

Contribution of Local Leaders towards Land Conflict Management in Tanzania: A Case of Farming Communities in Monduli District

Nsia Humphrey¹, Peter A. Kopoka. PHD²

^{1,2}Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to assess the contribution of local leaders towards land conflict management. The paper is based on a study conducted in MonduliJuu ward in Monduli District in Arusha region. The study aimed at identifying sources of land conflicts, identifying the role of local leaders towards land conflicts management and examining the effectiveness of local leaders towards land conflicts management among farmers and pastoralists in MonduliJuu ward. The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, the data were collected by using questionnaires and interview. The study employed a descriptive survey research design while the respondents were selected by using purposive sampling techniques and simple random sampling. The study involved 100 respondents which include 10 local leaders, 45 farmers and 45 pastoralists from MonduliJuu ward in Monduli District. The findings revealed that sources of land conflicts among farmers and pastoralists were poor land planning, scarcity of land and scramble for pasture. Furthermore, the findings discovered that local leaders play a leading role in solving land conflicts among farmers and pastoralists communities but during conflicts some of the local leaders favor their own communities and even some of them take bribes when solving herders-farmers conflicts which creates dispute among the communities. Thus, the study recommends that in order to solve land conflicts, local leaders should be at the forefront to control and manage land conflict in time and should avoid taking bribe and put aside theirself-interest. The government should put additional emphasis on implementing village land use plans and should provide education on laws, regulations and procedures governing land ownership.*

Keywords: land conflict, local leaders, land use plan, Poor education

1. Introduction

The vital importance of land issues to socio-economic development in Africa is unquestionable. Land is very crucial in any production within a society whereby equitable and secure access to land is a critical factor for the development. It provides a sense of security in contexts where formal employment opportunities and access to resources are limited. Land resources continue to have major historical, cultural and spiritual significance (Askew, Maganga, & Odgaard, 2013).

In East Africa, land plays a leading role in sustainable economic development whereby large population depends on it in industry, urban life and agricultural livelihood. It remains the fundamental importance to large majority of people. Land provides the means of existence that is in food production and without it, man is poor Evans (2013). This is also true for Tanzania whereby to a large extent, a majority (about 80 per cent) of her population depends on land for agriculture. The remaining 20% of the population use land for other activities such as, industries, forestry, pastoralist and fishery (Navuri, 2011). Although a new generation of farmers and pastoralists has emerged, they still seem to favor cash crop cultivation and animal keeping with the main problem again remaining to be land shortage.

Other land problems that face both farmers and pastoralists include the reality that while population is growing fast, the land resource is stagnant and hence creating a situation for conflict to arise. However, despite the importance of land, it has posed many challenges and become a source of conflict in Africa. A study done by Yamano (2005) revealed that, land is increasingly becoming a source of conflicts in Africa,

where land access had traditionally been characterized as relatively egalitarian. Conflict is hereby defined as a difference in preferred outcomes in a bargaining situation. It is a disagreement between two or more parties in search for a particular interest such as social structural, religious sentiments racial or ethnic differences (Goldstein & Pevehouse 2006). Again Mpangala (2002) defined conflict as a confrontation that arises from incompatible interests of opposing parties.

In Tanzania, land conflict is not a new phenomenon. Rwechungura (2011) reported that, even though Tanzania remains relatively comfortable with arable tracts estimated at 44 million hectares for various uses, mostly agricultural activities, the country is not free from land related conflicts. The country has been experiencing an increasing magnitude of conflict among land-users particularly between cultivators and pastoralists. This argument is supported by William, (1999) who argues that, conflicts often erupt between pastoralists and farmers over access to land and water resources. This situation happens due to the farmers' expansion into marginal lands resulting into competition between livestock and crop production.

Furthermore, poor distribution of people engaged in farming has always created problems and sometimes leading to deadly conflicts. In Tanzania, areas such Monduli District, Arumeru, Longido district in Arusha region. Other areas include: Kilosa and Kilombero districts in Morogoro region; Kilindi and Handeni districts in Tanga region, and Mbarali district in Mbeya region. All of these are places that have experienced land conflicts between farmers and pastoralists in recent years. These conflicts have mostly resulted into loss of lives, destruction of property and the turning the areas into war zones, as they try to clinch the right to use the

land (Chawene, 2012). Land conflicts among agro-pastoral communities have been major threats to the community and a nation at large. This is because land resource is the most useful for both crops cultivation and livestock keepers.

The relationship between peasants versus pastoralists in Tanzania is one of ambivalence. There are cases of communal warfare, for example Kilosa killings of 2008 and peaceful coexistence (Benjaminsen, et al 2009). In Tanzania pastoralists in-migrations toward peasants territory is an overriding phenomenon and is unlikely going to be halted (Mattee & Shem, 2006), although the Agriculture and Livestock Policy of 1997 discourage any movement of pastoralists with their cattle.

In Tanzania both modern and traditional mechanisms are employed to resolve land conflict. Takashi, (2005) suggests a combination of both formal methods (village land committee, village council, police forces and courts) and informal methods (traditional rulers, elders, groups) However, previous studies done on resolving land conflict emphasized on modern mechanisms such as negotiation, arbitration, mediation, reconciliation, adjudication as pointed by UN Charter chapter six, article 33. For example, Schellenberg (1996) pointed out that, the approaches of conflict resolution should base upon BATNA (Best Alternative to Negotiated an Agreement). Schellenberg identifies five different methodologies practices that can lead to conflict resolution, leaving out the contribution of local leaders towards land conflict management, therefore this study intended to assess the contribution of local leaders towards land conflicts management among farmers and pastoralists in Monduli district in Arusha region.

2. Methodology

2.1. Study Area

The study was conducted in MonduliJuu ward in Monduli district, Arusha region whereby pastoralism and agriculture are the backbone of many livelihood. It is located in the northeastern section of the country. Monduli District has an area of 6,419 km². Km and is situated between latitudes 3.00" to 4.50' south of the Equator and Longitudes 36.50' to 36.45' East of Greenwich Meridian. Monduli district border with Arumeru district to the East, Ngorongoro and Karatu districts to the West, Mbulu and Babati to the South and Simanjiro district to the Southeast and Longido district to the North. The district is divided into 3 divisions Manyara, Makuyuni and Kisongo. The district has a population of 158, 929 people (NBS 2012). The major ethnic group is the Maasai. The district of MonduliJuu was selected because it has a large number of pastoralists and famers who have been involved in frequent conflicts over land.

2.2. Data Collection Methods

This study employed both primary and secondary methods in data collection. The combination of methods was used for aim of increasing legality and consistency of data collection. The primary methods used are questionnaire and face to face interview as instruments of collecting data from farming communities in MonduliJuu ward. Secondary data

was collected through documentation. Valuable background information was collected from published and unpublished literature. These are such as Monduli District Council Reports, books, journals, reports and newspapers and website. A pilot test was carried out at MonduliMjini; a convenience sample of 10 questionnaires was distributed to respondents and returned questionnaires enabled a researcher to refine the survey instruments. To improve the comprehensibility and clarity of the questionnaire, difficult words were relieved with simpler words where possible. Statistical Package for Social Science version 21 used to process and analyzes data by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The study included 100 respondents from MonduliJuu ward which composed of 45 farmers, 45 pastoralists and 10 local leaders. The sample size was obtained by using the following formula developed by Yamane (1967);

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

3. Results and Analysis

3.1. Sources of land conflicts among farmers and pastoralists communities

The study sought to determine how poor land planning, population increase and lack of sustainable land use education are the sources of land conflict among farmer-herder community. The Analysis shows that 71.1 % of both farmers and pastoralists said that poor land planning is the source of land conflict, 88.9 % of both farmers and pastoralist confirmed that population increase is the source of land conflicts and 40 % of bot farmers and pastoralist argued that lack of sustainable land use education is the sources of land conflicts among farmers and pastoralists. The finding of this study indicated that, population increase contributed to the conflicts among farmers and pastoralists. Similar findings on source of land conflict were reported by Jones-Casey and Knox (2011) in Mali that farmers have begun raising livestock or increased the size of their herds. These livelihood changes combined with population growth and declining herder mobility, have contributed to the increased area of land for cultivation, as well as the increased concentration of human and animals on arable land, and contributed to competition over scarce arable land. As shown in table 1 below:

Table 1: Sources of Land Conflicts

Category	Farmers		Pastoralists		Total	
	Count	% within group	Count	% within Group	Count	%
poor land planning	12	26.7	20	44.4	32	35.6
population increase	25	55.6	15	33.3	40	44.4
lack of sustainable land use education	8	17.8	10	22.2	18	20
Total	45	100	45	100	90	100

Source, Field data, 2017

On the basis of the interviews conducted with local leaders they argued that sources of land conflicts among farmers and

pastoralist are; Lack of education on land use management. The local leaders clarified that because pastoralists and farmers lack education which can stir conservation of the exhausted land and management of land resources, large degraded land is left unutilized and people compete for the remained small arable land. Increase in the number of both peasants and pastoralists.

During the interview, local leaders were asked to give their opinions on what are the sources of land conflicts in their communities. It was revealed that in recent years there has been a rapid increase in the population of farmers and pastoralists. Therefore such a population increase exceeded the carrying capacity of the available land resources in the study area. They further explained that there are other groups of pastoralists migrating into Monduli district from other villages such as Eastern Arumeru, Mfereji and Kitumbeine.

Interviews conducted with local leaders revealed that the number of livestock is increasing day to day while the land resources are rapidly deteriorating. This is in part contributed by the immigration of large groups of pastoralists with large number of livestock in the study area. Similar findings on sources of land conflict were reported by Jones-Casey and Knox (2011) in Mali that farmers have begun raising livestock or increased the size of their herds. These livelihood changes combined with population growth and declining herder mobility, have contributed to the increased area of land for cultivation, as well as the increased concentration of human and animals on arable land, and contributed to competition over scarce arable land. However, the UN-HABITAT (2012) reported that land and natural resource issues are almost never the sole cause of conflict. Land conflicts commonly become violent when linked to wider processes of political exclusion, social discrimination, economic marginalization, and a perception that peaceful action is no longer a viable strategy for change.

The interviews further revealed that the incidence of land use conflicts between pastoralists and peasants is very serious in the study area. From the interviews the respondents outlined the indicators for the existence of land use conflicts in the study area. The indicators mentioned include; (i) Increase in the number of cases pertaining to farmers-pastoralists conflicts. The high incidence of land use cases reported in villages and wards in the study area symbolizes that land use conflict is serious despite the existence of local leaders which are mandated in negotiating land use conflicts at the grassroots level. (ii) Weak awareness campaigns about land issues to farmers and pastoralists. The interviewees declared that general village meeting which is usually used to disseminate information to villagers are rarely arranged by the local leaders. On the other hand, once they are arranged only a few numbers of people do attend. Moreover local leaders have little knowledge on education pertaining to land policies, laws, and rights governing the use of land resources. Based on this situation, the land use conflict could occur in the study area. (iii) Lack of clear boundaries between cultivation area and grazing land. The unclear boundary between plots used for cropping and land for grazing is among the indicators of land use conflict between peasants and pastoralists since the

two groups are likely to interfere each other as areas for cropping and grazing are not legally allocated.

The indicators provided by the respondents point to weak local leaders and governance structures to resolve conflicts. The issue of low level of awareness amongst farmers and pastoralist was found to be effective, weak awareness campaigning and clarity over boundaries between cultivation and grazing land. Overall the interviews clearly illustrate the existence of conflict between farmers and pastoralists. An example of serious conflict between farmers and pastoralist which has similar nature with the study findings was reported by Odhiambo (2008) in Ngorongoro. The conflict represented by the recurrent skirmishes between the Loita Maasai and the Batemi around the villages of Enguserosambu and Kisangiro in Loliondo and Salesale Divisions. The conflict between the Batemi and the LoitaMaasai has been attributed to “chaotic and disorderly arrangement in land management and administration”, which was highlighted by the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters (The Shivji Commission) as one of the critical causes of land-related conflicts in Tanzania. It is instructive that there are no clearly marked and agreed boundaries between Salesale and Loliondo Divisions as there has been no systematic demarcation of the divisions. In the absence of a systematic demarcation of the boundaries of the divisions, it is not surprising that village boundaries are equally unclear, leaving room for contest and conflict.

3.2. Role of local leaders in land conflicts management among farmers and pastoralists communities

Another objective that the study sought to establish was the role played by local leaders in conflict management among farmers and pastoralist communities. The findings of the study indicated that 14.44% of the respondents agreed that, they were playing an important role while 24.44% disagreed. The respondents were also required to indicate whether the local leaders played a role in managing conflicts and their responses indicated that only 22.22% agreed while 38.88% disagreed. These results indicate a dissatisfaction of the community on the role of the local leaders to resolve and manage land conflicts. The findings agree with the findings of Nzogela (2014) which found that for the land conflicts to be resolved by amicable means through the local leaders depends on the level and severity of the conflict. In situations where conflicts are severe amicable means fail.

Figure 1: Role of local leaders in land conflicts management among farmers and pastoralists communities.

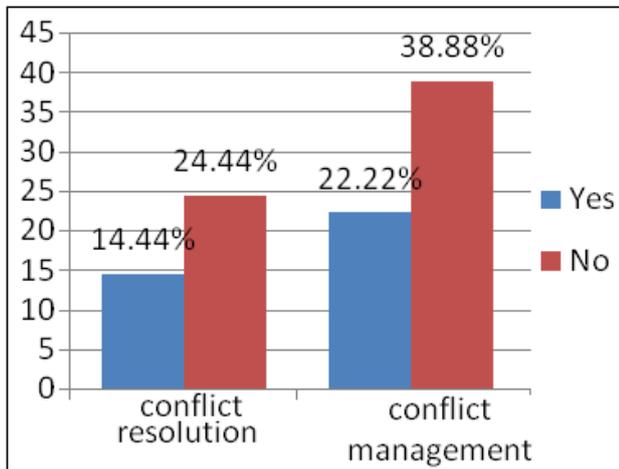


Figure 1: Field data, 2017

3.3. Effectiveness of local leaders on land conflict management among farmers and pastoralists

In this part the respondents were asked to say if the role played by local leaders is effective in resolving and managing conflict among farmers and pastoralist communities. The finding shows that the role performed by local leaders are less effective to control the occurrence of land use conflicts involving pastoralists and farmers in the study area.

Table 2: Effectiveness of local leaders in conflict management

Status of effectiveness	Frequency	Percent of response
Ineffective	10	11.1
Fairly effective	30	33.3
Effective	30	33.3
Very effective	20	22.2
Total	90	100

Source: Field data, 2017

The above findings indicate that 11.1% of the respondents rated the effectiveness of local leaders in land use conflict management as ineffective, 33.3% rated it as fairly effective and effective respectively while 22.2% rated it has very effective.

The ineffectiveness of land use conflict management was highlighted by responses from interviews in the following aspects;

- 1) Lack of clear insight on land access and land use. Such an ambiguity led to the conflict since some pastoralists used to graze the livestock despite the fact that they do not own land and there is no clear grazing land allocated for their livestock,
- 2) Poor education of most of the local leaders on how they can effectively mediate land use conflicts by using village tribunals. The local leaders are less aware about the 1999 Land Act No. 5 other than applying traditional approaches to reach a conflict management. This reduces the effectiveness in the management of land use conflicts.
- 3) Poor performance by the land use planning division results into poor village land use planning. There are no clear areas allocated for a specific use of a particular development sector. There is no allocated land by the

land use planning division which can be used as grazing land for pastoralists in villages.

Poor land use planning in villages accelerates the occurrence of land use conflict in the study area. This is supported by findings from a study conducted by Odhiambo (2008) which revealed amongst other things that, competition for access to range resources remains the major cause of conflict in pastoral areas, the situation has been exacerbated by among others, population pressures, climate change, industrialization and globalization, which threaten and potentially undermine the capacity of pastoralists and their local authority institutions to manage such competition, increasing their vulnerability and constraining their coping strategies.

3.4. Best approaches for Conflicts Management between Farmers and Pastoralists

Interviews with local leaders put forward several strategies which can improve effectiveness in addressing land use conflicts between farmers and pastoralists. Participation with local leaders can improve strategies of land conflict management. Local leaders are highly respected and listened by their communities, and therefore if they are used they can much contribute in conflict management and mitigation amongst conflicting communities in Monduli district. This statement supported by Williams (2011) asserts the need for traditional societies in Africa are reputed to hold secrets of peacemaking located in their ways, formed from centuries in customs before the disruption of colonization. The findings by William (2011) revealed that, revival of land committees building their capacity in land conflict management is a must to the village land committees so that they can improve the performance in land use conflict management. Land committees would help in the preparation of land use planning to allocate grazing areas and farming areas to reduce the interference occurring between peasants and pastoralists which further on lead to clashes amongst the two groups at study. Wehrmann (2008) also noted that land conflicts can be resolved with minimal state intervention and even without any state intervention at all.

From the above findings it is observed that the flow of information about land use planning and land use strategies should not be biased as they are a source for conflicts over land. The information pertaining to the land use must be shared between farmers, pastoralists and local authority leaders to encourage more participation between stakeholders. Land use planning and use of participatory approaches involving farmers and pastoralists in dealing with land management including land allocation and utilization must be taken into high consideration. This applies not only to minor inheritance or boundary conflicts but also to extended land use conflicts concerning common property and natural resources. If the affected parties agree on settling the dispute together they will propose the best way of managing conflict. These alternatives are; negotiations and a joint establishment of rules and sanctions regarding the use of the common property, defining who may use the land and for what purpose at what times. Addition to that village authority and tribunals must provide intensive awareness campaigns on land use issues, including

sustainable land utilization, parallel with effective implementation of land use guiding policies. Lind and Tyler (1988) insist the use of participatory approach in conflict resolution. They noted that procedures that allow disputing parties to vent their emotions, voice their concerns, and participate in determining the final decision as providing fairer outcomes than those situations where one or both parties are less involved in general. The suggestion for the involvement of local leaders in land use conflict management revealed by the interview is similar to the research findings reported by Hussein et al. (1999) that apart from changing patterns of resource use and increasing competition for resources, the breakdown of 'traditional' mechanisms governing resource management contributed to the increasing land use conflict. Traditionally, land ownership patterns in Tanzania were based on clans, lineages and tribes, and therefore, people highly feared to violate the traditional prescriptions of land ownership.

4. Conclusion

Based on the study results and data analysis, one can conclude that the main sources of land conflicts among farmers and pastoralists in MonduliJuu was in part due to population increase, poor land planning and the lack of sustainable land use education. The study also makes the conclusion that both farmers and pastoralists are dissatisfied with the role of the local leaders in resolving and managing land conflicts. The study notes that the role played by local leaders has not been very effective in resolving conflicts. The findings however indicate that the role of local leaders cannot be totally neglected because in some instances it has helped to resolve some of the conflicts, particularly those which had not reached a severe stage. The study goes on to conclude that participation of local leaders can improve strategies of land conflict management because local leaders are highly respected and listened by their communities. Thus, the study concludes by noting that capacity building of land committees is important in order to be able to realize the role that is played by local leaders in resolving land conflicts.

5. Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following are advanced as recommendations that can enhance the contribution of local leaders in land conflict management in Tanzania:

- Monduli district council undertakes increased efforts in capacity building through constant provision of education to local leaders pertaining to laws and regulations guiding sustainable land to the local leaders who most of them are members of the ward land tribunals. This can be carried out through formal training sessions and through frequent workshops and awareness rising among both the leaders and the local population. Capacity building will also contribute to the improvement of local leaders in land conflict management. This can be done by council legal officers to arrange seminars once every year for all the members of ward tribunals.
- It is further recommended that the government of the United Republic of Tanzania should implement its land use planning policy and other initiatives to end land conflicts. Local leaders need to be more involved,

particularly in the allocation of agricultural land, grazing land, open spaces, and areas for institutions and land for other uses.

- Allocation of land based on land use planning must also go hand in hand with the provision of security of tenure to avoid the process of land grabbing by a few well to do individuals who may use corrupt means to acquire large pieces of land.
- There is also greater need to enhance citizen participation of all stakeholders including farmers and pastoralist. This can be achieved by strengthening local grassroots organizations for governance to avoid conflicts.

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