

## PARKS, SECURITY AND WATER IN OLD SOUTHERN DIVISION G-C. M. Mutiso

The two most important issues relating to access to production water historically, in the old Southern Division (currently Mutha, Ikutha and Mutomo Divisions), are security and the creation of parks. When Tsavo Park was created in 1947, it is estimated that 50% of the then population were moved out of areas taken up by the park. This had tremendous influence on land use in the division for most of the people were livestock keepers and their livestock grazed and drank in the areas taken over by the park. Very significant was the Tiva River flood area. This area used to be the ultimate drought /dry season grazing area for the Tiva just disappeared into this flood area. This is the Ndia Ndasas area, stamped into Kamba folklore as the ultimate survival site. People were able to cultivate in it during major droughts over and above being the reserve grazing area for many Kitui people not just the southerners. It was ecologically a premium area. The population thrown out of the park area basically concentrated in the old Kanziko and Ikutha locations. The land deteriorated very rapidly and it has not recovered up to today. The attendant overgrazing led to deterioration of the land resource as livestock concentrated on utilizing the hilly areas. The resulting gullying and lack of ground cover led to drying of streams from the hills, which at the turn of the century were perennial according to early missionary records and Kamba oral traditions.

The old Mutha location did not have as a heavy population as the other locations in 1947. Although it did not have access to the eastern Kitui State lands, its population had grazing options not just into the low populated Voo and Mwitika locations but could spill into the Zombe and Endau locations for which grazing was good and the Thua and its tributaries provided water. As the impacts of the creation of the Tsavo Park spread in the decade of the fifties, cattle movements changed. The area between the Thua and the Park became the prime grazing areas. During the decade of the sixties the Yatta also became a prime grazing area. Water for the latter was from the Tiva and the Athi. This Yatta area was much drier than the Thua flood plain and was not as central as the other.

After independence in 1963, Kitui population exploded into the Thua channel and settlements were made from Enyali all the way to Kakya /Waldena in Tana River. This expansion took over what in colonial times was called Kitui Eastern State lands, which were zoned not to have permanent populations for they were the buffer between the Orma/Somali and the Kitui Kamba. The seventies proved the fiction of the Eastern Kitui state lands. There were permanent cultivation and grazing operations established all the way to Kakya/Waldena. These settlements supported the poaching, which decimated Tsavo in the seventies. To keep the old Mutha population out of the state lands, large-scale water pumping systems had been established in the last days of the colonial period to serve the western parts of Mutha and Voo locations. The pumping was from the Thua River. These collapsed in the decade of the nineties as the pumps were pulled out and sold into the coffee producing areas. Recently, the Mutha town gravity scheme has been rehabilitated. A pumping scheme is in place for Voo town. Given the distances between the scattered populations, these schemes are not adequate.

In the eighties, a donor concentrated on building rock catchments in the division. Most of the construction was in Mutomo, Ikanga, Ikutha and Kanziko in descending order. This technology did not scatter water provision to many areas for it is dependent on sizable rocks being available.

Insecurity, in terms of raiding of cattle and goats, is a phenomenon introduced into the area from the droughts of the eighties and nineties. There have been assorted clashes between the Kamba, Orma and Somali. The most serious were in the nineties. The ultimate impact of the clashes was in the early nineties as impacts of the assorted Somali factions spread all the way into Mutha and Kanziko. It is argued that the main raiders were Somali who leapfrogged the Orma to raid the Kamba. Consequently populations collapsed back towards Mutha and Kanziko towns. The ripple effect impacted on the whole of the old Southern Division as well as the eastern fringes of former Central and Eastern Divisions.

The recent creation of the Kitui South Game Reserve has formalized the collapse of Kamba populations back to the hills and out of the former Eastern states lands. Some Somali clans are settled west of the reserve around Enyali. They together with their Kamba and Orma allies are accused of continuing the insecurity in the border areas of Kitui and Tana districts not to speak of poaching in the Tsavo East National Park.

The net effect of all these key issues impacting on the Southern Division's land use system and attendant population growth, driven by natural growth and in migration, is the impoverishment of the people. Large-scale cattle production systems have collapsed. Those families, which before lived off this extensive livestock production system, have collapsed into crop agriculture with limited livestock (small stock) keeping. This is a coping mechanism to the loss of land to parks and raiding. Impoverished cattle keepers find options in crop agriculture. Yet the area is of limited crop production without conservation and /or supplementary irrigation.

The development need therefore is to implement a water provision technology, which will, among other things: 1. Cater to the population, which is not within the reach of the limited gravity or rock catchment systems. 2. Address provision of water for high value crop production. 3. Address provision of water for schools. 4. Address the issue of water for animals in the Tsavo Park and Kitui South Game Park for if structures are build in the populated areas proximate to the parks the animals will move out to use it. We believe that the technology meeting all these criteria is the sand dam technology.