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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

**Colonial Displacements and African Coping Strategies. The Experience of
BaTonga of Binga, Zimbabwe, 1956-2008**

BY

CODELIA DHODHO

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SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR ENOCENT MSINDO

DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the challenges faced by BaTonga in livelihood reconstruction after involuntary displacement and resettlement from the Zambezi valley to pave way for the Kariba dam reservoir. It shows how they were forcibly evicted without compensation because of the racist policies of Southern Rhodesia. Their resettlement into an arid region infested with marauding elephants, malaria and tsetse fly undermined their complex livelihoods and eroded their self-sufficiency, but the study argues that they were active and resilient agents who adopted complex coping strategies. It shows how they had to adapt to dry-land farming and counter the effects of wildlife which plundered their crops and managed to secure the harvest in the drought-prone region. The study shows that although they adopted precarious livelihoods, they managed to survive under extreme circumstances for decades without any external assistance until the coming of NGOs who began to distribute free food from 1982. It argues that prolonged distribution of emergence food aid may not have been necessary, but its coming for almost three decades largely served political interests of both the NGOs and their governments. This perpetuated poverty as BaTonga also manipulated its distribution as a coping strategy against fragile livelihoods. This caused dependency which further plunged them into chronic food insecurity because they abandoned their traditional coping strategies. The study argues that both the colonial and postcolonial government as well as NGOs failed to address the root causes of livelihood insecurity in Binga for the five decades under study. It is therefore the contention of this study that the problem of food insecurity in Binga was not only an issue of recurring drought but was deeply rooted and pervasive due to multiple complex factors which made it difficult for the people to establish sustainable food production after displacement.

Key Terms: BaTonga, displacement, livelihoods, hunger, coping strategies, Kariba Dam, Binga, NGOs, food aid.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to BaTonga people

ABBREVIATIONS

AGRITEX:	The Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services
BIDA:	Binga Development Association
CADEC:	Catholic Development Commission
CAMPFIRE:	Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
CCJP:	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace
CNC:	Chief Native Commissioner
DFID:	Department for International Development
DNPWM:	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management
IRR:	Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction Model
LAA:	Land Apportionment Act
MDC:	Movement for Democratic Change
NC:	Native Commissioner
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
SLA:	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SLF:	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
WCD:	World Commission on Dams
ZANU (PF):	Zimbabwe African National Union (Patriotic Front)
ZAPU:	Zimbabwe African People's Union

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CHAPTER 1: BATONGA LIVELIHOODS BEFORE DISPLACEMENT

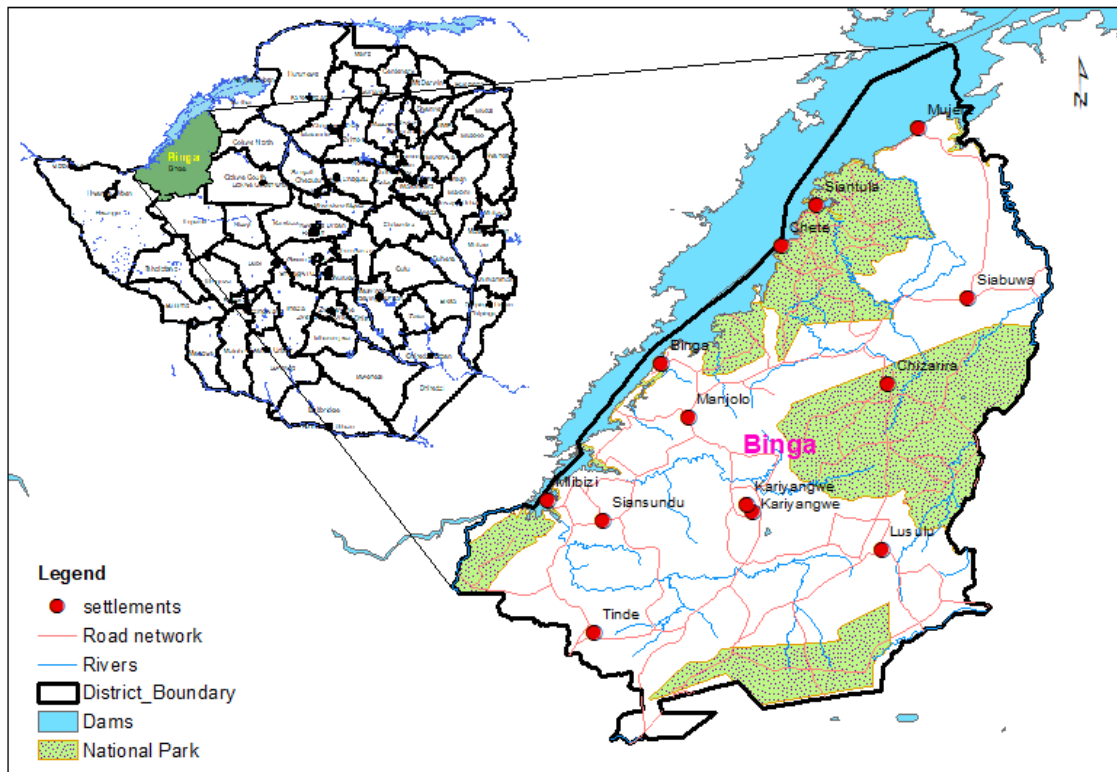
Introduction

BaTonga of Binga in the Zambezi valley are the third largest ethnic group in Zimbabwe after the Shona and the Ndebele. They live in the poorest and least developed parts of the country close to the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia and are among the most marginalized ethnic groups¹. They used to inhabit the banks of the Zambezi River but there were involuntarily displaced without compensation by the Rhodesian government between 1956 and 1958 to pave way for the construction of the Kariba Dam. There were resettled in Binga district, a region which was prone to droughts, had poor sandy soils, and was infested with tsetse fly, malaria and dangerous wildlife. This thesis provides a historical study of how BaTonga coped with the socio-economic challenges of displacement from 1956 to 2008. The study also critically examines the role of long-term humanitarian food aid in undermining the livelihoods reconstructed after displacement since ninety per-cent of BaTonga population was trapped in acute food insecurity in 2008 and required permanent welfare in the form of food aid every year.² The map below shows the location of Binga on the map of Zimbabwe.

¹ Basilwizi Trust, Legacy of Dams on the Zambezi: Group works to right the wrongs at Kariba, International Riversp.18, 2010, accessed at <https://archive.internationalrivers.org>, on 26 July 2019.

² Ibid.

Figure 1: Map of Zimbabwe Showing the Location of Binga District



Source: Author

This chapter provides an outline of the reasons and the drive for carrying out the study. It introduces the study by giving a background of BaTonga livelihoods before displacement and resettlement and briefly lays out the literature which discusses how displacement shattered these livelihoods. It also introduces the theory that guides the study and defines methods and sources used to answer research questions.

The Context

Before displacement and resettlement, BaTonga inhabited the middle Zambezi Valley from the Kariba Gorge to Mlibizi. The people lived on the floodplains along both sides of the Zambezi River, was a mighty fast-flowing river, on which they depended for their social, economic and religious life. They had adapted to their natural environment and called themselves *Bamulwizi* (the people of the river) which was known as *Kasambabezi* (if you have knowledge of the river infested with

crocodiles and hippopotami, you can afford to bath in it.)³ *Mulonga Kasambabezi* (River Kasambabezi) flooded annually on its banks. BaTonga, through their indigenous knowledge systems knew how to cross the fast-flowing river, where to fish and where to bath without falling prey to the crocodiles and hippopotami. They had so much adapted to the river that they knew how to distract the crocodiles when crossing it, or fishing and bathing.

The Zambezi River is the fourth largest river in Africa after the Nile, Congo and Niger rivers. Like the Nile, it flooded annually, and the floodwater deposited rich alluvial soil brought down from the watersheds of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Angola. BaTonga had depended on its perennial water supply and fertile soils for livelihood in farming for many centuries. Although they have no known migration oral traditions, archaeological evidence suggests that they migrated into the Valley between AD1000 and 1100.⁴ About fifty-seven thousand Tonga-speaking people lived on both sides of the river which was not a border at all. They were linked by kinship ties and a man could have wives and children on both sides of the banks.⁵ However, involuntary displacement between 1956 and 1958 split the people into two groups in different nations, namely Zimbabwe and Zambia.

³ Pamela Reynolds and Colleen Cousins, *Lwaano Lwanyika, Tonga Book of the Earth*, Panos Publications, London, 1993, p.20.

⁴ Godfrey T. Ncube, *A History of Northwestern Zimbabwe 1850-1960*, Mond Books, Kadoma, 2004, p.2.

⁵ Interview with Siamabbuyu at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020

anarchical because they were a “people who did not recognise a paramount chief, or faultfinders or grumblers”.¹² BaTonga’s autonomy ended when the BSA company extended their rule to Matebeleland after the defeat of the Ndebele Kingdom in 1894.

The British colonisers looked down upon BaTonga people and this had a negative impact on their displacement years later. When the colonial officials first encountered BaTonga, they regarded them as “a very inferior race of people [who were] cowardly, stupid and timid to an extreme degree” because they compared them with the powerful Ndebele raiders under King Lobengula.¹³ The first Native Commissioner in the Zambezi, Valdemar Gielgud, was appointed in 1896 to enforce colonial authority. He had a negative attitude towards BaTonga’s livelihoods in the arid and harsh environment of the valley because he did not understand their way of life. Gielgud first encountered them in 1898 on his tour to collect taxes in the valley and complained to his authorities that they had no respect for authority and the headmen had no power to compel them to pay tax because of the egalitarian nature of their society.¹⁴

Because of their seclusion from the rest of the country, BaTonga people were not willing to pay many taxes which were introduced by the colonial government. They were forced to pay the hut tax of ten shillings for the second wife’s hut every year. Gielgud blamed them for laziness because they made no effort to earn the money to pay tax as they were largely self-sufficient in the valley. He compared them with the Ndebele whom he described as “...a vastly superior race, and one which has been accustomed to a most blind obedience to authority.”¹⁵ The Ndebele and Shona people who made up most of the population of Southern Rhodesia were mobilized through their traditional chiefs to participate in the migrant labour system on settler commercial farms, mines and in towns. On the contrary, BaTonga evaded the payment of taxes because they were not keen to leave the valley for a period every year and sell their labour to the white settlers.

This chapter argues that BaTonga were not lazy but were self-sufficient because of their diversified livelihoods. Although the Zambezi valley received low and extremely irregular rainfall and the temperatures were high, the people’s livelihoods were adapted to their environment.

¹² Lancaster, *Ethnic Identity*, 1974.

¹³ A3/18/26-28, W.E. Farrer (Native Commissioner, Sebungwe) to Chief Native Commissioner, 1906.

¹⁴ NB6/1/4/2 Valdemar Gielgud’s Annual Report for Sebungwe to the Chief Native Commissioner, January 1898.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

They had a well-organised and complex economic system which ensured that they had enough food to eat even in times of drought. Subsistence economy was based upon cultivation on the riverbank gardens, on the alluvial flood plain as well as on much bigger slash and burn fields higher on the escarpment that was less than a mile from the river.¹⁶ Although agriculture was the most important economic activity in the Zambezi valley, hunting, gathering, fishing and pastoralism supplemented agricultural products and ensured a continuous supply of food.¹⁷

BaTonga people were forcibly evicted from the floodplain of the Zambezi River between 1956 and 1958 when the construction of the Kariba dam began. They had to abandon their wealth in form of fertile land, water, fish and wildlife to pave way for the reservoir for the generation of electricity. About 34 000 people were displaced from the north bank while around 23 000 were evicted from the south bank. Resettlement in Southern Rhodesia was not properly planned as it was carried within the colonial context of forced evictions. They were dumped into the wilderness of Binga which was inhabitable and agriculturally unviable, and the colonial State through neglect denied them a share of the benefits of the dam. The colonial government made very little efforts to minimise the negative impact of displacement, and this dealt a heavy blow on their livelihoods. It is against this background that a study had to be conducted on how the process of forced displacement and resettlement undermined the livelihoods of BaTonga and how they coped with these challenges for five decades.

Research Goals

This study explores how involuntary displacement undermined BaTonga's complex economic systems which were adapted to the climate and environment of the valley, and how the people coped with these challenges from the time of resettlement in 1956 up to the food crisis of 2008. It also critically examines the role of long-term food aid in undermining their fragile livelihoods adapted to the new environment after independence. To achieve this, the study sought to understand how forced displacement undermined the livelihoods of BaTonga; to examine the coping strategies adopted by the people to deal with these livelihood challenges; as well as to

¹⁶ Elizabeth Colson, *Social Organisations of the Gwembe Tonga, Human Problems of Kariba VI*, Manchester University Press, 1960, p.77.

¹⁷ NB6/1/8-10 Sebungwe Native Commissioner's Annual Reports, December 1909

critically examine the role of prolonged food aid on the development of chronic food insecurity which characterizes the period between 1982 and 2008.

This thesis asserts that although displacement ruined their livelihoods, BaTonga adapted their livelihood strategies to the harsh environment as evidenced by their survival through successive droughts from 1956 to 1980 without government support. Their resilience is demonstrated by their continuation to dwell in an environment with little support for food production. The study argues that when humanitarian food aid from various NGOs kept on coming since 1982, the people abandoned most of their coping strategies and became so dependent on it that they suffered during the 2008 drought because of the State's decision to stop donors from giving food and humanitarian aid in Zimbabwe. Many children and the elderly died from hunger and those who survived had to live from gathering wild foods until food distribution resumed in 2009. The focus of the research determines the extent to which prolonged food aid distribution and government neglect have contributed to the chronic food insecurity in Binga. This most probably helps in understanding why poverty and food insecurity is increasing as most communities and households fail to make a sustainable living and may assist in identifying the most appropriate strategies to address this challenge. There is no guarantee that the 2008 food crisis cannot happen again in Binga.

Displacement and Livelihoods

After being forcibly evicted from the Zambezi, BaTonga had to adapt to dryland farming on poor soils in a drought-prone region to get sufficient food supplies for their families and communities. Although their displacement was dam-induced, the colonial government did not compensate them for livelihood disruption and loss and there were no rehabilitation programmes for the reconstruction of livelihoods. The colonial government only gave them relief food for two years after displacement but stopped before they could sufficiently produce their own food.¹⁸ They faced persistent droughts and destruction of crops by marauding wildlife, but the colonial officials did not assist them with livelihood restoration and rehabilitation measures. Neither did

¹⁸ W.T. Nesham, *Kariba Resettlement*, NADA vol.38, 1961, pp.22-26.

they receive relief aid to help them survive during times of chronic food shortages. These challenges caused the people to develop some resilience and cope with livelihood risks. They had to adapt to dryland farming and develop ways of securing the harvest against all the odds. They also resorted to poaching of wildlife and fish from the Lake risking their lives. Despite all these precarious times, BaTonga people managed to feed themselves for two decades without any external support until Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) came distributing free food for more than three decades after independence.

This study had to understand the impact of long-term food aid on the fragile livelihoods adopted by BaTonga after resettlement. According to McGregor, NGOs flooded Binga District following the media publicity of widespread hunger and underdevelopment during the 1982/3 nation-wide drought.¹⁹ International NGOs such as Save the Children (UK) and Christian Care set up various development projects and started distributing relief food aid among BaTonga. There has been a steady inflow of humanitarian food aid every year since then due to recurring periods of drought in the region. Manyena criticizes the NGOs in Binga for failing to address the root problems facing the BaTonga communities, thereby perpetuating poverty.²⁰ By 2008, more than 90% of the total population of Binga was chronically poor as they required food aid every year.²¹ McGregor concurs with Manyena that NGOs contributed to the impoverishment of BaTonga through policies which failed to bring transformative economic empowerment and development. This study analyses how decades of humanitarian food aid impacted on the precarious livelihood strategies of BaTonga communities to understand the challenge of pervasive food insecurity in the region. Food aid has increasingly been criticised for its role in long-term food insecurity as revealed by Ncube's quantitative study that Sinansengwe community in Binga is increasingly becoming vulnerable to drought because of food aid which has created dependency among the people.²²

¹⁹ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.155.

²⁰ Siambabala Manyena, *Disaster resilience in development and humanitarian interventions*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Northumbria, Northumbria Research, 2009, p.310, <https://www.nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/661>
Save the Children, *Household Economy Assessments, Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe* April 2003.²¹

²² Thabo Ncube, *An Analysis of the Impact of Continuous External Support on Community Resilience in Sinansengwe Community in Binga District in Zimbabwe*, Masters Dissertation, University of Free State, 2010.

This thesis asserts that although displacement ruined their livelihoods, BaTonga successfully adapted their economic strategies to this harsh environment as evidenced by their survival through successive droughts from 1958 to 1980 without government support. Their resilience is demonstrated by their continuation to dwell in an environment with little support for food production. The study argues that when humanitarian food aid from various NGOs kept on coming since 1982, the people abandoned their coping strategies and became so dependent on it that during the 2008 drought many died from starvation because of the State's decision to stop donors from giving food and humanitarian aid in Zimbabwe. The focus of the research determines the extent to which prolonged food aid distribution and government neglect have contributed to the chronic food insecurity in Binga. This most probably helps in understanding why poverty and food insecurity is increasing as most communities and households fail to make a sustainable living and may assist in identifying the most appropriate strategies to address this challenge. There is no guarantee that the 2008 crisis cannot happen again in Binga.

The study is primarily guided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach which emerged in the 1990s with the aim of reducing poverty in developing nations through understanding people's choices and actions. It provides a way to understand the nature of poverty and the links between different aspects of people's livelihoods. Its architects, Conway and Chambers mention that "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living".²³ The term livelihood is often used generally to refer to economic production, employment, and household income. According to Carney, "a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base."²⁴ Scholars such as Ellis, Scoones and Kranz emphasised the need for the poor to develop sustainable livelihood strategies for poverty reduction to be achieved. This study argues that although BaTonga managed to cope with livelihood disruption and loss after displacement, they failed to establish sustainable livelihoods.

²³ D. Carney (ed.), *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make?* Department for International Development, 1998, P.4.

²⁴ Ibid

According to Kranz, economic growth is influenced by the capabilities of the poor to take advantage of expanding economic opportunities.²⁵ Scoones argued that building assets helps to reduce economic vulnerability to poverty as well achieving sustainable livelihoods.²⁶ This study shows how it became difficult for BaTonga to build assets after resettlement because of many social, economic and political obstacles. Ellis focused more on diversification of rural livelihoods and of income streams for people to become less susceptible to poverty.²⁷ The study shows how lack of livelihood capitals inhibited the people from diversifying livelihoods after displacement.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) has become an analytical structure for understanding livelihoods of the poor in a given vulnerability context. It is concerned with factors and processes which either constrain or enable people's ability to make a living in an economically, ecologically, and socially sustainable way. This framework is important to this study as it offers a broad view to the factors which cause poverty, in a historical context. It informs the study in exploring the factors which enhanced or constrained BaTonga's ability to reconstruct their shattered livelihoods after displacement. It also helps to analyse their potential to escape from poverty in terms of access to resources, skills and social networks. However, this framework has been criticized for underplaying the structural constraints that keep people in poverty as it accepts the state of poverty and inequality as the study shows.²⁸

This study analyses how political, social and economic limitations negatively affected BaTonga's ability to cope with post-resettlement challenges and build sustainable livelihoods. Neglect by both the colonial and post-colonial State limited the resources that they could access to produce sufficient food for their households. They had no share in the Lake's water, fish, electricity and tourism resources; they were barred from hunting wildlife, and from accessing forestry resources in national parks bordering their areas. However, they had to find ways of illegally accessing some of these resources for survival. They managed to rebuild their livelihoods, but they were fragile; they were not sustainable. When donors came with prolonged distribution of humanitarian food

²⁵ Lasse Kranz, *The Sustainable Approach to Poverty Reduction. An Introduction*, SIDA Division for Policy and Socio-Economic Analysis, 2001, p.21.

²⁶ Ian Scoones, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, A Framework for Analysis*, Working Paper 72, Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex, 1998.

²⁷ F. Ellis, *Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification*, in *Journal of Development Studies*, 35,1,2002, pp.1-38.

²⁸ Christopher McDowell, *Involuntary Resettlement, Impoverishment Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods*, in *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*, Volume 2, 2002, Massey University Papers, Australia

aid, BaTonga were quick to adjust their precarious livelihoods as a way of coping with vulnerability, as the thesis demonstrates. However, the study argues that this further entrenched poverty among the people and exposed them to dependency on this food aid.

Livelihood diversity and food security before displacement

The term food security means different things to different communities because of different value systems. The United Nations defines food security as access of all people, at all times, to enough food for an active and healthy life.²⁹ BaTonga asserted that they had food security before displacement because of the availability of diverse sources of food all year round. Although maize, sorghum and millet production were key to their households' self-sufficiency, it was complemented by food from many other sources. They did not have stocks of food for use during famine but households which did not harvest sufficient grains could survive from gathering a wide variety of food from the forest, killing wild animals, fishing or selling livestock for grain.³⁰ Although some of these sources of food could not meet the optimum nutritional requirements, they cushioned many families and communities from hunger and starvation until the next harvest. This is in line with Devereux and Maxwell's argument that food security is linked to having sufficient food which may not be linked to farming.³¹ This section discusses the importance of farming in food security and argues that self-sufficiency was achieved through complex livelihood strategies.

a. Riverbank farming

A close examination of BaTonga cosmology is key to understanding their complex livelihoods before displacement. The concept of time is not universal among most humans. BaTonga's reckoning of time was different from the Western one which is governed by written calendars and clocks. According to Weinrich, almost all historical BaTonga accounts were telescoped into three generational periods.³² They reckoned the

²⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action, Rome: FAO, 1996.

³⁰ Interview with Siyamabbuyu at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020

³¹ Stephen Devereux and Simon Maxwell (eds.), Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa, London: Institute of Development Studies, 2001.

³² A.K.H. Weinrich, *The Tonga People of the Southern Shore of Lake Kariba*, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1977, p.19.

mythical time which is usually found in folklores which were told to educate the young as well as for a metaphysical explanation to express and give meaning to what probably was beyond their realm of understanding. They also remembered the time when they were living on the banks of the Zambezi before the construction of the Kariba dam which flooded their homes. Today they live in the realm of time which began with forced displacement and resettlement in Binga. It is these three episodes that keep being recounted in BaTonga orality. This study compares livelihoods before and after displacement to understand how they lost their self-sufficiency.

Before displacement from the banks of the river, farming was the main livelihood which dominated lives of BaTonga as it was not governed by the rhythms of the seasons but constituted part of their routine all year round.³³ Their time revolved around planting, weeding, harvesting and processing food crops. According to McGregor, the Zambezi River was central to all the areas of BaTonga life.³⁴ The interrelationship between their seasonal obligations and duties went hand in hand with understanding of their chronological calendar which was calculated based on natural agricultural planting and harvesting seasons.

They used the term *chiindi* to refer to space and *chindingo* for a definite point of time. They reckoned time using the sun, the moon and to a lesser extent the stars. The period of twenty-four hours from dawn to the next dawn was called *busiku* and it was divided into *buzuba*, a term that refers to daytime, and *mansiku*, which referred to nighttime.³⁵ Daytime was also divided into several sections: *kuseni* (morning), *sikati* (afternoon) and *gogo/golezya* (evening). Farming, hunting and livestock herding were done during daytime and the people stopped working after sunset when it was dark although guarding of fields against elephants and hippopotami was also done at night in temporary shelters erected in the fields. Moonlight nights were devoted to social activities such as singing, drumming

³³ Colson, Social Organisation of the Tonga, p.78.

³⁴ JoAnn McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi: The Politics of Landscape on the Central African Frontier*, James Currey, Oxford, UK, 2009, p.94.

³⁵ Chet S. Lancaster, *The Goba of the Zambezi: Sex Roles, Economics and Change*, University of Oklahoma Press, USA, 1981, p.39.

and dancing.³⁶ The Tonga year *mwaka* was divided into lunar months and these months were recognized by the cycles of the moon, from its appearance as the first quarter, the full moon, the last quarter, and then it disappeared and dark intervals followed.

BaTonga reckoned their time was both linear and cyclical. It was cyclical in the sense that at night the sun went down under the earth and came up on the other side in the morning. The sun repeated the same journey each day forever. However, they knew that each day was new and unique in its own sense. Their year was divided into four agricultural seasons. It began with the rainy season from November to March which was marked by farming on the flood plain and on the bigger fields where shifting cultivation was practiced. Sporadic light rains came in November and early December but most rain fell in December through February when men, women and children left homes at dawn and spent their mornings in the fields, planting and weeding their crops with short handle hand hoes and digging sticks. Many women and children began to spend their days in the fields from February to April, scaring away quealea birds, baboons and monkeys which were attracted by ripening sorghum.³⁷

Harvesting and threshing of the main summer sorghum crop on the flood plains and on slash-and-burn fields started in April. Preparation for planting of the winter crops started at the end of April. Winter was spent weeding and watering the crops on the riverbank gardens which were harvested before the August wind started. Cash crops such as Turkish tobacco and marijuana were also cultivated in winter.³⁸ They also planted maize on the silt of the receding river which was ripe in September. Next crops on the riverbank gardens were planted as temperatures became warmer at the end of August to ensure that they were harvested before the rains came and flooded their gardens in November. Although the agricultural seasons and the flooding of the Zambezi formed a unique way in which BaTonga dated their past, they also relied on astronomy and other forms of catastrophes for computing time. For example, a solar eclipse was often regarded with

³⁶ Weinrich, *The Tonga People*, p.20.

³⁷ Lancaster, *The Goba of the Zambezi*, p.39.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.49.

fear and people did not go to the fields nor engage in economic activities. Due to their reliance on rich soils of the Zambezi, it is not difficult to understand why forced displacement from the banks of the river into the inhospitable dry land was a major blow to BaTonga social and economic wellbeing without the rhythm of the annual flooding and recession of Zambezi waters.

Farming was the main livelihood in the Zambezi valley because of the availability of good soils and perennial water supply. According to Colson, BaTonga had four types of fields which were classified according to soil type and access to water where they produced a variety of crops throughout the year.³⁹ The most important of these fields were the riverbank gardens and alluvial fields on the flood plain. Riverbank fields were narrow and extended from the high-water mark of the Zambezi down to the lowest point left uncovered by the subsiding flood waters. These were mainly cultivated in the dry season after the flood waters had receded. One explorer who visited BaTonga during the turn of the twentieth century noted that “either bank is lined with small patches of thriving mealies running down the water’s edge at various intervals.”⁴⁰ David Livingstone who visited the valley in 1858 also took note of the importance of all-year cultivation of the riverbank gardens by BaTonga.⁴¹

Riverbank gardens were watered by natural river flooding to extend the farming season beyond the short summer rains.⁴² This was important in drought prone valley where rainfed farming was risky. In addition, BaTonga also prepared some dry season gardens on broad, flat beds of fertile alluvial flood plains just above the riverbanks along the Zambezi and its tributaries. The Zambezi usually overflowed in each rainy season and fertilized the land with new deposits of silt which increased crop yields every year, as noted by Harding.⁴³ Both men and women owned alluvial gardens and they were also inherited from parents to children due their importance for survival during the dry season

³⁹ Elizabeth Colson, *Social Organisation of the Gwembe Tonga*, p.77.

⁴⁰ Colin Harding, *In the Remotest Barotseland. Being an Account of a Journey of Over 8000 Miles Through the Wildest and Remotest Parts of Lewanika’s Empire*, Hurst and Blackett Limited, London, 1905, p.285.

David and Charles Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries and the discovery of Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa. 1858-1864*, John Murray, London, 1865, p.159.

⁴² Pamela Reynolds and Colleen Cousins, *Lwaano Lwanyika, Tonga Book of the Earth*, Panos Publications, London, 1993, p.156.

⁴³ Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland*, p.150.

and for the production of a surplus for trade.⁴⁴ The riverbank and alluvial gardens ensured some harvest even when no rain fell because of the availability of water in the perennial river. This was important for food security in the region which received sporadic rains during summer. It is important to note that some people cultivated fields on the bank opposite to where they had their homesteads because the river was not a boundary between BaTonga on the northern side and on the southern side. It only became a boundary after the colonization of Southern Rhodesia and the occupation of Matebeleland in 1894.

The riverbank gardens made survival possible in the ecologically harsh valley because they were covered by floods during the rainy season and could be utilized during the dry season following the recession of the floods. The people grew a great variety of crops on these gardens to reduce the risk of famine but maize (*zibopwe*) was the main crop planted for food.⁴⁵ In order to maximize on the harvest on limited space, maize was intercropped with beans, groundnuts, sugar cane, cowpeas, cucumbers, melons and Turkish tobacco.⁴⁶ Harding noted that, "The natives grow every sort of native grain and vegetable."⁴⁷ They developed a variety of short season maize (*kaile*) which matured in sixty days.⁴⁸ This maize was planted in April and it matured in June, and only specifically selected maize seed was planted to ensure early maturity and high yields with less moisture. According to Beach, maize, an American crop appeared in the Zambezi Valley in the 18th century and spread throughout the region by the 19th century.⁴⁹ It was usually boiled or roasted and eaten as green mealies off the cob because it was difficult to pound into mealie meal for cooking *nsima*, their staple food. Sometimes they boiled the maize with cowpeas and eaten as a whole meal known as *musozya*. However, maize production was affected by resettlement on dry and infertile soils on the Zambezi plateau.

⁴⁴ Reynolds and Cousins, Lwaano Lwanyika p.158.

⁴⁵ Harding, In Remotest Barotseland, p.284.

⁴⁶ Reynolds and Cousins, Lwaano Lwanyika, p.156.

⁴⁷ Harding, In Remotest Barotseland, p.178.

⁴⁸ Thayer Scudder, Gathering among African Woodland Savannah Cultivators: A Case Study: The Gwembe Tonga, University of Zambia Institute for African Studies, Zambian Papers No.5, 1971, p.26.

David Beach, The Shona Economy: Branches of Production, in Robin Palmer and Neil Parsons (eds.) *The Root of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*, Heinemann, London, 1983, pp.37-65.

Farming on both riverbank gardens and alluvial fields sustained BaTonga communities and ensured food security in the arid valley. When Gielgud, the Native Commissioner for the Zambezi first encountered BaTonga in 1898, he reported that they were “...living in a country where the slightest effort will produce rich crops...in fact they can raise three crops a year.”⁵⁰ In order to maximise the harvest the people produced the same crops on the riverbank gardens three times a year because they were not big enough to meet their annual food requirements. When drought affected the valley, their riverbank gardens kept them alive as the Native Commissioner for Sebungwe District reported that most BaTonga people were not badly affected by the 1922-23 drought because of their riverine gardens. “When patrol was made the natives were then eating young maize (in October 1923) and would reap sufficient to carry them over until next year.”⁵¹ BaTonga also confirmed that they had food throughout the year and food was abundant before displacement.⁵² Therefore, although the Zambezi valley was prone to drought, the people were largely not prone to famine and starvation before displacement and had enough food to meet their needs.

As the Zambezi valley received sporadic summer rains which could not sustain plant growth, BaTonga people developed complex methods of maximizing yields on the relatively limited riverbank spaces on the gardens. These methods were developed over time and passed down for many generations.⁵³ Food security was obtainable through a process of relay farming which involved sowing seed in successive rows as the floods gradually subsided. An early twentieth century explorer, Harding, noted that a riverbank field had maize at the highest point which was fully ripe while near the water level maize plants had just germinated.⁵⁴ They did not have to wait until large spaces were dry enough for planting but even planted a single row of seed at a time. Small lagoons were also sown with maize as soon as the water evaporated in the dry season, and islands which only

⁵⁰ NB6/1/4/2 Sebungwe Native Commissioner's District Annual Report to Chief Native Commissioner, December 1898.

⁵¹ S235/501 Sebungwe Native Commissioner's District Annual Report to the Provincial Native Commissioner, December 1923.

⁵² Michael M. Tremmel, *The People of the Great River*, Silveira House Social Series No. 8, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1994, p.31.

⁵³ Lancaster, *The Goba People*, p.285.

⁵⁴ Harding, *In Remotest Barotseland*, p.285.

appeared when the river was low were also utilized for crop cultivation.⁵⁵ No land was wasted nor left idle near the river, and they made maximum utilisation of the available water and the rich alluvial nutrients to secure the harvest. This ingenuity ensured continuous supply of maize and contributed to food security in the valley in a region where farming was difficult due to persistent drought. It also shows that their self-sufficiency was due to their ability to harness the river's resources. One villager said "We had enough grain to feed our children throughout the year, because the Zambezi never dried up. It was always flowing and watering our maize."⁵⁶

Apart from providing food throughout the year, the riverbank and alluvial gardens were properly managed to provide some cash income to the people who were located far away from sources of employment in towns, farms and mines in the country. The intensive cultivation all year round ensured the production of a surplus which BaTonga could trade to earn consumer goods that were not available in the valley. Their main cash crops included Turkish tobacco and cannabis (which the colonial authorities referred to as 'native hemp') which were also grown for local consumption.⁵⁷ The Native Commissioner for Sebungwe District reported that by 1923 BaTonga were growing tobacco as a cash crop for trade within the district as well as with other districts.⁵⁸ He also noted that they planted tobacco on the first dry patches to be exposed when the river subsided, while subsequent alluvium patches were used planting maize, beans and pumpkins.⁵⁹ The production of food and cash crops all year round demonstrates that they were hardworking people who were not as lazy, primitive or degraded as reported by the early white settlers. It can be argued that they were so much in control of their lives and were self-reliant that there saw no need of engaging into migrant labour during the early years of colonial rule.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Interview with Siyamabbuyu at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020.

⁵⁷ NB6/1/4/2 Valdemar Gielgud's report to the Chief Native Commissioner, 1898. zx

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Trade was an important economic activity among the valley BaTonga. Although the Zambezi valley was isolated from the plateau and other areas, BaTonga traded locally and externally with other ethnic groups for many centuries before colonization.⁶⁰ Although they were regarded as remote and primitive by the colonial officials, they were in touch with the outside world as evidenced by their possession of exotic goods such as beads, bangles and calico cloth imported from China.⁶¹ Weinrich noted that before displacement, BaTonga men used to carry sacks and buckets of green maize cobs to the mines of Wankie and Kamativi and to Gokwe where they earned cash for payment of tax as well as for purchase of consumer goods.⁶² Some people used donkeys to transport fresh produce from the valley to other districts. BaTonga people confirmed that dry season green maize from the valley was very profitable, and its demand was great because other regions did not have perennial rivers to irrigate and produce the crop during the dry months of the year.⁶³ The sale of maize, tobacco and cannabis generated some cash income and improved the lives of the valley people.

This account contradicts with the image portrayed by Gielgud that BaTonga were lazy; they were not only willing to work for the settlers which would have resulted in their exploitation. Selling of fresh maize also became a way of coping with the pressure to pay tax to the colonial government which introduced many taxes to coerce people to go and work as wage labourers for the white settlers on their farms and mines. There was a critical shortage of labour in Southern Rhodesia required to drive the settler economy. Cash income is also a major source of financial assets for realisation of desirable livelihood outcomes. Some households invested the money in livestock for disposal during periods of drought and famine, as the Native Commissioner noted that “One Mtonka chief purchased twelve heard [of cattle] and had them railed to Wankie and taken cross country

⁶⁰ Harding, In Remotest Matebeleland, p.86.

⁶¹ Howarth, The Shadow of the Dam, p.7.

⁶² Weinrich, The Tonga, p.35.

⁶³ Interview with Judith Munenge

to his home on the Zambezi.”⁶⁴ The people lived in tsetse fly free areas which allowed them to rear livestock including cattle, sheep and goats.

Although farming was the most important economic activity in the Zambezi valley, both riverbank farming and rainfed agriculture were not always reliable for ensuring food security because of many risks. When the sorghum crop failed during year of drought and the riverbank gardens failed to sustain the communities, the people had to find other sources of food to sustain their families and communities. Most frequently used livelihoods included foraging, hunting, pastoralism and fishing.

b. Foraging

Reynolds observed that although the valley Tonga were primarily cultivators, they also relied heavily on foraging to sustain their demands for food throughout the year.⁶⁵ Muyambi concurs with Reynolds and adds that they were skilled hunters and gatherers because these arts were passed down through countless generations as important survival techniques for the people.⁶⁶ Foraging involved gathering food from the wild such as fruits, vegetables and bulbs to supplement the harvest. BaTonga claimed that they could completely live off the wild in times of severe food shortages due drought or floods which destroyed their crops.

In 1916, the Native Commissioner’s patrol team in the Zambezi valley reported that BaTonga had to get much of their food requirements from hunting and gathering after crop failure due to drought.⁶⁷ BaTonga had considerable knowledge and utilization of wild produce and foraging was a most important activity and a survival skill performed mostly by women and children. Scudder asserts that gathering played a more important role in the food economy of the valley Tonga than has generally been recognized in any agricultural society in Africa.⁶⁸ The widespread exploitation of wild plants for food was

⁶⁴ S235/501 Sebungwe Native Commissioner’s District Annual Report to the Provincial Native Commissioner, December 1923.

⁶⁵ Barry Reynolds, *Kariba Studies Volume III, The Material Culture of the Peoples of the Gwembe Valley*, Manchester University Press, 1968, p.66.

⁶⁶ R.K. Muyambi, *Some Batonka Notes*, NADA, 1980, pp.137-139.

⁶⁷ NGB6/1/8-10, Sebungwe District Native Commissioner’s Report, 1916.

⁶⁸ Scudder, *Gathering*, p.xi.

mainly due to the periodic food shortages caused by crop failures due to irregular rainfall. BaTonga gathered even more plants than the hunter-gatherer Khoisan of the Kalahari Desert because there was a wider range of wild food plants in the diversified vegetation of the Zambezi valley.⁶⁹

The rich flora in the valley provided a large variety of fruits and vegetables that were important sources of nutrition all year round for the wellbeing of the people. BaTonga women said that “We needed relish (*buyani*) for eating with our main sorghum meals (*nsima*). There many edible plants in the bushes which we collected and cooked.”⁷⁰ Reynolds and Cousins maintain that women supplemented the leafy vegetables (*chisyu*) grown in their fields and gardens because gathering could supply relish on more days than cultivated vegetables.⁷¹ They collected, dried, processed and stored a lot of these leafy vegetables for use during the dry season. The women and girls also got insects and reptiles from the forest, and sometimes meat of small animals and fish to provide a variety of meals for their families. In good years, the food collected supplemented and improved the normal diet. They utilized wild food plants and fruits as snacks and side dishes to the main food obtained from the harvest in the gardens or on bigger fields. Thus, forest foods played a crucial role in BaTonga diets.

Gathering from the wild was important when crops failed due to drought and when there was no reserve on which they could draw. For instance, in 1916, it was observed that when the pearl millet crop had failed the people largely survived on a diet of wild fruits and roots.⁷² During years of drought, the valley people had certain plants which were only gathered and cooked as famine food for survival.⁷³ When grain was completely exhausted and the harvest was not ripe, both men and women collected tiny seeds of wild grasses which ripened in February and pound them to make flour which was used to cook the main meal of *nsima* (porridge). These wild grasses were only used during starvation

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Interview with Judith Munenge on 21 March 2021 at Siabanga

⁷¹ Reynolds and Cousins, Lwaano Lwanyika, p.199.

⁷² NGB6/1/8-10, Sebungwe District Native Commissioner's Report, 1916.

⁷³ Scudder, Gathering, p.29.

because collecting the tiny grains was an arduous task which could only provide a meagre amount of food.⁷⁴

According to Harding, they would also gather wild fruits such as *busiika* (*Indicus tamarindus*) whose sap was mixed with ash from Mopani tree to make some porridge to deal with starvation, which nevertheless caused diarrhoea.⁷⁵ There were some bitter and poisonous roots and fruits which were collected and were prepared for purposes of fighting off starvation.⁷⁶ However, some of these famine foods poisoned people such that most deaths during periods of drought and famine were reportedly caused by “stomach aches” due to poisonous foods from the forest.⁷⁷ For instance, it was reported that “two women and a man at Gapangula’s Kraal on the Sebungwe River died from starvation dysentery”.⁷⁸ Even though some people were intoxicated by poison from these famine foods, they helped families and communities to survive when they could otherwise have died from starvation.

However, many of these plants and trees which BaTonga depended on for relish and famine substitutes were inundated by the Lake after the construction of the Kariba dam in 1958 and the people were resettled in new areas with irregular rainfall and sparse vegetation.⁷⁹ The new environment lacked the diversity in flora hence this significantly affected their ability to cope with the challenges of drought and famine.

c. Hunting

When crops failed BaTonga people could survive on hunting wild animals in the bushes along the Zambezi valley. Early travellers who encountered BaTonga during the nineteenth century before displacement confirmed that they were renowned hunters. Livingstone recorded that BaTonga were “accomplished” and “fearless” hunters of

⁷⁴ Reynolds, Material culture, p.66.

⁷⁵ Harding, In Remotest Matebeleland, p.86 I. Schapera (ed.), *Livingstone’s Missionary Correspondence, 1841-1856*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1961, p.302.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ S235/501 Sebungwe Native Commissioner’s Reports, 1923

⁷⁸ NB6/1/8-10, Sebungwe Native Commissioner’s Reports, 1916

⁷⁹ Thayer Scudder, Regional Planning for People, Parks and Wildlife, Working Paper 3/1982, Department of Land Management, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zimbabwe, p.8.

elephant and buffalo.⁸⁰ Tim Thomas who was a missionary and traveller in the Zambezi Valley in 1867 also described BaTonga as excellent and courageous hunters after he observed a hippopotamus hunt in the Zambezi River.⁸¹ BaTonga also confirmed that hunting was a skill possessed by every man because of its economic importance in their communities. However, these skills were discredited by the settlers because of their failure to appreciate African innovative and technological powers, as discussed in Chapter 6.

Hunting was an important economic activity because there was an abundance of game and a wide variety of species of animals in the forests of the Zambezi valley⁸² which BaTonga hunted for meat, hides and ivory for trade. David and Charles Livingstone pointed out that although every man could hunt, specialist hunters were chosen by an ancestor and performed rituals which made them great hunters of elephants for meat and ivory, buffaloes⁸³ for meat and hides, lions and other dangerous animals for their skins or medicinal purposes. It might not have been true that these rituals worked but it shows that these people had great skill as they killed big game using traditional weapons. Hippos are extremely dangerous in water, but BaTonga hunted them using canoes and killed them with harpoons and spears⁸⁴. Meat formed an important part of BaTonga diet before relocation to the Zambezi plateau and provided them with the key protein energy necessary for growth. People had big bodies because they ate meat every day, sometimes as the main meal. Every man could hunt, and animals were abundant.”⁸⁵

BaTonga did not have sophisticated weapons which could be harmful to fauna. Thomas Baines who explored the Zambezi valley in mid-nineteenth century observed that their main weapon for hunting was the throwing spear.⁸⁶ They also used hand axes as well as bows and arrows, but many hunters also possessed guns just before resettlement.⁸⁷ They

David and Charles Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries and the discovery of Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa*. 1858-1864, John Murray, London, 1865, p.159.

⁸¹ Reynolds and Cousins, *Lwaano Lwanyika*, p.261.

⁸² David and Charles Livingstone, *Narrative*, p.185.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.160.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Interview with Nene Muntanga on 24 May 2021 at Logola

⁸⁶ J.P.R. Wallis, *Thomas Baines, Explorer and Artist 1820-1875*, Books of Zimbabwe, 1982, p.140

⁸⁷ Interview with Nene Muntanga

got muzzle-loading guns or muskets from the Portuguese and Chikunda slave and ivory traders in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.⁸⁸ Furthermore, young men who went to work on South African mines bought guns such as Martini Henry rifles which were invaluable for defence from wildlife when travelling, and to protect crops against large wild animals when they returned home after the expiration of their contracts.⁸⁹ Harding argued that the ambition of every Tonga man was to purchase a gun and go for a hunting expedition which usually took many days.⁹⁰ Hunting was so important that young men would venture into migrant labour to get money to purchase a gun.

It is also important to note that BaTonga manufactured their gunpowder using salt petre, ashes of certain trees, flints obtained from hills and bullets were made from the iron of old hoe blades.⁹¹ This confirms Mavhunga's argument that the African hunt was a skilful workshop which involved advanced technology.⁹² It shows how crucial hunting was to BaTonga communities and the innovation that took place to get the most out of it.

Although they were professional hunters, hunting was also done communally as a form of livelihood during periods of famine. BaTonga men, women and children employed traditional innovative methods such as digging game pits with spears set in the bottom. Livingstone recorded the creativity of the people as they dug deep pitfalls which were smeared over with mud to conceal them from the unsuspecting animals⁹³. This was an effective hunting method as Gielgud witnessed many game pits during his visit to the valley and even lost his horse and donkey which fell in these game pits carrying several bags in 1897. BaTonga hunters also set traps to kill animals around watering places.⁹⁴ Thomas Baines also observed that during times of famine BaTonga communities would communally burn grass near the river and drive the elephant and buffalo into traps and pitfalls at night.⁹⁵ These giant animals could supply many people with meat for food and

⁸⁸ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p. 44.

⁸⁹ Reynolds and Cousins, *Lwaano Lwanyika*, p.113.

⁹⁰ Harding, *Remotest Barotseland*, p.199.

⁹¹ Reynolds and Cousins, p.114.

⁹² Clapperton C. Mavhunga, *The Mobile Workshop: Mobility, Technology, and Human-Animal Interaction in Gonarezhou (National Park), 1850-Present*, Doctor of Philosophy (History), The University of Michigan, 2008.

⁹³ Schapera (ed.), *Livingstone's Missionary Correspondence, 1841-1856*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1961, p.160.

⁹⁴ NB6/1/4/2 Valdemar Gielgud, Report from Sebungwe to Chief Native Commissioner, 1898.

⁹⁵ J.P.R. Wallis, *Thomas Baines, Explorer and Artist 1820-1875*, Books of Zimbabwe, 1982, p.140.

avert the dire effects of starvation. BaTonga argued that they did not practice overhunting nor decimate animal species by these hunting methods as later claimed by colonial officials because they lived in harmony with wildlife and had their own ways of practicing conservation.

Hunting was arguably the main male livelihood as men organized hunting parties to kill buffaloes and elephants while young boys hunted for small game like hares and mice using knobkerries and in the company of dogs. Game meat was eaten daily as boys also set traps for small animals and birds such as pigeons and Guinea fowls.⁹⁶ Hunting was intensified between November and December when green crops attracted the animals such as elephants and buffalos from the bare forest.⁹⁷ According to Lancaster, hunting during this period therefore became a desperate measure to save the crops from being plundered by the animals.⁹⁸ In addition, hunting practiced securing the harvest also supplied much of the required food when the grain reserves were depleted just before the harvest was ready.⁹⁹ Thus, hunting was an important economic activity for the whole BaTonga population, and it provided significant amounts of food during times of famine. However, all African hunting was banned after displacement when the colonial authorities set up game parks and safari areas in the valley and on the plateau to promote tourism, and this posed a severe blow to BaTonga livelihood and wellbeing as discussed in Chapter 6.¹⁰⁰

d. Pastoralism

Although the Zambezi valley was infested with tsetse fly livestock rearing was an important livelihood because travellers and hunters who visited the region in the second half of the nineteenth century reported that BaTonga possessed vast herds of cattle.¹⁰¹ The hunter, Fredrick Courtenay Selous went into the valley between 1877 and 1888

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Interview with Nene Muntanga, Logola

⁹⁸ Lancaster, *The Goba*, p.39.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Scudder, *Regional Planning for People*, 1982.

¹⁰¹ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p.19.

collecting trophies from Pandamatenga through Hwange to Kafue and described the large herds of BaTonga cattle whose variety was the small, hardy and long-horn.¹⁰² BaTonga were prosperous people not only because of large herds of cattle but they also possessed large flocks of sheep and goats.¹⁰³ This evidence from the pre-colonial period helps to dispel the colonial myths which claimed that the people were always poor and primitive. Cattle were an important symbol of wealth used in the payment of the bride wealth. The people also slaughtered cattle during ceremonial occasions and feasts, and their hides were valuable.

However, this wealth in livestock ownership was greatly reduced by frequent raids from the fierce Ndebele Kingdom in the South and the powerful kingdom of Barotse in the north as they were in a buffer zone between these two great kingdoms.¹⁰⁴ According to Weinrich, the Ndebele considered the valley as their sphere of influence and raiding ground but did not station *Indunas* (chiefs) in the region who could force BaTonga pay tribute to their king.¹⁰⁵ The Kololo of Barotseland and the Lozi of the Upper Zambezi also considered the valley as raiding ground for cattle and slaves. It was unfortunate that BaTonga could not match the military prowess of their adversaries because they appear to have offered no organized opposition to the various invasions as they were stateless societies. Consequently, they lost a significant part of their wealth to the raiders.¹⁰⁶

Although cattle almost disappeared from the valley as a result of the raids in the nineteenth century, these wars and raids ceased after the occupation of Barotseland by the British South Africa Company in 1890 and the conquest of the Ndebele in 1894.¹⁰⁷ It is important to note that not only was the population of livestock affected but the population of BaTonga people was also depleted by these wars and slave raids, particularly by the Chikunda slave traders.¹⁰⁸ The rinderpest cattle disease which followed in 1896 and killed cattle in Mashonaland and Matebeleland was a final blow which

¹⁰² J.G. Millias, *Life of Courtenay Selous*, 1975, p.180; Reynolds, *The Material Culture*, p.68.

¹⁰³ NB6/1/4/2 Valdemar Gielgud, *Reports to the Chief Native Commissioner*, 1898.

¹⁰⁴ A3/18/26-28 Sebungwe Native Commissioner's correspondence with the Chief Native Commissioner, 1906

¹⁰⁵ Weinrich, *The Tonga*, p.25.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ A3/18/26-18 Sebungwe Native Commissioner's Correspondence, 1906.

¹⁰⁸ Reynolds and Cousins, *Lwaano Iwanyika*, p.113.

practically wiped out the Tonga cattle in the valley.¹⁰⁹ The Native Commissioner reported that there were only six herd of cattle in the Zambezi valley in 1902¹¹⁰ which then increased to seventy by 1909.¹¹¹ This meant that only few families now owned cattle as the presence of tsetse fly made the introduction of new breeds of cattle from outside the valley difficult because they died from bites by the fly.¹¹² Cattle were an important symbol of wealth. As they lost cattle, BaTonga did not possess any ox-drawn ploughs and did not have scotch-carts at the time of resettlement in 1957.

Although it became difficult to replenish their lost herds of cattle after the rinderpest pandemic, BaTonga replaced them with large numbers of sheep and goats which were important for barter trade. They possessed large flocks of fat tailed sheep and goats because of their resistance to tsetse fly¹¹³. In 1901, BaTonga who numbered about 8 232 owned approximately 2 000 sheep and 8 100 goats.¹¹⁴ Goats were important for meat and milk, but sheep were of greater economic value than goats. Both sheep and goats also represented the capital wealth of a man, and they could also be used for payment of bride wealth. According to Weinrich, before resettlement a man could pay five goats, some hoes and some beads for bride wealth.¹¹⁵ BaTonga also possessed large numbers of pigs which had been introduced in the valley by the Portuguese.¹¹⁶ Towards the upper end of the river, few people kept donkeys that were used as pack animals because of their resistance to nagana caused by tsetse fly. More than five hundred donkeys were counted on both sides of the river in 1957 which were used for transport.¹¹⁷ They also kept large numbers of fowls and pigeons which were consumed in great numbers during years of poor harvests.¹¹⁸ Therefore, the people were largely self-sufficient before displacement from the Zambezi valley as summarized by an elderly villager Who said “Food was plenty.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ NB6/1/3-4, Native Commissioner’s Report, Sebungwe, 1903.

¹¹¹ NB6/1/8-10, Native Commissioner’s Report, Sebungwe, 1909.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ NB6/1/4/2 Sebungwe Native Commissioner’s Reports, 1898.

¹¹⁴ NB6/1/3 Native Commissioner’s Report, Sebungwe District, 1903.

¹¹⁵ Weinrich, *The Tonga*, p22.

¹¹⁶ NB6/1/3-4 Sebungwe-Mafungabusi Reports, 1903.

¹¹⁷ Reynolds, *Material Culture*, p.69.

¹¹⁸ NB6/1/8-10 Native Commissioner’s Report, 1909.

We could find something to eat any time of the day. Milk was also abundant because we milked our cows and goats. Our children ‘bouncers’ because of good food.”¹¹⁹

e. Fishing

BaTonga diets also relied heavily on fish resources from the Zambezi and its tributaries. The people were traditionally fishermen as they had lived on the riverbanks for many centuries. Livingstone observed a wide variety of fish in the Zambezi and its tributaries, some which he claimed occasionally attained the length of a man.¹²⁰ The colonial officials also reported that fish was in abundance when they first patrolled the Zambezi in 1897.¹²¹ Although there were specialist fishermen, fishing was done by men, women and children using a variety of methods in the Zambezi and its tributaries.¹²² The best time for fishing was usually after the rainy season river torrents had subsided, and early in the dry season. During fieldwork, BaTonga reported that “Men used to kill large fish using spears while women and children used scoop nets, fish weirs, non-return traps, and other various types of nets.”¹²³

Livingstone also noted that they used nets made of *hibiscus*, baskets and assegais for catching fish.¹²⁴ Women and children sometimes dammed some of the little inlets when the Zambezi receded, the fish being scooped out when there was little water left.¹²⁵ They also used fishing baskets and set traps to catch fish in islands and shallow waters, and sometimes poisoned fish in ponds using ground pods and seeds of *musangu* (*Acacia albida*) to catch mainly big fish.¹²⁶ Fishing was therefore an important part of subsistence activities of the people for food as well as an insurance against starvation in times of famine.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Kandimba Munkuli on 21 May 2021 at Siabanga

¹²⁰ Schapera, Livingstone’s Missionary Correspondence, p.301.

¹²¹ NB6/1//2, Val Gielgud, Native Commissioners’ Report, 1898.

¹²² Interview with Kandimba Munkuli

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Schapera, Livingstone’s Missionary Correspondence, p.301.

¹²⁵ Reynolds, Material Culture, p.53.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p.43.

Trade in fish helped the people to get some goods which were not found in the valley through barter trade with people living on the Zambezi plateau. In 1905, Harding wrote that BaTonga women traded baskets of dried fish among other goods with traders in the valley in exchange for *calico* cloth, beads, wire ornaments and salt.¹²⁷ The people used to preserve fish for sale through drying on the sun or on fire before transporting them for sale to the plateau Tonga and the Shangwe of Mafungautsi in Gokwe. Fish trade intensified with the growth of towns like Victoria Falls, Hwange and Bulawayo as demand increased. In 1931, the Native Commissioner for Hartley reported that there were many people from Sebungwe who were selling fish in his district, particularly in Selukwe. Of note were men from Sebungwe who sought the Native Commissioner's permission to travel in Gatooma selling fish. One man possessed 734 fish while the other brought 450 fish which they intended to sell at six pence each.¹²⁸

These were large numbers of dried fish which found their way more than five hundred kilometres away from the Zambezi. This shows how fishing was as an important source of cash income before displacement, and arguably explains why most BaTonga men were not keen to venture into wage labour for the settlers far away from their homes in the valley. However, this form of livelihood was shattered with the damming of the Zambezi which saw BaTonga being resettled as further away as two hundred kilometres from the Lake.¹²⁹ As BaTonga people resisted paying taxes and participating in the migrant labour system, the colonial government largely ignored them and did not develop the valley until they forcibly evicted them from the riverbanks when the Kariba Dam was constructed.

This neglect was also because the valley was remote and cut off from the rest of the country. Although their economy in the valley depended on the availability of water in the Zambezi River as well as the fertile alluvial soils, the colonial government forcibly displaced them from the banks of the river between 1956 and 1958 into dry and barren land on the Zambezi plateau. They were resettled on seven thousand square miles of

¹²⁷ Harding, In the Remotest Barotseland, p.56.

¹²⁸ S152/G1/1, Native Commissioner Hartley Annual Reports, 1934.

¹²⁹ Scudder, Regional Planning for People, 1982.

vacant land in Sebungwe District which had not been assigned by the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 because the land was economically unproductive for agriculture.¹³⁰ A new district called Binga was created in the portion of Sebungwe district lying to the west of Sengwe River and the eastern part of Wankie district.¹³¹

Forced resettlement of BaTonga in Binga was catastrophic to their livelihoods which largely depended on the Zambezi River. There was very little land suitable for human settlement in Binga because of the prevalence of tsetse fly, malaria and game, and the area was in the marginal Agricultural Region V which received very low rainfall of below six hundred millimeters (600mm) per annum. The colonial administration had not realized any economic potential of this land allocated to the valley Tonga because only between five and eight percent of the total land was considered suitable for agriculture.¹³² There was very little fertile soil and the rest of the land had loose sandy soil which was not suitable for crop production. This decimated their livelihood in farming as the study shows.

This study argues that although forced displacement decimated BaTonga livelihood in farming, the colonial system in Southern Rhodesia was not only harsh to BaTonga of the Zambezi valley but also dispossessed many African groups of their land which was their source of livelihood. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 provided for the expropriation of the best land in the country for settler farming while the indigenous people were banished to marginal areas. The wielders of political and economic power displaced the Ndebele from their best land after 1930 and dumped them into the wilderness (*amagusu amnyama*) in the Shangani Reserve in Nkayi and Lupane areas which were infested with malaria and dangerous wildlife.¹³³

Again, an estimated population of seven thousand Hlengwe people had their land turned into a national park between 1937 and 1968 and the people were dumped in marginal lands in

¹³⁰ W.T. Nesham, Kariba Resettlement, *NADA* vol.38, 1961, pp.22-26.

¹³¹ F429/134 Correspondence, The Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture to the Acting Director, Department of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control and Reclamation, 25 August 1956.

¹³² S3599/389, Correspondence, Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Lands and Surveys to Game Officer, Salisbury, 26 January 1956.

¹³³ J. Alexander, J. McGregor and T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory: One Hundred Years in the "Dark Forest" of Matabeleland*, James Currey, Oxford, 2000, p.46.

Gonarezhou that failed to sustain their livelihoods.¹³⁴ Gonarezhou forest, like Binga was a hot and dry region located in Agricultural Region V in the southeastern Lowveld. The arid climate did not guarantee good crop harvests hence the BaHlengwe lost their pre-displacement self-sufficiency. Furthermore, some Hlengwe people lost their land to settler farmers and cattle ranches and were pushed to the marginal Native Reserves between 1898 and 1960. Just like BaTonga, they were condemned to remote, infertile and uninhabitable areas and this ruined their livelihoods.¹³⁵ The well-watered fertile land in the country was reserved for white commercial farmers while the Africans were relocated to inhospitable and marginal regions where they were not able to support themselves by agriculture.

However, involuntary displacement of BaTonga was unique in that it was induced by construction of the Kariba hydropower dam. Development induced displacement could have been followed by policies which promoted rehabilitation and restoration of livelihoods, but BaTonga were displaced without compensation. This study discusses how loss of good, fertile land and water from a perennial river threatened the people's livelihoods after displacement, and how they coped and adapted to these difficulties. Colson documented how BaTonga found it challenging to make a living after the destruction of their traditional farming practices in the hostile environments after resettlement without their riverbank and alluvial gardens.¹³⁶

According to Scudder, the Kariba was the first major large dam in tropical Africa that displaced large numbers of an ethnic minority whose livelihoods were not well known.¹³⁷ The Rhodesian authorities argued that they were moving BaTonga "from one part of the wilderness to another wilderness"¹³⁸ and the move was not going to affect their livelihoods. This study demonstrates how their displacement was not a planned effort neither by the Federal Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland nor the white settler government of Southern Rhodesia hence it was traumatic and caused a lot of suffering to the people in their new

¹³⁴ Baxter Tavuyanago, *Living on the Fringes of a Protected Area; Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) and the Indigenous Communities of Southeastern Zimbabwe, 1934-2008*, University of Pretoria, PhD History, 2016., p.120.

¹³⁵ Taderera H. Chisi, "Colonial Economic Displacement and Responses of the Hlengwe of the Southeastern Lowveld of Zimbabwe, 1890-1965", *Afrika Zamani*, No.20-21, 2012-2013, Codesria, pp.165-194.

¹³⁶ Elizabeth Colson, *Kariba Studies IV: The Social Consequences of the Kariba Resettlement: The Impact of the Kariba Resettlement upon the Gwembe Tonga*, Manchester University Press, 1971.

¹³⁷ Scudder, *The Kariba Case Study*, p.19.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

homes. It shows how the loss of fertile alluvial and well-watered land without compensation affected their ability to rebuild and restore their livelihood in farming.

Literature review

According to Cernea, the construction of large hydropower dams has displaced millions of people globally, and most of them have not been rehabilitated.¹³⁹ Involuntary displacement because of the construction of dams has been criticized for its failure to effectively rehabilitate the displaced populations. Scudder noted that in the seventies, some of the largest artificial water reservoirs were found in Africa, namely, Lake Kariba and Lake Volta.¹⁴⁰ The construction of the Akosombo Dam on Volta River in Ghana from 1961 to 1966 displaced eighty thousand people who were primarily farmers and fishermen. The Ghanaian Government compensated the displaced people, but insufficient planning resulted in relocation of communities into areas which were not capable of providing for their former livelihoods and traditions.¹⁴¹ The Kariba Dam which was built earlier left BaTonga people worse off than the Ghanaians because they did not receive any compensation for losses.

The Portuguese constructed the Cahora Bassa Dam along the Zambezi River in Mozambique in 1974 to generate hydropower for export as well as an integral part of an anti-guerrilla military strategy. This dam negatively affected the realisation of sustainable livelihoods in much of the Tete District and Lower Zambezi.¹⁴² According to Isaacman, peasants lost their fertile soils of the flood plains which were inundated by the lake, and this led to food shortages and malnutrition among the displaced communities¹⁴³. Just like BaTonga of Binga, they had fewer opportunities to make up for the food deficits because hunting and fishing had also been disrupted by the construction of the dam. Therefore, the construction of hydropower dams had great costs for

¹³⁹Michael M. Cernea, *Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement*, Washington, D.C., The World Bank, 2004.

¹⁴⁰ Scudder, T. and Colson, E., 1982. From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the analysis of dislocated people. In: A Hansen and Ohver-Smith, eds. *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Resettled People*. Boulder, Westview Press, pp.267-287.

¹⁴¹ Matilda Mettle, *Forced Resettlement in Ghana: The Dam and the Affected People: The Bui Hydroelectric Power Project in Ghana*, Master of Philosophy, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, 2011, p.58.

¹⁴² Allen Isaacman, *domesticating a White Elephant: Sustainability and Struggles over Water, The Case of Cahora Bassa Dam, Zambezia* (2001), XXVIII (ii), pp.199-228.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

the people who had to sacrifice their land for inundation, as the study shows using BaTonga as a case study.

The World Commission on Dams of 2000 presented a framework for decision-making to avoid the social and environmental costs of dams.¹⁴⁴ However, the relatively recently constructed Merowe Dam in the Sudan has been criticized for significant violations of human rights during the resettlement process. The state authorities used force to evict people from their homes by closing the flood gates in the middle of the night during the flooding season from 2003. They had buses ready for the evicted people to be transported to the resettlement sites and people lost their crops and livelihoods due to flooding.¹⁴⁵ The use of force in dam-induced evictions has been criticized for human rights abuses. In similar manner, most BaTonga communities were forcibly evicted from their traditional land as the colonial authorities arrested and killed some people who resisted displacement as the study shows. This helps to understand why they failed to rebuild sustainable livelihoods after resettlement.

Displacement discourses of the Zimbabwean Tonga from the Kariba dam primarily focus on state violence during their eviction from the Zambezi and the impoverishment which followed resettlement. Colson and Scudder mainly focused on the impact of displacement on the Gwembe Tonga of Zambia. McGregor affirms how the Zambezi River provided both subsistence and identity to BaTonga before displacement, and how construction of the Kariba dam brought major political and economic changes among the people. She further asserts that their failure to benefit from the dam led to unending struggles with both the colonial and postcolonial State.¹⁴⁶ McGregor's work lays a foundation on understanding the history of BaTonga as it covers a lengthy period from the time of resettlement up to the early 2000s. She discusses the agency of BaTonga in fighting for cultural recognition in Zimbabwe. This thesis shifts from politics of recognition to how negligence by the colonial State prompted BaTonga to develop complex and resilient livelihoods based on slash-and-burn farming, and illegal hunting, gathering and fishing. The study

¹⁴⁴ World Bank., 2000. *World Commission on Dams. Displacement, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, and Development*: Earthscan, London.

¹⁴⁵ Ali Askouri, The Merowe Dam: controversy and displacement in Sudan, *Forced Migration Review*, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 2021.

¹⁴⁶ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, 2009.

also explores the impact of food aid as well as post-independent government policies on these livelihoods.

Manyena asserts that the major problem facing BaTonga is chronic food shortages whose root causes lie in the involuntary displacement.¹⁴⁷ He points out that forced displacement caused them to become vulnerable to multiple disasters so much that they had no capacity to recover on their own. They lost land, water and social networks which affected their food production, and this was worsened by government policies of neglect and marginalisation as well as humanitarian aid. This study agrees with Manyena's view that displacement affected their food production capacity, and they lost the ability of restoring their lives to pre-displacement economic self-sufficiency. However, it argues that BaTonga adopted complex methods of coping with the livelihood challenges which they faced in their new environment without any external support. There is a gap in literature on how the people confronted the challenges of poor harvests and shortages of food before the coming of humanitarian food aid distribution.

Narratives on the displacement of BaTonga use the victimhood approach to document the severe blows suffered by their livelihoods and how this led to their impoverishment. Most studies view BaTonga as passive victims who failed to recover from the risks of displacement because they experience acute and perennial food insecurity. After they had been uprooted from the river and resettled in the arid Binga district, BaTonga experienced loss of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs because of loss of good soils, water, forests for gathering, hunting and fishing rights as this study shows. Pankhurst and Piguet note that there is gap in displacement and resettlement discourses on the responses and initiatives for coping and reconstruction of the affected communities.¹⁴⁸ Hamar attempted to cover this gap by viewing displacement through the lens of agency which helps to expose the complex and shifting political economy sustaining the process of displacement.¹⁴⁹ This approach sees the displaced as active and resilient agents engaged in complex processes of adapting to the challenges and opportunities that arise because of displacement. There is a gap in literature on the new political economies generated after

¹⁴⁷ Manyena, *Disaster Resilience*, p.91.

¹⁴⁸ Alula Pankhurst and Francois Piguet, *Moving People in Ethiopia: Development, Displacement and the State*, James Currey, 2009, p.13.

¹⁴⁹ Amanda Hamar, Introduction, in A. Hamar (ed.), *Displacement Economies: Paradoxes of Crisis and Creativity in Africa*, ZED Books, 2014, p.3.

involuntary displacement and this thesis strives to cover it using BaTonga as a case study. There is need to understand how the people survived debilitating conditions of a harsh and unproductive farming environment, colonial neglect by the State, as well as marginalisation by the post-colonial government.

This thesis highlights the people's agency in rebuilding their livelihoods after the catastrophe of displacement. Manyena defines resilience as the ability to move on following a disaster by mobilising available resources to maintain essential structures to adapt to new changes brought about by disaster.¹⁵⁰ This thesis argues that BaTonga attempted to recover with significant success before independence as they adopted new systems of knowledge suitable to their environment. When crops failed, they adopted complex ways of maintaining subsistence food supplies for wellbeing. The research explores these various coping and adaptation strategies and evaluates their sustainability and contribution to food security. They adopted new farming methods to suit the arid climate and sandy soil in as much as they had to find ways of dealing with marauding game which destroyed their crops. Hunting and fishing were prohibited but they became "poachers" to supplement their diets and increase food supply in periods of drought.

According to Mavhunga, skilful traditional hunters who become poachers are publicly seen as criminals in conservation, tourism and State circles, but are regarded as heroes among their people for breaking state laws.¹⁵¹ BaTonga were deprived of traditional hunting rights, so they turned to poaching to supplement their diets and to protect their crops from marauding elephants. They were sure of making a living in the hostile environment even during the worst periods of famine without any external support because the Native Affairs Department did not provide them with relief food aid.¹⁵² An examination of their coping mechanisms assists in evaluating how post-independence government policies and humanitarian food aid affected these coping strategies contributing to the challenge of pervasive food insecurity.

¹⁵⁰ Manyena, *Disaster resilience in development*, p.15.

¹⁵¹ Clapperton C. Mavhunga, *The Mobile Workshop: Mobility, Technology, and Human-Animal Interaction in Gonarezhou (National Park), 1850-Present*, Doctor of Philosophy (History), The University of Michigan, 2008, p.241.

¹⁵² S2827/2/2/3/3 Internal Affairs District Annual Reports, 1953.

There are a few studies on the coping mechanisms of various groups of people who were displaced during the colonial era. Chisi analyses how the Shangane of southeast Lowveld responded to colonial economic disempowerment when they lost land to sugar plantation owners after the Second World War.¹⁵³ Although their livelihoods were ruined by displacement, they could depend on farming and on paid labour in the sugar and citrus estates. Tavuyanago's work is also important for comparison of coping strategies of victims of colonial displacement as he examines the responses of the Shangane communities who were evicted from Gonarezhou National Park between 1934 and 1968.¹⁵⁴ The Shangane were forced to become poachers, migrate to South Africa, as well as join militant politics during the liberation struggle. However, both Chisi and Tavuyanago focused more on the political and social coping strategies while this study is concerned with socio-economic coping mechanisms to understand why Binga suffers from chronic food shortage. The study examines the diverse factors which affected the BaTonga's ability to adapt and become resilient to the risks of resettlement as they mastered their new environment.

Sources and Methods of Study

This study adopts a case study approach and qualitative methods of gathering and analysis of data. According to Kothari, the case study method involves a careful and complete observation of a defined group.¹⁵⁵ The research was conducted in Binga District where the majority of the displaced BaTonga were resettled in 1957/8. The case study as a method is especially suited to capturing the narratives of the displaced and marginalized BaTonga with a view to understand their coping mechanisms beyond direct state intervention. The method makes possible for an in-depth and detailed study of the shifting political economy from 1956 to 2008. Some of the people who experienced the evictions are still alive. Additionally, the memories of evictions have been passed from generation to the other as the experience profoundly transformed Tonga livelihoods.

¹⁵³ Taderera H. Chisi, "Colonial Economic Displacement and Responses of the Hlengwe of the Southeastern Lowveld of Zimbabwe, 1890-1965", *Afrika Zamani*, No.20-21, 2012-2013, Codesria, pp.165-194.

¹⁵⁴ Baxter Tavuyanago, *Living on the Fringes of a Protected Area; Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) and the Indigenous Communities of Southeastern Zimbabwe, 1934-2008*, University of Pretoria, PhD History, 2016.

¹⁵⁵ C.R. Kothari, *Research Methodology, Methods and Techniques* (2nd ed.), New Age International, New Delhi, India, 2012, p.34.

There are many publications on colonial displacements in Southern Rhodesia as well as on the adverse effects of involuntary dam-induced displacement and resettlement. Elizabeth Colson and Thayer Scudder produced many publications on the experiences of the Gwembe Tonga of Northern Rhodesia which also allude to the Binga Tonga. They are relatively few publications on the experiences of BaTonga of Binga which mainly focus on them as victims of displacement as well as colonial and post-colonial injustices. The study uses a multidisciplinary approach gleaned from Anthropological studies, Linguistics, Geography and Archaeology although most of these studies are biased against the BaTonga of Zambia. Writings of explorers and travellers who sailed along the Zambezi River provide useful accounts of BaTonga livelihoods before displacement. The study also benefits from reports of the various Non-Governmental Organisations who worked with BaTonga of Binga since the attainment of independence. Some of these sources accessed on the internet include strategic and annual reports from Basilwizi Trust, Binga Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), Save the Children (UK), Christian Care, Binga District Administration (BIDA), Catholic Agency for Development (CADEC) and many others. These reports help bridge the gap created by most published studies.

Primary archival material collection housed at the National Archives of Zimbabwe in Harare tend to have many gaps on the History of BaTonga before displacement because the Zambezi valley was inaccessible to the Sebungwe and Mafungabusi District Native Commissioner who lived more than two hundred kilometres away.¹⁵⁶ Information was gleaned from the annual Native Commissioners reports, files on tsetse fly, malaria and game control, as well as from correspondence from other neighbouring districts such as Wankie, Urungwe, Gokwe and Lupani. When Binga District was created after resettlement, there was now a resident Native Commissioner, but the archival material becomes even scarcer from this period. Most of these files are still at the National Records Centre or have not been transferred from the respective Government Departments, Parastatals and Local Authorities. The Federal correspondence and minutes of meetings on the construction of the dam were also invaluable to the study. Binga Secondary School Library housed many published and unpublished documents on the experiences of BaTonga after resettlement, but it was closed, and the material is no longer

¹⁵⁶ NGB2/6/1 Correspondence, acting Native Commissioner to Chief Native Commissioner, Bulawayo, 23 March 1913.

available for public access. The gaps in primary data and written records are covered by oral interviews.

Oral history involved collecting information from those surviving BaTonga people who were resettled from the Zambezi River between 1956 and 1958 through recorded and written in-depth interviews. According to Vansina, oral history is collected from eyewitness accounts of illiterate societies to reconstruct their past.¹⁵⁷ Information was collected from those surviving BaTonga men and women who experienced displacement and resettlement in between 1956 and 1958. The study employed purposive sampling which involves the selection of members to participate in the study who are chosen by the judgement of the researcher. This was made possible because I have lived in the community for some time and already knew several elderly people at the time of starting my research.

Moreover, chiefs and other villagers were also helpful in identifying other key interviewees because very few are still living. For all people to have representation to write their experiences on the historical record, the younger generations, both men and women above the age of eighteen who were born after resettlement were also interviewed to uncover how resettlement affected their livelihoods. These informants were also purposefully sampled based on their knowledge about the study, which was explained to them during initial research visits before proceeding with the interviews. Representatives of Binga Rural District Council, Government Departments as well as Programme Officers of NGOs which gave relief food aid were also interviewed on development policies implemented in the district. The weaknesses of oral tradition and problems of memory were checked by corroboration with written and archival sources.

Ethical considerations

This research was approved by the Rhodes University Ethics Committee whose processes are rigorous enough to protect both the researcher and the human subjects who were to volunteer research data (see Appendix 6). The researcher made sure that the participants in interviews had

¹⁵⁷ Jan M. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History*, University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1985.

full knowledge of what they were involved in. Informed consent was sought, and the participants were assured of privacy and confidentiality and that the information collected was going to be used only for academic purposes. They were assured of their rights to discontinue with the interviews at any stage if they felt uncomfortable to disclose. Elderly people who were over sixty years old were handled with gentleness and patience during interviews. Permission to record was sought and those participants who wished not to be recorded had their wishes respected. All the people who participated in this research were informed of their right to withdraw from the interview process at any stage.

Organisation of Study

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. Chapter 2 deals with the diverse literature related to the study and the theoretical frameworks that guide the study. It presents the Sustainable Livelihood Approach and lays out theoretical perspectives on the concepts of displacement and coping mechanisms. It also discusses the Resettlement Theory and how it complements the Sustainable Livelihood Approach in understanding the impact of displacement on BaTonga livelihoods. Literature on colonial displacements and coping mechanisms is also reviewed.

Chapter 3 explores how the process of displacement and resettlement from the Zambezi valley was initiated and guided by dam-induced displacement guidelines with the involvement of the international community but was then shadowed by the Land Apportionment Act which informed colonial evictions from the 1940s. The impact of lack of explicit resettlement plans and policies by the state is explored as it had an impact on the outcome of the resettlement process.

Chapter 4 discusses the Southern Rhodesia's resettlement policy and compares it with that followed by Northern Rhodesia on the resettlement of the Gwembe Tonga of the north bank. The use of state violence and human rights abuses is discussed in relation to impact on the outcome of the resettlement process.

Chapter 5 deals with BaTonga livelihood challenges after resettlement and examines how they coped and adapted to these problems. It unpacks challenges in crop production, and how the

people circumvented such challenges without external assistance. They developed new farming strategies suitable to their barren land.

Chapter 6 focuses on how marauding elephants threatened crop production in the wilderness of Binga and how the people coped with these challenges. They demanded game control but when it was denied, they had to guard their fields to secure the harvest. It explores how restrictive conservation laws affected the wellbeing of BaTonga during the colonial and post-colonial period and argues that the CAMPFIRE programme failed to address the human-elephant conflict and pushed the people to become poachers.

Chapter 7 explores how marginalization of Binga during the colonial and post-colonial period affected livelihoods and impoverished the people. Lack of infrastructural development is discussed considering limitation of livelihood opportunities contributing to increasing poverty and hunger in Binga.

Chapter 8 examines the impact of an influx of NGOs and long-term distribution of humanitarian food aid on BaTonga livelihoods from 1982 to 2008 when the district experienced a food crisis following the State's decision to temporarily ban NGOs from operating in the nation. The political interests of Save the Children (UK) and CADEC as the main long-term food distributing organisations are explored and the impact of dependency on food aid on BaTonga livelihoods is discussed.

Chapter 9 analyses the major issues arising from the study and conclusions are made.

Conclusion

This chapter established the following research questions: how did forced displacement and resettlement undermine the livelihoods of BaTonga? And how did they cope and adapt to these livelihood challenges over time? How did prolonged distribution of food aid contribute to the impoverishment of BaTonga and chronic food insecurity which characterizes the period between 1982 and 2008? The concept of sustainable livelihoods is used to focus on the livelihood trajectories of BaTonga people after displacement up to the onset of the food crisis of 2008. Existing literature on BaTonga displacements reveals the violent eviction that negatively affected

livelihoods but does not mention their coping mechanisms to these challenges, which this study addresses. Literature on colonial displacements reveals their political responses to the adverse impact but this study focuses of socio-economic responses of BaTonga to explore how they survived food shortages. The following chapter discusses in detail the literature and the theory that guides the study.

CHAPTER 2: COLONIAL DISPLACEMENTS AND COPING STRATEGIES

Introduction

This chapter reviews the diverse literature on colonial displacements in Rhodesia and coping mechanisms of selected case studies. It presents the theoretical frameworks that guide the study by laying out the Sustainable Livelihoods approach's set of analytical tools and the Resettlement Theory which complements and strengthens the Sustainable Livelihoods approach.

The displacement of BaTonga is best understood in the broader discourses of racist land alienation which prevailed during the colonial era in Southern Rhodesia. Colonialism in Africa which involved the domination and subjugation of the Africans by Europeans was characterised by racial land dispossession of the former by the latter. The Africans were forcibly evicted from their traditional land and resettled in marginal areas which had infertile soils and received less rainfall. Land formed the basis of man's subsistence hence most livelihoods were negatively affected by the loss of land, and this culminated in violent liberation struggles in most settler colonies such as Southern Rhodesia, South Africa, Namibia, Kenya and Algeria as they fought to regain their land.

The expropriation of land by European settlers in Southern Africa was harsher in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia where land and other important resources were distributed on the basis of racial superiority. In South Africa, land dispossession began with the passing of the Native Land Act in 1913 which consolidated areas of White settlement. When the National Party came to power in 1948, it passed racist laws which drove more than three and half million Africans into the Homelands as a way of consolidating racial segregation.¹⁵⁸ These Homelands dispossessed Africans of their best land and allocated them only a small fraction of their ancestral land in marginal areas while the White settlers took a greater proportion of the best and most productive of the land in the colony.

¹⁵⁸ Bernadette Atuahene, Paying for the Past: Redressing the Legacy of Land Dispossession in South Africa, *Law and Society Review*, Vol.5, No. 4, 2011, pp.955-989, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41475241>.

Minority white settlers also owned more than half the land in Namibia as thousands of local populations were driven off their ancestral land by the Germans before the outbreak of the First World War. From the onset of South African rule in Namibia in 1915, more African Homelands were created between 1920 and 1962 which were accompanied by massive expropriation of African land.¹⁵⁹ The Africans were violently displaced and forced into these Homelands where their livelihoods depended on providing cheap labour on settler farms and mines. The Odendaal Commission of inquiry in 1962 reported that the Africans were suffering and had not managed to achieve proper livelihoods in the Homelands.

In colonial Zimbabwe, the expropriation of land by the British settlers also involved the notion of racial segregation as legislation was enacted to spatially separate the Africans and the white settlers. Most of the grabbing of land by the settlers involved state violence as the Africans were forcibly evicted from their ancestral land and banished to marginal regions which failed to sustain their livelihoods. BaTonga were victims of this land grabbing and this caused untold suffering by endangering their food production, compromising their food security, and ruining their livelihoods. Colonial displacements were not classified in any internationally recognized way because displacement as an operational concept originally dealt with refugees who crossed borders.

Forced Displacement in Colonial Zimbabwe

Early displacements

Colonial displacements associated with mass removals and resettlement of Africans from their original homelands in colonial Zimbabwe date back to the settler invasion of Mashonaland in September 1890, although BaTonga displacements occurred much later than that. When Cecil John Rhodes' Pioneer Column marched into Mashonaland and settled at Fort Salisbury, the white settlers started pegging off farms and gold mines in the land which was already occupied by the Shona-speaking people. Each member of the Pioneer Column had been promised a free farm of three-thousand acres and fifteen gold claims.¹⁶⁰ Rhodes and his partners in South Africa had been

¹⁵⁹ Wolfgang Werner, A Brief History of and Dispossession in Namibia, *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol.19, No.1, 1993.

¹⁶⁰ Ryan Hill, Colonialism and Inequality in Zimbabwe, in Ryan Hill (ed.) *Conserving the Peace: Resources, Livelihoods and Security*.

enticed to colonize Zimbabwe by unfounded rumours of an abundance of gold deposits (Eldorado) in the region north of the Limpopo River. When it became clear that there was no 'Eldorado' such as that found in the Witwatersrand mines of South Africa, they were compelled to focus on agriculture in order to make the colony a profitable venture.¹⁶¹ Although the best land for farming was already occupied and farmed by the Shona who resisted losing their ancestral heritage, members of the Pioneer Column proceeded to grab it and peg off their farms. Therefore, the use of violence in land expropriation was a common characteristic of colonial forced displacements.

Moyana argues that the Rhodesian government began to implement the policy of land segregation with the creation of Reserves in Matebeleland in 1894 by setting aside special land reserves for the black population of the colony.¹⁶² When the settlers failed to get large deposits of the anticipated gold in Mashonaland, they believed that the Second Rand was in Lobengula's kingdom in Matebeleland. The British South Africa (BSA) Company then planned an attack of the Ndebele Kingdom in 1893 with the hope of getting this gold. Six hundred and seventy-two volunteers participated in the invasion of Matebeleland and each member was promised a free farm of six thousand acres in any part of Matabeleland, thirty gold claims and part of the Ndebele cattle.¹⁶³ It followed that after the defeat and conquest of the Ndebele all the land in Rhodesia now belonged to the BSA Company.

Consequently, the Land Commission assigned Gwayi and Shangani Reserves to the vanquished and this divided the land in Matebeleland between settler territory and Ndebele territory, along racial lines. Ranger points out that the Land Commissioners paid a hasty visit to the Shangani Reserve which was with infested with tsetse fly, and did not visit Gwayi at all, which was rocky, arid and not penetrable for lack of a good road.¹⁶⁴ The Ndebele resisted being displaced into these uninhabitable Reserves when the best land in Matebeleland was set aside for minority settler agriculture and ranching, just as BaTonga resisted forced eviction from their best land on

¹⁶¹ Alexander Jocelyn, *The Unsettled Land: State-making and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe, 1893-2003*, Oxford, James Currey, 2006.

¹⁶² Henry Vusso Moyana, *Land Apportionment Act in Rhodesia 1920-1960*, Doctoral thesis, Columbia University, 1975, p.47.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Terence O. Ranger, *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7: A Study in African Resistance*, Heinemann, London, 1967, p.105.

the Zambezi River for the barren land on the plateau many years later. BaTonga land in the Zambezi valley was regarded as part of Lobengula's territory but it was not immediately occupied by the settlers after the occupation of Matebeleland.

Settler brutality which manifested in forceful eviction and displacement of the indigenous populations increased after the defeat of Africans in the First Chimurenga/Umvukela uprising of 1896/7. The Ndebele took up arms against colonial rule to recapture lost land among other issues, but they were defeated in 1896. BaTonga did not participate in this war largely because there were no permanent white settlements in the Zambezi valley. The Shona joined the uprising but were also defeated and consequently lost their land to the settlers. According to Ranger, the defeat of the Shona and the Ndebele marked the beginning of extensive expropriation of land, massive displacement of indigenous people from their land, confiscation of cattle, and exploitation.¹⁶⁵ Therefore, this preceded the massive displacement of BaTonga and extensive land grab in the Zambezi valley in 1956-58.

The Native Reserves Order-in-Council passed in 1898 created the Native Reserves to accommodate blacks only to create room for white settlement and commercial agriculture in the best regions of the colony. The Ndebele were supposed to move into Gwayi and Shangani Reserves while more reserves were also created in Mashonaland in marginal areas which did not receive good rainfall and had infertile soils.¹⁶⁶ Mlambo agrees with Moyana that creation of Native Reserves initiated the racialisation of the land issue in the colony of Rhodesia.¹⁶⁷ Phimister adds that the creation of Reserves was partly a strategy to eliminate competition in farming between the white settlers and the Africans even though the white population was still very small.¹⁶⁸ The BSA Company ignored any traditional land rights of the indigenous people and expropriated the best land which they reserved for sale to Europeans to guarantee economic security. This set precedence to the human right violations in future displacements, including that of BaTonga. Moyana asserts that by 1902 the Africans in Rhodesia had been expropriated

¹⁶⁵ Terence Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and the Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1985.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ A.S. Mlambo, "This is Our Land" The Racilization of Land in the Context of the Current Zimbabwe Crisis, *Journal of Development Societies*, June 2010.

¹⁶⁸ Ian Phimister, Peasant Production and Underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1914, with particular reference to the Victoria District, in Robin Palmer and Neil Parson (eds.) *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*, Heinemann, London, 1983, pp.255-267.

from more than three quarters of all the land in the colony.¹⁶⁹ By 1911 they were approximately twenty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty (23 730) Europeans in Rhodesia who owned some nineteen million and thirty-two thousand three hundred and twenty (19 032 320) acres of land while seven hundred and fifty two thousand (752 000) Africans owned only twenty-one million three hundred and ninety thousand and eighty (21 390 080) acres of land.¹⁷⁰ The table below clearly illustrates this inequality. However, the expropriation did not lead to immediate eviction because most Africans who lost land continued to live on settler farms where they were subjected to high rental charges paid in form of labour.¹⁷¹ BaTonga were not affected by this largely because of the seclusion of the Zambezi valley with its harsh climate.

Figure 1: Table showing land ownership inequalities in 1911

Race	Population	Land owned
Black Africans	752 000	21 390 080 acres
White settlers	23 730	19 032 320 acres

Extracted from H.V. Moyana, The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe, 1984.

The table above shows how hungry the settlers were for land, and it was only a matter of time before the displacement of BaTonga. Kwashirai posits that in the first decade of colonial rule, the BSA Company had delineated different land use categories before conducting extensive geographical surveys and reports.¹⁷² This resulted in the colonial officials frequently amending the initial boundaries for African Reserves. For instance, some areas with fertile land that had been allocated to the Africans in Gwayi and Shangani Reserves in 1894 had to be taken away and reserved for settler occupation. Phimister also gives evidence that the BSA Company chipped away millions of acres from Msana and Kunzwi Reserves which had fertile lands and had easy access to markets and reserved them for white settlers.¹⁷³ Kwashirai asserts that some Ndebele-

¹⁶⁹ Moyana, Political Economy of land, p.42.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p.44.

¹⁷¹ Henry V. Moyana, *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1984, p.40.

¹⁷² Vimbai Kwashirai, Indigenous Management of Teak Woodland in Zimbabwe, 1850-1900, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 33(4), 2007, pp.816-832

¹⁷³ Ian Phimister, *An Economic and Social History of Zimbabwe, 1890-1948: Capital Accumulation and Class Struggle*, Longman, London, 1988, p.66.

speaking people living on the fertile and well-watered land along the Gwayi River were evicted in 1910 and displaced to inferior soils in Matobo.¹⁷⁴

The BSA Company also displaced and reallocated land to Africans in Shangani Reserve where they wanted to possess the dense teak woodlands.¹⁷⁵ Moyana argues that land expropriation continued because the Europeans who were into extensive farming and ranching always complained that the extent of African areas were too large.¹⁷⁶ This expropriation of land and re-drawing of the boundaries of the Reserves led to repeated displacement and resettlement of Africans who became overcrowded in the Reserves as more productive land was reserved for white farmers. This lack of care for Africans had not yet been witnessed by BaTonga until their mass displacement.

Mass displacement of Africans increased with the passing of the Land Apportionment Act (LAA) of 1930 which became the most important law governing land distribution in Southern Rhodesia. The LAA institutionalized the demarcation of all land in the colony along racial lines to avoid interaction of the two main races in Southern Rhodesia. According to Moyana, this piece of legislation unjustly ensured that half of the 51% of the total arable land in the colony was assigned to the whites, who numbered about fifty thousand (50 0000), while Africans who numbered about one million and eighty-one thousand (1 081 000) had to scramble for the less productive 29.8% of the farming land in the colony.¹⁷⁷ Therefore, the setter government invoked the LAA when they evicted BaTonga into barren land on the Zambezi plateau. The following table shows how the land of Southern Rhodesia was demarcated.

¹⁷⁴ Kwashirai, Teak Woodland.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Moyana, Political Economy of Land, p.44.

¹⁷⁷ Moyana, The Land Apportionment Act, p.110.

Figure 2: Table showing the demarcation of land according to the LAA

Category	Acres	% Of Country
European Area	49 149 174	51,0 %
Native Reserves	21 127 040	22,0 %
Unassigned Area	17 793 300	18,5 %
Native Area	7 464 566	7,8 %
Forest Area	590 500	0,6 %
Undetermined Area	88 540	0,1 %
TOTAL	96 213 120	100,0 %
Total for African Use	28 591 606	29,8 %

Extracted from H.V. Moyana, The Land Apportionment Act

Although the LAA stripped the Africans of their traditional land rights and banished them to the impoverished and unproductive Reserves, many Africans still resided in unassigned land and on European land.¹⁷⁸ According to Phimister, the legislation was meant to impoverish Africans and compel them to seek employment on settler farms in order to raise money for paying the numerous taxes demanded by the Rhodesian government.¹⁷⁹ Moyana adds that white farmers wished to undermine African self-sufficiency and inhibit competition around land and markets as the Great Depression affected the colonies in the 1930s.¹⁸⁰ However, the LAA put a definite limit to the land available to African permanent settlement even though their population was expanding and this negatively affected their means of subsistence. Displacement of BaTonga some years later was different because it was development-induced, and they had to relocate far away from their traditional land.

Although the LAA also stipulated that all the Africans had to be driven into the Reserves by 1937, unless they entered into labour agreements with the white farm owners, mass displacement continued after that date, including BaTonga displacement from 1956.¹⁸¹ Most Africans who were squatting on settler farms as tenants were compulsorily evicted to give way to white settlement

¹⁷⁸ Moyana, The Land Apportionment Act, p.63.

¹⁷⁹ Pimister, 1988, p.65.

¹⁸⁰ Moyana, The Political Economy of Land, p.75.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

as more settlers immigrated into the colony during the Great Depression. Between 1931 and 1941 about five hundred thousand Africans had been evicted from the European Area and resettled in the marginal reserves.¹⁸² This was mass displacement of people from their traditional homelands which had been allocated to the settlers. However, in some cases there were long delays in implementing the mass removals of Africans after the passing of the LAA, particularly in Midlands and in Matebeleland where people continued to reside on Crown Land and settler farms.¹⁸³ Little was done to displace and resettle these people because there was no land to accommodate them in the overcrowded reserves in their districts. They were subjected to payment of high labour rental charges on settler farms where they were subjected to untold suffering until they were forcibly displaced and settled in the reserves after the Second World War which saw a wave of mass evictions of Africans from their ancestral lands. Forced colonial displacements were brutal and ruined livelihoods as a way of coercing the people to supply cheap labour to settler farms and mines. It was during this period when BaTonga were displaced from the floodplains of the Zambezi.

Late colonial displacements

BaTonga lost their land during the period of increased demand for land and economic development in the colony. According to Mlambo, there was an influx of European immigrants into Southern Rhodesia after the Second World War as the government was anxious to increase the white population in the colony who could provide the necessary skilled labour and a large domestic market.¹⁸⁴ Palmer argues that the settler government enticed many British families with the promise of good land for cash crop farming and ranching.¹⁸⁵ This was not vacant land but traditional land which the Africans had occupied for generations. Also, returning European service-men and immigrants poured into Southern Rhodesia in increasing numbers as they were eager to escape post-war austerity in Europe and seek land for wealth-creation.¹⁸⁶ Mlambo

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Moyana, The Land Apportionment Act, p.232.

¹⁸⁴ A.S. Mlambo, From the Second World War to UDI, 1940-1965, in Brian Raftopoulos and Alois Mlambo (eds.) *Becoming Zimbabwe. A History from the pre-colonial Period to 2008*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, pp.75-114.

¹⁸⁵ R. Palmer, Historical Background, in Palmer and Parsons (eds.), *Roots of Rural Poverty*, pp.1-32.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p.2.

documents that as many as seventeen thousand (17 000) settlers entered the country in one year alone, in 1948, and the settler population rose from eighty-two thousand (82 000) to one hundred and thirty-five thousand (135 000) between 1946 and 1951.¹⁸⁷ By 1960, the settler population had risen to two hundred and eighteen thousand (218 000) mainly as a result of immigration and there was need to accommodate all these people on the available best land in the country.¹⁸⁸ There was increased demand for industrialization which saw the increased demand for cheaper electricity as well. Therefore, displacement of BaTonga now drew closer.

As more immigrants kept pouring in and demand for land increased, the Department of Native Affairs came under pressure from the government to evict Africans from Crown Land. This called for the strict implementation of the LAA which saw more than a hundred thousand (100 000) Africans being forcibly removed from their traditional land but there was no land in the overcrowded African Reserves for them to resettle.¹⁸⁹ BaTonga were apparently safe because their land had been unassigned by the LAA. The African population had increased following the passing of the LAA in 1930 but there was no corresponding increase in the land available for them in the colony.

Mass displacement increased although there was very little land available for resettlement. Nyambara documents how about seven to ten thousand Africans who lived on Rhodesdale Crown land in Midlands were evicted as ex-servicemen were given farms there under the Government Settlement Scheme.¹⁹⁰ The evicted masses from Rhodesdale were forcibly resettled in remote, unassigned arid and tsetse-infested areas such as Gokwe and Sanyati which made it a challenge to reconstruct their disrupted livelihoods. This uncaring attitude on the part of the colonial government helps to understand how about twenty-three thousand BaTonga were forcibly uprooted from their homeland on the Zambezi and resettled in a remote, unassigned and tsetse-infested area in Binga to pave way for the Kariba dam.

¹⁸⁷ Mlambo, *From the Second World War to UDI*, 2009.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ P.S. Nyambara, Immigrants, "traditional" leaders and the Rhodesdale State, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(4), 2001, pp.771-91.

Nevertheless, the Rhodesian administration continued to evict and displace more Africans in the 1950s from land reserved for white settlement and dumping them in the overcrowded reserves. African right to productive land was not considered when the colonial government passed the Native Land Husbandry Act in 1951 which enforced the eviction of all Africans from all Crown Land by 1955 whether it was required for European settlement or not.¹⁹¹ Under this new law, African farmers were also forced to radically change their land tenure practices. They were only allowed to own five head of cattle and all the rest were to be immediately sold off. The white commercial farmers bought most of the excess stock at sub-market prices.¹⁹² The settler authorities disregarded African livelihoods as was later experienced by BaTonga five years later. This change had huge cultural implications because cattle ownership was critical to one's prestige and to the passage from adolescence to adulthood among the indigenous cultures. Under the Native Land Husbandry Act, Africans were also limited to the ownership of only eight acres of land.¹⁹³ Considering the large sizes of many African families, eight acres were not enough for both settlement and crop production hence the legislation caused a lot of anger among the people.

Loss of land and cattle affected their livelihoods and virtually eliminated the possibility of significant African contribution to commercial farming in colonial Rhodesia. This study explores how loss of livelihood assets after forced displacement impoverished BaTonga. The Act was inhumane because it made provision for a huge influx of white settlers arriving after World War II who were promised land and livestock for commercial farming. The settlers therefore managed to secure both the productive land and livestock forcibly taken away from the Africans. Consequently, the white population of Southern Rhodesia doubled from 1946 to 1955 and more Africans were forced to resettle in the overcrowded reserves from 1950 to 1960. Those who failed to find land in the Reserves were forced to go into urban areas to sell their labour to settler manufacturing industries. The issue of land dispossession of Africans thus caused untold suffering as people were evicted from their traditional lands to pave way for white settlement. This study examines the impact of land dispossession of BaTonga.

¹⁹¹ Mlambo, *The Racialization of Land*, 2010, p.57.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

To add on, this study seeks to understand how the forcibly displaced Africans coped and adjusted their livelihoods to the enormous challenges which confronted them in their new environments, using BaTonga as a case study. These coping mechanisms have played a key role in the process and history of displacement, resettlement and development of Africans in general, and BaTonga in particular. The study focuses on impact of involuntary displacement of BaTonga from the Zambezi valley in 1958 to make sense of their livelihoods over a lengthy period. The study shows how the BaTonga's predicament was similar to that of most Africans who lost their land but was different as development-induced displacement.

The Ndebele who were resettled in the Shangani Reserve, as well as the Hlengwe/Shangane who were displaced from the southeast Lowveld, had to adapt and cope with the challenges of harsh environments and this ruined their livelihoods. These groups were violently displaced, and their rights grossly abused by the colonial state as they were forced into marginal areas, but they responded differently to the post displacement challenges. The natural, physical, social, financial and human resource base of the Ndebele and the Hlengwe/Shangane was different from the resources that were at the disposal of the BaTonga after displacement. This affected livelihood strategies and output of these resettled Africans and determined their socio-economic development throughout the colonial era.

Coerced eviction of the Ndebele

Alexander, Ranger and McGregor lament how the Rhodesian state embarked on a programme of institutional violence in the form of forced evictions through the implementation of the Land Apportionment Act.¹⁹⁴ They argue that although the forced evictions everywhere in the colony involved suffering, in the northwest there were exceptionally harsh. If they had studied the forced evictions of BaTonga, probably they were also going to conclude that they were also exceptionally harsh.

More than a hundred thousand Ndebele speaking people were evicted from European land after 1945 in areas as diverse as Filabusi, Insiza, Nyamandlovu, Matopo, and Fort Rixon and dumped

¹⁹⁴ J. Alexander, J. McGregor and T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory: One Hundred Years in the "Dark Forest" of Matebeleland*, James Currey, Oxford, 2000, p.46.

into the Shangani Reserve.¹⁹⁵ Gwayi and Shangani Reserves which had been demarcated in 1894 were still thinly populated because the Ndebele had rejected going there regarding them as “cemeteries” and not homes. The area was a remote, forested wilderness which the Ndebele regarded as a dark forest (*amagusu amnyama*) which was not fit for human habitation.¹⁹⁶ This study documents how BaTonga struggled to live in the harsh land on the Zambezi plateau.

Forced evictions under the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 saw multitudes of Ndebele families leaving European Areas into these reserves. For instance, the people from Filabusi were reluctant to leave their traditional homelands in 1951 but the police conducted raids at dawn and forced them into lorries. They attempted passive methods of resisting forced eviction by sit-downs, lying down in front of trucks or simply refusing to board the lorries. However, their resistance did not help but instead increased the violence of the state officials who handcuffed the leaders of the resistance and threw them onto the trucks which transported the people to the unknown wilderness. At one time, eight hundred families were dumped in Lupane at night, in the jungle which was infested with malaria and dangerous wildlife.¹⁹⁷ Chisi also documented how some Ndebele people evicted from Filabusi and some Karanga people from Masvingo were dumped in the marginal and remote areas of the southeast Lowveld.¹⁹⁸ They were dropped at borehole at night, where there was no shelter, near BaHlengwe people whom they did not know nor understood their language.

Alexander’s work is important to this study as it focuses on how expropriation of land by the colonial state incapacitated the Ndebele and disrupted their lives and how they coped and adapted to the new environment. They suffered in their new homes from disease, attacks by wildlife, and harassment by the host population and many of them died from malaria and attack from wild animals.¹⁹⁹ The Shangani Reserve lacked social amenities to accommodate the influx of the Ndebele and even water for domestic use was scarce. The Native Affairs Department

¹⁹⁵ Ibid

¹⁹⁶ Alexander et al, p. 46.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Hebert T. Chisi, Transformations in Hlengwe Ethnicity in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe, 1980-2014, Doctor of Philosophy of Rhodes University, 2017, p.164

¹⁹⁹ Alexander et.al., Violence and Memory, p.61.

acknowledged that there was need to sink boreholes and wells to make the land viable, but these were not in place when the Ndebele arrived in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In fact, the Ndebele evicted from Bubi district in the late 1930s failed to cope with the abundant wild animals, malaria attacks, and scarcity of water in the Shangani reserve had to return and seek refuge on other settler farms or on Crown land back in Bubi. However, they had to suffer from multiple displacements as they were forced back to Lupane by 1946.²⁰⁰ The colonial government was very harsh and treated the Africans inhumanely. This study explores how BaTonga suffered for many decades in their new homes.

However, Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger's work did not dwell more on how the Ndebele coped and adjusted to restore their livelihoods in the hostile, arid Shangani Reserve. Rather, they document their aggressive socio-political coping mechanisms which culminated in the rise of nationalism and the liberation struggle in the region. They discuss how the Ndebele soon converted to Christianity and embraced modernity earlier than the host population as a way of forging alliances with the missionaries who had established churches in the region, and how they were hostile to the host populations whom they found in Lupane and Nkayi as evidenced by their stigmatisation and displacement of the BaTonga and the Sili people. Traditionally, the Ndebele regarded themselves as superior to these weaker groups whom they used to raid before colonisation, so they forced them to submit to their leaders, and to adopt the Ndebele language and customs as documented in *Violence and Memory*.²⁰¹ BaTonga thus felt threatened by the presence of the Ndebele and migrated to Lubimbi, Binga and Gokwe while the Sili moved back to Tsholotsho. This out-migration of the host population helped the Ndebele to secure resources such as good land and water sources which were important for livelihoods, but Alexander does not shed more light how these socio-economic issues impacted on livelihoods over time. This thesis covers this gap in knowledge using the BaTonga case study by examining changes in their livelihoods from 1958 to 2008.

Forced displacement of BaHlengwe from Gonarezhou Park

²⁰⁰ Ibid., p.63.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p.77.

In his unpublished doctoral thesis, Baxter Tavunago documented how a minority group in Southern Rhodesia, the Shangane (*aka* BaHlengwe) were evicted from their ancestral homeland in Gonarezhou forest following the establishment of a game reserve in Gonarazhou National Park in 1934.²⁰² An estimated population of seven thousand people was dumped in marginal lands that failed to sustain their livelihoods.²⁰³ Gonarezhou forest, like Binga was a hot and dry region located in Agricultural Region V in the south-eastern Lowveld. The arid climate did not guarantee good crop harvests hence BaHlengwe, traditionally did not depend much on crop cultivation for their subsistence. They were economically self-sufficient because they also subsisted on hunting, gathering and fishing using their indigenous knowledge systems in the forest, just like BaTonga were also self-sufficient in the Zambezi valley as shown in Chapter 1.

Tavuyanago examines their coping mechanisms beginning with refusal of some people to leave the demarcated Gonarezhou Park and fighting the colonial authorities to claim back their ancestral lands. When the colonial State excluded them from the game resources of the park through the construction of fences, they responded by snaring and poaching wildlife, but this intensified conflict with the State, in the same manner BaTonga of Binga killed elephants when they lost their hunting rights, as the study shows in Chapter 6. However, unlike the displacement and resettlement of the BaTonga which took about a year to accomplish, the resettlement of BaHlengwe took many years to be executed because of their resistance. Some people in protest left for South Africa in search of employment to cover up for the lost income because of exclusion from the resources of the park. Others joined militant politics during the liberation struggle to defend their identity and their rights. When the State failed to restore their rights and their claims after the attainment of independence in 1980, some groups of people occupied parts of the Gonarezhou Park and almost all white commercial farms surrounding the park during the land reform programme of the year 2000. This is different from Binga where BaTonga were banished from the lake shore and never returned as a coping mechanism.

²⁰² Baxter Tavuyanago, *Living on the Fringes of a Protected Area; Gonarezhou National Park (GNP) and the Indigenous Communities of Southeastern Zimbabwe, 1934-2008*, University of Pretoria, PhD History, 2016.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.120.

Although Tavunago's work is important to compare the coping mechanisms of BaHlengwe and BaTonga, it mainly focused on socio-political responses to eviction from Gonarezhou National Park. This study offers the socio-economic perspective of coping mechanisms through an analysis of how displacement affected livelihoods and how BaTonga responded to rebuild these livelihoods through employing various coping strategies. The livelihood outcomes are analysed to determine their sustainability as they changed over time.

The historian Chisi also studied displacement and response of the minority Hlengwe/Shangane in Chiredzi District during the colonial era.²⁰⁴ He traces the phases of expropriation of BaHlengwe land from 1890 to 1965. Some BaHlengwe chiefs and their people lost their land to settler farmers and cattle ranches and were pushed to the marginal Native Reserves from as early as 1898. In the 1950s, large numbers of BaHlengwe people were evicted from the Triangle-Hippo Valley area as large tracts of land in were put under sugar and citrus farming by the settler commercial farmers. They were condemned to remote, infertile and uninhabitable areas in Matibi 2 and Sengwe and this negatively affected their livelihoods. They further lost their land in their new homes during the late 1950s to the Ndebele who came from Filabusi and the Karanga from Masvingo following the fuller implementation of the Land Apportionment Act and the passing of the Native Land Husbandry Act, in 1959.²⁰⁵ This coincides with the period in which BaTonga were evicted from the banks of the Zambezi onto the escarpment.

Before displacement and resettlement, BaHlengwe were a riverine people who had diversified livelihoods because of the frequent droughts which affected farming. They obtained livelihoods from agriculture, pastoralism, hunting, gathering, fishing trade and basketry. Most of these livelihood strategies were no longer possible after resettlement in the Native Reserves, hence they responded in diverse ways to make a living in their new environment. Chisi mentions that some BaHlengwe men joined the wage labour system and got employed in the sugar and citrus plantations in Triangle. Some men went to work in South African mines while others migrated to neighbouring Mozambique for livelihood. However, some people remained in Matibi 2 and

²⁰⁴ Taderera H. Chisi, "Colonial Economic Displacement and Responses of the Hlengwe of the Southeastern Lowveld of Zimbabwe, 1890-1965", *Afrika Zamani*, No.20-21, 2012-2013, Codesria, pp.165-194.

²⁰⁵ Chisi, Hlengwe Ethnicity, p.165.

Sengwe. When the Ndebele and Karanga newcomers invaded their grazing and hunting land in 1959, they coped by adopting strategies which were meant to preserve their customs, traditions and identity and rejected Missionary influence.²⁰⁶

However, Chisi does not dwell much on rebuilding of ruined livelihoods after resettlement; instead, he examines their aggressive forms of resistance as a way of protesting against the settlers for loss of land. He describes how the people employed passive resistance strategies ranging from defiance of authority, acts of sabotage, destruction of property, theft or arson.²⁰⁷ By 1965, BaHlengwe joined militant nationalism as most of them took part in the liberation struggle. There is a gap in literature on how these displaced minority groups coped and adapted to the challenges of ruined livelihoods which this study attempts to cover, using the BaTonga case study.

Theoretical Framework

This research is informed by the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach as the basis for the examination of how BaTonga coped with and adapted to the socio-economic changes after involuntary displacement and resettlement. Although the Sustainable Livelihoods (SLF) is not a major analytical tool of displacement and resettlement, it is important in understanding livelihood trajectories of the people and how they adapted to adverse situations from the time of resettlement up to the post-independence period. The study also adopts the Resettlement Theory to identify and address the risks inherent in resettlement situations that cause impoverishment of the affected people. BaTonga went through a difficult socio-economic development process from the period of displacement hence these two theories facilitate an understanding of the underlying causes of their persistent poverty and chronic food insecurity among them.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Chisi, Colonial Economic Displacement.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) to development intervention emerged in the 1990s with the aim of reducing rural poverty in developing countries. The approach is of British origin, and it was adopted by many development agencies in practice and research with the aim of increasing livelihood sustainability of the poor. The establishment of the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) made the 'sustainable livelihoods approach' a core principle of its strategy for pro-poor policy making.²⁰⁸ The sustainable livelihoods approach employs a holistic perspective in the analysis of rural livelihoods to identify areas where an intervention could be strategically important for effective poverty reduction, either at the local level or at the policy level.²⁰⁹ In research, the SLA is concerned with livelihood strategies and outcomes and provides a way to understand the nature of poverty and the links between different aspects of people's livelihoods. Its core ideals for development include participatory approach for poverty reduction, reducing livelihood vulnerability, and environmental sustainability.

The essence of the SLA is the concept of a sustainable livelihood. According to Scoones, the concept 'sustainable livelihood' draws from the concept of livelihood which comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means for a living.²¹⁰ The most widely accepted definition of 'livelihood' stems from the work of Chambers and Conway: "A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living".²¹¹ The term is often used interchangeably with economic strengthening and refers generally to economic production, employment, and household income. The idea of livelihoods is merged with sustainability: "A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base."²¹² The SLA assumes that the poor rely on a range of assets to produce livelihood results that people seek. The approach essentially

²⁰⁸ Ian Scoones, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Case Study of the Evolution of the DFID Policy*, Overseas Development Institute, London, 2003.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Scoones, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods*, 2003.

²¹¹ D. Carney (ed.), *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make?* Department for International Development, 1998, P.4.

²¹² Ibid.

focuses on what people do with these assets considering issues and problems of access and changing political, economic and socio-cultural circumstances. It encourages a broader understanding and examination of factors, institutions and processes that can explain the differing success with which rural households and communities make a living. As an analytical tool, the concept of sustainable livelihoods comprises a set of core principles embedded within a theoretical framework.

The Sustainable Livelihood Framework

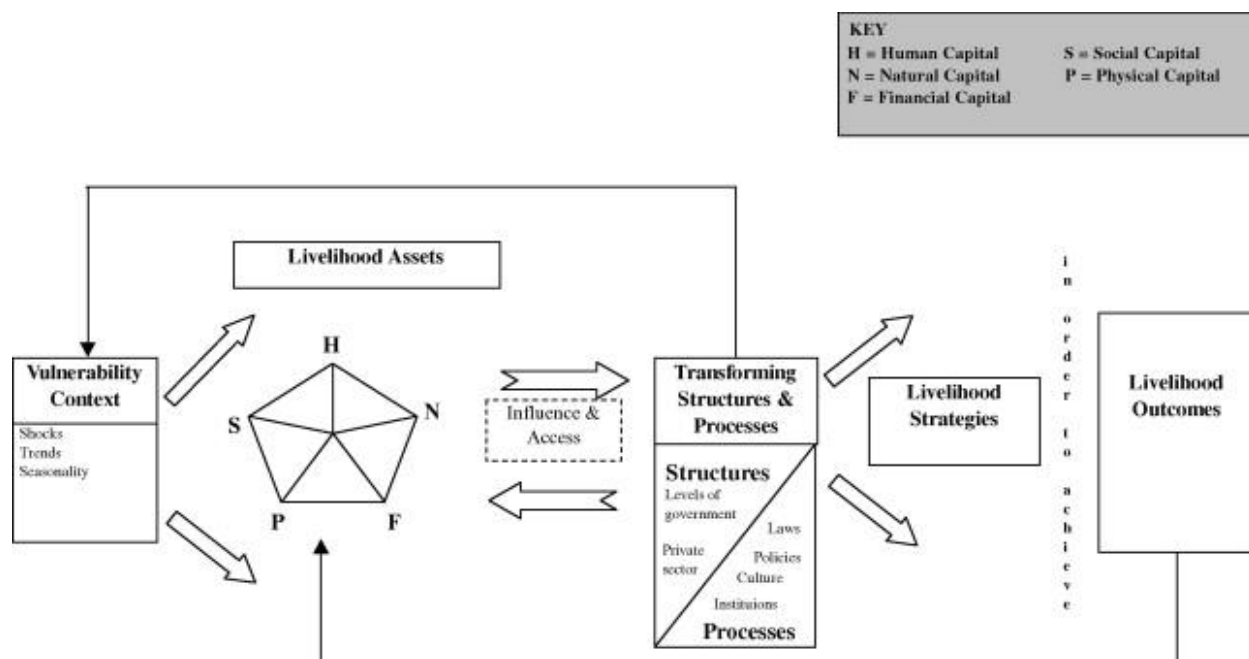
The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework (SLF) is an analytical tool to make sense of the ways in which people use and organize access to resources, deal and negotiate with institutions and live and work in a particular socio-cultural-economic and historical context, which itself is the product of a particular configuration of a global and local process.²¹³ In research, it assists in understanding and analysing people's livelihoods by presenting the key factors that have an effect on these livelihoods, and relations between them. The DFID Sustainable Livelihoods framework on Figure 3 sets out to conceptualise firstly, how poor people operate within a vulnerability context that is shaped by different factors, namely shifting seasonal constraints (and opportunities), economic shocks and longer-term trends. Secondly, it conceptualises how they draw on different types of livelihood assets or capitals in different combinations which are influenced by the vulnerability context, a range of institutions and processes, and how they use their asset base to develop a range of livelihoods strategies to achieve desired livelihood outcomes.²¹⁴

Figure 3: The DFID Sustainable Livelihood Framework²¹⁵

²¹³ Carney, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods*, 1998, p.4

²¹⁴ Lasse Kranz, *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction. An Introduction*, SIDA Division for Policy and Socio-Economic Analysis, 2001.

²¹⁵ William Solesbury, *Sustainable Livelihoods: A Case Study of the Evolution of the DFID Policy*, Overseas Development Institute, London, 2003.



Elements of the Framework

The framework shown on figure 3 comprises five key components which are the vulnerability context, livelihood assets, transforming structures and processes, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes which link with each other.

1. The Vulnerability Context

Vulnerability refers to the characteristics that limit people's ability to participate, manage, resist, or recover from the impact of a natural or other threat.²¹⁶ It refers to the likelihood of experiencing harm from unpredictable events that can undermine livelihoods and cause people to fall into poverty. This context includes demographic, economic, technological or political trends. Economic shocks such as drastic changes in the national or local economy affect prices, markets, employment and purchasing power undermine livelihoods. Armed conflict, failed states, displacement, drought, flooding, plagues, health, employment opportunities, lack of voice or power to make claims affect the people's ability to build sustainable livelihoods.²¹⁷ Shocks

²¹⁶ R. De Stage et.al., *Learning about Livelihoods. Insights from Southern Africa*, Oxfam Publishing, Oxford, 2002, p.8.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

originating from outside the community affect most people while some shocks such as poor health principally affect individual households, and this affects the choice of coping mechanisms. According to Chambers, the vulnerability complex varies by region, community, social group, household, gender, age, season and time in history.²¹⁸ The SLF points out that the external environment in which the poor people live their lives is responsible for many of their hardships or vulnerability as it extends the people's susceptibility to poverty. This study determines the vulnerability context of BaTonga and explores how they coped and adapted to the challenges of livelihood after displacement.

The vulnerability context also refers to impact of changes that take place over time, and how households try to adapt to this change.²¹⁹ Broader institutions and structures that control the livelihood options that are open to them also make households vulnerable to poverty.²²⁰ They are powerful external structures and forces that combine to consolidate a long-term cycle of poverty amongst the poor. The framework emphasizes that the people in such an environment can overcome their vulnerability if their livelihoods were to be sustainable. However, this study seeks to show that livelihoods are not principally about the maintenance and improvement of the material conditions, as Levine noted.²²¹ It also argues that the vulnerability of BaTonga was complex and changed over time in relation to the economic and political climate.

2. Livelihood Assets

A key component of the SL framework is the multiplicity of assets that the poor people utilize when constructing their livelihoods. The framework produces a holistic view of what resources are important to the poor and shows how in different contexts, sustainable livelihoods are constructed through access to a range of these livelihood resources or assets or capitals.²²² DFID defines livelihood assets as areas that offer a holistic representation of all the capabilities, the resources, and entitlements that people have invested in and built up over time. This refers to a stock of resources on which households can draw to generate income, meet their basic needs,

²¹⁸ Robert Chambers, *Vulnerability, Coping and Policy*, IDS Bulletin Vol.37, 4, 2006, Institute of Development Studies, p.33.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Frank Ellis, Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification, in *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol.35, No.1, 2002 pp.1-38,

²²¹ Simone Levine, *How to Study Livelihoods: Bringing a Sustainable Livelihoods Framework to Life*, ODI Working Paper 22. 2014.

²²² Kranz, The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach p.21.

manage risk, and cope with stresses and shocks.²²³ Kranz argues that poverty is not just a question of low income but it includes dimensions such as bad health, illiteracy, lack of social services as well as a state of vulnerability and feelings of powerlessness.²²⁴ Ellis agrees that assets form the foundation for livelihood activities and strategies and that, in order to achieve livelihood outcomes, households have to access, expand, combine and transform as well as exchange a range of livelihood resources.²²⁵

The DFID SL framework (figure 3) is built around five principal categories of livelihood assets, represented in a five-axis pentagon form to underline their interconnections and the fact that livelihoods depend on a combination of assets of various kinds.²²⁶ The size and shape of the asset pentagon varies between communities and between wealthy and poor people, and a larger asset base generally offers greater livelihood opportunities and greater livelihood security. However, BaTonga lacked key assets to livelihood, and this impoverished them, as the study explores.

2.1 Human assets

According to Kranz, human assets are the key resource because the livelihoods approach is centred on people and their capabilities to put these assets into productive use.²²⁷ It is the total capability residing in individuals, based on their stock of knowledge, skills (including traditional or indigenous knowledge), health and nutrition and ability to work, that individuals or a household possess and draws on to achieve desirable livelihood outcomes. This is enhanced by their access to services that provide these, such as schools, medical services, and adult training. People's productivity is increased by their capacity to interact with productive technologies and with other people.²²⁸ Human capital is necessary for a household to make use of natural, physical, financial and social assets effectively and transform them into different livelihood activities. The

²²³ Ian Scoones, Livelihoods Perspectives and Rural Development, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2009 <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150902820503>, p.189.

²²⁴ Kranz, The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, p.28.

²²⁵ Frank Ellis, *Rural Livelihoods Diversity in Developing Countries: Evidence and Policy Implications*, Overseas Development Institute Papers, <https://www.odi.org/publications>, 1999.

²²⁶ Kranz, The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction, 2001, p.18.

²²⁷ De Stage et.al., Learning about Livelihoods, p.98.

²²⁸ Rengasamy, Introduction to Livelihood Promotion, p.18.

study analyses the quality of human capital available to BaTonga and how it affected livelihood reconstruction after displacement.

2.2 Social assets

Social assets refer to the social resources which people draw upon in pursuit of their livelihood objectives. These include norms, values and attitudes that predispose people to cooperate; relations of trust, reciprocity and obligations; and common rules and sanctions mutually agreed or handed down. These resources are connected and structured in networks and groups of mutual support which exist within and between households, extended families and communities; people mobilize social capital to access resources.²²⁹ They are the benefits that come through relationships with people and institutions and access to resources that are determined by local rules and conventions.²³⁰ Social capital exists among personal relationships and is an intangible resource which facilitates the increase in other assets. This study examines the importance of social networks of BaTonga people which could assist them in the diversification of livelihoods.

2.3 Natural assets

Natural assets consist of land, water, forests and the natural resources used by people to generate livelihood means. These natural resources are dynamic, they change with time and can be improved by human activities.²³¹ Most rural livelihoods depend on natural capital, and access to quality natural resources is crucial to the strength of the natural resource base available to rural people. Ellis emphasises that land is life for many people and shortage of quality land threatens livelihoods.²³² Access to quality land and to other resources allows people to invest in productive processes. Water is also an essential resource in crop and livestock production in rural livelihoods and the lack of adequate water is linked to poverty as it threatens livelihoods. Deprivation of crucial assets, such as natural capital and social capital lead to increased vulnerability and poverty as in the case of BaTonga.

²²⁹ Morse, McNamara and Acholo, Sustainable Livelihood Approach.

²³⁰ De Stage et.al., Learning about Livelihoods, p.101.

²³¹ DFID, *Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheet*, Department for International Development, https://www.livelihoods.org/infor/infor_guidance_sheets.html, 2000

²³² Ellis, Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification.

2.4 Physical assets

Physical assets refer to capital goods such as farm equipment, shelter, infrastructure, adequate water and energy supply that make people's labour more productive. Buildings, roads and tools provide the security, mobility and capability that allow people to produce, transform, exchange and consume goods.²³³ Ellis argues that physical assets are effectively created by economic production processes and are designed for the common good.²³⁴ They store value and may be sold in times of crisis to gain income. However, this study shows how a dearth of such assets affected possible livelihood strategies of BaTonga for many decades after resettlement.

2.5 Financial assets

Financial assets are the financial resources that are available to people, and which provide them with different livelihood options. Financial capital is represented by the cash that family members can dispose of, which includes savings, credit, insurance and pensions, remittances, welfare payments, grants and subsidies.²³⁵ Rural savings can be kept in the form of livestock or food stocks. Lack of financial resources hinder livelihood diversification for most households and communities and limits the livelihood options available to them. This study shows how limited sources of cash income depressed livelihoods in Binga.

These five types of assets are important for the construction of sustainable and resilient livelihoods. Scoones suggests that people with more assets available to them are less vulnerable to livelihood shocks because they help them in the construction of sustainable livelihoods. Not all households have the same control and access to key livelihood assets hence there is need to understand the factors which may limit or enhance people's access to these assets. This study seeks to understand how access to various assets influenced coping mechanisms of BaTonga after displacement and resettlement. This helps to analyse their ability to adapt to the changes brought about by the adverse circumstances.

3. Transforming structures and processes

²³³ Scoones, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods.

²³⁴ Ellis, Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification, p.33.

²³⁵ DFID, Sustainable Livelihoods.

These are the institutions, organisations, policies and legislation that determine people's access to assets and livelihood activities, as well as framing the vulnerability context in which they live. Policies, institutions and processes transform people's access to assets. According to Carney, they affect livelihoods of the poor both by determining who gains access to what type of asset, defining what range of livelihood strategies are open and attractive to people.²³⁶ Institutions include membership to formal organisations such as cooperatives and registered groups, informal organisations such as exchange labour groups, political institutions such as political parties, and social-cultural institutions such as kinship, marriage, inheritance, and religion.²³⁷ Policies and institutions influence can increase or decrease vulnerability as they can inhibit or facilitate the exercising of capabilities and choices by individuals and families as well as the transformation of assets into a strategy for sustainable livelihood.²³⁸ This study explores various how policies during different epochs impacted on BaTonga livelihoods.

In general, the SLF suggests that public policies are responsible for the reduction of rural poverty as they affect people's ability to put assets to productive use. The framework also stresses that the challenge of poverty elimination can only be overcome by working at both the macro and the micro level.²³⁹ It considers linkages between the two levels to inform more supportive policies and institutions. Poverty-focused development should be conducted in partnership with both the public and the private sector. This study looks at how colonial and post-colonial politics, power and institutions shaped BaTonga's coping mechanisms and determined their ability to adapt to the challenges of displacement and resettlement.

4. Livelihood strategies

Livelihood strategies are the ways in which the poor people deploy their assets and capabilities to improve their livelihoods.²⁴⁰ Scoones asserts that asset ownership influences the livelihood options available to people, and households with greater access to assets such as land, water, livestock, money as well as higher education and skills, and better socio-political networks have

²³⁶ Carney (ed.) Sustainable Rural Livelihoods.

²³⁷ Scoones, *Livelihoods Perspectives*, 2009.

²³⁸ DFID, 1999.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Rengasamy, *Introduction to Livelihoods Promotion*, p.37.

a wider range of livelihood options than household with fewer assets.²⁴¹ The SL framework aims to support people's strategies to get better livelihood outcomes. Scoones adds that changes in agrarian production, increased diversification or migration are possible strategies in rural areas to increase income levels, but these strategies have different dynamics and outcome.²⁴² This helps to show how lack of key assets and government policies affected the economic opportunities available to BaTonga people that could uplift them from poverty.

5. Livelihood outcomes

Livelihood outcomes are achievements of livelihood strategies.²⁴³ Individuals and households employ multiple strategies in bid try to achieve multiple outcomes which include more income, increased health, well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security, asset accumulation, high status in the community, and a more sustainable use of natural resources. Ellis argues that poverty reduction interventions should focus on empowering the poor to build on their own opportunities, supporting their access to assets, and developing an enabling policy and institutional environment.²⁴⁴ This will enhance livelihood resilience, food security, wellbeing and sustainability. This study shows how this became difficult to implement in Binga because of structural challenges which needed political solutions.

Sustainability of livelihoods

The SLF recognizes that livelihoods must be sustainable to achieve day-to-day survival and long-term poverty reduction and it also helps to understand what constitutes a sustainable livelihood in a given context. According to Conway and Chambers, "a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities, assets and entitlements while not undermining the natural resource base."²⁴⁵ Morse postulates that sustainability is considered in terms of available capital (natural, human, social, physical and financial) and an examination of the vulnerability context (trends, shocks and stresses).²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Scoones, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods.

²⁴³ DFID 1999

²⁴⁴ Ellis, Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification.

²⁴⁵ D. Carney (ed.), *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make?* Department for International Development, 1998, P.4

²⁴⁶ Morse, McNamara and Acholo, Sustainable Livelihood Approach.

McDowell agrees with Morse and notes that sustainability infers livelihood activities that lift people out of poverty, enable them to cope with future shocks and stresses, and in a manner that enhances the natural resource base.²⁴⁷ The study explores how various coping mechanisms adopted by BaTonga failed to achieve sustainability.

According to Kranz, there are four key dimensions to sustainability, namely economical, institutional, social, and environmental. These dimensions must be balanced depending on the livelihood strategy adopted.²⁴⁸ Scoones suggest that there is need to assess a number of the outcome indicators of a livelihood to determine its sustainability, and the most important criterion for assessing livelihoods outcomes and sustainability is poverty reduction.²⁴⁹ Solesbury agrees with Scoones when he pointed out that a sustainable livelihood is achieved when all people have the same basic needs.²⁵⁰ He also proposed that this is possible because the poor people have assets in their own skills, in their social institutions, in their values and cultures and in their detailed and sophisticated knowledge of their own environment.²⁵¹ Ellis takes this further and argues that poverty reduction and sustainability can be achieved by increasing the level of assets or fostering intensive use of under-utilised assets.²⁵² These assets increase social sustainability and minimise vulnerability by reducing external stress and shocks and providing safety nets. However, there is need for diversification of livelihood sources, broadening access to unlock underutilised assets or resources as well as strengthening people's capabilities help to strengthen livelihoods and make them more secure and sustainable.²⁵³

Sustainability of livelihoods can also be understood in the perspective of community and household resilience. This study examines sustainability in relation to BaTonga livelihood strategies during different periods. Resilience is defined as "the capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt by resisting or changing to reach and maintain

²⁴⁷ Christopher McDowell, Involuntary Resettlement, Impoverishment Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods, in *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*, Volume 2, 2002, Massey University Papers, Australia.

²⁴⁸ Kranz, The Sustainable Livelihood Approach.

²⁴⁹ Scoones, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, p.5

²⁵⁰ Solesbury, Sustainable Livelihoods.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ellis, 2000, p.28.

²⁵³ De Stage et.al., Learning about Livelihoods, p.57

an acceptable level of functioning and structure.²⁵⁴ It refers to a community's creative ability to act and withstand pressure and cope with problems and adopt coping strategies which build on their strengths to spread risks. Resilience focuses on people's agency and ability as they adopt coping strategies aimed to reduce vulnerability and effectively negotiate, adapt to, or manage shocks and stress.²⁵⁵ Communities adapt either negative or positive ways of dealing with adverse conditions on the longer term. This is particularly important to BaTonga people as they attempted to circumvent livelihood challenges after displacement.

Resilience is important to understand the sustainability of livelihood strategies adopted as coping mechanisms as it indicates the ability of communities to recover from effects of shocks. Vulnerability occurs when affected people are unable to counterbalance adverse impacts to cope short term and adapt long-term. This study analyses BaTonga's short term coping strategies as well as long term adaptation. The UNDP views resilience as the ability of a community to absorb shocks and stresses to its infrastructure, and its social, cultural and economic fabric. Sustainable livelihoods are therefore supposed to be resilient in their response to shocks and stress. Sustainable and resilient livelihoods to risks are thus key for poverty reduction but this study shows how it became a challenge to BaTonga to achieve this.

Weaknesses of the sustainable livelihoods approach

Although the sustainable livelihoods approach is valuable to understanding livelihoods strategies and outcomes of people as they react to changes in a specific context, it has also been criticised for its deficiencies. According to McDowell, the SL approach is not concerned with identifying the causes of poverty, but rather focuses on how the poor try and often fail to overcome their impoverishment.²⁵⁶ It is deficient in focusing on the underlying causes of poverty such as lack of power, conflicts of interests, exclusion and entitlement failures. This study discusses how some

²⁵⁴ Oparinde, Adewale and Hodge, Building Livelihood Resilience: A case study of factors affecting farm livelihoods' adoption of coping and adaptative strategies in rural Nigeria, International Food Policy Research Institute, University of Cambridge, 2011.

²⁵⁵ Melissa Marschike, Exploring Strategies that build Livelihood Resilience: A Case of Cambodia.

²⁵⁶ Christopher McDowell, Involuntary Resettlement, Impoverishment Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods, in The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies, Volume 2, 2002, Massey University Papers, Australia.

of these factors were crucial in explaining why BaTonga have remained poor for many decades despite NGO and government efforts to develop the district.

Murray agrees with McDowell that the framework accepts the status quo of poverty and inequality and underplays the structural constraints that keep people in poverty.²⁵⁷ Scoones also highlights that the SL approach gives little attention to structural level of power and politics and overemphasises the role of the poor in building livelihoods.²⁵⁸ Inequalities of power and conflicts of interests are not sufficiently acknowledged but this is important in explaining BaTonga's impoverishment and perennial hunger.

At theoretical level the approach has been criticised for placing too much emphasis on material assets and capabilities of the poor to choose livelihood activities while neglecting some elements of the vulnerability context such as rampant inflation, violence and civil conflict, gender relations or the devastating effect of the HIV/AIDS pandemic which limit desirable livelihood outcomes.²⁵⁹ Saldapolrak argues that the SL framework take assets, as the core concept of the approach, for granted as it is not sufficiently embedded rationally.²⁶⁰ For instance, BaTonga did not possess important livelihood assets and this limited their capabilities, as the study shows.

The approach does not question the existence of assets which are crucial for people to pursue sustainable livelihoods. The approach also erroneously presumed that it is possible to expand the people's "asset pentagons" in a generalized and incremental fashion. McLean pointed out that the five capitals were too narrow in scope as many aspects of people's lives and wellbeing could not fit in them.²⁶¹ Assets are among many other resources which people use to construct livelihoods. The SLA is therefore weak as it provides few categories of social factors which affect people's ability to make a living within their historical and vulnerability context.

²⁵⁷ Murray, Livelihood Research.

²⁵⁸ Scoones, Livelihoods Perspectives, 2009.

²⁵⁹ De Stage et.al., Learning about Livelihoods, p.17.

²⁶⁰ Patrick Saldapolrak, Livelihoods as Social Practices. Re-energising Livelihoods Research with Bourdieu's Theory of Practise, in *Geographica helvetica*, Vol.69, 2014, p.1-10.

²⁶¹ J. McLean, Beyond the Pentagon Prison of Sustainable Livelihood Approaches Towards Livelihood Trajectory Approaches, Asia Par Viewpoint, 56:380-391.

To address and counter these inherent weaknesses in the SL framework in the study of BaTonga involuntary displacement and coping mechanisms, this thesis uses the resettlement theory which comprises Scudder's Four-Stage Framework, Cernea's Impoverishment, Risk, and Reconstruction (IRR) Model and McDowell's Forced Displacement, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Impoverishment Risks Framework. These theories complement and help to strengthen the SLF in understanding the long-term implications of involuntary displacement and resettlement on livelihood reconstruction efforts of BaTonga.

The Resettlement Theory

Scudder and Colson's Four Stage Framework

Decades of research on dam-induced displacement have proved that the dam projects were not successful in terms of re-establishing the affected populations at a better or equal living standards but have resulted in impoverishment of the affected communities. There are two key pioneering models on the complexities of the process of displacement and resettlement. Scudder and Colson proposed the first model in 1982 to deal with the process of dam induced displacement.²⁶² In this model, Scudder and Colson argued that relocation, whether voluntary or compulsory is a stressful experience hence they used data from several dam resettlements to explain how people and socio-cultural systems respond to resettlement. The model identified four stages of a successful resettlement process which present the behavioural or psychological tendencies of the people affected over a period of two generations. The four stages were categorised as the planning and recruitment phase, transition phase, development phase, and handing over or incorporation phase.

During the planning and recruitment stage policy makers propose the development and resettlement plans, often without participation of those to be displaced. Scudder and Colson emphasised early involvement of the affected people in the planning and decision-making period

²⁶² Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the analysis of dislocated people, in A. Hansen and A. Oliver-Smith (eds.), *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Resettled People*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1982, pp.267-287.

for a resettlement process to be successful. This reduces their stress and anxiety as the first and second stages are associated with increases in stress. Furthermore, increased involvement in development opportunities after resettlement can contribute to a successful resettlement process.²⁶³ This study shows how BaTonga were not involved and how this impacted on the outcome of the resettlement process. Scudder and Colson's model has been criticised for not giving suggestions or guiding principles to policy makers on how to involve the affected people.²⁶⁴ For a resettlement process to succeed, emphasis should be on resettlement with development instead of compensation but the Four Stage model does not give suggestions on the development policies to be pursued by the policy makers for economic building after resettlement.

During the adjusting and coping stage, people learn about their imminent displacement, then physical relocation takes place. They must clear land and most of the displaced people have to cope with the initial drop in living standards during this phase. Scudder attributes the drop in standards to the time it takes time for governments, companies and organisations involved to strengthen facilities such as infrastructure and schools. However, improved resettlement planning, and implementation can eliminate this drop in living standards.²⁶⁵ This stage is also characterised by the conservative coping behaviour of the displaced people who are risk averse after the shock of resettlement, and it comes to an end only if the majority is able to re-establish their former living standards. This stage is applicable to BaTonga but they failed to move on to other stages.

According to Scudder, if a resettlement process succeeds, improvement of living standards and economic development starts during the third stage after physical relocation has taken place.²⁶⁶ With innovativeness, the displaced people start rebuilding their economic and social networks as they engage in community formation activities that lead to improvements in the standards of living of first-generation displaced people. There is more emphasis on providing good infrastructure and education, finding non-farm income. People change from risk-aversion to risk-

²⁶³ Thayer Scudder, *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing with Social Environmental, Institutional and Political Costs*, Earth scan, London, 2005. p.13.

²⁶⁴ Syam Kumar Chiruguri, Search for Theoretical Model to Measure Displacement: *Anthropological Reflections International Research Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 4(7), 2015, pp.46-53.

²⁶⁵ Scudder, *The Future of Dams*, p.34.

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

taking and this is made possible by the availability of sustainable development opportunities. Income increases and is spent on quality housing and equipment. Food and self-sufficiency is achieved, and people will start to grow cash crops and practice commercial livelihood management and start selling meat and dairy. Others will start small businesses such as shops or small factories, thereby diversifying the options for non-farm income. However, Scudder noted that this stage could take many years as the people fail to restore or improve their livelihoods, and as a result they become impoverished.²⁶⁷ This study shows how and why BaTonga became impoverished as they failed to diversify their livelihoods.

BaTonga did not even reach the last stage which involves handing over a sustainable resettlement programme to a second generation of residents and to non-project authority institutions. Local production systems and community leadership issues are integrated into the political economy of a region or a nation.²⁶⁸ Scudder and Colson emphasised that the community must have the institutional and political strength to compete for their fair share of national resources. A resettlement programme is deemed successful after it has gone through all the four stages, and this success is defined as development that is environmentally, economically, institutionally and culturally sustainable into the second generation.²⁶⁹ Therefore, this theory helps to prove how the Kariba resettlement programme became unsuccessful and also analyse consequences of such failure on livelihoods.

According to Chiruguri, Scudder and Colson's work is problematic in that it provides a static picture of displacement.²⁷⁰ It does not give a clear picture of the resettlement problems that the four stages are trying to address. However, this study uses the SL framework to cover this gap and to address people's livelihood, social, political and economic losses as a result of the resettlement process. Furthermore, this model was first formulated to explain the stages of voluntary resettlement. It was later applied to some cases of involuntary resettlement which successfully passed through the four stages. According to De Wet, the model is formulated to

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ Scudder and Colson, *From Welfare to Development*, p.40.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., p.32.

²⁷⁰ Chiruguri, *Theoretical Framework to Measure Displacement*.

explain similarities rather than differences in people's reactions to resettlement.²⁷¹ However, people are not a homogenous group; they react in a variety of ways because of different history, classes, age, gender and other factors that resettlement is associated with. This study addresses these deficiencies in the theory by seeking guidance from the Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction Model.

The Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction Model

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the magnitude of forced population displacements caused by development projects was around ten million people each year.²⁷² Dam-induced displacements became a worldwide problem because of their frequency, size and dire consequences. Impoverishment became the most widespread effect of involuntary displacement because of unsuccessful involuntary displacement projects whereby the people did not pass-through Colson and Scudder's four stages. For instance, in India, of the twenty million displaced by dams, seventy-five percent of these had not been rehabilitated and their livelihoods had not been restored decades after resettlement.²⁷³ Involuntarily displaced people failed to recover and became so impoverished that a new model was necessary to identify the risks and consequences associated with involuntary displacement and resettlement. Michael Cernea's Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction (IRR) Model was formulated to fill this gap as an analytical framework to understand unsuccessful resettlement projects. Instead of identifying the different stages of resettlement, the IRR model categorises the impoverishment risks posed by development-induced displacement projects with the aim of minimizing or eliminating these risks.

The IRR model addresses three fundamental core concepts of risks, impoverishment and reconstruction. Impoverishment is the central risk as Cernea traces the process of its onset, its unfolding, and the process of escaping from poverty. Displaced people experience the long-term risk of becoming poorer, more economically vulnerable and socially disintegrated than before

²⁷¹ Chris De Wet, *A Spatial Analysis of Involuntary Community Relocation: A South African Case Study*, *Anthropological Approaches to Resettlement: Policy, Practice and Theory*, 1993, p.322.

²⁷² Michael M. Cernea, *Risks, Safeguards and Restructuring: A Model for Population Displacement and Resettlement*, in M.M. Cernea and C. McDowell (eds.) *Risk and Reconstruction: Experience of Resettlers and Refugees*, 2000, pp.11-55.

²⁷³ Ibid.

displacement.²⁷⁴ The IRR model connects the risk of impoverishment to eight interlinked potential risks and outlines reconstruction strategies to counteract these potential risks. These common socio-economic risks are landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalisation, food insecurity, increased morbidity and mortality, loss of access to common property, and social disarticulation. The model recognises that the intensity of risks varies depending on contextual conditions such as place and time, and that not all eight risks occur after every resettlement.²⁷⁵ This study explores the risks of landlessness, joblessness, marginalization among the BaTonga and adds the risk of wildlife threat. Marauding elephants jeopardized their livelihood in farming and contributed to perennial food insecurity.

The IRR model stresses that if proper counteractive action is not taken in time through targeted policies, involuntary displacement will inevitably lead to impoverishment.²⁷⁶ However, Cernea argues that impoverishment from displacement is not inevitable, it is preventable,²⁷⁷ thus he provides a framework for planning; as a warning tool to anticipate impoverishment risks involved. It is an important tool for preventive planning to guide the design of resettlement plans for either preventing or mitigating risks as well as monitoring their impact. Inadequate planning and implementation worsens the risks of displacement and aggravates poverty.²⁷⁸ For instance, McDowell notes that many displacement projects intended to alleviate impoverishment by providing the displaced with cash compensation for lost assets without re-establishing them viably.²⁷⁹ If the risks of displacement are not properly managed in a timely manner it can result in long-lasting impoverishing effects of the people leading to what is known as “new poverty” or “secondary poverty”.²⁸⁰ BaTonga became impoverished after displacement as they lost self-sufficiency in food production as this study shows.

²⁷⁴ Mathur, H.M., *Resettling People Displaced by Development Projects*, The United States, Berghalm Books, 2006.

²⁷⁵ McDowell, *Involuntary Resettlement*, 2002.

²⁷⁶ Vlado Vivoda, John Owen and Deanna Kemp, *Applying the Risk and Reconstruction IRR Model to Involuntary Resettlement in the Global Mining Sector*, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, Sustainable Minerals Institute, University of Queensland, 2017.

²⁷⁷ Michael M. Cernea, *Understanding and Preventing Impoverishment from Displacement: Reflections on the State of Knowledge*, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 8(3), 1995, pp.245-264.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ Christopher McDowell, *Involuntary Resettlement, Impoverishment, Risks and Sustainable Livelihoods*, *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*, Vol. 2, 2002, trauma.massey.ac.nz/mcdowell.

²⁸⁰ Faustina O. Bessy and Prince O. Tay, *Resettlement Induced Secondary Poverty in Developing Countries*, *Developing Country Studies*, Vol.5, No.5, 2015, pp.170-179.

The IRR Model has been criticised for simplifying the livelihood strategies and thus ignoring other important factors.²⁸¹ Cernea only captured the resettlement impacts of projects, and his framework is not useful to capture other social impacts of the project. Furthermore, although the IRR model claims to manage rehabilitation of the displaced, it has largely remained a theoretical framework without effective implementation in most development projects globally. Cernea's model shows that during displacement people are deprived of natural capital, human capital and social capital which they must be able to regain during re-establishment.²⁸² However, it is incomplete by not including financial and cultural capitals necessary for re-building and improving livelihoods. This study remains sensitive to these weaknesses and cover them by the Sustainable Livelihoods framework, as noted by McDowell when he revised the IRR model.

The Impoverishing Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

In 2002, McDowell came up with a framework for post-resettlement reconstruction which combines the Sustainable Livelihood research and the concept of Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (Figure 2).²⁸³ He argues that the concepts of sustainable livelihoods and impoverishment risks are compatible and appropriate in understanding the impacts of forced resettlement and post-resettlement reconstruction. Integrating the elements of both frameworks enables researchers to account for changes to the basic material and social, tangible and intangible assets that people have and to track the impact of these changes on their livelihood strategies. While the SL approach is not primarily concerned with why the poor became poor, but rather why they remain poor, the IRR Model focuses on a dynamic understanding of the impoverishment process taking place after involuntary resettlement.²⁸⁴ Identification of distinct risks inherent in the process of involuntary resettlement and understanding how they impact on livelihoods then adds a necessary analytical dimension to the SL approach. This helps to understand how the displaced people cope adapt to the new situations.

²⁸¹E. Smyth and F. Vanclay, *The Social Framework for Projects*, 2017.

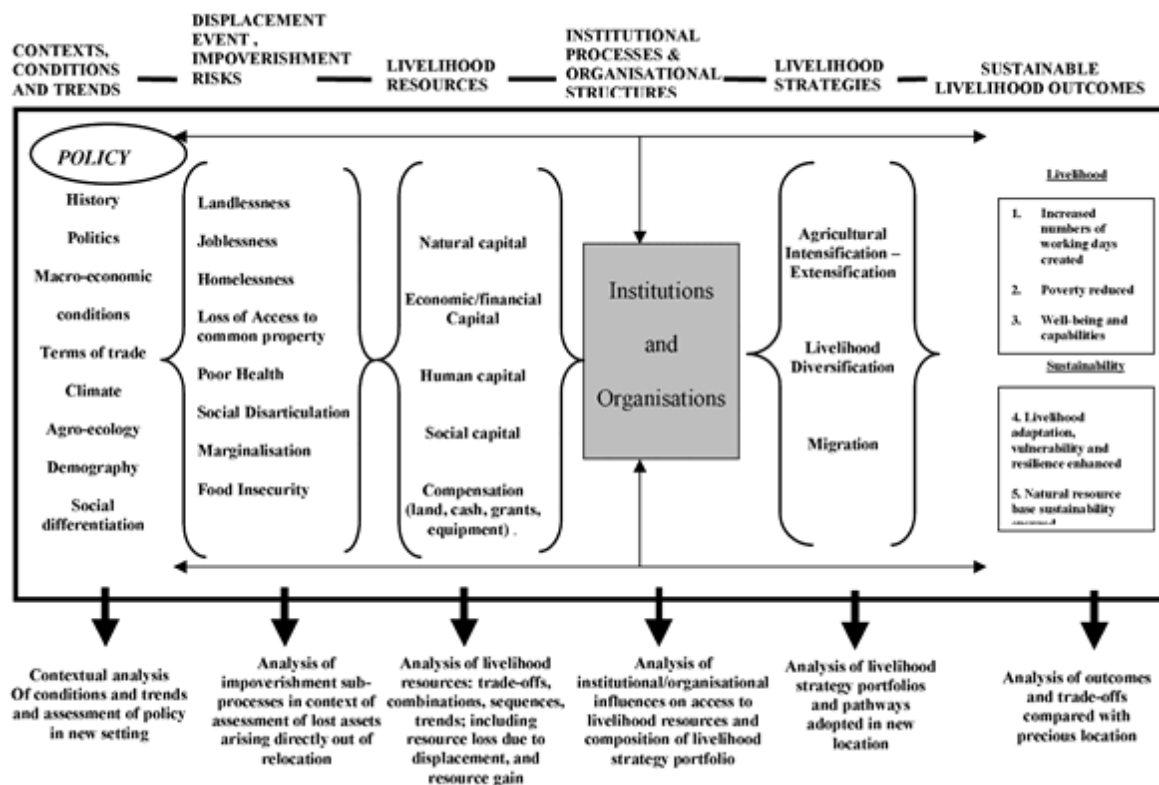
²⁸² McDowell, *Involuntary Resettlement*, 2002.

²⁸³ McDowell, *Involuntary Resettlement*, 2002.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Figure 4: Forced Displacement, Sustainable Livelihoods and Impoverishment Risks

– A Revised Framework for Analysis ²⁸⁵



McDowell also argues that a focus on institutions and sustainability helps to understand the impact of involuntary displacement and resettlement processes on livelihoods.²⁸⁶ Both the SL approach and the IRR Model regard institutional processes as central to livelihood resources and strategies. According to Cernea, institutions are socially embedded to function in the context of social, economic and power inequalities.²⁸⁷ The SL approach emphasises the role of both formal and informal institutions and organisations in livelihoods construction but they can also constrain community reconstruction by further marginalising some groups.²⁸⁸ In as much as involuntary displacement and resettlement dismantles patterns of social organisation, there is need to understand how they are re-formed to confront new challenges. This overall contribute to the

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ Ibid

²⁸⁷ Cernea, Risks, Safeguards and Restructuring, 2000.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

understanding of the coping mechanisms in relation to sustainable outcomes of livelihood strategies. While McDowell emphasises on an impoverishment-risk livelihood approach, in this thesis the livelihood processes and outcomes after involuntary displacement and resettlement direct research in understanding the impoverishment risks faced by BaTonga. This livelihood-led impoverishment risk approach is necessary to explore their coping strategies to understand how and why the people became poor, and why they became impoverished after resettlement.

Conclusion

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework provides a framework for exploring the coping strategies of BaTonga to the various livelihood challenges faced after forced eviction without external assistance. It helps to identify available livelihood capitals used to build livelihoods and how lack of access to crucial assets affects sustainability of livelihoods. The study also draws on the Resettlement Theory, particularly the IRR Model to explore the process of impoverishment of BaTonga people over a period of 50 years. The next chapter deals with the context of policies that influenced the forced eviction of BaTonga. This assists in understanding how and why the resettlement process was largely disastrous.

CHAPTER 3: PLANNING FOR DISPLACEMENT: BATONGA EXCLUSION

Introduction

BaTonga people had to move from their traditional lands and give way to the formation of the reservoir for the Kariba dam necessary for turning the turbines for the generation of electricity needed for economic development. This chapter explores the way Southern Rhodesian authorities handled the main issues pertaining to BaTonga displacement and resettlement before they were evicted from the Zambezi Valley and resettled on the plateau in Binga District. It argues that although BaTonga were victims of development-induced displacement, their resettlement was mainly planned according to the provisions of the Land Apportionment Act which guided the mass evictions of indigenous populations from the best land into marginal areas in the colony from the 1940s. Although dam-induced displacement provided for compensation for disruption of life, BaTonga were not given compensation because the legislation did not give room to that.

The Land Apportionment Act (LAA) of 1930 which became the most important law governing land distribution in Southern Rhodesia demarcated all land in the colony of along racial lines and led to mass forced evictions of Africans from their traditional homelands as discussed in Chapter 2. The strict implementation of this law after the Second World War saw more forced evictions of hundreds of thousands of Africans from Crown Land in the 1950s to pave way for former soldiers who wanted to take up farming in the colony as well as the British settlers coming from overseas. These displaced Africans were settled in remote and marginal land which was in unassigned, arid and tsetse-infested areas. For instance, up to 10 000 Africans were evicted from Rhodesdale Estate in Masvingo and resettled in Gokwe District which was largely empty.²⁸⁹ It was around this time when BaTonga were also evicted from the Zambezi valley and resettled in unassigned land which was also not good for human habitation as their land was going to be inundated by the Lake.

However, the mass displacement of around 57 000 BaTonga on both sides of the Zambezi River was development-induced displacement sponsored by the International Bank (now known as the

²⁸⁹ P.S. Nyambara, Immigrants, "traditional" leaders and the Rhodesdale State, *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(4), 2001, p.771

World Bank). The resettlement was planned for, and funds were set aside according to the international guidelines for dam-induced displacement which provided for restoration of livelihoods. Thus, the displacement of BaTonga people on the south bank in Southern Rhodesia was expected to be executed not according to the provisions of the Land Apportionment Act as the international community was involved in the process. However, Southern Rhodesia was directly governed by the racist and autocratic British settler government while Northern Rhodesia had relatively few British settlers who ruled indirectly through the African chiefs and this largely influenced their resettlement policy for BaTonga. Scudder and Colson as well as the World Bank have assessed the costs and benefits of the Kariba Dam on BaTonga on both sides of the river as development-induced displacement. This chapter argues that although the international community provided the funds for restoration of livelihoods during displacement and resettlement of BaTonga people, the government of Southern Rhodesia decided to largely follow the provisions of the Land Apportionment Act which denied BaTonga of any resettlement rights, and this affected the outcome of the resettlement.

Costs and Benefits of Dam-Induced Displacement

Displacement involves forced removal of people from their usual place or country because of war, natural calamity or for the purposes of developmental projects. According to Hamar, displacement, as an act, experience or effect of some form of forced dislocation, or confinement is as old and continuous as human history.²⁹⁰ It involves involuntary out-migration of people which is influenced by 'push' factors that force people out of their traditional localities.²⁹¹ Voluntary displacement on the other hand is usually influenced by 'push' and 'pull' factors, and normally comprises young people who migrate gradually in search of greener pastures. Involuntary displacement force entire population to move, and there has been a growing concern over the impact of involuntary displacement of communities worldwide.²⁹² The main types of

²⁹⁰ Amanda Hamar, Conceptualising Displacement. In A. Hamar (ed.) *Displacement Economies in Africa, Paradoxes of Crisis and Creativity*, ZED Books, London, 2014, p.4.

²⁹¹ Roli Asthana, Involuntary Resettlement Survey. Survey of International Experience, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.31, No.24, 1996, pp.1468-1475, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4404268>

²⁹² Ibid.

displacement include disaster-related displacement, conflict-induced displacement, and development-induced displacement.

This chapter examines how BaTonga on both sides of the Zambezi were victims of development-induced displacement, particularly dam-induced displacement although their resettlement was influenced by various territorial policies. Their land was inundated by the Lake Kariba to produce hydro-electricity power, but their experiences were different in terms of costs and benefits from the project due to these policies. The displacement caused by the construction of dams for irrigation and hydropower is both the greatest and most discussed in literature.²⁹³ Mega development projects such as the Great Aswan Dam on the Nile River which opened in 1970, the Kariba Dam on the Zambezi River which opened 1959, and the Akosombo Dam on Lake Volta in Ghana which opened 1965 led to displacement of thousands of people. This drew the attention of Anthropologists like Elizabeth Colson and Thayer Scudder who studied the social consequences of these hydropower projects upon the displaced people. These studies revealed that the construction of dams caused many adverse social consequences upon the displaced populations.²⁹⁴

Massive displacement of population because the construction of mega dams such as the Three Gorges Dam in China and the Sardar Sarovar Complex on the Narmada River in India in the 1990s stirred much debate about the costs and benefits of dam construction. There are conflicting approaches to literature on dam-induced displacement namely the optimistic managerial approach and the pessimistic radical approach.²⁹⁵ The optimistic approach of dam proponents view displacement as an inevitable outcome of high dams and focuses more on the advantages of constructing dams as vehicles of development. Pessimistic anti-dam activists represent the impacted people and civil society who object the forced removal of people on moral grounds based on the adverse outcomes of mega dam projects and that the supposed development benefits do not often accrue to the victims of displacement. Gasper argues that the most

²⁹³ Bogumil Terminski, *Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement: Theoretical Frameworks and Current Challenges*, Geneva, May 2003.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

²⁹⁵ Ranjit Dwivedi, Displacement, Risks and Resistance: Local Perceptions and Actions in the Sardar Sarovar, *Development and Change* Vol.30, No.1, 1999, pp.43-78.

prevalent pro-dam view which he calls the ‘bulldozer’ approach crushes anyone who stands in the way of development.²⁹⁶ It largely ignores the social and environmental losses of mega dams and focus on their advantages to development. This study argues that the colonial government in Southern Rhodesia applied the violent “bulldozer” approach in the displacement of BaTonga.

It has been established that many countries in the world focus on the construction of hydropower dams as vehicles of economic development and pay less attention to displacement. Cernea notes that the construction of these dams requires already occupied land and this involves involuntary displacement of the inhabitants of this land with or without compensation.²⁹⁷ Optimist dam advocates justify displacement of population from the standpoint that it is the sacrifice of a few in favour of the larger good.²⁹⁸ As a result, many high dams have been constructed around the world on the argument that they were vehicles for industrial transformation and economic growth. They were built for a greater common good to control floods, generate hydropower, supply water to drink, irrigate fields, promote tourism and for industrial purposes. They ignored the adverse outcomes of such projects such as the displacement and rehabilitation of population as important parts of the project. Optimistic proponents of dams like Michael Cernea do not condemn displacement of people but extensively focus on ways to manage displacement and resettlement to minimise the adverse outcomes of dam projects through his Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction (IRR) model.²⁹⁹

States, which are the major proponents of dam-induced displacement argue that dams, as development projects, are designed to achieve positive outcomes, but are associated with certain costs that must be borne as the costs of implementing the project.³⁰⁰ The planners of dams claim that the long-term benefits of these dams would far outweigh the short-term disruption of the economic and social systems of the evicted people. Many dams in Africa including the Kariba Dam on the Zambezi River have been built in terms of a set of national goals

²⁹⁶ Des Gasper, The Ethics of Economic Development and Human Displacement, in George DeMartiano and Deirdre McCloskey (eds) *The Oxford Handbook on Professional Economic Ethics*, Oxford University Press, 2014, p.5.

²⁹⁷ Michael M. Cernea, *Impoverishment Risks, Risk Management and Reconstruction: A Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement*, Washington, D.C., The World Bank, 2004.

²⁹⁸ *Displacement, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, and Development*, World Commission on Dams, 2000.

²⁹⁹ Michael M. Cernea was the World Bank’s Senior Advisor for Sociology and Social Policy from 1974-1997 who wrote extensively on how to manage displacement and resettlement processes. The World Bank is the largest financier of dams.

³⁰⁰ Faustina O. Basey and Prince O. Tay, Resettlement Induced Secondary Poverty in *Developing Countries, Developing Country Studies* Vol.5, No.5, 2015, pp.170-179, <https://www.iiste.org>.

based on the economic cost-based analysis which endorses that it is unfortunate but unavoidable that some people should suffer in the process once the policy decision has been made. While many may have benefited from these mega development projects, forced displacement and relocation of many indigenous inhabitants led to suffering and loss of livelihoods. The pro-dams approach views population displacement as a pre-requisite of growing economies especially in developing countries to allow development projects to take off. Displacement thus becomes an unintended negative outcome of development projects such as the construction of dams.

Many dams were constructed in developing countries during the period of decolonisation in the 1950s and 1960s resulting in massive displacement of weaker, indigenous populations. The Sardar Sarovar on Narmada in India and Indonesia's Kedung Ombo dam have arguably been regarded as the most damaging mega dam projects built by World Bank loans in 1985.³⁰¹ These dams allegedly led to much suffering, poverty and environmental damage. The Indonesian government deployed the army to evict more than 5 000 families from the Kedung Ombo reservoir because the State had not planned for the compensation and resettlement of these affected people until they were marooned on their rooftops as their homes were flooded.³⁰² Arguably, worse atrocities were committed in Guatemala where the army massacred more than 400 men, women and children who were in the way of the Chixoy dam between 1980 and 1982 when the people resisted displacement.³⁰³ These costs were widely condemned as unnecessary and unacceptable to be paid to secure dam benefits.

Adverse effects in the construction of mega dams such as these fueled dam controversy around the unfair distribution of costs and benefits of mega dam projects and generated the anti-dam movement in the 1980s and 1990s. Criticism of the World Bank as the biggest dam financier compelled the Bank to review all its funded large dams on the costs and benefits of these dams in 1998.³⁰⁴ Anti-dam opponents criticised the evidence provided in the World Bank report as being biased in favour of reckless dam proponents. Mounting pressure from the anti-dam

³⁰¹ Robert Goodland, "Viewpoint - The World Bank Versus the World Commission on Dams, *Water Alternatives*, Vol.3, Issue 2, 2010, PP.384-398, www.water-alternatives.org.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ World Commission on Dams, *Chixoy Dam in Guatemala*, Earthscan, London, 2000.

³⁰⁴ *The World Bank Environmental and Social Safeguarding Policies*, Washington, D.C., The World Bank, 1998.

movement led to the establishment of the World Commission on Dams (WCD) in 1998. The WCD produced a critical report in the year 2000 which stated that forty to eighty million people worldwide were displaced by construction of dams and many of them had never regained their former livelihoods.³⁰⁵ The WCD documented pervasive cases of human rights abuses including violence and killings caused by mega dam projects worldwide.³⁰⁶ The Kariba Dam was included as one of the case studies of the negative impact of involuntary displacement of 57 000 people from the Zambezi valley who lost their livelihoods as this study shows.³⁰⁷ It was deemed one of the worst resettlement projects in dam history because BaTonga people lost their livelihoods and became impoverished. It is therefore important to examine how the dam construction was planned to understand why the costs became higher than the benefits of the project and why BaTonga people became losers.

Construction of the Kariba Dam: Social impact assessment

WCD report states that most of the dams constructed before 1970 were built without an environmental as well as a social impact assessment. The construction of these early dams was easily justified on their provision of cheap hydroelectric needed for industrial and economic growth and national development. The Federal Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland mainly focused on the generation of electricity for the mines and manufacturing industries while the displacement of people was considered only a marginal cost rather than a social issue. This affected the outcome of the project which disempowered the people who sacrificed their land for national development.

Planning for a major dam in the Zambezi basin began in 1941 with the aim of providing electricity in mines and manufacturing factories in Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia.³⁰⁸ After the Second World War, there was a worldwide increase in the prices for copper which was mined in Northern Rhodesia. This resulted in the mines increasing production, but they lacked reliable, low-cost supply of electricity.³⁰⁹ They depended on thermal energy generated from coal from

³⁰⁵ *Dams and Development: A New Framework for Decision Making*, World Commission on Dams, Earthscan, 2000

³⁰⁶ Gasper, "The Ethics of Economic and Human Displacement"

³⁰⁷ World Commission on Dams, The Kariba Case Study, p.19.

³⁰⁸ Thayer Scudder, The Kariba Case Study, California Institute of Technology, Social Science Working Paper, June 2005, p.5.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

Wankie in Southern Rhodesia but the power stations and the railway lines transporting the coal to Northern Rhodesia had reached their maximum production capacity. There was need for an alternative source of cheap power hence a hydro-electric plant was considered to ensure the expansion of the copper mines, and to supply the manufacturing industries and growing urban settler population in Southern Rhodesia.

In 1941, the Electricity Supply Commission of Southern Rhodesia initiated investigations of the possibilities of siting the hydro-power plant at the Kariba Gorge on the Zambezi River.³¹⁰ The Kariba gorge was suitable for a large dam that could provide electricity for both territories but it would be costly and would take longer to complete.³¹¹ Two other options for citing the dam included the Shire river in Nyasaland but there was inadequate hydrological information about the river and also because there were very few European settlers in the territory.³¹² The mine owners in Northern Rhodesia favoured the Kafue gorge on the Zambezi tributary in Northern Rhodesia for a smaller and cheaper dam which could supply the critical energy to the Copperbelt companies.³¹³ In addition, the Kafue would be constructed in two or three years and thus supply the necessary energy at an earlier date than a dam construction at the Kariba gorge. Consequently, the two governments of Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia signed an inter-territorial agreement in favour of Kafue and the decision was endorsed by the Federal Parliament in early 1954.³¹⁴

In his Impoverishment, Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) model for displacement and resettlement Cernea asserts that the identification of social risks must logically be the first premise of any responsible consideration of the social impacts of dam building.³¹⁵ Before planning any project, there is need to take measures to protect the lives and rights of the displaced and reduce economic and social loss. Although the Kafue gorge was a better site for a hydro-electrical plant to meet the requirements of electricity in Northern Rhodesia than Kariba, the Kariba site was

³¹⁰ NAZ File F143/7 Report on the Kariba Gorge and Kafue River Hydro-Electric Projects by the Inter-territorial Hydroelectric Power Commission, 1952.

³¹¹ Ibid.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p.24.

³¹⁴ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.107.

³¹⁵ Michael M. Cernea, *Impoverishment, Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement*, UN Symposium on Hydropower and Sustainable Development, 27, 2004.

chosen in 1955 mainly for political reasons after the formation of the Southern Rhodesian dominated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953 which comprised Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was a semi-independent state in southern Africa that existed from 1953 to the end of 1963. The increasing number of Europeans in Southern Rhodesia after the Second World War called for a union of the British colonies of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to increase their economic potential by attracting investment as well as to block African nationalism by establishing a multi-racial society.³¹⁶ Southern Rhodesia had the largest number of white settlers who were around 80 500 according to the 1946 census against 21 919 whites in Northern Rhodesia and 2 300 settlers in Nyasaland.³¹⁷ Although the Africans and some white settlers particularly in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland opposed Southern Rhodesian hegemony, the Federation was imposed upon them by the majority Southern Rhodesia settlers. Salisbury became the Federal capital and Godfrey Huggins who was the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia became the first Prime Minister of the Federation.³¹⁸

The British Colonial Office failed to recognise the lack of political support for the Federation of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and agreed to the union because they wanted to strengthen their imperial power against the Boers after the Afrikaner Nationalist Party won the 1948 election in South Africa.³¹⁹ This error contributed to the demise of the federation in just a decade in 1963. It is against this background that Northern Rhodesia was reluctant to fund the construction of the Kariba Dam sited in Southern Rhodesia.

In addition to their political anxiety over the Federation the Copperbelt companies which contributed funds for the construction of the hydro-electric plant were not keen on building of a dam at Kariba gorge for economic reasons. They had to contribute twenty million pounds from copper profits for the construction of the Kariba Dam but they preferred the Kafue site which could allow them to save some money for the building of schools and hospitals in Northern

³¹⁶ Henry Franklin, *Unholy wedlock: the failure of the Central African Federation*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1963.

³¹⁷ Central African Statistical Office, *Report on the census of Southern Rhodesia held on 7th May 1946*, Salisbury, 1949.

³¹⁸ Andrew Cohen, "Voice and Vision" - The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland's Public Relations Campaign in Britain: 1960-1963, *História (São Paulo)* 54(2)

³¹⁹ Henry Franklin, *Unholy wedlock: the failure of the Central African Federation*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1963.

Rhodesia.³²⁰ Furthermore, the siting of the electricity generation station on the south bank of the Zambezi River angered the European settlers in Northern Rhodesia because the settlers in Southern Rhodesia wanted to unfairly benefit most from the copper profits obtained in the northern territory. Moreover, building a dam at Kariba was a symbolic gesture of power for the unpopular Rhodesian-Nyasaland Federation which was imposed upon them by the majority Southern Rhodesia whites.³²¹ Had these factors been considered during the planning period and the Kafue site had won, there was not going to be need for mass displacement and long-term suffering of BaTonga from the Zambezi valley.

It has been argued that the planning period mainly dealt with electricity generation and political interests of the whites and did not consider the fact that the construction of a dam at Kariba would displace more thousands of people than the Kafue site. Howarth noted that construction of a dam at Kafue would have displaced about a thousand Africans from their land as compared to the project at Kariba which was going to displace around sixty thousand people along the banks on both sides of the Zambezi River.³²² However, the interests of the Africans were nothing when compared to the political and economic interests of the settler dominated Federal Government.

Scudder and Colson's Four Stage Framework for resettlement maintains that early involvement of the affected people in the Planning and Recruitment Stage guarantees a successful dam displacement and resettlement programme.³²³ Nevertheless, in many development cases, this phase occurs without the knowledge of the affected people. According to the World Commission on Dams report, in both countries, BaTonga were neither well informed nor consulted and they were not aware of the ongoing debates to inundate their land and homes until construction had already begun in 1956.³²⁴ BaTonga confirmed this and said that they became aware of the construction of the dam when floods were coming. "We were only told to leave the valley because our land was going to be permanently flooded".³²⁵ This affected the costs and benefits

³²⁰ WDC, Kariba Case Study, p.19.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p.36.

³²³ Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, *From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of Dislocated People*, in A. Hansen and A. Oliver-Smith, (eds.), *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of the Dislocated People*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982, p.267-287.

³²⁴ WDC, *The Kariba Case Study*, p.xi

³²⁵ Interview with Siamabbuyu at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020.

of the resettlement process as their interests were not considered nor protected as in most development-induced displacement and resettlement programmes.

Financing displacement and resettlement: Inaccurate Cost Assessment

The building of a hydropower dam at Kariba gorge on the Zambezi River was going to cause a permanent inundation of some five-thousand five hundred and seventy-seven square kilometres of land with a length of two hundred and eighty kilometres.³²⁶ The people who were going to be affected by the flooding of their homes and fields on the south bank of the Zambezi river were not involved in the planning of the resettlement programme therefore they did not negotiate favourable resettlement conditions. Cernea's Impoverishment Risk and Reconstruction model states that victims of involuntary displacement face risks which result in destruction of livelihoods therefore focus should be on identifying the risks and involving them in developing measures to minimise the impacts.³²⁷

They were not consulted nor involved in the planning and decision-making process for the dam site and their interests were not represented in the Kariba choice for the dam which was going to flood their land and lead to their displacement. One villager said, "We were told to move away from the river because our homes were going to be covered by water. We did not know that a dam wall was being built down the river which was going to stop water from flowing"³²⁸ They expected to be involved in planning for their resettlement as this was displacement for development purposes which was guided by international standards. This shows the callousness of the Southern Rhodesia government.

The construction of the Kariba dam was an international project as the World Bank agreed to fund the construction of the Kariba Dam as the first major hydropower dam built in tropical Africa and the largest man-made water reservoir in the world.³²⁹ However, under the constitution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, the construction of the dam for power supply within

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Cernea, the Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction model, 2000

³²⁸ Interview with Idah Munenge, Simandala Village, Bulawayo Kraal on 21 December 2019.

³²⁹ NAZ File F143/7 Report on the Kariba Gorge and Kafue River Hydro-Electric Projects by the Inter-territorial Hydroelectric Power Commission, 1952

the Federation was a responsibility of the Federal Government but the resettlement of those affected by the dam construction was the responsibility of the Territorial Governments of Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia.³³⁰ The developer was the Federal Hydro-electric Board (also known as the Federal Power Board) which was formed in 1954. It had a budget of four million pounds towards the resettlement of all BaTonga and Korekore people in the valley which was going to be inundated by the reservoir both in Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia.³³¹ The British Colonial Office also provided some funds to finance the resettlement process.³³² As a result, the Federal Power Board agreed with the British government that the resettlement programme was part of the cost of the dam which was going to be recovered from the sale of electricity after its completion. The dam was going to be completed in 1959 because of an increasing demand for energy. Therefore, the resettlement of BaTonga of Southern Rhodesia was largely planned according to the principles of dam-induced displacement, and not the local discriminatory Land Apportionment Act.

However, although the Federal Government agreed with the British government to finance the resettlement the economists and engineers who planned the construction of the Kariba dam did not intend Kariba funds to be used to improve BaTonga's way of life because of the prevailing discriminatory policies against Africans.³³³ The Inter-territorial Hydro-electric Commission of 1952 had reported that there was no provision for the re-establishment of BaTonga people whose homes were to be flooded in the Zambezi valley during the period of planning and fieldwork for the construction of the dam, therefore the Federal Power Board removed from the main project and tasked the territorial governments with the resettlement programme.³³⁴ The Board agreed with the Territorial governments that they would only provide resettlement costs restricted to "a restoration of living standards".³³⁵ This meant compensating the affected people only for their material losses, so that there were not going to be worse off than they had been

³³⁰ WCD, the Kariba Case Study, 2000

³³¹ World Commission on Dams, *Dams and Dam Development*, Earthscan, London, 2000

³³² Ibid.

³³³ NAZ File F143/7 Report on the Kariba Gorge and Kafue River Hydro-Electric Projects by the Inter-territorial Hydroelectric Power Commission, 1952

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Scudder, Kariba Case Study, p.28.

before resettlement. These plans for rehabilitation of the affected people were noble but the territorial governments did not practically follow them because of several factors.

The major problem was underestimation of the numbers of the people who were going to be affected by the dam during the planning stage which led to insufficient funds allocated for resettlement. The only reference to resettlement in the Federal Power Board and World Bank pre-project planning documents of 1951 estimated the number of people to be resettled at 29 000, that is about 14 300 in Southern Rhodesia and 15 000 in Northern Rhodesia as opposed to 57 000 people who were eventually displaced between 1956 and 1958. Furthermore, in the Kariba 1955 project document, there is little detail on the resettlement programme, except for a budget allocation of £4 million that was to be spent on removal of people from the valley.³³⁶ When the actual number of people to be resettled almost doubled from 29 000 to 57 000, the budget for the programme remained unchanged and this affected the prospects of restoration of livelihoods.

This meant that the project planners grossly under-estimated and underfinanced the cost of losses and compensation for disruption of life and welfare as is usually done in development-induced displacement. Consequently, “restoration of living standards” was not going to be achieved as they regarded compensation as an awkward necessity to the Africans who were always evicted from their traditional lands in British colonies without any compensation. Thus, it was expedient for the settlers to have the programme of resettlement undertaken at the lowest possible cost. The disruption of livelihoods and living standards was not an issue of concern because BaTonga were their subjects who had no entitlement to compensation at all. Arguably, the Southern Rhodesia government authorities were used to social and economic disasters resulting from mass evictions throughout the colony for many decades.

Lack of involvement of BaTonga

According to Cernea’s Impoverishment, Risk and Reconstruction Model, there is need to first identify risks before designing of a dam building project to avoid impoverishment of

³³⁶ WDC, Kariba Case Study, p.vii

development-induced displaced people.³³⁷ Although the Federal Power Board set aside some funds to finance the resettlement of BaTonga, the people who were going to be directly affected by the dam through inundation of their homelands were not involved in the planning of their resettlement. The people reported that “If they had informed us about the flooding of our land before the dam was built, we were going to tell them to stop because our land was more important.”³³⁸ BaTonga only became aware of their fate when the floods were coming.

Although the project planners could have identified the presence of serious livelihood risks during the planning phase, it was impossible for the autocratic Southern Rhodesia government to consult with Africans because of the policy of racial discrimination. This was evidenced by the absence of any BaTonga representative in the Development Planning Committee for the Kariba Dam Construction which included R.H. Roberts, T.K. Samson, J.C. Ferguson, J.H.R. Savory, Murray and Brown.³³⁹ The Committee even reported that “the Kariba dam construction was not a matter for the low offices”³⁴⁰, which meant that even the Native Affairs Department was not included in the critical planning process which required identification of suitable land for resettlement and possible development projects for reconstruction of livelihoods of the affected people. This was going to lessen the costs which BaTonga had to bear for the construction of the dam.

However, Scudder and Colson emphasised that early involvement of the affected people in the planning and decision-making period determines the success of a resettlement process. They can identify development opportunities that are implemented in the project and make it possible to reduce anxiety and stress during the first and second stages after resettlement.³⁴¹ During fieldwork, BaTonga complained that they did not even know that they were going to lose their traditional homelands for inferior land.

De Wet concurs with Scudder and Colson on the issue of effective participation of affected communities in planning for development-induced displacement and resettlement. He adds that it is a requirement that their decision making is necessary to determine whether resettlement

³³⁷ Cenear, *Impoverishment*, 2004.

³³⁸ Interview with Siamabbuyu and Dumbwe

³³⁹ NAZ File F121/J153/1-2 Kariba Lake Coordinating Committee, Minutes, 1960-62

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁴¹ Thayer Scudder, *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing with Social Environmental, Institutional, and Political Costs*, Earthscan, London, 2005.

should take place and how it should take place.³⁴² This was ideal if BaTonga were not under the yoke of colonialism which stripped them of any rights as citizens of the colony. But they were affected by development-induced displacement, which was being financed by the international community, hence it was expected to involve the victims at an early period in the planning process to help in highlighting the risks of resettlement as well as coming with appropriate rehabilitation and development programmes for better adaptation after resettlement well before the actual construction of the dam commenced.

WCD also established that the planning and implementation of the dam project mainly considered national developmental goals and did not consider the victims of development to benefit from the dam directly.³⁴³ The dam was mainly built to provide hydropower for capitalist ventures in the two territories. Proper planning and inclusion of the victims according to dam-induced guidelines could have included setting up of irrigation projects which could have alleviated the loss of livelihoods and suffering which befell BaTonga people after relocation into a waterless and barren land on the plateau. Muntale from Logola confirmed this when he said “We want wanted our water. It was going to be better if Sikanyana had provided us with water to drink and to grow vegetables.”³⁴⁴ Provision of water would have largely changed the outcome of the displacement.

According to Scudder and Colson, inclusion of major stakeholders in the early stages of planning reduces their stress and anxiety as the first and second stages are associated with increases in stress.³⁴⁵ Although they did not give suggestions on how to include the affected people, BaTonga insisted that they discussed their perceived risks on their own in various gatherings such as beer parties and funerals and also shared their ideas with their traditional leaders when they were told to move after construction of the dam had begun. However, they were not even granted the opportunity to present these ideas to the District Commissioner Cockcroft through their chiefs.³⁴⁶ Muntale in Chief Binga’s area said, “We wanted to be allowed to settle close to the water (the

³⁴² Chris de Wet, *The Experiences with Dams and Resettlement in Africa*, World Commission on Dams, Displacement, Resettlement, Repatriation and Development, 2000.

³⁴³ WCD, *Kariba Case Study*, p. xvi

³⁴⁴ Interview with Josia Muntale, Simandala Village on 21 December 2019.

³⁴⁵ Scudder, *Theories of Resettlement*, p.43.

³⁴⁶ Interview with Josia Muntale, Simandala Village on 21 December 2019.

Lake's Drawdown Areas) where we could grow crops twice a year. But the land was given to whites and were told to settle as far away from the river as possible."³⁴⁷

Involving BaTonga in planning for resettlement was likely to cause conflict. Their desire to resettle on the Lake's Drawdown Areas clashed with the colonial economic policy which reserved the land close to the Lake for white settlement, fishery, and biological research. Scudder agrees that the utilization of the Lake's Drawdown Areas could support thousands of people with recessional cultivation possible between January to July and December to January.³⁴⁸ This would mean that the impact of displacement on livelihoods was going to be minimal. Muntale said that "It was possible to even grow cash crops such as cotton, rice and tobacco close to the Lake where there is availability of water. We were not going to starve at all."³⁴⁹ as a way of improving livelihoods, but this idea was not explored before eviction of BaTonga from the riverbanks.

Development options in fisheries, wildlife management, tourism and rural electrification should also have been considered in consultation with BaTonga and implemented as part of the dam project with the aim of rehabilitation of the affected people after displacement. However, because of the policy of direct rule in Southern Rhodesia, the people were not afforded the opportunity to participate in the discussions relating to their displacement and this contributed to their suffering after displacement. On the contrary, the settlers in Northern Rhodesia ruled indirectly through the traditional chiefs who negotiated payment of compensation together with the implementation of several development projects directly benefiting from the resources of the future lake.³⁵⁰

The Gwembe Tonga Native Authority negotiated the resettlement process on behalf of BaTonga people and ensured that most of the people were not resettled far away from the Gwembe Valley. Muntale from Chief Binga said, "Our relatives in Zambia remained close to the Lake. I visit my cousins in Monze; they have good land to grow their own food."³⁵¹ The northern government set aside some funds for an agricultural development plan which ensured better adaptation of

³⁴⁷ Interview with Nene Muntanga.

³⁴⁸ Thayer Scudder, *Regional Planning for People. Parks and Wildlife*, Working Paper 3, Department of Land Managements, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Zimbabwe, 1982, p.19.

³⁴⁹ Interview with Muntale

³⁵⁰ Elizabeth Balneaves, *And the Waters Prevailed ... in Horizon*, Volume 10, No.8, August 1962

³⁵¹ Interview with Muntale

livelihoods after resettlement than their Southern Rhodesia relatives. In 1956 agricultural specialists had to analyse the soil and water engineers had to find the best sources of water supply before resettlement commenced.

On the contrary, the Southern Rhodesian authorities could not provide the £60 000 required to survey the land set aside for resettlement in Binga because they considered it too expensive.³⁵² This confirms Cook's observation that one of the most common problems of involuntary resettlement is that planning objectives mainly focus on moving people from the site of the main project, and only marginally address re-establishment.³⁵³ This meant that BaTonga had to unfairly bear the cost of being resettled in an unknown area, leaving behind the best land and this was going to greatly affect the recovery of livelihoods. A survey was crucial because the Native Commissioner Cockcroft who had administered Sebungwe District for ten years had concluded that most of the newly created Binga district was inhospitable as there was neither suitable land nor reliable water supplies.³⁵⁴ That is why Colson lamented that not enough attention was given to social issues associated with resettlement of the BaTonga and no adequate resources were set aside for the resettlement process.³⁵⁵

Although the Gwembe Tonga on the north bank, through the Native Authority, negotiated some benefits from the future lake, the Federal Government which had agreed to finance the resettlement paid more attention to the technical feasibility and economic gains than the well-being of the displaced people. The report produced by the Inter-territorial hydro-electric Power Commission in 1952 confirmed that the main concern of the Federal Government was to transfer the affected people from the way of the dam to another area as they pursued relocation as a policy to deal with displacement.³⁵⁶ The Federal Government thus went on to approve the large-scale inundation of occupied lands along the Zambezi without any clear plan for rehabilitation of the victims of displacement. The Southern Rhodesian Government reported that they were going to create special native reserves for relocation of BaTonga on the western side of the vast

³⁵² S3599/389, Correspondence, Secretary for Mines and Survey, 26 January 1956.

³⁵³ Cynthia C. Cook, Introduction, in C. Cook, (ed.) *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Selected Papers from a Conference on Environment and Settlement Issues in Southern Africa, The World Bank, Washington, DC, 1994, p.23. Google Books.

³⁵⁴ W.T. Nesham, Kariba Resettlement, NADA vol.38, 1961, pp.22-26.

³⁵⁵ Elizabeth Colson, *Social Organisations of the Gwembe Tonga, Human Problems of Kariba VI*, Manchester University Press, 1960, p.77.

³⁵⁶ F143/7 Report on the Kariba Gorge and Kafue River Hydro-Electric Projects by the Inter-territorial Hydroelectric Power Commission, 1952

unoccupied wilderness of Sebungwe district. These reserves were to be called Binga which was historically an inhabitable hot and arid wilderness infested with tsetse fly, malaria and teeming with elephants.³⁵⁷ Nene Muntanga recalled that “When we came here, the land was empty and populated by wild animals. Wild animals would roam and cry at night.”³⁵⁸

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that there were elaborate plans on how BaTonga were going to be moved from the flood plains to Binga, but there was no provision for the re-establishment of their livelihoods in these plans. Arguably they assumed that the costs of displacement had to be borne by BaTonga as an inevitable outcome necessary for the development of the two Rhodesias. This was according to the provisions of the Land Apportionment Act which saw the mass displacement of Shona and Ndebele people throughout the colony without any detailed plan of restoration of livelihoods. The colonial authorities disempowered them and disrupted their lives so that they could participate in wage labour on settler farms, mines and in manufacturing industries in towns and cities to earn a living.

It can be argued that the Southern Rhodesian Government was not willing to use the money set aside by the Federal Power Board for the resettlement and restoration of the BaTonga standards of living, in as much as the colonial authorities were not even willing to set aside government funds necessary for agricultural development of Binga District.³⁵⁹ Thus the BaTonga were just offered alternative land to relocate to, which the colonial authorities knew had little agricultural potential, and this had serious repercussions on the livelihoods of the people. The land was barren, hilly and arid and had sandy soils which were not suitable for farming.

Furthermore, no compensation was made at community level through provision of basic infrastructure and services or for loss of land, water sources, and other natural resources, as well as disrupted social networks. On the contrary, the Native Affairs Department in Northern Rhodesia made plans for BaTonga to be among the first to have access to electricity and water from the Lake. According to Manyena, on the Zambian side, the interest of the local population

³⁵⁷ NAZ File S2827/2/2/4/1 District Commissioner, Annual Reports, Sebungwe, 1956.

³⁵⁸ Interview with Nene Muntanga

³⁵⁹ NAZ File S2827/2/2/3/2, Native Commissioner's Annual Report to the Internal Affairs Department, 1956

was paramount because there was no racially based segmentation.³⁶⁰ Although the Gwembe Tonga suffered as a result of involuntary displacement, they were treated better than their Rhodesian relatives. The whole Zambian shoreline was designated as “Native Trust Land” and could not be utilized without consent of the local people. The Gwembe Tonga were allowed to relocate close to the Lake where there were fertile soils, access to water and there was infrastructural development necessary for livelihoods restoration. This is largely because of the key differences in the way colonial despotism was more virulent in the Southern Rhodesia settler colony than in the indirectly ruled protectorate of Northern Rhodesia.

The despotism of the Southern Rhodesian settler government was well shown when they ignored the report that resettling BaTonga on the Zambezi plateau was going to become a disaster. The District Native Commissioner Ivor Cockcroft who had spent ten years administering the Sebungwe District from Gokwe and had toured the Zambezi valley extensively was concerned about the long-term impact of displacement on the BaTonga livelihoods. When the government started planning for a dam either on Kariba or on Kafue, Cockcroft realized that the removal of the BaTonga from the banks of the Zambezi was going to gravely affect their agriculture, therefore in 1949 he sent a nine-page report to the State and suggested two possibilities for resettlement with development as a plan for the rehabilitation of the people.³⁶¹ He suggested that they could either be resettled close to the proposed dam on land that could be irrigated once the Lake was filled in order for their agricultural practices not to be disrupted by the semi-arid Zambezi climate; or to relocate them to more fertile in Gokwe.³⁶² He was more concerned about the availability of fertile land and water for productive farming that could be able to sustain subsistence food production in the aftermath of displacement from fertile and well-watered land along the Zambezi.

However, the colonial officials were not agreed on the intended evictions because the District Native Commissioner’s concerns and development suggestions were rejected by the Provincial Native Commissioner, Yardley, who wrote to Cockcroft that, “I don’t share the view that the

³⁶⁰ Siambabala B. Manyena, *Disaster Resilience in Development and Humanitarian Interventions*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Northumbria, Northumbria Research, 2016, p. 6, <https://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/661>.

³⁶¹ Scudder, *The Kariba Case Study*, p.28.

³⁶² NAZ File S2806/2/2 Internal Affairs District Reports, Ivor Cockcroft, Native Commissioner, Sebungwe, 1950.

resettlement of the Batonga will have any serious repercussions.”³⁶³ The Rhodesian Native authorities practiced what Cernea calls “propensity to risk denial” when they treated the socio-economic risks as if they would not exist or would not be as serious as proposed by Cockcroft through avoidance and tacit denial.³⁶⁴ Cernea argues that project appraisal reports for dam projects rarely contain an explicit recognition of social risks and a detailed outline of their content because planners often get very nervous about identifying risks verbatim and even about specifying the “social impacts” of displacement.³⁶⁵ This partly explains why the Provincial Native Commissioner rejected the District Native Commissioner’s detailed appraisal report. Accepting such risks would have placed an obligation on the Native Affairs Department to act to mitigate such perceived risks but in contrary to other policies governing the distribution of resources in Southern Rhodesia at that time.

The Southern Rhodesian Government was not willing to use the money set aside by the Federal Power Board for the resettlement and restoration of the BaTonga standards of living, in as much as the colonial authorities were not even willing to set aside government funds necessary for agricultural development of Binga District after resettlement. Therefore, BaTonga were just offered alternative land to relocate to, which the colonial authorities knew had little agricultural potential, and this had serious repercussions on the livelihoods of the people. The land was barren, hilly and arid and had sandy soils which were not suitable for farming. Furthermore, no compensation was made at community level through provision of basic infrastructure and services or for loss of land, water sources, and other natural resources, as well as disrupted social networks.

On the contrary, the Native Affairs Department in Northern Rhodesia made plans for BaTonga to be among the first to have access to electricity and water from the Lake. According to Manyena, on the Zambian side, the interest of the local population was paramount because there was no racially based segmentation. The whole Zambian shoreline was designated as “Native Trust Land” and could not be utilized without consent of the local people. The Gwembe Tonga were allowed

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Michael M. Cernea, *Social Impacts and Social Risks in Hydropower Programs: Preemptive Planning and Counter-risk Measures*, World Bank, 2004.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

to relocate close to the Lake where there were fertile soils, access to water and there was infrastructural development necessary for livelihoods restoration. Although this was not the ideal resettlement plan for the Gwembe Tonga, it was far much better than the programme for BaTonga on the south bank.

A sound social analysis required reliable statistics of the affected communities and technical expertise in planning resettlement and re-establishment of livelihoods.³⁶⁶ It would require involving BaTonga in planning for possible solutions to their disturbed livelihoods as well as more visits by government authorities in the remote and hot valley, which would delay the construction of the much-needed dam. Thus, Yardley had to dismiss Cockcroft's concerns on the grounds that national interests were more important than the fate of BaTonga. The prevailing development ideology in the 1950s which emphasised economic growth as the vehicle of national development forced Yardley to claim that the construction of the dam would override the potential hardships as the dam would bring BaTonga in contact with western civilisation.³⁶⁷ This confirms the argument on the costs and benefits of dam construction that bearers of the costs are the vulnerable, who have no power nor voice to benefit from the projects.³⁶⁸

Although the Native Affairs Department had very little knowledge about the economic system of BaTonga they ignored and disregarded reports of the potential negative effects involved in relocating the riverine communities from the Zambezi into the dry and barren plateau and did not consider giving them better land as suggested by the District Commissioner a priority because of two possible reasons. According to the report of the World Commission on Dams the main driving factor were the racist policies of the settler government which segregated against the blacks in the colony.³⁶⁹ The Native Reserves in the country of Southern Rhodesia were now overcrowded following the influx of European settlers after the Second World War and there was shortage of land for resettling Africans who were evicted from European Areas according to the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951.

³⁶⁶ Ibid.

³⁶⁷ NAZ File S2806/1970, Provincial Native Commissioner Yardley to the Chief Native Commissioner, 3 December 1956.

³⁶⁸ Bessy and Tay, *Secondary Poverty*, 2015.

³⁶⁹ World Commission on Dams, *Kariba Case Study*, p.12.

As shown in the first chapter, most people who were evicted from Crown land and European Areas were resettled in marginal areas such as Lupane, Nkayi, Gokwe and the southeast Lowveld but there was an overriding critical shortage of land for Africans. Better fertile and well-watered land in the country was reserved for the whites and the Africans had to give way to settler agriculture and development, thus the colonial government was not willing to establish a coherent policy for compensation for loss of fertile land and water of the displaced BaTonga affected by the Kariba dam construction. Therefore, they abandoned the noble values of humanity and those fundamental principles of justice which are part of the common heritage of all time when they flooded the best land in the valley and forcibly resettled BaTonga in the wilderness where livelihoods were a challenge.³⁷⁰

The other complication which resulted in the resettlement planning was that although the British government had offered loans to the Federal Government to cover resettlement costs, they did not fully involve themselves in the planning process. Cernea asserts that for a development-induced displacement and resettlement to succeed, there is need for the presence of political commitment, sound social analysis, accurate cost assessment, and effective executing organisations.³⁷¹ The British Colonial Office through the Federal Power Board pushed the process of resettlement and rehabilitation to the territorial governments, as discussed above. They only became alarmed when the resettlement process did not cater for drowning wild animals and became financially and physically involved in the rescue of marooned animals when the dam flooded as discussed in the next chapter. The welfare of the displaced BaTonga whose human rights were grossly abused by the territorial governments did not raise as much interest in Britain and the rest of the world as the rescue of wildlife which was trapped by the rising water as the lake began to fill up.³⁷² This arguably demonstrated how they valued animal life more than human life as they did not question the murder of eight men and wounding of many people who resisted forced eviction in Chief Chipeco's area as shown in Chapter 4.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Michael M. Cernea, *Hydropower Dams and Social Impacts: A Sociological Assessment*, Social Development Papers, World Bank Paper No.16, Environmental Department Papers, 1997.

³⁷² Van de Merwe, Kariba, p.99.

Conclusion

BaTonga people on both sides of the river were victims of development-induced displacement but the resettlement of the people on the south bank was largely influenced by the racist policies which favored the white settlers and segregated against the indigenous populations of Southern Rhodesia. The resettlement theory for victims of dam-induced displacement which claims that the early involvement of affected people in planning as well as a sound social analysis reduces the negative impacts of displacement could not be applied to Southern Rhodesia because of underlying segregatory policies of colonialism. The provisions of the Land Apportionment Act were discriminatory against the Africans and could not allow for the compensation for their losses in wealth nor restoration of their livelihoods. The following chapter explores the forced eviction of BaTonga from the valley and how this led to their exclusion and peripheralization as they became impoverished afterwards.

CHAPTER 4: COERCED EVICTION OF BATONGA FROM THE ZAMBEZI VALLEY, 1956-1958

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe and explain the forced removal of BaTonga from the south bank of the Zambezi to land on the plateau in Binga district between 1956 and 1958 during the construction of the Kariba Dam. The previous chapter explored the way their displacement and resettlement were planned without conducting a socio-economic impact assessment prior to commencement of the project according to the guidelines of development-induced displacement. It showed how the government of Southern Rhodesia lacked explicit policies nor comprehensive resettlement plans for about 23 000 people on the south bank during the preparation stage because of their racist policies guided by the Land Apportionment Act of 1930. This chapter discusses the policies which guided Southern Rhodesia's resettlement plan. It argues that the autocratic and despotic policies of the colonial regime largely influenced the violent displacement and poorly planned resettlement of BaTonga and influenced its outcome largely as a disaster.

Involuntary displacement and resettlement is one of the most controversial issues surrounding large-scale dam projects as it leads to impoverishment of those who are treated as necessary sacrifices for national developmental goals. It is a significant challenge because these people are not properly consulted and not usually compensated for their asset losses, as discussed in the previous chapter. International law does not appear to provide effective protection for victims of forced displacement and the forced resettlement guidelines of funding agencies such as the World Bank are not always observed or properly policed. The top-down driven process of displacement and resettlement from the Zambezi with insufficient planning and lack of involvement of the people resulted in whole communities being dislocated into less inhabitable areas which jeopardised their traditional livelihoods. De Wet argues that this all raise the threat

of the people's effectively having no protection from their national governments as they become victims of unjust laws and action.³⁷³

The Southern Rhodesia Resettlement Policy

According to Howarth, the two governments of Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia followed radically different policies for resettlement of BaTonga who were on the way of the reservoir of the dam in their respective territories³⁷⁴ and this meant that the impact of resettlement affected the two groups differently. Although Cernea blames lack of sound social analysis and inaccurate cost assessment as some of the major factors affecting the outcome of forced resettlement programmes, the case of BaTonga of the south bank was mainly influenced by the racist policies of the Southern Rhodesian Government.³⁷⁵

Cernea maintains that dam displacement and resettlement have a long history of dismal failure because of lack of political commitment of the responsible authorities³⁷⁶. This commitment is expressed in policy and laws governing displacement and resettlement. Although the British government through the Federal Power Board set aside funds for resettlement of the people affected by the damming of the Zambezi at Kariba gorge, Southern Rhodesia lacked political, and humanitarian will to assist the 23 000 BaTonga in the process of displacement and resettlement. The State did not have clear plans and policies for rehabilitation after displacement hence they could not request for adequate funds necessary to fund the smooth removal and successful resettlement of the affected people. They only requested for lorry transport for removal, some grass for thatching huts, and grain to be provided during the resettlement period. Adult males would be exempted from the annual poll tax of £2 for two years but no monetary compensation was paid by the Rhodesian government.³⁷⁷

On the contrary, the government of Northern Rhodesia claimed funds for monetary compensation of the 34 000 Gwembe Tonga for loss of land, houses and harvests, which the

³⁷³ Chris John De Wet, Why do things often go wrong in resettlement projects? In Pankhurst, A. and Piguet, F. (Eds.), *Moving people in Ethiopia: Development, Displacement and the State*, pp.35-48, 2009, Boydell and Brewer Ltd.

³⁷⁴ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p.36.

³⁷⁵ Cernea, *Hydropower dams and Social Impacts*, 1997.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ W.T. Nesham, *Kariba Resettlement*, NADA vol.38, 1961, pp.22-26.

people later invested in cattle and ploughs which became important for livelihood rebuilding after resettlement.³⁷⁸ McGregor notes that the Northern Rhodesian Ministers had to complain to the Federal Power Board about the limitations of compensation and even requested funds for long term development for rehabilitation of the people. Consequently, the Federal Power Board spent an average of £134 per person on resettlement in Northern Rhodesia, and as little as £59 per person in Southern Rhodesia.³⁷⁹

The Land Apportionment Act did not make room for monetary compensation of Africans evicted from European Areas. Although the Federal Power Board had mentioned the issue of compensation for the restoration of standards of living of the displaced, the Southern Rhodesian authorities decided not to request for these funds. In Northern Rhodesia there were no such racist laws thus the Territorial Governor paid compensation of £572 000 the Gwembe Tonga people to cover general losses and individual payments.³⁸⁰ BaTonga chiefs on the north bank of the Zambezi had some degree of authority as the Gwembe Tribal Authority requested for compensation from their government because the Africans owned the land in their communities.

There were fewer European settlers in Northern Rhodesia than in Southern Rhodesia and only six per cent of the land in the territory was either crown land or was occupied by European (as opposed to Southern Rhodesia where the settlers owned a lion's share of fifty-one percent of the total arable land). Therefore, the government had no legal power to move the Gwembe Tonga from their land, and compensation had to be offered to persuade the people to move. However, the offer of compensation in some cases alienated the chiefs from their people because the Native Authority which comprised of chiefs agreed to move on behalf of the people and asked for compensation. For instance, Headman Sianzimbwe refused to go to Lusitu because he accused his chief Chipepo of trying to sell their land to the settlers.³⁸¹

The displacement of the BaTonga of the south bank was indeed different from other types of displacement according to the provisions of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930. It was a result

³⁷⁸ Colson and Scudder, *Consequences of Resettlement*, p.20.

³⁷⁹ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.111.

³⁸⁰ Elizabeth Colson, *Social Organisations of the Gwembe Tonga, Human Problems of Kariba VI*, Manchester University Press, 1960, p.78.

³⁸¹ JoAnn McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi: The Politics of Landscape on the Central African Frontier*, James Currey, Oxford, UK, 2009, p.94. McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.113.

of a development project hence there was need to compensate them and rehabilitate them especially by making them become direct beneficiaries of the dam resources. According to De Wet, they were supposed to be regarded as “people who are part of progress” rather than seen as “people in the way of progress”. Critics of dam-induced displacement argue that although the means through which people are dispossessed of their land may vary from country to country according to land laws, measures should be put in place to restore the lives of the displaced people. Restoration of livelihoods promotes and sustains the economic and social lives of the affected people and prevents impoverishment.

BaTonga only became aware of their imminent displacement after construction of the dam had already begun. As discussed above, Howarth asserts that the people who were below the flood line of the future Lake were just issued with a warning to move from the valley to make way for the reservoir of the Kariba dam.³⁸² They were notified of their fate by the Sebungwe District Commissioner Ivor Cockcroft who toured the villages in the valley between August and September 1955 accompanied by the Minister of Native Affairs P.B. Fletcher and the Minister of Native Agriculture.³⁸³ They met with fourteen BaTonga chiefs and elders of the south bank of the Zambezi river and informed them to move to higher areas.³⁸⁴ The people recalled that, “It was just a command that, “Move away the flood is coming, you will be wiped away by the water. All this land will be flooded by water.” That was the only thing we were told.”³⁸⁵ They just informed them of imminent eviction from their ancestral land; they were not consulting them nor educating them on the Kariba project because plans for the construction of the dam were already at an advanced stage. This shocked the people who could not understand why they had to leave their homes.

³⁸² David Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, Collins Press, London, 1961, p.73.

³⁸³ Frank Clements, *Kariba: The Struggle with the River God*, Methuen and Company Limited, London, 1959, p.85., NADA, 1961, p.22.

³⁸⁴ Michael M. Tremmel, *The People of the Great River*, Silveira House Social Series No. 8, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1994, p.31.

³⁸⁵ Interview with Monitor, *Panos Institute Oral Testimony Programme*, Panos Southern Africa, 2005, p.8.

Figure 4: The Kariba Dam



Source: Author.

The colonial authorities merely instructed the chiefs to move together with their people according to a government order; they treated them as passive victims who could not negotiate to protect their interests because of the entrenched power dynamics of colonialism. The chiefs then sent messengers to their villages for meetings with their people where they debated the issue among themselves, but they did not have enough information on the impact of the project: “Our parents and grandparents were used to the annual flooding of the (Zambezi) river, but we could not imagine our homes and our upland fields being permanently covered with water. We had not seen this before in the valley.”³⁸⁶ Although Reddy emphasises that communities require

³⁸⁶ Interview with Maria Munkuli at Siabanga on 20 January 2020.

significant capacity building to understand, plan and discuss the resettlement process, this was impossible during the colonial period in Rhodesia.³⁸⁷

Most people forcibly resettled during the colonial period were offered inferior land which was not suitable for successful farming. The District Commissioner informed BaTonga chiefs that they had to relocate where they preferred to resettle in the new lands set aside for them on the Unassigned Area on the Zambezi plateau.³⁸⁸ They had to immediately search for suitable areas in the arid Binga district and prepare themselves for the departure within a year. This time was too short for the people to consult among themselves and their traditional leaders for such an upheaval of their life.

This was worsened by the fact that no one of the estimated twenty-three thousand people on the south bank was allowed to settle close to the future Lake shore because this land was reserved to be turned into National Parks. This was against the international standards for displacement and resettlement which recognise that people should be resettled on land in close proximity to the area from which they will be displaced.³⁸⁹ The Northern Rhodesian government managed to resettle more than thirty-four thousand people on fertile alluvial soils along the shoreline of the future Lake because of the negotiations by the Native Authority.³⁹⁰ Although the flooding of the valley drastically reduced the amount of arable land available on the north bank, only three thousand people were given land outside Gwembe valley.³⁹¹

Northern Rhodesia was ruled differently from Southern Rhodesia hence the differences in resettlement policies. The former was under indirect rule and there were few whites living in the territory who could compete for resources with the blacks. On the contrary, Southern Rhodesia was under an authoritarian form of government dominated by the whites who made up about four percent of the total colony's population. As shown in Chapter 1, the settlers expropriated

³⁸⁷ Gerry Reddy, Eddie Smyth, Michael Steyn, *Land Access and Resettlement. A Guide to Best Practice*, Greenleaf, 2015, Google Scholar, p.16.

³⁸⁸ W.T. Nesham, Kariba Resettlement, *NADA* vol.38, 1961, pp.22-26.

³⁸⁹ Frank Vanclay, Project-induced Displacement and Resettlement: from Impoverishment Risks to an Opportunity for Development? *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* vol.35, 2017, Issue 1.

³⁹⁰ Colson and Scudder, *Consequences of Resettlement*, p.20.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*

the best land from the Africans. Thus, the best land along the Lake shore was reserved for the settlers while BaTonga were pushed to the margins.

The World Bank 1980 Guidelines for Involuntary Resettlement recognise the importance of land for livelihood of displaced people and stipulates that new land should be equivalent or superior in productive potential to the land from which people will be displaced.³⁹² Since both the World Bank and the Rhodesian authorities did not have a resettlement policy, they did not meet this requirement as BaTonga had to travel long distances in search for suitable land to resettle themselves before the floods came. The Native Affairs Department only provided transport for Chief Binga and Chief Sikalenge to go into the interior to choose their new lands, but the other twelve chiefs and elders walked long distances for many days looking for good land to resettle their people.³⁹³ This explains why Scudder regarded BaTonga displacement as one of the worst dam resettlements projects as it failed to consider the social risks of uprooting them from their ancestral lands onto barren land.

The colonial authorities acknowledged that there was a severe lack of fertile soil for farming and shortage of water sources and rivers in Binga District. However, they went on with the project because they said, “The Batonga should be allowed into the land of their own choosing, and if and when conditions were unsatisfactory, they would fan out on their own accord.”³⁹⁴ Nevertheless, BaTonga could not migrate to other districts with better soils such Gokwe or Lupane without permission from the settler government, they were only allowed to resettle in the Binga district.³⁹⁵ The colonial government treated resettlement as a mechanism of getting people out of the way of the Lake as soon as possible and did not give attention to the associated suffering and misery of the displaced because This was the norm according to the provisions of the Land Apportionment Act whereby people were violently evicted from their ancestral lands and resettled far away on marginal land.

³⁹² Vanclay, Project-induced Displacement and Resettlement.

³⁹³ Weinrich, The Tonga People, p.14.

³⁹⁴ NAZ File S3599/389, Correspondence Secretary for Ministry of Mines, 26 January 1956.

³⁹⁵ NAZ File S2827/2/2/4/3 Native Commissioner, Sebungwe District Annual Report, 1958.

Cook argues that one of the most common problems of involuntary resettlement is that government agencies tend to prepare resettlement components hurriedly and superficially.³⁹⁶ A period of one year was not enough for the people to search for land, build houses and clear new fields for farming before the Lake began to form. Vancly pointed out that there is often a lack of realism about timeframes, budgets and effort for undertaking the resettlement properly.³⁹⁷ Scudder and Colson reinforce the issue of realistic timeframes in the Four Stage Resettlement Theory which states that the first stage of Planning and Recruitment deals with a lengthy pre-resettlement period.³⁹⁸ This was not so in the resettlement of BaTonga because of the urgent demand for electricity in the Copperbelt mines; the dam construction was supposed to be completed as early as 1959. This meant that the governments of the two Rhodesias had less time from mid-1956 to adequately prepare for the removal of the inhabitants on the banks of the Zambezi to higher ground before the floods came. Thus, the resettlement process become a crash programme in the two British colonies as the Native authorities tried to meet deadlines for relocation of communities before the flood gates were closed and the valley was flooded.

Coerced eviction and Resistance to Move

According to Cernea, the process of forced displacement is a process of many unknowns and unpredictable events; and it is prone to elicit strong opposition because of risks of deep social disruption and losses.³⁹⁹ BaTonga were not in agreement with the dislocation but the general populace on both sides of the Zambezi could not openly express their displeasure to their respective District Commissioners because of fear of ill-treatment by the colonial administration.

More importantly, it was difficult for BaTonga to abandon their fertile and well-watered land for the arid, barren and empty land in the interior. Chiefs such as Siachilaba and Saba and their elders had wandered on the plateau and failed to get good land and reliable water sources hence they

³⁹⁶ Cynthia C. Cook, Introduction, in C. Cook, (ed.) *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Selected Papers from a Conference on Environment and Settlement Issues in Southern Africa, The World Bank, Washington, DC, 1994, p.23. Google Books

³⁹⁷ Vancly, Project-induced Displacement

³⁹⁸ Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of Dislocated People, in A. Hansen and A. Oliver-Smith, (eds.), *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of the Dislocated People*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982, p.267-287.

³⁹⁹ Michael M. Cernea, *Impoverishment, Risks, Risk Management, and Reconstruction: Model of Population Displacement and Resettlement*, UN Symposium on Hydropower and Sustainable Development, 27, 2004.

were not willing to leave the valley. In addition, they were distrustful of the colonial authorities who had not consulted them in the decision to build a dam on their land thus they regarded imminent resettlement as theft of their land by the settlers. Some of the people even accused their chiefs who had agreed to the move as trying to sell the people's land to the whites.⁴⁰⁰ One villager said that "We had been born in the valley. Our ancestors lived there and were buried there. How could we leave their graves behind?"⁴⁰¹ Resettlement is a traumatic and inherently disruptive experience as it destroys livelihoods. For years, the Tonga had lived in splendid isolation along the Zambezi River, where steep hills of the escarpment were safe barriers from Ndebele, Lozi and Kololo raiders as well as the Chikunda slave raiders in the nineteenth century, thus they were not keen to abandon this place of refuge.⁴⁰²

More importantly, BaTonga mentioned that were also not prepared to forsake the Zambezi river because it held the mighty waters that sustained the Nyaminyami god whom they believed had a head of a tiger fish and snake's torso, and was a supernatural power embodying the river's force and strength, as well as having a serpentine form in its flow.⁴⁰³ The god was one of the most powerful spirits in their cosmology and guaranteed them social and economic wellbeing. "The river was our home and the home of Nyaminyami whose annual passage downstream caused floods. The floods ensured us of ample food throughout the year. When there were no floods, he fed us with his *nyama-nyama* (meat) during periods of famine. We could cut as much meat as we wanted from his body for food. How were we going to survive from starvation far away from the river without the help of Nyaminyami?"⁴⁰⁴ This shows how disruptive dislocation was to the people's religious cosmology.

Prior to the flood, BaTonga on both banks of the Zambezi in the Gwembe valley were a single social group and the river was not a frontier to them, but the move was going to split the people into two groups. The river itself was a shared economic space from which they collectively engaged on fishing. Some families lived on opposite sides of the banks, and displacement was

⁴⁰⁰ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p.109.

⁴⁰¹ Interview with Mbaaita Mudimba at Donga

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, p.72.

⁴⁰³ Joshua Matanzima, *Changes and Continuities over time in the Cultural Significance of the Nyaminyami Water Spirit among the BaTonga People of Northwestern Zimbabwe*, Masters Thesis, Rhodes University, South Africa, 2018, p.6.

⁴⁰⁴ Interview with Minchito Munkuli, Msenampongo on 22 January 2020.

going to disrupt kinship obligations. Tamakloe argues that resettlement is time of change and there is need to take specific measures to minimise social disintegration.⁴⁰⁵ This is supported by Ayeni who reiterates that the Kainji Dam resettlement experience was a success largely because it did not disrupt the social, economic and cultural organisation of the affected people.⁴⁰⁶ It was unfortunate that both the Federal government and the governments of the two Rhodesias did not seriously consider the impact of the split on the people as they were going to be completely cut off from each other. They strongly identified with the river, calling themselves *Bamulwizi* – the People of the River as it played an integral part in their lives providing water, and communication and trading possibilities.

Although the people could not openly resist displacement, they showed their unwillingness to move from the valley by not initiating the move on their own. They did not go out to search for land to resettle in the interior, build houses nor relocate on their own before forced eviction. When the Native Commissioner came informing people about resettlement and put some pegs on the possible flood level after the closure of the sluice gates, few families immediately started looking for land to relocate to. Those few who got good land were able to build homes and move at their own pace, and the process was not as traumatic as that experienced by most of the people who had to wait for forced eviction.⁴⁰⁷

Scudder and Colson asserted that relocation from an old habitat and physical environment is a stressful experience and there is need for an appropriate rehabilitation programme.⁴⁰⁸ The Northern Rhodesian authorities through the Gwembe Tonga Native Authority tried to persuade the people to move before flooding but the time was too short. The resettlement of twelve thousand Tema people in Ghana to give way to the Akosombo Dam on the Volta River took more than eight years from 1952 to 1959 because of strong resistance of the people.⁴⁰⁹ In contrast, the

⁴⁰⁵ Martha A. Tamakloe, Long-Term Impacts of Resettlement: The Akosombo Dam Experience, in Cynthia C. Cook, (ed.) *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Selected Papers from a Conference on Environment and Settlement Issues in Southern Africa, The World Bank, Washington, DC, 1994, p.23. Google Books.

In Cook, pp.99-110

⁴⁰⁶ J.S.O. Ayeni, Wolf Roder, and J.O Ayanda, The Kainji Experience in Nigeria, in C. Cook, (ed.) *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Selected Papers from a Conference on Environment and Settlement Issues in Southern Africa, The World Bank, Washington, DC., Google Books, 1994, pp.111-124

⁴⁰⁷ Panos Southern Africa, p.9.

⁴⁰⁸ Scudder and Colson, From Welfare to Development.

⁴⁰⁹ Matilda Mettle, Forced Resettlement in Ghana. The Dam and the Affected People. The Bui Hydroelectric Project in Ghana, Masters Dissertation, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, 2011.

construction of the Kariba dam started in February 1956 when the Federation and the World Bank approved the site, and people started being forcibly moved in mid-1956. Time was running out before the completion of the dam whose inundation was expected to be complete in December 1958, therefore the resettlement of BaTonga became a compulsory, fast-track movement before the impoundment of the Lake. The Native Department authorities and police had to force the general BaTonga populace to leave the security of their ancestral land for the unknown. The colonial officials were afraid that the people were not aware of the imminent danger of the floods, hence the use of force in eviction.

Forced displacement from the south bank of the Zambezi River started as early as July 1956 as soon as construction of the dam wall started. The main displacement of northern chiefdoms of Southern Rhodesia started in June 1957 with the eviction of the people of Mola, Siamupa, Sinamasanga, Sinamwenda and Simuchembu when their areas were flooded as the Lake began to fill up because the dam wall was situated in the northeast.⁴¹⁰ The Native Department simply informed them that they had to move because the law compelled them to move. With very little time for preparation, these powerless people were truck-loaded and taken to higher places on the Zambezi plateau and the move was completed in September 1957.⁴¹¹

Although they were unwilling to move, they could not successfully resist the order, as one man reported that, "It was useless to fight, and we were losers in the fight...the decision to leave was difficult to take."⁴¹² Displacement therefore proceeded in total disregard of the people's feelings and welfare. The chiefdoms on the upper end of the Lake which took time to become flooded were the last to move in 1958. These included the people of Sikalenge, Binga, Siansali and Siachilaba, and most of these people except those from Siansali stayed close to their old land when the floods came. However, they were not permitted to resettle near the edge of the forming Lake.

⁴¹⁰ I.G. Cockcroft, *They Did Not Leave The Valley*, NADA, Vol. X, No.1, 1969, p.53.

⁴¹¹ NAZ File F429/134 Correspondence between Secretary for Agriculture and Acting Director, Department of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control and Reclamation, 1956.

⁴¹² Panos Southern Africa, p.9.

The success of the process of displacement and resettlement was severely affected by shortage of water and land suitable for human habitation. Dam opponents argue that if a project cannot find suitable land for resettlement, it should be questioned whether the project should proceed.⁴¹³ Chief Sinakoma failed to find a favourable area on the plateau for his people, but the Native Department did not assist him until the time of eviction from the banks of the Zambezi. When the people were forced to move in 1957, his people were separated by a high mountain range which made the administration of his new area difficult.⁴¹⁴ Chief Binga whose area was above the flood line was nevertheless evicted because his land was set aside for the administrative centre of the new Binga District created in 1957. He chose an area adjacent to his former land, but this new land could not accommodate all his people. As a result, his people had to live in two groups divided by a mountain, just like Chief Sinakoma's people, which made effective running of the areas impossible. Some villagers who belonged to Chief Binga before displacement were politically disoriented because they said that "When we left the River, we did not know whether we belonged to Chief Binga or Chief Sikalenge."⁴¹⁵

To add on, Chief Siansali refused to forcibly relocate with his people to the barren Zambezi plateau and threatened the Native Commissioner to cross to the North Bank. Some of his people relocated to Northern Rhodesia in protest.⁴¹⁶ The shortages of critical resources for livelihood on the plateau troubled BaTonga so much that they were reluctant to leave their traditional homelands. However, they just had to leave the floodplains of the Zambezi because they were compelled to. Muntale said that "We were told that the floods were coming, and they were going to kill us if we did not move."⁴¹⁷ This confirms what Cernea reiterated that forced displacement and resettlement is impoverishing because it takes away people's political power.⁴¹⁸

Chief Siachilaba who stayed close to the head of the Lake refused to move from his land because he complained that there was no better land in the interior. "They told us that the waters were

⁴¹³ Reddy et al., *Land Access and Resettlement Guide*, p.66.

⁴¹⁴ Weinrich., *The Tonga People*, p.14.

⁴¹⁵ Interview with Muntale, Msenampongo.

⁴¹⁶ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*.

⁴¹⁷ Interview Muntale

⁴¹⁸ M.M. Cernea, *Reforming the foundations of involuntary resettlement: Introduction*. In Michael M Cernea and H.M. Mathur, (Eds.), *Can compensation prevent impoverishment? Reforming resettlement through investments and benefit-sharing*, pp. 1-13). Oxford University Press, 2008, PP.1-13.

building up and they were going to cover our fields and our huts, but we could not find water in Manjolo.”⁴¹⁹ When the waters of the Lake rose after the closure of the two sluice gates on 3 December 1958, many of Siachilaba’s people had to move to higher ground but in an area which was not less than five kilometres away from the edge of the Lake.⁴²⁰ They were allowed to occupy this area because it was not suitable for white settlement. However, they lost their best land on the flood plains and settled in an area which had no water both for domestic use and for farming.

Chief Saba’s people also refused to move, and the Governor had to make a proclamation to allow them to move to slightly higher ground close to their land because they were living at the head of the Lake where the land was also not suitable for settlement of the whites.⁴²¹ However, some people from other chiefdoms who resisted being resettled up on the plateau moved into Chief Saba’s traditional lands.⁴²² People from Siachilaba, Binga and Sikalenge got some land to settle and farm in the sparsely populated Saba’s area but there were few livelihood resources available. Muntale said that “Although I got a small field in Saba, it was better than going to Nsenga where elephants roamed everywhere day and night.”⁴²³ The best land close to the Lake was reserved for white settlement and tourism according to the discriminatory Rhodesian policies while BaTonga struggled to find suitable land to resettle.

Although BaTonga were not willing to leave their ancestral lands for the inferior land on the plateau, they could not successfully resist the move. Nationalists tried to represent the people in various places, but they were not successful in stopping the dislocation because the dam was already under construction. For instance, Harry Nkumbula who was the leader of the Northern Rhodesia National Congress which had its largest support among the BaTonga on both sides of the river and also among the Ila people on the Zambezi plateau sent a petition to the British Queen in London opposing the Native Authority’s acceptance of Kariba on the unfairness cost distribution of the dam. He requested her to appoint a commission comprised mostly of Africans from West Africa to inquire whether it was really in the interests of the country to obtain the

⁴¹⁹ Interview with Muntale, Musenampongo

⁴²⁰ W.T. Nesham, *Kariba Resettlement*, NADA vol.38, 1961, pp.23-26

⁴²¹ A.K.H. Weinrich, *The Tonga People of the Southern Shore of Lake Kariba*, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1977, p.17.

⁴²² S2929/5/1, C.J.K. Latham, Report of the Delineation of Tribal Communities in Binga District, 1967.

⁴²³ Interview with Muntale, Musenampongo

benefits of the Kariba at the expense of the suffering of the people of the Gwembe Valley. The petition was not successful because the British government acted in the interests of the industrial capitalists who intended to benefit from the generation of low-cost electricity at the expense of the colonial subjects. They assumed that BaTonga had to bear the unequal costs of displacement because of long-term developmental benefits of the dam to the settlers. The interests of the capitalists were far more important than the well-being of BaTonga colonial subjects.

According to Terminski, there is little capacity in governments to manage the risks associated with resettlement and this results in excessive use of force and violation of human rights in the process of removing people in the way of dams.⁴²⁴ The displacement and resettlement of BaTonga was not carried out in a socially responsible manner. De Wet points out that, for a resettlement to be successful, it should always in principle be voluntary⁴²⁵ but BaTonga regard the period of resettlement as *kulonzegwa* or forced eviction, as a time of troubles (*buyumuyumu*).⁴²⁶ The period is well remembered, and the story is passed on to younger Tonga generations in many forms of oral transmissions because it was bedevilled by human rights violations.⁴²⁷ They recalled the trauma associated with the time when they were forced to depart between 1957-1958 by narrating that trucks came early in the morning, ready to transport people to their distant new homes as transport was provided for those moving to places that were over twenty miles who could not carry their belongings on foot.⁴²⁸ Most of the people were not given an opportunity to choose when they were ready to relocate but were just forced to board the lorries. Most elderly people who were not ready to live behind their land disappeared into the bushes when the lorries came to dislocate them. Soldiers rounded up people from their homes and fields by force, one village at a time. "We were not given enough time to harvest our winter crops, pack our belongings or to say goodbye to friends and relatives because the trucks were

⁴²⁴ Bogumil Terminski, *Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement: Theoretical Frameworks and Current Challenges*, Geneva, 2015.

⁴²⁵ Chris De Wet, *Introducing the Issues*, in De Wet (ed). *Development-induced displacement. Problems, Policies and People. Studies in Forced Migration Vol 18*, 2005.

⁴²⁶ Pamela Reynolds and Colleen Crawford Cousins, *Lwaano Lwanyika. Tonga Book of the Earth*, Panos Publications, London, 1993, p.205.

⁴²⁷ See Itai Muwati, *Negotiating space, voice and recognition: An analysis of the "District Song" of the Tonga people of Binga, Zimbabwe*, *Muziki Journal of Music Research in Africa*, vol.12, Issue 2, 2015, pp.22-36.

⁴²⁸ NAZ File S2827/2/2/4/1 NC Sebungwe Annual Report, 1956.

waiting as we packed.”⁴²⁹ They had to hurriedly pack all their belongings, grain and small livestock and load them onto the trucks. This caused a lot of disruption in their lives.

Reddy emphasised that victims of displacement need to be treated with respect and negative impacts should be mitigated in order to prevent impoverishment.⁴³⁰ The Kainji resettlement experience of more than forty-four thousand people was regarded as a resounding success when compared to experiences at Lake Volta and Lake Nasser mainly because minimum pressure was used to ensure people moved, and people agreed to leave their homes.⁴³¹ This was mainly because of effective participation during the planning phase and the fact that they were provided with cash compensation, better houses and better infrastructure than their old homes. This was not the case with BaTonga resettlement process hence they had to be forcibly evicted from the way of the reservoir.

As discussed in chapter 3, the involuntary resettlement of BaTonga was carried out in the context of racist colonial policies of Southern Rhodesia. Their forced eviction from the Zambezi was like the forced evictions caused by the implementation of the LAA in Matebeleland and elsewhere in Southern Rhodesia after the Second World War. Alexander described the forced resettlements into the Shangani Reserve as very harsh and caused so much suffering to the Ndebele.⁴³² The villagers were reluctant to go into the less habitable Reserve therefore the police raided them at dawn and violently forced them onto lorries and those who resisted were handcuffed and thrown onto the trucks. Tremmel maintains that most of BaTonga could not resist eviction and agreed to get onto the lorries with their belongings because they had no other option available for them to choose and the colonial authorities used violence and force to compel the people to leave the valley.⁴³³ Siyamabbyu said that “We were not given any choice at all. We were just told that if we chose to stay, we were going to be drowned by the coming floods.”⁴³⁴

⁴²⁹ Interview with Tambule Munsaka on 23 January 2020, Nsenga

⁴³⁰ Reddy, et al., *Land Access and Resettlement Guide*

⁴³¹ J.S.O. Ayeni, Wolf Roder, and J.O Ayanda, *The Kainji Experience in Nigeria*, in C. Cook, (ed.) *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Selected Papers from a Conference on Environment and Settlement Issues in Southern Africa, The World Bank, Washington, DC., Google Books, 1994, pp.111-124

⁴³² J. Alexander, J. McGregor and T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory: One Hundred Years in the “Dark Forest” of Matebeleland*, James Currey, Oxford, 2000, p.46.

⁴³³ Tremmel, *The People of the Great River*, p.38.

⁴³⁴ Interview with Siyamabbyu, Dumbwe on 18 January 2020

The process of displacement also caused many conflicts between chiefs and their subjects when the former compelled the later to leave their homes for the unknown. For example, Chief Sinakatenge agreed to the move on behalf of his people, and looked for new land to resettle, but his village head called Makaza tried to resist by refusing to leave his home together with his people.⁴³⁵ The District Native Commissioner sent armed soldiers and policemen to take Makaza and his people by force to the new area. Their resistance had not helped them because the police threw their belongings out and burnt their huts. They handcuffed Makaza together with thirty other people who were accused of leading the resistance and threw them onto the lorries. They were detained at Sanyati Prison in Gokwe, but they escaped and returned to their old homes on foot.⁴³⁶ They were so determined not to move but the police were so inhuman that they had to burn the huts of people who were reluctant to move as a way of coercing them to leave their land. This clearly shows how the displacement was forced upon the people to make way for the Kariba reservoir.

This arguably explains why Cernea suggests that the worst consequence of involuntary displacement is impoverishment and violation of basic human rights.⁴³⁷ It also confirms the idea that most dam construction projects tend to view resettlement as a problem of getting people out of the way of the reservoir; it is usually not an issue of importance to the policy makers as such. The dam, and the capitalism that it promotes is regarded as much more important than the livelihoods of the poor. The Rhodesian authorities focused on the generation of electricity and were swift to move BaTonga from the way of the lake. Resettlement scholars argue that the process of displacement and resettlement must pay close attention to all social issues in an ethical manner.⁴³⁸ McGregor maintains that about a thousand people refused to leave their *malende* shrines and baobab trees associated with their ancestral spirits to Manjolo area⁴³⁹ but they were eventually coerced to move by force. The implementation of the LAA in Matebeleland also resulted in such violence, as discussed above.

⁴³⁵ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.112

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

⁴³⁷ Michael M. Cernea, *Risks, Safeguards and Restructuring: A Model for Population Displacement and Resettlement*, in M.M. Cernea and C. McDowell (eds.) *Risk and Reconstruction: Experience of Resettlers and Refugees*, 2000, pp.11-55.

⁴³⁸ Reddy et al., *Land Access and Resettlement Guide*

⁴³⁹ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.112.

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The use of force and abuse of human rights during BaTonga resettlement both in the north and south bank led to violence and bloodshed in the Zambezi Valley. According to Vanclay, involuntary displacement and resettlement disregards human rights as it denies the affected people the right to refuse displacement.⁴⁴² In Northern Rhodesia, the District Commissioner John Snugg and his successor Alan Prior tried to persuade the people to relocate to new areas through the mediation of the Gwembe Tonga Native Authority by promising them compensation for the resettlement that would assist in restoring their livelihoods but met stiff opposition in some areas. Contrary to Southern Rhodesia, there was no law in Northern Rhodesia to empower the colonial officials to compulsorily expropriate the Gwembe Tonga's land and enforce displacement and resettlement. Instead, the District Commissioner resorted to the use of force to compel the people to leave their traditional land.

However, this compulsion produced hostility, suspicion and open resistance in June 1958 when the Governor issued a final order that people must board lorries and move.⁴⁴³ Chief Chipepo was

⁴⁴⁰ Reddy et al., Land Access and Resettlement Guide

⁴⁴¹ McGregor, Crossing the Zambezi, p.112.

⁴⁴² Vanclay, Project-Induced Displacement and Resettlement

⁴⁴³ Howarth, The Shadow of the Dam, p.71

asked against his will to split his people into two groups and the largest group of six thousand people was going to be resettled in Lusitu, which was more than a hundred kilometres downstream along the Zambezi river, much further than everybody else in the valley. The smaller group of three thousand people was going to move back from the Lake for a shorter distance.⁴⁴⁴ When the Native Authorities tried to evict the people by force, Chipeco's people were prepared to fight for their land and a riot broke out in many villages where the police had brought trucks to forcibly transport people to Lusitu. However, the people's right to protest was disregarded and the colonial state was not willing to negotiate with them. Instead, the police opened fire on the rioters who were armed with spears and battle axes and killed eight men and wounded many people by short guns.⁴⁴⁵ Many people including children and the wounded ran away and hid into the forest because the police continued inhumanely with their arrests after the deaths, accusing the men of defying government orders to leave the valley for Lusitu.

Soon after the shooting and arrests, the people were not even allowed to mourn and bury their dead but were forced to get onto the trucks. According to Howarth, "The police and soldiers threw out the people's possessions from their homes before burning the houses, broke open granaries and packed the grain in sacks, and loaded all these goods into fifteen open trucks."⁴⁴⁶ Although many of the villagers had hidden in the forest, their huts were destroyed by fire, and they did not return to board the trucks for fear of being killed by the armed soldiers. These people were left without shelter nor food as their goods together with some women and children were taken to Lusitu and dumped in the open valley at night. They had to take many days walking to join their families in Lusitu. As a result of this brutality, many people lost their possessions, particularly grain and livestock during this time of forced relocation and this affected their ability to recover from the effects of displacement.

Following the death of men in Chipeco and their forced resettlement in Lusitu, BaTonga who were still on both banks of the Zambezi became aware of the danger of defying the colonial governments, and as a result, they involuntarily abandoned their land to the whites. They

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ Tremmel, *The River Tonga*, p.31.

⁴⁴⁶ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, p.159.

reported that, “We had no choice but to move. We heard stories from Chipeco area...there was heavy fighting in Chipeco and many lives were lost.”⁴⁴⁷ By the end of October 1958, the valley was empty as more than sixty thousand people had been evicted from their ancestral lands, and the last gap on the Kariba dam wall was closed early December in order for the inundation of BaTonga land.

According to Cernea, failure to acknowledge displacement risks and effectively handling them in a socially responsible way results in disasters because the risks are likely to eventually explode with aggravated effects than if they were addressed timely.⁴⁴⁸ This proved to be true about the forced displacement of BaTonga which was done within an unrealistic short period of time as the colonial authorities focused mainly on physical relocation rather than on its socio-economic impact on the people. Furthermore, the Tonga on the south bank were evicted from their land without any compensation and forcibly taken to an area which was not fit for human settlement because of the unwillingness of the settler authorities in Southern Rhodesia to initially make a socio-economic risk assessment. They had to move and give way to the formation of the reservoir for the dam necessary for turning the turbines for the generation of electricity needed for economic development. The Rhodesian state could not afford to postpone the closure of the two sluice gates to give BaTonga more time to plan, negotiate and agree to the displacement.

Immediate Consequences of Displacement and Resettlement

As discussed above, involuntary displacement and resettlement is controversial as it usually results in winners and losers. Poorly planned resettlement projects often underestimate social impacts and can have devastating impacts on communities as they fail to rebuild livelihoods.⁴⁴⁹ Cernea’s IRR Model proposes eight collective risks of impoverishment faced by victims of involuntary displacement and provides strategies how these risks can be prevented. These risks include landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalisation, food insecurity, increased

⁴⁴⁷ Panos Southern Africa, *The Tonga People*, p.8.

⁴⁴⁸ Cernea, *Impoverishment Risks and Resettlement Model*, 2004

⁴⁴⁹ Reddy et al., *Land Access and Resettlement Guide*, p.66.p.14

morbidity and mortality, loss of access to common property, and social disarticulation.⁴⁵⁰ BaTonga people faced all these risks after being resettled on the Zimbabwe plateau.

The immediate risks faced by most people included homelessness and social disarticulation. When the people were evicted from the valley, the lorries dumped most of them in the middle of the forest far away from their place of origin, where there were not even temporary shelters, and this caused a lot of hardships for the people, just like the Ndebele who were dumped in the dark forest of Shangani after 1945. The press reported that “the Batonka people were resettled in what was once an undisturbed habitat for game”.⁴⁵¹ They had to share the land with lions, elephants, hyenas, leopards and buffalos which were a threat to their wellbeing. The region was also infested with malaria and tsetse fly which made it not suitable for human settlement. In Northern Rhodesia the government had provided resources for the shooting of big game, especially elephants to drive them to into areas that were not suitable for human settlement, therefore the resettlement there was not as devastating as that of Southern Rhodesia.

The people were moved during the cold season between April and August and they slept in the bush or in temporary shelters for days before they were able to construct proper huts.⁴⁵² The elders remembered that “We were resettled in a new place, where we had little first-hand knowledge and experience because we had been used to life in the valley along the river banks.”⁴⁵³ Resettlement on highland without the river changed their way of life. Although the Native Department provided them with cut and bundled thatching grass for construction of new huts because they were moved during the dry season when thatching grass was scarce in the forest, the grass was not enough, and they lacked other necessary building material. The displaced in the Kainji dam in Nigeria between 1962 and 1968 were provided with built houses roofed with corrugated steel sheets and this resulted in their adaptation to resettlement much better than that of BaTonga.⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵⁰Cernea, *Impoverishment Risks and Resettlement Model*, 2004

⁴⁵¹NAZ File S3599/390, Minutes of Meeting held on 26 January 1959, Department of Native Affairs.

⁴⁵² Tremmel, *The River Tonga*, p.41

⁴⁵³ Interview with Mbaaita Munenge at Donga on 22 January 2020

⁴⁵⁴ ⁴⁵⁴ J.S.O. Ayeni, Wolf Roder, and J.O Ayanda, *The Kainji Experience in Nigeria*, in C. Cook, (ed.) *Involuntary Resettlement in Africa*. Selected Papers from a Conference on Environment and Settlement Issues in Southern Africa, The World Bank, Washington, DC., Google Books, 1994, pp.111-124.

BaTonga were left in the wilderness, in empty lands which were largely not habited by any people. Those who went to settle in Syabbanga remembered that “There was no one here. It was so scary because there were animals moving during the day and crying at night. But we could not go back to the river. Our huts had been burnt down.”⁴⁵⁵ The absence of human settlement meant that there were not social services available during the time of resettlement. The colonial authorities hurriedly resettled them before health, education and general welfare services were provided hence there were no schools, clinics, bus services, nor grinding mills for many decades and this had a negative impact on their livelihoods. There were plans to construct roads, but the government only cut the rough roads for lorries to be able to carry the people to their new areas of resettlement in the jungle. The Native Department promised the people infrastructural development as compensation for their loss of better lands. The Native Commissioner promised to construct better roads and open new market opportunities for the district, but this was never fulfilled, and it led to the marginalisation of BaTonga on the periphery of the colony.

During fieldwork, BaTonga vividly recalled Sikanyana’s (Cockcroft) promises to improve their lives after displacement. Due to the critical shortage of water both for domestic use and for farming, the colonial government promised to sink many boreholes fitted with pumps for them, as well as to build dams and weirs for irrigation of crops in the district. They even promised to bring them running water and electricity from the Kariba dam into their villages. One villager said that, “We were told that our water (from the Zambezi) was going to follow us.”⁴⁵⁶ The government also promised them infrastructural development such as the building of clinics because of the prevalence of diseases such as malaria and sleeping sickness in the uninhabited forest, as well as establishment of schools.⁴⁵⁷ They also promised to give the BaTonga fishing permits for them to participate in the new fishing industry on the Lake as compensation for their loss of livelihoods. However, these promises were verbally made before resettlement and have not yet materialized more than half a century after the forced resettlement of BaTonga in Binga District.⁴⁵⁸ This

⁴⁵⁵ Interview with Mbaaita, Donga.

⁴⁵⁶ W.T. Nesham, Kariba Resettlement, *NADA* vol.38, 1961, pp.23-26

⁴⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁵⁸ Terence M. Mashingaidze, Beyond the Kariba Dam Induced Displacements: The Zimbabwean Tonga Struggles for Restitution, 1990s-2000s. *International Journal on Minority Group Rights*, Vol.20, 2003, pp.381-404.

marginalization and neglect has impoverished the people and excluded from the affairs of the rest of the country as discussed in Chapter 7.

It can be argued that the promises for social amenities and infrastructural development were not aimed at compensating them for displacement by assisting the people in their economic and social recovery and development, but they were a way of preventing opposition and further resistance by BaTonga after resettlement into uninhabitable areas. Instead of moving them to a new place with better land which was still abundant in European areas reserved for settlers, with more agricultural potential and water sources, the colonial authorities promised to improve the lives of BaTonga in those barren lands. Their resettlement coincided with the rise of mass nationalism hence they feared their uprising in demand for better land and gave them empty promises.

The Native Department feared resistance from BaTonga soon after resettlement because some people walked long distances and repeatedly returned to their old homes as it was difficult for them to accept the forced eviction. For example, people of Chiyala who were dumped in the new area at Siatwiinda trekked back during the night to the same place in the valley where they had been evicted from.⁴⁵⁹ Most people wanted to go back to their land in the Zambezi after they found the areas unfit for human settlement. They discussed and declared that “We were foolish. We have left our fine, fertile land on the bank of the river to come to a wilderness. We should go back”.⁴⁶⁰ The colonial authorities in Northern Rhodesia were reported to have brought back some of the people to their land in 1958 to see for themselves that their gardens, fields and homes had been inundated as the Lake began to form although the dam had not yet been completed.

It was difficult for the people to forsake their land as some people in Sikalenge, Siachilaba and Binga chiefdoms who were resettled closer to their old land used to go back and stay in their old homes. Some women used to cultivate and water their river-bank gardens without the knowledge of the colonial officials before their land was completely flooded because they had been dislocated before they had harvested their winter crops.⁴⁶¹ When the colonial authorities

⁴⁵⁹ Panos Southern Africa, p.9.

⁴⁶⁰ Van de Merwe, The Kariba, p.93.

⁴⁶¹ Interview with Maria Munkuli, 20 January 2020, Siabanga.

found out that the people had not completely forsaken their land, they sent the police to burn the homes and destroy the gardens to ensure that the move was effectively permanent. This brutality further alienated the people from the government. The colonial officials wanted them to adapt to their new areas and abandon their land and their water completely for the formation of the Lake, for tourism and for white settlement. This despotic attitude made the path of livelihood recovery as well as coping and adapting to the conditions in the new environment become long as the following chapters will show.

Conclusion

This chapter insisted that BaTonga were not involved in decisions in relation to how, where and when they had to move from the banks of the Zambezi to pave way for the Kariba dam reservoir. Although they were victims of dam-induced displacement, negotiation was not considered because of the colonial context of the resettlement which favoured expropriation of land without compensation hence it was a top-down approach from the Native Department. The people were commanded by law to move even though there was no habitable land on the Zambezi plateau. When they resisted leaving the valley because they had failed to find land and water on the escarpment, the colonial officials violently and forcibly evicted them without compensation and dumped in the wilderness with devastating social impacts which have affected the people for decades. This shock of the process was devastating. I will later examine how they tried to cope with this forced relocation.

CHAPTER 5: THE RISK OF CROP FAILURE AND COPING MECHANISMS, 1958-1980

Introduction

This chapter discusses the dilemma that the resettled BaTonga on the Binga plateau faced in relation to food shortages due to crop failure from 1956 to 1980. It argues that the people demonstrated agency and resilience as they managed to make a living without any external support. Scoones claims that 'coping' involves temporary livelihood adjustments in face of shocks, risks and uncertainties, while 'adaptation' involves livelihood changes due to long term risks.⁴⁶² After displacement and resettlement, BaTonga faced both sudden shocks in food production which demanded coping strategies to avert hunger and starvation as well as long term food shortages which required adaptive strategies.

According to Scudder and Colson's Four Stage Framework, people may face physical and mental stress after displacement and resettlement, but they must eventually adapt to the new environment.⁴⁶³ There are several factors which affect this process of adaptation, which is expected to take place within the possible shortest period. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework portrays the vulnerability context as the major challenge affecting people's adaptive capacity to pursue sustainable livelihood strategies.⁴⁶⁴ Vulnerability is defined as the characteristic that limit an individual, a household or a community's capacity to participate, manage, resist, or recover from the impact of a threat.⁴⁶⁵ It then follows that reduced vulnerability is key to adaptation and restoration of livelihoods after involuntary displacement.

The vulnerability context refers to unpredictable events that can undermine livelihoods and cause households to fall into poverty.⁴⁶⁶ This chapter focuses on vulnerability to food shortages due to crop failure. The Sustainable Livelihoods framework points out that the external environment in which people live their lives is responsible for many of their hardships as it

⁴⁶² Ian Scoones, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework for Analysis*, IDS Working Paper Number 72, 1998.

⁴⁶³ Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the analysis of dislocated people, in A. Hansen and A. Oliver-Smith (eds.), *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Resettled People*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1982, pp.267-287.

⁴⁶⁴ Scoones, *Sustainable Livelihoods*, 1998.

⁴⁶⁵ R. De Stage et.al., *Learning about Livelihoods. Insights from Southern Africa*, Oxfam Publishing, Oxford, 2002, p.8.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid.

extends their susceptibility to poverty.⁴⁶⁷ However, an exploration of how environmental factors increased vulnerability in Binga shows how government policies contributed to their increasing hunger and poverty and limited their livelihood opportunities. Prowse argues that the Sustainable Livelihood Framework understates the structural constraints which limit people's ability to make a sustainable living. It therefore ignores the root of poverty as it is actor oriented. It puts more emphasis on assets but does not help to explain how poor people struggle to acquire the resources which are crucial for rural livelihoods. Structural and macro-level factors also shape livelihood options and strategies available to the poor people. Therefore, it is paramount to question the role of both the colonial and postcolonial governments in availing key resources necessary for food production and reducing hunger in Binga.

According to McDowell, it is important to understand the impact of identified risks on livelihoods.⁴⁶⁸ Food insecurity is one of the eight risks in the Impoverishment, Risk and Livelihood Reconstruction Model proposed by Cernea to deal with the challenges of involuntary displacement and resettlement in general.⁴⁶⁹ Chapter 1 has shown how crop production was BaTonga people's central livelihood before displacement due to the availability of perennial water and fertile soils in the Zambezi Valley. Displacement ushered in livelihood uncertainty in farming due to persistent crop failure, and this threatened food security among the people for many decades.

Manyena argues that the one of the root causes of impoverishment of BaTonga was limited access to and control of resources after resettlement. This was true as the people began to face critical shortages of food because of difficulties in farming mainly because of forced change in traditional production systems. They had traditionally adapted to the erratic rainfall in the Zambezi Valley by relying on water from the perennial Zambezi River which usually guaranteed them a harvest more than twice a year as discussed in chapter 1. Rainfed farming in Binga was difficult and caused a major disruption of their food supply. This confirms Cernea's observation

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁸ Christopher McDowell, Involuntary Resettlement, Impoverishment Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods, in *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*, Volume 2, 2002, Massey University Papers, Australia.

⁴⁶⁹ Michael Cernea, *The Risk and Reconstruction Model for Resettling Displaced Populations*, World Development, Volume 25, Issue 10, 1997, pp.1569-1587.

that the core problem in forced displacement and resettlement is people's loss of livelihoods which can lead to impoverishment and disempowerment.⁴⁷⁰ Many issues surrounded the problem of perennial crop failure before independence including poor rainfall patterns, barren soils, the destruction of crops by wildlife, lack of state support and marginalization. This chapter discusses the environmental factors while the next chapter focuses on wildlife threat to food production, particularly the menace of elephants.

1. Recurrent Drought

As mentioned in the previous chapter, BaTonga were resettled in a semi-arid region which had a tropical dry savanna climate. They experienced decades of crop failure due to sparse rainfall and high temperature. The mean annual rainfall at Binga in the 1960s was about 25 inches (635 millimetres)⁴⁷¹ Cernea's model of livelihoods risk and reconstruction shows that people are deprived of their natural, human and social capital during displacement and resettlement which they must be able to regain in order to build sustainable livelihoods.⁴⁷² The low rainfall received on the Zambezi plateau was highly erratic and was poorly distributed. The rain was usually heavy and took the form of tropical thunderstorms, interspaced with hot dry days.⁴⁷³ BaTonga people began to face challenges in food production because they never regained their water and alluvial soils which had kept them alive in the drought prone region before the Zambezi River was impounded for hydropower generation. Colonial subjugation thrived on African poverty and lack of access to good and well-watered soils necessary for productive farming and this jeopardised Africa livelihoods.

According to McGregor, BaTonga felt they were betrayed by the government for breaking the promise that the water would follow the people to their new resettlement areas. During the time of eviction, the Native Commissioner promised the resisting Tonga leaders that 'water would follow them', meaning the state would provide them with new sources of water after the move. Had the settler government allocated chiefdoms some portions of irrigated lands close to the

⁴⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁷¹ NAZ File S2929/5/1, C.J.K. Latham, Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in the Binga District of Rhodesia, 1967.

⁴⁷² Cernea, The Risk and Reconstruction Model, 1997.

⁴⁷³ S2929/5/1 Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in the Binga District of Rhodesia, 1967

lake, it was going to supplement dry-land farming, but this land was reserved for white settlement. Scudder suggested that construction of a series of small dams along tributaries was going to support both crop cultivation and livestock production. Binga was rich in natural resources which did not develop the district because they were regarded as a national asset. The colonial government benefited from water, fish and electricity from the Zambezi as well as wildlife for tourism and safari but did not plough back the profits to the people who had sacrificed for the construction of the dam.

Permanent loss of the Zambezi water therefore impacted greatly on BaTonga's food production and caused them to face perennial food shortages. This confirms Cernea's view that the loss of natural capital hinders livelihood reconstruction after displacement and accounts for the onset and unfolding of impoverishment. There were successive droughts in the upper Zambezi valley from the second year of forced resettlement which resulted in massive hunger and famine in Binga. The Native Affairs Department recorded that there was drought in 1959, 1963, 1965, 1966, 1968, 1978, and 1980⁴⁷⁴. BaTonga confirmed this and said, "Food became scarce after we came here. I could only harvest a little grain enough to feed my children for two to three months. The rest of the year we were hungry".⁴⁷⁵ The District Officer also agreed when he reported that, "Without boreholes being sunk inland, much of the presently occupied land would be uninhabitable."⁴⁷⁶ These boreholes only provided water for drinking and domestic use and most of them dried up soon after resettlement hence they began to face food shortages because there were no irrigation schemes developed.

The political economy of Rhodesia in which BaTonga livelihoods existed did not consider fair distribution of natural resources such as water from the Lake nor land in the drawdown area to the Africans a priority. According to Scudder, the potential use of Kariba water for irrigation was not investigated as part of the project of construction of the dam. Several irrigation schemes could have been established around the reservoir, and drawing water from this Lake, and the amount of water that was going to be extracted by these irrigation schemes was going to be too

⁴⁷⁴ Muyambi, NADA, 1980, p.138.

⁴⁷⁵ Interview with Syamabbuyu at Dumbwe, on 18 January 2020.

⁴⁷⁶ S2929/5/1 Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in the Binga District of Rhodesia

low to have any impact on power generation. The government failed to address the underlying problems which put BaTonga in a hunger trap and neglected them after resettlement as the Native Department reported that “the people of the Zambezi Valley are hard pressed and find the problem of daily survival more difficult.”⁴⁷⁷ Although the colonial authorities realized that hunger was severely affecting the people after resettlement, they did not take any active steps to mitigate against food insecurity.

Although BaTonga had no control over crop losses due to drought, they attempted to adapt to the new context by building long term strategies necessary for livelihood. Scoones postulates that it is necessary for rural people to diversify their livelihoods through changes in agrarian production or migration in order to escape from poverty.⁴⁷⁸ The people were not allowed to migrate from the agriculturally unproductive land even though the District Commissioner reported that, “The Batonga had a poor grain year, and are finding food difficult to come by at present (December 1959).”⁴⁷⁹ Hunger and famine persisted in the district for many years but the colonial government did nothing to make available the water from the newly formed Lake for irrigation of crops.

In predicting the way people respond to risks, shocks, stresses and uncertainty, the SLF regard the poor not as passive victims in contexts of vulnerability but as proactive agents in securing their livelihoods. BaTonga people attempted to achieve household food security by developing farming systems necessary for survival. They deployed various survival strategies to mitigate against the risks of crop failure. It became necessary to adopt climate smart technologies such as extensive cultivation of drought resistant crops. As maize (*kaile*) became a high-risk crop in the absence of water for irrigation, they coped by producing more of drought tolerant small grains because of their lower risk of failure in the arid environment. Sorghum became their major food crop as they cultivated a drought resistant dwarf variety called *maila* which ripened faster than either millet or mealies⁴⁸⁰. They developed this variety through cross pollination of different

⁴⁷⁷ NAZ File S2827/2/2/3/3 Internal Affairs Annual District Reports, Binga District, 1959.

⁴⁷⁸ Ian Scoones, Livelihoods Perspectives and Rural Development, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 2009.

⁴⁷⁹ S2827/2/2/3/3 Internal Affairs Annual District Reports, Binga District, 1959.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid.

short varieties and managed to come up with *maila* which ripened in about ninety days and managed to abate hunger unlike the long-term varieties which remained longer in the fields.

A major strategy for building resilience to drought involved increasing crop diversity through mixed cropping on the same piece of land. BaTonga had to intercrop two or more crops simultaneously in the same field. They grew millet, maize and sorghum as their staple foods but in order to improve the chances of harvesting at least some grain, Manyena noted that communities in Simatelele area intercropped staple grains with vegetables such as okra and beans.⁴⁸¹ In many communities people first planted sorghum or millet which took more time in the fields before it became ripe, and then after germination, they planted, pumpkins, beans, cowpeas, cucumbers, cucurbits and water melons which could ripen earlier before the main harvest of sorghum or millet. BaTonga exercised agency to solve their hunger problems as they planted sorghum, millet and maize together in the same field.⁴⁸²

As BaTonga struggled to mitigate the impact of drought, they reported that the colonial authorities condemned mixed cropping as wasteful. Chambers agrees with these sentiments as he points out that expatriates in West Africa regarded the method as backward and branded the farmers as “primitive, conservative, ignorant, lazy and unprogressive.”⁴⁸³ The European farmers were used to large, geometrical farms and mechanised row-planting, weeding and harvesting. However, BaTonga did not focus on the untidiness of the field but on the appropriateness of the method to their context. Intercropping up to three grain crops after resettlement became necessary in order to increase yields as different root systems exploited different levels in the soil profile for moisture and nutrients.⁴⁸⁴ More important, the people indicated that plants such as cowpeas, pumpkins and watermelons covered much of the soil surface and conserved the much-needed moisture from rapid evaporation from the soil surface more effectively than millet or sorghum planted alone. It has also been proven that planting nitrogen-fixing plants such as

⁴⁸¹ Benard Manyena, *Disaster resilience in development and humanitarian interventions*. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University, 2009, p.122

⁴⁸² Interview with Syamabbuyu at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020.

⁴⁸³ Robert Chambers, *Rural Development. Putting the Last First*, Longman Scientific and Technical, England, 1983, p.87.

⁴⁸⁴ David Gibbon and Adam Pain, *Crops of the Drier Regions of the Tropics*, Longman Scientific and Technical, United Kingdom, 1988, p.41.

beans and cowpeas could fertilize non-nitrogen fixing plants such as millet and sorghum and this was an advantage because the soils were poor and BaTonga did not add artificial fertilisers.⁴⁸⁵

Mixed cropping became an important method of farming as growing a variety of crops enabled households to have a more varied food supply over a longer period. The informants mentioned that they domesticated some nutritious wild vegetables to alleviate hunger and malnutrition which became common after resettlement. Loss of their riverbank gardens reduced production but vegetables such as pumpkin leaves and okra were ready for eating after a month of planting, followed by cowpeas, pumpkins, watermelons, sugar cane and cucumbers. Early maturing crops were eaten in the fields as women and children guarded flowering sorghum from birds and animals before the main harvest which was ready in April, and this contributed to food security. “We could get different types of crops and fresh vegetables for food from the same field from January to April”.⁴⁸⁶ This confirms de Haan’s argument that agency enables livelihood to adapt and to develop in the long run.⁴⁸⁷ BaTonga women emphasised that watermelons, some leafy vegetables and cucumbers usually could not fail when other crops were scotched by the sun during the long dry spells.

Mixed cropping helped to reduce labour requirements in this region where they had to practice extensive farming to meet basic subsistence food requirements after the loss of their best land. They did not have draught power necessary for land preparation because of the prevalence of tsetse fly which killed livestock. Instead of preparing many fields for different crops, a household could cut trees on one patch of land on which they could grow all their crops. They would have grain, vegetables and fruits all cultivated in the same field during one rainy season. “It became easy to weed and guard one field from birds and animals during the day and at night. My wife and young children would spend the day weeding and chasing away birds and baboons”.⁴⁸⁸ Mixed cropping was therefore an effective way of managing the available natural and human capital and the risk of loss was less than that expected in many fields. This was effective as an adaptive

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁶ Interview with Twalikobila Mwiinde, Nsenga, 23 January 2020.

⁴⁸⁷ De Haan, *The Question of Development and Environment*, 2000, pp. 359-367.

⁴⁸⁸ Interview with Moomba Mungombe at Dampa on 17 January 2020.

strategy to deal with the destructive effects of drought by reducing vulnerability to crop failure and increasing their resilience.

Successive years of drought in the 1960s on the Zambezi plateau taught BaTonga to practice staggered planting of crops to reduce the risk of losing out completely in the event of protracted absence of rain during the farming season. When a sorghum crop planted during the early rains in November did not germinate well, they would plant a second crop in the same field to fill in the gaps when more rains came. A field could have two or more different sizes of the same crop mixed with other varieties of vegetable crops and legumes. According to Chambers, this is a sophisticated indigenous method which combines different heights, root depths and maturity periods so that plants planted during different periods complemented each other in the use of light, water and nutrients.⁴⁸⁹ BaTonga claimed that they just ensured that spacing between the plants would be sufficient enough to allow enough sunlight necessary for optimum plant growth. One villager said that “The ears of sorghum and millet did not ripen at the same time making it possible for more than one harvest in a field”.⁴⁹⁰

Scoones argues that livelihood adaptation, vulnerability and resilience are important indicators in assessing livelihood sustainability. As drought persisted in the region, BaTonga struggled every year to produce enough food for households’ consumption. Some people stated that in a good year, the harvest during the post-displacement years was only enough for household consumption. However, the major problem was their inability to produce a surplus of grain in any agricultural season which they could store and eat when crops failed. This compromised their ability to deal with the recurrent drought and other risks. One woman complained that “My mother used to produce a lot of food for us to eat at the River. She even sold green mealies to Siabuwa (upland BaTonga and BaShangwe people) every year and bought us clothes and beads. But look at me now, I cannot even feed my children!” Failure to produce surplus grain for trade affected the accumulation of financial and physical assets such as livestock which could be traded

⁴⁸⁹ Chambers, *Rural Development*, 1983, p.87.

⁴⁹⁰ Interview with Moomba Mungombe at Dampa on 17 January 2020.

for grain when crops failed. If ever there was a surplus, it was usually in form of watermelons, cucumbers and cucurbits which could not be sold for long.

Forced displacement and resettlement deprived BaTonga of their water and alluvial fields and exposed them to persistent drought on the Zambezi plateau. Their coping and adaptive measures to drought could not guarantee food security because on the soils were not suitable for farming and crops could be destroyed by wildlife. Drought and famine are the major causes of vulnerability to peasant farmers in peripheral regions in Zimbabwe hence it is crucial to understand the ways in which BaTonga communities had to withstand this threat. An insight into their coping mechanisms helps to assess the potential of farming as a livelihood on the Zambezi plateau.

2. Infertile soils

Forced displacement and resettlement also robbed BaTonga of rich alluvial soils on the banks of the Zambezi River where they could plant and harvest food two or three times a year as discussed in chapter 1. Their fields were inundated, and they were resettled in a region with loose sandy soils which were nutrient deficient. The colonial government was aware that about nine thousand people were resettled in Lubu valley where only less than eight percent of the land was considered suitable for agriculture.⁴⁹¹ Involuntary displacement undermined the capacity to secure livelihoods as the colonial government did not provide a rehabilitation programme to assist in the recovery process of BaTonga beyond resettlement.

After experiencing hunger soon after resettlement due to the 1959 drought, BaTonga had to go beyond limitations caused by displacement and neglect by the State. They adopted slash-and-burn farming as the major source of food because they lived in smaller villages in the vast land with mopani forests. Cultivation of drought tolerant crops such as sorghum (*maila*) and bulrush millet (*nzembwe*), as well as cucurbits (*myuungu*) and sesame (*bwengo*) on these fields helped to improve food security and nutrition.⁴⁹² The soils were so nutrient deficient that they practiced a form of land rotation whereby they cleared a piece of land which was utilised until its fertility

⁴⁹¹ NAZ File S3599/389 Correspondence, Secretary for Mines, Land and Surveys, 1956.

⁴⁹² NAZ File NB6/1/3-4 Native Commissioner's Annual Reports

diminished after four to five years because they could not afford inorganic fertilisers. A new field could produce high yields of sorghum for three to six years, after which it was abandoned to lie fallow for five to ten years. Siyamunene recalled that, “We cleared the forests during winter and cut the branches which were spread to cover the whole field. We then set them on fire when they were completely dry before the rains came”.⁴⁹³ The tree stumps were not removed because they needed them to develop more shoots which could be burnt again to produce fertilizer for the soil. Slash-and-burn technique was a mitigating factor to the risks involved in farming in the harsh environment, but it was not sustainable because of increased demands for labour.

The people lacked financial capital required to apply high inputs in their cropping system. Their main resource were the trees which provided ash for potash to fertilise the soil which lacked sufficient humus, calcium and phosphorous essential for plant growth. Siyamunene said that “We had to burn the bushes and grass before sowing seeds on clear ground. We did not have a problem with weeds after burning grass.”⁴⁹⁴ In spite of this ingenuity and effort by the people to reduce risk and reconstruct livelihoods beyond displacement, the colonial authorities criticised their coping strategies and blamed the people for having “...little use of modern ideas and their lands and villages are full of tree stumps.”⁴⁹⁵ This condemnation stemmed from the skewed belief that a good farmer is one who leaves no tree standing in his field and who grew one crop in a field; the rest were weeds which needed to be cleared. The colonial authorities accused BaTonga of deforestation and land degradation but the latter traditionally regarded slash-and-burn farming as sophisticated and appropriate for taming their new environment. Periodic cutting down of trees cleared the game infested forests and destroyed the habitats of dangerous wildlife⁴⁹⁶ which threatened their lives and livelihoods.

The Rhodesian government further blamed BaTonga for their failure to adopt new methods of farming necessary for their new environment.⁴⁹⁷ They also ridiculed them as people with very limited knowledge of agriculture as they compared them with other Africans in ecologically

⁴⁹³ Interview with Siyamunene at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020.

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁵ NAZ File S2827/2/2/2/2 Correspondence on Anti-malaria spraying and tsetse control, Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1955

⁴⁹⁶ NAZ File S2827/2/3/1 Correspondence on Anti-malaria spraying and tsetse control, Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1958.

⁴⁹⁷ NAZ File S2827/2/2/3/3 Correspondence on tsetse control, Ministry of Internal Affairs, 1959

better districts such as Marandellas or Mazowe. One Native Commissioner reported that “The great bulk of the African is as backward in his agricultural methods as he was thirty years ago. Compulsion will make him mend his ways”⁴⁹⁸ White farmers depended on the use of animal traction for increasing crop yields because it enabled farmers to work faster so they criticized BaTonga for their continued dependence on the traditional hoe and digging stick in agriculture instead of adopting the modern plough. Cattle were killed by trypanosomiasis which was widespread because of wildlife hence most BaTonga households lacked draught animals to till the land.⁴⁹⁹ The Sustainable Livelihoods approach emphasises the importance of physical and financial capital in building sustainable livelihoods, but BaTonga lacked this.

Food production in the new environment remained a challenge as the colonial government did not assist them with agricultural extension workers who could teach them new soil management systems. They broadcasted sorghum or millet seeds without first digging the soil and this was assumed by the colonial government as the major reason why they got poor yields every year.⁵⁰⁰ The Tonga people adopted this method as appropriate farming methods for this extreme environment; “This land is barren. One must be careful on how to get something from it. The loose soils were not suitable for deep digging. Digging would remove all the leaves and ash of burnt trees from the roots of sorghum and millet”.⁵⁰¹ Beach supported this idea when he found out that deep ploughing was not suitable for sandy soils which lacked sufficient humus to conserve moisture necessary for plant germination and growth.⁵⁰² He argued that that deep ploughing exposed the top fertile soil to the sun therefore the use of the hoe instead of the plough conserved moisture and provided a better germination rate of seeds and in turn increased the yields.⁵⁰³

It was unfair for the colonial authorities to blame BaTonga for persistent hunger and crop failure because they had condemned Binga District as a place where farming was not sustainable as a livelihood because of many risks. They acknowledged that, “The problems of agriculture in the

⁴⁹⁸ NAZ File S1618/1951-1953, Native Commissioners Quarterly Reports, Urungwe.

⁴⁹⁹ S2827/2/2/3/3 Correspondence, tsetse control, Internal Affairs, 1959.

⁵⁰⁰ S2929/5/1 C.J.K. Latham, Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in the Binga District of Rhodesia, 1967.

⁵⁰¹ Interview with Zilikwene Mudimba at Keelamenda on 17 January 2020.

⁵⁰² David Beach, *The Shona Economy: Branches of Production*, in Robin Palmer and Neil Parsons (eds.), *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*, Heinemann, London, 1983, pp.37-65.

⁵⁰³ Ibid.

district are so formidable that it is difficult to see how any progress is to be made”⁵⁰⁴ The Northern Rhodesian government took important measures to mitigate vulnerability and improve the wellbeing of the Gwembe Tonga by availing finances for commercial farming after displacement from the Zambezi. They provided them with loans for cash crop production under the guidance of trained experts. Irrigation schemes were set up in Lusitu and Sinazongwe for market gardening and cotton cultivation which assisted them in livelihood reconstruction.

There was need to stimulate farming in Binga through providing the people with training and resources necessary for dryland farming. Scudder pointed out that no investment was made into the training of the people to develop appropriate farming systems for their new area as a package for rehabilitation of the displaced people. As late as the 1970s the whole of Binga District with a population exceeding fifty thousand people only had two agricultural assistants who trained people better farming methods. One was stationed at Siabuwa which had very few BaTonga displaced from the Zambezi, and another was in Siansali in Kariangwe. Agricultural extension services are important in training small-scale farmers in sustainable farming practices which could enhance food production. This could help in achieving sustainable food production because it has been argued that agriculture is the cornerstone of growth and poverty reduction in rural areas.

The Sustainable Livelihoods framework emphasises the importance of human capital in the realisation of livelihoods. It is the role of the State in enhancing human skills by providing education, training, medical services among other things. Training BaTonga in dryland farming and in low-cost diversifying of livelihoods was necessary for the communities to make use of the available natural, physical, financial and social assets effectively in realising sustainable livelihoods.

Ellis emphasises that land is life for many people and shortage of quality land threatens livelihoods. Deprivation of fertile land increased vulnerability and poverty in Binga.⁵⁰⁵ The land reform programmes, both the first phase of 1981-1996 and the second phase “fast-track” from

⁵⁰⁴ S2827/2/2/3/3 Correspondence, tsetse control, Internal Affairs, 1959.

⁵⁰⁵ Frank Ellis, Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification, in *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol.35, No.1, 2002 pp.1-38,

2000, have left out the people of Binga as the government was not responsive to their needs for good farming land after they lost their alluvial soils to the Kariba Dam. Instead, the district experienced an influx of Ndebele-speaking cattle owners and cash crop farmers from Lupane area who took the best land.⁵⁰⁶ According to Beach, the post-independent government relocated thousands of from the overcrowded communal areas of southern and eastern Zimbabwe into the Zambezi Valley. They were resettled into Gokwe and Binga which were occupied BaShangwe and BaTonga groups. Dzingirai pointed out that this resettlement was done for political reasons as it involved the dominant Shona and Ndebele people during election times. This can be largely true since BaTonga who were crowded in the arid and barren places such as Lubu, Sikalenge or Siachilaba were not considered for these resettlement schemes because of power relations in the State.

On the contrary, they were confronted with an influx of outsiders who were well-connected to local rulers, who plundered their best land in Sinamagonde, Kariyangwe, and Sinansengwe. “During campaigns, we heard it being announced on radios and newspapers that land was available in Binga for resettlement. We also wanted land, but they (resettled people) took the land which belonged to our children and grandchildren.”⁵⁰⁷ Dzingirai argues that traditional chiefs were bribed by politicians to welcome non-Tonga people in their areas and allocate them land on behalf of the Council.⁵⁰⁸

It can therefore be argued that lack of fertile and well-watered land affected BaTonga people’s ability to feed themselves. Although they tried to cope and adapt their farming methods to the harsh environment, the risks were so insurmountable that they got poor yields which were usually not sufficient to meet their annual grain requirements. They had to find ways to supplement the poor harvests. Farming thus failed to enhance livelihood systems and was unsustainable not only because of poor rainfall and infertile soils but also due to other factors including the threat of wildlife.

⁵⁰⁶ . Dzingirai, Every Man must settle where he wants: The Politics of Settlement in the Context of Community Wildlife Management Programme in Binga, Zimbabwe, Zambesia, XXIII (i), pp.167-175, 1996.

⁵⁰⁷ Interview with Maria Munkuli at Syabanga on 20 January 2020.

⁵⁰⁸ Ibid.

3. Inadequate labour requirements

The Sustainable Livelihood framework which is valuable to understand livelihoods and how people react to new situations requires households to have access to sufficient human capital which includes labour supply to realise their livelihood. According to Kranz, labour supply is necessary for a household to make use of natural, physical, financial and social assets effectively and transform them into different livelihood activities.⁵⁰⁹ BaTonga did not only have lower levels of key natural resources, but they were also constrained by availability of human capital. When they were evicted from the Zambezi and dumped in the mopani forests of Binga men had to face the arduous task of clearing new fields before the rainy season started. Their new villages were smaller than when they lived in the valley as they were dispersed and scattered across Binga District⁵¹⁰ hence they did not have enough labour required for clearing fields after forced relocation.

Displacement disrupted patterns of social organisation and interpersonal ties, informal networks and kinship groups as they were split into two nations. One elderly villager recalled that, “There were few homesteads here. Few people came to settle here because most rivers were dry. Our relatives went to Keelamenda where there are springs, but my father chose to settle here in Syabanga”.⁵¹¹ The average household size was about five people including children and the elderly.⁵¹² This confirms what dam opponents argue that forced displacement dismantles patterns of social organisation.⁵¹³ McDowell emphasises that displacement disrupts the social fabric of people as they are dispersed into smaller groups and are disintegrated from the tight-knit bond of kinship.⁵¹⁴

BaTonga people were resettled in a wildlife reserve which was largely avoided by people because it was infested with tsetse fly (*Glossina species*) which caused sleeping sickness in humans and nagana in livestock. Trypanosomiasis which is known as sleeping sickness was a major health

⁵⁰⁹ Kranz, The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction, 2001, p.18.

⁵¹⁰ S2929/5/1 Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in the Binga District of Rhodesia, 1967.

⁵¹¹ Interview with Maria Munkuli at Syabanga on 20 January 2020.

⁵¹² S2929/5/1 Delineation Report, 1967

⁵¹³ McDowell, Involuntary Resettlement, Impoverishment Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods, 2002.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

problem among the BaTonga. It was caused by parasitic protozoa called trypanosomes which attacked both men and domestic animals. It affected mostly the adult male population because they travelled more especially fishing or hunting. Some of the symptoms which showed up later included general body weakness and low-grade fever, uncontrollable drowsiness during the day and insomnia at night. The affected person would begin to lose his or her memory and tended to doze while seating or eating. The colonial authorities reported that a high proportion of the BaTonga people who succumbed to sleeping sickness remained “healthy carriers” of trypanosomes in their blood for many years without dying from the symptoms of the disease. The disease did not produce an epidemic situation but was another major cause of ill-health in the valley. Most of BaTonga became infected with the disease and became ill for several months without receiving treatment.

Malaria, also known as *malangazuba*, was also prevalent in the district due to the presence of the anopheles mosquito. Only two clinics were found in Siabuwa and Kariangwe; Binga District Hospital was inaccessible as it was located close to the Lake. It took eight to fourteen days for symptoms of infection with malarial parasites to be noticed. Main symptoms included fever, chills, sweating and headache. If left untreated, malarial parasites could cause brain infection, destruction of blood cells, liver failure, kidney failure, respiratory failure and eventually death. Mostly children and the elderly were susceptible to malarial deaths because of their low immunity against the disease. Although cases of fatality were low among the adult population, malaria was a major cause of ill-health after resettlement. Both malaria and sleeping sickness affected the wellbeing of many people and their ability to work for livelihood.

Scudder argues that in the Second Stage of resettlement, labour resources are strained during the first few years after resettlement when everyone is expected to build new homes and clear new fields at the same time after displacement and resettlement.⁵¹⁵ Although Cernea suggested that resettled people often must reconstruct their livelihoods under conditions of resource scarcity, BaTonga failed to create sustainable livelihoods leading to long-term hardship and

⁵¹⁵ Thayer Scudder, *The Future of Large Dams: Dealing with Social, Environmental, Institutional and Political Costs*, Earthscan, London, 2005, p.34.

impoverishment.⁵¹⁶ Clearing large fields required more human capital but their major challenge was lack of efficient tools required for such a task.

According to Scoones, sustainable livelihoods can be achieved through livelihood diversification, which includes intensification of agriculture.⁵¹⁷ It includes increased use of inputs for production, but this was not going to work in the context of BaTonga people where crop production was difficult due to many risks. As the people could not afford inputs such as artificial fertilizers and harnessing water for irrigation, they had to work hard to get some food for survival. Loss of alluvial gardens increased labour demands not only associated with the timely land preparation, but with planting, weeding and scaring of birds and baboons in these large forest fields. This was worsened by the fact that they did not have sufficient farming implements such as iron axes, hoes and ploughs to help in land preparation and for weeding larger fields. Tambule said that “When we arrived here, very few people had strong axes to cut down hard mopani trees in the bush. Most of us possessed only small hunting axes and hoes. I borrowed an axe from my neighbour, but unfortunately it broke after cutting just a few trees.”⁵¹⁸ The problem was compounded by the fact that most able-bodied men were also involved in migrant work in mines in Hwange and Kamativi. Colson noted that migrant labour of boys and young men even increased following resettlement⁵¹⁹ because of livelihood disruptions and uncertainties hence people had to mobilise the available resources to confront and mitigate these new challenges.

It is important to note that the task of clearing fields was a cost which was supposed to be borne by the State as an opportunity to improve living standards of the displaced. In Northern Rhodesia the Gwembe Tonga received cash compensation for clearing new fields at the rate of five pounds per acre per person.⁵²⁰ During same period, the Volta River Association cleared the land for farmers during the resettlement of 800 000 people due the construction of Akosombo Dam in 1956 in Ghana.⁵²¹ In Ghana again, when the Bui Dam was constructed in 2002, they paid fifty

⁵¹⁶ Michael M. Cernea, Compensation and Benefit Sharing: Why Resettlement Policies and Practices must be Reformed, *Water Science Engineering*, Vol.1, No.1, 2008, pp.89-120.

⁵¹⁷ Scoones, *Sustainable Livelihoods*, 1998, p.5.

⁵¹⁸ Interview with Tambule Munsaka at Nsenga on 23 January 2020.

⁵¹⁹ Colson, *Social consequences*, p.103.

⁵²⁰ WDC Kariba Case study p.xi

⁵²¹ Matilda Mettle, *Forced Resettlement in Ghana: The Dam and the Affected People: The Bui Hydropower Project in Ghana*, MPhil, Thesis, Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology Management, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, 2011, p.64.

Ghana Cedis (US\$32.81) support for clearing new farmlands per acre.⁵²² The Southern Rhodesian Government did not set aside money for the betterment of BaTonga because of their discriminatory policies. Scudder and Colson argue that forced eviction without policies to assist the affected people to rebuild lives can disempower them.⁵²³ Lack of compensation thus affected their capacity to adapt and build a resilient livelihood in farming.

Nevertheless, BaTonga had to overcome these challenges and use the available human resources in a better way for livelihood strategies. Social networking had been important in the form of beer parties for neighbours to help in various farming tasks.⁵²⁴ After resettlement they had to build new social relations as a planned livelihood strategy. Work parties were necessary for pooling together the available assets and to assist each other in this back-breaking toil of clearing forests on time before the rains came. They had this to say, “Women brewed some beer and *muviya* (a beverage) for the party of workers which gave them energy and morale to work for many hours. The men axed the trees while the women and children lopped in the branches using hoes, sticks and hands. No one could afford laziness; we all had to work hard and prepare land and plant before the rains came.”⁵²⁵ A field could be cleared within a short period of time before they could move on to the next household, until all members of the party had their fields cleared before the rains came. Manyena commends communities that can recover from a disaster without any external assistance as building resilience.⁵²⁶ Most households planted some crops during the first year of forced resettlement to become self-sufficient but unfortunately, they were scorched by the sun due to drought.

4. Destruction of Crops by ‘pests’

Livelihood in farming in the wilderness of Binga was also a challenge as swarms of birds which were attracted by the drought resistant crops destroyed the harvest. Grain eating birds (*tuyuni*) invaded grain fields every year from the time the first sorghum seeds appeared up to the time of

⁵²² Ibid.

⁵²³ Thayer Scudder and Elizabeth Colson, From Welfare to Development: A Conceptual Framework for the analysis of dislocated people, in A. Hansen and A. Oliver-Smith (eds.), *Involuntary Migration and Resettlement: The Problems and Responses of Resettled People*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1982, pp.267-287.

⁵²⁴ Howarth, *The Shadow of the Dam*, 1961, p.57

⁵²⁵ Interview with Syamunene at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020.

⁵²⁶ Manyena, *Disaster Resilience*, 2009, p.14.

harvesting. In Chief Siachilaba's area, people tried cultivating maize because it did not attract birds, but the crop could not do well due to sparse rainfall and hot summer temperatures.⁵²⁷ According to Kranz, the livelihoods approach focuses on the way people develop their coping and adapting livelihood strategies to achieve certain outcomes in response to a particular 'vulnerability context'.⁵²⁸ When swarms of birds descended on the ripening crop women and children had to guard the fields banging iron pots and shouting to scare the birds during the day from January up to the time of the harvest. Nevertheless, the Native Commissioner reported that, "the birds usually became fearless and disregarded beating tins and shouts, they rose and settled again, almost immediately."⁵²⁹ Lancaster noted that men also participated in scaring birds by setting snares and making many elaborate scarecrow devices across the fields as a desperate measure to secure the harvest as a desperate measure to secure the harvest.⁵³⁰

The wilderness was not good enough for farming because colonial officials also observed that monkeys and baboons were bold and destructive daytime raiders and fields had to be guarded from dawn to dusk. They jeopardized the harvest even during years of good rainfall patterns. Weinrich reported that the main cause of hunger in 1976 was crop destruction by monkeys and birds. The people confirmed this menace as one woman said, "The year when my mother died my whole field was destroyed by baboons and birds because I spent two weeks away from home. There were too many birds, and my children became tired of banging pots everyday". Reynolds and Cousin also confirmed this calamity as they recorded that the year 1985 was remembered as *Nzala Ya Buyuni* (The starvation/year of quealea birds). After three years of severe drought caused mainly by low rainfall in the early eighties, birds consumed much of the grain in the good season of 1984-85. After this catastrophe drought came again and resulted in famine remembered as *Nzala Ya Kubula Kwamvula* (The starvation / year of no rain). Therefore, the region failed to achieve food security for many years after displacement. The recurrent famine was either caused by drought or by destruction of crops by birds and wild animals.

⁵²⁷ Ibid., p.72.

⁵²⁸ Lase Kranz, *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction*, Swedish International Development Agency, 2001. p.22

⁵²⁹ S2827/2/2/3/3 Internal Affairs Annual District Reports, 1959.

⁵³⁰ Chet S. Lancaster, *The Goba of the Zambezi: Sex Roles, Economics and Change*, University of Oklahoma Press, USA, 1981, p.39.

Many years after displacement, the District Commissioner reported that, “The Tonga are in a confused state because of their relocation. They are discontented people and have resorted to alcohol to escape from the realities of their lives.” One would agree with Cernea who asserted that it is harder to reverse risks after displacement and resettlement has taken place because of many challenges faced in reversing these risks. BaTonga people tried to cope but failed to reverse the risks as they became more vulnerable to food insecurity. The recurring shocks and stresses to farming therefore resulted in impoverishment.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an insight into the challenges which BaTonga faced as they attempted to reconstruct their livelihood in farming after forced relocation on the Zambezi plateau. They attempted to adapt to their environment but the risks to farming were formidable as they failed to achieve self-sufficiency in food production. The chapter has demonstrated their agency and resilience amidst their precariousness exacerbated by continued marginalization after their forced relocation from the Zambezi. Hunger and poverty threatened their wellbeing, but they struggled to feed their families and communities by adopting an array of coping mechanisms. Interestingly, there was not yet any Non-Governmental Organisation in this region to assist them. That BaTonga could cope under the most difficult circumstances without NGOs demonstrates their agency. Their adaptive capacity was however limited by many threats to crop farming due to their limited draught power as their livestock were decimated by tsetse fly, and as they also braved this dry region of Binga with poor soils. The experience of BaTonga reveals a salient point that confirms Cernea’s argument that if the risks of development-induced displacement are not properly managed in a timely manner, it can result in long lasting impoverishing effects on the people leading to what is known as “new poverty” or “secondary poverty”. So, although I identify ways in which BaTonga coped with their plight, this chapter also illustrated the increase in general impoverishment among BaTonga as they lost essential capitals due to forced displacement and resettlement. The problem of food insecurity in Binga was not only an issue of poor rainfall but was deep rooted and pervasive due to multiple complex factors which made it difficult for the people to establish sustainable food production after displacement. The next chapter explores

conflicts between BaTonga and the government over elephants which also threatened their livelihood in farming.

CHAPTER 6: THE WILDLIFE THREAT AND COPING STRATEGIES OF BATONGA

Introduction

This chapter focuses on how displacement into the wilderness dispossessed BaTonga people of their traditional control over wildlife and affected their livelihoods. It argues that the colonial government devastated the livelihoods of BaTonga by dumping them in the wilderness after displacement without hunting rights, and the post-colonial government further marginalized them through the CAMPFIRE programme. Reckoning with marauding elephants which plundered their crops depressed farming as a livelihood and when combined with recurrent drought arguably pushed BaTonga to engage in poaching as a survival strategy.

When BaTonga were evicted from the banks of the Zambezi River following the construction of the Kariba Dam between 1957 and 1958, they were resettled in a wilderness teeming with dangerous game. The Department of Wildlife Conservation also rescued some animals including elephants trapped in the rising waters during the Operation Noah animal rescue project in 1959, as mentioned in Chapter 3. These animals also had to share the Binga District with the displaced BaTonga people. After resettlement, the Department shot and killed many dangerous animals in Binga in an attempt to stop the spread of tsetse fly to other districts bordering Binga. The Rhodesian authorities designated Chizarira Game Reserve, Matusadonha and Chete Safari areas in the district for wildlife conservation and also to stop the spread of tsetse fly. These areas are shaded green while the wards or communities are numbered on the map below.

Figure 6: Map showing wildlife conservation areas in Binga



Source: Author

This chapter discusses how Batonga people learnt to live with dangerous wildlife including elephants which threatened their livelihoods. It especially highlights the mechanisms that they adopted to cope with living with the elephants. It argues that loss of hunting rights exposed the people to the dangers of elephants roaming their communities and plundering their crops and prompted them to harm the giant mammals.

The Context

The colonial authorities marginalized BaTonga people by forcibly evicting them from the ecologically rich Zambezi River without compensation and dumped them in barren land in Binga District as discussed in the previous chapters. According to the colonial authorities, BaTonga were

dumped in Binga District which was an undisturbed habitat for wildlife because it had low agricultural potential.⁵³¹ And as a result, the people met formidable challenges of roaming wildlife outside of the national parks which plundered their crops and limited their prospects of getting a harvest. BaTonga claimed that they did not have major problems with elephants feeding on their crops before displacement because they were able to manage them through hunting. According to Tremmel, most elephants stayed near the mountains and when they did come into people's villages hunters killed them.⁵³² They were able to manage wildlife and protect themselves and their crops thus they did not experience challenging problems with the elephants. Scudder confirmed that large game used to be found in less densely populated areas in thick bushes that were far away from the villages along the river and hunting intensified when the animals came to plunder crops.⁵³³ This shows some form of harmony between BaTonga and elephants before displacement and resettlement.

Problems with wildlife started after forced eviction from the banks of the Zambezi River and resettled into a region teeming with wildlife. The colonial government claimed that wildlife was not going to be a problem to BaTonga as they confined it to protected areas. Chizarira was gazetted as a game reserve in 1963 and it attained National Park status in 1975. BaTonga inhabitants of the game reserves who had resettled there after displacement from the Zambezi River were moved in 1968 when Chizarira was fenced off and they lost their hunting grounds. Several chiefs were hostile to the eviction and settled on boundaries of the game reserve without hunting rights. They lost also access to perennial springs at Bukalabukala, Manziatuba, Siampondo, as well as Mtshezu and Chizarira perennial rivers as they were resettled on the park's boundaries.⁵³⁴ Conyers points out that large parts of the Binga district, including some of the best agricultural areas, were designated as national parks, safari areas and forest reserves, which were managed by central government agencies and were not accessible to the local population.⁵³⁵ This shows how the colonial government preferred wildlife over people: animals got perennial rivers

⁵³¹ NAZ File F429/134 Correspondence, The Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture to the Acting Director, Department of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control and Reclamation, 25 August 1956.

⁵³² Michael M. Tremmel, *The People of the Great River*, Silveira House Social Series No. 8, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1994, p.31.

⁵³³ Thayer Scudder, *Regional Planning for Parks and Wildlife in Northern Portion of Sebungwe Region, Zimbabwe*, Institute for Development Anthropology, December 1982, p.22.

⁵³⁴ Dick Pitman, *Wild Places of Zimbabwe*, Books of Zimbabwe Publishing Company (Pvt.) Ltd., Bulawayo, 1980, p.126.

⁵³⁵ Diana Conyers, *Decentralisation in Zimbabwe: A Local Perspective*, Public Administration and Development, Vol. 23, 2003, pp. 115–124

and springs as well as fertile land which could produce sufficient vegetation while the less fertile and dry land was given to BaTonga. The table below shows the land allocated to conservation and people in Binga district after resettlement.

Figure 4: Table showing land use in Binga

Land Use	Total Area in Hectares
Forest	103 500
Wildlife	235 526
Communal settlement	791 100
Total land in the district	1 130 986

Extracted from V. Dzingirai, "Take Back Your Campfire"⁵³⁶

Although colonial authorities erected high fences surrounding the Chizarira Game Reserve to control the movement of game and stop the spread of tsetse fly many animals including elephants, buffalos and rhinos lived outside the protected areas and roamed in communities bordering the protected area.⁵³⁷

The Elephant Threat

Villagers in communities close to the Chizarira national park such as Nabusenga, Sinansengwe, Sinakoma, Kabuba and Sinamagonde, as well as those close to the Lake Kariba such as Nalubuyu and Bulawayo Kraal (see the map above) suffered a lot from the wildlife menace. During fieldwork, these villagers asserted that elephants developed seasonal migration routes for food when crops were almost ripe in fields, and in search of water sources during the dry season. They would come via these routes and destroy their crops. Before displacement, they would not have been troubled by the elephants as they would have just killed them and save their livelihood.

⁵³⁶ Vupenyu Dzingirai, "Take Back Your Campfire" A Study of Local Level Perceptions to Electric Fencing in the Framework of Binga's CAMPFIRE Programme, Centre for Applied Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, 1995.

⁵³⁷ Ibid.

Hunting before displacement was not a crime because the colonial government used to regard elephants, baboons and monkeys which raided crops as “pests” which had to be shot and killed as a way of keeping them under control.⁵³⁸ For instance, in 1934, the Native Commissioner praised BaTonga Chief Simuchembu for killing an elephant using his own rifle and ammunition because of the damage they caused. He was given three pounds as a reward “to encourage others in the Zambezi Valley to perform similar services” when he sold the tusks to Trooper Linton of the British South Africa Police.⁵³⁹ However, after displacement and resettlement in 1958, it became illegal for Africans to kill and control elephants as “pests” because they were now valued more than crops. Forced displacement thus marginalized BaTonga who lost their traditional control over game. They were forced to live with wildlife, but they no longer possessed game rights as they were not allowed to kill problem animals which plundered their crops and threatened their livelihood because of various conservation laws passed since the inception of colonial rule.

Although Africans had successfully managed and controlled wildlife for many centuries, the colonial state captured and protected access to wildlife through the introduction of the Game Law Amendment Acts of 1891 and 1893. More protective and command type of legislation was introduced to protect wild animals after the rinderpest epidemic of 1896-97 almost depleted wildlife. They introduced a license system which restricted the traditional hunting by Africans. This led to the criminalization of the African hunting as they were prohibited from hunting and killing wildlife without a license. This was part of colonial subjugation which dispossessed the indigenous people of their traditional heritage in form of wildlife. More restrictive laws were passed including the Game and Fish Preservation Act of 1929 which led to the establishment of Game Reserves as part of the modern conservation measures in the colony which disempowered Africans. The indigenous people therefore lost their source of meat, medicine, hides and a safety net during periods of famine.

⁵³⁸ NAZ File S1618/1951-1953, Native Commissioners Quarterly Reports, Report from Native Commissioner, Sebungwe, December 1953

⁵³⁹ NAZ File S1542/G1/1 Correspondence between Native Commissioner, Sebungwe, and Superintendent of Natives, Fort Victoria, 20 January 1934.

The displacement and resettlement of BaTonga in 1958 coincided with the rapid expansion of the hunting safari industry in Southern Africa which led to the enforcement of conservation laws in the 1960s. The colonial authorities set up game parks and safari areas in the Zambezi Valley to promote tourism and banned all hunting without authorization in form of a license. Loss of hunting rights during the time of livelihood vulnerability after resettlement posed a severe blow to the wellbeing of BaTonga people who were traditional hunters.

BaTonga as Traditional Hunters

As mentioned in Chapter 1, BaTonga communities used to depend on hunting abundant wildlife in the Zambezi Valley for subsistence and survival during periods of famine. Beach argued that hunting to BaTonga was more prominent than cattle keeping of the Shona as a source of meat. Early travellers in the nineteenth century confirmed this as they documented that BaTonga were renowned hunters and that the valley abounded in game including elephants. In his journeys along the Zambezi Valley in 1860, David Livingstone noted that BaTonga men were great hunters of big game such as elephants, lions and buffalos.⁵⁴⁰ Hunting was a major source of livelihood, and an important aspect of life and professional hunters were respected in BaTonga societies.

Harding confirmed this and noted that there were BaTonga men “who lived by the gun” hunting using muskets. He saw heads of animals hung on trees and skins of big game on roof tops displayed as achievements of the hunters.⁵⁴¹ This shows how hunting was their life. Livingstone sheds light to this and pointed out that although every man could hunt, there were specialist hunters who were chosen by an ancestor and performed rituals which made them great hunters of big game including elephants. Livingstone allegedly met a man who claimed to change himself into a lion and would spend a whole month hunting big game including elephants for the benefit of his village.⁵⁴² While this may not be true that a person may change into a lion, it shows how hunting was not only just for fun or fame but for the benefit of the whole community for livelihood.

⁵⁴⁰ David and Charles Livingstone, Narrative, p.185

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

⁵⁴² Ibid.

Furthermore, hunting thus formed the basis of male livelihoods and these skills were passed down through countless generations, as discussed in Chapter 1. Although all men could hunt, BaTonga did not overhunt and endanger animal species as they were regulated by traditional rules which promoted conservation during reproduction seasons. Traditionally, their main weapon for hunting was the throwing spear but they also used hand axes and bows and arrows, which could not kill animals indiscriminately.⁵⁴³ Later, they began to acquire guns for killing large game such as elephants, lions, buffalos and cheetahs, as well as for protection of their crops against plundering by wildlife.⁵⁴⁴ Possession of guns did not lead to indiscriminate killing of wildlife, because hunters followed the traditional code of conduct, which maintained the ecological balance of wildlife species in the forest. Munene said that “We observed hunting seasons and certain animals were not supposed to be killed.”⁵⁴⁵ Thus, it was not necessary for the colonial government to regulate hunting through repressive hunting laws.

The passing of restrictive legislation which prohibited indigenous Africans from hunting in the name of conservation negatively affected the lives of BaTonga after resettlement. Their men were robbed of their role as providers of protein, and they had nothing else to do for livelihood as hunting was an important social and ritual event in which young men proved their manhood. Written applications for hunting permits from the Chief Forest Officer in the Department of Agriculture were required but most BaTonga were illiterate and hence could not apply for these permits. Furthermore, they did not have the money required for obtaining such hunting licenses. Their exclusion from accessing wildlife in their communities for subsistence was therefore very unfair. Those caught hunting without licenses were called poachers and were arrested or shot down by the game rangers if they resisted being arrested.

Criminalizing the hunt thus threatened their culture and social identity because “shades” (or ancestral spirits) as part of their tradition demanded men to hunt hence the people demanded game control, as reported by the District Commissioner in 1967.⁵⁴⁶ Mavhunga who documented about criminalization of the hunt in Gonarezhou National Park explored the African hunt as

⁵⁴³ Pamela Reynolds and Colleen Cousins, *Lwaano Lwanyika, Tonga Book of the Earth*, Panos Publications, London, 1993, p.113.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁵ Interview with Munene

⁵⁴⁶ S2929/1/5 C.J.K. Latham, *Delineation Report*, 1967.

spiritually guided mobility which the colonial authorities should have utilized in their quest for conservation of wildlife species.⁵⁴⁷ Criminalisation of the hunt thus agrees with Dickman's view that conflicts between people and wildlife are driven by complex social factors inherent within a community.⁵⁴⁸ BaTonga lost their self-sufficiency when all hunting was prohibited on account of wildlife conservation. This contributed to their impoverishment as argued by Cernea that marginalisation and loss of access to common property are some of the risks experienced by displaced people.

Hunting became a preserve for the white minority while indigenous people lacked protein as most communities could not keep cattle because of the prevalence of tsetse fly which also killed livestock. Considering how important hunting was to their lives and livelihood, BaTonga they felt cheated as they considered wildlife as their entitlement. One would agree with them as they regarded the prohibition as one of the ways the colonial government continued to "steal" their animals as it dispossessed them of their heritage in the same manner that they had dispossessed them of their fertile and well-watered land along the banks of the Zambezi.

The rapid expansion of the hunting safari industry in Southern Africa from the 1960s enforced conservation laws.⁵⁴⁹ After resettlement, colonial authorities set up game parks and safari areas in the Zambezi Valley to promote tourism. The anti-hunting regulations were meant to conserve the wildlife to promote tourism and trophy hunting by wealthy whites while Africans who lived with the animals were starving. BaTonga challenged trophy hunting as perpetuating discriminatory systems of colonialism as only the rich American or British sport hunters were allowed to hunt and kill selected animals as trophies because they could pay large sums of money to the government. This same government deprived BaTonga of their culture as traditional hunters of animals freely roaming on their own land and threatening their lives and livelihoods. It was even more unfair for BaTonga to be criminalized as poachers when they killed wildlife to

⁵⁴⁷ Clapperton C. Mavhunga, *The Mobile Workshop: Mobility, Technology, and Human-Animal Interaction in Gonarezhou (National Park), 1850-Present*, Doctor of Philosophy (History), The University of Michigan, 2008.

⁵⁴⁸ Dickman, *Complexities of Conflict*, 2010.

⁵⁴⁹ Francine M. Madden, *The Growing Conflict between Humans and Wildlife: Law and Policy as Contributing and Mitigating Factors*, *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy*, 11 (2), 2008, pp.189-206

feed their families and protect their fields while the trophy hunters were regarded as professional hunters.

Loss of hunting right was detrimental to livelihood as most communities could not keep cattle because of the prevalence of trypanosomiasis which also killed goats and sheep. The Ministry of Agriculture noted that the chances for the survival of BaTonga cattle and goats on the Zambezi plateau was bad because of the heavy presence of tsetse fly which fed on blood of animals and spread diseases.⁵⁵⁰ BaTonga thus felt cheated as they did not possess livestock for meat and lost their traditional hunting rights. Considering how important hunting was to them as outlined above we agree with that BaTonga considered wildlife as their entitlement and regarded the prohibition as one of the ways the colonial government continued to “steal” their animals and it dispossessed them of their heritage in the same manner that they had dispossessed them of their fertile and well-watered land along the banks of the Zambezi. BaTonga men reported that “We were robbed of our role as providers of protein. We could no longer go to the forest hence we had nothing else to do for livelihood.”⁵⁵¹ Hunting was an important social and ritual event in which young men proved their manhood. “Our grandsons do not know how to throw a spear; they cannot even kill an impala because we could no longer take them for hunting and train them to be providers of their families.”⁵⁵²

Hunting became so difficult that written applications for permits from the Chief Forest Officer in the Department of Agriculture were required but most BaTonga were illiterate and did not have money required for obtaining such hunting licenses.⁵⁵³ Mundia confirmed this when he said that “When my Uncle died, his “shade” (*Muzimo*/ancestral spirit) required me to hunt and provide meat to his family and the community but I could not get the license. I joined two other men and we would hunt at night to reduce the chances of being caught by the (game) rangers.”⁵⁵⁴ Hunting without a license was risky because those caught breaching the Law were called poachers and were either arrested or shot down by the game rangers. Criminalizing the hunt thus threatened their

⁵⁵⁰ NAZ File F429/134 Correspondence, The Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture to the Acting Director, Department of Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control and Reclamation, 25 August 1956

⁵⁵¹ Interview with Tambule Munsaka in Nsenga on 23 January 2020

⁵⁵² Ibid.

⁵⁵³ NAZ File S1542/G1/1, Correspondence between Native Commissioner and Superintendent of Natives, Fort Victoria, 20 June 1934.

⁵⁵⁴ Interview with Tambule Munsaka

culture and social identity because “shades” as part of their tradition demanded them to hunt hence the people demanded game control.⁵⁵⁵ Mavhunga explored the African hunt as spiritually guided mobility which the colonial authorities should have utilized.⁵⁵⁶ Dickman proved that conflicts between people and wildlife are driven by complex social factors inherent within a community.

BaTonga resented prohibition of hunting animals outside the national parks as this further marginalized them after loss of entitlements due to forced displacement in 1958. This caused so much conflict between the government authorities and BaTonga, as well as between the people and wildlife. BaTonga sometimes killed the animals indiscriminately and wounded many animals which they could not eat when they used snares. This threatened conservation efforts because it was wasteful hence the colonial officials criminalised all hunting without a license. According to Dickman, human-wildlife conflicts are often a manifestation of underlying human-human conflicts such as between authorities and local people. As argued above, social factors strongly influenced the conflict between BaTonga and the colonial authorities about elephants in the district. The colonial authorities provoked BaTonga people by resettling them in the wilderness but denied them control of wildlife to protect themselves and their livelihood.

The CAMPFIRE programme and marginalization of BaTonga

After the attainment of independence in 1980, BaTonga had prospects of restoration of control of wildlife as well as other entitlements lost during their forced displacement from the Zambezi River, but the new government inherited all the restrictive colonial laws of conservation of wildlife. The postcolonial government which came to power in 1980 did not repeal the colonial laws which centralized control and management of wildlife and discriminated against Africans. Instead, this new government introduced new forms of strict control and conservation of wildlife through the Communal Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE).

The government through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWM) developed the CAMPFIRE as a wildlife policy in 1989 to involve community members in wildlife

⁵⁵⁵ S2929/5/2 C.J.K. Latham, Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in The Binga District of Rhodesia, 1966.

⁵⁵⁶ Mavhunga, The Mobile Workshop, 2008.

management and conservation by giving them some incentives to conserve wildlife resources. According to Hasler, the CAMPFIRE conservation strategy was established because of the fear that the human-wildlife conflict was going to decimate the elephant populations due to poaching.⁵⁵⁷ In principle, community members would fully manage wildlife through selling hunting rights and use the income for infrastructural development. They would also receive compensation for crop losses and thus regard wildlife as an alternative livelihood to farming. During the first ten years from 1989, the Binga Rural District Council received money from the CAMPFIRE donors which was used to build classroom blocks and annex schools in Lusulu, Nsenga, Manjolo and Simatelele.⁵⁵⁸ However, some of the community representatives and committee members abused some of the money and it did not benefit people who suffered because of roaming elephants.

The CAMPFIRE strategy was mainly funded by the United States International Aid for Development.⁵⁵⁹ As a donor-funded organization, the CAMPFIRE project was primarily used to serve national and global rather than local interests. The programme was imposed upon the people whose views and interests were not considered. Elephants are the world's largest land animals which were regarded as an endangered species and were not supposed to be killed. The Western nations therefore put pressure on the postcolonial government to prioritise these mammals over the right of communities bordering national parks. Animal life was arguably valued much more than the life of a poor MuTonga person. The government complied because of the fear that if elephants were to be culled, Western nations would boycott tourism in the country which was the major source of foreign currency in the country.

According to Dzingirai, the CAMPFIRE programme did not bring much money to local communities because it failed to empower the local people who lived with wildlife.⁵⁶⁰ Its major concern was upon wildlife conservation according to the interests of the Western funders of the project who empowered the rural district councils at the expense of local communities. The Binga

⁵⁵⁷ Richard Hasler, *Political Ecologies of Scale and the Multi-Tiered Co-Management of Zimbabwean Wildlife Resources under CAMPFIRE*, Centre for Applied Science Occasional Paper, University of Zimbabwe, 1993.

⁵⁵⁸ V. Dzingirai, *Every Man must settle where he wants: The Politics of Settlement in the Context of Community Wildlife Management Programme in Binga, Zimbabwe, Zambezia*, XXIII (i), pp.167-175, 1996.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid.

Rural District Council was responsible for selling contracts to safari hunters who managed trophy animals. The project thus failed to deal with the command nature of wildlife management inherited from the colonial government. Although communities bordering Chizarira National Park in Binga suffered from marauding elephants, the Binga Rural District Council controlled the wildlife revenue from CAMPFIRE. For instance, Sinakoma community which had significant elephant populations was ranked by the Council in 1999 as one of the most underdeveloped communities in the district.⁵⁶¹ CAMPFIRE could not provide enough dividends to construct a healthcare facility, a road for accessibility or a borehole in the community.⁵⁶²

Furthermore, instead of empowering local people, the programme reinforced the discriminatory colonial conservation laws which prohibited any form of unlicensed hunting and reserved the killing of big game to tourist and safari activities. This was mainly because the conservation of endangered species such as elephants was no longer a national issue regulated by the government but was now overseen by the international community. The CAMPFIRE project also paved way for corruption as the elite sought to benefit from sport hunting at the expense of the indigenous populations. As shown above, traditional BaTonga hunting benefited both households and communities, but trophy hunting arguably brought in economic gain for the Binga Rural District Council (hereafter referred to as the Council) and the government but had no meaningful value for local communities who had to reckon with the elephants. According to Scudder, Safari operators charged \$2000 for shooting a bull elephant in Binga in 1989 but none of the income had been invested in the construction and upgrading of infrastructure.⁵⁶³ Later, the revenue increased as Trophy Hunters paid US \$36,000 to \$70,000 for an elephant hunt, and \$65,000 to \$140,000 to hunt lions in the country.⁵⁶⁴ However, this money did not reach the poor communities whose members sacrificed their lives and livelihoods living with the elephants as pervasive corruption hit the hunting industry in general and Binga District in particular.

⁵⁶¹ Bernard Manyena, *Disaster resilience in development and humanitarian interventions*. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University. 2009, <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/661>, p.118.

⁵⁶² Ibid.

⁵⁶³ Thayer Scudder, *Regional Planning for Parks and Wildlife in Northern Portion of Sebungwe Region, Zimbabwe*, Institute for Development Anthropology, December 1982, p.22.

⁵⁶⁴ Rachel Nuwer, *Hunt Elephants to Save Them? Some Countries See No Other Choice*, Dec. 4, 2017.

Villagers in Nchenga complained that the governments control over wildlife and over parks enriched the ruling party Ministers in Matebeleland North Province which was endowed with elephants and rhinoceros which were priced for their horns. BaTonga shared Scudder's sentiments when they complained that "Influential politicians and Council officials here always benefit from ivory sales. They drive big cars and build big houses at Binga Centre. Their children go to school in Bulawayo and attend universities out of the country. But they are not bothered by the elephants. We live with the elephants and lose our crops every year and we are starving. CAMPFIRE does not give us food nor meat to eat." This shows how complex the conflict had become. It was now conflict over control of the wildlife income which did not benefit the victims of wildlife menace. This was not only unique to Binga because Alexander and McGregor confirm that the CAMPFIRE programme failed to develop local communities as Nkayi and Lupane never received substantial revenue from game.

According to Magadza, CAMPFIRE disenfranchised and marginalized BaTonga as it did not give them the opportunity to dominate wildlife.⁵⁶⁵ During fieldwork, BaTonga complained that the project did not give them real rights and responsibilities as primary beneficiaries of the wildlife revenue. They wanted to be fully involved in decision making on getting rid of the problem animals outside the national park which periodically raided their crops. They were not allowed to hunt and kill the elephants which traumatized them by raiding their crops and threatened to kill them. Villagers battled to survive in face of many risks of crop loss due to elephants and other ecological challenges. They had to compete with the mammals for living space when they did not see any direct benefit from CAMPFIRE. Therefore, the programme failed to give them a livelihood as it was imposed on the people, and it did not address the root cause of the human-wildlife conflict in Binga.

The CAMPFIRE strategy largely failed to solve BaTonga's livelihood challenges, and they remained vulnerable to food shortages. This proves what Jani wrote that human-wildlife conflicts emanate from the underlying and deeper human-human conflicts between different stakeholder groups

⁵⁶⁵ Christopher H.D. Magadza, *Kariba Reservoir: Experience and Lessons Learned in Brief*, World Commission on Dams, Dams and Development, Earthscan, London, 2003, pp.205-223.

with divergent ideas on how wildlife should be managed.⁵⁶⁶ One village said that, “During periods of drought, we did not receive meat to keep our children alive and we felt cheated”.⁵⁶⁷ The Council claimed that since CAMPFIRE started it had never been able to harvest wildlife for the purposes of providing people with meat because each year it has been forced to defer its intended cropping to a date in the future when there would be surplus wildlife. To add on, it was reported that 65 percent of BaTonga children in Omay aged between seven months and two years were undernourished while 47% of children aged two to three years were stunted because of lack of protein energy.⁵⁶⁸ It shows how serious the deprivation of meat was to the people that children died of malnutrition in a land of plenty of wildlife resources. The conservationists argued that shooting elephants for feeding BaTonga people would jeopardise them of revenue from trophy hunting. This uncaring attitude arguably shows that the local people were not the intended beneficiaries of the CAMPFIRE project.

The main contention between conservation authorities and BaTonga centered around the fact that the CAMPFIRE programme failed to compensate BaTonga for the crop losses caused by wildlife on their fragile livelihood. Prior to displacement, BaTonga used to hunt and kill wild animals which destroyed their crops and benefited from the meat and hides, as discussed above. As conservation of wildlife became more important than peoples’ livelihoods, villagers claimed that “the National Parks authorities ignored us and took long to respond to damage of crops by elephants. Sometimes they completely failed to come to shoot the problem animals”⁵⁶⁹ Furthermore, requesting compensation for crop destruction involved reporting the loss to National Parks officials who had to make a visual assessment of the damage together with Agricultural Technical Extension Services (AGRITEX) staff.⁵⁷⁰ However, the lack of standardized assessment guidelines and compensation approaches created more conflict and corruption which disadvantaged and impoverished the people.

⁵⁶⁶ Vincent Jani Disputes, Relationships and Identity: Analysing Human-Human Conflicts as a Basis for Human-Wildlife Conflicts in the Mid-Zambezi Valley, Northern Zimbabwe, PhD Thesis, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa, 2018, p.9.

⁵⁶⁷ Interview with Twalikobila Munenge on 20 January 2021, Nchenga

⁵⁶⁸ Parade, August 1986, A Land of Naked Youths.

⁵⁶⁹ Interview with Twalikobila Munenge on 20 January 2021, Nchenga.

⁵⁷⁰ Scudder, Regional Planning for Parks, 1982, p.28

Scudder pointed out that the National Parks Staff tended to play down the extent of crop raiding as elephants had more economic value to the state.⁵⁷¹ It was also difficult to find transport from areas bordering Chizarira National Park to go to Binga Centre to report destruction of crops and sometimes the authorities had no transport to come and assess the damage. Scudder ascertained that the National Parks authority were too busy to respond promptly. "Today if you give a report that elephants are a problem, you are referred to CAMPFIRE. CAMPFIRE do nothing in turn."⁵⁷² It is important to note that payment of compensation has never been effective in alleviating conflict between people and wildlife as the hidden costs were not compensated. The people arguably remained losers in the CAMPFIRE programme as they were not compensated for disruption of sleep nor of education of children guarding fields scaring away elephants at night.

Since National Parks authorities were funded by international donor agents who regarded elephants as resources that should serve global interests more than local livelihoods, they arrogantly urged affected villagers to tolerate the troublesome elephants and learn to coexist with them. BaTonga's animosity towards the giant mammals was worsened by the fact that National Parks officials did not shoot the problem elephants. Twalikobila said that "(National) Parks people took long to come (to assess the damaged crops). When they eventually came carrying their guns, many times they did not shoot the problem elephants because they usually claimed that they were nursing young calves. They left them to continue plundering our crops and threaten to kill us."⁵⁷³

This uncaring attitude led to more destruction of crops hence it can be argued that elephants' life mattered more than human life. BaTonga reasoned that the government through the Department of Parks and Wildlife Management would rather kill people to save the elephants. It was reported that many people were killed by wildlife, but it was under-reported.⁵⁷⁴ This silence about the loss of human life and livelihoods arguably did not match how highly vocal these conservationists were on animal rights. They clearly showed that they were not in favour of the idea that elephant foraging needs were much more important than their crops. Wildlife had failed

⁵⁷¹ Ibid.

⁵⁷² Interview with Twalikobila .

⁵⁷³ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴ Parade, August 1986, A Land of Naked Youths.

to replace agriculture as the main source of food and income, as claimed by principles of CAMPFIRE. The report that in Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE communities, elephants destroyed over 17,000 acres of crops from 2010 to 2015, and along with other animals, elephants have killed 139 community members⁵⁷⁵ shows how bad the situation was.

Coping with the wildlife threat

When it became clear to BaTonga people that the government was not going to grant them permission to manage troublesome animals roaming in their communities, they had to come up with ways of coping with this nuisance and threat to food security. These included demanding game control, guarding their fields to protect their crops, as well as killing and maiming the animals, particularly elephants.

Although all hunting without a license was prohibited and BaTonga could not afford these licenses, the people demanded game control to protect their crops from being plundered by roaming elephants. The chiefs sent representatives to the District Commissioner to demand their hunting rights of animals outside of the game protected areas, but they were denied such rights.⁵⁷⁶ It was unfair for the government to deny them permission to hunt and control wildlife roaming in their communities and causing crop destruction. Farming had become their source of livelihood after displacement, but it was now under threat from wildlife.

The District Commissioner reported in 1967 that BaTonga had conflict with the Game Department because they were not allowed to shoot crop raiders for meat.⁵⁷⁷ It was also recorded that after suffering from frequent famines caused by destruction of crops by game, the people of Simuchembu Chiefdom bordering Chizarira National Park sought for government permission to trap these wild animals for meat, but they were denied the permission. It is interesting to note that this was the same community which was encouraged to shoot elephants as pests in 1933 when their chief was given a reward of three pounds for killing an elephant using

⁵⁷⁵Rachel Nuwer, *Hunt Elephants to Save Them? Some Countries See No Other Choice*, Dec. 4, 2017

⁵⁷⁶ NAZ File S2929/5/2 C.J.K. Latham, *Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in The Binga District of Rhodesia*, 1967.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

his own gun before resettlement.⁵⁷⁸ Elephants were now regarded as important for tourism and safari hunting over the livelihoods of BaTonga after displacement. This discrimination and exclusion disadvantaged the people and jeopardized their source of food from hunting and farming.

The risk of crop destruction persisted for generations and worsened BaTonga's vulnerability to hunger and poverty as they never regained their hunting rights from successive governments. They had to scare the giant mammals from plundering their crops at night their crops. To do that, families had to spend nights in the fields for several months screaming and beating iron pots from field shelters (built on stilts) to scare away the elephants. They also set fires on the edges of fields, burning chilies or rags soaked in used oil for the smoke to irritate the elephants. These methods were however time consuming, risky and not very effective because sometimes the elephants ignored them and destroyed their crops. This was so bad that in 1967 the District Officer had to report to his superiors that there was hunger in many areas of the district because many crops had been destroyed by elephants despite the people's efforts in scaring the elephants.⁵⁷⁹

Although guarding and protecting fields of sorghum required human capital which became a challenge to many households, people had to take turns to sleep in the fields every night from February to May to minimize the damage to crops. During interviews, one woman said that when she was young, she used to walk five kilometres with her young brother from Simandala Village in Bulawayo Kraal to spend the nights guarding the fields near Logola river. After spending sleepless nights banging pots they had to bath in the river in the morning and go straight to school (Simatelele Primary School, which was fourteen kilometres away) without eating anything. After school they went home and eat, then went back again to sleep in the fields.⁵⁸⁰ This persistence shows how the people were determined to secure the harvest and prevent hunger in their families before the coming of free food handouts by NGOs. Children would rather perform poorly in school due to lack of sleep or dropouts before completing primary education because they had

⁵⁷⁸ NAZ File S1542/G1/1 Correspondence between Native Commissioner, Sebungwe, and Superintendent of Natives, Fort Victoria, 20 January 1934.

⁵⁷⁹ NAZ File S2929/5/2 C.J.K. Latham, Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in The Binga District of Rhodesia, 1967

⁵⁸⁰ Interview with Sister Chekacheka, Simandala, 22 January 2020

no alternative sources of food. However, dropping out of school to secure the harvest further impoverished the people as most of the m remained largely illiterate and unemployable.

Nevertheless, the scaring of elephants at night endangered their lives of many people who were sometimes trampled to death by these hungry animals during the fight for the ripening crops. Many people lost their lives, and it was just reported and recorded by the authorities who did not compensate families for such losses. Furthermore, scaring of elephants was also not very effective because sometimes the animals ignored them and destroyed their crops. One man from Donga whose crops were destroyed every year as the elephants made their trips from Chizarira to the Zambezi desperately killed an elephant and tied its skeletal head on a tree in his field to warn other elephants of imminent death. This also was not very helpful to deter the hungry giant mammals which caused havoc in their fields as they consumed about of 150 kilograms of forage and 190 litres of water daily. The national park and safari areas had exceeded their carrying capacity ss the elephant population increased at levels that adversely impacted on biodiversity conservation. The table below shows the general increase in elephant population in the whole country. This gives an insight into the increase of elephants in Binga district which had to feed on people's crops as foraging areas in parks and safari areas were depleted.

Figure 4: Table showing Elephant Population in Zimbabwe

Census Year	1980	1983	1989	1993	1995	1998
Estimated population	46 426	49 082	58 672	58 185	64 478	70 000

*Extracted from F.M. Madden, The Growing Conflict.*⁵⁸¹

According to Dickman, social and cultural perceptions and history of a community influence the way they perceive the risk of crop damage by wildlife.⁵⁸² BaTonga generally did not tolerate elephants as interviews with villagers in Nalubuyu revealed that although birds and baboons caused more damage to their crops, the people could tolerate them more than elephants which they felt could be restricted to game parks. Many people just dreaded elephants roaming their

⁵⁸¹ Francine M. Madden, The Growing Conflict between Humans and Wildlife: Law and Policy as Contributing and Mitigating Factors, *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy*, 11 (2), 2008, pp.189-206

⁵⁸² Dickman, *Complexities of Conflict*, 2010.

villages, and they became hostile towards the animals. They claimed that these giant mammals “could uproot fruit trees, destroy our pole and dagga houses or trample people to death.”⁵⁸³ One villager from Nsenga said she always developed a bout of diarrhoea caused by fear whenever elephants came to plunder her crops.⁵⁸⁴ This agrees with Dickman’s view that poverty reduces coping ability and adaptive capacity to respond to harvest losses by crop-raiding elephants.⁵⁸⁵ The poor farmers lacked alternative livelihood assets and coping strategies after destruction of their crops by elephants hence they responded with hostility to this challenge.

According to McDowell, there is need to ascertain how people respond to the risk of the processes of impoverishment.⁵⁸⁶ As CAMPFIRE failed to address the problem of wildlife in Binga, BaTonga communities had to find ways of coping and adapting to the dangers of marauding elephants and state neglect to make a living in the hostile land. Instead of working as partners, the people arguably became adversaries with the conservation authorities over wildlife management. The conflict escalated and manifested itself as the people’s conflict with wildlife as represented by elephants when it became apparent that parks officials were more concerned about protecting elephants than the local people’s livelihoods. Since the issue of wildlife conservation had no local Tonga support, most hunters defied the anti-poaching regulations and began killing the elephants which came to their communities. One would agree with Madden that communities sharing boundaries with wildlife may reduce cooperation with conservation authorities if they feel that the needs of wildlife are being prioritised over theirs, or that they are being excluded from decision making.⁵⁸⁷

Quarrels between the Game Rangers, the National Parks authorities and BaTonga were inevitable as it became difficult for the communities to comply with the strict hunting regulations. Alexander and McGregor argued that past experiences of communities shaped people’s attitude to game under the CAMPFIRE programme. They retaliated to the wildlife menace of wildlife by

⁵⁸³ Interview with Judith Mleya, Nsenga.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ Dickman, *Complexities of Conflict*, 2010.

⁵⁸⁶ Christopher McDowell *Involuntary resettlement, Impoverishment Risks, and Sustainable Livelihoods*, *The Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies*, Volume 2: 2002.

⁵⁸⁷ Francine M. Madden, *The Growing Conflict between Humans and Wildlife: Law and Policy as Contributing and Mitigating Factors*, *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy*, 11 (2), 2008, pp.189-206.

killing or wounding the animals using wire snares near watering holes.⁵⁸⁸ Cernea argued that if counteractive action is not taken on time, potential risks of displacement may manifest as disasters. Although they were powerless and could not influence change of wildlife policy, poverty, and lack of viable livelihoods unified BaTonga people who killed the elephants risking being arrested for poaching. They had to cope by fighting with the actual menace because the authorities had failed to deal with the problem.

The government authorities called these coping mechanism “poaching.” Pitman who toured Chizarira National Park in 1979 reported that “The conflict in Chizarira has erupted in the form of a particularly extensive and malignant poaching epidemic.”⁵⁸⁹ He noted that BaTonga mainly used wire snares and traps to kill elephants, buffalos and rhinoceros. They got these wires from game and veterinary fences, using lines of up to two hundred snares, each more than one metre in diameter and built from nine or ten strands of wire. These snares could kill elephants by entangling them in wire and stripped the skin to the bone.

BaTonga people had to fall back on their traditional knowledge systems which had been disregarded by the conservation authorities when they passed laws to prohibit them from hunting. According to Thomas Baines, traditionally the BaTonga were fearless hunters of elephants using the throwing spear. “They would fire the grass down by the river and drive the elephant and the buffalo to the creep right up to them before striking them with their spears.”⁵⁹⁰ This knowledge helped them kill elephants without necessarily using guns which could alarm the Game Rangers who were trained to ruthlessly shoot all poachers dead at first sight.

One man from Bulawayo Kraal argued that “Sometimes when a herd of elephants raided our fields, out of sheer desperation we indiscriminately maimed and injured them using slings made from sling of baobab twine. We would hurl the slings from our shelters and cause confusion among the herd by aiming for the eyes or legs. The hurled stones could cause an elephant to trumpet and fall maybe some distance because of the injury.”⁵⁹¹ If they wounded a tusked bull, they would track it for its precious ivory. Baines confirms this because he said that traditionally,

⁵⁸⁸ Interview with Judith Mleya at Binga Centre

⁵⁸⁹ Dick Pitman, *Wild Places of Zimbabwe*, Books of Zimbabwe Publishing Company (Pvt.) Ltd., Bulawayo, 1980, p.126.

⁵⁹⁰ J.P.R. Wallis, Thomas Baines, Explorer and Artist 1820-1875, Books of Zimbabwe, 1982, p.140.

⁵⁹¹ Interview with Tambule Munsaka, Nsenga

BaTonga excelled in following the track of a wounded animal. They then tracked the animals until they became sick and were isolated from the rest of the herd of elephants.⁵⁹² It became less risky to kill them using spears and remove their tusks with an axe.

Traditional hunters organised themselves into groups to kill the problem animals by tracking them using their spoor as they knew when the elephants made trips to the watering holes and rivers. BaTonga men were good at tracking down animals. They targeted the bull elephants for ivory which could be easily smuggled into Zambia across the Lake Kariba because of kinship ties and links with the Gwembe Tonga. They worked together with Zambian BaTonga hunters who possessed modern guns, getaway cars and ready markets for wildlife products. The demand for game meat and ivory was high in Zambia and there was less monitoring of poaching activities. Furthermore, prices were higher in Zambia where a single elephant tusk could be sold for US\$500. It was easier to evade the National Parks officials who regularly patrolled the Lake Kariba as they had studied their movements. Sometimes BaTonga poachers canoed the crocodile infested waters into Zambia where they delivered ivory, dried meat or hides of animals to customers. The Zambian Wildlife Authority's enforcement of anti-poaching regulations was weaker and underfinanced due to declining economy and falling copper prices from the 1990s when compared with the Zimbabwean National Parks which was sponsored by NGOs interested in conservation. This confirms what Dickman suggested that vulnerability and lack of wealth often inflames conflict and determines levels of hostility felt towards wildlife.⁵⁹³

Illegal hunting and wounding of animals also became a desperate measure for BaTonga to save the crops from being plundered by the elephants. They reasoned that, "We are forced to live together with the elephants. They roam around our villages just like our domesticated animals, so we have right to kill them the way we kill our goats for food. (National) Parks people have failed to keep them away from our fields and our water, so we take the matter into our hands, although it is illegal to do so."⁵⁹⁴ This shows increased animosity and intolerance towards the roaming elephants as the conflict escalated during the CAMPFIRE period. According to Pitman,

⁵⁹² Ibid

⁵⁹³ Dickman, *Complexities of Conflict*, 2010.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

BaTonga hunters increasingly began to trap wildlife within the Chizarira National Park during the liberation war in the 1970s because the freedom fighters encouraged them to defy conservation laws.⁵⁹⁵

Most of the wildlife poachers were not usually caught by game rangers largely because of shortage of resources like patrol vehicles and radios for communication. BaTonga people argued that they were not worried about arrest and imprisonment for illegal elephant hunting because of their desperation. Pitman once caught two BaTonga men laying snares that could kill elephants on the boundaries of Chizarira National Park in 1979 and argued that they were poaching in their traditional hunting grounds because of increasing rural poverty.⁵⁹⁶ Although poaching was unlawful and exposed the hunters to the risk of injury, death or being arrested, it benefited the people with meat and income. Some people allegedly worked for commercial poaching syndicates which involved senior politicians, Game Rangers and international customers for ivory and rhinoceros' tusks overseas. In fact, ivory was in high demand in China where it sold for around US\$2,000 a kilogram, and a large well-carved ivory tusk in China could go for \$100,000.⁵⁹⁷

Instead of engaging the local communities on possible solutions to wildlife problems in Binga, National Parks officials engaged in war with villagers whom they accused of poaching as CAMPFIRE regulations protected game both within and outside Game Parks. Game Rangers had to guard the animals from illegal hunters within and outside fenced areas through an active informer system in villages using monetary and non-monetary incentives.⁵⁹⁸ The rangers claimed that they were instructed to shoot any poacher at sight before the poacher shot them first. Munene, a villager in Sinansengwe recalled how one day National Parks officials raided his household after midnight following a tip-off that he had illegally killed elephants for ivory.⁵⁹⁹ They searched thoroughly and threw all his belongings outside his huts but could not get the ivory because he had dug the floor in his sleeping hut and carefully concealed four tusks there. Although he shared some meat with some of his neighbours, people reported him to National

⁵⁹⁵ Pitman, *Wild Places in Zimbabwe*, p.165.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁷ Rachel Nuwer, *Hunt Elephants to Save Them? Some Countries See No Other Choice*, Dec. 4, 2017.

⁵⁹⁸ Interview with a Game Ranger who refused to be named

⁵⁹⁹ Interview with Munene from Sinansengwe

Parks authorities because he had become a ruling party (ZANU (PF)) activist in a stronghold for the Main opposition party in the country (Movement for Democratic Change). However, this intimidation by conservation authorities did not deter the BaTonga from illegally hunting down game both for meat and for income.

Although most of the local hunters did not have guns, in some instances they would study the movement of game rangers and know when it was safe to shoot elephants in protected areas. They usually performed these dangerous adventures at night when both animals and game rangers were not very alert. It was alleged that most successful illegal hunters possessed abilities which guaranteed success in their battles with fierce animals and armed game rangers. David Livingstone confirmed these abilities in a man called Pondoro in his journeys in the Zambezi Valley in the mid-nineteenth century.⁶⁰⁰ During fieldwork, it was gathered that a man called Gaisos was a renowned elephant hunter in Nsenga who could shoot charging elephants at close range, but he was never caught nor shot down by game rangers for his illegal hunting activities. However, he was eventually trampled to death by a nursing elephant in 2007. The BaTonga regretted his death as a loss of a hero, while National Parks authorities celebrated the death of a troublesome poacher. This narrative shows the skills and knowledge possessed by poachers which the conservation authorities could have tapped to ease the conflict over wildlife management.

The IRR model which seeks to address the problems of resettlement to prevent the risk of impoverishment fails to highlight the capabilities of the victims of involuntary displacement, thereby failing to give a complete narrative of the experiences of the people. Although BaTonga people suffered because of the menace of wildlife, they exercised agency to minimize the damage and protect their livelihoods. There is need for equitable distribution of income from elephant hunting and government support in diversification of livelihoods because farming remains a challenge in the region. Reynolds and Cousins suggested the need for BaTonga to control wildlife resources and be given assets to manage safari organisations. There is need for sustainable management of wildlife which incorporates local knowledge and wisdom for

⁶⁰⁰ David and Charles Livingstone, *Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambesi*, 1865, p.159.

eliminating poverty. This calls for the involvement of the local communities in the formulation of policies and in development processes to address the root cause and achieve sustainable livelihoods in Binga. Scudder suggested national parks boundaries needed to be redrawn and there was need to consider voluntary resettlement.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how displacement forced BaTonga to live with the menace of wildlife, particularly elephants but dispossessed them of their hunting rights. The post-colonial government failed to restore these rights because of international control of endangered species. The CAMPFIRE programme failed to ease the conflict over wildlife control in Binga and could not provide the people with an alternative livelihood to farming. Agriculture remained a distressed livelihood and could not meet the annual food requirements of the people hence there was need for alternative livelihood schemes which could reduce poverty and enhance food security. The people were battling to survive hence they resorted to poaching but it was risky and not sustainable in providing food and income during periods of crop failure. Their interests conflicted with those of the conservationists who appeared to sacrifice the livelihoods of people to wildlife, therefore. when NGOs came distributing food aid, they welcomed it as a more viable livelihood than reckoning with elephants destroying their fields as discussed in chapter 8.

There is need for equitable distribution of income from elephant hunting and government support in diversification of livelihoods because farming remains a challenge in the region. Reynolds and Cousins suggested the need for BaTonga to control wildlife resources and be given assets to manage safari organisations.⁶⁰¹ There is need for sustainable management of wildlife which incorporates local knowledge and wisdom for eliminating poverty. This calls for the involvement of the local communities in the formulation of policies and in development processes to address the root cause and achieve sustainable livelihoods in Binga. Scudder suggested national parks boundaries needed to be redrawn and there was need to consider voluntary resettlement.⁶⁰²

⁶⁰¹ Reynolds and Cousin, Lwaano Lwanyika, p.172.

⁶⁰² Scudder, Regional Policy, 1982.

CHAPTER 7: LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND LIVELIHOODS, 1956-2008

Introduction

This chapter analyses how lack of infrastructural development from the time of displacement up to 2008 negatively affected BaTonga livelihoods leading to increasing hunger and poverty. Their agency in coping with these challenges both during the colonial and post-colonial period is explored. The previous chapter has shown how the people struggled with the menace of wildlife which destroyed their crops. It discussed how they coped and adapted to this challenge and became poachers to safeguard their crops. This chapter argues that marginalisation of BaTonga largely because of their location on the periphery of society and stigmatisation because of poverty disadvantaged them in making a living after displacement.

According to Forbang-Looh, marginalisation is the process of putting of putting people in an inferior or peripheral position in such a way that they lack power and thus, cannot influence decisions.⁶⁰³ Various forms of marginality include geographical or physical marginality which focuses on physical location and distance from centres of development.⁶⁰⁴ McGregor argues that BaTonga people were disadvantaged and lacked access to resources largely because of their identity and their location on the border of the country.⁶⁰⁵ This is true because they were isolated from major towns and cities and located on the boundary with Zambia which resulted in unbelonging to Zimbabwe. Forbang-Looh adds that marginalised people suffer from discrimination and stigmatisation.⁶⁰⁶ This chapter explores how BaTonga people were neglected and disadvantaged by both the colonial and post-colonial governments.

The forced displacement of BaTonga people marginalised them as they were disempowered and settled in a hostile environment as discussed in the previous chapters. The colonial regime discriminated against them by failing to restore their entitlements after displacement and this impoverished them. BaTonga's political, economic and developmental needs were largely

⁶⁰³ Gilda Nicheng Forbang-Looh, Marginalisation and (un)belonging in John Nkemngong Nkengasong's Across the Mongol, International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection Vol. 6, No. 2, 2018, pp.81-95, Google Scholar.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ Joann McGregor, Crossing the Zambezi. The Politics of Landscape on a Central Africa Frontier, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, P.141.

⁶⁰⁶ Forbang-Looh, Marginalisation and (un)belonging.

neglected after displacement, and this affected their ability to escape from poverty for many decades. McGregor blames Cockcroft as the District Commissioner for obstructing development in Binga arguing that the people should be left to evolve on their own.⁶⁰⁷

During the colonial era, some Native Affairs Department officials even acknowledged the government's failures in improving Binga's infrastructure. When assessing the area's development needs in 1966, the District Administrator C. J. K Latham noted that: "I would make a special plea for the Tonga. They are a people living in a vacuum, bridged by seventy years of development elsewhere in the country."⁶⁰⁸ BaTonga livelihoods existed in a national political economy where there were marginalized subjects who were politically invisible, and this constrained their strategies for making a living. They were rural people who were relatively small in number and had no voice in a remote corner of the country where the economic choices and development policies of the government were influenced by political interests.

During the colonial era, they had no access to power because race was the key guiding the oppressive policies of the settler regime. The majority blacks were ruled by minority whites who deprived them of political and economic decision for their country and communities. According to McGregor, BaTonga nationalists during the liberation struggle Andrew Muntanga and Francis Munkombwe who were affiliated to the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) joined politics because they felt the BaTonga were "a neglected people".⁶⁰⁹ They decided to fight for their freedom with the hope that the new black government would bring equitable distribution of power and resources.

Kranz argues that poverty is not just a question of low income, but it includes dimensions such as bad health, illiteracy, lack of social services as well as a state of vulnerability and feelings of powerlessness.⁶¹⁰ BaTonga people were disadvantaged and impoverished after displacement as evidenced by their lack of proper roads and communication networks, lacked education. They did not have access to healthcare facilities and employment opportunities within their district.

⁶⁰⁷ Joann McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi. The Politics of Landscape on a Central Africa Frontier*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, P.141.

⁶⁰⁸ NAZ File S2929/1/1, C.J.K. Latham, Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in The Binga District of Rhodesia, 1966.

⁶⁰⁹ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, 2009, p.141.

⁶¹⁰ Lasse Kranz, *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction. An Introduction*, SIDA Division for Policy and Socio-Economic Analysis, 2001.

This affected their ability to adapt to their environment and escape from poverty, as discussed below.

Poor roads and communication networks

According to the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework, physical capital such as housing, health, education adequate water and energy supply make people's labour more productive in making a living.⁶¹¹ Infrastructure is essential for linkages to markets, education and health services while buildings, roads and tools provide the security, mobility and capability that allow people to produce, transform, exchange and consume goods. Ellis argues that physical assets are effectively created by economic production processes and are designed for the common good.⁶¹² BaTonga lost their crucial physical assets upon displacement and were promised access to water, electricity, roads by the government. However, the government failed to honour these promises as discussed above and this affected the people's capabilities in reducing vulnerability to livelihood risks. The proceeds from the sale of electricity to the nation as well as from tourism from the Lake Kariba were not used for social and infrastructural development for the people who sacrificed for the creation of the reservoir.

There were no roads nor railways to facilitate contact with other parts of the country and transportation of goods after resettlement largely because of the geographical location of Binga on the periphery and frontier of the country. The colonial economy of the then Southern Rhodesia was based mainly on commercial farming and mining. There were no commercial farms in Binga District because of the poor soils, arid climate, tsetse fly and wildlife, which made farming impossible. The colonial government used to establish communication networks in areas which could benefit the colonial economy, thus Binga was left out. According to 1967 reports from the Department of Native Affairs, of the eighteen chiefdoms which were displaced by the Kariba Dam, only Siansali, Saba, and Siachilaba were close to primary roads and had contacts with other ethnic groups.⁶¹³ However, these were rough roads which had been made for lorries to transport people during resettlement in 1957. Furthermore, these roads had not been maintained for years

⁶¹¹ Frank Ellis, Household Strategies and Rural Livelihood Diversification, in *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol.35, No.1, 2002, pp.1-38.

⁶¹² Ibid.

⁶¹³ S2929/1/1, C.J.K. Latham, Report on the Delineation of Tribal Communities in the Binga District of Rhodesia, 1967.

so much that trees and thorn bushes had grown and blocked some of them rendering most places inaccessible.⁶¹⁴

Binga was cut off from the rest of the country because there were no tarred roads in the whole district which was vast and difficult to access in the rainy season. Weinrich also pointed out that in areas with dust roads communication with the outside world was irregular because of shortage of transport services.⁶¹⁵ The Native Department also reported that the district was inaccessible, and roads remained so bad that European businessmen who had permits for shops never opened as there was no way of transporting goods to these stores. This caused the people to lag behind other districts in terms of accessing consumer goods and social advancement. Cockcroft who was the District Commissioner did not allocate funds for road construction as he argued that it was not profitable to construct better roads because of low population density.⁶¹⁶ He alleged that the BaTonga were not at all interested in being linked to the outside world as they wanted to preserve their culture, but this was not true.⁶¹⁷

One can argue that it was because of the exploitative and discriminatory colonial policies which did not permit allocation of resources for infrastructural development to communities which did not produce raw materials. Roads are important as they reduce poverty and link up markets and other development opportunities necessary for livelihoods. Binga thus remained isolated in the remote part of the country far away from other towns and cities and suffered from extreme poverty throughout the colonial period.

BaTonga had hope that the post-colonial period was going to redress the injustices of their displacement from the Kariba Dam and develop the district. However, the new government also did not allocate adequate resources for the construction of roads and other communication networks in Binga, and the district remained largely underdeveloped. Remoteness and inaccessibility of some basic facilities affects livelihoods and is also a contributing factor to rural poverty as it constrains access to key livelihood resources and markets.

⁶¹⁴ Interview with Valley Mugande, Buniwa Village, 20 March 2021.

⁶¹⁵ A.K.H. Weinrich, *The Tonga People of the Southern Shore of Lake Kariba*, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1977, p.52.

⁶¹⁶ S2929/1/1 Delineation Report, Binga, 1967.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid.

The “Growth with Equity” policy introduced in 1981 which laid the foundation for development of the post-conflict Zimbabwe focused on rural development through improved access to public services and employment creation.⁶¹⁸ Matebeleland provinces in general and Binga in particular appear to have missed out on the massive development programmes implemented in the 1980s as evidenced by the lack of infrastructural development in the region.⁶¹⁹ McGregor pointed out that Binga was the most poorly served district in Southern Rhodesia in terms of infrastructure and it was way behind the districts on the north bank of the Zambezi.⁶²⁰ The government of Northern Rhodesia managed to some degree improve the lives and livelihoods of Gwembe BaTonga people displaced from the Kariba Dam by building roads and railways.⁶²¹ It is the role of the government to deliver services, solve societal problems and create opportunities for its people but the Southern Rhodesian state failed to cater for the welfare of the people of Binga. One can argue that they were displaced to pave way for development but much of this development which was expected to trickle down to them never came. This confirms Amartya Sen’s contention that certain classes of the society are poor because of the politics of distribution of goods and services.⁶²²

Poor road networks and communication systems affected the coping mechanisms of BaTonga people after displacement as it limited their ability to diversify livelihoods. Creation of productive employment opportunities was essential for achieving poverty reduction and sustainable economic and social development in the district where farming was a challenge. However, Binga could not lure investors who could develop locally based industries such as fish canning factories at Binga Centre or irrigation schemes for cotton production in areas such as Tyunga, Siabuwa or Simatelele because of poor road networks. Again in 1981, Binga Rural District Council had a vision for the development of the district in the “Lusumpuko Plan”. The plan advocated for development of industries around the Lake including fish canning and freezing plants, boat and net manufacture, freshwater prawns and aquaculture.⁶²³ Such industries needed fast-moving

⁶¹⁸ Diana Auret, *A Decade of Development: Zimbabwe 1980-1990*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1990, p.10.

⁶¹⁹ Terence M. Mashingaidze, *Beyond the Kariba Dam Induced Displacements: The Zimbabwean Tonga’s Struggles for Restitution, 1990s–2000s*, *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 20 (2013), pp. 381–404.

⁶²⁰ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p. 141.

⁶²¹ Elizabeth Balneaves, *And the Waters Prevailed...* in *Horizon*, Vol. 5 No.2, 1961.

⁶²² Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines*, 1981, p.7.

⁶²³ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.156.

transport and electricity to maintain the cold chain. It can be argued that unemployment lies at the core of poverty in Binga. For the poor, labour is often the only asset they can use to improve their well-being. Young men who had no source of income had to walk long distances of more than 300km going to Hwange to look for work in the coal mines.⁶²⁴ Others went to farming areas like Gokwe and Kadoma where they worked as cattle herders.

Binga possesses thick seams of coal fields which can yield an estimated 1.2 billion tonnes of coal reserves.⁶²⁵ There were plans to construct a 2000 Mega Watt power station would be situated in the Lusulu coal fields ⁶²⁶ which could have provided employment and other livelihood opportunities for many people. However, as the district was at the periphery of the country's economic sector their coal and natural gas remain untapped to date. If these mines had been put in operation, they could have changed the lives of many individuals, households and communities because it has been proved that employment generation is important for poverty reduction. The district was isolated from the economy of post-colonial Zimbabwe which had the mandate to invest in rural development. It is the role of the central government to allocate resources to local government for development. The main post-colonial achievement in transport was seen in the tarring of the 140km stretch of road from Kamativi to Binga Centre in 1985.⁶²⁷ However, it has not been resurfaced and is now full of potholes. The following picture shows an ambulance being drawn by a pack of oxen after it got stuck in the mud in a dusty road in Binga during the rainy season in 2020.

⁶²⁴ Binga Rural District Council Newsletter, April 1984.

⁶²⁵ A.O. Thompson, Records of Rhodesia Coalfields, IV The Lusulu- Sengwe Coalfields, 1975.

⁶²⁶ Global Energy Wiki Monitor, Binga Power Station, https://www.gem.wiki/Binga_powerstation

⁶²⁷ Binga Rural District Council Newsletter, June 1986.

Figure 7: An Ambulance being pulled by a pack of oxen



Source: Antony Mleya, Binga District Hospital

One may agree with Amartya Sen who argues that chronic and persistent poverty is concentrated among the people in the remote rural areas; and rural poverty is the product of poor infrastructure that hinders development and mobility.⁶²⁸ The Binga district could not be integrated with Ndebele and Shona societies in areas such as Lupane, Nkayi or Gokwe. By 2008, many places in Binga such as Tyunga or Munde were inaccessible by road; most communities were in the middle of forests and could only be accessed via cattle tracks. Most NGOs also shunned remote areas particularly in the rainy seasons when the cattle tracks or dust roads were blocked by flooding rivers and streams.⁶²⁹ Save the Children Alliance proved this by highlighting that “Binga is a remote, poor and often inaccessible district of the country, characterised by unpredictable climatic conditions, limited access to communication, impassable roads, and limited access to clean water and sanitation problems, and chronic food insecurity.”⁶³⁰ A health

⁶²⁸ Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines*, 1981, p.9.

⁶²⁹ Interview with Zilongezyo Munsaka, Chilimbali Village on 16 March 2021.

⁶³⁰ Ali MacLaine, Save the Children (UK), *Infant Feeding Practices in Binga and Nyaminyami, Zimbabwe*, in relation to HIV, 2006.

medical officer at Binga District Hospital said that, “In August 2008, there was an outbreak of cholera in Siabuwa which killed many people. There was no one there to educate the people about how to stop the spread of the disease. We spent three weeks without getting any transport to go to Siabuwa to assess the disaster.”⁶³¹ Lack of roads in Binga hindered regular communication and resulted in marginalization and social isolation of the BaTonga

Sen argues that in cases where access to resources or income is deprived, personal capabilities of individuals lead to absolute deprivation.⁶³² It is the role of the government to ensure equitable distribution of all that is produced, including information to eliminate poverty. The BaTonga had no source of information of what was happening in the rest of the country. The villagers also highlighted that Binga has no radio and television reception for Zimbabwe’s stations since 1980 because of the great of about 500km to the radio studio in Bulawayo. They could only access Zambian radio and televisions.⁶³³

By 2008, they had no access to telephones as there was no electricity in most business centres, schools and clinics because of remoteness. Lack of transport and communication also hindered their integration with urban markets for their crafts, livestock or agricultural produce which could help raise their living standards. Young people complained that they had failed to develop social networks with other districts necessary for finding employment and other livelihood opportunities such as engaging in cross border trade or artisanal mining (*kukolokoza*).⁶³⁴ This affected their ability to diversify as a coping mechanism because of lack of opportunities as diversification of income sources reduces the risks of dependence on and failure in one enterprise. Therefore, BaTonga’s coping and adapting strategies to the challenges of displacement were affected by poor communication networks.

Poor educational opportunities

⁶³¹ Interview with A Medical Officer in Bulawayo on 22 March 2021.

⁶³² Amartya Sen, *The Living Standard*, Oxford Economic Papers New Series, Vol. 36, Supplement: Economic Theory and Hicksian Themes, Oxford University Press, 1984, pp. 74-90.

⁶³³ Interview with Nineveh Munsaka, Simandala Village, 21 December 2019.

⁶³⁴ Interview with Zilongezyo Munsaka at Chilimbali Village on 16 March 2021

According to Kranz, human assets are the key resource because the livelihoods approach is centred on people and their capabilities to put these assets into productive use.⁶³⁵ The capabilities of people help them enhance their livelihoods and to make use of natural, physical, financial and social assets effectively and transform them into different livelihood activities. It is enhanced by their access to education and medical services. Education promotes higher adaptive capacity and reduces poverty.

Education is a developmental right, but according to Colson, there were no schooling facilities on the south bank of the Zambezi before resettlement and a few children managed to attend school in Zambia.⁶³⁶ The valley was cut off from the rest of the country because of its location on the periphery. However, there was rapid expansion of schools on the Zambezi plateau after resettlement in the 1960s as the colonial administration felt that the Africans had to be given some practical education to prepare them for wage labour in agriculture and industries. As in most parts of the colony of Southern Rhodesia, missionaries were responsible for the provision of this form of education to the Africans as a way of evangelising them. The Roman Catholic Church, the Methodists and the Church of Christ established schools in the district, with the Roman Catholic Church building most of the schools because they imported books and teachers from their sister mission in Monze in Zambia.⁶³⁷ ChiTonga language was different from the Shona and Ndebele languages spoken and taught in most of the country. There were no ChiTonga textbooks and no BaTonga trained teachers in the country who could communicate with local children in schools.

However, these mission schools were inadequate to meet the educational needs of the people. According to McGregor, Cockcroft, the District Commissioner blocked the building of government schools in Binga as a way of keeping BaTonga from modernity.⁶³⁸ For instance, an educated man asked for permission from Cockcroft for his community to build a school for their children, but

⁶³⁵ Lasse Kranz, *The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction. An Introduction*, SIDA Division for Policy and Socio-Economic Analysis, 2001.

⁶³⁶ Elizabeth Colson, "Foreword", in Weinrich, *The Tonga*, 1977, p. 8.

⁶³⁷ S2929/5/2 C.J.K. Latham, *Report on the Delineation Reports of Tribal Communities in Binga District of Rhodesia*, 1967; McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.140.

⁶³⁸ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.141.

he blocked that.⁶³⁹ This shows how BaTonga were eager their children to access modern education and literacy because of the opportunities it presented. They could not fold their arms and wait for the government to build schools for them but were also prepared to participate in the provision of infrastructure for learning.

Although the demand for schools was high, there were only two Roman Catholic schools offered full primary education up to Grade Seven, namely the Zambezi Mission School in Sikalenge and Kariyangwe Mission School in Siansali at independence in 1980.⁶⁴⁰ Most of the schools just offered elementary education up to Standard Three which was not very useful in offering opportunities for gainful employment. There was no secondary school in Binga until 1983 and very few children had completed the full seven years of primary education.⁶⁴¹ McGregor pointed out that there were no government schools in the district towards independence because Cockcroft, the District Commissioner blocked government from building schools.⁶⁴² Weinrich claimed that Cockcroft suspected that education instilled nationalist feelings into young people and taught them to evade paying taxes.⁶⁴³

Although this might have been true, it could not justify the lack of secondary schools in the area. The colonial authorities wanted to perpetuate white domination in the country. On the contrary, in Zambia resettlement was accompanied by a major education programme such that by 1982 there were thousands of BaTonga secondary school graduates with a Form Three or Form Five qualification. The Gwembe Tonga were so much educated that they were employed in senior civil service posts throughout Zambia and could compete for political offices as District Governors.⁶⁴⁴ This enhanced their social status while their Zimbabwean relatives remained disadvantaged. Education is important as it opens doors for participation in local and national economic, social and political development, and it reduces the effects of marginalisation.

Although education plays a central role in development and poverty alleviation, BaTonga remained isolated from the national development programmes in education after independence.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ Weinrich, *The Tonga*, p.35.

⁶⁴¹ Binga Rural District Council Newsletter, March 1984.

⁶⁴² McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.141.

⁶⁴³ Weinrich, *The Tonga*, p.35.

⁶⁴⁴ Elizabeth Colson, "Foreword", in Weinrich, *The Tonga*, 1977, p. 8.

According to Zvobgo, the post-colonial government realized that education was at the centre of national development and therefore it had to be extended to every citizen.⁶⁴⁵ To accomplish that they implemented an ambitious educational system which made primary education free. Enrolment increased by 232% in primary schools and rose by 330% in secondary education between 1980 and 1982.⁶⁴⁶ However, most children in Binga were illiterate as the district was neglected by the state elite who systematically allocated resources other regions.

BaTonga were on the geographical margins of society, far away from the centre of decision-making authorities in Harare. When the government could not meet the demand for more infrastructure and teachers due to lack of funds as schools expanded in rural Zimbabwe, Binga suffered the most. There was no teacher-training college in the Binga District and many qualified teachers shunned going to work in the remote area. Although the government declared that every child would have the right and opportunity to avail himself for secondary education, there were no secondary schools in Binga. Kariangwe Secondary School which was a Roman Catholic Mission school was the first to offer secondary education in the whole district in 1983. Binga Secondary School was the first government school built in 1985.⁶⁴⁷

Power relations lie at the heart of development as they determined where schools had to be built. More than 1200 secondary schools were built in the most neglected rural areas by 1985⁶⁴⁸ but Mashingaidze reiterates that this was a lost decade for the BaTonga.⁶⁴⁹ BaTonga lamented that they belonged to land of the forgotten people as the government failed to respond to their social needs. "The colonial government stole our land and dumped us here and forgot that we exist. If they considered as citizens of this country, they should have built schools for our children. We wanted our children to learn and get jobs in Bulawayo and buy food for us." ⁶⁵⁰

Contrary to the government stipulation that there must be a primary and secondary school within a five-kilometre radius, the nearest primary school in places such as Siabulabula in Sinakoma or

⁶⁴⁵ Rungano J. Zvobgo, Education and the Challenge of Independence, in Ibbo Mandaza (ed.), Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Transition, 1980-1986, Codesria, Dakar, Senegal, 1986, p.319-343.

⁶⁴⁶ Ibid., p.333.

⁶⁴⁷ Binga District News, April 1986, Binga Rural District Council.

⁶⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁹ Mashingaidze, Beyond the Kariba Displacements, 2013.

⁶⁵⁰ Interview with Monica Mugande on 21 March 2021 in Nalubuyu.

Logola in Binga was more than 15km. One old woman in Nalubuyu said, “Our children could not walk that far. We had to wait until they were older enough to walk long distances, but some people never went to school at all.”⁶⁵¹ The closest secondary school in Siachilaba since independence has been Manjolo Secondary located under Sikalenge ward, more than 30km away from places such as Siachilaba, Simatelele and Bulawayo Kraal. Potiphar from Bulawayo Kraal which was 27km from Manjolo secondary School said that “We cannot walk every day to school because of elephants. I am a bush border but there is no water at the school.”⁶⁵² Provision of education was therefore not a priority for the development of Binga.

Lack of infrastructure also affected the availability of education to BaTonga children. There was a shortage of classrooms, desks, books, laboratories and trained teachers in the available schools. There were so few primary schools in Binga that some men from Chief Sinakatenge who worked in Bulawayo collectively raised money for three years and were able to buy bricks and roofing material for the construction of Sizemba Primary School in Tyunga in 1985.⁶⁵³ This shows how determined BaTonga people were to make education available to their children when the state failed to help them. Even those who did not have money in Sizemba helped with the provision of labour for the construction of the school. It was also common in Binga for parents in a community to build accommodation for teachers when the government and Binga Rural District Council failed to meet this need. For instance, parents constructed houses for teachers in Kalungwizi.⁶⁵⁴

Secondary schools such as Manjolo and Siabuwa had to offer makeshift boarding facilities where pupils who lived more than twenty kilometres away from the school had to build their own huts near the school for accommodation. The children were called “bush boarders” who had to temporarily stay in makeshift shelters during the week and then go back to their communities during the weekend and school holidays. This shows how many people were hungry for education at a time when the government was not able to meet this demand. Although the bush boarders faced many sanitary challenges, this was an effective coping mechanism which saw many children complete and pass their secondary education. They got jobs to work as temporary teachers in

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Interview with Potiphar Dube from Bulawayo Kraal on 22 March 2021.

⁶⁵³ Binga District News, October 1986, Binga Rural District Council.

⁶⁵⁴ Ibid.

local schools and earned a salary which could help in buying food during drought, pay for healthcare for their families or buy consumer goods. This helped to ease suffering from precarious livelihoods.

There were many dropouts in school because of the long distances and the curriculum which was taught in a foreign language to BaTonga children. From 1974, all BaTonga school pupils had to learn the Ndebele language after the Ministry of education abolished the teaching of ChiTonga and other minority languages as part of standardisation of the primary school curriculum.⁶⁵⁵ The use of the indigenous ChiTonga language as a medium of instruction was not restored during the post-colonial era. As they were a few educated BaTonga people, the teachers were often Ndebele and Shona, and the school children could not understand their language. Bekezela said, “We were taught Ndebele rhymes, songs and folklores because our Grade one teacher could not speak in Tonga. It was hard learning to write the language which we could not understand.”⁶⁵⁶ This largely contributed to poor performance of school children and high rates of illiteracy in the district. However, it produced a new consciousness of marginality and exclusion which contributed to the emergence of BaTonga activism and demands for recognition in the country.

During the period of economic and political crises in Zimbabwe from 2000 to 2008, Binga was hard hit because of the high rate of poverty, HIV/AIDS, and the cholera pandemic. The government did not have money to buy books, repair infrastructure, or pay teachers due to the economic downturn and hyperinflation. Consequently, most trained teachers left the country and went to teach in the neighbouring countries. As a result, children were taught by untrained teachers because of brain drain in the country. For example, when Milumbe passed his Advanced Level with Eight points in 2007 at Binga High School, he was employed as a Temporary Teacher to teach Form Five Divinity Class.⁶⁵⁷ This was a better coping mechanism than completely closing schools which had no teachers. However, the lack of proper teaching skills adversely affected the quality and level of education in Binga, thus negatively contributing to their poor pass rates and ultimately participation in key economic and political processes.

⁶⁵⁵ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p. 140.

⁶⁵⁶ Interview with Bekezela Lunga, in Bulawayo, 17 June 2021.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid.

Poor healthcare facilities

Kranz argues that poverty is not just a question of low income, but it includes dimensions such as bad health, illiteracy, lack of social services as well as a state of vulnerability and feelings of powerlessness.⁶⁵⁸ The colonial government through the Native Affairs Department promised to build hospitals and clinics to the resettled BaTonga because of the prevalence of disease in the Zambezi Valley.⁶⁵⁹ This was one of the empty promises made by Cockcroft, the District Commissioner to persuade BaTonga people to move from their land and pave way for the Kariba Dam reservoir. Soon after resettlement, the government built Binga District Hospital near the lake where the Europeans lived.⁶⁶⁰ This hospital was not accessible to most of BaTonga, as some were resettled as far as 200km away from the administrative centre. There were no clinics in the resettled communities despite the prevalence of malaria and malnutrition which accounted for high mortality rates in children.

The Roman Catholic Church opened Kariyangwe Hospital which had 29 beds in 1960 but there was no resident doctor because of location far away from towns and cities.⁶⁶¹ Furthermore, there were no regular doctor visits because of the remoteness of the area. Consequently, BaTonga people suffered and died from curable diseases such as malaria and sleeping sickness as discussed in Chapter 5 due to the prevalence of mosquitos and tsetse fly. Leprosy was also widespread and killed people who failed to access medication.⁶⁶² Lack of preventive and curative health interventions affected the wellbeing of the people who failed to perform their livelihood tasks due to illness.

At independence in 1980, the new government inherited the health problems from the colonial government. There was no rural health centre from Binga Centre to Kamativi, distance of 125 kilometres.⁶⁶³ Furthermore, there was no single health centre in Lusulu with a population of more than 3000 people due to negligence of the past. Access to healthcare promotes social and

⁶⁵⁸ Lasse Kranz, *The Sustainable Livelihood* 2001, p.28.

⁶⁵⁹ W.T. Nesham, *Kariba Resettlement*, NADA, Volume 38, 1961, p.22.

⁶⁶⁰ S2929/5/1, C.J.K. Latham, *Delineation Report for Binga*, 1967.

⁶⁶¹ Weinrich, *The Tonga*, 1977, p.36.

⁶⁶² Shepherd Mutamba, *Binga - The Forgotten Land*, in *Parade and Foto-Action*, December 1986, pp.16-18.

⁶⁶³ *Binga District News*, July 1986, Binga District Council.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*

economic development and ill health has detrimental impact on poor people's livelihoods.⁶⁶⁴ The post-colonial government constructed clinics in Tyunga, Pashu, Chinego, Lubimbi and Sianzundu during the 1980s, but they were understaffed because of a shortage of qualified nurses⁶⁶⁵ in the country which became worse in marginal and remote areas such as Binga. There was need to start a nurse-training school in the district, but the government did not avail the required finances. This remained one of the empty promises to BaTonga people. The few clinics established concentrated on immunisation of children below five years against childhood diseases such as polio, tetanus and tuberculosis. However, many children continued to die because of other diseases such as diarrhoea, malaria and kwashiorkor because of absence of healthcare facilities, lack of clean water, and malnutrition. In the 1980s 50% of deaths in Binga were children below the age of five.⁶⁶⁶

Pregnant women suffered the most when they were referred to Binga Hospital for delivering their babies due to anticipated complications. They had to walk long distances, sometimes more than 100km from Sinansengwe, Muchesu, Lubimbi or Malaliya to Binga Hospital. One man travelling from Binga Centre to Kariangwe which was about 80km had to help a new mother: "I passed two women climbing mountains, one of them carrying a new-born baby on her arms. I had to stop and give them transport for the remaining 40km." Maternal mortality was high because of little medical intervention. There was no resident doctor at Binga Hospital before 2008 who could perform operations to pregnant women with complications. A nurse said, "I had to watch many people die because there was not transport to carry emergence cases to St Luke's or Victoria Falls Hospitals."⁶⁶⁷ People also died of endemic malaria as well as HIV/AIDS but some of these deaths could have been prevented by the availability of adequate medical care. Despite these challenges, BaTonga found ways of conquering them and survive.

Health is essential to wellbeing, which is an integration of the body, spirit and mind. BaTonga defined health or *kupona* as a long-term state of wellbeing of the whole person physically, spiritually and mentally which enabled them to go about their daily business. *Kupona* did not only

⁶⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁷ Interview with former nurse at Binga Hospital in Bulawayo on 15 September 2019

include the absence of disease or *machise*. Being healthy considered what an individual and the community believed as they shared their experiences and feelings of wellbeing. This means society usually decided if a person was healthy or not and maintaining good health among BaTonga was therefore a communal issue. This was an important coping mechanism which ensured well-being in the absence of treatment for sicknesses and diseases.

BaTonga believed in natural and spiritual causes of disease and sickness. There were common ailments caused by natural factors such as headaches due to the high summer temperatures, toothaches, stomach aches, vomiting and diarrhoea which could easily be treated by common herbs. However, some common sicknesses were attributed to spiritual origins, for instance, persistent headaches or stomach aches could be a result of witchcraft. Sterility, impotence, leprosy, mental illness, and other less common health challenges believed to be a result of witchcraft were referred to traditional healers known as *bamwanza* who had to treat the whole person, spiritually and physically.⁶⁶⁸ However, they depended on herbal treatment as the most common form of healthcare. They had a great understanding of medicinal herbs which eliminated certain symptoms of illness and physically healed the body which was passed down for many generations. They had knowledge of roots, bark or leaves of vegetation which treated common ailments including snake bites, but they lived precarious lives due to malaria attacks and sleeping sickness. They also defied the colonial government by growing and using cannabis for medicinal, religious and cultural use as a way of coping with few healthcare facilities.⁶⁶⁹

Lack of water and electricity

Forced displacement and resettlement of BaTonga people also led to their impoverishment because not only did they face the challenge of water for farming but experienced serious shortages of water for domestic use on the plateau where there were largely no perennial rivers. The Native Commissioner, Cockcroft promised to “sink numerous boreholes and wells and fitting them with pumps” as well as to build “numerous dams and weirs” during the time of

⁶⁶⁸ Reynolds and Cousins, Lwaano Lwanyika, p.76.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁹ Ibid.

displacement.⁶⁷⁰ Unfortunately these promises of development were never fulfilled because little funding was allocated for the process of resettlement. In 1967, the District Officer, Latham, reported that if boreholes were not sunk in most resettlement areas, they were going to become uninhabitable, but nothing was done to bring water from the lake to the BaTonga.⁶⁷¹

Upon displacement, the Native Commissioner, Cockcroft, promised them that water would follow them meaning the state would provide them with new sources of water, but the promises were broken. Only Manjolo area received piped water because drilled boreholes failed to yield some water. However, women and girls had to walk more than ten kilometres to the water taps carrying heavy containers of water from the tanks to surrounding villages.⁶⁷² The people complained that this affected the education of girls who often dropped out of school even though their school fees is paid for by NGOs. Alikke said “When I gave birth to my first child, I could not bath every day because I was not able to walk to fetch water. My mother-in-law could only manage to fetch water for cooking food.”⁶⁷³ This demonstrates how critical the water problem was to BaTonga women.

McGregor mentioned that oral testimonies from BaTonga emphasized shortage of water as a major challenge to their livelihoods after displacement.⁶⁷⁴ Many of the boreholes drilled after resettlement supplied hard or dirty water and more than 60% failed to provide water at all or dried up in the dry season.⁶⁷⁵ Many people in Simatelele have brown teeth which have been ruined by the hard water from the boreholes.⁶⁷⁶ Matron lamented that “Our grandparents left their fresh water and were condemned to this place with bad water. Can you see our teeth? No one from this area can get married outside our villages because we lost our beauty. The dirty water ruined our teeth and we can no longer smile.” To demonstrate the unpalatability of the water, school children at Bulawayo Kraal School kept many packets of salts left behind after evaporating borehole water. They displayed them in their classrooms.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁰ W.T. Nesham, Kariba Resettlement, NADA, Volume 38, 1961, p.22.

⁶⁷¹ S2929/5/1, Latham, Delineation Report, Binga, 1967.

⁶⁷² Interview with Minchito Munkuli at Msenampongo on 22 January 2020.

⁶⁷³ Interview with Alikke Mudenda at Manjolo on 22 January

⁶⁷⁴ McGregor, Crossing the Zambezi, p.156.

⁶⁷⁵ S2827 Report from the Secretary for Agriculture to the Minister of Lands, 1961.

⁶⁷⁶ Interview with Siyamabbuyu at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020.

⁶⁷⁷ Ibid.

Loss of water from the river affected farming and fishing activities as the Lake was reserved for commercial fisheries and tourism. The post-colonial government also promised to improve water supply, but the people still have acute shortage of water for drinking although the Lake Kariba always have water. The BaTonga lost their homes and livelihoods following the damming of the Zambezi to produce hydropower, but they did not have electricity nor running water in their home, schools and shopping centres. The people mentioned that there is a proposal for the Zambezi water pipeline project which is meant to transport water from the Lake for more than 450km to supply Bulawayo which faces water challenges when some villages which are 18km from the Lake do not have domestic water.⁶⁷⁸

However, there are no such plans to build pipelines to supply water from the Zambezi to the many parts of Binga which are bedevilled by perennial droughts as BaTonga received less attention than the Ndebele people. Fifty homesteads in Manjolo depended on one borehole and the whole ward had only two boreholes which were fourteen kilometres to and from other homesteads.⁶⁷⁹ During the dry season, people in Samende and Manjolo came up with duty roasters for homesteads to get water from a borehole three days a week as a coping mechanism to the problem.⁶⁸⁰ However, this posed a serious health hazard to the communities as they did not bath daily, did not wash clothes or dishes, and had no water for livestock to drink. They never used to experience this difficult life before resettlement as water was abundant in the mighty Zambezi River.

Tremmel noted that limited access to domestic water was an emotional subject among the BaTonga.⁶⁸¹ Even to date people still complain about their loss of the perennial Zambezi River as they realized that water woes were responsible for their perennial chronic hunger. Limited access to water is a major contributor to the persistence of poverty in Binga. This limited their livelihood opportunities and increases the risks of dependence on rainfed agriculture which was not reliable.

⁶⁷⁸ Interview with Potiphar Mweembe on 21 May at Bulawayo Kraal

⁶⁷⁹ Interview with Alikke Mudenda, Manjolo

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁸¹ Mike Tremmel, *The People of the Great River*, Silveira House Social Series No.8, Mambo Press, Gwelo, 1994.

In addition, with the water problem, most BaTonga do not have access to electricity although they sacrificed their homes and livelihoods for the construction of a dam whose main purpose was the provision of hydroelectricity power. The dam was completed in 1958 and most towns and farms in the country were connected to the power grid but BaTonga were excluded and were not connected to the power grid because of marginality. A retired teacher said that, “Our fathers were supposed to be the first to benefit from the project of generation of hydroelectricity but most of them died without having seen electricity anywhere in Binga.”⁶⁸² According to Chipango, social, economic and political factors affect the way to access electricity in Zimbabwe hence Binga centre was connected more than thirty years later, in 1990.⁶⁸³ Some parts such as clinics, schools and business centres were connected later during the programme of rural electrification.

Lack of electricity limited livelihood strategies because people could not embark on small businesses such as welding or running a butchery. Availability of electricity improves quality of life in rural areas and improves health and education. Without electricity the healthcare delivery system became limited on possible procedures that could offered at clinics. For instance, an operating theatre required electricity hence pregnant women with complications had to be referred to bigger hospitals. Many people who lost their livelihoods to facilitate the generation of electricity at Kariba still live in darkness because they cannot afford to pay for the process of being connected to the power grid.

Loss of Fishing Rights

Fishing was a key source of food in BaTonga communities before resettlement, but the colonial government prohibited the people from accessing the fishing resources following the damming of the river. McGregor argued that BaTonga were always fishermen as they learned the trade from a very young age, but they were denied equitable sharing of fishing resources.⁶⁸⁴ BaTonga felt they had a right to the fish in the Lake because they sacrificed their land for inundation by the reservoir. Although fifteen chiefdoms were allocated a fishing camp on the Lakeshore,

⁶⁸² Interview with Potiphar, Bulawayo Kraal.

⁶⁸³ Ellen F. Chipango, How politics and poverty affect electricity provision in Zimbabwe, *The Conversation*, 2020, <https://theconversation.com>, accessed on 19 June 2022.

⁶⁸⁴ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, 2009. P.1.

permanent residence in these camps was prohibited and fishing was strictly controlled. Furthermore, these fishing camps were many kilometres away from villages where fishermen had permanent homes and fields hence, they could only fish during the dry season. They were taken as far away as 200km from the new Lake such that by mid 1970s few people could travel to the fishing camps.

Weinrich noted that in Sinamwenda, only had three men lived at the fishing camp catching and selling fish to the European commercial fishermen.⁶⁸⁵ The local men could not compete with the better funded Europeans who possessed better fishing equipment. European fishermen could access cash loans which enabled them to purchase fishing boats, rigs, and nets required to fish in deep waters of the Lake. BaTonga's traditional fishing practices using indigenous knowledge systems of the river was disregarded because the whites wanted to safeguard and monopolise the fishing resources.

On the contrary, the Northern Rhodesia government established some fishing industries for the Gwembe Tonga on the north bank after resettlement. Villagers were taught the mounting, mending and settling of nets for a transition to Gillnet fishing at Sinanzongwe where a large commercial fishery for BaTonga was established.⁶⁸⁶ The government also established a boat-building school at Sinanzongwe as a way of diversifying their livelihoods. This helped to reduce poverty in the Gwembe Valley.

Following the attainment of independence in Zimbabwe, the government did not restore them their fishing rights both for domestic consumption and for earning an income. According to McGregor, the introduction of the cooperative system and the licensing system marginalized the BaTonga by limiting their access to fish and kapenta (*Limnothrissa miodon*).⁶⁸⁷ Just like the fishing camps, the cooperatives were far away from villages thus became dominated by the Shona and Ndebele people who were not indigenous to the district. According to Manyena, Mudimba and Mudimba, the major sources of tension between fishermen and government authorities since

⁶⁸⁵ Weinrich, The Tonga, 1977, p.36.

⁶⁸⁶ Elizabeth Balneaves, And the Waters Prevailed... in Horizon, 1961.

⁶⁸⁷ McGregor, Crossing the Zambezi, 2009.

the 1950s of tension were the fishing license system and the harassment of fishermen.⁶⁸⁸ The fishing license managed by the National Parks was put in place to regulate fishing in the Lake. This system prohibited BaTonga from accessing the fishing resources from the Lake. Fishing was a major source of food for the people before displacement as discussed in Chapter 1 as everyone including, men, women and children could fish.

The prohibitive fishing regulations required fishermen to apply for licenses to both the National Parks and Rural District Council. Very few people could afford the licence fees and could have access to the Lake. Furthermore, for a fisherman to obtain a gillnet fishing license, he had to provide evidence of belonging to a fishing camp for operational area and owning a boat and life jackets.⁶⁸⁹ All these things were beyond the reach of BaTonga who were struggling to obtain a livelihood after displacement. The post-independent government did not rectify these prohibitive laws but encouraged BaTonga to form fishing cooperatives and pool together their resources. However, they were even more stringent requirements for a cooperative to be eligible to fish. Those who eventually managed to get the licences from both the District Council and the National Parks also had to apply for a permit to sell fish to traders at fishing camps and then a hawker's license to sell fish outside of the fishing camp.⁶⁹⁰ The burden was just too much and prohibited many BaTonga from fishing.

However, as many people could not raise money to acquire these prohibitive licenses, they resorted to fish poaching. They would study the movement of the Fish Rangers employed by the National Parks and fish illegally using mosquito nets. They were harassed and arrested by National Parks officials who regularly patrolled the Lake but poaching of fish continued unabated, both for domestic consumption and trade. However, criminalisation and punishment of fishermen by National Parks officials further made poaching dangerous and less rewarding as they impounded their fishing equipment and fish and were forced to pay fines. People in Simatelele used their canoes (*kabwato*) but National Parks officials confiscated both the fish, nets, and canoes which they never returned to the owners but destroyed them instead. The loss of

⁶⁸⁸ Bernard Manyena, Andrew E. Collins, Frank Mudimba, and Danisa Mudimba, Reducing Mrginalisation of Fishermen through Participatory Action Research in the Zambezi Valley, International Journal of African Development, Vol.3, No. 2, 2016.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁰ Ibid.

livelihood in both fishing and hunting impoverished the people and exposed them to food insecurity.

The vicious circle of marginalisation

According to Amartya Sen, social, institutional and political organization of a society can assist or impede livelihoods resilience.⁶⁹¹ BaTonga were denied access to resources because of who those in power perceived them to be. Manyena contends that marginalisation of BaTonga generated demeaning, stereotypical myths and prejudices which portrayed them as dangerous, deformed and primitive.⁶⁹² This stereotyping began with David Livingstone who encountered them in 1850s and described them as “the most primitive tribe” in Central Africa.⁶⁹³ This attitude towards the people which Msindo calls “othering” continued during the colonial era contributed to their losses during the process of displacement as the colonial authorities did not consult them.⁶⁹⁴ McGregor pointed out that the BaTonga “were a neglected people, cast as inferior and labelled primitive and ignorant.” The District Commissioner, Cockcroft, reinforced this stereotyping by promoting Tonga culture and traditions such as allowing both men and women to smoke marijuana.⁶⁹⁵ BaTonga were aware that these stereotypes affected their access to resources and opportunities in the country as the government despised them and focused on the advancement of Shona and Ndebele people.

McGregor notes that because of their exceptional levels of poverty and backwardness, stigmatizing stereotypes further excluded them from politics.⁶⁹⁶ They lacked rural livelihood opportunities and were extremely poor. Those who migrated to other towns and cities in search of better opportunities were largely hindered from getting employed by their exclusion. Bulawayo was the industrial hub of the country which employed thousands of people from different ethnic groups. Getting decent employment is important in breaking the cycle of poverty.

⁶⁹¹ Amartya Sen, *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1981.

⁶⁹² Siambabala B. Manyena, *Ethnicity, Identity, Agency and Development: The Case of the Zimbabwean Tonga*, p.25. In L. Cliggett and V. Bond (eds) *Tonga Timeline: Appraising Sixty Years of Multidisciplinary Research in Zambia and Zimbabwe*, pp.26-65. Lusaka: Lembani Trust, 2013.

⁶⁹³ I. Schapera (ed.), *Livingstone's Missionary Correspondence, 1841-1856*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1961, p.302.

⁶⁹⁴ Enocent Msindo, *Ethnicity in Zimbabwe: Transformations in Kalanga and Ndebele Societies, 1860-1990*, University of Rochester Press, USA, 2012, p. 39, Google Books.

⁶⁹⁵ McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi*, p.141.

⁶⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

During interviews, it became clear that BaTonga who went to Bulawayo were isolated from the Ndebele and Shona people and were confined to the impoverished old suburb location of Makokoba which was established as the first Native Location after the conquest of Matebeleland in 1894 as a way of coping with their perceived inferiority. Most of their young men could not secure jobs in factories and ended up as gardeners or performed menial jobs which were not secure and did not pay well. Mweembe, who worked in Bulawayo for more than ten years until he went back home in Binga in 2002 said that “I could not speak English and my Ndebele was broken so I could not get a job. I lived with my uncle who helped get a job as a Garden Boy in Khumalo (Suburb).⁶⁹⁷

McGregor confirms this and highlights that the people exported their poverty to urban centres as they failed to get decent employment. The Ndebele had an arrogant attitude toward the BaTonga whom they belittled, suppressed, and looked down upon because their past. The Ndebele king Mzilikazi used to raid and enslave BaTonga in the Zambezi Valley before colonization. This discrimination and exclusion largely hindered them from building important social networks necessary for livelihood diversification. They had few connections which could assist them in getting better jobs, better education or livelihood opportunities in the city. Those who managed to break free from these inhibitions managed to attain better and competitive education outside of Binga and get better paying jobs which made them escape from the web of poverty.

Developmental neglect thus created a vicious circle of marginalisation of BaTonga people. As they lagged behind other ethnic groups in terms of development, they were stigmatised and further excluded from getting better housing, education, jobs or political posts by those who were better off. This exclusion and discrimination not only disadvantaged them but further pushed them to periphery and impoverished them, thus creating the vicious cycle of poverty.

The few BaTonga intellectuals who completed their secondary education attempted to address the challenges of developmental neglect by forming the Binga Development Association (BIDA)

⁶⁹⁷ Interview with Peter Mweembe at Chilimbali Village on 16 March 2021.

in 1989 which got funding from international donor agencies for development projects such as the construction of schools, clinics and dams. BIDA provided a way to address the problems of the district bypassing the government as represented by the Binga Rural District Council. This shows local attempts to develop the district, but conflicts between the Council and BIDA over management of finances for development disrupted the initiative. When BIDA collapsed BaTonga intellectuals channelled their grievances through the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP), which was founded in 1995. The CCJP facilitated discussion at community level in the whole district and advocated for their right to development and political representation as part of minority rights discourse. However, CCJP was banned in Binga after BaTonga delivered the highest opposition vote for the main opposition party in the June 2000 parliamentary elections. But BaTonga people continued to vote for the opposition party with the hope that it will take overpower and develop their district.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to explain how BaTonga people were marginalised by both the colonial and postcolonial governments largely because of their few numbers in relation to other ethnic groups in the country, their location on the periphery of the country and their alleged primitive culture. The postcolonial government also failed to recognise their belonging to the State because of their location in Matebeleland during the time of power struggle between the Shona and Ndebele people during the 1980s. This marginalisation was evidenced by lack of infrastructural development as well as lack of basic social necessities such as education and healthcare. Although the people tried to cope with these challenges, they remained largely poor and lacked basic social amenities. The coming of NGOs with development programmes also failed to address the structural causes of poverty in Binga as discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 8: NGOS AND PROLONGED FOOD AID IN BINGA, 1982-2008

Introduction

This chapter explores the role of long-term food aid on BaTonga communities and analyses its impact on livelihoods in the quest to understand the context of poverty and food insecurity in Binga. BaTonga people suffered from severe food shortages and poverty because Binga is prone to drought and more than 90% of the people depended on emergency food aid for survival which had been distributed since the 1982 food crisis caused by a severe drought.⁶⁹⁸ This chapter argues that their chronic poverty and failure to produce adequate food requirements for their families and their communities cannot be solely blamed on the forced displacement from the banks of the Zambezi in 1958 but also on the prolonged distribution of emergency food aid for more than two decades under study. The previous chapters have discussed how their fragile livelihoods enabled them to survive through several episodes of drought after resettlement without humanitarian assistance in form of food aid. This chapter argues that long-term provision of food assistance, although necessary, decimated BaTonga's livelihood in farming and increased their vulnerability to food insecurity due to dependency syndrome.

NGOs and Food Aid Distribution in Binga

Africa is regarded as the poorest continent of the world following many decades of colonial subjugation by European nations. After decolonisation in the 1960s and 1970s, much focus was on poverty reduction through industrialisation and modernisation. The rich industrialised and modernised nations believed that it was their duty to assist in the development of the poor nations through aid.⁶⁹⁹ Consequently, developed nations transferred public resources to African governments through the foreign aid system as part of a belief that this foreign aid increases economic growth. The United States was the largest single donor of development assistance, followed by the European Union, and EU member states such as Germany, France and the UK.

⁶⁹⁸ Save the Children, Household Economy Assessments, Binga & Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matabeleland North & Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe April 2003

⁶⁹⁹ Nicola Banks and David Hulme, *The Role of NGOs and Civil Society in Development and Poverty Reduction*, Manchester University, Brooks World Institute Working Paper No.171, 2012.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) were treated as an important part of civil society which could become key agents in the transfer of foreign aid to developing nations. According to Lindsey, NGOs are formal, self-governing, non-profit and voluntary institutions.⁷⁰⁰ Local, regional and international non-governmental organisations were treated as separate from the government and hence outside political influence. The official channelling of funds through NGOs instead of recipient country governments has been called “the rise and rise of NGOs” or NGO-ization.⁷⁰¹ The role of NGOs in the foreign aid system had its roots in the neoliberal, free-market policies prescribed to developing countries by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the 1980s.⁷⁰² The Structural Adjustment Programmes launched by many African countries during this period saw these states withdrawing funds from social service delivery. As a result, international donors began to channel their funds as foreign aid to developing countries through NGOs which were regarded as key agents in the fight against poverty and the spread of democracy.

Since the 1980s, NGOs played an important role in the development sector of Third World countries as they occupied the gap left by states which failed to meet the needs of their citizens when they began to face financial challenges.⁷⁰³ They were viewed as an alternative development agent for development programmes and service provision.⁷⁰⁴ In addition, donors favoured NGOs as partners in development strategies because of their potential to focus on bottom-up development to complement the growth-centred development of the allegedly weak and corrupt governments in poor countries.⁷⁰⁵ NGOs were also regarded as better able to deliver services to local populations than the recipient government because of their perceived accountability.

According to Vivian and Masego, NGOs had the potential to provide innovative, participatory and sustainable solutions to rural development challenges.⁷⁰⁶ This was perceived to provide a channel

⁷⁰⁰ Lindsey Patricia Peterson, *Foreign Aid, INGOs and Development: A Cross-National and Longitudinal Examination of the Global Development System*, PhD Thesis, The Ohio State University 2011.

⁷⁰¹ Michael Edwards and David Hulme, *Too Close for Comfort? The Impact of Official Aid on Nongovernmental Organizations*, *Current Issues in Comparative Education*, Vol. 1 (1), 1998, United Kingdom, p.7.

⁷⁰² *Ibid.*

⁷⁰³ Nicola Banks and David Hulme, *The role of NGOs and Civil Society in Development and Poverty Reduction*, Brooks World Institute, Manchester University, 2012.

⁷⁰⁴ Banks and Hulme, *The role of NGOs and Civil Society*, 2012.

⁷⁰⁵ Jessica Vivian and Gladys Maseko, *NGOs, Participation and Rural Development. Testing the Assumption with Evidence from Zimbabwe*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 1994.

⁷⁰⁶ Vivian and Maseko, *NGOs, Participation and Rural Development*, 1994.

in the understanding of developing countries and elimination of rural poverty through economic advancement, social transformation and democratic government. It has been argued that the greater the challenges caused by neoliberalism, the greater the rise of NGOs filling the vacuum left by the government.⁷⁰⁷ However, as NGOs sought to fight poverty, they did not question the impact of free market policies on the impoverishment of most people in poor countries.

Although NGOs were regarded as independent entities, their role in developing countries has been questioned. The main reasons for the distribution of foreign aid included the recipient need and donor interest but aid was usually given to countries that were strategically important for the donor.⁷⁰⁸ They had wider access to foreign aid than the respective governments where they operated and their calls for emergency aid were easier heard by international development and donor agencies. However, NGOs as development agents have been criticised for failure to fulfil their development objectives because they worked to fulfil the interests of donor countries as 'surrogates of the state'.⁷⁰⁹

Many NGOs were drawn to Zimbabwe soon after the attainment of independence to address hunger and poverty during the nationwide drought of 1982-83 when the government requested for food aid from international food agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Consortium for Southern African Food Security Agency. The country was recovering from the effects of a protracted war which incapacitated the new government from feeding its people during the period of drought.

Food aid refers to food assistance that is granted to governments, institutions or households to curb temporary food shortages.⁷¹⁰ The distribution of food aid in general began when the United States of America (U.S.) launched a surplus food transfers programme between governments which was targeted to fight hunger after the Second World War under the Marshall Plan.⁷¹¹ However, this programme began during the time when the world was polarized by the Cold War which was an ideological war between the U.S. and its allies, and the communist Soviet Union

⁷⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁸ Paterson, Foreign Aid, 2011.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁷¹⁰ Sara Pantuliano, From Food Aid to Livelihoods Support: Rethinking the Role of WFP in Eastern Sudan, 2007, www.researchgate.net/publication/6457982

⁷¹¹ Gawain Kripke, Food Aid or Hidden Dumping? Separating Wheat from Chaff, Oxfam Briefing Paper, 2005, p.3.

and its allies. Thus, one can argue that food aid became a means through which America could control world.

During short-term crises, the WFP through international NGOs distributed food for free principally to save lives by alleviation of hunger and starvation in affected countries. This aid consisted of the distribution of general food rations, mainly grain, and selective feeding programmes to nutritionally vulnerable groups to in areas affected by natural and man-made calamities.⁷¹² Although this was a good gesture to prevent malnutrition and death, sometimes food aid was used to serve the political and interests of the Western countries and it was issued for prolong periods well after the crisis had ended.

NGOs identify areas of greatest need for relief food, but they have a bias for remote and marginal areas in aid targeting, because they usually suffer from social exclusion from the countries in which they live.⁷¹³ Save the Children (U.K.) targeted the Binga district because of its isolated geographic location and minority status of BaTonga people.⁷¹⁴ Minority people in peripheral areas are usually systematically disadvantaged and face discrimination in institutions such as education and health. Although the distribution of emergency food aid sought to serve many objectives, its focus was direct provision of food to hungry communities during times of crisis which could not feed themselves. Binga was among the first districts to be severely affected by the first drought of 1981-1982 just after independence.⁷¹⁵ The drought was so severe in the area that most communities did not harvest anything from their fields. Livestock was dying, rivers, dams and most boreholes had dried up and people began to die from hunger.⁷¹⁶ The international publicity of this desperate situation among BaTonga through media attracted humanitarian emergence relief aid to the area. Consequently, NGOs flooded the Binga district and initiated many poverty-reduction programmes in economic, social, and environmental issues as well as the distribution of humanitarian food aid.⁷¹⁷ Most of these NGOs were funded by United Nations Agents such as UNICEF and WFP, as well as the Department for International Development (DFID)

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Pantuliano, *From Food Aid to Livelihoods Support*, 2007

⁷¹⁴ Anna Taylor, *Comparative Experiences of Community Managed Targeting in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Malawi*, Save the Children, Field Exchange 23, www.enonile.net/fex/23/comparative, 2004

⁷¹⁵ Shepherd Mutamba, *Binga-the Forgotten Land*, in *Parade and Foto-Action*, December 1986, p.16-18.

⁷¹⁶ Ibid.

⁷¹⁷ JoAnn McGregor, *Crossing the Zambezi. The Politics of Landscape on the Central African Frontier*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p.155.

and the United State Agency for International Development (USAID). NGOs such as Save the Children (U.K.), Christian Care, Catholic Relief Services, the Red Cross Society, Adventist Development and Relief Agency Zimbabwe (ADRA), and Organisation of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP) competed in distributing emergency humanitarian food to BaTonga people. This food was brought into the country by the WFP as emergency relief to people during periods of drought and was distributed under the Vulnerable Group Feeding schemes and Schools Feeding as well as emergency food aid to those who faced food shortages. This food was important as it helped to prevent hunger, malnutrition or even death of the people.

However, these programmes ensured that free food continued pouring in every year even when there was no famine. Mugande, who once worked for an NGO claimed that “The programme officers and nutrition managers of the NGOs portrayed BaTonga to international donors as victims of displacement and government neglect who needed long-term food assistance.”⁷¹⁸ Nevertheless, this was not largely true because they had managed to live in precarity and cope with food insecurity for many years without any external help. The colonial government had assisted them with food aid intervention and tax break for two years after displacement but discontinued when they expected the people to have settled in their new homes and expected them to use available resources to fight hunger and poverty.

NGOs continued to bring in more food aid in Binga even after the 1982/3 drought because they understood how precarious their livelihoods were in the harsh ecological region. Food is a necessity hence they argued that prolonged states of food shortages can cause malnourishment and poor health amongst the poor which in turn weakens the labour force necessary for agricultural production and ultimately hinder economic development.⁷¹⁹ Because of this, they distributed maize, beans, salt, cooking oil and some nutritious fortified porridge meal for free to BaTonga people. However, the shortage of food in Binga was more of a political issue and there was need for political solutions to lift the people from hunger and poverty.

⁷¹⁸ Interview with Valley Mugande at Bunsuwa on 21 March 2021

⁷¹⁹ Interview with Food Distribution Programme Officer, ADRA, at Binga Centre on 20 December 2019

Nevertheless, free food kept on coming as the NGOs publicised recurrent droughts in the district from 1981 to 1986 arguably as a way of fundraising. The coming of humanitarian food distribution every year even in periods of good harvests questions the effectiveness of food aid in promoting sustainable development of poor communities. Although emergency food aid from donors was necessary during periods of acute food shortages in the Binga district its protracted distribution every year for almost three decades posed a major threat to livelihoods and resilience in the drought prone region. Long-term food distribution negatively affected people's agency in reducing chronic livelihoods vulnerability and increased food insecurity as discussed below.

Political Considerations in Food Aid Targeting

Although food aid is important in abating hunger, critics of food aid argue that aid agencies keep on distributing food assistance and eventually cause dependency because these agencies benefit from disasters.⁷²⁰ This can probably explain why these agencies food kept pouring in food in Binga from 1982 even in good years of adequate rainfall. The people had survived in the past for many decades from 1958 in the same region without receiving any food assistance from NGOs so the need for prolonged free food distribution may not have been justified.

NGOs are accused of bias for selfish reasons in choosing areas of operation to partner with UN agencies in distributing relief food. They flooded Binga from 1982 largely because it was one of the poorest districts lagging behind in terms of development⁷²¹. Arguable, Binga's poverty could better attract donor funds which could be channelled in development projects than other more developed districts. According to Mugande, donors who are usually driven by motivations were more likely to consistently provide financial assistance through these NGOs to assist in poverty reduction in Binga.⁷²² NGOs were trusted with these funds as they were believed to be less corrupt than the government and could provide well-targeted emergency relief food.⁷²³ However, the prolonged distribution of free food has been criticised as targeting was principally influenced by special interests of these NGOs, and this limited the effectiveness of food aid in

⁷²⁰ Dambisa Moyo, Why Foreign Aid is Hurting Africa, Africa News, Wall Street Journal, 2009, <https://wjs.com/articles>

⁷²¹ McGregor, Crossing the Zambezi, 2009, p.155.

⁷²² Interview with Valley Mugande, Bunsiswa.

⁷²³ Banks and Hulme, The role of NGOs, 2012

reducing poverty. A Teacher at Simatelele said, “We really needed food during the drought, but we needed to learn to produce our own food. It is not good for my family to be fed every year with some food which we do not know where and how it was grown.”⁷²⁴

Wright commended Save the Children (U.K.)'s manner in which it advocated for food aid distribution and “lobbied vigorously” to alert the international community through wide media coverage “to spur reluctant donors into prompt and decision action.”⁷²⁵ It can be argued that his lobbying and advocacy was primarily not done to benefit the poor hungry people but a drive to solicit foreign funding. The publicity of widespread hunger and chronic in Binga district in postcolonial Zimbabwe during the neoliberal era managed to move the hearts of donors to pour funds in this district for poverty reduction for prolonged periods. As the NGOs continued to lobby for food aid for BaTonga as a disadvantaged minority group who had suffered from displacement, donors continued to supply food for the people for many decades and this jeopardised their livelihood in agriculture. Food aid may have been necessary in dire situations but not every year.

Furthermore, the NGOs might have exploited BaTonga’s hunger, poverty and marginality for other agendas. Binga was regarded as politically suitable for the proliferation of NGOs because Grayling said, “The people feel neglected and there is enormous resentment against the government.”⁷²⁶ Local leaders welcomed many donors to spur development in the district. There was relatively no local opposition to humanitarian aid projects because of the alleged polarization between the people and the government.

According to Azeoha, many people established NGOs as a source of employment as the number of NGOs was multiplying.⁷²⁷ Many foreigners from the U.S. and Europe have come to Africa as expatriates working for NGOs on projects of development thus, they would do everything within their power to maintain their jobs and possible benefits. Many NGO members benefited from the projects fees as some of the money released for poverty alleviation projects was paid for salaries and for buying luxury vehicles for the projects. Although NGOs are non-profit making entities, some of these organizations increasingly operated like business ventures as they

⁷²⁴ Interview with Wailos Munkuli, Binga Centre on 21 May 2021

⁷²⁵ Mark Wright, *Evolution of a Crisis: Save the Children UK Perspective Field Exchange*, p.27, 2003, www.enonline.net.fex/18/evolution

⁷²⁶ Chris Grayling, *Parliamentary Debates, Hansard, UK Parliament, House of Commons, Vol.405: Debate on Monday 19 May 2003*.

⁷²⁷ Abel E. Ezeoha, *Can NGOs Aid Good Governance and Sustainable Development in Africa? ---Some Theoretical Insights*

attempted to make profit to sustain themselves and the lives of people who depended on them for livelihood. Their main objective hence became consistently securing foreign funding. This may help to explain why more than five NGOs had to compete to feed BaTonga for a prolonged period and probably exaggerating their hunger to secure funds from donors. They had lived without food aid after displacement in precarious times.

Furthermore, it is important to note that when the problem for which NGOs were founded was solved, they sought new campaigns and new funds to self-perpetuate.⁷²⁸ NGOs came to distribute emergency relief food during the period of the 1982 drought to avert hunger and save lives. However, Binga got more rains in the 1984-1985 farming season, but drought relief food was distributed during this period because it was argued that some areas had their crops destroyed by elephants, insects and birds.⁷²⁹ Consequently, in June 1985, 240 bags of 50kg maize meal, 240 cans of cooking oil and 1125 packets of beans as shown on the table below.

Figure 5: Table showing the amount of food distributed in June 1985

Food Distributed	Description	Quantity Distributed	Total Distributed
Maize Meal	50kg bags	240	12 000 kg
Cooking oil	2,5 litre cans	240	6 000 litres
Beans	500g packets	1125	562,5 kg

*Extracted from Binga District News, June 1985.*⁷³⁰

This was a lot of free food received in a good year which arguably negatively affected their traditional coping strategies which they used to fall back on during periods of food crises before the coming of NGOs in Binga. An elderly villager in Nsenga remembered the drought years and the good season after as follows: “They were hard times and we had nothing to eat; we survived on *nyii* and *kabombwe* (forest foods). We thank those who send us food from afar. When it rained again, we were able to eat *nzembwe* (sorghum) from our fields again. The donors also gave us maize, and we had lots of food that year.”⁷³¹ The role of NGOs in promoting sustainable rural development thus becomes weak as food aid began to pour in every year, affecting people’s

⁷²⁸ Ibid.

⁷²⁹ Binga District News, June 1985, Binga District Council.

⁷³⁰ Ibid.

⁷³¹ Interview with Wailos Munkuli, Binga Centre

farming strategies. It can be argued that this continuous flow of emergence food aid even when there was no emergence nor food crisis largely benefited the NGOs with consistent employment.

According to Vivian and Masego, the contribution of NGOs to rural development in Zimbabwe has been overstated.⁷³² As food distributing NGOs sought to receive continuous funding through feeding BaTonga, they continued to give emergency relief food for many decades even if it was not a sustainable solution to food shortages in the district. Emergency food aid was more of relief than development aid because the NGOs treated food insecurity and poverty in Binga as a technical problem that could be solved by provision of free food without addressing the root causes of crop failure and poverty.⁷³³ The many NGOs distributed food to almost every person in the district every year from 1982.

Save the Children (U.K.) worked with the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare in distributing food to children as well as pregnant and lactating mothers in Binga.⁷³⁴ Binga had a high infant mortality rate whereby more than 50% of children died before reaching their fifth birthday mainly because of malnutrition and lack of immunisation.⁷³⁵ Widely reporting this mortality to the international communities arguably gave Save the Children an opportunity to fundraise from overseas donors and they managed to distribute "...five square meals a week to every child under the age of five years."⁷³⁶ This food was important for growth and survival of children because most of the people could not afford protein energy. However, feeding the vulnerable children in Binga hence became a viable project which guaranteed flow of funding for the organisation for many years in the district. Nonetheless, this project helped to improve nutrition, gave many children a chance to live and improve lives of many people. One woman commended this food and said "I had lost four children who died young. But when began to feed them with porridge from Save (Save the Children (U.K.)) my children stopped dying. They grew to become adults and even today my grandchildren are alive because of this porridge."⁷³⁷

⁷³² Vivian and Masego, *Participation and Development*, 1994

⁷³³ Edwards and Hulme, *Too Close for Comfort*, 1998.

⁷³⁴ Binga District News, August 1986, Binga District Council.

⁷³⁵ Ibid, November 1983.

⁷³⁶ Ibid. August 1986.

⁷³⁷ Interview with Wailosi Munkuli, Binga Centre

Another viable food aid venture for Save the Children was the supplementary school feeding programme. During the first decade after independence, very few schools in Binga offered full primary education to BaTonga children because of shortage of schools, teachers and books.⁷³⁸ As the Binga Rural District Council together with community members built schools, many children could not attend school regularly because of the long distances, lack of school fees, and the need for children to assist parents in livelihood activities. According to Save the Children (U.K.), supplementary feeding programmes provided an incentive for children to regularly attend school and it was no longer necessary for most school-going children to spend their time gathering wild fruits, selling vegetables and wild produce for survival.⁷³⁹ Bekezela confirmed this when she said that “The porridge was so good. I would not miss school because I could also take some porridge home for my grandmother.”⁷⁴⁰ Giving this report to donors arguably motivated them to continue pouring funds to feed BaTonga children hence food aid kept on pouring in the district to the detriment of livelihoods.

The proper meal of cooked porridge, beans or peas which was provided daily at schools complemented the free monthly rations of food distributed to for each member of the household to fill the gap of food insecurity.⁷⁴¹ Therefore, it can be argued that the provision of emergency food aid in Binga helped to sustain NGOs and their members of staff who were employed to manage various projects in as much as it helped to provide food to BaTonga who suffered from crop failure due to erratic rains and recurrent droughts. However, although the food aid helped to meet their needs, this weakened their livelihoods.

In addition to feeding the children, during the 1980s adults in Binga who were unemployed got monthly rations of 15kg of maize meal, 1kg of beans and 500g of salt.⁷⁴² As most people in Binga were unemployed and had no sources of income, they qualified for these free food packs every month. They had no cattle which they could dispose of to buy grain because of the invading tsetse fly which killed even donkeys that were used for draught power.⁷⁴³ However, these people had

⁷³⁸ Weinrich, *The Tonga People*, p.33

⁷³⁹ Save the Children HEA

⁷⁴⁰ Interview with Bekezela Munkombwe, Binga Centre.

⁷⁴¹ Ibid.

⁷⁴² Binga District News, August 1986, Binga District Council.

⁷⁴³ Binga District News, June 1985, Binga District Council.

survived precarious times from their displacement in 1958 without any food aid as shown in previous chapters.

The NGOs could have improved the people's lives in a sustainable way by improving food production. BaTonga's quest to promote sustainable development of the district at independence through Lusumpuko Plan (which sought access to fishing and wildlife resources for the creation of employment) was not supported by NGOs which chased after funds not for transformation of Binga but for distributing free food packs. It can be argued that if their activities were tailored towards sustainable development, NGOs should have empowered the people to solve their problems of hunger and poverty.

In their drive to gain foreign humanitarian funding, NGOs argued that prolonged states of food shortages can cause malnourishment and poor health amongst the poor which in turn weaken the labour force necessary for agricultural production and ultimately hinder economic development.⁷⁴⁴ This probably motivated the donors who made available funds to food agencies for feeding adult people every year to improve their nutrition and general wellbeing. As NGOs were always hunting for donor funds, they began to distribute maize, beans, cooking oil and some nutritious fortified porridge meal for free to BaTonga people to supplement their harvest for many years. It was no longer relief food. The increase in the variety of food items given to the people from the nineties certainly helped to avert hunger and starvation and improved their lives in many ways. Regular provision of supplementary food hampers to malnourished sick children, pregnant and breastfeeding mothers at healthcare centres also encouraged many women to seek medical help and avert many unnecessary maternal deaths due to complications. Despite these benefits, the shortage of food in Binga was more of a political issue and there was need for political solutions to lift the people from persistent hunger and poverty.

In addition to serving the interests of NGOs, food aid is also criticised for serving the interests of donors more than food security needs of recipients. Kripke is of the opinion that although food aid was mainly distributed for humanitarian reasons during emergencies, it also served "classified

⁷⁴⁴ Kripke, Food aid or Hidden Dumping? p.11.

interests” of donor countries.⁷⁴⁵ The debate around the effectiveness of food aid as leading to sustainable development centres around these hidden interests as developed nations strive to protect their investments in developing countries. According to Dambisa Moyo, foreign aid is part of foreign policy of donating countries.⁷⁴⁶ For example, the Federal Government of the US includes a certain percentage of aid in its budget largely for political considerations as the superpower expands its interests in the world.

The US is regarded as the world largest donor of food aid under the Food for Peace Programme giving about half of all global food aid but 90% of it comes in form of food donations.⁷⁴⁷ This food which is mainly cereals, beans and cooking oil is purchased from the American farmers and is shipped to recipient countries. This food aid can be said to serve American interests as it financially sustains their farmers, food processors, distributors and shippers. The US government does not want to lose political support of its farmers who sell their grain to them for food aid.⁷⁴⁸ It therefore uses millions of dollars to purchase its surplus food created by agricultural subsidies and dumps it in developing countries in form of humanitarian aid.⁷⁴⁹ This may help to understand why large shipments of food aid into Binga continued over decades, long after the drought of 1982 had ended.

Furthermore, food aid does not assist in the internal distribution of food within recipient countries which could assist in achieving sustainable development. It has been argued that the cost of food aid was going to be less if cash was donated and the purchase of locally produced food in developing countries was going to promote farming. For, example, during the 2006 food crisis in north-eastern Kenya, UNICEF had to regularly deliver truckloads of maize and other goods produced in the US while the western region had excess grain which was spoiling in the silos in Lake Victoria.⁷⁵⁰ US-produced maize distributed for free robbed the local Kenyan food producers in Lake Victoria of local markets. Lack of markets then discouraged these local farmers from

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid., p.13.

⁷⁴⁶ Dambisa Moyo, Why foreign aid is hurting Africa.

⁷⁴⁷ Kripke, Food aid or Hidden Dumping.

⁷⁴⁸ Jim French, Why US Farmers Should Take “Pride” in *Reforming Food Aid, The Politics of Poverty. Ideas and Analysis from Oxfam America’s Policy Experts*, Oxfam, 2013.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁰ Thielke, “Starvation in Africa”.

producing more maize during the next farming season because of the cost of seed and fertilizers which could not be recovered after spoiling of grain.

Considering this, NGOs should be regarded as political actors who manage foreign aid more than a model of development. One would agree with Dambisa Moyo who asserts that prolonged food aid in Africa has done little to support African farmers but rather benefits donor countries farmers.⁷⁵¹ Therefore, prolonged distribution of emergency food aid can undermine local economies by discouraging local food production and circulation. Moyo emphasizes that food aid undermines African economies and is increasingly impoverishing people because it is not working to bring development in Africa.⁷⁵² It can be argued that BaTonga people became impoverished as they abandoned their traditional survival strategies due to prolonged food aid distribution.

Save the Children and Politicisation of Food Aid

According to Moyo, foreign aid in general became a form of neo-colonialism whereby the former colonial powers sought to promote and maintain an economic presence in their former colonies through humanitarian work.⁷⁵³ As noted above, food aid had many objectives which helped to serve many interests. It can be argued that the international funding agencies used NGOs to further their political and economic agendas in poor countries. Although NGOs claimed to be autonomous from external political influence, the Government of Zimbabwe criticized them about their role and function as they excluded government representatives from membership in their organizations. The NGOs adamantly maintained their non-governmental status. However, the United Kingdom branch of Save the Children which distributed prolonged food aid in Binga not only offered emergency food to save BaTonga lives but also to promote and protect British interests in Zimbabwe as its former colony. This organization even excluded members from the Binga Rural District Council from joining the organization as members thus depriving them of participating in the development of their region.

⁷⁵¹ Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid. Why Aid is not Working and how there is a better way for Africa*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York.

⁷⁵² Ibid.

⁷⁵³ Ibid.

The provision of overseas funding to Save the Children to allegedly save the starving BaTonga who were neglected by the government during times of crisis was arguably not the principal objective of its presence in the country. When the organization first came in 1982, it worked with the government in saving lives during the period of severe hunger. Save the Children (U.K.) targeted social welfare groups of people while other food distributing NGOs such as ORAP, ADRA and CADEC targeted the rest of the population in all the twenty-one wards in Binga to receive food aid.⁷⁵⁴ The Government through the Department of Social Services and the District Drought Relief Committee considered which areas needed food aid in the district as well as determined which people qualified for aid.⁷⁵⁵ Save the Children (U.K.) thus distributed programme food mainly to children, pregnant and lactating mothers for almost 20 years but then decided to also add emergency food aid distribution programmes in the district in 2001 during the period of economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe. The organization reported that there was an acute humanitarian crisis in 2001 due to widespread hunger in the whole of Zimbabwe and people had exhausted their coping strategies.⁷⁵⁶

However, Save the Children U.K.'s decision to add emergency food aid distribution programmes in the district from the 2001 drought further handicapped BaTonga's ability to diversify their livelihoods in face of livelihood challenges. Although there were successive droughts in the country for almost a decade in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010⁷⁵⁷ which caused widespread food shortages, it can be argued that the distribution of emergency food aid by Save the Children (U.K.) was largely influenced by political interests than the food requirements of BaTonga. Zimbabwe had implemented the controversial fast-track land reform programme in 2000 which forcibly took commercial land from British farmers without compensation and redistributed it to landless Africans. This was a huge blow to British investments and influence in its former colony and it can be argued that humanitarian aid through NGO work could retain some of this influence. Consequently, Britain opted to fund food aid in Zimbabwe in August in 2001 as they argued that the U.N. World Food Programme took

⁷⁵⁴ Ali MacLaine, *Infant Feeding Practices in Binga and Nyaminyami, Zimbabwe, in Relation to HIV*, Save the Children UK, 2006, p.6.

⁷⁵⁵ Binga District News, June 1985, Binga District Council.

⁷⁵⁶ Wright, *Evolution of a Crisis*, Save the Children, 2003.

⁷⁵⁷ S. Nangombe, *Drought Conditions and Management Strategies in Zimbabwe*, Department of Meteorological Services, Harare, 2013.

more time to respond to the alleged humanitarian crisis as it later released funds in 2002.⁷⁵⁸ Wright also reported that, “Save the Children has taken the lead within Zimbabwe in providing guidance and information on food security to the British NGO group” as Britain claimed that more food was required because Zimbabwe’s maize production had decreased by 71% following the land reform programme.⁷⁵⁹ This means the organization spread propaganda about the Zimbabwean situation to get international support for British against Zimbabwe.

It can be argued that British interests were entrenched in food distribution in Binga through Save the Children (U.K.). When a British parliamentarian Chris Grayling, brought up the Zimbabwean land reform issue in the UK House of Commons in 2003, he mentioned that NGOs “doing work at the front line in Zimbabwe” collected intelligence about the reality of events in some rural areas.⁷⁶⁰ He also brought forward the Binga food crisis, the government banning of food distribution in the district, the issue of developmental neglect, BaTonga resentment of the government and voting for the opposition party, and many other issues gathered and reported by NGOs distributing food in Binga. This shows that NGOs were political agents collecting information in communities and the country for their governments. Therefore, Save the Children was far from being politically neutral in its humanitarian work in Binga; it served British interests more than humanitarian interests. This possible helps to explain why this organization maintained its presence and expanded its operations even when there was no shortage of food in the district, thereby affecting BaTonga’s resilience to livelihood challenges.

Moreover, Save the Children (U.K.) decided to add food aid distribution programmes in 2001 arguably to pursue its own interests and expansion in Binga as a reliable food aid agency in the eyes of international funding agencies. The organisation took to propaganda through the media (which it regarded as “a powerful means of mass communication”) to publicise the political and economic meltdown in Zimbabwe and appeal for donations to feed everyone in Binga.⁷⁶¹ When the DFID money for relief aid came from Britain in August 2001, Save the Children (U.K.) claimed that they used it to issue out food to poor households without livelihood assets such as cattle,

⁷⁵⁸ Wright, *Evolution of a Crisis*, Save the Children, 2003.

⁷⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁰ Chris Grayling, *Parliamentary Debates, Hansard*, UK Parliament, House of Commons, Vol.405: Debate on Monday 19 May 2003.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.

scotch-carts or ploughs all year round and these constituted more than 90% of the total population in the Binga district.⁷⁶² The few middle-income and high-income households which possessed cattle, sheep and donkeys also received free food from three months per year from January to March, or up to six months per year starting from September 2001.⁷⁶³

It can therefore be argued that Britain increased emergency food aid distribution in Binga in 2001 through Save the Children for political reasons to prove to the international community that the fast-track land reform programme collapsed and incapacitated the national agricultural system by increasing food insecurity. Walker, a senior official at the organisation reported that “Innocent people of Zimbabwe should not be made to suffer for a political situation that is out of control”.⁷⁶⁴ This propaganda was meant to lure overseas people to donate money. It was easier for Save the Children (U.K.) to justify feeding the marginalised and chronically poor BaTonga because of entrenched political interests. This partly explains why foreign aid generally fails to promote long term development because of its multiple objectives. Food aid had to continue coming and increase in volume even if it harmed livelihoods because the British interests in Zimbabwe were arguably of paramount importance than BaTonga’s livelihood development.

Save the Children (U.K.) carried out a Household Economic Assessment (HEA) in Binga in 2004 which had a focus on access to food, income and other livelihood capitals as a way of finding justification for continuous food distribution in the region.⁷⁶⁵ Although the HEA separated BaTonga households into three groups according to their possessions and income, every household practically received about 35 percent of their annual food requirements in form of aid, even in the resource rich wards of Sinamagonde, Kabuba and Lubimbi in Lusulu areas where people had not been affected by displacement and resettlement.⁷⁶⁶ This can arguably show that they exaggerated the needs of BaTonga to the donors and this consequently disempowered the people of the ability to produce their own food even in good years of sufficient rainfall. The food distributing organisations competed for feeding the “hungry” and “vulnerable” BaTonga people

⁷⁶² Save the Children (UK), Household Economy Assessments, Binga and Nyaminyami (Kariba Rural) Districts, Matebeleland North and Mashonaland West Provinces, Zimbabwe, April 2003, p.43

⁷⁶³ Ibid., p.10.

⁷⁶⁴ Lyn Walker, Programmes Director for Save the Children in Zimbabwe, Report on Relief Web, 27 December 2008.

⁷⁶⁵ Save the Children Household Economy Assessments, Binga and Nyaminyami, 2003.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid., p.11-13.

as they also competed for donations from agencies such as UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the Consortium for Southern African Food Security Agency. As there was an influx of NGOs in the sparsely populated district, with around 100 000 people, most families qualified to be classified as “vulnerable” and without any means of self-support.⁷⁶⁷ This has arguably created a dependence syndrome and undermined BaTonga’s traditional coping strategies in face of drought and livelihood challenges.

However, NGOs also distributed foods for many years because BaTonga people increasingly demanded to be fed as they arguably adopted food aid as a coping mechanism against poor harvests due to unreliable rainfall among other factors. As most of the food aid was principally targeted to the needy people, village heads influenced the selection of beneficiaries as “vulnerability” was also locally defined. Food aid has been criticized for causing dependency syndrome when it is not administered properly.⁷⁶⁸ BaTonga decided that almost every household had to benefit from humanitarian food as a form of compensation for their losses after displacement and resettlement. A village head said “Everyone here is poor and hungry ever since we left the river (the Zambezi). We had lost our alluvial fields and our water. We sacrificed our lives for the dam, but the government did nothing to assist us. Therefore, all *BaTonga baMulonga* (The River Tonga) had to benefit from the donors.”⁷⁶⁹

This shows that the people also politicised food aid as a way of shifting loyalty from the failed state to the donors who were showing willingness to ‘compensate’ them for their losses after resettlement largely for hidden interests. Weinrich noted the defiant attitude towards the government of BaTonga well before independence as a coping mechanism against the challenges of displacement and resettlement.⁷⁷⁰ It can be argued that they welcomed food aid as a way of not depending on the government for their needs. Maclaine confirms this and notes that BaTonga were known for their pride and determination not to cooperate with the State after forced displacement.⁷⁷¹ Even the British Government noted that BaTonga resented the

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ Kripke, Food aid or Hidden Dumping.

⁷⁶⁹ Interview with Wailosi Munenge at Msenampongo on 22 January 2020.

⁷⁷⁰ Weinrich, *The Tonga People*, 1977, p.49

⁷⁷¹ Maclaine, *Infant Feeding Practices*, Save the Children (UK), 2006, p.24.

government and voted for the opposition party.⁷⁷² NGO activities also fueled this defiance to the ruling party as they arguably indirectly campaigned for regime change in the country. BaTonga arguably did all that they could to perpetuate the coming in of food aid as a livelihood to cope with food insecurity in the drought prone region. However, this attitude further sunk the people into dependency syndrome which impoverished them. Households therefore strived to be registered and benefit from the free food packs, instead of striving to strengthen their livelihoods for achieving resilience.

The 2012 national census indicated that 96,2 percent of the BaTonga were chronically poor⁷⁷³ and Save the Children (U.K.) confirmed that as early as 2001 more than 90 percent of the population in the district benefited from food aid.⁷⁷⁴ This was a very huge number in comparison with other districts such as Makonde-Chinhoyi where between 10 and 50 percent of the rural population needed food aid.⁷⁷⁵ The NGOs failed thus failed to reduce poverty as they were dealing with its symptoms expressed as chronic food insecurity. It can therefore be concluded that food aid failed to achieve sustainable development in Binga because it was not designed to do so due to its multiple objectives. Political interests of donor agencies and countries largely had to determine the feeding programmes as well as targeting of food aid.

Politicisation of food aid by the Government

It was not only the NGOs, their governments, and BaTonga people who attempted to use food aid to their advantage. The Government of Zimbabwe also attempted to gain political mileage in Binga by manipulating the distribution of food by NGOs. There had been very little development in Binga after independence because of neglect by the government, and hence BaTonga had not been voting for the ruling party.⁷⁷⁶ The developmental neglect of Binga was part of a broader national project of uneven development propagated by the ruling party since 1980, with Matabeleland broadly speaking being penalised for its anti-ZANU-PF stance, as discussed in

⁷⁷² Chris Grayling, Parliamentary Debates, Hansard, UK Parliament, House of Commons, Vol.405: Debate on Monday 19 May 2003.

⁷⁷³ Basilwizi Trust, Sustainable Development Support for a Poverty Free Zambezi Valley Strategic Plan, 2010 - 2015

⁷⁷⁴ Save the Children Household Economy Assessments, Binga and Nyaminyami, 2003.

⁷⁷⁵ Food Agriculture Organisation Special Report, FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to Zimbabwe, 2010.

⁷⁷⁶ Terence M. Mashingaidze, Beyond the Kariba Dam Induced Displacements: The Zimbabwean Tonga's Struggle for Restitution, 1990s-2000s, International Journal of Minority and Group Rights, Volume 20, 203, pp.381-404.

Chapter 7. BaTonga supported the main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) which had great support from British farmers who lost land in Zimbabwe during the fast-track land reform of 2000. MDC received substantial votes in Binga during both Parliamentary, Senatorial and Presidential elections held from 2000.⁷⁷⁷ The ruling Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF) party blamed NGOs as part of a foreign-driven regime change agenda inclusive of the MDC for using food handouts in Binga to gain and consolidate support for the opposition party.

This allegation was largely caused by the work of the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) in the Binga district which increased tension between the government and NGOs in the region. CCJP was part of the Catholic Church which had distributed food aid in Binga for many years through CADEC. The CCJP which spoke out strongly about the Gukurahundi atrocities committed against Matebeleland and Midlands provinces in the country in the first half of the 1980s also implemented a programme from 1996 to 2005 to address the root causes of poverty in Binga through increasing awareness of the local people's developmental rights and entitlements.⁷⁷⁸ It was blamed for stirring the pot and being stridently opposed to the ZANU-PF government when BaTonga started questioning the government over their developmental neglect in the district. The work of CCJP was allegedly associated with the opposition MDC party when its presidential candidate Morgan Tsvangirai won more than 27,000 votes out of 37,000 in Binga, accounting for the largest votes in any rural constituency in Zimbabwe for the presidential election in 2002.⁷⁷⁹ The Government blamed the CCJP for this triumph of the opposition party and accused it of using food aid distribution (through CADEC) to buy votes. This convinced the Government of the hidden political interests of NGOs serving British interests to topple the ruling party from power largely because of its controversial land reform programme.

In using liberation war like language, this contributed to the ZANU-PF led national government calling most NGOs operating in Binga at the time as sell outs. When Save the Children (U.K.) through wide media coverage to the international community blamed the fast-track land reform

⁷⁷⁷ McGregor, Crossing the Zambezi, 2009.

⁷⁷⁸ Bernard Manyena, Disaster resilience in development and humanitarian interventions. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University. 2009, <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/661>, p.118.

⁷⁷⁹ Ibid., p.138.

process in Zimbabwe for food shortages and a humanitarian crisis,⁷⁸⁰ the Government temporarily banned the organisation from distributing food in the whole country for five weeks following the 2002 elections.⁷⁸¹ This retaliation showed that the government had power overall power on the operations of Save the Children. Banning of food aid distribution in Binga was also meant to intimidate BaTonga that they could starve to death unless they voted for the ZANU-PF ruling party which had control over the operations of NGOs in the country. Again, during the 2005 Senate elections, the government temporarily barred food aid distribution in the district as it accused NGOs of “playing politics with food” and “using food handouts to influence our people to vote for imperial lapdogs, the MDC.”⁷⁸² However, in averting a major food security disaster, food aid distribution resumed soon after the elections.

The politicisation of relief food during the 2008 harmonised elections caused chronic food shortages in Binga. The banning of food aid distribution caused a food crisis in 2008 which resulted in suffering and deaths. There was drought throughout the country in from 2007/08 which was severe in Binga due to lengthy dry spells and the inability amongst most BaTonga to harvest any grain. The people had abandoned their coping mechanisms against livelihood challenges due to long-term distribution of free food packs. In addition, the district voted significantly for the MDC party in both the parliamentary and presidential elections of that year, allegedly because of the work of the NGOs in campaigning for the opposition. For instance, it was reported that there were small pamphlets with the MDC party’s logo packed in maize meal bags distributed to BaTonga before the 2008 elections.⁷⁸³ In the 2008 parliamentary elections, MDC won with 16,335 votes (85 percent of the votes) against ZANU-PF’s 2,946 (15 percent) in the Binga North Constituency, accounting for the largest voter turn-out for the MDC in any rural constituency in Zimbabwe.⁷⁸⁴ The government again blamed NGOs for campaigning for MDC with food handouts.

⁷⁸⁰ Wright, *Evolution of a Crisis*, Save the Children, 2003.

⁷⁸¹ Meldrum, A. (2002) Mugabe stops charities famine work, *The Guardian*, 17 October 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com>

⁷⁸² Jennipher Muderedzi, Exploring structural violence in the context of disability and poverty in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Disability* 6(0), 2017, p.924.

⁷⁸³ Interview with Zilikwene Munenge at Manjolo Business Centre on 23 December 2020.

⁷⁸⁴ Manyena, *Disaster Resilience*, 2009, p.138.

Again, during the Presidential elections held on 29 March 2008 the opposition candidate Tsvangirai won with a large margin against the ruling party in Binga. However, the government blamed the British meddling in this election and only released the results on 2 May 2008 with the opposition candidate, Tsvangirai, winning but with no overall majority. Tsvangirai won with 47,9 percent and Robert Mugabe had 43,2 percent, necessitating a run-off election.⁷⁸⁵ The lead up to this election was marred by violence and intimidation of voters by ZANU-PF's militias, leading to the withdrawal of Tsvangirai from the run-off.⁷⁸⁶ Meanwhile, the government through the Minister of Home Affairs banned all NGOs on 5 June 2008 as it once again used food as a political weapon by blaming them for the loss of the ruling party during the 2008 elections.⁷⁸⁷ NGOs were seen as part of the political agenda and this took place at a time of massive food insecurity in Binga District.

There was widespread hunger in the country because basic commodities were scarce due to price cuts.⁷⁸⁸ The situation was dire in Binga where more than 90 percent of the population lived on food aid and had barely planted any crops due to drought.⁷⁸⁹ Most families had no source of income to buy food on the informal market and could not have a single meal per day. People starved for many days and fainted from hunger. The situation drove them into destitution as they survived on picking up the droppings of goats which they then dissolved in a cup of water and drank it just to survive as they waited for the return of food aid.⁷⁹⁰ Those who possessed chickens, goats and cattle exchanged them for grain from the informal market at exorbitant prices. Most of the people resorted to living off wild foods which were unpalatable and poisonous, just to survive until the restoration of food aid.⁷⁹¹ This shows how dependency on food aid can cause untold suffering when it suddenly becomes unavailable.

Food Aid Dependency

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁸⁷ J. Shoko, Mugabe Turns Screws on Rights Activists and Lawyers, Zimbabwe Crisis Reports, 2008, The Institute for War and Peace Reporting, <http://refworld.org>.

⁷⁸⁸ Tapiwa Madimu, Food Imports, Hunger and State Making in Zimbabwe, 200-2009, Journal of Asian and African Studies, SAGE Journals, 15 August 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1177/002109619868735>

⁷⁸⁹ Save the Children Household Economy Assessments, Binga and Nyaminyami, 2003.

⁷⁹⁰ Interview with Snikiwe Munkuli in Simatelele on 21 December 2019.

⁷⁹¹ Thabo Ndlovu, An Analysis of the Impact of Continuous External Support on Community Resilience in Sinansengwe Community in Binga District in Zimbabwe, Masters in Disaster Management, University of the Free State of Bloemfontein, South Africa, 2010, p.24.

Although food aid is intended to address acute and chronic food insecurity, its negative effects have generated some heated debates on its effectiveness. Most critics argue that although food aid has helped to save hundreds of millions of lives, it leads to poverty in the long run.⁷⁹² The previous chapters have shown how BaTonga struggled to produce enough food but survived without and food aid. The coming of free food packs for prolonged periods did not improve food production in the ecologically hostile district but ruined their livelihood in farming. The distribution of free food to the food-insecure in emergency contexts has been blamed for the development of dependency syndrome if done for extended periods. Dependency is extreme reliance on resources beyond one's control. It is a scenario where communities cannot meet their basic food requirements without external support. Save the Children (U.K.) mentioned that one of the causes of perennial food shortages and malnutrition in the Binga district was the dependency syndrome.⁷⁹³

Throughout the world, food aid has been blamed for causing a cycle of dependency at household and community levels and discourages people from working to produce their own food. Assal asserts that emergence humanitarian assistance carried out in contexts of fragile livelihoods has little chance of achieving development.⁷⁹⁴ The previous chapters have attempted to show how precarious BaTonga lived in the ecologically hostile region, but they managed to build some resilience and managed to survive tough periods of recurrent drought without external assistance. According to Manyena, the work of NGOs increased poverty in Binga because people were no longer resilient.⁷⁹⁵ There was need for careful assessment of the root causes of hunger and food insecurity before bringing in perennial food aid for decades. As discussed above, food aid was brought in to fulfill many interests which could not foster sustainable livelihood development. During fieldwork, the people showed a dependency mentality as they said that "Our God heard our cry. We were going to die from hunger but Save (Save the Children (U.K.)) gives us food like Manna from heaven."⁷⁹⁶ They could not be innovative enough to come up with

⁷⁹² Richard Acaye, "Relief Aid Dependency Syndrome: A Case for Disaster-prone Moroto District in Uganda" Doctoral Dissertation, Waldern University, 2015.

⁷⁹³ Maclaine, *Infant Feeding Practices*, Save the Children (U.K.), 2006, p.91.

⁷⁹⁴ Manzoul Assal, *Is it the Fault of NGOs Alone? Aid and Dependency in Eastern Sudan*, Sudan Working Paper, 2008:5, Chir Michelsen Institute.

⁷⁹⁵ Manyena, *Disaster Resilience*, 2009.

⁷⁹⁶ Interview with Zilikwene Munenge at Manjolo Business Centre on 23 December 2020.

lasting solutions to their perennial food insecurity. The people had been innovative in producing their food after resettlement without any external support, but this resilience was eroded by the distribution of free food packs over time.

Save the Children (U.K.) confirmed that the pouring in of free food handouts for many years in the Binga district undermined most people's ability to cope with poor harvests because of recurrent drought and destruction of crops by wildlife and locusts. It was reported that "Food aid has improved people's lives through reducing the time and energy required for arduous tasks of cultivating big fields and guarding them day and night from chasing birds and monkeys in the fields".⁷⁹⁷ Food aid therefore caused the people lose initiative and innovation to overcome the problem of crop failure in anticipation of free food packs every year as most of them largely abandoned the vigilance of farming and guarding their fields from predators. Chapter 1 has demonstrated how the people were hard workers before displacement with diversified livelihoods. Chapter 5 has also shown how they had to develop resilience after resettlement because development of skills is important in ensuring food security and sustainable livelihoods.

Long-term free food distribution imbued BaTonga with a sense of entitlement which discouraged innovation to overcome livelihood challenges. A young, educated man from Sinansengwe community who worked in Bulawayo but rarely visited his village said, "If one gets educated and put on nice clothes or even gain some weight the old men will bewitch them. I built a nice four-roomed house in my village, roofed it with asbestos sheets and painted it but the elders told me that I will never sleep in that house (meaning that they would kill him). I had to run away and hide here in Bulawayo. They claim that people who flash their wealth will chase away the donors and cause them to die of hunger."⁷⁹⁸ The older generation which directly experienced forced resettlement largely decided to depend on free food handouts as a coping method for survival as there were few opportunities for livelihood. They passed on this dependence mentality to their children, and this further ingrained poverty among the people. This also helps to understand why the district suffers from chronic food shortages and high levels of poverty.

⁷⁹⁷ Save the Children (UK), Binga household Economic Assessment, 2003, p13.

⁷⁹⁸ Interview with Luba Mudimba at Bulawayo Kraal on 18 March 2021.

Because of prolonged inpouring of food aid in Binga, most young people had not taken up farming seriously as a livelihood necessary to feed their families and as a source of rural employment. This hindered the passing on of traditional coping strategies practiced by their forefathers to make a living in the dry region after displacement from the Zambezi. One woman reported that when she managed to sleep in the fields for a whole month scaring elephants, she harvested millet that filled a drum (about 200kg). “If my three sons could help me guard other fields, we could have obtained three more drums which would last us until the next harvest. But they said they feared angering the elephants by banging tins. Had it not been for Save (food aid from Save the Children (U.K.)), we were going to die of hunger because they do not even want to go and look for jobs in Bulawayo”.⁷⁹⁹ One can be tempted to argue that they deliberately reduced their effort to produce their own food so that they could continue receiving free food.

By 2008, the BaTonga youths were not motivated to be fully involved in the arduous farming strategies which their grandparents used to pursue for survival before the coming of food aid. Staff from AREX complained that men and boys had developed a “food aid mentality” which caused them to become passive recipients of food packs for six to nine months every year as evidenced by their reduced involvement in land preparation for farming (*kuduntula*), weeding, or guarding the crops against elephants.⁸⁰⁰ This undermined the communities’ food security enhancing strategies. Youthful boys were alleged of having no work ethic. For instance, there was perennial flow of water from natural springs in Keelamenda but no young person worked in a garden as they argued that it was not profitable to grow vegetables.⁸⁰¹ One nurse who has worked at Binga Hospital for many years said “The young generation just eat and wait for more food to come from Save (Save the Children (U.K.)) Even when they get married, they are not concerned about finding food for their wives and children. Their fathers used to spend days in the forest hunting and selling meat and bringing money and food home. They would look for piece jobs and get something for their families.”⁸⁰²

⁷⁹⁹ Interview with Martha Mugande at Manjolo Business Centre on 23 December 2020.

⁸⁰⁰ Interview with Priscilla Mweembe, AREX officer at Binga Centre on 23 December 2020

⁸⁰¹ Ibid.

⁸⁰² Interview with Virginia Mudimba, Sister in Charge at Binga Hospital.

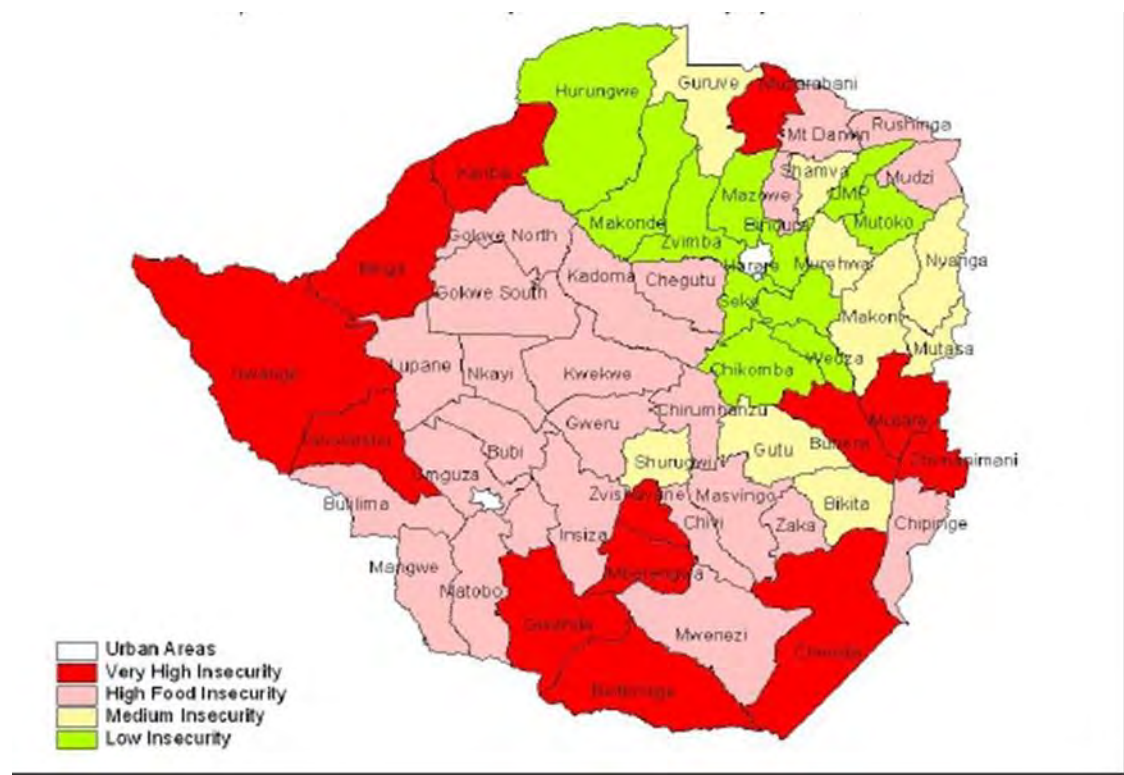
This picture fits well into the definition of aid dependency syndrome. According to Harvey and Lind, a person is aid dependent when they cannot meet their immediate basic needs in the absence of relief assistance.⁸⁰³ Acaye adds that a continuous need for relief assistance, or dependency, creates a vicious cycle that leads to a poverty trap which results in chronic dependency, and further increases dependency on food aid.⁸⁰⁴ However, there were few employment opportunities in Binga for the young people to earn a living. Save the Children (U.K.) confirmed that there were few income generating activities in the area as the mean adjusted income was 20 percent that of other districts like Rusape.⁸⁰⁵ Consequently, the people lived in a precarious position due to the dependency syndrome as food aid failed to improve livelihoods. The following map shows how Binga became one of the districts facing severe food insecurity by 2007.

⁸⁰³ Paul Harvey and Jeremy Lind, "Dependency and Humanitarian Relief: A Critical Analysis", Humanitarian Policy Group Research Report 19, ODI, 2005.

⁸⁰⁴ Acaye, Relief Aid Dependency Syndrome, 2015.

⁸⁰⁵ MacLaine, Infant Feeding Practices, Save the Children (UK), 2006, p.12.

Figure 8: Map showing Severe Food Insecurity in Binga in 2007 ⁸⁰⁶



The greatest concern around prolonged provision of food aid is the possibility that it can undermine livelihoods and displace local production therefore it cannot be a substitute for development. It is argued that when families have more food at their disposal, it removes the incentive to produce food for themselves. The previous chapters have shown how BaTonga coped and survived in the hostile land on the Zambezi plateau and managed to feed themselves during periods of recurring drought without getting any food from NGOs. However, this self-sufficiency was eroded by prolonged distribution of relief food aid to almost every household for more than two decades.

According to AREX reports throughout the 1990s the whole Binga district used to produce about 6 000 metric tonnes of grain and even during the 1991-92 catastrophic drought they harvested more than 5000 metric tonnes.⁸⁰⁷ However, despite increases in population growth the yields

⁸⁰⁶ Food Agriculture Organisation, World Food Programme Relief Web, reliefweb.int/map/Zimbabwe 2007.

⁸⁰⁷ Save the Children (U.K.) Binga household Economic Assessment, 2003, p.40.

decreased to less than 3000 metric tonnes per year from the 2001 drought.⁸⁰⁸ This period coincides with the increase in food aid discussed above when Save the Children (U.K.) began to issue out emergency food aid to almost every household in Binga from 2001.

This period coincides with the increase in food aid discussed above when Save the Children (U.K.) began to issue out emergency food aid to almost every household in Binga from 2001. At the turn of the century, the organization reported that it had stockpiles of 350 tonnes of food which it intended to feed 125 000 people in 2002 up from 36 000.⁸⁰⁹ The number of beneficiaries which almost doubled affected food production efforts in Binga as free food was always available. Due to erratic rains and recurrent drought, Save the Children (U.K.) assumed that yields of food were grossly insufficient to meet the rural families' need and most of the households had to be assisted with food hand-outs throughout the year.⁸¹⁰ It is important to note that all beneficiaries received monthly rations of 10kg maize meal, 2kg beans and 375ml cooking oil per person and most households had an average of seven to ten people.⁸¹¹ Although they claimed that this food could provide about 50 percent of their annual food requirements, the BaTonga claimed that it was enough to cover most of their annual hence there was arguably no incentive to produce more. Free distribution of food therefore caused a chronic reliance of food aid which was a blow to food security enhancement strategies.

Dependency on donor food proved to be a precarious livelihood which caused suffering to the BaTonga when the distribution of food was delayed. The delays were common after the chaotic fast track land reform programme because of politicization of food aid discussed above. People should have increased their livelihood portfolios such as goat and sheep rearing, crafts, or trading to reduce vulnerability.

Prolonged provision of food aid thus failed to teach the BaTonga to depend on producing their own food. Although many NGOs have flooded Binga and poured in food and funds for decades, their results were disappointing to a larger extent as Binga remained largely underdeveloped

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁹ Anna Taylor, Comparative Experiences of Community Managed Targeting in Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Malawi, Field Exchange, Save the Children (UK), 2002, www.enonline.net/fex/23/comparative

⁸¹⁰ Save the Children (U.K.), Binga Household Economic Survey, 2003, p.45.

⁸¹¹ Ibid., p.45.

with high rates of extreme poverty. They brought more of relief aid than development aid and could not overcome the economic challenges facing the nation at large.

Food aid may not have been an appropriate tool for tackling the challenge of food insecurity, fighting hunger and promoting development in Binga because of exclusion and marginalisation of the people in the country. The political and economic challenges in the nation at large made them more vulnerable as they had few buffers against contingencies. Possibly what the BaTonga needed to enhance livelihoods and food security were irrigation schemes using water from the Lake and game control rights. A focus group discussion established that men desired to start sustainable enterprises which were different from projects such as sewing, baking bread, or basket weaving funded by many NGOs.⁸¹² They mentioned that if donors were willing, cattle ranching could have been tried in Kabuba, Lubimbi and Lusulu where pasture could be available and there were fewer animal diseases caused by tsetse fly and ticks.⁸¹³ However, this was beyond the scope of NGO work because of economic and political constraints. The men showed that they had great livelihood ideas, but they lacked financial and human capital necessary for take-off.

In addition, cash transfers and assets-for-work with enough training and follow up of the young people could have gone a long way in empowering them to escape the vicious circle of poverty. Identifying the strengths of the people could have assisted in establishing some vocational training centres for the young adults to learn various skills necessary to tap into their traditional livelihoods as well as adopting new livelihoods that are more sustainable. However, NGOs have been criticized mainly focusing on immediate relief and basic needs, hence they were quick to provide humanitarian assistance in the form of food aid. There was need to learn new survival skills that could help them survive in the economic melt-down to make crafts and other income generating activities for survival. The resultant dependency on food aid was probably going to be averted by engaging the BaTonga in food-for-work projects and utilize food as an incentive to work.

⁸¹² Group discussion with adult men at Manjolo Business Centre on 18 January 2020

⁸¹³ Ibid.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to establish how and why Binga received prolonged emergency relief food aid. Binga was a peripheral area which suffered from poverty and severe droughts hence humanitarian food was necessary to save lives and improve livelihoods. However, it was flooded with NGOs who also manipulated the people's hunger and poverty to further their interests. It can be concluded that food aid failed to eradicate poverty but largely increased livelihood vulnerability because the problems faced by BaTonga could not be solved with free food handouts. Food aid is not a long-term solution to food insecurity as drought is a recurring issue the shortage of food in Binga was more of a political issue and there was need for political solutions to lift the people from hunger and poverty. NGOs failed to address the root problems of exclusion and marginalisation of BaTonga by the ZANU-PF led government. There was need for the government to establish irrigation schemes drawing water from the Lake, grant the people some game control rights, and create employment opportunities in the district to enable them to get formal jobs and earn better incomes.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS

Although mega dams achieve long-term economic benefits, the social and economic costs are borne by the indigenous people who suffer from involuntary displacement and resettlement. Forced relocation of BaTonga due to the construction of the Kariba Dam led to their impoverishment due to livelihood loss. The colonial context of the displacement largely accounted for the coercion, human rights abuses, lack of compensation, as well as lack of livelihood restoration and rehabilitation policies. They have suffered from chronic food shortages, lack of infrastructure and marginalisation due to their location on the periphery.

This thesis has provided an insight into the challenges which BaTonga faced as they attempted to reconstruct their livelihoods after forced relocation into inhabitable land. The process of forced displacement and resettlement undermined their complex livelihoods which were adapted to the climate and environment of the valley. This thesis argued that the people were not passive victims who failed to recover from the risks of resettlement into barren land, but they were active and resilient agents who adopted complex strategies of coping with the challenges to food production as they adapted to the drought-prone area. This contributes to a shift from the victimhood theories of documenting the experiences of people who suffer from dam-induced displacement in general, and BaTonga in particular. This thesis helped to expose the complex and shifting political economy sustaining the process of displacement, using BaTonga as a case study.

The study has also shown how BaTonga were hardworking and had complex livelihoods which ensured their self-sufficiency in the drought-prone valley before displacement which helped to demonstrate how dislocation affected their livelihood diversity and food security. Intensive riverbank farming on alluvial soils provided most of their food and income for trade, but this was devastated by forced displacement into a dry region without access to water from the newly formed Lake. They had access to game, fish and wild foods to complement the harvest, which they lost after forced relocation and this led to food shortages. They had to adjust to extensive dry-land farming, but their adaptive capacity was limited by many threats to crop farming. They had limited draught power as their livestock were decimated by tsetse fly, and as they also braved this dry region of Binga with poor soils. The prevalence of sleeping sickness and malaria also

posed labour challenges in farming as there were few healthcare facilities. As a result, they faced severe food shortages, but they adopted new ways of coping with these challenges.

BaTonga were victims of dam-induced displacement who had to be compensated for their losses, but the study has shown how their resettlement was mainly planned according to the provisions of the discriminatory Land Apportionment Act of 1930 which guided most evictions in Southern Rhodesia. The international community was involved in the planning of the resettlement of both the Gwembe Tonga on the north bank and those on the south bank, but the autocratic government of Southern Rhodesia followed a different policy from that of Northern Rhodesia which was not a settler colony. The study has shown how the people were evicted within the context of mass evictions of various indigenous populations at different times since the 1940s. It has argued that Southern Rhodesia's harsh resettlement policy was disastrous on the people who were dumped in the wilderness without any plans for livelihood restoration. It has shown how their agency enabled them to survive in the harsh environment for decades without any external support from the colonial government and there were no NGOs giving humanitarian aid. This agency can probably help marginalised communities in the development of sustainable resilience more than external development blueprints

Although this study identified ways in which BaTonga coped with their plight, it also illustrated the increase in general impoverishment among BaTonga as they lost essential livelihood capitals due to forced displacement and resettlement. Lack of control over roaming elephants in their communities continued to threaten their crops and affected their wellbeing. They were forced to live in the wilderness teeming with dangerous game without any hunting rights to protect themselves and their crops and this increased food shortages. The study has shown how the postcolonial government failed to deal with these restrictive wildlife laws because of international control of endangered species. It has argued that the CAMPFIRE programme which was introduced in 1989 was a top-down donor-funded approach to conservation which further marginalised BaTonga as it sought to protect elephants for tourism purposes at the expense of livelihoods. The people demanded game control in vain and had to guard their fields and scare the elephants to secure the harvest. Consequently, they also resorted to wounding and killing the giant mammals as the conflict escalated, risking arrest by conservation officials who were at

war with the villagers over wildlife. The study argued that most of the coping strategies were not sustainable sources of food and income as farming remained a depressed livelihood, and food shortages persisted. There is need for government intervention in harnessing these local knowledge systems into sustainable livelihood solutions.

BaTonga's precariousness was exacerbated by continued marginalization by both the colonial and postcolonial governments without any external assistance hence they failed to establish sustainable livelihoods. Lack of infrastructural development after resettlement further crippled BaTonga livelihoods. Binga was remote, inaccessible and was cut off from the rest of the country and this chased away investors who could create employment opportunities. The colonial government neglected developing Binga largely because there were no commercial farms nor mines for exploitation. The post-colonial government also neglected developing the district because of its peripheral location. Although they sacrificed their social and economic systems for the construction of the Kariba Dam, they had no electricity and had no access to water from the Lake. There were few schools, but the thesis established that some BaTonga took the initiative and built their own schools after independence, although they faced the challenge of teachers. There were few healthcare centres, but the people had to rely on herbal medicine for various ailments, which however had its own limitations. They resorted to voting for the main opposition parties in the country and got support from international NGOs, which fed them for free for many decades, but this further impoverished them.

The study illustrated that the work of NGOs and prolonged distribution of emergence food aid for more than two decades decimated livelihood in farming and increased vulnerability to food shortages in Binga. Food aid had many advantages, but it might not have been necessary because the people had survived precarious times without it. However, NGOs kept pouring in food aid every year because they served the interests of their governments. Save the Children (U.K.) increased food distribution in Binga from 2001 to preserve British interests in the country. CADEC issued food but largely influenced national election outcomes in Binga from 2002 through the work of CCJP. The government of Zimbabwe manipulated food aid to serve political interests and sometimes led BaTonga into destitution when they banned NGOs from distributing food. BaTonga also manipulated food aid as a coping mechanism against insecure livelihoods and

shifting loyalty from the state to NGOs. Therefore, NGOs, BaTonga and the government contributed to the ruining of fragile and precarious livelihoods adopted after resettlement through manipulation of long-term emergency food aid which led to chronic poverty and pervasive food insecurity in Binga. The experience of BaTonga reveals a salient point that confirms Cernea's argument that if the risks of development-induced displacement are not properly managed in a timely manner, it can result in long lasting impoverishing effects on the people leading to what is known as "new poverty" or "secondary poverty". The BaTonga case study can assist in assessing the livelihood trajectories of other cases of dam-induced displacement in Africa and beyond.

The thesis has shown that the problem of food insecurity in Binga was not only an issue of poor rainfall but was deeply rooted and pervasive due to multiple complex factors which made it difficult for the people to establish sustainable food production after displacement. Many communities in Zimbabwe and nations in Southern Africa face the challenge of food insecurity which may not solely be blamed to climatic change, as BaTonga example has shown. Uncovering the multiple complex factors affecting food production and distribution may contribute to sustainable solutions.

There is need to study how the introduction of cash-based programme in form of cash transfers, food for work, food for assets, and productive assets creation programmes affected BaTonga livelihoods. This study ended with the 2008 food crisis in Binga but there many important economic and social developments in the district thereafter which need to be studied. There is need for a gendered study on the impact of displacement in Binga, the impact of government schemes such as the Bulawayo Kraal Irrigation Scheme and Fishing Cooperatives on BaTonga livelihoods.

The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework has provided a framework for exploring the coping strategies of BaTonga to livelihood crisis using available livelihood capitals and has shown how they failed to establish a sustainable livelihood in farming. They faced numerous challenges in accessing livelihood opportunities, but their major constraints were underplayed by the SLF because it is rather too broad and general. It is true that failure to access important livelihood

assets such as land and water has been a major setback in the establishment of a viable livelihood in farming, but this is not wholly true about Binga because their poverty was complex. Scoones notes that assets are the core concept of the framework as they are the building blocks for a sustainable livelihood.⁸¹⁴ Ellis adds that assets form the foundation for livelihood activities and strategies and that, to achieve livelihood outcomes, households must access, expand, combine and transform as well as exchange a range of livelihood resources.⁸¹⁵ The framework is however problematic as it takes the existence of these assets for granted.

Emphasis on assets and capabilities underplays constraints to livelihoods therefore there is need to address the factors which limit the ability of people to use their assets and capabilities to achieve viable livelihoods. Binga District was endowed with natural resources necessary for the BaTonga's livelihoods reconstruction and diversification, but the people encountered formidable structural challenges which hindered them from gaining access to these assets after resettlement. Although they accessed some of the assets such as wildlife and fish through illegal means, they have become increasingly poor over the decades after relocation. The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) has been criticized for its failure to explain what keeps people poor.⁸¹⁶ It underplays the role of government in livelihoods support and puts greater emphasis on what communities could do for themselves to escape from poverty, using the available resources. BaTonga's used their capabilities in producing food amidst formidable livelihood challenges, but lack of infrastructural development largely limited their livelihood activities and outcomes. The emphasis on people's agency in making a living in difficult situations takes the existence of resources as a given.

Failure of both the colonial government and post-colonial government together with the top-down approach to developing Binga by NGOs contributed to the marginalization of BaTonga. The SLA approach was developed in response to failure of various interventions in poverty alleviation.⁸¹⁷ The development practitioners assumed that communities have the capacity to

⁸¹⁴ Ian Scoones, *Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: A Framework for Analysis*, IDS Working Paper 72, Brighton, 1998

Frank Ellis, *Rural Livelihoods Diversity in Developing Countries: Evidence and Policy Implications*, Overseas Development Institute Papers, <https://www.odi.org/publications>, 1999.

⁸¹⁶ De Stage et.al., *Learning about Livelihoods. Insights from Southern Africa*, Oxfam Publishing, Oxford, 2002, p.116.

⁸¹⁷ Ibid.

implement plans for poverty alleviation without external intervention as the framework was influenced by neo-liberalism which argued that the state had to limit its role in the economy. Emphasis on agency of the poor in reducing poverty and making a living tends to blame BaTonga communities for their increasing poverty. Yet this study has established failure of this agency due to various local and international constraints. NGOs did not question the root of poverty in Binga but followed development programmes that further entrenched poverty among the people.

Morse, McNamara and Acholo criticised the SLA for its failure to account for the distribution of resources and their politicization by governments.⁸¹⁸ This is true of Binga where successive governments failed to avail critical resources for the reconstruction of livelihoods of BaTonga after displacement. In addition, NGOs implemented development programmes which were informed by their hidden interests which fulfilled the objectives of their governments. Morse and others added that lacking assets is both a cause and an outcome of poverty.⁸¹⁹ It was impossible for BaTonga to use their own skills and talents to work their own way out of poverty because they did not have either the resources, institutions or local organisations to influence government and NGOs. Manyena blames the government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) for failing to address the strategic and practical needs of the BaTonga.⁸²⁰

According to Murray, the framework did not sufficiently acknowledge inequalities of power and conflict of interest at national level.⁸²¹ BaTonga had no power to claim their resources after resettlement and after independence and this affected capabilities to build resilient livelihoods. Failure by the government to share the benefits of the Kariba Dam with the people who sacrificed their homelands and livelihoods restricted livelihood options of BaTonga. It then follows that the vulnerability of the communities in Binga was mostly due to state neglect, as Mashingaidze puts it.⁸²² However, NGOs and long-term distribution of food aid impoverished them. Considering this

⁸¹⁸ Stephen Morse, Nora McNamara and Moses Acholo, *Sustainable Livelihood Approach: A critical analysis of theory and practice*, Geographical Paper No. 189, 2009

⁸¹⁹ Ibid.

⁸²⁰ Bernard Manyena *Disaster resilience in development and humanitarian interventions*. Doctoral thesis, Northumbria University, p.140, 2009.

⁸²¹ Collin Murray, *Livelihoods Research: Some Conceptual and Methodological Issues*, Background Paper 5 Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2001.

⁸²² Terence M. Mashingaidze, *Beyond the Kariba Dam Induced Displacements: The Zimbabwean Tonga's Struggles for Restitution, 1990s–2000s*, *International Journal on Minority and Group Rights* 20 (2013), pp. 381–404.

causes of poverty in Binga are complex and should not be confined to assets and capabilities as the region is rich in resources but the people have struggled to make ends meet for more than five decades. Most scholars argue that poverty in Binga after independence is a socio-economic phenomenon which has been structurally produced.⁸²³ They were powerful external structures and forces that combined to consolidate poverty among the BaTonga. The framework does not offer solutions on how people in such an environment can overcome their vulnerability.

While the SLA is primarily concerned with why the poor remain poor, the IRR model focuses on understanding of the impoverishment process taking place after involuntary resettlement. The IRR model added the analytical approach to the SLA in this study in identification of risks in the process of involuntary resettlement of BaTonga and understanding how they impacted on livelihoods. This helped to understand how the displaced people coped adapted to the new situations. There is a growing concern about unplanned displacements in Zimbabwe and southern Africa, which can benefit from the experiences of BaTonga.

Although the story of the Kariba dam-induced displacement of BaTonga from the Zambezi remains to be told in its entirety, this study details the unending challenges that they have faced in reconstructing their livelihoods. This thesis contributes to the study of intersecting fields of rural development, livelihoods, development induced developments and poverty eradication discourses in Zimbabwe and sub-Saharan Africa at large.

⁸²³ Diana. Conyers and Fanuel Cumanzala, *Community Empowerment and Democracy in Zimbabwe: A Case Study from Binga District*, Semantic Scholar, 2004.

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Interview with Zilikwene Mudimba at Keelamenda on 17 January 2020

Interview with Syamunene at Dumbwe on 18 January 2020

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Interview with Twalikobila Mwiinde at Nchenga on 19 January 2020

Interview with Maria Munkuli at Siabbanga on 20 January 2020

Interview with Minchito Munkuli at Musenampongo on 22 January 2020

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DONOR AGENCIES

Introduction

The study aims to examine the socio-economic challenges faced by BaTonga after forced displacement from the banks of the Zambezi between 1956 and 1958 and how the colonial and post-colonial governments assisted them. It also critically examines the role of food aid in Binga after independence. The effectiveness of food aid in addressing acute and chronic food insecurity has generated some heated debates among scholars and policy makers. This interview aims to get some information on the impact of protracted food aid on the livelihoods of BaTonga from NGOs that distribute food aid in Binga.

General information

Name of Interviewee -----

Donor Agency-----

Position of Interviewee-----

Age-----

Gender

Questions to guide interview

1. When was the agency established? Why was it established?
2. What programmes do you offer to BaTonga communities?
3. For how long have you been giving food aid in Binga?
4. In your own view, what are the main challenges facing BaTonga?
5. Why has Binga faced chronic food shortages for years?
6. Explain why Binga has not been able to achieve food security for decades?
7. How has food aid affected economic activities of BaTonga? Are there signs of dependency on food aid?
8. What are possible options for BaTonga to achieve food security and improve their economies?
9. What factors have contributed to the success of your agency in distributing food aid in Binga?
10. Mention the challenges that confront your agency in its operation.
11. In your own opinion, do you think BaTonga can survive without food aid?

12. What can the Government do to alleviate poverty and hunger in Binga?

Thank you/ Twalumba!

APPENDIX 2

Interview guide to Local Authorities and Government Officials

Introduction

The study aims to examine the socio-economic challenges faced by the BaTonga after forced displacement from the banks of the Zambezi from 1958 and how the colonial and post-colonial governments assisted them. It also critically examines the role of food aid in Binga after independence. The effectiveness of food aid in addressing acute and chronic food insecurity has generated some heated debates among scholars and policy makers. This interview aims to get some information on the impact of protracted food aid on the economies of the BaTonga from NGOs that distribute food aid in Binga.

General Information

Name of interviewee-----

Age-----

Position/ occupation-----

Gender-----

1. In your own opinion, what are the main challenges facing BaTonga people?
2. What is the source of water for domestic use for people in your area? How many boreholes are working?
3. What causes persistent hunger and poverty in Binga?
4. Where do people get food during periods of crop failure?
5. What can be done to improve food security in this area? What new crops can be introduced?
6. Which organisations have been giving food aid in your area? What do they give?
7. Do you think food aid has helped to the alleviate the challenge of food shortages in Binga or have worsened it? If yes, in what way?
8. Which other NGOs are found in your area? What do they do?
9. What has the Government done to support farming in Binga? What else can be done to alleviate food shortages?
10. What else can be done by the Government and NGOs to bring change in district that can benefit people?

Thank you/ Twalumba!

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR BATONGA VILLAGERS

Introduction

The study aims to examine the socio-economic challenges faced by the BaTonga after forced displacement from the banks of the Zambezi from 1956 and how the colonial and post-colonial governments assisted them. It also critically examines the role of food aid in Binga after independence. The effectiveness of food aid in addressing acute and chronic food insecurity has generated some heated debates among scholars and policy makers. This interview aims to get some information on the impact of protracted food aid on the economies of the BaTonga from NGOs that distribute food aid in Binga

General information

Name of Interviewee-----

Village of Origin-----

Age----- Gender-----

Questions

1. How does your community cope with the shortage of food due to drought?
2. Do you usually experience a challenge of game destroying your crops in fields before harvesting? If yes, what can be done to solve this challenge?
3. How much land do you own? How productive is the land? Which crops do you grow?
4. Are there boreholes in your area? Where do you get water for domestic use?
5. Do you have access to water and fish from a river?
6. Do you have access to irrigation facilities in your area?
7. Do you gather food from forests? Which products do you get from the forests?
8. Do you own a plough or a scotch-cart now? Are there people who hire your plough or scotch-cart? How do they pay you?
9. Do you own cattle/sheep/goats/donkeys? If yes, how many? When did you acquire them?
10. What are your sources of cash?

11. When was CAMPFIRE introduced in your community? Is it helpful in regulating the destruction of crops by wildlife in your area?
12. How do you track the wildlife? How do you scare them?
13. In your opinion, why is Binga facing chronic food shortages?
14. Which organisations give food aid in your area? What do they give? For how long have they been giving food aid? Who do they give?
15. In your own opinion, has the availability of food aid affected economic activities in your communities? If yes, in what way?
16. Do you think your family is having enough grain to eat per agricultural year? On average how much food do you get in a good year?
17. In your own view, how dependent are people on food aid in your communities?
18. What can be done to alleviate hunger and poverty in Binga?

Thank you Twalumba!

APPENDIX 4

Dear Participant

Re: Invitation to participate in research study

You are invited to participate in a research study entitled **Colonial displacements and African Coping Strategies. An Experience of BaTonga of Binga, Zimbabwe, 1956-2008.**

The aim of this research is to understand how BaTonga coped with the challenges of forced displacement and resettlement following the construction of the Kariba Dam during the colonial and post-colonial period. Your participation and cooperation is important that the results of the research are accurately portrayed.

The research will be undertaken by means on in-depth face-to-face interviews and the data to be collected from this research will be qualitative. I ask for permission to record the interview and take down some notes, which analyse and use for writing my thesis. The interview will require about 30 minutes of your time.

We will provide you with all the necessary information to assist you in understanding the study and explain the and explain what will be expected of you (the participant). These guidelines will include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a study subject. Furthermore, it is important that you are aware that this study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Rhodes University.

Participation in this research is completely voluntary and this invitation letter does not obligate you to take part in this research study. You will need to give informed consent by means of indicating on the provided form that you give your consent. Please note that you have the right to withdraw at any given time during the study without penalty.

Thank you for your time and I hope that you will find our request favourable.

Yours sincerely,

Codelia Dhodho

For More information contact:

Codelia Dhodho (Researcher)

14300/19 Tan Villa

Selbourne Brook

Bulawayo

Zimbabwe

Email: dhodhoc@gmail.com

Cell: +263773507077

Professor Enocent Msindo (Supervisor)

History Department

Rhodes University

Grahamstown

South Africa

Email: e.msindo@ru.ac.za

Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee

Mr S. Manqele

Email: s.manqele.ru.ac.za

Tel. +277727

APPENDIX 5

14300/19 Tan Villa

Selbourne Brooke

Bulawayo

Zimbabwe

Email: dhodhoc@gmail.com

Cell: +263773507077

Date-----

The Chief of (*Name of Area*) -----

Dear Sir

Re: Request for Permission to conduct interviews in your area of jurisdiction

I am a PhD student at Rhodes University studying the history of BaTonga people of Binga District. I request for permission to carry out interviews in your area to document the eyewitness accounts and experiences of the people since the time of displacement from the Zambezi Valley. This information is going to be used solely for academic purposes and is going to be treated with confidentiality.

I intend to interview five elders who were there when people were resettled from the Zambezi in 1958 and five adults who were born after resettlement. Your assistance in identifying these informants who are willing to participate in this study is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Codelia Dhodho.

APPENDIX 6

14300/19 Tan Villa

Selbourne Brooke

Bulawayo

Zimbabwe

Email: dhodhoc@gmail.com

Cell: +263773507077

Date-----

Name of Organisation-----

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Request for Permission to conduct interviews with Programme Officers within your Organisation.

I am a PhD student at Rhodes University studying the history of BaTonga people from the time of resettlement in 1956. I am requesting for permission to carry out interviews with some members of your organisation to find out the importance of Humanitarian Food Aid to BaTonga communities. This information is going to be used solely for academic purposes and it is going to be treated with confidentiality.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Codelia Dhodho

APPENDIX 7

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Project Title: **Colonial Displacements and African Coping Strategies: The Experience of BaTonga of Binga, Zimbabwe, 1956-2008.**

This is a Historical study that seeks to examine the history of the BaTonga people of Binga in the Zambezi Valley in northern Zimbabwe from the time of displacement by the construction of the Kariba Dam up to 2008. The study intends to understand how the people coped with the socio-economic challenges of forced displacement and resettlement in a hostile environment during the colonial and post-colonial periods. The research is towards the attainment of a PhD in History at Rhodes University, South Africa. It is conducted by Codelia Dhodho as the principal researcher, with the help of two Research Assistants.

If you are happy to participate in this project as an informant, I need to explain to you your rights as a contributor to this study. I will now go through this form with you.

I the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the research, as provided in this information sheet.	YES	NO
2.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the participation.	YES	NO
3.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the research.	YES	NO

4.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalised for withdrawing and nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	YES	NO
5.	I agree that the proceedings of the interview be audio-recorded	YES	NO
6.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g., use of names, pseudonyms, anonymization of data, etc..)	YES	NO
7.	The use of data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me, and I consent to this data being kept in a repository for further future research.	YES	NO
8.	I understand that other researchers have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms specified in this form.	YES	NO
9.	Select only one of the following: ● I would like my name to be used and understand what I have said or written as part of this study will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this research can be recognised. ● I do not want my name to be used in this research.	YES	NO
		YES	NO
10	Along with the Researcher and Research Assistants, I agree to sign and date this informed consent form. Signature -----Date-----	YES	NO

For More information contact:

Codelia Dhodho (Researcher)

14300/19 Tan Villa

Professor Enocent Msindo (Supervisor)

History Department

Selbourne Brook

Bulawayo

Zimbabwe

Email: dhodhoc@gmail.com

Cell: +263773507077

Rhodes University

Grahamstown

South Africa

Email: e.msindo@ru.ac.za

Rhodes University Ethical Standards Committee

Mr S. Manqele

Email: s.manqele.ru.ac.za

Tel. +277727