

Land Conflict Resolution for Chilonga Village

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Abstract

The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement issued statutory instrument (S.I) 50 of 2021, announcing the 12940 hectares of Chilonga land is commercialized for national food security. The statutory instrument (S.I) 50 of 2021 also stated that the Chilonga villagers immediately pave way for the lucerne grass irrigation project. The problem with this research is that the Ministry of Land has the power to relocate people in all communal lands according to the constitution of Zimbabwe and the Communal lands Act Chapter 20:04, but failed to resettle the Chilonga villagers. This research aims to analyze the causes of the Chilonga land conflict, the Ministry of Lands's capacity to carry out the Chilonga land resettlement, and how the government can intervene in resolving the Chilonga land conflict. Theories and concepts used are; strategy theory, conflict tree concept, conflict triangle theory, and national security concept. This research employs a qualitative research method involving nine informants. The results of the study show that the causes of the Chilonga land conflict are poor strategic planning, poor communication, cultural beliefs, political influence, lack of trust, and land compensation. The research results also show that the Ministry is lacking the capacity to conduct Chilonga resettlement. Finally, the research shows that the government should provide adequate support to the resettlement program and also should consider win-win conflict resolution.

Keywords: Chilonga village, cultural beliefs, conflict resolution, lucerne grass, and land conflict.

INTRODUCTION

Global economic changes are forcing governments to relocate their citizens in support of these developments, and most of the time this migration leads to vertical conflicts. Governments move their citizens to accommodate interests in national economic development (Mortreux, 2018). These changes include the creation of commercial farmland for industrial farming, and the building of dams, roads, and mines, among other things. Governments worldwide have a responsibility to protect their country's national security on prominent issues like economic security, crime reduction, energy security, environmental security, food security, and cyber security (Burgess, 2010). The problems arise when the relevant government starts implementing the resettlement project that is moving people from one area of more relevance for national security development to areas that are of lesser importance in terms of development relevance (Downing, et al, 2021).

Zimbabwe is not unique. Since the British Colonial masters acquired control of the majority of Zimbabwe's productive lands in 1890, numerous land resettlement projects have been implemented (Moyo, 2014). In Zimbabwe, resettlement schemes are still in place for national security reasons. Through the statutory instruments (S.I) 50 of 2021, S.I 63 of 2021, and S.I 72A of 2021, the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement declared that the 12900 hectares of Chilonga land are now commercialized for the benefit of the country's food security.

The statutory instruments also stipulated that the residents of Chilonga must promptly prepare the way for the lucerne grass irrigation project. According to Sections 4 and 6 of the Communal Lands Act, Chapter 20:04, the Ministry of Lands is the sole owner of all communal lands in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean constitution also gave the Ministry of Land authority to relocate communal villagers if it became necessary to commercialize the land.

Chilonga village is located in Chiredzi district, which is in Masvingo province in the Republic of Zimbabwe. An average of 12940 hectares (32000 acres) of fertile flat terrain are occupied by the Chilonga village. The Chilonga village is situated 270 miles (or 270 kilometers) southeast of Harare, the nation's capital. The Shangaan people founded the village of Chilonga in the year 1960. As a result of the relocation of this tribe, the government created Gonarezhou national park. The Shangaan people were pushed by British colonial authorities so that a national park could be established in the interests of national security. The current government is relocating again the same Chilonga villagers in order to create land for the lucerne grass project.

Chilonga village has rich, black soils, but because of the region's unpredictable rainfall patterns, the village is vulnerable to droughts. The village has extremely little rainfall and scorching weather all year long, which makes farming extremely difficult. Due to these weather issues, the government decided to use overhead irrigation to commercialize the Chilonga area for the Lucerne grass project.

The following theoretical frameworks served as a guide for the research: Arthur F. Lykke Jr.'s strategy theory (Webb, 2019). According to Lykke, a strategy is an organized process that outlines the objectives, methods, and resources used to achieve a specific goal (Basri, 2015). Ends are the objectives or desired results of a particular approach. This may be stated mathematically as "Strategy = Ends + Ways + Means."

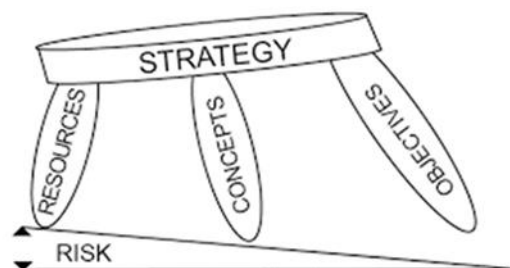


Figure 1. 1 Strategy Theory
Source: Kutsi Basri, 2015.

Ends are the objectives or anticipated results of a particular strategy. The goal of the strategy consists of one or more ends. Ways are actions. They are the methods and tactics applied to achieve the objectives (Webb, 2019). The use of strategy theory is necessary for planning strategic programs like the Chilonga land resettlement. The three legs of a stool, according to Lykke, signify the need to balance means, ways, and objectives (the stool itself represents the strategy). A plan is risk-adjusted and low-risk if the chosen approach is efficient and has sufficient funding to accomplish the target (objective). However, if either the ways or means legs are too short (because of inadequacies) or the end leg is too lengthy, the strategy is out of balance and the hazard is considerable (the goals are unrealistic).

The approach must be adjusted to restore balance; for example, desired aims can be scaled back to fit within the available means, or means can be increased to adequately support the preferred method (s). The investigation of the causes of the Chilonga land conflict also

made use of the conflict tree idea. By evaluating the topics (core problems) in a conflict using a conflict tree, the main emphasis is on the causes and effects of each issue. The Conflict Tree helps to identify the sources and impacts of a single issue (core problem) at a time (Myerson, 1997).

Ichsan Malik also alluded at the conflict tree's usage of an analogy to emphasize the key ideas of the discussion. Three categories can be applied to this type of analysis. First, "tree roots" might be compared to the fundamental causes of a conflict. The "tree trunk" also alludes to the main subject or bone of contention. Thirdly, "tree branches" relates to the various implications or repercussions of the dispute. It is believed that through examining these groups of issues, practical solutions would be found (Malik, 2017).

RESEARCH METHODS

With a case study research methodology, this study employed qualitative research techniques. Researchers play a crucial role in qualitative research when it comes to gathering information that will be utilized to describe and explain a phenomenon such as the Chilonga land conflict.

A case study is a type of research strategy that is common in many disciplines, notably evaluation. For instance, one case study examined the Chilonga land issue (Creswell, 2016). The criteria for selecting informants for the study used the purposive sampling method. In Chiredzi district, Masvingo province, the informants were all people who could give reliable information about the Chilonga Land War because they were thought to be involved, involved in the dispute in some capacity, or knowledgeable about the conflict.

The researcher physically visited Chilonga village for this research project in order to gather data through observation, interviews, and document analysis. To ensure triangulation, the researcher collected data from three sources. The data was validated through the use of three sources. According to William Wiersma (1986), triangulation refers to comparing data from different sources and at different times to assess veracity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Factors Causing the Chilonga Land Conflict

The findings of this investigation reveal the following as the major causes of the Chilonga land conflict:

- a. Strategic planning
- b. Communication
- c. Cultural beliefs
- d. Political influence

a. Strategic Planning

The findings from interviews, observations, and document analysis indicate that the government and the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement both lack strategic planning. Meiser (2016) contends that through the process of strategic planning, business or project executives should establish their organization's goals and objectives as well as its future vision. Meiser (2016) made a connection between the strategic planning problem and Lykke's (1989) three-legged stool model of strategic theory by relating aims, ways, and means, which if properly balanced produce a successful strategy.

Setting the sequence in which these goals should be completed can help the organization in realizing its stated vision. The strategy theory is used to analyze land conflict. Before acting in accordance with goal and capability, strategy entails making an effort, thinking, and planning everything. Based on its goals, methods, and means, Lykke's strategy theory is discussed. The findings show that the strategic theory's intended outcome was not accomplished clearly.

The ends are also known as the objectives, goals, or outcomes in some texts. Meiser (2016) defined ends as the outcomes or repercussions of an activity. Maintaining a balance between objectives or ends, channels, and resources or means is another concept from Lykke's theory of strategy. It is also a procedure that comprises setting objectives, allocating resources and capabilities, and employing the best strategies to enable it to reach this objective (Lykke, 2014).

Additionally, according to Lykke, the three criteria of appropriateness, feasibility, and acceptability can be used to analyze the available ways and means for constructing a plan when considering all ends. Lykke defined appropriateness as the strategy's alignment with our national power and interests while also being acceptable to both sides. Ends are employed to understand the major national security objectives from Chilonga village.

The Zimbabwean government must decide the best course of action to follow in order to settle the Chilonga land issue, as well as the means or resources that will support such actions.

b. Communication

According to the research's findings, a lack of communication is another factor contributing to the Chilonga land conflict. Any society's aspirations for the future should be clearly stated to prevent resistance (Lammers, & Baldwin, 2018).

Lykke's strategy theory can also be used to explain the Chilonga land conflict as being the result of a lack of communication. It is important to elaborate on the three-legged stool since it illustrates the entire program from beginning to end (Lejano, et al, 2021). The goals, strategies, and tactics of the lucerne grass project's Chilonga land resettlement. The aim of the strategy consists of one or more ends. Ways are actions. They are the strategies and tactics applied to achieve the objectives. How are you going to get to the end state, they respond to. The resources required to carry out the plan to attain the aims or the goals are the means (Lykke, 2014).

Francis Fukuyama claims that trust develops in a community or group of individuals when they act honestly, organically, cooperatively, and in accordance with established norms that are used for the benefit of all (Fukuyama,1996). According to the research findings and data from accepted theories, communication between parties is a crucial component. Conflict is likely if it is not done properly. A better communication mechanism may have prevented or addressed the Chilonga land dispute between the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement and the Chilonga residents.

c. Cultural Beliefs

According to Van den Berghe's assertion from 1987, cultural beliefs are a cause of disputes over rural land. Ichsan Malik also talked about cultural ideas, saying that conflict arises from disparate belief systems, whether they are actual or imagined. People hold values in order to give their lives meaning. Values describe what is good and bad, right and wrong, fair and unfair, etc. Value conflicts can occur for a number of reasons, including having different standards for judging other people's beliefs or behaviors, adopting new values to achieve excessively restrictive goals, and having different lifestyles and worldviews, regardless of ideology, custom, or religion (Malik, 2017).

According to Chakona and Shackleton (2019), cultural beliefs should be viewed as a collection of "behavioral patterns relating to thoughts, manners, and behaviors, which members of society have shared and passed down to subsequent generations." The findings of this study suggest that one of the underlying causes of the Chilonga land conflict is cultural belief. The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement is able to resolve the issue by applying Lykke's strategy theory to describe how the issue of cultural beliefs ultimately led to the Chilonga land conflict.

d. Political Influence

According to Van den Berghe (1987), horizontal and vertical pluralism both contribute to conflicts over rural land. Pluralism Horizontal community structures include politics, ethnicity, area, religion, and race. They are all culturally diverse. Social plurality (in terms of varying political ideologies) and regional diversity are additional examples of horizontal pluralism (in terms of villages and cities). Because each party defends its political identity and traits against threats from other political rivals, this leads to conflict. If there are ideals that are shared and upheld, conflicts brought on by horizontal pluralism can be reduced to a minimum.

A society that is polarized according to who controls the wealth, knowledge, and power is one in which there is vertical conflict (Van den Berghe, 1987). The findings of the study suggest that politics is also a contributing factor in the Chilonga land issue.

Attitude is made up of elements from the emotional (feeling), cognitive (belief), and conative (desire, will) spheres (Galtung, 2009). According to the criteria given above, each of the factors that lead to conflict (attitudes, behaviors, and contradictions) can also serve as possible entrance points for influencing the problem calmly and attempting to find a solution.

Ichsan Malik (2017) also made a suggestion that the conflict tree might use an analogy to highlight the key concepts that lead to a dispute. This kind of analysis falls into three groups. First, the "tree roots" of a conflict could be contrasted to that reason. According to this study, one of the main causes of the Chilonga land conflict is politics.

The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, and Rural Resettlement's Capacity to Resettle the Chilonga Villagers.

a. Resources

According to research findings, a significant barrier to the Chilonga relocation initiative is a lack of resources. The strategy theory can be used to demonstrate this resource problem. According to Lykke (2014), a strategy needs three balanced legs in order to succeed. The legs stand in for resources, ideas, and goals. The search for resources is now this section's primary concern. Resources, according to Basri (2015), are the ways to put ideas into practice and accomplish goals. The ideas are the strategies for utilizing the means to achieve the ends. Resources are the tools needed to put principles into practice and accomplish goals. The terms "means" and "immaterial" are defined by Basri (2015). Materials are resources that may be physically touched, such as equipment, tools, cash, motor vehicles, and many more. Immaterial resources are those that are not physical, such as intellectual property and strategic knowledge stocks, which an organization may employ as needed to advance its objectives.

The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Relocation should have adequate resources to be able to run a resettlement program in Chilonga village.

b. Government Support

According to the research's findings, the government provides less funding to the ministry of lands, agriculture, water, climate, and rural resettlement. The researcher saw that Zimbabwe's government was not providing enough support for both tangible and intangible resources. The Zimbabwean constitution makes it very clear that the government is tasked with providing all ministries with the necessary assistance to meet their objectives. According to

Arthur Lykke's strategy theory, a strategy should have goals, methods, and means. It was a wise move to keep the three equally balanced (Basri, 2015). Zimbabwe's constitution states that the government is in charge of overseeing all ministries' strategies. This implies that every action taken by any government ministry should be thoroughly regulated and supported by the government.

c. Villagers' Trust

According to research findings, the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement has now lost the trust of the Chilonga locals. According to Fukuyama's (1996) trust and distrust hypothesis, a sense of trust between people fosters understanding. The partners in a relationship feel safe and devoted to one another when there is trust between them.

Francis Fukuyama claims that trust develops in a community or group of individuals when they act honestly, organically, cooperatively, and in accordance with established norms that are used for the benefit of all (Fukuyama, 1996).

According to the trust and distrust idea, trust is not a naturally occurring phenomena. It lays the groundwork for cooperation. The Ministry of Lands and the mediator, the Zimbabwean government, are both tasked with helping to rebuild trust among the people, in accordance with the trust and distrust hypothesis. A building constructed with short cuts won't be able to withstand pressure and time. Lewicki, et al. (1998) concur that building and maintaining trust is preferable to trying to mend something that has already been damaged. In a relationship, trust must be carefully maintained once it has been established. It is difficult to rebuild trust when it has been shaken.

Association, cooperation, honesty, and loyalty are the indications for building trust in order to achieve reconciliation. The four indicators should be reinstated by the Government of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement in order to rebuild trust between the ministry and the Chilonga residents.

How can the Government of Zimbabwe Intervene in Resolving the Chilonga Land Conflict?

a. Policy Issues

The findings of the research on policy matters suggest that the government should create consistent policies. A government policy, according to Merriam and Webster, may take the form of legislation, a statutory document, a regulation, a process, an administrative decision, an inducement, or a voluntary practice (Dictionary M.W, 2022).

The three-stool strategy can be mathematically stated as "strategy = ends + ways + means," in accordance with Lykke's theory of strategy. The goals, ideas, and resources are all subject to policy concerns. Merriam-definition Webster's of "policy" suggests that it can be compared to "strategy." In order to resolve the Chilonga land dispute, the Zimbabwean government needs to implement policies that address the goals, strategies, and tactics. A good policy should balance means, ways, and aims, just like the strategy does.

b. Financial Support

The findings of the study also pointed to a lack of financial assistance from the government. The administration ought to be aware of how crucially critical economic and food security is to maintaining national security (Nugroho, 2020). States dominate many of the factors that affect security at the other two levels, and states appear unable to cohabit with one another in harmony, according to Buzan, who describes national security as being particularly central (Buzan, 2016). National security is crucial because many factors that affect security at the other two levels are controlled by the state, and because states cannot cohabit peacefully with one another.

The Chilonga resettlement initiative is for national security since it addresses Zimbabwe's food security and economic security as its main concerns. The government of Zimbabwe is required by its constitution to provide financial support for any matters involving national security.

c. Politics

According to the findings of the research, the political climate in Chilonga village has exacerbated the land dispute. The underlying causes of conflict can be further discussed using Myerson's conflict tree idea. Conflicts should be resolved from the source by first analyzing the sources of the dispute and then taking appropriate action (Myerson, 1997).

Ichsan Malik also made a suggestion about the conflict tree's use of an analogy to emphasize the key points of the debate. This kind of analysis falls into three groups. In the beginning, "tree roots" may be compared to the basic reasons of a conflict. The "tree trunk" also refers to the central issue or point of disagreement. Thirdly, "tree branches" refers to the conflict's numerous ramifications or effects. It is anticipated that by looking at these sets of problems, workable solutions will be discovered (Malik, 2017).

Chilonga village is being used as a battleground by political parties, including the ruling party and the opposition parties. The Chilonga land problem should be treated by the government as having political roots. The government should implement rules to minimize politics in the Chilonga relocation.

d. Re-alignment of Chilonga Village

The study's findings indicate a deadlock between the Chilonga villagers and the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement about the resettlement program. By developing solutions for resolving the Chilonga land conflict, the Zimbabwean government should step in to break the impasse.

According to Mitchell's theory of conflict resolution, conflict resolution seeks methods to ensure that important issues, such as the land conflict, are discussed and resolved while addressing the conflicts' underlying causes, such as unmet basic human needs. Negotiation is typically used to achieve this, and it may be with the assistance of a third party in the form of a facilitator or mediator (Mitchell, 2005).

The government acts as a mediator in the Chilonga land dispute. Therefore, the goal of conflict resolution is to address the underlying causes of the lack of resources, interpersonal communication, political influence, and cultural attitudes. It's a task that's all about procedures. Conflict resolution, as opposed to conflict settlement, starts by considering protracted conflicts as the outcome of unmet human needs since long-lasting disputes frequently have their foundations in the fundamental wants of conflict players (Mitchell, 2005).

Conflict resolution can be a technique for creating a culture of peace, according to Bar-Tal. In an effort to foster peaceful relations, mutual trust, and awareness of the interests and needs of other groups, reconciliation can be developed from the acknowledgment and acceptance of groups' shared interests and aims (Bar-Tal, 2009).

The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement, the residents of Chilonga, and the investor Dendairy have all proposed the re-alignment scheme and getting rid of the resettlement issue. They have realized that there is a sizable amount of undeveloped land in Chilonga that is sufficient for the Lucerne project. Additionally, they decided that the villages could start growing their own grass under Dendairy's supervision.

The government should step in and then take the re-alignment program into consideration rather than the resettlement program, in accordance with the reconciliation theory outlined above. The administration should take into account that the matter has been deadlocked for a while, making re-alignment a viable option.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings suggest that;

- 1) The following factors contributed to the Chilonga land conflict:
 - a) Poor strategic planning on the part of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement resulted in significant chaos during the war.
 - b) The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement did not adequately inform the Chilonga villagers about the land resettlement initiative.
 - c) Cultural and religious convictions also play a role in the Chilonga land dispute.
 - d) The research findings suggested that politics in Chilonga village was another factor contributing to the Chilonga land dispute.
- 2) The research findings also indicate that the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Relocation is now unable to implement a resettlement program to the Chilonga community because it has the resources necessary to do so.
 - a) In terms of all the expectations, the government's support for the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement is insufficient to carry out the Chilonga resettlement program.
 - b) The Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate, and Rural Resettlement has caused the Chilonga resettlement scheme to fail because the inhabitants of Chilonga do not trust one another.
- 3) The research findings also suggested that the Government of Zimbabwe should take the following actions in order to resolve the Chilonga land issue successfully:
 - a) The Zimbabwean government should implement a carefully considered policy that is well-balanced in terms of its goals, methods, and means.
 - b) The government ought to set up adequate financing for the resettlement program.
 - c) To prevent the politicization of the Chilonga land resettlement initiative, the government should take appropriate action.
 - d) The government ought to suggest a scheme that benefits everyone, such as the re-alignment program.

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