

Farmers manipulating the elite: Right, wrong, reasonable?

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Abstract: *With the liberalisation of the economic and political structures, Tanzania has experienced an outbreak of complex amalgamations, among which the farmers' organisations. With these organisations, however, farmers are faced with a siphoning system from their representatives. Nonetheless, farmers, as active agents, are able to engage in organising practices to busy these representatives in making use of the available opportunities in the organisations. The phenomenon of organising practices raises an ethical question as to how justifiable they are, given their character of manipulating or manoeuvring the other. The response to this ethical question is based on the suggestion of going beyond the right and/or wrong dichotomy to a reasonableness framework in ethical judgement.*

Keywords: *social arena, organising practices, elite, farmers' organisations, integrity*

Introductory background

From the early 1990s, Tanzania has experienced an increase of complex social amalgamations to deal with different kinds of challenges. This experience is a typical expression of a shift from a socialist political economy, as promoted by the *Ujamaa* policies of the 1960s, to embracing a capitalist political economy, with the liberalised economic and political structures. The simplest amalgamations include small localised grassroots-based groups, with members being homogeneous in terms of livelihoods promotion systems. Examples of such groups include village-based self-help groups, which express themselves in similar activities, such as farming, hunting, and savings services. With the village-based groups networking with similar groups or with other groups with diversified types of livelihoods activities elsewhere, bigger amalgamations are formed resulting in networks and cooperatives, to mention but a few.

It is important to note that these organisations are influenced by glocal processes in their practices, that is, the complex interplay between the global and local processes (Robertson, 1994). The local, national, and international structures, agendas and happenings are influential to the practices of the organisations. Much as there is quite a number of positive aspects in the glocal processes, many farmers' organisations are still in a disadvantaged position because of their weak negotiation capacities with respect to other actors who are more advantaged in dealing with the prevailing structures (ref needed). However, these organisations of farmers being at a disadvantaged position should not be construed as being passive; in actual fact, they are very active, as can be seen in their moves to get organised; and still, they have their own way of taking advantage of the opportunities that come along with the glocal processes.

Farmers' organisations have always been formed in order to give a better chance for negotiations in terms of prices for agricultural inputs and produce, and the different services in the community, with the ultimate aim of livelihoods promotion for the farmers and farming communities. Much as the farmers and the farming communities recognise opportunities in such farmers' organisations, they still recognise one challenging aspect: the local actors who represent them in such organisations are also interested in directly benefitting from such organisations. It is an experience of living with the elite capture phenomenon as expressed by Mansuri and Rao (2004:23 and 30) in terms of benevolence and malevolence.

Thus, while these farmers recognize the farmers' organisations as an opportunity, they also recognise a "siphoning system" of resources by their representatives. And, as farmers are active actors, they

are able to get involved in organising practices. Hence, the question becomes: in this “siphoning system” of the farmers’ organisations, how do the farmers make sure that their representatives are useful to them?

The collection of the data that has been used in this paper began in 2005, with a project that resulted in the work; *Our Way. Responding to the Dutch aid in the District Rural Development Program of Bukoba, Tanzania* in 2007 (Kamanzi, 2007). During this period of three years, not less than thirty interviews and six focus group discussions were conducted. While generally, the interviews were conducted to donors, district officials, politicians, business people, and farmers, the focus group discussions were conducted to only the farmers. From 2007 to 2009, there has been continuous collection of data through interviews to not less than fifty farmers and seven focus group discussions, with an average of six respondents per group. All these have been beneficiaries of the farmers’ organisations in the area.

The majority of the interviews have been conducted during the time when the farmers would carry on their local meetings in the villages. Most respondents were selected from those who openly contributed their ideas in these meetings. After a meeting, an appointment would be made with the contributor for some discussion regarding his/her organisation. For all the seven focus group discussions, the officials of the farmers organisations were requested to provide the people whom they thought were competent to discuss issues on their organisation.

Content analysis was the major analytical technique. From the transcripts of the different interviews and focus group discussions, free-flowing summaries were created. In order to understand the reality of the relationship between the organisations, the farmers, and the representatives, a number of guiding questions were used to re-read the summaries: how useful or not are the farmers’ the organisations? What are the characteristics of the leaders of the organisations? How were the leaders elected? How do the farmers perceive the work of the leaders? How do the farmers benefit from the organisations and leaders? Such questions assisted in developing themes. Raw data is presented in terms of quotations from the respondents. The article proceeds with data on the farmers’ conceptualisation of their organisations, conceptualisation of the important people or elite, and the farmers’ manipulation of those elite. With the section on the discussion of the data, the article discusses issues about the farmers’ organisations as a political/social arena, the modernising development discourse and the elite, and the elite fishing as organising practices. The article winds up with a conclusion and food for thought.

Conceptualisation of farmers’ organisations

In order to see how farmers conceptualise farmers’ organisations, the case of the Coffee Growers Cooperative Union (CGCU) is used. It was founded in 1955 in Bukoba, with the main aim of freeing farmers from their dependence on Asian merchants who controlled the regional coffee market through buying the farmers’ coffee and selling it on the market, helping farmers obtain essentials and agricultural equipment, and providing training to farmers, committee members, and cooperative workers.

Farmers in the area have mixed feelings about CGCU: while the cooperative has been useful with numerous development initiatives, it is still problematic due to its internal contradictions. In a focus group discussion, a respondent argued for the CGCU:

CGCU offered scholarships to study in the region, within Tanzania, and abroad; it assisted us in paying the salaries of teachers, and; CGCU built secondary schools. CGCU built us “societies” [collecting, buying and selling points for agricultural implements, and payment centres after selling coffee]; CGCU used to bring us farm implements and to subsidise the prices of the implements; CGCU provided employment to us and made us known.

From this way of looking at CGCU, which is a common way of looking at farmers’ organisations, it can be argued that farmers see them as opportunities to address different pressing issues in their livelihoods promotion processes. That is why farmers get stressed when they see such organisations in trouble.

The farmers, however, also observe the dark side of farmers' organizations. In an interview with an ex-official of the CGCU on the reasons why the cooperative was not functioning well, he responded:

It is difficult to say what exactly is behind the decline of CGCU because there are so many reasons. CGCU could not pay enough money to the farmers who were discouraged and did not want to sell coffee to it any more. At some point, there came in other companies which were providing better prices than CGCU and there was a lot of coffee that was being sold in Uganda. So, many people did not sell coffee to CGCU. A lot of money was being spent on many meetings of the CGCU leaders as allowances instead of organising subsidies to the coffee farmers. Many leaders and business people ate the Cooperative's money.

In a way, therefore, this quotation gives an idea of the farmers' organisations as exploitative for they have a tendency of paying less to the farmers; they are less muscled to face competition, and; they misuse funds.

As farmers' organisations are perceived as places from where to get rich, people who are leaders at different levels do not want to leave: they struggle as much as they can to remain in the positions: the representatives of the farmers do not see why others should come in; those in top positions try to maintain their friends in the lower positions.

Nonetheless, as a whole, farmers acknowledge the centrality of farmers' organisations, as can be observed from this quote, which expresses a complaint of a beneficiary of the CGCU, when asked about his opinion on its decline:

You cannot understand what it means to have a child who does not go to school: you imagine a child tomorrow and you think that he/she is either to be a thief or die of alcohol; you are lucky if your child will escape to town to ride bicycles; others disappear in the lake; others to Uganda; others are in our houses and what they know best is weeding banana plantations, eating, drinking, and sleeping. Of course, why should we hide, they then die of HIV/AIDS! ...

We are farmers; you reduce prices on our crops and you think that we can survive. How? You have just prepared our death beds; you have killed us. We have no money to take children to school; no money to go to hospital; no money to dress up; no money to take to church. You have made us poor by giving us little coffee prices. ...

CGCU lorries used to come and pick our coffee. We could even get lifts to town. Now, you have these people who send others with sacks and bowls; the lorries they drive belong to their Indian bosses. When they have collected enough, an Indian's lorry comes, packs only the coffee and takes off; no lift to any!

So as to conclude this section, it is important to note that farmers' organisations are perceived as important agents in the livelihood promotion interventions. Much as they have a negative side, as well, their decline is of concern to the farmers.

Farmers' identification of representatives

In the previous section, it has been shown how the farmers consider farmers' organisations as very useful, notwithstanding their dark side. In this section, there is presentation about the characteristics of the people whom the farmers think can represent them in such organisations. In a focus group discussion, farmers made categorisations and prioritisations of the people they thought would represent them in farmers' organisations. The prioritisation was based on the roles they play in the community.

Table 1. Categories and prioritisations of important people and roles

Category	Prioritisation	Role
Leaders	Priority One	Organise people Supervise development projects Link people with authorities
Elders	Priority Two	Give advice
Government employees	Priority Three	Give ideas Have experience Know many people outside
Business people	Priority Four	Give financial contribution
Youth	Priority Five	Do heavy jobs Provide some financial assistance Sometimes they have ideas

Such people are referred to as important people in the community for they have some specific role. In order to stress the issue of importance of these categories, a respondent in a focus group discussion argued:

All these people, who at the end of the day become our leaders, are very important. They are the ones who can organise us so that we can receive and accept any contribution from outside for a development project. They act as a link between us in the village and the outside world. We never go to the district, but they go. Even if we went, whom do we know? What can we say? Our words are village words, but theirs are development words. They know what to say !

And another respondent argued:

If we did not have such people, we would have problems with our development projects in our village: many projects would not come in; we would have less people to contribute ideas on these projects; we would not have people to push us to work; we would not have people to push some of our leaders to do their work as leaders.

Such people, leaders, elders, government employees, business people, and the youth, are referred to as important people whose main characteristics are being educated, political, middle class, and religious, as is expressed by the quotes in Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the important people

Characteristic	Qualifying note
Being educated	We have a young man who is very smart at talking; he has gone to school. ... The last chairman of the village is an old fellow now; but he is tough and he uses his experience as one who was a qualified civil servant in those days. We have a family in this village that is blessed: the father, the mother, and their sons have all gone to school. That is why they are all politicians. The current chairman is a retired person; that is why we chose him to be our leader: he was good and knew many people and things.
Being political	I remember very well what one of the priests said about politicians: a man wanted his son to be either a farmer, or banker or, teacher. He thought that the best way to know this was closing him in a room and putting in there a banana, banknote, and a book. If he ate the banana, he would become a farmer; if he took the money, he would be a banker, and; if he read the book, he would be a teacher. He locked the boy in the room and when he came back he found out that he had eaten the banana, pocketed the money, and he was reading the book. So he concluded that his son was to become a politician. ... Politicians are everything because they try to do everything; ... politics is about telling lies to win favours.
Middle class employees	... people who are not rich and at the same time not poor. They have gone some distance from poverty, but they are still struggling to settle: they are not yet rich. When such people get a problem that demands some small money, they are able to deal with it. If someone among his relatives died, the person should not fail to buy a shroud. However, such people had better not get any problem that needs them to sell off their property because this could ruin them completely: they are fragile and they are not very stable.
Being religious	People who do not have religion do not have values. If someone does not have reverence to God, how do you think he/she can respect people? Where will such a person get values from? He/she does not pray; he/she does not go to church/mosque; he/she does not belong to any religious community; do you think that person can ever be useful in the society?

Farmers’ “manipulating” important people

The main aim of this section is to show how the farmers manipulate the important people. In order to reach this aim, let me present a case of a farmers’ association, the development of Small Farmers Association (DSFA), which is referred to with the data. The association operates in Bukoba District, Kagera Region, Tanzania. The association was founded in 1997; it has partnership with some international NGOs whose focus is on strengthening the capacity of small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs by providing demand-driven services and supporting the initiatives of local associations of farmers and entrepreneurs. The members, who are from small groups in the villages and individual farmers, pay a membership fee, aimed at its development and giving access to technical training, provision of inputs, and marketing support. Currently, the members are dealing with the growing of vanilla and oyster mushrooms. The association functions as a business unit, with the prospects of becoming economically sustainable and donor independent.

The farmers do not directly interact with the facilitators or donors of their livelihoods promotion in the farmers’ organisations; instead, they are mediated by the important people who act as their representatives. If, as already mentioned earlier in the previous sections, these representatives have personal agendas of economic gains through their representation, how do the farmers benefit for these important people? In the following sub-sections, I shall explain the three practices in which the farmers are engaged in to manipulate the important people: ordination, opportunism, and enrolment.

Ordination

Ordination means setting apart someone for the administration of various functions: farmers set apart and authorize important people to perform certain functions on their behalf. They let them go to meetings, speak, and they praise their intellectual capacity. A man defending his position as to why, I, who was construed by him as an important person, should go for farmers’ organisations’ meetings and not him, argued:

Why did you go to school? These are your things. Okuzaara ti kunya [giving birth is not going for a long call]: it means bringing out someone who should assist you. Don’t expect me to go for these village meetings for planning for development. They have taught you these things at school, me not. I am already tired. I attended such meetings from long time ago. I think that my ideas have expired already. ... So, you go because you are young and you will tell me what has happened .

This elderly person “delegates” and needs feedback from the meeting. Of course, the delegated person is trusted. A woman argued when she was asked why she never went for any meeting in the farmers’ organisation:

What do you want me to say there? What do I know? I am a farmer; I take care of children and my husband. Probably, my husband can go there, but even him what do you think he can say? We are all farmers for a long time in this village. We cannot have a lot to say on development. ... We are not teachers or politicians.

Another woman responded as to why she never participates in meetings:

... I rarely hear of such meetings. Again, I know that there are people who lead us. That is their work: let them plan. Again, what do you want me to plan? I have never been to Mwanza and Dar-es-salaam and that is where plans come from; I have no phone; I have no car; ... I hear nowadays people can send a letter very far and it reaches the same day without any transport (talking of emails), I don’t know that. ... Those plans are yours. ... Leave us to dig, but bring us good seeds .

And praising the capacity of the important people to recall discussions, another woman commented:

We have many people who have gone to school. Others are teachers, workers, business people, and others are lucky because they can easily speak. You see, for example, if we all listened to a radio, not all of us would remember and tell people what has been said in the radio. The important people will remember what has been said and they will talk as if the radio was talking about this village. ... They understand things because they have seen them, worked with them, tasted them

Thus, the important people are ordained, that is, set apart through being left to participate in development planning matters; basically, not everybody should go there and even if everybody went there, just a few ordained people would contribute in such meetings.

Opportunism

In a farmers' focus group discussion, I asked why they had to elect a new leader, and not the incumbent one. The following arguments were brought forward:

You know very well that this man has been in leadership for long; he is from here and most of us are related to him. ... However, he has done nothing for us. He is not going to have my vote. But, again, should I vote his competitor? No, if I do, the results might show that the competitor got more votes from here. So, I had better not vote.

In the same line another respondent argued:

It is true that he is our son; but he did nothing for us. However, knowing him, what much do you think he would offer us? He has not travelled a lot. To Dar-es-Salaam yes, that one I know and we all know there. But outside Africa, I do not know. If he has gone there, he was hidden and never stayed there for long. He has very little connections for us all, but for himself probably.

With this observation, his competitor was introduced in the discussion with credibility to function better because of the networks:

This man has moved a lot. He has even stayed in Europe. He can really assist us with his networks. He has friends who can do a lot for us. He has businesses that we can see. He has money; he knows what money is and therefore there is a possibility that he assists a lot in getting us opportunities for money.

And again, opportunism struck from another angle, as can be seen from this argument:

We have been with this person for a long time and nothing has happened in our area. It is because he belongs to the opposition party. Belonging there means losing from the government because it can never think about you. Let us change and have someone from the ruling party. The government cannot abandon us. It will think of us.

The farmers are opportunistic in that they throw away the incumbent because he has less chance of offering them what they want, compared to the one who has more networks due to his exposure and belonging to a ruling party. This implies that the farmers are able to gauge their important people and see who can benefit them most. With the criterion of what is in for them, they choose who seems to have the most potential.

Enrolment

In this sub-section, I present the way the farmers enrol the important people onto their course. I shall present two ways in which they enrol the important people: pleasing and scheming. Pleasing is about doing something for the sake of someone. In an agricultural tradeshow in Bukoba, I saw a tiny traditional species of banana, besides an imported huge banana hybrid. I was curious as to why this tiny banana was for the show and not the huge one only. This farmer recounted:

I am a farmer for a long time. I know where I plant what and for what reasons. ... The good bananas are planted around the house. ... If you go behind my house, you will see other types of bananas; some of them are small in size and poor quality; others are strange ... These bananas cannot be planted in front of your house: they will give you shame, and that's all!

Now, these people bring us Mtwishe [new variety banana type]. I should never put it in front of my house; it grows very fast, but not as good as Nshakala or Ntobe or Kinunu or Njubo [local banana types]. ... But if you come to my home, I shall show you one banana tree near my house on the left side, which, I was given by the Bi shamba [female extension officer]. I did not want to disappoint her; she is my friend; I do not want her to think that I never took her serious. ... But, if I have to tell you the truth that is in my heart, I am not convinced of any good thing from that banana tree: I just planted it for the sake of pleasing her!

In principle, the farmer, basically, pleased the important person, who when he did not find resistance in planting the hybrid banana by the farmer, he thought that things were moving on pretty well. In

fact, pleasing is a way of enrolling the important people by speaking their language so that they can continuously have attention on the farmers. Let me now turn to scheming.

The concept of scheming has to do with farmers concealing a design or desire or plan or intention for advancing their personal interests of making them representatives in the farmers' organisations. Farmers cleverly plan and target something in future, which the important people are not aware of. While discussing about a collapsing Farmers Extension Centre, which was established in 1992 in Bukoba, farmers showed no enthusiasm in the Centre. One of the elders was asked why he thought the Centre was not functioning well and he said:

You see, I have dealt with many important people, even the Whites; ... One important thing is to read their minds and speak what they already know. You see, they are big people with a lot of power and money. ... It is upon you if you want to be helped or not. ...

That time came a very big and important man to open our centre and who was willing to assist us in its improvement. ... We knew this because they told us he was doing it elsewhere. ... Why would we say no to the man? Why would we ask for something else outside his idea? Would we not be stupid? ... The best thing he could do to us was to continue making our Centre better for something that could happen on our way tomorrow. ... ekigwa tikilaga [what falls never informs before hand that it is falling].

Scheming is a typical practice that is used with regard to people who are thought of as having abundant resources: the farmers, basically, scheme to get the resources from important people, particularly pecuniary resources.

Thus, enrolling the important people is done in two ways: pleasing them by speaking their language so that they can always have their attention on farmers, and by scheming for the resources of the important people so that they can always disburse them. So, how do the farmers manipulate the important people? They ordain them by leaving them to participate in development planning matters; they opportunistically elect them so that they can, in turn, bring them back something, and; they enrol them by pleasing them and scheming their resources.

Farmers' organisations, manipulation, and important people

In this section, there is presentation of a discussion on the farmers' organisations with respect to the social arena, the manipulation of the important people in relation to organising practices, and the important people in relation to the modernising development discourse.

Farmers' organisations are arenas, that is, places of "concrete configurations between social actors interacting on common issues" (Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, 1997: 240). In the words of Long and Long (1992:2), they are interfaces, that is, intersections between different fields or levels of social organization where the different actors present their understandings, interests and values; they are battlefields of power. As a field, farmers' organisations become a space of concrete confrontation (Bierschenk, 1998) where the different actors, such as the representatives of the farmers, the donors, the politicians, etc interact with each other on the common issue about the promotion of the farmers. Due to the multiplicity of actors with their different backgrounds, mandates and experiences and therefore different viewpoints, perceptions, objectives, practices and strategies, the farmers' organisations are characterised by struggles, negotiations and accommodations. As levels, however, farmers' organizations are concretization of power hierarchies. For instance, taking an organization which is based on donor relations, there are donors on top who hold the stick; politicians, who are brokers, are in the middle and at the bottom, there are farmers' representatives who stand to be the recipients of the donor resources on behalf of the farmers who are at the lower tie of the hierarchy.

During the negotiations in the farmers' organizations, as an arena, the representatives of the farmers meet other actors, such as the donors, government officials, and others. These actors are strategic groups, who differ in composition, but present themselves as groups as a way to negotiate powerfully for each group. Between these groups, there are conflicting interests, which are sorted out in the very arena (Olivier de Sardan and Bierschenk, 1994; de Haan, 2000). Each strategic group

brings in its strategic rationality, that is, an evaluative mini-discourse, carrying the intentionalities of the strategic actors in a social arena.

While the strategic rationalities guide the negotiations of the strategic groups, on the one hand, they also guide the actions of the “outside-the-negotiation” actors, the farmers, on the other hand. They influence farmers’ actions in terms of organising practices, which according to Kamanzi (2007, following Nuijten, 2005), are manoeuvres or diligent responses that less powerful actors engage in so as to achieve their desired goals in their encounter with a powerful actor. Such are practices of the farmers, such as ordination, opportunistic behaviours and enrolment, all geared towards manipulating the important people with the aim of making sure they minimize the siphoning of the important people and gain from them as their representatives in the farmers’ organizations. The organising practices do not happen as a result of a common understanding or normative agreement by the farmers, as such, but they happen due to the forces at play between them and powerful people, particularly those envisaged to be key decision actors in any field (Nuijten, 2005:3); farmers need to make their living out of an opportunity, a farmers’ organization, which, incidentally, has more powerful people than they are (for instance politicians and donors).

There is an important and interesting ethical issue to discuss: the ethicalness of the organising practices which are about manipulating the other. From deontological and/or normative perspectives, organising practices could be taken as unethical; ethics from the deontological and normative perspective involves complying with fixed minimum standards of honesty, reliability, and truthfulness. A person who meets such standards would give a connotation of “incorruptibility” (Berker 2005). However, dealing with ethical issues as deontological and normative is narrow because, at times, compliance with minimum standards goes hand-in-hand with incoherent and chaotic behaviour. Moreover, the deontological and normative perspectives assume fixed standards and clear distinctions, situations of which, in a morally fragmented and pluriform society and in everyday practice of institutional life, cannot meet ethical challenges (*Idem*). It is for this matter that ethical judgement should not get closed in a system of right and/or wrong, but more to judgement in terms of reasonableness (Kamanzi, 2008). This is because the negotiating actors are not at the same power levels. Thus, when it is about power asymmetries between who has resources and opportunities and the one who does not have resources, the latter is ethical in engaging the former in undertakings of convictions so that the resources or opportunities can be accessed.

But again, what determines who is more powerful than the other? Reference is made to the development gaze, that is, “an authoritative voice, which constructs problems and their solution by reference to *a priori* criteria, for example to ‘broad themes which buzz around developmental agencies...’” (Grillo, 1997:19). This gaze or authoritative voice is institutionally extensive and comprises of a stock of ideas that informs the praxis of many groups (Preston 1996:4); it is a certain language in development within which development activities should be planned, implemented, monitored, and evaluated, and within which development activities should operate and be interpreted. The more you internalize the gaze, the more powerful you become: and a hierarchy is established from the donors on top, for example, through the politicians and representatives, till down to the farmers.

According to Kamanzi (2007), this is a modernizing development discourse. It is the language of the state engendered order and the intervention of experts, a language of the market-engendered order, a language founded on the affirmation of the idea-set of modernity and the optimistic, reason-informed pursuit of formal and substantive democracy, a language of globalization, a language that otherises the subject of development, a language that shapes subjects of development, and a language that defines problems. This is the language that the farmers think and know is the language being spoken in the farmers’ organizations and the people next to them who can understand and speak the language are the important people, given the characteristics they have. That is why the farmers’ struggle to have these people as representatives.

Within the same discursive structure, as the modernising development discourse where there is involvement of power asymmetries in the negotiations because the negotiators have different levels of internalisation of the discourse, the less powerful is justified in undertaking organising practices to benefit from one who has internalised it more. Thus, the ethical argument of right and/or wrong becomes weakened by the power asymmetrical situation and the struggle to diligently smoothen the edges of this power for livelihoods promotion. In other words, organising practices are neither right nor wrong, but reasonable engagements of the powerless to benefit from the powerful.

Conclusion and food for thought

The interactions between the farmers and the important people take place within localised power relations. The interactions, however, involve practices beyond the local context through imagination of more powerful actors beyond the local context. The farmers, knowing that the farmers' organizations are places of concrete confrontations beyond their localities between different actors who have internalized the development discourse, "opt" not to go there directly, but through the important people who become their representatives. Farmers think that the important people are able to confront more powerful actors in the negotiations because they understand some language of the development gaze and they get into organizing practices to benefit from their being representatives.

I would like to raise some ethical reflection as food for thought, based on the issue of the ethicalness of organising practices. Organising practices have been discussed as ethical because the less powerful people are trying to convince the powerful in order to access resources and opportunities. I would like to look at the idea of reasonableness with regard to organising practices as going beyond normative and deontological perspectives to embrace an integrity perspective. This would imply integrating ethics in the social fabric by getting into a wider discussion of ethical issues beyond deontology and normativity to the issue of integrity.¹ This has to do with the way specific segments of behaviour fit into the pattern of a life as a whole; this is constancy of character. Practically, this would mean openness in discussions and negotiations by the different actors in matters of the farming livelihood system as an arena. Basically, in such dialogues, the intentionalities of the actors need to be clear to the negotiating partners. That is why, for instance, the farmers who deal with their representative in flexible ways, cannot be denied of being people of integrity because they did not follow the fixed standards. Such farmers should, actually, be interpreted as people of integrity whereby the important aspects of their values from their context and worldview are being lived. This implies a wider definition of the ethicalness of the farmers and dependence on their worldview and contextual background.

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¹ Integrity is a terminology derived from a Latin word '*integritas*', a negativum of the verb '*tangere*', to 'touch'. Integrity, therefore, literally means 'not being touched', 'purity'. It points at something that is not violated by something else, and therefore an unbesmirched unity.

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