

Micro.Land.Grabbing

A Challenge for Local Communities Worldwide

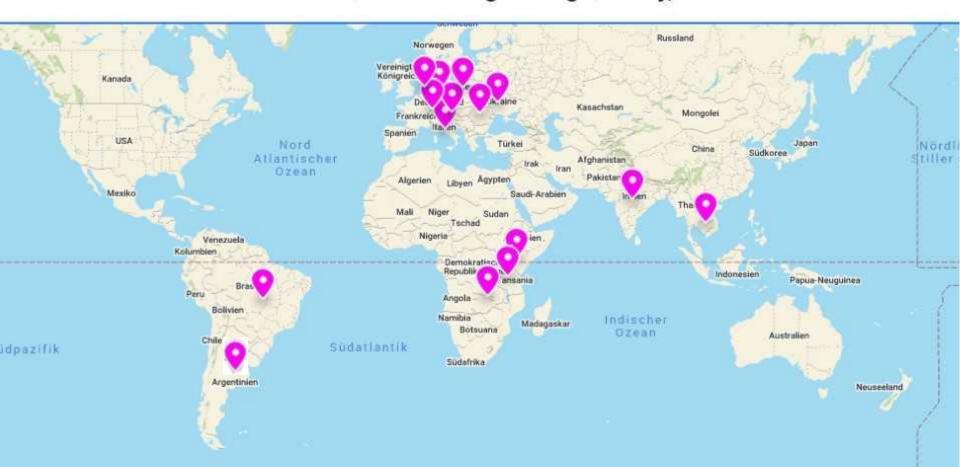


Youtube playlist with music from participants: https://bit.ly/201NByl

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PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES | micro.land.grabbing. | Friday, 22/1/2021





Survey. Micro Land Grabbing



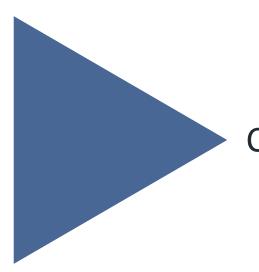




Which strategies for resistance do local communities apply against micro land grabbing?







Characteristics of Micro Land Grabbing



Land Grabbing is:



Characteristics of Micro Land Grabbing

- 1. The process of micro land grabbing is gradual and involves numerous acquisition acts that usually not exceed the local typical scale.
- 2. Micro land grabbing can therefore stay unconsidered over a long period.
- 3. Land grabbers are predominantly regional and national actors and have diverse backgrounds (farmers, elites, companies, state agencies etc.)

Actors involved in Micro Land Grabbing



Land Grabber

market actors that aim at acquiring land

- influence politicians
- promise jobs, money, knowledge, food security
- can act violently and divide community members



Institutional facilitators

e.g. governments, public administration, and state agencies

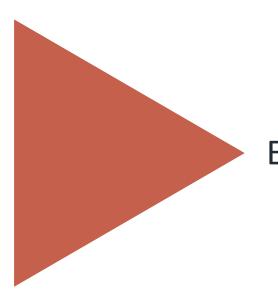
 create and apply legal frameworks that enable land grabbing



Intermediaries

'door openers' for land grabbers

 act between communities, government, investors



Effects and conflicts

Effects

Negative Socio-economic Effects

Similar patterns of effects despite different social organisation

- local food production changes to global production, commercial activity or public infrastructure
- dissolved local economic structures
- increased economic dependencies
- Increasing land prices -> loss of access to land
- global South food insecurity -> migration to town
- global North "structural change"
- Simplification of cropping patterns -> loss of (agri-) cultural practices

Effects

Negative ecological Effects

- No control over natural resources
- exploitative human –nature relations
- loss of biodiversity
- soil degradation
- excessive use of agrochemicals
- danger of natural hazards
- Reduced groundwater availability
- aesthetic degradation



Conflicts

Within local communities

between "winners" and "losers" due to

- revenues from land sales
- bribery
- employment opportunities
- Intensified agricultural practices

between community leaders and individual community members

- about "development" trajectories
- because Leaders act as intermediaries without approval of the community



Conflicts

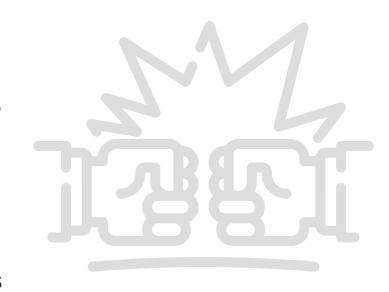
Between communities and land grabbers

Conflicts over resource use

- over water and pasture
- over access to roads and forest resources

Conflicts over intensified agricultural practices

Cultural conflicts e.g. in the cases of pentacostal churches in Brazil



Conflicts

Between communities and authorities

Government institutions act as "land grabbers"

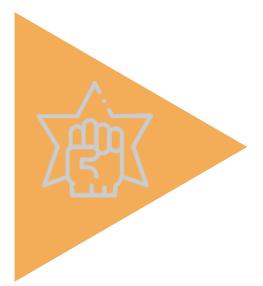
- for national infrastructure (e.g. airports) on communal land
- displaces local people

Government institutions want "modernisation" of the agrarian sector

- supporting agro-industrial actors
- providing infrastructure
- providing the legal basis for non-agrarian projects
- allowing companies to explore mining resources

Government institutions do not

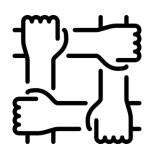
- recognize communal territory and land titles
- fulfil their legal duties



Awareness and capacity building

- Self-identification and judicial formalization of the community
- Secure land titles with
 - social mapping
 - land certificates
- Capacity trainings by CSOs and universities
- Acquire financial resources from NGOs or public credits
- Conflict dialogue mediated by state or CSOs
- Regular exchange between communities
- Public discussions about the development of the community

Legal strategies, political pressure, alliances



- Increase public participation in land governance
- Secure common land by creating municipal land acts
- Ally with universities to gain knowledge for legal struggles
- Build political pressure
- Raise public awareness
- Self-organize into interest groups and associations
- File official complaints and law suits

Alternative economies and cultural activities



- Create alternatives forms of livelihood
- Local food initiatives
- Strengthen local tourism linked to cultural heritage
- Create visions for an alternative development of the region
- Consult universities and CSOs for resource management
- Safeguard cultural heritage
- Organize cultural events to increase attractivity of the region



Micro land grabbing needs to be discussed

Many small land grabs = large area of intensification

Local communities may be political actors against MLG

Discussion

Questions and Debate of Survey Results

How to deal with the conflicts arising due to micro land grabbing?

What can we learn from each other in terms of resistance?

How can we possibly work together in the future?

MLG as a chance to raise awareness:

"Effects of MLG seem very similar to classic LG, but it is more invisible and thus resistance is harder to mobilize"

"Term indicates a global trend. It elicits both interest and a new way of looking at global land grabs." "It helps to raise awareness within communities to form resistance"

"Awareness for different kinds of Land Grab and parallels between affected communities."

What is new about MLG:

"Main attribute is that MLG frames the everydayness of invisible but effective MLG." "national context and differences between visibility and invisibility matter and are connected." "even if legal frameworks and cultural background

differ, the conflicts and effects on local communities are similar so hopefully the resistance strategies could be too"

Debating Survey Results

The new term MLG might not be benefitial for activists' work:

"MLG is a side effect of classical land grabbing and international agreements. We need to prioritize the discourse on what is most important!"

"The term might not be used in future" "The term only touches the surface of the wide issue of land grabbing"

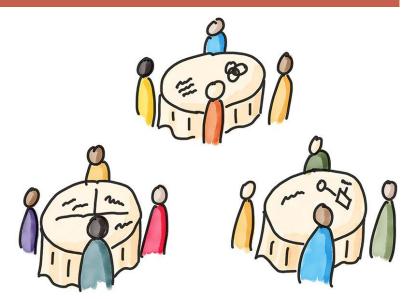
Challenges:

"Doing a precise definition without excluding phenomena" "think about specific resistance strategies for MLG" "Point out invisibility of micro land grab"

World Café: Conflicts

How to deal with the conflicts arising due to micro land grabbing?

- Conflicts within community
- Conflicts with land grabbers
- Conflicts with authorities



Which conflicts connected to MLG occupy our daily lives?



Between communities and authorities

- Authorities do not recognise the legal frameworks that protect the land rights of local communities
- Privatization initiatives enable macro and micro land grabbing.
- Macro land grab invites for micro land grabs and vice versa.
- Authorities suppress resistance of LC.
- Modern land rights do not recognize traditional land use rights.
- ICT (land titling based on communication technologies) increase dynamics of land grabbing.
- Registration process for community land is poor.
- Environmental conservation areas are often imposed over community land. LCmembers are not allowed to use the land anymore.
- Environmetal authorities create conflicts with communities, because they don't allow protected land to be used for peasant farming.

Within communities

- Conflicts over collective property/use rights: within families; between cattle farmers and between famers and pastoralists over pastures; between users about forms of land use.
- Some community members like the idea of intensification others not.
- Competition over benefits of and partnership with mining company between community members and with other communities.
- Increase of land prices leads to internal conflicts.

conflicts

Between community and land grabbers:

- Lack of transparency
- Offer favourable contracts, payment, and development possibilities to community members owning land; communities are not aware of investment aims.
- Companies link with international development agencies to influence them.
- Companies devide communities and use internal conflicts to gain ressources. Traditional authorities lose legitimacy.
- Companies occupy land without legal permission.

How do we deal with conflicts?



Strategies including authorities

- · Demarcate the land.
- Achieve legal status for communities.
- Built national and international alliances to overcome lock-ins resulting from national policy that suppress local communities.

Generall strategies:

- Multidimensional character of conflicts requires invidual solutions. Mediation can be a solution but not in every case.
- Don't underestimate the capacity of communities although they appear devided at first glimpse.
- Participatory conflict mapping and round table discussions. Reduce technical problems concerning the these approaches.
- Relate to local history because it shapes social relationships of the people

deal with conflicts

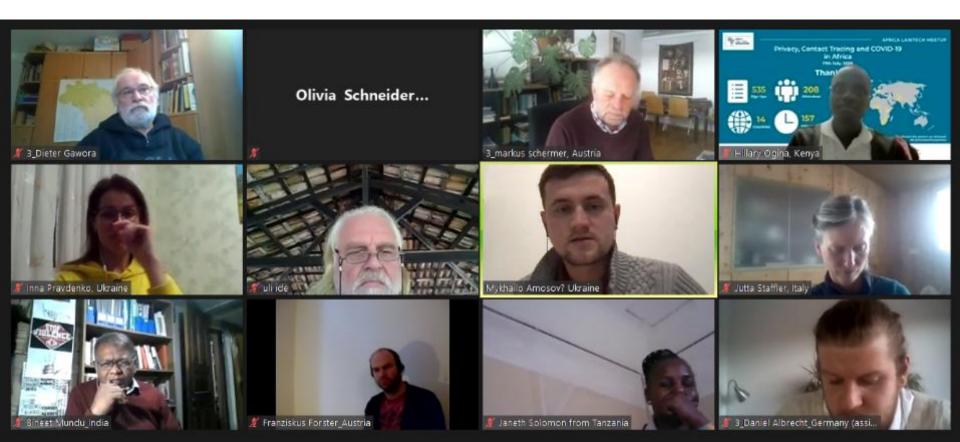
Strategies trageting the communities

- Strengthen sense of community: "the enemy is not inside the community, it comes form outside, waiting to dissolve the community."
- Management of conflicts resulting from internal hierarchies, power asymmetries and income inequalities with the help of local mediators.
- Awareness raising for problems with MLG within community
- Speak about MLG with other communities to raise visibility.
- Organize solidarity between different communities.
- Form boards of community representative to overcome internal rivaleries.

Strategies targeting land grabbers:

- Document cases of land grabbing.
- Support partner organizations that document land grabbing by international companies
- Strengthen internal organizations of the commons.
- Build international alliances against companies because they take over the power over resources from the state.

What did we achieve so far?



Within communities

- Land certificates subjected by local NGO secure private property rights to local community members. They are recognized by politicians and generate confidence among community members.
- Institutions develop projects that safeguard cultural heritage and identity of local communities.
- Local communities organize internally with political actions, self-demracation of their territories and open dialogues with authorities.
- Increased awareness and mobilization among community members; some come back from cities to protect their traditional territories.
- Local traditional communities become more visible.

achievements

Between communities and authorities

- Conversion of protected areas into areas of sustainable use.
- Organize discussions about environmental struggles with the help of big organizations.
- Achieve support by NGOs to put pressure on governments.
- Reports on land conflicts and land legislation show inactivities by official bodies.
- Local governments sometimes help to stopp ongoing land grabs.
- Authorities invited local community members to discuss.

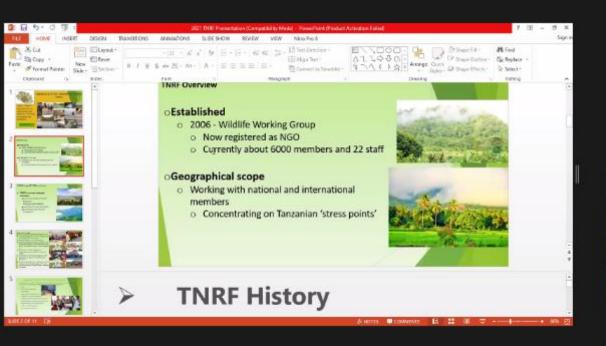
Between community and land grabbers:

- Fences around private land outline community rights.
- Organize protest against land grabs.
- Rights of communities have become more visible, thus putting land grabbers under pressure.
- More confidence within communities against land grabbing if they have land certificates issued by NGOs.

Inputs of Parter Organizations

What can we learn from each other in terms of resistance?

- **Janet** from Tanzanian Natural Resource Forum:
 - Awareness and capacity building
- Carlinhos from Centro da Agricultura Alternativa:
 - Legal activities and political pressure
- **Armin** from Citizen Cooperative Obervinschgau:
 - Alternative economies and cultural activities





🧸 Janeth Solomon from Tanzania

Micro.Land.Grabbing: A challenge for local communities worldwide

ESTRATÉGIAS DE AÇÃO DO CAA-NM EM MARCOS LEGAIS RELACIONADOS COM A PROMOÇÃO OU PROTEÇÃO DOS DIREITOS DE POVOS E COMUNIDADES TRADICIONAIS







World Café: Resistance

What can we learn from each other in terms of resistance?

- Awareness and capacity building
- Legal activities, political pressure and alliances
- Alternative economies and cultural activities



Which strategies of my community do I consider effective?



Awarenss and Capacity Building

- First, build strong awareness for an issue and activate sense of community.
- Put issues into broader picture to politizise them.
- Issue land certificates and make social maps in collaboration with NGOs and universities to create confidence about tradition land use rights. It enables communities to claim their land.
- Build community councils with representatives of different communities to solve conflicts between the groups (e.g. pastoralists and farmers) and to raise awareness for different needs of land use.
- Use external mediation in case of intense conflicts.
- Build community internal commitees to mediate diverse needs and interests of community members and to represent community interests to externals.
- Monitor, if community land rights are complied with. It is most successfull if done in collaboration with community members.

Legal Activities, Political Pressure and Alliances

- Engage in legal activities and alliance building at the same time to generate enough political pressure. The local administration is often week an the power in the hand of the government, therefore we need international alliances.
- Build alliances with media, activists, and external organizations.
- Local communities need to connect to each other to build pressure.
- In some places, we need to change law because micro land grabbing is legal, in other places we need to make sure that legal frameworks are clarified and implemented in favor of communities.
- Citizen referendum on the use of land can make community members aware that they can change law and participate in governance if they take action.
- How can communities claim control over the legal process of clarifying land rights?

strategies

Alternative Economic and Cultural Activities

- Build citizen cooperative to push alternative economic and cultural activities in the region.
- Campaign to revive traditional farming and gardening.
- Alternative economic activities are the last step after having increased awareness and imitated legal actions.
- Cultural activities are very important. And it is important to combine differen activities like economy and culture.
- It is important to value the poeple you work with and the work they do.

Which of the strategies I learned can I apply in my own context?



Awarenss and Capacity Building

- Ukraine: How can we create resistance if there is no awareness for the systemic problem of MLG nor selforganization in a community affected by land grabbing?
 - Often local community members know something about their problems. This knowledge has to be valorized.
 - Connect communities without resistance to those that do resist to enhance social learning processes.
- Brazil: Social mapping with participation of communities makes members aware of what they loose if they don't resist.
- Brazil: Occupy symbolic places of communities.
- Italy: Try out strategies and adapt afterwards. Strategies from Brazil must not suceed in Italy.
- Italy: Give room to meet the needs of all community members, be tolarent about different strategic apporaches, e.g. radical strategies vs. less radical.

Legal Activities, Political Pressure and Alliances

- Zambia: Traditional governance system of old leaders can become a barrier to collective resistance.
- Zambia: Build more alliances to create visibility for cases, help build awareness about community rights, increase power of communities, and increase pressure on government to recognize community land.
- Norway: We still need to focus more on how to make governments implement existing legislation and how to modify wrong decisions, e.g. in environmental impact analysis.
- Ukraine: Create more networks between communities
- Cambodia: Organizing a citizin referendum can be a resistance strategy but how can we strengthen civil engagement for it? Italy: In Italy we made sure, that the dicision of the referendum was legally binding.

learnings

Alternative Economic and Cultural Activities

- Build dialogue and create a common vision on alternative development options for the community.
- Stronger focus must be set on alternative economic activities!

How can we support each other in the future?



create specific resistance strategies for MLG

 Due to the invisibility of MLG it is harder to create resistance against it. How can we collaborate on this question?

Exchange ideas

- Exchange struggles and resistance strategies with each other.
- Exchange also with other communities.
- Share experience about legal practices and framworks
- Make FAQ about experiences.
- Create platform to exchange resistance strategies, legal frameoworks, etc.

Diffuse knowledge to communites

- Create networks between communities to reduce language barriers.
- Prepare explanatory documents for local communities on land tenure rights and resistance strategies.

Creating a discourse on MLG

- Name cases of micro land grabbing that already change something in the process of our struggle.
- Atlas of Environmental Justice (global documentation project) is a platform where we can make cases of MLG visible.
- Build understanding for different scales of LG and the interconnectedness of micro and macro land grabbing.
- Work on clarifying where MLG ends. A knowledge of scale is necessary.
- Broaden the discourse to other communities.

support

Build Alliances:

- We need to build alliance to put pressure on national and regional governments working against local communities.
- Alliances can help to build international visibility for cases of Micro Land Grabbing.
- It is important to build alliances beyond the local and national level.
- Collaborate in creating legal frameworks that are in favor of local communities.

Results of the Workshop

Survey



- MLG may be a chance to raise awareness.
- MLG emphasizes invisibility, localness and everydayness of land grabbing.
- Usefulness of the term for political work is unsure.
- Term needs specification.

Conflicts



- MLG causes daily conflicts within communities, and between communities and authorities and land grabbers.
- To deal with MLG, communities focus on claiming their rights before authorities. For this, they have to strengthen their sense of community their capacities.
- If communities organize resistance, they can be successful.

Resistance



For effective resistance, combine strategies of:

- Awareness building
- Capacity building
- Legal activities
- Political pressure
- Alliance building
- Alternative economic and cultural activities

Next Steps

How can we possibly work together in the future?

Collection of ideas:

- ✓ Send contact list
- ✓ Send workshop documentation
- Create online platform to share resistance strategies
- Use existing platforms to document conflicts and share strategies, e.g.: https://ejatlas.org/
- Write policy paper/scientific paper
- Establish regular workshops and open up existing ones for international participants
- Design instruction for activists on how to deal with land grabbing
- Connect to other institutions dealing with land grabbing, eg. Transnational Institute in NL.
- Share videos on local communities, e.g. https://bit.ly/2NOCUz5 (German)



































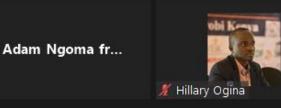














Olivia Schneider...





































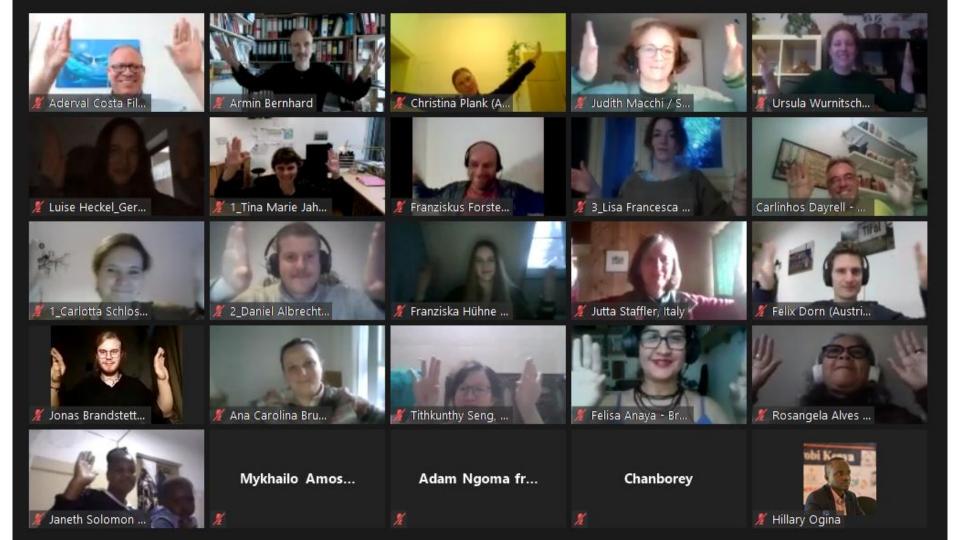












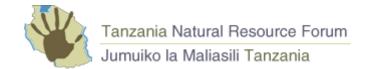
Partners















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Thank you for your participation and hope to see you soon!

