

# Land Use Conflicts among Farmers and Agro-Pastoralists in Mvomero District, Tanzania: A Gendered Perspective

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Abstract: Land Use Conflicts (LUCs) over resource use are ever increasing in Tanzania. This happen inspite of several government and non-government efforts to contain them and their socio-economic impacts. The conflicts have adverse impacts on the gender roles of farmers and agro-pastoralists. This paper analyses the causes and impact of the persistent land use conflicts on gender roles in Kilosa and Mvomero Districts. The study from which this paper is based adopted cross-sectional research design and involved 124 respondents. Structured questionnaires and checklist for key informants were the main tools for data collection. Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to establish the characteristics of the study sample. Binary logistic regression was used to estimate the predictor variables for the land use conflicts. The findings indicate that there were changes in gender roles in participation to some activities such as land preparation for cultivation, spraying pesticides, watering crops, looking after livestock and treating sick animals. Sex, residence status, human and livestock population pressure were important predictors for land use conflicts (p<0.05). It is concluded that LUCs are contributed by population pressure of both human and livestock in the light of declining land resources, and lack of security of land tenure to farmers and agro-pastoralists. In view of the findings, it is recommended that the government and non-governmental organisations should assist farmers and agro-pastoralists to develop and implement gendered land use plans to help peaceful co-existence and sharing of resources between farmers and agro-pastoralists.

**Keywords**: Land use, agro-pastoralists, gender roles, resource use

#### 1.0 Introduction

Land Use Conflicts (LUC) is a global problem, and Tanzania is not an exceptional. Land is an important asset for human survival and development. It is a major source of income and livelihoods for most rural people as it is for urban dwellers. Land is not only a source of livelihood and the most valuable economic asset but it also carries spiritual values (Kironde, 2012). Given its importance, access to and availability of land resources is critical to ensure real and long lasting improvements in social, economic and political well-being, specifically for vulnerable societies such as agro-pastoralists, gatherers and farmers that are prone to instability and conflicts (Barume, 2014). The ownership and utilization of land as a productive resource and as an important asset have directly and indirectly defined the dimensions of most conflicts involving man, since time immemorial.

Land ownership is widely reported to be the source of conflicts between farmers and pastoralists as well as among farmers and pastoralists themselves, at varying levels (Barume, 2014). In recent years, conflicts between farmers and pastoralists on the use of land have become more frequent and violent. The increased conflicts between farmers and pastoralists is attributable to

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the intensification of production activities that are necessitated by increased human population and development in the light of declining land resources and environmental stress in a situation of land governance deficits (Adisa and Adekunle, 2010; Kironde, 2012). The scramble for land among different livelihood groups has been critical due to increasing human population and land-based development activities. The expansion of agricultural activities into pasture lands and the expansion of grazing activities into the cropping lands result in the occurrence of conflicts between farmers and agro-pastoralists. In the conflicts involving farmers and pastoralists, women and children are the most affected groups of the population. As a coping mechanism to the conflicts, gender roles and relations may also change, and the change has varied impact on men, women and children.

Farmer-pastoralist tensions in Tanzania were reported for the first time in the 1950s, especially where both pastoralists and farmers competed for land use (Benjaminsen et al., 2009). In Kilosa and Mvomero Districts, land use conflicts can be traced way back to 1945 and in the 1960s when there were several skirmishes between the Kaguru farmers and Parakuyo pastoralists in Kilosa (now part of Mvomero District). According to Benjaminsen et al. (2009), the first serious encounter between the two groups took place in 1967 when swords, spears, and machetes were used, and many people were killed. Since then, the conflict between farmers and pastoralists groups in the area and in many other areas of Tanzania have been recurring for a long time, claiming lives of many innocent people and creating economic problems to the nation. In recent years, the occurrences of such conflicts have become more frequent and violent, resulting in loss of property and lives. For example, it was reported that in 2000 about 38 farmers died in Kilosa (Benjaminsen et al., 2009). In 2014/2015, 15 people died and 14 people were severely injured in Kiteto District (Mwamfupe, 2014). As a result of these conflicts, there is change in gender roles and relations as women are compelled to take on new roles in their households in the absence of their husbands and male children. In other words, women become breadwinners (Kemirere, 2007).

According to Mazurana and Proctor (2013), conflicts affect gender relations at different levels. Conflicts do transform power structures and inequalities that exist within societies and may affect power structures at the community, family, and household levels. However, the effects of conflicts on gender relations are diverse in nature. Conflicts change men's and women's roles, including marital relations and household burden-sharing. However, the impact of conflicts on gender relations is a contextual issue and, thus, location specific empirical evidence is required to establish their causes and impacts on gender roles and relations. Such information is very useful to inform and support the initiatives undertaken to control their occurrences as well as mitigating their effects on gender roles and relations.

Many studies have established the level of awareness, nature, causes, impacts and management of the farmers-pastoralists land use conflicts in Tanzania (Mwamfupe, 2014; King, 2013; Msuya, 2013; Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009; Kajembe *et al.*, 2009). However, there is still paucity on the impact of land use conflicts on gender roles and relations. This paper analyses the impact of land use conflicts between farmers and pastoralists based on gender relations by identifying gender roles and relations, determining gendered impact of Land Use Conflicts (LUCs) on access to and control over resources between women and men, and determining the extent of LUCs and factors contributing to the persistence of LUCs between farmers and agro-pastoralists in the study area.



### 2.0 Methodology

The study on which this paper is based was conducted in Mvomero District, Morogoro Region, Tanzania in 2016. The District was selected purposively because it is among the places where Land Use Conflicts (LUCs) between farmers and pastoralists have become more perilous. Four villages of Kambala, Dihombo, Bungoma and Hembeti were purposively selected based on frequent outbreaks of farmers and pastoralists LUCs. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design to establish the prevailing levels of the LUCs and its impact on gender roles and relations. A combination of systematic and simple random sampling techniques was used to obtain a sample of 124 participants. Out of these, 61.3% were men and 38.7% were women. The sampling units included an individual farmer and pastoralist. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information on socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, factors for the persistence of LUCs and gender roles in the study area. In addition, qualitative data were collected through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving community members who were not leaders and through Key Informant Interviews with local leaders, Village and Ward Officials to compliment information collected through the questionnaire. Descriptive statistical analysis was done to establish the socio-economic profile of the study population. Binary logistic regression analysis was employed to analyse factors contributing to the persistence of LUCs between the farmers and pastoralists.

The binary logistic regression model was specified as follows:

$$Log (p/1-p) = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + \dots e_i$$

Where: Log [p/(1-p)] is a logarithm of chance of being involved in land use conflicts or not, and P represents chances that an individual is involved in a land use conflict

$$B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3$$
..... $B_nX_n + \varepsilon$ 

 $\varepsilon = \text{Error term}$ 

 $X_1 - X_n = Predictors$ 

X1= Age (measured in years since one was born)

X2 = Sex (0 = If female, 1 = If male)

X3= Education level (0 =No formal education, 1 = Formal education)

X4= Residence status (0= migrant, 1 = Indigenous).

X5= Influx of farmers in grazing land (0= Not a perceived cause, 1= A perceived cause)

X6 = Human and livestock population pressure (0= If it is not a factor, 1= If it is a factor)

X7= Boundaries problem (0 = If it is not a factor, 1= If it is a factor)

X8= Ethnic differences (0= If it is not a factor, 1= If it is a factor)

X9=Corruption practices and political problem (0= If they are not a factor, 1= If yes)

X10= Land governance deficiency (0= If it is not a factor, 1= If it is a factor)

X11= Shortage of grazing land (0= If it is not a factor, 1= If it is a factor)

#### 3.0 Findings and Discussions

## 3.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The findings on socio-demographic characteristics as presented in Table 1, reveal that the majority of men (71.0%) and women (70.9%) were between the age ranges of 25 and 54 years. The findings further revealed that 67.1% of men and 43.8% of women had attained the primary level of education. Moreover, the majority of men (89.5%) and women (75%) who took part in the study were married. It was also found that crop farming and livestock keeping were their

main economic activities. The family sizes of the surveyed households ranged from 1 to 18 members, with the mean size of 5.82. Furthermore, the majority of women (89.6%) and men (67.1%) were indigenous/born or raised in the area of residence as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (Percent n=124)

Variable	Categories			
	S	<b>Male</b> (%)	Female (%)	
	Below 35	17.1	12.5	
A	35 - 44	26.3	41.7	
Age	45 - 54	27.6	16.7	
	55 and above	28.9	29.2	
Marital status	Single	5.3	2.1	
	Married	89.5	75.0	
	Widow/Widower	1.3	16.7	
	Separated	3.9	6.3	
Occupation	Farmer	59.7	40.3	
•	Pastoralist	61.3	38.7	
Education level	No Formal education	10.5	41.7	
	Primary	67.1	43.8	
	Secondary	13.2	6.3	
	College / University	9.2	8.3	
Residence status	Native	67.1	89.6	
	Migrant	32.9	10.4	
Duration of residence	1-5 Years	8.0	20.0	
	6-15 Years	8.0	20.0	
	16-25 Years	36.0	20.0	
	>26 years	48.0	40.0	
Household size	1 - 6 members	48.7	45.8	
	7-12 members	32.9	39.6	
	13- 18 members	18.4	14.6	

#### 3.2 Land Use Conflicts

Findings as presented in Table 2 reveal that farmers perceived the extent of conflicts to be more severe. Such conflicts have also been reported to have devastating impacts including loss of properties such as crops and damage of properties, killing of the cattle and other important household properties.

Table 2: Perception on extent of land use conflicts (n=124)

Extent of LUCs	Frequency	Percentage	
Most Severe	59	47.2	
Moderate	30	24.2	
Less Severe	35	28.2	

Nearly half (47.2%) of the respondents perceived the extent (level) of LUCs in the study area to be more severe while about a quarter (28.2%) of the respondents perceived the level of conflict to be less severe, compared to the previous five years preceding the study. Moreover, the perception that LUCs are more severe is attributable to the frequent outbreaks of farmers and agro-pastoralists conflicts in the area which have been recurring in the study area during the past five to ten year preceding this study. During the key informants interview it was reported that these conflicts have had unbearable consequences economically and socially.



The impacts of the LUCs have had many consequences including the hatred behaviours that develop between farmers and pastoralists' communities. During FGDs, it was frequently mentioned by many participants that LUCs were becoming more serious and result in devastating impacts. For example, one of the respondent who was among the victims of these conflicts reported that:

"…the problem of LUCs is becoming critical, I don't remember an exact number of people who have been killed or injured but some people's lives have been lost in these conflicts … they are also becoming more frequent and violent. …I am also the victim of such conflicts; you can see the scar on my face…" (Farmer FGD - Bungoma village).

Other scholars, including Mwamfupe (2015) have also reported that LUCs between pastoralists and farmers in Tanzania have led to loss of properties and lives. The author further observes that the conflicts are frequently occurring and the extent of damage has also increased.

#### 3.3 Factors Contributing to Land Use Conflicts

Binary logistic regression was used to estimate the factors that contribute to the persistence of land use conflicts. Findings as presented in Table 3 reveal that residence status of the respondents, population pressure of humans and animals were important predictors of land use conflicts (p< 0.05). These findings imply that, as more people and animals enter the area they exert a big pressure on existing resources, hence in absence of good land and enforcements of land use plans conflicts are more likely to happen due to the competition of existing limited resources. The findings of this study compare well with other scholars who have also reported that in the light of declining land resources, the identified factors are important in explaining occurrence and persistence of land use conflicts between farmers and pastoralists. Other scholars, including Audu (2013), UNFT (2012), Gefu and Kalowole (2006) and Meur *et al.* (2006) have also reported that population pressure of both human being and livestock and land governance deficiency are the factors contributing to the persistence of LUCs in most developing countries in sub Saharan Countries.

Sex of the respondent was among the important predictors of land use conflict (p< 0.05) this imply that there was a difference of men and women involvement in LUCs, this is consistent with many literatures on LUCs in which more men are likely to be involved in the conflicts. However, the impacts of the conflicts are more severe to women and children who are left behind when such conflicts happen (Kamirere, 2007). In absence of men who have some special gender roles in the household, women are compelled to take over the roles that were undertaken by male members of household including making major household decision over use of the resources.

Findings from the qualitative data analysis revealed that some of the factors which did not show significant contribution in predicting the occurrence of LUCs were also important predictors in varying contexts. For example, it was found that mismanagement of land use plan and inadequate enforcement of the existing by-laws were hampered by corruption practices and poor political commitment. In one of the FGDs with pastoralists, it was found that there was some laxity in dealing with the conflicts. This practices of poor accountability of local government



leaders created mistrust which exacerbated tensions among farmers and agro conflicts-pastoralists. During an FGD with male Agro-Pastoralists, the governance issues were strongly echoed:

"...we wish our court cases to be decided on and resolved at the district level because village government leadership tends to favour farmers, especially in setting the amount of compensation for crop damage... whenever we demand for our rights the village leadership calls in the police and the problems remain unsolved" (Male pastoralist-Kambala village).

Table 3: Factors for the LUCs between farmers and pastoralists (n=124)

Predictors variables	В	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Age	0.366	0.322	1.297	0.255	1.443
Sex	-1.872	0.850	4.858	0.028	0.154
Education level	.473	0.902	0.275	0.600	1.605
Residence	-2.792	1.031	7.339	0.007	0.061
Influx of farmers to the grazing land	0.998	0.671	2.210	0.137	2.712
Human and livestock population pressure	-1.546	0.778	3.943	0.047	0.213
Boundaries problem	-1.466	1.198	1.496	0.221	0.231
Ethnic differences	0.600	0.783	0.588	0.443	1.823
Corruption and political problems	1.348	0.942	2.049	0.152	3.850
Land governance deficit	1.140	0.896	1.619	0.203	3.126
Shortage grazing land	-0.757	0.647	1.369	0.242	0.469
Constant	5.486	3.196	2.946	0.086	241.331

On the other hand, the farmers too do not trust some district level officials whom they accuse of acting in favour of the pastoralists. In one of the FGDs with farmers, they had this strong observation:

"...District level officials always favour the pastoralists because livestock's in our area is considered an important source of revenue for government officials, and in some ways we feel these officials have informal communication with the owners of the livestock....some high ranked politicians also own livestock in our area....thus they influence decisions and make pastoralists more arrogant..." (Farmer -Dihombo village)

Similar findings have also been reported in literature that poor governance practises, corruption and inadequate political will in taking stern measures towards ending such conflicts have caused LUCs to persist (Mwamfupe, 2015; Benjaminsen and Boubacar, 2008; Moritz, 2006; Maganga, 2007; Bayart, 1993).

#### 3.4 Gender roles in farmers' and pastoralists' communities

Gender roles and relations in farmers and pastoralists' communities manifest themselves in diverse activities. These include looking after cattle, taking care of livestock kept near home, performing dairy related activities, finding food for the family, constructing and repairing livestock sheds, preparing land for cultivation, watering crops, spraying pesticides and transporting harvested crop products for various purposes. Traditionally, some activities are perceived as men's or women's activities. Following recent resurgence of land use conflicts in the area, the study on which this paper is based used the previous five years' period preceding the



study as a reference period, hence the "before" and "after" LUCs in the pastoralists and farmers' communities.

The findings on changes in the gender roles before and after the re-occurrence of the LUCs are presented in Table 4. It was found that there was a slight shift in some of the activities in terms of men's as well as women's participation during the previous five years. For example, due to security concerns, fewer women (6.5%) continued to undertake this activity. Traditionally, looking after cattle in pastoral communities is a male dominated activity as confirmed by this study. During FGDs, one of the respondents commented on the dramatic change in women's participation in animal grazing and reported that:

"... although looking after cattle is a men's major role, women were also used to performing it even away from home in the past, before land use conflicts.... but today the cases have changed because of insecurity caused by frequent outbreaks of farmers and pastoralists land use conflicts. This has reduced women's movement away from home.... and therefore the task of looking after cattle remains to a great extent in the hands of young men and boys, leaving women to perform domestic roles and taking care of livestock kept around the compound...' (Pastoralist-Kambala village).

The findings of this study, as presented in Table 4, reveal that most of the activities undertaken by farmers and agro-pastoralists have not changed significantly before and after the occurrence of LUCs. Most of the key activities such as land preparation, cultivation, planting, weeding and harvesting are done by both men and women. There is a very slight difference in percentages of the perceived male or female dominated activities (see Table 4).

Table 4: Changes in gender roles among farmers and pastoralists (Percent n=124)

Variables	Gender roles in 2010 (%)			Gender roles in 2016 (%)		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
Look after cattle	54.8	21.0	24.19	80.6	6.5	12.9
Take care of livestock near home	00	54.8	45.2	00	51.6	48.4
Dairy related activities	4.8	93.5	1.6	8.1	88.7	3.2
Find food for the family	40.3	22.6	37.1	64.5	8.1	27.4
Treat sick animals	77.4	00	22.6	74.2	4.8	21.0
Construct, repair livestock shed	95.2	00	4.8	90.3	3.2	6.5
Build house / hut	14.5	61.3	24.2	17.7	33.9	48.4
Land preparation	56.5	19.4	24.2	64.5	8.1	27.4
Sowing seeds	17.7	6.5	75.8	41.9	11.3	46.8
Weeding	9.7	9.7	80.6	37.1	11.3	51.6
Watering crops	61.7	3.3	35.0	75.0	8.3	16.7
Spraying paste killers	88.7	1.6	9.7	90.3	6.5	3.2
Pruning crops	29.0	12.9	58.1	51.6	14.5	33.9
Bird scaring	19.7	29.5	50.8	36.1	23.0	41.0
Harvesting	32.3	3.2	64.5	54.8	6.5	38.7
Transportation crops to storage	58.1	3.2	38.7	72.6	6.5	21.0

Besides some changes in gender roles, it was also found that some traditional women gender roles, especially among the pastoralists, have not changed significantly. For example, in the dairy related roles, women are the majority (93.5%). The activity of taking care of livestock kept near



home is also still dominated by women. A slight change has been found in this activity whereby 54.8% of women reported that they engaged in this activity five years preceding this study as compared to 51.6% during the study. The trend of women continuing to take part in their traditional roles has also been reported in literature (Macha, 2011; Blench, 2004). Women take care of livestock kept near the compound (boma), requiring particular attention such as pregnant cows, newly born calves, injured and sick animals. Women ensure that calves have ample suckling time and enough supply of feeds. This implies that LUCs did not change this role as it remains to be a women's major role before and even after the conflicts. In most of the traditional pastoralist societies there is a clear division of labour which is difficult to change. During a focus group discussion, it was further revealed that, despite security concerns, some activities will continue to be undertaken by women. Nevertheless, the occurrence of LUCs has restricted women's mobility. In one of the FGDs with agro-pastoralists, men emphasised that there are some specialized skills that women have in taking care of the animals and this is more likely to continue:

"...taking care of livestock around the compound (boma) needs special attention...you need skills to identify and care for the sick and pregnant cows and calves. This role has to be done by skilled women who, besides doing it, train and orient young boys on managing such duties..." (Pastoralist FGD- Hembeti village).

#### 4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings of this study have revealed that LUCs have significant impact on gender relations, particularly on gender roles among the agro-pastoralists and farmers' communities. Generally, the respondents perceived that LUCs were negatively impacting on their livelihood. They were becoming more frequent and violent, causing injuries and loss of lives as well as destruction of crops and properties. Apart from cultural norms, LUCs increased and reduced the possibility of men and women to assume certain roles. It has also been revealed that roles such as land preparation for cultivation, spraying pesticides, watering crops, transportation of crop products, looking after cattle, and treating sick animals are still dominated by women. Lack of transformative changes in some gender roles is attributable to socio-cultural contexts which embrace male dominance and the negative impact of LUCs on women's mobility. An increase in human and livestock population has resulted in more pressure and tension. There are inadequate land use plans in areas where farmers and livestock keepers compete for limited land use and rights. Also, there is weak enforcement of land use rights and other resources where such plans exist, which is attributable to poor governance.

In view of the findings of this study, it is recommended to the government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in the area to enforce appropriate legal actions. NGOs should continue to advocate the gendered approaches in setting land use plans for farmers and agro-pastoralists. This can be achieved through gender training and campaigns to ensure gender equality as well as stimulating and coordinating gendered debates for change in socio-cultural norms against male dominance. Such dominance should be eliminated in order to improve gender relations.

Local government authorities should use participatory approaches in making land use plans and ensure enforcement of laws and by-laws on land plans in order to improve security among



smallholder farmers and agro-pastoralists. This can be done by establishing crop farming and livestock grazing zones for peaceful co-existence of these communities. Demarcation of the farmers and agro-pastoralists' land use plans should consider land carrying capacity to ensure sustainable use of the land and its resources.

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