



LARRI Webinar

Why do so many land deals remain unimplemented in Africa? A land rights perspective.

Photo courtesy Linda Engström

Presenters: Joanny Bélair (Utrecht University), Marie Gagné (Environment Canada) and Linda Engström (SLU, Sweden)

Discussant: Assistant Professor Melisew Dejene Lemma (Hawassa University, Ethiopia)

Webinar: 26th October 2022, 13.00-15.00

Link: <https://gu-se.zoom.us/j/7494858819>

Across a wide range of African countries whose political contexts, social structures and land governance systems vary considerably, large-scale land deals in the agricultural sector are scaled back, perform poorly, or are abandoned. Despite indications of severe implications of these non-operational projects for local populations, investors and host states, the literature analysing the reasons behind this widespread phenomenon remains fragmentary. Methodological issues and the lack of reliable databases also render cross-country comparative analyses difficult. This paper discusses the results of a meta-comparative analysis of the outcomes of land deals in seven Sub-Saharan African countries. Based on a systematic review of the academic scholarship on land deals and on an original database, we identify what factors matter in explaining projects' trajectories and local impacts. Our preliminary results indicate that land conflicts and local resistance are critical factors in understanding investors' ability to start and maintain production. In this presentation, we unpack the causes behind such conflict and resistance and outline some other factors that seem key to explaining why so many land deals from the recent land rush have closed down.

Program:

Presentation and discussant's comments will be followed by a break and then a plenary discussion.

The Land Rights Research Initiative is a platform for discussion and collaboration among researchers, students and others interested in land rights issues in the context of global change. LARRI is hosted by the Human Geography Unit at the University of Gothenburg.

Contact: Margareta Espling margareta.espling@geography.gu.se; Robin Biddulph robin.biddulph@geography.gu.se
Website: <https://www.gu.se/en/research/larri-land-rights-research-initiative>

