

Analysis of the Discourse and Background of the ProSAVANA Programme in Mozambique - focusing on Japan's role

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Contents

Introduction	2
1. The Discourse observed among the ProSAVANA stake-holders	2
(1) What is ProSAVANA?.....	2
(2) Transition of discourse on ProSAVANA and their 4 phases.....	4
(3) The Changing Nature of Public Discourse on ProSAVANA	4
(4) The characteristics of each discourse and their background	6
(a) “Success of the Cerrado development/Japanese cooperation with Brazil”. 6	
(b) “South-South/ Tripartite cooperation through Japan-Brazil cooperation” 7	
(c) “Bringing the success of the Cerrado to Africa (ProSAVANA)”	8
(d) “Solution to global food security through the development of the tropical savannah in Africa”	8
(e) “Agricultural stagnation in Mozambique”	9
(f) “Uncultivated Mozambican North”	10
(g) Midcourse correction and “Model driven development”	11
(h) “Agriculture as business/co-existence of peasants and large-scale agribusiness”	12
(i) “Complying with the international code of conduct”	13
(j) “Win-Win-Win partnership and investment”	14
(k) “Business chance for the Japanese and Brazilian enterprises”	14
(l) “Land grabbing/competition with China”	16
(m) “Return to JICA’s traditional project-base assistance and balancing with investment oriented approach”	17
2. Analysis of the discourse and its background	18
(1) Examination based on the voices from civil society of Mozambique	18
(2) Examination based on the reality of rural communities and their livelihood in Northern Mozambique	21
(3) Examination based on the previous experiences of Brazil and other African countries	26

(a) Case of Brazil.....	26
(b) Case of other African countries – land grabbing	29
(c) Lessons to be learned for Mozambique	30
Concluding Remarks.....	32

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Introduction

This paper examines the much debated characteristics and background of the “Triangular Cooperation for Agricultural Development of the Tropical Savannah in Mozambique, namely, ProSAVANA – JBM”, signed jointly by the governments of Japan, Brazil, and Mozambique in 2009. This paper seeks to analyse the discourse and the arguments observed in public documents and discussions of the Japanese planners and promoters of the programme. The composition of this paper is as follows. The first section will trace the evolving nature of the discourse that ProSAVANA stake-holders employ to support their involvement in ProSAVANA. The second section will examine the above discourses based on (1) the voices of the local civil society, (2) the social and cultural characteristics of Northern Mozambique, the targeted area of the project, and (3) preceding cases of land grabbing observed in Brazil and other African countries. Lastly, the author will highlight the characteristics and the challenges concerning the present predominant discourse of development and assistance.

1. The Discourse observed among the ProSAVANA stake-holders

(1) What is ProSAVANA?

It is critical to understand that the ProSAVANA Programme originated as a cooperative venture between Japan and Brazil. This can be more clearly understood by referencing the original name of the project, “the Japan-Brazil Partnership Programme for Agricultural Development of the Tropical Savannah in Mozambique”(JICA Sept. 28, 2009; Hosono

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2012:32), and by referencing a time line of joint meetings held by Brazilian and Japanese government officials leading to cooperating in ProSAVANA [see Table 1].

Table 1 Preparatory Process of ProSAVANA

Year/Month	Locations	Event and Persons
2000 (March)	Tokyo	Establishment of Tripartite framework for inter-governmental cooperation of Japan-Brazil Partnership Programme-JBPP
2004 (Sept.)	Brazil	The Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit
2005 (May)	Tokyo	Prime Minister Koizumi with the Brazilian President Lula da Silva agreed to work together for the "UN reform" and to prepare for the 2008 Japan-Brazil Year of Exchange begins.
2006 (May)	Brazil	The Japanese Agriculture Minister Shoichi Nakagawa's visit
2006 (Sept.)	Brazil	Minister Nakagawa's re-visit
2007 (Apr.)	Brazil	Sadako Ogata, President of JICA, and Celso Amorin, the Brazilian Foreign Minister agreed to promote JBPP.
2007 (May)	Brazil	The Japanese Agriculture Minister Toshikatsu Matsuoka's visit
2007 (Aug.)	Brazil	The Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso and Minister Amorin confirm "revitalisation of the strategic partnership"
2008 (Year around)	Japan/Brazil	Japan-Brazil Year of Exchange/Centennial of Japanese Immigration to Brazil
2008 (May)	Brazil	The Japanese Agriculture Minister Masatoshi Wakabayashi's visit
2009 July	Italy L'Aquila G8 Summit	The Prime Minister Aso and the Brazilian President da Silva agree to conduct "Agricultural Development in Africa's Tropical Savannah"
2009 Sept.17	Maputo	Signing of the agreement of ProSAVANA by the JICA's Vice President Kenzo Oshima, the Director of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), Marco Farani, the Mozambican Agriculture Minister Soares Bonhaza Nhaca,
2009 (Sept.) – 2010 (Mar.)	Mozambique	ProSAVANA Preparatory survey by JICA
2010 (Oct.)	Brasilia	The 10 th Anniversary, Japan-Brazil Partnership Programme, JICA's directors of Brazilian, Central American offices, the Japanese Ambassador to Brazil, Brazilian Vice-minister, Foreign Minister, ABC's director.

Compiled by the author

The ProSAVANA programme from the beginning was neither conceived together with the local inhabitants nor was there interest in meeting local need. Instead this project was conceived as a way for Japan and Brazil to: work together for achieving UN reform, participate in the new global political/economic structures such as BRICS and G20, and jointly promote commodity production/extraction. Japan and Brazil have historical ties due to a mass migration of Japanese to Brazil in the past century. The programme has been repeatedly publicised as the main component of Japanese international assistance (JICA, 2012 b: 88). The public relations campaign has been so effective that by the end of 2011, US Secretary of States Hilary Clinton praised ProSAVANA as an "effective south-south cooperation" for improving the effectiveness of international assistance at the 4th high-level forum (HLF4) held at Pusan in Korea, and gave a huge encouragement to the Japanese stakeholders (JICA, 2012b: 19). Also in Japan, the ProSAVANA programme receives ever increasing publicity as a promising example of Japanese development assistance. It is especially noticeable as TICAD V (the 5th Tokyo International Conference on African Development), a conference held every five years in order to strengthen relations between African governments and Japan, is approaching.

Although JICA and Japanese government publicise the ProSAVANA Programme as if it has already succeeded, it is not at all clear why they can offer such claims while the programme is not yet implemented on the field as Table 2 indicates.

Table 2 Plan of the ProSAVANA Programme

2011~2015	Assistance to improve research capacity and technology transfer
2011~	Other private investment, CSR enterprise.
2011~2013	Agricultural Development Master Plan
2013	Official Loan and Grant, Overseas Investment.

Compiled by the author based on the 5th ProSAVANA seminar (JICA, July 31, 2012)

It is also very difficult to figure out what the ProSAVANA programme really is. What is its central objective? Even if one can read Japanese documents and are trained in policy analysis it is difficult to envision what this project is all about. It is also difficult to know who will take responsibility for what. The time table for action remains unclear due to lack of information and a constant shift of arguments, rationale and focus.

The same concerns were expressed during the interviews with the local (Mozambican) CSOs and other donor agencies conducted by the author in Maputo in August and September of 2012. This is the reason why the author decided to do discourse analysis of the programme based on the released materials.

(2) Transition of discourse on ProSAVANA and their 4 phases

Before the signing of the ProSAVANA programme by the three governments it is important to know how planning for this programme was done amongst the Japanese stakeholders and between them and their Brazilian counterparts.¹ It is difficult to know what occurred at these meetings since there is no publicly released documentation. Information was made public only after 2009 and it will be these documents that will be analysed here in detail. The documents to be examined come from four sources: First, JICA's homepages (including reports) and publicity papers; Second, interviews of the stakeholders and a review of their supporting documents their articles; Third, related organisations such as MoFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization); and lastly, news clippings from Japanese, Brazilian and International newspapers.

Based on the analysis of these documentary sources, the following periodization was made by the author: **[First phase]** from the time of 2009 agreement to the time of the preparatory survey (2009-2010); **[Second phase]** from the end of the preparatory survey to the start of the programme (2010-2011); **[Third phase]** from the start of the programme to the present (2011-2012); and **[Fourth phase]** dressing up the ProSAVANA programme to give it the appearance of being a traditional JICA assistance program for small farmers.

(3) The Changing Nature of Public Discourse on ProSAVANA

The major discourse themes on the ProSAVANA programme observed during the **[First phase]** could be summarised as follows: (a) "Success of the Cerrado development/Japanese cooperation with Brazil"; (b) South-South/ Tripartite cooperation through Japan-Brazil partnership"; (c) "Bringing the success of the Cerrado to Africa (ProSAVANA); (d) "Solution to

the global food security through the development of the tropical savannah in Africa”; (e) “Agricultural stagnation in Mozambique”. Each discourse here has no concrete basis. The discourses have been arrived at through analysis of images and macro data without a firsthand knowledge of the land and people of their programme target area, that is, Northern Mozambique.

Similarly, the discourse observed during the **[Second phase]** was: (f) “Uncultivated Mozambican North”; (g) “Midcourse correction of the original discourse and Model driven development”; (h) “Agriculture as business/co-existence of small farmers and large scale agribusiness”; (i) “Complying with international code of conduct”.

In this phase, the discourse of the **[First phase]** had to be modified based on the findings of the preparatory survey conducted in Northern Mozambique. It became clear that “agricultural (not rural) development through foreign investment and the principals of the market economy” was to be the main feature of the programme. This led to widespread concerns in Mozambique, Japan and around the world that this programme was yet another example of what has come to be popularly known as “the land rush” or “the land grab” occurring around the world, especially in Africa. This is why the discourse evolved to include concerns for (h) “co-existence” and (i) “complying with international code of conduct”.

The discourse appearing in the **[Third phase]** becomes predominantly business oriented. It is easily observed in the following discourse of this period: (j) “Win-Win-Win partnership and investment”; (k) “Business chance for Japanese and Brazilian enterprises”; (l) “Land rush/competition with China”. The discourse was influenced by the recent joint mission of the Japanese and Brazilian public and private sector deployed to Northern Mozambique and the rise of global food prices.

If there is such a great business opportunities waiting in Mozambique, why do Japanese tax payers need to subsidise it? JICA was compelled to balance the predominantly business oriented discourse of the previous phase leading to the current **[Fourth phase]** discourse, (m) “Return to JICA’s traditional project-base assistance to small farmers and balancing with investment oriented approach”.

Table 3 Transition of discourse on the ProSAVANA programme and its periodization from 2009 to September 2012.

Phase	Year	Discourse
First Phase	2009-2010	“Success of the Cerrado/Japanese cooperation with Brazil ”
		“South-South/ Tripartite cooperation through Japan-Brazil cooperation”
		“Bringing the success of the Cerrado to Africa (ProSAVANA)”
		“Solution to the global food security through the development of the tropical savannah in Africa”

		“Agricultural stagnation in Mozambique”
Second phase	2010-2011	“Uncultivated Mozambican North”
		Midcourse correction and “Model driven development”
		“Agriculture as business/co-existence of peasants and large-scale agri-business”
		“Complying with international code of conduct”
Third phase	2011-2012	“Win-Win-Win partnership and investment”
		“Business chance for Japanese and Brazilian enterprises”
		“Land rush / competition with China”
Fourth phase	2012-present	“Return to JICA’s traditional project-base assistance for small farmers and balancing with investment oriented approach”

Complied by the author

(4) The characteristics of each discourse and their background

Based on the changes of the discourse observed in the documentary sources from the first phase to the fourth phase, the author would like to carefully examine the arguments appearing in each phase.

(a) “Success of the Cerrado development/Japanese cooperation with Brazil”

The Cerrado development, which is the success story of developing the “uninhabited barren land” of the Cerrado in Brazil, is the model for the ProSAVANA programme. It is of central significance for the entire ProSAVANA programme and its stakeholders. The importance of the Cerrado development project is evident in JICA’s seminars and its public relations campaigns in spite of the “discovery” of the incompatibility of this argument with the realities of Northern Mozambique. The following is a typical explanation.

“Japan and Brazil have continued to operate the Japan-Brazil Cerrado Agricultural Development Project for more than 20 years. Today, the Cerrado area has become a top-level world agricultural region (JICA, May 25, 2009)”.

“The Cerrado Agricultural Development Project of JICA which created a giant crop producing area is an extremely large project in the past experiences of the Japanese ODA. It contributed to transform Brazil into one of the two pillars of the global food supply together with U.S.A. (JICA, June 30, 2009)”.

A detailed evaluation of the Cerrado development will be done in the following section 2. Prior to this evaluation some background information on JICA and their discourse would be helpful.

JICA was created by merging in 1973 of the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA) established in 1962, and the Overseas Settlement Agency, itself a result of the merger of long existing official emigration and settlement bodies in 1963, as a corporate body under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its roots are, thus, in overseas settlement projects. Already prior to WWII JICA's predecessors had been assisting Japanese migrants who settled in Brazil to farm. Most of the Japanese migrants before and after the WWII left Japan for the hope of the acquisition of vast farming land in the Brazilian interior, since such land is not available on the small mountainous islands of Japan, especially for the second or third sons of families (Masterson with Funada Classen, 2004).

JICA has its roots in assisting Japanese settler societies (*colonias*) in Latin America especially in Brazil since there is such a high concentration of Japanese located there. JICA is having a difficult time breaking with its past. An enormous amount of money, equivalent to nearly 805 million US Dollars (51% was funded by the Japanese government) was spent on the Cerrado development project hoping that Japanese migrants obtain land. But there had been a lot of criticism of the project even amongst the Japanese migrants because of many failures. Recent trends and changes in the world environment have turned the Cerrado development into somewhat "of a success story" due to a sharp rise in agricultural commodity prices and a growing number of bilateral and regional free trade agreements making investments and commodity movements easier.

(b) "South-South/ Tripartite cooperation through Japan-Brazil cooperation"

Adding to the JICA's original mandate to support the Japanese migrants to Latin America, especially in the field of agriculture, another mandate was given to JICA by its predecessor, OTCA, that is, economic cooperation with the neighbouring Asian countries as a substitute for WWII war reparations. By 2000, however, both Asian and Latin American countries "graduated" or "were about to graduate" from the Japanese official assistance, ODA. This is the time when many scandals related to the Japanese ODA were revealed, and due to a long recession in Japan, taxpayers began to seek for more transparency and accountability in its usage. All of these caused a decrease in the ODA budget and a shift from assisting Asia/Latin America countries to Africa. This is the background of the emergence of "South-South/Tripartite Cooperation" in the Japanese context. This move was praised by the Brazilian counterpart as follows:

"Marco Farani of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency stresses among its tripartite cooperation initiatives with Germany, France, USA and Japan, the scheme with Japan is the most important (JICA, November 24, 2010)".

In addition to this historical background, four events have contributed to Japanese stakeholders shifting their focus from the old recipient regions to Africa after 2000. (1)The UN Millennium Summit held in 2000, (2) Sadako Ogata, ex-high commissioner for UNHCR, taking a role as the JICA's president in 2003, (3) China's rapid and deep involvement in Africa in the latter half of 2000s, and (4) TICAD IV where the Japanese government promised to triple their aid to Africa.² Although Africa became the main focus of Japanese ODA, there were not enough qualified Japanese experts who had experience in the areas of

specialisations and in the various regions of Africa. Language skills were also a barrier limiting Japanese cooperation. In Africa, there are not only Anglophone but also as many Francophone, Lusophone, and Arabic countries and in each of them there are also numerous local languages.

JICA did not try to overcome this challenge through “localisation” of their operations like UN agencies had been doing. Instead, they introduced “South-South cooperation”, bringing Asian or Japanese Brazilian experts to Africa. Especially Japanese Brazilians were welcomed to be key players of the tripartite cooperation and used as a diplomatic tool because this helped to increase the visibility of “Japanese” aid while strengthening relations with Brazil.

(c) “Bringing the success of the Cerrado to Africa (ProSAVANA)”

Although the ProSAVANA programme seemed to be a suitable tool to serve Japanese intentions for strengthening relations with both Africa and Brazil (including the Japanese Brazilians), in fact, the difference between Brazil and Africa is not small. Therefore, some similarities had to be found and emphasised in order to bring the “Brazilian success” to Africa.

“The Cerrado of Brazil and the tropical savannah in Mozambique have many common agronomical characteristics, and the Cerrado development project is said to contain a lot of agricultural techniques useful for agricultural development in Mozambique. Especially the soil improvement methods that have accumulated through the Cerrado project and the introduction of appropriate crops are expected to contribute to improve productivity of agriculture in the Mozambican tropical savannah, leading to improve living standards for small-scale farmers (JICA, September 28, 2009)”.

“The Cerrado and tropical savannah area in Africa have many agricultural similarities. Through 30 years of the agricultural development initiatives in the Cerrado, Brazil has accumulated much knowledge that can be applied to tropical agriculture in Africa. There is a prediction that improving productivity by utilising results of experiments can be accomplished with relative ease (JICA, June 30, 2009)”.

(d) “Solution to global food security through the development of the tropical savannah in Africa”

This emphasis on the similarities between the Brazilian Cerrado and African tropical savannah has resulted in a new initiative turning Africa into the “new Cerrado” to replicate “success” contributing to global food security.

“World’s food demand is strong, and a stable food supply has become an important global issue. One of the solutions, sustained development of the tropical savannah utilising the vast unused land.(...)The skills built through the Cerrado agricultural development hold the possibility of not only solving the problem of food shortages in Africa, where the half of world’s tropical savannah exists, but also to contribute to the world’s food security (JICA, May 25, 2009)”.

“One half of the world’s tropical savannah is concentrated in Africa, and there is a vast region of unused agricultural land. The world is looking for a new base for food production and export. Agricultural development of the tropical savannah in Africa will not only benefit the related countries but will also benefit the whole world (JICA, June 30, 2009)”.

“If ‘the last remaining continent for agricultural production’ accomplishes ‘green revolution’, the world’s food security can largely be solved. ProSAVANA is a step toward realisation of such dream (Hongo, 2010:17-19)”.

In these arguments, there are a repeated term used as the evidence of the similarities between the Cerrado and Mozambique, that is, “tropical savannah”. It is one of the climate categories of a classification system established by Russian-German geographer, meteorologist and climatologist, Wladimir Koppen, in late 19th century. It is also called “tropical wet and dry climate” and its main characteristics is a clear separation between rainy and dry seasons. According to the Koppen’s classification, the Brazilian Cerrado and many parts of Africa including Mozambique could be included in “tropical savannah”.

The areas categorised as “tropical savannah” or “tropical wet and dry climate”, which offers favourable conditions for agricultural production, were rapidly targeted for not only aid projects but also for foreign agricultural investment. This causes serious problems since the usage of Koppen’s classification of “savannah” is easily confused with another classification system in which “savannah” is characterised as open land where many wild animals and a few trees exist. The assumption of this latter classification is that savannah is considered as “unused land” which could be easily transformed into farm land. This misleading notion has resulted in damaging vast open forest land around the world.

(e) “Agricultural stagnation in Mozambique”

When one talks about “bringing success of the Brazilian Cerrado to Africa”, there is this impression given that the African “tropical savannah” is “vast”, “unused”, and “waiting for cultivation just like the case of the Cerrado”.

Mozambique was chosen as one of the most suitable place to implant “the Cerrado model” since parts of the country belong to “the same tropical savannah”, has “vast uncultivated land”, and it is similar to Brazil in being linguistically a Lusophone country. The “low productivity” of the Mozambican farmers, and the “advantages” of the Cerrado model, that is, large scale industrialised agriculture (mechanization and high inputs of agricultural chemicals) was emphasised. This is clear in the following JICA documents.

“After the end of 16 years of civil war, Mozambique managed to conduct three national elections without any big trouble thanks to its democratisation efforts, accomplished political and economic stability, and is said to be one of the most successful countries for post-conflict peace-building. Poverty is, however, still a serious issue, and according to the UNDP’s Human Development Index of 2007-2008 Mozambique was listed as the 172nd out of 177 countries, identifying the country as one of the least developed countries. Although 80% of the population is engaged in agriculture, they are forced to

remain in subsistence agriculture with low input and low productivity, thus suffering from poverty. On the contrary, about 70% of land in Mozambique (540,000km²), is categorised as tropical savannah region, and there remains a vast unused land, suitable for agriculture (JICA, September 28, 2009) “.

“The agricultural sector of Mozambique accounts for about 27% of GNP, about 10% of all exports, and absorbs about 80% of workforce. Although there are 36,000,000 hectares of land suitable for farming, only 16% of it, or 5,700,000 hectares, is actually cultivated (JICA, February, 2011)”.

The analysis of Mozambique using macro statistical indexes gives the impression that the nation’s agricultural sector is stagnant and leading people to believe that Mozambique is the same as the Brazilian Cerrado.

(f) “Uncultivated Mozambican North”

The “tropical savannah” climate area is limited to the northern region in Mozambique. This is one of the main reasons why the ProSAVANA programme targets Northern Mozambique. For the planner of the ProSAVANA, the geographical similarities between the Cerrado and Northern Mozambique is also evident as seen in the following map, showing the same latitude of these two regions. This argument is used by almost all the JICA documents on ProSAVANA up to now.



Map 1 JICA’s map distributed at an symposium (June 13, 2012)

It is not clear what kind of impact the fact of having the same latitude with the Brazilian Cerrado gives to the Mozambican project. For example, Japan shares the same latitude with Korea, China, Iran, Turkey, Spain and the United States but this does not mean that these countries have similar agricultural conditions with Japan.

In summary, the discourses observed in support of the ProSAVANA programme during the first phase emphasised: One, the strengthening of diplomatic relations between Japan and Brazil, secondly, painting a scenario that Mozambique was a “similar case” to the Brazilian Cerrado, and thirdly, public relations discourses have encouraged implementation of the project emphasising the benefits to African and global food security. The first phase

discourses left out or ignored the reality of the land locale and also the experiences of the people living in the ProSAVANA target area.

As Japanese agents encountered Northern Mozambique for the first time, their arguments began to change and thus a new discourse was created. Previous discourse spoke of Mozambican “tropical savannah” as “unused land”, “low in productivity” and characterized by “food shortages and poverty”. In short, this land was judged as “stagnant” by JICA. In reality, this region has rich, productive soils and good water and is one of the most populated regions of Mozambique. Noting the contradictions between reality and earlier discourses, JICA began to create a new discourse.

“The tropical savannah region that spreads to the northern part of the country is thought to have a high potential of agricultural production, for the land being especially suitable for farming, due to its steady amount of rainfall and vast land. This region, however, is mostly uncultivated. Furthermore, small-scale farmers are limited by their adherence to traditional agricultural practices, which are mostly extensive type of cultivation, and the productivity of both subsistence crops and cash crops are not high. Even the agricultural techniques of intermediate and large-scale farmers are limited, and not very productive. Hence, the expansion of cultivated land and increases in agricultural productivity are to be expected with the introduction of appropriate agricultural technology-and investment (JICA, February 2011)”.

The emphasis on the “agronomical similarities” quietly replaced earlier discourse emphasising similarities between climate and latitude. This change was due to the obvious difference in soil fertility between the two regions. A new discourse emerged pointing out that although Northern Mozambique is very suitable for agriculture and has the potential to be highly productive, the local farmers only know traditional extensive farming, and cannot expand their farming land nor improve production, thus the land remains as an “unused treasure waiting for foreign technology and investment”.

(g) Midcourse correction and “Model driven development”

While the publicity emphasising the similarities of the two cases and the slogan “from Cerrado to Africa” officially continued, it seems that this contradiction was sensed by some promoters of the programme, and it began to be carefully mentioned as follows.

“Due to substantial differences in the Brazilian and African socio-economic environments, we do not think that we can implement the Brazilian Cerrado development model without any modifications.(...)The Cerrado style development of the Savannah can be implemented but this will not solve the problem of developing the community on the whole. A “new developing model” such as introduction of cooperatives, research, loan systems, and improving the infrastructure would be needed (JICA, June 30, 2009)”.

Still, it was not mentioned the significant agronomical difference between the Brazilian Cerrado and Northern Mozambique. The soil in the north of Mozambique was “too rich” compared to the “barren Cerrado”. Thus a major adjustment was brought by JICA. This

could be seen in the following explanation of the ProSAVANA related project “Nacala Corridor Agricultural Developmental Research and Enhancement of Skill Transferring Ability Project” (hereafter, Nacala Project).

“Although the knowledge and information of the Cerrado development can be applied to the Mozambican savannah in order to increase agricultural productivity, due to the differences in the social-economic environment, establishing an ‘agricultural development model’ for the farmers to realise the agricultural development of the Nacala Corridor would be the most effective way (JICA, February 2011)”.

It means that the discourse of commonness was adjusted by adding other objectives, and changing the discourse to focus on the “improvement of agricultural productivity” in response to the argument which was based on the “low-productivity” discourse of (f). This tendency is the same in the following more detailed description of the Nacala Corridor project.

"Aiming towards reducing poverty among small-scale farmers, securing food, and developing the economy through private investments in the savannah area, this programme not only encourages agricultural development. It also aims to develop a model for small scale farmers and investors to coexist.(...)The scientists will research crops that could be suitable to grow in the Nacala Corridor area, and also establish a model to assist decision-making, so that farmers and agricultural extension offices can use it as a tool to select an appropriate cropping systems and agricultural technologies(JICA, February 2011)".

The Nacala Corridor Project’s main objective became increasing the agricultural production of the target area as a whole. The Nacala Project, however, has failed to detail the needs of existing farmers and what and how they are currently producing. It is just assumed that the creation of a “new model” and “new tools” will solve the problems of these farmers. This discourse emphasises the “coexistence of small scale farmers and foreign investors” but it is not at all clear about the final objectives and priorities.

The above examination of the documentary sources made it clear that the starting point of the ProSAVANA programme which was summarised as “the transfer of the success of the Cerrado development”, “Japan-Brazil cooperation”, “similarities of the Cerrado and Mozambique” had to be modified to the one of “establishing a new model and adjustment”, when faced with the reality of the project target area, Northern Mozambique.

(h) “Agriculture as business/co-existence of peasants and large-scale agribusiness”

After this period, "increase of agricultural productivity" came to be one of the most important objectives of the programme, and a discourse was formulated stating that this "vast and unused but fertile land" should be used by “those who can utilise it effectively”. Its premise was the praise of market economic principles and the promotion of agricultural investment by the private sector. Agricultural productivity is what is being promoted

without expressing any preference towards existing small scale farms or bias against large-scale agribusiness.

“Based on the idea that the large scale agribusiness and the small scale farmers should coexist in a proper-way, the Mozambican government is going all out to bring private investment to the country (JICA, May 11, 2012)”.

It is apparent, however, that there were some doubts on the part of the JICA’s planner and promoter of the ProSAVANA programme, shown in the sentences below.

“The ProSavana project (sic), whose objective is to promote a competitive, market driven agricultural and rural development strategy, has been faced with the question whether it should aim at supporting small scale and poor farmers or promoting large scale agriculture consisting of mostly foreign companies backed by foreign investment private enterprises. It has been pointed out that if the latter is the case, it would lead to land grabbing.(...But)it should be possible to promote agricultural mechanisation to enhance the competitiveness of both large scale agribusiness and that of indigenous small farm landholders so that the two can coexist.(...)Innovative and specific ideas which aim at ‘profitable agriculture’ without being particular about the size of the farmland (Hongo, 2010:17-18)”.

Although the crucial question was recognised and phrased, a quick conclusion of the direction of the ProSAVANA programme as “parallel promotion of the small farmers and large scale competitive agribusiness “was made to avoid answering whose interests the programme is really serving. The “utilisation of private investment” was made to be the necessary condition for achieving the objective, and making “profit’ was made to be the top priority.

This kind of approach is called “kill two birds with one stone” in a proverb, which has been repeatedly seen in the Japanese ODA, and has often resulted in failure. The actors and projects that should be given priorities are often not agreed upon, and the results tend to end up being half-baked.

(i) “Complying with the international code of conduct”

At this time, as shown in (g), the supremacy of market economy which continued after the end of the Cold War, and the sudden increase of international food prices intensified land grabbing in many areas of African continent which were disguised as “agricultural investments” causing a lot of international criticism. Knowing this, a former JICA official involved in the programme continues:

“The report published by the World Bank as the counter-measure against land grabbing (...supported the possibility of parallel agricultural development by large scale agribusiness and small scale agriculture. It also pointed out that the formulation of the ‘code of conduct’ is necessary, and the investors must follow the seven principles(...)(Hongo, 2010:17)”.

We can observe in the **[Second phase]**, in the course of project formulation and preparation, various adjustments were attempted. The agricultural investment model enabling increased agricultural production and the coexistence of small scale farmers and large scale agribusiness became the new direction of the ProSAVANA programme.

(j) “Win-Win-Win partnership and investment”

In the **[Third phase]**, during which the implementation began, the number of institutions involved and news coverage on the project has increased rapidly especially since a delegation of Japanese and Brazilian stakeholders were sent to Northern Mozambique. Although JICA’s explanations of this period are rather vague, others such as JETRO were very clear about their findings gained by the above mission.

“Brazilian legislator speaks about the benefits of the three countries. ‘Three countries all have different strong points, which make sharing work easy and clear. Brazil will produce crops, Japan will distribute, and Mozambique will establish firm grounds for investment.’ Japan, which helped the rise of Brazilian agriculture, will cooperate with Brazil to assist Mozambique’s agriculture development. It is important that everyone involved benefits from this (JETRO, August 21, 2012)”.

A utopian vision based upon the ideology of market economics envisions the possibility of everyone involved benefitting from the project by using their strengths is being promoted. The point missing from this vision is that there are real farmers actually living in the area and nothing is mentioned about how they could stand to benefit from this vision. This is due to the project itself developing too fast from an idea to a mega economic project with a wide variety of players. The below statement well explains the phenomenon.

“In this project, JICA and Embrapa will invest 13.4 million dollars in the development of agriculture in the Nacala Corridor (Brazilian Nikkei, May 1, 2012)”.

(k) “Business chance for the Japanese and Brazilian enterprises”

A joint mission of the Japanese public and private sectors was sent to Northern Mozambique in April, 2012. The joint mission consisted of 19 members including the JICA staff, representatives of Japanese businesses and government officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This mission received wide coverage by media and national institutions such as JICA, JETRO and others. The common feature of the media coverage was its focus on "business opportunities".

“In the surrounding areas alongside of Nacala Corridor, there are more than 14 million hectares of land suitable for farming, and **that is about three times the total farmland in Japan** (emphasis mine),(...)It could be confirmed that the factors observed in this region, such as soil, climate, water resources and vegetation, show a great potential to promote regional development through agricultural investment.(...)It also gave a unique opportunity to confirm its abundant labour force.(...)As one representative of the participating enterprises from Japan pointed out ‘this is a mega-programme that we would not have been able to participate in under usual circumstances. The necessary

conditions are there and some decisive projects have already been implemented' (JICA, May 14, 2012)".

"Many big businesses from Japan participated in the mission to source mainly soybeans and sesame seeds for import into Japan (Brazil-Nikkei, May 1, 2012)".

"In Africa and South America, the grain handling and marketing infrastructure by major multinational grain companies has not been developed as much as it is in Europe or Northern America. There is, thus, a big opportunity for Japanese enterprises to be a pioneer (Nikkei Online, August 18, 2012)".

"From the viewpoint of food security, Japan can find business opportunities in the distribution and marketing industries. (The ProSAVANA programme) offers an advantage of decreasing the obstacles to enter the African market by promoting partnerships between Brazil and Japanese players (JETRO, August 21, 2012)".

Challenges exist to doing business in Africa. Most Japanese enterprises lack knowledge of local customs and language skills especially those of Lusophone countries. From this perspective, collaboration between Brazil and Japan gained enthusiastic support. This could be clearly observed in the following comments by Japanese businesses participating in the joint mission.

"Brazilian involvement in this project is big due to the vast differences between Japan and Mozambique in language, social environment and ways of doing business.(...) Collaborating then with businesses in Brazil, who are familiar with Japanese culture, will ease our access." "(We shall) hire some Brazilians who speak the same language as they do in Mozambique, to train local human resources." A Japanese businessman shared his hope regarding the management of plantations in Mozambique to be done by working with Brazilians (JETRO, August 21, 2012)".

The above coverage shows Japanese government and business eagerness of working with the Brazilian enterprises. The Brazilian counterparts were, however, quite different from the Japanese with respect to purpose, enthusiasm and speed.

"The Brazilian farmers and agricultural machinery makers asked one after another concrete questions to the Mozambican officials. 'How could we settle there?' or 'We would like to dispatch a fact-finding mission as soon as possible(Sankei Business, August 20, 2012)".

"More than ten people belonging to the Brazilian agribusiness delegation felt a good response saying, 'there are still some problems of infrastructure, but we liked the soil here, which produces good results without any (chemical) fertiliser,' and 'it seems that a little introduction of (our) technology will push further growth.' There is already a plan of coming back for further inspection in July.(...)Mr.Nishimori, a Brazilian congressman, stated that "we would like to provide more solid support to (Brazilian) farmers to settle (in Northern Mozambique) (Brazilian Nikkei, May 1, 2012)".

The comments given by the Japanese Brazilian congressman and agribusiness people clearly show their intention of establishing plantations or settlement of Brazilian farmers and agribusiness in Northern Mozambique. The reason for their enthusiasm lies in the “difference” of Northern Mozambique with the Cerrado despite the repeated argument of JICA for “agronomical similarities” between these two regions, that is, “good soil” and “positive outcome without any fertiliser”. The Brazilians not only liked the soil fertility of that region, but were also surprised with the amazingly low price of land.

“While Mozambique possesses similar climatic and soil characteristics, AMAPA (Mato Grosso State Cotton Association) President Carlos Ernesto Augustin told Reuters that some areas in the country (Mozambique) on the southeast coast of Africa have even more fertile soils than Brazil. ‘The price of the land there is too good to ignore,’ said Augustin, who added that the risks inherent in buying Brazilian land as a producer were enormous because of high costs and stiff environmental regulations. (In Mozambique), producers who are granted concessions to plant would be required only to pay a tax of 21 reais per hectare (\$5.30/acre), and would receive an exemption from import tariffs on farm equipment. Prime productive land in Brazil's developed south can run to 35,000 reais a hectare, compared with 5,000 reais in the extreme frontier regions of the center-west and northeast savannas (sic.), where infrastructure is poor.(...) Mozambique's Agriculture Minister Jose (sic.) Pacheco made the offer after a visit to Brazil three months ago. The country is offering 50-year concessions for Brazilian producers to develop 6 million hectares (15 million acres) of its savannah.³ Brazil currently plants 24 million hectares of soybeans and another 18 million of corn and cotton (Reuters, August 21, 2011)”.

As mentioned above, the Mozambican land was offered at an exorbitant low price that is unbelievable in Brazil (1 US Dollar per hectare in Mozambique while 2,900 Dollars in Brazil according to Chiara [2011]). The agricultural investment condition in Mozambique is also attractive to the Brazilian agribusiness due to its loose environmental regulations.

Based on the analysis of the remarks given by the Brazilian stakeholders, it seems that the Brazilians recognise the ProSAVANA programme as an “advantageous and easy land acquisition project”.

(I) “Land grabbing/competition with China”

The Brazilian farmers and enterprises were not the only ones who found Mozambique attractive for farmland acquisition.

“Recently the food crisis has arisen as a global concern. Numerous nations are competing for land which possesses the possibility of becoming a mega- agricultural production area and many businesses are vying for land contracts (Brazilian Nikkei, May 1, 2012)”.

It is interesting to note that the Japanese Brazilian newspaper is pointing out the global land rush in the same article on the ProSAVANA mission where it introduced the Brazilian enthusiasm to fertile land in Northern Mozambique. A Japanese newspaper, Sankei,

also discuss current global land rush together with the ProSAVANA programme, emphasising that China and others are the rivals of Japan and Brazil, and the aid project (ProSAVANA) is to “leap ahead from such competition”.

“The Chinese corporations and American grain majors are moving towards strengthening relationships with Mozambique, and there are many rivals (for the Japanese and Brazilians). The Japanese actors plan to assist in agricultural technology and human resource development through promoting public/private sector partnerships, in order to leap ahead of the competition.(...)The reason why the Brazilians are accelerating the implementation of the project lies in the fact that it is not only Japan and Brazil who are interested in Mozambique. China is also eager to obtain land in order to secure soybeans from Africa.(...)Cargill, the largest multinational grain dealer in the world, announced this March that they are purchasing 40 thousand hectares of farmland to produce soybeans and wheat.(...)Land grabbing is intensifying as the local government promotes it by offering licenses (Sankei Business, August 20, 2012)”.

From the above coverage, it can be observed that the competition among foreign investors for land grabbing has been greatly intensifying in Mozambique. Among these competitors, China is one of the most active players, and the Japanese government had deep concerns about this since China has been a hidden “rival” of Japanese ODA and diplomacy with Africa.⁴

“In search of food and natural resources, China is increasing its ODA and investment in Africa. At the 5th cabinet ministers’ conference of ‘Sino-African Cooperation Forum’, China announced the establishment of a development fund, giving loans to African governments up to twenty billion US Dollars for the next three years. Meanwhile, Japan will host the 5th TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development) next year, continuing the fight over African development leadership (Nikkei Online, July 28, 2012)”.

As TICAD V approaches, the ProSAVANA programme is expected to play an important role in the self-promotion and publicity of Japanese assistance to Africa, differentiating it from other donors, especially China.

(m) “Return to JICA’s traditional project-base assistance and balancing with investment oriented approach”

While enthusiasm has been created for accelerating investment in Mozambique, it has gotten more and more difficult to see why JICA need to get involved to begin with. There is a growing suspicion both inside and outside of Mozambique that the purpose of the ProSAVANA programme is cheap land acquisition. To counteract this rumour, JICA employed the discourse of “coexistence with large-scale agribusiness”. But JICA was forced to extensively rework its plans to give the appearance that their involvement in the ProSAVANA programme is no different than what they have always done and that is providing technical assistance to small farmers in the field of agricultural development.

“Production of soybeans and sesame should rapidly be increased /putting emphasis on creating organisational models and technology transfer to small-scale farmers not excluding medium and large-scale corporations /formulate and verify the coexistence model, production increase (JICA, July 31, 2012)”.

No matter how hard JICA tries to return to the traditional form of aid that focuses on the local small scale farmers and put forward such image in order to avoid further criticism, they still operate within the framework that ProSAVANA will become “the Cerrado of Africa”. This framework has become firmly established and extensively publicised, and a diverse range of actors are already deeply involved with huge expectations.

Up to here, discourse analysis based on the information acquired before September 2012 has been undertaken. In the following section further analysis of the discourse will be done.

2. Analysis of the discourse and its background

In this section, the author will analyse the above discourse and its background based on the following three viewpoints: (1) the voices of civil society of Mozambique, (2) the reality of the northern Mozambique farming community and livelihood of those people, and (3) the previous cases in Brazil and Africa.

(1) Examination based on the voices from civil society of Mozambique

According to the author’s interview with members of Mozambican civil society organisations (1 national farmers’ organisation and 2 environmental groups⁵) in early September 2012, the organisations shared strong concerns over the ProSAVANA programme and how it is carried out. There were many aspects pointed out as problems. The critiques were centred around three points: a disregard for the political sovereignty of the people, the negotiating process is undemocratic, and the lack of accountability. These critiques can be summarised as follows:

1. Land grabbing and the problem with the right of land that is guaranteed to farmers,
2. Negligence and ignorance about the production effort of the local farmers of Northern Mozambique,
3. Environmental problems caused by deforestation, heavy usage of chemical fertiliser and pesticides, promotion of monoculture,
4. Damages to food security by agricultural investment for export, sacrificing food production of the people at the local, regional and national level,
5. Thus, violates sovereignty of the people of Mozambique.

It is true that there was no single description regarding the current production effort of the local farmers in the documentary sources of the Japanese agencies as seen in the previous section. The local farmers were represented as someone who only knows traditional and extensive farming, and cannot sustain their food, or “abundant labour”, and

to whom the ProSAVANA programme needs to bring a new model for improved methods and organisations.

The concern of the Mozambican civil society became so strong that on Oct. 11, 2012, the biggest farmers' organisation in Mozambique, UNAC (União Nacional de Camponeses), released a statement criticising the ProSAVANA programme (UNAC, Oct. 11, 2012), and it received worldwide attention. Although the issues they argue in the statement are more or less the same as the above summary, the statements were based on the findings of the research done by the several Mozambican and international NGOs, namely, ORAM, GRAIN and others, since spring of 2012. The impact was enormous as the problems related to the ProSAVANA programme was not widely known until then.

One of the strongest concerns is related to land grabbing. As will be discussed in (3) of this section, the programme was planned and begun during the time when the most controversial phenomenon related to land grabbing was occurring in Mozambique and Africa. Although these points are briefly mentioned in the discourse summarised as the 'international norm', and an optimistic view towards regulation was shared by JICA, the planner and promoter of the ProSAVANA programme, there have not been any information about how such problems will be avoided. As land grabbing became a major global issue, a Japanese NGO called "No! to Land Grab, Japan" sent an open inquiry to JICA concerning the possibility of land acquisition or usage in the ProSAVANA project on Dec. 10, 2011. In answering to this inquiry, JICA stated that "at this point, we are not planning it", but continued the paragraph, "this area belongs to the state, and there is a possibility of land use by non-Mozambican private investments in the future based on the land laws specified by the Mozambique government (JICA, Jan. 5, 2012⁶).

This typical ambiguous phrasing of the Japanese governmental agencies is not at all clear about whether the land will be taken to be used by the Brazilian or Japanese enterprises or not. In the actual activities, however, the Brazilian delegates did openly talk about their expectation of obtaining a large amount of good land with little money from their participation in the ProSAVANA programme. (Reuters, Aug. 15, 2011; Brazilian Nikkei, May 1, 2012).

Being asked about the possibility of land acquisition (in any sort including lease and etc.) by the Brazilian agribusiness in the context of the ProSAVANA programme during the open seminar and meeting held by the initiatives of the Japanese NGOs in the end of 2012 in Tokyo, both JICA and MoFA did not deny the possibility, but also replied "we cannot tell/do not know since we are currently making the Master Plan (for the programme)" and "the coexistence of large scale farmers and small farmers is important" (JICA, Nov. 15, 2012; MoFA, Dec. 14, 2012). In fact, According to an internal source of JICA to development consultants, the Master Plan for the programme is supposed to include measures that could "respond" to possible land-grabbing y caused by promotion of middle and large scale agricultural development (JICA, 2011 Saikoji: 12).

From the Mozambican farmers and citizens point of view, this is not only about the issue of land but also about sovereignty. That is, sovereignty of land, food, and self-

determination, thus, democracy based on people's rights. UNAC shares its resentment in the statement as follows.

“Ever since hearing about the ProSAVANA Programme, we have noticed a lack of information and transparency from the main stakeholders.(...)We, peasant farmers, condemn the way in which the ProSAVANA programme was drafted and the way it is intended to be implemented in Mozambique, which has been characterised by reduced transparency and the exclusion of civil society organisations throughout the process, especially peasant organisations. Following a comprehensive analysis of ProSAVANA, we peasant farmers have concluded that: ProSAVANA is a result of a top-down policy, which does not take into consideration the demands, dreams and basic concerns of peasants, particularly those within the Nacala Corridor (UNAC, Oct.11,2012)”.

UNAC expressed strong dissatisfaction and reservations about being in the situation where there was no consultation, no clear information disclosed, and being told continuously that “nothing is decided,” and then, many things suddenly leak out from the press.

Furthermore, this goes far beyond a violation of the sovereignty of the local farmers of the targeted area of the programme. According to some civil society members, the approach of the project is starting to give negative influence for the Mozambican civil society and also for democracy. This is because even though many civil society organisations including various farmers' organisations are active in Mozambique, the promoters of the ProSAVANA programme picking out specific individuals from specific organisations who are eager to collaborate in order to make an excuse that “the civil society is participating in the discussion”.

This kind of the manipulation using civil society organisations or their representatives has been used on and off in Mozambique by the government. But it reached a serious point and gave serious negative impacts to the Mozambican society as whole when the new members of the National Elections Committee (CNE) were installed based on the new electoral law introduced in 2007. The law stipulates that a majority of the members were to be from civil society organisations. This progressive legal experiment in democracy in reality betrayed civic expectations when most of these “civil society” members ended up having some kind of connection with the ruling party, FRELIMO. This election law ended up creating many obstacles to free elections, and has revealed that Mozambique has reached a state of “slide into one-party rule” or “party-state overlap” under multiparty system (Manning, 2010; Mozambique Political Bulletin, 2009-2010).

“Participation of farmers' organisations” with the ProSAVANA programme was conducted with the same technique, and the local civil society has criticised the Japanese aid agencies for not respecting the transparency or the democratic processes of the local civil society, leading to the situation where perfunctory authoritarianism of the local government is confirmed and facilitated.

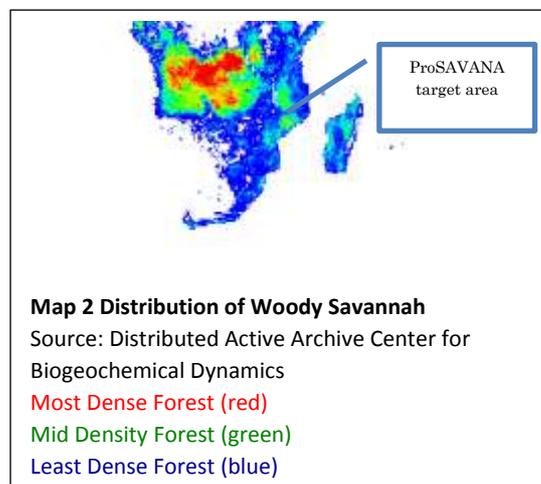
(2) Examination based on the reality of rural communities and their livelihood in Northern Mozambique

As we have examined in the previous section, the development rationale of the northern region of Mozambique by the Japanese planners and promoters of the ProSAVANA programme has shifted many times. At first its “commonness with the barren Cerrado” was emphasised. Followed by “the difference may be large”, and then changed to “not utilised/cultivated although the area is fertile and land is abundant”, and lastly shifted to admit “it is difficult to secure large area of land because of high population density in some areas” (JICA, July 31, 2012).

People who are familiar with Mozambique know well, that Northern Mozambique has rich soil, is well watered, thus populous, and has played a significant role in agricultural development through the small farmers’ effort since the colonial period up to now (Isaacman 1995; Funada-Classen 2012). These facts pose unavoidable questions about the research capacity of the Japanese aid agencies, especially of JICA. JICA is one of the world’s largest aid agencies in terms of annual budget. If it is small land holders who are to benefit from the work of JICA how are their interests being protected by supporting a market oriented approach to agricultural development which inevitably favours large scale farming and the interests of power?

Faced with these “newly discovered” contradicting realities, JICA expanded its attention to the low populate Niassa Province. Although this Province has low population density as a whole, its southern part has relatively high population density due to similar agricultural conditions to the interior of the neighbouring Nampula Province. But more than half of the northern table mountain highland area (North-eastern part of the Province) is a wildlife reserve area. Its western area is climatically not classified as “tropical savannah”, and has a low population density due to the fact that its agricultural productivity is low.

What political purposes are served in doing analysis of regions based upon climate or ecosystem classification systems? As it was pointed out in the previous sections, “tropical savannah” is merely a category based on climate (dry season – rainy season pattern) and not based on soil type nor vegetation. On the other hand, generally speaking, savannah is defined also by the vegetation, and the Encyclopaedia Britannica explains that savannah is characterised as “hot and seasonally dry climate, with trees sparse and scattered, and having basically grassland vegetation with tall grasses”.



characterised as “hot and seasonally dry climate, with trees sparse and scattered, and having basically grassland vegetation with tall grasses”.

In Japan and perhaps around the world, “savannah” has the image of a land with few trees, and also “the Cerrado” discourse of “barren land” gives the image that there is almost no trees. There are, however, two varieties of savannah, “grassland savannah” and “woody savannah”. The latter is a transitional stage in ecosystem maturity.

Whether the usage of this savannah terminology as in “ProSAVANA” is intended or not is not known. The term “savannah” is certainly directing the public to ignore the savannah’s rich vegetation, especially its’ forests, and promote the image of turning it into vast farmland.

The ProSAVANA target area, the inland area of northern Mozambique, is woody savannah. Much of the “uncultivated land” in Niassa Province is covered or used to be covered by the wide “miombo” forest which stretched all the way from Tanzania. This could be clearly observed on the map by Distributed Active Archive Center for Biogeochemical Dynamics.⁷ Although the wide range of the northern inland is covered by woody savannah, the Japanese documentary sources examined by the author never referred to the word “forest” even once. Rather, it was publicised that Northern Mozambique is covered with untouched land as shown in the caption of the photo which says “unused land is spread behind the small scale farmers’ land (JICA, Sept. 28, 2009)”.

This so-called unused land and forests were largely reclaimed by the people who depend on the natural resources. It has not been “barren” from the beginning. The inhabitants may have an intention to use it as farmland in the future.

Such land has often been the object of dispute among the inhabitants of the area. Two of the three targeted provinces of the ProSAVANA programme are the most populous provinces in Mozambique. Nampula and Zambézia Provinces, with a population of over 3.9 million and 3.8 million respectively, hold about 40% of the entire population.⁸ This is due to abundance of water and the fertility of land, which leaves serious doubts about the argument by the planners of ProSAVANA emphasising “the agronomical similarities with the Cerrado”. This is perhaps the reason why JICA recently altered its arguments by saying “it is difficult to secure large scale continuous land”. On the other hand, in Niassa Province where it is recently claimed to be “possible to secure large scale continuous land” by JICA, forest or transitory forest dominate the area. According to the provincial director of agriculture, 77% or about 9.4 million hectare of Niassa Province is covered by forests (Notícias, Setp. 4, 2012). In this province, however, miombo forest is rapidly disappearing because of cutting trees for export by private enterprises, and also for securing firewood by local inhabitants. Recently, in Niassa Province, six multinational companies have begun monoculture tree planting. A total area of 2 million hectares has been planted for “mitigating global-warming”(Ibid.), but the probabilities are high that this will lead to the emergence of conflicts over land, water, and forest usage.

Although the recent documents emphasise the objective of the programme as “improving productivity of extensive traditional agriculture”, they do not explain what, how and why the local farmers produce. They also stress how “poor” the locals are due to “the low productivity”, but they do not mention anything about their livelihood. In other words, the improvement (increased productivity) has been emphasised without knowing the real situation of the people who live in the area.⁹

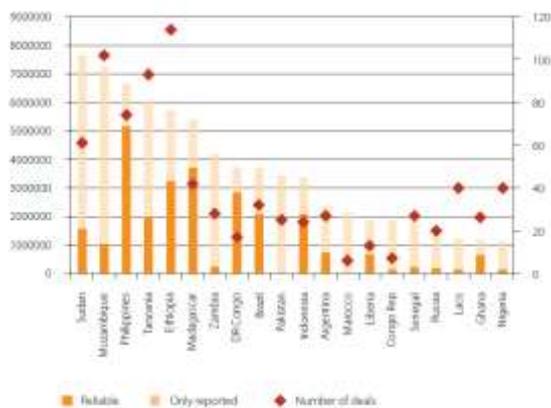
Northern Mozambique has a great deal of geographical variation and thus local farmers adapt their agriculture to the local conditions. There exist coastal areas, urban suburbs, highland, low wetland, and inland areas where cash crop farming is spreading

widely. For instance, in Niassa Province which is considered to have “plenty land” thus targeted by the programme, contract farming by tobacco companies has spread in recent years. This has led to large scale deforestation followed by a rapid increase in the use of chemical fertiliser and other agro-toxins (Juaréz and Perez-Nino, 2012). Contrary to the JICA’s view of “stagnant agriculture”, the top item of Mozambique agricultural export is tobacco, and its main production areas are Tete and Niassa Province.¹⁰

According to the research done by the author from 2010 to 2012 in the tobacco growing area of Maua District, Niassa Province, it was found that tobacco is a “man’s crop” for the local communities and all its sales profits belong to male producers. It was observed that men who obtained a large amount of cash had spent it mostly for drinking and payment for prostitutes also were increasingly involved in domestic violence and disputes. This has led to a stagnation of food production, and in some cases, a creation of “one husband three wives” situation which is historically rare in the area.¹¹ Also, it was observed that the traditional intra-community relation based on the matri-local residence pattern had been disrupted.

In Niassa Province, besides tobacco growing, cotton cultivation had started during the colonial period. Before jumping to the conclusion that promoting “profitable agriculture” is the answer to Mozambique’s problems, the reality of the current problem of promoting agricultural investment to support cash-crop contract farming by private companies needs to be thoroughly examined. There has been not enough detailed research on this, especially in Niassa, and there is no public record that the programme stakeholders of ProSAVANA had such concern or did such studies during their preparation and planning. Rather, they simply emphasis that farmers are practicing “underdeveloped traditional agriculture”, and gave the impression that there has not been any efforts by the local farmers to improve their productivity and no agricultural investment entering the area (JICA, Feb., 2011).

This negligence of local agricultural practices in Northern Mozambique and its importance for maintaining resilience and stability has its reason. It appears clearly in the objectives of the Nacala Corridor project, that it is, “agricultural” development not “rural” development that is being pursued. Agricultural development focuses only on increasing agricultural production and with this focus the needs of rural society are neglected. There has been an unwillingness on the part of JICA to see the problems associated with pursuing what they call “profitable agriculture” such as those exposed in the case of tobacco production. Likewise, the reductionist pursuit of increasing agricultural production as the answer to agricultural development prohibits them from seeing the needs of the local people and Mozambique society. The negligence of local farmers, their livelihood and society could be observed also in the fact that there has been little field research carried out by the JICA’s consultants for this project. Interviews were conducted with only 20 farmers of various scales (MoFA Dec. 14, 2012).¹²



Source: Anseeuw, et.al./Land Matrix, 2012:9.

The negligence of the local small farmers and their livelihood and the emphasis on the importance of technical “productivity”, “profitable agriculture” and “co-existence between small and large scale farmers” coincide with the current global phenomenon of private investors rushing to rural Africa for land acquisitions. Mozambique has been one of the most targeted countries in the world for such a phenomenon due to their rich natural resources of land and water and the

abundance of labour. According to the analytical report by Land Matrix, the organisation established by the world experts on land issues, both total number and reported area of land deals in Mozambique is the second biggest around the world (Anseeuw et.al. /Land Matrix, 2012). This is happening whether or not Japanese aid and Japanese private investment are coming forth. This phenomenon has pushed the GNP of Mozambique, but has started to make a tremendous influence to its natural environment, to peoples’ lives and to their social relations (Mozambique News reports & clippings, Sept. 21, 2012).

There are a few cases of success such as the 8 years–effort of a local NGO and local farmers who secured public and private cooperation, and carried out a soybean project in Gurue in Zambézia Province (Hanlon and Smart, 2012). It is, however, very rare that a project is planned and implemented based on the initiative and motivation of local communities and farmers like this case. In the majority of cases, the investment has been carried out based on the discourse of “the paramountcy of profit” promoted by the government and foreign companies, disregarding the rights and concerns of the inhabitants, which resulted in the conflict with them.

This kind of discourse and the accompanying inflow of investment has promoted the practice of buying out local authorities such as village chiefs or “traditional chiefs” who play a big role in securing the formalised participation and acceptance of local residents, and influences power relations within local communities to a great degree.

Amartya Sen long ago pointed out that the loss of rights is the underlying cause of poverty and malnourishment. It is no use talking about the problem of poverty without seeing and analysing power relations. A discourse which prioritises “poverty reduction by introducing a top-down profit seeking mechanism” results in contradictions between the perceived goals of those in power and the real life experience of rural communities. It is therefore necessary to talk about how to avoid the further loss of rights of the inhabitants. There is no acknowledgement that this problem exists in the ProSAVANA documents.

It is important to improve the livelihood of small farmers, increase their agricultural productivity and sustain it, and provide market access for their agricultural produce. The

question is how do you do this? And further is the market access a domestic market or global? Deforestation ought to be stopped, and for this to happen outsiders like Japan may be able to help by responding to the requests of the local people. It is therefore problematic that the process of planning and introduction of the ProSAVANA programme has proceeded thus far with little input from local-residents, and by a continual reference to the supposed similarities with the Brazil/Cerrado experience (UNAC, Oct. 11, 2012).

The ProSAVANA stakeholders more recently are stressing the “coexistence between small farmers and middle and large scale business enterprise” (JICA, May 11, 2012). It is not clear, however, how they are avoiding the problem of farm consolidation and the problem of power relationships when Mozambique is already in the middle of the land grabbing phenomena. It must be remembered that the land and water are limited so the prioritisation of export agriculture comes at the expense of local needs.

“Solving the problem of the world food security” was often cited as the objective in the Japanese documents (JICA, May 25, 2009; May 15, 2010; Feb. 2011; Aug. 24, 2012). The so called low productivity of small farmers has been conditioned by various necessary concerns of their own food security, environment, culture and society. If the supreme purpose of this programme is to increase agricultural productivity, a focus on increasing productivity per unit of land area ought to be the measure of success. As Vandana Shiva, Miguel Altieri and others have documented repeatedly, small scale traditional farms produce much more for food per unit of land area than large scale monocultures.¹³ This differs from the rhetoric that the only way to feed the world is through industrialised large scale, mechanised, intensive input use method, which is the kind of agriculture which led to “the success of the Cerrado development”. In fact, there are currently over 65million (one third of) Brazilians who suffer from food insecurity in the country despite such “success” in agricultural development (Clementes&Fernandes,2012:22). The same phenomenon is occurring in Uganda due to land rush (FOEI, 2012:5). The questions of, how to feed the world? Or, how is the world to be fed? , are contested ground.

A discourse is already heard that “the local economy is revitalised by increasing the employment of farm workers”. What we have seen around the world is that farm labourers are unlikely to be paid wages by which their families can obtain adequate food. Traditionally their minimum level of nutrition has been kept because their family is supported by their local community in many ways, women unequally share the social cost. African people have constantly been betrayed by the claim that foreign capital would create employment opportunities (FOEI,2012:12).

The current phenomenon of food insecurity among local small farmers and degradation of family production and creation of casual/temporary jobs instead of permanent ones is identical to what has happened in the Cerrado after the introduction of the developmental programme, PRODECER, Brazilian and Japanese Cooperation for the Agricultural Development of the Brazilian Cerrado (Pessoa, 1988:7;89;116-117).

As local farmers’ and civil society organisations, such as ROSA and the Network of Organisations for Food Sovereignty, represented by 35 organisations have pointed out, this

programme has neither been planned in consultation with the local inhabitants or civil society organisations, nor based and upon a grasp of the real local situation (UNAC, Oct. 11, 2012; ROSA, Dec. 13, 2012). From the public documents released by JICA up to September 2012, it is impossible to find information about any serious efforts to consult with local people. Although there were several “multi-stakeholders meetings” that the local civic organisations participated since April 2012 according to MoFA¹⁴, these organisations felt that these were not consultation, rather they were one-sided information distribution meetings. This only served to increase their suspicion of the intention of the meetings and the project.¹⁵ On the contrary, it has been widely propagated that JICA, the three governments and private enterprises of Japan and Brazil are meeting, discussing and working closely. There is absence of any mention, and thus any regard, of the local inhabitants who would certainly be the most affected by this programme.

It is not at all clear how much the inbuilt perception, attitude and framework, can be modified concerning this project which is characteristically political (internally called “Ex-prime minister Aso’s project”¹⁶), diplomacy oriented, and based on investment interests. JICA used to have its main tenet as “human-centred development”, but has not shown the attitude and purpose to “stand on the side of local inhabitants” up until now. JICA has kept repeating the objective of the project is to “increase agricultural investment and production” and achieve “coexistence with private enterprises” although they have not made any serious efforts of finding out the local reality nor consulting (rather than “information sharing”¹⁷) with the local farmers, farmers’ organisations or civil society working with land issues and food security.¹⁸

This tendency observed among the Japanese ProSAVANA stakeholders is not new to some people. Vera Lúcia Salazar Pessoa who conducted detailed research and interviews in 3 localities within the Cerrado concludes:

“The project (PRODECER) was prepared by outsiders from the top down and there was no consultation with the local people (Pessoa, 1988:128)”.

Although the time, region and country are different, the expression is identical to the statement of UNAC on the ProSAVANA programme. History repeats.

(3) Examination based on the previous experiences of Brazil and other African countries

(a) Case of Brazil

Disregard of the “rights of farmers” and the problem of land grabbing expressed in the ProSAVANA programme has been happening all over the world in recent years. In Brazil where agricultural investment is advancing, corporations are grabbing the land of the inhabitants for the expansion of farmland, and now are rushing into forest areas. As a result, ecological destruction is increasing due to the cultivation of large scale monoculture crops for biofuels, soybeans, and sugar cane (Pessoa,1988; Mendonça,2009; Clementes&Fernandes,2012). At the same time indigenous cultures are being destroyed

through attacks and killing of the inhabitants and citizens who are trying to preserve land and the nature (Pessoa, 1988: 182).

“The Farmers of The Cerrado” mentioned in JICA’s documents are “Nikkei and European *colonos* from Southern Brazil” (JICA, June 30, 2009), and excludes the local peasants or small farmers who had been living the area. Pessoa vividly describes the process of marginalisation of these people, that is, their loss of land, the degradation of their livelihood, their status as “semi-slaves” in *colonos*’ plantations, and their urban dislocation. , Thus, the complete destruction of individuals and community life (Pessoa, 1988: 84; 89-90; 105-106).

In 1981, 2,685 families stood up and organised 16 campaigns for land reform. By 1983 the number of land conflicts had grown to 53 swelling to 65 in 1984 (Ibid.:181-182). This all happened during the Japan’s accord and introduction of PRODECER with the Brazilian Military Dictatorship (1964-85) to the Cerrado area.

It is now apparent that the description of the Cerrado as “barren and not inhabited land” depicted by those Japanese who praise “the success story of the Cerrado development” is not accurate. As discussed in Section (2), this area was a woody savannah, and in a way a treasure chest of nature’s abundance characterised by its variety of trees.

Although it seems there is various data on the deforestation of the Cerrado (48% according to IBAMA, 2011, and 80% to WWF), the fact that this development project damaged vast forest lands and nature cannot be denied. Even a Japanese expert on Brazilian affairs and who accompanied the project, Kotaro Horisaka, describes the process of the Cerrado development as follows.

“The national highway stretches straight towards horizon, the farm reclamation created through destroying all standing trees by bulldozers which looked like army tanks (Horisaka 2012: 47)”.

After all, the Cerrado was not “barren” land where nobody was living, but rather it was “rich in diversity” due to the sparse population. This richness was, however, thoroughly destroyed by the Cerrado development. Yutaka Hongo, JICA’s key person and initiator of the ProSAVANA programme, who worked for the Cerrado development for over 20 years and called “a living encyclopaedia of the Cerrado” by his institution, insists in the interview that they developed the area because it was “barren”, and this expression comes from the description given by a French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, in his book published in 1930s, *Tristes Tropiques* (JICA, Sept. 30, 2009).¹⁹ For him and his colleagues, the Cerrado development was a “big success” in every aspect and no reconsideration of the issues related to environment nor indigenous people’s rights is mentioned (Hongo and Hosono 2012).

In the “barren and not inhabited” Cerrado, there were indigenous “Quilombo”²⁰ people who made their living based on farming on the rich lands of the Cerrado. According to Vera Pessoa, who conducted an empirical research for her

dissertation, their land was taken from them for the Cerrado development project during the time of the Brazilian military dictatorship. The people were placed in a protected area, marginalised, turned into mere farm labourers, and they became poorer (Pessoa, 1988).

In 1992, these people organised themselves to fight for their rights. They set up a farmers' association called the Cerrado Network, and requested a dialogue with JICA, but JICA refused to meet with them (Inyaku, Nov. 8, 2012²¹). There is no description, in JICA's Cerrado development documents, of these local, indigenous farmers. JICA mentions "farmers" repeatedly, but they do not mean the local small farmers who had been living in the area for years but the European or Japanese/Nikkei "colonos" (migrants) from the southern part of Brazil who were looking for land, and designated as "superior farmers" (JICA, June 30, 2009).

This "success without any negative legacies" and negligence of indigenous/minority and environmental rights of the Cerrado development, observed in the discourse of the Japanese ProSAVANA planners, is the key background of the characteristics of the design and discourse of the ProSAVANA programme. As it was thoroughly examined in the previous sections, without understanding the local reality and global phenomenon, the ProSAVANA programme was setup and propagated as a "replica of the Cerrado development" (Agriculture Minister José Pacheco, AIM, Dec. 25, 2012) since there are many "similarities" (JICA 2009-2012) and "land is not used and productivity is low" (JICA, Feb. 2011).

The problem of transplanting the Cerrado's experience to Africa without recognising its negative aspects is not confined to deforestation and the incumbent ecological destruction. FASE (Federação de Órgãos para Assistência Social e Educacional), a Brazilian civic organisation, published an emergency report entitled "International Cooperation and Investment in Brazil" criticising the ProSAVANA programme pointing out that the conflict and contradiction between local farmers and large scale monoculture agriculture seen in the Cerrado development in Brazil will be reproduced overseas countries (FASE 2012:32-33). No re-examination, however, has been made by those who promoted it, and only the slogan of "the success of the Cerrado development" has been repeated.

At a seminar recently held in Tokyo, JICA proudly shared information about their assistance on an "ecological conservation plan" and their "surveillance of illegal tree cutting in the Amazon" (JICA, July 31, 2012). This public relations effort regarding a relatively small conservation effort pales in JICA's involvement in the deforestation of the Cerrado—a reality that they did not want to talk about in public. Civil society organisations in both Brazil and Mozambique are concerned that Japanese and Brazilian promoters are only telling their perspective on the Cerrado development project and are not willing to hear the voices of people "from below". It thus leaves a high possibility that the problems of the Cerrado development project will be repeated in Northern Mozambique.

FASE also criticised in its report that the ProSAVANA's slogan "South-south cooperation" hides the expansive move of the Brazilian private investors, and the project should not be considered as "South-South" but rather as "North-South cooperation" since in reality there is motivation on the part of Brazilian corporations to use this project as their

global strategy (FASE, 2012). It is exactly on this point that it was strongly contended by Mozambican scholars and members of the local civil society against the Brazilian scholars who proposed the benefit of “horizontal, South-South cooperation” during an international academic conference held in Mozambique.²² During the debate even the word “Brazilian imperialism” was used.

Similar points appeared in a Japanese journal by a JICA staff, Hiroyuki Kubota. Although his expectation towards ProSAVANA is high, interestingly enough, he also states as follows:

“Emerging countries have a merit in positioning themselves as a member of the ‘South’ in securing their freedom of action.(...)The relation with these countries in the context of ‘South-south cooperation’ is rather similar to the debate on coordination among the old donors (Kubota, 2010:3)”.

(b) Case of other African countries – land grabbing

The phrase “unused land” is an expression used not only for Brazil and Mozambique but also for rural areas around the world. It is used not only by stakeholders in the ProSAVANA Programme, but also by the World Bank and others. The World Bank released a paper in 2009 entitled, “Awakening Africa’s Sleeping Giant: Prospects for Commercial Agriculture in the Guinea Savannah Zone and Beyond”. In it they mentioned that Africa has 600 million hectares of the Guinea Savannah (equivalent to the “Africa’s tropical savannah” used by JICA), and about 400 million of it could be used for agriculture (The World Bank, 2009:1). The World Bank continues that “(l)ess than 10 per cent of this area is currently cropped, making it one of the largest underused agricultural land reserves in the world”.

According to JICA and the World Bank, half of the Guinea Savannah/“tropical savannah” exists in Africa, and it is getting a keen attention from public and private investment (the World Bank, 2009; JICA, June 30, 2009). Many woody savannah areas in Africa have been re-named as Guinea Savannah or Africa’s “tropical savannah”, and have become the target for rapid agricultural development.

Since 2000, and even more so after the food crisis in 2007-8, large scale agricultural investments have been flowing into Africa, and a great amount of land has already been taken away from local communities. Africa already has recorded 754 affirmed cases of land deals involving foreign investment in the last 10 years accounting for 56.2 million hectares (equivalent of almost 5% of the total farmland, same as the total area of Kenya). Many problems and conflicts have been occurring in each country (LandMatrix data; The Guardian, April 23; 27, 2012). The annual report of Land Matrix also points out that 62% of the total area for land rush around the world is located in Africa (Anseeuw et.al./Land Matrix 2012: 7).

The promoters of the ProSAVANA programme have been referring to the World Bank reports and seven “Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment” to which the Japanese government has cooperated in its formation, and are trying to propagate the view that a large scale agricultural investment by corporations and small farmers can coexist, and

by raising these principles they can avoid the confrontation (Hongo, 2010:17; JICA, Dec.14 and Jul. 31, 2012).

The above World Bank Report and “the Principles”, however, have been strongly criticised by experts, farmers’ organisations, and environmental civil organisations around the world for legitimising the global rush for land, rather than challenging its legitimacy. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, is one of the leading critiques to these principles, and in his article entitled “Destroying the World’s Peasantry”, he concludes:

“All too often, notions such as ‘reserve agricultural land,’ or ‘idle land,’ are manipulated out of existence, sometimes being used to designate land on which many livelihoods depend, and that is subject to long-standing customary rights.(...)The set of principles(...)remain purely voluntary. But what is required is to insist that governments comply fully with their human rights obligations, including the right to food, the right of all peoples to freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources, and the right not to be deprived of the means of subsistence. Because the principles ignore human rights, they neglect the essential dimension of accountability (De Schutter, 2010)”.

De Schutter also criticises that the competition between small farmers and large agro-industries is bound to be unequal. At the same time, he does not forget to point out that small farmers are rendering invaluable services, namely, preservation of agro- and biodiversity, local communities’ resilience to price shock or weather-related events, and environmental conservation (Ibid.).

In April 2012, an international environmental NGO, FOEI (Friends of the Earth International) and La Via Campesina (an international farmers’ organisation) held an international campaign and strongly criticised that the World Bank’s policy for land privatisation and concentration has paved the way for corporations to take upwards of 80 million hectares of land from rural communities across the world in the past few years, and accusing the Bank of promoting “corporate-oriented rather than people-centred” policies and laws (FOEI Report, 2012;the Guardian, April 23, 2012).

David Kureeba, a member of National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) of Uganda said as follows:

“People's rights to land (in Uganda) are being demolished. Small-scale farming and forestry that protected unique wildlife, heritage and food is being converted to palm oil wastelands that only profit agribusinesses (The Guardian, Apr.23, 2012)”.

(c) Lessons to be learned for Mozambique

It is interesting to analyse JICA’s understanding about land rights. In answering to the inquiry of a Japanese NGO on the land acquisition, JICA stated that “this area belongs to the state, and there is a possibility of land use by non-Mozambican private investments in the future based on the land use system specified by the Mozambique government (JICA, Jan. 5, 2012²³). This typical phrasing of the Japanese governmental organisations is not clear and

rather contradictory. Interestingly enough, after the private-public delegates of two countries visited Northern Mozambique in 2011 and 2012, the Brazilian delegates openly talked about their expectations for the ProSAVANA programme lies in the acquisition of a large amount of land with little cost (Reuters, Aug. 15, 2011; Brazilian Nikkei, May 1, 2012).

The ambiguities and contradictions continue. During an open seminar and dialogue with Japanese NGOs, JICA and MoFA did not deny the possibility of land being acquired by Brazilian agribusiness in the context of the ProSAVANA programme, and replied “we cannot tell/do not know since we are still in the process of making a Master Plan” and “the coexistence of large scale farmers and small farmers is an important feature of this programme” (JICA, Nov. 15, 2012; MoFA, Dec. 14, 2012).

What is clear in JICA’s reply to the open inquiry is JICA’s complete negligence of the land rights of the local farmers and communities despite the fact that Mozambique as well as other African countries regards the customary land right of the inhabitants as an important legal base. Even after the introduction of the 1997 Land Act, farmers continued to possess the right to use the land. It only mentions that the state owns the land and its usage will be determined by the current governmental system. This “system”, however, as we have seen previously, did not prevent the land rush from occurring in Mozambique.

Leaving all the responsibility on the shoulders of the recipient governments and escaping from criticism by using terms such as “aid upon their request”, “their decision”, “their governance issue” and “state sovereignty” is what has been observed during the discussions regarding KRII and the Cerrado development. Here, this logic has resulted in neglecting the rights of indigenous people. The problem appears to be deeply rooted and may be a political strategy of economic interests due to its appearance again and again.

Facing ever rising criticisms, JICA responded reclaiming JICA’s original mandate of assisting local farmers. Their assistance to small farmers is, however, just a part of the project. Even if some farmers benefit from JICA’s assistance can their process be called “coexistence/parallel development with small farmers” if at the same time the land, water, and forest in the surrounding areas are decimated and the right of access to land is taken away from many more inhabitants? This is not just empty rhetoric since Mozambique is the second most targeted country around the world for global land deals. And for Brazilian agribusiness, the ProSAVANA programme offers the opportunity of acquiring a vast tract of high-quality land at very favourable terms.

The problem is not only the issue of the land acquisition. The process is also a threat to democracy as mentioned in (1) of this section. The promoters of the ProSAVANA are able to find individuals who are willing to speak out in favour of the programme in order to protect the legitimacy of the programme’s supporters. As time goes on it is becoming more clear that to promote the interest of ProSAVANA is to deny the interests of local farmer’s and civil society organisations. Civil society organisations are concerned about the negative impact on democracy and that division among the local farmers is becoming stronger. In this global, regional, national, local context, even if the promoters of the programme keep shifting their emphasis every time they find “newly discovered” facts and criticisms, many

farmers, citizens, experts inside and outside of Mozambique view the ProSAVANA programme as a Japanese aid project to assist the overseas expansion of Brazilian agribusiness under the guise of “South-south or tripartite cooperation”.

Concluding Remarks

The author has discussed the changes of discourse and the analysis of its background. It is now apparent that the lack of accountability and transparency, both to the local right holders and to the citizens have persisted. The cause of this stems from the fact that this programme started as a political, diplomatic, commercial and publicity project, and has not been initiated from the needs of the local inhabitants nor their challenges under the current forces of globalisation. Although the planners and promoters of the ProSAVANA programme managed to raise public funds (tax) by stressing the words such as “lack”, “unused”, “low productivity”, “poverty”, “food shortage”. They were merely drawing on observations of ~~by~~ macro-level data, assumptions and images without any actual research on the ground nor discussions with those who are living there.

Anyone who has ever visited Northern Mozambique will come up with many questions to JICA’s descriptions. If the Northern Mozambique farmers lack so much, how is it possible for them to carry on a normal livelihood? Why is it that Northern Mozambique is the most populous region of the country? How can they be the nation’s largest agricultural production region? The gap between the discourse offered by the promoters of the programme to public is so disconnected from the local reality that it is feeding suspicions and eroding the trust of the local people. This tendency could also be seen in such a remark by the promoters of the project:

“The people of Mozambique have been relying on aid too much. Therefore, it is necessary to bring foreign investments, rather than more aid”.²⁴

Northern Mozambique is historically the most marginalised region of the country. Marginalization resulted in a disproportionate amount of anti-governmental rebels participating in the 16-years-war (Funada Classen, 2012). The local small farmers, however, managed to become the nation’s leading producers of foodstuffs, and major producers of agricultural commodities for exports. They were also major contributors to post-war reconstruction, yet they were not recognised at all by the planners of the ProSAVANA programme. Since, according to JICA, there were no farmers here “a new model” and “entrance of large agribusiness” were imposed as a necessity. Such a lack of understanding and respect for the local society and people’s efforts history among the promoters of ProSAVANA has come from a lack of respect for the struggles of the people and instead has been driven by the profit motive and to protect the reputation of the programme supporters.

This seems historically imbedded in the Japanese aid observed not only in the Cerrado development, but in the past assistance to Mozambique. In 1983-84, in the middle of the post-independence internal war in Mozambique, the Japanese government began to supply agricultural chemicals as grant-aid rather than much needed food.²⁵ It was also given to the Marx-Leninist Samora Machel administration in order to soften its hardliner position

towards the west, according to MoFA internal documents.²⁶ The agricultural chemicals, mainly, pesticides produced by Japanese chemical companies through Japanese trading companies were given under the name of “Grant Aid for the Increase of Food Production Assistance”, or KR/II/2KR.²⁷ The pesticide assistance continued throughout the war, and although the assistance was aimed specifically for food production, it was used by the cotton industry, but most of the volumes were not controlled, and it was not until 2000 when a great flood hit Mozambique that it was discovered that most of them had been misused, causing various environmental problems and were scattered to unknown locations.²⁸ Local and international civil society organisations together with Japanese citizens organised joint research, issued statements, and participated in social movements, activities, and dialogues since 2000 when finally the Japanese government had to admit to the problem and took responsibility for the treatment of the pesticides and excluded pesticides from future assistance programs. KR/II was remodelled and renamed as “Grant Aid for Underprivileged Farmers”.²⁹

Due to these problems, for many in Mozambique, the Japanese governmental assistance, especially agricultural assistance, had been considered problematic. It can be characterized as ego-centric, as lacking in understanding of local reality, of being disrespectful towards local farmers and civil society, and lacking in environmental awareness. This was the reason why many Japanese who were working in Mozambique after the issues became apparent were trying to prevent the repeat of past mistakes. ProSAVANA was brought by the Japanese who did not experience such scandal or aftermath. Thus, they did not realise how critical the audience in Mozambique was towards Japanese ODA.

For long, aid donors have used a “what was lacking” approach in designing plans for development projects. This approach had to be discarded by the late 1990s after so many failed and damaging aid projects. The advance of the market economy throughout the world since the end of the Cold War has influenced policy makers and public opinion alike to make nearly everyone believe that the only prescription for poverty reduction and food security is to promote economic growth. The recent rapid change which is proceeding in Africa under the name of “agricultural development” is in fact the last phase of unification of the world economy, meant to achieve a total integration of all of Africa’s inhabitants and all of Africa’s remote rural areas. The ProSAVANA programme is certainly following enthusiastically this global belief in the supremacy of “economic growth”.

This is not just the story of Mozambique nor even of just Africa. The following is what an Indian economist of the Nehru University, Professor Jayati Ghosi has stated on the direct investment into the agricultural sector, and the large scale land leasing in Ethiopia and Somalia.

“It reflects a pattern of the investments that the Indian corporates will not be allowed to do in India. What happens in India is that harder to get contiguous land on lease because there are stronger small holders and more complicated kind of land holdings.(...)We have more protection. (...)The Indian investors are behaving exactly like new colonialist investors in some of the poorest countries in the world. If these

companies can behave this way in Africa, it's a matter of time to start behaving so in India".³⁰

Would the ProSAVANA programme from its planning, to its formulation, to its execution be possible if it were organised in Japan? Probably not. But it is not possible to give a definite answer once and for all. "Economic growth" has come to have almost religious status in the modern world. It is seen as the solution for almost any problems that we encounter. Power relations are masked and the disparity between the power and wealth of corporations continues to increase while grassroots people are being marginalised. Even after the Great East Japan Earthquake and explosion of Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plants, we observe the Japanese government and Japanese big business trying to ignore the damage to people's health, to society and to the environment in order to continue their profit making by continuing nuclear energy.

Japanese assistance is a mirror of Japanese society, and the strategy of assistance is a reflection of society.

It is still not too late to change this programme. The author hopes that this paper will contribute to bringing about such change.

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¹ Many meetings occurred between Japan and Brazil occurred between 2005 and 2009 as shown in Table 1.

² This process could be found in the documents by a Japanese NGO, the author was a vice chairperson was, called TICAD Civil Society Forum on their archives (<http://www.ticad-csf.net/eng/index.htm>).

³ After this article provoked a great concern in and outside of Mozambique, the Agriculture Minister Pacheco denied his promise of offering concessions to such vast land. The question, however, remains if Mozambique is offering land to the Brazilians under the ProSAVANA programme or not.

⁴ Rivalry against China was the basis of the Japan's "strategic partnership with Brazil" promoted during the Koizumi administration in order to win the diplomatic competition over the "UN reform" as previously mentioned. Japan tried to change the UN Security Council whose permanent seats are occupied by the victors of WWII including China, and obtain a permanent seat by convincing the regional powers such as India and Brazil and another non-permanent member Germany to set up an alliance. This has been the earnest wish of MoFA, but failed disastrously due to China's strong influence on the African countries despite the MoFA's long-term efforts using TICAD. The ProSAVANA programme was, thus, suitable project in this context from the perspective of MoFA and some of the Japanese politicians.

⁵ UNAC (União Nacional de Camponeses), Justiça Ambiental (JA), Friends of the Earth (FOE).

⁶ This reply was posted on the official site of the Japanese NGO, No! to Land Grab, Japan, on Jan. 15, 2012. (<http://landgrab-japan.blogspot.jp/2012/01/jica.html>)

⁷ http://webmap.ornl.gov/wcsdown/wcsdown.jsp?dg_id=10011_9 During the open seminar held in Tokyo in Nov. 2012, one of the JICA staffs explained that the reason why they did not touch the forestry issue at all was that they have to carry out a "thorough" systematic survey in order to find out the actual land availability within the ProSAVANA programme and such a survey has been funded, but the result has not been produced yet. There is, however, substantial amounts of free data already available and widely shared on internet. By accessing free, public information it is possible to learn of Northern Mozambique's abundance in natural resources and the significant numbers of people who live in this region before jumping to the conclusion that "savannah" equals "similarity with the Cerrado" and therefore there is no forests or people living here and that there is "vast unused land available".

⁸ The data is based on the national census carried out in 2007, and the current population is bigger, but based on estimates. Instituto Nacional Estatística (<http://www.ine.gov.mz/Map.aspx>).

⁹ This was confirmed by some interviews to those involved with the ProSAVANA programme and its related project by the author in Aug.-Sept. 2012. Although three years have pass after the signing of the accord, they have not done detailed field research, and some of them actually tried to write a report based on the interviewing with the author. The explanation of JICA or MoFA on this regard was that they are still in the "planning phase" and "it is the role of the Mozambican counterpart" (JICA Nov. 15, 2012; MoFA Dec. 14, 2012), although the final Master Plan will be released by autumn 2013.

¹⁰ There has not been, however, a policy for tobacco growing, and the organisation of the tobacco farmers are not yet promoted. Consequently the producers' price of tobacco has been kept down to a level. This is in fact the reason that the main producing area of tobacco has shifted from Malawi and Zimbabwe to Mozambique.

¹¹ In this area, polygamy is common, but it has been rare to have more than two wives.

¹² The issues related to the ProSAVANA programme was discussed during the ODA Policy Council under the NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Regular Meeting held in Tokyo on Dec. 15, 2012. This information was given by the MoFA as a proof of their "dialogue" with local communities and small farmers during the council. Being pointed out the small number of research and interviews for variety of the realities of the region and for such large scale project, their argument relied on, again, that they are still in the "planning phase", and it is the responsibility of the Mozambican counterparts.

¹³ Miguel Altieri, "Small farms as a planetary ecological asset"

(<http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/susagri/susagri045.htm>) ; A documentary “The Economics of Happiness” by Helena Norberg Hodge.

¹⁴ The information was given by the MoFA personal during the council held on Dec. 14, 2012.

¹⁵ The author’s interview to these organisations (from Sept. to Dec. 2012).

¹⁶ Taro Aso was a Foreign Minister during the initial phase of the preparation of the ProSAVANA programme. He visited Brazil in August of 2007, and promised to revitalise partnership of Japan with Brazil, promoted bilateral strategic planning for international cooperation towards Japan-Brazil Year of Exchange in 2008, and finally agreed with Brazilian President Lula da Silva to begin this project in Italy during the L’Aquila Summit held in July 2009 (Table 1). Aso revisited Brazil in Jan. 2011 as Ambassador on Special Mission, after former Prime Minister Taro Abe’s visit to Brazil in May 2010 (MoFA site <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/latin/brazil/data.html>).

¹⁷ Interestingly, the word “consultation” was rarely used by JICA, but “information sharing/explanation”, “communication”, or “exchanging views” are even after the increase of criticism from the local organisations. According to them, the UNAC’s statement is the result of “misunderstanding based on shortage of mutual communication” (JICA, Nov. 15, 2012).

¹⁸ Their reasoning is that “we are still in the planning phase”.

¹⁹ Hongo repeated the same story during the discussion took place in Tokyo on the 8th Nov. 2012, and also mentioned that originally the ProSAVANA project was his idea. His colleagues admit that he is the most enthusiastic and firm promoter of ProSAVANA.

²⁰ Quilombos were communities set up by those who escaped from slavery or slave like treatments in the Brazilian plantations.

²¹ The story shared by Tomoya Inyaku, a Japanese expert on the Brazilian issue, during an open seminar at Tokyo on Nov. 8, 2012.

²² The III Conferência do IESE (4-5th Sept. 2012) held in Maputo, Mozambique.

²³ No! to Land Grab, Japan (<http://landgrab-japan.blogspot.jp/2012/01/jica.html>)

²⁴ From an Interview by the author to one of ProSAVANA related Japanese in fall, 2012.

²⁵ Food was given as loan.

²⁶ These documents were obtained via Freedom of Information Act. 2KR Network. http://www.paw.hi-ho.ne.jp/kr2-net/en_fr/index.html

²⁷ This aid scheme was established after the Kennedy Round in 1960s under Cold War environment. It determined the system and amount of each western country to offer food assistance, especially wheat, to pro-western developing countries. Such grant aid for food is called KR. Since Japan import wheat, and the success of lobby of the Japanese chemical companies, the Japanese government set up the second KR in order to cover the internationally agreed portion by agro-chemicals and machineries (2KR Network, 2005).

²⁸ The details are on the website of a Japanese NGO that was set up and actively worked to change this aid scheme, 2KR Network. http://www.paw.hi-ho.ne.jp/kr2-net/en_fr/index.html

²⁹ Information at MoFA site on this:

(http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/hakusyo/03_hakusho/ODA2003/html/siryo/sr3110210.htm)

The English translation of the scheme was changed from “poor” to “underprivileged” by suggestions made by 2KR Network.

³⁰ Interview <http://www.stopafricalandgrab.com/>