



Report for Panel Discussion F39:

The Privatization of Knowledge Production

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Brokering for Business: Knowledge and Power in South Africa's New Commodity-Focused Agricultural Transformation Strategy

Post-apartheid agrarian reform in South Africa has long focused on combating rural poverty and transformation of the historically skewed and racialised agricultural sector. It initially targeted a broad range of rural poor and had an interventionist focus, with a key role for government in redistributing land and other productive resources. Recently, a new style business-focused agrarian reform is emerging that sees a key role for the private sector. This approach to transformation seeks incorporation of 'black' smallholders in high-value commodity markets, increasingly differentiates between 'entrepreneurial' and 'subsistence' farmers and aims to make farmers independent of state support. The new vehicle for delivery is the smallholder-public-private partnerships and the various value chain collaborations that fall under it.

Drawing on fieldwork and action research from 2015 to 2019, this paper unpacks these recent, smallholder-focused partnerships and collaborations around the production and marketing of the high-value macadamia and avocado crops in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Political economic relations and historical continuities are evident in the growing gap between the new entrants and the established commercial growers and processors. Historical privilege is also evident in implementation and agenda-setting of the new transformation agenda. This includes private sector-friendly governance instruments for achieving Black Economic Empowerment and discrediting of more radical alternatives such as land reform. Notwithstanding such outcomes, we find that the practices and processes underpinning emergent partnerships show other aspects of accumulation and consolidation. Key to stabilising this new transformation agenda is a collection of value chain actors, hired consultants, local and national officials, and a new class of farmer representatives.

These so-called brokers work in tandem to stabilise a new commodity-oriented discourse of inclusiveness focused on maintaining the status quo in the commercial farming sector and instilling new entrants with business attitudes. Together they construct a transition model focused on rescaling of the large-scale farming model to smallholders and adoption of 'best farming practices'. Brokerage theory is applied in order to understand new identities and mentorship roles that shape the novel transformation approach. By analysing brokers' differential agency, repertoires, positionalities, and moral ambiguity, we see how this field is unwieldy - a negotiated space of intermediation that requires

brokers' constant reworking. These findings nuance current political economic thinking in agrarian reform debates. It is suggested that we focus on brokering and knowledge-based trusteeship as key aspects explaining South Africa's historical continuities and dual agrarian structure.

As explained, South African agrarian economy is typified by what Prof. Yves refers to as a dual agrarian structure. His presentation is about 'transformation' in South Africa: economic transformation is the most recent policy discourse. 'Radical economic' transformation is used to denote the need to transform South Africa's dual agrarian structure. Although Yves's earlier focus has been on the study of South Africa's land reforms that aim to bridge the gap, this panel presents a more emergent type of support that has a strong focus on maintaining commercial production and is about developing a so-called class of emerging farmers together with the private sector, in what are new smallholder farmer-PPPs. This is what Yves calls the larger process of the 'privatisation of the responsibility for development' the area he focusses his study on is the North-Eastern part of South Africa bordering Zimbabwe.

Policy view of commodity focused 'agrarian reform' includes support according to agro ecological potential (Vhembe commercial tree crops). Official discourse 'inclusive rural economy' employment. New instrument in macadamia: statutory levy. Government attaches AgriBEE conditions for 20% of the levy expenditure but let the commodity associations manage funds.

Transformation 'on the ground' nature of 'privatised support' for smallholder farmers. From 2002 Vhembe Agricultural extension trained generalists into commodity specialists, agricultural departments try to supply seedlings and privileges to 'productive farmers' for inputs. Emerging trend: 'reduce dependency syndrome' make farmers self-reliant, focus programmes on farmers with capital means, land, and papers.

Nature of smallholder-public-private partnership in macadamia for example, annual transformation summit. Study groups for emerging growers, recent type of value chain collaboration for exchanging technical knowledge.

Farm representatives on their roles and motivation. In most cases, a farmers' representative will call meetings with other farmers to discuss issues concerning the critical challenges in order to assist each other. The duties of farmer's representatives are to be intermediaries between farmers and other stakeholders involved. The department and other organizations are only involved when we face problems that we cannot solve on our own. We also have companies that assist us with information or coaching on how

to manage our farms. They come through the department of agriculture. Motivation always explained as 'enlightened altruism' – we serve the country and benefit as individual farmers from stronger networks. S(PPPs) In Agric extension: subject positions. Public extension whose duties include gatekeepers of beneficiary lists, presenting new eligibility criteria, and giving product inputs. Private sector/commodity organization manage study groups, managing transformation grants, transformation summits. In conclusion, SPPPs show increased trusteeship from private sector and mentors in managing funds and knowledge exchange. Public extension in commodity sector lacking capacity, lagging behind. Knowledge that is more commercial and not adapted to the technological needs of the farmer.

Graduation model is becoming more entrenched, and with that a separation of support for commodity-focussed smallholders and 'the rest' (typically seen as 'subsistence' farmers). This is reinforced by underlying processes of rural polarization and accumulation form below (cf. Olofsson 2019).

Adaptiveness and farmer-centred nature of partnership model is very limited due to limited agency of key local actors such as farmer representatives and agricultural extension officers.

Brokerage as analytical lens helps us see emerging properties, trends that are being solidified, offering possibility to reappraise roles in SPPP and how to shape them differently.

Private Agricultural Advisory Services Models Emerging in the Kenyan Agri-Food Sector and a Reflection on Exclusion Risks

How do farm advisory businesses innovate to support inclusive chain-wide innovations?

Innovation ecosystem experiences from selected private models emerging in Kenyan agri-food sector.

Recently, private agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) models have emerged, owing to growing demand for knowledge and innovation support among entrepreneurial farmers and other value chain actors, linked to the unfolding agri-food sector transformation in Kenya. At the same time, a new strand of studies on AEAS, inspired by the concept of agricultural innovation system (AIS), have emerged focusing on the roles and contribution of AEAS in brokering multi-actor networks to create shared value for farmers and other actors. However, the value that these different actors bring into the innovation processes and how this is enabled has not been well interrogated empirically. This paper addresses this gap by applying the innovation ecosystem concept as a new perspective for analysing value co-creation and value capture. Through qualitative fieldwork and review of secondary documents, we explore how two nascent private AEAS models in Kenyan agri-food sector build their innovation ecosystems. Findings show that the ecosystem lens evokes a more compelling conceptualization of AEAS as entailing a complex value proposition that is dependent on other complementary services and requiring focal actors to take the lead in mobilizing and aligning multi-actor contributions to the materialization of the value proposition. We find pre-entry capabilities of founder directors and articulation and popularization of the business concept as main resources and roles, respectively, of the focal actors in building their ecosystems. Main contributions of ecosystem actors are in financial, technical, networking support; content development and validation, and skilling of advisors; and linkages for complementary inputs and services. Value capture mechanisms are both monetary and non-monetary, and direct and indirect. We show that in seeking alignment, the models manipulate both the multi-actor network composition and/or the components of the value proposition by design or through learning from real life experiences. We conclude that the ecosystem perspective offers a systematic approach for visualizing the outlook of an inclusive and productive multi-actor network. However, actor level inclusiveness in ecosystem lens should be evaluated from value addition perspective of end users and not normatively. This points to the need for private firms venturing into AEAS to apply the ecosystem perspective to guide their business strategy processes.

The panel shifted its focus from the academic context to practical experiences on the ground. Here the Department of Animal Science from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology shared how it provides technical services to poultry farmers, as well as trains and assigns students as extension officers that disseminate knowledge to farmers in rural areas.

This panel deals with knowledge strategies of businesses and financial institutions in and with Africa. It invites papers that deal with seeing knowledge development as a business model, and its effect on inclusion and exclusion. The panel will deal with the question how public and private knowledge centres compete with each other, or work together, and it deals with the issue of Public-Private hybridization, and how to understand that.

Growing roles of businesses, a market for agricultural knowledge and innovation support services.

Transforming agri-food systems in Kenya:

Farmers (entrepreneurial) need technical and managerial support for profitable and sustainable production. Spotlight on agricultural extension and advisory services (AEAS) from public led to pluralistic systems.

Emerging private-sector AEAS models in Kenya:

Growth in private sector extension services as knowledge and innovation intermediaries especially in high value agri-food sectors. Emerge through experimentation and learning in search of business model configurations that work.

How do these firms develop business models in production and commercialization of agricultural knowledge and information and capture value?

Apply innovation ecosystem concept to understand business models of private AEAS. Role of private extension in supporting knowledge driven innovation in Kenya agri-food sectors.

1. Unpack how the business market knowledge and innovation support.
2. As lead firm-enlist diverse actors in value creation as part of the business model.
 - The innovation ecosystems to deliver knowledge and innovation services.
3. Content development, training/advisory (group/farm).
4. Input and service delivery (e.g., soil testing), Market development/linkages.
5. Content development and validation. Training, advisory/farm coaching.
6. Design of cow barn structures

Reflections from findings 1:

1. Emerging private AEAS models deliver knowledge and innovation support services by tapping in to distributed capabilities/resources in their ecosystems with blend of different actors.
2. Ecosystem actors interaction contributes to innovating knowledge/products. Data capture and analysis key in process.
3. founder capabilities-entrepreneurial drive and network brokering a key attribute (Kapoor et al 2015).
4. Donors/NGOs are key source of start-up finance and business incubation.
5. public sector actors involved in these networks, but participation is limited.

Reflections form finding 2:

Value addition and capture of all actors' key to the business model: monetary and non-monetary models.

1. Lead firm: grow viable business, attract investment.
2. Donors/NGOs: incubate, document lessons, scale as part of strategic program goals.
3. Input/services firms: market growth e.g., tech and knowledge transfer by international actors.
4. TVETs and Universities-match graduates with industry needs, linkages with industry.

Tensions and Dilemmas

1. Exclusion of resource poor farmers who are not considered commercially oriented hence not able/willing to demand market AEAS services.
2. the business face challenge of commercial growth-low demand but growing-how to stimulate market maturity.
3. Competition sometimes limits cooperation of ecosystem actors and potential for innovation to support clients.

Conclusion

1. The study provides insight into the AEAS business models in pluralistic knowledge system (Pigford et al., 2018).
2. Commercializing knowledge as innovation is all about collaborative co-creation but also maximizing value for individual stakeholders and the network (Reypens et al., 2016)
3. How can we address the tensions and dilemmas to enable more sustainable innovation support for all types of farmers? Role of private-public partnership hybrid business models.

Agricultural Industrialization in Ghana

In the context of agricultural industrialization in Ghana, the idea is to get industrial conducive variety of crop to farmers to produce the crops themselves, and at times they would engage in dissemination of knowledge.

A question to Samuel in relation to what Catherine had said in terms of the Kenyan the rise of private extension agencies is also an indication of the demise of the of the public extension officers.

How do COG institute go about disseminating information into the industry and in so doing within the ecosystem, where do they find themselves and how do they go about forming partnerships to ensure that the innovation that is generated is absorbed in the industry?

The commercialization division of the COG Institute. The institute was formed in 1974, and since then they have been doing a lot of research in the crop sector, that is its mandate. The crops are produced for both consumption and industrial use. The model of their research is usually based on collaboration among the key actors in the agricultural sector. For example, for the cassava crop, to produce the varieties, they look at the industry demands, so that the input that they get from the industry in terms of the properties that are required. For instance, in the brewery sector, they have been able to devolve a number of varieties that have been adopted for use by these industries. Another example is the Presidential initiative on cassava in Ghana, they also release varieties that have high starch contents for the processing of products from the cassava. So, the government is playing a role directly, the role is to come out with policies and they also team up with the private sector. How they are able to release and disseminate their research findings. 1. Before evaluating what is needed, they do multiple locational trials 'demonstrating force', and so in that stage of introducing the products, the farmers, the extension officers are also part of the team that will be able to evaluate and assess the performance of that variety before it accepted for adoption. So, from day one, the farmers are aware of the new variety and they also do a lot of publicity, researchers that publish, will also use that information/medium. They use media platforms where they introduce their varieties and try to give details. At times, the researchers that are pursuing different breeders and varieties will have to do what is called the farmer first schools and other platforms to be able to educate on the good agronomic practices that have to be taught. And the varieties that have been released. Of late, COG has been doing a lot of partnerships with the private sector with those already in the industry, in terms of processing using products as the raw materials based for their production.

What are the partnerships that ensures that dissemination of information occurs? At various points in Ghana, they partner with various agricultural extension officers in various part of Ghana to disseminate knowledge and the new crop varieties to the communities. They also have demonstration plots, because the varieties are demand driven, what is the new variety coming to solve.

What forms of models do extension agencies use in Kenya to disseminate knowledge?

In Kenya, there is a place where public universities play a role in the development of varieties of different horticultural crops, like the development of cherry tomatoes, at the moment they are developing the seeds, package them and disseminate them to farmers who are interested in getting it to the market. But there is also the part of the private sector in doing the training farmer on the efficacy of pesticides in the biochemical industry before release into the market. So, research and dissemination are not done by the public research institutions only, it is also done by the private sector. There is collaboration happening between the public and the private sector in terms of fundamental research.

There is competition over the same seedling between different actors in South Africa. Thus, when certain varieties are desired for the market and they are very scarce, the system becomes more privileged, the more successful you are the more networks you have. The seedling is very hard to come by even for the government that requires them in bulk. But it has to do with the crop that we are talking about, for example the macadamia that is a real booming crop. The relationship is a bit one way and is not contractual, for if it were contractual, then it would be a lot better. Because then, there would be mutual commitment. The mentors in this sense are not committed to the structural forms.

One is the fundamental research and other is the outreach by training students in the field as extension officers. Varieties are also sold directly.

Knowledge Production in Africa

When it comes to knowledge production in Africa, there has been a shift from public domain to private domain. Up until between 25 to 35 years ago for example, within agricultural space in most west-African countries, and that goes for most sub-Saharan countries as well, was dominated by the government i.e., the ministry of agriculture provided extension services, or institutions that are affiliated by the ministries, so the research institutions leading in fundamental research in varieties of developments and eventual dissemination.

But up to the last 10 – 15 years or so, we have seen new models emerge. These new models take variety of form; public-private partnerships, primarily or exclusively private and the development agencies, the NGO's are also stepping into the fold, providing knowledge dissemination services to producers to process within the Agri-business space.

The developments bring a number of questions. If the public sector is decreasingly being the source of knowledge dissemination, is it for the public good as it used to be? Now we have the private sector domain, NGO'S domain.

Outside of the formal state support, what is called economic transformation in south Africa. There are increasingly new kinds of partnerships emerging. So, Yves has been trying to understand one of this new form of public – private partnerships.