

FORCED EVICTIONS OF PASTORALISTS IN KILOMBERO AND ULANGA DISTRICTS IN MOROGORO REGION IN TANZANIA

Parakuiyo Pastoralists Indigenous Community Development Organization (PAICODEO), PINGOs Forum, Tanzania Land Alliance (TALA), the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) and journalists from ITV, Star TV, Channel 10 and Mwananchi newspaper have conducted a fact finding mission concerning the forced evictions of pastoralists in Kilombero and Ulanga districts in Morogoro region in Tanzania. The fact finding mission was carried out from 12.11 – 15.11 2012.

The evictions took place in Kilombero and Ulanga districts in Morogoro region in Tanzania from September 2012 to January 2013. During the eviction exercise the district authorities have forcefully removed many pastoralists and agro-pastoralists and their livestock in Kilombero and Ulanga districts.

It is estimated that 486,736 out of an estimated total of 500.000 numbers of livestock have been seized and removed by a team of 400 people including police, district authorities, the Prime Minister's Office (that gave consent for eviction), the Morogoro Regional Commissioner, park rangers, Mgambo (local militias)

and the Tanzania Peoples Defense Force. It is estimated that around 5000 people (pastoralists, agro-pastoralists and a few farmers) have been moved out of the districts due to the eviction exercise. The confiscated livestock belongs to the people evicted as well as to other pastoralists and agro-pastoralists who are hiding in the districts or have moved to neighbouring districts and regions such as Coast, Iringa, Ruvuma and Dodoma. The affected pastoralists are Sukuma and Taturu agro-pastoralists and Iparakuyo Maasai and Barabaig pastoralists.

Massive theft

The group of people who carried out the evictions took the livestock by force and gathered them in so-called "holding grounds", where they were kept under very bad conditions with too little food and water. All livestock were being taken. Even the livestock that the pastoralists had been forced by the district authorities to brand as per the new 2010 livestock legislation (The Livestock Identification, Registration and Traceability Act No. 12,



The cattle is being seized and forced on board trucks



2010). In that branding process the pastoralists were forced to pay up to 10.000 Tanzania Shilling per livestock for having it branded and they were promised by the district authorities that the branded livestock would not be taken away in evictions. When the livestock had been forcefully seized, the pastoralists were forced to pay “fees” for having their livestock in so called “holding camps” (70.000 Tanzania Shilling per livestock), and thereafter they were forced to hire big trucks to transport their livestock to markets to sell them, notably the Puku market in Dar es Salaam. The pastoralists had to pay for the rent of the trucks (3 - 8 million Tanzania Shilling per truck). This kind of massive resource extraction from the pastoralists follow the exact same pattern as during the forced evictions of pastoralists in Ihefu in the Usangu Plains in 2006-2007 and it can be seen as a continuation of a policy of elimination of pastoralism in the country (as also reflected in the Strategic Plan for Implementation of the Land Laws - SPILL Plan - of 2005).

On their way to the market, the trucks were regularly being stopped by police check points, where the police officers asked another round of “fees” for letting the trucks pass through (between 1 to 8 million Tanzania Shillings per truck depending on the size of the truck). Fees that most likely end up in the pockets of the police officers at the roadblocks. In order to pay all these

fees and fines, many pastoralists ended up selling all of their livestock before reaching the market. Thus, the evictions led to complete impoverishment of the affected pastoralists. They lost most or all of their livestock and thereby their main source of food and income. Particularly vulnerable were the elderly, persons with disabilities, children, those who are sick and pregnant women, all of whom were left on their own without food or money or any form of humanitarian assistance.

It is the clear impression of the fact finding mission that the evictions are being used to enrich those who carry out the evictions. The Kilombero and Ulanga districts earned more than 700 million Tanzania Shillings via fines collected from the evicted pastoralists and agro-pastoralists.

People made homeless and destitute

When the pastoralists were forced to move they were also rendered homeless since they have nowhere to go to. The authorities who evicted them told them to go back to where they come from, but that is obviously not possible since that land is no longer available, and returning and reclaiming that land would lead to a lot of conflicts.



The livestock are ready to be transported by trucks to the PUGU livestock market in Dar es Salaam

The IIParakuyo Maasai have been in the Morogoro region for more than a hundred years, and for many years the government accepted them to be inhabitants of the area. Some of the other pastoralists like the Barabaig and the Sukuma agro-pastoralists came later. The Barabaig pastoralists were in the 1970s forcefully removed from their land in Hanang district in the then Arusha region. The reason was that the government had introduced rice and wheat farms in the Barabaig traditional grazing lands in Hanang with the assistance from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The Sukuma agro-pastoralists were removed from their grazing lands in Mwanza, Tabora and Shinyanga regions due to the introduction of cotton farms. Up until 2006-2007 the government accepted the pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in the Morogoro region. However, with the 2006-2007 Mbarali evictions, the government discourse on forced evictions started.

The authorities have conducted no consultations and dialogue with the people affected before the evictions and they have offered neither plans for relocation nor any compensation. Instead they have completely deprived the affected pastoralists of their livelihood and turned them into destitute people. The pastoralists feel that the plan of the government is to completely eliminate pastoralism in the country.

Killings and injuries

The evictions have been carried out with great brutality, and the fact finding mission detected that prior to their arrival on 10th November 2012, 3 people had been shot by the police because they protested against the evictions. One Mr. Dasu Lutaligula (22) had died and two others were injured. The mission witnessed that the dead person was in a coffin at St. Francis Hospital in Ifakara in Kilombero district and that the police was busy organizing the burial. The two injured persons had been admitted to hospital. However, when the authorities heard about the fact finding mission they forcefully removed them from the hospital and kept them somewhere out of reach for the fact finding mission. According to the fact finding mission, the two were badly injured but were refused admission to the hospital by the police. The fact finding mission did all it could to locate the two people, but in vain. Finally, on 17th November 2012 they found Mr. Mahende Lutaligula (25) who sustained a bullet injury at his head, and Mr. Dase Lutaligula (18) who sustained a bullet injury in his leg after being shot by police in the Udagaji village, Chita ward, Kilombero district, Morogoro region on 10th November 2012.

On 31st January 2013, Mr. Baya Katambi (21) a Sukuma agropastoralist was shot dead by the police at Lugangeni/Ipera Asilia village, Mtimbira division, Ulanga district, Morogoro



Mr. Joel Bendera, Regional Commissioner for Morogoro Region, together with the police and other members of the eviction team

region. When the pastoralists complained about the use of force, Mr. Madaraka Amani, Kilombero District Natural Resources Officer, said that: "When you slaughter a camel it will keep throwing its legs but that cannot stop it being slaughtered".

Another incident of shootings and killings happened prior to the evictions of pastoralists in Ulanga District, where on the 17th March 2012 at Maguba area in Ulanga District five Sukuma agro-pastoralists were killed. The Sukuma people who were killed are:

1. Sanyiwa Ndahya (28)
2. Ng'erebende Nchambi Lukeresha (26)
3. Kashinje Msheshiwa (35)
4. Kulwa Luhende (48)
5. Lutala Ndahya (45)

In addition three people were injured:

1. Zina Msheshiwa (29)
2. Msheshiwa Ndahya (53)
3. Khama Chisongelile Tiga (30)

The affected pastoralists are now living in great fear, and they are without any protection whatsoever. Those who dare to try to defend their rights and resist the evictions are afraid that false and fabricated charges will be made against them. Pastoralists and agro pastoralists who have been evicted are abandoned by the government and now live in abject poverty. They are not relocated and compensated and they are now scattered in Morogoro, Lindi, Kagera, Tanga and Coast regions.

Justifications for evictions

The government's justification for the evictions are that parts of the Kilombero and Ulanga districts are part of a Ramsar Site, which needs to be protected, and that pastoralist activities destroy the environment and threaten the conservation of the area and its water sources. The Ramsar Convention was signed in Ramsar, Iran in 1971, and provides for the conservation and good use of wetlands. The government of Tanzania ratified the Convention in August 2000 and officially declared the Kilombero Valley Wetlands a Ramsar Site in 2002. The valley is located in parts of both Kilombero and Ulanga districts in Morogoro region, covering an area of 596,908 hectares. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands stipulates wise use of wetland resources, maintaining the ecological character of the site while also contributing to people's livelihoods. However, while pastoralists are blamed for destroying the Ramsar Site and exhausting the water sources, big commercial companies like the Kilombero Valley Teak Company Limited have not been touched. This company owns 28.159 hectares of land and grows big teak trees for timber which consume huge volumes of water – much more than the livestock of the pastoralists who were forcefully evicted.

Also, a huge agricultural investment project "The Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania" (the SAGCOT corridor) runs through the Kilombero and Ulanga districts and the fact finding mission believes that the evictions can be caused by investment interests. The SAGCOT corridor includes among others large scale rice cultivation that requires huge amounts of water, and the project is among others supported by the World Bank, the EU and USAID. While the pastoralists only use the wetlands during the dry season

when they do not have access to other grazing areas, the irrigation farming uses large quantities of water all year round.

After the evictions in January 2013 a few farmers and politicians praised the government initiative claiming that it would resolve conflicts between farmers and pastoralists and save the Ramsar Site. However, a large number of villagers in the two districts have described the operation as inhuman, and it has violated an earlier agreement reached three years ago on exact boundaries between the villages and the Kilombero Valley Ramsar Site. Some villages are part of the Ramsar Site where farming and livestock herding is not allowed – apart from the Kilombero Valley Teak Company Limited that is still allowed to operate within the Ramsar Site. Farming and livestock herding is allowed in villages adjacent to the Ramsar Site, but people in these villages were also victims of forced evictions and confiscations of livestock.

Severe consequences and a bleak future

The evictions have been officially halted in January 2013 by the government of Tanzania, but undercover evictions are still going on in Kilombero and Ulanga districts. These evictions are done by police and park rangers but without permits from the regional and district authorities. These police and park rangers are taking advantage of the vulnerability of the pastoralists. A

few pastoralists managed to stay in the two districts, but they are only left with very few cattle (ten or so). The few pastoralists who are left in the area live in fear of being evicted, and the affected families suffer from psychological traumas. This has among others led to increased problems of alcoholism among both the youth and the elderly people.

The pastoralists are extremely worried about the human rights violations, which they have suffered from, and most of which have been initiated and sanctioned by the government and local authorities. The pastoralists are currently living in fear of more evictions and uncertainty of what their future would be.

No actions have been taken towards those who have committed the violations and no compensations and assistance have been offered by the government and local authorities. The pastoralists are now in a desperate situation as they live as internally displaced persons without any humanitarian assistance. The evicted pastoralists have no or very little food, they have no-where to live and many of their children have had to leave school and are experiencing psychological problems because of the brutal evictions that they experienced. The pastoralists request access and rights to land, which is paramount for their survival (either in the form of alternative land or the right to return to their land from which they were evicted), food aid assistance and counseling to those who suffer from trauma.

Recommendations

The government of Tanzania should protect the rights of pastoralists on an equal footing with all other citizens in Tanzania. Thus, the Government of Tanzania should:

- Commission an independent investigation of the human rights abuses that have taken place during the evictions.
- Take actions against all government officials and others who committed the killings and injury of pastoralists, confiscated livestock and lands, extracted illegal fines and fees etc.
- Compensate the pastoralists and agro-pastoralists for all the losses they have suffered.
- Make alternative land available for those who have been evicted – land which is of sufficient size and quality to allow the pastoralists to continue with their traditional pastoralist livelihoods OR
- Allow the evicted pastoralists to return to the districts they have been evicted from.
- Put in place measures which guarantee land tenure security of the pastoralists – either in relocation areas or in the areas they were evicted from.
- Put in place conflict prevention measures in the new areas where the evicted pastoralists are resettled.
- Provide counseling to those victims of the evictions who suffer from psychological trauma
- Make publicly available the reports of investigation commissions, which have looked into human rights violations committed against pastoralists during the various evictions that have taken place in the Morogoro region.

The international organizations like the World Bank, the EU and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat should adhere to their own safeguards when they fund projects in Kilombero and Ulanga districts, Morogoro region to make sure that such projects do not lead to violations of the rights of indigenous peoples such as pastoralists.

IWGIA – INTERNATIONAL WORK GROUP FOR INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Classensgade 11 E, DK 2100 – Copenhagen, Denmark
Tel: (45) 35 27 05 00 - Fax: (45) 35 27 05 07 – E-mail: iwgia@iwgia.org – Web: www.iwgia.org