

2.2.3 Colonial rulers and HADO's failures to rehabilitate degraded lands in Kondoa

Many of the complex interactions between land appropriation, demographic change and colonial and post independence politics are illustrated by Kondoa in Central Tanzania (Mugasha and Nshubemuki, 1988; Barraclough and Ghimire, 1996). The district is frequently cited as a classic example of deforestation and desertification caused by population growth and supposedly careless pastoral and cultivation practices. Over half the district's 1.4 mil ha are badly eroded. The increased caravan trade in Central and Eastern Africa during the eighteenth century induced massive clearing of forested areas (i.e. miombo woodlands) at the supply points for expanded agricultural production and for fuelwood supplies to the iron-smelting kilns.

Colonial rulers' objectives, approach and reasons for failure to reclaim degraded lands in Kondoa.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the rinderpest epidemic decimated the bovine population in East, Central and Southern Africa from Ethiopia and Somaliland to Botswana and the sleeping sickness carried by tsetse fly began to spread southwards into Kondoa-Tanzania. To contain this sleeping sickness affecting the Rangi people, the British colonial administrators of Kondoa embarked on tsetse fly eradication campaigns and mass evacuation of population in danger of sleeping disease and resettled them in concentrated villages in tsetse free areas. Tsetse eradication programmes consisted of clearing woodland and bushes in infected areas of the hills and plains to facilitate resettlement from and destocking in the badly eroded highlands. Colonial rulers also imposed labour-intensive soil conservation practices such as ridge cultivation, contour banking and reforestation. These measures did not take adequate account of the Rangi's customs and livelihood concerns, but the Rangi were too weakened to resist collectively. Some responded to harassments by the colonial officials with apathy, others by migrating to other regions. A net ecological result of the British administration's conservation interventions was to slow land degradation in the highlands but to accelerate it in the lowlands.

Due to the renewed deforestation and erosion as well as food shortages the post-independence government made Dodoma region (of which Kondoa district was a part) the second area of villagization in 1972. The Dodoma Land Rehabilitation Programme (HADO: a swahili acronym for Hifadhi Ardhi Dodoma) was, therefore, established in Kondoa district, Tanzania in 1973, with substantial financial and technical support from Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), to rehabilitate its soils and forest.

Objectives of HADO and Approach

The objectives of HADO as stipulated by the 1973/74-1981/82 Master Plan are as follows (Mbegu and Mlenge, 1983):

- To ensure that the people of in Dodoma Region are self-sufficient in wood requirement,
- To encourage communal wood growing schemes in the region,
- To promote Ujamaa and communal bee-keeping activities,

- To encourage the establishment of shelter belts/windbreaks, shades, avenues and fruit tree growing, and
- To conserve soil and water and to reclaim depleted land.

The programme's approach was in many ways similar to that of the British land rehabilitation effort in the 1930s. It emphasized cattle destocking, soil conservation measures such as contour banking and tree planting for shelterbelts, agroforestry and village woodlots. In severely eroded areas, cattle were excluded, effectively evicting their owners as well. Like the earlier efforts, HADO was a top-down and technocratic project with little real participation by the local people in setting goals or in designing and implementing the project.

Results and analysis of reasons for HADO's failure

The HADO programme did demonstrate that eviction of people and cattle could contribute to the restoration of vegetative cover on some degraded semi-arid lands within a relatively short time but such narrow technocratic approach only exported problems elsewhere.