Children and land grabs: Development, social reproduction and the future in a nature park in Senegal
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Since 2008, the sharp raise of commodity prices resulted in an energy and food crisis, and pressure on market supply chains. International organizations reacted by placing agriculture, both for energy and food production, at the centre of their political agendas. The resulting development model is one that insists on private capital investment to fuel production on ‘underexploited’ and ‘potential arable’ land. Thus, in recent years a new wave of large-scale land acquisitions by states, companies, investment and pension funds, is reshaping rural territories globally. Impacts on peasant and indigenous populations are yet to be fully measured. In this talk I present an overview of my research on territorial transformations induced by a foreign company’s private lease of a natural reserve in Senegal. I focus on current and future impacts on children and youth. Indeed, young people are crucial agents in social reproduction and I argue that they need specific attention, particularly since their futures are at stake.