



Kiên Hoàng Lê

photography

:: Landgrab Tanzania ::

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Landgrab Tanzania

Lukonde Village

Text by Johana Suobodova

The Morogoro region is one of the most fertile areas in Tanzania therefore it is attracting local and foreign investors and several cases of land grabbing have been reported lately in that area. The village of Kiguni, situated in the Morogoro region is currently going through a land acquisition by a local investor.

The «Kidago Farm» has an area of 1080 hectares, it has been occupied and cultivated by local smallholder farmers for several generations. The Tanzanian legal system does not allow farmers to have formal property rights on the land, the land belonging to the government. However, they can cultivate it and collect the usufruct.

In the 80's, Kidago Farm was acquired by the Uluguru Tailors. That first acquisition already was not totally legal given that the Tanzanian law does not allow a private investor to acquire more than 50 hectares of land with-

out the consent of the local villagers. However, they did not exploit the area and let the local farmers cultivate it. In 2005, the land has been handed over to Professor Martin Shem who acquired it for speculative reasons.

Since 2005, Prof. Martin Shem is forcing the villagers out of their land and houses using violent forces and intimidation methods. The most common method he has been using is sending Maasai warriors to graze cattle on the fields of the local farmers, eating or destroying all their harvest. More violent events have also occurred, houses have been burned down and farmers trying to resist beaten up. Local police or authorities have been of no help to them probably because of bribery.

Half of the area cannot be cultivated by the local farmers anymore and the area they still can cultivate is gradually decreasing. The families that have

already been evicted from their plot are in a precarious situation, often having to rely on relatives or neighbours for their survival. Previous to the land acquisition, local farmers could sell up to 80 percent of their crops and send their children to secondary school. Today, they hardly have enough to fulfil their basic needs and several villagers decided to send their children to live with relatives due to the feeling of insecurity in their village.

The villagers are trying to fight for their rights and their case has been introduced at the High Court in October 2010. They are represented by the local smallholders farmer association «MVIWATA» and the NGO «Legal and Human Rights Centre». The villagers are waiting for the settlement of the case as this is the only way out they can see to that crisis.

Aziza Ramadhani
farmer Lukonde village



Sauda Nassibu
farmer Lukonde village



Asia Waziri Bamangwe
farmer Lukonde village



Amina Choya
farmer Lukonde village



Devotha Jacob Luanda
farmer Lukonde village



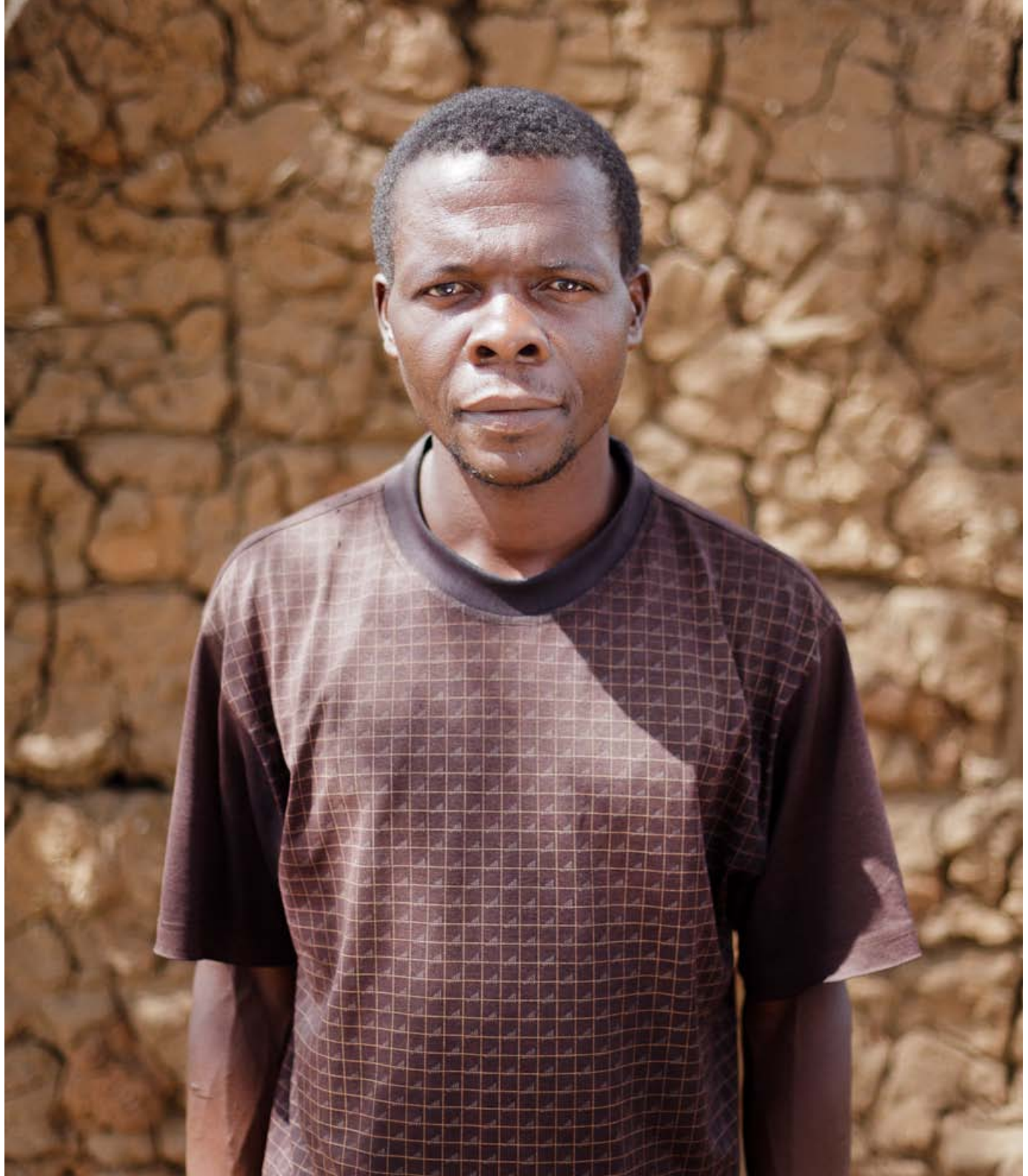
Ramadhani Juma Chaula
farmer Lukonde village



Mayunga Simon
farmer Lukonde village



Kilunga Zahero
farmer Lukonde village



Musa Habibu
farmer Lukonde village



Hamdani Adam
farmer Lukonde village















































Kiên Hoàng Lê

photography


Vita

Kiên is a '82 born, Berlin-based photographer whose origins are Vietnamese.

His photographic work is focussing on socially driven documentary and journalistic Photography.

He was born in Hanoi - Northern Vietnam -, grew up in Bogensee - East Germany - and has lived in the UK, India and Australia.

Since 2009 he is persuing his studies in Photojournalism & Documentary Photography at the University of Applied Sciences Hannover.



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