

The Green Innovation Centre in Zambia

Thursday 22 March 2018, by [Rosa Luxemburg Foundation](#), [The African Centre for Biodiversity](#) (Date first published: 1 January 2018).

Fighting hunger through corporate supply chains?

The study “Green Innovation Centre in Zambia: Fighting Hunger through Corporate Supply Chains?” is a joined publication by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung and African Centre for Biodiversity. It discusses the Green Innovation Centre (GIC) Project of the German government, its approach and its impact. The development concept behind the GIC is farming as a business and a commercial value chain approach. The German development agency GIZ partners with the NGOs COMACO and Good Nature Agro in the Eastern Province in the area of groundnut and soy, as well as with the Dutch SNV on the dairy sector in Southern Province.

GIC is one piece in the mosaic of the Green Revolution approach among dominant donors. Good Nature Agro and COMACO interventions are not “classical” Green Revolution projects, but rather can be described as “intermediate” between Green Revolution and more ecological approaches, while remaining closely allied with corporations and their private interests. GIC follows the general development trajectory of creating or working with cooperatives in an “instrumentalist” way to serve a development project purpose, rather than as critical and independent farmer organisations. Extension services are privatised and provided to an exclusive group. Public sector institutions such as ZARI are side-lined and replaced by hybrid, for-profit private enterprise-NGOs.

Interventions are made in sectors and regions where a few transnational corporations dominate the sector and search for cheap commodities from farmers (Parmalat, Cargill, NWK Agri-services). GIC’s indicators relate to the business success of these corporations. The value chain approach as implemented in the GIC project ignores informal market channels. The GIC interventions focus on a small number of smallholder farmers and provide them with exclusive access to finance, services and support. The aim is to identify and provide further support to those who can emerge as full commercial farmers (“stepping up”), while the majority of farmers is left out.

[RLS Study GI Zambia](#)

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