Gendered Terms of Incorporation and Exclusion in Rural Mozambique: Unpacking Pre-existing Inequalities and Mechanisms of Compensation

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Abstract

Existing literature focuses primarily on the general impacts of land grabbing and their compensation mechanisms. However, pre-existing structures of inequality heavily condition and differentiate the outcomes of land expropriation and compensation mechanisms. With this in mind, this article addresses the differentiated impacts of such mechanisms on diverse segments of the rural population. Through the experience of the operations of a tree plantation company in rural Mozambique, this research shows that compensation mechanisms are not improving the livelihoods of affected rural households. Because pre-existing inequalities are not addressed, female access to opportunities is limited. Women-headed households are at higher risk of being excluded. Most end up adversely incorporated, ultimately resulting in the exclusion of the majority. They are more likely to suffer negative impacts of land grabbing even where compensation packages are implemented. The article shows how the burden of social reproduction is further transferred to, and ultimately carried, by women, as affected households increasingly depend on female productive and reproductive labour to survive the impact of land acquisition on their rural livelihoods.

Keywords: land grabbing; terms of incorporation; working people; gender; rural livelihoods; social differentiation.

Introduction

Context and objectives of the research

Land grabbing is conducted through different processes and models with differentiated outcomes in the expulsion of people through direct land expropriation and resettlement, resulting in the unfair reallocation of fertile or resource-rich land. Others include mechanisms of adverse incorporation, social and gendered exclusions, and the transfer of land control through contract farming (Borras and Franco, 2012; Hall *et al.*, 2015; Tsikata and Yaro, 2014). Local socio-economic conditions play a critical role in the outcomes for different categories of households, particularly conditions related to land tenure, labour regimes, livelihoods, and local economies (Ali and Stevano, 2019; Hall *et al.*, 2017).

In Mozambique, public discourse claims that foreign direct investments in rural areas (even those that imply land expropriation) promote rural development through compensation mechanisms designed to integrate the affected rural households into socio-economic development projects. The mechanisms include corporate social responsibility programmes, social and development plans to provide alternative livelihood strategies and income generation, or even optimistic long-term plans of employment creation. Supported by such claims, in 2009, Portucel Moçambique initiated a mega project on plantation agriculture in the country, in partnership with the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank. It remains the largest in the agricultural sector – in terms of land size obtained and investment volume (around 2.5 billion USD). Over 350,000 hectares of land were obtained in the Zambézia and Manica provinces. The company avoided the stated national land acquisition requirements such as public consultation and resettling displaced residents as spelt out in the Mozambican Land Law. Instead, it claimed it would compensate for the land loss by putting in place a Social Development Plan. Each household was considered a unit for the distribution of benefits, with household heads as their representatives.

This article examines the strategies adopted to compensate for the loss of land and livelihoods incurred by rural households that were affected by Portucel's land acquisition. It focuses on household heads affected by the project to understand how levels of incorporation in the ensuing production

relations introduced by Portucel Moçambique were differentiated by prevailing social categories. It is particularly interested in how women-headed households and different categories of women in male-headed households were affected. Overall, the article attempts to answer the following questions: what are the differentiated outcomes of mechanisms of compensation, in the context of land grabbing, to distinct groups of rural working people? How did patriarchy shape the coping mechanisms of the different categories of households to expand their survival strategies?

The research questions were addressed using information from a qualitative study, where primary data gathering occurred in five field visits made intermittently between 2015 and 2019. The data collection consisted of interviewing heads of households that previously owned the land where Portucel is currently running the plantations (including women and men owners of land). The data collection methods included focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews. Since the company's compensation mechanisms considered households as the unit for the distribution of benefits, 33 household heads were interviewed, of which 15 were women, and 18 were men. Two FGDs took place, including one with seven women and another with men who were permanent workers (only men were in permanent employment in the study area). Sample selection was purposive and interviewees selected were those who had had their land expropriated by Portucel. One limitation of this methodology was the difficulty of engaging more deeply with the gender dynamics within households headed by men. Therefore, the research focuses mainly on understanding the distinct implications of land grabbing for households headed by women versus those headed by men, differentiated by their socio-economic status, which is determined by land ownership.

Segments of working people and terms of incorporation

The current dynamics of land expropriation show complex contextual and historical specificities in how on- and off-farm labour dynamics, which shape rural livelihood strategies, are determined by existing social inequalities. Analysis of forms of integration as an outcome of land grabbing leads to debates around adverse incorporation, which happens when expropriated

rural populations are integrated into capitalist processes through different exploitative mechanisms (Hall *et al.*, 2015). This includes being incorporated into the practices of corporations, markets and value chains but simultaneously excluded from the benefits of accumulation processes (Hall *et al.*, 2015; Hickey and Du Toit, 2007). These mechanisms can include precarious jobs offered by the corporation, unfair contract farming framings, and high risk market integration. Compensation mechanisms also significantly determine who gets what as a result of how they are incorporated into the production systems after land acquisition.

Gender relations have been acknowledged as one form of inequality that shapes the outcomes of land grabbing and its respective compensation mechanisms. Tsikata and Yaro (2014) underline how pre-existing gender inequalities and gender biases embedded in investment projects are implicated in post-project livelihood activities. They argue that even projects that seemingly include mechanisms of community inclusion might fall short of protecting women's livelihoods or even limit their access to opportunities if pre-existing inequalities are not addressed. Many cases show that men are usually incorporated through employment and other mechanisms, while women are excluded from these processes leading to an intensification of gender inequalities (Gyapong 2020; Hall *et al*. 2015; Levien 2017; Tsikata and Yaro 2014). In the context of incorporation of smallholder farmers into global circuits of accumulation, Torvikey *et al*. (2016) bring to the fore how women and men are positioned differentially in terms of out-grower value chain employment benefits, as men occupy higher earning positions on permanent contracts, and women are disposable casual workers. Tsikata (2016), looking specifically at how gendered land tenure systems disadvantage rural women's livelihoods, suggests the need to recognise the importance of the gendered division of labour in production and the control of resources since they affect how women experience land grabbing in ways that predispose them to higher levels of exploitation.

Shivji (2017) analyses the process of surplus extraction by capital and shows that the cost of rural workers' necessary consumption sits at its core. He refers to 'working people' as the different segments of the rural population which go through exploitation processes, thereby feeding the accumulation of capital. Shivji (1987) explains that capital maximises its rate of exploitation by

letting peasants retain their traditional means of production and control over their labour process so that they assume responsibility for the costs of their reproduction. He also points out that men become semi-proletarianised through working in plantations, and women remain 'peasantised', subsidising capital. The capitalist surplus extraction harms social reproduction, as the burden of unpaid and self-exploited labour falls ultimately on women. Irrespective of their positions in their households, women keep producing food in addition to all other activities that involve taking care of the household. Women under such conditions, he explains, live "sub-human" lives "while exerting super-human labour". Women's additional exploitation often takes place in the process of subsidising capital by generating additional products and income to make up for shortfalls in household sustenance (Shivji, 2017).

Fraser (2016: 100) puts forward the discussion on social reproduction as the "condition for sustained capital accumulation". Currently, capitalism's orientation to unlimited accumulation tends to destabilise the very processes of social reproduction on which it relies. She refers to the disruptions as "the crisis of care". Fraser calls for making the economies of care visible by recognising labour conducted by women, including a range of work from food preparation, provision of clothing and shelter, care for workers, raising of children, and caring for the elderly (Fraser, 2016). These and other activities provide capitalism with the labour force it relies on to produce surplus value.

While it is necessary to make visible the contribution of women's unpaid labour to capitalist surplus extraction, the burden of subsistence production as women experience high levels of peasantisation under large-scale land acquisition, needs further interrogation. In the face of their differential incorporation into the land compensation deals, it is essential to understand the role of the gendered division of productive and reproductive labour in the survival strategies of those dispossessed of their land. I borrow from Shivj's analysis of surplus extraction to understand how Portucel's survival as a company relies on women's productive and reproductive labour as shaped by the patriarchal context of rural Mozambique. The benefit of patriarchy to capital is how it allows women's labour to be configured to augment capitalist surplus value extraction in ways that allow capital to renege on any responsibility for its survival.

Incorporating rural households into Portucel's rural development project

Brief historical background, rural settings, and rural livelihoods

The current shape of African agrarian society is derived from its colonial past. The first scramble for Africa shaped agrarian societies into what they look like today (Moyo *et al*., 2012). Historical processes of agrarian change due to colonialism and imperialism are still present, at least implicitly, particularly regarding rural livelihoods and land distribution. Labour force exploitation was one of the main strategies of colonial Portugal and foreign capital concessions in colonial Mozambique – which shaped the dynamics of semi-proletarianisation among the peasantry. From 1930 to 1970, Portuguese colonialism intensified the integration of peasants into the global capitalist economy, including transforming indigenous populations from southern Mozambique into a labour reserve for South African mining capital. The country's central and northern sections became a plantation economy with big companies producing sugar, cotton, and tobacco. Plantation agriculture co-existed with smallholder agricultural families who produced food and other cash crops for the external market (Serra, 2000). Thus, according to Wuyts (1989: 27), the colonial historical path spurred three main clusters of livelihood strategies for the peasantry, namely: (i) selling crops to the market, (ii) selling labour to plantations in the northern and central regions, and a labour reserve for South African mining, and (iii) practising agriculture for own consumption.

After independence, and the adoption of the Bretton Woods institutions' structural adjustment programmes, the Mozambican economy took a neoliberal turn which intensified after the 2000s. High levels of foreign direct investment engaged in extractive and export ventures, directed both at mining and agriculture industries, making Mozambique one of the main targets of land grabbing (Land Matrix[1]). Rural development and livelihoods are highly shaped by these dynamics, as evidenced by the foreign investments of Portucel Moçambique and the implications of its land acquisition model and social development plan for the district of Ile.

Portucel Moçambique, land acquisition model and social development plan

Mozambique is a country where land is predominantly state-owned. Land acquisition follows the procedures outlined in the Land Law, beginning with the identification of targeted land, preparation and submission of the land exploration plan, and request for the right to use the land. A critical part of the process is submitting the *Direitos de Uso e Aproveitamento da* Terra (DUAT), which outlines the public consultation and negotiation with residents. In case of a positive response, the applicant finally obtains the government's approval of the DUAT. The company then moves to the next stage - compensating and resettling residents - before commencing its operations.

Portucel Moçambique received a 50-year DUAT approved by Mozambique's Council of Ministers. The company has been gradually expropriating land from rural households to plant approximately two-thirds of the area. Until 2019, around 3,500 families have had shares of their land "transferred" to Portucel (with some exceptional cases of total land transferred). Portucel has planted 13,500 hectares of eucalyptus (Portucel Moc, 2021). The company plans to integrate the local population into rural development programmes based on employment creation and provision of agricultural inputs and technical assistance (Portucel Moc, 2021).

However, Portucel's model of land acquisition excluded resettlement. Instead, they negotiated with the Council of Ministers to implement Portucel's Social Development Plan (PSDP). In the company's narratives, the local population would benefit from the social and community development projects outlined in the PSDP. The stated goal of the PSDP was to create and share value and prosperity with local communities through investments in forest plantations. The PSDP constituted a set of projects to be implemented to compensate for rural households' loss of land and forest resources. These included food production and income-generating projects to overcome food access and production challenges. These projects were expected to: (1) provide technical assistance and training on farming techniques (following Climate Smart Agriculture guidelines); (2) distribute agricultural inputs such as livestock and seeds; (3) construct barns; (4) provide water holes; and (5) construct and rehabilitate roads and bridges, among other smaller related income generation projects (Portucel Moc, 2021).

Before the company's arrival, households were mostly subsistence producers with some market integration. They relied on precarious production techniques, mainly rain-fed and labour-intensive techniques, using tools such as hoes with no fertiliser application. Households provided the labour force. They mainly produced maize, peanuts, beans, and cassava (INE, 2012). Thus, it was the expectation that the implementation of PSDP would promote agrarian transformation in terms of mechanisation and use of improved farm practices and inputs. A company representative reported that about 5,800 families and 115 communities in the Manica and Zambézia Provinces had received benefits since the PSDP was implemented in 2015. However, designed in a top-down manner, the PSDP's planning and implementation were insensitive to smallholder viewpoints and the livelihood concerns of affected households, especially women. The PDSP did not fully consider the priorities and aspirations of the local population.

There were crucial distinctions in the experiences and outcomes of the neoliberal land grabbing processes. More broadly, regarding global processes, pre-existing inequalities within rural societies shape the dynamics of incorporation and condition the experiences of each segment of the working people. At the same time, the segments of working people are not delimited and segregated. The categories present grey boundaries. Factors external to the land grabbing process may move households into other social categories. In some instances, they might simultaneously belong to multiple categories. The affected rural households did not constitute a homogeneous class. On the contrary, factors such as class, gender, kinship, and age differentiated the working people into distinct groups that went through differentiated experiences, terms of incorporation, and outcomes regarding the process of land grabbing.

The data analysis identified patterns of household segmentation based on gender and the land size holdings of family heads before the project's inception. I thus outlined four household groupings based on their experiences and terms of incorporation. They were households headed by women and those headed by men. The male-headed households were further differentiated into three based on the socio-economic statuses of the heads. The first obtained direct benefits from the company like waged employment, and the second were poorer male household heads deriving benefits from the PSDP but outside the company's

employment. The final grouping was also under male heads, the local elites, who gained permanent employment and were more incorporated into the PSDP.

Gender inequalities were apparent and culturally present in this study community, subjecting women to multiple forms of marginalisation. Most women household heads interviewed were unmarried, divorced or widowed and belonged to poorer segments of the communities. Very few women household heads belonged to the rural elite either directly or indirectly through marriage. The first group of men household heads interviewed was made up of the local elites, community leaders, public officials, and politicians. The second group comprised company workers with permanent employment, and the third consisted of men heads of households who often earned lower income through non-permanent waged work. The situation of unmarried, divorced, and widowed women heads of households was particularly accentuated, making it imperative to understand how such women experienced Portucel's compensation packages associated with land grabbing.

Portucel's land acquisition process and compensation adequacy

This section presents the generalised implications of the land grabbing process and the convergent implications for rural livelihoods. The gender-differentiated implications will be explored in subsequent sections. Compensating for land expropriation was done through two main mechanisms: the PSDP package and employment creation. Two problems identified throughout the process of compensating households were unfulfilled promises and unsatisfactory compensation mechanisms. A consistent feature emerging from the interviews with all research participants was that Portucel had failed to keep its promises: providing employment, distributing seeds, and improving the overall livelihood conditions of affected households. Most women and men household heads interviewed stated that they had failed to protest and had allowed their land to be "transferred" to Portucel because there was a general notion during the consultation phase that the company would provide permanent employment for at least one member of each affected household. They felt assured that permanent employment would allow fixed monthly income to compensate for losing their land.

Not all affected household heads obtained employment from the company. Around 80%, according to Bruna (2021), worked for a couple of months or received no employment opportunities from the company. Most interviewees who had access to casual work said that the earnings did not compensate for the loss of their land. They had to work on average for one to two months, earning 170 Meticais a day (around 2 to 3 USD):

> Yes, I worked there, maybe for a month or so. With the money, I bought salt and food. I could not even buy a bicycle because the money was so little. … Life got worse; before we could produce on our farms, even sell produce. After Portucel came, everything stopped, [I] cannot even produce cassava, cannot get any money, nothing. Before, I could even buy clothes for my children, buckets, plates, and pots (Woman Head of Household, Ile, 2019).

The second problem revolving around dissatisfaction with services provided was the inefficient compensation mechanisms. Some households reported receiving seeds and technical assistance from the company. They complained, however, that the seeds were insufficient for their needs, distributed late in the season, and inappropriate for the edaphoclimatic conditions of the region:

> Yes, they distributed seeds, including beans and maize. However, because the soil is incompatible, they must change to other seeds here; … most of us are asking for seeds compatible with our land. For example, peanuts and beans [would be better] because maize does not grow here, maybe with manure (Male Community Leader, Ile, 2019).

The compensation was considered insufficient because it did not cover income and subsistence deficits from the loss of land. They faced a food production shortfall. The deforestation caused by the company's turn to plantation agriculture meant a loss of forest resources such as mushrooms and small animals, which contributed to meeting their dietary needs, firewood for cooking and even grass to construct their homes. The project implementation thus curtailed access to such resources, which were critical determinants for their social reproduction.

According to the data collected, most households, unable to survive on their farm incomes, engaged in livelihood diversification. Men sought casual employment in neighbouring towns, and women brewed and sold alcoholic beverages, producing and selling charcoal and offering traditional health

services. The following section focuses on differentiated implications for, and responses by, distinct segments of the working people, with a particular focus on how women's productive and reproductive labour within peasant production modes make up for the losses in household provisioning.

Local elites: intensification of social differentiation

Not all rural households were affected in the same way. Thus, even though many stated that the compensation received was insufficient to cover their expenses and provide them with general well-being, the local elites appeared not to have been affected similarly. Local elites, mostly male influential members, are likely to constitute the better-off segment of the working people, retaining power nowadays because of localised historical dynamics.

I distinguish the local elite as community leaders (by lineage and kinship) and their relatives, 'richer' peasants with larger plots of land and livestock, and local government officials. They are usually very influential within the community and are at the forefront of decision-making and negotiation processes with external actors. This puts them in an advantageous position regarding access to information and eligibility for external programmes. It enhances their opportunity to receive benefits deriving from such programmes. This group of individuals is a product of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence rural structures and traditional native leadership. They have access to conditions for accumulating from below based on owning large plots of land or advantageously taking over the remaining colonial investments in the post-independent period after the Portuguese fled the country or even links to Frelimo, the party in power since independence.

The local elites derived benefits from the PSDP. They were appointed group leaders for demonstration plots. Their eligibility to hold leadership positions was due to their possession of the national identity card and their prior experience with the commercialisation of surplus production, which gave them a firmly established market network. They also possessed large tracts of land and had enough to carry out farming activities even after they had ceded land to the company. Opportunities available to them from the PSDP were access to inputs and technical assistance. The interview with one of the

elected leaders, who previously owned the community mill, revealed certain advantages of being a group leader, such as receiving more agricultural inputs and technical assistance:

> I did not get employed. My benefit is to be the group leader. With the income, I managed to buy a motor pump to irrigate my farms using a solar panel. I thank Portucel for these improvements… (Male Demonstration Plots Leader, Ile, 2019).

Besides having the privilege of accessing inputs and technical assistance, they had the financial resources to hire labour on their larger farmlands, where they also applied these new agricultural practices. Labour availability was crucial in applying the new techniques, which were labour intensive. The other smallholders could not deploy additional income to pay for hired labour. As one demonstration plot leader highlighted:

> I was chosen to be responsible for a group of 24 farmers. I am responsible for taking care of the demonstration field by introducing new farming techniques I have been taught. The other 24 hardly make it. Maybe they can apply these new techniques in smaller areas because it is hard work. To do half a hectare or one hectare is challenging work. I have at least six to eight people working for me, and I pay 50 meticais per day (Male Demonstration Plot Leader, Ile, 2019).

The efficiency of these demonstration plots had been questioned because most smallholders could not apply the new techniques. Also, it was clear how unevenly distributed these 'benefits' from PSDP are on the ground. In some instances, some local elites have benefited both by being employed and at the same time holding a demonstration plot, which will further allow accumulation opportunities, thus intensifying social differentiation.

Permanent waged workers: more land, more benefits

Permanent workers were usually men with larger plots that were not under use before the project's inception. Because they owned larger plots of land, they could transfer larger plots to the company and retain enough to support their subsistence. The project prioritised households according to the land size they gave up; as such, these household heads were first to be offered permanent

jobs, mainly as guards, "*agentes de ligação*" (i.e. liaison officers, between the community and the company). or seasonal workers for the plantations. They received seeds and technical assistance for their farms under the PSDP. They could secure regular income, which they invested in farm inputs and labour, enabling them to produce adequate food and cash crops to sell in the markets. They hired labour, usually women and men from poorer households, in addition to relying on the labour of their wives.

Despite the benefits derived from PSDP interventions, interviews with permanent workers did not confirm significant life improvements. These wage workers acknowledged the benefits of a monthly salary but complained about the burden of work versus the amount of money they received. A permanent worker – a guard – oversees 48 blocks of eucalyptus and controls fires. These workers need a cell phone and a bicycle, which they must purchase from their wages, in order to carry out their tasks. Those unable to do so have to walk long distances to take care of the blocks of eucalyptus. One guard highlighted:

> Since I started working in the company, my life improved, not totally, but at least the minimum. However, the negative part is the working time [the workload]. We cannot add our value to the community and have businesses that help the community grow… I was working in the field and lost my phone. It costs 600 Meticais, and I receive 500 or 400 Meticais. I am not going to be able to buy a new one. We want a salary that enables us to grow. It is hard to wake up, go to my farm from 4 am to 7 am, and then work for the company the rest of the day (Male Portucel Worker, Ile, 2019).

Although they had access to more money, the overall household expenses were still not fully met. They must compensate with overexploitation of their labour, including their wives' and the latter's contribution to social reproduction. They survived due to the female labour tied to the land for subsistence farming. So, they end up subsidising capital via self-exploitation:

> My life has gotten better. Now I can buy things for my children that I could not before, like a radio and a bicycle... Before, I was working with no formal contract until 2018. However, I have received the same monthly salary since 2018: 4,200 Meticais [around USD 62]. They say the salary depends on the government; [my salary would improve] if the government

> raises the salary [official minimum wage]. However, as my wife works on the farm [the guard's land] with some people we hired, we manage to get products to sell in the market (Male Portucel Guard, Ile, 2019).

Although many permanent wage workers have connections to local elites by kinship, most do not own enough means of production to easily accumulate from below. They might be better off than other groupings, such as poorer peasants and women household heads. They struggled, however, to fulfil their livelihoods and social reproduction needs. They did this through further self-exploitation. They claimed that they wanted better terms of incorporation, but their current economic status inhibited any struggle on their part against dispossession or protests against Portucel. The labour of their wives on the land they retained was critical to making ends meet.

Peasant male household heads: intensified drudgery and self-exploitation

This group of respondents included male household heads who owned relatively smaller land without links with local elites. These household heads engaged mainly in subsistence agriculture and occasionally sold the surplus in the market. In response to the promises made in the project, most transferred their land to the company. Those who failed to do so had theirs forcefully expropriated and ended up with either insufficient land to survive, or no land at all. Some were employed as casual workers, but even they reported labour exploitation:

> They want us to work from dawn to dusk. It is backbreaking work. The wages are low and do not compensate. We are unhappy with that; the money is so little. They hire us to work only a few days and then try to make the most of our work each day from dawn to dusk (Man Household Head, Ile, 2019).

This segment of working people was experiencing low incomes and severe food deficits, and had to adopt alternative livelihood strategies for survival. The most common strategies were: (1) selling labour to better-off households (permanent waged workers or rural elites); (2) borrowing or renting land from family or other members of the community; (3) engaging in seasonal migration to work in nearby cities or towns, as construction workers; and (4) migrating permanently. In their absence, their wives took over as heads responsible for

ensuring household survival through subsistence production and waged work on the farms of the rural elite and permanent employees.

Gendered implications and reactions of the working people

Women-headed households: exclusion and labour exploitation

Female household heads had no occasion to consent to "transfer" their land to the company. This situation is derived from rural Mozambique's gender exclusionary traditional and customary cultural practices (Agy, 2018). The interviewed women stated that it was mainly men and local elites who were invited to the initial meetings with the company. They, the women, were left out. Thus, women are excluded from participating and presenting their opinions and aspirations in meetings with investors and government representatives to decide the community's future. One of the women that were interviewed explained the exclusion process:

> We were not consulted at all. We would just see machines coming and clearing our land for their ends. If you complained, the leader would come and tell you that the land is not ours. The land belonged to the government and God. They would come in, cutting down everything…even if you protest, they will not accept (Woman Household Head, Ile, 2019).

Women in the study, whom the company employed, were casual workers. In some cases, male members of their families (husbands, sons, nephews, sons-in-law) were employed even though the women were the actual owners of the land. A community leader in Ile explained that older women usually transferred their casual job opportunities to young men, who split the remuneration with them fifty-fifty. Citing one instance by way of explanation:

> She and her daughter gave their land [to Portucel]. Because they are women, they cannot handle this job; only men can handle [it]. After the men got the job [casual employment], they shared the income in half. One half for them [women] as land owners and the other half for the men that worked… For the other one [another woman that was present at the meeting] as well, because they do not have sons, do not have men in their families, it was the same process (Male Community Leader, Ile, 2019).

Many women complained about food-related issues. Most expressed that food production was a higher priority to the community than the eucalyptus the company was planting. In the words of one of the women interviewed, "*eucalyptus does not kill hunger*". As mentioned earlier, poorer male peasants were migrating to peri-urban areas in search of employment. Meanwhile, their wives assumed full responsibility for household social reproduction and farm work. For example, before Portucel expropriated their land, Dona Deolinda and her husband worked on their farm with help, remunerating their workers with farm harvest. After they lost their land to Portucel around 2009, her husband went to the city looking for jobs in construction while she assumed the household headship, farming on borrowed land and hiring out her labour to better-off households in the village. Dona Deolinda and other women heads of households experience significant burdens and precarious existence. She lamented:

> It is bad. I have nothing, not cassava, nothing. I do not understand why cassava and beans do not grow next to the eucalyptus; it absorbs all the water. My husband had to move to the city to work in construction, and he sent me a little money that was not enough. I must work on other people's farms to earn money (Expropriated Peasant Woman, Ile, 2019).

As a kind of ecological rupture, women spoke of their small plots and gardens right next to the eucalyptus plantation and how this remaining small plot of land could not produce adequate food for subsistence. The predominant understanding of the interviewees was that the eucalyptus trees exhaust soil nutrients, including groundwater. Another ecological rupture, as noted, was the lack of access to forest resources, including mushrooms and other edibles.

Generally, women heads of households were keen to have their land back so they could farm again and get their food and life back. These women were not interested in struggling for better terms of incorporation into the PSDP or other forms of compensation. As Dona Zita claims: "*I would rather have my land back. They took over our land in vain!*" Another woman noted:

> Nothing got better. We are here crying. We want our land back to farm because we see nothing now. They fooled us and brought nothing that they had promised. They said they would bring zinc plates for our homes, that we would benefit from this company for 50 years and so on. Nothing was done. That is why we are crying. Even the seeds they promised, they do not bring them anymore. And then I think, "Why did I accept this transfer of land in the first place?" (Expropriated Peasant Woman, Ile, 2019).

The exclusion of households headed by women follows the argument of Tsikata and Yaro (2014) that if pre-existing inequalities are not addressed, female access to opportunities, such as permanent jobs and PSDP, are limited. Women household heads present higher risks of being excluded and suffering accentuated adverse effects of land grabbing even if compensation mechanisms are implemented.

Conclusion

Corporations have been implementing compensation mechanisms, such as job creation and social development plans, to incorporate rural households into the expected process of rural development and thereby improve their livelihoods without considering pre-existing rural structures and inequalities. Trends indicate that such mechanisms are not improving the livelihoods of affected rural households. Most end up adversely incorporated, ultimately resulting in the inclusion of a few and the exclusion of the majority, particularly households headed by women.

My discussion so far shows that social development experiences derived from the projects rolled out by Portucel Moçambique differed for the participating community members depending on their gendered positions within their households and the size of their land. The pre-existing structures and inequalities conditioned the differences in experiences within the rural setting. In this way, intra-community relations and inequalities exacerbated the impact of land dispossession and expropriation. Local elites could be incorporated insofar as they got opportunities to accumulate. Male workers, heads of poorer households and women household heads underwent exploitation of their labour to feed the company and, at a considerably lower rate, the local elite's accumulation.

The weight and costs of social reproduction were further transferred to, and ultimately carried by, women belonging to poorer households and households headed by male workers, as noted by Fraser (2016), Tsikata (2016) and to some extent, Shivji (2017). Overall, it is crucial to underline that both pre-existing structures and inequalities and the mechanism of incorporation heavily condition the outcomes of land grabbing and the reactions from below. This is because they determine the level of exclusion that each segment experiences and the compensation for the losses resulting from expropriation.

This article demonstrates the various degrees through which the working people in their heterogeneity experience land grabbing processes in ways that intensify their exclusion and social differentiation in the rural world. By examining the different forms of labour undertaken by the household head, I discerned the various levels of incorporation, from the petty commodity producers to the fully proletarianised waged workers through to the semi-detached casual workers and seemingly detached peasant farmers subsisting on the land for their needs. I argue that they all constituted part of the company's exploited labour, contributing to its wealth generation. This was made possible by women's productive labour and reproductive labour tied to the land. The nature of the exploitation experienced by the various women depended on the household's incorporation in the company's production processes. The critical feature here was the sex of the household head and the size of land owned. In all this, women's productive and reproductive labour played a key role since such labour provided the fallback survival strategy for households living within the land area that Portucel obtained. Portucel's wealth accumulation is thus only possible due to existing forms of patriarchy that give men unquestioned access to women's labour, productive or reproductive. Undermining patriarchy becomes critical for reversing rural communities' exploitation in large-scale land acquisitions.

Endnotes

1 https://landmatrix.org/map/

2 'Rights to use and benefit from the land'. The DUAT is a statutory land use permit.

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