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## ROLE OF COLONIAL CHIEFS IN THE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION OF THE NANDI, 1902-1963

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### ABSTRACT

The British colonial policy of indirect saw the introduction of new forms of leadership among the Nandi in Kenya. Among such new offices were that of the colonial chief, which played an intermediary role in reconciling the economic interests of the colonialists and the natives. Yet, despite their significant role, the contribution of colonial chiefs to the economic transformation of the Nandi has not been documented properly. Available literature largely vilifies these chiefs as agents of a repressive colonial system. Yet, there are signs that the Nandi chose to retain the names and legacies of some of these chiefs, suggesting the chiefs could have made some positive contribution to society. The study thus examined the role of colonial chiefs in economic transformation of the Nandi, Kenya from 1902-1963. The periods were deemed significant because 1902 was when the chiefs' ordinance was passed while 1963 was the year Kenya got independence. The study employed the Elite theory and Principal-Agent theories. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised former colonial chiefs, Nandi community elders, current chiefs who knew the history of their office of chieftaincy in the community. The inclusion criteria comprised variables such as geographical distribution, age and command of historical knowledge of the Nandi colonial chiefs. Data was collected using a questioning guideline, interviews and secondary sources. Therefore, apart from the respondents, the primary sources included archival material on colonial and post-colonial chiefs as well as their roles, collected at the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi and Kakamega, and the information from the County Government offices. Oral interviews were tape-recorded. Secondary sources were obtained from research libraries in Kenya and subjected to content analysis. Data from the interviews and document analysis was analysed thematically. Data from the questionnaire was analysed using descriptive statistics. It was found that the colonial chiefs also played a significant role in the economic transformation of the Nandi through enhanced agriculture, trading and taxation. The study has underscored the importance of proper documentation of the nature of Kenyan communities in the pre-colonial period. There is need to harmonize the different narratives that speak of the different facets of the Nandi origin, migration, settlement and their socio-economic as well as social organization in the pre-colonial period. Such information will provide a clear backdrop for

understanding the positive and negative impact of colonialism, including colonial chiefs on the community.

**KEYWORDS:** colonial chiefs, economic transformation, Nandi, Kenya

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Hamilton [1] and Mandani [2], chiefs as the unofficial officers of the British indirect rule gained their elevated social status from their central role in collection of taxes. Therefore, collection of taxes for the British was the first main economic responsibility of the colonial chiefs. The present study used these views as a basis for examining the role of colonial chiefs in the implementation of taxation policy in Nandi. Nevertheless, Hamilton and Mandani do not show how the chiefs, having been placed as important intermediaries in collection of taxes, used their position to transform their African communities economically.

Davenport [3] and Mamdani [2] both contend that Shepstone's segregationist policy of indirect rule, bolstering the elite position of chiefs, keeping blacks and whites apart, denying the former access to economic opportunities in reserves, was clearly a precursor to latter day apartheid in South Africa. Being the agents of implementation of segregationist economic laws, the colonial chiefs understood clearly the negative economic consequences of colonial policies on the natives. From these views, it is clear that colonial chiefs were in a strategic position to bargain for fair economic welfare of the African natives. Therefore, the study explored if chiefs attempted to transform natives economically in colonial Nandi. Besides, the above works examined colonial chiefs in South Africa where different economic policies may have been implemented compared to those rolled out in colonial Kenya.

Beinart [4], Davenport [3], Hammond-Tooke [5], Lacey [6], Southall [7] and Stadler [8] all argue that the Cecil John Rhodes' Glen Grey Act of 1894 was a major legislative attempt to systematically curtail the authority of colonial chiefs by replacing them with a system of government-appointed district councillors and introducing separate Reserve Areas under a distorted Version of the Communal System of land tenure. The Act had a number of purposes and a range of contradictory effects. The introduction of the district council system of local government was meant to steer Africans away from the Cape Franchise to a form of separate political representation. It was a forerunner to the more all-encompassing segregationist and apartheid measures, especially the creation of territorially separate areas for African occupation, the Reserves. Moreover, the Act, according to these authors, was intended to drive labour of the land by introducing a peculiar form of communal tenure. Often, the land provisions of the Act are interpreted as an extension of individual tenure to tribal areas of communal tenure. The above reviewed studies do show that colonial chiefs played a role in the establishment and implementation of segregationist economic policies in South Africa. This attests to the fact that colonial chiefs had some influence on the economic policies of the colonial system that had adverse effects on the local natives. However, the studies were conducted

in South Africa. The present was undertaken in Kenya to examine if the Nandi colonial chiefs played similar roles as those of colonial South Africa.

Hammond-Tooke [5] and Evans [9] agree that the policy of incorporating African leaders, in the form of colonial chiefs, into the political structures of colonialism ensured that Africans would blame their own black leaders for the economic woes resulting from colonisation. Therefore, the British wanted to steal resources from Africa and still find absolution from that crime. Moreover, by preserving the shattered fabric of the indigenous mode of living, the colonialists kept Africans apart from colonial institutions. This implies that impoverishment of the natives was an integral strategy of the British indirect rule. Having been rendered poor through confiscation of cattle and land alienation, Africans would not match the economic status of the white settlers. According to these authors, the laws and policies governing land tenure, political representation, the powers of chiefs, the manner in which justice would be dispensed, and the creation of separate reserve territories were all aimed at reducing Africans' economic opportunities while advancing those of the white settlers. Did the British use such tactics in Nandi Kenya? What role did the colonial chiefs play in implementation of this strategy of impoverishment in Nandi? How effective were they in gaining control over the Nandi people and their resources? The two studies reviewed above underscore the fact that economic exploitation was the chief reason behind colonial conquest of Africa. Therefore, all the political actions (policies and laws) of the colonial government were designed to secure economic opportunities for the colonial government and the white settlers. These views helped to focus attention on the economic implications of the political actions undertaken by the colonial government through the colonial chiefs in Nandi. The study specifically examined how such political actions transformed the Nandi community economically. The reviewed work was done in South Africa while the present study was conducted in Kenya.

Erik observes that one of the economic roles of colonial chiefs was the recruitment of labour for the colonialists from the local communities [10]. In some cases, the chiefs were allowed to allocate work to labourers, which proved challenging for them. The study drew from these views to explore the Nandi views concerning labour in white settler farms. It also explored the role of the Nandi colonial chiefs in labour recruitment and implementation of the squatter system. Accordingly, chiefs and village headmen could be allowed to allocate labourers some work, but it proved challenging as it became increasingly difficult to allocate enough labour to carry out public works. Erik argued that this was due to the general break up of tribal authority and increase in the production of economic crops by natives [10]. Again, the administration's strategy was to change the ordinance to limit the number of maximum working days to 24 and give the Africans the right to minimum wage. A notable feature in the above reviewed works is that colonial chiefs were not very popular among the native Africans because they represented a breakaway from the established traditional forms of leadership to which Africans had been used. The study sought to explore the perceptions of chiefs in Nandi with respect to the chiefs' roles as recruiters of labour. Moreover, the study examined the impact of this labour recruitment role of chiefs on the Nandi economic order.

In a study of apartheid South Africa, Woods argues that the challenges of labour supply revealed that it was not necessarily a problem with lack of cooperation among the chiefs but it could equally be the chiefs' lack of authority as principals in their areas of jurisdiction [11]. This reiterates the dilemma of the principal-Agency theory. It demonstrates that for the colonial chiefs to be effective, they needed to act with full authority as principals and not as agents. Yet, being appointees of the colonisers, such powers were not accessible to these chiefs. Nevertheless, the administration was responsible for appointing chiefs and claimed that the process had been successful and that in most cases chiefs found popular support among the natives. Interestingly, Woods contests that in several cases there existed a general confusion about who should be appointed chief. It came out clearly that many appointed chiefs asked popular support among local populations; therefore, it is uncertain whether the problem was with the chiefs' unwillingness to act as agents or their limitations as principals. The study took a cue from these views to examine the nature of appointment and power dynamics of the Nandi colonial chiefs. The reviewed work demonstrates the inherent dilemmas of indirect as a form of principal-agent management system. The fact that colonial chiefs and the British experienced conflicting interests meant that colonial chiefs could take advantage of the confusion to pursue their own interests or those of their native communities. The study examined how some of the Nandi chiefs took advantage of the cleavages emerging from the weaknesses of indirect rule to advance the economic welfare of their own people.

Cope [12], Macmillan [13], Bradford [14] and Gluckman [15] argue that, in South Africa, colonialists afforded the chiefs material gain to lessen the temptations of corruption and to put a stop to the excessive fines imposed by chiefs. Chiefs welcomed the proposed stipends claiming that they were no longer able to support themselves on court fines or the extraction of tribute [16]. This implies that colonial chiefs tended to be corrupt or to misappropriate funds. It was also indicative of the growing effects of commercialisation on leadership. By the late 1940s, an effort to avoid association with the unpopular state and the potential loss of adherents, some chiefs argued that commoners' fines should be paid directly to white officials [16]. Generally, however, the imposition of fines remained a financial mainstay of chiefly authority. The reviewed studies show that chiefs had some economic gains for themselves due to their positions. However, the studies fail to show whether or not these chiefs used their enhanced economic status to advance the welfare of their communities.

In contrast to the chiefs who sought power through the institution and salaries offered by the state, Izinduna, some concentrated on the means of advancement available to them in the rural areas. By 1930s, many Zulu chiefs were no longer powerful or affluent in the customary pre-colonial sense, but were rather a heavily indebted class of paid civil servants [16]. This suggests that the economic allurements of the office of colonial chief were an illusion. The British ensured that the colonial chiefs did not earn enough to make them too powerful. Generally, chiefs were unlikely to undertake cash-crop production on land they held in trust for the people. During drought and depression of the 1930s, increasing numbers of chiefs of royal lineage from northern districts set off for the urban areas and the land mines to augment their incomes through tribal subscriptions [16]. It is evident from these

studies that the local chiefs used their positions to exploit the local people economically. However, none of the studies have explored the contribution of these chiefs to the economic transformation of their people.

Mshiyeni and other chiefs in Zulu land derived special benefits and material gain from their association with the state's military recruitment drive [16]. However, Colonel E. Stubbs, the Director of Non-European Army Services, complained that Mshiyeni was either unable or unwilling to fulfil his grandiloquent promises of providing even hundreds let alone thousands of men despite having been entertained lavishly by the Defence Department and a special itinerary band sent through Nongoma at his request. This is indicative of the tension that existed between the colonial chiefs and the British due to poor pay for the former. Such tension also helped to reveal the nature of services rendered to the British by the colonial chiefs. The study presumed that colonial chiefs sought to protest their poor pay by either overcharging the natives fines or sabotaging the government projects. Both of these had some level of impact on the economic situation of the natives, in this case the Nandi.

Goldsten and Udry both show that connections to chiefs in Akwapim, Ghana, was crucial in determining property rights to land and hence investment incentives in agriculture, though they themselves proposed a relatively benign interpretation of the chiefs' actions [17]. Evidently, colonial chiefs held sway over some important economic assets. This situated the chiefs in a strategic position to influence the economic situation of the natives positively. Siwan, Francois and Kotwal have found that in parts of Western India where land ownership was dominated by Maratha elites, development outcomes were worse but measured social capital was higher [18]. These views suggest that colonial chieftaincy had real and measurable economic impact, which was a concern of the study with respect to the Nandi colonial chiefs. The study took insight from the reviewed studies to trace how the colonial chiefs in Nandi might have helped to mitigate issues relating to land ownership and use in Nandi.

Nayega [19] and Lubogo [20] argue that the initiation of British colonial rule in Basoga posed a threat to the Basoga Chief and, unlike the Baganda, the British had come to stay. As the land was the basis of both political and economic power of the Basoga chiefs, the onset of the British ushered in politico-psychological insecurity, which motivated the chiefs to demand for a land settlement. Moreover, violent methods were used against the British rule in other parts of Uganda; the Basoga, weakened by raids from Buganda, sleeping sickness and crop failure, chose a peaceful option. Therefore, the chiefs chose to operate within the colonial establishment in their efforts to convince the British to institutionalize their control over land. Clearly, land alienation was a key factor in the establishment of colonial rule. By annexing land belonging to the traditional leader, the British were able to disempower such leaders or cow them to obedience. In relation to the above, a key question arises: what role did land alienation play in the emergence of colonial chieftaincy in Nandi? Furthermore, 1930 characterized the Basoga chiefs' petition on the issue of land, and read as follows: "We the

Basoga very much desire to have freehold land, being of the same nature with that introduced in Buganda province in 1900” [19]. The reviewed studies underscore how many of the present-day land injustices can be traced to colonial policies on land tenure and use. They also demonstrate how the British manipulated the dynamics of land use and ownership to ensure control of the natives in colonial Uganda. Therefore, the study examined the specific land-related impact of colonial chiefs in Nandi during the colonial period.

The history of Nandi squatters in Uasin Gishu goes as far back as 1912 when settlers made several requests for labour to Nandi chiefs. Ochieng’ says that, in that year, the cattle population in the Nandi reserve had fallen to about 12,000 as the bulk of the cattle had gone with the squatters to the neighbouring settler farms [21]. As such, apart from land alienation, cattle confiscation was another strategy of indirect rule, which ensured the British had power over the natives in Uasin Gishu. At the same time, the issue of Nandi squatters raised complaints from both chiefs and European settlers. Some of the chiefs complained that settlers in the Uasin Gishu were constantly requesting him to supply them with labour. This begs the question on the availability or otherwise of the Nandi labour. What attitudes did the Nandi have towards working in settler farms? In 1916, settlers were complaining about the restriction by tribal authorities forbidding Nandi squatters to take their cattle on to farms [22]. This view hints to conflicts between the Nandi and the white settlers concerning grazing spaces. The study sought to establish the role of colonial chiefs in mitigating such conflicts. The studies by Ochieng’ and Peristiany indicate that the Nandi chiefs did show concern for the economic welfare of their people even as they endeavoured to advance the mandate of indirect rule. However, it is not clear from these studies how much impact the complaints from these chiefs improved the economic welfare of the Nandi.

Ayittey posits that the British colonialism strengthened the powers of the chiefs, weakened the influence of tribal opinion, and contributed to slow economic development in colonial and post-colonial Africa [23]. According to Ayittey, prior to colonialism, land in traditional Africa was nobody’s property until someone settled on it. The study presumed that the Nandi had elaborate rules governing land ownership and sought to determine the role of colonial chiefs in maintaining or altering such rules. Although the African traditional leaders exercised enormous powers over the distribution of land, much land was lineage owned. Further, these leaders could not recklessly exercise their powers of appropriation and confiscation without the full consent of the Council of Elders. However, during the colonial period, the chiefs, with the support of the colonial administration, became authoritarian and corrupt men. They also began to show no respect for the traditional councils of elders. From these views, the study examined how the Nandi colonial chiefs exercised their powers of land distribution. Ayittey’s work demonstrates how colonial chiefs arrogated themselves powers, which they then abused for economic gain at the expense of their people. From these views, the study examined how the colonial chiefs in Nandi exercised their economic roles, if and how they benefited from those roles, and the contribution they made from their positions as economic actors to the economic transformation of the Nandi people.

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Generally, most of the studies have explored the role of colonial chiefs in advancing apartheid economic policies in South Africa. A few of the studies focused on the indirect rule in Uganda, specifically the Basoga kingdom. The general sense one gets from the review is that chiefs tended to derive political power from the economic gains they obtained due to their privileged positions. There are a few studies that acknowledged that some chiefs tried to enhance the welfare of their people, especially with regard to land ownership. However, none of the studies mentions whether or not colonial chiefs successfully used their privileged economic positions to advance the economic welfare of their people, a gap that the study aimed to fill.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Nandi County, Kenya. It adopted a descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised all the former colonial chiefs, Nandi community elders who had lived through the colonial period and had relevant knowledge about the contributions of the various Nandi colonial chiefs, historians who had studied the Nandi colonial chiefs and the current chiefs who had studied the colonial history of the office of chieftaincy. The sample size of the study was determined by the saturation point during data collection. The inclusion criteria comprised variables such as being of Nandi origin, or knowledgeable in Nandi colonial history, especially the subject of colonial chieftaincy, geographical distribution, age and command of historical knowledge, especially about colonial chiefs of the Nandi. Former colonial chiefs of the Nandi were the main target population. However, since most of them had died, complementary information about their roles was sought from relevant archived documents, relatives and friends of the colonial chiefs who are knowledgeable about the roles played by colonial chiefs, and scholars who had studied and written about the Nandi in general and colonial chiefs in particular.

Primary sources were collected by interviewing elderly respondents in Nandi County. Data was collected using question guidelines and interview schedule. The researcher conducted interviews with mainly the elderly respondents. Oral interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of each respondent. The data from the interviews was complemented by those from the question guidelines. The questions were administered to current chiefs to gauge their level of knowledge of the history of their office of chieftaincy. For document analysis, primary sources included archival material on colonial and post-colonial chiefs as well as their roles collected at the Kenya National Archives in Nairobi and Kakamega, and the information from the County Government offices. In the study, data analysis began first with transcription of audio-recorded data. Once every interview was completed, the researcher transcribed the notes by copying what was said into a Microsoft Word processor document. Data analysis began with the researcher picking out relevant information that could answer the research questions in detail. This was done using the units of analysis derived from the research objectives and the reviewed literature. The analysed data was presented by narration of what was said by the respondents with interpretations and discussions based on the objectives and the reviewed literature.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Taxation

During the colonial period, tax payment was mandatory. According to Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), the direct African taxation of Kenyans in the colonial period was an idea attributed to Sir Arthur Hardinge [24]. He proposed a system of levies that would be implemented gradually over time and with the advancement of the Uganda Railway. Therefore, there were various forms of taxes. The first of these was the Native Hut Tax, which was founded on the Hut Tax Regulations of 1901. At the start, the regulation required every hut used as a dwelling to pay 1 rupee per year. The amount levied for every hut varied across economic regions along the Uganda railway line. For instance, in some parts the amount levied was 2 rupees and as of 1903, the Hut Tax was set at 3 rupees. The next type of tax rolled out was the Poll Tax [24]. This was established under the Poll Tax Ordinance of 1910. It sought to complement the effective collection of hut taxes by targeting those excluded by the Hut Tax policy. Poll Tax required Africans of age above 25 years to pay individual tax.

According to respondent Arap Surtan Chirchir:

The chief summoned people and informed them of the need to pay taxes. Taxes were acquired through disposing of some property; for instance, a sheep was worth 10 shillings and taxes were 20 shillings or more. Therefore, one had to dispose of much property to achieve the set target. The man of the household was responsible for payment of Hut and Poll taxes (Oral interview with Chirchir arap Surtan on 5/4/2019, 72 years old).

The study further established that taxation had more than just economic implications on the Nandi society. For instance, since taxation was based on huts and households, some of the men evaded taxes by limiting the number of huts constructed in their compounds. This also meant that some men chose not to marry early to avoid building huts. Nevertheless, the chiefs often investigated and uncovered such tactics leading to punishments for the evaders of taxes. Hut tax records between 1910 and 1912 show that some of the chiefs were excelling in their roles as tax collectors [25]. In some locations, the taxes even increased over time, meaning new or more huts had been carefully registered and taxed over time, courtesy of the efforts of the chiefs. However, some few locations registered a decrease in tax collected over time. This is indicated in the table below.



**Table 1: Tax Collected by Various Nandi Colonial Chiefs, 1910-1912**

Name of location	Names of chiefs or headmen	Huts counted 1910-1911	Rupees collected 1910-1911	Huts counted 1911-1912	Rupees collected 1911-1912	Increase rupees	Decrease rupees
1	Kibellas	662	2031	661	1971	-	57
2,3,4	Arap	529	1434	501	1512	78	-
5	Cheno	-	-	-	-	-	-
6	Arab Chirchir	684	2136	747	2277	141	-
7	Arap	338	918	376	1131	156	-
	Kimamusur						
8	Arap Chepsiror	214	703	369	1089	387	-
9,10,11	Arap Viatol	591	1797	499	1830	-	25
12	Arap Kutia	206	576	207	627	51	-
13,15	Arap Korsoi	284	741	197	800	-	14
14	Arap Kiamaen	143	456	127	373	-	-
16,17	Arap Cheptooz	296	903	271	832	-	-
18	Arp Sisiwa	194	807	175	534	-	2
19	Arap Chetoryot	347	912	521	1014	7	-
20	Arap Segoo	822	2585	763	2274	-	-
21	Kapkeresin	537	1701	540	1686	-	-
22	Arap Sirma	397	1077	396	1200	123	-
23	Arab Kitongot	511	1521	688	2061	543	-
24	Arap Tallaz	592	1761	521	1704	32	-
25	Arap Blagat	820	1936	632	1896	80	-
26	Kiboit	173	534	155	474	-	-
27	Kapcheroroin	230	363	250	735	72	-
28	Arap Cherogoir	232	816	273	231	15	-
29	Kipsergoi	550	1917	606	1824	-	-
30	Arap Narya	316	1134	404	1224	90	-
31	Arap Kitongot	504	1566	655	1977	411	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>10116</b>	<b>30384</b>	<b>10422</b>	<b>31489</b>	<b>1536</b>	

Source: KNA/DC/NDI/I/I [26]

According to data collected from KNA, the British collected taxes to facilitate the operations of the government [26]. Taxation was also a means of forcing Africans to accept to provide labour in white settler farms. Since the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1902 had declared that all land in the Kenyan Protectorate belonged to the British government, Africans could not use land freely to generate revenue for paying the required taxes. As such, the only recourse available to them became to offer labour in settler farms as a means to raise revenue for paying taxes and subsistence [24]. Thus, taxation helped to subsidize the funding received from Britain. The DC was required to try as much as possible to generate enough taxes to cater for the salaries of those under his administration in the district. These findings concurred with the view by KRA that the British had a colonial policy, which served to ensure

that Britain could sustain itself economy by turning colonies into foreign sources of revenue and market for their economic products back at home.

According to one interviewee, the Nandi struggled to meet their tax obligations in the colonial period:

The colonial chiefs collected taxes, which was 30 shillings per household around 1948-49. Those who did not have money to pay taxes had the option of surrendering some of their animals. However, tax evasion was punishable by imprisonment. Most people undertook manual labour to raise money for paying taxes to the colonial government (Oral interview with Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old).

According to the respondent, Poll Tax was ordered to be paid per family head. By 1948-49 tax was collected, everyone had to pay. Chiefs had to identify the people to pay tax by their age, as they were collected the taxes they were taken to DC. By 1953 taxes per head was Kshs. 25. One had to work hard to get maize. Some maize from Canada was brought by 1937. The interviewee further explained the above views noting that the chiefs, with the help of the administrative police (AP) (Kaya), arrested those who declined to pay taxes. Many people sought refuge in settler farms in Uasin Gishu due to strict measures instituted by Chief Tulel against failure to pay taxes. Another interviewee explained how Poll Tax was implemented in Nandi during the colonial period:

Payment of taxes were mandatory to estimate the number of family members each member came with a stick and this facilitated to estimate the population hence ease payment of taxes. Through the headmen the chief summoned the meeting to estimate the number of people. Counting was based on the clans attendance the meeting was compulsory (Oral interview with retired Assistant Chief, Sosten Kirwa Arap Kimwey, on 5/4/2019, 69 years old).

Poll taxation in Nandi was formally established under Resolution no 2/1931, passed at a meeting of Nandi Local Native Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1931, which was presided over by the Capt. F.B. Hislop, District Commissioner. The Resolution was proposed by Chief Arap Chepkiyen and seconded by chief Arap Melil carried unanimously. It provided that: for the year 1932, there be levied a local native rate of 1 shilling; the rate shall be levied as a poll rate on every adult male Nandi in the Nandi District, and the rate shall be paid on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1932 [27]. The introduction of tax collection through colonial chiefs was not without challenges. This was revealed by study findings from KNA, which revealed that colonial chiefs at times did not keep accurate records of revenue collected. For instance, an audit inspection of 1932 showed what had been suspected, that the method of revenue collection from chiefs' offices was extremely sketchy. Therefore, the colonial administration adopted a system whereby no loopholes existed and which would obviate further defalcations [27]. As indicated by arap Koey:

The government conducted regular auditing to ensure transparency in revenue collection. It also used close supervision of colonial chiefs and recruited local informers and spies to report on misappropriation of funds (Oral interview with Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old).

Aside from direct taxation, the study also found that the colonial government generated revenue through plot rents and licences such as donkey licenses and cycle licenses. Others included animal taxes during auction [27]. According to Hamilton [1] and Mandani [2], chiefs as the unofficial officers of the British indirect rule gathered power from their followers and passed it to the central state in form of taxes. Therefore, collection of taxes for the British was the first main economic responsibility of the chiefs. Nevertheless, as shown in the study, chiefs' economic powers gained through tax collection helped to transform the Nandi community both positively and negatively. On the one hand, the Nandi were forced to adopt a life of labour in order to pay taxes. As earlier noted, the Nandi despised physical labour; so, this was a major transformation on their part. On the other hand, taxation served to impoverish the Nandi much of whose land and livestock had already been confiscated by the government.

### **3.2 Land Division and Ownership**

The Nandi understood and practised communal land ownership and use. There was no such thing as landless individuals. However, colonial incursion into Kenya disrupted this form of land ownership and use. The British introduced individual land ownership and tenure. According to Njuguna and Baya, individual ownership of land was an alien concept that has contributed to major land inequalities in Kenya to date [28]. It supports ownership of land by one person at the expense of others. Upon the official annexation of Kenya as a colony in 1920, the British declared all Kenyan land as its protectorate. Under this new era, the colonial regime embarked on a quest to identify and confiscate fertile land from across Kenya. This saw the introduction of the Squatter System in Kenya [29]. Under this system, land was divided into the fertile or productive segments, better known as the Kenya Highlands, inhabited and used by the white settlers, and the Reserves or Reserved Land, inhabited by the African natives. The white settlers then proceeded to contract natives to provide labour for pay. Native labourers could reside in the white settler farms as squatters. The rollout of the Squatter System ushered in major displacement of natives, especially in Central, Eastern and Rift Valley regions of Kenya.

In Nandi, the study revealed that land alienation and displacement occurred soon after 1905, following the defeat of the Nandi Resistance (Oral interview with Simon Arap Kelewa on 4/4/2019, 87 years old). This affirmed the view by Ngeny that after the death of Samoei, the Nandi were defeated soon. The colonialists then began a project to push the Nandi away from fertile areas [30]. According to Lagat, by 1917 to early 1918, most of the men from Nandi had embraced the Squatter System by signing labour contracts with the white settlers [29]. However, the peak of land alienation in Nandi was after 1920. Three years later, in 1923, the project of land alienation, coupled with that of taxation,

sparked what is now known as the Nandi Uprising [31]. The Nandi protested against the alienation of much of their fertile land, such as Kipkarren Valley, which had deprived them of grazing grounds.

The study established that colonial chief played significant role in the implementation of land alienation and squatter system. According to Simon arap Kelewa,

Colonial chiefs were hated mainly because of these two colonial projects. The situation was made worse by the fact that every resistance by the Nandi tended to invite the confiscation of more land. The Nandi attributed their defeat and severe punishments to the spying role of the chiefs. The chiefs informed the government of planned attacks and protests. They also forced the people to provide labour (Oral interview with Simon Arap Kelewa on 4/4/2019, 87 years old).

Evidently, the colonial chiefs contributed greatly to forcing the Nandi to embrace a life of labour under the squatter system. The study further revealed that another major land demarcation in Nandi took place in 1950s-1960s under settlement scheme. In pre-colonial Nandi, land was communally owned. Each clan kept animals in their territories (pororiosiek; singular: pororiet). In the colonial dispensation, however, the chiefs helped in delineation of boundaries for the clans. Therefore, the chiefs tried as much as possible to retain the boundaries established traditionally through the clan system (Oral interview with Kimeli Maritim on 7/4/2019, 79 years old). However, as arap Chirchir pointed out, land ownership had changed greatly in Nandi:

The land system had changed greatly by then. Plus, the available land was little and not very fertile. So, these chiefs struggled to avail good land to every clan. Most of the chiefs took huge tracts of land to themselves. Their families and friends also benefited a lot and many other Nandi people became landless (Oral interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old).

The above views were affirmed by Joseph Arap Keter, who noted that some chiefs took up large parcels of land for themselves because they were in good terms with the British (Oral interview with Joseph Arap Keter on 1/4/2019, 77 years old). Keter gave the example of Chief Malel who converted into Christianity and was subsequently highly favoured by the colonialists by being given a huge tract of land. He owned a huge tract of land from present-day Eldoret International Airport all the way to present-day Eldoret town. It was reported that some of the chiefs who took part in the demarcation of the Nandi land in the 1950s were, among others, Mr. Letangwa, Arap Cheno and Arap Kibeles. Demarcation began from Tabolwa to Mulango. The boundary was established when Arap Kibeles or Arap Cheno threw a stick and the white man followed where the stick was thrown and it became the boundary (Oral interview with Simon Arap Kelewa on 4/4/2019, 87 years old). The demarcation also followed rivers. For instance, Chief Arap Cheno, who was a Terik, used a horse and marked the land Lessos Hill and Kabiyeet to Keiyo Hills.

At the family level, land was divided between the sons, especially after the death of the father. In case a man had two or more wives, he divided the land according to the number of wives. Cattle was also divided to the wives, so that each one had something. The chief's role in matters of land at the family level was to ensure land was divided equally. Therefore, chiefs helped to resolve land disputes (Oral interview with Kimeli Maritim on 7/4/2019, 79 years old).

### 3.3 Ox-Drawn Cultivation

The introduction of ox-drawn ploughing was a major technological transformation to Nandi agriculture in the colonial period. The study results indicated that colonial chiefs were used to force the Nandi to accept this type of mechanised farming. Prior to the arrival of the colonialists, farming and foraging for honey and herbs were some of the most notable of Nandi economic activities. Farms were cultivated by hand and wealth was measured by the size of one's harvest and the number of livestock in one's compound. However, in an interview, Samuel Biwott noted that one notable colonial DC, Mr. Hunter, introduced oxen plough from local native council (LNC) (sunguro). At first, the Nandi declined the idea of tying oxen for ploughing. They had always understood that male animals were useful only for meat, sacrifices and breeding. They had no concept of saddling such animals for laborious activities. However, DC Hunter managed to teach the Nandi to put oxen into land cultivation work. As Samuel Biwott narrated:

First, he called the Chiefs to a delegation, who were led by Arap Cheruiget Kapchui. He then summoned all clans at Kabandan. The DC also called Mr. Sem, an extension officer, for field day and himself in Itigo. At the meeting, he showed the Nandi how to strap the oxen with yoke. One spanner and sixteen oxen pulled the plough with a child placed ahead of the oxen (*shika kamba*). Mr. Sem struck on the oxen and they began to move following the *shika Kamba* boy and subsequently ploughing the ground. Whenever Mr. Sem whistled, the oxen stopped. Thereafter, the DC called upon Mr. Sem to plough on a small piece of land to plant trees as an illustration of the oxen ploughing practice. He asked the assistant chiefs (Kiptainik) to gather the clans and line up the people in a circle. Mr. Sem was told by the DC to plough around the circle of people. After ploughing, the clans planted the trees (Hunter's trees - *kabansctan*). The DC then called upon the clans to join hands and provide seedlings of wattle trees and blue gum for planting. The chiefs were given instruction that anyone who did not support this type of farming be jailed. Mr. Hunter later reported to Britain how he beat the Nandi and forced them to do farming. Owing to this, he was elected as Member of Parliament in Britain (Oral interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old).

From the interview, one respondent revealed that Mr. Hunter was serious on matters of development. He convinced the Nandi to use oxen to plough. Initially, the Nandi replied that Mr. Hunter was a fool when he urged them to use the animal plough. However, "a local man by the name of Mr. Raphael Sem arap Kaptono from Mutwot had earlier used 16 oxen to plough. He had someone leading the oxen

(mshika Kamba)” (Oral interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). Therefore, the DC summoned the meeting (barasa) and he convinced arap Kaptono to hide nearby with his oxen until the meeting was sat. The people were gathered in Mosop. The DC gave a speech on the importance of using oxen ploughs. However, many did not seem to understand the skill. As such, the DC summoned the congregation to make a circle. He then sent for Arap Kaptono who stroke a whip and suddenly everyone was shocked to see oxen emerge pulling the plough. The oxen ploughed around the circle. Mr. Hunter then planted some trees on the ploughed ground. Later, Hunter summoned another meeting in which he commanded everyone to bring their oxen. He informed them to donate oxen and provided them with ploughs. Those who declined to donate oxen were whipped by the chief. Some were imprisoned in the camp to provide manual labour and whipped.

When ox ploughing was finally accepted, people could willingly donate 6 to 16 oxen to pull the ploughs. Ploughs (sungura) were donated through the local native councils (LNC) (Oral interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). By 1939, there was mouldboard plough pulled by 16 oxen. For example, Sawe arap Mengich indicated that Arap Cherusei began to use the oxen in Mogon (Oral interview with Sawe arap Mengich on 23/3/2019, 73 years old). He obtained the implements from the white settlers and local native council (LNC). Maize was planted and surplus disposed of. Other crops planted were millet, sorghum, sweet potatoes and Irish potatoes. The chief also presided over the planting of sisal as live fence and cultivation areas were thus demarcated. The live sisal especially demarcated the European from the African land. This was a common practice enforced during the reign of Chief Isiah.

Having realized the benefits of enhanced or mechanised agriculture, the Nandi soon began to practice mixed farming and mixed cropping. They ploughed small pieces of land. In most cases, chiefs compelled the people to work on settler farms. They also oversaw the construction of gabions and ensured food was available at all times. They also protected the widows from being deprived of their farms. The Nandi chose good seeds by preserving them in the kitchen to dry (Oral interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old).

### **3.4 Expansion of Crop Farming**

The study also found that colonial chiefs facilitated the expansion of food and cash crop farming in Nandi. The chiefs were used to force the Nandi to adopt new crops. They also played a role in sensitising the Nandi farmers to improve their farming practices.

Prior to colonisation, the staple food for the Nandi had been sorghum and millet. As indicated by the study findings, the Nandi were mainly livestock farmers, but they also planted sweet potatoes, millet and sorghum (Oral interview with Kimaiyo Arap Mutai on 27/3/2019, 98 years old). They also used a plough kiptororit. The Nandi stored food in the pots (chemargorias). They exchanged the produce with the neighbours such as the Luhya, who supplied the Nandi with tobacco (barter trade). Maize was introduced during the colonial period (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76

years old). In an interview, it was revealed that initially, the white settlers told the Nandi to plant maize. The Nandi referred to Maize as “bandiat”. Hunting and gathering was still prevalent but it was not a reliable source of food. The colonial government had effected a ban on hunting and foraging, safe for a few white settlers who were allowed to hunt for meat. However, some of the white settlers were free to go into the forests to hunt and gather honey. The chief directed the people to grow crops to avert hunger. Cereals were supplemented with traditional vegetables like Sakyat, Mborajet and milk (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

Later, when tea crops were introduced in areas like Nandi Hills, the chiefs advised the colonial government not to force the Nandi to provide labour since the Nandi despised the notion of being slaves. The government, fearing for unnecessary protests from the Nandi resorted to recruit labour from the Luhya and Luo to provide labour in tea estates. The Nandi was instead recruited to provide security services around the tea factories and estates. One Asian, Mr. Kaghira, hired the Nandi to provide labour and the Nandi chiefs castigated him severely. However, in time, some of the chiefs encouraged the Nandi to embrace the life of manual labour to augment their sources of livelihood. Later, the Nandi also provided labour in sugarcane plantations (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

Mr. Hunter also supplied potatoes (butatis) later to the Nandi. The chiefs asked the Nandi to set aside some land for planting potatoes. On their part, the chiefs took big pieces of land. Potatoes for planting were distributed across the clans (pororiet). The chiefs punished individuals who did not participate in potato cultivation by whipping or caning. The chiefs gradually urged the government to supply ploughing equipment to Africans to promote mechanised agriculture. They further identified those who defied government directives on farming. Such natives were summoned or forced to the DC’s office to undertake manual labour and caning by chiefs. Because of this forced agriculture, wealth accumulation increased in the Nandi (Oral Interview with Pius Kiptarus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old). The above findings agree with those of Grishow that by 1920s onwards colonial administrations increasingly intervened in rural areas with the aim of changing farming methods lacking major technological and institutional changes and for this reason, they initiated to use chief’s and village headmen to disseminate information and propaganda [32]. Therefore, indirect rule became the solution whereby “development could be achieved without disrupting traditional community.”

The results of the study further indicated that, unlike other exotic food crops, maize production spread fast among the Nandi. In an interview, Simon Arap Kelewa noted that Cassava was introduced by the white settlers though it never did so well. This was not helped by the fact that the Nandi were being compelled to grow these foreign crops. For instance,

Mr. Hunter introduced growing of trees. He provided people with free plough pulled by oxen. People declined to heed to their development and took off with their animals. Mr. Hunter appointed chiefs from each clan (pororiet) and those targeted were ex-soldiers

and ex-police. The chiefs, in turn, used force to compel people to plough with oxen. Later, the Nandi were impressed with the development and adopted it to till their lands. Each location was supplied with two ploughs and Yiro Yorks. The chief supervised the supply and use of such equipment (Oral interview with Simon Arap Kelewa on 4/4/2019, 87 years old).

Reiterating the above findings, respondent Peter arap Koey noted that the British introduced maize crops in Nandi. Some of the maize had been bought from Canada. The respondent also added that the Nandi colonial chiefs ensured that agricultural extension officers were provided to the native farmers. These officers were mostly available to white settler farmers. Affirming these findings, another interviewee noted that the colonial chiefs taught agricultural officers who then instructed the people how to use ox-drawn ploughs (Oral interview with Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old). The British also introduced tea in 1949 in Nandi Hills. As earlier mentioned, tea planting and plucking labour was sourced mainly from the Luhya and Kikuyus and were supervised by the chiefs. Tea plantations were owned by the white settlers. The first tea factories had been erected in Nandi Hills in 1948. In the words of one interviewee:

...by 1949, tea was brought to Nandi hills. The labour in tea plantations were provided mainly by the Luo and Kikuyu. The colonial chiefs began to encourage the Nandi to seek labour opportunities in tea plantations. However, since only the whites were allowed to plant the cash crop, the chiefs also discouraged the Nandi from attempting to plant tea (Oral interview with Peter arap Koey on 21/3/2019, 86 years old).

Concerning the overall role of chiefs in farming practices, one respondent had this to say:

Preparation of land was done by hand or oxen and then maize and millet were planted together. The chiefs always urged people to use oxen. They also taught people to protect their crops. For instance, a stick or bran of thorns were used to cover the seeds. The chiefs' role was to ensure cleanliness of the area, timely and proper sowing of seeds and observation of soil conservation in farm cultivation and use. In the native reserves, production of crops was mainly for subsistence. Chiefs discouraged Africans from competing with farm products from white highlands. Concerning animal husbandry, Africans were not allowed to mix their livestock with those of the white settlers. Yet, Africans were encouraged through their chiefs to embrace new breeds of animals. The chiefs were also tasked with identifying and curbing the spread of animal diseases (Oral interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old).

Affirming the above views on the role of colonial chiefs, Joseph arap Keter reported that under the guidance of colonial chiefs, terraces were built to protect soil erosion. The chief organised for the construction of terraces and gabions. The chiefs also organized the provision of agricultural extension



officers whose responsibility was to assess and suggest improvements of agricultural activities. The chief and the headmen (assistant chiefs) accompanied the officers whenever they visited the native reserves (Oral interview with Joseph Arap Keter on 1/4/2019, 77 years old). According to another respondent, these agricultural extension officers taught the Nandi to construct bomas for easy gathering of manure. They also trained the people on terracing, maintenance of forests, the planting of new crops such as millet, sorghum and maize (Oral interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old).

### **3.5 Colonial Chiefs and Sustainable Agriculture**

Prior to colonialism, the Nandi were conscious of and practiced environmental conservation and management initiatives. For example, they never used to live around the rivers but resided in the highlands (tegat). Forests were preserved for hunting and gathering. During the dry season, hunting was forbidden among the pre-colonial Nandi. The Nandi trapped the animals in the wild (Oral interview with Kimaiyo Arap Mutai on 27/3/2019, 98 years old). However, when the Luhya started burning charcoal, Nandi started to clear the forests to trade wood with the Luhya (Oral interview with Pius Kiparus Kapkiyai on 4/4/2019, 76 years old).

The study found that at the onset of colonialism in Nandi, the British soon banned hunting and foraging by African natives in the forests. This was part of the governments' restriction of movement to curtail political insurrections in Nandi (Oral interview with Peter arap Koei on 21/3/2019, 86 years old). Colonial chiefs were thus tasked with restricting the movement of the Nandi into nearby forests. The chiefs posted kanga and used spies to identify or deter such movements. However, the chiefs also encouraged the Nandi to practice bee-keeping, which had already been done by the white settler farmers. Some of the chiefs nonetheless allowed the Nandi to go into the forests to fetch firewood and special medicinal herbs. But these chiefs had to be bribed to allow such movements. In such cases, they allowed the Nandi to go into the forests and warned them against being spotted by the kanga who stood guard in certain sections of the forest edges. Interestingly, as Koei pointed out, the government allowed white settlers to go into the forests to hunt and forage for honey. Further, the settlers also destroyed huge forest areas to create land for farming and to obtain firewood and timber for construction of their settlement areas.

The study further established that colonial chiefs oversaw the construction of gabions and terraces to prevent soil erosion due to intensified farming activities. The white settlers also practiced soil conservation and the Nandi learned a lot working and squatting in the white highlands. The agricultural extension officers reported to the chief on the progress of such developments. Initially, extension officers only visited white settler farms. However, due to protests from the chiefs, the DC allowed the officers to visit farms cultivated by the Nandi as well. Additionally, the first extension officers were always whites; but over time, these officers saw the need to put some educated Africans into apprenticeship on extension and veterinary services. As such, it was mostly these trained Africans who later visited and helped the Nandi in their farms. Chiefs did the follow-up on the progress of

implementation of directives of extension officers (Oral interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old).

Another soil conservation initiative facilitated by the colonial chiefs was planting of trees on sloppy areas. The chiefs, with the help of agricultural extension officers, instructed and supervised the planting of such trees (Oral interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old). Additionally, the Nandi colonial chiefs regulated the cutting down of trees by natives in restricted areas like forests and swamps. This was a continuation of the traditional Nandi practice of protecting the environment. One respondent cited the example of Chief Arap Nyatita thus:

He presided over activities like preparing roads, taking care of the environment compelled people to carrying out cultivation, cow dung was used to plants grow crops. Chief compelled the Nandi to plough their lands apply manure and all this was compulsory (Oral interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old).

Another colonial chief, Isaiah, also facilitated the construction of dams to provide water for drinking and agricultural activities. This was noted in the following report entry by the District Commissioner:

For water supply points, five dams and one well were constructed during the year. The most credit for the must go to chief Isiah who organized the dam making in the area by communal unpaid labour. Improvement of water supplies offers the main scope for the building of minor capital works by locational councils in the future [33].

As already mentioned above, the colonial government declared that all forests were part of government land (Oral interview with Malakwen Arap Rutto on 15/04/2019, 87 years old). Therefore, the colonial chiefs sensitized the Nandi against flouting government laws governing such protected natural resources. In areas where hunting was not restricted by the government, it became the responsibility of the colonial chiefs, being the new forms of leaders, to appoint some members of the Nandi community to examine the seasons and advice on the right season for hunting (Oral interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old). Whenever the hunting season came, the observer normally went uphill and announced by singing “Merue koechei mi hoboviet kereben” (Don’t oversleep, there is happiness in the forest). This song marked the beginning of hunting. Hunters summoned one another to forests. A soloist (in response) would then announce: “Ochony, ochony obel got” (signifying ‘coming together’). Many animals were killed during the hunting season. The game meat was conserved for months through a process of roasting, steaming, salting and drying. The head of the hunting expeditions was given some portion by each group. Some of the colonial chiefs went on hunting while those chiefs who remained at home were given some meat for blessing purposes (Oral interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old).

In the 1960s, locusts destroyed most of the crops in Nandi. This was followed by a severe drought. The chief played a key role in the implementation of government policies concerning hunting and other functions during the dry spell. For instance, Chiefs Arap Naman, Isaiah Boinet and Elijah Cheruiyot implemented the government policies on drought (Oral interview with Sosten Kirwa Arap Kimwey on 23/3/2019, 69 years old).

### **3.6 Colonial Chiefs and Livestock Farming**

In the colonial period, there was restriction on the number of livestock that the Nandi natives could keep. The white settlers introduced the squatter system in Nandi. The chief summoned the people to move to European farms where they lived as squatters. In this system, the Nandi head of household had to register the number of squatters per homestead. There was also a maximum number of livestock to be kept, around 10 (keteben buluu). Nevertheless, as the study revealed, even as squatters in the white highlands, they were allowed to practice some minimal livestock farming. Those African natives in reserved lands also practised animal husbandry with conditions. It thus became the role of colonial chiefs to interpret and implement the regulations governing livestock farming among the Nandi natives.

The study findings revealed that the Nandi colonial chiefs played a role in the control and management of livestock disease. For instance, they taught the Nandi people about veterinary services. The chiefs supervised the activities with the assistance of headmen and agricultural extension officers. Chief Katono, for example, advocated for digging of dips, although some people declined. The chief prevailed upon the Nandi to accept dipping as a means of controlling or containing ticks. He headed Kapchepkendi and Kamelilio (Oral interview with Simon Arap Kelewa on 4/4/2019, 87 years old). In case of outbreak of diseases like anthrax (Maikotik), the chief summoned people to take their animals for dipping (Oral interview with Joseph Arap Keter on 1/4/2019, 77 years old).

During the outbreak of diseases, the Nandi informed the chief who called the veterinary officers. Thanks to the campaigns spearheaded by the chiefs, all the Nandi villages (kokwet) brought their animals to be vaccinated. If one defied to vaccinate the affected animals, the chief forwarded the information to authorities for action. Animals were branded for better identification (Oral interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). The study also found that colonial chiefs had to contend with the challenge of livestock thefts. Traditionally, cattle raiding was an activity undertaken by the Nandi to deprive the Luhya and Luo of the animals. This was treated as a full-time job. The colonial chiefs intervened in this practice by demanding to know the victims of raid (Oral interview with retired Assistant Chief Sosten Kirwa Arap Kimwey on 5/4/2019, 69 years old).

Past literature has shown that the history of Nandi squatters in Uasin Gishu goes as far back as 1912 when settlers made several requests for labour to Nandi chiefs. Ochieng' says that, in that year, the cattle population in the Nandi reserve had fallen to about 12,000 as the bulk of the cattle had gone with the squatters to the neighbouring settler farms [34]. At the same time, the issue of Nandi squatters

raised complaints from both chiefs and European settlers. Chief arap Koitalel complained that settlers in the Uasin Gishu were constantly requesting him to supply them with labour. In 1916, settlers were complaining about the restriction by tribal authorities forbidding Nandi squatters to take their cattle on to farms [34]. The studies by Ochieng' and Peristiany indicate that the Nandi chiefs did show concern for their people even as they endeavoured to advance the mandate of indirect rule.

The study found that the Nandi colonial chiefs also oversaw the practice of livestock upgrading (Oral interview with Stephen arap Marus on 23/3/2019, 64 years old). Livestock breeding had been practised mainly by the white settlers. The white settlers also introduced various breeds of livestock. The settlers also did not want the mixing of their animals with those of the Nandi. They considered the Nandi animals to be of low grade. The chiefs' role was to ensure that such mixing never occurred. As such, even when a bull from the white settler farms broke fence and entered into the Nandi lands, the Nandi household head was punished for it. Chiefs ensured animal diseases were prevented or controlled. They also ensured animals were vaccinated. Chiefs further kept records of the number of livestock in each location.

Further, the study results showed that with the advent of black agricultural extension officers, the Nandi were taught to practice experimental farming (Oral interview with Mariko Kurgat on 20/3/2019, 88 years old). This included cross-breeding and new crop planting techniques, which required one to set aside one land for demonstration purposes. People feared to take lands, especially demonstration lands, due to tedious work of demonstration. Nevertheless, the chiefs took their subjects to observe how such demonstrations were done in the white settler farms. They also used their own lands to convince the Nandi that such practices helped to enhance yields from the animals and crops.

It was also established that cattle dips were dug with the orders of Chief Katono in Kapchepkendi and Kamelilo (Oral interview with Samuel Biwott on 16/3/2019, 76 years old). The first cattle dips were initiated in 1949 in areas like Kabiyet, Aldai and Kilibwoni (Oral interview with Peter arap Koeoy on 21/3/2019, 86 years old). By 1952, more land had been demarcated for digging more cattle dips. All animals were treated in Chemamul (Baraton). The animals were uniquely numbered (macchiato) or branded to avoid scrambles and losses. The people from Kapchepkendi were renowned for being so strong, for example Mr. Kevolo could handle the animals, some weighing 300kgs, for dipping single-handed. Because the Kapchepkendi were energetic, most of them were picked to work in European farms. Another respondent recounted the role of the chief in dealing with emergency outbreaks of animal diseases:

If animals were sick, for instance from anthrax (Kipketet), the chief summoned the people so as to find out the cause of the disease. An elder would cry out loud: "*uui Kirwok mогоiwet*" (members meet in the tree). By noon, people demanded to know the cause of the meeting. He informed them that a young child cried 'pleading not to be left without a stick'. The Orkoiyot listened keenly and announced that "*Kirogo mokimeto lakweno*

*osi kesom asis*” (we don’t deny our children a stick and then ask god for more). He summoned all the clan prophets (maotik) to interpret the issue. When prophets converged, he told them that a vaccine was available. He ordered all clans to vaccinate animals. This increased the Nandi’s production. The chief was at the centre of all these events. This especially happened during the reign of Chief Elijah Cheruiyot. Each chief presided over the exercise (Oral interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 7/4/2019, 90 years old).

From the data obtained from the KNA, various resolutions and regulations supported the colonial chiefs in their contribution to livestock farming in Nandi. For instance, the Resolution of 1932 agreed to maintain and construct saltlicks. The proposal was made by Arap Tego and seconded by Arap Kendagor, both colonial chiefs. The District Commissioner recommended the resolution of the Nandi Local Native Council meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> March 1932 on the following grounds:

For the case of drainage and improvement of saltlick, work was commenced in December 1931 on the draining of the Baraton saltlick, on the vote of sh. 1200/- work was carried on into the New Year, but the funds proved inadequate. In addition to labour two automatic steel gates were purchased on the advice of the executive engineer, public works department, Eldoret. Although funds proved inadequate to complete the jobs, the work being of such importance to the Nandi, work continued at the request of the tribe taking advantage of the day months [35].

The above views show that colonial chiefs took initiatives to improve the quality of livestock farming in Nandi.

### **3.7 Colonial Chiefs’ Response to Livestock Theft**

Livestock theft was common among the Nandi in the precolonial and colonial period. Prior to colonialism, the Nandi used to raid their neighbours (mainly the Luhya and Luo) for cattle. Cattle rustling was a frequent cultural practice that was almost treated as a sport between neighbouring tribes. However, the colonial administration banned the practice of cattle rustling [36]. According to one respondent, various factor pushed the Nandi to stock theft as a form of cattle rustling during the colonial period:

The government practice of destocking took away animals from the Nandi. Land alienation also led to deaths and loss of livestock. As such, they sought to replace the lost animals. The Nandi also used cattle rustling as a form of protest against colonial imposition of foreign agricultural practices. The harsh laws and punishments meted out on cattle raiders and thieves led to more retaliation. The livestock in white settler farms and in some western Kenya regions that had collaborated with the colonisers were of

good quality and attractive to the Nandi (Oral interview with retired Assistant Chief Sosten Kirwa Arap Kimwey on 5/4/2019, 69 years old).

The respondent added that the above reasons complicated the work of colonial chiefs in curbing cattle rustling. On the one hand, the chiefs were sympathetic with the economic situation of their people owing to destocking and land alienation. On the other hand, they were mandated by the government to fight all forms of illegal acquisition of cattle.

As the study findings obtained from KNA revealed, most of the chiefs ensured that laws against cattle rustling were implemented to the letter. In some cases, the Nandi could steal cattle from white settler farms, which attracted stiff penalties from the colonial administration. Due to the ban on cattle rustling, livestock theft began to exacerbate more within the Nandi community. This problem was the main point of discussion between the chiefs and the governor in a meeting held in Kapsabet in 1938. Presenting his views, Chief Arap Chepkuyeng noted that temporary imprisonment of livestock thieves was not working. He proposed for a ten-year jail term along with a fine as a severe punishment and deterrent of the vice. Chief Elijah, however, proposed a death penalty for the thieves as a solution [36]. The study also revealed that the Nandi raided other communities for animals like cattle, goats and sheep. The raided animals were hidden for over two years. Moreover, the Nandi could conceal the identity of the perpetrators from the chief. In an interview, Kiptum Temuge revealed the difficult position that cattle raids placed the Nandi colonial chiefs:

Those who raided were hard to identify. The DC usually summoned the chief to explain the whereabouts of the stolen animals. In turn, the chief summoned all the people and interrogated them to reveal the identity of the thieves. Interrogation was done for hours or days until those suspected were arrested under the chief's surveillance. Anybody who gave wrong information was taken to prison. The suspects were severely tortured to reveal the whereabouts of the stolen animals (Oral interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 22/04/2019, 90 years old).

### **3.8 Colonial Chiefs' Role in Nandi Trading Activities**

The Nandi used to practice barter trade with the Luhya and Luo in the pre-colonial period. Trade was mainly a matter of necessity; meaning it was only done to alleviate deficiencies like food during times of hunger. The Nandi exchanged wheat or animals with their neighbours. In the colonial period, it was found that barter trade was still common within the Nandi and between the Nandi and neighbours, although the colonial administration had limited unnecessary movements. Therefore, each trader had to apply for and obtain a written pass from the chief which showed the reason for their movements [36].

As indicated by one respondent, among the Nandi, two oxen could be exchanged for a young heifer (Oral interview with Sawe arap Mengich on 23/3/2019, 73 years old). If an animal that had been sold

died, replacement was done. The Nandi also traded millet and sorghum with Luo and Luhya. They used the gourds to measure millet quantities during such transactions. They added animal urine to milk to preserve it as they made their journeys to the points of trading. The Nandi also exchanged commodities with the Luhya, such as sweet potatoes and milk, and the Nandi took tobacco. Most of the trading activities were deliberated on during meetings held every Monday. The batter trade with the other tribes was also silent due to language barrier. According to one interviewee, the colonial chiefs supervised trading activities in Nandi and with Nandi neighbours. In this way, they helped to foster harmony within Nandi and between the Nandi and neighbours.

### **3.9 Chiefs' Role in Recruitment of Colonial Labour**

The study further established that colonial chiefs also played a key role in recruitment of local labour to work in white settler farms and colonial industries. As indicated in the Provincial Commissioner's report obtained from KNA, the DC was mandated with training the locals on importance of cultivation of land [36]. Subsequently, every Nandi family was requested to provide some of the strong young men to work on white settlers' farms. Therefore, the chief summoned all those who accepted to provide labour and gave them instructions on how to behave in their new workplaces. Those who flouted workplace regulations were punished severely. Younger men were mostly recruited and worked as cooks and errand boys in the white people's houses (Oral interview with Arap Surtan Chirchir on 5/4/2019, 72 years old).

The results revealed that the colonial chiefs used labour recruitment to promote peaceful co-existence between the Nandi and the white settlers. Those who had quarrelled with white settlers were encouraged by the chiefs to show their penitence by providing labour in the farms. Thus, most of the chiefs were conscious of their dual agency role in every task they undertook. At first, most of the Nandi people were compelled to work in European farms. However, with time most worked on European farms without coercion (Oral interview with Kiptum Arap Temuge on 8/4/2019, 90 years old). Past studies have indeed shown that the colonial chiefs were responsible for recruiting labour for the colonialists from the local communities. In some cases, they were allowed to allocate work to labourers, which proved challenging for them. Accordingly, chiefs and village headmen could be allowed to allocate labourers some work, but it proved challenging as it became increasingly difficult to allocate enough labour to carryout public works. Governor Bowring argued that this was due to the general break up of tribal authority and increase in the production of economic crops by natives [10]. Again, the administration's strategy was to change the ordinance so as to limit the number of maximum working days to 24 and give the Africans the right to minimum wage [10].

Moreover, the challenges of labour supply revealed that it was not necessarily a problem with lack of cooperation among the chiefs but it could equally be the chiefs' lack of authority as principals in their areas of jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the administration was responsible for appointing chiefs and claimed that the process had been successful and that in most cases chiefs found popular support among the natives [10]. Interestingly, Woods contests that in several cases there existed a general confusion

about who should be appointed chief [37]. It came out clearly that many appointed chiefs asked popular support among local populations; therefore, it is uncertain whether the problem was with the chiefs' unwillingness to act as agents or their limitations as principals.

Ayittey posits that the British colonialism strengthened the powers of the chiefs, weakened the influence of tribal opinion, and contributed to slow economic development in colonial and post-colonial Africa [23]. According to Ayittey, prior to colonialism, Land in traditional Africa was nobody's property until someone settled on it. Although the African chief exercised enormous powers over the distribution of land, much land was lineage owned. Further, the chief could not recklessly exercise his powers of appropriation and confiscation without the full consent of the Council of Elders. However, during the colonial period, the chiefs, with the support of the colonial administration, became authoritarian and corrupt men. They also began to show no respect for the traditional councils of elders. Ayittey's work demonstrates how colonial chiefs arrogated themselves powers, which they then abused for economic gain at the expense of their people.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Right from the pre-colonial period, the major economic preoccupation of the Nandi has been crop and animal husbandry. They also hunted and foraged for honey in forests. However, the appointment of colonial chiefs saw a shift in the economic activities of the Nandi. The number of livestock kept per Nandi household was limited by the colonial government. Hunting and foraging in forests was limited and later banned for the Nandi. There was also restriction on movement making it difficult for the Nandi to visit forests, even to fetch medicinal herbs. Taxation was a major economic activity undertaken by the colonial chiefs. Taxes were levied per household, represented by a married man or one hut. Taxes were paid in cash or by surrendering some livestock.

The Nandi was also taught to plant new food and cash crops. They were also taught to use ox-drawn ploughs to cultivate land. In crop planting, soil conservation was key and the chiefs ensured this was followed. Similarly, in animal husbandry, the chiefs ensured that the Nandi farmers were provided with dips to secure the health of their livestock. They also helped to engage in innovative breeding of livestock. The colonial chiefs also helped to recruit labour for the white settlers from the Nandi people. Cattle rustling was banned and there was a rise in livestock theft among the Nandi themselves. Colonialism also barred them from hunting, which forced them to engage in other means of acquiring livestock and other commodities. This included barter trade. The chiefs provided the necessary documentation to facilitate movement for trading purposes.

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