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***Small-Scale Farmers, Private Enterprises and Innovations in
Food Value Chains: Applying the Actor-Network-Theory in rural
Tanzania***

Masterthesis

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7 Conclusion

Small-scale farmers in both districts, Dodoma and Singida, faced similar constraints in adopting innovations. This included environmental changes, labor, finances, access to transportation and markets. In both areas, farmers viewed the adoption of new varieties and practices as a means of addressing these challenges. In Mondo village farmers had the opportunity getting into a contract arrangement. They were vertically connected with a processor. Until now they have hardly experienced benefits from this cooperation. However after introducing these innovations, most of the farmers have experienced new cultivation methods, have started sharing these innovations with others by providing training in cultivation. The farmers were able to establish a so-called demonstration plot, which serves as a test facility. As a result the main resource that connects them with other actors is knowledge. Here the farmers innovated technically, but in the process of innovation adoption, these can occur in institutional, scientific or also managerial manners of actors. It is not important whether these are internal or external actors of the innovation process. Frequency and quality of the interactions between the farmers and e.g. the extension officer play a significant role. The farmers tried to use their social networks extensively in order to gain more innovations to adopt. However, the farmers failed. This not only happened because of their opportunistic behavior doing side-selling. This mainly happened because of the missing interaction and the mistrust having experienced. Trust plays a crucial role in the sunflower production system. There is evidence that, through various forms of horizontal coordination, as farmer groups, cooperatives or processor associations, small-scale producers can improve the efficiency of their production. This may involve reaping economies of scale in terms of input costs or making infrastructure investments that improve the competitiveness of production. Sunflower as a cash crop can be an additional contribution to increase household income and food security, and thus raising the standard of living of rural people. This can happen when promotional activities are encouraged. The crop on its own will probably not overcome the complex challenges Tanzania's population could face with in the next decades. Actor-network theory can be useful for studies of information systems in situations where interactions of the social, technological and political matter are regarded as particularly important. There are also examples of horizontal coordination encouraging the transmission of innovation in the production process which in turn can improve product quality and productivity. Furthermore, during the study both, vertical and horizontal

coordination could be monitored; especially farmers have hardly been linked with one actor within the sunflower oil production. And as a consequence the results presented that neither production nor welfare have gained long-term improvements. This leads due to personal experiences into a vicious circle. Sustainable and profitable value chains can emerge, when the state invests in rural structures, like enhancing the transport- and financial structures. The incomes of farmers and wagers rise and through this the whole rural economy is strengthened. Until today achievements in the struggle against hunger have been disappointing to a certain degree, although successful solutions are known. Politics are afraid to act and finally realize the human right to food. Up to now the famine situation is mostly a result of political failure.