



DEBATE

Jean-Yves Carfantan, Senior Consultant, AgroBrasConsult

This is therefore what has been said about the context. We will now throw the floor open for comments and questions on this specific topic.

Landry Signé, Founding Chairman of the Global Network for Africa's Prosperity

Could you elaborate on the comprehensive agricultural programmes that you highlighted and how India and other Asian countries are helping Africa through the African incentives rather than older programmes and older goals?

Suresh Kumar, Chief Editor of Africaindia.org

I am sorry, but I did not understand the question.

Landry Signé, Founding Chairman of the Global Network for Africa's Prosperity

I would like you to elaborate more on the comprehensive African agricultural programmes and how India, Japan and other Asian countries are contributing to these programmes, which are the key programmes started by the new partnership for African development, which was founded in 2011, with the idea of ownership of the agricultural future of Africa.

Suresh Kumar, Chief Editor of Africaindia.org

You mentioned the NABARD and the African Union. Africa Indian, along with regional communities, whether it is AU, COMESA or ECOWAS, all are agreed on regional development rather than country-specific development. This is important because when we adopt regional development in Africa, only then is it possible to have a cohesive one, because Africa does not just need agriculture; it also needs all the essential elements of its development. Let us take infrastructure, for example. Infrastructure is about better roads and railways for grains to reach at the cold store.

Turning to power generation, power generation not only requires the running of the cold store, but is also needed for irrigation purposes and the running of different machines, depending on the power. However, irrigation is particularly key and is the most important part of this. Today, diesel is used for irrigation, which is not a good thing, and it is not beneficial for the farmers in the long term. I have talked about the need for other technologies.

Overall, cohesive development through the regional communities is required and that is the only solution for a sustainable green revolution in Africa.

Hervé Koffi, Country Manager, General Electric Global Growth, Abidjan



The Ivory Coast is the biggest exporter of cocoa in the world where we produce 1.7 million tonnes a year. My question is addressed to Mr Meksem. You mentioned the difference in the history and there is one key issue that comes from history that I would like to have your view on, which is the issue of the ownership of land in Africa. We have to deal with this issue in the Ivory Coast today and it is the same for Burkina Faso and all the [inaudible] countries. All these countries have this issue. I have not seen any country that has the right response to this and for me it is a key issue. If we do not deal with it, everything else is nothing and nothing will happen. I would therefore like to have your view on this issue.

Khalid Meksem, President of the University Mohammed VI

You have touched on something extremely important. If we look at the history of the ownership of land in Africa, I can give you concrete examples that are basically the same everywhere you go. If we take Morocco, for example, in the pre colonial time it used to be that people who lived on the land owned the land "individually or collectively" and there was a sustainable production system where goods were redistributed and everyone was happy. Everyone worked. It is the same for Mali and many other countries. That is how it used to be.

The colonial powers then came and began to access the most productive lands in Africa and in all countries the structure was that there was a good part of a country and a bad part of a country. The most fertile lands were annexed by the colonial powers, and by doing that, people who used to live on the land were removed from their land or assigned part of the land. Unfortunately, when the colonial powers left the first Ministers and Presidents, or even Generals sometimes, were given the lands by the colonial powers and there was a transfer of titles that was illegal, because the people who really owned the land were not given their land back. Therefore, with time and through all the repression that Africa has experienced since the colonial powers left, there has been a huge discrepancy in land ownership between the people who own many hectares of land and the majority of people who then share only a few hectares of land. In addition to the issue of collective lands

Redistributing the land will therefore be an extremely problematic issue today. I think that what Africans should therefore do is to try to develop a mechanism by which the land can be re accessed without having to go through a civil war which could come about as a result of trying to get access to land that was lost in colonial times. I wish that I had a good solution to this.

Philippe Chalmin, Professor, Paris-Dauphine University

I do not really agree with the view of the impact of colonial times in Africa. You can believe me when I say that it was quite limited. There is the very particular case of South Africa, [inaudible] knows the story because the land was in fact colonised before the arrival of the black population. Otherwise, when [inaudible] from rubber in Liberia or palm oil in the Belgian Congo there has hardly been any colonial occupation. In fact, during colonial times, in the French and English colonial areas what you had were stations that were the organisations of the marketing boards and offices, such as the Office of Niger, the caisses de stabilisation and so on.

Where I think that Khalid is perfectly right is where it is not a problem of colonisation. For example, if I take cocoa in Ivory Coast, this is not a problem of colonisation but is a kind of fight about traditional land rights. I remember when President Houphouët Boigny said that the land belonged to whoever was cultivating it. The problem there, especially in the cocoa belt, was that it was the Burkinabes who were working on the land and they did not own it. In many parts of Africa, there are traditional rights without a proper land rights system and there are no appropriate maps. In Ethiopia, for example, when massive land rights were given to Chinese companies the Government was saying that it owned the land.



Jean-Yves Carfantan, Senior Consultant, AgroBrasConsult

This is obviously an important point but if we take too long on the historical background, we will not have time to address the other very important topics that we need to address. I therefore suggest that we move on to the second part of our workshop and we can come back to the historical questions at the end, if necessary.

I will now give the floor to Dr Krishan Jindal, who will introduce the very interesting experience of NABARD in different African countries.