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Accountability and Ownership in Brazil's Development Cooperation: The Case of ProSavana in Mozambique

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Introduction

Donor dependence has constrained the development visions of African countries during the last few decades. Today, the principle of recipient ownership is therefore seen as indispensable for aid effectiveness and legitimacy (Booth 2012; Castel-Branco 2008; Cramer, Stein, and Weeks 2006). However, the dominance of the OECD-DAC—the Development Assistance Committee of 30 industrialized donor countries, the World Bank, IMF, and UNDP—in defining ownership has been challenged by private actors and Southern providers of aid, such as China and Brazil.[1] While traditional donors associate ownership with recipient commitment to good governance standards, many emerging powers claim to better and unconditionally meet the demand in developing countries based on their domestic experience. Scholars have argued that access to new, alternative, and competing sources of finance from emerging powers, particularly foreign direct investment (FDI), could increase the negotiating power and ownership of recipient governments (Kragelund 2014; Whitfield and Fraser 2010, 348). And indeed, South-South aid has been attractive for developing countries that have been disenchanted by the prescriptions of

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traditional donors (Woods 2008). This paper explores the extent to which recipient actors can gain or even take ownership by looking at the case of ProSavana, an ambitious yet unpopular and failed agriculture initiative that Brazil and Japan started in Mozambique in 2011. This analysis suggests that aid without explicit political conditions does not necessarily increase recipient control if decision-makers merely act as facilitators for foreign direct investment and the interests of the business sector.

The ProSavana program promised to boost the productivity of large-scale as well as subsistence agriculture along Mozambique's Nacala corridor by combining public technology transfer with a private sector investment plan. Advocates of the initiative emphasized the potential to replicate Brazil's agro-industrial success in improving food security, based on the assumption of socio-cultural and geographical affinities with lusophone Mozambique (Carrillo 2011). Without concealing its own commercial and political interests in Africa, Brazilian development agencies have distinguished their programs from traditional aid as demand-driven, non-interventionist, and based on solidarity and mutual benefit (Amanor and Chichava 2016; Hopewell 2013; Ikegami 2015). Similarly, though an OECD-DAC member, Japan has distinguished itself from DAC norms to untie aid and combined its foreign assistance with FDI. The implementation of ProSavana, however, reveals the pitfalls of this model. In 2016, five years after inception, ProSavana had been abandoned due to Brazil's domestic political and economic crisis and small-farmer resistance in Mozambique. Is this case no different from traditional foreign aid programs? Can this failure help inform and advance a meaningful concept of ownership from a recipient perspective?

This paper uses the case of the ProSavana program to explore the implications of South-South development cooperation for recipient ownership regarding the design, implementation, and impacts of interventions. It develops three principal hypotheses that contrast with the argument that competing sources of finance increase recipient ownership. First, South-South cooperation has potential for sharing technological innovation. However, if South-South technical assistance is based on superficial assumptions of bilateral similarities, it cannot respond to environmental, geographical, and socio-economic demands. Second, if foreign corporate interests are privileged over the benefits of local communities, then neither the limited political conditions of South-South cooperation nor the commitment of recipient governments translate into greater recipient control or support by the local population. Finally, the discussion concludes that a conception of ownership should not only focus on the negotiating space of recipient governments, but highlight the rights, representation, and welfare of affected communities. The case of ProSavana highlights key dynamics shaping South and North-led initiatives today, including aid dependence, private-driven aid, land conflict, food security, and particularly the integration of African agriculture into global value chains. This paper does not claim to draw generalizable conclusions on South-South cooperation. However, it aims to inform future policy by elucidating the pitfalls of donor-driven and state-centered concepts of ownership for the analysis of development interventions.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows: section two considers contrasting concepts of ownership in international development, reflecting on the dynamics of power and dependence between developing country governments and donors. The aid dependence of Mozambique serves to illustrate these dynamics. Section three examines the power dynamics between donors and recipients throughout the ProSavana program, focusing on the agency of three types of local actors: the Mozambican government, local technocrats, and civil society groups. The ProSavana program is a well-known and well-documented experiment of large-scale South-South cooperation. Hence, the analysis draws on program documents, gray literature, newspaper articles, and in-depth case studies (Fingermann 2015; Shankland, Gonçalves, and Favareto 2016). The paper closes by summarizing the main arguments and considering how the analysis of this case study can advance our understanding of power dynamics of South-South partnerships and the prospects for local ownership in the contemporary aid landscape.

Ownership By Whom? A Contested Concept

The donor community of the OECD conceives recipient ownership as exercising leadership over national development policies through implementation, translation in results-oriented operational programs, and coordinating aid with donors (OECD 2007). Emphasizing policy implementation rather than conception, this mainstream definition of ownership has in the last decades of development practice implied the "commitment" of recipient states. National ownership emerged as a concept among development elites and agencies following the shift towards neoliberal governance models in the 1990s. While strong state governments played a commanding role in developing countries until the mid-1970s, neoliberalism painted the state as an impediment to the forces of free markets. Structural adjustment programs, by reducing the financial and political means of national governments in favor of implementing the visions of external technocrats, further nurtured a discourse of developing country governments as incapable and corrupt (Mkandawire 2001). At the end of the 1990s, donors reconsidered the imposition of policy reforms as an aid condition. They would now provide resources and seek to align aid with national strategies if recipients commit to poverty reduction and "good governance" targets. In this sense, their recognition of the importance of ownership has in practice allowed a deeper penetration into spheres of governance and civil society. This narrow idea of ownership—central to the 2005 Paris Agenda for Aid Effectiveness—has accompanied new poverty reduction strategy papers and aid models, legitimized through the Millennium Development Goals. In least-developed countries with high dependence on external support, this approach has repeated colonial patterns of external command, as the following outline of aid dynamics in Mozambique illustrate. Furthermore, to enhance economic policy, neoliberal ownership approaches promote an alternative "multilayered" governance system that gives decision-making authority to various stakeholders such as supranational institutions, donors, private sector, civil society, and states (Whitfield 2009, 12). Critics argue that this diffuses accountability between governments and their constituencies, and weakens democratic representation (Dietrich 2016; Howell 2002). As a result, neither recipient governments nor donors can be held responsible for development policies and their consequences for people's lives.

Mozambique illustrates how aid interventions have constrained rather than enabled national developmental ownership. As a low-income country, Mozambique is donor-dependent, with aid representing roughly 18 percent of gross national income (OECD 2017). Structural adjustment during the 1980s weakened the state by putting in place fiscal constraints, which, in turn, diffused control over resources across public institutions and donor programs (Wuyts 1996). Hence, the Mozambican government finds itself in a weak negotiating position with its donors (Whitfield 2009). Furthermore, donors have at times actively undermined state autonomy—for instance, by insisting on the liberalization of cashew production despite government opposition (De Renzio and Hanlon 2008). Managerial explanations for compliance with donor interests are aid fragmentation, donor inflexibility, and administrative costs. Mozambican ministries manage a diverse set of donors, and as a result, focus more on attracting project finance than developing a national strategy. But there are also political motivations for compliance, including the possibility of private and political gain and maintaining elite privilege. And in the absence of substantial pressure from civil society, parliament, or media, the governing Mozambique Liberation

Front (FRELIMO) has few incentives to challenge donor policies. This aid dynamic has shaped the state-civil society relationship from the outside, and arguably fuels an oligarchic patronage system that cautiously controls the process of liberal-democratic decentralization and effectively excludes citizens from the political process (Buur 2009).

Taking these dynamics into account, Whitfield and Fraser (2010) propose an alternative concept of ownership to the donor discourse that conceals political questions of power, control, and responsibility. They define ownership as the amount of "development space," or control that aid-receiving governments have over the negotiation process and the formulation of interventions. They argue that ownership is not an instrument for aid effectiveness, but an end in itself: it reflects the legal sovereignty of African states and their safety from external influence (Whitfield and Fraser 2010, 343). The authors recognize that recipient state control does not naturally increase the accountability of governments towards their constituencies. However, they suggest that clearly defined national responsibility for policy implementation could support domestically determined lines of accountability and expose governments to greater scrutiny.

Providers of South-South cooperation have incorporated these critiques. Brazilian development actors offer their own definitions of ownership; they claim that South-South cooperation is based on solidarity, partner demands, non-conditionality, and non-interference into national affairs (Cintra 2011). Brazilian actors recognize that cooperation is hardly without asymmetries, yet they argue that it can be horizontal and based on mutual benefits (Esteves, Abdenur, Gomes, and Fonseca 2014). On the other hand, critics have described the insertion of powerful corporations like Brazil's Vale and Odebrecht in Africa as extractivist (Veltmeyer 2012; Garcia 2016), sub-imperialist (Bond 2016), and ignorant of human rights (Abdenur and Neto 2013). Rather than a "win-win" arrangement, the South-South cooperation approach to ownership implies a new constellation of winners and losers. The case study of ProSavana suggests that a concept of ownership as national sovereignty omits the private interests of domestic and transnational elites, which can effectively undermine progressive socio-environmental impact.

In summary, traditional aid has more often impeded rather than enabled recipient leadership by focusing on commitments to predefined good governance standards. In contrast, recipient-centered concepts emphasize the sovereignty of developing countries to define their own development path—a critique that Southern aid providers invoke. Ultimately, however, the meaning of ownership depends on the interpretation and interests in regards to who should be the "owner"—the funding donor, the recipient government, private organizations, or affected civil society organizations. In this sense, the subsequent analysis of ProSavana reveals the limits of both a donor-centered concept as well as Whitfield and Fraser's focus on recipient government control. The findings suggest that recipient government leadership does not imply meaningful ownership—one which fosters local economic and socio-environmental rights, benefits, and agency—as long as it privileges the interests of foreign corporations over those of citizens.

South-South Cooperation and Ownership: The Case of ProSavana

The Replication of Development Blueprints

This section considers the foundation of ProSavana and the contested model of agrarian change it promised to bring to Mozambique.[2] ProSavana sought to emulate Brazil's development of the tropical Cerrado region that had been supported by USAID and Japan's aid agency JICA between 1979 and 2001 and managed by the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa). The modernization of the Cerrado privileged capitalized large-scale farmers and export crops. Previously a net-importer of food, Brazil became a world export leader of grains, ethanol, sugarcane, and meat (Wolford and Nehring 2015). On the one hand, this became an export success story in the eyes of the World Bank. On the other hand, the development has driven the dramatic deforestation of over 60 percent of the Cerrado's grasslands and woodlands—precipitating biodiversity losses in one of the world's most biodiverse regions.[3] Furthermore, the program has been associated with corruption, the abuse of weak protection laws, and the displacement of small-holder farmers. Commercial and extractive powers have dominated over local state officials, small farmers, and communities, demonstrating the trade-offs of this economic modernization in terms of popular ownership, poverty reduction, and livelihood improvement (Klink and Machado 2005).

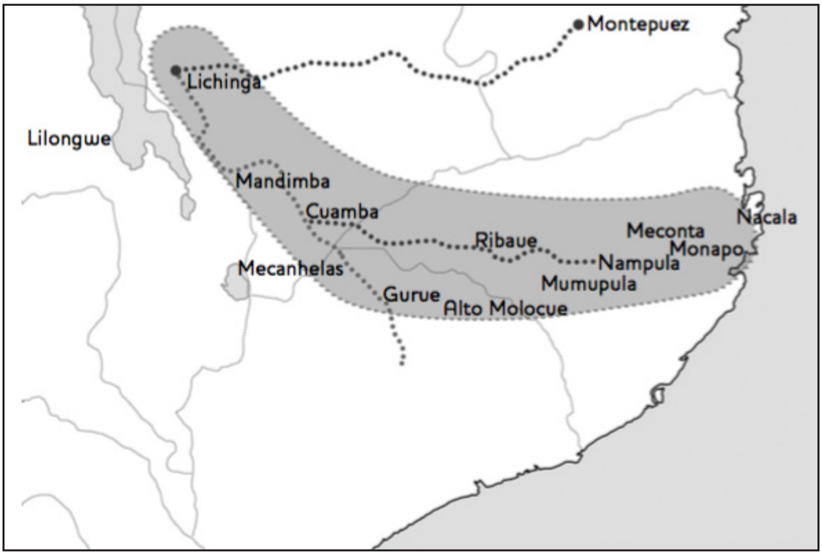
Drawing on this divisive, yet internationally lauded model, ProSavana targeted Mozambique's Nacala corridor (Figure 1), an area of approximately 540,000 square kilometers. This program was planned to last twenty years, starting in 2011. The program consisted of three parts: First, ProSavana-PI (Projecto de Investigação) focused on research and capacity-building of Mozambique's Institute of Agricultural Research (IIAM); second, ProSavana-PEM (Projecto de Extensão) focused on agricultural extension through training and pilot projects with commercial and small growers; and third, ProSavana-PD (Plano Director) aimed at producing a "Master

Plan” for plot models that would integrate smallholders into value chains and guide investments—particularly from Brazil and Japan (Chichava et al. 2013a). The consultancy Getúlio Vargas Projects (GV-Projetos) managed these investments as a subcontractor through the private Nacala Fund. A detailed breakdown of ProSavana’s timeline and funding structure is provided in the appendix.

Underlying this South-South initiative has been an assumption of cultural and climatic similarity between Mozambique and Brazil. The two countries share ecological characteristics such as a tropical climate, common pre-colonial roots in Africa, and the same language (Wolford and Nehring 2015). However, the failed replication of the Cerrado blueprint highlights salient differences in key factors of production. First, in contrast to Brazil’s private land ownership, there is no official land market in Mozambique. Since the end of the country’s civil war 1992, land has been state-owned with use rights for residents, and this system stayed intact following civil society and peasant mobilization (De Renzio and Hanlon 2008). The profitability of large-scale agricultural programs depends on a land market. The government has provided 14 million hectares[4] for foreign investors, but as the Nacala corridor is more densely populated than the Cerrado, this was met by considerable opposition from local communities fearing displacement. Secondly, in contrast to Brazil’s Embrapa-led agro-technological modernization, Mozambican agriculture is characterized by low productivity, dominance of small-holder farmers without experience with industrial farming methods, lack of inputs, and poor access to market. Most production is rain-fed as most farmers cannot afford irrigation systems or do not have the land tenure to justify installing them. Thirdly, the Cerrado development was financed by a strong, already industrializing state. As mentioned above, Mozambique lacks the capital and state autonomy to lead a similar development process (Wolford and Nehring 2015).

To conclude, the Cerrado development represents a top-down, export-driven, and environmentally destructive development model. Moreover, the attempt to replicate this blueprint ignored the different conditions regarding land, labor, and capital in Mozambique and hence limited the possibility of local ownership. The following sections turn to the agency of the Mozambican government, foreign interests, and local responses that have shaped the failure of ProSavana.

Figure 1: The Nacala Corridor (Chichava et al. 2013a)



Elite Interests

Arguably, ProSavana demonstrates the expectations and interests of the Mozambican government in South-South cooperation, although the latter had virtually no influence in the conception of the program. During Brazil's diplomatic and commercial expansion under President Lula da Silva (2003–2010), JICA and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) committed to a "Japan-Brazil Partnership Programme for the Development of the African Tropical Savannah." The two parties confirmed during a G-8 summit in 2009 to implement it in Mozambique (Chichava and Durán 2016). However, despite the absence of the Mozambican government in the initial design, the project was in line with the institutional framework over technical cooperation between the Mozambican Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) and ABC (Patriota and Pierri 2013) as well as Mozambique's Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development (PEDSA). PEDSA aims to increase the competitiveness of the agricultural sector, strengthen agrarian institutions, improve infrastructure, and create a legal framework that encourages investment (MINAG 2010). ProSavana's capital- and technology-intensive agribusiness focus aligns with this modernization discourse as well as with elite private interests. Indeed, senior MINAG and IIAM officials have personally managed the program (Chichava et al. 2013a, 105). MINAG and the Mozambican investment company Gapi also financially contributed through the Development Initiative Fund (PDIF), aiming to include small-scale farmers through contract farming (Chichava and Durán 2016, 17). The Mozambican government was eager to gain from Brazilian know-how on tropical agriculture and, in 2014, invited a total of 70 researchers of the Brazilian public agricultural development institution Embrapa. However, South-South technical cooperation did not fulfill these high expectations.

The Practice of Technology Transfers

This section examines the inclusion and agency of local development institutions and their staff in the implementation of the technical assistance component ProSavana-PI (JICA, ABC, and MINAG 2015). With an estimated cost of $13.48 million USD, the technical component was intended to benefit 500 researchers and 40,000 farmers through the provision of equipment and technologies (soil improvement, fertilization, soil and plant analysis, seed processing units), and training of the staff of IIAM (providing models for rural extension). As part of this project, cotton, maize, soybean, sorghum, and Cerrado bean seeds were bred to grow in local conditions (Patriota and Pierri 2013). The official evaluation document suggests that the training activities were implemented effectively. However, contrasting Brazil's official representations of a horizontal and demand-driven approach, the program evaluation indicates that the specialists from Brazil dominated throughout the program. It also notes poor communication among the agencies of the three countries: Japanese and Brazilian activities were not coordinated and carried out separately. As a result, the project was inefficient and faced major delays. Moreover, while Japan and Mozambique met their commitments, since 2012, ABC faced budget cuts under President Dilma Rousseff. Embrapa retreated from its planned contributions to the program, which has only been exacerbated by the economic recession, political crisis, and the regime change (JICA, ABC, and MINAG 2015, 30).

Nonetheless, it appears that Mozambique's agricultural researchers made some gains from Embrapa's expertise in developing tropical agriculture. IIAM and MINAG have worked to extend technology to local farmers (JICA, ABC, and MINAG 2015, 30), increased the budget for research and development, and committed to continuing these efforts even without Brazilian and Japanese support. They expect the impact of the technology transfer to be high, which is surprising considering the apparent collapse of ProSavana as a triangular initiative. Still, the potential for local ownership depends on Mozambique's capacity to institutionalize the skills and apply the technology. Since the evaluation does not consider feedback from beneficiaries, local farmers, or the connection between research and the extension of knowledge, it is uncertain if these beneficiaries will endorse and utilize the technologies.

Privileging Foreign Corporate Interests

Unlike Embrapa's technical support, ProSavana's land investment component has been particularly controversial. The rise of private-led large-scale farming reflects an international trend, which has been promoted by many African governments, but at the cost of local small-holder farmers. For the Mozambican government, the development of the Nacala corridor links it with strategic assets: the railway to Malawi and the Tete province, the Nacala airbase, and the Nacala port (Patriota and Pierri 2013). However, there is evidence that the increasing leadership of foreign private corporations undermined the control of local institutions. MINAG attracted Brazilian farming companies by providing land on advantageous financial terms, under the condition that 90 percent of the employees will be Mozambican (Patriota and Pierri 2013). In fact, Brazilian firms in Mozambique have significantly shaped ProSavana. In particular, the mining company Vale—which has engaged in mineral extraction and corridor development in Brazil and Mozambique—has positioned itself as a key player in the agricultural development of the Nacala corridor. Vale has links to Embrapa and FGV-Projetos that is managing the ProSavana investment plan. Hence, through its financial and technical power, Vale has had a transformational impact of agricultural development in the region (Shankland, Gonçalves, and Favareto 2016).

More generally, ProSavana illustrates a pattern of development cooperation from finance-rich countries to resource-rich (but finance-poor) countries that is characteristic of North-South and South-South aid (Hochstetler and Oliveira 2015). Like those from Brazil, Japanese agencies were also motivated by finding business and investment opportunities on the African market. Japan is food-dependent, importing 60 percent of its supply (Kana Roman-Alcalá Okada 2015). In the context of global food crises in 2007 to 2008, countries like Japan have reoriented their food security strategy towards liberalization and offshore agricultural investment. In turn, comparably cheap lands in Sub-Saharan Africa have become new frontiers as their regional agriculture has been integrated into global value chains through mono-cropping, and large-scale production (Kana Roman-Alcalá Okada 2015). Unlike other donors of the OECD-DAC that officially untie aid from investments, Japan has long combined the two, a strategy that is usually ascribed to emerging donors. Japan expected facilitated access through the language and cultural mediation of Brazil (Classen 2013). Thus, ProSavana was effectively promoted as South-South cooperation.

As noted above, ProSavana reveals the direction of the Mozambican government regarding the promotion of foreign land investments. Large farming in Mozambique has failed in the past 15 years despite much investment, in part, due to the country's land tenure regime (Hanlon 2011). The state allocates use rights based on application, occupation for 10 years, or communal tenure. In practice, most farmers do not hold formal rights, and the administration lacks capacity to implement land tenure laws and track and identify available land for investments (Ekman and Macamo 2014). Moreover, Mozambican elites disagree over the kind of land investments the country should seek: foreign or domestic, small or large scale, for food or for cash crops (Hanlon 2011). In this context, ProSavana reveals the government's failure to take control by setting clear terms. A 2013 leaked draft version of the master plan argues that ProSavana could harmonize the goals of bringing local products to external markets, addressing the constraints of rural people, and supporting family farmers. However, the framework did not outline the decision-making process over investments and environmental and social concerns, and strategies to manage family farming alongside large-scale farming (Shankland, Gonçalves, and Favareto 2016). Furthermore, the government has not defined the respective shares of production for domestic food security (e.g. maize, beans, and sorghum) and for external markets (soy and cotton). The overall lack of transparency regarding foreign investments further indicates that the Mozambican government served the interests of investors while containing rather than addressing civil society demands. The following section considers popular responses to this practice.

Civil Society Opposition

ProSavana was designed by diplomats, agricultural researchers, and investment experts who envisioned an agricultural transformation, but neglected the existing conditions. Presuming a close similarity between Brazil's Cerrado region and the Nacala corridor, the imposed master plan did not consider that the latter is more densely populated and used by small-holder farmers (Chichava et al. 2013b). The implementation would have displaced thousands of locals for new larger farms. Hence, the program faced substantial resistance from national and transnational civil society and peasant organizations calling for transparency, agrarian justice, and ecological protection. The Mozambican civil society organizations União Nacional dos Camponeses (UNAC), Plataforma Provincial da Sociedade Civil de Nampula (PPOSC-N), Justiça Ambiental (JA), and Acção Académica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (ADECRU) have opposed ProSavana because they are concerned about the implications for small farmers (Chichava and Durán 2016, 18). Though the program claims to improve local farmers' skills, opposition groups argue that this is propaganda to cover up "land grabs" and the privileging of foreign companies over local food security. In 2012, this opposition allied with Via Campesina and Brazilian and Japanese civil society groups, addressing all three governments to demand the termination of ProSavana. In 2014, UNAC, JA, and ADECRU, together with other groups such as the Fórum Mulher (FM), and Liga Moçambicana dos Direitos Humanos (LDH) launched the "No to ProSavana" campaign. The campaign appealed particularly to President Armando Guebuza and the Frelimo party, denouncing the connections between political elites and foreign investors that supported land grabs in the Nacala region (Fairbairn 2011). Though not opposing FDI altogether, these activists have insisted on the significance of subsistence agriculture for rural Mozambique and promoted state-supported family farming (Chichava and Durán 2016).

The civil society response exposes the top-down governance structure of ProSavana and the dominance of foreign private interests. ABC has defended the technology transfer as demand-driven. However, the investment plan affecting a large population was developed behind closed doors. Program developers responded by organizing consultations between MINAG and civil society, and by publishing program information. Cabral and Leite (2015) argue that the domestic mobilization has shaped Brazil's emerging South-South development cooperation approach that has up to now mainly been in cooperation with state agencies. If true, this form of international mobilization addressing all three stakeholders could present a new mechanism for holding donors accountable and pushing for participation.

Discussion and Conclusion

Field studies show that despite significant investment in technical training, the impact of ProSavana in the Nacala corridor has been insignificant. By 2015, the program had been internationally criticized, neglected by the struggling government of Brazil, and faced financial uncertainty (Shankland, Gonçalves, and Favareto 2016). Brazil's engagement was ambitious but increasingly unreliable. While Brazilian agencies appear to have taken leadership in designing a program that suits Brazilian interests, the country's political and economic crisis has directly affected the country's structural programs abroad. For Brazilian investors, Mozambique has become less attractive as President Michel Temer has removed environmental and social protections in Brazil, facilitating the expansion in the domestic Cerrado and Amazon regions. Initial foreign requests for land use permits have not been realized. For instance, recent records on the Landmatrix.org database show that ABC's planned land investment in an area of 700,000 hectares in the Nacala corridor date back to 2009. The same database chronicles only one concluded contract by the Brazilian Pinesso Group in the corridor (in Lioma, concluded in 2014, over 9,000 hectares). Of the 136 recorded (intended and concluded) ventures in Mozambique, most investors are European, Asian, or African (while 31 are Mozambican public and private investors). For better or for worse, ProSavana has barely impacted the lives of small-scale farmers in the Nacala corridor. It has certainly not led to an agrarian transformation, despite making waves in the public realm. In March 2017, Mozambique's President Filipe Nyusi traveled to Japan to reactivate the government's commitments (Frelimo 2017). Though the Japanese government has shown motivation to continue this project bilaterally, most programs have been stalled at the time of writing as a result of Mozambique's current debt crisis.

ProSavana is emblematic of the South-South development cooperation promise to increase recipient ownership through the combination of technical cooperation and foreign investment without imposing political conditions. While the effectiveness of the technical assistance component suggests that there is potential for positive impacts, the successful opposition campaign demonstrates the importance of integrating the expertise of Mozambique's farmers. Interestingly, a recent field study shows that another Embrapa-led program during the 1980s has shown long-term impact: Mozambican peasants have reportedly adapted tropicalized soy varieties even though the project was abandoned by official ministries (Shankland, Gonçalves, and Favareto 2016). But overall, this analysis reveals the dynamics and interests that have undermined local ownership and contributed to ProSavana's failure. While aligning with elite interests and promoters of market liberalization, the replication of Brazil's agribusiness model ignored the local conditions and socio-environmental demands of Mozambique's population. My analysis shows that although South-South development cooperation does not impose aid conditions on recipient governments, it does not alter their dependency in the context of today's global political economy.

In this context, the analysis of this South-South initiative in Mozambique can critically inform the contemporary political economy of aid and private investment in Africa. Public-private partnerships increase the role of the private sector, cross-sector technology transfers, and innovations, and are promoted across the continent, for instance through the Grow Africa Initiative and the New Partnership for Africa's Development formed by the African Union in 2001. The support of this model is based on the belief that the main challenges for countries such as Mozambique in improving agricultural productivity are gaps in technology and finance, and access to markets. On the flip side, not only Brazil and Japan but also other donors increasingly combine commercial interests and development cooperation—a reversal of efforts to untie aid. For instance, the programs of the UK and Norway in Mozambique's Beira corridor are also led by UK businesses and consultancies. However, the findings presented show that private sector-oriented program governance can weaken political accountability mechanisms and create new dependencies (e.g. international agricultural companies). The paper also aligns with those critiques based on the lack of sustainability and benefits to rural development and poverty reduction, as well as their externalized socio-environmental costs (Castel-Branco 2014; Mawdsley 2015).

As for recommendations resulting from this analysis, the Mozambican government should establish a clear land policy framework regarding foreign investment and its role within the transformation of the agricultural sector. It should support a participatory political process to ensure that investments in farming benefit local production and socio-environmental priorities. If the continuation of ProSavana with Japan does not contribute to local food security but increases the reliance on commercial crops, one should advise against it. Given the limitations of its domestic agricultural development, the government may instead pursue investment in productivity gains for small-scale farmers, for instance, through fair contract farming, and the support of smallholder cooperatives and farmer associations. In this context, the successful international mobilization of smallholder farmers could also reflect an opportunity for a progressive reform of traditional aid relationships.

Overall, the case of ProSavana shows that the combination of technical cooperation and foreign investment causes conflict if governments present it as a win-win situation without addressing the political dimension of FDI, in this case the powerful interests of Brazilian agribusiness. This conclusion calls for a concern for ownership that includes civil society groups while emphasizing the importance of recipient government agency and sovereignty.

Notes

[1] For instance, between 2005 and 2010, Brazil's technical cooperation increased nearly fourfold, particularly in lusophone African countries (Costa Leite et al. 2014).

[2] The country's agriculture sector accounts for a quarter of GDP, employing over 80 percent of the population, particularly women (90 percent) (World Bank data).

[3] International organizations including the World Bank and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) tend to downplay the biodiversity and carbon costs of converting wet savannahs and assume that preservation and demarcation mechanisms are adequate. However, studies of the carbon conversion efficiency of land for food crops suggest the costs to biodiversity are much higher than can be justified. Given the goals of preserving carbon while meeting food needs, they suggest limiting cropland expansion and increase productivity (e.g. irrigation) on existing land (Searchinger et al. 2015).

[4] One hectare is equal to 0.01 km2, or 2.47 acres.

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Appendix

ProSavana Budget Overview

Project Component		Financial resources allocated by each partner	Total Budget	Timeframe
ProSavana	PD	JICA - US$ 6,264,000	US$ 7,723,370	24 months
		ABC - US$ 1,159,370		
		MINAG - 300,000		
	PI	JICA - US$ 7,317,000	US$ 13,483,840	5 years
		ABC - US$ 3,672,960		
		EMBRAPA - US$ 1, 356,280		
		MINAG - 1,137,600		
	PEM	not available	to be defined	6 years

Source: (Fingermann 2015)