

**LAND DEALS AND COMMERCIAL
AGRICULTURE IN NIGERIA:
THE NEW NIGERIAN FARMS IN SHONGA
DISTRICT, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA**

Joseph A. Ariyo and Michael Mortimore

Background

Kwara State agricultural policy

To use agriculture as the pathway to socio-economic development by creating a class of commercial farmers who will utilise the large expanse of arable land and equitable climate with which the state is endowed

Strategies

1. Back-to-land programme

1. Commercial farmers from Zimbabwean

The overarching question

How are the Shonga farms land deals structured and governed, and what are their impacts?

Specific research objectives

- **Examine the structure and governance of the land deal involving Zimbabwean commercial farmers in Shonga**
- **Assess the impact of the commercial farms on adequacy of land for local farmers, employment, domestic food supply, inflow of investment capital and the environment**

Methodology

- 1. In-depth interview of key participants in the Shonga experiment**
 - Four senior level government officials in the ministry of agriculture**
 - Five of the 13 commercial farmers**
 - Eight local farmers who lost some land to the commercial farms**
- 2. Inventory of plant species in fallow areas close to the commercial farms**

The structure and governance of the land deal for commercial farms

- **MoU between the Zimbabwean farmers and Kwara State government**
- **State support for the commercial farms**
 - **land**
 - **Infrastructure**
 - **Finance**
 - **Political**

Impacts

Impact areas

1. Land for local farmers

2. Employment

3. Technology transfer

4. Domestic food supply

5. Inflow of investment capital

6. The environment

Remark

Minimal; no settlement relocation

Significant; 2000 at peak period

New crops/farming practices

Cassava, soybeans, milk, poultry

Nil

Minimal

Conclusion/concerns

- a) Sustainability of the Shonga farms**
- b) Efficiency of the Shonga model vis-à-vis alternative forms of commercial agriculture**
- c) Future of agriculture in Kwara State**
 - Replicability of the Shonga model**
 - Future of smallholder farmers in the state**
 - Effect on state policy on social differentiation**