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VENEZUELA
A country sliding towards full-blown dictatorship

ISLAMISTS
How Saudi Arabia and Qatar disagree on faith based politics

TAXES
African countries must generate domestic revenues

Land ownership

In German in E+Z
Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit.
Both language versions
at www.DandC.eu

Monitor

Debate

Tribune

Focus: Land ownership

Title: Disputed land in Kenya.
Photo: msw/45presse

FOCUS

Land ownership

Roots of violence

Riots in Kenya are not only linked to ethnic identies, but relate to issues of land ownership too, as Paul Kawegah of GIZ elaborates. Some problems date back to the colonial era. **PAGE 19**

Secure tenure

Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development is promoting poor people's right to land. Sustainable agicultural development depends on secure tenure, writes Gunther Beger, one of its leading officers. As journalist Elijah Grega spells out, smallholders in Sierra Leone are frustrated about land being leased out to foreign investors. In Chad, disputes over land often trigger violence, as human-rights activist Djeralar Miankeol reports, and the livelihoods of smallholders are being destroyed. **PAGES 21, 23, 24**

Colonial legacies

Namibia became independent in 1990, but land is still distributed in an unfair manner. According to the political scientist Henning Melber, colonial legacies are evident. Things are similar in Guinea-Bissau, where the government must implement its new land policy to prevent violence, as peace activists Armando Mussa Sani and Jasmina Barckhausen argue. **PAGES 26, 29**

Cambodian controversies

Many smallhoders in Cambodia fear they may lose the land they depend on. Development consultants Frank Bliss and Karin Gaesing discuss approaches to improve matters. Journalist Sun Narin explains how land controversies became common in Cambodia. **PAGES 31, 34**

Crowded slums

Since urban land is very expensive, masses of poor people live in densly populated informal settlements. In India, many of them are at constant risk of eviction, according to Roli Mahajan, a Delhi-based journalist. **PAGE 36**

Dangers of displacement

Displacement in the context of major infrastructure projects compounds problems of poverty. A World Bank scholar has done seminal work on the matter. Korinna Horta of Urgewald, a German non-governmental organisation, demands that international financial institutions must heed his lessons. **PAGE 38**

EDITORIAL

Of using and owning

It is not obvious that land has to be individual property. In the past, almost all land was used collectively, and shared ownership is still common in many regions of the world. For nomadic communities, who exist on all continents, anything else makes little sense.

Modern market economies need clear ownership rights, however, so people can calculate economic decisions precisely. Meanwhile, the world population is growing, resources are getting scarcer, and competition is becoming fiercer. Overuse and climate change are adding to the problems. Scarcity makes prices sky-rocket. Land speculation is a growing phenomenon in many parts of the world.

Urbanisation is accelerating, and cities engulf their fringe areas. As a result, those plots of land are not available for agriculture anymore. Prices rise, and people are displaced. The rural poor often end up in big cities' slums – where they again live without secure tenure. As soon as the area becomes economically interesting, they are forced to leave again.

Conflicts over land have an existential significance. They touch questions of living and livelihood, of identity and sometimes even religion. Formal and traditional rights do not always match. This is particularly true in former colonies, where colonial structures exist alongside old traditions.

Of course, land is not the same everywhere. A plot in the centre of Tokyo is of different value and use than a piece of desert. For an oasis in that desert, the situation is completely different again. But wherever land is precious for people, be it fertile farmland or well-located building land, similar problems arise. All too often, women and minorities suffer discrimination.

Where formal land rights do not exist or are not enforced, might makes right. Powerful people just stake their claims, privatising land by creating facts. Provincial leaders sell community land – or land with unclear ownership – to investors; municipal leaders "develop" areas with informal settings for shopping malls and office towers.

The huge development challenge has several dimensions:

- existing customary laws must be formally acknowledged,
- ways must be found to trade those usage rights in order to allow the most productive use of land possible, and
- marginalised groups, that are already disadvantaged in customary law, must not be marginalised further.

There is no blueprint that fits every country. In 2002, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization passed sensible voluntary guidelines on the matter. Good solutions must facilitate socially acceptable development in the long term. Land issues are conflict prone, however, because they affect the interests of influential political and economical elites. It is no coincidence that Germany's Civil Peace Service, which promotes non-violent resolution of conflicts, is engaged in many issues relating to land rights (full disclosure: like D+C/E+Z, the Civil Peace Service is funded by Engagement Global on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development – BMZ).

Unfortunately, legal regulations concerning ownership, usage rights and transfer of land – by inheritance, for example – are not always fair. People deserve security however. Those who live in permanent fear of being evicted cannot build a secure existence. Hundreds of millions of people face this situation.

You'll find all contributions of our focus section plus related ones on our website (briefings section): www.dandc.eu/node/3093

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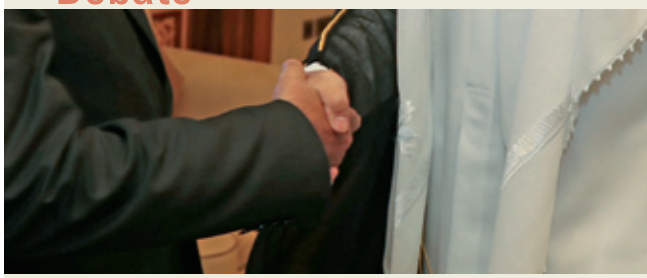
Debate



Competing Islamisms

Several Arab countries have discontinued diplomatic relations and trade with Qatar. This kind of collective boycott of a small Arab country by its neighbours is unprecedented in modern history. The crisis is driven by diverging ideas about what kind of Islamism is legitimate. Maysam Behravesh, a political scientist, assesses the situation.

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Tribune

The health of herds

Animals, like humans, need water. In rural areas, human livelihoods depend on herds, so draughts can prove devastating. Cornelia Heine of Vétérinaires sans Frontières Germany discusses the policy implications of the need to access water.

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Knowledge gaps

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires a reorientation of global development policies. The principles seem simple and universal, but they have wide-ranging consequences for the knowledge systems that development agencies rely upon, write Martin Noltze and Sven Harten of DEval, the German Institute for Development Evaluation.

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CIVIL SOCIETY

Diminished civic equality

Philanthropy is gaining ever more influence in the USA – and that has international implications. A new book by David Callahan sheds light on who the most important mega-donors are and what causes they promote.

By Hans Dembowski

In 2015, Mark Zuckerberg, the founder of Facebook, and Priscilla Chan, his wife, have pledged to donate most of their wealth to worthy causes. At the time, their fortune amounted to $ 45 billion. It is likely to grow considerably, given how popular Facebook is. The couple has pledged to give away 99 %. They own more assets than the bottom fifth of American households. Zuckerberg and Chan say they want to "promote equality" so everyone has opportunities "regardless of nation, families or circumstances they are born into".

Another prominent American philanthropist is Michael Bloomberg, the founder of the financial-data company Bloomberg and former mayor of New York City. His wealth is about $ 40 billion. He has said he will spend the bulk of his fortune to influence government policies in the USA and around the world. Issues he is interested in include fighting climate change, reducing traffic deaths in poor countries and stemming overfishing.

Bill Gates, Warren Buffett and George Soros are yet more billionaires engaged in philanthropy. Gates and Buffet are funding the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, whereas George Soros' vehicle is the Open Society Foundations. The individuals involved are leaving their mark on global affairs.

The examples and figures mentioned here are taken from David Callahan's book "The givers". It is full of anecdotes about rich American people trying to change the world – or at least the USA or perhaps only their home town. Anecdotal evidence is all Callahan can offer, and he is not to be blamed for it. The poor are well researched, but the mega-rich have always guarded their privacy.

Callahan offers a broad assessment of what the growing relevance of philanthropists means for society. He makes it very clear that this trend results from growing inequality. A few "super citizens", as he called them, have the financial clout to dominate civil society, whereas masses of other citizens feel increasingly disenfranchised and are withdrawing from public life.

In many countries, organisations that depend on mass-membership have been losing influence, and the share of people who take part in elections is decreasing. At the same time, gaps between the haves and have-nots are widening.

Extremely rich people who start foundations or contribute their wealth to them have considerable political influence, Callahan argues. One way of putting pressure on governments' decision-making is to offer to co-finance projects under the condition that public budgets contribute money too. Callahan states that elected governments should have the resources they need to provide and protect public goods, and when they do not, the question arises whether the rich should not be taxed more. On the other hand, he sees public budgets in the US squeezed by debt and future pension payments.

Mega-donors are leaving their mark on issues from urban planning to foreign policy. Local governments appreciate it when philanthropists co-fund public parks and accept the donors' ideas of where those parks are set up or redeveloped, while think tanks that depend on private money get involved in debates on how to deal with Iran, the global environment or trade.

RIGHT-WING THINK TANKS

Mega-donors do not always support causes that serve the common good. Callahan reports that billionaires such as Robert Mercer or Charles and Robert Koch are known to fund conservative think tanks which have histories of climate change denial and promoting an anti-tax agenda. According to Callahan, the hugely influential American Enterprise Institute (AEI) had an annual budget of $ 55 million in 2015, which it had collected as tax-free donations from a mere 1,500 persons.

Callahan states that he worries more about inequality in public life than about all philanthropists supporting the same agenda. He sees a great diversity of mega-donors who support a great diversity of causes. However, he does emphasise that all mega-donors tend to be economically conservative. After all, the system has worked for them. The author acknowledges the history

Mark Zuckerberg and his wife promise to fight inequality. Their assets are worth more than the combined wealth of the USA's bottom 20 % of households.

Screenshot: https://www.facebook.com/zuck

of America's super-rich committing their wealth to philanthropy, but warns that the impact of what happening now will prove more forceful than established grant-institutions such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation or the Carnegie Corporation. These grant-making bureaucracies tend to support many different causes, and are financially conservative, as they are designed to last forever. In contrast, many of todays super-rich want to spend all their money in their lifetime.

Callahan only deals in passing with how the philanthropists accumulated their wealth. Some have inherited it. In other cases, business models were controversial, to put it mildly. Facebook, for example, is known for sophisticated tax-avoidance schemes and doing little to stem the spread of fake news. Bill Gates' company Microsoft dominated the global IT business in the 1990s and its grip on the market only loosened after complex anti-trust proceedings in the USA and the EU. Financial-sector titans were not made to pay for the global financial crisis that had Wall Street as its epicentre in 2008. The Koch brothers' wealth stems from fossil energy.

Philanthropic foundations are accountable only to themselves, as Callahan stresses. They set their own agendas and have the means to pursue them forcefully. They are in a position to take risks, test new approaches and scale up what works. Callahan therefore considers philanthropy to be society's risk capita.

Callahan sees a need to regulate philanthropy more stringently. For instance, he wants foundations to disclose all of the grants they make. Otherwise the public cannot understand what policies they are promoting. Moreover, he wants legislators to reconsider what kind of spending should be tax-exempted so efforts to manipulate public policy are not subsidised by governments. In his eyes, moreover, philanthropists would be well advised to publish information pro-actively in order to boost their legitimacy.

REFERENCE

Callahan, D., 2017: The givers. Wealth, power and philanthropy in a new gilded age. New York: Knopf.

Relevant players

The Association of German Foundations has published a report on what its members contribute to international development. The document provides insights into activities, but it does not offer an overview of what is going on. Because it does not elaborate on the great diversity of foundations, it remains unclear what influence different kinds of foundations actually have.

The "Stiftungsreport" (Foundation report) does a good job of explaining what the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are, that achieving them will require engagement by all different players and that German foundations are prepared to play their part. The authors point out that foundations, as independent players, have comparative advantages:

- They interact freely with partners all over the world and can implement programmes in places where German government agencies cannot become involved for political reasons.
- They can test new approaches and scale up what works out well.
- They promote the involvement, ownership and empowerment of local people.
- Some act as think tanks and provide policy advice.
- Some are impact investors, providing seed capital for new businesses of social relevance.

The report shows that foundations can prove useful partners for civil-society organisations, government agencies, private sector businesses, international organisations et cetera. The problem, however, is that foundations are an extremely diverse category in Germany. Some foundations are actually state agencies in disguise because they were set up by governments or government-run institutions. Examples include Stiftung Entwicklungszusammenarbeit Baden-Württemberg or KfW Stiftung. Other foundations are closely affiliated to political parties, such as the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (Christian Democrats) or the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Social Democrats).

Yet other foundations have close ties to major private-sector corporations. Siemens Stiftung, for example, was started when its parent multinational was struggling with corruption cases. It serves a PR purpose, though it is more than a mere PR instrument. Robert Bosch Foundation, in contrast, was not started by the car-component maker of the same name – it owns that company. Yet other foundations are standard philanthropic outfits. Karl Kübel Stiftung, for example, was started by a successful entrepreneur close to the end of his career in 1972. Making matters even more complex, big non-governmental agencies like Brot für die Welt (Protestant), Caritas (Catholic) or Welthungerhilfe (secular) have started foundations, inviting private donors to support their work long term.

To understand the full relevance of Germany's foundations, readers would need to know more about what kind of foundation does what kind of work with what kind of result. Information on what kind of support, especially from governments, foundations get, would be necessary too. The Stiftungsreport shows that these institutions are relevant, but not how much they actually matter.

LINK

Stiftungsreport – Entwicklungszusammenarbeit: Wie Stiftungen weltweit wirken (Foundation report – Development cooperation: the global impact of foundations, only available in German). ***https://shop.stiftungen.org/stiftungsreport-entwicklungshilfe***

MARSHALL PLAN WITH AFRICA

Private sector as saviour?

Gerd Müller, Germany's federal minister for economic cooperation and development, has proposed a Marshall Plan with Africa. He wants the private sector to generate jobs and drive the continent's development. Experts, however, disagree on what impacts private businesses have on African development.

By Sabine Balk

Amadou Diallo was born in Senegal and is now a top manager of Global Forwarding, a subsidiary of DHL. He is the only African board member of a major German corporation. In his eyes, economic growth is the key to African development. He bemoans that only about one percent of German businesses' direct foreign investments are made in Africa.

Most German companies are small and mid-sized enterprises, so in Diallo's eyes, there is a need to convince them of African opportunities and mitigate their risk aversion. According to him, many managers are apprehensive about the security situation in Africa. "Many countries are safe," he insists, and German companies would be foolish to leave African markets to their Chinese competitors. He prefers using official development assistance (ODA) to support business development to channeling money to governments that tend to neglect their people.

Elisio Macamo disagrees. The development sociologist from Mozambique is an associate professor of African studies at Basel University. He doubts that the private sector can drive development in Africa. According to him, politics and social circumstances deserve more attention. He warns that Müller's proposal will only add up to one more well-intended plan. Every new plan, he says, is the result of previous plans, but donor governments should do more to learn the lessons of past failures. Macamo says that Müller's proposal is good in the sense of emphasising solidarity, but whether it will actually deliver results, is an entirely different question.

The core problem, according to Macamo, is the general belief that everything will turn out well if only the right decisions are taken. Things are not that simple, he argues, because human beings do not always respond to decisions as expected. Political leaders who get ODA funding, for example, don't automatically use it to build hospitals.

Macamo points out that Africa has made considerable progress since independence, and "our expectations have grown accordingly". It took Europe a long time to get where it is now, he says. He calls for humility and patience in regard to African development. He expresses calm confidence about the continent's future.

Claudia Warning, who belongs to the management of Brot für die Welt, the Protestant aid agency, expresses herself in favour of creating jobs. In principle, foreign direct investment can make a difference, she says, though quality matters. As she sees it, investments all too often do not result in decent employment, but only commodity production. All too often, international labour standards concerning fair pay, working hours or occupational safety are ignored. She also notes that foreign investors tend to neglect environmental standards as well. Moreover, African economies must be driven by Africans, Warning states, rather than foreigners.

Günter Nooke is Chancellor Angela Merkel's personal adviser on African affairs. At a recent panel discussion hosted by GIZ, a newspaper (Frankfurter Rundschau) and a public broadcaster (Hessischer Rundfunk) in Frankfurt, he was asked why a Marshall Plan with Africa was needed. His half-joking response was "media attention". What matters most, in his eyes, is to change the perception of Africa, especially as Europe has a keen interest in African development.

Western governments want to see African economies grow, so they emphasise private-sector investments, according to Nooke. To some extent, however, Africa needs other models than the ones that work in Europe. "We want to find out, in cooperation with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the diaspora, how migrants' remittances can serve to boost investments," he said. One option he mentioned was that governments might subsidise business investments that are made with remittances.

African economies are still geared to commodity exports: manganese-ore mine in Ghana.

Photo: Gliing/Lineair

G20

Education for catching up

Education matters: school children in Madagascar.

In about 60 years of independence, African countries have not managed to catch up with the world market. Official development assistance (ODA) as such cannot rise to all relevant challenges. Key issues are better education and more investments.

By Susanne Sawadogo

"If you put a gun to my head and say you can invest in only one thing, my conclusion – based on my experience – would be it has to be education," says Jean-Louis Sarbib, a former high-ranking World Bank officer. No matter how ambitious a developmental project is and how favourable the social circumstances are, unless a country's leaders act responsibly in politics and business, the country cannot make progress. Sarbib argues that education lays the foundations of responsibility because it is knowledgeable people with independent minds who "ask the right questions". They expect government agencies, schools or private businesses to perform responsibly.

The plain truth is that demands for democracy and good governance do not suffice if one wants African resources to be used to the benefit of a growing population. That was made quite clear at a recent conference on Africa's economic transformation and its partnership with the G20 in Berlin. The event was hosted by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET).

African education systems are a colonial legacy, and they were designed by colonial powers to promote some 10,000 people to the top. This is the assessment of Tutu Agyare, a Ghanaian business consultant. The masses were always neglected – and still are, he says. Moreover, he sees gaps between what is taught in schools and the skills that are actually in labour-market demand. To lead a business, he adds, one not only needs an understanding of accountancy, but of citizenship too.

Sarbib agrees that the education sector needs to be reformed, as it currently produces inequality. Children should start school at a younger age, in his eyes, and rural people must benefit too: "If you want to increase productivity in agriculture, somebody has to be able to read the instruction of the fertiliser."

Education is essential for ensuring that growth is not jobless, says Heike Rüttgers of the European Investment Bank. However, Günter Nooke, who is Chancellor Angela Merkel's personal adviser on African affairs, warns that a good education is useless if no jobs are available. In such settings, education will only drive migration. Germany's Federal Government wants to fight the reasons of flight and has put African development on the agenda of the G20 summit in Hamburg. The Compact with Africa, a G20 initiative, promotes investments in infrastructure and private-sector companies.

According to the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), infrastructure investments worth about $ 130 billion are needed in Africa every year. ODA will not suffice, but it can provide incentives by promoting vocational training or mitigating investors' risks.

Business gains, moreover, must be reinvested in Africa. All too often, Africans avoid taxes, do not invest at home and thus do not employ people. It is all too common for prosperous Africans to stash away their savings in foreign bank accounts or in investments in Europe. Donor governments insist that African governments must increase their tax revenues in order to make investments themselves.

Nooke points out that safeguarding human rights and fighting corruption contribute to improving the investment climate. However, full-blown democracy according to the western model may not be required. In his eyes, it is better than nothing when an authoritarian developmental regime brings about economic success.

That message does not convince Greg Mills of the Johannesburg-based Brenthurst Foundation. Empirical evidence, he says, shows that "democracies grow faster".

Photo: Kopp/picture-alliance/Westend61

Scapegoating

A small tribal community in Zimbabwe is being blamed for worsening the impacts of climate change. People who belong to other tribes may feel superior, but the Khoisan are primarily victims of global warming.

At 14 years of age, Ndumiso Sibanda has never been to school – and probably never will be. He belongs to the ancient Khoisan tribe. They live in Zimbabwe's Matabeleland North Province. His family has a semi-nomadic life style.

Khoisan is a unifying name for two groups of people in Southern Africa. They share physical and linguistic characteristics that distinguish them from the region's Bantu majority. According to Tsoro-O-Tso San, a development trust that is involved in Khoisan welfare, the tribal community has a population of 2,500 people.

Ndumiso says his community lives in an environmental-friendly way. "The bush has always been part of our lives, we live in harmony with nature," he claims. Incessant droughts have left their mark on this Southern African country, however, and the Khoisan and their livestock have not been spared. "Most of my people no longer have cattle because of the lack of water," he says. "Only few domestic animals, goats for instance, survive the harsh conditions."

Some environmentalists argue, however, that the tribal community is compounding ecological problems. "The Khoisan use grass and tree branches to construct their homes, cutting trees, damaging nature continuously as they don't live for long at one place," maintains Mavis Chidziva, an independent environmental expert. This is how the government sees things too. "Khoisan people dig out tree roots from the ground, worsening climate change effects, because the trees consequently perish," complains Nyson Dhumbuchena, a government climate-change officer.

Davy Ndlovu of Tsoro-O-Tso-San does not agree. He insists: "The Khoisan respect the environment and they avoid unnecessary cutting down of trees. They live with nature."

He adds that, while the Khoisan have not contributed to making climate change happen, they are suffering its impacts.

Indeed, the Khoisan have become scapegoats. "We are being accused of fuelling effects of climate change by tribes who think they are superior to us," says Ndumiso.

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VENEZUELA

From 21st century socialism to dictatorship

Venezuela is marked by a deep governmental crisis. The constitution is being breached and human rights abused. The country is at a crossroads. It can either move towards unrestricted dictatorship or restore democracy.

By Francine Jácome

Venezuela's economic, social and political decline set in in 2012 during the last months of Hugo Chávez' presidency. Under his successor Nicolás Maduro, things have kept getting worse. Food and pharmaceuticals are in short supply. Serious bottlenecks are evident in health care, power and water supply too. In some parts of the country petrol is hard to find. This year, inflation is expected to rise to 1,000 %, while the economy is set to shrink by 4.5 %. Inequality is worsening and security deteriorating.

People have been expressing their discontent in public protests since 2014. Since April 2017, things have been escalating further. There now are rallies all over the country. The new wave of protests was triggered by two Supreme Court decisions which strapped the opposition-dominated parliament of its rights.

The opposition argued the government was staging a "top-down coup". Even though the attorney general has the reputation of being a Chavista, she surprisingly stated that these decisions violated the constitution. The Supreme Court rowed back a bit, but people still feel a coup is going on.

The crisis escalated further on 1 May when Maduro announced a new constituent assembly. He wants it to change the constitution that was passed in 1999 and is his predecessor's most important legacy. In contrast to 1999 and in breach of the constitution, no referendum to approve this constituent assembly is planned this time.

Making matters worse, Maduro also announced so-called sector elections for this assembly which would apply to students, business owners or indigenous peoples, among others, along with geographically defined constituencies. However, the constitution does not foresee any such sector elections. Experts say Maduro is trying to achieve some kind of over-representation that would allow him to win a legislative majority with the support of only 20 % of the people. Opinion polls show that 85 % of the people oppose the proposed sector elections.

The attorney general and other high-ranking government officers, moreover, have spoken out against the new constituent assembly, which shows that the Chavistas are no longer united. According to the opposition alliance MUD, the constituent assembly is the coup's next stage, and indeed its announcement has made the protests, which initially were non-violent, escalate further.

The government in response is increasing repression, enforced by the security forces. So far, more than 70 persons have died, 10,000 have been wounded and more than 3,000 arrested. Some 1,400 people are in detention, and more than 370 civilians have been brought before military tribunals, which, according to the constitution, may only put soldiers on trial.

The Venezuelan scenario is chaotic, dangerous and worrying. It concerns the international community and not only the nation's citizens. Four issues matter in particular:

- the institutional crisis,
- the erosion of the electoral system,
- the increasing militarism of the government and the militarisation of society in general and
- the political prisoners.

The most important issue is the loss of electoral legitimacy. According to the constitution, governors were supposed to be elected in December 2016, but those elections were postponed indefinitely. A recall-election concerning the president was also postponed indefinitely. Moreover, new rules concerning how the proposed constituent assembly is to be elected do not conform with the constitutional principles of universal suffrage, secret ballots and free choice. Venezuelans are plainly being denied their election rights.

The momentary stalemate in the country cannot last. To prevent further violence, dialogue and negotiations must begin. By ensuring appropriate conditions for that to happen, the international community can help.

Anti-government protests in Venezuela's capital Caracas.

Photo: Becerra/picture-alliance/AA

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AFRICA

No development without tax revenue

Africa is the continent of opportunities in the 21st century. Roughly half of the world's fastest growing economies are in Africa. At the same time, Africa is a continent facing tremendous challenges. Its population is set to double by 2050. All of these people need access to education, training and health care systems.

By Thomas Silberhorn

Every year, almost 20 million young people in Africa enter the labour market. Across the continent, investments in additional infrastructure are needed. Schools, universities and roads need to be built; water and energy supplies need to be provided. The United Nations estimates that, to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Africa will need investments worth $ 600 billion – per year! A steep hill to climb, and official development assistance alone will not get us to the top.

This calls for a new dimension in our cooperation with Africa which involves all policy areas. That is what the Marshall Plan with Africa which Federal Development Minister Gerd Müller presented at the beginning of the year is all about. In addition, the German G20 presidency has launched a new investment partnership with Africa in which we are joining ranks with the large industrialised countries of the world in order to promote investment in Africa. Investment is not only about improving the business environment for the private sector or stepping up public funding for development cooperation. Many of our African partners very rightly believe that increasing domestic revenue from tax, tariffs and levies and fighting tax evasion is the key to investment.

Sufficient revenue is the backbone of an effective state. For a state to properly perform its function it needs to be in a position to fund its activities. In other words, there can be no development without taxes. In Africa, the tax ratio, that is the tax-to-GNI ratio, is frequently below 20 %, often even below 10 %. By comparison, the tax ratio in Europe is approximately 35 %.

Taxes, therefore, have long been an important aspect in development cooperation. The German Development Ministry is already working with some 30 countries on these issues, including Ghana, Malawi, Zambia and Uganda. This cooperation is not only about increasing the tax ratio but also about ensuring greater transparency in tax systems and investing tax revenue efficiently. Tax receipts can be increased, for instance, by abolishing unwarranted tax breaks or simplifying tax charges for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Countries' efforts to develop efficient tax systems must also include efforts to fight tax avoidance, tax evasion and illicit financial flows. Every year, African countries lose more than $ 50 billion. This is money that is urgently needed for investments. That means, the loss in revenue is even higher than the total of global official development assistance that is invested in Africa every year.

That is why, at the G20 Africa conference which we hosted in mid June, the German government introduced an initiative to fight illicit financial flows from Africa. Together with the governments of Kenya and Italy and the OECD, Germany launched the African Academy for Tax and Financial Crime Investigation. It will train African tax inspectors and legal officers in Nairobi with a view to building more capacities to tackle tax avoidance and other financial crimes more effectively.

Transparent, fair and efficient tax systems are an important building block in efforts to ensure that Africa not only continues to be a continent of opportunities, but also has a real chance of establishing itself as a dynamic economic region and offering its people sufficient jobs and opportunities.

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Development needs funding.

Photo: dem

FUNDAMENTALIST IDEOLOGIES

Competing Islamisms

A number of Arab states have discontinued diplomatic relations and trade with Qatar. This kind of collective boycott of a small Arab country by its neighbours is unprecedented in modern history. The crisis driven by different ideas about what kind of Islamism is legitimate.

By Maysam Behravesh

At first glance, the current crisis may look like yet another Sunni-Shia dispute of the kind that has been haunting the region for centuries. This time, however, all countries involved are led by Sunni governments. They disagree about what kind of Islamism is extremist and must be fought. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt resent the stance taken by Qatar.

The Saudis espouse Wahhabi ideology, which looks to the past and seeks to preserve the status quo. Wahhabism is based on an austere interpretation of Islam. Riyadh has used it to consolidate state power and the Al-Saud family's grip on it.

Saudis have been funding missionaries to spread Wahhabism throughout the Muslim world. This ideology has spawned extremists, including various versions of Salafis, who aspire to adopt the lifestyle of the Prophet 1400 years ago, as well as militant and terrorist outfits including the Taliban, Al-Qaida and ISIS. Some of these groups have turned against Saudi Arabia, however, appalled by the monarchy's ties to the west and its blatant abuse of power.

Qatar is not a democracy either, but its emirs have taken a more open-minded stance towards Islamism. They have not only encouraged debate among various Islamist forces, but their Doha-based broadcaster Al Jazeera is even providing an international platform for such debate. The attention Al Jazeera attracts in other countries has long irritated the respective governments.

While Saudis have basically sponsored Wahhabis and their affiliates, Qatar has a track record of supporting all kinds of Islamism, including reform-oriented and revolutionary organisations. Many of them are related in one way or another to Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, which has its roots in the anti-colonial struggle of the first half of the 20th century.

The Brotherhood's traditional stance towards government is opposition, and it has never looked to Saudi Arabia for leadership. It has spawned similar organisations in many countries. The offspring includes the AKP in Turkey, Tunisia's Ennahda and the Palestinian Hamas.

The approach Qatar takes to Islamist politics is basically forward looking and not fundamentally opposed to change. In this sense, it has some common ground with the Shia revolutionary Islam officially practiced and promoted by Iran. Doha's relations with Tehran, accordingly, have long been much better than Riyadh's.

During the Arab Spring, Qatar generally backed protests all over the Arab world. For example, it threw its weight behind the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Ennahda in Tunisia. The Saudi rulers, in contrast, felt alarmed by the revolutionary wave. They used money, political influence and even military force to stem the tide. In July 2013, when Egypt's military toppled President Mohamed Morsi, the member of the Muslim Brotherhood who had been democratically elected, Qatar's Al Jazeera spoke of a "military coup", but the Saudi-funded Al Arabiya called it a "popular revolution".

Today, Doha is a safe haven for some leading Muslim Brothers. A prominent example is Yusuf al-Qaradawi, an exiled Egyptian theologian.

In their abrupt decision to boycott Qatar, the Saudi-led bloc cited Doha's "embrace of various terrorist and sectarian groups aimed at destabilising the region". According to the boycotters, these entities include the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Al-Qaida in Syria, ISIS and Shia groups in the Saudi eastern province of Qatif as well as Iraq, presumably espoused by Riyadh's arch rival Tehran.

The ideological differences between Qatar and Turkey on one side and Saudi Arabia and its allies on the other run deep. As all countries involved have some common geopolitical interests, détente and rapprochement may be possible nonetheless.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu in Doha with Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on 14 June 2017.

Photo: picture-alliance/abaca

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GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Setting the wrong example

Climate protest in front of the White House in June.

US President Donald Trump announced in early June that his nation will leave the Paris Agreement. It was bad news. Climate protection can make progress without the USA for a while, but eventually Washington will have to get back on board. The international community must put pressure on the White House.

By Hans Dembowski

Trump promised to stop "implementation of the non-binding Paris accord and the draconian financial and economic burdens the agreement imposes on our country". This is nonsense. By definition, a non-binding agreement cannot be draconian. The truth is that all commitments made in the context of the Paris Agreement are voluntary, determined by the national governments themselves.

The president was probably not aware of it, but his statement meant renouncing any claim to world leadership. Climate change means that Earth is like a leaking boat. Temperatures are rising, and the sea level is too. Anyone claiming leadership, must act to solve the problem. Trump wants others to plug the leak, denying his nation's share of responsibility. We know that Paris Agreement commitments need "racheting up". Otherwise, global warming will spin out of control.

So far, all nations – except Syria and Nicaragua – have joined the voluntary efforts. The USA, however, is an indispensable nation. Its funding, science and engagement are needed. Nonetheless, some progress on international climate protection may prove feasible in spite of the White House's neglect of duty.

Trump is unpopular at home and faces serious legal problems. He may lose his majorities in Congress next year. The governors of California, New York and other states oppose his decision on Paris, and so do many mayors. The international community must get in touch and cooperate with these leaders. It helps that the heads of many big corporations disagree with Trump's stance too.

The good news is that regardless of his decision the USA is on course to reach the targets Trump's predecessor Barack Obama set for 2020. The reason is that major investors will not be building big new fossil-fuel dependent facilities. They know that such investments would be extremely risky.

Another positive aspect is that Trump's diplomats will now be sidelined in global climate talks. A party that is leaving has less scope for slowing others down.

Trump will find few allies for his anti-Paris agenda. Saudi Arabia and Russia may appreciate his step. Both depend on fossil-fuel exports, have a long history of failing to diversify their economies and are run by regimes that are too afraid of their people to grant fundamental civil liberties. That may suit Trump's authoritarian leanings, but it hurts American leadership. The USA prevailed in the cold war because its freedom and democracy was inspiring. The soft power of setting attractive examples proved as important as the hard power of military force.

Most governments of developing countries know that climate change is real and their nations' fates depend on controlling the phenomenon. They are likely to rally around the powers that want to move ahead, like the EU and China.

Kenya, by the way, recently inaugurated a new railway linking Nairobi to Mombasa. It is one of many examples of China funding infrastructure in developing countries at a time when the White House wants to slash foreign aid. Which approach will convince more Africans is not hard to tell. Railways, of course, are comparatively energy efficient.

The international community must now show that it is determined to protect the climate and isolate the erratic president in the White House. In view of global challenges like climate change, Trump's thinking in terms of zero-sum games, in which someone's gain is always someone elses loss, is no longer acceptable.

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Photo: Susan Walsh/picture-alliance/AP Photo

Marshall Plan with Africa must succeed

Regarding: "Our success will depend on joint action", interview with Gerd Müller, Germany's federal minister for economic cooperation and development in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2017/05, p. 20.

Gerd Müller visiting a regional polytechnical training centre in Kigali, Rwanda.

Photo: Grabowski/Photothek/picture-alliance/dpa

Gerd Müller, Germany's federal minister for economic cooperation and development has proposed a Marshall Plan with Africa. He is to be commended for assessing the African scenario and the developmental challenges courageously and candidly.

The unemployment rate for young people is currently 50 % in Africa. As young people lack jobs and prospect, many contemplate the risky journey across the Mediterranean in the hope of salvation in Europe. Twenty million additional jobs must be created in Africa every year. Tangible action is needed if we want to rise to this challenge.

Müller does not want to leave anyone behind, but he states in no uncertain terms that corrupt elites still wield to much influence in many countries. How can countries be supported if corruption keeps them stuck in misery?

In such cases, funding must not be disbursed to governments but provided directly to the people. If donor agencies focus on the matter, the can drive the generation of employment by supporting millions of small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs).

So far, only few donor agencies are experienced in SME promotion. Nonetheless, we know what works. Access to credit and financial services must improve, and the strong results of microfinance indicate what must be done. Thanks to microfinance institutions, 190 million women and 10 million men around the world have been able to start businesses, and 95 % of them are repaying their debts.

In Africa, thousands of strong microfinance institutions are waiting for support. They require refinancing and want to extend their field-office networks. So far, microfinance has focused on start-ups. A forceful shift towards lending to existing SMEs is now needed. This approach, by the way, would be an important way to promote women, as Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel has noted for good reason.

However, there can be no secure jobs in Africa unless massive efforts are made to improve skills training. There have only been rather few vocational-training projects in past decades, and many of them failed in the swamp of governmental corruption and nepotism.

We must learn from failure. It is essential to involve private-sector businesses in vocational training, as is standard practice in Germany's dual system of vocational training. The private sector and its organisations must sponsor vocational training. It is possible to convince managers of this cause because they have a keen interest in vocational-training projects teaching relevant skills. They are equally interested in getting competent and reliable long-term staff. Germans can help.

These things must be taken into account. They will make a Marshall Plan with Africa succeed.

Prof. Dr. Winfried Pinger, Cologne, former Christian-Democrat spokesperson for development affair.

HUMAN AND ANIMAL HEALTH

The animals die first

More than 780 million people have no access to clean water, and 2.5 billion people lack adequate sanitation. Yet both are vital for human health. Animals also need water – and given the intense interdependence that still exists between animals and humans in much of the rural world, lack of water has obvious implications for human and animal health.

By Cornelia Heine

Millions of people in the Horn of Africa face major challenges from drought and shortage of water. And their animals need water too. More than 20 million people in the region live as pastoralists – nomadic herders – because arable farming is barely possible in this arid and semi-arid region. The people have no permanent home, moving around with their herds in search of water and pasture. Their livestock tend to be camels, cattle, goats or sheep.

Water points are vitally important for nomads. If livestock die for lack of water, the lives of the people who depend on them are immediately at risk. The latest drought in the Horn of Africa clearly shows that, when animals start dying, human deaths soon follow.

Animals do not die only of thirst, however. Among the consequences of too little water is a weakened immune system. Moreover, where water becomes scarce, there soon will be no grazing land. The animals become weak and undernourished – easy targets for parasites and infectious diseases. Such diseases, moreover, are transmitted faster from one animal to another because of the crowding that occurs at the few available water points.

Another impact of water shortage is that herds yield less milk because the animals lack the energy needed to produce it. An important source of human nutrition is thus lost. For children under five, in particular, wholesome vitamin-rich goat or camel milk is vital.

Some human diseases are typically prevalent in areas that are hit by shortage of water. Trachoma is one example. This eye disease is caused by bacterial infection (see D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2017/06, p. 29). It is the reason of the blindness or visual impairment of nearly two million people. Trachoma is the world's biggest infectious cause of blindness. It spreads fastest where hygiene is poor, e.g. where soiled towels are used by several people – a practice which is common where water is in short supply.

The disease is also transmitted by flies, which in turn tend to be around livestock a lot. Separated water points for humans and animals can help reducing the transmission of the disease.

CHANGING ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Lack of rain changes the environment, and so do violent storms that cause flooding. In many places, extreme weather is increasing the risk of certain diseases for humans and animals. Such diseases may lurk, for instance, in soils that were impoverished by drought. Seeking nourishment from sparse blades of grass, animals graze closer to the ground and scuff the surface with their hooves. Doing so can expose them to the deadly threat of anthrax.

Anthrax made world headlines in 2001 when it was used in mail attacks in the United States. Letters containing anthrax spores were sent to a number of senators and news media offices. The bacterium that causes the disease is called bacillus anthracis. It produces a lethal toxin, which lends itself to use as a biological weapon. Animals infected with anthrax typically die suddenly with no previously discernible symptoms. The danger for livestock owners arises when animal carcasses are processed, for instance, to get the hides for leather. The risk of infection is very high because anthrax is a zoonosis, a disease that can naturally be transmitted from animals to humans.

An awareness of the role played by water – both as a giver of life, but also as a potential reservoir of germs that cause illness in both animals and human beings – is essential for any broad-based integrated approach for identifying health risks. This does not only apply to the world's estimated 500 million pastoralists, but also the millions of smallholders and backyard animal farmers who live in close contact with livestock.

Cryptosporidium parvum is a protozoan that is dangerous for both humans and animals. Transmitted by faecally contaminated water, it causes a disease known as cryptosporidiosis, the symptoms of which are watery diarrhoea and abdominal pain. It is likely to harm infants and people with

Many people in rural Africa live in close contact with their animals: Ethiopian herders.

Photo: Heine

a compromised immune system in particular. For AIDS patients, infections can become fatal. In East Africa and elsewhere, many water sources are used by both humans and animals. They are a potential transmission point, especially if children play in contaminated puddles or faeces enter the groundwater.

Animal urine in water or mud can also spread dangerous diseases. For example: leptospirosis, which is caused by corkscrew-shaped motile bacteria transmitted in the urine of infected mammals such as rats, dogs, mice and pigs. Although basically any mammal can be infected with leptospirosis, small mammals – especially rodents – are the main carriers worldwide.

The animals that carry the bacteria do not normally develop leptospirosis themselves. They excrete the germs in their urine, in some cases throughout their life. Humans can become infected through small skin wounds or via mucous membranes. The main source is contaminated water or mud. In mild cases, the sufferer may experience flu-like symptoms. But there are also severe infections, which result in jaundice, kidney failure or meningitis. Two to ten percent of untreated leptospirosis cases are fatal.

The occurrence of this zoonotic disease becomes more probably where humans and animals live close together and where unhygienic conditions encourage rodent infestations. The incidence often rises after sudden heavy rainfall followed by flooding and mud flows. Leptospirosis is a typical post-disaster disease. It should be on the radar of every health professional working in the area of water and sanitation or delivering humanitarian aid in emergency situations.

Vétérinaires sans Frontières Germany (VSFG) has long been committed to an integrated "One Health" approach that takes account of humans, animals and the environment. The organisation runs projects in East Africa designed to help people whose livelihoods depend on animal husbandry. Apart from animal health, the NGO also tackles issues such as food security, drought prevention, agriculture, water supply and sanitation.

One project area is Afar in Ethiopia, a semi-arid region the size of Ireland. With temperatures regularly exceeding 50° Celsius, it is the one of the hottest places on earth. The project objective is to safeguard water supply for people and animals. The means for doing so range from rehabilitating water points to constructing water collection basins and implementing soil protection measures so the ground retains moisture longer. Hygiene education and separating water points for human and animal use are dealt with too.

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AGENDA 2030

New need for knowledge

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires a reorientation of global development policies. Its principles seem simple and universal: the agenda applies to all countries, no one should be left behind, and everyone should cooperate. Nonetheless, they have wide-ranging consequences for the knowledge systems that development agencies rely upon.

By Martin Noltze and Sven Harten

Challenges are evident in three areas in particular.

- First, the universal scope of the 2030 Agenda is quite demanding. Because of its complexity, ever more data and methodological innovations are needed, including for adopting new technologies and boosting the capacities for collecting and processing data as well as to adopt new technologies.
- Second, implementing the agenda requires new partnerships for development. Apart from established donors and their academic partners, additional actors from civil society and the private sector must be involved. On all sides, new forms of cooperation will depend upon timely sharing of suitable strategies and approaches.
- Third, the availability and usefulness of knowledge must increase. So far, a lot of available information has not met specific needs, or it is stored, but not used, in the databases of individual agencies. For usefulness to increase, knowledge gaps must be closed, with developmentally relevant information being generated in a timely fashion.

NEW DATA AND METHODS

The 2030 Agenda was adopted in September 2015, and the reconfiguration of knowledge systems has lagged behind. This is a problem, because decisions are still based on only limited evidence.

The core challenge is the complexity of the Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs pertain to the social, economic and environmental dimensions of human development. Sustainability depends upon all three dimensions, so none of them may take precedence. A core principle is that no SDG must detract from the other SDGs. Accordingly, there is a need for new knowledge concerning how various development strategies interact. This is a task for evaluation – but certainly not an easy one.

The assessment of mobile-phone usage, such as here in a slum in Nairobi, can help to predict trends.

Photo: Wire/picture-alliance/dpa

There are more challenges. The principle of accountability means that we need to find out: who has contributed how much to which result and in what way? Causal relations must be established clearly.

In order for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to drive evidence-based policymaking, knowledge gaps must be closed, and information must be made available at the local, regional and global levels. Accordingly, statistical capacities must be strengthened. Related programmes deserve international support, as was envisioned by the Paris21 Initiative. Large data sets from the World Bank, for instance, can serve to supplement national statistical data. The Bank's Demography and Health Surveys (DHS) or the Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS) are examples. Moreover, various methodological innovations allow for the collection of reliable information at low costs in low-data environments. Examples include the Grameen Foundation's Progress out of Poverty Index (PPI) or the World Bank's Survey of Well-Being via Instant and Frequent Tracking (SWIFT).

International initiatives such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) serve the interests of joint accountability, cooperation and planability. They should be used more extensively. What matters is free access to information. New institutions such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are playing leading roles. Among other things, they are making substantial investments in new knowledge systems.

M&E systems are increasingly relying on mobile technologies, social media and satellite data. So-called "machine learning" is especially innovative. This method predicts trends based upon the processing of large data sets. Data on cell-phone usage, for instance, can help to predict the spread of epidemics (such as Ebola).

New and larger data sets are not a panacea, however. Often, they only reflect major trends and probabilities. They rarely address causes. There is, however, enormous potential in using both big data (see D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2017/01, p. 30) and machine learning for complex evaluations and assessing ever more empirical data. The potential has only been tapped to a small extent.

New partnerships are emerging in the context of the 2030 Agenda, and they will have to be up to the task. M&E is rather strongly institutionalised among governmental and non-governmental development agencies, but the contributions of private-sector businesses have hardly been assessed in any other perspective than a rather narrow business one. It is necessary to move beyond M&E systems that only meet the needs of specific actors, in particular the donors.

M&E insights must be timely too. Procedural and technical innovations are needed to disseminate useful knowledge quickly. In this area, new actors such as charities and private business – such as African telecommunication companies – are the leaders. The product-related information they gather serves as a basis for company decisions, but it can also help long-established donor agencies to provide services to the poorer members of society.

The success of such new collaborations often depends upon how well the parties involved understand one another. Established donors must accept that data is in high demand, but not necessarily a free commodity. Private companies, in turn, must realise that shared developmental successes will ultimately benefit everyone, even if profits are only made in the middle or long term.

INCREASING USEFULNESS

Developmentally relevant knowledge is often not freely available. Or it turns out to be insufficiently refined, or it does not relate to particular questions. Because of its universal character, however, the 2030 Agenda requires useful information at various levels. M&E must therefore no longer remain the exclusive domain of the donors. M&E must be done with the involvement of local partners.

Meta-analyses and synthesis studies increase the relevance of knowledge and contribute meaningfully to learning at the regional and global level. Platforms such as the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) are creating global knowledge maps and identifying knowledge gaps.

Various players in policymaking, economy and society can promote an evaluation-oriented mindset. More than ever, the M&E community is called upon to provide knowledge and information in a timely and useful manner. Doing so will require innovative ways of communication. Success depends upon M&E being mainstreamed in all developmental actions.

SUMMARY

In the history of international cooperation, the momentum for evidence-based decision-making has rarely been so strong as it is today. The review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda reflects this trend. To date, however, the development of M&E systems has lagged behind the Agenda's implementation. This dynamic must change. On-going decision-making must increasingly be based upon timely and relevant information.

Policymaking and implementation require strategically relevant evaluations, not least to assess complex issues in light of empirical evidence. M&E systems must be technologically and methodologically suited to process new and additional data sets. Moreover, they must facilitate the involvement of new and diverse actors, both in collecting data and using knowledge.

Public funding is warranted for initiatives that promote interconnected knowledge and information systems as a basis for policymaking. Moreover, knowledge platforms deserve support from governments, private-sector businesses and society in general. All parties must spread relevant information. Data and information should be processed in a way that expands knowledge regarding to various topics and wide-ranging issues. Ultimately, all parties must accept a new collaborative culture of learning. The goal is to improve the useful, timely and needs-based provision of information.

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Land ownership

In many world regions, it is controversial who is entitled to use what parts of land in what ways. Customary law and codified regulations often do not add up to a coherent system. Access to land, however, is becoming ever more important in view of a growing world population, worsening climate change and ever faster urbanisation. Those who are displaced mostly plunge into poverty. Prudent legislation can limit the problems and prevent violence, but that, unfortunately, is not necessarily the priority for powerful interest groups.

A slum in Phnom Penh: in many informal settlements around the world, people fear eviction, so they do not invest in their homes.

Photo: Kopp/Linear/Imagebroker

Roots of violence

According to a popular narrative, ethnic tensions drive Kenya's political conflicts. The focus on tribal identities, however, fails to highlight the relevance of land disputes. To understand how the country's ethnic diversity is linked to these disputes, one must consider history.

By Paul Kawegah

Farm land in the Rift Valley.

Long before independence, members of the elite began to take control of large tracts of land for their personal benefit. It helped that the British colonial regime enforced rules according to which the governor held all land in trust on behalf of the English monarchy. Masses of indigenous Kenyan people were dispossessed and became casual labourers on land that was originally theirs.

Kenya's Truth Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC), which was set up to deal with the post-election violence of 2007/2008, affirmed that this was how grievances over land started. They have haunted the country ever since. For instance, they have been at the root of election-related rioting in 1992, 1997 and 2007/08. The violence of 2007/08 made headlines all over the world. It claimed about 1,500 lives and forced some 300,000 people to flee from their homes. Many are still internally displaced persons today (see box, p. 20). How this year's election will play out remained to be seen in early June, when this essay was finalised.

Unfortunately, regime-backed grabbing did not end with colonial rule in 1963, and it often had a tribal dimension. Kenya is a diverse country with many different cultures. Most regions are predominantly populated by local tribes who, not without reason, believe that they historically own their region. They tend to consider all those who speak other languages and live according to different traditions to be "outsiders" or even "invaders".

In the past, tensions over land were nonetheless often resolved peacefully in negotiations of tribal community leaders. Over the decades, this has become increasingly more difficult. There are several reasons, including population growth and the impacts of climate change.

The increasingly monetised economic matters too. When people were basically subsistence farmers, compromise was easier to find. Its monetary relevance has made land more valuable. Where oil, gas or other underground resources are discovered, even more money is at stake. Greed matters.

That infrastructure has typically been built to serve the interests of the more powerful groups, adds to feelings of grievance. Since colonial times, moreover, Kenya's legal system has a similar inherent pro-power bias, so codified law does not always help. It may actually challenge what seems right to local communities. As lawyers and other people with formal education gain relevance, moreover, traditional community leaders lose some of their clout. Civil-society organisations have been lending support to grassroots communities, but they are often overburdened and cannot reduce the growing complexity of the conflicts. In any case, local people no longer have ownership of all dimensions that relate to a conflict.

Some isolated counties in Kenya have a history of prolonged droughts and harsh weather. These areas were marginalised by governments in colonial as well as post-colonial times. They are sparsely populated and typically still lack essential infrastructure. Nonetheless, the indigenous peoples who live there feel strongly about the land they consider their own.

The dynamics change if oil is found. In Turkana County, for example, the value of land multiplied. Private-sector companies and individuals now own large tracts of land and expect to profit from oil production. The local people, however, are hardly involved in this business. Their communities have lived in isolation for generations. To them, the abrupt arrival of "outsiders" is more than an intrusion on their traditional culture. It looks like a forceful takeover of resources.

Over the years, Kenyan governments have made several attempts to resolve historical land injustices. Several commission were established, including the Commission of Inquiry into the Land Law System in Kenya (called "Njonjo Commission" after the chairperson) in 1999, the Commission of Inquiry into The Illegal/Irregular Allocation of Public Land ("Ndungu Commission") in 2003, the above-mentioned TJRC and, most recently, the National Land Commission (NLC) in 2012.

The Ndungu Commission published its report in 2004, stating that illegal and irregular allocation of land was an important component of large-scale official corruption, as individuals and corporations acquired land in illegitimate ways. Both national and local government levels were said to be involved in such crimes. The issue remains unresolved.

The media tend to focus on the ethnic dimension of the conflicts and hardly discuss underlying land issues. The land issues may seem unmanageable, but government agencies often prove to be unable to manage ethnic tensions too. There is a pattern of violence erupting in the context of elections. Campaigns provide opportunities to express land-related grievances, and the aggrieved often argue along ethnic lines.

Photo: Gilling/Lineair

Election violence occurred in 1992, when multi-party democracy was introduced, and again in 1997 and 2007. It was telling that "local communities" clashed with "immigrants". That was especially the case in the fertile Rift Valley.

Some observers have argued that land issues did not cause violence, as there were no clashes in 2002 and 2013, when political leaders did not emphasise tribal identities the way they did in 1992 and 1997. This argument is flawed because it does not consider why ethnic propaganda can become so devastating.

The truth is that ethnic conflicts and land disputes are intertwined – and have been so for a long time. The Rift Valley and the Indian Ocean coast are the epicentres of land-related conflicts between the Kikuyu and indigenous communities. The Kikuyu are Kenya's most populous group and make up almost a quarter of its people. Jomo Kenyatta, the country's first president and father of Uhuru Kenyatta, the current one, had a tendency to settle supporters on fertile land. Many of his supporters were Kikuyu like him. In the eyes of local communities they were – and their descendants are – outsiders.

Not only election violence is related to land disputes. To some extent, that is also true of terrorism. In June 2014, militants attacked the town of Mpeketoni in coastal Lamu county twice. More than 60 people died. Al-Shabaab, an Islamist militia from Somalia, claimed responsibility. Nonetheless, President Uhuru Kenyatta spoke of "well planned, orchestrated and politically motivated ethnic violence against a Kenyan community". According to him, the attacks were designed to evict that community. Kenyans know he meant Kikuyus.

Islamist terrorism is a complex phenomenon. There are several ways to explain it. The land aspect is certainly relevant. After taking over power from Britain, President Jomo Kenyatta had settled Kikuyus in Mpeketoni area. To date, the local Somali and Oromo populations vehemently lay claim of ancestry to that land.

A better future is possible. In 2012, the National Land Commission was established by an act of parliament. It is an independent entity that is designed to initiate investigations into present or historical land injustices and recommend appropriate ways of redress. The Commission can act on its own initiative or respond to complaints.

In the long run, Kenya's domestic Peace hinges on its success. Whether it proves effective remains to be seen as it is still in an early phase. It is worrisome, however, that the NLC faces the same challenges earlier commissions struggled with. It needs more funding, its mandate is not entirely clear and it is likely to run into opposition from the ministry of land.

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Growing fears in Kinamba

When the results of Kenya's presidential elections were announced in late December 2007, violence erupted. Many people still suffer the consequences, for example some 700 internally displaced people (IDP) who live in Kinamba on the edges of the Rift Valley. They fled from the valley nine years ago.

The host community displayed human solidarity by accepting them at a time of rage, killings and wanton destruction. David Gitonga, a community leader in Kinamba, asked the local community to provide the IDPs with roofs over their heads and a sense of security. The support from the community was overwhelming, with 90 % of the respondents agreeing to host IDPs. What ethnic background they had did not matter.

Nine years later, the IDPs are still in Kinamba. A long-term solution is not in sight. Everybody expected their stay to short since they would go back home at some point in time, or be resettled by the government. Neither has not happened.

Today, fear is evident among both the IDPs and their hosts in Kinamba. The IDPs worry they may be kicked out, whereas the hosts are anxious about eventually losing their land to "outsiders". Depressingly, the situation is not different in many other places where IDPs live.

An IDP camp in 2013.

Photo: Curtis/picture-alliance/AP Photo

Disadvantaged traditional occupants

For a large share of the world population, land is a vital asset. This is especially true in rural areas where subsistence farming is widespread. At the same time, land is an increasingly endangered asset due to droughts, desertification, coastal flooding and other impacts of climate change. The growth of the world population, urbanisation and changing diet habits are putting additional pressure on agricultural land.

By Gunther Beger

Three-quarters of those who suffer hunger worldwide are smallholders, livestock farmers or rural workers in developing countries. Women bear the brunt of the work done on smallholdings. What they produce, feeds their families and themselves. If women in developing countries received the same funding for agriculture as men do, the number of hungry in the world could be reduced by 100 to 150 million.

It is astonishing as well as shocking that less than 20 % of the women concerned have secure land-ownership rights. Of the world population, 70 % has no access to a formal – officially recognised and documented – land registration system. Only about 10 % of rural land in Africa is formally documented. In view of increasing disputes and foreseeable conflicts, this is a huge socio-political challenge.

More than half of earth's entire land area is occupied on the basis of traditional and customary law. Some 1.5 billion people live on land they depend on, but do not formally own. In consequence they are exposed to the fear and threat of being arbitrarily expelled from this land. Competition for the best and most fertile land is increasing worldwide, so traditional occupants including indigenous groups and small-scale farming families tend to lose out. Growing competition, weak institutions and unclear (parallel) legal systems result in non-transparency and corruption in the land sector.

Secure land rights are a prerequisite for investment and productive land management: tomato farm in Ethiopia.

Photo: kd

Land tenure and land use rights tend to be poorly secured in developing countries. As a result, rural development through sustainable and productive use of resources is inhibited.

LAND INVESTMENT

Since global food prices last surged about ten years ago, land has become considerably more attractive as an investment. Many large-scale land acquisitions and leases are concluded in developing countries with weak or authoritarian governments. Typically these countries are haunted by problems such as poverty and malnutrition too. Large-scale land acquisitions and leases are a widespread and hard-to-categorise phenomenon.

Investment in land often affects rural areas that have not been developed for commercial agriculture but are still used for small-scale farming. The interactive online database of the non-governmental Land Matrix initiative (see D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2016/12, p. 5) currently documents over a thousand finalised investment agreements worldwide, 422 of them in Africa for a total area of around 10 million hectares.

Land demand is growing, there are competing uses, and the potential for conflict is increasing. The results of the Land Matrix initiative's analytical report 2016 show that the number and volume of new deals may be stagnating. However, the amount of land for which deals are operational is sharply increasing. Documented agricultural investment affects 26.7 million hectares, which is about two percent of the earth's arable land. Productive use has commenced on 70 % of the hectarage.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Germany's Federal Government is committed to securing land rights and development-friendly rural investment in partner countries. The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) were endorsed by the UN Committee on World Food Security in 2012. They are a big step towards responsible investment and stronger land rights for small farmers. In its Coalition Agreement, the German government has explicitly emphasised support for the VGGT and their application.

Accordingly, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) supports efforts to secure land-tenure and land-use rights for disadvantaged groups in developing countries at various levels. It is active in international agenda- and standard-setting (for instance, in the context of the G7 and G20), and it also engages in tangible action in development cooperation with governmental as well as non-governmental partners.

During Germany's G7 presidency in 2015, the member countries agreed to align their ODA-supported investments with the VGGT. Thereupon, the BMZ assigned the German Institute for Human Rights to prepare a study on how the existing international standards of financial cooperation relate to the VGGT.

The study was recently completed. It confirms that the World Bank Group standards are broadly in line with the VGGT. These standards are also used by Germany's development banks KfW and DEG. However, the study shows which additional diligence multilateral and bilateral financial institutions need to do in order to meet the ambition of the VGGT entirely.

Together with the KfW development bank, the BMZ has taken preliminary steps to minimise the risk of land-rights conflicts. Investment in rural development and agriculture are obviously needed in developing countries. Such investment, however, almost always goes along with land-use changes. It is essential to handle these issues sensitively.

During its G20 presidency this year, Germany successfully made the case for more transparency and human rights due diligence in connection with land investment. Investors from G20 countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and Brazil, are particularly active in the agricultural sector in developing countries.

Through official development assistance (ODA), the BMZ helps partner countries draft responsible land policies and ensure good land management. German expertise is a valued element of the cooperation. For example, Germany's experience of redistributing East-German farm land, which had been used by huge collectives during communist rule, can be of relevance in other contexts.

Through the special initiative ONE WORLD – No Hunger (SEWOH), the BMZ is specifically promoting VGGT application in partner countries. The initiative encompasses projects by civil-society organisations such as Transparency International. TI is running a project to fight land-related corruption and secure land rights in Africa.

To promote fairer and more secure access to land for rural people, the SEWOH global project "Responsible Land Policy" is engaging policymakers, civil-society activists and private enterprises at various levels. It is laying a foundation for regulating – and securing official recognition of – land-use and land-tenure rights for small farmers, indigenous groups and communities in selected countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Together with the African Land Policy Initiative and the World Bank, the BMZ has established a Network of Excellence for Land Governance in Africa (NELGA). Training and tertiary education in land management as well as strengthening land governance capacities at national and continental levels are key objectives of this programme.

Secure land-access and land-tenure rights are key factors for sustainable rural development. Only when people are sure that their land will not be taken away at some point in the future, will they invest and make sustainable, productive use of the land – and that is vital for development.

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LINK
Land Matrix: ***http://www.landmatrix.org***

How to ease tensions in Sierra Leone

Foreign private-sector companies have already leased more than 20% of Sierra Leone's arable land. Traditional smallholder farmers are losing their livelihoods. The government has adopted a new policy and must now show the political will to implement it.

By Elijah Grega

Sierra Leone is a land of paradox and contrasts. The country is endowed with an abundance of mineral resources like diamonds, bauxite or iron ore, but the vast majority of the people are living in poverty. The nation was devastated and traumatised by the civil war that ended in 2002. Before the strife, Sierra Leone's education sector was excellent. Today, the literacy rate is slightly above 30 %.

The government has been rebuilding infrastructure and shoring up institutions, but there still are gaps in health care, education and water and power supply. The country was thus ill prepared when Ebola broke out three years ago, and some 4,000 people were killed by this disease.

Sierra Leone's social and economic problems are all linked to issues of land use and poverty. Land concerns everyone – whether they are rich, poor, educated or jobless. Most rural people are farmers who depend on fields. Their ownership of those fields is not secure, however, since there are no accurate records. The country lacks a comprehensive cadastral information system.

People fear large-scale land leases to foreign private-sector companies that want to grow sugar cane, palm oil and other cash crops. According to a survey conducted by the Oakland Institute, a California-based think tank, over 20% of Sierra Leone's arable land has been handed over to foreign companies this way.

The government argues that large-scale investments will reduce unemployment and bring prosperity. Indeed, major investors such as Addax from Switzerland or SOCFIN have made elaborate promises. However, the leasing agreements are not transparent, and there is reason to doubt that the rates charged reflect the actual value of the land.

In reality, farmers have been forced to sell their land for a pittance. Most hopes for better livelihoods, more jobs and improved schools for the children have not come true. Large-scale land deals have made "thousands of smallholder farmers poorer", according to Action for Large-scale Land Acquisition Transparency (ALLAT), a civil-society organisation.

Tensions are growing. People are angry because the investors are not showing commitment to corporate social responsibility. Nonetheless, the government offers them tax-breaks and puts down farmers' protests and resistance. Land-rights activists are being criminalised, and some have been sentenced to jail terms by the courts.

On the other hand, public awareness of the issues is growing, and farmers are organising with land-rights activists. One result is that the government has approved a new land policy. Most land-rights activists say it is commendable. Implementation is a challenge, however. To ensure equity and justice, new institutions are needed, and local authorities as well as civil society must get a say in decision making.

To strike a reasonable balance that suits all relevant stakeholders, several issues must be taken into account. Women, for example, deserve particular attention. As in most West African countries, they do most of the farm work in Sierra Leone. Moreover, it is necessary to ensure that land deals actually serve food security and poverty alleviation. If they do not do so, they must not be approved.

The land-rights activists are now focusing on raising awareness of a UN agreement. The Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of land, Fisheries and Forest (VGGT) were endorsed by the Committee for World Food Security in 2012. This document has actually inspired Sierra Leone's new land policy. It emphasises the rights of smallholder farmers, especially when their traditional ownership is not formally documented.

The current tensions over land will ease once the government shows the political will to implement the new policy. It should put a moratorium on large-scale land deals, or at least slow them down. Too many rural people have lost their farms already. Moreover, the government must stop hounding and criminalising land-rights activists.

Traditional villagers fear they may lose their land.

Photo: Matthias Graben/Lineair

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Chad's agriculture must be modernised.

Commercialisation is destroying community rules

In southern Chad, bitter conflicts over land are becoming more common. They frequently turn violent. Long-standing community culture is being eroded – and so are the livelihoods of many farmers.

By Djeralar Miankeol

For as long as anyone can remember, a set of (often unwritten) rules have applied to the use of land and other resources. Ownership was defined by tradition. The rules address issues like access, management and transfer both for individuals and groups. The rules are well known and accepted among the communities that apply them. They vary considerably from region to region. They reflect overarching principles that are recognised as a kind of customary law.

In past decades, the community rules worked out well. Enough rain fell to sustain the extensive farming of certain well-chosen crops in southern Chad. The rains were predictable, and droughts were rare. The yields were never very high, but they were sufficient. The economy was not thoroughly monetised, and the sense of solidarity and family ties was strong. Population density was low, so there was enough land for everyone. Farmers kept their fields fertile by allowing them to lay fallow for long periods of time.

Today, this system is hanging in the balance. Its complex control and regulation are increasingly challenged. Land has become scarce, and there is an uptick in conflicts between different kinds of land use. Livestock herders are taking over more and more areas that should actually remain bush or lay fallow. Fast population growth, moreover, means that farmers require ever more land too. On top of all that, climate change has significantly increased the size of the arid Sahel-Sahara zone, which is poorly suited to rain-fed agriculture. The soil quality has also deteriorated, and vegetation has become sparse.

Migratory herders from the north of the country are forced to come south earlier in the year and stay longer. Many choose to settle there, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for farmers and herders to live peacefully together (see also D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2015/07, p. 24).

The commercialisation of land use is destroying traditional rules of communities' collective ownership in favour of individual ownership. Moreover, village farmland near big cities can be seized from one day to the next simply as urban settlements expand. The farmers normally cannot assert ownership in such cases.

Oil extraction is relevant too. In some areas, extraction equipment has been set up, drastically reducing the farmland available to nearby villages.

Compounding problems, the cultivation methods are stuck in the past. Farmers still practise extensive agriculture, which requires a lot of space. Soil fertility has declined, and due to lower yields, malnour-

Photo: Ton Koene/picture-alliance

ishment is becoming more common. Many families are forced to sell so much of their harvest that they no longer have enough food.

The system has reached a breaking point. The amount of resources that farmers and herders use far exceeds the natural rate of regeneration. It is therefore imperative that cultivation methods and animal husbandry take up less space and become more productive. Farmers must shift to more intensive agriculture. It is no longer viable to only rely on fallow to maintain soil fertility. And herders have to use cultivated fodder and adjust the size of their herds in response to the scarcity of resources.

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Mafia-like networks

In many developing countries, land grabbing takes place on a large scale, either for the purposes of mining or agriculture. This loss of land is disastrous for the affected village communities. Awareness of the problem is growing, however, and there are more and more tools and guidelines available to soften the blow.

But land grabbing by local elites is hardly taken into account, although its impact is just as devastating and far-reaching as land seizure by international corporations. In Chad – like in most countries south of the Sahel – politicians, soldiers, officials and businesspeople invest heavily in animal husbandry and appropriate farmland to that end. In villages on the edge of big cities, they also do so for speculative purposes. In many countries, mafia-like networks have developed, made up of local investors, government officials and members of the judiciary and security forces.

The methods they use to rob the poor of their land are clever and extremely perfidious: they intimidate people, take advantage of their ignorance and fear, abuse their power and use violence. Families, communities and entire regions slide even deeper into poverty, having lost their livelihoods along with their farmland. Young people move to cities, where they eke out a living as day labourers, try their luck in gold mines, or migrate to neighbouring countries or Europe.

As part of the EU's efforts to stem the flow of migrants and fight terror, the countries of the Sahel region are receiving significantly more funds for development than before. Germany's official development assistance (ODA) is providing special support to Mali, for example, and once again includes Chad, after bilateral cooperation between the two countries ended in late 2012 due to poor governance and corruption. But as long as employees of the state institutions that regulate land ownership are themselves users and speculators, and as long as impunity continues unchecked, land grabbing will increase rather than decrease. Whoever supports those responsible becomes an accomplice.

Land grabbing is a problem in many African countries. Protest by Kenyan schoolchildren in 2015.

Photo: Dai Kurokawa/picture-alliance/dpa

Theatre sheds light on conflicts

The small country of Guinea-Bissau is home to over 20 ethnic groups. This diversity implies different cultures, rituals, languages and political and social rules. Usually people coexist peacefully, but when conflicts do erupt, they tend to revolve around access to land. Staging plays is a way to facilitate peaceful solutions. Law enforcement matters too.

By Armando Mussa Sani and Jasmina Barckhausen

Many conflicts revolve around the use of land. It can serve as pastures for cattle or farmland for the cultivation of rice or cashews after all. The spread of cashew trees along the West African coast is a legacy of Portuguese colonialism, which forced resettlement according to the motto "divide and rule". On the other hand, solidarity among Guinea-Bissau's settled areas, which are ethnically diverse, was strong enough to give rise to an 11-year liberation struggle, which played a key role in breaking up Portugal's colonial empire.

The leaders of the newly independent nation were men who had proven their worth on the battlefield, but were not well prepared for government. Even today, after 43 years of independence, its pros and cons are still hotly disputed. Social discrepancies between people in urban and rural areas grew worse, fostering a culture of hate and retaliation in which might mostly made right. Peace all too often rests on the willingness of the weaker party to give in.

Freedom is a process rather than an achieved goal. In this sense, the liberation of the people of Guinea-Bissau was merely the first important step towards their autonomy. The legacy of colonialism did not disappear with the withdrawal of the colonial rulers. In order to pursue their own path to development, the people must build a collective identity.

Apart from land conflicts, the most important problems the country faces today include corruption, tension between religious modernisation and tradition and a crisis of political power. In order to confront these issues, the non-governmental organisation (NGO) GTO-Bissau has been cooperating with the non-governmental German association Weltfriedensdienst (World Peace Service). Together, they have launched a peace forum. A network of 300 peace activists, who are organised in 11 regional groups, covers the entire country.

The activists were trained for two years. They collectively analysed everyday culture and viable means to transform conflicts. The training concluded with a reflection on practice. The membership of the peace network reflects the country's ethnic diversity, illustrating the possibilities of constructive cooperation.

One method the peace activists use is forum theatre. They stage a play that depicts a real conflict from the audience's lives. The performance stops at a critical juncture. The audience is asked to help find a solution and invited on state to intervene in the action.

During the practical training phase, the 11 groups tackled 54 local conflicts this way. Twenty of them dealt with the right to control arable land and cashew plantations. Other conflicts were about the coexistence of people who belong to different religions, or about power and leadership struggles in NGOs. The administration of public goods was a topic as well.

Apart from educational theatre approaches, the peace activists engage in open debates in order to find solutions. Solutions must be culturally compatible and restore trust to damaged relationships. The latter is particularly valuable to the communities concerned. That's why traditional authorities and state agencies are willing to cooperate.

LAND AS A COMMON GOOD

The work of the 11 peace groups shows that communities are able to resolve conflicts peacefully (for three examples, see box, p. 27). However, the efforts also make it clear that the state has a responsibility to address the various forms of land appropriation and agricultural use.

A long-term solution to conflicts about land ownership will depend on the application of Guinea-Bissau's land law. After it was proposed in 1998, ten years went by before it was adopted. However, it is yet to be implemented.

The law regards land as the property of the state and the common heritage of the people. Nonetheless, it also envisages the exclusive use of agricultural land by individuals and communities, whilst taking into account ethnic-cultural realities.

On the ground, however, the peace groups are experiencing something completely different. In conflicts that relate to commodity extraction, for example, state agencies themselves are disregarding the provisions of the law that require them to act according to a sense of ethnic-cultural sensitivity. It is the peace groups who facilitate understanding between village communities and state agencies. They are promoting out-of-court solutions.

The peace groups now want to stage their plays in the capital city in order to make decisionmakers and donor agencies more familiar with the problems of rural people. It is necessary to raise awareness of the need to apply the land law.

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Their grandparents' legacy

Portugal's colonial administration founded the villages of Sintchã and Uok along the road leading west from the capital, Bissau, to the region of Biombo. Families from a variety of ethnicities were settled in Sintchã, while Uok is home only to Balanta. Although the new settlements offered only little space, life was peaceful.

After independence, however, the village community of Uok wanted to return to their former territories. As the commercial value of cashew nuts rose, younger generations from Uok recalled that some plantations had once belonged to their grandparents and insisted on their inheritance. However, the population of Sintchã had grown and taken over the land in question. A violent conflict arose.

In the course of being trained as mediators (see main article), peace activists from Biombo chose this dispute for practical-efforts part and organised hearings with opinion leaders from both villages. They earned the trust of one person from Uok, who now appeals to the group for help whenever the situation threatens to escalate. So far, two attacks on Sintchã have been averted this way.

The residents of Uok do not believe that the state government is neutral because the head of administration belongs to the region's largest ethnic group, the Pepel. He is well aware of this challenge, so he asked for peace group assistance in the ongoing mediation process too. A friendly football match took place between the two villages on a neutral playing field without it leading to riots. The peace activists are making incremental progress towards the goal of the disputed terrain being amicably shared.

Forum theatre piece on the conflict between Sintchã and Uok, performed by the Biombo peace group.

In the southern region of Tómbali, a conflict revolved around cattle repeatedly destroying rice fields. The cattle belonged to Balanta, who had only arrived in the region later than the previously established Nalu, who owned the fields. The hostilities got worse every year. Violent clashes were particularly common at the start of the rainy season. Finally the peace group from Tómbali took up the issue.

The group conducted multiple separate meetings with farmers, herders and traditional authorities. In the end, the parties signed an agreement that required the herders to take precautionary measures. Everyone cooperated on protecting field boundaries and building enclosures. Harmony was restored to the villages. The residents continue to engage in open dialogue with the support of the peace group.

In Quínara, a region in Guinea-Bissau's little developed south, the two villages of Aidará, home to long-established Beafadas, and Mui, home to later arrived Balanta, were locked in a bitter dispute over a rice field for years. Hate and mistrust spread. Ethnic alliances threatened to draw surrounding villages into the conflict. The local member of parliament tried to exploit the tensions for party-political gains instead of finding a solution.

The peace group from the region of Quínara began conducting hearings together with traditional and state authorities from the sector. The breakthrough came thanks to a forum theatre performance. It was rehearsed during the training, and it dealt with the conflict at hand. Seeing their own problems acted out onstage unleashed powerful emotions in the audience, affecting both parties to the conflict. After people had dried their tears, serious dialogue began. People were eager to find a solution.

The results have been impressive. A protocol now regulates field usage rights, and both village communities respect it. The agreement also spells out who is responsible for ensuring the rules are followed. The relationship between the neighbours has significantly improved. Children from Mui now go to school in Aidará, and women from Aidará sell fish and soap in Mui.

Photo: José Luis Aguilar Aguilar

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No land in sight

Despite independence since 1990, land ownership remains unfairly distributed in Namibia, and the impacts of colonial rule are still being felt. The former liberation movement South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) is in government, and people expect it to resolve the land issues. In the process, the limits of post-colonial transformation have become evident. It is difficult to find even a partially satisfactory solution to these complex problems.

By Henning Melber

The formerly colonised people of Namibia expected independence not just to bring a significant improvement in their standard of living but also to transform the sociopolitical and socioeconomic setting. Fair distribution of land figured prominently in those expectations. The need to redistribute wealth was obvious.

However, decolonisation brought mainly political sovereignty. The government could only change the economic scenario to a limited extent. It had to respect constitutional principles that had been predefined before independence. The body of law that was thus introduced did not reflect what the majority of the people consider right and wrong. On the contrary, it protects existing private property – property that in many cases was acquired in the course of colonial injustice, not least including land seizures and dispossession.

Many Namibians thus see the country's law as protecting the rights of privileged minorities, whose standing has hardly changed. Landowners' property rights are safeguarded, but the moral and ethical questions of how and when their property was acquired were never tackled.

TERRITORIAL REORGANISATION

There is no history of irrevocably formalised control over land, which makes things even more complicated. Southern Africa – as other world regions – experienced extensive migration, with newcomers displacing other people, even before the European colonial powers arrived. Land had been re-occupied on various occasions. At some point in time, each ethnic group in Namibia – with the exception of the Bushmen – is known to have migrated to what is now the country's territory. In most cases they did not claim land use without any force. There is an aphorism according to which treason is a matter of date. That

As a result of the colonial period, the majority of commercial farmers in Namibia are white. A policy for redistributing land to disadvantaged groups has not really worked out so far.

Photo: Peter Frischmuth/Argus

might also be said of the right to "ancestral" land.

This is no justification for creating a convenient loophole for the descendants of European colonialists. They must face up to the realities and consider the consequences of colonial subjugation. In 2015, Germany finally acknowledged that the warfare against Herero and Nama people by German soldiers between 1904 and 1908 constituted acts of genocide. The descendants of these two ethnic groups had to fight long and hard to secure that admission.

Nonetheless, the search for permanent solutions to the land question remains complex, difficult and unresolved. The first – and so far only – National Land Conference was held in 1991. It discussed ways to redistribute land in the fairest and most appropriate way and concluded that the historical complexities made a full restitution of land impossible.

LAND REFORM WITH CONTRADICTIONS

The climate is harsh, making an economically viable land reform difficult. Two-thirds of the national territory is classified as semi-arid and a quarter as arid. Around 44 % of the land is used for fenced ranches which are privately owned. It mostly serves to graze livestock. About 60 % of this commercially used land has an average annual precipitation of less than 300 mm. It is owned by fewer than 5,000 persons, most of whom are white. Many are German-speaking, and some are foreigners.

Only around eight percent of Namibian land has an average annual precipitation of at least 500 mm that is needed for non-irrigated farming. Most of this land belongs to the 43 % of the territory in communal use, the former "native reserves". Due to individual fencing as a de facto privatisation, however, less and less of that land remains in collective use.

This state of affairs clearly contradicts the resolutions of the 1991 Land Conference. At present, however, authorities tend to tolerate such unlawful appropriation of land. A considerable number of the land grabbers, after all, are members of the higher public administration or belong to the party leadership. If the government and local traditional authorities continue to condone and even engage in such wrongdoing, the situation of rural communities will deteriorate further, accelerating the exodus from rural areas.

So far, land reform has been halting and slow. The government has wasted a lot of time on legal and administrative debates. There is no clear political strategy for the transfer of land and the resettlement of people with long-term prospects of sustainable livelihoods. Redistribution is based on a principle called "willing seller – willing buyer". It gives the government a preferential right to buy farms at market value. The land is supposed to be reallocated to historically disadvantaged people, but that has rarely happened.

What has happened is that members of the new political elite got precedence as buyers. As early as the mid-1990s, observers remarked sarcastically that land reform had been accomplished since most members of the cabinet now owned private farms .

Only very little land has been purchased for the purpose of accommodating the landless. By the mid-1990s, the authorities had bought only around 100,000 hectares. By the turn of the millennium the figure had risen to 341,000 hectares of 54 farms.

The results of resettlement projects have been sobering. Most new settlers remain dependent on food aid. They did not get the support they needed to become self-sufficient and remained unable to achieve the minimum objective of secure livelihoods. All too often, those who were resettled kept relying on government support. The rural infrastructure has collapsed. Strikingly, land reform is neither mentioned in Namibia's official poverty reduction strategy, which was approved by the cabinet in 1998, nor in the National Poverty Reduction Action Programme for 2001 to 2005.

LAND POLITICS

Much will depend on how the black elite at the helm of the government will manage to reduce the glaring social inequalities of the new post-colonial class society. To think that a land reform will resolve the issue is quite common – but mistaken. This idea is hard to dispel given that the unfair distribution of land is a colonial legacy. Major successes in poverty reduction, however, would reduce the symbolic significance of land and ease frustration about slow change.

In 2012, SWAPO declared the land question to be a priority. Since then, public discourse has been marked by mutual recriminations. The government accuses the commercial farmers of sabotage for refusing to sell their land at acceptable prices. In the meantime, the commercial farmers' association has published figures that show that the redistribution of land is very much on track to meet the government's targets. Tinkering with figures, however, is not a good way to deal with a deeply emotional issue that is linked to senses of identity as well as impotence. The government is not handling these links well. It is high time it took them into account.

A second national land conference was originally scheduled for 2016. It was half-heartedly prepared and finally postponed and is now supposed to take place later this year. It is expected to be anything but harmonious. Most likely, clashes of interest will become evident.

The current bilateral talks between Germany and Namibia reveal differences concerning land questions too, moreover. At present, Germany's Federal Government refuses to recognise land distribution as a means of compensation for the consequences of the genocide committed and does not want to fund respective measures. It is indisputable, however, that the present distribution of land is basically a result of German colonial rule. It is a colonial legacy. In view of growing dissatisfaction among sections of the people, Namibia's government has indicated it is prepared to step up a gear. Among other things, it plans to take a closer look at some constitutional clauses, re-assessing whether land transfers must always be voluntary, for example.

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Indispensable legal certainty

The importance of legal certainty concerning land rights cannot be overstated in the context of fighting poverty. This is evident in Cambodia, for example.

By Frank Bliss and Karin Gaesing

In the world's poorest countries, as well as in many low-income countries, agriculture is very important – and so is access to land. The share of agriculture in countries' gross domestic product (GDP) may tend to shrink, but in many places, this sector (including livestock farming) still offers the most job opportunities. In Cambodia, it accounts for almost half of all employment as well as 26.7% of GDP. In Kenya, it employs three quarters of the entire workforce and contributes 32.7% to GDP. In Ethiopia, 85% of the labour force work in agriculture (CIA, 2017).

Given these statistics, the livelihoods of large numbers of people depend on access to agriculturally viable plots. All over the world, however, smallholder farmers are increasingly being deprived of the land they need – be it through land grabbing or through the conversion of farm land into urban land, much of which is then sold. Often questionable legal means are used. Papua New Guinea (where an estimated 3.8 million hectares of land have been irregularly grabbed), Indonesia, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique (where shady deals concern more than approximately 2.2 million hectares) are currently the world leaders in terms of land use changes (Land Matrix 2017). Such changes almost always mean the dispossession of the traditional owners and are therefore nothing more than "land grabbing" (Bread for the World 2016).

In Ethiopia, the selling off of land has become a topic of hot debate in the past few years. Even the state-controlled media address it. The main point of contention is whether the national government or regional authorities should be in charge of land deals. Despite an official "freeze" of land sales to foreigners, almost 1 million hectares have changed hands in the recent past.

Legal certainty regarding land ownership is decisive: peeling cassava in Kratie, Cambodia.

Photo: Bliss & Gaesing Consulting

These new Cambodian farmers received a provisional land title.

In Cambodia, a similar trend began more than 15 years ago (see essay by Sun Narin, p.34). New land leases were stopped two years ago, after 712,000 hectares had been leased out. Cambodia's government has even withdrawn concessions made to domestic and foreign investors who failed to use the land within a certain period of time. All too often, however, the most valuable trees were already felled, or over-exploitation of natural resources had simply continued.

In Cambodia, land deals were stopped because they were becoming politically controversial. First, land was sold to the military and members of the government, and later domestic and foreign investors, especially Chinese companies, benefited. Along with dissatisfaction because of bad governance and increasing socio-economic disparities, the issue of land rights began to have an impact on elections. Suddenly, the Cambodian People's Party's grip on power looked shaky. It only narrowly won the parliamentary elections in 2013. As a result, it reconsidered indiscriminate land grabbing and the almost limitless granting of land concessions.

Two programmes have recently gained momentum and are becoming ever more important. They were both introduced more than ten years ago, but were delayed by less than determined implementation. The programmes pertain to the registration of community land titles for indigenous communities and the granting of so-called "social land concessions" to poor rural families.

COMMUNITY TITLES

The first programme primarily concerns Cambodia's north and northeast. In the province of Ratanakiri, several hundred indigenous villages have filed applications. The registration procedure usually takes several years and requires many bureaucratic steps. At least four ministries are involved. Delays can also result from the determination to find mutually accepted boundaries between villages.

Once there is consensus on the borders, the villages concerned receive provisional titles quickly, so third parties can no longer intrude and expropriate land for agro-industrial concessions. In the past three years, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), which are supporting rural communities, have confirmed such useful impacts. However, the final title must be granted by the Ministry of Land and may cover smaller plots than initially requested.

Some local NGOs are also currently receiving support from German agencies, which in turn get funding from Germany's Federal Government. Welthungerhilfe and the Knights of St. John have been involved in this way (Welthungerhilfe 2016). The sponsored Cambodian NGOs not only help the village communities to obtain land titles, they also contribute to improving health care, agricultural production and food security.

The programme shows a substantial correlation between secure land rights and better living conditions. The long-term involvement of the local NGOs is important because it tells the people concerned that they are not left alone in the long time that the registration procedure takes.

SOCIAL LAND CONCESSIONS

The social land concessions are part of a government programme that started in several provinces of Cambodia in 2007/2008. The idea was to provide landless families with small units of one to two-and-a-half hectares. The families do not have to pay for the land, but they must meet certain criteria, including proven poverty and not owning any land. Some of the applicants are then granted land in a kind of lottery. This procedure was introduced with support from the World Bank and development agencies working on its behalf.

The plots are almost always relatively low-value bush land, and all valuable trees have normally been felled. The plots are roughly levelled, and access roads are built. Wells are dug, and a minimum amount of construction materials is provided for building homes. The rules initially stipulated that farmers had to cultivate

Photo: Bliss & Gaesing Consulting

most of the land within one year in order to obtain the official land title. Later, the time span was extended to five years. The basic problem, however, persists: extremely poor people simply do not have the financial resources to make it through the time from first tillage to harvest. Typically, the families have to continue doing wage work, which keeps them from cultivating their new land in an expedient manner. Most households have proven unable to dedicate very much time to their new fields.

To tackle this problem, a German project was started in 2014. Its goal is to provide sustainable support for resettling poor farmers and helping them bridge the gap to self-sufficient agricultural production. The "Improvement of Livelihoods and Food Security Project" (ILF) allows families to cultivate their new land and simultaneously earn a living by doing paid community work, without having to commute daily between their old homes and their new farm.

The famers are provided with machines such as small tractors and simple irrigation facilities (hand pumps, hoses and pipes). They are also given seed or seedlings for sugarcane and trees with edible leaves, such as acacias or moringa. These things are geared towards quick high-quality yields, to be consumed by the families themselves or sold on the market. Support for starting vegetable gardening, poultry farming or fish ponds serves the same purposes of providing food to the families and laying a foundation for commercial farming. Skills training is offered too. It relates to building, animal husbandry, marketing and healthy nutrition. The project contributes to enabling families to use their new land and meet the conditions for the final registration of their land title. In the meantime, the government has begun to offer training too.

These measures cannot solve the problem that some of the distributed land is quite poor. Some families are fortunate to receive very good land, while others only get average plots. It would make sense to ensure that all families get land of similar value.

CONCLUSIONS

Three basic conclusions can be drawn from the Cambodian example with regard to how land rights relate to fighting poverty and boosting food security:

- In countries that wish to change their traditional system of land ownership, land titles must provide broad protection to farmers. Otherwise, sustainable agricultural development is impossible. The reasons are that traditional users will not invest unless land tenure is secure and that dispossession and displacement always result in impoverishing rural people.
- As part of transformative processes in land law, it is possible to provide more people with land titles than previously owned land. In particular, groups that have traditionally been landless can benefit. In Cambodia, this was primarily done with previously unused land, but there is now a chance of redistributing land from unused agro-industrial concessions. Unfortunately, though, the most valuable timber has already been taken away. German development agencies should request that their partners in countries like Ethiopia, Indonesia or Kenya consider unused land concessions. After all, concessions can be withdrawn and the land can be handed over to smallholder farmers. In Ethiopia, the GIZ has started an initiative to empower authorities to manage major land deals in line with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (FAO 2012).
- The example of Cambodia clearly shows that land grants, in and of themselves, are not enough. The new farmers must be given land they can use immediately. The necessary economic and social infrastructure has to be in place. Additionally, there must be some kind of financial bridge that allows them to cope economically until they can sell their first full harvest. Many poor families lack agricultural experience, so training and recurring education matter. Financial literacy may need to be promoted too. The land-grant process must be executed fairly and with a view to sustainability. The size of the plots and the quality of the soil must be such that all farmers concerned find long-term livelihoods.

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Land titles help to prevent conflict

Land disputes have become a serious and persistent issue in Cambodia. In response to unrest, the government stopped leasing large plots to private-sector investors a few years ago. Earlier land deals, however, are still causing tensions.

By Sun Narin

The Khmer Rouge ended private ownership of land and real estate in Cambodia. Its genocidal rule claimed an estimated 1.7 million lives from 1975 to 1979.

When the regime collapsed, most Cambodians were living in rural communities. Many had fled their homes, and no one wanted to settle in Phnom Penh, the capital, which was called "a ghost city". In the acute crisis, people obviously did not worry much about formal land titles.

Attitudes changed as peace was restored and market-oriented development set in. Land conflicts have become common and persistent. Some cases haunt remote forest regions where indigenous communities have a traditional lifestyle that relies on natural resources found in the forests.

Land conflicts occur in other regions too, however. It matters, of course, that 85% of Cambodia's 16 million people depend on agriculture. Having land for cultivation is their top priority. Many smallholder farmers fear they may lose the land they cultivate some day.

Cambodia is one of the least developed countries in Southeast Asia. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), 14% of the people live below the poverty line today. They have a purchasing power that equals less than $ 1.25 per head and day.

Legal activists say that land conflicts started in 1999, one year after the very last Khmer Rouge fighters were beaten along the Thai border. Land matters definitely became more tense, however, after the government passed a new land law in 2001.

Among other things, the law was designed to attract foreign investors. It introduced a system of land registration. In principle, it entitles people to land that they have been using continuously for at least five years. The registration process is still going on. By 2016 land titles had been officially recognised for about 60% of all relevant plots. The government expects to conclude registration by 2023.

Another provision of the new law is economic land concession (ELCs). An ELC means that the government leases state-owned land of up to 10,000 hectares to private investors for a maximum of 99 years. The problem is that many ELCs were granted while title registration was still going on. This policy resulted in forced evictions and violent protests all over the country. Responding to the unrest, the government has been going slow on ELCs in the past few years.

All in all, the government has granted ELCs to more than 100 private-sector companies. Some 2 million hectares are affected. Land conflicts relate to agriculture, manufacturing industries, mining rights and the construction of hydropower dams. Urban development is another difficult issue (see box, p. 35). Making matters worse, the rule of law is weak. People's rights are not protected reliably even when they are officially recognised.

Affected communities have staged many rallies in Phnom Penh, hoping that the government, and perhaps Prime Minister Hun Sen himself, would solve their problems. He has been in power for more than 30 years and is known to "get things done". His means, however, are not always fair. Human Rights Watch accuses him of having abused his power and resorted to violent force. Villagers have also invited policymakers from the National Assembly, the Senate and relevant ministries to intervene.

UNHEARD VOICES

All too often, however, the village communities were not heard. Legal activists point out that powerful elites, including high-ranking government officials, are involved in most land conflicts. On the other hand, some 400,000 to 1 million people have been personally affected by land disputes, according to estimates. Adhoc, a Cambodian human-rights group, reckons that 60,000 people have been forcibly evicted from their homes.

Evictions can be brutal. In 2012, a 14-year-old girl was shot to death by government security forces as they cleared a village in the northeast. Vann Sophat of the non-governmental Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR) likens evictions to "battlefields". Protests are often crushed with force. Villagers who dare to oppose the security forces risk arrest, detention and prosecution. The courts are not believed to be independent, however, but to act on behalf of the government, as Vann Sophat reports.

Women tend to be particularly active in land disputes. "They depend on the land and house," the activist explains. In Cam-

This informal settlement in Cambodia's capital Phnom Penh was evicted in 2006.

Foto: kd

bodian society, women are not expected to travel far. Many women are willing to risk their lives fighting for their land. When things turn violent, however, men mostly lead the protests, according to Vann Sophat.

Human-rights groups argue that the government has not handled land disputes well. Latt Ky of Adhoc points out that the government has typically failed to assess the situation on the ground properly before granting ELCs. Only after the fact did it notice who was affected. Moreover, the environmental impacts of ELCs were not assessed either.

Land disputes have hurt the government's reputation. The ruling party's share of the vote dropped by nine percentage points to slightly below 49 % in the general election of 2013. It still has the majority of legislative seats, however.

Even before the election, Prime Minister Hun Sen acknowledged land-related problems. He decided to stop granting new ELCs in 2012 and limited the duration of future leases to 50 years. He insisted that local people deserve protection and promised to redistribute 1 million hectares of land to poor and dispossessed families. Human rights groups, however, say that little has happened since.

Serious efforts were made to resolve ongoing land conflicts. National and provincial committees have been established to consider these matters. However, the conflicting parties' interests tend to be hard to reconcile, especially as the rights of ELC companies are defined in their contracts.

Human-rights activist Vann Sophat reckons that "just over 20 % of land conflicts have been resolved" so far. His organisation, the CCHR, has been supporting 41 communities in land disputes, and so far, a solution has only been found in 10 cases. He warns that many people concerned still do not have formal land titles, so future conflicts cannot be ruled out.

Latt Ky of Adhoc says that the situation has generally been improving and no new conflicts have emerged since the government stopped granting ELCs. The unresolved conflicts are tough, however, and in the long run, he too expects new conflicts to arise. Future investors, he believes, will not want to pursue their business interests and will not be keen on compromises with local communities.

The human-rights activists agree that land titles will help to prevent conflicts in the future. According to them, it is essential to raise awareness of ownership rights among the people.

Government officers argue that the land law is fine and will work out well in the long run. They admit that not everything is in place yet, but insist that the problems are being dealt with.

To some extent the government is blaming problems on opposition forces. It has stated that "political parties have manipulated the current land issue shamelessly for their own political gain". In the eyes of human-rights activists, however, the successful resolution of land issues depends on "the political will of the government".

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Once there was a lake

In Phnom Penh, the Boeung Kak Lake has been leased to a private-sector company for 99 years. The company has reclaimed the land and built a new neighbourhood on the 90 hectare area. People who previously depended on the lake were not compensated.

In the past, the lake served recreational purposes. Today, many local restaurants are no longer viable. Fishermen relied on the lake too.

Since 2007, thousands of families have been forced to leave their homes around the former lake. Amnesty International has called this development Cambodia's "largest forced eviction since the Khmer Rouge era". It has been reported that a leading member of the ruling party is among the owners of the lease-holding company.

"There is no trust between villagers at Boeung Kak Lake and the government," says Vann Sophat of the non-governmental Cambodian Center for Human Rights (CCHR). The local people are frustrated because the government is not offering any solution.

Police officers with riot shields, helmets and electric batons have quashed protests several times. Boeung Kak activists, including many women, have been sentenced to jail terms.

Vann Sophat says that this conflict is particularly difficult to resolve because it is linked to politics. That is not always the case, according to him, but the legal situation is often very complicated nonetheless.

Boeung Kak is not the only land conflict in the city of Phnom Penh. In 2009, for example, some 150 families were evicted from Dey Krahorm, and their homes were destroyed. The land they had been living on was leased to a private construction company. Compensations were not paid.

A resident of the Boeung Kak lakeside cries during a protest in Phnom Penh in 2011.

Photo: Mak Remissa/picture-alliance/dpa

Crowded spaces

Land is especially expensive in urban areas. Poor people are often forced to live in densely populated, informal settlements which lack the security of tenure. Many Indian slum dwellers, for example, have reason to fear eviction.

By Roli Mahajan

Janki Prasad, 40, and her three children live in a small room covered with a tin roof. A broken wooden door marks the entrance. This hut has barely enough space for two people. A brick wall separates the living space from the street outside, where an open drain runs parallel to a walking path. In the rainy season, the area is flooded.

Janki's home is one of many in Seelampur, a slum in Delhi. She says it is better to live here than in the village she comes from. It is 600 kilometres away, and she is happy to see her husband daily. He works in the capital region, and she is also earning some money as a cook. The children go to school. Their housing situation is tough, but Janki considers that she has more and better opportunities in the city than those available in her village.

She is actually one of the more fortunate slum dwellers because she shares a "toilet" with a neighbour. It is a makeshift tent with wooden planks as pillars and old bed sheets as walls. It is not connected to the sewerage system, and its waste goes into an open drain.

Most people in Seelampur use community toilets on the fringes of the slum. These toilets are not cleaned regularly, and women find it embarrassing to go there since they only get minimum privacy from men and boys.

IN SEARCH OF OPPORTUNITIES

India is home to more than 65 million slum dwellers. They live in more than 100,000 informal urban settlements. Over a third live in slums that are not officially recognised.

Ever more people are moving to the cities in the hope of better opportunities. In the past two decades, India's urban population increased by 160 million to 377 million, according to a UN report, and some 600 million people are expected to live in India's 8,000 cities and towns by 2031.

Only half of the cities and towns have local-government bodies of their own. The census of 2011 only counted slums in these so-called statutory towns, because the other towns lacked the authority to report slums. For many official purposes, slums are often simply ignored.

There are three official classifications for slums: "notified", "recognised" and "identified". The first two categories mean that some official authority has designated the area as a slum. The third category, however, only means that at least 300 people are living in at least 60 tenements. An "identified" slum has no legal status and does not get municipal services. More than 1 million of New Delhi's about 1.7 million slum dwellers live in such conditions.

Many slums grew on railway land, like this one in Kolkata.

Photo: dem

India's other megacities such as Mumbai, Kolkata and Bangalore also have huge slum populations. Indian urbanisation has been largely unplanned and haphazard. That is typical of many developing countries. Masses of people live in marginalised settlements that do not match officialdom's idea of what a proper city should look like.

"WORLD-CLASS CITY"

In Delhi, town planners and policymakers have promoted visions of a "world-class city" without slums. They argue that an "efficient land market" could convert "underutilised" public land, which is currently occupied by slum dwellers, into commercially exploitable real estate. Their idea of urban development is to evict most shanty towns and upgrade some of them.

The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) spelled out such plans in 1997. Ahead of the Commonwealth Games in 2010, it forcefully evicted large numbers of urban poor and demolished their homes. In the DDA perspective, slums should generally not be accepted.

In recent decades, Indian courts have increasingly shared that view. Asher Ghertner, a geographer form Rutgers University in the USA, has written about "the judiciary's expanded role in demanding slum clearance" in his book "Rule by aesthetics: world-class city making in Delhi".

This phenomenon seems to be prevalent across the country. In a 2017 ruling, the Bombay High Court decided that slum dwellers who had encroached on railway land had to pay a fine. The families had lived there for decades. Nonetheless, the judges argued that, "the very act of encroaching upon railway property (is) a punishable offence".

Historically, India's slums often grew on public land, including railway property for example. Government agencies mostly chose to tolerate them. After all slum dwellers are potential voters. Nonetheless, the residents of informal settlements were never free to manage their affairs as they thought was best. Informal settlements are controlled by mafia-like networks of slum lords who typically have some links to corrupt politicians. The poor people pay hefty rents for their miserable homes. They are also charged for the minimal basic services they get. Slums are part of the informal economy in which "might makes right".

Ghertner, the American geographer, notes that public attitudes have been increasingly turning against slums. Many court cases that resulted in slum evictions in Delhi started as public interest litigation (PIL). PIL means that a court accepts a case that was filed by citizens not pursuing their personal interest, but claiming to represent the public good. Better-off residents are filing such cases against shanty towns, considering the poor people's homes a public nuisance.

According to the landmark ruling of the Bombay High Court in the Olga Tellis case in 1985, government bodies may evict slum dwellers in spite of people's constitutional right to life and livelihood. However, the state agencies must act in accordance with the law and consider the slum dwellers' situation. In practice, such consideration is minimal. In the Olga Tellis case, it meant waiting until the rainy season was over. Evicted people, moreover, were not entitled to new homes.

IN-SITU REHABILITATION

Even well-intended policies sometimes go wrong. The Delhi Master Plan 2021, which was published in 2007, introduced an "in-situ rehabilitation" approach for the redevelopment of slums. The first slum chosen to be improved this way was Kathputli Colony, which Salman Rushdie immortalised in his famous novel "Midnight's children".

Kathputli was a designated slum area, so the people living there had right of tenure. Nonetheless, they were evicted and forced to move to a different place in 2014. Media attention did not help. Now the reallocation of some 1,000 new flats to some of the evicted people has begun. The new flats are not where the former slum cluster was, however, and the former residents feel they are being cheated. They have been expressing their concerns by writing to various government authorities.

In-situ rehabilitation is possible in principle. It requires taking into account the needs of the local people (see Diana Mitlin in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2016/10, page 24 and D+C/E+Z print edition 2016/11-12, page 13), which typically differ from town planners' preconceptions (see Rüdiger Korff in D+C/E+Z e-Paper 2016/10, page 28 and D+C/E+Z print edition 2016/11-12, page 19). The results of such measures suit the residents, but do not necessarily conform with ideas of "world class".

India's central government is aware of the challenges. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said: "We have a dream that by 2022, every Indian should have his own house with the facilities of electricity, water and nearby hospitals. No one should be homeless."

The proposed National Urban Rental Housing Policy 2017 could be a game changer. It proposes that slums on municipal land be granted security of tenure under the condition that they are converted into rental housing. Municipal bodies would assume the landlord role and be bound by social principles. According to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, the policy will not only protect slum residents from the threat of constant eviction and demolition but also act as a source of significant revenue for the urban local bodies. Housing Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu said in April 2017 that this policy "aims at meeting the growing housing needs of migrants, students, single working women and others".

The approach makes sense. Nonetheless, some observers doubt it will work out. One reason to worry is the experience of Kathputli Colony. After all, the DDA approach of in-situ rehabilitation is in line with what the central government is planning, but it failed.

In more general terms, Mukta Naik, a senior researcher at the Centre for Policy Research, an independent think tank, argues that the new policy does not include an unconditional no-eviction guarantee. In her eyes, this lack reveals "the failure to recognise informal housing for what it is, to accept that slums are providing affordable housing which should have been provided by the state". She concludes that the state still considers slum dwellers to be encroachers rather than people who need homes.

Indian cities are witnessing a building spree, but most projects only cater to the middle-income and affluent population. Demand for land is great. Manish Kumar, the manager of a private-sector real-estate consultancy says: "Home prices have gone beyond the reach of many." He sees a lack of affordable housing which results from the lack of both land and loans at reasonable rates.

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Concern for the most vulnerable

"De-risking" is a new catchword in development finance. It means to reduce the risks that are linked to any given project or programme. The "crucial question", in the eyes of the prominent development sociologist Michael Cernea is: "whose risks?" Not only investors need protection, he argues, but so do the people who are displaced, victimised and at risk of poverty. Once the World Bank's new Environmental and Social Framework comes into force next year, however, they will be even more likely to be neglected than they have been so far.

By Korinna Horta

Cernea certainly knows about risks that go along with aid. In 1974, he was the first ever sociologist to become a member of World Bank staff. He spent the next quarter century fighting intellectual battles inside and often outside the institution, demanding that official development assistance take into account social-science knowledge, and not only consider economic modelling. He edited a seminal book "Putting people first" (1985/1991), which was translated into many languages and has become a classic text on participatory development.

Formally retired from the World Bank, Cernea continues to be a prolific writer. At the World Bank he was responsible for several ground-breaking achievements, but is perhaps best known for his work on forced displacement. In 1980, the World Bank published a policy he had drafted on the matter. It ushered in a new era because other multilateral and bilateral agencies fast adopted similar approaches in their policy guidelines.

The new policy pointed out that development-related large-scale displacement affects millions of people. It must be avoided to the extent possible. If it cannot be avoided, the negative impacts must be contained. The poorest people must not be forced to bear the costs of development. The World Bank has to assume responsibility and cannot leave the issue to local authorities relying on local means.

The policy stated that, when a project leads to displacement and necessitates resettlement, the related costs are an integral component of that project. The point was that financiers and governments cannot treat people like disposable goods. People have rights, ownership and aspirations.

THE IRR MODEL

IRR is a planning tool that Cernea developed and made quite popular. The three letters stand for "Impoverishment risks and reconstruction model for resettling displaced populations". He first presented it at a conference on hydropower in China.

The model identifies eight fundamental and recurrent risks that recur in the context of forced displacement:

- landlessness,
- joblessness,
- homelessness,
- marginalisation,
- food insecurity,
- loss of access to common property resources,
- loss of health and
- community disarticulation.

These risks must be controlled. Depressingly, that is not what "de-risking" as used in the current jargon of international financial institutions (IFIs) means. Instead, de-risking is a one-sided strategy to mobilise private capital from risk-shy investors. One option is to provide risk insurance, another is to ensure that the regulations of developing countries permit attractive returns to private investors.

IFIs including the World Bank and its regional multilateral sisters are keen on leveraging private investments for major infrastructure projects. Unless private-sector capital flows in large amounts, the investment goals set by the G20 cannot be met as it will prove impossible to channel trillions rather than merely billions of dollars into infrastructure.

Top IFI managers are fond of de-risking, but it is alarming that they tend to only consider investors' risks. At least that was evident at this year's spring meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in Washington. Local people's risks of being uprooted, marginalised and impoverished in the context of large

Indigenous people protest against Belo Monte dam in Brasilia in 2013.

Photo: Ed Ferreira/picture-alliance/Estado conteudo

infrastructure projects was hardly considered. The lessons that Cernea taught are not being heeded.

IFIs must do more than state their commitment to inclusive and sustainable development. The risks poor people face – and in particular displacement – must be recognised in advance and addressed transparently in cooperation with the communities concerned. The IFIs have adopted environmental and social standards that oblige them to do so.

The depressing truth, however, is that the standards are not enforced stringently for several reasons, and things are likely to get even worse. Typically, the governments of the countries where infrastructure is being built show little concern for poor and marginalised groups. They want new roads, dams, mines, power plants et cetera. IFI managers, in turn, are interested in implementing many projects fast, not least because they fear to be crowded out by private-sector banks and new multilateral banks, such as the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, which is based in Beijing.

The World Bank's new Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) will become effective in 2018. Experience shows that it is likely to be emulated by other IFIs. The new Framework takes a "risk-based approach", which means that risks do not have to be identified early on, but will be tackled as they emerge in the course of a project. Moreover, the new Framework increasingly relies on the environmental and social standards of borrowing governments rather than on multilateral standards.

According to Cernea's experience, the "risk-based" approach means that displacement risks will increase without mitigation. He says the World Bank should not be "learning by doing" because that means that "others will have to pay the costs" of lessons. Moreover, the Bank will keep forgetting what it has just learned. "The next project will be just the same," Cernea warns.

Cernea points out that infrastructure projects require land and, in past decades, have uprooted millions of people. In his view, it is a growing pathology in development finance that projects are given "right of way", whilst displacement and impoverishment are not properly addressed.

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Marked by displacement

Michael Cernea, the sociologist who had a strong impact on World Bank policies on preventing forced displacement, was born in Romania. He is the child of a Jewish family who miraculously escaped the Nazi Holocaust, including a pogrom that killed over 12,000 Jews in his hometown Jassi. In midlife, in 1974, he and his family moved to the USA. He personally knows hardship.

Michael Cernea.

Nazi rule and the personal experience of oppression deeply marked his thinking. His family lost its livelihood and became impoverished. Racist laws barred him from going to a state school. It was dangerous to walk the long way to a poor community school. He spent a year at home. In 1944, as the Soviet offensive was beating back the German army, the family managed to flee to Bucharest.

Cernea stayed committed to fighting discrimination of any kind. The violence and terror that marked his early life has contributed to his approach to social exclusion, marginalisation and injustice.

Cernea studied philosophy, paying particular attention to social matters and political economy. After the war, however, Romania's democracy did not last long. The Communist Party's early promises of freedom, equality and social justice soon evaporated. In a spirit of defiance, he wrote a doctoral thesis on the "Contradictions in Socialist Society". It took him four years to get it accepted, and by then he knew that it would be impossible to pursue his interest in action-oriented sociology in his own country.

Academic institutions in North America became aware of his empirical work. He was invited to the USA and Canada and eventually decided to stay. With support from US senators, he managed to get the Communist Regime's permission for his family to join him. Then World Bank President Robert McNamara, who was focusing on rural poverty alleviation, hired him, thus providing him with a prominent public platform to work as a development sociologist.

At the World Bank, Cernea made key contributions to laying the foundations of the socio-anthropology of development, a new field in applied social sciences. He won prestigious awards, the Kimball Award (1988) and the Malinowski Price (1995), for his pioneering work on basing public policy and development programmes on social-science knowledge. Cernea continues to be a scholar and a leading authority on forced displacement and resettlement.

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