



ONE IN SEVEN PEOPLE GO TO BED HUNGRY EVERY DAY – GROW WITH US AND CHANGE THIS!

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The facts about land grabbing

There’s a new global rush for land. Governments and investors are rushing to buy agricultural land outside their own borders to secure future food supplies or simply as an investment. In poorer countries the size and scale of this phenomenon is breathtaking. Oxfam’s research has found that more than 83.2 million hectares of land — an area almost twice the size of Australia’s agricultural land¹ — has been bought or leased in developing countries over the last four or so years.

This land is often sold as “unused” despite it actually being used by small-scale farmers to grow food for themselves and their communities. These farmers, many of whom are women, are often violently evicted from the land and left with no way of growing food for their families or to sustain themselves.

To make matters worse, the deals are characterised by a lack of transparency. Little is known about how much is actually paid for the land (although reports of \$1 per hectare are common) and our report, *Land and Power*, tells of farmers who didn’t even know their land had been targeted until the bulldozers arrived. But it doesn’t have to be this way.

In Papua New Guinea, Oxfam has been supporting communities which have lost their lands to logging and palm oil investors. One community went all the way to PNG’s National Court, which granted a court order in May 2012 halting logging. We must ensure the land and water rights of poor people are protected. We can do this by pressuring government and corporations to stop land grabs, and ensuring women and other farmers have secure tenure over their land and water resources.



Small-scale farmers face many challenges, from climate change to land grabbing.

Photo: Rodney Dekker/OxfamAUS

¹ According to the 2000-2002 National Land and Water Resources Audit theme assessment, Australia’s dryland and irrigated agricultural land is 42,481.1 ha. See <http://www.anra.gov.au/topics/land/landuse/index.html>