

Policy Brief 40: Land governance in Malawi: Lessons from large-scale acquisitions

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Over the past decade, rural Malawians have witnessed a surge in large-scale land acquisitions for commercial agriculture that threaten their access, control and ownership of customary land. This policy brief presents cases of such 'land grabs' related to the expansion of out-grower schemes in Nkhosang and Chikwawa districts. The main reason why these processes have been controversial is the weak legislation governing land resources in Malawi, which has allowed foreign investors and their local partners to acquire customary land without the consent of local people, who claim the land as theirs. The research on which this policy brief is based shows that the government's Green Belt Initiative (GBI) to promote large-scale irrigated farming and its commitments to the G8's New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition further accelerate land concentration among local elites and expose many to landlessness and food insecurity.



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