

The Veterinary History of Cattle Destocking Policy in Kwimba District, Sukumaland, Tanganyika, 1920s to 1950s

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Abstract

The implementation of destocking policy as one of the British colonial veterinary interventions in Kwimba district resulted from British economic desire to maximize production and supply of livestock raw materials in the territory to meet imperial needs. Studies on colonial veterinary interventions in Africa have focused on non-policy veterinary measures such as dipping, laboratory investigation of livestock diseases, trypanocides, construction of cordons, veterinary drugs, and veterinary vaccines. These studies have paid less attention on the role of veterinary policies such as destocking in the management of diseases and maintenance of livestock health. Using primary and secondary sources, this study demonstrated that the implementation of destocking policy was an important aspect of British colonial veterinary interventions in controlling diseases and maintenance of livestock health in Kwimba district between the 1920s and the 1950s though the local people never accepted the policy. The local people protested the policy through evasion using various means at their disposal while British colonial government adapted stringent measures to deal with recalcitrant stock owners. This contradiction became instrumental in the political struggles of the 1950s. The paper contributes knowledge on the role of veterinary policies in controlling livestock diseases in colonial Africa.

Key words: Destocking, Cattle, stockowners, Kwimba, British

Introduction

The economic aims of British administration in Africa were promulgated by Lugard who argued that Britain should develop her empire for both the “advancement of the subject races” and for the development of its material resources for the benefit of

mankind.”¹ In this view, British colonization of Tanganyika after the First World War introduced veterinary interventions such as

¹ Grace Carswell, “African Farmers in Colonial Kigezi, Uganda, 1930-1962: Opportunity, Constraints and Sustainability,” (Ph.D. thesis: University of London, 1996), 36.

destocking policy to control diseases and maintain livestock health in Kwimba district which was part of the Lake Province (Sukumaland²) in order to maximize production and supply of livestock raw materials to meet imperial needs.

The history of veterinary medicine in Africa has witnessed considerable growth in terms of literatures and scientific studies. However, studies on colonial veterinary interventions have focused attention on non-policy veterinary measures such as dipping,³

² A geographical area in British colonial Tanganyika that comprised the area South of Lake Victoria. The area was made up of the five districts of Geita, Mwanza, Kwimba, Maswa and Shinyanga and covered an area of 17,000 square miles which supported a human population estimated at 1.4 million. The local people are called the Sukuma. For detailed description of the region, see, for example, Hubertus Catharina Christsiaan Meertens, *Dynamics in Farming Systems: Changes in Time and Space in Sukumaland, Tanzania* (Amsterdam: KIT Press, 1995), 11-13.

³ Wesley Mwatwara, "A History of State Veterinary Services and African Livestock Regimes in Colonial Zimbabwe, c.1896-1980," (Ph.D. thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2014), 77 – 118; Paul Cranefield, *Science and Empire: East Coast Fever in Rhodesia and the Transvaal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Collin Bundy, "We Don't Want Your Rain, We Won't Dip': Popular Opposition, Collaboration

laboratory investigation of livestock diseases,⁴ trypanocides,⁵ vaccines,⁶ and

and Social Control in the Anti-Dipping Movement 1908-1916," in William Beinart and Collin Bundy, *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa: Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei and Eastern Cape, 1890-1930* (London and Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987), 191-22; Daniel Gilfoyle, "The Heartwater Mystery: Veterinary and Popular Ideas about Tick and Tick-borne Diseases at the Cape, c. 1877 – 1910," *Kronos* 29, 2003, 139; Julius Mgaya and Osmund Kapinga, "Iringa Dipping Scheme in Mufindi 1940s – 1958; 'Development' Resisted by Peasants, *East African Studies Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* 4, 2 (2022).

⁴ Karen Brown, "Tropical Medicine and Animal Disease: Onderstepoort and the Development of Veterinary Science in South Africa 1908 – 1950," *Journal of South African Historical Studies* 31, 3 (2005).

⁵ Karen Brown, "From Ubombo to Mkhuzi: Disease, Colonial Science, and the Control of *Nagana* (Livestock Trypanosomiasis) in Zululand, South Africa, c. 1894 – 1953," *The Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 63, 3 (2008).

⁶ Marion Wallace, *A History of Namibia: From the Beginning to 1990*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 144.

construction of veterinary cordons⁷ while paying less attention on veterinary policies such as destocking. A handful studies have focused on veterinary policies. Sunseri's study analysed state veterinary policy against rinderpest in Tanzania between 1891 and 1901 as the only available interventions against the disease during the German period.⁸ Waller discusses the evolution of veterinary policy in colonial Kenya between 1900 and 1940.⁹

With regard to destocking policy, Tignor discusses destocking policy in colonial Kenya from a political vantage point¹⁰ while Mwatwara discusses the implementation of destocking policy in the Gutu reserve in Southern Rhodesia from an environmental

viewpoint.¹¹ The two settler colony based studies have inadequately documented destocking policy as an aspect of veterinary interventions. Building on previous studies, this paper documents the implementation of destocking policy between the 1920s and the 1950s as an aspect of British veterinary interventions and shade light on local people's response to the policy in a non-settler context of Tanzania using Kwimba district as a case study.

The study anchored on both primary and secondary sources. Archival sources were collected from Tanzania National Archives where sources such as census reports, Development plans, ordinances, circulars, and correspondences were accessed. Oral interview were collected from villages of the sampled wards in the district. Secondary sources such as dissertations, journals and books provided additional materials.

Implementation of Destocking Policy

By the 1930s Sukumaland with 1,204,000 cattle, 1,304,600 goat and sheep was the leading livestock rearing region of Tanganyika. Kwimba was one of the Sukumaland districts with high concentration of cattle particularly in the chiefdoms of Nera and Buhungukira which by the late 1920s were proclaimed overstocked. By 1929, these areas carried between themselves over 200,000 head of cattle out of the total district herd of 319,000

⁷ Gorgio Miescher, *Namibia's Red Line: The history of Veterinary and Settlement Boarder*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 23-26.

⁸ Thaddeus Sunseri, "The Entangled History of Sadoka (Rinderpest) and Veterinary Science in Tanzania and the Wider World, 1891-1901," 92-121.

⁹ Richard Waller, "'Clean' and 'Dirty': Cattle Disease and Control Policy in Colonial Kenya 1900-40," *African History* 45, 1 (2004), 56-65.

¹⁰ Robert Tignor, "Kamba Political Protest: The Destocking Controversy of 1938," *African Historical Studies* 4, 2, (1971).

¹¹ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey: Livestock Management, Soil Conservation and the State in Southern Rhodesia, c. 1930 – 50,' *Environmental and History* 21, (2015), 592-595.

head and 266,000 sheep and goat.¹² From veterinary view point, overstocking resulted to overgrazing,¹³ deterioration of livestock health,¹⁴ decreased cattle quality¹⁵ and high cattle mortality due to starvation.¹⁶ Therefore, it was important for British authority to destock the district in order to maintain animal health. However, destocking measures to improve stock health were only opted when the first short-term plan of land utilization in Sukumaland 1946-1948 which based on Malcom's Sukumaland Soil Utilization Report of 1939 emphasized on equating the number of cattle with land carrying capacity.¹⁷ The plan

considered the place in which cattle should take in the economy. Under this consideration, direct cattle tax or law were proposed as measures to keep the bulls down.¹⁸ Owners of more than so many herds of stock would be made to ageist them to specified areas where stocks were still not numerous. The purpose of adjustment was to encourage specialized stock keeping and maintain health of stock, that is, certain areas of breeding, others for feeding store and others for fattening.¹⁹ The plan laid a foundation for the implementation of the Ten Year Sukumaland Development Scheme which was initiated in 1947/48. One objective of the scheme was to establish a balance between the number of cattle and the capacity of grazing land by imposing compulsory offtake quotas.²⁰ For this purpose, a four percent off take per annum was officially set in Kwimba District in 1953.²¹ Balance was important in providing

¹² Samuel Chipungu, "Constraints in the Commercialization of Sukuma Livestock, 1919-1961," (MA. thesis, University of Zambia, 1981), 37.

¹³ Philip Raikes, *Livestock Development and Policy in East Africa*, (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1981), 96.

¹⁴ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey: Livestock Management, Soil Conservation and the State in Southern Rhodesia, c. 1930 – 50," *Environmental and History* 21, (2015), 592.

¹⁵ Martin Birley, "Resource Management in Sukumaland, Tanzania," *Journal of the International African Institute*, 52, 2 (1982), 8.

¹⁶ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey," 575.

¹⁷ TNA, L.2/9/108; Long Term Objectives and the First Three Year Development Plan 1946 – 1948.

¹⁸ TNA, L.2/9/108; Long Term Objectives and the First Three Year Development Plan 1946 – 1948.

¹⁹ TNA, L.2/9/108; Long Term Objectives and the First Three Year Development Plan 1946 – 1948.

²⁰ John de Wilde, *Experiences with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa Volume II: The Case Studies*, (Maryland: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 419.

²¹ Mikidadi Hamisi Alawi, "An Assessment on the Effects of Environmental Conservation Policies in Colonial and Post-Colonial Tanzania, 1922 – 2000: The Case of Morogoro and Shinyanga Regions," (PhD. Thesis, Open University of Tanzania, 2014), 119.

sufficient grazing lands, maximize livestock nutritional level and improve livestock health.

In the eyes of British veterinary experts the balance between the number of cattle and the capacity of grazing land was an important intervention in stock diseases control on grounds that the poor type and quality of African cattle was largely due to the very low level of nutrition on which they were maintained. Furthermore, African grazing lands were 'hopelessly' overgrazed and hence animals lived on practically 'a starvation ration.'²² Therefore, balance between the number of cattle and land carrying capacity had the advantages of ensuring sufficient grazing land for cattle but also effective control of stock diseases could be attained.²³ The susceptibility or resistance of livestock to infections depends on nutritional status. Undernourished livestock tends to be more susceptible to diseases than well fed ones. Occurrence of diseases such as coccidiosis, trypanosomiasis, babesiosis, and ectoparasitic infections was precipitated by poor nutrition of livestock.²⁴ Furthermore, insufficient grazing led to low cattle weight leading to low conception rate among cows and long calving interval.²⁵ Therefore, the

need to maximize nutritional level of livestock to maintain their health became the basis for the implementation of destocking in Kwimba.

The implementation of destocking policy was accompanied by annual livestock census in the district. Stock census served as a check for calculating destocking trends which were necessary to maintain balanced herds and a balanced sale of cattle.²⁶ For example, bulls could be sold in such numbers as to upset future breeding and males in general could be sold to the extent that in the few years' time, majority of the herds could consist of female stock and immature.²⁷ To avoid these mistakes, cattle census in Kwimba became an important aspect of destocking. For example, the 1956 Kwimba district cattle census reflected the number of bulls, castrated males, mature females, males up to 2 years, un-weaned calves and the total number of cattle for each sub-chiefdom in the district.²⁸ These statistics were crucial for planning future sustainable destocking in the chiefdoms.

In implementing the policy, the British were influenced by the Kenyan and Southern Rhodesian experiences. In colonial Kenya, Machako area was also proclaimed

²² Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us!

Command us and we will obey," 589.

²³ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us!

Command us and we will obey," 592.

²⁴ Lughano Kusiluka et al, *Diseases of Small Ruminants in Sub – Saharan Africa: A Handbook*, (Midlothian: VETAID, 1996), 109.

²⁵ Titus Lunyasunya, et al, "Effects of Poor Nutrition on Reproduction of Dairy Stock on Small Holder

Farms in the Tropics," *Pakistan Journal of Nutrition* 4, 2 (2005), 117.

²⁶ TNA, V/1/29/85; Letter from Regional Assistant Director of Veterinary Services to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, 30th July 1952.

²⁷ TNA, V/1/29/85; Letter from Regional Assistant Director of Veterinary Services to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, 30th July 1952.

²⁸ TNA, V/1/29/144; Kwimba District Annual Census of African Owned Livestock, 1956.

overstocked in the late 1920s but negotiations between British administration and local elders to implement voluntary destocking failed due to conservatism of the local elders.²⁹ In Southern Rhodesia, the implementation of compulsory destocking campaign in 1938 without legislative instrument in the Gutu district led to widespread discontents, and in response, the Natural Resource Act (1941) was passed to enforce destocking in the Native Reserves.³⁰ Basing on these experiences, British authority of Tanganyika insisted that in all civilized countries flocks and herds have to be kept down to the capacity of the country to hold them and when this could not be done voluntarily, it could be done compulsorily³¹ and enforced by state legislations. This position made the implementation of destocking in Kwimba compulsory. The policy was enforced by rules created by the Sukumaland Federation in 1952 under the guidance of British officials.

The rules could be cited as the destocking (Sukumaland Federation) rules, 1952. The rules shall apply to such areas as may be prescribed by resolution of the Federal Council of the Chiefs of Sukumaland. They shall not apply to areas to which the Sukumaland livestock restriction rules apply, provided that the necessary councils

have been established under rule 3 and 4 of the said rules.³² In these rules, “Subordinate Native Authority” means any Native Authority subordinate to the Native Authority of the Sukumaland Federation. “Remove” means permanent remove from a prescribed or shall on an authorized cattle market or slaughter.³³

Section 3 (i) stated that there shall be set up immediately on the coming into force of these rules for each district of Sukumaland a District Advisory Destocking Council comprising of the Deputy Provincial Commissioner, Sukumaland, the District Commissioner and Subordinate Native authorities of the District concerned and the two officers to be nominated by the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province. Section 3 (ii) stated that Each District Advisory Destocking Council shall advise the Federal Council of the chiefs of Sukumaland of the areas within its District which should be prescribed. Each prescribed area shall consist of and be described in terms of one or more village areas.³⁴

Section 4 (i) stated that before the first of January of each year or as soon as possible thereafter, the subordinate Native Authority of each prescribed area, shall ascertain the number of cattle in each herd within such

²⁹ Robert Tignor, “Kamba Political Protest: The Destocking Controversy of 1938,” *African Historical Studies* 4, 2 (1971), 241.

³⁰ Wesley Mwatwara et al, ‘It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey,” 592.

³¹ Abdu Sadani Kandoro, *Wito wa Uhuru*, (Dar Es Salaam: Dar Es Salaam National Printing Unit, 1961), 47 – 48.

³² TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952

³³ TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952

³⁴ TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952

area. Under section 4 (ii), the subordinate Native Authority shall thereupon notify in writing to the headmen of each village within the prescribed area the number of cattle so found in each herd, the number of cattle required in accordance with the schedule to these rules to be removed from each herd and the name of the owner or other person having the custody of the herd. Section 4 (iii) stated that the village headman, upon receipt of such notification shall make known its contents to the owner or such other person as aforesaid, but before 30th day of September of the year, remove from the herd the number of cattle of required to be removed. Section 4 (iv) stated that the subordinate native authority shall after satisfying itself that the provisions of the proceeding sub-rule have been complied with, issue a certificate of removal in respect of the cattle removed.³⁵

Section 5 (i) stated that if the owner or other person as aforesaid fails to remove cattle as required by these rules, the subordinate native authority may require him to select from the herd cattle of the number to be removed, and if this is not done may itself make the selection. Section 5 (ii) stated that the subordinate Native Authority shall then brand the selected cattle, which shall thereupon be sold by the owner or other person as aforesaid at the next cattle market serving the village. Section 5 (iii) stated that if the selected animals are not sold in occurrence with the preceding sub-rule, the subordinate Native Authority may itself take possession of the animals and sell them on behalf of the owner or other person as

aforesaid.³⁶ Section 6 stated that all persons shall provide such information and reasonable associated as is in their power for the purpose of enabling the subordinate native authorities to fulfill their function under these rules.³⁷

Under section 7, any person failing to comply with any provision of these rules shall be guilty of an offense and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding Shs. 500/- or to imprisonment with or to both such fine and imprisonment.³⁸ Destocking rules applied equally to all stock owners throughout the district. This was contrary to Southern Rhodesian case where there was a lopsided implementation of destocking rules between settlers' cattle and African cattle in the reserves. In Southern Rhodesia, destocking rules applied only in the reserves through 'unilateral culling of African cattle.'³⁹

³⁵ TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952.

³⁶ TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952.

³⁷ TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952.

³⁸ TNA, 112/11/448; Native Authority Ordinance (Cap. 72) Rule. Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952.

³⁹ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey: Livestock Management, Soil Conservation and the State in Southern Rhodesia, c. 1930 – 50, *Environmental and History*, Vol. 21, 2015, p. 592.

The rules came into effect in Kwimba in 1953 as agreed at the District Advisory Council held during January and February 1953 covering all the chiefdoms in the district.⁴⁰ The implementation of the rules was coordinated at the district level through Development Team consisting of all government officials and Native Authority.⁴¹ The team was led by district members of the Veterinary Department.⁴² The involvement of veterinary officials in destocking campaign was usual since state veterinary officials were not limited to pharmacological drugs and administration of inoculants but also extended to other livestock improvement activities.⁴³ Destocking rules were implemented through three methods namely permanent removal of herds to another area open for migrations, home slaughter and sale in the market.⁴⁴ With regard to home slaughter, hide and mask had to be brought to the council with a note signed by headman and one councilor. Mask retained and destocking ticket was

issued by the chief or sub-chief.⁴⁵ At the market the seller would bring the beasts and destocking clerk issued ticket for each beast sold.⁴⁶ Copy one of destocking ticket went to the seller, copy two went to the buyer, copy three went to Native Authority and last copy went to the market officer as record.⁴⁷ Destocking schedule which determined the number of beast each stock owner had to destock was as follow; 1-10 cattle no destocking, 11-20 heads one had to be destocked, 21-30 cattle, two had to be destocked and thereafter proportionately.⁴⁸ Destocking policy was guided by carefully planned procedures to ensure its effectiveness and accuracy. A list showing the number of cattle each stock owner had to destock was made up every year by the Native Authority and the Native Authority Clerk assisted by the headman and two parish councilors for each village, the list was then published in each village.⁴⁹ Destocking had to be finished by the 1st October of the current year, after this date defaulters were liable to a court case and

⁴⁰ TNA, 483.

⁴¹ John De Wilde, *Experience with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa Vol. II: The Case Studies*, (Maryland: The John Hopkins Press, 1967), 419.

⁴² TNA, V/1/20/93; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to All Chiefs of the Bukwimba Federation, 16th January, 1958.

⁴³ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey,' 588.

⁴⁴ TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation.

⁴⁵ TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation.

⁴⁶ TNA, V/1/20/62; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, Mwanza, 29th March 1957.

⁴⁷ TNA, V/1/20/88; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to Provincial Commissioner, Mwanza, 21st December 1957.

⁴⁸ TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation.

⁴⁹ TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation.

compulsory destocking. After 31st December, officials of the Native Authority in whose area the defaulters lived were also liable to punishment.⁵⁰ It was recommended that each chief worked out a plan showing the numbers of beasts to be destocked in his area during each of the first nine months of the year. This procedure guaranteed approximately equal numbers of beasts at each auction and helped in stabilizing price.⁵¹ For example, destocking plan for 1958 reflected the number of cattle to be in each chiefdom and sub – chiefdom as follow; in Buhungukira chiefdom: sub-chiefdoms of Busongo and Mwamashimba no destocking.⁵² Nera Chiefdom: sub-chiefdoms of Kikubiji no destocking, Buyogo-3,214, Nyamilama-4,801, Inonelwa-1,013, Kakora no destocking and Malya-4,161.⁵³ The chiefdom of Usmao: sub-chiefdoms of Ibindo-923, Mondo-3,900, Koromije-1,700, and Ishingisha-2,800.⁵⁴ Chiefdom of Magu-800, chiefdom of Sima-1,300 and the Chiefdom of Ndagalu-550.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation.

⁵¹ TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation.

⁵² TNA, V/1/20/93; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to all Chiefs, 16th January 1958.

⁵³ TNA, V/1/20/93; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to all Chiefs, 16th January 1958.

⁵⁴ TNA, V/1/20/93; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to all Chiefs, 16th January 1958.

⁵⁵ TNA, V/1/20/93; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to all Chiefs, 16th January 1958.

Local People's Response to Destocking Policy

Destocking policy was highly resented by the local people. Local peoples' resentment and protest against compulsory destocking policy were not unique to Kwimba alone but across Sukumaland districts. For example, in the nearby Sukumaland district of Maswa, it was observed in 1953 that although there was constant explanation, argument and persuasion, but the local people never showed any sign of wanting to co-operate in the destocking campaign.⁵⁶ Local peoples' protest against the policy was also evident in Kwimba district. The 4 per cent market off-take rate which was set for the district in 1953⁵⁷ was never attained. For example, in 1954 Kwimba district recorded 1.8 per cent market off-take rate,⁵⁸ the lowest percentage in all the Sukumaland districts. Protest against destocking policy in Kwimba emanated from a number of grounds.

The first area of resentment was the price offered by cattle buyers to local stock owners in auctions. The Sukuma argued that the government compelled them to sell their cattle, but did not influence the price paid to

⁵⁶ Samuel Chipungu, "Social Stratification in Relation to Cattle Marketing in Rural Sukumaland, 1951 to 1961," *Journal of East African Research and Development* 12, (1982), 61.

⁵⁷ Mikidadi Hamisi Alawi, "An Assessment on the Effects of Environmental Conservation Policies in Colonial and Post-Colonial Tanzania, 1922 – 2000," 119.

⁵⁸ Samuel Chipungu, "Social Stratification in Relation to Cattle Marketing in Rural Sukumaland," 62.

stockholders. Though the prices for other commodities were higher, and tax rates had increased considerably, the prices paid in the auctions were low.⁵⁹ The reason for this was that the buyers knew that the Sukuma had to sell and the best evidence for this truth was the fact that prices for meat in the local butchers were higher though cattle prices were very often low.⁶⁰ This complaint was fuelled by the fact that Sukumaland cooperative societies had no interest in the auction of cattle because cooperative organizations could not take all interest only in one phase of cattle trade that was in the auction prices. It had to deal also with the marketing and the final sale of cattle to the consumer something which was difficult.⁶¹ As a result, the local stock owners felt that they were highly exploited.

Complaints regarding cattle price were levelled against the main cattle buyer in Tanganyika and Sukumaland in particular, the Tanganyika Packers Limited (Liebig). Tanganyika Packers Limited began production in Dar es Salaam in 1950 as a colonial parastatal with 51 per cent ownership by the government of

Tanganyika.⁶² The company started buying cattle in Kwimba cattle markets such as Nyambiti, Ngudu, Hungumalwa and Mabuki since August 1950.⁶³ In October 1951, for example, Liebig bought 20 cattle at Nyambiti, 3 cattle at Ngudu, 38 cattle at Mabuki, 129 cattle at Hungumalwa, and 81 cattle at the Nyanhanga.⁶⁴ By 1952 stock owners in the district were selling approximately 2,000 cattle a month to Liebig.⁶⁵ The company assessed the price of cattle on per head basis at the auction and as a result of its influence; the prices were always low, much to the dissatisfaction of the owners. In 1955 and 1957 for example, mature cattle prices in the Lake Province were shillings 123 and 104 respectively.⁶⁶ The prices were even low when compared to other parts of the territory. For example, the price for mature cattle in Iringa district in 1955 was shillings 124 while in 1956 the

⁵⁹ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁶⁰ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁶¹ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁶² Julius Mgaya and Osmund Kapinga, "Iringa Dipping Scheme in Mufindi 1940s to 1958; 'Development' Resisted by Peasants," *Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* 4, 2 (2022), 5.

⁶³ TNA, E/3/V/3; Letter from Bwanashauri to all Chiefs Kwimba District, 11th August 1950

⁶⁴ TNA, E/3/V/67; Livestock Market Report from Kwimba Livestock Marketing Officer to Provincial Veterinary Officer, October 1951

⁶⁵ TNA, E/3/V/18 Letter from Ag. Regional Assistant Director of Veterinary Services to Kwimba District Commissioner, 16th July 1952

⁶⁶ Samuel Chipungu, Social Stratification in Relation to Cattle Marketing in Rural Sukumaland," 64.

price was shillings 141.⁶⁷ In defence against its low cattle prices offered to the local stock owners, the company's position was that, the fixing of price was a necessary measure to enable it to pay a 'factory price' for slaughter cattle, and this was supposed to be a price which would enable the company to realize high price.⁶⁸

However, from stock owners' vantage point, lower cattle prices were linked to destocking policy. Destocking could only be looked upon by peasants as collusion between British colonial government and the chiefs to rob the peasants off his wealth and especially to feed the Tanganyika Packers factories of Mwanza and Arusha.⁶⁹ This conclusion created deep resentment and protest against the policy among the local people.

In the second instance, local stock owners protested against destocking policy because of the nature of the auction itself. The complaint was that the tempo was too quick and clear consent of the owner of the cattle in a lot was not obtained.⁷⁰ Thus, stock owners understood that was a consequence of the policy, and they felt that the word "compulsory now referred to the sale of

stock rather than to destocking.⁷¹ For example, if the owner withdrew his cattle from an auction, the cattle was given a refusal brand which had two consequences on the stock holder: in the first place, the owner who refused to sell could not bring back this beast to any auction, but has to slaughter it at home and would be issued with a destocking ticket.⁷² Secondly, a beast with refusal brand would fetch a very low price when brought up at another auction.⁷³ The only explanation given by the local people was that the buyers did so on purpose so as to give recalcitrant stockowners a lesson.⁷⁴ Stockowners in the district viewed the quick speed of the tempo in the cattle markets as a malpractice that aimed to swindle their cattle.

Thirdly, destocking policy was detested in the district because cattle owners were not consulted in designing the program before its implementation. The program was imposed on the local people and implemented without their consent. In this case, the local people lacked sufficient

⁶⁷ Julius Mgya and Osmund Kapinga, "Iringa Dipping Scheme in Mufindi 1940s to 1958," 9.

⁶⁸ Samuel Chipungu, *Social Stratification in Relation to Cattle Marketing in Rural Sukumaland*, 64.

⁶⁹ Isaria Kimambo and Arnold Temu, *The History of Tanzania*, (Nairobi: East African Publishing house, 1969), 205.

⁷⁰ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁷¹ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁷² TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁷³ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

⁷⁴ TNA, V/1/20/47; Paper on Destocking by Hance Corry for the Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province

knowledge on the policy and therefore unaware of its scientific rationales. One respondent attested that:

Colonial authority in Sukumaland never involved the local people when planning for destocking, a policy which had direct impact on their wealth. Cattle meant a lot to a Sukuma and it was therefore important to consider their views when planning for destocking. But this was not done. For example, the local people were not informed on the veterinary and scientific benefits of destocking, they were not involved in deciding on how to destock, and how much to destock. Furthermore, they were not informed on the implementation procedures in the district. Worse enough, the implementation of the program was not voluntary but procedures were enforced by numerous rules and punishment. Basing on all these grounds, opposition against destocking was likely to occur among the local people. I am a Sukuma but also I have been working in this district as veterinary officer for more than 30 years. Therefore, I know my people and their history very well. A typical Sukuma would only respond to a particular government veterinary intervention if he is well involved in its planning and recognizes its rationales, contrary to that he would protest. He would end up saying *genayo mambo ga nyasomi* meaning that 'those are literate's issues'.⁷⁵

Another responded added that "*amakoloni gale machilo gete, agoyi ga pangaga kila kenho na bise yale kofata doho.*" This means that 'the colonialists were very arrogant,

they planned everything and the Africans had to follow',⁷⁶

The two respondents revealed the extent to which colonial authority used force to dictated destocking policy in colonial Kwimba and what was expected from the Sukuma. Lack of involvement in the planning and implementation of colonial agricultural interventions which were simply 'dropped from above' was a major source of resentment and protest against destocking from the local people in Kwimba. Evidence suggests that top-down technical solutions imposed to too many people who were ignorant of scientific farming⁷⁷ such as destocking ended up in widespread protests. Protests against top-down approaches to colonial agricultural interventions were not confined to destocking policy in Kwimba district alone, but also featured in other agricultural interventions in other parts of the territory. For example, in various sites of soil conservation works, there were complaints that policies were introduced without consultations with Africans except chiefs who were considered to be government employees.⁷⁸ It was in the same ground that British measures to control soil erosion along the steep slopes of Usambara and Uluguru resulted to serious rural unrest

⁷⁶ John Ludeleke, Interview at Nyambiti, April 29, 2023

⁷⁷ Grace Carswell, "Multiple Historical Geographies: Responses and Resistances to Colonial Conservation Schemes in East Africa," *Journal of Historical Geography* 32, (2006), 412.

⁷⁸ Grace Carswell, Multiple Historical Geographies," 412.

⁷⁵ Duttu Mahega, Interview at Ngudu, March 3, 2023.

as well as protests.⁷⁹ In these mountainous areas of the territory, the rioters constantly shouted 'We don't want terraces, bring us back our old ways.'⁸⁰ Apart from being a top-down approach, compulsory destocking was also enforced by coercive rules which stirred further protests. For example, fines were levied by the Native Authorities and at times control resembled a police operation rather than agricultural extension and as a result, resistance grew and became more articulate.⁸¹

The most important method of protest against destocking in Kwimba district was evasion. In the first place, the local people in the district evaded destocking by bribing Native Authority clerks in order to record lower number than the actual number of cattle possessed by a stock owner. This strategy was used when Native Authority Clerks were compiling destocking list for each village in the district a few months before the commencement of destocking exercise which covered the first nine months of the year.⁸² The number of cattle possessed by the owner was used for establishing the number of cattle to be destocked. The less

the number of cattle, the less would be destocked and vice-versa. However, it was discovered by the British authority in the district that the local people were bribing Native Authority Clerks in order to record less number of cattle so that fewer cattle could be destocked.

For example, in 1956 Kwimba District Commissioner complained of the discrepancy between figures of the Veterinary Department count carried out from July to November 1955 and the Native Authority Count carried out from October 1955 to January 1956. The District Commissioner maintained that the discrepancy between the counts with regard to calves was understandable, however, the discrepancy in total figure was due to Native Authority clerks taking bribe from the local people in order to record lower figures than those actually counted.⁸³ By recording less number of cattle, local stock owners had the advantage of destocking less number of their beasts or did not destock completely if he recorded less than 10 cattle. Under the Sukumaland destocking schedule, stock owners with less than 10 cattle were not covered by compulsory destocking.⁸⁴ However, traditionally, the Sukuma were also unwilling to disclose exact number of their cattle believing that once the correct number of cattle had been known by an outsider, cattle could be easily bewitched

⁷⁹ Andrew Culson, *Tanzania: A Political Economy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 52.

⁸⁰ Grace Carswell, Multiple Historical Geographies," 413.

⁸¹ Daniel Heijnen Jones, *Development and Education in the Mwanza District, Tanzania: A Case Study of Migration and Peasant Farming*, (PhD. thesis: Center for the Study of Education in Changing Societies, Amsterdam, 1968), 14.

⁸² TNA, V/1/20/59; Short Summary of Destocking Procedures in Sukumaland Federation

⁸³ TNA, V/1/29/131; Telegram from Kwimba District Commissioner to Provincial Commissioner, Lake Province, 12th March 1956

⁸⁴ TNA, 112/11/448; The Native Authority Ordinance (Cap.72) Rule. The Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952

and inflicted with diseases or misfortunes.⁸⁵ Therefore, the practice of giving incorrect cattle figures among the Sukuma had both social and economic grounds.

The second form of evasion took place at the cattle markets. Under this system, local stock owners 'sold' their beasts to the licensed local butchers and subsequently repossessed after paying a service fee to the butchers. For example, it was observed that the local butchers bought as many cattle as they possibly could and then sold them back to their original owners at the market price plus ten (10) shillings as service charge.⁸⁶ The buyers thus reaped 10 shillings per animal and the owner had a destocking ticket and his beast⁸⁷ instead of selling it at a cheaper price to Liebig.

The third form of evasion involved temporary re-allocation of cattle to friends or relatives who had no cattle. The system was famously known as *kubilisa*. Under *kubilisa* system large stockowners apportioned their cattle to friends and relatives who finally returned the cattle to the owners after Native Authority Clerks

have finished compiling destocking list.⁸⁸

This method allowed large stock owners to easily evade compulsory destocking. Distributing cattle to friends and relatives as a way of evading compulsory destocking appeared to be common in most parts of colonial Africa. In Southern Rhodesia, for example, when the natives in Selukwe reserve appreciated that the weight of destocking was borne by large stock owners, they re-deployed socio-political mechanisms of redistribution of livestock – *kuronzera*.⁸⁹ This redistribution suggested that cattle could not be destocked since by doing so could have left Africans with insufficient cattle to meet the perceived subsistence level. In Kwimba, apart from being a destocking evading mechanism, *kubilisa* was also used by large stock owners as a way of resolving the problem of pasture, and water shortages while for those who owned too few animals to warrant a family herder, the practice was also the best solution.

The fourth method involved distributing hides to friends and relatives, thereby getting exempted from destocking through auction. One of the options of compulsory destocking program in Kwimba district was home slaughter and the hide had to be shown to the Chief as evidence of compliance to destocking and get a destocking ticket and remained with the hide.⁹⁰ Therefore, the owner got a destocking ticket but also remained with the

⁸⁵ Clement Lazaro Manyama, Interview at Shilembo, 26 April 2023.

⁸⁶ TNA, E/3/V/128 Letter from Acting Regional Assistant Director of Veterinary Services to All District Commissioners, Sukumaland, 6th September 1952

⁸⁷ TNA, E/3/V/128 Letter from Acting Regional Assistant Director of Veterinary Services to All District Commissioners, Sukumaland, 6th September 1952

⁸⁸ Mathias Magoye Kumalija, Interview at Kiliwi, 24 April 2023.

⁸⁹ Wesley Mwatwara et al, 'It is no use advising us! Command us and we will obey,' 594.

⁹⁰ TNA, V/1/20/62; Letter from Kwimba District Commissioner to Provincial Commissioner Lake Province, 29th March 1957

hide which could be distributed to other people who also presented it to the chief and received their destocking tickets without slaughtering their animals. As a result, a few hides enabled many cattle owners to evade cattle auctions.

In dealing with recalcitrant stockowners who evaded destocking, British colonial government set stringent measures in the district. In the first place, it was an administrative policy that Native Authorities should ensure that all evasions of destocking orders in the district were rigorously prosecuted and that this applied to the chiefs also.⁹¹ This meant to provide a lesson and to threaten all those who violated destocking rules including the Chiefs themselves.

Secondly, in dealing with the loop-hole associated with home slaughter, Native Authorities were directed to see that destocking certificates for home slaughter were only issued after the hides have been inspected wherever possible by European officers, and if that failed, by Veterinary Guards or Agricultural Instructors.⁹² In addition to that, for the purpose of reducing high circulation of 'ghost' hides, it was ruled that: firstly, if a stock owner wished to slaughter an animal for his own use, he had to obtain a special permit from Native Authority, which was given on payment fee

of 3 shillings.⁹³ Secondly, destocking tickets were not given for animals which died from natural causes, and to prevent this ruling from being abused, it was laid down that destocking tickets could only be issued by a Veterinary Guard, accompanied by a headman for the slaughter of the animal concerned, and provided that the hide had been produced at the Native Authority within seven days of the time of slaughter for examination and stamped with the Native Authority seal.⁹⁴ Thirdly, if a butcher wished to slaughter an animal from his own herd, he was supposed to first offer it for sale at a market price and bid for it himself.⁹⁵ These measures all together, aimed at reducing home slaughter abuse clause and rampant circulation of cattle hides among local stock owners.

Thirdly, violation of any destocking rule in the district including evasion was an offence liable to legal punishment. For example, Sukumaland Federation destocking rule number 7 made it clear that any person who failed to comply with any provision of Sukumaland Federation destocking rules was guilty of an offence and could be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding 500

⁹¹ TNA, V/1/29/125; Letter from Provincial Commissioner to District Commissioners in Sukumaland, 16th November 1955

⁹² TNA, V/I/20/121; Letter from Provincial Commissioner Lake Province to Kwimba District Commissioner, 29th September 1958.

⁹³ TNA, V/I/20/121; Letter from Provincial Commissioner Lake Province to Kwimba District Commissioner, 29th September 1958.

⁹⁴ TNA, V/I/20/121; Letter from Provincial Commissioner Lake Province to Kwimba District Commissioner, 29th September 1958.

⁹⁵ TNA, V/I/20/121; Letter from Provincial Commissioner Lake Province to Kwimba District Commissioner, 29th September 1958.

shillings or to imprisonment with or to both such fine and imprisonment.⁹⁶

Colonial government's response against those who evaded destocking had the effect of intensifying resentment against destocking among the local people in the district. It was in this way that local peoples' grievances against destocking policy turned to be an important nationalist agenda capitalized by Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) politicians across Sukumaland including Kwimba district. This was particularly important from 1958 when the part was allowed to re-operate in Sukumaland following its proscription in November, 1954. It was against this background that Schmidt believed that, peasant's grievances drove nationalist agenda and their energies were harnessed in the struggles for national independence.⁹⁷

Conclusion

The paper has analyzed the implementation of destocking policy as one aspect of British veterinary interventions against livestock diseases in Kwimba district. The paper shows that the implementation of the policy was accompanied by various rules and procedures crafted by the Sukumaland Federation and maintained by Native Authorities in the district. The rules made the implementation of destocking policy in the district compulsory. However, compulsory destocking produced widespread protest from the local people

who evaded the policy by using every possible means at their disposal. In response to evasion, colonial government set in place stringent measures to deal with recalcitrant stock owners. The contradiction between the local people and the British colonial government over compulsory destocking policy had the effect of fueling political movements in the district and Sukumaland in general. TANU politicians took destocking policy as an important agenda in disqualifying the legitimacy of British colonial administration across Sukumaland.

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⁹⁶ TNA, 112/11/448; The Native Authority Ordinance (Cap.72) Rule. The Destocking (Sukumaland Federation) Rules, 1952

⁹⁷ Elizabeth Schmidt, *Mobilizing the Masses: Gender, Ethnicity and Class in the Nationalist Movements in Guinea, 1939 – 1958* (Portsmouth, Heinemann, 2005), 2.

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