FOOD FOR THOUGHT
IN A WORLD WITH PLENTY OF FOOD WHY DO ONE BILLION PEOPLE NOT HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT? SHOULDN'T EVERYONE GET THEIR FAIR SHARE?

Learn and think about making food fair, and then take action. It's a chance to become an active global citizen.

Learn, think and take action with Oxfam’s Food for Thought project. Complete your wallchart as you learn.

Use the leaf templates

And when you have learnt about the food system, thought about how it could change and planned and done something yourself, share what you have learnt at www.classforchange.org

Learn | Think | Act | Share

A space for active global citizens! Class for change
Tanzania is a large country in east Africa. It has a population of over 40 million (the UK has 60 million). Most people (about 3/4) live in rural areas (in the UK less than 1/4 do). A lot of the land in Tanzania is ‘uncultivated’ (not used as farm land), with a third being national park. It is an economically less developed country, with the average income about £875 per year (the UK is about £21,000). Life expectancy is about 53 years (in the UK it is about 80). A third of people live in poverty.

**The mystery**

In 2009, the Tanzanian government decided to stop all land being sold for biofuel development. They wanted to investigate and review whether this was a good thing or not.

Why do you think they did this?

Solve the mystery!
Help required?

Look at the 12 mystery cards. You need to put them in the correct order so the story makes sense.

Think about what goes at the beginning, the middle and at the end of the story.

To help you think about what sort of information helps to set the scene, what sort of information links things together and what looks like a conclusion.

Looking at things like dates and connecting words might help.

Start off by putting them into those categories, and then decide the exact order.
**Jatropha – a biofuel**

Jatropha is a bushy plant which can be grown in very dry conditions. When the seed is crushed the oil can be used for *biodiesel*. It can be grown on poor soil. Governments in places like Europe give companies money (*subsidies*) to use it rather than *fossil fuels* because it is a *renewable* resource.

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**Land as an ‘investment’**

In 2008 people with lots of money such as banks (*investors*) saw buying land as a good way to make profit. Because oil prices were high, biofuel looked like a good alternative for energy, so the price for land to grow increased. High food prices also meant land was becoming more expensive.
An opportunity for poorer countries

Because foreign investors wanted to buy land, many less economically developed countries with a lot of land (many in Africa) could see that selling their land could bring them money. For example in 2007 Mozambique received offers to buy 110,000 km². This is more than one eighth of all the land in the country.

Sun Biofuels and Tanzania

In 2008, a company called Sun Biofuels (based in the UK) offered to buy 8,000 hectares of land in Kisarawe district, Tanzania. They will pay about £12million for this. They plan to grow plantations of Jatropha on this land to export for biofuel production, mostly in Europe. This will make them a lot of profit.
In 2008 the government in Tanzania wanted to help develop rural areas, which were very poor. The average income in these areas was about £100 per year. As Tanzania has a lot of land, the government thought selling this to large multinational companies was a good way to bring money to these areas.

Mtamba is a village in Kisaware, where Sun Biofuels wanted to buy land. 850 people live here. This was ‘village land’, which in Tanzanian law means the local people own and control it. They grow food to eat, use the swamp to collect water, and many get nearly ¾ of their income from making charcoal.
The villagers in Mtamba were happy when first told about Sun Biofuels investment. 4000 jobs in the region were promised, and compensation (money in return for the land) of £50 per hectare. They are encouraged to agree to sell the land by the District Land Officer (who works for the government).

However villagers are not given a lot of information and things are rushed. They are only given 4 days warning to meet and talk about the sale of the land. They are not sure how much land is being taken, they didn’t realise the company will own the swamp they use for water. No agreements are made in writing.
**Locals left out?**

After the sale many local people are unhappy. They can no longer collect charcoal to get money. They no longer own the swamp, there are only 1,500 new jobs and many do not have qualifications to get them. Many don't know how to claim *compensation*, and this is less than half what was agreed.

**Tanzania reviews land for biofuel**

Companies like Sun Biofuels growing biofuel to export means land cannot be used to grow food. 80% of Tanzanians depend on small areas of land to grow food. In 2009 the government decided to stop all biofuel land developments so they could decide if it had a bad effect on growing food and local people.
The ‘green gold’ rush

Since 2008 more and more companies have been buying up land, partly to grow biofuel (‘green gold’), but also because food prices are going up making land more valuable. In 2011, figures showed 227million hectares of land had been bought since 2001 (an area the size of western Europe), half of this in Africa.

Land ‘grabs’ - a fair investment?

Many organisations have noticed that very often local people are the victims of these large scale land sales by large multinational companies. In 2011 the International Land Coalition (made up of 116 organisations, including Oxfam) called these ‘land grabs’, saying they were unfair and should stop.
Sources of information

Oxfam, Briefing Paper 114 Another Inconvenient Truth (2008)
http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications

International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Biofuels, land access and rural livelihoods in Tanzania (2009)
http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/12560IIED.pdf

Oxfam, Growing a better future (2011)
http://www.oxfam.org.uk/grow

Information on countries: CIA world factbook

Information on Jatropha and Tanzania (video)
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/8410544.stm

Please note
The £9 billion global biofuel subsidies figure is based on $15billion at 2011 exchange rates. This figure is from Oxfam Briefing Paper 114 Another Inconvenient Truth (2008) p16.

All other costs are converted from dollars using 2011 exchange rates applicable at time of print.
Sun Biofuels and Tanzania (overview)

A UK company called Sun Biofuels wanted to buy 8,000 hectares of land in a part of Tanzania called Kisaware. They want to produce Jatropha, mainly to export to Europe. This will make them a lot of profit. In 2007 there was lots of money (£9 billion) given to companies to use biofuels rather than fossil fuels.

Peter Auge, general manager of Sun Biofuels says the plantation will not use land being used for growing food. He will compensate local people for the loss of land, and give them jobs tending and harvesting the plants. Also 5 per cent of its budget will be spent on things like schools.

The government view

In 2008 the Tanzanian government was very keen to sell land to multinational companies. Most of the population live in very poor rural areas where land is not used well. Many earn only £100 per year. They thought investment from multinational companies would help improve this.

The view from Mbata

Mbata village is in Kisarawe, where Sun Biofuels want to buy land. 850 people live there. They grow food, and rely on the swamp, where they collect water, and on the surrounding forests where they collect wood to make charcoal, which they sell. Many people get ¾ of their income from selling charcoal.

The villagers were happy about Sun Biofuels buying land. Mussa Mirisho who lives there said “They are giving us seeds and a market, so this is good for the villagers”.

Headquarters of Sun Biofuels, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. © Aubrey Wade/Oxfam

A bag of charcoal in Mbata. © Aubrey Wade/Oxfam

Women collecting water in the swamp, Mbata © Aubrey Wade/Oxfam
A confusing process

The villagers own the land and surroundings. They have to agree to the sale. The District Land Officer and local politician encourage the villagers to agree. The villagers are promised compensation of £50 per hectare and up to 4,000 jobs. However, nothing is put in writing. Things are a bit rushed. There is only 4 days for meetings to talk about it before the sale is agreed.

The villagers agree to the sale, but afterwards many are confused about what the deal says.

Villagers losing out?

After the sale, villagers received less than half of the compensation promised. Many were confused how to get this money. Only 1,500 jobs were created, and now the villagers don’t own the swamp or the forest which they rely on.

Saibi Mrisho (right) is preparing charcoal. He says: "I depend on charcoal making to provide for my family. We don't know our future. We don't know if they will allow us to use the forest to make charcoal. I'm worried that they won't. If this happens I won't be able to feed my family, especially if we're not employed as they've promised."

Emilia Isdori (left) collecting water says: "This water is important to me because we use it for cooking, washing clothes, bathing and drinking. It takes me 2 hours to walk to the swamp and back but it's my only option in the dry season. If they refuse us access to the water our only option will be to beg them for access."

Reviewing land sales

Because of problems like this, in 2009 the Tanzanian government decided to stop all land sales for biofuel so it could think about them a bit more. They were worried local people would not be able to produce enough food, and that their needs were being ignored.
Land ‘grabs’ overview

Figures show 227 million hectares of land had been bought between 2001 and 2011 in large land deals like the one in Tanzania. This is an area the size of western Europe. Half of this land was in Africa.

The main reason is because large multinational companies see that land makes a good investment in these countries.

This is because it is quite cheap, and can be used to grow biofuels to export for money, and biofuels use is being encouraged. Many also think the price of land will increase as more and more people need food. They can then sell the land in the future for a profit. Many governments like the Tanzanian government have been happy to help this investment, thinking it will help to develop rural areas.

If done ethically and sustainably land investment could be very important for small farmers.

Land ‘grab’

However, the United Nations committee on World Food Security recently said: “Evidence shows... large scale land investment is damaging the food security, incomes, livelihoods and environment for local people” (HLPE, July 2011, p8).

Like in Tanzania, many groups are seeing these deals are not always fair on local people. Very often they are not asked properly what they think, are not given promises in writing and do not get the correct amount of compensation (money for being moved off their land). Also a lot of this land is no longer used to make food, making it harder for countries to grow enough food for everyone.

In 2011 the International Land Coalition (made up of 116 organisations, including Oxfam) in their ‘Tirana Declaration’ called buying land in this way a land ‘grabs’, saying they were unfair and should stop.
Land sale in Mbata – the people

Imagine you are one of the following people. Think what they would think about the land sale in Mbata.

Imagine you are in a village meeting before the land sale. Are you for or against the sale? What would you say to justify this? Can you reach an agreement?

John Hangi, Kisarawe District Land Officer. He represents local people but also works for the central Tanzania government.

Peter Auge, Chief Executive Officer of Sun Biofuels Tanzania Ltd, in Dar Es Salaam (capital city). He is employed to make money for Sun Biofuels.
Professor Jumanne Maghembe, Minister for Agriculture, Food Security and Cooperatives. You are responsible for deciding how rural areas develop.

Veronica Mabuga with her sons and husband. She runs a small shop in Mbata village, selling things to local people. Many of her customers make charcoal to get money.
Tanzania Land debate

Make an argument!

What do you think about the sale?

What facts or information support you?

What do you plan to say?

Tanzania Land debate

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What do you think about the sale?

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