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Land Grabs and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

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“Land Grabs” and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Master’s Thesis: Joanna LaFrancesca

University of San Francisco, Masters in International Studies

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Fig. 1

Implications of “Land Grabs” on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Abstract:

This thesis focuses on the case study of Senegal to examine the implications of large-scale land acquisitions on the livelihoods of small-scale farmers. I investigate the diverse perspectives of market enthusiasts, human rights organizations, peasants, the state, and international financial organizations on large-scale land acquisitions. Based on primary research, I argue that the state of Senegal plays an active role in permitting “land grabs” and that they pose a threat to food sovereignty among Senegalese host communities. Lastly, I argue there needs to be a broader understanding of long-term consequences and risks to insure social justice in areas affected by “land grabs” in Senegal.

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This master's thesis would not have been possible without the help and support of my advisor, colleagues, family and friends in Senegal, The Gambia and California. I would like to acknowledge my thesis advisor, Professor Rue Ziegler PhD, of University of San Francisco, for all of her thoughtful edits, revisions and recommendations throughout the writing process. I also would like to acknowledge the following people and organizations who went out of their way to help me while I was in Senegal: Action Aid, especially Fatou Ngom, Marietou Dia, and Saer Sy, Yaguemar Diop and Yacin Cisse of CLUSA, Professor Amadou Ba and Mamadou Ndiaye of the University of St. Louis, Senegal, CCPA Kaolack, APROVAG Tambacounda and all of the interviewees who took time out of their busy schedules to speak with me. I would like to thank my family Matt, Rosemarie and Jack LaFrancesca and my boyfriend Devin Wilcox-McCombs for their endless support and encouragement. Lastly, I would like to thank the Jallow's, my Gambian host family, for their tireless love, patience and generosity and who inspired the topic of this thesis.

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Implications of “Land Grabs” on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Chapter One: Introduction

*“Farmers of the World against Land Grabbing: Land for Those who Work the Land and Feed the World” – banner held by participants at the World Social Forum, 2011.*¹

In February of 2011, 75,000 people from 132 countries participated in the 11th World Social Forum (WSF) in Dakar, Senegal to rally under the belief that “another world is possible”.² Established in 2001, the WSF was created as an alternative to the World Economic Forum to promote solidarity towards a more just, equal and sustainable world. Among some of the main speakers at the week-long event was Evo Morales, President of Bolivia, who spoke against “neo-liberalism and neo-colonization” and promoted a vision “of a future where public policy is based upon the needs of the people rather than the hunger of capitalism”.³ As introduced in the 1980’s, the economic term, neo-liberalism, refers to *laissez-faire* policies that favor government deregulation and privatization and encourage free trade among nations. Authors Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar refer to “the neoliberal consensus”, as it effects agriculture, in that it,

maintains that the ‘free market’ can and will take care of everything that governments in the global South once did to support agriculture and food consumption by the poor, and that government spending for these programs can be drastically reduced... this left poor countries in an especially vulnerable condition when prices for basic foods- wheat, corn, soybeans, food oils, and rice- rose on the world market.⁴

As argued by Magdoff and Tokar, an open market favors rich countries, which are better able to compete in global markets than poor countries. This asymmetrical relationship is

¹ “La Via Campesina.” Peasants from La Via Campesina join the World Social Forum opening march. http://www.viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=998:turkey-the-gerze-declaration-for-climate-justice-&catid=50:thousands-of-cancun-for-climate-justice&Itemid=195 (accessed October 23, 2013).

² “THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM 2011 IN DAKAR SENEGAL: INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FIND.” International Solidarity Find. <http://intersos.org/en/evidences/world-social-forum-2011-dakar-senegal-international-solidarity-find> (accessed October 20, 2013).

³ “La Via Campesina.” Peasants from La Via Campesina join the World Social Forum opening march.

⁴ Magdoff, Fred, and Brian Tokar. *Agriculture and food in crisis: conflict, resistance, and renewal*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010: 17.

exacerbated by protectionist practices, such as tariffs and subsidies that are maintained in rich countries at the expense of low-income nations. Open market enthusiasts claim that free trade levels out the playing field, creating an equal marketplace for global competitors, however, this is not the case since rich countries have a greater advantage than poor ones.⁵

One of the key issues presented at the WSF that encompasses themes of neoliberalism is the issue of large-scale land acquisitions, where investor countries and corporations are largely represented by the global North and host countries largely comprise the global South. Large-scale land acquisitions, or “land grabs” as popularized by the media, involve the leasing or purchasing of large plots of land for agricultural development and have generated considerable debate.

According to the International Land Coalition, 134 million hectares have already been “grabbed” in sub-Saharan Africa⁶. In Senegal, the case study of this thesis, 17% of arable land has been monopolized by wealthy investors. Public response to these large-scale land acquisitions includes opposition by development and human rights scholars, activists and local communities in host countries. While there are large discrepancies in agricultural practices between high-income and low-income nations, the most notable are between large-scale agriculture and small-scale agriculture. As Brian Tokar and Fred Magdoff write,

Large-scale farming is defined (here) as capitalized agricultural enterprises operating as businesses often of a corporate nature, using wage and salaried labor, deploying intensive agricultural techniques to maximize commercial output. Smallholder farming on the other hand entails family labor producing for commercial sale and household subsistence.⁷

⁵ Ibid.

⁶“Making Agriculture Investment Work for Africa.” Address, parliamentarian's response to the land rush from International Institute for Sustainable Development, Cotonou, Benin, October 4, 2012.

⁷ Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar: 311-12.

Related to the debate concerning the consequences of “land grabs” is a disagreement about which agricultural method – agribusinesses or small-holder farming – is most suitable to meet future global demands for food and which can best assure human rights related to food. The United Nations reports that the global population is set to increase by a billion in the next 12 years, and that by the year 2050, there will be 9.6 billion people (there are 7.2 billion currently) on the planet, with the most growth projected to occur in developing regions, and Africa specifically.⁸

Large-scale land acquisitions, conducted by either multi-national corporations, (MNCs), foreign governments, or local elites and governments is not a new phenomenon. Since the onset of colonialism, transnational land transactions have occurred in the name of profit. The debate concerning “land grabs” centers on whether or not these transactions benefit local economic development or harm the agricultural sustainability of host communities. In the past five years, large-scale land acquisitions have increased in magnitude, estimations of hectares “grabbed” worldwide went from 20-50 million in 2009 to 203-230 million in 2012.⁹ This trend can be traced directly to the collision of the global food crises and financial crises of 2007-2008 and 2010-2011. During these periods, global food prices soared. According to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the global food index price-“a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities”¹⁰- in 2008 was at 201.4 and at 230.1 in

⁸ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2013). "World Population to reach 9.6 billion by 2050 with most growth in developing regions, especially Africa". World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision, Press Release (13 June 2013):

⁹ Kugelman, Michael, and Susan L. Levenstein. The global farms race: land grabs, agricultural investment, and the scramble for food security. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2013:1

¹⁰ "FAO.org." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: FAO Food Price Index. <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/FoodPricesIndex/en/> (accessed November 21, 2013).

2011, alarmingly high rates in comparison to 2000 when the global food index price was only 91.1.¹¹ The year 2011 marks the highest food prices since the 1970s.

A multitude of investors (local, foreign, private and government) increasingly have seen the value of purchasing and leasing land, which leads to its commodification. Many investors have seized the opportunity to invest in agriculture for biofuel production and also to grow more food for their respective populations in a time of perceived crisis and food shortage. For example, Saudi Arabia is one country that has been actively involved in land investments in sub-Saharan Africa. Due to a shortage of arable farmlands in this country, the government looks to grow staple crops in Ethiopia as part of Saudi Arabia's own strategy for national food sovereignty.¹²

Due to the intimate link between land and food, large-scale land acquisitions have serious global and local implications on food systems. This thesis considers the case of Senegal and examines the implications that "land grabs" have on food sovereignty, food security and social justice in host countries. Food security was first defined in 1996 at the World Food Summit as, "food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."¹³ Throughout this thesis, I include food security as a component under the greater umbrella of food sovereignty. Food sovereignty is a term that was first coined by the international organization, *La Via Campesina*, and is defined as,

"the right of each country or group of countries to define its agricultural policy in the interest of its population, to develop and protect its domestic production and markets in

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Narula, Smita. "The Global Land Rush: Markets, Rights, and the Politics of Food." *Stanford Journal of International Law* 49, no. 1 (2013): 101-172:1.

¹³ "An Introduction to the Basic Concepts of Food Security." FAO.
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al936e/al936e00.pdf> (accessed October 5, 2013).

order to satisfy the need for healthy, sufficient, culturally and religiously acceptable food, and that they also be fairly compensated for the value of their agricultural labor.”¹⁴

This paper takes the issue of food security one step further by incorporating the aspect of decision-making at the local level. By these definitions, food security can be imported, but food sovereignty cannot; the latter a product of local policies and practices. Throughout this thesis, I use the term food sovereignty in an effort to acknowledge the role of communities and states while encompassing important elements of food security.

The immediate consequence of “land grabs” is that they remove land from cultivation by local farmers, directly challenging food sovereignty which may have negative implications on food justice and social justice. This thesis examines “why” in the case of Senegal. The research questions I pose with regard to “land grabs” in Senegal are as follows:

- What are the social, economic, and agricultural impacts of large-scale land acquisitions on host countries like Senegal?
- What implications does large-scale commercial usages of land have on the local food system?
- In what ways is food sovereignty among smallholder famers affected by land acquisitions?
- How do small-scale famers contribute to local food systems in Senegal outside of large-scale agriculture?

I explore these questions and the underlying theories in this thesis through a review of the relevant literature, including debates, theoretical frameworks, land tenure history, an overview of “land grabs” in West Africa, and interviews and observations from my five-weeks of fieldwork in three separate regions in Senegal. I present different perspectives centering on agricultural

¹⁴ "Food First." Dakar Declaration. http://www.foodsovereigntyours.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/EnglishFINAL_DakarDeclarationWAS.pdf (accessed October 5, 2013).

development, including agroecology, neoliberalism, food sovereignty, governance and social justice. Lastly, my key arguments reveal the active role of the Senegalese state in “land grabs”, how that participation threatens future production and food sovereignty, and the need to anticipate possible negative consequences of “land grabs” in order to protect social justice and food sovereignty for affected populations in Senegal.

“Land Grabs” and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Chapter Two: Research Methods

I arrived in Dakar, Senegal the day that Ramadan ended. The excitement of the *feste* prayer day was tangible, and I was beyond thrilled to be back in West Africa after nearly two years away. The first thing I remember noticing in the taxi ride downtown was bright blue spray paint on a beige wall near the highway that read, *l’agribusiness est une pretexte*.¹⁵ I chuckled a little to myself from the backseat of the cab thinking of the coincidence, and also making a mental note of how “free” Senegal is compared to neighboring The Gambia, where I had previously lived.

This thesis examines the effects of large-scale land acquisitions on the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, namely on their food sovereignty and social justice. I am interested in exploring this topic for a number of reasons. In 2009 to 2011 I was working as a health volunteer with the Peace Corps in The Gambia, and was lucky to live in a small Fulani farming community. Through that experience, I saw how dependent the livelihoods of my host family and community are on subsistence farming, and how crucial environmental sustainability is to food sovereignty. The importance of small scale farming on local food systems and food accessibility, made me wonder about future food security in the face of large-scale agriculture, and of course, large-scale land acquisitions.

I began learning more about “land grabs” in a Global Health and Food Security course at the University of San Francisco, and was surprised to learn that the land acquisitions were occurring in Senegal, which surrounds entirely except for a very narrow strip on the Atlantic,

¹⁵ Agribuissnes is a pretext.

The Gambia. After reading more about the plight of social and environmental injustices that small holder farmers in host communities were facing as a result of “land grabs”, I decided to pursue the topic for my MA thesis. A deeper presentation on how “land grabs” pose to threaten social justice and food sovereignty in Senegal is explored in chapter five.

In order to conduct this research, I used both primary research and secondary research methods, including my fieldwork in Senegal. This chapter will be broken into the following subsectors; research strategies, data collection, limitations and framework for data analysis.

Research Strategies

In order to gain access to the answers for the above questions, I established two contacts in Senegal prior to leaving for my fieldwork. The first contact is with international human rights NGO, Action Aid, and the second contact with an agriculture NGO that is in partnership with United States Department of Agriculture, (USDA).

The first strategy I used was “snowballing”¹⁶ and growing my informant network upon arrival in Senegal. While I had some familiar connections in Senegal through previous work experience in The Gambia, I was relatively new to the circle of NGO members and agriculture extensionists. Upon arrival, I met with two primary contacts, who graciously took the time to explain to me the current situation in Senegal and describe the key players. Action Aid, which is launching an urgent appeal/investigation on “land grabs”, was especially helpful in this process. From this start, I had a list of recommended contacts located throughout the country, and an introduction that made it easy for me to meet with them.

¹⁶ To increase rapidly in size, intensity or importance.

I used the same snowballing strategy to gain more contacts after speaking with interviewees, who also kindly introduced me to their networks. In some cases, with the introduction of contacts, I was able to meet “random” people to interview as well.

Data Collection

I collected most of my data through library research and fieldwork interviews. I used books, reports by international NGO’s and think-tanks, the Land Matrix project¹⁷, which is a live database funded by Oxfam, European Commission and Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs to facilitate a network of researchers to promote transparency and accountability in land decisions, official government documents, World Bank literature and academic articles to further my understanding of “land grabs” in general as well as in Senegal. I conducted formal interviews with 15 diverse individuals who provided informed consent. Some have wished to remain anonymous in this report, so I have used pseudo names to protect their identity. The interviewee breakdown is, five farmers, one pastoralist, one land lawyer, and eight members of civil society¹⁸. Three of the interviewees (two farmers and one human rights worker) were women. I tape recorded all of the interviews and took extensive notes of my observations during each interview.

Due to time constraints, I was unable to engage in participant observation, but I was still able to collect a surprising amount of data in five weeks. It was important to travel to Senegal to

¹⁷ The Land Matrix is a global and independent land monitoring initiative in order to facilitate an open development community of citizens, researchers, policy-makers and technology specialists to promote transparency and accountability in decisions over land and investment. <http://landmatrix.org/about/>

¹⁸ It is important to define civil society and the sensitivities that surround the term. Civil society is defined as an organization or group of people that is not affiliated with government, and works towards the greater good. Some examples of this include NGOs, church groups and school clubs. However, social scientists point out the flaws in this definition, which can also include negative organizations such as gangs, whom may be working for the greater good of their group, but not society. I use this term sparingly, referring to NGOs, community organizations and human rights organizations and acknowledge the controversies concerning this term.

learn first hand about local land issues and I found that everyone I talked to and met was extremely hospitable and willing to help with my work. I was surprised at how openly people talked about the State, and how freely they criticized the roles of the national government and the international community in development. From my experience in The Gambia, any kind of dissent against the Government or the President, may result in arrests or disappearances, so people there are very hesitant to express any controversial ideas or thoughts.¹⁹ The freedom of speech in Senegal undoubtedly contributed to the willingness of informants to talk to me about land issues.

While some interviews were conducted in English and one in Pulaar (which was the language I learned as a Peace Corps volunteer)²⁰, I was extremely fortunate to have the support and help of translators for the interviews which were conducted in French and Wolof. Yaguemar Diop of Cooperative League of the USA, (CLUSA), assisted me with translations while I was in Kaolack, and Mamadou Ndiya, Masters Candidate at the University of St. Louis, worked as my research assistant for the week I was in St. Louis. Without their help, I would not have been able to get as much research done.

Limitations

There have been a number of challenges in this research project. The first and largest one has been the limited time allocated for fieldwork. I was in Senegal for a total of five weeks, making in-depth ethnographic research impossible. In order to collect data from different geographic regions in Senegal, I was not able to spend more than a week in any one particular

¹⁹ President Jammeh became president in The Gambia in 1994 after a bloodless coup. He is considered a dictator by many in the international community, notoriously violating basic human rights.

²⁰ I also used a translator for the interview conducted in Pulaar to make sure the message of the informant was properly understood.

site. This caused me to rely heavily on a local NGO and think-tank network of people, who I was able to contact through connections from my previous work with the Peace Corps. This undoubtedly affected the rapport I was able to build with these groups, since most often I was meeting informants for the first time and then interviewing them the same day. The trust was established by word-of-mouth, and I was able to achieve rapport within the first few minutes of each interview. The interviews were not random, since I was referred by previous contacts, although there were a few interviews I was able to conduct by chance; for example with the land lawyer and a few of the farmers.

Despite limitation of time, I was able to complete my interviews. I was also able to be sufficiently flexible to travel by *set-plas*, which is a form of public transportation that consists of an old station wagon where each seat (seven total) is sold to a passenger. In this way I was able to visit the three different regions in Senegal, and conducted some of my interviews along the way. The *set-plas* rides also gave me ample time to reflect on my experience and to view a large portion of the country, albeit bouncing around for hours on end on pot-holed dirt roads in flash flood storms while crushed like a sardine in an over-stuffed car with passengers and their luggage. The map in Fig. 2 shows the routes that I made during my fieldwork. Each trip required a full day of



Fig. 2

travel including hours of waiting in a *garas*²¹ for a gas tank to fill, as well as multiple hours²² once on the road.

Research Schedule

Since I had a lot to cover in five weeks, secondary research and pre-departure preparation was critical to make the most effective use of limited time. As noted previously during my fieldwork, I conducted 15 formal interviews in three different regions of Senegal. First I travelled to the central Kaolack region, then the eastern Tambacounda region, lastly the northern St. Louis region, with two trips to the capital of Dakar in between travels to meet with national or international peasant and human rights organizations based there. To make efficient use of the short time, I worked quickly, transcribing my interviews on the go and continually calling potential (when the cellphone provider *Orange* permitted) contacts and scheduling interviews.

Framework for Data Analysis

Through my literature review, I learned that the voice of small-scale farmers is largely underrepresented. In my interviews, I had the opportunity to meet not only small-scale farmers but numerous individuals who work professionally with rural farming communities. Once all of the data had been collected I analyzed the findings from the interviews in light of debates in the literature on “land grabs” in Africa. Specifically, I cross-referenced the evidence I gathered from my fieldwork with literature from the food sovereignty movement, development discourse, and cases of “land grabs” in other West African nations.

²¹ A Garas is a car-park, similar to a bus station, where vehicles of public transportation depart from.

²² The car rides ranged from 4 hours to 7 hours depending on where I was going and road conditions.

“Land Grabs” and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Chapter Three: Land Grabs and Food Sovereignty; a Review of the Literature

How are “land grabs” effecting rural farming communities and food sovereignty?

This thesis explores the multi-faceted effects that large-scale land acquisitions are having among rural farming communities in Senegal. The concerns most central to the phenomenon are highlighted in this literature review, and include social justice, food sovereignty, and governance. This chapter frames the debate on “land grabs” from a theoretical perspective. The debate is represented by two main camps of thought: a market-plus approach and a rights based approach.²³ The market-plus approach views large-scale land acquisitions as a development opportunity and a way to include recipient countries in the global market, while the rights based approach views such land acquisitions as a violation of human rights and social justice. Related to this debate I examine the international peasant perspective and the concept of food sovereignty and how it relates to land deals. In the following chapter, I examine the issue as it relates to my case study of Senegal.

This literature review examines the current debate, from the perspectives of international agencies, scholars, corporations, the state, non-governmental organizations, and civil society²⁴. In this paper I use the term “land grabs” to describe the leasing or purchasing of large quantities of land across the globe, often for export agriculture production, a topic of considerable controversy. Through an interview I highlight later in the thesis, I was informed that the term, “large-scale land acquisitions” does not properly describe what is occurring in sub-Saharan

²³ Narula, Smita. "The Global Land Rush: Markets, Rights, and the Politics of Food." *Stanford Journal of International Law* 49, no. 1 (2013): 101-172.

Africa. This term implies that the land transactions are conducted in a legitimate, transparent manner, which is not often the case in “land grab” deals. Thus, I use the term “land grabs” in quotations, as an acknowledgement of the political charge and sensitivity surrounding the term.

This review presents four key themes. First, I provide an overview of the theoretical frameworks, secondly, describe the market-plus approach versus the rights based approach, and thirdly, I reveal the perspective of varying actors, and discuss food sovereignty and food security. Finally, I conclude with trends and gaps in the literature.

Background

“Land grabs” are not a new phenomenon. Resource extraction has been a big business on a global scale for many years, some would argue since the onset of colonialism. Cases of “land grabs” date back 150 years to the first wave of globalization, with the emergence of six commodities on the global market, sugarcane, tea, rubber, bananas, palm oil, and food staples.²⁵ At the time, investors were largely comprised of corporations from the United States and Europe with large-scale land acquisitions taking place in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Today, with both the food and financial crises of 2007-08 and again in 2010-11, “land grabs” have re-entered the public arena and have been variously represented in media, foreign policies, and NGO reports. The trend is evident in the increase of agricultural investment, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, as noted by the World Bank (WB).

In 2008-2009, 56 million hectares of land were targeted by foreign investors, with 75% of those represented in sub-Saharan Africa.²⁶ According to the International Land Coalition, the

²⁵Kugelman, Michael, and Susan L. Levenstein. The global farms race: land grabs, agricultural investment, and the scramble for food security. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2013. 7

²⁶ Smita Narula, 106.

latest figure for sub-Saharan African “land grabs” is around 134 million hectares, which represents an area larger than the entire country of South Africa.²⁷ Although the current debate focuses on whether or not “land grabs” can be used for positive development, the literature reveals dynamic, complex debates; bringing into question the motives of actors including; MNCs, the state, local government officials, and elites. The increasing commoditization of land and the voice, or lack of, rural farmers’ is clearly apparent.

While there are differing opinions among scholars concerning “land grabs”, there is agreement on causal factors for the recent surge. MNC’s, most notably from affluent countries, have been in the resource extracting business for centuries. A high demand for, and dwindling of natural resources such as oil, coal and copper for example, has led to a global search for new resources, usually located in the global South. Today, the resource in demand is largely agricultural farmland, to be used for the production of agricultural crops for export both for food consumption, as well as conversion into biofuels as an alternative fuel for automobiles.

Many investors have chosen to invest in agriculture due to a lack of necessary resources for food production; namely water and land. The drive to produce food and become food secure is a leading incentive in land deals.²⁸ For example, in the north of Senegal a French/American company called *les Grands Domaines du Senegal* is producing fruits and vegetables for export back to Europe and America. However, staple food production is not the sole motivator of investors. In Senegal, bio-fuel production is a main attraction, due to incentives provided by European governments to reduce carbon emissions. The two main case studies that this thesis

²⁷ "Making Agriculture Investment Work for Africa." A Parliamentarian’s Response to the Land Rush from International Institute for Sustainable Development, Cotonou, Benin, October 4, 2012.

http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2013/pap_concept_note_en.pdf

²⁸ "GRAIN — Land grabbing and food sovereignty in West and Central Africa." GRAIN — Home.

<http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4575-land-grabbing-and-food-sovereignty-in-west-and-central-africa>

focuses on are in the biofuel production business and will be further explored in chapters four and five.

With much land in the global North already in use, foreign investors search for alternative land opportunities. The vast spans of “underutilized”²⁹ land in sub-Saharan Africa provide MNCs, foreign governments, and local elites with the next “logical” option for agriculture development. Out of the ten largest land deals between the years 2007-2011, six of them have taken place in sub-Saharan Africa.³⁰ These land transactions have led to many discrepancies both among host communities and within the international community. A frequent problem is that “land grabs” are taking place without transparency and accountability from investors.³¹

Many countries do not have in place legal or procedural mechanisms to protect local rights and take account of local interests, livelihoods and welfare. Even in the minority of countries where legal requirements for community consultation are in place, processes to negotiate land access with communities remain unsatisfactory.³²

Although issues of transparency in land deals are acknowledged by many, the approach on how to address them varies greatly within the debate.

²⁹ There is debate concerning what is considered unused land and what is considered land and by whom. For example, there are many open fields that appear to be unused but are actually ancestral burial grounds, or grazing fields for livestock. Fallow fields also have benefits to the ecosystem.

de Schrutter, Olivier. "How not to think of land grabbing: three critiques of large scale land investment in farmland." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38, no. No.2 (2011)

³⁰ Kugelman, Michael and Levenstein, Susan. *The global farms race: land grabs, agricultural investment, and the scramble for food security*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2013:13-15.

³¹ Kaag, Mayke, Yaram Gaye, and Marieke Kruis. "Accountability in Land Governance A Study into the Stakes in Senegal." *LANDac Research Report* 1 (2011):

³² Cotula, Lorenzo, et al. "Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural investment and land deals in Africa." *FAO, IIED and IFAD* 1 (2009):7.

In her report, Associate Professor and Faculty Director at the Center for Human Rights and Global Justice, at New York University School of Law, Smita Narula presents the debate around “land grabs” in two separate camps of thought, the market-plus approach and the human rights based approach. I have found that her presentation best captures the debate and I use her insights as a basis of analysis.

Proponents argue that these investments can support economic development in host states while boosting global food production. But critics charge that these "land grabs " disregard land users' rights and further marginalize already vulnerable groups: small-scale farmers, pastoralists, and indigenous peoples who are being displaced from their land and from resources essential to their survival. Amid mounting global protests, two dominant frameworks have emerged to assess and contest the global rush for agricultural land.³³

Theoretical Frameworks

This section of the literature review will examine the theories of crucial anthropologists, social scientists, professors, and writers who present theories relevant to the scenario examined in the thesis. The underlying theories most relevant are those concerning weak states politics, the agroecology vs. industrial agriculture debate, neoliberalism, the market-plus approach vs. the human rights based approach, the peasant perspective, and modernization vs. commoditization.

Weak States

In his book, Warlord Politics and African States, William Reno, a professor at Northwestern University, addresses the role of “weak” states in Africa. The term “warlord politics” describes African nation-states who have reduced the scope of the government, and in turn have turned to foreign allies rather than internal ones for partnerships in economic

³³ Smita Narula:1

development endeavors³⁴. Reno argues that by partnering with foreign investors (often times sponsored by the World Bank) African states stifle internal opposition and competition for power and resources.

Economic development is abjured when it threatens to put resources into the hands of those who might use them to challenge the rulers' position. Consequently, anxious rulers contract a wide array of economic roles to outsiders, in part to deny resources to internal rivals and to use outsiders' skills and connections to gather as much wealth as possible.³⁵

The countries Reno uses as examples of this are Liberia, Sierra Leone, Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) and Nigeria. While Senegal may not practice "warlord politics" at the extreme of these countries, some of the perspectives presented by Reno are also relevant to the "land grab" case in Senegal. Specifically, Reno's explanation of a "weak state", or a state that exists along informal political networks³⁶.

Central to Reno's thesis concerning weak states and warlord politics is the role of the World Bank. Reno explains that all but one of Africa's nation-states accepts loans from the World Bank, and are thus forced to follow their loan conditions.³⁷ The World Bank's main objective is to develop Africa, by means of liberalizing the market. This is done by opening each country up for "foreign investors to be welcomed like partners".³⁸ This kind of dependence on foreign investors and allies rather than localized partners, creates some of the power dynamics and friction that contribute to warlord politics, and weak states. Reno argues that weaker states are an outcome of a global political economy, very much under the guidance of the World Bank.

³⁴ Reno, William. "Political Logic of Weak States." In *Warlord politics and African states*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998. 1-40.

³⁵ Ibid: 1.

³⁶ Ibid: 2.

³⁷ Ibid: 5.

³⁸ Ibid.

Global recognition of sovereignty is pivotal to explaining the politics of weak states in permitting agencies such as the World Bank, supposedly designed to enforce a standard of behavior in global economic matters, to deal with these new political authorities. The resulting political authorities, heavily reliant on non-state global actors and nearly bereft of formal state institutions, also fail to fit into realist notions that predict that rulers will maximize their political authority through self-sufficiency...³⁹

Such global economic networks have been noted by Immanuel Wallerstein in his world system theory⁴⁰ as well as theories presented by Max Weber noting the web of global capitalism. Both theorists are used in supporting Reno's argument where there has been an economic power shift away from nation-states in an effort to "cope with global capitalism", as represented in weak states and warlord politics.⁴¹ Reno summarizes this by stating, that "forces of the global economy give rulers tools with which they can respond to political struggle by acting in their own interest."⁴²

Agroecology vs Industrial Agriculture

Another controversy that contributes to the theoretical framework behind "land grabs", is the debate on how to grow food to meet the needs of a growing global population. As was mentioned in chapter one, by the year 2050, there will be 9.6 billion people on the planet, with the most growth projected to occur in developing regions, and Africa specifically.⁴³ This has spurred a lot of debate on how to feed an influx of people globally. There are two primary arguments on how to best achieve this. The first relates to agroecology, or "the application of

³⁹ Ibid: 10.

⁴⁰ The development of global capitalism is detrimental to a large portion of the world's population.

⁴¹ Ibid: 38.

⁴² Ibid: 40.

⁴³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2013). "World Population to reach 9.6 billion by 2050 with most growth in developing regions, especially Africa". World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision, Press Release (13 June 2013):

ecological concepts and principles to the design and management of sustainable agroecosystems,”⁴⁴ which favors small-scale agriculture based on ecologically sound principles, a practice contrary to large-scale agriculture. The second view, sees this as a “romantic” idea of how to provide food and develop agriculture in poorer countries and supports a more industrialized form of agriculture reliant on modern technologies.

This perspective supports agricultural advancements through the use of technical agricultural inputs and methods, like genetically modified organisms (GMOs), large machinery, and monoculture production. These are the same methods that have been supported by western investors, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Alliance for a Green Revolution (AGRA) in Africa. One notable difference between the two ideas is that one stems organically at the peasant level, and one comes from outside investors and scientists, usually from the global North.

Agroecology

Miguel Altieri is an Agroecology professor at the University of California, Berkley and has conducted extensive research on an alternative and natural approach to agriculture. He criticizes the approach of large agribusinesses, such as Monsanto and Cargill, and supports a more ecologically sensitive, sustainable solution. For Altieri, the food, fuel and economic crises of today are a product of capitalism. Thus, there is no benefit in following the same problem that created all the problems⁴⁵. In order to insure food, there needs to be a new paradigm from what

⁴⁴Altieri, Miguel. "Agroecology: principles and strategies for designing sustainable farming systems.." Berkley. http://nature.berkeley.edu/~miguel-alt/principles_and_strategies.html (accessed October 20, 2013).

⁴⁵ Miguel Altieri.

has been practiced on a large-global scale, and for him that is a movement towards food sovereignty by means of agroecology and land reform.⁴⁶

Altieri states that industrial agriculture has already failed to feed the world and that an increase in production (which is the platform of industrial agriculture) does not guarantee that that food will be accessible to everyone, especially the poor. “Obviously we know the problem with feeding the world doesn’t have anything to do with production.”⁴⁷ Once this myth is realized, then, in his perspective, agroecology makes perfect sense.

The concept of sustainability... is useful because it captures a set of concerns about agriculture which is conceived as the result of the co-evolution of socioeconomic and natural systems. A wider understanding of the agricultural context requires the study between agriculture, the global environment and social systems given that agricultural development results from the complex interaction of a multitude of factors. It is through this deeper understanding of the ecology of agricultural systems that doors will open to new management options more in tune with the objectives of a truly sustainable agriculture.⁴⁸

The scientific research Altieri presents supports his claim. The methods used through agroecology focus on the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity and soil, which are both extremely important to nutrients that support crops. The overuse of chemical fertilizer, an outcome of a monoculture, actually has negative effects on soil quality, thus effecting the sustainability of such farming techniques. Altieri explains that, “the main focus lies on the reduction or elimination of agrochemical inputs through changes in management to assure

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Altieri, Miguel . Interview by Transnational Institute. Personal interview. Video Public Lecture, January 12, 2012. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2yFvD8wuLmU>

⁴⁸ Miguel Altieri. “Principles and strategies for designing sustainable farming systems”.

adequate plant nutrition and plant protection through organic nutrient sources and integrated pest management, respectively.”⁴⁹

This is done by following ecological principles including:

- Enhance recycling of biomass and optimizing nutrient availability and balancing nutrient flow.
- Securing favorable soil conditions for plant growth, particularly by managing organic matter and enhancing soil biotic activity.
- Minimizing losses due to flows of solar radiation, air and water by way of microclimate management, water harvesting and soil management through increased soil cover.
- Species and genetic diversification of the agroecosystem in time and space.
- Enhance beneficial biological interactions and synergisms among agrobiodiversity components thus resulting in the promotion of key ecological processes and services.⁵⁰

The end result and “ultimate goal of agroecological design is to integrate components so that overall biological efficiency is improved, biodiversity is preserved, and the agroecosystem productivity and its self-sustaining capacity is maintained.”⁵¹ This agroecological perspective focuses on small holder producers. Altieri and other advocates believe that small farmers are the key to global food security that they are more productive and resource conserving than large-scale agribusiness corporations, and that agroecology is more sustainable, and respectful of biodiversity and the climate.⁵² He argues that although many people believe small-scale farmers cannot feed a growing global population with “non-modern” agricultural technologies, he argues that they are already feeding a large portion of the world.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

Social rural movements embrace the concept of food sovereignty as an alternative to the neoliberal approach that puts its faith in inequitable international trade to solve the world's food problem. Instead, food sovereignty focuses on local autonomy, local markets, local production-consumption cycles, energy and technological sovereignty and farmer to farmer networks.⁵³

Paul Collier and Commercialized Agriculture

On the opposite side of the debate is economist Paul Collier, a professor at Oxford University. Collier has worked for the World Bank and is author of The Bottom Billion, which investigates why there are a billion people living in poverty and what can be done. Collier has also written extensively about agriculture and is a supporter of industrial agriculture as the key to food security, he critiques agroecology and organic agriculture.

And finally, the romantics have portrayed the food crisis as demonstrating the failure of scientific commercial agriculture, which they have long found distasteful. In its place they advocate the return to organic small-scale farming -- counting on abandoned technologies to feed a prospective world population of nine billion.⁵⁴

Clearly, Collier does not support the idea that agroecology can feed the world. For him and others who support this perspective, new technologies and commercialized agricultural is the best way to produce more food and overcome hunger.⁵⁵ This perspective supports the projects

⁵³Altieri, Miguel. "Small farms as a planetary ecological asset: Five key reasons why we should support the revitalization of small farms in the Global South." Food First/Institute for Food and Development Policy. <http://www.foodfirst.org/en/node/2115> (accessed October 19, 2013).

⁵⁴"The Politics of Hunger." Foreign Affairs. <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64607/paul-collier/the-politics-of-hunger#> (accessed October 20, 2013).

⁵⁵"Paul Collier on African Agriculture and Urbanization." Urbanization Project. <http://urbanizationproject.org/blog/paul-collier-on-african-agriculture-and-urbanization#.Uo2FSPnryy9> (accessed October 20, 2013).

and investments made by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), as I discuss in chapter five.

Collier argues that peasants cannot feed the world, and that they are inefficient as producers.

The productivity of peasant agriculture, especially in Africa, has lagged far behind international standards. Farmers and pastoralists are occupying vast tracts of land that could produce much more if better managed. It has long been evident that scale economies are important for the ancillary aspects of agriculture: the logistics of getting crops to market, the finance of inputs, and the technology for innovation all favour size.⁵⁶

According to Collier and his supporters, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and industrialized agriculture will feed the world and contribute to the development of the “bottom billion”. This is the same argument that has fueled structural adjustment policies⁵⁷ and has made “land grabbing” legal in many African countries. African agriculture has been targeted by large international monetary institutions and investors as the key to provide food security and enhance the African economy.

For economic development to succeed in Africa in the next 50 years, African agriculture will have to change beyond recognition. Production will have to have increased massively, but also labour productivity, requiring a vast reduction in the proportion of the population engaged in agriculture and a large move out of rural areas.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Paul Collier - The World Food Crisis, Mark II | Global Policy Journal - Practitioner, Academic, Global Governance, International Law, Economics, Security, Institutions, Comment & Opinion, Media, Events, Journal." Global Policy. <http://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/12/01/2011/paul-coller-world-food-crisis-mark-ii> (accessed October 20, 2013).

⁵⁷ There will be a thorough explanation and example of this as it relates specifically to Senegal in chapter five.

⁵⁸ Collier, Paul, and Stefan Dercon. "African Agriculture in 50 Years: Small Holders in a Rapidly Changing World?." Food and Agriculture Organization 1 (2009): 1-13.

The “romanticism” of peasant agriculture is emphasized as farming, it is hard work and many peasants strive for a better life for their children. The solution, is “modern agriculture”, “Africa’s future is not as a continent of happy peasants; it will adopt the American model of successful development based on an abundance of land. Happy American peasants have become the preserve of Hollywood nostalgia.”⁵⁹

The next perspective, the last theoretical framework I examine in this literature review is based on neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism

For just as enclaves, of say, mining production are often fenced off (literally and metaphorically) from their surrounding societies, they are at the same time linked up, with a “flexibility” that is exemplary of the most up-to-date... neoliberalism, both with giant transnational corporations and with networks of small contractors and subcontractors that span thousands of miles and link nodes across multiple continents.⁶⁰

In the beginning of economist Dambisa Moyo’s⁶¹ Dead Aid, she opens with a letter that was found on the dead bodies of two Guinean teenage boys who had snuck onto a European plane in the luggage compartment, in an effort to migrate to Europe. Moyo, who agrees with Collier, used this anecdote to pull at the heart strings of her readers, portraying the image that Africans want to be like Europeans, and that they should be and that foreign investment and an open market can get them there. The end of the letter reads,

⁵⁹ Collier, Paul. "The Last Hunger Season: A Year in an African Farm Community on the Brink of Change" By Roger Thurow." Washington Post. http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-09-07/entertainment/35498111_1_african-agriculture-school-fees-small-farmers (accessed October 20, 2013).

⁶⁰ Ferguson, James. *Global shadows: Africa in the neoliberal world order*. Durham [N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006: 14.

⁶¹ Dambisa Moyo was born in Zambia and educated at Oxford, she was worked for the World Bank and writes about the negative effects of foreign aid.

Therefore, we Africans, especially we the African children and youth, are asking you to set up a great, effective organization for Africa so that it might make progress. And if you find that we have sacrificed our lives, it is because we suffer too much in Africa. Our greatest wish, though, is to study, and we ask that you help us to study to become like you in Africa.⁶²

In chapter eight titled “Of Mimicry and Membership”, of his book Global shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order anthropologist James Ferguson also presents this letter, but in a different light, “there is a specific sort of embarrassment, as well as stark horror, in reading this letter. It is an embarrassment of encountering Africans- in this ostensibly postcolonial era- who humbly beg Europeans to come to their aid and who bluntly ask for help in order “to become like you”.⁶³ The differing analysis between Moyo and Ferguson reflects varying perspectives on neoliberalism and economic development. Moyo, an economist, believes that foreign investment and intervention (not aid) are the steps that need to be made for Africa to develop, while such intervention principles and attitudes, especially concerning resource extraction, resonates differently with Ferguson who is an anthropologist.

According to neoliberalist approaches, it constitutes a set of economic principles that are “essentially about making trade between nations easier, it is about a freer movement of goods, resources and enterprises in a bid to always find cheaper resources, to maximize profits and efficiency.”⁶⁴ The economic initiatives and transactions behind “land grabs” can be viewed through this neoliberal lens.

⁶² James Ferguson: 156.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ "A Primer on Neoliberalism." - Global Issues. <http://www.globalissues.org/article/39/a-primer-on-neoliberalism#Neoliberalismis> (accessed November 20, 2013).

This approach is essential for understanding part of the “land grab” debate including the market-plus approach as well as the modernization of agriculture. While I am not making the argument that all “land grabs” are done in a neoliberal fashion, it is important to acknowledge that many of the investors in large-scale land acquisitions are carried out by foreign investors who rely heavily on development rhetoric.

The Market-Plus Approach

Many financial institutions, corporations and states, hold that while foreign⁶⁵ “land-grabs” have the potential to be harmful, they also have the potential to economically benefit stakeholders. This approach undergirds a variety of international development schemes by the World Bank Group. According to the World Bank, “approach privileges market-led processes as engines for economic growth and increased agricultural productivity, but also recognizes the need for proper business, legal, and regulatory environments to help investments flourish.” The idea that the market will promote development and eradicate poverty is not a new one, it is the philosophy behind the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) of the nineteen-seventies and eighties.

For example, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is a multi-national organization that partners with governments, organizations and investors to promote food security on the continent. “Africa must achieve its own food security. To do that requires nothing less than a complete transformation of the agricultural sector.”⁶⁶ In order to expand and transform a regions agricultural sector, besides the necessary agricultural inputs, there is a need

⁶⁵ More will follow on the role of national land grabs, something that is incredibly relevant to the case of Senegal.

⁶⁶ "Vision and Mission." AGRA. <http://www.agra.org/AGRA/en/who-we-are/about-the-alliance-for-a-green-revolution-in-africa/> (accessed November 20, 2013).

for land. This is where the “land grab” debate comes in. Those who support the market-based approach do not view such land transactions, and the commoditization of land, for agricultural and market development as a “grab” but rather as a partnership with the host communities and an opportunity to become involved in the market and gain economic prosperity, thus leading to food security via poverty eradication.

Ironically, this approach views large-scale land transactions in the name of agricultural advancement as essential to food security, while many have argued just the opposite. Thus, “land grabs” are framed not as “grabs”, but rather as a “win-win”⁶⁷ for agricultural development at the local and national level.

The market-plus approach argues that if carefully disciplined and appropriately regulated, large-scale land transfers can achieve win-win outcomes for both the investor and host populations. It is argued that such regulation can be achieved through continued facilitation of an appropriate investment climate and adherence to a set of good governance principles.⁶⁸

More evidence to support this side of the debate is reflected in the World Bank’s report, “Awakening Africa’s Sleeping Giant”. This report focuses on an agricultural development initiative called the Competitive Commercial Agriculture for Africa, (CCAA), located in the Guinea Savannah, which includes the southern part of Senegal. The dialogue in this report speaks volumes to the mentality of foreign investment in commercial agriculture in Africa part of the debate.

The objective of the CCAA (Competitive Commercial Agriculture for Africa) study was to explore the feasibility of restoring international competitiveness and growth in African agriculture through the identification of products and production systems that can underpin rapid development of a competitive commercial agriculture. The CCAA study

⁶⁷ Smita Narula, 108.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

focused on the agricultural potential of Africa's Guinea Savannah zone, which covers about 600 million hectares in Africa, of which about 400 million hectares can be used for agriculture, and of which less than 10 percent are cropped.⁶⁹

According to this view, while large-scale land investments would be involved, these should not be falsely labeled as "grabs" and rather as "investments needed to promote the emergence of successful commercial agriculture in Africa".⁷⁰

Further supporting this, Ruth Meinzen-Dick and Helen Markelova, contributing authors to The Global Farms Race, find the debate as to whether "land grabs" are good or bad as a wasted effort, and offer instead an analysis of how outcomes can be improved, again seeking the "win-win" that is discussed by the World Bank Group. As is the case in much of the literature reviewed, there is a consensus that the agricultural sector in sub-Saharan Africa has been widely ignored in international development schemes. Meinzen-Dick and Markelova explain the infrastructural advantages that come from "modernizing" the agriculture sector of host countries could help develop agriculture.

There is evidence that increased investment in food and agrofuels production in the rural areas of developing countries can have important benefits for their economies, particularly in terms of boosting and modernizing the agricultural sector and reviving rural economies.⁷¹

⁶⁹ "Awakening Africa's Sleeping Giants." The World Bank: Directions in Development Agriculture and Rural Development 1 (2009): 236:2

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Meinzen-Dick, Ruth, and Helen Markelova. "Improving Outcomes." The global farms race: land grabs, agricultural investment, and the scramble for food security. Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2013. 115. Print.

However, challenges with land tenure, accountability, food security and the environment are not immune to the “modernization” of the agricultural sector through such land deals, and have been acknowledged by those who support the market-plus approach.⁷²

As a solution, the authors propose a list of concerns to be assessed in order to provide, “the key to the long-term sustainability of the investments, which in turn can help investors, host governments, and local people alike”.⁷³ The list they provide in order to protect the “integrity” and “sustainability” of large-scale land acquisitions comprises issues of; current land use, land tenure arrangements, proposed land use and livelihoods, food security, ecological conditions, transparency, terms of agreement and enforceability. This list is very similar to others proposed by the Food and Agriculture Organization⁷⁴, The World Bank, and the Department for International Development.

However, a different take on these “checklists” is provided by Olivier de Schutter, and is a sobering reminder of the real threats hidden behind such discourse in that they are, “providing policymakers with a checklist of how to destroy the peasantry responsibly.”⁷⁵

The Human Rights Based Approach

Leading the human rights-centric perspective of the debate is Special Rapporteur to the Right of Food, Olivier de Schutter. De Schutter is skeptical of the market-plus approach, seeing it first as a commodization of land and second as a violation of human rights. He is at the forefront of this camp of thought stating that the human rights of all (including the right to food)

⁷² Smita Narula.

⁷³ Ibid. 119.

⁷⁴ Cotula, Lorenzo, et al. "Land Grab or Development Opportunity? Agricultural investment and land deals in Africa." *FAO, IIED and IFAD* 1 (2009):

⁷⁵ Tanner, Christopher. "Large-Scale Land Acquisitions and Food Security ." *Evidence on Demand: Climate and Environment Infrastructure/Livelihood* 1 (2013):vi.

should be put before anything else.⁷⁶ The market-plus approach regarding land transactions and agricultural investment has large implications on land, since land is a necessary agreement for large-scale commercial agriculture, many of the human rights de Schutter calls to be respected are intimately linked with land, and thus linked with food.⁷⁷ The human rights based approach to “land grabs” is one that “prioritizes the positive fulfillment of human rights”.⁷⁸

The respective international bodies that represent the human rights most central to this approach are the International Covenant on Economics, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and well as the United Nation’s Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Land is at the root of many of the articles protected in the ICESCR because of its direct link to shelter, food, water, employment and arguably cultural identity. This camp of thought posits that rural populations in sub-Saharan Africa are particularly affected by violations of human rights, as seen in “land rights”.

In light of the significance of land to the overall development of society in general and to the rural poor in particular, large-scale agricultural ventures that are widely practiced in sub-Saharan Africa have different human rights implications. The implications could be categorized under three broad human right issues: namely rights related to livelihood, environmental rights, and the right to self-determination of peoples.⁷⁹

Another important right that the human rights approach claims is not protected is the right to property. Under this, undeniably falls the question of land. This is where it gets very tricky in the case of sub-Saharan African (and definitely in Senegal) because of the discrepancies concerning land ownership. More light will be shed in later chapters about the case specific to

⁷⁶ Smita Narula: 108.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid: 126.

⁷⁹ Abebe, Semahagn Gashu. "The Need to Alleviate the Human Rights Implications of Large-scale Land Acquisitions in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Goettingen of International Law* 4 (2012): 873-890.

Senegal, but generally in sub-Saharan Africa land is controlled by the government, so while there may be small holder farmers living and working on the land, at the end of the day, they are not the ones who hold the power concerning “their” land.⁸⁰ Naturally, this presents a lot of challenges to the implementation of human rights.

To further address the “human rights challenge” de Schutter came up with 11 principles to tackle the basic human rights violated by “land grabs” known as the “Minimum Human Rights Principle”. The principles are grounded in the right to self-determination, right to development, and the right to food to encourage the evaluation of opportunity costs, indigenous and non-indigenous rights, consent, labor rights, and respect of the environment, to name a few. Although these principles do bring awareness to the human rights challenged by “land grabs”, they are not part of an international agreement, and thus serve little effectual purpose. However, for de Schutter, and those in the human rights based approach, it is a start in framing the necessary discourse to encourage the international dialogue surrounding “land grab” issues.

Human rights groups and NGOs, base their advocacy and marketing strategies on human rights rhetoric. As a result there is now a polarized debate, pitting big-agribusinesses and big-agriculture against peasant farmers. While done in a way to advocate for human rights, these NGOs run the risk of simplifying the debate while generalizing the role and perspective of peasants. NGOs are often the most visual actors of the debate, as seen in the media.

Agribusinesses and transnational corporations are a major threat to the world. They consume too many resources. They control the best land, and are grabbing even more land everywhere. Instead of producing food for people, they produce crops for export markets– bio-fuels for cars or animal feed for industrial meat factories. But farmers are also uniting globally and we will defend our lands.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Semahagan Abebe: 880.

⁸¹ Coulibaly Ibrahima, *La Via Campesina*, World Social Forum Tunisia: 2013.

In his critique of “land grabs” de Schutter further challenges the proposition to “regulate” land grabs while proposing that what really is needed is “to do more than impose a discipline on land-grabbing: we need a real alternative to this kind of investment in land”. He calls for a reframing of the current debate to include the exploration of the opportunity costs, lost by many host countries in these land deals. What could the “underutilized” land be used for if it was not supporting export agriculture? This is an extremely important aspect of “land grabs” that is often overlooked in current literature, and one that I will provide examples for in the context of Senegal, later in the thesis.

The Peasant Perspective & Food Sovereignty

An important perspective to add in this literature review is the perspective that supports peasant agriculture (smallholder agriculturists) and acknowledges food sovereignty and agroecology as the means to food security, contrary to large-scale agricultural businesses. In *Agriculture and Food in Crisis*, “peasantry” is defined as,

rural dwellers who occupationally live off the land as farmers and/or pastoralists combining subsistence and commodity production. Socially they group in family units that form the nucleus for organizing production, in addition to consumption, human reproduction, socialization, welfare, and risk spreading... They tend to be associated with localized village community life and traditional transformist attitudes.⁸²

Among the leading advocates of peasant livelihood is the international organization La Via Campesina, or “The Peasant’s Way”. It argues that small-scale peasant agriculture is capable of insuring food security via food sovereignty, “the right of each nation or region to maintain and develop their capacity to produce basic food crops with corresponding productive

⁸² Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar: 70.

and cultural diversity.”⁸³ Supporters of this camp of thought view “land grabs”, whether the investors are foreign or local, as undermining the food sovereignty of host communities and a threat to sustainable peasant agriculture.

This position argues that big-ag cannot insure food security in the way that peasant agriculture can, and has.

There are 1.5 billion peasants on 380 million farms; 800 million more are growing in urban gardens; 410 million gathering the hidden harvest of our forests and savannahs; 190 million pastoralists and well over 100 million peasant fishers. At least 370 million of these are also indigenous peoples. Together these peasants make up almost half the world's peoples and they grow at least 70% of the world's food.⁸⁴

While those who support the market-plus approach and the development of agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa as a means to reach food security, this perspective argues that these methods, in fact, are a threat to food security. At the forefront of such dialogue is Miguel Altieri.

He argues that “big-ag” through the clearing of forest and use of monocultures, negatively effects the ecosystems and has adverse effects on climate change. For agroecologists, such as Altieri, the best way to combat climate change is through the practice of using “the basic ecological principles for how to study, design, and manage sustainable agroecosystems that are both productive and natural resource conserving, and that are also culturally-sensitive, socially-just and economically viable.”⁸⁵

⁸³ Magdoff, Fred, and Brian Tokar. *Agriculture and food in crisis: conflict, resistance, and renewal*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010:255.

⁸⁴ "Sustainable Peasant and Family Farm Agriculture can Feed the World." *La Via Campesina* 1 (2010): 1-15: 5.

⁸⁵ "Miguel Altieri." *Our Environment* at Berkeley Department of Environmental Science Policy Management. http://ourevironment.berkeley.edu/people_profiles/miguel-altieri/ (accessed October 21, 2013).

Further supporting this point is de Schutter's idea of "opportunity costs" which was mentioned earlier in the review. In this case, the opportunity costs of "land grabs" are small scale peasant farms practicing agroecology. By employing monocultures for export agriculture, often for biofuels, it takes away the opportunity for local host communities to contribute to local food security through agroecology and true food sovereignty. De Schutter explains this in detail here;

The real concern behind the development of large-scale investments in farmland is that giving land away to investors, having better access to capital to 'develop', implies huge opportunity costs, as it will result in a type of farming that will have much less powerful poverty-reducing impacts, than if access to land and water were improved for the local farming communities; that it directs agriculture towards crops for export markets, increasing the vulnerability to price shocks of the target countries; and that even where titling schemes seek to protect land users from eviction, it accelerates the development of a market for land rights with potentially destructive effects on the livelihoods, both of the current land users that will face increased commercial pressure on land, and of groups depending on the commons—grazing and fishing grounds, and forests.⁸⁶

The next section evaluates these opportunity costs further in the specific case of biofuel crops and food crops.

Bio-Fuels & Food Security

Food production is intimately linked with the changing of our planet's climate. The current global food industry is responsible for "between 11 and 15% of all global emissions"⁸⁷, in an effort to combat the impact of carbon emissions, international policies represent the desire to foster alternative fuel sources. Ironically, the clearing of land and establishment of biofuel

⁸⁶ de Schutter, Olivier. "How not to think of land grabbing: three critiques of large-scale land investments in farmland." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38, no. 2 (2011): 249-279: 249

⁸⁷ GRAIN. *The great food robbery: how corporations control food, grab land and destroy the climate*. Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, 2012:98

plantations is also contributing negatively to climate change, where GRAIN⁸⁸ reports that “15-18% of global GHG⁸⁹ emissions are produced by land-use change and deforestation.”⁹⁰ To be sure, not all of the land-use change is used strictly for biofuel, but this shows that clearing forests for large-scale farms has negative impacts on climate; and these are the methods that biofuel farms employ.

The demand for biofuels as an alternative source of energy is also another impetus that pushed companies to grab land in Africa. This has been particularly facilitated by the policies of Western governments, which provide financial incentives to the private sector for the development of biofuels.⁹¹

It is generally known that the world market is heavily dependent on oil and that we have nearly exhausted our crude oil resources. In an effort to combat this, developed nations have been attempting to reduce their dependency on fossil fuels. While, in the face of climate change, it is critically important for countries that are most dependent on the resource to search for alternative solutions, there must also be a critical analysis asking the question, at what cost and to whom? A shift in international policies and agendas reflect the global priority to find such solutions to the fuel crisis.

The European Union’s renewable energy law requires 10% of transport energy to come from renewable sources by 2020. This law is encouraging agribusiness firms to invest in land to produce biofuels for the European market. In sub-Saharan Africa, many investors have planted *jatropha* (an oilseed-bearing shrub) and oil palm trees, both sources for biodiesel.⁹²

⁸⁸ Genetic Resource Action International, a small international non-profit organization that supports small farmers.

⁸⁹ Green House Gas Emissions

⁹⁰ Ibid: 99.

⁹¹ Semahagan Abebe: 876.

⁹² Brown, Lester. "Food, Fuel and the Global Land Grab." *The Futurist* 1 (2013): 1-7.

In order to meet the demand created by international regulations placed on fuel, the production of biofuel crops in sub-Saharan Africa has significantly increased. In between the years 2000-2007 the production of biofuels tripled.⁹³ In 2008, biofuel production was recorded at 81 billion liters, and is predicted to reach up to 172 billion liters by 2020.⁹⁴ In order to produce 172 billion liters, there will be a need for an increase in arable land.

Biofuel crops account for 63% of land acquired in “land grabs” in sub-Saharan Africa.⁹⁵ Currently, there are two main kinds of biofuel crops, those that are starch or sugar based (like corn and sugar cane), and those that have oilseeds, like soy, palm and *jatropha curcas*.⁹⁶ Both can be processed into oil which is able to fuel an automobile. The recent surge in biofuel production can be explained by the desire of Western countries to lower their dependency on fossil fuels, as has been explained. However, the desire of African countries to lower their dependency on oil imports is also a motivating factor. As in the case of many “land grabs”, emerging companies are often comprised of foreign investors and local investors, for these reasons. The World Bank paints this phenomenon as a “win-win”, however, a problem arises with the production of biofuel crops when no local market is available, nor the capacity to process; as is the case in Senegal.

Crop production of small holder farmers is greatly affected by biofuel production. Peasants become the laborers on biofuel plantations, and biofuel companies provide incentives with daily wages and community infrastructures developments, like roads and hospitals. While

⁹³ Molony, Thomas, and James Smith. "Briefing Biofuels, Food Security, and Africa." *African Affairs* 109 (2010): 489-498:489.

⁹⁴ "Grain." Land Grabbing for Biofuels Must Stop. <http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4653-land-grabbing-for-biofuels-must-stop> (accessed September 20, 2013).

⁹⁵ Schoneveld, George . "The Anatomoy of Large Scale farmland acquisitions." *CIFOR* 1 (2011). http://www.cifor.org/publications/pdf_files/WPapers/WP85Schoneveld.pdf (accessed October 17, 2013).

⁹⁶ Thomas Molony and James Smith

promises of employment and development are alluring, some question the long term sustainability of such opportunities as well as the effect on local food systems. The biggest debate that has evolved out of biofuel production is the “food vs fuel debate”, and implications on food security.

At first, it was thought that *jatropha*, a shrub that has seeds containing oil that can be produced into biofuels, did not need desirable land to grow. *Jatropha* experts claimed that the plant could thrive on deserted lands, therefore it would not compete with family farms for desirable farmland. However, this was not the case, and it was soon realized that in order for *jatropha* to produce quality seeds (which is needed for oil) it requires quality soil and water⁹⁷, and, is also toxic. So in actuality, *jatropha*, as in the case of Senegal, requires desirable farming land and has adverse consequences for soil.

As seen in the previous section, peasant farming feeds 70% of the world’s population. If a portion of those farmers leave the farm and start producing nonedible biofuel plants, it could have negative implications on not only the availability of food but also on affordability; “more production of biofuels will force food prices up and make it more difficult for poor people to purchase food.”⁹⁸ Another component of the “food vs fuel” debate is how quickly the biofuels are consumed by vehicles. For example, “the World Watch Institute offers the comparison that the amount of grain required to fill the 90-litre petrol tank of a 4x4 vehicle once with bioethanol could feed one person for a year, while (not) filling it every two weeks over the same period would feed several families.”⁹⁹ The effect of large-scale biofuel productions on food systems is exemplified in the case of Sierra Leone, as shown in a report by Action Aid; “of those surveyed,

⁹⁷ Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar: 126.

⁹⁸ Thomas Molony and James Smith: 495.

⁹⁹ Ibid: 497.

99 per cent said that food production had declined in their communities, and 90 per cent said that loss of farmland to the Addax¹⁰⁰ project had been responsible.”¹⁰¹

In order to implement large-scale biofuel farms, many companies have sought “unused” or “underutilized” land in sub-Saharan Africa. However, there are serious discrepancies on the definition of “unused” land between customary beliefs of peasants and assumptions by investors. Since land laws in Africa are often unclear, it has been argued that local communities are being exploited. Also there is a lack of clear biofuel policies at the state level, making transactions with foreign and national investors non-transparent and unaccountable.

Clear land tenure policies are required to guide investments and the proper allocation of land, and must incorporate an understanding of national and local land tenure systems as well as a comprehensive assessment of pastoral practices. There are indications that, because many African countries do not yet have well-thought-through biofuels policies that consider land tenure, ad hoc decisions about land use could have longer-term repercussions.¹⁰²

These transparency issues are not unique to biofuel farms and have occurred in other large-scale land deals across the continent as well. It is important to note, that those in the market-plus approach camp of thought acknowledge these challenges and believe that through better management, it is possible to have transparent land transactions.

Transparency & Land Laws

In the “land grab” literature, one of the recurring themes from both sides of the debate is the issue of accountability and transparency. A multitude of rights, principles, and policies

¹⁰⁰ Swiss Company in Sierra Leone called: Addax Bioenergy

¹⁰¹ Cooper, Charlie and Morrison, Sarah. "Biofuel project funded by UK leaves Africans without food." The Independent. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/biofuel-project-funded-by-uk-leaves-africans-without-food-8793617.html> (accessed November 29, 2013).

¹⁰² Thomas Molony and James Smith: 493.

attempt to evaluate ways in which transparency and accountability can be more visible and improved among all facets of land deals, between stakeholders and actors. Transparency is when all parties involved; the company, community members, local authorities and governments, are aware of the intention and details of the proposed project. Most important in this is the awareness and informed consent among host community members whose land and livelihoods, are directly involved. In many cases, in Senegal for example, companies appear at the targeted area and begin implementing their project, without previously seeking approval from local community members. During this process, community members are not explicitly aware of the project objectives nor exactly what it entails and how their livelihoods could be effected.¹⁰³ It was partly in response to these issues of transparency that de Schutter put out his Eleven Principles with the first one being; “conduct investment negotiations in full transparency with the participation of host communities.”¹⁰⁴

A similar problem is that of accountability. How can the promises and agreements made between investors and host communities be respected? Under what laws and regulations, and who will enforce it? The issues surrounding accountability are extremely complex in the case of Senegal, as well as across sub-Saharan Africa. The reasons for this are related to the complex nature of land laws and the conflict between customary laws and national ones.

When land becomes of interest to commercial investors, the legal options available to local groups are few – and so is the effectiveness of the opportunities for public accountability created by the law. In many contexts, it is perfectly legal for a government to allocate land to a company with minimal consultation and transparency, and with paltry compensation payments for local groups. Control over land is often in the hands of the government or of customary chiefs, and multiple legal devices undermine the land

¹⁰³Dembele, Silman. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Tape recording. Senegal, August 20, 2013.

¹⁰⁴ Smita Narula: 130.

rights of local farmers, herders and foragers, and the formal opportunities for these groups to have their voice heard.¹⁰⁵

This highlights the variation in how accountability can be perceived. While investors, companies and governments, both regional and national, view accountability by respecting the law, others (local populations, rural associations, NGOs) view it as a violation of human rights, since often times land laws may not reflect the best interest of those at the community level. Therefore, in order for accountability to truly be recognized, authors of the report “Land Grab or Development Opportunity” argue that there would need to be amendments to national and international laws concerning land and specifically foreign investments.¹⁰⁶ Their suggested recommendation is a two pronged approach where, “a ‘legal empowerment’ agenda encapsulates these two arenas – legal reform to increase local control and downward accountability, and collective action for bottom-up checks, balances and agenda-setting.”¹⁰⁷

To address transparency and accountability in relation to land laws in sub-Saharan Africa, it is necessary to provide background information on the history of land tenure, laws and regulations. Traditionally, land is inherited, passed down the patronal lineage dating back to the first person who cultivated the land. Uncultivated land is traditionally viewed as being “collectively owned”. This practice changed however in the face of colonialism, and also at Independence in African nation-states.

Since the establishment of colonial then independent national states, the major appropriators of these lands at scale have been governments. While exceptions have begun to emerge, national land laws have generally been structured to make this appropriation possible, by denying that customary rights amount to real property rights,

¹⁰⁵ Polack, Emily , Lorenzo Cotula, and Muriel Cote. "Accountability in Africa's land rush: what role for legal empowerment." *ibid* 1 (2013): 1-57. 2.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid: 3.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid: 4.

deserving of protection. This is a-historical in its implication that Africa was empty of owners prior to state-delivered entitlement.¹⁰⁸

This presents friction between the practice of customary land laws and those orchestrated by the state. These laws make it favorable for governments and foreign investors to gain access to land “legally”. Human rights organizations and NGOs advocate for the rights of peasants, and continues to pressure reforms in these laws. In her report “The Law is to Blame” Wily sums it up,

the weak legal status of communal rights is the most pernicious enabler in their demise, allowing governments to take undue liberties with their citizens’ lands, and particularly those which are unfarmed and by tradition held in common. While international acquiescence to abusive domestic law helps entrench the diminishment of majority land rights, the domestic laws themselves are principally at fault and necessarily the target for change.¹⁰⁹

This section has provided a glimpse into some of the challenges concerning transparency and accountability at the local level. Yet further marginalized in relation to land rights at the local level is a group that makes up more than half of food producers, women.

The Gender Component

Gender issues are also generally agreed to be of high significance in the “land grab” debate. Although women comprise a large portion of rural farmers, food cultivators and providers in Senegal, and worldwide, they have very limited access to land ownership and security.

¹⁰⁸ Wily, Liz Alden. “The Law is to Blame: The Vulnerable Status of Common Property Rights in Sub-Saharan Africa.” *Institute of Social Science, The Hague* 1 (2011): 733-757. 733

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

At the community level, land is claimed as customary property by the descendants of the families that first cleared it or of those who conquered the area. Hereditary land rights include permanent rights to cultivate the land and to pass it on to patrilineal or matrilineal descendants. Women from patrilineal landowning households also have only impermanent land rights based on marital status.¹¹⁰

Although it is necessary to be clear that women's lack of access to land is not a direct result of "land grabs" (it's usually customary, or state law), women are uniquely affected by them due to local laws and customs. Therefore, special attention to implications for women are necessary when considering the overall implications of "land grabs" on community. Christopher Tanner, FAO Senior Advisor, captures this camp of thought in an article about land acquisition,

A gender perspective is critical to truly understanding the impact of large-scale land deals because women and men have different social roles, rights and opportunities and will be differentially affected by any major change in tenurial regimes, especially land transfers to extralocal investors.¹¹¹

Another compelling reason why women should be considered when evaluating the impact of "land grabs" is that they are indispensable in the food system, as producers, cultivators, and cooks. In sub-Saharan Africa 60-80% of the labor force in food production is comprised by women, however women own the rights to only 2% of land.¹¹²

At a Land Deal Initiative Conference, Jeanne Koopman of Boston University and Iba Mar Faye of *Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale* acknowledge gender challenges by

¹¹⁰ Iba Mar Faye, Jeanne Koopman: Land Grabs, Women Farming, and Women's Activism in Africa. *Global Land Grabbing II*. Conference conducted from Land Deal Politics Initiative, Development Sociology at Cornell University, Ithaca NY (2012, October 17).

¹¹¹ Behrman et al cited in Tanner, Christopher. "Large-Scale Land Acquisitions and Food Security." *Evidence on Demand: Climate and Environment Infrastructure/Livelihood* 1 (2013):14.

¹¹² Women Farmers Productivity. "United Nations Environment Programme." -- (UNEP). http://www.unep.org/training/programmes/Instructor%20Version/Part_2/Activities/Human_Societies/Agriculture/Supplemental/Women-Farmers_Productivity_in_Sub-Saharan_A (accessed November 29, 2013).

pointing to inequity at the household level and the differing intra-household roles between the genders in farming families. Customarily in West African households, the household head, who exclusively holds the rights to make land decisions concerning the household in customary law, is male.¹¹³ Although women do not have permanent rights to land in the customary law, they do have the right to a personal field for food production and cultivation for the compound. Any excess food or profit is then re-invested into the woman's children for school fees, food, clothing, etc.¹¹⁴

However, since these personal fields are based on verbal agreements and within the patriarchal hierarchy, they are subject to change. "A field that has traditionally been seen as a woman's personal field may become a family field under the household head's control."¹¹⁵ This is something that happens frequently when the state or an international agency deems a plot of land valuable, or wants the rights to purchase it. There are other priorities in the hierarchy of needs that eventually trump women's right to maintain access to land.

Action Aid, emphasizes that the specific needs of women farmers are "protected" under human rights, although these rights are often not implemented. In their report "From Under Their Feet" Action Aid highlights the position of the International Land Coalition, breaking down specifically what human rights are violated and how they pertain to women. Women, comprising a large majority of smallholder farmers in Africa, do not have their rights equally

¹¹³Iba Mar Faye, Jeanne Koopman Land Grabs, Women Farming, and Women's Activism in Africa. *Global Land Grabbing II*. Conference conducted from Land Deal Politics Initiative, Development Sociology at Cornell University, Ithaca NY (2012, October 17).

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

represented in land deals. Their cultural, economic and social rights are disregarded since land deals are not done in a matter of “informed consent” involving women farmers.¹¹⁶

Modernization or Commodification?

Many international financial institutions and organizations such as FAO, World Bank, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Department for International Development (DFID), believe that the key to economic development, and thus food security, is through the advancement of agriculture through foreign direct investments (FDIs). In an effort to modernize the agriculture sector in sub-Saharan Africa, millions of dollars are being invested into agricultural advancement. It is the same mentality that fueled the “Green Revolution”, which was launched in India in the 1960s, and also supports the AGRA initiative which is currently focusing on sub-Saharan Africa. In World Bank literature, such investment opportunities are viewed as a “win-win” and promoted as a good thing for development. Such perspectives are also represented among sub-Saharan African governments,’ laws and policies, as has been highlighted in earlier sections. James Ferguson describes this imitation as mimicry where, support for development initiatives by African governments mirror those of prior colonizers and counters traditional societal beliefs.¹¹⁷

Absent in the development discourse promoting agricultural advancement via FDIs is the analysis of turning land into a commodity, which is a result of land investment deals, regardless of intent. According to the World Bank, FDIs are inflows of investment into an economy

¹¹⁶ Kachingwe, Nancy. "From Under Their Feet: A Thick Piece on the Gender dimensions of land grabs in Africa." Action Aid 1 (2012): 1-20.

¹¹⁷ Ferguson, James

different than the investors' and are usually made as a balance of payments from the foreign investor.¹¹⁸ The work of de Schutter tackles this issue, bringing it into food security discourse.

The commodification of land, which the global phenomenon of land-grabbing is accelerating, entails risks that go far beyond what the current proposals for regulating it seem willing to recognize. Since both the investors and the governments in host countries have every incentive to shield the deals they negotiate from outside scrutiny, voluntary approaches to discipline land-grabbing are bound to fail.¹¹⁹

Treating land and natural resources as a commodity marker rather than a marker of subsistence, culture, and identity is a very slippery slope to embark upon, and is something that could be highlighted more in the debate. Karl Polyani, who was an economic anthropologist, captured the magnitude behind such implications,

To allow the market mechanism to be the sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment, indeed, even of the amount and use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society. For the alleged commodity 'labor power' cannot be shoved about, used indiscriminately, or even left unused, without affecting also the human individual who happens to be the bearer of this peculiar commodity...¹²⁰

In the case of "land grabs" the cultural and social relationship between people and their land cannot be ignored. The "bearers of this peculiar commodity", in this case land, according to Polyani will be greatly affected. This thesis explores this concept further in the context of Senegal.

Concluding Remarks

¹¹⁸"Foreign direct investment, net inflows." Data. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD> (accessed October 16, 2013).

¹¹⁹ de Schutter, Olivier. "How not to think of land grabbing: three critiques of large scale land investment in farmland." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38, no. No.2 (2011): 274

¹²⁰ Polyani, Karl in de Schutter, Olivier. "How not to think of land grabbing: three critiques of large scale land investment in farmland." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38, no. No.2 (2011):273-4

This literature review discloses the multiple factors that contribute to the “land grab” debate. It has shown that the narrow debate represented in the media leaves out the complexities in determining how, exactly large-scale land acquisitions can lead to poorer nutrition. The actors, as we’ve seen in the case of Senegal are also not as clear cut as NGO reports and the media portray. Aside from MNC’s, local elites and government officials have a strong foot hold in land governance. This literature review has also acknowledged what is missing. More research to connect large-scale acquisitions to poor nutrition and environmental damage is necessary to provide a framework for international policy makers to explore alternative land options, and anticipate long-term consequences.

This literature review has framed one of the main debates; the market-plus approach vs the rights based approach, while highlighting central themes such as social justice, food sovereignty and governance. This has been done through a presentation of theoretical frameworks including the perspectives of international agencies, scholars, corporations, the state, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. The following chapter will examine the specificities of the research process for this case study.

“Land Grabs” and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice

Chapter Four: History and Geography of “Land Grabs” in West Africa and Senegal

In this section of the thesis, I investigate Senegal’s land governance, laws, regulations, and practices which are crucial to understanding how “land grabs” operate. I provide an overview of the country’s history and geography including land tenure, food, agriculture, and local stakeholders and actors. This section also provides contextual examples of some of the key themes that were highlighted in the literature such as biofuels, food sovereignty and gender, and is divided into the following sections:

- Land History& Geography
- Land Grabs in West Africa
- Overview of Land Grabs in Senegal

Land History & Geography

Dakar, the capital of Senegal, is the most western point on continental Africa, jutting out



into the Atlantic Ocean. There are a total of 14 regions in Senegal, as highlighted on this map in all capital letters. Senegal shares a border with five West African nations, Mauritania, Mali, Guinea Bissau, Guinea and The Gambia, with a land mass totaling 75,955 sq miles, which is slightly smaller than South Dakota.¹²¹ The climate shifts around two dominant seasons, the

Fig. 3

¹²¹ BBC. "Senegal profile." BBC News. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14093754> (accessed November 29, 2013).

dry season which runs from November until May, and the rainy season which runs from June until October, of course these seasons fluctuate occasionally due to climate change. Agriculture in Senegal is rain-fed and crops are planted during the rainy season, where recorded rainfall averages around 500 mm, but has been on a slow decline.¹²² The main crops in Senegal are cereals like millet, sorghum, corn, and groundnuts (peanuts), however cotton, fishing and animal production are also practiced in the agriculture sector.¹²³ Groundnuts used to be the largest agricultural export in Senegal but have since declined. There will be more on the breakdown of agricultural exports and imports in the following chapter. The climate of Senegal is mostly tropical, however there is an arid strip, the Sahel, near the north that runs through the country's entirety.

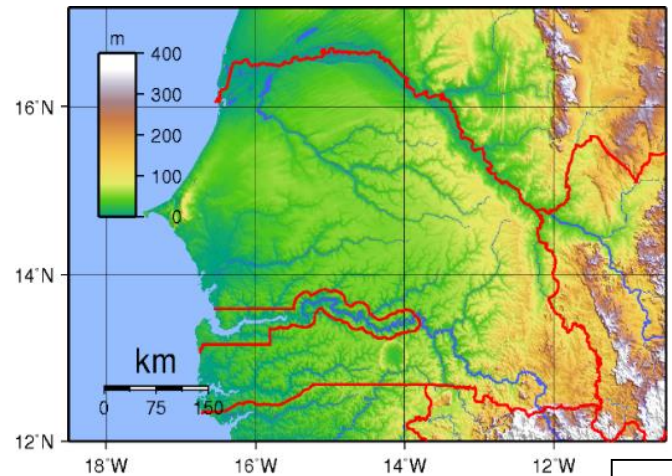


Fig. 4

There are numerous rivers in Senegal with the largest being in the Tambacounda region and St. Louis region. The southern region, Cassamance, is also extremely fertile, this map shows the natural water sources in the country. The largest land allocations are clustered around the areas with water in the north and east.

Land History, Laws & Tenure

Traditionally in Senegal, land has been passed down the patrilineal family line, starting with the original head of household, a role occupied by men, who were the first to clear and cultivate the area. The land is then passed down to the eldest son of the family who continues to

¹²²"USGS science for a changing world USAID." A Climate Trend Analysis of Senegal. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2012/3123/FS12-3123.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2013): 2.

¹²³Gage, James D, Cheikh Tidiane Sarr, and Carol Adoum. "Sustainable Agricultural Research: Institutional and Financing Reforms in Senegal ." Abt Associates 3 (2001): 1-37.

cultivate, and who in return passes it down to his eldest son.¹²⁴ While women in the family contribute with their labor, they do not have decision making powers concerning land because it is customary for them to relocate to the husband's village after marriage. In order to guarantee keeping land in the family, property is passed to the son. This custom has been practiced for generations, and is still widely followed despite changes in land laws.

The majority of rural families in Senegal (70% of the population) engage in family farming during the rainy season, and in the off season to generate income, people often engage in small informal businesses, livestock, or fishing. Agriculture predates colonialism, and for small scale farmers has not changed much. Aside from tractors, which is a technology only utilized by those with means, the most significant tool added was the plow. Today, many small holders still use the plow, which attaches to either a horse, donkey or cow and is used to create rows for weeding and sowing in the farms.

While many rural communities operate under customary land laws and have farmed their family's land for generations, the question of who actually owns the right to the land is not as clear cut. Traditionally, the family who labors on the family farm "owns" the land, but they only truly own it in the sense that they are occupying it, they do not own the land deeds. According to national land laws, the state is the rightful owner. In 1964, shortly after independence, the Senegalese government passed The Law on National Domain which made all rural land in Senegal property of the state, the first country to adopt such land laws in Africa.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ Maye Kaag, Yaram Gaye, and Marieke Kruis: 7-8.

¹²⁵ John Eichelsheim, Gerti Hesselning. "Legalizing Land Rights: Tenure Security in the Periphery of Ziguinchor." Amsterdam University Press 1 (2009): 271-291.

This was carried out by the government with the intention to “modernize” land tenure in Senegal; officials felt that the “traditional” view of land management was inefficient. The *Commisioner de Reforme du Regime Foncier* at the time had this to say about traditional land management systems,

It is to be feared that the legitimation of custom would be a step backward, with the capacity to block all modern development. It is a gerontocratic structure in which young people have no chance to bloom, and it accelerates the desertion of the countryside.¹²⁶

In an effort to transition from traditional land tenure to the new land tenure, there was a six month grace period where community members could file with the state to gain rightful ownership of their occupied land.¹²⁷ However, due to a lack of public awareness and communication, this only happened in a few cases.¹²⁸ Also, “the process was costly and time-consuming, offered no more security than the traditional system, and contradicted the communal nature of many customary tenure practices.”¹²⁹ In fact, today there is still a lot of uncertainty about land ownership in rural communities in Senegal. While in practice rural communities are still able to farm and cultivate on “their land”, it is the state that orchestrates the highest level of ownership and decision making powers, whether or not communities are aware of that power. In other words, the State is liable to take away the land and allocate it to someone else if it is deemed as “unused” regardless of the usages or intended uses by host communities.¹³⁰

This means that local land rules are recognized within the limits set by national law. Families can claim rights to their land as long as they continue to till it but fallow periods lasting more than a few years and longer-term leases can create problems in that the rural

¹²⁶ Golan, Elise. "Land Tenure Reform in Senegal: An economic study from the peanut basin." University of Madison-Wisconsin 1 (1990): 1-127: 19

¹²⁷ Maye Kaag, Yaram Gaye, and Marieke Kruis: 8.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Elise Golan:19.

¹³⁰ Maye Kaag, Yaram Gaye, and Marieke Kruis: 8

council or the temporary tenants may claim the land on the basis of national legislation.¹³¹

It is through this law, that “land grabs” can be done legally in Senegal. Naturally, this presents friction with community members whose land may seem “unused” to authorities and foreign investors, but is being used either for livestock herding, foraging herbal remedies, or as ancestral burial grounds at local levels. This is one of the many criticized limitations of the Law of National Domain. The *mise en valeur*, or land use, is poorly defined and leaves room for the interpretation of local authorities, who may be guided by political motivations. Social anthropologist Mayke Kaag explains that, “while the rural councils are democratically elected institutions, it is precisely this political dimension that results in decisions regarding the distribution of land not always being impartial and often based on political partisanship.”¹³²

Another power dynamic issue is that while the local authorities are regional actors in land allocations, the real holder of power is centralized at the national government, due to a lack of financial development in the local sectors. This keeps the power centralized and leaves the state as the ultimate decision maker.

In an effort to update land laws, there has been a recent push (1990s and early 2000s) towards the privatization of land. With investors in mind, the movement to privatize was mainly spearheaded by the World Bank, who favors foreign investment in agriculture as a means of development. The opening of Senegal’s agriculture sector to foreign investors was made

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid:8.

possible by structural adjustment policies and trade conditionalities imposed by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, there will be more on this in chapter five.

In the early 2000s, with the change of government, the idea of privatization carried the intention of industrializing the agricultural sector and promoting agribusiness development.¹³³ However, in both instances, “the practical needs of small scale family farmers were barely taken into account.”¹³⁴ Despite the concerns of small holder farmers and discourse towards changing national land laws, the Law of National Domain is still the go-to land law in practice, “however, practices are evolving, partly due to government agricultural policies that promote land allocation to large-scale investors, population growth and evolving market forces, all of which increase the gap between rules and practices.”¹³⁵

“Land Grabs” in West Africa:

“The purchase and lease of vast tracts of land from poor, developing countries by wealthier nations and international private investors has led to debate about whether land investment is a tool for development or force of displacement.”¹³⁶ International think-tank The Oakland Institute frames the debate on “land grabs” as such. As has been noted previously in chapter three, the food and financial crisis of 2007-08, and 2010-11, have left many corporate, government, and elite investors seeking land, many turning to resource-rich Africa. These transactions have been made possible for investors by free trade policies and affordable prices where, “both governments and private investors are attracted by policy reforms that have improved the investment climate in developing countries, as well as arbitrage opportunities

¹³³ Ibid: 9.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ “Land Rights.” oaklandinstitute.org. <http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/land-rights-issue> (accessed October 20, 2013).

afforded by the extremely low cost of leasing land in these regions.”¹³⁷ In recent years (2007-2011) 60 % of international “land grabs” have occurred in Africa.¹³⁸

In 2012, GRAIN and a number of other NGOs and grassroot peasant organizations, met in Ouidah, Benin to discuss land grabbing in West Africa and the consequences for food sovereignty. There were representatives from various West African nations, and “land grab” cases in, Cameroon, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Mali, and Benin were all highlighted. In each case, the topic of power dynamics and transparency arose. In large-scale land acquisitions, investors’ deal directly with governments, often surpassing community members and family farmers who occupy and farm the land in question. The lack of power at the community level is what has many members of civil society concerned about social justice. There is a popular saying in Africa that goes, “in agricultural societies, power is wielded by those who control the land.”¹³⁹ With the shift in control of land from communities to investors comes also the shift of power, as has been seen in West Africa and other regions around the world facing “land grabs”. Specific examples of this power shift for Senegal will be examined in chapter five.

Overview of “Land Grabs” in Senegal

Farming has been an integral part of Senegal’s economy and culture for countless generations. When interviewing farmers in the central region, many talked about how their millet farms was often traced back to their great-great grandfathers, who were the first to clear it.

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸ Michael Kugelman and Susan Levinstein:

¹³⁹ "Grain." Land Grabbing and Food Sovereignty in West and Central Africa.

<http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4575-land-grabbing-and-food-sovereignty-in-west-and-central-africa> (accessed November 27, 2013).

This section will examine the recent history of “land grabs” in Senegal, the introduction of biofuels, and provide a breakdown of the actors and stakeholders of large-scale land operations in Senegal. I also investigate the international attention on agricultural development and food security, and the local resistance movement for food sovereignty.

Land Grabs

The motivations behind the recent surge in “land grabs” in Senegal can be traced to global trends concerning raising fuel and food prices. The rise in prices has influenced the decisions of policies, governments¹⁴⁰, and corporations. While this has already been explored in the literature, it’s important to re-visit these motivations as they are directly relevant to the situation in Senegal. Senegalese NGO *Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale* (IPAR) estimates that in Senegal, approximately 446,123 ha of land has been re-allocated in large-scale land transactions,¹⁴¹ from 2007 to present day. However, dating back to 2001, the figure reaches around 650,000 ha of arable land.¹⁴² Although not all of the land promised in deals is currently in production, this number reflects the number of hectares for which leases have been contracted in Senegal. The majority use of “land grabbed” farms in Senegal is for biofuel production as well as agricultural exports.¹⁴³ This reflects the global priorities that seek both to produce more food and alternative fuel options. The largest “land grab” regions in Senegal are the in the north, St. Louis region, and in the east, Tambacounda region, both of which have abundant sources of water.

¹⁴⁰ There will be more on the particular motivations of the state of Senegal in chapter five.

¹⁴¹ "Large scale land grabs in the zone of Ross Bethio." IPAR in French (2010): 4-5.

¹⁴² "farmlandgrab.org." farmlandgrab.org | Sénégal: En 10 ans, 650 000 ha de terres ont été données à 17 privés nationaux ou étrangers. <http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/19539> (accessed October 29, 2013).

¹⁴³ "Large scale land grabs in the zone of Ross Bethio." IPAR in French (2010): 4-5.

Of the largest land deals currently in Senegal, six out of fifteen private investments are growing *jatropha*, a shrubby poisonous plant that produces seeds which contain an oil that can be

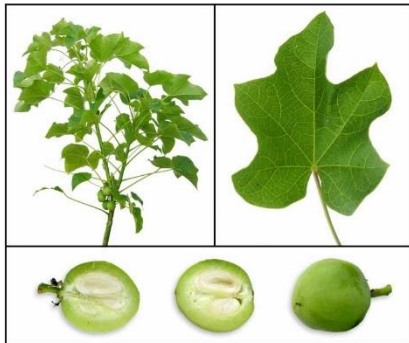


Fig. 5

processed into biofuel. The idea of producing *jatropha* was first introduced in Senegal by former President Wade as a national solution to the energy crisis. Senegal depends heavily on imported oil, and with rising global prices and a growing urban population, this dependency is having negative effects on local economies.¹⁴⁴ For example, “the fuel bill rose from 185 billion CFA francs in 2000 to 384 billion CFA francs in 2006 and to 623 billion CFA francs in 2008.”¹⁴⁵ This resulted in many shortages and power outages that outraged the public and caused a lot of political and economic friction. Due to this dependence and a lack of control over the foreign oil market, the government wanted to create a more localized oil alternative, and turned to *jatropha* production as the solution.¹⁴⁶

There is about 27-40% of oil in each seed, and the Senegalese government released a five year *jatropha* plan (2007-2012) in an effort to move towards alternative fuel. The plan that was promoted across the country was for farmers to intercrop¹⁴⁷, *jatropha* with their staple crops, namely millet. This was done with food security in mind, and monocultures of *jatropha* were promoted only in “deserted” land areas. The project claimed to create 100,000 local jobs and decrease Senegal’s dependency on foreign fuels while promoting the national energy sector.

¹⁴⁴ Hathie, Ibrahima. "Energy and Food Security in sub-Saharan Africa." The Wilson Center's Africa Program 1 (2012): 2-18: 4

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Growing multiple crops in the same area, usually trading off crops row by row. Not all crops can be grown this way, and there are certain pairings that work better than others.

Immediately following this promotion of biofuel production came the rush for both domestic and foreign investors looking for land to produce *jatropha*.¹⁴⁸

However, there were major flaws with this plan. It was originally believed that since *jatropha* is a shrub and likes “arid” climates, it could be planted on peripheral “unused” lands, not requiring much water or fertile soils. This proved to be untrue, although the plant could live under such conditions, it did not produce the seeds containing the oil, which was the whole purpose of production.

Surprisingly, almost all *jatropha* projects in Senegal are located on arable lands and were located in water accessible sites. *Jatropha* projects are predominantly in the north of Senegal where irrigation is easier and in the south where the level of rainfall and the quality of land are more appropriate.¹⁴⁹

This creates a competition between *jatropha* and food for fertile soil and water resources. Also, *jatropha* is extremely toxic and poisonous to the soil. This has negative effects on any crops intercropped with the shrub as well as negative implications on the longevity of the soil, again threatening food security. During an interview, when asked about local uses of *jatropha*, environmental activist Sidy Ba, explained that *jatropha* was used to make fences to protect local gardens due to its toxicity. Animals and pests would not cross it and, thus it be used as a live fence to protect inside contents.¹⁵⁰ There will be more from Sidy Ba’s interview in chapter five.

Lastly, there lacked local capacity to process the seeds into oil since there were no processing plants, nor was there a local market. Once farmers grew *jatropha* and the seeds were

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. 4

¹⁴⁹ Ibid. 6

¹⁵⁰ Ba, Sidy. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Tape recording. Kaolack, Senegal, August 19, 2013.

ready for harvest, they found that there was not anyone to sell to.¹⁵¹ Picking up the slack, foreign investors (paired with local elites) began purchasing and leasing large tracts of land for biofuel production. The list below shows specific investors from the years 2008-2010 (some of which are growing biofuel crops) and how much land each was allocated (by the state) for their projects.

- *Afrique Energie* has sought and obtained 11,000 ha of land in the Anambe river basin (South east of Senegal) of which 1,000 ha are situated in the developed area for rice cultivation;
- Agro Africa whose investors are Americans and Norwegians asked for 100,000 ha of jatropha land, 10,000 ha are currently allocated in Kounkané rural community and 20,000 ha in Bonconto rural community;
- Agro Synergie sought and obtained 300 ha in each of the 4 rural communities of the district of Kounkané (South East of Senegal).
- Jatropha Technology farm, an Italian company requested 50,000 ha in the Nétéboulou rural community (Tambacounda, East of Senegal) and obtained 500 ha and a promise for expansion up to 50,000 ha by 2015.
- *Société Boulonnerie Europe*, an Italian company, aims to sow 10,000 ha of jatropha at Mbeude Dieng (near Merina Dakhar, north of Thies region).
- Durabilis, a Belgian foundation received an allocation of 5,000 ha for jatropha production in the rural community of Bokhol (north of Senegal).
- *Plantations Vertes*, a Spanish company was allocated 20,000ha in the rural community of Mbane (north of Senegal) for biofuel production.
- Senethanol/Senhuile, an Italian company received 20,000 ha in the rural community of Fanaye (north of Senegal).¹⁵²

Many of these investors take advantage of local communities by promising jobs or omitting necessary information about the hazards of *jatropha* in order to secure land and water resources.¹⁵³ However, awareness about how *jatropha* can impact food security is circulating in

¹⁵¹ Ba, Sidy and Sy, Saer. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca. Tape recording. Kaolack, Senegal, August 17, 2013.

¹⁵² Ibid: 5-6.

¹⁵³ Ibid: 7.

rural areas as a result of outreach by NGOs. Some of these projects have been relocated due to local resistance and protests, such as the Senethonal project and the Jatropha Technology Farm, which are the two case studies highlighted in chapter five. Senethonal, also known as Senehuille, was first established as a biofuel company with intentions of growing sweet potatoes for biofuel. They were allotted 20,000 ha of land in Fanaye, a village in the north of the country, by the Senegalese government. The project is highly controversial and led to protests in 2011, which resulted in two deaths.¹⁵⁴ Due to this tension the president at the time, Abdulai Wade, temporarily paused the project. It was picked back up when Macky Sall came into office in 2012 and moved Senethonal to a different cluster of villages within the same region. There is still a lot of community resistance and controversy to this project, which will be examined in chapter five. Similarly, the Jatropha Technology Farm left the village of Neteboulou for another community in the region after villagers protested wages and a lack of local food production.

Among great concern to Senegalese civil society is how land diversion from food to biofuels effects the already fragile state of food security in Senegal. Farmers are barely able to produce enough for their own subsistence, and are “unable to cover the consumption needs of the 12 million inhabitants of the country.”¹⁵⁵ Local rice production by small scale farmers in the Senegal River Valley was compromised by “unregulated foreign investments and the push for hybrid rice cultivation by Green Revolution proponents have reduced the number of varieties of rice cultivated as well as increased rice exports dramatically.”¹⁵⁶ Due to a nutrition transition which has moved Senegalese away from staple cereals towards rice as a staple, Senegal is

¹⁵⁴“Grain.” Who is Behind Senehuille-Senethonal. <http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4815-who-is-behind-senhuille-senethanol> (accessed November 25, 2013).

¹⁵⁵ Ibid: 7

¹⁵⁶ “West Africa | Food Sovereignty Tours | Food Sovereignty | Agritourism.” Country Backgrounder: Senegal. <http://www.foodsovereigntytraveltours.org/international-tours/west-africa/> (accessed October 29, 2013).

heavily dependent on food imports to feed itself, especially the imports of the staple rice. Today, there is some national effort to switch back to a more millet and cereal based diet.

Senegal depends on imports for more than 60% of its food needs. Food imports increased from 243 billion CFA francs in 1999 to 602 billion CFA in 2008. Rice, wheat and corn are the main imported products with respectively 131 billion, 63 billion and 12 billion CFA francs in 2010. Rice imports were estimated to amount to 651,000 tons to supplement the domestic production of only 398,000 tons. This food dependency is structural and is noticeable through the average annual growth of cereal production which is estimated to 2%, below the annual population growth of 2.7%.¹⁵⁷

Due to an already sensitive food system in Senegal, the conversion of farmlands from food to biofuel is having serious consequences on national food security at the rural level. Small holder farmers are being incentivized to grow *jatropha* without being fully informed about the hazards it can cause their cereals and staple crops. This has led to a loss of 60% of cereal production in affected communities in Senegal, without a secure *jatropha* output.¹⁵⁸

Food Security and Agricultural Development

In June 2013 President Obama visited Senegal and was hosted by Senegalese president Macky Sall. During Obama's stay, he gave a number of speeches and announced new development projects and goals promoted through the United States/ Senegal alliance. One of the central project themes was the issue of food security and agriculture.

Since most people in Senegal, as is true across Africa, work in agriculture, our food security initiative will keep helping farmers harness new seeds and technologies, increase yields and boost incomes. And as President Sall pursues land reforms, we're looking forward to Senegal joining the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Ibrahima Hathie: 7.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ "Remarks by President Obama and President Sall of the Republic of Senegal at Joint Press Conference." The White House. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/27/remarks-president-obama-and-president-sall-republic-senegal-joint-press-> (accessed October 28, 2013).

Within national and international “food security” discourse, the term has been married to the concept of agricultural development. The two concepts have become intertwined, to the point where it is perceived that one cannot exist without the other. By this logic, “land grabs” are an instrument of agricultural development and thus food security, as we have seen in the literature review where Paul Collier and industrial agriculture was discussed.

The Senegalese government, first in 2008 under the rule of President Wade and now under the government of President Sall, has established national policies and agreements with large-scale international financial institutions, such as the World Bank, to develop the agriculture sector. One such agricultural development scheme that was heavily promoted by the Wade government is the *Grande Offensive Agricole pour la Nourriture et l'Abondance*, (GOANA), initiative. In 2008 this initiative was created in an effort to combat food insecurity in Senegal through agricultural advancement. The policy promoted the agricultural production of staple crops in the countryside such as millet, rice and corn and was supported by agricultural subsidies from the state. Self-serving land allocations to elites was then done with the rationale for increasing staple crop production. For example officials, *marabouts*,¹⁶⁰ and other wealthy individuals, were allotted more land for production.

All rural communities were asked to contribute 1000 ha of land to the execution of the programme and, when distributing the land, to give priority to those with the means to cultivate it. In addition, the President declared that ‘Ministers, high-level officials, directors and business executives are invited to cultivate minimally 20 ha and there is no upper limit.’¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Religious leaders.

¹⁶¹ Mayke Kaag, Yaram Gaye, Marieke Kruis: 15.

This paved the way for land allocations across the country. In most cases land was removed from the rural poor and transferred to elites. Ironically, this local “land grab” was done through a national, conscious effort to enhance food security. The region most susceptible to agricultural development programs is the Senegal River Valley (SRV) which runs through the St. Louis region and is located in the north-west of the country. Home to numerous lakes and rivers, the region is the main source of water in the country and even supplies the capital city, Dakar, with its drinking water.¹⁶² For this reason, there are a variety of agricultural investments in this region, ranging both from national and international projects.

Food Sovereignty and Civil Engagement in Senegal

The Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux, CNCR, is a peasant organization focusing on the rights of rural peasants in West Africa. With headquarters in Dakar, CNCR is very active in advocating food sovereignty and peasants’ rights in Senegal specifically. At a 2009 conference in Dakar, in collaboration with other West African states, CNCR put out a declaration defining food sovereignty as, “recognition of the status of producers and their organizations; recognition of title, the recognition of the right to produce, the establishment of appropriate support instruments.”¹⁶³ In an effort to focus national and international attention on food sovereignty and food and land rights in Senegal, and West Africa, CNCR put out a list of recommendations for those in power to adhere. At the center of these demands, is food sovereignty and the promotion of a dialogue that keeps in mind the rights and

¹⁶² Action Aid, Communications Manager. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Personal interview. Dakar, Senegal, August 10, 2013.

¹⁶³“Conseil National de Concertation et de Coopération des Ruraux.” Final Declaration. http://www.cncr.org/spip.php?article184&var_recherche=souverainet%E9#sommaire_1 (accessed November 1, 2013).

expertise of family farmers, climate change, and local food production.¹⁶⁴ CNCR claims to engage their members to achieve food sovereignty in order to;

help reverse the dependence of 50% imports to feed the Senegalese; Establish a framework for dialogue between all actors involved in the production, processing and marketing of agricultural products to promote food sovereignty Finally, we mandate the NCRC (Nature Conservation Research Centre) to finalize as soon as possible Farmers proposals for food sovereignty are validated by its members to submit, on behalf of the peasant movement, to all those interested in food sovereignty: the state, the private sector, development partners.¹⁶⁵

Gender

It's difficult to discuss food sovereignty and "land grabs" in the context of Senegal without mentioning gender. As explained briefly before, women's rights to land is often marginalized in both customary and national land laws. In sub-Saharan Africa, women produce 80% of household food but only control less than two percent of land.¹⁶⁶ In Senegal, women comprise 65% of the labor force in the agricultural sector, but less than one percent of land is managed by women.¹⁶⁷ Women are the primary food producers, cultivators and preparers, but do not possess decision making power concerning land. In reaction to "land grabs" in Senegal, women's associations and organizations have been vocal in advocating for their rights. Women are aware of their active role in the food system, as the main providers for their families, and are active in securing food at the household and community level. A lack of food sovereignty threatens this system, and women's associations are vocalizing the connection between "land grabs" and food sovereignty. In April 2012, the Rural Women's Declaration Against Land

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Kachingwe, Nancy. "From Under Their Feet: A Thick Piece on the Gender dimensions of land grabs in Africa." Action Aid 1 (2012): 1-20.

¹⁶⁷ Dia, Marietou. Interview by author. Tape recording. Dakar, Senegal, September 4, 2013.

Grabbing was made public. In their declaration, the women raise awareness about the living and working conditions of rural dwellers effected by “land grabs”.

Noting that over the last few years Senegal has been subject to land grabbing and the neoliberal commodification of natural resources, of which women in general and all rural dwellers are the primary victims; Acknowledging that land grabbing goes hand in hand with increasing private sector control over food and agriculture through greater control over resources such as land, water, seeds and other natural resources; Considering that many governments justify land grabbing by asserting that modern agro-industrial techniques will improve local agricultural practices perceived as “archaic,” and will guarantee food security; Considering that, while this is a very widespread belief around the world, it is totally false and does not stand up to the realities demonstrated by family farming; Considering that without equal access and control over resources by rural actors and women producers in particular, Millennium Development Goals 1 and 3, that is, to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” and “promote gender equality and empower women”, will not be attained by 2015; Committed to demanding and struggling for the systematic respect of our rights.¹⁶⁸

The declaration provides a call to action for the state to stop “land grabbing”, promote family farms, promote food sovereignty, show transparency and “oppose the principles of so-called “responsible agricultural investment” proposed by the World Bank, given that this type of investment cannot be responsible if it allows investors and multinationals to take over the lands of women and men peasant farmers.”¹⁶⁹ Further referenced in the declaration are the human rights covenants that have been ratified by the State and are in favor of the human rights concerning land, food and gender equality.

Concluding Remarks

This section has provided the recent “land grab” history in the context of Senegal highlighting the basic motivations, stakeholders, actors and effects on local food systems, food

¹⁶⁸“farmlandgrab.org | Declaration of rural women against land grabbing in Senegal.” Declaration of rural women against land grabbing in Senegal. <http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/20665> (accessed April 14, 2013).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

security, gender and food sovereignty. It is clear that the contradicting land laws and tenure statutes in Senegal make “land grabs” perfectly legal, although may not be respecting the rights of peasant farmers. The issue of land conversion from producing food to producing fuel, brings up an important national debate on food security as well as what the role should be of agricultural development initiatives; while the lack of transparency and misrepresentation of smallholder farmers and women brings up important issues of food sovereignty and local autonomy and decision making powers in the face of “land grabs”. In the next chapter, I analyze these issues through the lens of peasants’ rights, food sovereignty and social justice.

“Land Grabs” and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Chapter Five: Land Grabs, Food Sovereignty, Social Justice and the Role of the State

The state gives authorization to the companies to settle there (St. Louis Region). The role of the state must be to manage well the national production in order to save food security, if you give many hectares to companies who grow sunflowers, you attack food security.¹⁷⁰

Overview

Throughout my fieldwork a reoccurring question concurred the proper role of the State in addressing food sovereignty and large-scale land acquisitions. In Senegal, food sovereignty is heavily dependent on having access to land for family farming and subsistence agriculture. In light of recent large-scale land acquisitions, the reallocation of land poses a real threat to small-holder agriculture, which is responsible for feeding two thirds of the population in Senegal. In this chapter I argue that the livelihoods of small holder farmers are threatened by large-scale land acquisitions, which in turn compromises food sovereignty and exacerbates social inequality.

First, I argue that the State plays the largest role in misrepresenting the rights of peasants in large-scale land acquisitions. Second, large-scale land acquisitions threaten food sovereignty and the sustainability of peasant farmers, and that in order for there to be social justice in Senegal concerning land rights, there needs to be a better understanding of the long-term social, economic and environmental consequences.

To support these three arguments, I present my findings from two case studies:

1.) The case of Jatropha Technology Farm in Netebolou Village, in the Tambacounda Region

¹⁷⁰ Jallow, Alieu. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Tape recording. Dakar, Senegal, August 26, 2013.

2.) The case of Senethonal Project in Ngith Village and surrounding communities, in the St. Louis Region.

These two regions represent two geographically distinct zones in Senegal. What they both have in common is an abundance of water and vegetation, with lakes and rivers nearby boasting fertile lands. The arable land, and water supply¹⁷¹, and vast “unused” lands has attracted foreign investors, notably those interested in growing crops for biofuel production. However, before providing examples on how food sovereignty and social justice are threatened, it is important to start at the root, which is the involvement of the state.

The Role of the State and Misrepresentation of Peasant Rights

In 1964, four years after independence, the newly founded Senegalese government passed the law on National Domain making the government the rightful land owners of the country’s land. As was presented in the preceding chapter, this law permits the government to oversee and act as the final decision maker in all land transactions. For this reason, large-scale land acquisitions are conducted in a “legal” manner, but leave much to be desired among the peasant majority. Large-scale land acquisitions are both controversial and murky in Senegal, with a general lack of transparency or understanding of long-term consequences. But what is important to remember is where the power lies in “land grab” deals. Power is taken from the occupants of the land and placed in the hands of the government, elites and foreign investors. This unjust action excludes peasants from the decision making process, and, without such power, farmers are unable to maintain food sovereignty, or control over local food systems.

The Role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund

¹⁷¹ While there is a lack of irrigation systems in the country, these two regions host the majority of the countries lakes and rivers.

After gaining independence Senegal enjoyed some positive growth due to its agriculture sector and national exports, which at the time were thriving.¹⁷² From 1960-1967, Senegal's economic growth was fueled by groundnut¹⁷³ exports. In 1960, Senegal's groundnut exports accounted for 23% of the world's groundnuts, causing Senegal to experience economic development.¹⁷⁴ During this time, the agriculture sector supported 25% of the GDP, whereas today it is 16 percent.¹⁷⁵ The decline in groundnut exportation, led to economic challenges for Senegal, and has contributed to creating a country who imports more than it exports. The decline and crisis in Senegal follows this chronology:

The importance of groundnut exports in the economic development of Senegal can be divided into the following time periods: groundnut exports fuel economic growth (1960-1967), shift in the global demand for groundnuts (1968-1973), emergence of substitutes for oilseeds on the world market (1974-1978), collapse of the world prices for groundnuts (1979-1986), crisis of the groundnut sector in Senegal (1987 to present).¹⁷⁶

Right as the global demand for groundnuts shifted, in 1967, Senegal received its first World Bank loan and by the mid-70s, a series of events lead to an economic decline which prompted the Senegalese government to accept further loans from both the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF), with the majority transacted between the late 70s to mid-80s (the first IMF loan being in 1984).¹⁷⁷ This led to the implementation of the World Bank's structural adjustment programs (SAPs), which were conditions attached the loans and imposed upon borrowing nations. These SAPs affected Senegal's economic sectors, including

¹⁷²Dembele, Demba Moussa. "Debt and Destruction in Senegal: A study of twenty years of IMF and World Bank Policies." *World Development Movement* 1 (2003): 1-50:7.

¹⁷³ Peanuts

¹⁷⁴"Senegal's Trade in Groundnuts: Economic, Social and Environmental Implications." *Senegal TED Case Study*. <http://www1.american.edu/TED/senegal-groundnut.htm> (accessed November 29, 2013).

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Moussa Demba Dembele: 7.

the privatization of state-owned enterprises.¹⁷⁸ Until present day, these SAPs have “dominated economic policy in Senegal.”¹⁷⁹

The core policies associated with stabilisation and SAPs are cuts in public spending; tight monetary and fiscal policies; export-led growth; trade and investment liberalisation; deregulation of internal prices; dismantling of the public sector; privatisation of State-owned enterprises and of essential services; rolling back the State and eroding its ability to formulate autonomous national policies.¹⁸⁰

Conditionalities

IMF loans have contributed to the high debt that Senegal faces, placing the nation in the category of Highly Indebted Poor Countries Relief Program, (HIPCPR), ironically, also supported by the IMF.¹⁸¹ By 2002 Senegal’s external debt accounted for 70% of the Gross National Product (GNP). Aside from the debt, such loans come at a high cost in both interest rates and attached conditions. The interest rates on a \$121.35 million dollar loan from the IMF for 2014 are only 2% but jump to 30% in 2015, 24% in 2016 and 18% in 2017.¹⁸²

The European Network on Debt and Development¹⁸³ issued a report which investigated loan conditionalities. What the organization found is that 14 out of the 20 low income countries examined had more than fifty conditions attached to their loans.¹⁸⁴ Ranking fourth from the top

¹⁷⁸ Kingston, Christina, Godspower Irikana, Victory Dienye, and Kato Kingston. "The Impacts of the World Bank and IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes on Africa." *Sacha Journal of Policy and Strategic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2011): 110-130: 120

¹⁷⁹ Moussa Demba Dembele: 7.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Kingston, Christina, Godspower Irikana, Victory Dienye, and Kato Kingston.

¹⁸² "International Monetary Fund." Senegal: Financial Position in the Fund for Senegal.

<http://www.imf.org/external/np/fin/tad/exfin2.aspx?memberKey1=840&date1key=2013-11-25> (accessed November 15, 2013).

¹⁸³ Network of 50 NGOs from 15 European nations.

¹⁸⁴ "World Bank and IMF Conditionality: a development injustice." *Eurodad* 1 (2006): 1-31: 8.

of the list in terms of amount of conditionalities is Senegal, with 77 conditions attached to World Bank loans.¹⁸⁵

In the case of Senegal, the policy conditions included liberalization and deregulation which had devastating effects on the public sector and the agriculture sector.

Sweeping trade liberalisation and deregulation combined with the dismantling of the Senegalese public sector, from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s, led to the collapse of both the agricultural and industrial sectors. The agricultural sector, which employs more than 70 per cent of the population, has been severely affected by liberalisation and the dissolution of many state controlled enterprises (known as parastatals). As a result, peasants and small-scale farmers have seen their livelihoods deteriorate in the face of the invasion of the domestic market by cheap and subsidised imports from developed countries.¹⁸⁶

The need to fulfil such conditionalities renders the state weak, their priorities are forced to shift from a democratic process engaging citizens, to fulfilling the needs of the WB and IMF. As defined by Reno, “a weak state signifies a spectrum of conventional bureaucratic state capabilities that exists alongside (generally very strong) informal political networks”.¹⁸⁷ This creation of a “weak state”, that is held hostage to the conditionalities of the World Bank and IMF, has tremendous effects on agriculture as it is related specifically to trade. Senegal’s bargaining power is reduced significantly with the World Bank’s influence over Senegal’s trade policy, which is recognized internationally; “rich countries know, for example, that Senegal has been pushed to reduce its average agricultural tariffs to a level (18 per cent) well below the 30 percent allowed under WTO¹⁸⁸ rules.”

¹⁸⁵ “World Bank and IMF Conditionality: a development injustice,”: 8.

¹⁸⁶ Moussa Demba Dembele: 8.

¹⁸⁷ Reno.

¹⁸⁸ World Trade Organization

The SAPs that related directly to agriculture took place between the years 1985-1992, under the name, New Agriculture Policy (NAP), which focused on re-organizing the agricultural sector in Senegal.¹⁸⁹ The NAP along with the liberalization of groundnuts contributed to the decline of Senegal's agriculture sector. Production dropped significantly during this time and food imports became mandatory, as a result of local food insecurity. As we've seen, food imports are higher than exports, when prior to the privatization of groundnuts, it was the other way around. "According to some of Senegal's leading agricultural experts, most of the current problems facing farmers and the agricultural sector are directly linked to this policy."¹⁹⁰

The Free Market

So how might these policies relate to the recent surge of large-scale land acquisitions as supported by the state, in Senegal? Aside from the pressure of rising global food and fuel prices that provoke investors, let us not forget financial liberalization promoted by SAPs in Senegal, including; "removal of all exchange controls: free capital movements, exchange and interest rates set by the market, liquidation or privatisation of several State-owned banks and financial institutions, foreign ownership of banks and other financial institutions."¹⁹¹ Such promotions open the door to foreign investors, and with an already weakened agriculture sector and a "global market" demanding biofuels and staples in a time of fuel and food crisis, the state is thus incentivized. Considering the weakened position of the state as a result of Bank and Fund policies, the weakened status of the agriculture sector (also a result of SAPs), the liberalization of

¹⁸⁹Moussa Demba Dembele: 21.

¹⁹⁰ Moussa Demba Dembele: 21.

¹⁹¹ Moussa Demba Dembele: 26.

the market, and the law on national domain, the State is positioned to favor large-scale land acquisitions in order to promote “development”.

In all of these transactions, the local farmers, who are most affected by land decisions, are left out of the process. In many of my interviews, farmers complained that gaining access to more land to increase yields is getting more difficult and is worrisome. With large-scale land acquisitions competing with peasant farmers for arable land, food sovereignty is under threat.

According to Amadou Kanote, first Executive Director of Greenpeace Africa in Senegal, over the past 10 years, 650,000 ha of arable land have been “grabbed”.¹⁹² There is an estimated total of 3,850,000¹⁹³ hectares of arable land in Senegal, so the total percentage of arable land that “land grab” deals takes up is 17 percent. While this may not seem like a huge number, it is important to remember how quickly this number climbed. If Senegal continues on this trajectory, by 2022 nearly 34% of arable land will be affected. Whether or not “land grabs” continue at such a rate, the pressure to secure land in order to grow food is felt among peasant farmers, and 17% of the land farmers are not able to access to grow food. Since the agricultural projects that occupy “land grab” zones are monocultures for export, there are detrimental effects on biodiversity as well as food sovereignty.

Out of 10 interviewees used for this thesis nine of them mentioned that the State’s lack of transparency in “land grabs” is problematic for farmers, implying that the state allows companies to carry out business without the understanding or consent of community members most directly affected. Some individuals interviewed went on to say that communities have been coerced into

¹⁹² "farmlandgrab.org." farmlandgrab.org | Sénégal: En 10 ans, 650 000 ha de terres ont été données à 17 privés nationaux ou étrangers

¹⁹³ "Arable land (hectares) in Senegal." Trading Economics. <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/senegal/arable-land-hectares-wb-data.html> (accessed November 16, 2013).

accepting conditions set by the companies involved. The interviews focused on two large-scale “land grab” case studies in Senegal; the Senethonal Project and Jatropha Technology Farm Project.

Senethonal Bio-Fuel Project, St. Louis Region

After the protests and deaths relocated the company to the Ndial Reserve in the St. Louis Region, there was a shift in crop production. The lease for 20,000 ha between the company and the government remained the same, but Senethonal/*Senehuille* proposed to grow sunflowers rather than sweet potatoes for oil. The reason why along with the motivation behind some of the investors is murky, but tensions in the 37 villages most affected by the project remains high.

The project continues to be a lightning rod of tension and conflict. Thirty-seven villages are directly affected by it. Some find themselves suddenly surrounded by the project and cut off from their grazing lands and water sources, feeling dispossessed by the state and at a loss for how to survive. Others complain of harassment, eviction and poor compensation. In June 2013, three children lost their lives when they fell into a canal that was excavated to bring irrigation waters to the project's crops.¹⁹⁴

In an effort to promote a more positive side of Senethonal, the company claims to contribute to the social welfare of the communities through the Friends of Africa Foundation, which is run by one of the contributing investors, Gora Seck. While villager's say they are yet to see the benefits, the company promotes their community involvement. Senethonal's Director of Agricultural Operations and Infrastructure, spoke to this in an interview with the Senegalese newspaper, *Il Soleil*, highlighting their involvement in providing a health center, school

¹⁹⁴ "Grain." Who is Behind Senehuille-Senethonal: 1

supplies, roads, a Koranic school as well as “thousands” of jobs.¹⁹⁵ While there is opposition to this project, the rural president of the community of Ngith sweeps it under the mat by stating,

These people are a simple opposition of principle and have no technical and scientific arguments to reject the project. Everyone is aware that this project could significantly contribute to changing the lives of our people living below the poverty line. Some continue to show reluctance, but we much prefer a project that has a downside and a multitude of benefits.¹⁹⁶

The investors of Senethonal, like in many other “land grab” cases in Africa, are both national and foreign, the breakdown of investors in Senethonal is 51% Tampieri (an Italian family-run company) and 49% Senethonal (which is the name of the Senegalese company).¹⁹⁷ Of the investors in Senegal funding Senethonal’s percentage, are Benjamin Dummai (75%) and Gora Seck (25%).¹⁹⁸ Dummai is an Israelei-born business man who has worked mainly in Brazil as well as other parts of Latin America and Africa. His interest and involvement in the Senethonal project is murky, as is his criminal past.¹⁹⁹ Gora Seck is a Senegalese business man who was been active in the mining industry in Senegal and serves as the Director of African Minerals Corporation and is acquaintances of the Minister of Mines in Senegal, Ibrahima Basse.²⁰⁰ While the rhetoric of Senethonal’s marketing highlights infrastructural development and community benefits, not all community members buy into it.

¹⁹⁵“Le Soleil Senegal.” Senhuile- Senethonal.

http://www.lesoleil.sn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30910:projet-senhuile-senethanol-dans-le-departement-de-dagana-a-gnith-une-unite-de-biocarburants-fait-renaitre-lespoir&catid=78:a-la-une&Itemid=255 (accessed October 30, 2013).

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ “Grain.” Who is Behind Senehuille-Senethonal

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ “Dummai and his wife were found guilty of tax evasion in Brazil and he was charged by Brazilian authorities for financial fraud. Dummai has run various shell companies with partners who themselves have been implicated in a range of criminal activities.” Ibid: 2.

²⁰⁰ Ibid. 3

Amadou, who is a Fulani²⁰¹ nomadic pastoralist in the community of Ngith shared his perspective concerning the role of the state in the region, “the state does nothing for us because the state sends every day, some police to go out, around seven cars to protect the people who would like to install Senethonal there.” We met at dusk at the compound of a university professor’s house where I was staying in the large port city of St. Louis. He was very soft spoken and was dressed in traditional Fulani clothing, loose-fitting stripped indigo fabric that hung down to his knees, falling over snug fitting fabric pants. Upon arrival, he took some time and prayed on a mat that he had brought with him, as the call to prayer beckoned through the city in the background. The mosquitoes started coming out, with the dark and were a constant pest throughout the interview until the rain came and scared them away. At one point in the interview, he pulled up a video on his mobile flip phone showing a police intervention in his community, “we were just going to pray on a Friday but then all the police came,” explaining that they are not free to meet, and that opposition to the Senethonal project is often reported to local police, and protestors are imprisoned. He continued to say that “the state has changed my living condition for the worst.” We will meet Amadou again in the next section concerning food sovereignty.

Jatropha Technology Farm, Tambacounda Region

The other case study that I examine is the Jatropha Technology Farm (JTF), near the village Netebolou in the Tambacounda region. JTF, is also an Italian corporation, with the mission of producing jatropha for biofuels. The signed contract entails the company to lease 50,000 ha of land for the project, the first initiation actually began producing on 500 ha.²⁰² As in

²⁰¹ The second largest ethnic group in Senegal behind Wolofs.

²⁰² "Jatropha Technology Farm." - LAND MATRIX. http://landmatrix.org/get-the-detail/by-investor-name/2175/?order_by= (accessed November 15, 2013).

the north, there was much resistance by local farmers, but the State over-rode such protests in promotion of the project. In my visit to Neteboulou, I conducted an interview with a peanut farmer named Silman, visiting him in his father's large compound. It included numerous people, all just returned from the fields and preparing for dinner, bathing children and relaxing before evening prayers. We sat on a *bantaba*, or cement structure much like a large bench or bed for sitting and chatting, and soon Silman was surrounded by many of his peers, one reclined in a hammock weaved out of fishing ropes, and many curious children. When asked about how JTF first got involved in their community Silman said,

They (JTF) wanted to buy the land because they said that they had a project they wanted to work on, but the community refused because we said no, we can make an agreement where you work on the land, but we are not selling the land. But the company came with an agreement, with an MOU (memorandum of understanding) that was already signed in Dakar and it was the government in Senegal saying that they can have 50,000 hectares of land.²⁰³

The State holds the Power

In the end, the community had no real say concerning the land that they had been farming for generations, and were forced to leave their farms and work as laborers earning a daily wage for the JTF. The implications of this on the farmland will be explained in the next section. Many of the community members were upset by the fact that they were unable to make any decisions concerning this land and the general "lack of communication".

Companies are not allowed to come into a country and decide to work with a community without the state's consent. Usually they are told by the state through a kind of investment agreement policy, so that the state is the first that should be held accountable

²⁰³ Dembele, Silman Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Tape recording. Neteboulou, Senegal, August 20, 2013:

because the state is the one negotiating these kinds of contracts with foreign and private companies.²⁰⁴

These examples taken from two case studies of large-scale land acquisitions demonstrate the lack of power and autonomy over the decision making process among rural populations in relation to their land. This power is solely in the hands of the State, who is acting with other motivations in mind, rather than food sovereignty. Without such power, peasants are unable to maintain food sovereignty, social justice or control over local food systems.

Large-scale Biofuel Farms Threatens Food Sovereignty

At the World Social Forum in Dakar, a group activists came together to promote the Dakar Declaration in an effort to combat poverty and food insecurity by encouraging food sovereignty. Their perspective encourages family farming, which is responsible for feeding 80% of Africa.²⁰⁵ In the declaration, they explain, that poverty and food insecurity can be confronted through implementing policies that encourage food sovereignty. This section provides evidence to show that large-scale land deals, especially those involving biofuels, may threaten food sovereignty in Senegal. The Dakar Declaration states, “We are convinced that agribusiness, GMOs, and agricultural policies designed by foreigners only increase poverty and social tensions by making us dependent and turning self-sufficient peasants into wage workers.”²⁰⁶ As shown in chapter four, the majority of “land grab” deals are foreign run, and are in fact turning the food producers into wage laborers.

Domestic food production is being threatened by the re-allocation of land for large-scale export agriculture. As shown in chapter four all of the crops grown at “land grab” sites are done

²⁰⁴Dia, Marietou. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca.

²⁰⁵ "West Africa | Food Sovereignty Tours | Food Sovereignty | Agritourism." Country Backgrounder: Senegal: 1.

²⁰⁶ Ibid: 2

so with foreign markets in mind, not local food systems. In a country where the majority of the population is growing food for subsistence and food imports are already higher than exports, the re-allocation of land from food into land for export crops can have disastrous effects on local food sovereignty. For example I use the case of the crop, *jatropha*, as presented in the second case study that takes place in the Tambacounda region, and examine the effects that growing *jatropha* had on local food systems.

Netebolou, Tambacounda Region

Silman, the farmer from Netebolou, stated that before JFT came to their village, himself and all other local farmers contributed to their own food security by farming staples during each rainy season. They would grow enough for their subsistence to last their families until the next rainy season, selling whatever might be left over. It is not my intention to romanticize this lifestyle, just to support that it is the right of the peasants to be able to make decisions concerning their land and how it is used. There are many challenges that family farmers face with rain-fed agriculture. To give just a few examples, they are susceptible and vulnerable to climate change, fluctuating markets, and it is extremely difficult and demanding physical work.

When JTF came in with a signed MOU from the State, the company proceeded to employ community members at a daily wage to begin cropping *jatropha*. The community was divided, some were pleased by the prospect of earning money and the infrastructure development that the company promised them, which included a school and a hospital which were never built. Silman said that some people in the community “would not see the negative aspects, and the company

itself focused on only positive elements saying, okay we are only going to (provide) employment, there will be money, and there will be economic empowerment”²⁰⁷

The problems arose when the community, which had left (and lost) family farms to work in the *jatropha* fields, saw a drop in their daily wages, from 2,000 cfa per day to 1,500 cfa per day,²⁰⁸ which is about four U.S. dollars (USD) and three USD respectively. Since the farmers were not holding permanent positions, they soon realized that depending on a daily wage, that was decreasing, was not sustainable. They abandoned the work and the company left shortly after, re-locating to another community nearby without upholding any commitments to the first community. Due to a bad reputation following this action, the company took a different, local name in the neighboring community for a fresh start. JFT was in Netebolou region between the years 2008-2010, and it took almost two years after they left for the nutrients to replenish the soil so that they were able to grow staple foods.

To learn more about the effects that *jatropha* has in local community farms, I met with Saer Sy in his office in Kaolack. He had just returned from a field visit and was excited to talk with me about land issues. Sy is a Project Manager at Action Aid, an international NGO promoting human rights and battling poverty, and also had previous experiences working in the north of the country with land right’s activists. He was also familiar with the *jatropha* projects new to the country and talked about the harms of *jatropha* on food sustainability and farming during the interview.

In Senegal for example, in all areas, in all regions you can find people cropping peanut because peanut is our main economic crop, due to our history and our beliefs and so on. And you can use the seeds for the next year. It is securing their food and their income for

²⁰⁷ Dembele, Silman . Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Tape recording. Neteboulou, Senegal, August 20, 2013:

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

the next year. And you can have also millet. Millet is used a lot and if you stop cropping millet because of *jatropha*, it is not sustainable. There is an impact on the farming of millet, peanuts, and maize (corn). *Jatropha* has damaged a lot of this production, in terms of quantity and quality, and also the next thing is about, we have seen some people who have removed their *jatropha* production and they have seen their farming production decrease. After removing *jatropha* when you come back to produce millet, you can see the decrease in one hectare of land, before you can have 1 ton (for example) and now have less than 1 ton because the quality of the soil is damaged.

Speaking further about the harm that *jatropha* production causes food security is an agricultural expert on rural policies and food security, Oussengo Konate, based out of the Tambacounda office of Producers Association of the Gambia River Valley, (APROVAG), a local NGO that supports peasant farmers. For Konate, the biggest question he asks when confronted with large-scale land acquisitions and the re-allocation of land for *jatropha* and community members from farmers to laborers is, is it sustainable?

In the beginning of the *jatropha* project in Tambacounda, community members were told that *jatropha* could grow on “unoccupied” and “undesirable” lands. However, this proved to not be the case. Konate explained that this creates a competition for the best soil, which is either already occupied by family farms for staple food production, or is protected in the “classified”, or restricted, forest area.²⁰⁹ Due to this competition Konate explained, “in fact, this program has a negative effect on food security”.²¹⁰

They (JFT) need laborers and Tambacounda is a poor area, and when the program pays money for people to work with them, the population leaves their farms to work with the program, food security becomes affected. The movement of producers, they leave their agriculture for a bigger employer, creates the risk of food security, you know? They can have some money, but is it sustainable? The market of biofuels is not in Senegal. It is at the international level, and nobody can control it, nobody can sway what will happen

²⁰⁹ Konate, Ousseynou. Interview by author. Tape recording. Tambacounda, Senegal, August 19, 2013.2-3

²¹⁰ Ibid.

after a year or two and the risk is higher to expose the population in rural communities. *Jatropha* is not a food culture. You cannot eat *jatropha*, and when people leave their crops for *jatropha* when the market is not clear, what can they do? If there is cereal (millet) or rice they can eat it, but *jatropha* is not edible. It is a risk.²¹¹

Also at risk is the balance and the biodiversity of rural areas. *Jatropha* is grown in a monoculture fashion, which is known to deplete biodiversity. A member of the peasants' opposition, Alieu Jallow, spoke to this in our interview.

It can have a negative impact for the population. If you use large, quality land, lot's of water and natural resources and you are also using fertilizer, it destroys the environment and I think that it is necessary to maintain the ecosystem. With that kind of exploitation, the ecosystem is not in balance.²¹²

Studies from agricultural scientists show that the current agriculture system which favors the use of monocultures for agricultural production has greatly contributed to the current environmental crisis. From an ecological perspective, monocultures have contributed to the following problems; a lack in recycling soil nutrients, pest outbreaks, an increasing reliance on new cultivars, increased use of pesticides and herbicides to meet subsidized requirements.²¹³ When the sustainability of the land and environment is jeopardized, it threatens food sovereignty and food security of rural residents.

Similar to the argument presented by Konate, Jallow believes that there is danger in growing crops that are not edible in a region so heavily reliant on subsistence agriculture.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Jallow, Alieu. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca

²¹³ Altieri, Miguel. "Modern Agriculture." *Agroecology in Action*. http://nature.berkeley.edu/~miguel-alt/modern_agriculture.html (accessed November 15, 2013).

The type of production for sunflowers is not something that you can eat. It must be processed in order to have a result. But with a ground nut or something else after a few months you can eat it in your family, or you can sell it, but if you bring sunflower to the market people don't know it and they cannot eat it.²¹⁴

He continues to discuss the benefits of biodiversity in one's farm and garden, and uses his family farm as an example. For him and his family, they grow a variety of staples, fruits and vegetables, he is making the decision "because it is a family production, to bring many productions in the market."²¹⁵ This way, they are insuring the nutrition and food security of their family and also their immediate community, by providing nutritious and safe foods for family consumption and also to sell in local markets. For him,

the problem with the agribusiness is to take 300 million hectares for one production, for the community if you just have one production it is not good for nutrition, it's not good for the youth or the babies. And I think that, my opinion is that family exploitation is sustainable and in the economy, if one production doesn't work than the other will.²¹⁶

Ngith, St. Louis Region

Another huge component to the sustainability concern is the issue of water. Both case study regions take place in areas that have access to water, through rivers and lakes. The presence of large-scale biofuel farms means a greater competition for water with livestock, and crops. One of the greatest concerns in the north is the issue of livestock. For hundreds of years, the Fulani ethnic group, who are historically nomadic cattle herders, have grazed their cattle in the semi-arid "unused" land in the north. With the Senethonal project, nomads were displaced and over 1,000 cattle (the livelihood of many herders) were forced to relocate. Going back to the

²¹⁴ Jallow, Alieu. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca

²¹⁵ Ibid:

²¹⁶ Ibid:

interview with Amadou, who is a pastoralist, we can see the effect that this is having on his occupation, income and livelihood.

Amadou explained his lifestyle, which is similar to many other nomads who compromise the Ngith community and surrounding area. During the dry season they graze their cattle and make their income selling milk and cows, and during the rainy season they rent some plots of land from farmers in the area to grow their crops for their food supply. With the involvement of Senethonal in the area, the nomads no longer have access to their grazing land and were forced to get rid of all their livestock. Also, finding land to rent to farm is becoming increasingly difficult. For someone whose entire identity, culture and livelihood is involved in cow herding, to have that taken away unwillingly, is a violation of the rights represented in the UNCESCR.

Amadou also said that the company is aware of who their “opposition” is in the community and the corporation has monopolized control over the roads that lead up to the water which the communities use for bathing and drinking. Locals used to have water access in 15 minutes but “now we are obliged to go a different way and it takes one hour in order for us to get water to drink”. This is a further example of peasant’s rights being undermined by taking away their power and access to land and water, key ingredients for food sovereignty.

Environmentalist and food rights advocate Sidy Ba, works for an agricultural NGO called *le Cadre de Concetraction des Productuers d’Arachide compte*, (CCPA), which helps peanut farmers. Previously he worked for an active peasants right’s association in Senegal called *Enda Pronat* at the time that Senethonal first became involved in the St. Louis Region.

...the government has given them 20,000 ha to produce sunflower seeds to export for biofuel, it is useless for people in Senegal, it is being exported. There were people that were on this land, and they came and just grabbed it. It effected the livestock breeding,

cows and goats. So they asked people to leave, even though they were there way before them, cemeteries were destroyed...²¹⁷

This, according to Ba, has led to a decrease in production in the area, farmers are not free to grow anymore they are employees of the company and “they are strangers in their own land”.²¹⁸ Often times, communities are swayed by foreign companies (as has been shown in the case studies) and are taken advantage of. If you offer “1 million cfa to a peasant who doesn’t have money, he is going to think it is a lot of money, land grabbing is bad, very very bad there is nothing good in it for peasants. Nothing. Nothing good will come out if it, really.”²¹⁹

Negative Impacts

Large-scale land acquisitions in Senegal really did not begin to swing into full effect until around 2008. Five years later, there is a wide variation (and murky understanding) of the amount of land that has been promised to investors vs the amount of land that is actually in use. For all these reasons combined, there is no before and after data, thus a very vague understanding of what long-lasting effects may be. However, through these testimonies provided from the case studies, it is apparent that the day-to-day lives and farming habits of rural communities confronted with “land grabs” has been impacted. Turning small scale farmers into laborers on large-scale farms, has effects on the availability of food in local communities. Large-scale land deals threaten both food sovereignty and the livelihoods of peasant farmers. In the next section I examine why it is important to understand long term consequences, what we can learn from West African neighbors, explore some solutions to insure food sovereignty.

²¹⁷ Ba, Sidy. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

Social Justice and the Need to Understand Long Term Consequences

As was previously mentioned “land grabs” in Senegal are an extremely new phenomenon. I found that when I was chatting with people, outside of the study, about large-scale land acquisitions there was a general lack of knowledge surrounding these land deals. It is my argument here that in order for there to be social justice, there needs to be a better understanding of long-term consequences. By examining the cases of other West African countries and considering the opportunity costs of large-scale land acquisitions, a dialogue that is more in line with human rights can be explored. This section also concludes with recommendations presented in the interviews.

West African Large-Scale Land Acquisitions

“Africa is falling very hard on the land grabbing problem. If people do nothing about it, they will lose everything. If people don’t get upset, they are going to lose.” - Sidy Ba.

As was presented in chapter four, in 2012, GRAIN held a conference in Benin where many small farming associations and NGOs from around West Africa were present. GRAIN highlighted the “land grab” cases around the region and the trends between them from country to country are undeniable. In Mali, over 544,567 ha of arable land has been “grabbed” for export agriculture production. The main investors are Libyan and 40% of all production is for biofuels.²²⁰ The acquisition of much of this land was done in violation of human rights and does not contribute to food security, according to The Oakland Institute.

These land acquisitions involve violent and flagrant abuses of human rights and the report documents attacks on smallholder populations in the irrigated agricultural zones of the Office du Niger. Most of the large-scale land acquisitions are concentrated in state-owned lands within the large, riverine delta of the Office du Niger, where informal

²²⁰Baxter, Joan. "Understanding Land Investments in Africa: Mali Report." The Oakland Institute 1 (2011): 1-55.

customary rights of the local people are not protected by law, and are not recognized by public officials.²²¹

As in the case of Senegal, in Mali the majority of the population derives their living from agriculture, about 70-80 percent. And in the midst of low food security, the competition for arable land with foreign investors, aggravates the situation. Also similar to Senegal, the “informal customary rights of the people living on these lands are not protected by law, and are not recognized by public officials.”²²² The report continues to provide conclusions, although large-scale land acquisitions are relatively new in Mali as well, it is hard to ascertain what the long-term consequences are. OI reports lack of transparency and accountability on the hands of the government and investors, lack of environmental protection, especially water sources and the River Niger, and that there is ambiguity concerning land rights and peasants’ rights.²²³ The similarities to the Senegal case are there, with one common actor motivating the state, the World Bank.

The World Bank has shaped the economic, fiscal, and legal environment of Mali in a way that favors the acquisition of vast tracks of fertile lands by few private interests instead of bringing solutions to the widespread poverty and hunger plaguing the country.²²⁴

Another West African country that has had an increase of large-scale land acquisitions in recent years is Cameroon. In Cameroon an American corporation called Herkales is leasing 73,086 hectares for 99 years to produce palm oil, for biofuel.²²⁵ In this case, there have been

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid: 2.

²²⁴ Ibid: 2.

²²⁵ "Understanding Land Investment Deals in Africa: Massive Deforestation Portrayed as Sustainable Development: The Deceit of Herkales Farms in Cameroon." Land Deal Brief, September 2012.

numerous legal flaws in Herkales' business and involvement in Cameroon, one of which being illegal deforestation for the expanse of their production. Although this is a new project, much like the cases of Senegal and Mali, there has been efforts to assess the long-term consequences. The company behind the Herkales project, SG Sustainable Oils Cameroon Limited, conducted an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA)²²⁶ in Cameroon that claims 45,000 people could be impacted.²²⁷ Some of the risks that the ESIA concluded from their assessment were, displacement of locals, loss of traditional livelihood opportunities, and a risk to surface water.²²⁸ The case in Cameroon is gaining more recognition thanks to the Oakland Institute and Greenpeace Africa, prompting an important international dialogue.

While it is difficult to predict the long-term effects, Senegal can learn from the experience of neighboring countries. For instance, introducing an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment in "land grab" zones may help policy makers and local authorities better understand what could be lost. In his interview, Konate spoke to this saying that it is not enough to have local authorities and politicians making decisions about land. There needs to be a "third party who is not interested who can give an objective opinion and at the international level, they can use it to find solutions".²²⁹ In this matter, perhaps justice can be reached through an impartial analysis of impact.

Opportunity Cost

http://www.oaklandinstitute.org/sites/oaklandinstitute.org/files/Land_deal_brief_herakles.pdf (accessed November 13, 2012):1.

²²⁶ An assessment test to analyze the social and environmental impact of various projects on host communities. The rules and regulations concerning ESIA range from country to country and started in the 1960s.

²²⁷ Ibid:1.

²²⁸ Ibid:1.

²²⁹ Konate, Ousseynou. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca.

Another way to evaluate long term consequences is by looking at what Olivier de Schutter calls opportunity cost, which was presented in chapter two. The main opportunity cost in the face of “land grabs” is the potential of family farming production. Since this constitutes the majority of the population, it is safe to say that the biggest opportunity cost would be the loss of staple food production at the subsistence level. One further element of family farming and the representation of what “could have been”, is an extremely important topic that is worthy of its own thesis, and that is the gender component. In Senegal, 65% of women are participating in agriculture. Also, as the primary caretakers of children, women are directly responsible for food security at the familial level. In an interview with Marietou Dia, who is a Program Manager at Action Aid, she spoke about how active women are in the food system in Senegal.

Women are key through the whole process starting from growing foods, up to harvesting, processing, cooking and even now storing because there is an effect of climate change on production so women are more involved in storing cereals. Women are key to the whole process.²³⁰

While women are actively engaged in agriculture and food, they are not represented as land owners, therefore they have very little power when it comes to decision making, rendering them even more powerless in the face of large-scale land acquisitions than male farmers. Together they own about less than 1% of land in Senegal²³¹ and less than 2% of land across the continent.²³² This limited access to land for cultivation, outside of large-scale land acquisitions is troublesome for women and food security in Senegal. Adding foreign investors in the “land scramble” to an already highly hierarchical structure at the family, community, and ethnic

²³⁰ Dia, Marietou. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Nancy Kachingwe: 1.

structures exacerbates the situation. “When we are talking about “land grabs” we are talking about agribusiness and it means that money is behind the agenda, so it becomes a game of power relations, and women are left behind.”²³³

In the same region where JTF opened in Netebolou is the small rural village of Ngyuen. Driving from the main town Tambacounda, it was about 30 minutes on pavement and about an hour on a dirt road. I was lucky enough to meet Marietou and the Action Aid team in Tambacounda before they headed out on their rural visits. The eastern part of Senegal boasts an extremely beautiful landscape. Nothing but green farms and rolling hills chasing seemingly endless miles of blue sky with shape shifting clouds threatening rain. The red dirt road continued to wind further into the forest, with few clusters of huts at village markers. Cows blockaded the road and donkey carts took small boys to their father’s fields. Once arriving in Ngyuen we meet with a variety of community members before entering a small compound where about eight women were gathered holding a meeting. Jermain, the president of the local women’s group, took time from her meeting to talk with me about women’s role in the food system in their small farming community.

Thank you for your question, women are playing a great role in banana production and one time we noticed that a lot of the production would rot in the field, that is why we got involved with some partners so that we can process. In banana processing women are mostly the ones that are working it. We started making banana flour and infant food to insure that the food security chain is complete, women here are very aware that food security relies on food production. That is why we are really involved in gardening and bananas. Women are aware about food security and we are concerned about the quality of our food as well...the land is collectively managed by the women’s group.

²³³ Dia, Marietou. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca.

This is an example of an opportunity cost. Just an hour's drive from Netebolou, women farmers and gardeners are organizing and contributing to local food systems and nutrition.

Further contributing to a general lack of social justice in the regions affected by “land grabs” are issues of poor transparency. As was presented in chapter three, transparency is when all parties involved; the company, community members, local authorities and governments, are aware of the intention and details of the proposed project. As has been presented in this section through examples from the case studies, transparency is not represented by all parties involved in these “land deals”. Without prior and informed consent, how can such land deals be done in accordance to human rights and social justice?

During the interview with Sidy Ba, I asked him what the role of the State was, and he said “Oooohhhoooo” with a chuckle, and began scrolling through his open laptop on the long conference table in front of him. He translates the French title of the document he found on a government website (public access) at the Minister of Finance. “Checklist on how to Have Land in Senegal.” A complete guide on how foreign investors can acquire land. When further asked about community awareness and participation, his response was “their rights are not respected at all. There is a law project right now on how to get titles for the land and how to keep land for 50 and 99 years.”²³⁴

While these issues of transparency are currently impacting local communities and local food systems, it is also important to critically examine long term consequences.

If we don't pay much attention in years to come then people will starve because the only resource they have is being taken from them and with the economic crisis and the oil crisis actually the western countries are coming back to agriculture they are coming back

²³⁴ Ba, Sidy. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca.

to land to see what they can get and you know, Africa is still regarded as a very young continent where the resources are and where they can come.²³⁵

Concluding Remarks & Recommendations

Based on the evidence collected in the field from the two case studies presented in this chapter, I conclude that in order for there to be social justice and food sovereignty in Senegal the State and investors must be transparent, a peasant perspective must be incorporated into the decision making and amendments must address long term consequences on both the environment and local food systems. By examining opportunity costs, similar “land grab” cases in other neighboring countries, biofuel projects and the case studies, it is clear that changes in current land policies are necessary. While more research is necessary on “land grabs”, the following changes are helpful recommendations offered by interviewees.

The last question that I asked in each of my interviews was, “what are your recommended solutions at the local, national and international level?” The responses reflect a thematic concern for peasant participation and an increase in transparency. Konate suggested having an objective third party come to rural communities of interest and do an assessment prior to investors, to see objectively if the proposed project would be beneficial to communities. Salifa talked about the importance of an open dialogue.

There must be a direct dialogue with local populations particularly the 37 villages directly affected by the phenomenon and also a respect of human rights as stipulated by Senegal’s constitution as well as the United Nation’s charter. The government has to take its responsibilities’ and protect people whose only wrong has been to claim their own lands, to live and practice in it their activities in order to ensure their food safety.²³⁶

²³⁵ Dia, Marietou. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca.

²³⁶ Ka, Salif. Interview by Joanna LaFrancesca. Email interview. Senegal, September 9, 2013.

“Land Grabs” and Implications on Food Sovereignty and Social Justice in Senegal

Chapter Six: Concluding Thoughts and Recommendations

The immediate consequence of “land grabs” is that they remove land from local farmers, directly challenging their food sovereignty and social justice. The allocation of land to large-scale agricultural investors has increased international concern about “land grabs” and brought attention to the impacts of global markets on local human rights. This thesis has examined the complexities of the “land grab” debate and acknowledged further the specific case of Senegal. While the surge in land investments in Senegal is relatively recent, with the first investors only operating in the last five years, this thesis has shown that food sovereignty and social justice are already being compromised by “land grabs” in affected host communities. I examine multiple sides of the debate, exploring the perspectives of those who support industrial agricultural and the market, as well as those who support food sovereignty, agroecology and the human right’s principles, as promoted by de Schutter.

I argue that the key decision maker in “land grab” deals in Senegal is the State. Taking the power of decision-making and ownership out of the hands of farming communities threatens the ability of these communities to have ownership over local food systems and to maintain food sovereignty. I argue that the State does not recognize the rights of peasants and that in order for there to be social justice and food sovereignty in Senegal, there needs to be a broader understanding of the long-term consequences of “land grabs”.

On one of my last days in Dakar, I had a final interview with Marietou. While I had met her before, this was my last opportunity to interview her formally about the effect “land grabs” have in Senegal on women. The stifling heat from outside did not let up once inside the Action Aid office, where we held our interview in the waiting room. I sat with a bamboo woven hand

fan waving away the mosquitoes, flies and heat. As always, Marietou spoke with passion and intensity, “for me, the land grabbing is colonialization, you see, that’s why Africa specifically needs to get mobilized, to tell our governments, you cannot just play with the lives of communities!”²³⁷

For many human rights workers and activists, like Marietou, “land grabs” are a violation of human rights. The social, cultural and economic rights in communities affected by “land grabs” are directly challenged by the allocation of family farms to the control of foreign agribusinesses. While the government of Senegal officially recognizes human rights, as represented in the preamble of the Senegalese constitution, many civil societies in Senegal would argue that these rights are ignored.

This thesis highlights critical “land grab” debates. Using evidence from my fieldwork and literature review, I show that the State, as well as international financial institutions, play a large role in perpetrating large-scale land acquisitions and threatening food sovereignty and social justice in Senegal. Due to current global trends, including climate change, the financial crisis and the scramble for alternative fuels, “land grabs” and agricultural investments are not going away anytime soon. Thus, it is essential to evaluate the long-term consequences on peasants, who are the most adversely impacted.

At the World Social Forum, over 75,000 people and 70 African peasant organizations from 132 countries met to discuss their goals to achieve food sovereignty;

We believe that the agricultural sector in Africa is the basis for the well-being of the majority of the population, the region’s wealth, the preservation of natural resources, and the future of youth, societies and social peace.²³⁸

²³⁷ Dia, Marietou. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca.

²³⁸ "West Africa | Food Sovereignty Tours | Food Sovereignty | Agritourism." Country Backgrounder: Senegal.

In order to fully protect the most basic human rights concerning land and food it is essential for there to be a comprehensive understanding of the consequences of “land grabs”.

In an effort to mitigate negative effects of “land grabs”, it is critically important that the unexamined peasant perspectives be understood. To this end I interviewed eight family farmers and seven other members of civil society who work in the land and food rights arena. The hospitality and generosity I was shown during my stay in Senegal, contributed to a pleasant research experience, and I was able to make effective use of limited time.

During each interview, I asked the interviewees what their recommended solutions were at the local, national and international levels. The answers mostly reflected a desire for transparency and awareness by the international community of the actual effects of “land grabs” on local farm communities. As Marietou, noted, “negotiations done at the national level should be done in a very balanced way.”²³⁹

Agreeing with Marietou’s call for a more “balanced” national negotiation is Sidy Ba, who asks for the government to reform and represent the 70% that depend on family lands for subsistence agriculture. Political activists in the St. Louis region also call the government and investors to be transparent in land deals and to honor the United Nations Human Rights (UNHR), which is included in the Senegalese constitution. In addition, they demand that government officials, elites and foreign investors listen and involve community members in “land grab” discussions, in order to promote bottom-up rather than top-down decision making. These

²³⁹ Dia, Marietou. Interviewed by Joanna LaFrancesca.

changes would give power to local farmers and likely inspire positive impacts on social justice and food sovereignty.

However, the lack of effort by the State and investors to include local community members in the process reflects unequal power dynamics concerning access to land, and consequently food. Those who control the land have the power. And in Senegal, without land, it is very difficult to secure food. Local food systems are under immediate threat when land used for subsistence agriculture, along with its productive potential, is taken away.

Appendix:

Figure 1: LaFrancesca, Joanna. "Family Farm near Kaolack, Senegal traditional farming plow." 2013. JPG file.

Figure 2: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Senegal_rel89.jpg "Map of Senegal". 2013. JPG file.

Figure 3: Ibid.

Figure 4: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Senegal_Topography.png "Topography of Senegal". 2013. JPG file.

Figure 5: http://carboncapture.us/docs/Jatropha_Curcas_080424.htm "Jatropha Curcas". 2013. JPG file.

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