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OSSREA Features in Eight Categories in the 2012 Global Go To Think Tanks Rankings

According to the 2012 Global Go-To Think Tanks Report and Policy Advice of the University of Pennsylvania Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program that was released on the 24th January 2013, OSSREA was ranked out of 1,647 think tanks that were nominated and it features in eight categories as follows.

1) 134th out of the top 150 Think Tanks – Worldwide (US and Non-US),
2) 26th out of the top 50 Think Tanks in Sub-Saharan Africa,
3) 21st out of the top 30 Health Policy Think Tanks in the world,
4) 35th out of the top 50 International Economic Policy Think Tanks in the world,
5) 34th out of the top 50 Social Policy Think Tanks in the world,
6) 38th out of 40 Think Tanks with the Best Use of the Internet or Social Media in the world,
7) 52nd out of 65 Think Tanks with the Most Significant Impact on Public Policy in the world, and
8) 16th out of 20 Best Think Tanks with an Annual Operating Budget under $5 Million USD in the world.

In his congratulatory remarks, Professor Paschal B. Mihyo, Executive Director of OSSREA, notes that this is a significant improvement from its positions in the 2011 Report, in which it appeared in two categories, and on behalf of The Executive Committee and Secretariat of OSSREA, Professor Mihyo thanked all stakeholders of OSSREA for their invaluable contribution to this achievement.

According to James McGann (Ph.D.) the Assistant Director of International Relations Program and Director of the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program at the University of Pennsylvania, 6,603 think tanks from 182 countries were invited to participate in the process:

- 1,100 plus individuals from 120 countries participated in the nominations and rankings process;
- Think tanks were nominated, and subsequently ranked, in 38 categories;
- A total of 1647 think tanks were nominated;
- A total of well over 57,000 nominations were received across the 38 categories;
- 171 think tanks were nominated as the world’s top think tanks.

For further details, the 2012 Global Go To Think Tanks Rankings and associated trends report can be accessed at the Program’s website: http://www.gotothinktank.com.
Draft Codes of Conduct for Corporate Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility for COMESA Member Countries Presented by OSSREA

The Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) presented the Draft Codes of Conduct for Corporate Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility for COMESA Member Countries workshop held at Nairobi Safari Club, Nairobi, Kenya, from 12th to 14th of December 2012.

According to Dr. Paulos Chanie, Director of Research at OSSREA, the Workshop aimed to discuss the Draft Codes of Conduct to be adapted by COMESA Member Countries, which OSSREA developed together with a researcher commissioned for the task. Following the presentation of the Draft by OSSREA, the discussant provided detailed comments. Participants of the workshop also deliberated on the draft codes thoroughly for two days and gave their recommendations for improving the codes. OSSREA took the assignment to work on the comments and submit the final draft in the coming weeks.

Dr. Paulos says that the Draft Codes of Conduct has three parts: the first part providing codes of conduct relating to the overall operations of corporations operating in COMESA member countries and the codes of conduct pertaining to the governance structure of corporations; the second part encompassing codes of conduct for corporate social responsibilities for COMESA member states or the obligations and responsibilities that corporations have to the societies within which they are operating; and the third part presenting the role of governments in facilitating the development and enforcement of the codes of conduct on corporate governance and social responsibility.

Dr. Paulos also indicated that the workshop brought together around 40 experts representing the governments of the countries in the COMESA region as well as members of the private sectors, CSOs and academics in the region. OSSREA, the consulting think tank, was represented by the Director of Research and the researcher commissioned for the task.
Professor Paschal Mihyo Rejoins OSSREA as Executive Director

Professor Paschal Mihyo, previously the Executive Director (ED) of OSSREA from 2008 to the beginning of 2012, is back at OSSREA, effective 1 December 2012.

Professor Habtamu Wondimu, the President of OSSREA welcomed Prof. Mihyo in the presence of all staff members of OSSREA, where he also explained that it was to the advantage of OSSREA that the Executive Committee contacted and requested the previous ED to return, given his experience in leadership and ability to attract donors.

At the welcoming occasion, Professor Mihyo on his part said that he had decided to return to OSSREA with his new vision and plans to attract new donors and lead the organisation to a better future. As the staff members welcomed Prof. Mihyo, both the President and the returning ED requested the staff to accord the ED all the necessary support and to act in harmony so that OSSREA would be able to do a lot in 2013 and the years to come.

Graduate Research Methodology Mentors Attend a Refresher Training on Ph.D. Research Methodology in Social Sciences and Humanities

OSSREA organized a ‘Refresher Course on PhD Research Methodology Training in Social Sciences and Humanities’ for university Professors teaching research methodology courses at postgraduate level.

This training of trainers (ToT) workshop was conducted from 17 to 22 September 2012 at Giraffe Ocean View Hotel in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The ToT was attended by 28 participants drawn from universities based in 13 sub-Saharan African countries, namely, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

According to Dr Paulos Chanie, Director of Research at OSSREA, the purpose of this interactive ToT was to provide a meta-framework for conducting empirical research.

The refresher course was offered by two USA-based experienced professors and researchers, namely, Prof. Anthony Onwuegbuzie from Sam Houston State University and Dr. Rebecca Frels from Lamar University. In addition two guest speakers in the USA gave lectures via video conference.

The facilitators also gave a step-by-step guide for conducting quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research. In particular, the course focused on:

- conceptualizing, planning and implementing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research (qualitative-dominant mixed research, quantitative-dominant mixed research and equal status mixed research; philosophy and techniques of mixed analysis); and
- utilizing research findings.
This interactive session provided the participants with frameworks for selecting and applying data-analysis techniques and validating, interpreting, and reporting results of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research studies. The facilitators provided published examples and illustrated applications of statistical software (e.g., SPSS, SAS), qualitative software (e.g., NVIVO), and mixed research software (e.g., QDA Miner) that integrate a variety of statistical analysis and text analysis techniques.

Further, the facilitators provided a mixed research-based model for conducting and presenting rigorous, comprehensive, and insightful literature reviews. They also offered an array of strategies and approaches for applying evidence-based standards and guidelines when reporting results and writing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research dissertations/theses and publishing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research articles. Finally, they gave exemplars and models for teaching quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research courses.

The six days training ended with closing remarks given by Amb. Prof. Royson Mukwena, the then Executive Director of OSSREA, who also thanked the facilitators for their effective facilitation; OSSREA staff members for organizing a successful workshop; and the course participants for their hard work and active participation throughout the training.

**Advanced Research Methodology Training for Ph.D. Students Takes Place**

An Advanced Research Methodology Training for Ph.D. Students was conducted at the Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA), Addis Ababa, from 22\textsuperscript{nd} of October to 7\textsuperscript{th} of November 2012.

According to Dr Melese Getu, a Program Specialist at OSSREA, the training was designed to equip Ph.D. students in social science fields with advanced knowledge of research design, qualitative and quantitative techniques, and analysis and interpretation of quantitative data using SPSS, which, he said, were delivered by renown resource persons from the African Diaspora in the USA and also from the Addis Ababa University. Dr Melese also indicated that the training was the fourth round in the year and was attended by 31 participants from seven countries in Eastern and the Southern African sub-region.

Participants commented that the training was well designed, down to earth, and effectively facilitated by versatile professors. They also rated it as one of the best trainings they have ever attended; and thankfully encouraged OSSREA to keep up the effort. At the end, trainees were awarded certificates of attendance.
Training in Gender Mainstreaming in Higher Education Institutions Organised by OSSREA

A training in concepts of gender mainstreaming and institutional culture within African contexts of higher education was organised by OSSREA in partnership with the African Gender Institute (AGI) at the University of Cape Town and conducted at Giraffe Ocean View Hotel, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 18 to 23 September 2012.

The training commenced with the welcoming and opening remarks by Professor Jane Bennet the Director of AGI at the University of Cape Town and Dr. Paulos Chanie, Director of Research at OSSREA.

The overall aim of the training was to facilitate understanding about gender mainstreaming and development and existing gender roles, structures and attitudes in all activities of higher learning institutions. Twenty senior university academic and management staff members from eight countries took part in the training.

All sessions of the training were facilitated by Professor Bennet.

On the last day of the training, participants presented their action plans on mainstreaming gender in their respective university/faculty/department. The programme was concluded with evaluation of the training, a certificate handing over ceremony and closing remarks by Amb. Prof. Royson Mukwena, the then Executive Director of OSSREA.

OSSREA Participates in a Consultation Workshop on Conflict and Fragility and the Post-2015 Development Agenda

A Consultation Workshop on Conflict and Fragility and the Post-2015 Development Agenda was conducted at the Golden Gate Hotel, Monrovia, Liberia from 28 to 30 November, 2012 where the Organisation for Social Sciences Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) was represented by the Director of Research, Paulos Chanie (Ph.D.).

According to Dr. Paulos, the Monrovia workshop was part of the “Conflict, Violence, and Disaster” Theme I of the 11 themes around which the UN aims to build ‘broad coalitions for change’ to frame a more inclusive development agenda. The Consultation is the second of three regional consultations designed to mobilize global consensus on the importance of accounting for peace and security in the successor development framework by addressing the inter-relationship between armed conflict, fragility, organized violence, disaster and sustainable development.

The Monrovia Consultation was intended to build consensus on the most important ways by which conflict, violence, disaster, and fragility impede development; and discuss and offer concrete recommendations for priority goals, targets, and indicators relating to addressing peace and security. Specifically, the Consultation was intended to:

- build shared understanding and political consensus among Member States, UN agencies, civil society and the private sector on the nexus between conflict, violence, disaster and development and how to address conflict and fragility in the post-2015 development framework;
- propose a menu of strategic options to strongly represent conflict and fragility contexts including concrete goals, targets, and indicators to address conflict and fragility for the post-2015 development agenda; and
• build strategic and inclusive coalitions among member states, civil society, and the private sector to advocate for the inclusion of a conflict and fragility nexus agenda in the post-2015 development framework.

Dr. Paulos indicated that OSSREA was introduced to a wider audience, especially to the various UN agencies and top officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. He added and that informal discussions with various agencies were made to expand the network of OSSREA.
FEATURE ARTICLES

Strategic Repositioning in a Hyper-Competitive World: Rising Economic Partnership Agreements between China, European Union and African Countries

Sabastiano RWENGABO*

Abstract

Economic partnership agreements between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries have not been globally contextualised. Reviewing the literature on these agreements in Sub-Saharan Africa, this paper develops and applies the concept of strategic repositioning based upon analyses of international cooperation, to underscore the competition between the EU and China over Africa. It argues that a dominant actor facing an incipient power reworks its relations with other actors to prevent the challenger from eroding its dominant position. Through these agreements, the EU may re-constitute its place in Africa, preventing China’s potential threat to the EU’s position in Africa.

Key Words: Strategic repositioning; economic partnership agreements; European Union; China; sub-Saharan Africa

Introduction

Analysts have pointed out two concurrent politico-economic developments in Africa without linking these developments: China’s increasing influence; and negotiations of economic partnership agreements (EPAs) between the European Union (EU) and Africa’s regional organisations (ROs) as part of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) developing economies. Those who examine China’s rising influence have hardly analysed the response of global actors like the EU to this incipient power (Holslag 2010) especially in Africa. Analyses of EU-Africa EPAs too have not linked them to China’s influence in the continent (Khumalo and Mulleta 2010). The two phenomena are treated as unrelated despite both involving two powerful global actors engaged in a competitive relationship at a time African resources and strategic zones are competed between the West and the East compared to previous intra-European struggles for Africa (Amosu 2007). Admittedly, beyond the competitive dynamics caused by China’s increasing global economic and political influence (Shenkar 2006), either as an incipient power or as counter-hegemony, its relationship with Africa has several consequences: undermining Western efforts to link aid with better governance; providing undemocratic regimes in Africa with an alternative to western conditionalities and pressures; producing new forms of indebtedness; and damaging anti-poverty efforts in the continent (Schoeman 2008, 403). Likewise, Africa-China relations may signify Africa’s shift from its western-world trading partners, as Africa privileges its relations with China on ideological and political grounds (ibid.; Men and Barton 2011). Schoeman believes these relations are inevitable and create potential challenges and opportunities for Africa, China and Europe. Schoeman argues that Europe may

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have political, economic, systemic, and ideological concerns about China-Africa relations but that China is not the only power investing in Africa. However, Schoeman does not clearly show how Europe may respond, or has responded, to these concerns. A proper understanding of EU’s response would require linking its concerns over China’s influence and its strategic manoeuvres in Africa today, including EPAs. Because, the deepening Africa-China relations, in terms of growth in trade, investment, and aid, allow China to promote its interests in dealing with Africa sometimes at the cost of Europe’s interests (Zeleza 2008). In this context, analyses of EU-Africa relations, such as those on EPA negotiations, which hardly attend to West-East struggles over Africa, which downplay competitive engagements in today’s world political economy wherein Euro-American interests have converged vis-a-vis China (Moller 1997; Amosu 2007), are inadequate. For a better understanding of the EU-driven EPAs to be made, EPAs should also be seen as an instrument of competition in a “cooperation as self-help” dynamic (Glaser 1995).

Europe has had long-lasting politico-economic and socio-cultural relations with Africa, a continent that “has always been considered Europe’s backyard” (Men and Barton 2011, 1). Africa fed European slave-labour-dependant economies in the Americas; was Europe’s colonial sphere of influence, source of imperial prestige, raw materials and market for European products; and retains a politico-economic relationship with Europe (Rodney 1988). Some European countries like France and Britain maintain strong politico-military interests in the continent indicating that their interests and presence never ended with formal colonial empire (d’Albis 1998; Ashley 2006). Recently America established a U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) “to protect its interests” (Pham 2011; Jamieson 2009), defying the expectations of recent analysts like Paul Omach (2000, 82–85) who observed that U.S. interests in Africa reduced with the end of the Cold War. Previously a space for intra-European contest during colonisation, Africa is now globally contested, given U.S.’s, China’s, India’s and other powers’ entry. The Eastern emergence potentially threatens the EU’s strategic advantages; and reduces Africa’s allegiance to Europe, since China may reap more economic and political benefits from Africa than Europe, hence the need to rework Europe-Africa relations, through such endeavours as EPAs.

Some analysts maintain that a new Africa-EU Strategic Partnership seeks to help these partners meet “current and future challenges together” (EU 2011). EPAs are rooted in centuries-old Europe-Africa relations that were formalised in the 1957 Rome Treaty. Africa and Europe, it is argued, are linked by their history, interests and values, with a common future (Ibid., 7). EPAs, from this reasoning, are a continuation of these relations. However, this approach downplays the changing dynamics of North-South relations. It does not address the West’s renewed interest in Africa, given China’s increasing influence and the geopolitics of its rise (Shenkar 2006), and the realisation that “the west has never been more interested in Africa than it is now that China has attempted to conquer it” (Michel et al. 2009, 259). Another line of thinking argues that EPAs are part of the recent North-South transfer development approach which emphasizes the transfer of wealth from rich to poor countries, the targeting of aid to meet human needs, and a strong role for rich and poor governments” in which Western generosity helps in meeting the development needs of the poor (Keenan 2008; Collier 2008). This too does not attend to EPAs in their global context.

To demonstrate that the EU is countering China’s influence, this paper uses a conceptual framework rooted in realist analyses of cooperation; provides background and possible explanations for EPAs; and elaborates how China’s rise might endanger the EU’s presence in Africa.

Methodological and Conceptual Issues

Methodologically, the paper undertakes a critical review of literature, and is analytically situated at the intersection between the literature on international cooperation, analyses of China’s influence in Africa and the dynamics of EPAs. The EU’s concerns over China are inferentially vital for grasping the competitive EU-China relationship in whose context the EU-Africa EPAs are placed. This settles unanswered posers on possible explanations for EPAs beyond official.
justification. The EPAs are an important analytical issue. They are an institutional attempt at linking ACP and EU economies amidst competing forces over these economies. Thus, the findings and conclusions may be applicable to the whole ACP group. The focus on China, the EU and Africa, in no way downplays other powers which have played important roles and are still interested in Africa (e.g. Jamieson 2009, 311). China and Europe are representative cases, because, firstly, China is huge that it represents the global East; Europe represents the global West; and Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) represents the ACP group. Secondly, there is more cooperation between the EU and the US, and between the US and India, than there is between the US and China and between the EU and China, though US-China cooperation is being developed since the Cold War (Kissinger 2012). Significant EU-US clashes in Africa are less likely, than are China-EU and/or China-US conflicts. Thirdly, a Euro-American alliance against China is more likely than the reverse, given that most European members of NATO are also members of the EU and have worked with the US for long, sometimes their interests converging against China (Moller 1997). Therefore, China is almost a stand-alone power isolated to less powerful allies like Iran, Vietnam and North Korea. The West is in China’s backyard throughout its Asian allies, a geostrategic complication which makes realist pessimists to believe China cannot rise peacefully (Mearsheimer 2004). The paper dwells more on explaining EPAs than on addressing regionalism in SSA’s ROs negotiating EPAs.

Case studies have limitations in political analyses, but their strengths need not be downplayed. Giovani Sartori (1991, 253) believes “case studies sacrifice generality to depth and thickness of understanding”. Nevertheless, King, Keohane and Verba (1994, 46–9), recommend that any scientific investigation – qualitative or quantitative - should be guided by the logic of inference. Inference is the use of known facts to learn about unknown ones by raising and answering theoretically-informed questions based on observations. Brady and Collier (2004) argue that in-depth qualitative analyses are no less scientific than large-N quantitative analyses whose reliance on mathematical or statistical models do not necessarily make them better social studies since social phenomena are not reducible to the mathematical logic. For purposes of conceptualisation and theory building, this approach is important. The available material about the EU’s concerns over China’s rise, and its influence in Africa, are sufficient to infer about EPAs as a strategic repositioning mechanism. This paper uses existing evidence to infer about other EU-led EPAs beyond Africa in the context of competitive relations between China and the EU. Given the EU’s hitherto dominant position, threats to its position generate appropriate response, including cooperative endeavours to retain its dominant position.

Conceptually, this paper develops and applies the concept of strategic repositioning borrowing from ideas in international relations (IR), and building upon Charles Glaser’s (1995) notion of “cooperation as self-help”. Byron (2007) uses the concept to describe a range of policies a country facing demands from the rapidly changing global political economy can use to offset its otherwise vulnerable position through foreign policy adjustment. Analysing Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, Byron finds that the two countries, between 1990 and 2000, faced increasing pressures from globalisation and undertook structural, institutional, political and economic reforms to restructure and transform their economies. In both countries, international forces and domestic variables led to foreign policy adjustments to cope with demands of the international economy (Ibid., 233). However, Byron’s states were not working as a single entity like the EU does. This calls for relevant domestication of her concept. My conception of strategic repositioning combines and improves upon Glaser’s and Byron’s conception by applying it to institutionalised economic engagements between the EU and Africa’s ROs with which the EU is negotiating EPAs. By strategic repositioning is here meant the reconstitution of politico-economic relations through new engagements, rules of the game or new institutional arrangements, acquisition of new or expansion of existing opportunities or by changing one’s bargaining position or setting new priorities, to improve one’s strategic advantages vis-a-vis potential challengers in the international political and economic space. Two domestications are made in Glaser’s conception: the first is that while Glaser views realist pessimism as unwarranted, he does not reach out to neoliberals who believe institutions are important in
fostering cooperation (Baldwin 1993). Thus, his admission that cooperation is possible among adversaries raises, but leaves less sufficiently answered, the question of how such cooperation occurs. Inevitably, cooperation requires actors’ institutional commitments through coordination and collaboration regimes (Stein 1993). As Byron indicates, responding to international demands requires relevant foreign policy adjustment including international cooperation. The second domestication is that like Glaser borrows from various strands of IR theorising – “arguments about the security dilemma, costly signalling, relative-gains constraints, arms control, and cooperation under anarchy” (Glaser 1995, 52) – it is important to bridge the gap between neorealist and neoliberal theorising, to harmonise views that seem to indicate that neo-liberalism is biased toward political economy and possibilities for cooperation while neo-realism is best fitted for security issues and difficulties of cooperation (Baldwin 1993). Bringing these seemingly competing traditions into conversation highlights the applicability of both perspectives for understanding cooperation. Glaser’s argument is important for this study for two reasons.

Firstly, Glaser’s contingent realism argues that actors that appear to be competitors and adversaries may actually cooperate. Competition, he maintains, “is not an inevitable logical consequence of structural realism’s basic assumptions”, but that under wide-ranging conditions (such as belief that competition may be more risky, the desire to increase gains and reduce losses from noncooperation, and the urge to reduce uncertainty about another’s motives and intentions), adversaries can achieve common [political and economic] goals through cooperative policies, not competitive ones. In this conception, “cooperative policies are an important type of self-help” (Ibid., 59) which reduce risks and uncertainty about others’ motives, and increase absolute benefits. EPAs may reduce the EU’s concerns over China-Africa cooperation by institutionally binding EU-Africa partners together.

Secondly, Glaser shows, in the European context, that “concern over relative economic gains should not damage trading relations among Western Europe’s major powers, and between the United States and these countries, and therefore should not be a source of political tension” (Glaser 1995, 88). Applied to the EU-Africa context, relative economic gains considerations should not prevent EU-Africa EPAs, for through institutional-legal arrangements, further engagement and cooperation develop. Africa, the EU, and China, then, co-exist in a triangular relationship instead of the EU losing its significant place in Africa, forcing China to deal not with Africa alone but with the Africa-EU partnership, as well. Through EPAs-related repositioning, the EU repackages and reworks its relations, retaining its strategic presence.

According to the strategic repositioning logic, the world becomes more competitive when emerging actors appear to challenge the prevailing status-quo. Hitherto powerful actors, such as the EU and the US, facing real or potential challengers to their dominant position (such as India and/or China) have a variety of choices to make. They can adjust their position and thereby accommodate new actors; or they may resist the threat in which case they risk triggering off counter-resistance; or, they may withdraw – tactfully or completely - if they believe they may presently not face the new challenger meaningfully, allowing the new actor univalled space, and making it more increasingly difficult to challenge. Adjustment is critical to repositioning, and requires engagement of the new actor and other actors in such a way as to retain one’s relevance to an existing or future political and economic landscape. This differs from Mearsheimer’s offensive realist thesis which contends that hegemons whose dominant position is under threat from emerging powers, counter-hegemons, may act aggressively against the potential challenger (Mearsheimer 2001). This is because actors in international political economy are many. Strong actors are not interested in powerful challengers alone, such as the EU seeing China as a direct threat only. Instead, less powerful actors are equally important in the competitive struggle between the more powerful ones. The search for allies, as was the case during the Cold War, is evidence of such a claim. It also differs from Waltz’s (1979) and Grieco’s (1993) argument that cooperation is difficult because states are concerned with their autonomy and independence, and are sensitive to possibilities of others reneging on the agreement, difficulties of enforcing
compliance under conditions of anarchy, and thus eschew cooperation. Instead, as Glaser has indicated, self-interested cooperation is possible. This difference arises from two sources: 1) where actors are already in a cooperative engagement, such as the EU and ROs in Africa, the notion of noncooperation does not hold. The EU and Africa’s ROs are groupings of states which have already agreed to cooperate in defiance of realist emphasis on the difficulties of cooperation (Waltz 1979, 104–6); in agreement with Glaser’s optimism and my conception. 2) Cooperation tends to occur concurrently with, or to be facilitated by, institutions and regimes established by a hegemon (Keohane 1984) or emerging from regular coordinated and cooperative interactions (Stein 1993). So, institutionalised cooperation may be a means of self-help to increase one’s competitive disadvantage.

This thesis stresses competitive relations between already-cooperating global actors beyond Byron’s (2007) domestic and international factors in individual states’ foreign policy adjustments; it applies to ROs like the EU and in Africa, and to individual states like China alike. In repositioning oneself, the choice of engagement is influenced by three self-explanatory considerations: 1) the potential for strategic disadvantages an actor may suffer; 2) the advantages an emerging actor, such as China, may enjoy alone in Africa; and 3) the promise of other less powerful actors, such as Africa’s development and hence its potential as a future market and investment destination. I expound on each of these in the final section. These considerations create powerful incentives for reworking the EU’s relations with Africa to offset the changing balance of power. The EU utilises its geo-economic and geo-political proximity to Africa to reposition itself, to remain relevant in Africa and retain a presence in Africa.

This formulation— strategic repositioning— is informative and important for several reasons: firstly, it answers the unanswered question of “why EPAs now” between actors with centuries-old ties. It also challenges the pro-social argument that the EU intends to help Africa develop, highlighting the loss the EU would suffer if its relations with Africa declined, replaced by China. Secondly, the formulation resonates with analyses in international political economy which argue that dominant actors seek to establish regimes and institutions with the hope to gain in future – the US benefited from post-World War II reconstruction of Europe in terms of improved markets, stable oil prices and security cooperation, all facilitated by US-established institutions (Keohane 1984). Thirdly, the formulation attends to one of the theorised possible ways – aside from withdrawal, or resistance – through which the global West may respond to emerging economies and changing global balance of power, challenging analysts who view China’s rise as a potential threat to world security and economic cooperation (Mearsheimer 2004). Finally, the analysis fills gaps left by analyses of EPAs and of Africa-China ties which neither bring these phenomena in conversation nor broadly contextualise them in West-East competition.

Europe-Africa Relations: Background to EPAs

Economic linkages and interdependences have existed between global north and south, from slave trade and mercantile imperialism, through colonialism to today’s West-East competition over Africa. Since formal colonisation, Africa depended on Europe for aid; Europe on Africa for raw materials; and both on each other for markets. Unequal trade relations still characterise this relationship, and were echoed in the Lome Conventions (1995) and Cotonou Agreement (2000) between the EU and ACP countries. The Rome Treaty (1957), which established the European Community (EC), provided an institutional basis for the EC’s economic dealings with ACP economies. It provided for European Development Funds (EDFs) to give technical and financial aid to the then-still-colonised African countries. The ACP-EC relations anchored upon the EDFs started with the Younede Convention, 1963, and traversed through the Lome Conventions, the Cotonou Agreement, and today’s EPAs. Lome Conventions I-IV (1975–1995) redefined Europe’s relations with ACP countries, and were followed by the Cotonou Agreement (2000) which provided for gradual negotiation of trade agreements (Art. 36 and 37). These became Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). They followed the failure of Lome and Cotonou regimes to meet the expectations (Ridolfi 2011; EU 2000 and 2006).
The Cotonou (ACP-EC Partnership) Agreement 2000

The Cotonou Agreement provided for EPAs. The failure of EU-ACP cooperation, since 1957, to socioeconomically transform ACP societies’ concerns pessimists and optimists of EPAs alike: the co-operation has hardly met the promises made, including reversing the marginalisation of ACP economies in the world trade; increasing their share of total EU imports (which decreased from 6.7% in 1976 to 2.6% in 2006); and facilitating development. The Agreement (signed 23 June 2000) was meant to overhaul, reconstitute, and replace this regime (Ridolffi 2011); to enable ACP economies to better and actively participate in international trade and multilateral trade negotiations; and to integrate them in the global economy as the cardinal constituent of EPAs. The Agreement encompasses multiple issues; has political dimensions; includes non-state actors and local governments; and emphasizes trade cooperation, the fight against poverty, and human rights. Its central focus is poverty eradication, sustainable development, and integration of the ACP countries into the world economy (Article 9; 34(1-2)). It stresses economic growth, private sector development, employment creation, and improved access to productive resources. It establishes joint institutions; addresses migration and environmental issues, such as sustainable management of natural resources, and regional cooperation (Articles 29–34). From the language of these documents, liberalisation of ACP economies is key. This is at a time the EU is sensitive to China, given its role in blocking China’s entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) for years (Eglin 1997). Amidst these provisions, the EU offered SSA a trade policy called Everything-But-Arms (EBAs) (Mkapa 2011). By EBAs, African countries can export tax-free to Europe. Why, then, negotiate EPAs parallel to and/or instead of EBA?

EPAs: Negotiations and Stalemate

EPAs negotiations were launched in Brussels/Belgium on 27 September 2002. They were expected to end in December 2007, and the Agreement to come into force by 1 January 2008 (AU 2007). This has eluded negotiators to-date (October 2011). Instead, “African states regarded [EPAs] with suspicion, fearing that the agreements would limit their market access and their policy space”. Progress on negotiations has been slow: more than two years beyond their expected conclusion, many outstanding issues remain unresolved (Khumalo and Mulleta 2010, 209). The review team discovered that Africa’s negotiating capacities are constrained by concurrent WTO negotiations, EPA processes, parallel regional integration talks, and bilateral trade negotiations, making it cumbersome to follow these processes simultaneously (AU 2007, 6). Yet, some optimism remains: Roberto Ridolffi, the EU Ambassador to Uganda, argues that EU-ACP co-operation is no longer meant for EU-ACP trade promotion, but seeks to smoothen the gradual integration of ACP states into the world economy, promote their sustainable development, and contribute to poverty eradication (Ridolffi 2011). Thus, ACP countries’ sustainable development is dependent upon their EPAs—facilitated integration in the global economy. Apparently, these economies are isolated from the global economy, and EPAs would facilitate such integration therein. This conception of ACP economies as isolated islands detached from the global economy is both ahistorical and misleading. Because here the concept “global economy” is either ambiguous or hides something profound, since no country or continent today is autarchic. Similarly, improving ACP economies’ competitiveness is not synonymous with “integrating them in the global economy”. This ambiguity at the highest diplomatic level shows the elusiveness of the real intent behind EPAs, furthering analysts’ suspicions that EPAs are potential impositions (Goodison 2007).

Following the EPA between the EAC and the EU, for instance, Ridolffi notes that the EU granted the EAC exporters 100% duty-free and quota free access to European markets which “No other developed country or trading bloc has granted”, and the EAC agreed to liberalise 82.6% of its trade with the EU, making over 65% of productive goods entering the EAC from the EU duty-free (Ridolffi 2011). He contends that importing industrial machinery and inputs at the cheapest price makes the final product more competitive. For him, EPAs strengthen the EU-EAC legal and policy frameworks, and should be a high priority for the EAC to sign “the only WTO-compatible agreement that can ensure unfettered access” to the EU market. The EAC-EU
agreement (EPA) faces challenges, says (Mbithi 2010). Development economists have projected that Africa may expect moderate trade effects but large budget deficits are likely to occur in ACP countries. This exposes them to structural and financial adjustment requirements, and would necessitate the consolidation of overlapping intra-regional integration schemes instead of the EU-ACP integration (Borrmann, Busse, M. and Rocha 2007, 251–2). Considering the logic of competitive advantage, African capitalists would prefer intra-Africa free trade where they can better compete than trade freely with stronger European counterparts. Tanzania’s former President, Benjamin Mkapa, disagrees with this position, calling it a “misperception” to argue that the EU is now the EAC’s leading trading partner. For him, the EAC exports to the EU (as a percentage of overall trade) is declining; EAC exports to Africa are increasing—by 2008, exports to Africa ($4 billion) surpassed exports to the EU ($2.9 billion); while, he maintains, export quantities do not satisfactorily indicate development. “For the EAC countries to develop, our countries should not be exporting raw materials... The markets that we have for value-added manufactured products are therefore more important to us” (Mkapa, in Daily Monitor, 26 June 2011). Mkapa maintains that Africans should deepen regional integration, increase intra-African trade, and open up to Europe after exploiting African markets. This debate shows the political intricacies facing EPAs negotiations. EPAs came at a time Africa, with its own attractions (Wissenbach 2007), is being globally competed for. Previous agreements may have been easier Western impositions on European [neo] colonies without alternatives. With changed realities, however, the current EPAs stalemate may be unsurprising.

Summarising the stalemate, Khumalo and Mulleta (2010, 216) argue that EPA-negotiating ROs in Africa have many outstanding issues to iron out before moving on to regulatory issues like services and investment, realising that the current global economic crisis has compounded challenges facing African economies. Thus, potential adjustment costs of EPA-inspired reforms could endanger African countries. The EU, facing balance of payment difficulties, is unlikely to meet the development assistance commitments beyond the EDF, given the crisis. Africa’s ROs, which “have made their signing of the EPA conditional on the EU’s specifically agreeing to include development provisions in the agreements and have tied their commitments to the development assistance offered by the EU” remain in a quandary. Khumalo and Mulleta, however, are unbothered by the question of agreement in whose favour, and for what strategic purpose. In assessing risks associated with EPAs, Borrmann, Busse, M. and Rocha (2007, 233) state that East and Southern African economies “should carefully ponder the advantages and disadvantages of signing [EPAs] with the European Union”. They too, however, neither contextualise nor place EPAs in the wider and changing global economic context. During negotiations, it appears, “the EC is forcing the pace in negotiations so that there is a risk that integration will be with the EU rather than within a country’s own region, and on the EU’s terms” (Goodison 2007, 247). Goodison’s observation shows that the EU seeks to ‘attract’ ACP economies to itself, dictate their socioeconomic and political governance, and easily access them for its strategic objectives. Why EPAs?

Explaining EU-SSA EPAs

Building on Pre-existing Relations/Ties

This continuation thesis avers that EPAs are built upon previous relationships since colonialism. In this relationship, the Global South is pegged to its northern ‘partner’, allowing access to southern resources at the expense of the South. This is now being couched under the rubric of EPAs. In this view, the EU is pursuing mercantilist regionalism. This neo-imperialist thesis echoes concerns that EPAs are less well-intentioned than seeking to impose EU terms unto ACP states (Goodison 2007). This argument extends to the aid regime, shattering EPAs’ aid appeal. Aid sustains donor stranglehold over donor-recipient societies, like many donor-dependant African economies.

Nevertheless, more than US$1 trillion has been pumped into Africa by 2010, with little development impact. Aid creates aid dependence, corruption, exploitation and unfair economic
relations (Moyo 2009). EPAs are seen in the context of Europe seeking to redefine her relations with aid-dependants, stressing the dark side of foreign aid. Thus, if the EU is pursuing EPAs with SSA on its own terms, the argument goes, these EPAs will sustain the siphoning of raw materials from Africa at the same time retaining Africa as a donor-dependant continent (Dodd 2005; Mbaye 2005). This is the intent of EDF since 1957. This argument is relevant but hackneyed to those familiar with Africa: some see genuine concerns for Africa’s development, countering the above thesis.

**Helping the “Bottom Billion”**

Helping the “bottom billion” is a pro-social contention that northern donors should help the [southern] poor. It highlights the bright side of aid and donations. It is argued that the money needed in the form of donations to uplift African and other developing-world conditions is little. Instead, donors have ignored poor countries to remain in the development traps of conflicts, natural resource curses, landlockedness with bad neighbourhood, and bad governance (Collier 2008). The drive to end poverty and human suffering through development aid is age-old. These approaches do warn against the structural consequences of some hitherto popularised structural adjustment programs (SAPs) which the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) had imposed on Africa (Easterly 2006). But, they stress the importance of assisting the poor. Keenan indicates that Britain’s Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was driven by “Our Common Interest” slogan. This stressed that increased financial assistance from wealthy to poor countries would eliminate structural challenges that prevent poor people from “getting even their first foot on the ladder of development” (Keenan 2008, 1–2). Through development transfer, according to this logic, rich economies can end poverty and engineer economic development in the global south. This is why, in addition to integrating ACP economies in the world economy, the EPAs promise pro-ACP trade terms. “Deep in every liberal sensibility is a profound sense that in a world of moral uncertainty one idea is sacred, one belief cannot be compromised: the rich should help the poor and the form of this help should be aid” (Moyo 2009, xviii). If aid is not effective, as Moyo argues, then good trade relations may do better.

The North-South development transfer approach continues with its emphasis on wealth transfer to poor countries, targeting aid to meet human needs, and contributing generously to the poor’s development needs (Keenan 2008, 2) in today’s interdependent world. Hatton and Williamson believe this interdependence exposes the socioeconomic and political consequences of south-north migration. The search for better living conditions and economic opportunities, owing to limited opportunities in the South, leads to south-north migration. Improving socioeconomic conditions in Africa is politically and economically important for reducing migratory pressures on Europe (Hatton and Williamson 2006). Accordingly, African migrants to Europe may constrain European economies and societies, leading to domestic political distress. Developing Africa through meaningful partnerships, so that Africans remain at home and stop constraining northern economies, is necessary.

These competing viewpoints highlight the divergent understandings in the debate on EPAs. They, however, exclusively focus on Africa-Europe relations even when official documents and rhetoric repeatedly emphasize “integrating African economies in the global economy” as though they are now isolated. Marginality, I believe, is not synonymous with isolation. Africa is marginal to, not isolated from, the global economy. The likely untold story of EPAs can be seen in this language and the stalemate. A better analysis can capture this untold story by locating EPAs in the global context, in the strategic imperatives of today’s changing balance of power. EPAs are critical components of the EU’s strategic repositioning when the world’s economic power is shifting from Euro-American space to the global East. This potentially tilting balance of global power threatens pre-existing dominant powers. This shift increases East-West competition for influence in Africa.
Responding to China’s Influence in Africa

China threatens western powers’ sustained control over the global economy in which Africa is a contested space. Institutionalising EU-Africa partnerships rules out the possibility of Africa completely “looking East”. Xinghui Zhang (Zhang 2011, 29) indicates that China’s aid to Africa, “based on the principle of mutual benefit”, has gained popularity with some African countries. While Zhang believes China’s approach to aid does not threaten the EU, Chinese popularity in Africa may incentivise Europe to negotiate its stay in Africa alongside eastern economies, which Africa is unwilling to relegate as well. China presents itself as “responsible stakeholder”; it stresses equality, mutual benefits, cooperation, development experiments, investment, trade and technology, non-interference in domestic affairs, non-conditional aid, and shared history and destiny with Africa (Keenan 2008; Men and Barton 2011). It has undertaken projects in Africa at high human, technological and financial costs: the 1970–1980 Tanzania-Zambia railway shows that aid is possible without imposing conditionalities (Li 2011, 50–51). This challenge to the EU’s Africa policy forces the EU to respond accordingly.

China disguises its realist intentions, making them less threatening to its African partners than European pressures and impositions since the implementation of EDFs. This challenges EU’s economic and political conditionalities accompanying aid to Africa. Some analysts consider China’s approach deceptive, others as a pro-Africa threat to western interests, and China’s receptivity in Africa increases (Brautgam 2009). The EU’s suspicions may be genuine given China’s unchanged policy toward Africa for more than half a century (Large 2009; Li 2011). China’s history of support— compared to Europe’s history of colonial and postcolonial exploitation and subjugation— creates different perceptions rooted in historical memory and experience in Africa and Europe, making China a better devil. The EU cannot but respond accordingly (Bernt 2006).

Evidence: EU Concerns over China

The West is alarmed that “China’s worldwide search for resources to feed its economic development has implications for the EU’s own economic and industrial needs. The EU must monitor Chinese commodity deals, whether on food, minerals or energy resources, to ensure that Europe's strategic interests and access to global resources are safeguarded” (UK 2009, 67, emphasis mine). This indicates that EPAs may be responding to China’s rising influence, for the EU “must monitor” China in Africa. Evidence of the EU’s fear abounds: for more than a decade, the EU blocked China’s entry into WTO citing China’s share of world trade and its claim to be a developing country worthy of preferential treatment (Eglin 1997). Existing trade regimes which equally appear helpful to Africa are being sidestepped and EPAs emphasized: the ABA trade regime would be sufficient to help Africa export quota-free to Europe if it were institutionalised. This would render EPAs, which offer the same conditions, unnecessary (Mkapa 2011). With deepening Africa-China relations, Europe may require a politico-economic arrangement allowing for a better competitive space.

In 2006, a China-Africa Cooperation Summit (Beijing/China) pledged to continue assisting Africa (Wang and Bio-Tchiane 2008), a continent where Chinese investments increased from US$ 74.8 million in 2003 to 1,574.31 million in 2007; trade increased from US$ 2,643 million in 1994 to US$106,842 million in 2008 (Zhiyue 2011, 30–33), and continues to grow. China was not significantly affected by the current (2007–2012) global economic crisis compared to other strong economies. Expectedly, her investments in Africa further increased. For Wang and Bio-Tchiane (2008, 44–47), between 2001 and 2006, Africa’s exports to, and imports from, China, grew averagely by more than 40 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively— higher than the growth rate of world trade (14%) or commodities prices (18%). From this Chinese entry, Western demands upon SSA governance actors, mainly governments, to democratise, promote and respect human rights, rule of law, and accountability (Ademola, Abiodun and Adeolu 2009) are challenged by a non-democratic China. Such impositions are unwelcome to non-democratic
African elites. These look to China. The EU’s response has been double-pronged: instituting EU-China engagement over Africa; and engaging Africa through EPAs.

The 9th EU-China Summit (Helsinki/Finland 2006) expressed concerns over Darfur, Africa’s development, and both voiced their commitment to cooperate on Africa’s peace, stability and development. The EU reaffirmed its “attachment to the principles of good governance and human rights”, that are “embodied in its Africa Strategy”. China “emphasized the upholding of the five principles of peaceful coexistence, in particular the principle of non-interference into others’ internal affairs” (EU 2006, 2–4). These open disagreements aside, the EU and China agreed to dialogue on Africa, explore new avenues for cooperation, and welcomed China’s Forum for China-Africa Co-operation (FOCAC). These views reappeared in the 10th EU-China Summit (Beijing, Nov. 2007), when the EU and China recalled their “deepening and expanding economic cooperation and trade”; re-echoed their partnership and cooperation that had strengthened their strategic partnership (EU 2007, 1); and identified FOCAC and the EU-Africa Summit as institutional channels through which both would jointly engage Africa. These may appear to signal that the EU and China are strong partners in African affairs. Holslag and Hoeymissen (2010) insist that the EU has welcomed Chinese presence in Africa and may tap it for Africa’s development, apparently indicating that the EU seeks partners in African development. Yet, from Bressand (2011) and Pollio’s (2010) arguments, the EU is aware that, left free, China might threaten EU interests in Africa. Better cooperate with China over Africa simultaneously dealing with Africa through EPAs.

Strategic Repositioning — Countering China

In a hyper-competitive world, emerging actors challenge the prevailing status-quo. Hitherto powerful actors’ dominant position is threatened. From a variety of choices to make, adjustment seems plausible for it can be undertaken through institutional innovations to accommodate new actors. EU-Africa cooperation, then, becomes self-help (Glaser 1995) on the part of the EU facing China. Because resistance would ignite counter-resistance and withdrawal would bring greater peril, response to a challenger must appear to be well-intentioned inasmuch as the rising power may not seem as bellicose as realist pessimists argue. Repositioning requires engagement of the potential power and other actors to retain one’s relevance to an existing or future political and economic landscape. This is what the EU seems to be doing through EPAs. The logic of EPAs, then, becomes a logic of strategic repositioning for Europe can no longer single-handedly ride through Africa as before. China’s influence in Africa has three implications to the EU: 1) potential for strategic disadvantages; 2) reduction of African allegiance to Europe; and 3) China’s enjoyment of more economic [and political] benefits from developing Africa.

Potential Disadvantages: Counterbalancing China

“We are concerned about the lack of transparency of Chinese aid. African parliaments and civil society must have the information they need to be able to hold their governments to account. We are concerned that in some cases Chinese loan and investment agreements are neither contributing to poverty reduction nor respecting internationally-recognised principles of sustainable development, good governance and human rights” (UK 2009, 70).

The EU’s accusation that Chinese aid to Africa is not transparent and not contributing to poverty reduction is ironical. The EU’s aid is not without blemish: Moyo (2009), and Mwenda and Tangri (2005), agree that Western aid has perpetuated corruption, entrenched undemocratic regimes, crippled domestic accountabilities, and sustained donor-dependence and donor-phobia. Since 1957, the EU’s EDF-aid regime shows little. China’s development contribution is visible in infrastructure sectors. Instead, the China-Africa embrace has re-ignited European interest in Africa, as an element of perceived strategic competition, driving Europe’s attempts to engage Africa, a trend evidenced by symbolic politics of the EU-Africa Summit, Lisbon, December 2007 (Tull 2008, 2). China’s “business is business” approach to aid in Africa concerns traditional donors whose African aid programmes have not met development goals but sustain donor-dependence (Herman and Davies 2009, 1). Instead, Kragelund uncovers European concerns over
China’s influence in Africa, which makes Western observers fear that the West will lose leverage in Africa (Kragelund, n.d). A kind of phobia has emerged in Europe, generating a competitive ‘politics of interregionalism’ in the African context, with the EU acting as a ‘normative power’ (Pollio 2010, 236). Pollio further states, “The main concern about the European-promoted interregional project does not come from the conceptual solidity of inter-regionalism per se, but from the comparative advantages that India and China might enjoy in cooperating with developing countries” (Ibid., 236). The advantage is less that Eastern actors are stronger than that they may receive positive reception, thereby requiring the EU to reposition itself. EPAs would provide an institutional basis for such strategic repositioning.

Regionalised multilateralism has two dimensions: 1) strengthening EU integration and reach out to other ROs; and 2) encouraging ROs elsewhere to institutionalise along the EU model. This may create systemic inter-regionalisation in the global space, allowing the EU greater leverage as a model to emulate. Thus, though Holslag and Hoeymissen laud “Europe’s policy initiative to establish trilateral dialogue and cooperation with China in the field of African peace and security”, they warn that China is not reliable. Europe’s strategy, they advise, should combine constructive engagement and tacit balancing (Holslag 2010; Hoeymissen 2010, 1) – in line with strategic repositioning. “T tacit balancing” may require institutionalised relationships with Africa, and engaging China. This shows why the EU has resolved to engage China, which it simultaneously accuses of encouraging African nations to take on unsustainable, inequitable debt levels, contravening international and EU initiatives, like the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. The EU decided to engage China in dialogue on this issue (UK 2009, Ch 9/295).

The fears are not only economic but also military: “Although Member States will continue to pursue their own interests for political and commercial reasons, unwarranted Chinese political or economic action against any Member State must be seen as an affront to all EU Member States. There should be a presumption that the EU and its Member States should take action promptly in such cases to uphold solidarity across the EU. This would be one of the most effective measures to rebalance the relationship” (UK 2009, 29). I consider this reasonable evidence of EU fears of China. By militarily preparing against China, and reaching out to other regions in the world, the EU may protect its interests and retain allies. The EPAs’ collaborative relationship may be aimed at arraying the structural-military implications of China’s power and influence in developing Africa.

Africa’s Allegiance to Europe Vs China

In the international politico-economic landscape, a powerful actor enjoys allegiance from less powerful ones, especially dependants. This allegiance decreases with changing balance of power, as dependants see the challenger as an alternative power to hobnob with. China seeks such a shift. It shifted from the traditional model of aid to resources for development. It provides aid in exchange for various resources without conditions. Though China is exploiting Africa, its approach appears more welcome to Africans than the West’s “now”. From an identity perspective, Yiwei (2010) argues that China and the EU are in “disharmony” because their identities clash: China sees itself as a developing country, emerging power, eastern/non-western civilisation, a socialist state. The EU, in China’s eyes, is the world’s biggest developed bloc, a post-modern model, western civilisation, and European capitalism. This, Yiwei argues, entails relations between a developing country and a developed bloc; between an emerging power and a post-modern model; clashes between eastern and western civilisations; and differences between socialism and capitalism. While seeing China as less capitalist than the West would be misleading, these identity differences exist and may appeal to some African elites.

The implication is that Africans may “look East” to alternate disappointing relations with the West. They may identify with a developing-country, non-western-civilisation, China. In a word, China is a politico-economic alternative to western hegemony. Isolating the EU, denying it developing-world allegiance, this shift creates incentives to re-deepen Europe’s footing in Africa to retain such allegiance. EPAs may offer the EU an institutional framework for engaging Africa,
re-positioning itself through regionalised multilateralism (Ademola, Abiodun and Adeolu 2009), and thereby retaining relevance to Africa’s future policy stance and allegiance. The possible shift of political allegiance, and the declining EU relevance to Africa’s politico-economic, ideational and normative landscape, must be bothersome to the EU.

**Africa’s Development Equally Beneficial**

Africa’s development over the past decades promises increased purchasing power for European products. Losing Africa to China implies losing an important future market. Consequently, EPAs may help the EU to counter China in three ways. Firstly, by retaining institutionalised presence in Africa, the EU is able to keep in the know of what China is doing in Africa, to devise better strategies should economic or politico-military responses become necessary. If African economies become completely independent of Europe they may threaten European security and ideological interests in Africa if allied with China which the EU suspects, given Africa’s geographical proximity to Europe and the geostrategic implications of China’s rising power (Shenkar 2006). Secondly, EPAs retain the EU’s institutionalised access to African markets and resources that China would otherwise almost monopolise. The EU, then, shares with China instead of losing out completely. Thirdly, civil society demands for accountability in Africa’s dealings with China may be nurtured through Europe-Africa relations as Africa transforms socioeconomically. Future African elites may be forced to practice “democratic accountability” in dealing with China when facing stronger middle classes that emerge with development. These endeavours strategically reposition the EU in a hyper-competitive world facing China’s influence.

**Conclusion**

Strategic repositioning entails that the dominant actor facing challenges reconstitutes its politico-economic relations through new engagements, including cooperation as self-help (Glaser 1995) or making foreign policy adjustments to respond to global challenges (Byron 2007). New institutional arrangements help the power to acquire new, or expand existing, opportunities. They enhance the power’s bargaining position, thereby containing the challenger. This improves one’s strategic advantages in the hyper-competitive struggle for political and economic space. Europe seems to be responding to the potential for strategic disadvantages in Africa as a result of China’s competition, to fear the shift of Africa’s allegiance to China as an alternative to western aid and development support, and realises that as Africa develops, China seems destined to enjoy more economic benefits from the continent than Europe. This would threaten European economies, a reality to which strategies must be devised. While EBA allows SSA countries access to European markets, and would thus be a sufficient pro-Africa trade regime, EPAs seem to be aimed at retaining the EU’s competitive advantages in Africa. This is possibly why the EU emphasises liberalisation in its negotiations at the expense of meaningful regional integration and development which has led to concerns among SSA negotiators (AU 2007).

These concerns are not unique to Europe. Further studies are needed to examine other powers’ responses to this new scramble (Amosu 2007). I have demonstrated that East-West politico-economic competition puts the EU on its heels but have not attended to other emerging and existing powers, an issue which requires further analysis along the strategic repositioning thesis. The dynamics of EU-SSA partnerships are contextually comprehensible within China’s entry into Africa and how this forceful entry has been received in Africa and perceived in Europe. Clearly, then, EPAs are part of the broader European response to competitive pressures mounted by China. The EU combines “Kantian alliance and Machiavellian agendas” (Bressand 2011, 61). The former involves deepened cooperation at home and seeming dialogue-based engagement of both Africa and China. The latter “revolves around relations with three countries of Eurasia, a region essential to the global energy equation in which Chinese influence is growing while Europe’s own role is becoming hesitant” (Bressand 2011, 61) with concurrent “sovereign causes and globalised processes” (Ibid., 85). Sovereign causes might involve protecting and upholding European identity, and unity in a regionalised setting. Globalised processes combine regionalised
multilateralism in the global political-economy, such as engaging African ROs in EPAs. The EU’s EPA motives, therefore, transcend pre-existing EU-Africa relations and helping Africa to develop. Instead, the EU may, through EPAs, make the accommodation of its economic and politico-strategic interests a formal and institutionalised obligation to all African EPA signatories. We await the future of EPAs in a power-shifting global space where strategic repositioning seems the only plausible option. Yet, the concept needs to be refined and developed. It is the author’s hope that future researchers develop this concept by testing its efficacy for understanding different contexts and powers.

Notes

1. I use “Donor-phobia” to mean excessive fear of, and respect for, donors and its consequent erosion of domestic policy autonomy; while its co-constitutive logic is “Donor-mania” – the tendentious overreliance on donors and consequent reduction of the motivation to seek alternative sources of funding by, say, deepening domestic revenue sources, domestic capital creation and development of an indigenous revenue-generating productive sector. The two create dependency and the accompanying dependency syndrome.

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The Efficacy of Multi-Stakeholder Conflict Early Warning and Early Response Mechanism in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

In the first decade of the new millennium, Zimbabwe experienced political conflict culminating in socio-economic and political crises that retarded development prospects. The conflict that engulfed the country was only abated by the Global Political Agreement (GPA) signed on 15 September 2008. Various observers and stakeholders in the conflict field sensed the approach of the ominous clouds of conflict but the lack of co-operation and co-ordination amongst these actors hampered early warning and early response. The paper theoretically examines the efficacy of multi-stakeholder involvement in conflict early warning and response and its usefulness in peace-building in Zimbabwe. It also discusses the challenges of multi-stakeholder participation in conflict early warning and response and makes policy recommendations for consideration.

Key words: Conflict, multi-stakeholder, early warning, early response, peace-building, Zimbabwe

Introduction

Zimbabwe has been pervaded by conflict that can be traced back to pre-colonial times through the colonial era to the post-colonial period. These conflicts have tremendously impacted on Zimbabwe’s development prospects. Had these conflicts been detected early enough, appropriate action could have been taken by various players in the conflict arena to mitigate the impact of the conflicts or it could have even been prevented. The notion of early warning systems has been widely accepted by a number of nations, regional and international bodies as having the capacity to facilitate timely responses to negative conflict. Through a systematic and organised process of data collection, data analysis and interpretation relevant state and non-state actors could be informed on the need for specific actions geared towards the formulation of relevant responsive actions in Zimbabwe (CCSF 2012).

Realising the need for early detection and greater coordination of responses to conflict and violence in the country, the paper investigates the efficacy, relevance and importance of establishing a multi-stakeholder conflict early warning and response system to promote peace in Zimbabwe. The multi-stakeholder participation will award both state and non state actors a platform to contribute to the development of measures to deal with the humanitarian consequences of violence. It is envisaged that civil society, government, regional and international bodies will suggest recommendations for stakeholders on possible mechanisms to adopt in detecting early signs of violence and devising appropriate responsive strategies.

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States and civil society actors are primary conflict-prevention actors yet electoral violence, political violence and other forms of violence experienced in Zimbabwe have raised questions about the capacity of the state and civil society to successfully prevent violent conflicts. There are a range of conflict-prevention, early warning and response tools that are currently available at the national, regional, and international levels, which, if adopted by various stakeholders in the conflict and peace arena, could lead to an effective early warning and response. Churches and civil society have a prominent role to play in early-warning and response through observation, detection, monitoring, analysis, forecasting and development of violence warning messages.

These players could have timely warned the nation about the conflict that brought about the socio-economic and political crisis that engulfed the country in the new millennium but, they failed to do so. The development of a multiple-stakeholder conflict early warning and response mechanism is invaluable to the attainment of sustainable conflict prevention.

The paper conducts a contextual analysis of the usefulness of early warning and response mechanisms in Zimbabwe. It identifies harbingers and drivers of conflict in Zimbabwe and discloses how we have responded to the conflict. It also highlights the importance of having early warning and early response (EWER), and outlines the challenges to multi-stakeholder EWER. Finally, it suggests policy issues for consideration for the adoption and strengthening of multi-stakeholder participation to promote peace and stability through EWER that is cognisant of the context of the Zimbabwean conflict.

Conceptual Issues

There are several definitions of conflict which are broad enough to include a wide variety of conflict phenomena. Most definitions of conflict describe it as situations where persons perceive incompatible goals, needs and interests. Conflict takes many forms: Hyden (2006) points out that there is manifest conflict which is characterized by the use of force, or violence that often results in human casualties. He also identifies latent conflict which is embedded in societal cleavages which may or may not break into open confrontation and negative exchanges. Stakeholders interested in developing an early warning and response mechanism must craft a framework that ensures that latent conflict does not transform into violent destructive conflict.

According to Keyserlingk and Kopfmuller (2006), the “concept of early warning” was first developed during the Cold War in the field of national military intelligence to enhance the capacity of predicting potential (ballistic) attacks. At the level of the United Nations System, early warning was introduced as an instrument to forecast natural disasters such as droughts and earthquakes among others. Nowadays, early warning is employed to predict or respond to both natural disasters and violent conflicts.

Simply put, "early warning" is the process of collecting, verifying and analysing information and communicating the results to decision-makers. The purpose of early warning systems is to detect, forecast, and, when necessary issue alerts, to impend conflict as well as their outbreak and escalation. Early warning also undertakes to share and analyse that information and formulate options for response. It is important to note that early warning efforts do not intend to suppress conflicts, but to respond to the trajectory of a conflict.

"Response" means actions to prevent, mitigate and manage situation. The term multi-stakeholder in the paper denotes all those concerned by conflict: these include government, humanitarian agencies, non-governmental organisations, individuals, the media, the academic community, community-based groups, and traditional leaders.

Harbingers and Drivers of Conflict in Zimbabwe

Elections, economic recessions, resource discovery, territorial disputes, political disputes, asset redistribution, radical policy changes, natural disasters, amongst others have served as either harbingers or drivers of conflict. For instance, the elections in Zimbabwe have both been a forerunner and driver of conflict. When elections are held there are issues on the electoral agenda
pertaining to the ownership of resources which trigger conflict in communities. Different conflictual perceptions of leadership’s intentions arise, sowing seeds of division and hatred amongst the people. Doubts are raised regarding the transparency and management of elections. Questions pertaining to those who head the institutions running the elections and the involvement of the security personnel also arise. At electoral times, the politics of ‘othering’ gathers momentum, fanning the embers of conflict.

Zimbabwe has periodically held elections since independence and all elections that have been held have been pervaded by violence. In the 1980 elections, ZANU PF was accused by the British governor Lord Soames and PF ZAPU of having used violence to gain electoral victory and form the first independence government. The 1985 elections were held in the midst of a civil war (gukurahundi) between ZANU PF and PF ZAPU in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces and thus were ridden by violence. The 1990 elections were also pervaded by violence, the shooting of ZUM leader Edgar Tekere lends credence to that. Minor electoral skirmishes surrounded the 1995 and 1996 elections. Violence at the polls peaked in the new millennium evidenced by violent confrontations in 2000, 2002 and 2005; but the crescendo of electoral violence was reached in the June 2008 run-off elections.

Economic recessions have served as sources of conflict in Zimbabwe. Students and workers clashed with the riot police in demonstrations in the late 1980s. The demonstrations arose from the impact of the disastrous socialist philosophy on the economy and cost of living in the late 1980s. The food riots of the late 1990s followed economic decline consequent to the failure of ESAP. The 2008 violence was linked to the economic meltdown characterised by hyper inflation and shortage of resources. During economic recession in Zimbabwe, perceptions that have emerged are that the government and leadership have misappropriated funds or embezzled them and should thus be removed; even by violence if necessary. This set the stage for confrontation with supporters of the government. When economic recessions met poll years, the electorate was easily manipulated for political mileage and were also glibly used as instruments of violence in exchange for reward.

The discovery of economic resources has generated mineral resource conflict in Zimbabwe. The discovery of gold by unlicensed small-scale miners was accompanied by conflict between them and outsiders, amongst them, and between them and the state. Diamond discovery in the Chidzwa area of Marange intensified the nature of mineral resource conflicts. The nature of the conflict over these resources changed not only in intensity but also in character. The conflict grew and raked in the locals, the state, unlicensed miners, ZANU PF, MDC, the security sector, civil society and international players who contested the resource. It hit international news headlines after the government used excessive force and violated human rights as it sought to restore order in the diamond fields— further straining relations between itself and the international community.

Government-led radical policy changes have driven conflicts in Zimbabwe. Some trace the roots of the Zimbabwe crisis to radical policy changes. The decision by the Zimbabwean government to radically shift policy positions evidenced by the awarding of unbudgeted for gratuities of US$450m to war veterans in 1997, the land reform, the indigenization and empowerment policies of the new millennium. These radical shifts in policy positions were disastrous to economic performance, leading to heightened opposition against the government that generated socio-political conflict. Perceptions of these programmes were that these programmes were designed only to benefit the elite, further stoking the tensions.

Drivers of conflict are not only located in Zimbabwe; some have their loci in regional and global factors spheres, as well. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 was a harbinger to conflict that haunted Zimbabwe in the new millennium. The collapse of the Soviet Union and socialism was accompanied by social and political upheaval in many formerly pro-socialist states and Zimbabwe was not spared the chaos. Zimbabwe, in response to the collapse adopted a new political philosophy— neo-liberalism and adopted ESAP. The policy led to an increase in
conflict in Zimbabwe emanating from the negative socio-economic impact of its adoption. With the abandonment of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy in 1990, Zimbabwe became vulnerable to western capitalist external policy making and a slave to exploitative international finance. Western-sponsored finance programmes and aid provision did not take into consideration the domestic environment. This landed Zimbabwe into deeper political, social, and economic troubles that ignited the conflict.

Zimbabwe’s geographical location and climate makes it vulnerable to natural disasters like droughts and floods. When these disasters strike political gladiators, civil society and other actors jockey and jostle to provide assistance to the afflicted populations in order to gain mileage. This action tends to heighten community politics resulting in the generation and/or exacerbation of territorial disputes, conflict over resource distribution, traditional authority struggles, and a rise in petty jealousies.

Reactions to Conflict in Zimbabwe

Upon detecting conflict or as a reaction to conflict, various responses have been taken depending on the source and nature of the conflict in Zimbabwe. Some have generally elected to respond to conflict through either the fight, flight or flow mode; some have chosen confrontation; some avoidance; while others have opted to collaborate.

Conflict actors on the Zimbabwean political landscape have chosen different conflict resolution pathways. Having noted the tension and unstable political environment that pervaded the immediate post-independence period, ZANU PF invited members of the former ruling white minority regime and members of the defeated PF ZAPU to form a unity government in order to forestall the possible eruption of conflict in the early years of independence. Negotiation was again instrumental in the formation of a unity government formed after the 22 December 1987 Unity Accord that ended the violence in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. Again, dialogue was crucial in the formation of a unity government via the GPA (2008) that ended electoral violence and provided for a sharing of power between ZANU PF and the MDC. In a nutshell, power-sharing arrangements in Zimbabwe have acted either as a buffer to conflict or as an effective response against the escalation of conflict.

Upon the realisation that the Zimbabwean conflict was bound to escalate at the dawn of the new millennium, mediation was applied. Unlike the West and most civil society organizations that elected to react to the conflict by engaging in megaphone diplomacy in the mediation process, most church organisations and SADC chose to engage in quiet diplomacy mediate between the MDC and ZANU PF to avert an escalation of conflict.

Badza (2008,7) refers to quiet diplomacy in the Zimbabwean crisis as the negotiation strategy applied by the mediator who avoids applying pressure directly and openly on one or more of the critical parties to a conflict even when and if it is ethically necessary. The mediator is not a disinterested actor. He may have some interest in the outcome. Thus, it may either be a result of the mediator’s careful calculations of his strategic self-interests or those of his group. Therefore, it may be a result of a thorough cost-benefit analysis by the mediator. Equally, it may also be based on the objective assessment of the real or perceived catastrophic consequences of what has been referred to as ‘megaphone diplomacy’ which is, essentially, the opposite of quiet diplomacy.

Violence begets violence— that is the way Zimbabwe has reacted to conflict situations. The government has often employed force to deal with conflict which has subsequently been followed by repression. Between 1982 and 1987, the government deployed the Fifth Brigade into the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces to deal with by disgruntled ex-ZIPRA members who were sabotaging and destroying government infrastructure. The brigade, however, did not target the insurgents but retaliated by conducting a violent blanket harassment of the mainly siNdebele population it alleged supported the dissidents. As a result of this action, over 20,000 people, most of whom were innocent, lost their lives to the military operation.
As opposition against government rule rose from the late 1990s on the back of economic decline and rising standards of living, the government resorted to repression to contain demonstrations. The repressive Public Order and Security Act (2002), a variant of the colonial Law and Order Maintenance Act (1960), was passed to curtail opposition activities and mass democratic protests as the state forecasted conflict. The law was employed to deal with opposition parties, and student and worker protests; and this was often accomplished violently. In turn, some sections of the population has also hit back by engaging in violence, engendering a culture of violence on the political landscape.

Perturbed by government repression, some opponents of government reacted to state sponsored violence by sabotaging the economy, imposing sanctions, and applying restrictive measures. From 2000, the MDC formation and civil society groups sanctioned the imposition of sanctions on the Zimbabwean government by the United States, Britain and the European Union. These sanctions have served to intensify the conflict as they have widened the gulf of differences between parties to the conflict.

Others have responded to looming conflict or manifest conflict on Zimbabwe’s political landscape by emigrating. With the onset of the Zimbabwe crisis, many Zimbabweans fled to the Diaspora as economic and political refugees. It is estimated that one million Zimbabweans are now resident in the United Kingdom while three million are in the southern African sub-region. While others elected to flee, the Ostrich Reaction was adopted by some who chose to bury their heads in the sand, pretending not to be affected directly or indirectly by conflict.

Government recognition after the 2008 violence that conflict was dividing society and compromising development prompted it to embark on a peace-building project by establishing the Organ on National Healing Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI), which was entrusted with the “restoration of the dignity of all Zimbabweans regardless of age, gender or creed. Under the auspices of ONHRI, peace rallies and prayer meetings have been promoted to promote peaceful co-existence amongst Zimbabweans.

**Significance of Multi-Stakeholder Early Warning and Early Response**

The case for EWSs has already been made on African soil. The African Union and some of its Regional Economic Communities, e.g IGAD, EAC, ECOWAS have established or are in the process of establishing EWSs. Conflict-torn areas like the Horn of Africa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and many individual states have established their own EWER systems (CCSF 2012).

An early warning system that embraces the participation of a multiplicity of stakeholders can effectively result in the reduction or outright prevention of violent conflict in the country. In Zimbabwe, as is the case elsewhere, conflicts are generally traceable to many actors and sources; therefore, involving many actors in the quest to prevent conflict and effectively respond to it is of paramount importance. Multi-stakeholder participation boosts chances of resolving intractable deep-rooted conflict characterised by mingled conflict issues such as the one found in Zimbabwe which has resource-based conflict enmeshed in issues of identity, politics, race, ethnic issues and others. Experts in these different sources of conflict can work together to manage the conflicts.

As conflicts are multi-dimensional, an early warning and early response (EWER) system requires multi-stakeholder involvement which permits the sharing of skills and expertise in conflict prevention. Multi-stakeholder involvement allows for the establishment of synergies between the responsible stakeholders, i.e. government, civil society, citizens, the NGO sector and other bodies in early-warning and response structures. Through this, skills of national actors are built and there is the development of closer collaboration between them, thus facilitating immediate responses to conflict as gaps and areas of cooperation are made known in EWER. Some stakeholders specialise in conflict detection but lack the knowledge, expertise and funds to respond to it; multiple stakeholder involvement can help bridge the gap between early warning and early response as some may be able to do the above.
By promoting the working together of generalists, relevant technical specialists and communities in early warning and early response, community-led peace initiatives become more effective. This co-operation is crucial for detecting conflict, reducing violence, and enhancing peaceful interaction and resource sharing among local communities. Multiple stakeholders engage in a variety of activities across a range of sectors including emergency response, peacekeeping, and local capacity building which is essential for EWER.

The efficacy of multi-stakeholder involvement cannot be underestimated given the importance of the media as a potential conflict-prevention actor through the provision of information on potential sources of conflict—promotion of the exchange of information through all practical means, including electronic means, mail, conferences, seminars and workshops. Not to be ignored is the importance of the gender perspective in early warning and response. Women often bear the brunt of ugly side of conflict. By involving women in EWRS, the impact on the conflict is reduced since women are integral in peace building processes as they are less confrontational and provide motherly love and protection which is crucial in conflict prevention.

**Challenges to Early Warning and Early Response in Zimbabwe**

There are a plethora of challenges to multi-stakeholder conflict early warning and response in Zimbabwe. For multi-stakeholder participation to be effective, it is imperative to properly problematise and characterise the Zimbabwean problem which has been misdiagnosed for a long time, thus impacting negatively on effective early warning and response. Unless a clear diagnosis of the Zimbabwe problem is made, which attends to the causes and nature of the problem, the EWER mechanism will encounter difficulties and stakeholders will face difficulties working together.

Civil society is a conglomeration of non-state actors where various stakeholders come together, but the divisions amongst these stakeholders may hamper the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder EWER. The lack of consensus and misreading of the Zimbabwean conflict by various stakeholders could block the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder early warning and response systems. Petty jealousies and competition for visibility amongst agencies and organisations involved in conflict prevention is a challenge to EWER. These stakeholders hold different views with regard to the source and nature of the conflict in Zimbabwe. What is regarded by some as a potential source of conflict is to another regarded as a gateway to sustainable peace. For instance, to some, land redistribution is perceived as addressing the problem of socio-economic equality and therefore fostering peace, while to others, that action is disempowering and thus is considered a driver of conflict.

The lack of agreement by stakeholders may not only be confined to indicators of early warning but may also affect ownership of EWER. For instance, information on a coup may be regarded by some as exclusively the domain of national state security agencies. Co-operation between government and civil society is therefore blocked while other stake-holders could be stigmatized by government. The EWER may also be possibly perceived by state security agents as instruments bent on causing alarm and despondency in society. Early warning information on the possibility of a coup d’état was perceived as such by the state in the 1990s landing reporters Mark Chavunduka and Ray Choto in trouble with the military in the 1990s. To the security apparatus, EWERS are viewed as potential national security and therefore have restrictions placed on them to the sharing and dissemination of information in the name of national security.

The absence of political will works against the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder early warning and response mechanisms. Early warning and response has been hampered by the polarised political environment which is pervaded by mistrust and suspicion—hindering their reliability and effectiveness. Corollary to the above, media polarisation has also compromised EWER as the media has picked sides in hegemonic struggles. The media either suppress information on a looming conflict for political expediency or exaggerate the likelihood of a conflict as it panders to the dictates of paymasters, thus hampering the effectiveness of EWER.
The media has painted almost all the conflicts on Zimbabwe as political; yet the reality on the ground is that some of the conflicts we have are not altogether political. Some are social but are disguised as political by perpetrators of violence. At times, criminal elements take advantage of a political and electoral schism. This conflict is then explained as political/electoral by stakeholders on either side of the conflict divide, particularly the media. The failure to engender democracy and promote transparency and impartiality militates against the efficacy of multi-stakeholder early warning and response.

Obstacles to the efficacy of EWRS are also to be found in the problem of coloniality in Zimbabwe: colonialism has come to an end, but its effects, linger. We thus tend to perceive threats to peace through the eyes of the former coloniser and seek to forecast conflicts using their instruments and also seek to respond to conflicts through response mechanisms created by them. The coloniality of knowledge is thus still very visible in our minds. As we seek to attract effective multi-stakeholder participation, it is important to develop early warning and response mechanisms unencumbered by coloniality.

Foreign crafted EWER systems that exclude local stakeholder input could retard the effectiveness of detecting and responding to conflict as the foreign crafted EWER may be irrelevant as they could be based on a superficial understanding of the country’s political and conflict history. Locally crafted EWER would be more apt to take into cognisance the fact that Zimbabwe’s problems are multi-layered and multi-faceted with conflicts rooted in the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial layers. Effective multi-stakeholder participation in EWER could be affected by the mobilisation of adequate resources to establish an effective EWER system. It is an undisputable fact that in a resource constrained economy like Zimbabwe, mobilisation of financial, human, and material resources is no simple task but one that requires commitment from the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

Another challenge to EWER efficacy is that information received from the public domain is shunned while there is overreliance on professionals and experts. Indigenous modes of conflict early warning and response are ignored as they are regarded as unscientific and inferior to the detriment of EWER attempts in Zimbabwe.

**Policy Issues for Consideration**

Early warning can hardly ever be successful without the necessary political will and buy-in by the state and its various apparatus. Consensus building and identification of strategic linkages between the state and non-state actors is therefore a necessary preparatory process for the successful establishment of a national EWER system. Government ministries, the police, the army, human rights commission, electoral commission, and others are instrumental to state participation and involvement in the crafting of multi-stakeholder responsive actions. There is need to galvanise political will from the partners of the Inclusive Government to ensure a coordinated and inclusive approach against violence.

For effective conflict early warning and response mechanisms, the following could be considered:

- A broad-based early warning and response mechanism that embraces a multifarious explanation of the Zimbabwe crisis should be created;
- Civil society organisations should hold regular meetings that bring together continental and regional early-warning experts for training and to share experiences and technical support;
- Early-warning efforts should aim to strengthen national capacity for conflict prevention by building the skills of national actors and developing closer collaboration between them, with a view to facilitating immediate responses to conflict;
- There is a need to democratize the conflict forecasting and response system;
- Early warning should be timely in order to be effective; and timeliness could be achieved
through multi-stakeholder involvement;
• Stakeholders should collect and monitor information on potential conflicts through alerts that consider context, actors, and events to prepare profiles and baselines for assessing vulnerability;
• Stakeholders should issue early warnings that include analyses of conflict relevant structures, actors, and dynamics and that identify trends and conditions conducive to conflict;
• Media institutions should collect information from a large variety of sources to include indigenous modes of EWER;
• Early-warning mechanisms should be more connected to the broader SADC, AU, and UN system;
• Constant feedback and communication with broad civil society should be established;
• Strong linkages with print and electronic media in and outside Zimbabwe should be created and maintained;
• Functional solidarity and support networks with other civil societies in and outside Zimbabwe should be created and maintained;
• There is a need to ensure that creating effective conflict early warning and response mechanisms is a nationally-driven process;
  Functional contacts with regional and international bodies including with South Africa as facilitator and SADC as guarantor of the Global Political Agreement should be vitalised; and Indicators need to be collectively formulated through multi-stakeholder consultative engagement.

Conclusion

On the whole, it has been noted that multi-stakeholder EWER improves:
• response to, detection, forecast, prevention, rescue, and understanding of the nature of conflict;
• analyses and interpretation of data and information on conflict, dissemination and sharing of information;
• management of conflicts; co-operation, co-ordination, and harmonisation of early warning and response activities;
• comprehensively attending to conflicts, sharing skills and expertise;
• involvement of marginalised groups; and
• dealing with conflict vulnerability more robustly while enhancing the capacity of coping with conflict.

Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of Zimbabwe’s political and conflict history is fundamental in the formulation of effective conflict early warning and response mechanisms. Successful conflict early warning and response lies in collective action and an awareness of potential conflict situations and the ability to analyze relevant EWER information and the political will to take the right action when needed. Perhaps, the establishment of a constitutionalised multi-stakeholder EWER would go a long way in reducing “fire-fighting” approaches we have been taking to conflict in Zimbabwe.
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Ethical Issues in Electronic Commerce

Frank Gwavuya*

Abstract

This paper reflects on the ethical challenges posed by electronic commerce, with special emphasis on issues involving the content and users of electronic commerce information. The paper also discusses issues in electronic commerce, including security, privacy, identity and non-refutability of electronic transactions. The ethical challenges that often arise when using electronic commerce revolve around three issues: privacy and identity, both with reference to the human subject involved in the transaction, and transaction non-refutability. The paper also touches on issues to do with intellectual property and the ten commandments of computer ethics.

Key words: Electronic commerce, spoofing, privacy, security transparency, intellectual property.

Introduction

Ethics has been termed the study and philosophy of human conduct, with an emphasis on the determination of right and wrong. For marketers, ethics in the workplace refers to rules (standards, principles) governing the conduct of organizational members, and the consequences of marketing decisions (Ferrell 2005). Therefore, ethical marketing from a normative approach is defined as practices that emphasize transparent, trustworthy, and responsible personal and organizational marketing policies and actions that exhibit integrity as well as fairness to consumers and other stakeholders (Bartels 1967). Marketing ethics focuses on principles and standards that define acceptable marketing conduct, as determined by various stakeholders and the organization responsible for marketing activities. While many of the basic principles have been codified as laws and regulations to require marketers to conform to society’s expectations of conduct, marketing ethics goes beyond legal and regulatory issues. Ethical marketing practices and principles are core building blocks in establishing trust, which helps build long-term marketing relationships. In addition, the boundary-spanning nature of marketing presents many of the ethical issues faced in business today. Both marketing practitioners and marketing professors approach ethics from different perspectives. For example, one perspective is that ethics is about being a moral individual and that personal values and moral philosophies are the key to ethical decisions in marketing. Virtues such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, and citizenship are assumed to be values that can guide complex marketing decisions in the context of an organization. On the other hand, approaching ethics from an organizational perspective assumes that establishing organizational values, codes, and training is necessary to provide consistent and shared approaches to making ethical decisions (Ferrell 2004).

The speed and degree to which electronic commerce is infiltrating the very fabric of our society, faster and more pervasively than any other entity in history, makes an examination of its ethical dimensions critical. Though ethical lag has heretofore hindered explorations of e-commerce ethics, there is need to confront it and identify that as well.

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Electronic commerce is made possible by the internet; a relatively new digital environment is expected to thoroughly transform the way in which business is conducted (Judson and Kelly 1999). However, there are still challenges in addressing the ethical framework of electronic commerce.

**Literature Review**

**Defining E-Commerce**

Electronic commerce, which is also referred to as e-commerce, is “the carrying out of business activities that lead to an exchange of value across telecommunications networks” (Eito 1997; Husnayathi et al. 2005). It refers generally to all forms of transactions relating to commercial activities, including both organizations and individuals that are based upon the processing and transmission of digitized data, including text, sound and visual images (OECD 1997). The European Commission (1997) lists its components as activities including electronic trading of goods and services, online delivery of digital content, electronic fund transfers, electronic share trading, electronic bills of lading, commercial auctions, collaborative design and engineering, online sourcing, public procurement, direct consumer marketing, and after-sales service. It involves both products (e.g. consumer goods, specialized medical equipment) and services (e.g. information services, financial and legal services); traditional activities (e.g. health care, education) and new activities (e.g. virtual malls).

**E-Business: A Related Concept**

E-business is not just the buying and selling of goods and services, but also servicing customers, collaborating with business partners paid or unpaid conducting electronic transactions within an organization (Turban et al. 2002). Such a view is given as a definition of e-commerce by the (Cabinet Office 1999); but it would seem scholars have decided to coin the name e-business to the more expanded view which involves the exchange of information across electronic networks, at any stage in the supply chain, whether within an organization, between businesses, between businesses and customers, or between the public and private sectors, whether paid or unpaid. Zwass cited in Husnayati, Mohd and Maram (2005), claims that this way of doing business can be understood as the deployment of information technologies together with the organizational and management advances that pull the technology and are pushed by it in turn. Sino and Fondrona (2005) further distinguish the two by saying E-commerce is not to be confused with e-business. The term “e-business” refers to a particular way of organizing a company, as a far more flexible and informal economic production unit, in terms of its physical infrastructure and employment relations. E-commerce, by contrast, consists of the whole set of activities carried out by marketing function (product design, price setting, promotion, etc) and executed via the Internet. By turn, the internet has two great advantages, distance collapsing and simultaneity, allowing interactive communication among users.

**Significance of ICT and E-Commerce/Business**

Rogerson (1999) described advances in information and communication technology (ICT) as presenting many opportunities and threats to individuals, organizations and society as a whole. Computers can be shaped to any activity that can be described in terms of inputs, transforming processes and outputs; and Moor (1985) said of the computer that it is the nearest thing to a universal tool. Consequently, society and its organizations are becoming more dependent upon ICT as the means of providing information, the new life blood of society. There is increasingly wider access to and application of this powerful resource. In this setup, therefore, there is bound to be winners and losers, costs and benefits because information empowers those who have it but it also disenfranchises those who do not have it. Wealth and power flow to the information rich, those who create and use ICT successfully. They are primarily the well-educated citizens of the industrialized world. The information poor, both in industrialized countries and in the developing world, are falling further behind.
What Is Business-to-Consumer E-commerce?

Andam (2003) notes that business-to-consumer e-commerce between companies and consumers involves customers gathering information, purchasing physical goods (i.e., tangibles such as books or consumer products) or information goods (or good of electronic material or digitized content, such as software, or e-books); and, for information goods, receiving products over an electronic network. It is the second largest and the earliest form of e-commerce. Its origins can be traced to online retailing companies such as Amazon.com, Drugstore.com, Beyond.com. The more common applications of this type of e-commerce are in the areas of purchasing products and information, and personal finance management, which pertain to the management of personal investments and finances with the use of online banking tools.

What is Business-to-Business E-commerce?

According to Andam (ibid.), business-to-business e-commerce is simply defined as e-commerce between companies. This is the type of e-commerce that deals with relationships between and among businesses. About 80% of e-commerce is of this type, and most experts predict that business-to-business commerce will continue to grow faster than the business-to-consumer segment. The business-to-business market has two primary components: e-rastructure and e-markets. E-rastructure is the architecture of business-to-business which primarily consists of the following:

a) Logistics-transportation, warehousing and distribution (e.g., Procter and Gamble);

b) application service providers-deployment, hosting and management of packaged software from a central facility (e.g., Oracle);

c) outsourcing of functions in the process of e-commerce, such as Web-hosting, security and customer care solutions (e.g., outsourcing providers such as eShare, NetSales);

d) auction solutions software for the operation and maintenance of real-time auctions in the Internet (e.g., Moai Technologies and OpenSite Technologies);

e) content management software for the facilitation of Web site content management and delivery (e.g., Interwoven and ProcureNet); and

f) web-based commerce enablers (e.g., Commerce One, a browser-based, XML enabled purchasing automation software).

Ethics in E-Commerce

Ethics is an important element in all aspects of computing, but proves to be a real problem in the development and delivery of electronic commerce systems. There are many aspects of ethics that can affect electronic commerce systems, but perhaps the most notable and worrying to both consumers and developers is that of trust (Hamelink2000). The following sub-section looks into the issues that emerge in e-commerce pertaining to morality.

Issues in Business-to-Business E-commerce

In general, new technology brings benefits and risks and new challenges for human governance (Hamelink 2000). The advent of e-commerce brings with it a host of ethical issues surrounding customer privacy, risk, security and reliability. Sison and Fontrodona (2005) say that basically, the ethical difficulties associate with e-commerce revolve around three issues: privacy and identity, both with reference to the human subject involved in the transaction, and transaction non-refutability. In the same vein, (Nardal and Sahin 2011) list four issues, namely: security, reliability, non-deception and privacy in their exploration of ethical issues in e-commerce.

Privacy

The issue of privacy has received much attention, particularly in the developed countries. Technology has evolved to the point at which detailed, comprehensive profiles of individuals can
be created and disseminated at unprecedented levels. Technology has substantially altered the relationship between customers and merchants, and tipped the balance in favour of online merchants’ commercial interest versus the customers’ privacy interest. This change leaves online consumers particularly vulnerable, subject to harm, and their right to privacy compromised (Kelly and Rowland 2000). Harris and Spence (2002), confirm this observation by claiming that consideration of the ethics of e-business has tended to focus on areas relating to the fragility of information collected and held electronically and transferred via computer-mediated communication. These include privacy of information about individuals, accuracy of information, ownership of information and intellectual property and accessibility of information held, views that are confirmed by (Mason 1986 and Turban et al. 2000). Indeed, a brief observation of the practices of marketing on the internet show that some firms implement aggressive actions such as pop-ups, deceiving banners and hyperlinks and other forms of intrusive mechanisms which impinge on personal privacy. As technology moves from desk-based PC applications to mobile communications, there is potential to become even more intrusive, with the possibility of local tracking (within a 50 metre radius of a food or retail outlet) (Gauzent and Ranchod 2002).

Security

In addition to privacy concerns, the issues of security are well known worldwide as a major barrier to shopping online. One aspect of security relates to the potential technological sources of errors and security gaps which govern e-commerce transactions (Grabner-Kraeuter 2002). The smooth and secure processing of an online transaction depends on the functioning of hardware and software, as well as the cryptographic protocols that are used. The other aspect of security concerns is information security, which, when lacks, results in data theft and file corruption, and access to personal and confidential information. According to (Aljifri, Pons and Collins 2003), in the context of developing countries, security has been singled out as the most important issue in the growth of e-commerce.

Information security means protecting information and information systems from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, disruption, modification, perusal, inspection, recording or destruction. The terms information security, computer security, and information assurance are frequently incorrectly used interchangeably (Aljifri, Pons and Collins 2003). These fields are related and often share the common goals of protecting the confidentiality, integrity and availability of information. However, there are some subtle differences between them. Information security is concerned with the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data regardless of the form the data may take: electronic, print, or other forms (Aljifri, Pons and Collins 2003).

Security has long been a topic of ethical debate: is it better to protect the common good of the community or rather should we safeguard the rights of the individual?. As an ever increasing amount of people connect to the internet and more and more personal data is available online, there is susceptibility to identity theft, cyber crimes and computer hacking. This also leads to the question of who has the right to regulate the internet in the interest of security.

Business-to-Business Ethical Issues

Issues dealt with so far have been focusing on cases related to business to consumer cases. According to Harris and Spence (2002), the bulk of e-commerce literature and perspectives focus very much on the individual consumer and disregard the significant area of electronic commerce that is business-to-business. In the business-to-business case, privacy-based issues around information control are less critical at the personal level. By looking at a business-to-business case, they identify the moral precepts relevant to the case which may form a basis for further consideration of ethics in this area. These relate to freedom of choice, transparency, and facilitating fraud (ethical/illegal activities of others).

Job Security
Harris and Spence (2002) explore the ethics of business-to-business electronic commerce, with a focus on the banking sector, on the positive side of harnessing information technology to facilitate e-commerce. According to them, there is reduction of costs in business-to-business e-commerce which means that organizations can improve service and potentially generate more profits for shareholders and job security for employees. On the other hand, job losses are the means by which costs are cut and this has social implications for those in the firing line. The displacement of job opportunities away from face-to-face and back-office service roles to information system professionals is a common feature of the electronic commerce revolution (Turban et al. 2000).

**Transparency**

As a corollary to the issue of the restrictions in customer’s choice, it is in this respect that transparency is so critical for ethical e-banking and e-commerce. Cyberspace offers fantastic opportunities for disguise. (Rogerson 1999) sees this as a poly that can be used for overcoming prejudices but also for misleading either customer or supplier as to who you are and what you are offering. Clearly, outright fraudulent activities are to be condemned, but how far is it ethically acceptable for electronic activities to convey ambiguously, by hint or absence of clarification? What is it offering they are offering? Harris and Spence (2002) explore a normative theory of ethics called “Discourse Ethics”, as expounded by Appel (1976) and Habermas (1992) (both cited in Harris and Spence), to highlight the ethical and moral problem in transparency issues, full, open discussion including all those who are connected in any way to a decision and as such is a theory of real communication. It focuses on the reaching of a consensus by a process of argumentation.

**Freedom of Information**

Freedom of information that is the freedom of speech as well as the freedom to seek, obtain and impart information brings up the question of who or what has the jurisdiction in cyberspace. The right of freedom of information is commonly subject to limitations dependent upon the country, society and culture concerned. Generally, it is said there are three standpoints on the issue as it relates to the internet. Firstly, is the argument that the internet is a form of media, put out and accessed by citizens of governments and therefore should be regulated by each individual government within the borders of their respective jurisdictions; secondly, is that, Governments of the Industrial World have no sovereignty over the internet. (Bowman 1976) and a third party believes that the internet supersedes all tangible borders such as the borders of countries; thus, authority should be given to an international body since what is legal in one country may be against the law in the other.

**The Facilitation of Fraudulent Activities by Others**

The position of fraudulent activity on the ethical scale cannot be debated. It is wrong and illegal. “What about the facilitating of fraudulent activity?” Harris and Spence (2002) ask. How much responsibility do businesses have to prevent their product and services being used in the pursuit of illegal activity? According to the authors, the selling and marketing of handguns, emphasizing the fact that the grip does not reveal fingerprints, has been questioned in ethical terms (Brenkert 2000) in the United States of America, and the Swiss banking system of confidentiality has repeatedly been challenged when criminal investigations are underway. The existence of businesses is by societal permission and any business organization which acts contrary to societal values or which harms society in any way has violated its raison d’ etre. Perspectives that ‘the business of business is to maximize profit’ are no longer acceptable in the light of limited government power to deal with the global welfare issues of which business is an inherent part. Thus, such facilitation of money laundering or fraudulent activities for client businesses is completely wrong and ethically incorrect. Social contract perspectives on new roles and responsibilities of business organizations encourage responsibility for actions and consequences in the business-to-business and business-to-consumer contexts.
Intellectual Property Rights

The ever-increasing speed of the internet and the emergence of compression technology such as mp3 has opened the doors to peer-to-peer file sharing—a technology that allows users to anonymously transfer files to each other. Much of it, however, is copyrighted music and illegal transfer to other users. People now transfer music files that are supposed to be copy protected (Armstrong et al. 1990). Proponents of unrestricted file sharing point out how file sharing has given people broader and faster access to media; how it has increased exposure to new artists; and how it has reduced the costs of transferring media and has less environmental damage. Supporters of restrictions on file sharing argue that we must protect the income of our artists and other people who work to create our media. This argument is partially answered by pointing to the small proportion of money artists receive from the legitimate sale of media. A similar debate also exists over intellectual property rights in respect of software ownership. The two opposing views are for closed source software distributed under restrictive licenses or for free and open source software (Freeman 2004). The argument can be made that restrictions are required because companies would not invest weeks and months in development if there is no incentive for revenue generated from sales and licensing fees. Proponents for open source believe that all programmes should be available to anyone who wants to study them.

Accessibility, Censorship and Filtering

Accessibility, censorship and filtering bring up many ethical issues that have several branches in cyber ethics. Many questions have arisen which continue to challenge our understanding of privacy, security and our participation in society. Throughout the centuries, mechanisms have been constructed in the name of protection and security. Today, the applications are in the form of software that filters domains and content so that they may not be easily accessed or obtained without elaborate circumvention or on a personal and business level through free-content software. Internet censorship and filtering are used to control or suppress the publishing or accessing of information. The legal issues are similar to offline censorship and filtering. The same arguments that apply to offline censorship and filtering apply to online censorship and filtering; whether people are better off with free access to information or should be protected from what is considered by a governing body as harmful, indecent or illicit (Richard 2006). The fear of access by minors drives much of the concern and many online advocate groups have sprung up to raise awareness and of controlling the accessibility of minors to the internet. Censorship and filtering occurs on small to large scale, whether it be a company restricting their employees’ access to cyberspace by blocking certain websites which are deemed as relevant to personal usage and therefore damaging to productivity or on a large scale where a government creates large firewalls which censor and filter access to certain information available online frequently from outside their country to their citizens and anyone within their borders (Bellizzi and Hasty 2003). One of the most famous examples of a country controlling access is the Golden Shield Project, also referred to as the Great Firewall of China, a censorship and surveillance project set up and operated by the People’s Republic of China. University of Zimbabwe used to restrict its employees from accessing the yahoo mail website during working hours. In Zimbabwe the Directors of an internet service provider have been accused of transmitting protected information to foreign countries.

Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics

The Computer Ethics Institute, a non-profit organization whose mission is to advance technology by ethical means, lists the following ethical values, as defined in 1992, as a guide to computer ethics:
1. Thou shalt not use computers to harm other people.
2. Thou shalt not interfere with other people’s computer work.
3. Thou shalt not snoop around in other people’s computer files.
4. Thou shalt not use a computer to steal.
5. Thou shalt not use a computer to bear false witness.
6. Thou shalt not copy or use proprietary software for which you have not paid.
7. Thou shalt not use other people’s computer resources without authorization or proper compensation.
8. Thou shalt not appropriate other people’s intellectual output.
9. Thou shalt think about the social consequences of the program you are writing or the system you are designing.
10. Thou shalt always use a computer in ways that ensure consideration and respect for your fellow humans (http://www.Computerethics.org/images/The Ten Commandments of Computer Ethics.)

The internet knows no geographical boundaries or national or cultural lines. While on it, we interact with people from different parts of the world, with different values and beliefs. Apart from laws to regulate the on-goings of the internet, its users also need to have a certain amount of responsibility and etiquette while using it. This does not only apply to internet use, but also to general use of computer resources, hardware and software. It is impossible to formulate laws to enforce all sorts of behaviour acceptable to society. Instead, society depends on ethics to build awareness of socially accepted behaviour (Bartlett and Ghoshal 1989). Ethics are objective unlike laws; they cannot be forced on individuals. In fact, different individuals may have different ethical beliefs. The point, however, is that some sort of social standard needs to be set with regard to the use of computer resources. Unlike laws, ethics can be modified to suit the situation much more easily. Thus, it is the responsibility of groups, companies, organizations, service providers, and even countries to establish codes of ethical behaviour that people should strive to achieve and live by. In a utopian world, only ethics would be enough to have society function smoothly.

**Conclusion**

By its very nature, marketing ethics is controversial, and there is no universally accepted approach for resolving questions. Ethical issues address a problem, situation, or opportunity that requires an individual, group, or organization to choose among several actions that must be evaluated as right or wrong (Ferrell 2005). The organization and stakeholders define marketing ethical issues that must be identified and resolved to build trust and effective relationships with stakeholders. Because marketing ethics sometimes deals with subjective moral choices, this requires decisions about the moral standards to apply and the definition of ethics issues (Bartel 1967). However, many groups in society, including government, are defining ethical and legal issues and proactive approaches to deal with these issues. For example, millions of blogs or personal web logs exist on the internet without any formal code of ethics or regulation. Many firms, such as Audi, have their own blogs with many stakeholders requesting the formation of an ethics committee to create unified standards (Bellizzi and Hasty 2003).

Organisations are being asked to prevent and control misconduct by implementing ethical compliance programs. Ethics brings many rewards to organizations that nurture it; but managing ethics requires activity and attention on several levels complying with the law, setting ethical standards, and dealing with the complex decisions related to trade-offs between the bottom line and ethical conduct. Computer technology has revolutionized the world. It has removed restrictions of geographical proximity in communication and business. However, with every
great invention, also come its follies. Given the kind and amount of information stored on computer systems that travel over networks, there came the need for computer security. With the development of security for computers, came the need for a legal system to prosecute perpetrators (Bowman 1976). The limitations of the law brought the need for ethics. The legal system is an integral part of society. However, it has its limitations, but nevertheless it plays a vital part in the upholding of a secure computing infrastructure. It is important that security administrators understand the support they have from the legal system in order to adequately protect their computer systems. At the same time, it is important that companies develop healthy computer ethics to minimize intrusions from within. It is a well-known fact that most instances of computer crime occur from the inside; and thus, creating a culture of ethical computer behaviour is a vital deterrent to underhand computer-related activities.

References


Promoting Carbon Sequestration through Participatory Land Use Planning by Resource Poor Farmers: A Case Study in Arid Communal Areas of Zimbabwe

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Abstract
The carbon sequestration study was done in soils in Tagwira village, Mwenezi District, Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe using participatory approaches. Results indicated that 14% of farmers practice reduced tillage farming, while (88%) practice residue mulching in their gardens. Only 4.7% use cover crops while 24% have poorly maintained woodlots. No energy crops are grown in the village; but 88% of the farmers practice crop rotation. Action plans were produced indicating community plans for improved food security. A sustainable utilisation of existing resource base to promote carbon storage in soil is required. This is the initial survey on carbon sequestration through proper land management. Financial support is required to analyse amount of carbon in the soil to enable farmers to appreciate benefits derived. This will enable easier adoption of the technologies by other farmers.

Key words: Carbon sequestration, land management, participatory rural appraisal

Introduction
Communal areas of Zimbabwe are characterized by low and erratic rainfalls, high temperatures, and low soil organic matter content, leading to poor agricultural productivity and hence persistent food insecurity. Soil moisture conservation is of paramount importance to increase productivity of such soils and increasing or maintaining high organic matter content of communal soils decreases soil moisture loss. Additional benefits are improved structure of soil, water infiltration, reduced run-off and soil erosion while improving nitrogen cycling. These result in increased productivity, if better management is put in place.

Since carbon sequestration requires the participation of communities, there is need for research to focus on “low cost” carbon sequestration technologies that could offer solutions to challenges facing resource poor farmers, most of whom are located in arid communal areas of Zimbabwe. Agricultural practices that sequester soil carbon must enhance the livelihoods of the smallholder farmer for them to be accepted and adopted (Gonzalez et al. 2008; FAOa 2001). The potential for carbon sequestration in dry areas is quite significant (FAO 2001b), hence the need for land use planners and other stakeholders in these areas to come up with land management technologies that encourage the build up of organic matter in soils. Participatory land use planning is critical in the whole process since the farmer is the key to implementation, hence the need to base carbon sequestration strategies on practical farming skills, observation, personal experience and intuition.

In semi-arid areas of Zimbabwe, there is little knowledge available to farmers on carbon sequestration and its importance on climate change. Community-based land use planning has a

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critical role to play in sustainable natural resources management. Rural people are now regarded as shapers of their own development and therefore agricultural extension agents and other government agencies are now regarded as facilitators of development through creating an appropriate environment for a two-way exchange of ideas between farmers, researchers and extension officers. The concept is called Participatory Extension Approaches (PEA). In Zimbabwe, the PEA concept has been successfully tried and tested in Masvingo Province to improve community participation in developmental work, research and extension. Such approaches are important in carbon sequestration projects as most rural farmers tend to concentrate on yields.

The objectives of this paper are to outline the community-based land use planning process as a local approach to sustainable natural resource management that was carried out in Tagwira village of Mwenezi District and link up participatory efforts and outputs with a sustained and improved biophysical environment, including processes of carbon sequestration and its influence on climate change in semi-arid areas.

1. Materials and Methods

The study was done in Tagwira Village Ward 4 in Mwenezi District Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe. The total village area is about 540 hectares. Soils have been classified as Fersiallitic soils (5G) derived from granite (Thompson 1965). The village is located in agro-ecological region V with mean annual rainfall < 500 mm (Anderson et al. 1993; Vincent and Thomas 1960). The region is therefore regarded as semi-arid (Vincent and Thomas 1960). The best farming system is livestock production, which can be intensified to some extent by production of drought-resistant fodder crops. However, farmers in the area also grow maize that is not regarded as drought tolerant as they tend to get fairly good yields twice in every five years (Jones et al. 1987).

Vegetation in the area is influenced by rainfall, which in turn determines agro-ecological region. Vegetation Physiognomy is mainly Tree Bush Savannah (TBS) on uplands and higher ground dominated by Combretum and Acacia species while Bush Savannah (BS) is mainly found on low lying areas and drainage lines dominated by Colophospermum mopane and Acacia species in combination with a continuous and discontinuous cover of annual grasses and herb species. In the village, a total of about 338 hectares of land is under dry land crops annually. The remaining area, about 202 hectares, is taken up by grazing, homesteads, rivers, dams and land of no agricultural value. From the interview, the total village population is about 252 people. This gives a population density of about 2.1 hectares per person. This population is based on a total of 42 families in the village. Given the land cultivated at the moment, this transforms into an average of 8 hectares per family. The total cattle population in the village is about 76 cattle. This is owned by only 16 families, of which the highest has 13 cattle. There was an opportunity to increase the herd of cattle especially during the (2000/2001) season owing to the good vegetation resulting from the heavy rains. The carrying capacity of the village could be tripled because herbage quantity was not limiting.

The process involved the Provincial and District team members together with the Tagwira community at every stage. The main players were the Agriculture Rural and Extension Services (Agritex) and Ministry of Employment Creation and National Affairs (MNAEC), while at district level, the complement also included the Rural District Council (RDC), Veterinary (VET) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The planning process largely consisted of Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) as initial data collection strategies and tools coupled with technical surveys, analysis of village data and a series of validation meetings with community as well as informal discussions and confirmatory field surveys.

2. Technical Survey Procedures

The core team of the community organised meetings and prepared for the physical boundary verification with kraal heads. The whole team, including adjacent kraal heads, walked the boundary and confirmed the absence of disputes. This process led to the demarcation of Tagwira village area on sketch maps drawn by the community in the presence of their neighbours.
A series of participatory field surveys were planned for the village. These surveys included a group of knowledgeable and willing villagers chosen by the villagers themselves to team up with planners. For the technical field surveys, the land systems approach was adopted as a methodology to link the community resource maps with technical ones for land use planning. The Land Systems approach was selected for the field surveys because it is closely linked to indigenous knowledge systems.

Initially, a panchromatic air photo coverage at a 1: 25 000 scale for the village was obtained and prepared for stereo viewing. The Land System was delineated through an aerial photo interpretation as small relief units with rather homogeneous slopes and relative relief; vegetation and drainage patterns; and land use. A transect across different land units was then planned for a ground truthing program so as to cover as much variability of natural resources as was possible.

Land Systems as units of relief (geomorphological divisions) commonly of the order of 100 m to 5000 m in extent were used as bases for identifying different natural areas occurring in the village area.

A preliminary map was then made by overlapping the analyzed photographs showing different landforms and facets. Landform boundaries were later transcribed on accurate and controlled base maps produced from 1:50 000 topographic maps. It may not be necessary to use air photo mosaics because the accuracy of mapping to be achieved and the nature of most development envisaged in communal areas would not justify the additional cost of controlled mosaics. A technical natural resources map that correlated well with the community sketch map was then produced. More field surveys were done using the Land Systems framework to develop detailed inventories of landscape, topography, soils, vegetation types and variability, water supply, erosion intensity and development potential along the transects. In addition, at this stage, possible technical options or development interventions were identified for each landform through informal discussions with community representatives. Expert surveys were also done for soil profile characteristics and vegetation physiognomy and species composition as well as site condition. Some representative soil samples were collected from certain landform sites for a more detailed inspection, analyses, interpretation and characterisation. Specifically the community representatives dwelt on providing local names or classification of resources for the benefit of villagers.

Surveys on farming techniques were also done to get the various techniques practiced by the farmers (see Table 3 for results). This was followed by a validation workshop where community representatives made presentations about their situations and aspirations, including possible development options in the village.

A reconstruction of the main planning steps that were followed is shown in the form of the Tagwira planning procedure (Fig. 1). The process is depicted in a stepwise manner although, in reality, there were some consultations in between, rescheduled meetings and repeat sessions. The presentation merely shows the distinct stages without which the process may not have produced meaningful results. The process seemed to have been enhanced by the PRAs that had been conducted in the village. The level of awareness of the village community about development programmes was high and participation very good. However, the process is admittedly slow and can be made difficult with a non-cohesive community.
Step 1 - Social Mobilization
Government agencies entering community identification of local organizations
Report back meetings with community Creating awareness
Needs and problem identification

Step 2 - Action Planning
Ranking of needs and problems Searching for solutions
Mandating of the local institutions and action planning.

Fig. 1. An Overview of the Tagwira Village Planning Procedure

3. Results
The summary of proposed options/activities that were identified by the community is shown in Table 1, while the implementation framework is shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Proposed activities and community assessment/ranking on the impacts of such activities on poverty alleviation, food security, conservation and community empowerment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Impact on</th>
<th>Poverty alleviation</th>
<th>Food security</th>
<th>Conservation</th>
<th>Community empowerment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle restocking</td>
<td>######</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fencing arable land</td>
<td>###</td>
<td>####</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establishment of boreholes and more dams</td>
<td>#######</td>
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<td>######</td>
<td>#######</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gully control</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poultry production</td>
<td>#######</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Capentry and utilization of existing tree resources</td>
<td>###</td>
<td>###</td>
<td>###</td>
<td>#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digging infiltration pits</td>
<td>###</td>
<td>###</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. Proposed community action programme/framework for Tagwira village

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Responsible institution</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle restocking</td>
<td>Explain mechanics of program</td>
<td>Neshuro/Tagwira</td>
<td>Agritex</td>
<td>June–Aug</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree on community contribution</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vet</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Draw up list of beneficiaries</td>
<td></td>
<td>National Affairs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source funding</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitate identification and allocation of cattle</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training on “imported” cattle handling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fencing arable land</td>
<td>Agree on fencing strategy</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>Agritex</td>
<td>June–Nov</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree on community contribution</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Calculate fencing costs</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Produce fencing diagrams</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Source funding</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase fencing material</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Monitor fencing process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing dams and sinking boreholes</td>
<td>Research on appropriate methods</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>Agritex</td>
<td>June–July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigating prospects of raising dam walls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DR&amp;SS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigating underground water resources</td>
<td>Carry out necessary investigations</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>Agritex–Gutu</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gully control</td>
<td>Research to establish source of water and quantities in a wetland with a</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>Department of Water</td>
<td>October</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>shallow well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Document appropriate method of control</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>Agritex–Gutu/Munodawafia</td>
<td>June–Sept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitor control activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Detailed investigation on gully formation</td>
<td>Research about development of the gully erosion</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>DR&amp;SS</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>processes and control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agritex</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gutu/Munodawafia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of indigenous trees (Mukamba and Mupfura)</td>
<td>Elaboration of possible production processes and product identification</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>Forestry Commission</td>
<td>June–May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify possible partnership villages or wards</td>
<td></td>
<td>RDC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Liaise with RDC for harvesting authority</td>
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<td>NRB</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Develop Training programs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mobilise resources for implementation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identify working groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitate establishment of committees</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Land-Based Options</td>
<td>Carry out market surveys</td>
<td>Tagwira</td>
<td>National Affairs</td>
<td>June–May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving Clubs</td>
<td>Establish Training needs</td>
<td></td>
<td>RDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poultry production</td>
<td>Document working proposals</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Soap Making</td>
<td>Carry out relevant training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tanning of skins</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Carpentry etc.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The details from this output then formed the basis for all thinking on development within the village. Research and extension programmes together with community action plans were based on this product. Villagers felt that they had to take on board these projects and programmes for them to enhance food security through increased productivity. It was also interesting to note that farmers understood the need to address the issue of livestock restocking as a matter of priority as they pointed out that the only way they could achieve high levels of productivity was through manuring and timely planting. Addition of organic matter leads to high soil productivity (Johnston 1991) implying more crop residues. Research has also shown that increased organic matter in soils increases the water holding capacity of soils (Zorita et al. 1999). If the crop residue is left in the field, this will mean higher levels of soil organic matter. Lotter et al. (2003) found that organic farming systems have higher yields in drought years compared to conventional systems, a situation that could be exploited in semi-arid areas.

Issues of strengthening community institutions were a major activity for each option. It was agreed that National Affairs would play an important training and mobilising role for group formation, selection of committees and further development of business options.

Only a few farmers practiced reduced tillage operations. Winter ploughing is done in May/June–July after harvesting. When the rainy season begins in November/December, these farmers make ridges followed by planting. Weed removal is done using cultivators. However, this, in most cases, is linked to availability of draft power as it was observed that those farmers who were regarded as the well-to-do ones still practice conventional tillage systems. From our interviews, it was also noted that farmers who do direct planting on ridges having done winter ploughing had slightly higher yields than those practicing conventional tillage systems. Reduced tillage systems reduces breakdown of organic matter and loss of carbon as carbon dioxide (Curtin et al. 2000). This is attributed to minimum soil disturbances (Corbeels et al. 2004). Reduced tillage in combination with residue mulching modifies the soil surface properties which might reduce loss of water (Dimanche and Hoogwoed 2002). This will also increase the length of the growing period. This is critical since organic carbon content is a function of length of growing season (Batjes 2004).

The majority (88%) of the farmers in the village practice residue mulching in their gardens. However, when it comes to arable fields, only 4.7% practice this technology. Out of the 42 farmers in the village, 24% have woodlots each covering an area of 0.5 hectares but these are poorly maintained and the majority (88%) practice crop rotation (Table 3). The main crops grown are maize, sorghum, groundnuts, and pearl millet. It was noted that the rotation system did not include legumes in all cases as some farmers had permanent fields in which they grew either sorghum pearl millet or groundnuts with maize grown in lowland areas. It has been documented that crop rotation systems in which legumes are included will lead to higher soil organic matter and increased yield. This will mean more residues are left on the surface. Farmers therefore need to be encouraged to include legumes which can fix nitrogen in the soil.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farming technique</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage of farmers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduced tillage</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residue mulching (gardens)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover crops (arable fields)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlots</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crop rotation</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only 38% of the farmers in the village own cattle. This translates to about 5 cattle per farmer. Svwotwa (2001) quoting Whiringwiri (1997) reported cattle ownership ranging from 50 – 60% at national level in Zimbabwe. Farmers attributed the lower ownership figure to the 1991–2 drought that hit Zimbabwe and the whole of Southern Africa. Cattle play a critical role in crop production in the communal areas. Farmers who own cattle produce more yield than those with no cattle. Cattle owners generally achieve higher yields through timely operations and manure application (Prasad et al. 1992). Topography and seasonal changes affect grazing patterns in the village. During the cropping/rainfall season, grazing is more concentrated in the uplands, hills and foothills; while in winter/after harvesting, cattle graze in the cropping fields and vleis. These are typical grazing patterns of Zimbabwe communal areas. However, if there is no clear boundary demarcation for grazing, the livestock tend to overgraze other areas which are considered strategic in the cropping season. This exposes most of the soil to erosion and degradation (Allsopp 1999). This will lead to less productivity, thereby lowering the potential of the soil to sequester carbon. Seasonal grazing leads to carbon sequestration.

There is a trend in grazing patterns in the village depending on the season. Wetlands and arable fields are utilised for winter grazing while the uplands and hilltops are grazed during the summer season.

**Discussion**

There is need to make on farm trials on the benefits of reduced tillage operations. These trials have to look at moisture dynamics, soil carbon dynamics and crop yields obtained. Farmers in Tagwira are located in an arid environment in which reduced tillage systems could play an important role in moisture conservation. Wright et al. (2008) argued that the benefits of reduced tillage included enhanced carbon sequestration coupled with lower fertilizer requirements. This is very important when taking into consideration that these farmers are generally poor and cannot afford the costs of inorganic fertilizers. However, the benefits or lack of them have to be evaluated over a long period as climate variability has a key role in the benefits derived from carbon sequestration (Bremer et al. 2008).

Results from both PRA and technical surveys revealed that local people can detect and map environmental variability as attributed to variation in factors such as landforms, topography, vegetation, climate, soils and moisture regime. This is called macro variability that is predictable as opposed to random or stochastic, which is difficult to detect. However, local villagers, to some extent, could detect this (random) variability in the village through their local knowledge of vegetation species— soil relationships, effects of soil moisture, and effect of soil animals like termites that influence soil properties.

The macro variability forms a cyclic land use pattern that allows upland areas, hills and kopjes to be utilized for summer grazing while arable fields and lowlands are used for winter grazing. The main crop residue used is that of maize. Farmers with cattle prefer harvesting the stover and storing them for later use. However, farmers who do not own cattle leave their stover in the field hoping that when cattle graze, they will drop cow dung in the fields and enhance soil fertility. In some cases, the residue left in the field is burnt during land preparation. Similar trends on residue management in Zimbabwe were reported by Sibanda (1986). Farmers feed these residues without any form of modification or treatment. Smith et al (1989) reported increase intake and digestibility of stover after treatment. Treatment of the residue could increase the intake and digestibility so that farmers benefit from this. This could add value to the residues— leading to high economic demand which in a way would mean those farmers who do not own cattle will sell their residue to those with animals, thereby avoiding burning of residue in the field concomitant emission of more carbon to the atmosphere.

The community-based approach to rural development seems the best way by which AGRITEX can develop its team approach, while staff will have realistic bases for programme plans.
Inclusion of other institutions results in more than just an agricultural plan. This plan is acceptable to the community as they literally dictated what to include in it. Projects implemented out of the proposed interventions can be prioritised according to funding, upon further development of the project ideas by the District team.

The actual planning process involved a series of meetings with Tagwira community, their leadership, informal consultations, field surveys, workshops and interaction with individual farmers. A closer relationship with the community was envisaged to bring about more openness, as well as further thinking around project ideas developed during PRAs.

This planning process is a clear perception of the existing natural resources by the community. Community-based land use planning is facilitated by a situation where villagers feel that they can contribute to the planning process. Development of technical models or methodologies that best predict villagers’ perceptions of existing natural resources and their potential will therefore be most welcome. This can be achieved by linking indigenous knowledge with technical land use planning systems such as land systems approaches that identify different landforms types and natural resources that can be found and describe them according to their natural attributes, for example, qualities and characteristics of slope, soil, vegetation, water supply, and others.

There is need for a broad planning team so that non agricultural options including issues of land degradation and climate change are adequately addressed. There seems to be need for PRAs before land use planning since the level of community awareness will have been enhanced. There is a realistic opportunity to promote teamwork in natural resources management through land use planning. An opportunity does exist for all provincial specialists to go through the process for team building purposes as well as to give scope to others to identify their activities. The need for a technical system/framework in arriving at communal area development option has been shown clearly. This plan has 100% support from the Tagwira community largely because it allowed them to say what they wanted.

Linkages with PRAs were clear and this improved the community level of awareness about development issues and impacts of climate change, which would need to be mitigated in the village. They would hold their own preparatory meetings before the one with the technical team. They also admitted that the option on utilisation of the *Afzelia quanzensis* (mukamba tree) and fencing of arable land could not have surfaced during PRAs. However, the cattle restocking option still remained the priority option even through land use planning. One cannot doubt the farmer levels of confidence about their situation now at the end of this planning process.

A number of challenges were identified such as the wisdom of targeting a village as the planning unit rather than a ward. Two villages or wards may also need to be cosidered to increase coverage. The suggestion, however, is for every planning unit to be a relatively cohesive unit where community behavior can positively allow development processes to take place.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

It was concluded that development that encourages participatory approaches to design natural resources management interventions based on local level knowledge and analysis in dry areas is central to efficient cycling of energy and resources in a sustainable way. For this process to be successful, it requires technical support that is enabling rather than prescriptive and natural resources management partners that capitalise upon local innovation and knowledge.

There is high potential for promoting carbon sequestration in arid communal areas of Zimbabwe in view of the farmers' current constraints and challenges. However, this needs high financial and technological investments from outside in order for the community to put their action plans into activities. This is especially so when one considers the costs related to cattle restocking, dam and borehole construction and fencing both the arable and grazing lands.

It is also critical to note that the process covered only two phases of the PEA project cycle. There is need to cover the implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases, especially having on-
farm trials. This would give farmers an opportunity to share experiences and ideas as some farmers believe in the notion that "knowledge is like fire, you get it from others". This is the only way the laggards can adopt some of the technologies. However, there is need for a holistic approach in looking at the benefits of carbon sequestration instead of looking at soil fertility alone.

Acknowledgements

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References


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<th>Institutions</th>
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<td>US$100.00</td>
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<td>US$ 5.00</td>
<td>US$50.00</td>
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