

Full Length Research

The nature of land expropriation and compensation in Amhara National Regional State: a focus in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda

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This study examined the nature of land expropriation and compensation in Amhara National Regional State (ANRS): a focus on Jovani Alphano and Tana Flora farms in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda. To address the research objectives, a mixed research approach with concurrent research design was employed. The study accessed both primary and secondary sets of data through interview, questionnaire, document review and Focused Group Discussion. Then, the two data sets gathered through qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments were analyzed and interpreted through statistics-by-themes and side-by-side comparison in an integrative manner through joint display mechanisms. The study revealed that a top down imposition of expropriation was practically implemented without involving evictees at the grass root level in land dealings. Expropriation was carried out without genuine public consultation, ascertaining popular consent and written notification. Similarly, the study found that compensation was paid to evictees; however, the process of valuation was full of uncertainty and jumping which produced dissatisfaction and grievance on evictees. The major conclusion drawn from the finding is the expansion of commercial farming was not made vis-à-vis with reaching consensus about expropriation and compensation with the displaced poor in the study area.

Key terms: expropriation, consultation, notification, compensation, evictees, valuation

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the backbone of Ethiopia's economy. But the sector in Ethiopia continues to show sluggish growth due to its strong insistence on rain fed farming and low level of technology adoption (Samuel, 2006; Diao, 2010). This makes peasants in the country side facing persistent, pervasive and deep food insecurity and poverty (Samuel, 2006). To reverse the problem, smallholder agricultural intensification has given great attention in the poverty reduction policies of Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP).

In accordance with the program, agricultural extension policies have been adopted to enhance agricultural productivity (MoFED, 2002). Unfortunately, the sector has remained unable to transform the Ethiopian economy due to poor technology adoption and lack of market oriented commercial agricultural investment (Samuel, 2006; Birhanu *et al*, 2006). The extent and degree of investment in agriculture continued to be low and fragile in SDPRP (MoFED, 2006). This connotes that the more narrow focus on smallholder farming continues to be cost

ineffective in transforming poor peasants into non-poor population (Collier and Dercon, 2014). The practical achievement of SDPRP witnessed that smallholders have no prospects to escape from poverty through smallholder farming (Amdissa, 2006). The claim that small scale farmers are unproductive and inefficient results in the recognition of commercial agricultural investment under PASDEP document (Nathan, 2013; Yihene *et al.*, 2013; Fana, 2016). In PASDEP, the government gives solid priority for the expansion of large, medium and small scale agricultural investments through acquisition of both communally and privately possessed land (Samuel, 2006; Amdissa, 2006; Desalegn, 2011). The expansion of commercial farming is accelerated in unprecedented speed by dislocating small landholders (Belachew, 2013; Daniel, 2014; ANRSIC, 2016). The state ownership of land makes the expansion of agricultural investment very easy because the government has ultimate authority to expropriate land for public purpose and optimum utilization (FDRE, 2005; 2007). This resulted in the expropriation of large hectares of farmland for commercial agricultural investment from small landholders for the production of food and cash crops in Ethiopia (Daniel, 2015). Similarly, the acquisition of land for commercial plantation in Amhara region is also intense and paramount (ANRSIC, 2016). This makes access to land the innermost and contested issue in the government-society relations in the region. However, most agricultural investments particularly flower farms in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda have been destroyed through popular protest in August 2016 (ANRSIC, 2017; Reuters, 10 August, 2016). Several factors have been responsible in the destruction of investment sites. In the way forward, the nature of land acquisition and compensation process have remained one area of controversy about the sabotage of farms. It was a puzzle that how compensated evictees involved in firing developmental projects. Thus, this article made a systematic inventory of land deals and compensation in Amhara region by taking *Jovani Alphano* and *Tana Flora* flower farms in BahirDraZuriaWoreda as a focus of study.

Land Tenure Policies in Ethiopia

Land tenure policies in Ethiopia have been continued as the subject of contention among farmers, policy makers, researchers and the public at large since the imperial period. In the history of the country, land is not only a source of livelihood but also a source of political and economic power for all groups (Desalegn, 2004; Yigremew, 2002). The formulation of land reforms and policies in the country has been influenced in light of political advantages. In the imperial period, the land tenure policy was characterized by a complex system of ownership which was studied in dichotomy; i.e.,

Communal kinship/ rist system in the north and gult or privatization in the south (Bahru, 2002). Rist system was a dominant landholding system in northern Ethiopia denoted by shared rights and land distribution based on the principle of equality (Bezabih *et al.*, 2011). In this system, land was considered to be a collective property that allowed transferred rights to each individual member based on blood ties to founding ancestors; however, land could not be sold or mortgaged (Di Falco *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, the gult system was common in southern Ethiopia with absentee landlordism and a system of privatization (Bahru, 2002; Bezabih *et al.*, 2011). It was developed as a result of land grants by the government to loyalists of the regime, northern settlers and *madera* land for those serving the government (Bahru, 2002). This brought land concentration in the hands of few landlords that failed to provide incentives for cultivators to efficiently manage farmlands in a sustainable manner. Exploitative landlord-tenant relationships were manifested in practice. Consequently, the land tenure policy of the imperial regime was characterized by tenure insecurity, arbitrary eviction and inefficient utilization (Haimanot, 2009).

Following the imperial regime, Derg announced a far-reaching agrarian reform program known as Proclamation No. 31/1975 on 4 March 1975 (Nickola, 1998). The reform was radical that ended tenancy relations and land transfer rights of the imperial regime (Di Falco *et al.*, 2016). It further declared that all rural and urban land to be the property of the state without any compensation to previous landholders. The Proclamation allowed distribution of land to large number of rural families working under the exploitative tenancy relations for a small group of landlords. It further stipulated that farmers had usufruct rights with no transfer rights by sale, mortgage, or lease. Bequeathing of usufruct rights was only allowed to primary family members upon death of the landholder (Di Falco *et al.*, 2016). In this period, peasant associations were the major element of the state's rural bureaucracy with right to expropriate land and distribute it equally among its members (Fasil, 1993). The land reform effectively abolished the traditional institutions of *Rist* and *Gult* through restriction of farmland size to a maximum of 10 hectares. Land distribution was continued until 1991 to reduce landlessness and land quality differences. Eviction of peasants was done to give way for state farms and producer cooperatives. In this regard, studies indicated that the land tenure policy of Derg resulted in diminution of land holdings, tenure insecurity and unsustainable utilization of natural resources (Desalegn, 1994; Yigremew, 2002).

In 1991, the EPRDF government introduced a series of political and economic reforms. Unfortunately, the land tenure policies remained similar what the Derg socialist regime prevailed despite transformation of land institutions towards privatization was expected at home

and abroad. The government announced the continuation of state ownership of land in its economic policy in the transitional period. Surprisingly, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) constitution approved the state ownership of land in Ethiopia (FDRE, 1995). The constitution in its article 40 stipulates that ownership of rural and urban land and natural resources is exclusively vested in the hands of the state and nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia (FDRE, 1995; Desalegn, 2011). Similarly, land transfer rights are prohibited and land shall not be subject to sale or other means of exchange. This clearly indicates that peasants have only usufruct right with no right to sell, mortgage and exchange (Desalegn, 2011). But land leasing and inheritance are allowed with some restrictions. According to FDRE (2005, 2007) the state has the authority to expropriate land from peasants and transferred to investors (Desalegn, 2011). This connotes that landholders have only limited right subject to subrogation at any time for public purpose (ANRS, 2010). Therefore, land tenure insecurity has continued to be the calamitous factor in the slow progress of agricultural productivity in Ethiopia.

Historical development of expropriation policy in Ethiopia

The term expropriation is defined as a compulsory acquisition of land from peasants by the government for public purpose upon advance payment of fair compensation. Like other social terms, expropriation has a multitude of naming in different countries (Daniel, 2013). It is called 'eminent domain' in USA, 'compulsory purchase' in UK and 'expropriation' in Europe. Expropriation in Ethiopia has passed continuous developments since 1907 in the promulgation of Addis Ababa land charter (Daniel, 2013). Ethiopia used the term expropriation because the country adopted and followed a civil law legal system (Daniel, 2014). Thus, expropriation emerged during the reign of emperor Menelik II when the first regulation made land a private property (Belachew, 2013). The provision allowed few land lords and regional chiefs to privately owned land albeit expropriation was recognized by the government for public interest (Belachew, 2013). However, the expropriation clause was incorporated as a constitutional provision during the reign of Emperor Haile Sillassie I (Daniel, 2013). Concomitantly, the Derg allowed confiscation of private property and land without compensation in the 1975 land reform (Fasil, 1993). Now days, expropriation is adopted and enforced as a policy to access land for investors and other public purposes (Daniel, 2015). As stated in the constitution, the government is the only responsible and authorized entity to acquired land for domestic and foreign investors through expropriation. This right of the government is

manifested in the 1995 FDRE constitution, the federal expropriation and payment of compensation proclamation No. 455/ 2005, federal rural land administration law 456/2005, Council of ministries regulation No. 135/2007 and ANRS state council regulation No. 5/2010 (Belachew, 2013). The government justified that expropriation is carried out to benefit the society. In this regard, public purpose is used as one justification of land expropriation and limits the state from arbitrary action on land (Daniel, 2009).

In accordance with its land and development policies, the Ethiopian government provided million hectares of land to investors by expropriating peasants (Desalegn, 2011). However, the government is claimed that the land transferred to investors is unutilized. According MoRAD (2009a) 8000 applications were approved by regions and MoRAD in the year between 1996 up to 2008 a land estimated over million hectares. Whatever the claim is, large hectare of land is expropriated from peasants in Ethiopia for urban redevelopment and private mechanized farming (Daniel, 2009). Similarly, the extent of land expropriation in Amhara region is huge for housing, construction of public works and agricultural investment. According to ANRSIC (2016) more than 200,000 hectares of rural landholdings and communal land has been expropriated for commercial plantation. This implies that land acquisition is dynamic and rapid in the region.

The nature of compensation and valuation in Ethiopia

Compensation is a "full indemnity or remuneration for the loss or damage sustained by the owner of the property taken or injured for public use" as Corpus Juris Secundum cited in (Daniel, 2014). It is a payment paid in cash or in kind to expropriatees for the land and its attached properties taken away by the government for public purpose (Belachew, 2103). It is named differently as fair compensation, adequate compensation, reasonable compensation or any other like commensurate compensation in Ethiopia (Daniel, 2009). Compensation is at the centerpiece of land expropriation in contemporary Ethiopia (Belachew, 2013). In this regard, the FDRE (1995) noted that individuals have full right to claim compensation on their immovable property and improvements made on their farmland at the time of expropriation. Paying commensurate compensation is the duty of the government despite its authority to expropriate land for public purpose (FDRE, 2005; 2007). Thus, compensation serves as a guarantee to keep the balance of social justice and protects the rights of landholders from arbitrary eviction by the government (Daniel, 2014). Valuation is the process of estimating the values of the property taken from initial holders by valuation committees for public purpose. Valuation committees

used fair market price or market value as a principle in compensation valuation. Comparable sales method, income capitalization method and replacement cost method are used in compensation valuation (Daniel, 2009). But income capitalization approach is the most frequently applied method to estimate compensation for a land expropriated for agricultural investment. In this approach, the appraiser analyzes the property's capacity to generate future benefits and capitalizes the income into an indication of present value (Daniel, 2014). The method provides value to the land vis-à-vis with the income it produces. According to Daniel (2009) careful and proper valuation of properties should be made in compensation valuation. The federal expropriation proclamation No. 455/2005 and regulation No. 135/2007 noted the presence of certified appraisal professionals and nationally similar formula of compensation valuation in Ethiopia. However, Daniel (2009) argued that unfair compensation valuation is practiced as a result of absence of independent and uniform valuation system and adequate professionals in the field. Although the principle of fair market value is a criteria in compensation valuation, its practical ground remained a subject of contention. Therefore, this article examined the nature of land deals and compensation in ANRS by taking Jovani Alphano and Tana Flora farms in Bahir Dar Zuraia Woreda as a focus of study.

Theories on Land Expropriation for Commercial farming

There are different theories that scholars used to analyze and contextualize the nature of land expropriation for agricultural investment. There are different theories on appropriation of land including: primitive accumulation, accumulation by dispossession and regime dispossession (Fairhead *et al*, 2012).

Theory of Primitive Accumulation: is any historical process that creates the preconditions of capitalism through the use of force (Levin, 2015). In primitive accumulation, appropriation of land and resources is made through forcible and violent means (Bakker, 1990). It is a term used by Marx to describe the accumulation of social and economic conditions which results the rise of capitalism (Bakker, 1990). The violent and bloody process of expelling peasants from their land is a precondition for capitalism which transforms the land into capital and the peasants into proletariat (Marx, 1977). It is an early chapter in the development of capitalism (Levin, 2012) which illuminates the emergence of the proletariat and capitalism than the Political-Economy of land dispossession for commercial farming (Bakker, 1990). However, there is no primitive accumulation today because capitalism has remained a dominant mode of

production on a global scale which was practically seen in the era of colonialism (Bakker, 1990).

From the above central premises of the theory, the current land expropriation for commercial farming in Ethiopia cannot be understood in light of primitive accumulation. It is because of the fact that there was no historical account that shows the existence of proletariat in Ethiopia. The current dispossession of land is not the reflections of early chapter of capitalism rather a more advanced form of capitalist interest on land under neo-liberalism. Besides, land expropriation from the peasants is not solely made based on violent means. Hence, it is not adequate theoretical framework to examine the nature of land expropriation in Ethiopia today.

Theory of Accumulation by Dispossession: argued that capital is accumulated by expropriation of land and natural resources from peasants and by the conversion of common property into private property (Levin, 2015). It clearly recognizes dispossession is driven by advanced capitalism and over accumulated capital due to lack of profitable investment (Harvey, 2003). Accumulation by dispossession is the enclosure of public assets and land from prior users to wealthy elites for profit which results greater social inequality. It involves the privatization of public resources into private domains through dispossessing private owners of resources by violent expropriation and delegitimizing claims through legislation (Fairhead *et al*, 2012). In accumulation by dispossession, privatization and financialization are systems and manipulation of capital accumulation (Addisu, 2016). However, the theory misses the important role of the state in redistributing land to different classes through dispossession. So, the theory is less important to analyze the nature of land expropriation for commercial farming in the current Ethiopian context. Currently, the state is an active player in development and expropriation for flower farms in Ethiopia. Besides, investment in land by emphasizing flower farms is not promoted as a response to over accumulation. It is aimed to speeded up economic growth and diversify the export item of the country for the public interest. Hence, the theory is less applicable to contextualize the practice of expropriation in Ethiopia.

Regime dispossession theory: argues that land expropriation is a current political process of state redistribution of land to a particular class for a variety of economic purposes (Levin, 2015). A state claims dispossession of land from peasants takes place for the public purpose by means of force, legitimacy and material concession to convince the local communities about their dispossession (Levin, 2011). In this regard, the Ethiopian government tries to convince the public about land dispossession through compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation programs. To realize this, proclamations

about payment of compensation for expropriation of land holdings for a public purpose in the federal proclamation No. 455/2005; Council of minister Regulation No. 135/2007 and ANRS Regulation No. 5/2010 have been issued. The phrase 'public use' and 'payment of compensation' justifies the reason land taken from prior users and the amount of money paid to a property taken respectively (Daniel, 2013). Land has been expropriated for public purpose and best utilization albeit it indirectly affected local communities and the country. Therefore, regime dispossession theory was employed to contextualize the finding of the study.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

After reviewing empirical literatures, the researcher has developed a conceptual model that precisely indicates the relationship between dependent and independent variables in a linear relationship. In this study, expropriation and compensation are dependent variables brought as a result of the commencement of flower farms. Thus, the nature of land expropriation and compensation were thoroughly examined in this investigation. Generally, the conceptual framework was explained in Figure 1.

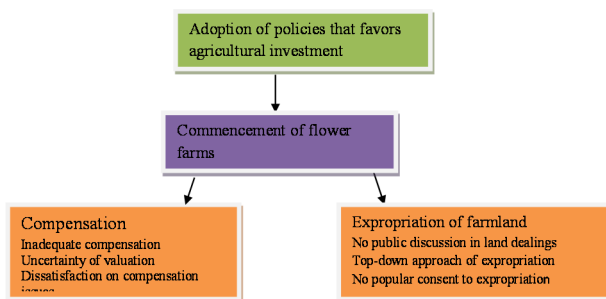


Figure 1

Objectives of the study

The overall purpose of this study was to examine the nature of land deals and compensation in Amhara National Regional State: a focus on *Jovani Alphano* and *Tana Flora* farms in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda. More specifically the study aimed to:

- Examine the nature of land expropriation and peoples' engagement in land acquisitions process
- To explore the nature of compensation process in flower farms in the study area.

Rationales for Selecting the Studied Cases

Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda was purposefully selected because many of the flower farms in Amhara region have been found in the Peripheries of Bahir Dar city (ANRSIC, 2015). Secondly, the extent of land expropriation was highly severe and numbers of landholders dislocated have been many compared with other woredas for flower farms in the region (Daniel, 2009). Therefore, Bahir Dar Zuria woreda was chosen in a non-probabilistic ways due to the above justifications. The second stage involved in selecting flower farms found in the district as a case study. In this regard, *Jovani Alphano* and *Tana Flora* farms were chosen based on a number of factors and considerations. Firstly, expropriation of land from peasants for agricultural investment in the woreda was unusual before. This means that dislocating landholders for these farms was the first in its kind in the district. Due to this, resistance and complaints against expropriation was very intense by evictees more than others in the woreda (Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda land administration office, 2017). Secondly, expropriation of land for these farms was carried out prior to the adoption of the details of compensation valuation implementation regulation at both the national and regional level (Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda land administration office, 2017; analysis of regulations and documents). Besides, the issues of land appropriation and compensation process in the district for commercial farming have become issues of ongoing contention at the public and academic endeavors. This influenced the investigator to examine the nature of land expropriation, the ways by which valuation of compensation and payment adhered to evictees as well as its overall process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Nature of Land Holdings and Expropriation

According to key informants land is the most important livelihood asset throughout rural Ethiopia. It has been served as a source of crop production and means of income generation for peasants long (¹ KII1, March 19/2018). The informant further added that the question of accessing land has remained the most critical issue for millions of farming households and at the forefront of government-society relations. In Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda, interviewed households had enough agricultural land for farming and other purposes before expropriation. In the same manner, the opportunities to access alternative land use arrangements were also high preceding the expropriation phases. However, the apparent expropriation for investment and reduction of farmland

¹ KII- stands for Key Informant Interviewee

Table1: Distribution of sample respondents based on their response about nature of landholdings

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Does your household possessed a land for crop production and other purposes?	Yes	139	86.9
		No	21	13.1
		Total	160	100
2	If yes, Size of land you hold?	Below 1 hectare	130	81.5
		1-2 hectare	9	5.6
		Total	139	86.9
3	How the current land size compared before 10 years?	Decreasing	139	86.9
		Nothing	21	13.1
		Total	160	100
4	If decreasing, reason?	flower farm	150	93.8
		2, 3	10	6.3
		Total	160	100
5	Type of land taken	Farmland	160	100

✓ (2, 3) stands to show expropriation for flower farms and sharing to children's

holding size becomes a hot agenda of the locals at the present. In this regard, about 86.9 percent of sample households have possessed agricultural land and the rest 13.1 percent did not possess farmlands. This witnessed that the majority of sample households possessed a farmland for cultivation and other purposes. Nevertheless, about 81.3 percent of surveyed households have a farmland below one hectare currently which sustains an average household family size of 7.04. This indicated that the mean land holding size of surveyed households is below one hectare, which is lower than the national average (1.22 hectare) (Sosina and Holden, 2014).

The current farmland possession of surveyed households' has reduced due to expropriation for flower farms and sharing to children's compared with the last ten years. The expropriated land used for crop cultivation by households. This in turn brought reduction of crop production. In connection to this, evicted interviewees unveiled that the extent of crop production has reduced per households following expropriation as a result of the shrinkage of farmland holding size. In this regard, Desalegn (2013) noted that the total output of peasants' production of crops was proportionally linked with landholding size manageable at family level. On the same token, Chala and Terefe (2015) also opined that farmer's possessing small landholding size cannot achieve anticipated growth and food security. Therefore, shortage of farmland is one of the severe constraints of farming surveyed households to produce enough agricultural production and sustain the basic needs of their family in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda. (Table 1)

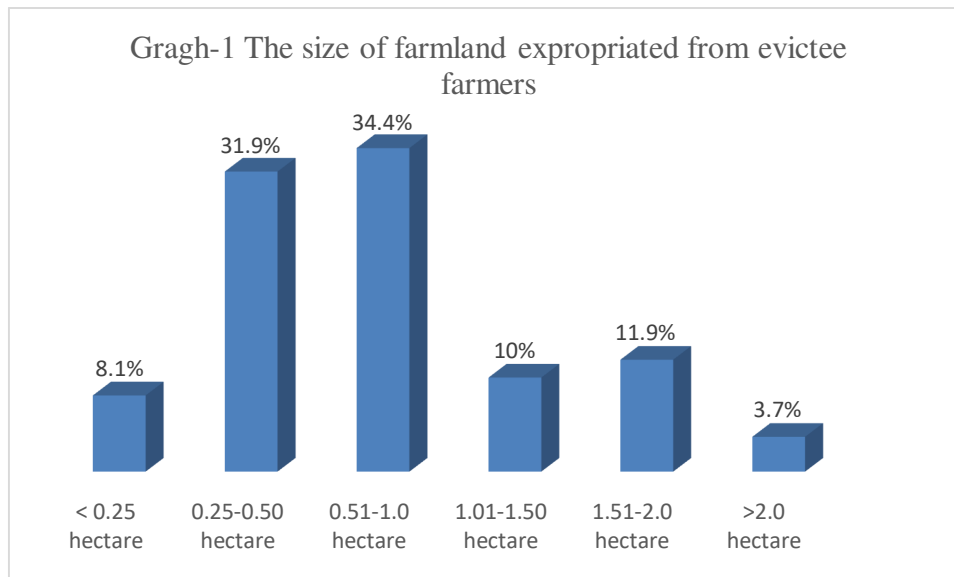
As highlighted in the graph below, about 34.4 percent of the sample households were expropriated a farmland size in between 0.51 hectare up to 1 hectare. Similarly, 40 percent of the respondents had lost a half and below half hectares of land for flower farms. Besides, about

24.6 percent of surveyed households were expropriated a land size above one hectare. As it was clearly stipulated in graph 1, the majority (60) percent of sampled households were expropriated a land size above half hectares by the government for flower farms. The average farmland size appropriated for flower farms accounted 0.84 hectare. This indicated that the land taken from peasants was too large compared with the mean land holding size of the woreda. In the land acquisition process, the maximum and minimum amount of land expropriated from peasants for the two studied flower farms was 2.45 and 0.09 hectares respectively.

According to evicted interviewees genuine public consultation about land dealings was not institutionalized to evictees by the government before expropriation. In the same breath, about 34.4 & 32.5 percent of sample respondents replied 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' respectively concerning the consultation of the public before the conduct of expropriation. On the other hand, about 33.1 percent of surveyed households recognized that the government consulted them when the land was transferred to investors; however, the consultation was an imposition of a decision made from above. In connection to this, GOI² and 3 embodied that woreda officials are implementers of a decision determined at Zonal or Regional level about expropriation. Likewise, the Amhara Regional Environmental Conservation, Land Administration and Use Bureau made a decision to free land from third bodies without making genuine public consultation. On the same token, VCI³ also asserted that peasants were engaged in consultation but they brought nothing once the authority decided on the issue. This implied that consultation was conducted with evictees to justify public and academic criticisms.

² GOI- Government official Interviewee

³ VCI- Valuation Committee Interviewee

**Figure 2**

Land Dealings, Participation and Consent of Peasants (This should be written like this. Because it is an independent topic for findings written below)

Table 2: Distribution of Sample households response about the nature of land dealings and expropriation

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Government consults me before Land taken	strongly disagree	55	34.4
		Disagree	52	32.5
		Agree	53	33.1
		Total	160	100
2	Government asked my consent before land transfer to investors	strongly disagree	52	32.5
		Disagree	52	32.5
		Agree	56	35.0
		Total	160	100
3	The land taken without my consent	Agree	55	34.4
		strongly agree	105	65.6
		Total	160	100

In the consultation process, evictees were unable to overturn the decision of the expropriator as a result of power asymmetry in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda. According to Daniel (2015) conducting public consultation about land dealings is helpful for the government to appreciate the concern of landholders and create smooth environment to the success of farms commenced. But Fonjong and Fokum (2015) noted that land deal negotiations in developing countries neglected communities' right on land. Similarly, Tanner and Baleira (2006) renowned that a bundle of promises are waved to local communities at different meetings on the desired outcomes of projects in most consultations related to land transfer without allowing them to bargain over land. In this investigation, therefore, expropriation was conducted without involving evictees at the grass root level in open

and genuine public consultation in land dealings.

According to government interviewees, the government asked the consent of evictees preceding to the expropriation phase. But the consent of evictees was ascertained after the government decided to expropriate the land for investment. Concomitantly, about 35 percent of sample respondents agreed that government asked their consent after decisions once decided at top level officials. Cognizant of such a fact, evictees strongly boycotted expropriation; unfortunately, they were labeled as anti-development and peace by the government. To ascertain their land rights, the peasants brought grievances and complaints in to the office of the regional chief administrator by opposing land appropriation. Conversely, approximately 65 percent of surveyed households articulated that the government failed to ask

their consent before the land acquisition process. This indicated that expropriation was administered without ascertaining the consent of evictees. According to Addisu (2016) expropriation of land should earn approval from the affected communities before expropriation. Unlikely, in this empirical inquiry, expropriation of peasants' farmland for flower farms was approved without reaching consensus with previous landholders.

Proclamations about expropriation of landholdings for public purpose ensured the provision of written notification next to public consultation and ascertaining the consent of peasants about expropriation. In this regard, KII1 articulated that the provision of written notification help evictees to have knowledge about the extent of land taken and amount of compensation paid. Unlikely, evicted interviewees embodied that the government did not provide written notification to evictees by indicating the time when the land was vacated and compensation was paid. The interviewees further added that the amount of compensation was only posted on notice board in Meshenti and Wonjeta towns for peasants' expropriated for *JovaniAlphano* and *TanaFlora* farms respectively after everything was completed. It is evidenced that the government did not provide appropriate written notification to peasants by indicating the extent of land taken, the time frame an evictee expected to be removed and amount of compensation paid with implementing agency. This was in contradiction to proclamation No. 455/2005 article 4(1), which states that when a woreda or an urban administration decides to expropriate a landholding shall notify the landholder in writing. Unfortunately, this investigation revealed the presence of discrepancy what has been stated in the proclamation and its actual implementation on the ground. (Table 3)

As indicated in the figure 2, the variation of each respondent data from the sample mean was 17.657 for the quantity of crops produced on land taken to flower farms. Evictees had produced a 30.64 mean quintal of crops on the farmland expropriated for flower farms. On the same token, 80 quintal was the maximum output of crops cultivated on a farmland appropriated for agricultural investment. Likely, 4 quintal was the minimum amount of crops produced on a land acquired for flower farms. The range of crops cultivated on expropriated farmland accounted 76 quintals of crops. Compensation was at the heart of land expropriation for flower farms in Bahir Dar ZuriaWoreda. Because the land appropriated for flower farms in this study was a farmland used for crop cultivation by households for a long time. In connection to this, the average amount of compensation paid to evictees was 68,405.54 whereas 53,998.38 birr was the variation of compensation amount paid to evictees distanced from the sample mean. In relation to compensation amount, 280,436 and 7,800 were the highest and lowest amount paid to evictees in the

aftermath of land expropriation in the study area.

From the aforementioned findings, the researcher deduced that the issue of land has remained unanswered and contentious in Ethiopian politics. The absence of land ownership and sovereignty created fear and insecurity on peasants which in turn enhanced the hegemonic power of the government. Peasants' confidence in possessing their land was strongly degraded because they have only usufruct rights over it. This right could easily be overtaken by the government at any time in the name of public purpose and best utilization of the land itself. But the justifications of expropriation are too bold and debatable. The questions of what constitutes public purpose and best utilization are ongoing public and academic agendas in Ethiopian politics. Desalegn (2011) claimed that land sovereignty empowers peasants and allowing them to be active agents in all matters affecting their lives. But small landholders were mere receivers of a decision made by the government. Land expropriation is common to undertake development projects and public use works but it should not be done arbitrarily. The feasibility of the farms and its short, medium and long term impacts to the locals and the country must thoroughly investigated prior to dislocation. A mere provision of compensation could not be a rational reason of land usurpation. In this study, an emotional and ambitious expansion of commercial farming has been observed by dislocating landholders. A mutual consensus about expropriation by both the locals and the government was not reached in study area. (Table 4)

The Nature of Compensation Payment

As indicated in Table 4, compensation was paid to all Sample households in cash without choice. Compensation in kind and resettlement to other places wasnot made in both Workemla Achadir and Atangusa Chicha kebeles. According to regulation No.135/2007 article 14, when a peasant dispossessed from his/her land that is used for growing crops or protected or pastoral land shall be provided with a plot of land capable of serving a similar purpose as much as possible. Unfortunately, the study revealed that peasants were compensated in cash as a result of lack of alternative free land. In this regard, about 85 and 15 percent of the sample households responded 'strongly agree' and 'agree' respectively in payment of compensation which was below their expectation.

Concerning the adequacy of the compensation, about 94.4 and 5.6 percent of survey households rated 'strongly agree' and 'agree' respectively that the compensation payment was not enough for many years. About 83.1 and 16.9 percents of respondents responded respectively 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' where the amount of compensation was equivalent with the land taken for flower farms. "The land taken and compensation paid

Table 3: Distribution of sample respondents by quintal produced per expropriated land and the amount of money paid for compensation

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Quintal produced /year	160	76	4	80	30.64	17.657
Compensation/hectare	160	272636	7800	280436	68405.54	53998.38

Table 4: Distribution of sample respondents' response about compensation issues

No	Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
1	Was compensation paid to evictees?	Yes	160	100
2	Was there Choice of compensation to evictees?	No	160	100
3	In which kind Compensation was paid?	Money	160	100
4	Compensation was below expectation	Agree	24	15.0
		strongly agree	136	85
		Total	160	100
5	Compensation paid was enough for many Years	strongly disagree	151	94.4
		Disagree	9	5.6
		Total	160	100
6	Compensation paid was not equal with land	Agree	27	16.9
		strongly agree	133	83.1
		Total	160	100
7	Compensation paid for natural tree was Adequate	strongly disagree	38	23.8
		Disagree	58	36.2
		no idea	64	40.0
		Total	160	100

was incomparable because land is a major asset for agrarian communities serving for life. Inversely, compensation was perishable and consumable within a short time particularly for peasants having no habit to use it wisely" (EI009⁴, Feb.12/2018). All interviewees and focused group discussants revealed that land size was considered when compensation amount was estimated. Similarly, about 23.8 and 36.2 percent of sample households replied 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' respectively on the adequacy of compensation paid to natural tree. Concomitantly, 40 percent of the respondents have no idea and know how whether the compensation paid to natural tree adequate or not. But secondary reports witnessed that the properties situated on the land, byproducts of crops, natural and manmade trees, the loss of the land itself and labor force employed to plough the land were considered and estimated in the compensation process. According to Desalegn (2011) peasants alienated from their land have complained that payment of compensation is unfair and inadequate. A similar observation made by Dejjitnu (2012) shows that previous landholders evicted from their farm lands were evidently paid inadequate compensation. This connotes that peasants expected more amount of compensation; however, it was very low and under their expectation.

The secondary data witnessed that compensation was

estimated by committees consists of four individuals from different sectors and professions. However, local elders were not included in the organization of compensation valuation committees. "Initially, the valuation committees were informed to estimate compensation in accordance with compensation proclamations" (VCI2, Feb. 22/2018). But, later on, the committee was influenced by administrators due to the absence of detail working procedures of compensation valuation. As highlighted clearly in Proclamation No.455/2005 article 10 (4), the working procedures of property valuation committees shall be determined by directives. However, the details of property valuation procedures are not enacted and enforced at the time of property valuation undertakings at both the national and regional level. This created fertile ground for woreda administrators to intervene in the process. Intermittently, members of the committee were ordered to do their activities in line with directions brought by administrators. This violated the provisions of compensation proclamation. In a nutshell, the absence of detail working procedures made the valuation process complex in Bahir Dar Woreda.

The compensation valuation committee was ordered by woreda administration to complete estimation within a very short period of time. The estimation of compensation was carried out in a time by which summer season was approaching to enter. This situation required additional estimators of compensation; however, the valuation of

⁴ EI- Evicted Interviewee

properties situated on the land was very rush accompanied with full of uncertainty and jumping. An incident of jumping and measuring a land twice and above was observed. Properties situated on the land and the land itself was not discreetly measured and estimated in the compensation process. The valuation committees are expected to have information about the full name and address of landholders before compensation valuation. But all evictees were not registered in their full name and address. This made the measurement of land very uneven, quick and arbitrary (EI013, Chicha, Feb. 18/2018). Cognizant of such a fact, two valuation committees were arrested as a result of the mistake happened in the valuation process until it was checked and audited (VCI2, Feb. 22/2018). The interviewee further added that the absence of independent compensation grievance hearing committee exacerbated the problem of compensation valuation. The committee formed to hear compensation grievance was not self-governed and autonomous in dealing the grievances of evictees. Thus, the grievances and complaints of evictees related to compensation remained unresolved. According to ANRS regulation No. 5/2010 article 11(1), land valuation committees should registered the full name of landholders with their address to estimate compensation carefully. In connection to this, Belachew (2013) noted that a careful consideration of ownership details and valuation must be adhered in payment of compensation. Conversely, this study accentuated that land measurement was arbitrary and dictatorial in nature due to the rush nature of valuation process accompanied with absence of autonomous compensation valuation and grievance hearing committees. This infringed the rights of landholders dispossessed from their possession and clearly reflected the discrepancy of the theory and actual implementation in the study area.

In compensation valuation, Maize and Finger Millet used to estimate compensation in *Workemla Achadir* Kebele. Similarly, Teff and Maize were used in *Atangusa Chicha* kebele. However, surveyed households have produced other crops like *Teff*, Pepper, finger millet and *Nug* in both kebeles. This grieved evictees on the estimation of compensation based on the above aforementioned crops because these crops are relatively cheap compared to other crops. In connection to this, the majority of evicted interviewees accentuated that the valuation of compensation was made based on these crops to reduced compensation amount. Contrastingly, interviewed valuation committees unanimously asserted that information was gathered from kebele agriculture worker about the dominant crops produced in the area and then compensation was estimated in accordance with these crops. They further added that compensation valued on these crops to benefit evictees because the yield of these crops was better than other crops produced in the area. According to Proclamation No. 455/2005

article 8(1), when a rural landholder whose landholding has been permanently expropriated, displacement compensation paid equivalent to ten times to the average annual income he/she secured over the last five years before expropriation. But the proclamation did not specify the crops used to estimate compensation. It stipulated only the annual average income a landholder gained over the last five years as compensation to permanent displacement. However, peasants had still grievance on the calculation of compensation based on these crops. Therefore, for peasants, estimation of compensation in such a way was misleading and mistaken.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The issue of land ownership and use rights has continued to be a subject of scholarly debate in both the academic and public spheres in Ethiopia in general and the study area in particular. The FDRE constitution declared that land has to be under the control of the state and it becomes the common property of the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. Similarly, the constitution assured that peasants have a usufruct right over their land with no right to sold, mortgage and exchange. But the usufruct rights of landholders can be subrogated at any time in the name of public purposes. In this way, expropriation is adopted as a policy of land acquisition for investment; the result of which brings rapid expansion of commercial farming by dislocating small landholders. Despite the rapid expansion of agricultural investment through expropriation, investment sites have been paradoxically dismantled and become a prime target for destruction in many places in Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda by popular protest. This was due to the top-down imposition of expropriation policy without undertaking genuine public consultation at the grass root level. The consent of dislocated peasants was not ascertained. This angered evictees and created fear of tenure insecurity on their remaining farmland because land is the major sources of livelihood to smallholder peasants. The conduct of expropriation without attuned investigation costs both local communities and the country in many ways. This connotes that the mere adoption and implementation of land expropriation policy for public purpose without reaching consensus with landholders is susceptible to failure. Although land expropriation was carried out for public good, it indirectly affected local communities in different aspects. The farms affected the livelihood sources; food security and land use arrangements of local communities. Similarly, the farms gobbled up land and created tenure insecurity on local communities and mobilized peasants to violence against the state. Hence, the way expropriation made and its consequential effects on local communities and the state could be explained in accordance with state dispossession theory.

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Appendixes

1. List of interviewees and key informants

A. Key informants Interviewees (Scholars)

No	Code	Sex	Educational Level	Place of Interview	Date of Interview	Remark
1	KI1	M	PhD candidate	DebreMarkos	19/03/2018	Developmental economist
2	KI2	M	PhD	DebreMarkos	22/03/2018	Agricultural Economist
3	KI3	M	Senior lecturer	DebreMarkos	16/03/2018	Peace and security studies

B. Evicted Interviewees

No	Code	Sex	Age	Education Level	Place of Interview	Date of Interview	Remark
1	EI001	M	64	Illiterate	Workemla	05/02/2018	Evictee&conflict participant
2	EI002	M	59	Illiterate	Workemla	05/02/2018	Local militia and evictee
3	EI003	M	59	Religious ed.	Workemla	06/02/2018	Priest & evictee
4	EI004	M	53	Illiterate	Meshenti	06/02/18	Evictee&conflict participant
5	EI005	M	52	4 th	Meshenti	08/02/2018	Expropriate & guard
6	EI006	M	56	Illiterate	Workemla	12/02/2018	Evictee, Conflict participant, arrested
7	EI007	M	53	Illiterate	Workemla	12/02/2018	Evictee&Conflict participant
8	EI008	M	60	Illiterate	Workemla	12/02/2018	Evictee&Conflict participant
9	EI009	M	62	Illiterate	Meshenti	12/02/2018	Kebele administrator
10	EI010	M	62	4 th	Teratir	12/02/2018	Local elders
11	EI011	M	59	Illiterate	Workemla	13/02/2018	Evicteeandconflict participant
12	EI012	M	62	Illiterate	Workemla	14/02/2018	Evictee&conflict participant
13	EI013	M	52	Illiterate	Chicha	18/02/2018	Local elders, evictee, conflict participant
14	EI014	F	50	Illiterate	Chicha	18/02/2018	Female Widow, evictee
15	EI015	M	48	4 th	Wogelsa	18/02/2018	Evictee&conflict participant
16	EI016	M	48	Illiterate	Atangusa	18/02/2018	Evictee&Conflict Participant
17	EI017	M	58	Illiterate	Atangusa	19/02/2018	Evictee & conflict participant
18	EI018	M	64	Illiterate	Wogelsa	19/02/2018	Evictee&conflict participant
19	EI019	M	40	Illiterate	Chicha	19/02/2018	Disabled

EI=Evicted Interviewees

A. Government Interviewees

No	Code of interviewee	Sex	Age	Education Level	Place of Interview	Date of Interview	Remark
1	GO-1	M	30	BA Degree	Bahir Dar	13/02/2018	Regional Official
2	GO-2	M	29	BA Degree	Bahir Dar	15/02/2018	Woreda Official
3	GO-3	M	32	BA Degree	Bahir Dar	16/02/2018	Woreda Official
4	GO-4	M	38	BA Degree	Bahir Dar	23/02/2018	Regional Official

Key: Government Official

Compensation Valuation Committee interviewees

No	Code	Sex	Educational Level	Place Of Interview	Date of Interview	
1	VCI1	M	Masters	Bahir Dar	19/02/2018	Retired
2	VCI2	M	Degree	Bahir Dar	22/02/2018	On duty

NB. The name of interviewees was coded for the sake of keeping the privacy and confidentiality of participants