



Dear Mr/Mrs,

My name is ____ and I am a researcher/student in the University of _____. I am part of a study that aims to unravel the impacts of biofuels on ecosystem services, human wellbeing and poverty alleviation in Sub-Saharan Africa. On this study, many Universities are involved such as Oxford University (UK), University of Tokyo, Bunda College in Malawi, as well as the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of South Africa, and the Stockholm Environmental Institute.

The aim of this interdisciplinary project is to provide clear empirical evidence on whether, and how, biofuel production and use can improve human wellbeing and become an agent of poverty alleviation in African least developed countries (LDCs). To do so, we will compare the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of two feedstocks used to produce biofuel (Jatropha and sugarcane) under two different management regimes: smallholder farmers and large scale plantations. The countries of study are Malawi, Mozambique and Swaziland.

We are interviewing farmers and/or workers of small and large plantations of sugarcane and Jatropha in these 3 countries. As we believe you are part of one of these groups, we invite you to be part of our study.

If you agree to participate in it, we will need one hour of your time to answer a questionnaire. In this questionnaire, we would ask you some questions related to your household economy and some personal information such as education, health and living standards. All this data would be completely confidential and stored only for our own records. If you work for a sugarcane/Jatropha company, we ensure you that the company will never have access to your answers. We are a group of independent researchers that have no link to the company.

The results will be published in international journals. There would be no way to relate the results with you, as your identity will be completely confidential. Our group of researchers will be the only team analysing this data, and no one else would be able to relate the information extracted with yourself. However, please take into account that as we do not speak the local language, during the interview we will either have a translator or an enumerator that works for us. This person will be a local person who will gather the information and send it directly back to us. He/she will not reproduce any part of the interview to anyone.

This study has been reviewed and approved by Oxford University Research Ethics Committee. Before making any decision on taking part on it, please feel free to ask us any question you may have on this study. Moreover, please consider that if you agree to be a part of our study, you can always approach any person involved in this study for any concern or complaint you may have, or to withdraw your consent at any time without any adverse consequences.

Many thanks for your collaboration,

Best wishes,

Prof. Kathy Willis and Dr. Carla Romeu-Dalmau, Oxford University (UK).

Ass. Prof. Alex Gasparatos, University of Tokyo (Japan).

Mr. Francis Johnson and Dr. Caroline Ochieng, Stockholm Environmental Institute (Sweden).

Mr. Graham von Maltitz, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), South Africa.

Dr. Charles Jumbe and Mr. Davies Luchanga, Bunda College (Malawi).