

**Land Conflicts in Mkoka and Songambebe Wards in Kongwa District,
Tanzania: Causes, Impacts, and Resolutions**

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to examine the factors that have contributed to the causes, impact and resolutions of farmer-pastoralists conflict on land in Kongwa district, Tanzania. Conflicts between farmers and pastoralists have been escalating and are becoming economically and socially unbearable. Respondents of the study included villagers, members of village land committees and members of land tribunals in Mkoka and Songambebe wards, Kongwa district. Focus group discussions were conducted to collect information on conflict causes and resolution mechanisms. Major factors between farmers and pastoralists conflicts were found to include policy deficiencies, insecurity of land tenure, inadequacy of capacity to the local institutions, corrupt practices, inadequate capacity in village land use planning. The study concludes that the root cause of the conflicts is the lack of security of land tenure to smallholder farmers and pastoralists who hold and use unsurveyed land. The government has to review its land policy to ensure security of land tenure, land grabbing and corrupt practices to prevent further conflicts.

Keywords: Land conflict, farmers, pastoralists, land policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Land in many African countries is a primary asset for survival and a major source of income and livelihoods for the rural population. However, land resources have continued to have major historical, cultural and spiritual significance (Odgaard, 2006). In Africa, land is increasingly becoming a source of conflicts, where land access had traditionally been characterized as relatively egalitarian (Yamano, 2005). It has been shown that local land conflicts can erupt into large-scale civil strife and political movements (Daudelin, 2002). Conflicts often erupt between herders and farmers over access to land and water resources (Williams, 1999). Some underlying factors, such as population pressure, agricultural commercialization, and urbanization, have contributed to the increasing number of land conflicts, and the current land tenure systems in Africa may not be well-equipped to resolve such conflicts (Cotula, Toulmin, and Hesse, 2004). In Uganda, however, shows that rural households experience small-scale land conflicts with relatives, neighbors, landlords, or local governments, and that such small-scale conflicts may have significant impacts on their agricultural productivity (Deininger and Castagnini, 2005). About 80% of the entire population in Tanzania comprises farmers and pastoralists that live in rural areas in which their life depend on land for conducting different economic and social activities such as crop production and animal keeping. Due to increased population pressure and the diversification of rural land use patterns in Tanzania, such as expansion of settled and ranching farming, national parks, towns and settlements, access to pasture and water for livestock has diminished thus prompting pastoralists to migrate to the central, eastern and southern parts of the country (Odgaard, 2005, Mattee and Shem, 2006). The squeezing out of pastoralists from their traditional grazing lands has spurred the tension and conflicts with farming communities. In view of the growing of the problem and the consequences associated with these conflicts the government has put in numerous efforts to address the problem. However, the conflicts persist and in some cases they have escalated. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the causes, impact and resolutions of land conflicts among inhabitants in Mkoka and Songambele wards, Kongwa district, Dodoma region, Tanzania.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Area

The study was a cross-sectional conducted in two wards of Mkoka and Songambele in Kongwa district. These are among the wards where farmer-herder conflicts have been reported. Kongwa district is one of the seven districts of the

Dodoma region of Tanzania. The district is located at $6^{\circ}10'23''\text{S}$ $35^{\circ}44'31''\text{E}$ coordinates in the centre of the country.

It is bordered to the north by Manyara region, to the east by Morogoro region, to the south by Mpwapwa district, and to the west by Chamwino district. It covers an area of 3,958 km². Its capital is the town of Kongwa. According to the 2012 Tanzania National Census, the population of Kongwa district was 309,973. Mkoka and Songambebe wards are among the 22 wards of Kongwa district in Dodoma region. The main economic activities in these wards are agriculture, business and pastoralism.

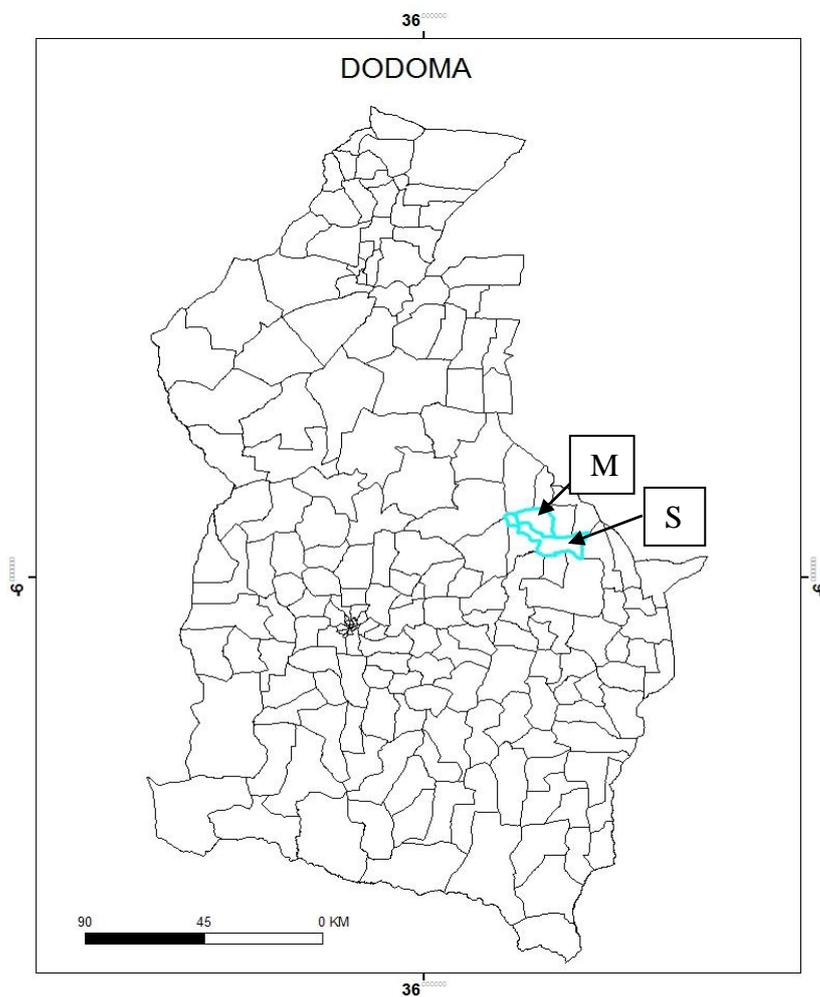


Figure1. Map of Dodoma region showing Mkoka (M) and Songambebe (S) wards in Kongwa district

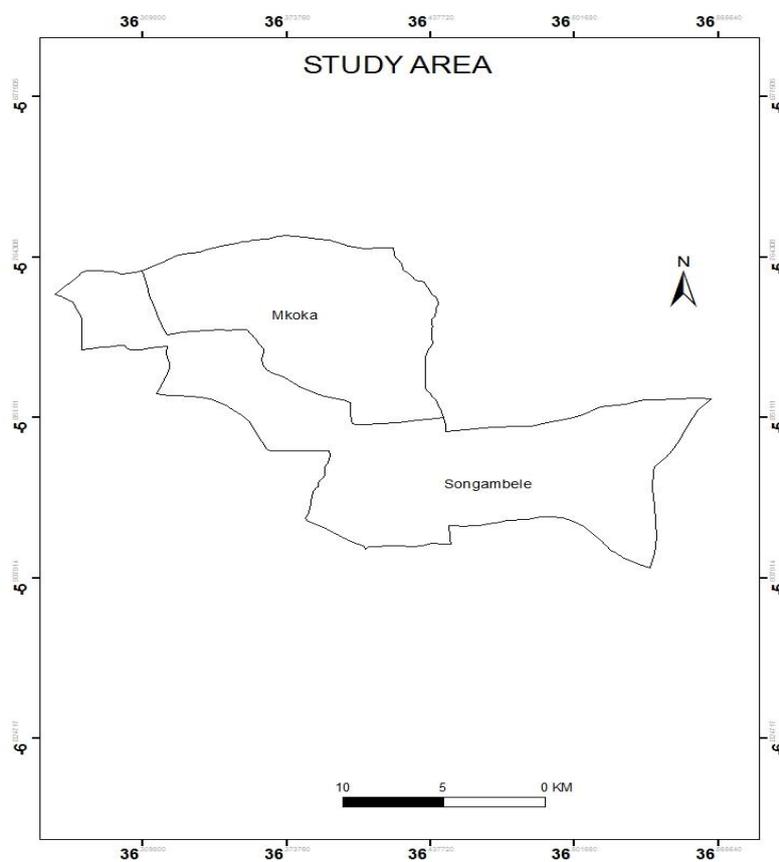


Figure 2. Map of Mkoka and Songambebe wards

2.2 Study design

This study was carried out in selected wards in 2015. A study involved a descriptive cross-sectional study. The study enrolled 105 respondents.

2.3 Sampling method

Focus group discussions were conducted to collect information on conflict causes and resolution mechanisms in their areas. Key informants interviews and discussions involving households (90), members of Village Land Committees (5), and members of Land Tribunals (10) these provided valuable insights into the findings.

2.4 Sample Size

The study sample size was estimated as described by Taro (1964) using the formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

N = population of the study

e = margin of error and in this case, e = 10%

1 = constant

2.5 Data Analysis

Data were analysed for descriptive statistics using Statistical Package for Social Sciences program version 20.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The study results indicate that, the majority of the respondents (58.9%) were females while (41.1%) were male. Male respondents were few due to family responsibility contrary to female who in most cases are at home taking care of the houses and children. This made them to be easily available during field data collections. Age distribution of the respondents was between 26-35years (21.1%), 36-45 years (21.1%) and 46-55 years were (21.1%), followed by age group 18-25 years (17.8%) , 56-65 years (10.0%) then above 65 years (8.9%) and (81.1%) were married as shown in (Table 1). The study involved these age groups because have family responsibilities and struggle for life which depends on land resource.

The results on education of the respondents show that (76.7%) completed primary education, 11.1% attained secondary education and 12.2% were illiterate as shown in (Table 1). This finding is similar to that of Damas and Rayhan (2004) which show that illiteracy is a serious problem which hinders efforts towards improving livelihood and it is the main cause of underdevelopment. Admin (2010) reported that, about (87%) of the poor people of Tanzania live in rural areas and engages in subsistence agriculture. Their education is low which limits them to better life and development.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of household respondents (n = 90)

Sex of respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	37	41.1
Female	53	58.9
Total	90	100.0
Age of respondents in years		
18 – 25	16	17.8
26 – 35	19	21.1
36 – 45	19	21.1
46 – 55	19	21.1
56 – 65	9	10.0
65 and above	8	8.9
Total	90	100.0
Marital status of the household head		
Single	11	12.2
Married	73	81.1
Separated	5	5.6
Widowed	1	1.1
Total	90	100.0
Level of education of the household head		
Primary education	69	76.7
Secondary education	11	11.1
Illiterate	10	12.2
Total	90	100.0

3.2 Respondents Involved in the Study

Respondents involved in the study were households (85.7%), members of Village Land Committees (4.8%), and members of Land Tribunals (9.5%) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Respondents involved in the study (n = 105)

Respondents	Frequency (%)	Percentage
Members of village land committees	5	4.8
Members of Land Tribunals	10	9.5
Households	90	85.7
Total	105	100

3.3 Causes of Land Conflict in Kongwa district

The causes of land conflict in Kongwa district are many. The economic and social development of farmers and livestock keepers in Mkoka and Songambe wards depends on the availability of land. In the present study, the results show that, 23.3% of land conflict was due to pastoralists grazing cattle in the villagers farms, 15.3% no proper demarcations of the land, 12.0% was due to double leasing of plots, 9.1% no title deeds, 5.8% was due to grabbing other peoples land and 6.2% was due to removing of demarcations. The results of the present study agree with Simbarashe (2012) who reported that conflicts over land use between farmers and livestock keepers in the country are contributed by land tenure contradictions between customary and granted land rights. In this study corruption was observed to be the cause of conflicts. The study agrees with previous studies which have shown that nepotism and corruption are causes of land conflicts. Haque (2004) reported that in most areas that are associated with conflicts in Tanzania are highly influenced with the corruption and nepotism of the government and public officials. Misana (1997) viewed corruption as the biggest causal of the conflicts, since the sources are scarcity. Mtwale (2008) reported that the corruption between the village leaders and district officials are the major causes of land conflicts that exist in Kilosa that lead to the killing, the village leaders allow pastoralists to settle in the hamlets without farmers permission. The study observed that there was no realistic and effective land use plans in the villages. John (2008) reported that unequal distribution of land resource between pastoralists and farmers lead to one group to move where the conflict begins. Benjaminsen (2009) argued that the land areas allocated to the pastoralists are not large enough, leading headers to search for pasture and water outside pastured village areas. The poor policy in agriculture sector and livestock sector also is the basis and fundamental causes of farmers and pastoralists conflicts (Ndagala, 1991).

3.4 Impacts of land Conflict in Kongwa District

There are several impacts that resulted from land conflict in Kongwa district. The results show that, killing of one another (17.3%), lack of food (19.5%), loss of peace among the community (15.4%), destruction of crops and livestock (12.8%), loss of originally owned land (10.9%) and stagnation of economic activities (7.1%). Villagers could not engage in production activities because they were running away for security purposes and hence the parties involved in conflict suffered from famine. Sometimes people lost their fertile lands for both agriculture and animal keeping. The results of the present study agree with previous studies which reported that rapid population growth and poverty also increase the hostility between the people in the particular community. Previous studies have shown that the increase of human population or livestock lead to the scarcity of land resources, hence people start to fight for land. In the present study, competition for land between the pastoralists and farmers led to the conflicts. This agrees with Mtwale (2002) who reported that population increase from birth and migration of pastoralists who practice transhumance has become increasingly important in Kilosa district (Morogoro) which lead fight of land resources.

3.5 Conflict Resolving in Kongwa District

Conflict resolution is the situation whereby the conflicting parties enter into an agreement that solves their central incompatibilities, accept each other's continued existence as parties and cease all violent actions against each other (Wallenstein, 2002). The goal of the process is not just to end the conflict, but also to solve the problem so that all parties in conflict feel satisfied. In solving conflicts there are two approaches namely traditional and modern approaches. In the present study, it was observed that the procedure of solving land conflicts started from the Village Land Committee up to the Court of Appeal. The Village Land Committee deals with land conflicts which do not exceed TZS 3,000,000 above that they forward to the next level. Zartman (1991) argues that good land governance requires the honest and serious application of certain principles to land policy, land related legislation, state land management, land administration, land reforms and land conflict resolutions. Equity is the key governance principle for the prevention of land conflicts. In the present study, it was observed that the Village Land Committee in Kongwa district are following the Land Dispute Act No.2 of 2002 which was established by the Government of Tanzania in solving land conflicts.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper concludes that, land resource is an opportunity if it is properly managed and used but also is a source of conflict in many communities in Tanzania including Kongwa district. The approach used in solving land conflicts in Kongwa district is in accordance to the Land Dispute Act No.2 of 2002 established by the Government of Tanzania in solving land conflicts. The study findings show that, death, lack of peace, property destruction, economic stagnation and distortion of community relationship are among the results of land conflict in Kongwa district.

The paper therefore, recommends that, in order to minimize land conflicts education must be provided to the community members on modern ways of animal keeping such as zero grazing for quality products and reducing the quantities of livestock keeping. To avoid the occurrence of more land conflict, communal land should be used equally to the community members.

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