RURAL PRODUCER AGENCY AND AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS: WHAT ROLE FOR SOCIO-LEGAL EMPOWERMENT?

Lorenzo Cotula, Emily Polack, Thierry Berger and Brendan Schwartz

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)
Global agri-businesses can implement the SDGs to boost strategic and commercial objectives says new ESG report.

Inclusive Business for Food Security

Corporates collaborate to transform rural livelihoods
Canadian net farm income and gross revenue, inflation adjusted, net of government payments, 1926–2016.

Source: www.darrilqualman.com
Rural producer agency and agricultural value chains: What role for socio-legal empowerment?
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https://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/12607IIED.pdf

Rebalancing power in global food chains through a “Ways of Working” approach: an experience from Kenya
Elizabeth Kariuki and Mary Kambo

https://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/17654IIED.pdf
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<th>Spheres of action</th>
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| **Understanding** | • Producers from a marginalised ethnic group attend trainings on relevant rights and applicable law, or on options for improved land access or more secure land rights  
• A co-operative of women farmers obtains advice on pricing arrangements and technical specs, or on issues affecting intra-household control over revenues  
• Value chain workers access information on labour rights, minimum and/or living wage, gender equality, or employment conditions |
| **Organising**    | • Livestock reapers create effective producer organisations for aggregation and collective negotiation with buyers, or national apex organisations for policy influence  
• Farm workers develop trade unions at company, local, sector and national levels, or enhance women’s representation in union leadership  
• Women whose land access has been eroded by a transition to cash crops form an association to strengthen their representation in land governance institutions |
| **Engaging**      | • Farmers cultivating small plots get support to negotiate increased land access (such as via private leases or government schemes), or to pool land via a co-operative  
• An informal coalition of women farmers links up with a specialised organisation and develops locally-controlled seed production, or establishes favourable arrangements with commercial input providers  
• Producers with the support of a lawyer negotiate offtake agreements with buyers, or challenge unfair terms in court |
Transforming Multinational Plantations to Local Cooperatives in Mindanao

Abrogated onerous contracts with multi-national companies and negotiated mutually beneficial arrangements which significantly uplifted the living conditions of farmers.
Empowering Producers in Commercial Agriculture (EPIC)

Project: Active January 2018 to December 2021

EPIC aims to empower rural producers and their wider communities to influence public decisions and private sector conduct in favour of bottom-up, locally beneficial and more sustainable investments in commercial agriculture.

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A Kenyan smallholder waters plants on his mixed farm where he is growing fruit trees and crops (Photo: V. Atakos/CCAFS, Creative Commons via Flickr)