda, Canhonda-2 and other smaller communities, has approximately 5000 residents (of whom 1900 live in Canhonda). The main economic activity is the growing of tangerines, oranges and other fruits. Other crops include maize, beans, sorghum and vegetables. Although Canhonda is not very remote geographically and is close to a major international transport corridor, the lack of public transport between the community and the main road, together with the absence of a food market, and the fact that households within the community are very spread out in the area, makes this a rural and remote village.
<b>Djanaque</b>	Company 2	Djanaque is a much smaller community than Canhonda - it is almost completely surrounded by the company plantations. There are only about 25 households still in the village. About five households moved out with the coming of the company's investment. The majority of the remaining residents are farmers growing crops, including maize, beans, cassava, sweet potatoes, vegetables and tangerines.
<b>Mafambisse</b>	Company 3	Company 3's factory and plantations are located in Mafambisse, which has approximately 65,000 inhabitants, many of whom work for the company (approximately 10% according to a company representative). Other community members are engaged in diverse activities, including farming (maize, vegetables, etc.), producing herbal remedies, public services and trade. Mafambisse is very urban compared to the other communities surveyed in Manica and Sofala.
<b>Mutua</b>	Company 3	The social forum that links communities, the company and the government is based in Mutua. The community has a little over 15,800 inhabitants, who are mainly involved in agriculture (maize, rice, cassava and vegetables) and other economic activities, such as working for the company, carpentry and health care. Mutua is more rural and smaller than Mafambisse.
<b>Lamego</b>	Company 3	Muda Massequesse, the main association of outgrowers for the company in Mafambisse, is based in Lamego. Therefore, there are several people growing sugarcane in the area. Other economic activities, particularly agriculture, are also engaged in. The exact number of residents was unknown by the community leader we interviewed. However, the size of the community is comparable to Mutua.

**Source: Fieldwork (2017)**

## 2. Findings from the communities

In all the villages under review, all respondents were aware of the nearby investments in their areas. In the case of company 1, they had mostly not heard of the name of the company but were aware of other companies in the area. But although all respondents were aware of investments, they were not often directly involved with them. Table 4 below shows that most respondents (90 out of 142) were not involved in any way with the investments. Very few (16) were employed by the investments, mostly (14) as casual workers. Most of those involved as smallholder farmers were working with company 3 (18), in addition to a handful of fruit farmers for company 1 (4).

Table 4. Respondents' involvement with investments						
	Not involved	Involved as casual worker	Involved as smallholder farmer	Involved as permanent worker	Missing	Total
<b>Company 1</b>	30	3	4	0	13	50
<b>Company 2</b>	42	6	0	0	1	49
<b>Company 3</b>	18	5	18	2	0	43
<b>Total</b>	90	14	22	2	14	142
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>						

### Company 1: Fruit

#### *Involvement with the company*

This company operates 140 kilometres north of Chimoio, close to the border with Zimbabwe. The two communities selected for this research are Catandica (the main centre of fruit production) and Nhazonia (which is approximately 12 kilometres north of Catandica). The company does not have a local presence in the area, but buys its fruits through a large farmer based in the area. This farmer organises many of the lychee growers in the area particularly from Catandica near the company operations. The company and this farmer also organise training to enable farmers to obtain the Global GAP certification, which permits export of their lychees to external markets in, for instance, Europe. Because of this structure, not many of the small-scale local farmers are familiar with the company. The company had just purchased a piece of land (about 1,000 ha) in this area, but indicated that its main source of fruits would continue to be the smallholder producers in the area.

Out of 50 respondent households living in communities around the company's sourcing areas, 38 reported that they practise small-scale agriculture. They grow maize, beans, vegetables and a diversity of fruits, such as oranges, tangerines, avocados and lychees. Those who are not involved in agriculture keep livestock or are traders, public officials or teachers. Because the company buys lychees, more and more farmers have started growing the fruit. Many respondents said that they were planning to do so as well. The company is offering a market for fruits – a product that is already widely grown in the area – and this is highly valued. More specifically, the opening of markets for fruits to Europe and South Africa was mentioned. Prices are much higher on these markets than on local markets, and the company provides additional assistance for farmers to comply with complicated certification requirements for the international markets: *'I'm happy with how companies conduct business in the community. This creates opportunities to take lychees to other places and this creates benefits for local producers.'* (Male respondent, Catandica)

However, respondents also said that the company could interact more with its farmers and the wider community to link better with what is happening at the local level. For example, the company *'could sensitise local people to*



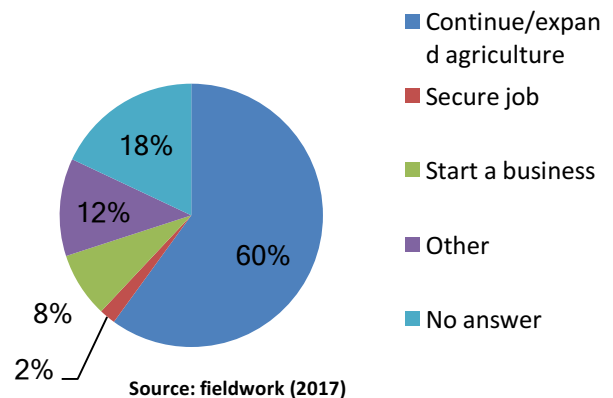
produce more' (male respondent, Nhazonia) or 'increase employment opportunities and the number of meetings with the community' (Female respondent, Catandica). In addition, an important finding was that local farmers wanted the company to be more transparent and open towards how farmers could start selling their fruits to the company.

#### Local livelihoods and priorities

During the last two decades, more and more migrants have been coming to the area of Catandica and Nhazonia, partly due to ongoing political conflicts that have forced people to leave rural areas and go to more urbanised areas. According to most respondents, this inflow of migrants has had negative consequences, such as increased poverty, increased crime rates, pressure on sanitary facilities and decreased availability of water. However, others said that the inflow of migrants and the growing population pressure was beneficial, accompanied by more business opportunities, new ideas and more customers to buy products. Most people also said that they welcome more investments and expect that those investments (e.g. processing facilities or other agribusinesses) will not only provide them with more opportunities to practise agriculture, but also boost the development of infrastructure in the area. Respondents indicate that there is a need for electricity, improved access to water and better roads.

**Figure 1. Development priorities**

(Company 1 villages, N=50)



Linked to this, when asked about their personal priorities, most respondents (60%) wanted to continue growing their crops, and expand their farms and grow fruits, such as lychees (see figure 1). Other ambitions mentioned by respondents included livestock keeping, opening a shop, starting a house construction company or becoming a mechanic.

### Company 2: Forestry

#### Involvement with the company

Plantations are located near the villages of Canhunda and Djanaque in Manica province, just 40 kilometres southeast of the town of Chimoio. The company mainly grows eucalyptus, for which the company has acquired land from community members. The lowest number of respondents were involved in its operations compared to the other investments we surveyed: only six out of 49 respondents reported working as casual labourers on the forestry plantation. Most households in these communities depend on their agricultural land and grow food and cash crops such as maize, sorghum, beans and vegetables. Both men and women also work as wage labourers on other people's farms or trade small goods, and a few of the men also work as carpenters or builders.

Prior to the start of the plantation, community meetings were organised by the company. Some respondents said they had sold land to the company. However, others reported that the company had promised financial compensation and employment, but had not delivered on its promises:

*'The company came to me personally asking for my land. I was cultivating maize on the area. Now, I have a smaller farm size. I expected to work for the company, get money and buy a new plot.'* (Male respondent, Djanaque)

*'They were offering jobs in return, for example as security guards or lumberjacks. They didn't give us any compensation. They promised permanent jobs but instead gave temporary jobs.'* (Male respondent, Djanaque)

Over half of the respondents (26 out of 49) were interested in working for the company. This group would welcome the additional income to support their households. The remaining respondents were not interested in working for the company – most because of old age or illness, but some said that they did not like the work conditions provided by the company or they had heard of delayed payments or low salaries. Multiple respondents also mentioned that in order to get a job, you have to give up some of your land to the company. This is a sensitive issue, particularly in the village of Djanaque:

*'People are very angry with the company because they promised people life employment. Fathers, sons, but nothing happened. Then, people gave up their land. After planting eucalyptus, and it grows, they kicked people off the land. As compensation, only maize, beans and tomatoes were given to people and they only hired two people as security guards and now people promised they might burn the trees (...). What we plan to do is go to the radio and speak up about the company. We also have plans to go up to the higher government levels'. (Community leader, Djanaque)*

Respondents said that they had few benefits from having the company nearby. Temporary employment during planting was seen as contributing to community development, as were the few permanent jobs with the company (particularly security guards). Another benefit acknowledged by respondents was the contribution of seeds to communities that had given land to the company. But at the same time, restrictions were also highlighted. The main concern was that very few people were employed by the company, even though jobs had been promised at the start of the investment. For women and older people, the chances of finding employment with the company were even smaller, as the work was being characterised as tough and demanding, requiring physical strength. Regarding the mentioned seed distribution, some respondents said that not all people who had given away land had received any seeds. Respondents in Canhonda reported having seen trucks with seeds passing through their village on the way to another village to distribute seeds, and claimed that this other village had not given up any land.

Some mentioned the construction of a soccer field, roads and the distribution of seeds as benefits delivered by the company. Ten respondents said that because of the company's activities, a village borehole had broken down and had not been repaired, decreasing the availability of water for the communities.

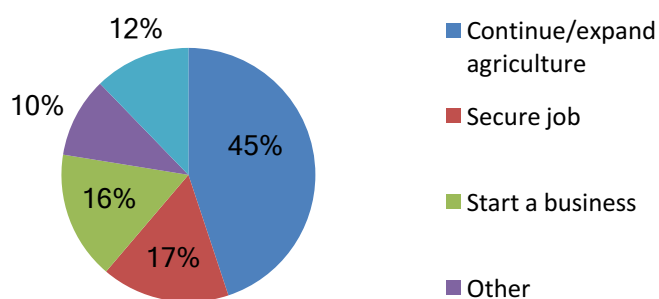
#### Local livelihoods and priorities

In the communities under review, respondents said that they were proud of their agriculture and their fertile soil. However, ten out of 49 respondents said that crime (particularly theft of food crops and domestic animals, and alcohol abuse) had been increasing and was a major issue. Other frequently mentioned challenges in the community include unemployment and the lack of infrastructure; they wanted more employment opportunities, electricity, a school, roads and a hospital. All the development ideas put forward by the respondents related to the above challenges.

One focus area of the research was that of people's plans and priorities for the future. These questions were asked in general, independent of the company's existence. The research team asked respondents to elaborate on individual plans and priorities through questions about their dream occupation or job, what they would personally like to do in the next 10 years, and what they would do if they were given 1000 dollars to invest. Most respondents (45%) around company 2 said that they wanted to continue farming or expand their farms (see figure 2). This could include adding crops (such as beans, maize and fruits) or having a larger farm. Second, respondents said that they would like to have a secure job as, for example, a driver or security

**Figure 2. Personal development priorities**

(Communities around company 2, N=49)



Source: fieldwork (2017)

guard for this or another company. Various respondents stressed that this employment should have good salaries and working conditions. Third, respondents wanted to start a business, mostly related to trading fish, food, drinks or agricultural inputs. Some other entrepreneurial ideas mentioned by respondents included the construction of processing facilities for oranges, maize and beans, since these facilities are lacking in the area. Obstacles to accomplishing this, according to our respondents, are a lack of employment opportunities and financial resources, which prevents an increase in productivity.

### Company 3: Sugar

#### *Involvement with the company*

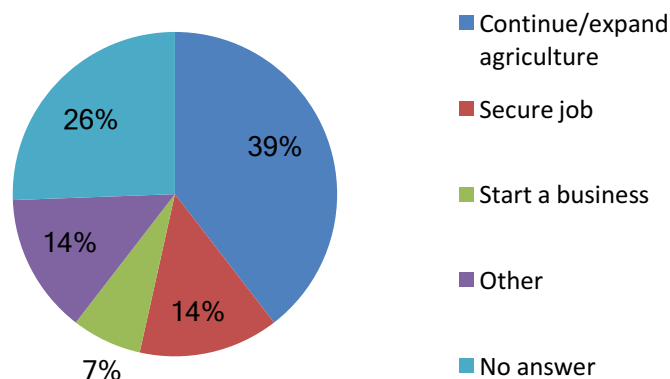
The company is situated in the district of Dondo, a little over 50 kilometres northeast of the port city of Beira in central Mozambique. We selected three villages around this investment - namely Mafambisse, Mutua and Lamego - and interviewed 43 of the households. The company has its own large plantations, in addition to sourcing from smallholder outgrowers. The outgrowers are organised in associations and this is the only way in which they can sell produce to the company. Through its outgrower system, the company involved most of our respondents in its operations, that is, 18 out of 43 as smallholder farmers and an additional seven as employees. In addition to the cash crop, farmers also cultivate maize, beans and vegetables or keep livestock. Those who were not involved with the company and were not farmers work as traders, nurses, public officials or teachers. Some older respondents were receiving a small pension.

Respondents said that they appreciated the company and an outgrowers' association for the benefits they offer which include agricultural extension services, irrigation and agricultural inputs. But first and foremost, farmers said that they are happy to have a market and to receive an income from the company as independent farmers. In addition, employment opportunities were mentioned as contributing to community development. However, respondents noted that there were very few jobs available and even fewer permanent jobs. In addition, respondents said it was hard to get a job with the company: nine respondents reported that to be hired, one must pay a bribe and know someone 'inside'.

In addition to employment, the company's initiative of a social forum was appreciated. The forum was created in 2012 by company and community representatives as a platform to develop a broader understanding of community concerns, to align priorities and to allocate corporate social investment in areas where they it will have the most impact. The social forum meets every three months. So far, it has contributed to community development by supporting the construction of classrooms, health centres, a morgue, etc. The construction of a borehole and the increased availability of water was mentioned by 23 out of 43 respondents. The company regularly organises community meetings either through the association leaders or community leaders or by contacting farmers directly. These meetings, as well as radio and television broadcasts, are used to disseminate information about agricultural production, and also to address challenges. For example, the theft of sugarcane was often

**Figure 3. Development priorities**

*(Communities around company 3, N=43)*



Source: fieldwork (2018)

mentioned as a topic discussed in the meetings.

#### *Local livelihoods and priorities*

Overall, respondents stated that they were happy to live and reside in Mafambisse, Matua and Lamego. Some were born there, while others had arrived from cities like Beira or Chimoio in search of agricultural land, a job and better living conditions. However, like in the communities around company 2, 16 out of 49 respondents pointed to the high crime rates (mainly theft) in the area. Many respondents ascribed this to the high inflow of migrants and the high unemployment rates. In addition, there is a need for electricity and a hospital, since people spend a lot of time travelling (approximately 45 minutes by car) to seek healthcare. Respondents' personal ambitions are shown in figure 3. Most (39%) want to continue or expand their farms. In addition, respondents said that they found it important to have a secure job. Other plans included starting a business (agricultural inputs, fishing or a processing facility, especially for tomatoes).



## C. Impacts of the investments

The three investments described in the previous section are very different investments with different business models, which reflects the nature of the Beira corridor as a very diverse investment hub. Company 2 is an example of a large-scale land-based investment that employs local people (mostly on a seasonal base), but does not (yet) directly include local producers in its business model. Because local people had given up their land or part thereof to the company, many of our respondents felt that the communities were not benefiting from the investments. Through a nucleus farm combined with an outgrower scheme, company 3 both employs local people (also mostly on a seasonal base) and buys sugarcane from local farmers. This allows local people to engage with the company in multiple ways. Without a local presence, company 1 almost exclusively buys fruit from local farmers. This seems a lucrative business for both parties: farmers are increasingly growing the fruits that are in demand by the company, while most of these fruits were already locally grown by farmers. Below, this section further elaborates on the perceived impacts of these three kinds of investments on local livelihoods in central Mozambique, related to land governance and food security.

### *1. Land governance*

Company 1 owns a relatively small piece of land (around 398 ha) in the area where it operates, but buys fruit from local farmers. Many fruits that the company buys, like lychees, were already locally grown fruits. Therefore, it has not yet had a direct effect on local land use or land ownership. Respondents said that they would like to see the company engage more with the community. It might, however, result in land use change, because farmers plan to grow more cash crops (fruit trees) and fewer crops for consumption. The extent to which this is perceived to have an effect on local food security is discussed in the next section.

Company 2 has leased large areas of land in Manica province, and some of this land used to be farmed by local people. The nature of the operations of the forestry plantation does not offer local people many economic opportunities that are in line with their aspirations, except for some (mostly temporary) jobs. Community members have lost or sold their land, sometimes in exchange for financial compensation, goods or jobs that turned out to be only temporary. Many of them have now lost their land (or a part of it) and are unemployed. Their agricultural activities are limited and there is little land available. Like most of the respondents we interviewed, people in the communities around this company said that they want to be farmers, or have a secure job or start a business. The local research data showed that current opportunities linked to the company's presence are not aligned with community priorities for future development.

Company 3 has also leased large areas of land, in the Sofala Province, but although some of this land used to be farmed by local people, it has created a market and economic opportunities for local farmers to grow and sell a cash crop (sugarcane), in addition to offering both permanent and casual work at the processing facility in Mafambisse. Although our respondents said that they would like to see more secure jobs created by the company, their operations are in line with our respondent's main aspirations, namely to continue with and expand their agricultural activities. In addition, the company's contribution towards a better distribution of water for irrigation was considered very positive by our respondents.

### *2. Food Security*

With investments such as sugar, fruit and timber in the provinces, more land is now used for cash crops. This might be at the expense of arable land that could have been used for producing food crops. Table 5 below shows respondents' perceptions about the amount of available food. It shows that overall, 76% of respondents had experienced an increased amount of food compared to 10 years earlier. They attributed this change not to the investments, but to the economic and political crises of the past decades and the increased production in recent years. The crises, accompanied by armed conflict, have had a severe impact on people's food security and the food productivity in the areas. Respondents said that, with more stability in the country, the quality of life and the

food production had increased. The 24% who indicated that there is less food available, mostly attribute this to climate change: *'The main food impact comes from climate change. Because of climate change, the land becomes less productive and food becomes more expensive.'* (female respondent, Canhonda) Some also attribute negative changes in food security to the increase in population in the communities.

<b>Table 5. Respondents' perceptions about the availability and amount of food</b>		
	Increased amount of food	Decreased amount of food
<b>Company 1 communities (N=41)</b>	85%	15%
<b>Company 2 communities (N=48)</b>	58%	23%
<b>Company 3 communities (N=39)</b>	72%	28%
<b>Total (N=119)</b>	76%	24%
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>		

# D. Learning Platform: the Beira Corridor

## 1. Introduction

In the following, we elaborate on the Learning Platform we organised in Chimoio. We then discuss the challenges prioritised in the Platform meeting, the Action Plans that were developed, the responses to the Action Plans through follow-up community engagement, and the subsequent changes made as a result of community inputs. We finalise by briefly discussing aspects of adaptive learning during the process.

From May to December 2017, the project engaged a group of 26 people involved in or affected by land-based investments agriculture and forestry in the Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC). The group consisted of representatives from three companies, community members from five communities, local government officials, civil society organisations and researchers. On 27 July, stakeholders were brought together for the first time, for a 2-day kick-off meeting to introduce participants to one another, share experiences and brainstorm about new activities. A week later, follow-up conversations were held with the participants. In October, the communities were visited again and focus group discussions were organised to debate the Platform and Action Plans. At the end of November, a follow-up 1-day platform meeting gathered the same group of participants for collaborative monitoring. Below is a schematic overview of the engagements.

Figure 4 Timeline of the Learning Platform



Following new developments and discussions, new members were added to the platform over the course of the months: the leader of a newly established lychee growers' association joined the group, as did the chairman of the sugar company's social forum, an initiative that received much appraisal and interest from other companies during the Platform meetings. One company did not send a representative to the follow-up meeting, and another company, two civil society organisations and one community sent different persons to it, due to travel plans or other competing obligations.

## 2. 2-Day kick-off Learning Platform

The group met for the first time on 27 July 2017. Discussions were started with an elaborate presentation on the findings from the local assessment. In preparation for the 2-day meeting in Chimoio, a bottom-up assessment among communities in the districts of Bárue and Gondola in Manica province, and the districts of Dondo and Nhamatanda in Sofala province, had been conducted in June and July to identify the type of developments happening around existing land-based investments and to ascertain how the investments were impacting on people's livelihoods. From the local assessment and the discussions that followed in the Platform, some overall challenges were identified:

- **Employment:** The desire for increased transparency and information on how to start engaging with the companies was voiced during the local research and taken up as a priority issue during Platform discussions. A lack of clarity around this leads to more frustration among communities that do not enjoy the benefits of the presence of companies and by the elite capture of those benefits. For those companies employing people directly (especially company 3), frustration was also caused by fraudulent

practices around employee selection procedures. Since the sugar company had outsourced this procedure, influential community members in strategic positions had captured the process and were reportedly demanding bribes for jobs. Not all companies participating in the Learning Platform had been aware of the vital importance of jobs for local development.

- **Communication:** From a business perspective, investments in communication make sense because a business needs to know that its investment is sustainable, also in the long run. Local level buy-in is essential in this. An example of the impact of a lack of local level buy-in was found in one investment area where local people reportedly either set fire to a plantation or did not put out the fire because they had strong negative feelings towards the company. For communities, much criticism was voiced about how difficult it was for them to reach out to a company, and the lack of information about the company activities in the area.
- **Agriculture:** When asked about future priorities, all communities showed a strong preference for improving their agricultural production, both expanding current production and diversifying into other crops (in particular food crops). Some company activities were responding to this preference. For example, one of the companies had started supporting local producer associations that were focusing on food crops, and another company had provided seeds to communities surrounding their investments. Complaints were voiced regarding the inclusivity of these initiatives: some people did not receive seeds or did not have the necessary start-up capital to join the association. But given the strong prominence of agricultural production in local priorities, companies agreed that it made sense for them to consider this in their future activities.

**Table 6. Priority issues in the Learning Platform**

	<b>Company 1</b>	<b>Company 2</b>	<b>Company 3</b>
<b>Employment</b>			
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarify terms of contracts between company and growers</li> <li>- Organise more meetings to increase the company's visibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create multi-stakeholder forums</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve grievances and complaints mechanism</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training in certification requirement; facilitation of certification;</li> <li>- Accompany producers during the growing season</li> <li>- Search for alternative markets for lychees and processed lychees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop out-grower scheme for eucalyptus</li> <li>- Establish block agriculture in agro-forestry setting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop more sugarcane associations</li> <li>- Expand sugarcane areas</li> <li>- Support non-sugar agricultural activities to make communities less dependent on the sugar company</li> </ul>
<b>Entrepreneurship</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Potentially support increased tenure security for communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement projects for income generation</li> </ul>

- **Entrepreneurship:** A fourth topic that came up during discussions at the Platform was entrepreneurship and the interest many people have in starting their own businesses. This was sometimes linked to possible ways in which the companies can support local development, for example through providing micro loans or support for setting up a small business.

On the second day of the kick-off Learning Platform meeting, three smaller groups were formed to initiate a process of collaborative planning, that is, to come up with new and practical ideas for each investment to better align the company activities with local priorities. The table below lists the various activities according to the four priority issues identified from the local assessment and discussions at the Platform.

What is striking is that no activities were proposed that address local communities' interest in finding jobs with the companies. In general, companies saw the number of jobs created as a given, determined by the way the business is organised, and outside of their scope for the Learning Platform. That communities prioritised employment opportunities was not perceived by the companies as an issue that should be addressed by them, especially as they would not benefit from addressing this challenge. Lastly, as mentioned above, the creation of more jobs is not easy to do and requires more structural changes to the business model structure.

Activities related to communication and agricultural production were addressed in the Action Plans. Each company proposed at least one activity aimed at improving communication and transparency between them and local communities, and at least one activity aimed at increasing agricultural productivity in their investment areas. Much attention was paid to the agricultural priorities voiced by all communities, although the focus was on crops that the companies were buying (sugar, lychees, eucalyptus) rather than on crops that are not part of the core business of the companies. There was one exception, however: company 3 felt that, being the single most important large-scale agricultural company in the area, it had a responsibility to also provide support for agricultural activities not linked to their core business. The popularity of these activities can be explained by the clear shared benefit that both company and communities would derive from increasing productivity. The proposed activities are also mainly in line with the core businesses of companies: extension services based on available knowledge within the company, or improving the access of produce to new markets (from which both the company and its outgrowers could benefit).

In terms of entrepreneurship, two activities were proposed, both somewhat less concrete, namely 1) the potential support for increased tenure security, and 2) the implementation of projects for income generation through the company's social forum, using an existing company-community platform to identify potential entrepreneurial ideas in the communities and, if evaluated as economically viable, provide start-up loans for the ideas. That proposals related to entrepreneurship were fewer in number and less concrete in their description can be attributed to companies not feeling responsible for working on this local priority, and knowing that they would not derive direct benefits from them.

### *3. Responses to Action Plans from communities*

In October and November, prior to the 1-day follow-up meeting, six out of eight communities that had been part of the initial local assessment were visited again to encourage reflective monitoring. The objective was to share the Action Plans developed during the Platform in July with the community members, to ascertain their feedback on the plausibility of the suggested actions as potential pathways to improved company-community relations, to learn about the impacts of already implemented actions, and to identify any new developments that had occurred since the first visit in June-July. The reason two of the communities were not revisited was because they are very remote and could not be reached during the limited timeline for the revisits.

#### **Company 1**

The most positive responses received were in line with the first three suggestions, namely to train more farmers in global certification, search for alternative markets for lychees and visit producers during the growing season. The last two suggestions - to clarify contracts between the company and growers, and to organise more meetings to increase the company's visibility - were received with more doubt. While the suggestions in themselves are good, community members reported that they had not yet been involved in any such meetings. There was a feeling that the company is still working with a 'selected few', which did not go down well with the rest of the community members.

Adaptations:



- Use a newly established association to improve communication between growers and company, and inform communities about the company plans to continue working in the area.
- Use current agricultural extension work to also inform farmers about contracts and the trade process.
- Assist farmers with irrigation through partnering with a social impact investor to set up irrigation facilities.

## **Company 2**

The possibility of a forum was perceived to be a positive development, since it would allow people to meet with the company and discuss any opportunities and challenges inherent in the company–community relations. The company was said to have conducted its activities without informing or consulting community members at all. However, reference was also made to earlier promises that had been broken by the company, so there was scepticism as to whether this activity would actually materialise. An outgrower scheme for eucalyptus was received with much criticism: challenges mentioned included the lack of land, the lack of financial resources and the risk of the company not buying the trees. Objection was also expressed with regard to the agro-forestry activity: eucalyptus is known to damage the soil and use large quantities of water, making intercropping very challenging; in addition, it would be in direct competition with food crops for land. A new suggestion from the group was to invite the fruit company to come and teach them how to grow fruits and buy the fruits from them.

For the Action Plan of the forestry company, no concrete adaptations were made to the plan, since the company could not be present at the follow-up event. The team discussing the existing plan highlighted two activities that they thought addressed some of the voiced concerns and challenges best, namely the creation of a forum for communication between company and community, and the proposal to assist communities in accessing DUATs (land right documents) in an effort to increase their tenure security. After the final event, a follow-up phone call was made to the community relations officer, to discuss some of the outcomes of the last Platform meeting.

Company 3: The idea of more associations was welcomed as a way to increase the opportunity to engage with the company. Unemployment was recognised as one of the most pressing issues; however, the limited availability of land and the need for expensive irrigation were pointed to as a significant challenge. To expand the area under sugarcane was also thought of as a good activity, and reference was made to two plots of land that are owned by the company but have been idle for a number of years. Community members suggested that the company could let them use this land. Also appreciated was the idea of supporting income generating activities, through providing loans, although the lack of capacity to set up businesses was mentioned as a challenge. The improvement of the company complaint mechanism was dismissed, since community members said they had their functioning ways of dealing with conflicts.

Adaptations:

- Formation of five additional sugar associations with support from the company.
- Formation of one food crop association with support from the company.
- Removed grievance and complaint mechanism from priority list, since communities indicated that this was unnecessary.

## **Aspects of adaptive learning**

The area around Chimoio has many large-scale and smaller scale, international and domestic investments in agriculture and forestry. This leads to communities not being completely clear about which companies are operating in their area, what the differences are between different companies and what their main activities are. At the same time, being one of many companies present in a certain area leads to the company feeling less responsible for local development contributions to the community as a whole. In the case of an enclosed area, such as the Kilombero Valley in Tanzania, a company feels more responsible for contributing to local development. In this case also the communities and the government have higher expectations towards the company in contributing to local development.

In the case of the Mozambique Platform, we had a larger turnover of people representing organisations and companies. This revealed that, especially for the companies, being part of the first meeting creates awareness and openness to the process, whereas when a new company representative comes in during the second meeting,

discussions are more easily perceived as negative. At the same time, something that came out clearly in Mozambique is the importance of commitment from higher management to implement some of the activities proposed in the Action Plans.

On a positive note, we generally found that participants demonstrated genuine willingness and enthusiasm regarding the platform, and opportunities to continue working on some of the initiatives kicked-off by the group, including the agricultural support given by the fruit company, and the creation of a possible continuation of the group by one of the civil society organisations participating in the Platform.

#### *4. Potential for continuation*

In Chimoio, the work around the Learning Platforms was developed in close collaboration with two strong NGOs with a presence on the ground. One of them had ongoing work with the forestry company and the fruit company, while the other had ongoing engagements with the sugar company. In addition, one of the NGOs was part of the Land Use Dialogue and had been involved in earlier multi-stakeholder platforms in Brazil and Tanzania. There were plans to set up a similar initiative in the Learning Platform focus area in Mozambique and to incorporate lessons and participants from the Platform meetings we organised.





# Appendix III

## The Kampala-Jinja corridor

*Case study*

# Contents

- A. Introduction**
- B. Research findings**
- C. Impacts of the investments**
- D. Learning Platform: the Kampala-Jinja corridor**



# A. Introduction

The third Learning Platform took place in Jinja, Uganda, in two districts located along the Kampala-Jinja corridor. The area was selected because the corridor is an increasingly important trade route that has seen more and more investments coming in. The Learning Platform and the in-depth research was focused on two large land-based investments near the town of Jinja, a city about 80 kilometres east of Uganda's capital, Kampala. The first investment owns a sugar estate of over 9700 ha just northeast of Jinja. The second investment operates part of the Bukaleba forest reserve east of Jinja. This section presents a brief overview of the local context, the communities and the two companies.

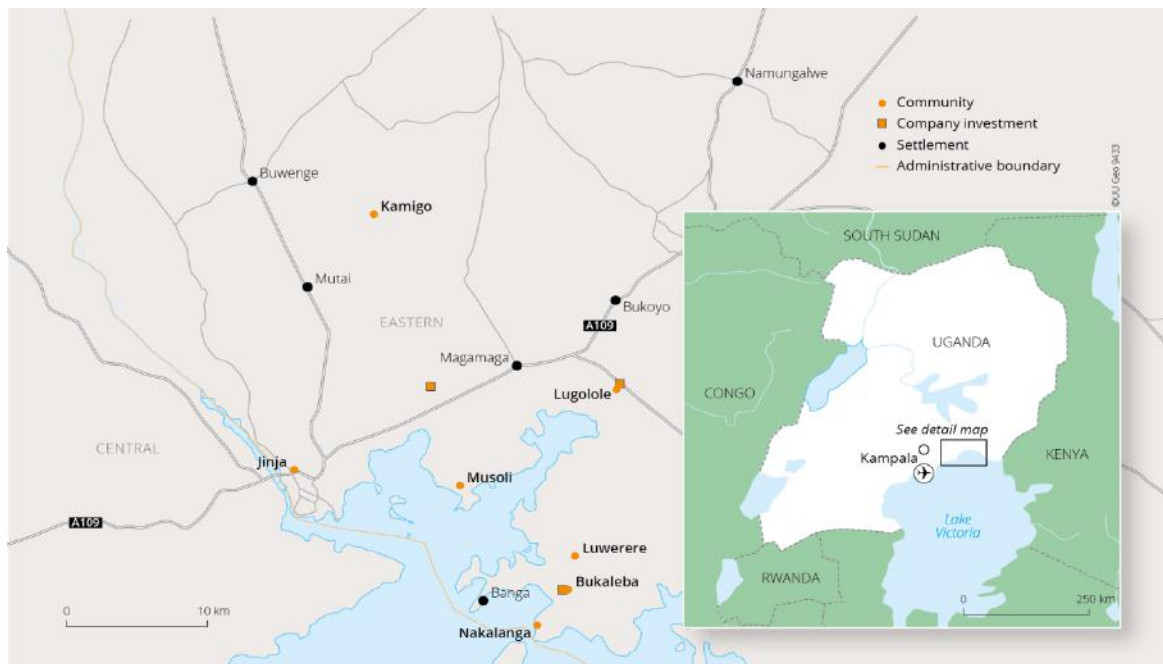
## 1. Local context: the Kampala-Jinja corridor

The Kampala-Jinja corridor is part of East Africa's Northern Corridor, which links South Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, the eastern part of the DRC and Uganda, to the port of Mombasa (Kenya), which borders the Indian Ocean. The Northern Corridor is the most important trade route for the landlocked countries in the East African Community. The 72-kilometre road between Kampala and Jinja, which is a part of this trade route, is the busiest road in Uganda.<sup>10</sup> The surrounding districts of Kampala, Wakiso, Mukono, Buikwe, Jinja and Mayuge have hosted large-scale investments for decades because of their fertile soils and proximity to Kampala. The area has several large plantations and estates and has been supplying the country with large quantities of produce, including coffee, tea, sugar, fruits and vegetables. Communities in the corridor include both urban communities (the small towns of Mukono and Jinja) and rural communities, where the main source of income is the production of coffee, tea, maize, bananas, sugar and other crops.

## 2. The Kampala-Jinja corridor: an investment hub

In the past 30 years, various other types of agriculture and commercial forestry have set up business and are contributing to rural transformations in the area. The Ugandan government, supported by several donors, is supporting new investments with the establishment of industrial parks and the construction of the Kampala-Jinja Expressway to alleviate heavy traffic flows. The Kampala-Jinja corridor was therefore a highly suitable location for

Map 1. Research area, investments and communities in Uganda



<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/annex-8-aap-uganda-2016\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/annex-8-aap-uganda-2016_en.pdf), 05-02-2018

the Learning Platform, as the communities, investors and other stakeholders could benefit from a dialogue space. The platform would facilitate discussion and stimulate action on inclusive ways of operating existing and future businesses to contribute to sustainable development in the region. Below, the two large-scale investments that were under review for this study are described.

### Company 1

Company 1 is a large sugar company founded in the early 1920s; it has 8000 acres of land around Jinja. The company produced 83,000 tonnes of sugar annually before the political turmoil in the 1970s. After a production stop due to the unstable political situation in the country, the company continued producing sugar in 1985, when it was partially taken over by the Ugandan government. It became independent again in 2000, the year the Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO) co-financed expansion up to 3000 tonnes of sugarcane per day. Today, the company consists of a nucleus estate of over 9700 ha northeast of Jinja. With financing from FMO, the East African Development Bank and the Global Environment Facility, the company has expanded in recent decades to achieve a production of more than 6000 tonnes of cane per day. Surrounding the estate are over 7000 outgrowers living in nearby communities who provide the company with sugarcane. The company is well known in the communities in the area. Through sister operations, the company also produces sugar in Rwanda, is planning a sugar plant in Sudan and owns a leisure camp in the Masai Marai National Park, Kenya.<sup>11</sup>

### Company 2

The Bukaleba Central Forest Reserve comprises over 9000 ha of forest reserve along the northern shores of Lake Victoria just east of the city of Jinja and about 120 kilometres from Kampala. The reserve is under the management of the National Forestry Authority (NFA). However, for forest conservation, the company that participated in the Learning Platform acquired a 50-year permit from the government for forestry development in the Reserve.<sup>12</sup> About 4310 ha are in use as a plantation; the remaining hectares are used for forest conservation, infrastructure and community forest activities (500 ha). In addition to the Bukaleba plantation, the company owns another 2600 ha of plantation in Kachung. Both plantations are FSC certified. The company was established in 1995 and its shareholders include several investment companies. Through offsetting carbon credits, the company was the first company to receive carbon revenues. In recent years, financing from, for example, FMO (US\$ 20 million), Finfund and Norfund (US\$ 25 million) has allowed it to expand its operations.<sup>13</sup>

<b>Table 1. Company characteristics</b>		
	<b>Company 1</b>	<b>Company 2</b>
<b>Main crops</b>	Sugarcane	Eucalyptus and pine trees
<b>Year established</b>	1920	1996
<b>Business model</b>	Plantation and outgrower scheme	Plantation
<b>Owned land in the Jinja area</b>	9700 ha	6500 ha
<b>Planted area</b>	9700 ha	6500 ha
<b>Outgrower area</b>	25,000 ha	-
<b>Location</b>	Jinja district	Mayuge district
<b>Source: fieldwork (2018)</b>		

<sup>11</sup> Company website, 05-02-2018

<sup>12</sup> Company website, 05-02-2018

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.fmo.nl/project-detail/31975>

# B. Research findings

## 1. Methods

To obtain a deeper understanding of the companies’ impact on their neighbours, and to explore how the community priorities link to those of the companies, in-depth field research was conducted in six of the communities neighbouring company 1 and company 2 in Jinja and Mayuge district. During six weeks of field research conducted by a researcher from Shared Value Foundation and a local researcher, community profiles were drawn up with community leaders in each village. These profiles were intended to provide a general understanding of the village including its historical trajectory, demography, infrastructure and services, natural resources availability and use, and leaders’ expectations and priorities for the village. To get a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of the investments in each village and the community members’ views on local development, 129 household surveys were administered in the six villages. The selected households represented an equal distribution of male and female, and varying degrees of welfare and ages. Other factors, such as natives and immigrants and closeness to a main road, were also taken into consideration.

Table 3 on the next page presents a brief overview of the communities under review. Villages were selected based on their proximity to the companies and the diversity of the communities in which the companies are located. The selected villages neighbouring company 1 are Musoli, Lugolole and Kamigo, and those neighbouring company 2 are Nakalanga, Luwerere and Bukaleba.

Residents were asked to name the different investments in their area that they were aware of, and were then interviewed about their current and expected involvement in the investment, observed impacts of the investment on their livelihood and food security, and their individual and community plans and priorities (not limited to the company), including entrepreneurial ideas for the future.

Table 2. Survey sample		
Investment	Village	Households
<b>Company 1</b>	Kamigo	20
	Lugolole	23
	Musoli	24
<b>Company 2</b>	Bukaleba	20
	Luwerere	20
	Nakalanga	22
<b>Total</b>		<b>129</b>
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>		

**Table 3. Overview of selected communities**

<b>Village</b>	<b>Neighbouring investment</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Kamigo</b>	Company 1	Kamigo is a small rural village with an estimated 1400 residents. It is located northwest of the nucleus estate of company 1 and borders Jinja and Mayuge district. The village has a very small trading centre and a few permanent brick structures. It can be considered a sugarcane growing community.
<b>Lugolole</b>	Company 1	Lugolole is a larger settlement and a trading centre located halfway between company 1 and company 2, and is home to about 4000 people. The town also hosts a newer sugar processing company in the region. Many of the respondents in Lugolole town are traders: they sell petrol, spare car parts or cosmetics or run small restaurants. Many respondents also produce sugarcane and food crops like maize, potatoes, beans and cassava alongside their main occupation.
<b>Musoli</b>	Company 1	Musoli is situated on a small peninsula along the northern shores of Lake Victoria and is close to the nucleus estate of company 1. It is a small settlement of approximately 700 people. For many households, the cultivation of sugar as outgrowers for company 1 provides the main source of income. Most of these households also fish, grow food crops, such as potatoes, maize and beans, and some run a small business.
<b>Bukaleba</b>	Company 2	Bukaleba is situated in the middle of the Bukaleba Forest Reserve, which is leased to the company and is thus at the centre of company activities. The community is home to an estimated 700 people. Because the community is located in a forest reserve, residents are only permitted to construct mud-based houses and structures by the National Forestry Authority (NFA). Many of the community members in Bukaleba are employed by the company; they and other community members also grow food on any free areas where the company has not yet planted trees and keep livestock, including cattle, goats, chicken and pigs.
<b>Luwerere</b>	Company 2	Luwerere is just outside Bukaleba Forestry Reserve and approximately 400 residents. Being outside the reserve, the community is more diverse - with permanent brick based houses visible in the area, community members involved in diverse economic activities, including operating retail shops, involved in seasonal work at the company, school teaching, hair dressing and growing food crops including maize, beans, cassava and sugarcane.
<b>Nakalanga</b>	Company 2	Nakalanga village is situated along the shores of Lake Victoria and is in the Bukaleba Forestry Reserve. It is one of the larger villages in the area and has approximately 3000 residents. Similar to Bukaleba, the village consists of only mud houses; there are no permanent structures. The closest school is in Bukaleba, several hours' walking distance from Nakalanga. Before it was banned a few years ago, fishing was the main source of income for most of the villagers.

**Source: fieldwork (2017)**

## 2. Findings from the communities

Sixty-seven households neighbouring company 1 and sixty-two neighbouring company 2 were interviewed. All respondents were aware of the nearby investments. Table 4 shows the different ways the respondents were involved with both the sugar and the forestry investment. For company 1 (the sugar investment), nearly half of the respondents were involved with the company as outgrowers, while the other half said that they were not involved. Those who were involved in other ways indicated, for example, that they sold their sugarcane to outgrowers from the company or sold food to employees of the company. Most respondents (46 out of 62) from communities around company 2 were not involved with the company and only 10 were employed by it. Below, we elaborate on the involvement of the communities with the companies and the alignment of the companies with local livelihoods and priorities.

<b>Table 4. Respondents' involvement with companies 1 and 2 (N=129)</b>				
	<i>Not involved</i>	<i>Involved as a smallholder farmer</i>	<i>Employed by the company</i>	<i>Other</i>
<b>Company 1</b>	31	28	0	8
<b>Company 2</b>	46	0	10	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>				

## **Company 1: Sugar**

### *Company relations*

Company 1 has both plantations and an outgrower system, through which it involves thousands of farmers in its business model. Twenty-eight farmers in our sample were official outgrowers, for which you need a permit. Others who grow sugarcane but do not have an outgrower permit, sell to middlemen who in turn sell the cane to the company. Most farmers combine sugarcane with other crops, such as maize, beans or potatoes. Some also fish, but because of bad fishing practices most fishing has been restricted by the government. Others, mostly in the trade centre of Lugolole, have a shop or a trading business (selling e.g. CDs, petrol or spare parts).

Until recently, company 1 was the only company producing sugar in the area around Jinja. Farmers reported that sugarcane prices were low at the time. However, over the last decade, more sugar processing companies have started operating near Jinja, increasing the competition for sugarcane among companies in Mayuge and Jinja districts. The increased competition has reportedly led to huge increases in the price paid for raw sugarcane in the area:

*'Before (...) it was only [company 1]. It was exploitative. There was delayed harvesting and payment. It was only for big farmers. And there was no market so we would sell though other bigger farmers who pay very little. I was selling a tonne for 70,000, but now it's 175,000.'* (Male outgrower, Musoli)

The quote shows that the increased competition is very much welcomed by local farmers, who receive a better price and can now choose to which company they want to sell their harvest. Some negative impacts were also reported; for example, company 1 stopped clearing roads around the new factories, and had decreased its agricultural extension services in some areas. The competition has negative implications for the company, who reports to have set up and invested in its outgrower system from which other companies are now benefitting. As a result, company 1 has put in place measures to make the company an attractive buyer for farmers' cane. One of the measures appreciated by the respondents is the improved supply of inputs and credit by the company.

Over the years, according to our respondents, company 1 has contributed to the development of the area. Apart from offering them a market for sugar, respondents often mentioned the construction and clearing of roads by the company and the contributions it has made to the construction of schools and health centres.

### *Local livelihoods and priorities*

Overall, respondents indicated that they were happy to live in the communities around the sugar company. They are close to trade centres and the lake, and said that the area is peaceful. But over 75% of respondents from the communities around the sugar company report that the company has attracted a lot of migrants to the communities to grow sugar or work with the company. Overall, this inflow of migrants is considered a positive development, as it brings more business, schools and hospitals. However, some also said that it leads to the scarcity of land and the fact that those who have land and grow sugar, are better off than those who do not. In



addition, challenges in the communities that were most often mentioned are theft (mostly of sugarcane at harvest time) and the lack of electricity (in Musoli village). Some also mentioned fishing as a problem. Due to unsustainable fishing practices, the government has forbidden fishing in lake Victoria and has recently confiscated fishing equipment. Some households have lost an important part of their income because of this and there is no alternative for these households to regain this income. Lastly, five respondents said that it was a challenge for the community that fewer and fewer people grow food crops: *'A challenge for this community is people's minds. They are set only on growing sugarcane and they have limited land even for growing food crops'* (Male respondent, Musoli). We elaborate on this and what it means for food security in the following section.

In our survey, we also asked households about their personal priorities and aspirations for the future (see table 5 below). The priority that was most often mentioned was starting a business, for example a retail shop or a business trading in food, charcoal or spare parts. Second was to buy land (or more land) for cultivation and/or to construct a brick house. Notable is that five respondents (of whom four were women) said that they wanted to become a landlady/ landlord, renting out plots and houses to others.

<b>Table 5. Respondents' development priorities, villages around company 1 (N=32)</b>	
<b>Priorities</b>	<i>No. of times mentioned*</i>
<b>Start a business</b>	12
<b>Buy land</b>	9
<b>Drive a car</b>	6
<b>Educate children</b>	5
<b>Become a landlady/ landlord</b>	5
<b>Other</b>	6
<b>*Respondents could mention multiple priorities</b>	
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>	

## **Company 2: Forestry**

### *Company relations*

Company 2 runs a large forestry plantation in Bukaleba Central Forest Reserve, which it leases from the Ugandan government. The communities of Bukaleba and Nakalanga are situated in the reserve, while Luwerere is located just outside it. Bukaleba and Nakalanga have been located in the reserve for quite some time. However, the government officially does not allow communities to live inside the reserve. For years, both the company and the government have been trying to make the communities leave the forest. But in the absence of any alternatives, the communities stay where they are. Through a presidential decree issued in 2011, the country's president, Museveni, designated 500 ha at the edge of the reserve (near the community of Nakalanga) for the communities to settle in.<sup>14</sup> However, the decree has not been implemented and respondents said that this area is already in use by the communities that are already settled there. Communities are living on the edges of the forestry reserve (some are also located in the border zone between Lake Victoria and the forest reserve). In the past, there have been violent conflicts over the land, cattle grazing and the destruction of newly planted trees.

Most people in all these communities are farmers: they grow maize, beans, cassava or potatoes. However, many of them also keep some cattle (cows and goats), which have been banned by the National Forestry Authority. Only 10 out of 62 respondents said that they worked or had recently worked for the company. Many more said they were interested in working for the company to earn an additional income. Perceptions about working for the

<sup>14</sup> <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-uganda-landrights-feature/ugandan-villagers-locked-out-of-forest-waiting-for-the-promised-land-idUKKCN11R1M1>

company differ: some said that the fringe benefits are good, but most agreed that the salary is low and it is hard work, planting or transporting the timber. In addition, respondents said that it is not easy to get a job with the company because it may require a bribe, because the company hires migrants or because the relations between the villagers and the company are not good, due to the ongoing conflict about the communities being located in the forest reserve: *'They hate us. They don't want us [villagers] here. I think it's not one person from our village working there.'* (Male respondent, Nakalanga) The same respondent explained why the relationship is not good:

*'They came to scare us, saying: "You'll need to leave. We give you a few months." They also say people from other camps will need to come here. They are deceitful. We're not important to them. They recently captured our cattle and it cost us, like, 2 million to retrieve them.'*

Respondents said that they feel restricted in their livelihood activities by the company: they cannot use land for agriculture and they are not allowed to graze their cattle in the forest reserve. However, they did mention benefitting from the company in some ways. For the smaller communities in the forest, this is often limited to the provision of firewood. But in Luwerere, a small trading centre, one respondent said that the company has contributed significantly to community development:

*'The company helps people test for HIV and they offer employment for more than 200 people and they educate kids in the neighbouring schools (...). They also construct boreholes for people and clear feeder roads.'* (Male respondent, Luwerere)

As mentioned above, such benefits are limited to those villages and communities located outside the forest reserve and do not apply to people living in it.

#### *Local livelihoods and priorities*

Eight respondents were born in the forest reserve. However, the other 53 respondents had moved to the communities around the forest for marriage, together with their parents or to find greener pastures themselves (i.e. to fish or keep cattle, or to escape from conflict or hunger elsewhere). The main reason for people settling around the forest reserve is to cultivate food. When asked, 49% of respondents (N=61) said that they think that people are still coming into the area. But because both the company and the National Forestry Authority prohibit the communities in the forest from cultivating crops there, many people also leave the communities around the forestry company: 46% said that they think there is mostly out-migration and 5% took a neutral stance (N=61)

<b>Table 6. Respondents' development priorities, villages around company 2 (N=62)</b>	
<b>Priorities</b>	<i>Times mentioned*</i>
<b>Buy land</b>	17
<b>Start a business</b>	10
<b>Educate children</b>	6
<b>Other</b>	13
<b>*Respondents can mention multiple priorities</b>	
<b>Source: Fieldwork (2017)</b>	

The challenges in the community are many and diverse, but the one that was most often mentioned (see table 6) is the scarcity of land for cultivation or grazing. When the company started in 1996, community members living in the forest reserve were reportedly allowed to grow their crops in between the grown trees. However, the company has since stopped the practice, citing destruction of their trees by the increasing number of people and animals. Since the company has also expanded their tree growing to areas of the reserve where the community could otherwise cultivate, residents have nowhere to grow the food crops necessary for their survival. Second, certain services like schools and hospitals are too far away for people in Bukaleba and Nakalanga to access. If

children go to school, they have to walk for hours to get there. The third main challenge mentioned was unemployment.

Despite a lack of opportunities for local people to cultivate crops and secure their livelihoods, their main aspiration for the future was to buy land and build a house on it (see table 6). Second, starting a business, such as a retail shop or a business trading in fish or charcoal, was frequently mentioned, as was sending children to school. Other aspirations included studying at university, rearing cattle or buying a car.

## C. Impacts of the investments

Although they are located in the same area, the two investments and their business models differ to a large extent. The sugar investment (company 1) combines an outgrower scheme with a nuclear farm, offering jobs and a market for local farmers who grow sugar. This research found that these opportunities are appreciated by local communities. However, those who do not own land or are not growing sugar may be missing out. The business model of company 2 (the forestry company) does not include local farmers, but offers some local community members employment. At the same time, there are ongoing conflicts over land. This section discusses the locally perceived effects of these two investments and business models on local livelihoods, related to land governance and food security.

### Company 1

Company 1 (the sugar investment) uses a lot of land for its plantations and has acquired this land gradually over nearly a century. Thus, sugar has been a common crop among local farmers. However, with the increase in the number of sugar processing companies in the Busoga region, there is now a larger market for sugarcane at increasingly more competitive prices. This has attracted new players to the market - wealthier people from villages and districts neighbouring company 1. It is common practice for these new players to rent large areas of land from poorer people and grow sugarcane. The land rents paid to the 'poorer' villagers are normally used to solve an urgent problem. While beneficial in the short run, in the longer run it affects the area of land available to grow food crops or engage in other land-related activities. This is reportedly contributing to food insecurity in some of the sugar growing areas, since those who rent out the land are not able to grow any food crops. Several respondents expressed their concerns about more and more people growing sugarcane instead of food crops: *'Sugarcane growing has now occupied a lot of land. Those who grow sugarcane are the only ones well off.'* (Male respondent, Lugolole) In fact, as table 7 below shows, more than half of the respondents attributed changes in food security to the sugar investment, saying that there is less land available for food crops and thus less food is produced. The 42% who did not attribute this to the company often said that climatic conditions have caused the decrease in available food. One respondent attributed the problem to the government, which had banned fishing in Lake Victoria: *'Cane doesn't bring hunger. It's fishing being stopped. No-one has brought us food to stop hunger.'* Some respondents in this group also stated that there was more food available since they have more money to buy food at the market.

Table 7. Respondents' attribution of changes in food security to the company		
	Yes	No
<b>Company 1 (N= 64)</b>	58%	42%
<b>Company 2 (N=57)</b>	70%	30%
Source: Fieldwork (2017)		

## Company 2

As mentioned, the presence of the forestry company has led to conflicts with the communities living in the forest reserve. The company is leasing land that was given out by the National Forestry Authority at a time when there were already communities living on the land. The communities are not allowed to live in a forest reserve and never had formal land rights, but they have been offered few alternatives, which has created an ongoing tense situation between the company and local people that has resulted in displacement and violent conflict. It has also caused a loss of income for many households. Communities were pushed to the margins of the reserve and their cattle, which had more than once damaged young trees, had been confiscated:

*'I'm prohibited from cultivating here, from rearing animals. My dad cultivated here; I grew up here. Now, I have nothing. Where will I go?'* (Female respondent, Bukaleba)

According to our respondents, this situation has impacted on their food security. Nearly 97% of respondents (60 out of 62) in the communities around the forestry company indicated that they had less food available compared to 10 years earlier. As table 7 shows, most of them attributed this to the company and said that there was no land available for them to cultivate crops. Some also attributed it to droughts or bad agricultural practices (use of pesticides).

Thus, the two companies have had major impacts on the livelihoods of local people, albeit to different extents. Although the companies have brought benefits to the local communities (e.g. better infrastructure, access to markets and employment), the impact on both land governance and food security is not necessarily positive. Indirectly, the growing market for sugar has sparked a rush for land, and possibly the most vulnerable groups are adversely affected. The forestry investment, and the government that has given out the land, has caused the displacement of people and a loss of livelihoods for many households. These impacts were taken up by the Learning Platform to see how stakeholders can mitigate risks, find alternatives and create opportunities for increased benefit sharing.

# D. Learning platform: the Kampala-Jinja corridor

## 1. Introduction

In this following part of the Uganda case study, we elaborate on the Learning Platforms that were organised in Jinja. We subsequently discuss the challenges prioritised in the platform meeting, the Action Plans that were developed, the responses to the Action Plans through follow-up community engagement, and the subsequent changes made as a result of community inputs. We finalise by briefly discussing aspects of adaptive learning in the process.

From August to December 2017, the project engaged a group of 28 people involved in or affected by land-based agriculture and forestry investments in the districts of Jinja and Mayuge, along the Kampala-Nairobi highway. On 21 September 2017, stakeholders were brought together for the first time, for a 2-day kick-off meeting in order to introduce the participants to one another, share experiences and brainstorm about new activities. In the following week, follow-up conversations were held with the various participants. In October, the communities were revisited and focus group discussions were organised to debate about what had been discussed at the platform and to get their inputs and suggestions for the Action Plans. In December, a follow-up 1-day platform meeting gathered the same group of participants for collaborative monitoring. In the week prior to this meeting, all communities had been revisited, as had the individual stakeholders, including the companies and government officials. Below is an overview of the engagement activities.

Figure 2. Timeline of the Learning Platform



The group consisted of representatives from three companies (4 people), community members from five communities (7), government officials (5), civil society organisations (5) and a researcher (1). Over the course of the process, new participants joined, including the ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) coordinator of the participating forestry investment, and the representative from a second sugar company in the area. This was based on discussions and suggestions from the group itself.

## 2. Kick-off Learning Platform

On 21 September 2017, the group met for the first time in Jinja for a 2-day kick-off meeting. The meeting commenced with an elaborate presentation of the local research findings from the field, presenting some of the development challenges and priorities, ideas for making the investments more beneficial for community



members, and expectations for the future. Present were representatives from three companies (4 people), community representatives (7), civil society organisations (5), government officials (5) and researchers (2). From the local assessment and the discussions that followed in the platform, some overall challenges were identified:

- Socioeconomic issues, with a focus on **education**, were seen as a main barrier to local development in the area. Education was voiced most strongly by all communities involved in the preparatory local research as a main constraint on personal and community development. Companies also acknowledged the importance of this for them: for example, opportunities for finding future employees in the local areas, as well as education as a basis for their corporate social responsibility activities to really take root.
- **Land issues** – especially conflict over access to land and regulation concerning the use of land – were raised as an important challenge. Boundaries are currently not demarcated, leading to competing claims, and there is unclarity and non-conformity around what types of activities are allowed on different pieces of land, for example restrictions on the use of lake shores and hill tops. The issue was perceived as very important by all stakeholders: companies were currently unable to expand their activities, while communities had fewer livelihood opportunities since their access to land was being severely restricted by the expansion of company activities. All participants acknowledged that there was an urgent need for this issue to be addressed.
- **Limited community involvement and participation** in company activities was seen as an issue for investors, since their investments could be sabotaged by community members, and the government would then have to deal with increasing insecurity. From the communities’ point of view, involvement – particularly in the business models – offered a main opportunity for improving people’s income generating capacity. From all perspectives, the stronger involvement of communities in the investments was seen as vitally necessary for the sustainability of all investments.

On the second day of the kick-off Learning Platform meeting, three smaller groups were formed to initiate a process of collaborative planning, that is, coming up with new and practical ideas for each investment to better align the company’s activities with local priorities.

**Table 8. Priority areas and Action Plans**

Socioeconomic issues, with a focus on low quality of education (company 1 and company 2)	Limited community involvement and participation (company 1)	Land issues (company 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form community association to engage company 2 in providing support to surrounding schools</li> <li>• Consider bringing quality education to the community schools</li> <li>• Conduct sensitisation meetings on the government’s laws and policies on child labour, forestry services and wetlands</li> <li>• Form a group of all community members who are interested in educating their children at schools owned by company 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tentative secretariat</li> <li>• Periodic training and information sharing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give micro loans to communities</li> <li>• Introduce the rearing of high-quality animals and bee keeping</li> <li>• Intensive sensitisation of the community</li> <li>• Employment of locals: 99% of the people around the forest are locals</li> <li>• Corporate social responsibility. Stakeholders should identify services to provide for society, e.g. hospitals and schools</li> </ul>

Each priority area identified through the local research and platform discussions was addressed in some way. Two priority areas were taken up in the context of specific companies, whereas one challenge was taken up in the context of both companies (lack of access to quality education). This led to the formulation of concrete activities, though they were less well defined and it was often not so clear what the role of the companies was. The proposed actions to tackle the two other challenges (land issues and lack of community engagement) were more detailed and indicated clear actions to be taken by the respective company. This shows that Action Plans work better when developed in the context of a very specific investment, than when they are developed to tackle a broad topic, such as education in the area as a whole.

What is interesting in the context of the Action Plan on land issues, is that none of the proposed activities address the land conflict directly. We brought up this issue several times during the platform, but the conflicts over land were said to be extremely sensitive and linked to influential national players, up to the office of the president. It also seemed as though no solutions were available that would be beneficial to all stakeholders. For example, one solution that was promoted by different stakeholders, including communities themselves, was to give 500 ha of the investment area 'back' to communities to be used by community members. However, upon further inquiry it turned out that in the view of communities this would be for agriculture, whereas the company and government were referring to agro-friendly activities. Another issue with this 'in kind' compensation proposal was that our visits to four villages showed that they all expected to be allowed to use this area, whereas the village located next to the 500 ha said that they would not allow other villages to access this land because it would hardly be enough for them to survive on. The strong conflictive nature of the land issues as well as the involvement of strongly influential high-level people, as well as differences in perceptions of the potential temporary solution (through the 500 ha), made this issue too complex to be tackled by the Action Plan directly.

### *3. Responses to Action Plans from communities*

In October and November, follow-up visits were paid to all communities that had been visited as part of the local research that had preceded the platform. At both research locations, participants said that there had been more negative developments since our first visit. For company 1, respondents mentioned the decrease in the price paid for their produce. For company 2, respondents mentioned that they were now no longer allowed to rear any cattle in the plantations, whereas before some cattle rearing had still been allowed.

For the further group work on the Action Plans, it was decided that since a number of members from the education group were not present this time, and since some new participants fitted better in the other two groups, that the Action Plan on education would be taken up by the two other groups as a cross-cutting issue. This meant that the revised Action Plans were related to the two main companies in the platform. This also responded to the above observation that the education Action Plan was the least detailed and provided few indications for concrete follow-up and responsibilities.

#### **Company 1**

The main activity proposed for this company during the Learning Platform was a tentative secretariat on community-company relations. This was well appreciated in the group discussions in all three villages. People mentioned the non-functioning of existing producer associations and appreciated the idea of a stakeholder roundtable that would focus on issues broader than just sugarcane production. It was seen as an opportunity to continue the between communities and the company.

The Action Plan on education had proposed some activities related to the quality of education in the villages. Specifically, community members from Musoli had proposed to have children attend the company-funded schools (where the quality of education is much better than in other schools), even if their parents did not work directly for the company. This had resulted in a first inventory of parents in Musoli who were interested in educating their children at these schools. The Action Plan also proposed exploring options for improving existing schools in the villages. In general, people were positive about these proposed actions related to improving the quality of schools, though no implementation of these plans had been noticed by the villagers.

#### *Adaptations*

Since especially the proposed activity of organising a roundtable where stakeholders from communities, company and others can meet and discuss issues, this proposal was further elaborated on and made more concrete. Some details included in the elaborated plan are the development of a concept for the roundtable and working on a funding strategy. Members of this group became very enthusiastic about the establishment of this platform and even mentioned it as potentially something that could be promoted towards other companies in Uganda.

## **Company 2**

The Action Plan on land issues was the most relevant one for communities in and around the forestry plantation. The activities in the plan are focused on creating alternative sources of livelihood, rather than directly addressing land issues. In general people appreciated the proposed actions to increase alternative sources for livelihoods, to balance the decrease in area for cultivation and rearing livestock – although it seemed that some of the ideas would further increase the pressure on land. For example, the idea of bee keeping was in principle welcomed by community members, though they mentioned problems with growing flowers needed to sustain the bee colonies. This lack of flowers had led to the failure of an earlier bee keeping project. However, this contradicted the claims of the company, which said that villages had been provided with areas to grow flowers on – but that elites in the community had started to grow regular food crops in these areas. Another proposed action was the idea of providing micro loans to communities. This was something focus group participants were in particular interested in, especially as a way to buy quality fishing equipment to start fishing again (fishing had been banned and the national government had burned all old fishing boats). The Action Plan also proposed that the company would employ more locals. This was a proposal appreciated in the village of Luwerere (outside the actual reserve area, and thus not under threat of being evicted), but less so in the other two villages.

The Action Plan on education proposed to set up a community association to engage the company in providing support to surrounding schools. However, since the company only provides support to community facilities in villages outside the reserve area, responses to this proposal were mixed. The villages of Nakalanga and Bukaleba, both of which were under direct threat of being evicted, said the walking distances to the outside villages would be too far for their children. They said that they would prefer to have better education inside the reserve.

### *Adaptations*

In response to the community reactions to the Action Plan, the plan was slightly adapted, namely to address the lack of good governance at the village level through capacity building of community-based organisations, while also including more details about alternative livelihoods that do not necessarily need land, for example the provision of fishing nets (for which the company could provide support) to support the local fishers who had lost their income due to the government ban on unsustainable fishing techniques, as well as identifying organisations that can provide micro loans to villagers.

### *4. Potential for continuation*

One stakeholder – namely the district NGO forum in the area – was appointed by the group to take the lead in following up on the established group. The forum, a respected umbrella organisation in the region, was seen as the most independent stakeholder to facilitate the continuation of the platform. It was decided that the forum would take the lead in drafting a concept note on the basis of our experiences in Uganda, and to identify potential funders to ensure continuation.

