



The impacts of a cancelled large-scale agricultural investment on smallholder farmers' land use and access

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Independent project • 30 credits

Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU

Faculty of Natural Resources and Agricultural Sciences

Rural Development and Natural Resource Management – Master's Programme

Uppsala 2023



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Credits:	30 credits
Level:	Second cycle, A2E
Course title:	Master's thesis in Rural Development and Natural Resource Management
Course code:	EX0889
Programme:	Rural Development and Natural Resource Management
Course coordinating dept:	Department of Urban and Rural Development
Place of publication:	Uppsala
Year of publication:	2023
Cover picture:	Performing the PRA-technique ' <i>Transect Walk</i> ' with interpreter and interview respondent to examine land borders and land use, in Bagamoyo district, 2023. Photo: Philipp Erbach, 2023
Copyright:	All featured images are made by the author.
Online publication:	https://stud.epsilon.slu.se
Keywords:	Large-scale, agriculture, small-scale farming, power relations, knowledge, post-colonialism, land, Tanzania

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“I wish that EcoEnergy could come and tell us what really happened. They could have come and informed us that they cannot proceed with the project or maybe just until this point so that we could go ahead with the continuation of our life.” Interview Respondent, sub-village 2, 10/2/2023

Abstract

Large-scale agricultural investments have seen a rise in popularity over the years, promising economic growth, food security, and poverty eradication around the globe. Through the rising involvement of development aid agencies with private investors, the number of foreign large-scale investments in developing countries significantly increased. This development agenda is rooted in open market access and a globalized world in which rural areas should be included in fast growing economies. However, as much as operational deals are framed as success stories with positive outcomes for the region and people, opposing neoliberal market structures on rural economies of subsistence farming can pose severe problems. A multifaceted perspective is needed, and more features of large-scale investments have to be explored.

This study aimed to investigate how the cancellation of such deals affected smallholder farmers in Bagamoyo region, Tanzania. By applying the theoretical concepts of power and knowledge combined with post-colonial theory, the focus of the study lays on the impacts cancelled deals have on farmers' land use and access. Empirical data was gathered through qualitative research in the prior project area by directly talking to the project-affected smallholders from a sugar cane investment. The findings indicate that, long after cancellation, the effects of the investor remain and that rural communities, especially smallholders, are affected economically and mentally.

Keywords: Large-scale, agriculture, small-scale farming, power relations, knowledge, post-colonialism, land, Tanzania

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Abbreviations

EE	EcoEnergy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
i.e.,	for example,
LSAI	large-scale agricultural investment
PS5	Performance Standard 5
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
VLUP	Village Land Use Planning

1. Introduction

Large-scale agricultural investments (LSAIs) have been promoted as a key development strategy, promising economic growth, employment possibilities, and poverty reduction in countless countries worldwide. Since the early 2000s, low- and middle-income countries have seen a sprunt in LSAIs with multifaceted aims, for example (i.e.), maximizing agricultural outputs or engaging rural people in labour markets by cultivating large tracts of land for biofuel and food production (Woodhouse 2012; Schoneveld 2014). Although it is widely acknowledged that several LSAIs reached those goals, others resulted in land conflicts, involuntary resettlement of communities, and environmental degradation (Hall 2011; Borras Jr et al. 2012). While there exists a vast amount of research on operational deals, the importance of cancelled investments is an understudied phenomenon in recent literature. Nevertheless, land deals, covering up to 12 million hectares¹ of land have failed to materialise globally (Wegerif & Guereña 2020). Solely in Tanzania, 13 deals entailing around 681.000 hectares of land proved to be unsuccessful (*Land Matrix* 2023). Existing research on cancelled projects showed that the main impacts of operational deals for local communities are land loss, or missed livelihood opportunities (Smalley 2017; Lind et al. 2020). Land is more than ‘just land’, namely a primary source of livelihood opportunities, important for cultural significance, and gives ground for subsistence farming and is therefore vital for food security and peoples’ livelihoods. To study the influences and effects of LSAI, not only operational ones but also cancelled projects have to be included.

Previous studies indicate different implication after a project’s cancellation. Some cases revealed the state taking over the land, even if used by smallholders before. Other examples showed that land was left uncultivated due to uncertainty and conflicts between local communities about who has land rights (Abdallah et al. 2014). However, more research needs to be conducted to properly examine the impacts of cancellations. Findings will not only be useful in bringing up debates in the

¹ 100 hectares corresponds to one square kilometre.

public but also inform policymakers and executors of large-scale projects, i.e., private investors or development aid agencies. A better understanding of cancelled LSAIs may lead to fewer abandonments of projects and can contribute to land equality, food security, and poverty reduction – the main promises operating LSAIs entail.

In addition, it is essential to explore the actors involved in LSAIs and the funding sources for such projects within the broader context of development and foreign investments. These investments have been subject to extensive debates, particularly concerning core development issues like food security and livelihoods (Borras & Franco 2010; Carmody 2011). LSAIs are typically undertaken by various entities, including private corporations, multinational companies, and government-led initiatives (Deininger & Byerlee 2011). Funding for these projects often comes from a combination of sources, such as private capital, international financial institutions, and government subsidies (Engström 2018). These investments are embedded within the wider discourse on development, attracting both support and criticism. For instance, scientific data often plays a crucial role in supporting LSAIs, highlighting aspects such as the energy efficiency of specific biofuel crops like sugarcane compared to others and the favourable climate conditions in Africa expected to yield increased productivity (ibid.). Understanding these broader dynamics and debates surrounding LSAIs provides a comprehensive perspective on their implications for development and foreign investments.

Within the scope of this project, my aim was to fill a part of this research gap on cancelled deals by examining the effects on smallholder farmers' land use and access.

1.1 Thesis aim and research problem

How smallholders relate to land is a crucial aspect to examine the influences cancelled LSAIs have on local communities. Hence, the aim of this thesis is to understand how the repeated delays which ultimately resulted in the cancellation of a LSAI impacted the way how small-scale farmers access and use their land.

The Research Question is formulated as follows:

How does a cancelled large-scale agricultural investment affect smallholder farmers' land use and access in Bagamoyo, Tanzania?

Access is defined as “the ability to derive benefits from things” (Ribot & Peluso 2003:155) and entails, among others, how smallholders can take advantage of the land they are living on. This definition purposefully creates a broader term than the definition of ‘property’, as access includes more than just the right to land (ibid.). How smallholders gain value from their land is connected with how they use the land – which crops are cultivated, which dwellings are built, used, and lived in, which trees are planted, etc. Both, access and use, are directly intertwined and linked as a big part of how small-scale farmers access land is related to how they use land.

1.2 Definition of study terms

1.2.1 Small-scale farming

In this thesis, when naming farmers, I exclusively refer to ‘small-scale farmers’. Small-scale or smallholder farming is typically characterized by subsistence-oriented agriculture with relatively small plots of land (Khalil et al. 2017). Most people I talked to relied on family labour, simple machinery, and hand tools for farming. They usually used low-input farming methods and were dependent on rainfall for irrigation.

1.2.2 Large-scale agriculture

Large-scale agriculture differs from small-scale farming in regard to e.g., farm size, cultivation methods, typical crop choice, and purpose. One way to define large-scale agriculture that is suitable for the investment at hand is “agricultural activities involving the acquisition of large tracks of land for commercial agriculture; often linked to foreign ownership.” (Munshifwa et al. 2020:106).

Throughout this study, I will differentiate between perennial and annual crops. Annual or short-term crops are defined as any type of yield that “completes its life-cycle in a single growing season” (Petruzzello n.d.). Perennial crops refer, in botanical terms, to any type of crop that can survive for multiple years, usually with new foliage emerging from a surviving part from one growing season to the next (ibid.). This entails any type of harvesting trees. A list of examples of perennial and annual crops in the study area can be found in the table below.

Table 1. Examples of crop types in studied area.

Annual crops	Perennial crops
Cassava	Banana trees
Maize	Coconut trees
Spinach	Mango trees
Sugar cane	Orange trees

1.3 Focus of the study

During fieldwork, I spoke with several farmers and villagers about different issues around their land use and access and in general, how they relate to land. Many of these issues raised were pertinent for research in rural development and had the potential to serve as a basis for an entire thesis.

However, when narrowing down my research question, in the course of fieldwork, I had to focus on findings that were most relevant to the study. Other data was left out from the analysis. Land *access* means the ability individuals or groups have, to obtain and utilize land for several purposes, i.e., agriculture, building housing, opening and running business, or other activities. It encompasses both the legal rights and practical opportunities for individuals or communities to access and use land resources (Ribot & Peluso 2003). Land *use* entails all human activities and practices taking place on one particular piece of land. This means, how land is utilized, managed, and changed for plenty of purposes, i.e., agriculture, forestry, rural development, conservation, etc. The focal points of respondents' land use will be pointed out in the findings but mostly evolved around crop cultivation and housing. I suggest some areas that could be further researched at the end of this thesis.

1.4 Outline of thesis

The structure of this thesis is constructed as follows: Chapter 2 is a background chapter and provides information about land governance in Tanzania, large-scale (and cancelled) agricultural investments, and ultimately the presentation of the studied case. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical concept I use to analyse my empirical findings. In Chapter 4, I critically discuss and reflect on my methodology and describe this study's research design. This chapter also includes limitations to the study, reflexivity, and the ethical guidelines I followed throughout data collection. My empirical findings are presented in Chapter 5 whereas I discuss the implications and significance of the results

in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 includes my conclusions, to which extent this thesis reached its purpose, and ideas for further studies.

2. Background

In this chapter, I provide information about land governance and LSAIs in Tanzania, as well as the situation of the studied case.

2.1 Land governance in Tanzania

After colonial rule, Tanzania built its land law on a system that separates all land in the country into three different types, namely *reserved land*, *village land*, and *general land* (Ardhi 1994):

Reserved land is administered by constitutional bodies that do not belong to the government. It includes all types of natural parks, i.e., forests or tourism reserves.

The Village Land Act No. 5 of 1999 establishes democratically elected village councils and chairmen as the governing bodies of *village land*. This act acknowledges customary land rights and includes legal safeguards to prevent discrimination against women and vulnerable groups. Village land enables local populations to obtain land security and smallholders can acquire certificates of customary rights of occupancy (Bluwstein et al. 2018). Additionally, the Village Land Act enables citizens living on general land for a period of consecutive 12 years to obtain land rights for the corresponding borders. However, the Village Land Act does not apply when going against the rights of the government, and, in many cases, government officials did not attach significance to it (Professor Ringo Tenga, personal communication 27/1/2023).

General land belongs to the government and includes urban areas, and (per definition) unused or unoccupied land. All general land can be leased from the government by investors – hence, there is no private ownership of land in Tanzania. Also, village land can be converted into general land at any time by the president, following the land acquisition act of 1967: “The President may, subject to the provisions of this Act, acquire any land for any estate or term where such land is required for any public purpose.” (*Land Acquisition Act* 1967). Moreover, the Land Act and the Village Land Act state contradictory definitions of general land, namely: “all land that is not classified as reserved or village land” and “all public land which is not reserved land or village land *and*

includes unoccupied or unused village land”(Sundet & Sundet 1997). By not clearly defining ‘public purpose’ and using two contradictory definitions of village land, it is easier for the government to lawfully dispose of peoples’ land in favour of investors (Sundet 2005).

In the context of Tanzania's land policy, it is essential to recognize the post-colonial influence as a fundamental factor that, until today, shapes the country’s land governance. The redefinition of Tanzania's land policy in August 2015 represents a continuation of historical trends that fail to effectively address critical issues such as tenure insecurity or dispute resolution (Engström et al. 2022). This policy revision, rather than challenging the existing power dynamics and structural inequalities inherited from the colonial era, reinforces a narrative that characterizes Tanzania's village land as underutilized. Additionally, it portrays traditional economic activities of villagers, particularly self-subsistence farming, as economically ineffective. Consequently, there is an emphasis on promoting investments in the country, indicating the government's favourable disposition toward land investments (ibid.).

Within this context, it becomes evident that post-colonial dynamics continue to shape Tanzania's land governance framework. The policy framework not only perpetuates historical inequalities and marginalization but also aligns with broader global neoliberal agendas that prioritize economic development and (foreign) investments. The framing of traditional livelihood practices as economically inefficient reflects the influence of post-colonial representations. Moreover, capitalist economic models are prioritized over local self-subsistence farming practices, rooted in traditional knowledge systems and cultural values.

2.2 Large-scale agricultural investments in Tanzania

LSAIs have seen a rising number throughout the globe, especially in developing countries in recent years. Most of them materialized in Africa (Nolte et al. 2016) with a total number of 422 concluded deals, and an area of 10 million hectares that was acquired by investors. This is the highest total size of deals on every continent with an amount of 26.7 million hectares² globally (40% of deals worldwide) (ibid.).

Not least in Tanzania, LSAIs gained more significance over the years, as the country received a reputation as an attractive terrain for land investments. This perception is based on the East African

²Status: 2016.

country's history of adopting liberal economic reforms and high growth rates over the past two decades (Bluwstein et al. 2018). The Tanzanian government proactively implemented policies attractive for investors and established institutions like the Tanzania Investment Centre in 1997 to support and streamline investments, including those related to land (ibid.). Investors can acquire land by engaging with Tanzanian authorities and leasing land areas after receiving necessary permits and approvals.

This can be deducted from the numbers, as Tanzania experienced an increase from roughly 3 million US Dollars (USD) in 1977 to more than 1 billion USD in 2018 in foreign direct investments (Lind et al. 2020). The rise in foreign direct investments may not directly reflect an increase in LSAIs in Africa, as not all foreign direct investments are LSAIs. However, many large-scale projects are rooted in the interests of foreign investors, and the increasing supremacy of neoliberal market structures in economies of subsistence comes as a result of a globalized world, similar to the nature of LSAIs. Simultaneously, prior studies show that there has been a rise in the privatisation of large-scale farms and policy initiatives to link public and private actors for large-scale-based value chains in recent years (Brüntrup et al. 2016; Engström & Hajdu 2018).

In the past decades, this development agenda has faced severe criticism. Daniel (2011), i.e., names the increase of investments in the land market as one of the main reasons for land grabbing (Daniel 2011), whereas Brüntrup et al. (2016) criticize that common policies regarding planning and coordination of LSAIs are not sufficiently developed yet to yield positive outcomes (Brüntrup et al. 2016). The latter critique point might have been partly a reason why the studied investment was cancelled in the first place.

2.3 Presentation of case

2.3.1 Razaba Ranch

The focus of this thesis revolves around a cancelled LSAI in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. Bagamoyo is one of six districts within the Pwani region with a population of 205,478 people in 2012 (*Census Information Dissemination Platform* 2022).

The project site was embedded in 'Razaba Ranch'. The area is known to be inhabited for at least 1500 years and was granted to the government of Zanzibar by the Tanzanian government in 1974. From there on, it was primarily used as a cattle ranch until 1994 (Engström 2018). Due to leopard and tse tse fly attacks, the cattle project was terminated and the remaining workers living on the

land were granted permission to stay and live on the land until further notice (roughly 300 workers and their families) (Chung 2017).

The study includes data from three sub-villages within the former Razaba Ranch³. All sub-villages are part of one village⁴, with a total population of 11,820 people. Village 1 lies inside the parameters of Razaba Ranch and its sub-villages are spread throughout the land area with vast fields of bushlands between townships and freestanding houses in between. All people living in Village 1 are project-affected people. A map of the studied area can be found in Figure 1 below.

³ Called sub-villages 1, 2 and 3 in the thesis for reasons of security for people residing there.

⁴ Called village 1.

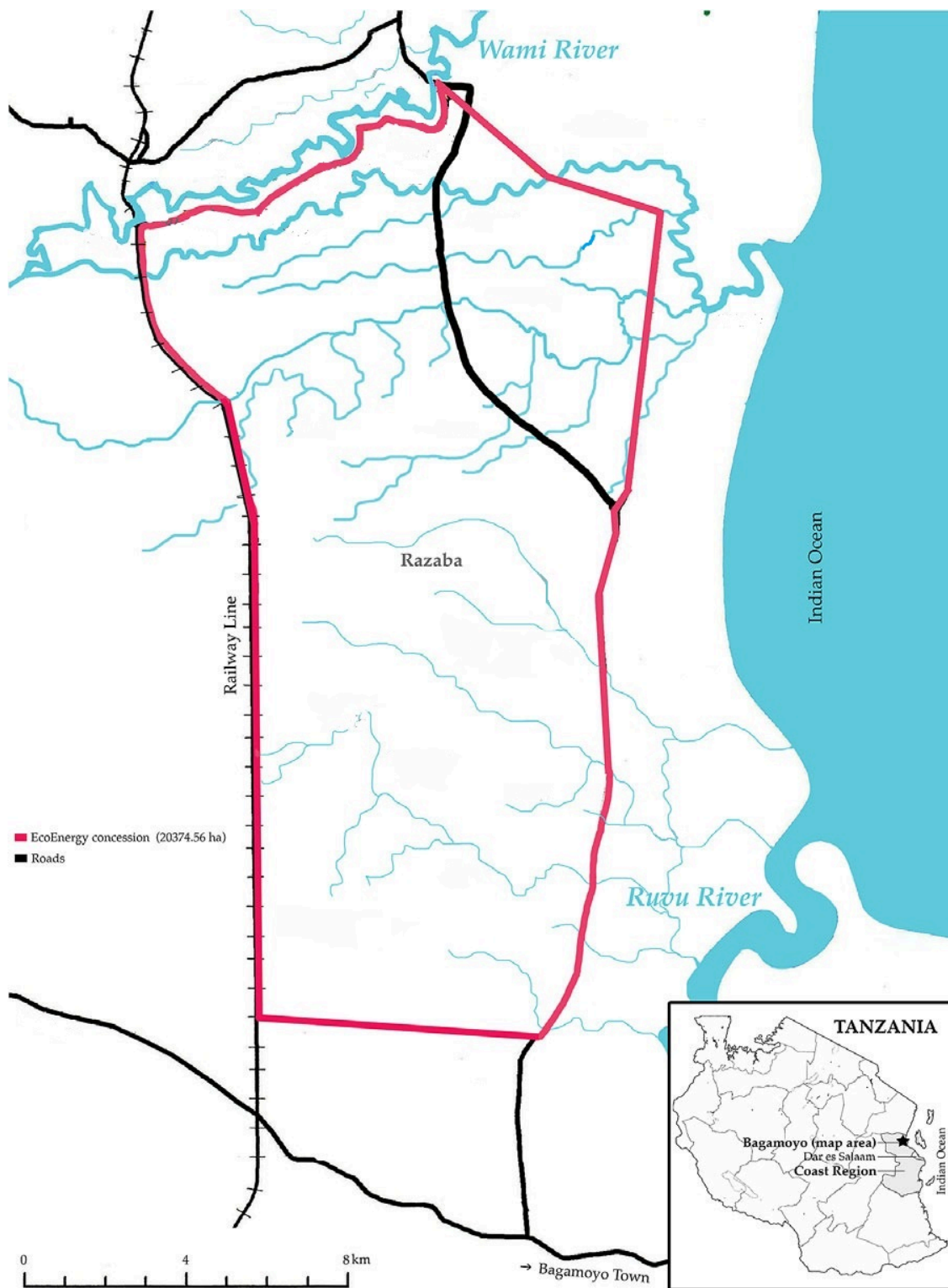


Figure 1. Map of Project area (Chung 2021), edited by author. Including former Razaba Ranch, three sub-villages visited lay in red indicated area.

2.3.2 EcoEnergy and Bagamoyo Sugar

The Swedish company ‘EcoEnergy’ (EE)⁵, leased around 20,374 ha of Razaba Ranch from the Tanzanian government to implement a large-scale sugarcane project in 2013 (Engström 2018). The focus of the project initially laid in the mass production of agricultural-crop-based biofuel and promised huge expectations, i.e., the creation of one million jobs and an export revenue of several billions of dollars (ibid.). In 2007, the company planned on developing approximately 3000 hectares of seed cane plantations before planting the whole area. However, the initial project faced multiple delays, and as no processing plant or other factories were built, it resulted in the burning of the harvested cane every year. Around 2009, EE faced monetary issues also, and had troubles receiving funds for the implementation of the large-scale project. The company then shifted the focus from ethanol to sugar as main output. Subsequently, a new timeline was published, that sugar will be planted in 2013, which meant a three-year delay than primarily planned. Ultimately, in April 2015, the former president of Tanzania, John Magufuli, revoked the company’s land rights and granted half of the area to the domestic investor Bakhresa Ltd (to its subsidiary Bagamoyo Sugar Ltd) in October 2016. The decision was made public in February 2017. Until then, no sugar cane was planted, or any processing plant was built. Bakhresa re-initiated activities on the seed cane farm in December 2017.

Now, Bagamoyo Sugar covers roughly the northern half of the land EE leased from the government. Even though EE had difficulties in launching its project and cultivating sugar cane, Bagamoyo Sugar is currently operational and has already planted vast fields of sugar cane (Figure 2). Sub-village 1 does not lay inside the parameters of the current investor. Farmers in sub-village 2 and sub-village 3 are currently affected by Bagamoyo Sugar, as the sub-villages lay within close proximity to its plantations. Additionally, several people moved to sub-village 2 subsequent to Bagamoyo Sugar launching its sugar cane project. The interview respondents were mostly smallholders that lived in sub-village 2 prior to the EE investment. However, it became evident that a high amount of people moved to sub-village 2 from areas that are now used as sugar cane plantations by Bagamoyo Sugar. People in sub-village 3 explained how they are affected by the current investor, as they do not know if they might have to move when it comes to an expansion of the sugar cane plantations or not.

⁵ Back then under the name ‘SEKAB’.



Figure 2. Sugar cane plantation by Bagamoyo Sugar in prior EE land area. The company's processing plant can be seen in the back. Photo by author.

Ultimately, this thesis's focus lays in the cancellation of the EE investment. Nonetheless, the current investment of Bagamoyo Sugar and its implications are to be considered when studying this case. Several scholars have outlined the historical context of the EE project (see Abdallah et al. 2014; Kjellin 2015; Chung 2017; Engström & Hajdu 2018; Lind et al. 2020), however, the focus of this study lays on the cancellation itself. Thus, details about the process of delays and reasons for cancellation will be left out in this study. Important implications during the investor's presence in the area are outlined below.

Resettlement action plan

During the planning process, EE implemented resettlement action plans (RAPs) to ensure the involuntary resettlement of 1374 people out of the project area (Interview IDC consultant, 30/1/2023). The project followed International Finance Corporation Performance Standard 5 (PS5), which is defined as follows:

“PS5 advises companies to avoid involuntary resettlement wherever possible and to minimize its impact on those displaced through mitigation measures such as fair compensation and improvements to and living conditions.” (IFC n.d.)

Project-affected people who had to be resettled were promised monetary compensation and new homes (Interview IDC consultant, 30/1/2023). Additionally, people received pieces of training, i.e., in non-farm activities, like this one farmer I interviewed: “*Yes, I learnt how to do braids for two weeks.*” (Female farmer, 43 years, sub-village 1, 7/2/2023). People expected resettlement by being educated about the RAP. As the project never went operational, none of the project-affected people were resettled or received compensation (Kjellin 2015).

People repeatedly were informed about not planting permanent crops or doing other developments to the land, i.e., investments in their housings or opening businesses. EE communicated to the project-affected people that anything of the above-mentioned assets which will be found to be added to their land, will not be taken into account when paying the compensation. Plots were measured, demarcated, and documented to calculate how much smallholders would be entitled to receive. The RAP as well as the demarcation of land plots proved to have significant importance regarding the smallholders’ land use and access, long after the cancellation.

3. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I present the theories and concepts I use to draw insights from my empirical findings about how a cancelled LSAI affects smallholder farmers' land use and access. I apply the concept of power, how power and knowledge are connected, and how examining power structures can reveal relationships between actors. In this case, smallholders and the investor of the cancelled deal, but also other actors like the Tanzanian government or the current investor. I combine this with post-colonial theory and how this relates to power and to knowledge.

3.1 Power

In social philosophy, critical science theory is an approach that emphasizes society and culture as means to reveal, scrutinize, and confront power structures (Augustyn 2023). As defined by Barker: "power is not a thing, an institution, an aptitude or an object" (Barker 1998:27). Power describes relations of force, and the execution of force can be found throughout history. He thus draws on Foucault's idea that power is a complex strategical condition in societies. One of the key insights of Foucault's theory in *'power/knowledge'* is that power relations are not simply a matter of individuals or groups exercising control over others, but rather are embedded in social structures and relationships (Foucault 1980).

In the case of cancelled LSAIs, it is important to consider the power dynamics between the investor and the smallholder farmers whose land was affected by the investment. Moreover, there are other actors involved who stand directly or indirectly in a relationship with the smallholders or EE. The Tanzanian government, i.e., plays a key role in this case. By revoking village land rights and leasing land to (foreign) investors, it exercises some kind of power over people who are residing in the area. It deprives them of the right to decide where to legally live or farm and makes substantial decisions regarding people's lives without their involvement. As a result, the emergence of an 'elitist' class, namely the government and government officials, i.e., ministry of lands, housing and settlement, arises. This class distinguishes itself from the farmers, characterized by

various dimensions of power. The way in which the government gains influence over others, by presenting certain perspectives as natural, while deliberately concealing potentially complex or unfair evidence, proves to be an example of manifestation of power (Fairclough 2013).

The term ‘power’ can be defined widely. When investigating this project, I found that power relations play an important role and I aimed to reveal and scrutinize the power manifestations and actors behind it. I found that power has many layers and using power over others comes in different forms and shapes. I aim to apply an interpretation of a specific concept and feature of power that proves important to analyse my empirical findings, namely how knowledge is related to power.

3.1.1 Power and Knowledge

In critical science theory, knowledge means, among other things, how much actors are involved in decision-making processes and informed throughout progresses (Hacking 1986). Hacking puts Foucault's view of power and knowledge in the following manner: Knowledge and power are productively related. However, ruling classes throughout history were not necessarily aware of the fact that their knowledge helped them to acquire and maintain power. They were as much, dependent on functionaries, the governed, and the repressed. Repression and censorship do not automatically come with the exercise of power – but moreover with the establishment of capitalism (ibid.). Barker takes this position further: “It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge; it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power” (Foucault 1980 see Barker 1998:28).

Furthermore, Foucault argues that knowledge is neither neutral, nor objective. Rather than that, knowledge is shaped by the importance, interests, and values of those who produce it (Foucault 1980). Hence, certain knowledges take up a different position than other forms of knowledge. Specific knowledge is therefore privileged over other knowledge forms (ibid.). Power dynamics between actors are therefore substantially shaped by the knowledge, and more importantly, by which form of knowledge actors have. When comparing actors, EE and the local smallholders, but also the government, other investors, or ‘the West’ in general, it becomes interesting to study *what* relevant sides knew and *how much* they knew. In investigating this, one can derive how this knowledge actively formed power imbalances during and subsequent to cancellation.

3.1.2 ‘Western’ science and economics

Another crucial factor when examining knowledge and power evolves around the concept of evolutionary development as a profound trust in modern Western *science* and its accuracy and fairness when launching development strategies (Escobar 2011). Projects based on such science were considered more advanced and even closer to the "truth." However, as pointed out by Haraway (1988), knowledge production, including scientific knowledge, is inherently "situated." It is shaped by individuals with specific interests and values and is more influenced by "power moves" rather than a genuine "truth" (Haraway 1988:581).

In addition to science, Western *economic* models are also an influential force when it comes to the execution of development projects (Escobar 2011). These models propagate the belief that social, cultural, and political progress can only be achieved through material advancement. This perspective instils the notion that capital investment and economic growth are the essential components for attaining development. Crucial social and environmental factors such as soils, rainfall matters, intra-household relations, labor dynamics, and the aspirations of small-scale farmers are often disregarded, leading scientific procedures to "miss the point" (Scott 2020:290). These omissions can have fatal consequences for development projects and ultimately for project-affected local communities.

3.2 Post-colonial theory

In this thesis, I adopt the term 'post-colonialism' in accordance with the argument that the process of liberation from colonialism comprises two distinct aspects. The first aspect involves achieving freedom from territorial colonial rule, which is considered to be a completed phase. However, the second aspect involves the liberation from entrenched colonial representations and subjective positions, which is still considered as an ongoing process (Go 2013).

The purpose of post-colonial theory is to elucidate the origins of values, assumptions, and representations that originate from both pre-colonial and colonial periods. These elements persist in contemporary Western perspectives of the 'non-Western' and 'the Other' (Said 1978). In this thesis, I employ post-colonial theory to unpack relationships between smallholders and different levels of authorities. Besides 'the West' and EE, the central Tanzanian government as well as the local land office can be involved as actors. I aim to connect the relationship between power and knowledge with post-colonial aspects.

One core aspect of colonialism was the enforcement of capitalistic laws over societies that are based on an economy of subsistence. Entire societies were forced into a direct relationship with the world economy which applied imbalanced global power relations (de Sousa Santos 2018). Looking at the studied case, the LSAI was supposed to take place in a large area that was inhabited by people who were dependent on self-subsistence farming. Shani formulated the problem of foreign large-scale investments as follows:

“The dislocation engendered by successive waves of neoliberal globalisation has led to the deracination of many of the world’s inhabitants resulting in a state of collective existential anxiety.” (Shani 2017:275 see Giddens 1991).

In order to understand how people are embedded within social structures, one has to understand the social structures themselves (Delanty 2011). Post-colonial theory serves as an example here. It shows how imbalanced knowledge between actors, permeates throughout history, i.e., when one actor (or more) enforced power and laws over individuals or a group. Additionally, it shows how liberation from certain colonial representations and subject positions are still ongoing and how post-colonial features are still entrenched in modern society. The definition of Shani mentioned above demonstrates the parallels between colonialism and LSAIs, as (foreign) large-scale investments are an instrument in neoliberal globalisation. However, I want to emphasize that not only ‘the West’ but also the relationship between Western countries and other actors, like the Tanzanian government, uphold post-colonial aspects when it comes to power relations regarding land governance. This (one may call it) dependency of power to knowledge, as well as postcolonialism and how both frameworks are connected are crucial for the analysis of my empirical findings.

4. Methodology

This chapter presents the research design and ethical guidelines used for this thesis.

4.1 Epistemology and Research Design

To find a suitable answer to my research question, I choose a qualitative research design. Qualitative research designs intend to understand how individuals, or a group, ascribe to a social problem (Creswell & Creswell 2017). Thus, my findings are based on the descriptions done by the participants (Moustakas 1994; Giorgi 2009). I draw on a ‘constructivist’ worldview which considers that humans seek knowledge individually and subjectively (Creswell & Creswell 2017). Again, following constructivism, my goal was to rely as much as possible on the participant’s views, as well as the complexity and differences of their interpretations and lived realities.

The cancellation of LSAI and its effects on the local people and communities, falls under an interplay of the categories of social and natural (namely agricultural) sciences. This research seeks to contribute empirically to ongoing findings in development studies. The studied case of a cancelled deal in Tanzania is specific – however, apparently, there is still room for improvement in those contexts and the development sector in general. This study is a puzzle piece in the web of studies undertaken to understand and better perform development projects. It is part of countless studies taken on development and land issues, impacts of investments on local communities, and the agricultural sector in Tanzania in general, among others. It was therefore important for me to gather my data right from the field by conducting in-depth and face-to-face interaction with the project-affected people. Collecting data in the natural setting where the participants experienced the studied issue is one of the main characteristics of qualitative research (ibid.). Not only did I want to talk with the farmers, but also perceive glimpses of their realities by participating in their daily lives by having food together or participating in meetings with their families and neighbours. I tried to understand the lived realities of the people by focusing on the specific contexts they work and live in.

4.1.1 Reflexivity

How researchers reflect on themselves is a key aspect when conducting research. Subconsciously, I base the interpretations of my findings on my own experiences and background. As I visited Africa for the first time, I found myself in a reality that substantially differed from most things I was used to from home. How people lived their day-to-day life, ate, or worked, to how people talked and approached one another, almost everything was new to me, and I needed to adapt adequately before going in the field.

Reflexivity can be classified into two types: While *prospective* reflexivity means the effects of the researcher on the study, *retrospective* reflexivity entails the effects the study has on the researcher (Attia & Edge 2017). I want to present one example of each reflexivity types that took place in the course of my project:

I realized at the beginning of fieldwork that I have to adapt and that my own lived reality from home could hinder my data collection. For example, I adjusted when it came to scheduling fixed times for interviews. Whilst I decided to be on time for the first interviews, I realized that what might be polite in Sweden could be considered impolite or intrusive in Tanzania. Time, stress, and punctuality are viewed markedly differently, and being two to three hours late proved to be more polite than being on time and therefore more beneficial for successful data collection and showed more respect towards the participant. This is a clear example of how the study affected me as a researcher and can be therefore classified as *retrospective* reflexivity.

Another example occurred in fieldwork during a group discussion: Although one group interview in the sub-village was initially planned with less than ten people, 23 participants arrived. The reason for that was their misconception that we were representatives of EE, who they believed would offer them clear information. People demanded answers, and some left the conversation when they realized I was not able to assist them. Later on, my interpreter explained to me that respondents mistakenly assumed, that I was a representative of EE or some other investor. In this case, I as a researcher had an influence on the study itself. This is an example of *prospective* reflexivity. These are just two examples of many in which reflexivity played an important role in affecting myself, as well as the study.

As a white, male European researcher, my aim was to be reflexive of my role and relationships with the informants, how they can influence them, and my findings. This means not only considering how interview participants might react to me but also how I perceive the local contexts, in which having a fully neutral position is impossible (Prowse 2010). Ultimately, it was essential for

me, and for successful data collection, to get as close as possible to the studied reality within the given time frame, knowing that I will never be able to fully live it.

At the beginning of fieldwork, I was introduced to one local community by my supervisor, Dr. Linda Engström, and her team. As they priorly visited the area several times, some of the local people knew I was connected to them, while others did not. Nonetheless, I was confronted with the people's unfiltered attention. Not necessarily because of my skin colour, but more likely because of what the presence of a white (usually male) person usually implies for the people in the region. Very often I was asked if I work for EE, if I knew when they would come back, or if I was planning to invest in land. Being reflexive means also taking this into consideration and how this might affect data collection and the participant's answers to my questions. I patiently explained the reason for my stay to the people and made sure to follow ethical conduct, which included asking for permission to interview, ensuring the anonymity of the respondents, and clearly expressing the aim of my study.

4.2 Access to the field

Before commencing fieldwork, it was important to follow local protocols and research practices. I applied for a research permit through the University of Dar es Salaam, which got granted right before entering the field. The team of my supervisor proved to be enormously helpful for that. Upon arrival in Tanzania's biggest city, Dar es Salaam, I was presented to my interpreter, Nestura Shanice Kimaro. Prior to our first interviews, we had an initial briefing in which we went through interview questions and discussed potential follow-up questions. Nestura expressed her ideas and concerns and I found that she had valuable research instincts and was invested in collecting constructive data for my thesis. Nestura was invaluable in helping me to understand local habits and traditions, i.e., when it came to greetings, farewells, eating together, etc., or in general how to approach my interview participants and their families. Also, she taught me Kiswahili – enough so that I could greet the interview participants in their own language in a humble manner. This did not only show respect towards the villagers and the local customs. It also 'broke the ice' as later on, I started each interview with a short chat in Kiswahili so that interviewees felt more comfortable.

4.3 Selection of study sites and participants

For this project, I purposefully selected participants that would help me better understand the issue and find answers to the research question (Creswell & Creswell 2017:262). I prioritized farmers that were affected by the cancellation of the project whereas I included a diverse range of individuals across gender and age groups. The main sample criteria for this project were farmers that lived in the area prior to EE's arrival. I was mainly interested in exploring how the cancellation affected the land use of farmers that have been evaluated by EE and expected resettlement and compensation.

We selected participants based on initial group interviews and with the snowball method. The snowball method is a sampling technique in which an interview participant, subsequent to being interviewed, nominates other potential participants that fit the criteria of the study (Bhat 2018). We also asked the sub-village chairmen to gather farmers that have been living in the area for a minimum amount of ten⁶ years, to make sure that the participants were present upon EE's arrival. In the process of fieldwork, we eventually also talked with farmers who have lived in the area for a shorter amount of time. This allowed insights into a multitude of perspectives. At last, I choose three study sub-villages. All three sub-villages lay in the planned project area, as indicated in Figure 1. I have changed the names of the sub-villages to '*sub-village 1, 2 & 3*', to remain the respondents' anonymity.

The whole team of five⁷ visited the local district council and applied for an allowance letter that permitted us to conduct research in the region. With the help of my supervisor and her colleague, Dr. Ronald Ndesanjo, we initiated the first contact in sub-village 1. Dr. Engström had priorly conducted research in the area and in some of the local communities, people knew her. She introduced my interpreter and me to the village chairman of one sub-village and at the first meeting with him and some villagers present, we introduced the intention of me and my interpreter to visit again and do more interviews.

From there on, we were on our own. Nestura organized a '*Boda Boda*'⁸ in the first week of the fieldwork. As we stayed in Bagamoyo, the biggest town close by, we agreed with our Boda Boda driver to drive us to the field on a daily basis. Sub-village 1 was more or less a 30-minute drive away; sub-village 2 was around 45 minutes away. The third sub-village was more than one hour

⁶ +/- two years

⁷ Consisting of my supervisor, her two colleagues, my interpreter, and me.

⁸ Kiswahili for Motorcycle

away, so we decided to stay there for one week at the end of the fieldwork. There, we had the chance to get a deeper understanding of the local realities and we gained valuable insights through informal chats after conducting interviews throughout the day.

4.4 Limitations

This study presents a snapshot of how a cancelled LSAI affects smallholder farmers' land use. More studies with different contextual implications have to be conducted to draw general conclusions. In the studied area, due to geographical constraints and time limitations, three sub-villages were visited. Since there were three of us on one Boda Boda, our driver discouraged us to visit too rural locations without any roads. Nonetheless, individual cases or new insights from other communities close by could have potentially added new perspectives.

Moreover, time plays a significant role in qualitative research. Six weeks gave enough ground to study the cancelled deal and its effects, however, spending more time would have been desirable. Simultaneously, spending more than six weeks in the field would have extended the scope of this thesis.

Another limitation was the translation factor. Using a translator posed some challenges since questions were occasionally simplified and formulated more straightforwardly than originally meant. This resulted in a loss of the original question's tone, and, as a consequence, some answers were shorter than expected. Additionally, due to the time required for translation, interviews tended to take longer, and less ground could be covered within the allotted time. My interpreter and I minimized the consequences of these limitations by discussing not only the recordings but also our observations, following the interviews. However, being able to fully understand the interview participants is more beneficial for the research. I discuss the limitations of the particular methods I used in the method sections (*see 4.6*).

4.5 Ethical considerations

In qualitative studies, following ethical guidelines is important. Foremost, people's thoughts and behaviours throughout the inquiry process have to be valued and respected. Prior to entering the field, I set up ethical conduct which included voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and the possibility to stop the interview at any given time (see Halse & Honey 2005;

Robson & McCartan 2011; Creswell & Creswell 2017). We used an oral consent form, that we read to participants prior to beginning the interview. We only conducted interviews when participants agreed to all listed points. The consent form can be found in Appendix 3. Alongside the ethical framework I created, my interpreter introduced me to local customs, traditions as well as ‘No-go’s’ in the field. Her input on how to behave toward the participants complemented the ethical values I established beforehand.

We began each interview by introducing ourselves and the research. We made sure to take sufficient time to thoroughly explain the purpose and objectives of this study. We guaranteed not to invade the participant’s privacy, especially in day-to-day settings. We never involved any participants without their clear consent and announced our arrival usually a few days beforehand over village chairmen or during the initial group interviews. We notified the interviewees about all these points and furthermore explained that the interview is voluntary. We informed them that they do not have to answer questions and have the right to stop the interview at any given time without providing a reason.

I changed the names of villages and participants. The aim here laid in ensuring the village’s and participants’ safety, while simultaneously creating a setting in which interviewees felt that they could express delicate topics without fearing any consequences.

4.6 Methods

In the following, I describe the methods I used for this thesis. I conducted six weeks of data collection in January and February 2023. Following group interviews in one sub-village, I proceeded with individual interviews in that same sub-village over the course of several days. Once I felt I had obtained adequate information in that sub-village, I moved on to the next one and began the process again, starting with a group interview.

4.6.1 Group interviews

I conducted a total of three group interviews, one in each sub-village visited. Prior to the group interviews, we asked the chairmen of each village to provide us with a group of five to eight farmers who were willing to participate. There were four main reasons why I decided to start off each village with a group interview. Firstly, it enabled me to get an overview of the sampled respondents. Right at the start of my project, I was able to identify the topics most important to the

farmers in relation to their land use and access. Later on, we conducted individual interviews mostly⁹ with farmers who were present in the group interviews. Secondly, I assembled topics that I took up later on in individual interviews and compared answers, both from the group and individual interviews. This enabled me to triangulate my data and detect more easily if people were stretching the truth, i.e., by wanting to present themselves better. Thirdly, I used the group interviews to take detailed notes of the setting, the farmers, and core moments of the interview. I used this technique to slightly adjust my questions towards topics that I wanted to dig into deeper later on. Lastly, group discussions allowed me to simultaneously gather data from a larger group of participants in a flexible way (Flick 2022).

However, one limitation of this method is that some answers can lack detail and that only a small amount of topics can be covered (Rubin & Rubin 2011). Also, group discussions can enforce existing power structures when some are excluded from participating. For this study, I tried not to exceed a maximum of five topics per discussion. This was also mitigated by having individual interviews afterwards.

Whereas the first group interview in sub-village 1 consisted of eight participants and the last interview in sub-village 3 of five, 23 participants arrived at the second interview in sub-village 2. Being stunned and unsure of what to do at first, I decided to seize the situation by explicitly observing group dynamics while steering the conversation to learnings that emerged in sub-village 1 the weeks before. Even though the high amount of people might have constrained some information, it gave me an initial insight into the general perception farmers in that sub-village have towards EE.

The first and third group interviews consisted of more manageable settings. I realized that it was difficult to get the conversation flowing in the beginning. Even though we properly introduced ourselves and the study, I felt a certain level of suspiciousness towards me at first. We came over this by starting with an informal conversation in Kiswahili and began (with the participant's consent) the recording at a later point in the interview. During the first and third interviews, I also observed group dynamics and how the farmers reacted to certain topics, individually and as a whole.

⁹ We also conducted individual interviews with farmers who were not present in the group interviews to verify if there are any major discrepancies in the answers we received.

4.6.2 Individual interviews

As indicated, after holding initial group discussions, I spent the following weeks with individual interviews. We conducted a total of 21 in-depth interviews with the farmers (see full list of interviews in *Appendix 1*). Usually, at the end of each group interview, we announced to conduct further interviews with group interview respondents who were willing to participate. As the group interview participants were selected by the village chairmen, I aimed to also get insights from farmers who were not chosen, to see if the farmers present in the group interviews were biased in any way. Through snowball methods and by walking through the villages, we held interviews with farmers that suited the sampling criteria and that did not initially participate in the group interviews. After three individual interviews, I realized that the statements and perceptions about EcoEnergy aligned with the farmers we already talked with. Also, farm sizes, wealth, or land access did not shift particularly from the ones in the group interview. I included all of the farmers' statements in the analysis.

Performing individual interviews allowed me to get a more detailed understanding of the topic and the farmers' perception of it. I used a semi-structured and open-ended approach. Moreover, I followed an iterative process where I constantly analysed my data and refined questions based on my findings. Likewise, performing interviews in a semi-structured style gave room to react with follow-up questions and control the line of questioning (Creswell & Creswell 2017). Simultaneously, participants had the possibility to elaborate on topics they personally considered important. Additionally, translation breaks allowed me to take notes and alter questions during the interview.

Nevertheless, the semi-structured style might constrain a free-flowing discussion and conceal topics not addressed in the questions. Compared to an unstructured interview, it was more difficult to spontaneously switch the interview subjects towards issues that I did not consider before. Yet, the more interviews I conducted, the easier I found it to adapt and still gain in-depth insights that arose during the discussion. Also, working through a translator presented certain difficulties such as the tendency for questions to potentially be simplified and more straightforward when translated. Consequently, there exists a possibility that some of the original question's nuances can be lost. I discussed this issue with my interpreter after conducting the first interviews, where I realized that some answers conflicted with the questions posed. We went over this by reformulating some questions and discussing the topic of the study again.

Similarly, I conducted unstructured individual interviews with two former consultants for the investor (*see Appendix 2*). Their area of responsibility laid in border security, training farmers, and

performing resettlement action plans for the affected people. Lastly, I talked to district government officials, including the head of the land department, the head of the agricultural division, and the head of agricultural engineering for Bagamoyo district (*see Appendix 2*). The main reason for those additional interviews was to get an overview of different perspectives. Looking at the case from an alternative viewpoint provided me with further insights into the matter. Ultimately, it gave me a clearer understanding of the way in which district officials see the smallholders and how they perceived the cancellation of the investment.

I stopped conducting interviews the moment I felt that new discussions did not bring as many insights as anticipated. Throughout fieldwork, new learnings and insights emerged the most in the beginning. Towards the end, the number of new findings gradually declined until I reached a point of saturation (Charmaz 2006; Creswell & Creswell 2017). I stopped collecting data as new interviews did not reveal new insights and properties. I then decided that I have an adequate sample and enough responses.

4.6.3 Observations

Another method that underpinned the insights gained in interviews was my and my interpreter's observations. I used observations to guarantee the validity, namely the authenticity and credibility of my research. During fieldwork, I triangulated data, a technique that facilitates the combination and comparison of data from multiple sources, ultimately resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the case (Creswell & Creswell 2017; Flick 2022).

We used a participatory rural appraisal technique called 'transect walk' in each village. A transect walk consists of a long walk through and around villages, alongside one or two key informants. This exercise helped to, together with the farmers, pinpoint physical aspects, i.e., land borders and cropping plots in the villages (Cavestro 2003).

We performed a total of five transect walks – two each, in sub-village 1 and sub-village 2, and one in sub-village 3. Generally, we decided to go by foot from one interview to another. That gave us more time and allowed us to dive into the geographical setting we were studying. On top of that, transect walks permitted a casual setting which gave ground for informal discussions. During the transect walks, we usually steered the conversation toward the farmers' land development throughout the years. Apart from confirming respondents' statements, i.e., about their crop types or methods, we determined features in their land use more easily. With their consent, we documented our findings by taking pictures. This gave my interpreter and me the possibility to go through the

pictures and discuss our findings later on. Transect walks served as an additional suitable pillar in gathering data.

However, the participatory nature of PRA methods has also faced criticism. Cooke and Kothari refer to the costs of participation for local people, in this case, time constraints, i.e., by not being able to work on the field. On top of that, they criticize the enforcement of existing power structures when some are excluded from participating (Cooke et al. 2001). In the course of the interviews, we tried to diminish this potential exclusion by choosing random participants out of the ones we interviewed.

Both, my interpreter and I kept notebooks in which we held notes and reflected on our surroundings. I had one notebook for impressions in interviews, which I used in translation breaks, and another notebook for impressions I gained throughout the fieldwork in general. I used the second notebook mostly in informal chats between interviews, to note down general ideas or epiphanies that occurred during fieldwork or to notch down insights I gained in transect walks. The notebook helped me to enrich details about the setting I was studying, whereas noting down self-observations helped me recognize potential researcher biases.

4.6.4 Data analysis

Following the data collection for my thesis, I generated initial themes in my data that proved useful in addressing the research question of how large-scale agricultural investment cancellations impact smallholder farmers' land use and access. Using the premium version of *Otter software*, I transcribed my data and employed highlighting and commenting features to facilitate organization and analysis. Although the transcription software performed adequately, I manually reviewed every interview to make corrections to sentence structure and word choice. This process allowed me to revisit the interview, evoking past thoughts and experiences and facilitating the recall of my observations. Themes were color-coded, and subsequent data reviews revealed new sub-themes.

Subsequently, the quotes of the farmers were gathered in an Excel sheet with the corresponding themes as headings. This provided a better overview and made it easier to find common (or contradicting) responses. The themes helped structure my empirical findings which will be presented in the following chapters.

5. Empirical findings

In this chapter, I present my empirical findings. Overall, when referring to the cancellation of the investment, farmers talked most about changes in their land use and their access to land. What is presented in the following, are the issues that affected a wide range of informants. The first part will examine how the cancellation affected farmers' land use, while the second part will explore how the cancellation of the investment impacted their access to land.

5.1 Land use

In analysing the data, there were four particularly interesting themes related to how cancelled investments impacted smallholders. Regarding the land use; i) the effects on houses and buildings and ii) the effects on crop cultivation. The findings on land access revolved around; iii) demographic shifts that occurred due to the cancellation and iv) no cultivation of freestanding land areas.

5.1.1 Effects on houses and buildings

One factor to map farmers' land use was to examine and talk with them about the houses they live in and other dwellings, i.e., any sheds or barns they own. I was curious about the type of houses and their perception of the possibilities and risks to build houses in the area.

Overall, respondents resided in clay-built houses with thatched roofs (Figure 2). Moreover, their houses, barns, and all other types of buildings were built on provisional foundations and had to be repaired or redeveloped regularly. Respondents expressed their frustration towards their living situation in relation to their housing structures several times in interviews: *"I can't even build a permanent house here; I am still living under this thing."* (Male farmer, 63 years, sub-village 1, 2/2/2023); *"If this land would be mine and I'd be free on it, I would change some things. First of all, I would build a permanent house and not this (shows around, we are sitting in his hut)."* (Male Farmer, 62 years, sub-village 1, 3/2/2023). It was evident that it was the insecure situation that

caused this. Like one farmer stated: *“Also, look at our houses – we can’t build real houses. It is not because we don’t have money to build it. It is because we are not safe here.”* (Male farmer in group interview, sub-village 2, 9/2/2023).



Figure 3: Clay house with thatched roof and wooden pillars. Photo taken by author.¹⁰

As mentioned before, farmers were sampled based on their time living in the area, i.e., before the investor arrived, and during the years when they were expecting resettlement. Upon closer examination, it became clear that many farmers at that time were positively disposed towards the idea of being resettled: *“As EcoEnergy came, they promised us to give us the keys of our new house, you see.”* (Female farmer, 37 years, sub-village 2, 10/2/2023), *“They promised us a lot, like getting brick houses and being resettled with new land and being given the keys.”* (Male farmer, 52,

¹⁰ With consent of interview respondent.

sub-village 2, 13/2/2023). But as time passed and promises were not fulfilled, uncertainty about what to do increased and people put their plans to develop their buildings on hold: *“Main problem: Building a permanent house. Even with money I could not be sure to keep the house. And now I’m old, I cannot move properly”* (Female Farmer, 60 years, sub-village 1, 1/2/2023).

During the individual and group interviews, I felt how the tone darkened when farmers reminisced about the promises they were expecting. One respondent told how he wanted to enlarge his house, right before it got evaluated. Assuming that he would be moved to a new place, he put his plans on hold and persevered until further notice. As he did not want to commence renovations when expecting resettlement, he held on, and it ultimately took him several years to carry out the essential renovations to his house.

Another interesting factor was the group interview held in sub-village 2. 23 participants arrived, whereas the chairman only invited nine respondents. As indicated, such a high response laid on the fact that villagers thought it was representatives for EE, or another investor, who arrived and would provide them with clarifying information. People demanded answers and some left the conversation, frustrated that I could not help them. One of the main topics this group raised was that farmers in this sub-village were insecure about investing in their houses or not.

Another topic that was often mentioned by the participants was the closing of a school: *“A school was here, and it was performing well. After EE came, the school closed, because this land was not supposed to belong to anyone, only to EE. That is why they closed down the school. And now we can’t build one, no school and no permanent houses”* (Female farmer in group interview, sub-village 2, 9/2/2023). According to the interviewees, people were too insecure to open a new school after the cancellation. Moreover, many respondents claimed that their kids left the area to live somewhere else. This had severe impacts on their land use also, as will be described in more detail in ‘crop cultivation’ (see 5.1.2).

Respondents were already uncertain about their living situation as the resettlement was delayed (Kjellin 2015). Not hearing back from EE and being left in the dark when it came to the cancellation only exacerbated this uncertainty.

5.1.2 Effects on crop cultivation

During fieldwork, I also focused on crops that the farmers were growing, how their cultivation changed over the years, and what were the reasons for shifts in their land use.

As pointed out in ‘Resettlement Action Plan’ (see 2.3.2), EE measured the farmers’ land and classified it by, i.e., the size of their house, running businesses, or other assets. They also informed

the farmers to not exceed the marked land plot borders. When digging deeper into the topic of the farmers' land use changes, I received different answers. Some farmers adapted their way of cropping rapidly after the abandonment of the investor (Figure 3): *"I develop my land as usual. We have been restricted to grow trees. But I am still growing Mango and Coconut, I don't care."* (Female Farmer, 60 years, sub-village 1, 1/2/23), *"When EcoEnergy came, we stopped (...) doing anything as we waited for the compensation and resettlement. I started to crop trees again when I've heard that they will not be coming anymore. But before that, I didn't crop anything. I was just sitting here and waiting to be resettled."* (Male farmer, 54 years, sub-village 2, 10/2/23).



Figure 4: Crop cultivation of interview respondent with mostly cassava crops. One coconut tree (left), one banana tree (middle), and one mango tree (back) were sighted during observations. Photo taken by author.

However, a vast majority of the farmers in all three sub-villages respected the established growing restrictions, many of them until the time of my fieldwork (Figure 4). On the question, if they were growing more crops before the appearance of EE one farmer answered *"Yes, way more. It looked like a forest here. When they came, they restricted us in planting, so I no longer cared for*

the trees and dry season took over the rest.” (Male farmer, 63, sub-village 1, 2/2/23) or *“Since EcoEnergy, I did not dare to plant any new trees”* (Male farmer, 53 years, sub-village 1, 6/2/23). When asked why they did not recommence planting even though the investor has not been present in years, we received different answers. Some were too uncertain if it made sense to invest in general land, as a new investor could claim land rights, others feared that EE still might come back.



Figure 5: Land area of interview respondent solely consisting of annual crops, namely rice and some maize in the front. Photo taken by author.

Thus, the combination of cropping restrictions combined with substantial information gaps regarding resettlement, compensation, the investor’s progress and the government’s future plans for the land had severe impacts, long after the investor left, leaving farmers in the dark, unsure how to cultivate their land: *“For me now, I’ve heard the rumours that it might be that the government might return back our land to us. So, I’m just waiting for that.”* (Female farmer, 37 years, sub-village 2, 10/2/2023). As investing in new trees could potentially pose a risk, most farmers decided against it. Nevertheless, the farmers who adapted promptly and grew trees again after the

cancellation still had to wait years until the crops yield. One farmer describes his situation as “*living under the puzzle*” and “*very unsure*” (Male farmer, 54 years, sub-village 2, 10/2/23).

When investigating the restrictions farmers were facing, I additionally shifted the questions towards their possibility to complain about their current situation or accessing information. Whilst most farmers did not dare to complain, those who I talked to and did complain, remained unsuccessful: “*We complained a lot, not only here, but we also even went to the government office.*” (Female farmer, 57 years, sub-village 3, 21/2/2023), “*Yes, we have tried to complain but we didn't get a good information and sometimes the government provided security here and would take us to the prison, so we are not able to complain anymore about it.*” (Female farmer, 45 years, sub-village 3, 22/2/2023) and “*We went to the government agent and complained about why we weren't compensated like the way it's supposed to be as we agreed with EcoEnergy. And some of them got beaten by the government because they don't want them to complain about their problem and compensation.*” (Male farmer, 55 years, sub-village 3, 21/2/2023).

The fear and exclusion from decision-making processes as well as having no possibility to complain or obtain information resulted in smallholders carefully selecting which crops to grow. This lack of recourses directly influenced the farmers' land use.

As pointed out in ‘*Houses and building*’ (see 5.1.2), farmers in sub-village 1 and sub-village 2 often complained about the closing of a school by EE. After the cancellation, the school was not reopened. Several respondents expressed their insecurity about rebuilding the school, In the course of the fieldwork, I came to realize that another reason why the school was not reopening laid in the sheer fact that numerous kids of farmers have left the area: “*For now, as they told us to not cultivate our land too much, there is no sense for my kids to stay here*” (Male farmer, 62 years, sub-village 1, 3/2/2023) or “*My kids need a school and a proper house to live in.*” (Female farmer, 60 years, sub-village 1, 1/2/2023). Ultimately, this resulted in changes in the farmers' land use as well. Not being able to rely on family labour as much as before the cancellation had severe impacts on some smallholders. As pointed out in ‘*small-scale farming*’ (see 1.3.1), family labour is an important factor in subsistence farming. Several farmers claimed that their work intensity changed as their kids left.

Simultaneously, some respondents told us that their kids stayed with them, also after the closing of the school. Some had to travel to the next school in Bagamoyo for hours, others did not visit schools at all anymore and entirely helped their parents with farming.

5.2 Land access

Regarding how farmers accessed land, I found fewer impacts that were a direct result of the cancellation, compared to the farmers' land use. However, two key themes emerged, namely demographic shifts and uncultivated lands, that were both related to the abandonment of the investment.

5.2.1 Demographic shifts in the area

The third key finding relates to demographic changes and their effects on land access¹¹. A theme that emerged through discussions was demographic changes that occurred in the study area over the past ten years, with one major shift being particularly important concerning land use and access: from 2015 on, around the time, that the investment was cancelled, there has been a growth in population in Razaba Ranch. As rumours about the cancellation spread in the area, people found out about accessible land and moved in. This had impacts on how land was accessed in the area, and by whom. While driving through the vast, empty bushlands to the villages, I saw numerous half-built houses lining the road. The construction work for these houses seemed to have stopped and I wanted to get to the bottom of the matter why people have started investing in general land in the first place, as respondents told me that most of these unfinished houses belonged to new people moving into the area.

During interviews with the farmers, a substantial majority of the smallholders stated that a spurt of newcomers arrived in the area around 2016/17, shortly after the cancellation. *“After EE left, there was a mass flow of people arriving to this land.”* (Female farmer, 60 years, sub-village 1, 1/2/2023), *“There are many people moving here. Especially when they’ve heard that the project got cancelled. They came, bought land and cultivate their crops.”* (Female farmer, 43 years, sub-village 1, 7/2/2023). This was confirmed in a group interview in sub-village 2: *“We are more now than a few years ago.”* (Female farmer in Group interview, sub-village 2, 9/2/2023). An example of how this affected the land of the people gave one farmer that moved to sub-village 2 from another village in 2018: *“Being honest, to get our land here was quite difficult, because we moved from another village in Razaba where we had our land and then shifted to here where we found that other people were already living here. So, it's not easy to get land because this land has already*

¹¹ There proved to be implications on both, land access and use with more substantial effects on access.

been taken by the former one who was just living here.” (Male farmer, 48 years, sub-village 2, 13/2/2023). In this particular case, this farmer originally intended to purchase land plots in sub-village 2. He visited the plots, talked with the seller, and agreed to buy land in the coming weeks. Due to the influx of new residents, the available plots were sold to someone else before they could acquire them. Consequently, the farmer and his wife settled in a smaller area of land located on the other side of sub-village 2.

Two farmers from different villages justified the decrease of their land¹² with *“people that started to move here.”* (Male farmer, 62 years, sub-village 1, 3/2/2023) and *“(…) the coming of new people.”* (Male farmer, 47 years, sub-village 2, 14/2/2023). Eventually, it became clear that these farmers sold parts of their land plots. Some farmers’ land size decreased, and arrivals gained land by moving to properties that were under the management of resident farmers already. Hence, it can be inferred that land access for some people (the newcomers) increased, but the area of cultivation stayed more or less the same. As the sampling of respondents focused on farmers who lived in the area before the arrival of EE, no exact statement can be made about if and how the cancellation of EE influenced the choices of the people moving to Razaba Ranch from 2016 on.

However, concerning the process of how new arrivals retrieved land, we received some insights that land was often paid for or borrowed from resident farmers. *“My land decreased from three to 1.5 acres. I gave some land to new neighbours.”* (Male farmer, 53 years, sub-village 1, 3/2/2023) and *“Most of the people are coming as newcomers, because the ones that used to stay here, sold their plots.”* (Female farmer, 57 years, sub-village 3, 21/2/2023). This reduction in land sizes was beneficial for some farmers and resulted in problems for others. While some used the money, i.e., to send their kids to a school that was someplace else, others regret selling their land as their decision came concurrently with changes in their land use in the remaining land.

Still, my interpreter advised me that it might be inappropriate to ask if the arrival of new people led to conflicts or land disputes. It became evident that the local farmers that lived in the area during EE’s presence shared their land with others after the abandonment of the investment. Newcomers mainly moved to land that was already accessed by farmers. These were areas with clearly indicated borders by the smallholders that have additionally been evaluated by the investor. The smallholders that sold parts of their plots automatically accessed less land. At the same time, new people accessed new land. Overall, it can be concluded that more people shared the same amount of land.

¹² ‘Farmer one’ from five to three acres; ‘Farmer two’ from 15 to ten acres.

Moreover, I found that people hesitated to access new land laying outside of the above-mentioned own land borders. Especially farmers stating that their land sizes decreased due to new people arriving, proves that demographic shifts had an impact on their land access. Our observations confirmed that huge fields of land between villages laid uncultivated even though smallholders owned small sizes of land.

Receiving official numbers from the land district proved to be unsuccessful, although they confirmed that there has been an increase in population since the cancelation: *“Population increased in the past ten years.”* (Agricultural engineer, Bagamoyo District Department of Land, 27/2/2023). They could not give any reason for this growth but assumed: *“(…) they must’ve heard that EcoEnergy left, and that land was cheap to buy there, although they have no right at all to buy land there, it belongs to the government.”* (ibid.).

Interestingly, it seemed that even newcomers followed the rules established by EE regarding crop cultivation and house type. At least the ones that bought land from farmers already residing in that area did not seem to invest in trees or brick houses. We made this observation while performing transect walks and passing by plots in which respondents claimed to have shared or sold their land to new arrivals. Furthermore, one farmer that sold half of her land stated: *“I told them not to grow trees when I gave my land to them”* (Male farmer, 53 years, sub-village 1, 3/2/2023). Thus, the combination of restricting crop selection when planning resettlement and the lack of information about the EE progress and cancellation, caused such great insecurity that it was passed on and absorbed by future land users.

5.2.2 Uncultivated land

Based on my observations when visiting the prior project site around the villages, as well as when performing transect walks, I realised that vast fields of land lie uncultivated, even though farmers complained about limited access to land. Those areas were unused and predominantly covered in bush. As soon as this caught my attention, I addressed this topic in the interviews by asking the participants why they do not aim to expand their land. This was particularly interesting for those that were complaining about their land size. Generally, I received different answers.

The majority of farmers I interviewed expressed uncertainty regarding how to invest in the land they are living on because they were aware of it being general land, i.e., this farmer: *“I do not feel free on this land, because this land belongs to the government. But for now, they didn’t come to*

stress me out. But I am living with the fear, knowing that this place is not mine.” (Female farmer, sub-village 1, 7/2/2023), or: *“To be honest, right now, I don't know. I don't know if this land is mine or not. And anytime we can hear from the government. So, I'm not I'm not sure of the land that I live in.”* (Male farmer, sub-village 2, 13/2/2023).

However, other smallholders related their uncertainty directly to the cancelled project: *“Since they left, the main impact for me is uncertainty. Also, I don't know where I am right now, I feel like in a puzzle. I don't know if I can do anything here really or not. It's very difficult.”* (Female farmer, 40 years, sub-village 1, 6/2/2023) or expressed confusion about who is currently owning the land in the area *“For now, I'm uncertain, because the land that I am on right now, I can say it is belonging to the EcoEnergy, though I'm not sure about their contract - whether if it's still EcoEnergy or if it's owned by the government.”* (Male farmer, 52 years, sub-village 2, 13/2/2023).

Even if the cancellation of the EE investment was not the decisive reason for farmers to not access more land, the statements of some farmers show that it reinforced the insecurity towards accessing more land.

Farmers respecting evaluation limits set by EcoEnergy

During the initial planning phase, EE completed land and other asset evaluations to calculate the amount of compensation due to the farmers (see *'resettlement action plan'* in 2.3.2). Counting factors included land size, crops, and house type, among others (Former project consultant, Bagamoyo, 24/2/2023). Simultaneously, EE restricted farmers to access and cultivate new land and referred to the evaluated land bounds. While for many farmers the promise of resettlement and compensation was rather positively received, a vast majority of interviewees stated that, over the years, they respected the determined borders out of fear to miss out on recompense payments.

Mostly farmers in sub-village 1 and some in sub-village 2¹³ did not access new land ever since: *“I am staying here because I'm still waiting for the compensation. (...) Everything has been uncertain and uncertain in so long.”* (Male farmer, 63 years, sub-village 1, 2/2/2023), and *“They found me here and the evaluation was taken here. I didn't expand my land since then. When EcoEnergy came, we stopped cropping because they promised us to be resettled.”* (Male farmer, 54 years, sub-village 2, 9/2/2023).

¹³ Mostly the farmers that lived in sub-village 2 prior to Bakhresa's arrival.

Hence, even though the project's cancellation dates roughly ten years back, several farmers attempted to work within the parameters established by the investor.

The farmers in sub-village 2 and sub-village 3 expressed frustration towards their recent situation as they respected the parameters determined by EE whereas they ultimately received compensation from Bakhresa. They still did not dare to access new land: *“But now we are just living like refugees, we are not moving. We don't know where to go or what's going to happen, so we are just living. (...) If I could have access of land here and free land, I could have cultivated even more than 1/4 acres, but we are not free on this land”* (Male farmer, 48 years, sub-village 2, 13/2/2023).

Even though they are currently more affected by Bagamoyo Sugar (and already received compensation), farmers did not access new land. Most farmers referred to fear and psychological stress from both, the investors and the government: *“And now we are just wondering and being surprised because we have been having our land and our home. But now we are just living like refugees, we are not moving. We don't know where to go or what's going to happen, so we are just living.”* (Male farmer, 48 years, sub-village 2, 13/2/2023), or *“Yeah, so there are some peoples who were beaten by EcoEnergy by that time but never me.”* (Male farmer, 55 years, sub-village 3, 21/2/2023).

6. Discussion

In the following, I use the theoretical concept of power and knowledge, as well as post-colonial theory to critically discuss my empirical findings from Chapter 5. The section is, as the empirical findings, divided into land use and land access.

6.1 Land use

6.1.1 Housing

The empirical evidence presented in the previous chapter showed several direct and indirect influences from the cancellation that affected the farmers, their families, and their land. As pointed out above, two key themes emerged, regarding the farmers' land use.

My interpretation is that the changes in land use are directly interrelated with unequal power relations and lack of knowledge. Respondents knew by the time of the fieldwork that the project was cancelled. However, rumours spread only after years, and it was impossible for the affected farmers to get succinct and correct updates. This put those responsible for the investment in a higher position of power compared to the local people (Hacking 1986). Those unequal power relations were produced by, i.e., the security of the investor using physical violence towards villagers to ensure the compliance of rules and reproduced by the lack of information on the farmers' side. Farmers expressed their fear and anxiety towards what happened to neighbours or friends, which is a clear indication of how one actor exercises power over a group (Barker 1998). Not being involved in any decision-making process and not having the possibility to retrieve information, subsequent to the cancellation, confirms the unequal power imbalances that occurred in Razaba. Power is clearly linked to knowledge here (Hacking 1986) and the fact that farmers were left in the dark, while other actors (investor and government) were aware of the cancellation demonstrates how those power relations come into play. This uncertainty of several factors, i.e., if the investment is still active, if

the rules the investor imposed to receive compensation still apply, and what the current situation with their right to land entails, led to major changes in land use, resulting in a decline in the farmers' development.

The unequal power relations described above are deeply rooted in the neoliberal features, moreover, the enforcement of those features, on self-subsistence economies. Looking at my findings through the lens of postcolonialism, it shows that the cancelled project had severe impacts on the farmers' land use. The assumption that the investment would help promote development and is embraced by farmers, is embedded in the idea that there exist a distinction between 'the West' and 'the others' with Western economies as something to aim for or look up to (Said 1978). Colonialism is embedded in Tanzania and in the country's land laws. How the government is leasing land to investors, especially foreign investments, displays how some actors have the possibility to exercise power over others. In this case, governmental bodies (the central government, but also the local land office in Bagamoyo) did follow a colonial role model by favouring the foreign investment over the desires of local populations. It therefore follows a position that supports economic models different to the ones present in the country and neglected to inform or involve the project-affected people. This resulted in severe impacts on the farmers land use, as shown by the examples of housing.

Smallholders aimed to use their land differently by building houses, dwellings, or huts for chickens or other animals. Not knowing if they are allowed to do so and how secure it would be for them to build a house led to a restriction of those plans. It is clear that there are more factors that come into play for why farmers could not build permanent houses – but the insecurity that increased due to the cancellation of the EE investment is a key one of those.

6.1.2 Crop cultivation

I observed similar influences when it comes to the farmer's types of crops. Whereas the investor knew that the project was cancelled, and the restriction of growing permanent crops got obsolete (especially for farmers in sub-village 1 that did not live in the parameters of the current investor, Bakhresa), local people were not informed about ongoing processes. Without directly exercising power by actively restricting the farmers from growing perennial crops, the power relations were still upheld, as farmers had no access to information (Barker 1998). The lack of transparency and fear sustained a kind of land use that only focused on annual crops. This ultimately resulted in them still not growing crops, after years, even though several complained how much they would want to

grow trees again. The sheer fact that smallholders were and are still influenced in their land use after the cancellation proves the unequal power relations put in place (ibid.).

In order to understand how the smallholders' land use was affected, one has to understand the social structures the farmers are embedded in. The cancellation itself did not necessarily impact the smallholder's ability to cultivate crops. Moreover, prohibiting the smallholders to grow certain crops during the waiting period for resettlement resulted in a disruption of their traditional farming practices which still lasted years after the cancellation. In theoretical terms, this shows how capitalistic market structures opposed power over communities which was reproduced by an imbalanced amount of knowledge (de Sousa Santos 2018). This is supported in recent literature by the argument of Shani that neoliberal globalisation projects lead to 'existential anxiety' (Shani 2017). Considering this, it is key to study how such investments were able to be established in Bagamoyo region in the first place. When looking at Tanzania's land governance and current land laws, clear features of postcolonialism can be found. By leasing land to (foreign) investors, the Tanzanian government acts as a type of middleman. Technically, it enables investments to force their market features, rules, and laws over local people without giving their consent or inform them in any way. In the studied case, smallholders were uninformed and adapted their crop cultivation to EE's needs and wishes while simultaneously neglecting their own desires and aspirations. Law and order was reinforced by the local land office in this case that favoured the government and EE's side over the voices of local communities. This resulted in a disruption of the farmers' day-to-day life and to changes in their land use, as shows the example of the crop cultivation. Examining my findings through the lens of post-colonial theory reveals how the investment, originally aimed at helping people and promote development, lead to the opposite case. The leasing of land from the government towards the Swedish investor was embedded in the assumption that neoliberal large-scale investments are more beneficial for local farmers than their current living situation. Present land borders of smallholders and in general how farmers relate to their land was overlooked, even though farmers emphasized the importance of a clear distinction between their own land and land of their neighbours. Consequently, it can be concluded that the unequal power relations and imbalanced knowledge are deeply rooted in post-colonial features of Tanzania's land governance with several actors involved. This creates a disturbance between smallholders and governmental bodies which currently leads to a one-way street with winners on one, and losers on the other side.

The psychological stress farmers went through has already been examined by prior research (see Kjellin 2015; Chung 2017); through this study, I argue that this stress seemed to continue subsequent to the cancellation. In my interpretation, farmers would have been equally involved and

fairly treated (as promised under PS5, *see* 2.3.2, Resettlement Action Plan), if they would have (at least) been informed about the project's cancellation.

To conclude, there are two key points that cut across how the project affected the farmers' land use, demonstrated at their houses and crops. Namely, not being able to participate or be involved in decision-making processes as well as not being informed, during and subsequent to the cancellation. Both points support the statement put forward in this thesis, which is that when the project was cancelled, one side possessed more information than the other. Deliberately withholding this knowledge played a significant role and created an unequal power dynamic between investor and smallholders. Looking at the broader picture, it can be concluded that the post-colonial aspect of land governance in Tanzania reinforced the situation and that the studied case is just a puzzle piece in a continuous level of uncertainty for the local communities in the region.

6.2 Land access

One major theme for changes in the farmers' land access was the share of land with newcomers. One of the reasons for the newcomers to arrive was that rumours about cancellation spread and people aimed to find new lives. Land was cheap and people bought parts of land from farmers already residing on it. When analysing this land acquisition processes, the project's cancellation led to a change in land distribution in uncertain land areas.

The empirical findings regarding the demographic shifts indicate reasons why smallholders' land access was affected by the investment and ultimately its cancellation. Even though own land plots were scarce and other land tracts laid available, the main reasons for farmers to not access more land were fear and uncertainty and direct orders from EE not to expand. Most interviewees referred to the fact that it was general land, others thought it was still somehow owned by EE. In general, EE plays an important role when it comes to the way farmers perceived and accessed land. Several farmers mentioned EE (without me naming the investor at first) when they declared their land boundaries. When looking at the power relations in this case, it becomes clear that the investment was, and still is, imposing some kind of power over the local communities (Barker 1998).

It is apparent that the investment and its cancellation disrupted the farmers' everyday lives and led to changes in how smallholders used and accessed their land. Looking at the power relations that are put in place, it is important to look at the social structures this power imbalance is embedded in (Foucault 1980). Not informing the communities about the cancellation of the project,

led to a neglect of smallholders' views, wishes, and substantial livelihood assets (in this case self-subsistence farming). This shows parallels to the example brought up in the theoretical framework section about colonialism (*see 3.1.2*). Shani (2017) mentions that “sudden and hurtful disruptions to patterns of everyday life” are rooted in a “globalising capitalist world economy” (Shani 2017:279). Actors exercised power over communities in this case, and neoliberal market structures were supposed to replace economies of self-subsistence. The cancellation of this plan resulted in severe changes in farmers' land use, hindering them to access more land and a constant state of fear and uncertainty about the future.

7. Conclusion

In this chapter, I summarize the major findings collected in this research and how they answer the research question. I furthermore reflect on to which extent the purpose of the study was reached, new insights this study gave me, and thoughts about future research.

7.1 Cancellation and implications

Prior studies on cancelled investments already showed that the delay of investments resulted in existential anxiety and mental stress for rural communities (Kjellin 2015; Chung 2017; Engström & Hajdu 2018). This thesis aimed to investigate how not only delays but importantly the cancellation of LSAIs affected those communities' land use and access. In the course of this study, two overarching points emerged that cut across all four key themes and were directly related to how smallholders use and access land. Those two points were direct outcomes from and connected to the cancellation of the investment.

Firstly, not being informed about the cancellation and ongoing delays produced uncertainty, fear, and imbalanced power relations as one actor had more knowledge about the current situation than the other. Whereas the investor began the investment by promising compensation payments and better housing conditions, rapidly the first delays occurred and eventually resulted in the project's cancellation without informing local communities.

Secondly, not being involved in any decision-making processes or new developments of the projects. This includes the delays but also every process after the cancellation, including the arrival of a new investor or the change from EE's land rights back to general land. Those, namely being uninformed and the exclusion from decision-making processes severely affected the farmers' land use and access. These combined with the psychological stress and fear resulting from brutality sides of the investor during, and of the government after cancellation, sustained a land use that only focused on short-term crops, withheld development in houses and restrained smallholders to access more land.

In the course of this thesis, I found that the above-mentioned points are rooted in the current land governance of the country. Farmers experienced considerable challenges and uncertainties related to their land prior to the investment, and it is probable that they will continue to face such difficulties in the future. I conclude that the cancellation of the investment led to a disruption in farmers' land use and access. However, the investment was embedded in questionable land governance practices by the government when it comes to the right of local smallholders. The situation is most likely to persist, and future projects might (with or without cancellation) lead to disturbances in farmers' land use and do quite the opposite than promote development in the country.

During fieldwork, I identified four key themes that provided insights into smallholders' land use and access. The themes for land use were namely house and crop type, and for land access demographic shifts and unassessed land between villages and houses. Those themes helped to analyse and gave clear examples of how the cancellation of the LSAI by EE affected the farmers' land use and access.

In conclusion, lack of knowledge and uncertainty resulting from the two main points mentioned above were the main reasons why farmers did not invest in desired house types and why farmers did not invest in perennial crops. Furthermore, farmers performed changes in their land use and accessed less, while newcomers accessed new land as more people moved into the area. The moving of people was, among other reasons, caused by news spreading that land was available and cheap to buy – an influence directly related to the cancellation. Here, too, power relations are an important factor as the knowledge that this land is general land seemed to be not as clear for all the farmers. Indeed, the district land office stated that people had no right to buy land from residing communities. Lastly, the power relations between the government and the local people are still at play as farmers did not dare to access new land that lied uncultivated between (sub-)villages and houses. While this is not a direct effect of the cancellation, the land borders were reinforced by EE during the land evaluation. Furthermore, some farmers I talked to did not know if EE might come back and were still hoping to receive any type of compensation.

This confirms how the neoliberal foundation of this large-scale agricultural investment held up power relations even long after its cancellation. Following the theoretical framework used in this thesis, this affected the farmers by impacting their land use and land access.

7.2 Reaching purpose

This study aimed to connect a multi-layered and -faceted problem to a specific case. Many things have to be taken into consideration when trying to prove LSAI characteristics from one example to a generic issue. First, the people living in this region in Tanzania have been treated unfairly, even prior to the arrival of the investor. The land laws in Tanzania, with the president owning all general land, pose a common problem when it comes to being certain about the land one lives on – all this while small-scale farmers are dependent on their land. When looking at LSAIs in other parts of the world, the problem can differ widely, and people are impacted differently.

Additionally, for this case, as much as the investor and the cancellation of the EE investment posed problems to the people, some issues have been pertinent before and were austere reinforced by the LSAI. The cancellation impacted the farmers' land use and access – conversely, the main problems farmers face lay in struggles that root deeper than the investment. This thesis adds a puzzle piece to the web of problems and unfairness that rural communities in this area live through every day.

7.3 Ideas for further study

My empirical data was very rich and uncovered plenty of issues relating to how cancelled LSAI affected smallholder farmers. While I could have written an entire thesis on any of these subjects, I narrowed down my focus to land use and access to answer the research question. In the following, I suggest several interesting and important topics which could be further examined:

- Focus on how cancellation affected farmers' livelihoods, especially regarding how changes in cultivation impact income and livelihood assets.
- A gender perspective on how the cancellation of the project affected men and women differently.
- Effects of cancellation on a broader scale (land region and district) and how cancellation affected the area economically.
- Possibilities to prevent cancellation or if cancellation happens, possibilities to inform farmers in a way that minimizes the negative impact on them.

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Popular Science summary

Investors vs smallholders

Imagine you rely on a piece of land in many ways, for example to produce your food, to work or to socialize with neighbours and friends. But what if you are not sure any more about what plants to grow and if investing in renovations for your house still makes sense?

This is the reality of countless rural people and farmers throughout developing countries, whose land use is affected by big investments. This thesis aimed to understand how large-scale agricultural investments, more detailed, the cancellation of those, impact farmers and their land. I specified on what the effects were on their crops and houses, and how new demographics in the area changed the farmers' access to land. This is important as many development aid projects aim on large-scale investments with a focus on achieving economic growth and sustainable standards while disregarding societal issues. Many of those projects fail and their implications are an understudied phenomenon.

In order to understand how those cancelled investments affect the people and their land, one has to talk to the people themselves. I therefore went to Bagamoyo, Tanzania where a large-scale project never went operational and talked to smallholder farmers that expected to be resettled as land was needed to grow sugar cane. I found that farmers were substantially left out of any information which had severe impacts in how they accessed and used their land, years after cancellation.

My results show that farmers need to be included more in decision-making processes as well as informed about ongoing progresses – also after the cancellation of projects. The investment, aimed to boost production and employment in the area led to the contrary and even worse. I learnt that people at all levels have to be involved and that it is still a long way when perfectionating development aid projects.

Acknowledgements

Producing this thesis has been immensely rewarding and challenging at the same time. I could not have completed it without the help of so many people, and I am more than grateful for their support and guidance throughout.

Firstly, I want to thank my amazing interpreter and friend, Nestura Shanice Kimaro, for not only teaching me how to understand, but also fall in love with Tanzania. Without her guidance through data collection, and her patient explanations regarding local customs, traditions and the Tanzanian mindset, I could not have undertaken this journey. I won't forget the time spent together in the field and the long discussions of our observations from the day. *Asante sana rafiki!*

Secondly, I am extremely grateful to have had Dr. Linda Engström as a supervisor for my thesis. With her knowledge and expertise, especially during the first week of fieldwork in which I followed her throughout Dar es Salaam and Bagamoyo, she took away my nervousness in days and taught me tips and tricks for data collection, but also how to be relaxed in the setting I found myself in. Her guidance was always clear and on point and I never felt in any way confused or lost by her insights and valuable feedback. From the beginning on, where I created ideas for my thesis, until the very end, I felt in good hands and my project would not have been possible without her.

Thirdly, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Dr. Ronald Ndesanjo, whose insights and tips about how to formulate my questions and approach interview participants saved me from sleepless nights in the field. I will not forget his patience and humble manner.

I would be remiss in not mentioning Charles Kona, field assistant and interpreter of Linda and Ronald, who joined us in the first week of fieldwork also. My knowledge of Kiswahili would not be the same without him and I still look up to his pleasant and relaxed way to explain me things, in the field or while eating Chipisi Mayai.

Lastly, I'd like to mention all my friends in Uppsala throughout different programmes, who made the endless study sessions in the libraries bearable and whose prep talks, hugs and nice words made me shape the thesis that I finally produced. Looking back, I am sure that I will miss those times and simultaneously am proud of all of us for pushing our theses until the very end.

My research was funded by The Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography. Thank you to for making this project possible.

Appendix 1: List of individual interviews

Identity	Gender	Age	Farm Size (in a)	Annual crops	Perennial crops	Date
sub-village 1						
Farmer 1	F	58	1	Maize, rice	-	31/1/2023
Farmer 2	M	45	4	Rice	Banana	1/2/2023
Farmer 3	F	60	1.25	Cassava, maize, rice, vegetables	Coconut, Mango	1/2/2023
Farmer 4	M	63	5	Cassava, maize, rice, sugar cane	Banana	2/2/2023
Farmer 5	M	62	4	Cassava, maize, peas, rice	Mango	3/2/2023
Farmer 6	M	53	4	Cassava, maize	Watermelon	3/2/2023
Farmer 7	F	40	4	Cassava	Banana	6/2/2023
Farmer 8	F	43	2	Cassava, maize	-	7/2/2023
Farmer 9	F	45	2	Maize, rice	-	7/2/2023
Farmer 10	M	55	8	Cassava, maize	-	8/2/2023
sub-village 2						
Farmer 11	M	54	3.5	Cassava	Banana, Mango	9/2/2023
Farmer 12	F	61	10	Maize	-	10/2/2023
Farmer 13	F	37	1	Cassava, Maize	Banana, Pineapple	10/2/2023
Farmer 14	M	48	0.25	Cassava, spinach	-	13/2/2023
Farmer 15	M	52	0.25	Cassava, maize, peanuts	-	13/2/2023
Farmer 16	M	47	10	Maize	-	14/2/2023
Farmer 17	F	52	2	Cassava, maize	-	15/2/2023
sub-village 3						
Farmer 18	M	55	5	Cassava, maize, rice, sunflower	-	21/2/2023
Farmer 19	F	57	6	Chili	-	21/2/2023
Farmer 20	F	45	2	Cassava, Chili, Peppers	-	22/2/2023
Farmer 21	M	43	5	Maize, spinach	-	22/2/2023

Appendix 2: List of Group interviews and list of additional interviews

Identity	Profession	Location	Date
Bedford, A.	Former consultant for investor	Bagamoyo	30/1/2023
<i>Anonymous</i>	Former security and border control for investor	Bagamoyo	24/2/2023
Matia, D.	Head of Land Department	Bagamoyo	27/2/2023
Kissimbo, M.	Head of Agricultural, Livestock and Fisheries Division	Bagamoyo	27/2/2023
Karushekia, A.	Agricultural Engineer	Bagamoyo	27/2/2023

Interview	Participants	Place	Date
Group interview 1	8	Sub-village 1	31/1/2023
Group interview 2	23	Sub-village 2	9/2/2023
Group interview 3	5	Sub-village 3	20/2/2023

Appendix 3: Consent form for interview participants

CHECKLIST FOR OBTAINING ORAL CONSENT FROM RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS:

For Master thesis project: “Impacts of a cancelled Large-scale agricultural investments on smallholder farmers’ land use and access”

The participant should be able to answer all questions on this sheet with ‘Yes’.
Have you understood the information explained to you about this research project and this interview?
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study and received satisfactory answers to any questions?
Do you understand that during the course of the interview you are free to refrain from answering any question you do not wish to answer or ask that the interview is stopped, without having to give a reason for not answering/withdrawing?
Do you agree that we record this interview? I will not share the recording with others. The purpose is only to help us remember what you say correctly.
Do you understand that we do not record your name and that we will not use your name when explaining or writing about local experiences?
Do you agree to us quoting your words (ensuring they are in context) when the study is written up or published, without mentioning your name in direct association with the quote? Note: this does not guarantee that people with local insight will not be able to identify you.

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