

THE ROLE OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON LAND-BASED CONFLICTS IN KILOSA DISTRICT: 1967 TO 2010

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to identify the ways in which climate change had and still has played a significant role on the land-based conflicts in Kilosa district since 1967. The district has experienced a number of serious climatic catastrophes such as intensification of climate sensitive diseases, flooding, livestock deaths, droughts and widespread crop failures. These became the main cause of the conflicts, fighting and misunderstanding between different tribes particularly two major groups of farmers and herdsmen over the land use. A conflict between farmers and Pastoralist over land use in Kilosa has been rooted for many decades now but climate change has culminated the historical hostility in an inexorable way. With its location in the central part of Tanzania, Kilosa has a population of 438,175(National Census Report, 2012) in area of 14,265 Km² and the main economic activities people is livestock keeping and farming. Due to droughts, widespread crop failures and animals diseases herdsmen (pastoralists) were and are migrating from different parts of the district and looking for pastures and water sources available for themselves and their animals. In migration, they encounters with arable farmers who are total affected by widespread crop failures and floods, resultantly to land-based conflicts become a new episode in history. The paper highlights the critical role of climate change on land based conflicts in Kilosa district with view of suggesting coping mechanisms to be adopted by the societies.

Keywords: *climate change, Land based conflict, Arable farmers, herdsmen, droughts.*

Introduction

Climate change means a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to natural forces and human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods (United Nations, 1992) As one among the country which found in sub-Saharan Africa, Tanzania has experience serious climatic disasters which disturbed people's social life, economic activities as well as political flourishing since independence in 1961 due to climate change.

Though the country is regarded as most peaceful nation in East and Central part of Africa, emergence of conflicts between farmers and herdsmen in different parts of the country for example Kilosa in Morogoro region, Mbarali in Usangu plains in Mbeya region and Kiteto in Manyara region over the land use has become a new challenge toward peace and harmony existed since antiquity.

With its location in the central part of Tanzania, Kilosa district has experienced a number of serious climatic catastrophes such as intensification of climate sensitive diseases, flooding, droughts and widespread crop failures which together culminated the historical hostility between farmers and herdsmen that has been rooted for many decades now in an inexorable way.

Many people were killed, displaced and lost their properties since the occurrence of first serious fighting between farmers and pastoralist reported in 1967 where spears, sword and other crude weapons were used. Therefore, there is need to give a clear attentions on issues of climate and its role towards the occurrence of conflicts

Area of Study

Kilosa is one of the six districts of the Morogoro region. It is located in the central part of Tanzania in East Africa. The district lies between latitudes 6° south and 8° south and longitudes 36° 30' east and 38° east. The district is bordered by Tanga region in the north, Iringa region in south-west, Kilombero district in the south, Morogoro municipality in south-west and Mvomero district in east. The district covers 20 percent of the total area of Morogoro Region.

Before colonialism the area(present Kilosa) was under local chiefs who functioned as leaders, for example Kaguru and Sagara chiefs(Beidelman,2012) During Arabs slave trade of East Africa around 19th Century, Kilosa became a slaves station from different parts of present main Tanzania. According to National Bureau of Statistics report of 2012, Kilosa has a population of 438,175 as per the 2012 National Census in area of 14,265 Km². Mikumi National Park(which is one among the largest wild animals reserves in Africa) was established in 1964, today its covers 3,230 km² of the District. The climate typically consists of short rain period which starts in November and end in January followed by heavy rainfall between March and May. The district experiences dry season from June to October. The average annual temperature is 24.6°C

Kilosa has thirty six wards and 168 registered villages with ethnic groups such as the Kaguru, Sagara, Vidunda, Parakuyo Maasai, Barabaig, Gogo and Sukuma. The main economic activities of people in Kilosa are livestock keeping and farming. All these activities relying on the use of land as well as climate of the area hence triggered fluctuating conflict, competition and co-operation between settled farmers and pastoral or herder since independence.

Objectives

The main objective of this paper is to identify the way in which climate change had and still has played a significant role on the land-based conflicts in Kilosa district(Morogoro region,Tanzania) since 1967 to 2010. To do a historical analysis of the role played by climate change in culmination of conflicts between farmers and pastoralist and suggesting mitigation measures so as to prevent future occurrence.

Methodology

In this paper, the role of climate change has been highlighted and its implications on the occurrence of conflicts between pastoralist and farmers who were and are living in Kilosa district. Both primary and secondary data have been used especially from Kilosa district. Archival sources on population, Migration, Environmental and climatic related documents and reports were collected and analyzed basing on main objective. The presentation and discussion of findings limited with time as 1967 when the first major historical conflicts in Kilosa to 2010 when the last conflicts occurred with huge magnitude.

Presentation and discussion of findings

Flooding and Population: Environmental challenges such as floods and hunger in Kilosa District has and had important role to the occurrence of conflicts. Though some areas of

Kilosa experienced flooding several times due to the river Mkondoa to divide the Kilosa town into two parts during rainy seasons, But current study pointed out that floods mainly caused by climate change and population(UNICEF, 2013). Total of 23980 people were displaced in affected areas due to floods during the heavy rainfall on January, 2010. The numbers of houses as well as agricultural fields were badly destructed and after that hunger became a historical theme.

The district population growth rate was 29% within ten years 2000 to 2010 in a historical period which climatic catastrophes experienced vividly, hence impacted the hostility relationship between farmers and pastoralist who were even divided in villages around 1970 due to constant fighting's.

No wonder, on December 2000, Maasai warriors(Moran) attacked the villagers who were farmers in Rudewa Mbuyuni, 38 villagers were reported to be killed and hundreds were wounded . This incident was later named '**The Kilosa Killings**' (Benjaminen et al, 2009). In history of Tanzania this is worst conflict between two communities lived together in the same district for more than sixty years.

Drought

The land-based conflicts in Kilosa District were influenced more by drought which affected more Northern part of the area. The frequent drought in Kilosa has been increasing more in period of ten years (Mushi, 2013). The drought led to the death of large number of livestock as the results of absence of water and pastures which actually influenced by climate change. The measures which were taken in 1970's by local authority in establishing pastoralist and farmers villagers had proved failures as areas reserved for pastoralist experienced water shortages from 1980 to present especially during dry seasons. In that situation, Pastoralists with their livestock's were and are migrating from different parts of Kilosa and looking for pastures and water sources available. In migration, they encounters with arable farmers who are total affected by widespread crop failures and floods, consequently fighting's which led to massive killing of people and destruction of properties.

Intensification of climate sensitive diseases

The climate change impacts become visible in Kilosa for two decades ago whereby tsetse flies and ticks increased, According to Tanzania Veterinary Journal, 2007 Twatwa village along Wami river was badly affected by trypanosomiasis (Caused by tsetse flies) during the onset of the rain season 2004. The tsetse flies increased mainly due to the poor grazing range management, scarcity of water sources and high temperature in recent years. Tsetse flies and ticks borne diseases led to the loss of productivity among pastoralist(KDRDP and Irish Aid 1997) In the traditions measures taken have been migrating towards less affected areas and in that way pastoralist encountered with farmers thus misunderstand become inevitable.

Table 1. Historical weather Data in Kilosa.

month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
mm	126	120	182	181	56	12	7	15	23	38	88	128
°C	26.2	26.0	26.0	25.0	23.6	22.0	21.8	22.5	23.7	24.9	26.1	26.9
°C (min)	20.9	20.8	20.9	20.4	18.8	16.5	15.9	16.7	17.6	18.6	20.1	21.4
°C (max)	31.6	31.3	31.2	29.6	28.4	27.6	27.7	28.4	29.8	31.2	32.1	32.4
°F	79.2	78.8	78.8	77.0	74.5	71.6	71.2	72.5	74.7	76.8	79.0	80.4
°F (min)	69.6	69.4	69.6	68.7	65.8	61.7	60.6	62.1	63.7	65.5	68.2	70.5
°F (max)	88.9	88.3	88.2	85.3	83.1	81.7	81.9	83.1	85.6	88.2	89.8	90.3

In this climate table: For every month, you find data about precipitation (mm), average, maximum and minimum temperature (degrees Celsius and Fahrenheit).

Meaning of the first line: (1) January, (2) February, (3) March, (4) April, (5) May, (6) June, (7) July, (8) August, (9) September, (10) October, (11) November, (12) December

Role of climate change on influx of people and conflicts

Historical, Kilosa districts experienced migration of other communities particularly pastoralist even before colonialism, According to Beidelman (1962), there were presence of Parakuyo(Pastoralist in nature) dominated Northern part of district, Probably they migrated there around 1850 because other historical writings mentioned the area as the land of the Kaguru and the Usagara(Illife, 1979) during colonial occupations. Due to climatic challenges such as drought and intensification of climate sensitive diseases in neighboring areas like Mpwapwa and Kongwa led to high immigration of pastoralist to Kilosa district in two decades ago. The Central part of Tanzania (where Kongwa and Mpwapwa) has long historical climate challenges which caused by its nature (Arid and semi-arid region) but contributed a lot by human activities. Pastoralist migrated in district where farmers settled for years, this led to conflicts due to the struggle for land and water hence land-based conflicts become a new episode in history of district as it influenced by climate change.

Widespread crop failures

An overview of Kilosa through different historical works, it was 'gifted land' due to good climatic conditions and soil fertility compared to other parts of Central Tanzania. During Germany colonial rule in Tanganyika (Modern Tanzania) they introduced sisal plantation in Kilosa(Koponen,1994) and re-establishment of sisal estates in the same area given important consideration by British colonialist who took Tanganyika after the first world war.

In 1967 all estates found in Kilosa were nationalized by the majority government formed by Tanzania after got Independence in 1961. Also, even before the colonial occupation, people who lived in this district enjoyed varieties of crops which were grown including maize, rice, millet, cassava, beans, bananas and cowpeas. But after 1967, the farmers started to migrate due to soil acidity and erratic rainfall which led to widespread crop failures in Kilosa. They left and still left their agricultural fields to see refuge in other places all because of the soil compaction and the increased salinity due to climatic changes (Mwafupe, 2015). Human mobility in Kilosa has been issue of both farmers and pastoralist, who practiced the seasonal mobility thus, conflicts on land driven by climatic changes. For instance, farmers who were migrated and established their agricultural activities confronted with pastoralist in Mabwegere village, (John, 2011) in the peak of this conflict on October, 2008 eight people were killed and more the 832 villagers fled to the neighbouring villages and become refugees in their own country.

Summary & Conclusion

Though recent scholarly works tried to show the reasons for the occurrence of constant conflicts between farmers and pastoralist give a special attention on the scarcity of resources as well as poor policies on land management in Tanzania and Kilosa.

Some measures have been taken so as to reduce the conflict since 1967 for (Mtwale,2002). Due to intensification of hostility, local government decided to established a new six pastoralist villages basically for Parakuyo who were main pastoralist in Kilosa district in mid of 1970's. But the conflicts continued due to climatic changes which led to prolonged drought

since 1978, soil acidity and erratic rainfall, spread of animal and human diseases and the crop failures.

In that way climate changes in Kilosa and Tanzania has played undeniable roles to the development of all other factors for land-based conflicts hence there is need of considerable measures. Climatic challenges contributed by human activities such as deforestations and burning of fossil fuels led to increase of concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere .

This paper argues that the occurrence of land based conflicts since 1967 to 2010 in Kilosa were caused mainly by climate changes. Therefore government, stakeholders and citizens have to consider the issues of climate change from all perspectives. Dealing with climatic challenges will act as long term measure towards solving or reducing land based conflicts not only in Kilosa but the whole sub-saharan region of Africa.

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