

# Socio-Economic Impact of Road and Fiber Optic Infrastructure on Underdeveloped Regions: Case of Isiolo County, Kenya

Marube Kepha

Murang'a University of Technology, Kenya

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14824242>

Published Date: 06-February-2025

---

**Abstract:** Should compensation mechanisms and processes be a factor to delay development of critical infrastructural facilities? The researcher carried out a survey experiment in Isiolo, one of the targeted counties benefit from multiple infrastructural facilities yet to be developed and link the north eastern part the huge development projects commonly known as Lamu Port –South Sudan, Ethiopian Transport Corridor (LAPSET). The researcher found out that the respondents who participated in the survey expressed displeasure in the way land compensation process were done. The study applied quantitative method (cross-section) to gather data in respect to the level of disagreements among those affected. The study covered Isiolo central and Garbatulla sub-counties which have an estimated population of 112,000 people. (KNBS, 2019). The sample size was 384, determined by deployment of Krejcie, R.V. & Morgan, D.W. table (1970). The results showed that, government had succeeded in achieving the following; advocacy in policy programs to the public participating, conducted public (75 % agreement), formed peace and conciliation committee to address grievances, (79% agreement), provided critical information regarding compensation, (55% agreements) however, the government had not succeeded in the following policy areas; Introduction of information on the genesis of the development programs, (15% agreement), the nature of compensation, (10% agreement), the capacity of grievances /conciliation committees to authoritatively and legally handle conflicts emanating from compensation issues (7 % agreement). The study concludes that G.O.K had been able to put up policy framework to address land compensation grievances. However, the propagation teams failed to convince the affected (respondents) how to critical and well the compensation mechanisms could support their plight in terms of retribution or in ways contemplated by government. This pointed to failure in the dialogue/mediation aspect among the dissenting members of public in the affected area. This meant that disagreements exists. It is recommended that Government should change tactics in policy disseminations and in particular use the services of specialized/ skilled negotiators and communicators in matters compensation. The local people should be educated matters community development, roles and with the specific examples of where such practices have succeeded before initiating development plans.

**Keywords:** government plans, development, land compensation, underdeveloped communities, information disseminations.

---

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Land remains an emotive issue in the world. In India, USA, South Africa, Philipines, United Kingdom, Land management and administration remains a number one resource which is highly protected due to its golden value (World Bank land conference, 2024). According to Indian government, the principal of “Right to fair compensation and transparency in land acquisition, rehabilitation and settlement Act, 2013”, prominence is in making sure that fair market value compensation is observed especially when land is alienated for government development purposes.

In Nigeria, Land compensation refers to payment given to landowner when the government acquiring land for public purposes and used market values at the time is key plus other development on the land. (Nigeria land use Act 2018). In Kenya, compensation refers to monetary payments by government as an obligation to those that give land based on the principal of just compensation. (Land acquisition Act, 2012). However, the process of compensation are challenges despite existence of legal provisions guaranteeing government disposition rights of land from its citizens for development. (P.K. Mbote 2020).

Some states forcefully alienate land from her citizens without due regard to respect of ownership rights and use them for official purpose which is against the international set standards. The universal declaration of human rights UDHR, Article 17): [The United Nations, declarations on rights of indigenous people (DRIP) Article 26 (2) (International labor organizations convention, 169). This research paper therefore focused on how processes of land acquisition by government should be structured in a sensitive, economic and considerate ways to right owners of land before subjecting the same to unorthodox means of acquisition

### Statement of the problem

Despite government's efforts to develop key economics infrastructural facilities for the benefits of the people, the processes of acquiring land to undertake the projects cause harm, anger, humanitarian, suffering and conflicts with the expectations of to the beneficiaries of these services. (Mkutu 2024). In Hye- sung kim's research Article (2024), "Sacrificing environmental degradation and conflict risky for economic development:- Public attitudes to LAPSET in Turkana County, Kenya, he argues that governments are not sensitive when dealing with the attitudes of the local people who are the beneficiaries of the service and works. He underscores that relationships between economic development and public concerns for environmental consequences is key for development of local commitments. This paper therefore addresses the gap that exists between government legal frameworks and the people's expectations in respect to private land alienation for development, in this case compensation matters verses the processes of acquisitions

### Objective of the study

Examination of the best ways possible devoid of land compensation challenges during acquisition by government for official/public projects development.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The international legal instruments about land are several and relevant to developing countries (Hye- sung kim's 2024). In sence some instruments are actually advisory in nature: The international labour organization convention 169, gives lands owners the right to fair treatment when it comes to alienation of private land for official/National use; The united nations declaration on Human Rights of indigenous people (DRIP) And Africa Land Policy Center 2019, which advises developing countries on how to use land to promote community development. Together with International land coalition (2010), The African land Policy center condemns imprudent use of land and advocates for observation of landesa principles (Dhoika declaration, 2023), which champions the interests and power of land rights to people communities in rural areas.

Land management scholars have argued that Governments are out to legislate statutes which don't take cognizance of processes in alienation of private land for official use where only circulars do exist and are not usually followed by land stakeholders. (S.S China, 2019). In his research entitled "Torward an integrated approach society and Natural resources, Vol. 26. (2012), Berkers , F, Ross argue that development in developing countries have shattered plans which when integrated splits policy opinions and leave projects/programmes half way done.

The observations shares somehow the concerns of statuettes which are incomplete in nature. The procedures, proceedures and plans are not coherent and hence don't achieve desired goals. (Huho J.2012). In his research work, Zakharia (2014), entitled literacy education in conflict and crisis affected contexts argues that when elites plan developing programmes/ Projects, they don't consult the the general population or the universe but just assume that all people share similar thoughts and the end results which normally stall development/projects.

In the Isiolo community development trust strategic plan, (2023-2027), the board of trustees chairman Hussein Kalicha Golicha remarked that the slow pace at the which LAPSET projects in Isiolo-Mandera infrastructural fasciitis take shape may affect the aspirations and hopes of people who wanted to invest in Isiolo, Garissa and Mandera Counties.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The study applied quantitative method (cross-section) to gather data in respect to the level of disagreements among those affected. The survey covered Isiolo central and Garbatulla sub-counties which have an estimated population of 112,000 people. (KNBS, 2019). The sample size was 384, determined by deployment of Krejcie, R.V. & Morgan, D.W. table (1970). The survey concentrated more in interviews which covered all categories of people in the area. The statistical package for social science tool was used and results recorded for interpretation of the responses for conclusions and recommendations.

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The table presents public opinions on various government initiatives related to policy training, public participation, grievance committees, and compensation for infrastructure improvements. Responses are categorized as S.A – Strongly agree, P.A – Partially agree, N – Neutral, P.D – Partially disagree and S.D – Strongly disagree

Respondent were asked their opinion on whether the Government has trained People on Policy Programs. Responses indicated 21% (79 respondents) strongly agree while 48% (191 respondents) partially agree, indicating that a majority (69%) believe training has taken place, further 11% (43 respondents) are neutral, 4% (15 respondents) partially disagree, and 15% (56 respondents) strongly disagree, indicating some dissatisfaction. Overall, the majority believe training has been conducted, but a significant portion remains skeptical.

Respondents were also asked on whether the Government has been able to conduct Public Participation with 25% (96 respondents) strongly agree, while 60% (231 respondents) partially agree, only 2% (12 respondents) are neutral, while 18% (30 respondents) partially disagree, and 3% (13 respondents) strongly disagree. A strong majority (85%) acknowledge public participation efforts, with minimal disagreement.

A further question on the Effectiveness of Grievance Committees only 3% (13 respondents) strongly agree and 8% (28 respondents) partially agree, totaling just 11% approval, while 23% (90 respondents) are neutral, showing uncertainty and 43% (164 respondents) partially disagree and 24% (93 respondents) strongly disagree, totaling 67% disapproval. The majority (67%) feel that grievance committees are ineffective in addressing concerns.

On how compensation for critical infrastructure improvements were done, 49% (187 respondents) strongly agree that compensation has been handled well 23% (86 respondents) partially agree, bringing overall agreement to 72% while 8% (32 respondents) are neutral, and 12% (45 respondents) partially disagree, and 9% (32 respondents) strongly disagree. A significant majority believe compensation has been handled well, though some concerns remain.

**Table 1: Public opinions on government initiatives**

STATEMENT	S.A n(%)	P.A n(%)	N n(%)	P.D n(%)	S.D n(%)
Government has trained People on policy program	79(21%)	191(48%)	43(11%)	15(4%)	56(15%)
Government has been able to conduct public Participation	96(25%)	231(60%)	12(2%)	30(18%)	13(3%)
Grievance committees	13(3%)	28(8%)	90(23%)	164(43%)	93(24%)
Compensation on critical Improvement	187(49%)	86(23%)	32(8%)	45(12%)	32(9%)

#### Qualitative findings

The interview schedules revealed that the respondent observed 3 key issues which they expressed as follows: *The government never consulted the community about the reasons for the opening up of LAPSET projects. We could see high powered delegations meeting in big hotels in Isiolo Town and we never knew the agenda until when the assistant chiefs started discussing about the project. The assistant chiefs appointed members of their communities to constitute grievance committees. The project affected our land and the rates of compensation were never discussed until very late we realized that they were not standard in the county. In some cases, some rates were high while others were low without explanations. The construction sites for the materials and staff were built in one area favoring one community and leaving out others and this applied even to the employment of non-skilled workers. We were surprised to see non skilled workers from other counties far away from Isiolo.*

## 5. SUMMARY

The study results provide insights into public perception regarding government initiatives in policy training, public participation, grievance handling, and compensation in infrastructure projects. On Government Training on Policy Programs, a majority (69%) believe the government has provided training. However, 19% disagree, indicating gaps in awareness or effectiveness. On the issue Public Participation Efforts: 85% of respondents acknowledge public participation efforts, suggesting strong engagement by the government and only 21% express disagreement, showing relatively low resistance.

On the effectiveness of grievance committees, the majority (67%) feel grievance committees are ineffective in addressing concerns while only 11% approve of their performance, while 23% remain neutral, highlighting a lack of confidence in their role. On compensation for critical infrastructure improvements: 72% agree that compensation has been handled well, showing positive public perception however, 21% express dissatisfaction, suggesting unresolved concerns in some cases.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The results shown above indicated that the government did well in training the public on general land compensation and development of government policy programs and conducted public participation barazas but failed to put in place professional committees to handle respondent's grievances and therefore these led to poor dissemination on critical information on compensation issues hence occasioning interrupted infrastructural development progress .

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should either professionalize her grievances addressing committees at grassroots level or put in place simplified information that could be led and understood by all community residents where critical social economic infrastructural programs are build. The following professionals are key in such development initiatives.

1. Consortium of all professional found in the road sector, ICT, land, survey, legal fraternity, auditors and related sociologists & psychiatrists (combined teams from physical science fields to social science fields).
2. The development belongs to the people so there is need to build capacity of the people to be affected for easy of cooperation and collaboration. They should be part and parcel of development; play role in development and play role in decisions making at local level.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Aalders, J.T., J. Bachmann, P. Knutsson & K.B. Musembi. 2021. 'The making and unmaking of a mega- project: contesting temporalities along the LAPSET corridor in Kenya', *Antipode* 53, 5: 1273–93. Agade, K.M. 2015. 'Changes and challenges of the Kenya Police Reserve: the case of Turkana county', *African Studies Review* 58, 1: 199–222.
- [2] A.C & Atelhe, G.A (2014). Nomads against Natives: a political ecology of herder/farmer conflicts in Nasarawa state, Naigeria. American International journal of contemporary research, (2), PP. 76-88.
- [3] Agade, K.M. 2017. 'Oil and emerging conflict dynamics in the Ateker Cluster: the case of Turkana, Kenya', *Nomadic Peoples* 21, 1: 34–62.
- [4] Bächler, G. 1999. *Violence through Environmental Discrimination*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic. Beckerman, W. 1974. *Two Cheers for the Affluent Society*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- [5] Berkes F, Ross, H. (November 2012). *Community Resilience: Toward an integrated approach*. Society and natural Resources, Vol. 26.1.
- [6] Blomberg, S.B. & G. Hess. 2002. 'The temporal links between conflict and economic activity', *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, 1: 74–90.
- [7] Bloom, D. 1995. 'International public opinion on the environment', NBER Discussion Paper No. 732. Caramel, L. 2022a. 'Climate: Africa wants to exploit its fossil fuel for many more decades', *Le Monde*, 22 May.

- [8] Caramel, L. 2022b. 'In Africa fossil fuel exploitation is extremely focused on the needs of the West', *Le Monde*, 22 November.
- [9] Chome, N. 2020. 'Land, livelihoods and belonging: negotiating change and anticipating LAPSSSET in Kenya's Lamu County', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 14, 2: 310–31.
- [10] Collier, P. & A. Hoeffler. 2004. 'Greed and grievance in civil war', *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, 4: 563–95.
- [11] De Soysa, I., N.P. Gleditsch, M. Gibson & M. Sollenberg. 1999. 'To cultivate peace: agriculture in a world of conflict', *The Woodrow Wilson Center Environmental Change & Security Project Report* 5: 15–25.
- [12] Diehl, P.F. & N.P. Gleditsch, eds. 2001. *Environmental Conflict: an anthology*. Boulder: Westview Press. Dunlap, R.E. & A.G. Mertig. 1995. 'Global concern for the environment: is affluence a prerequisite?', *Journal of Social Issues* 51, 4: 121–37.
- [13] Dunlap, R.E. & R. York. 2008. 'The globalization of environmental concern and the limits of the postmaterialist values explanation: evidence from four multinational surveys', *The Sociological Quarterly* 49, 3: 529–63.
- [14] Dunlap, R.E., G.H. Gallup, Jr. & A.M. Gallup. 1993. 'Of global concern: results of the Health of the Planet survey', *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* 35, 9: 7–39.
- [15] Enns, C. & B. Bersaglio. 2019. 'On the coloniality of “new” mega-infrastructure projects in East Africa', *Antipode* 52, 1: 101–23.
- [16] Fearon, J.D. & D. Laitin. 2003. 'Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war', *American Political Science Review*. 97, 1: 75–90.
- [17] Gifford, R. & A. Nilsson. 2014. 'Personal and social factors that influence pro-environmental concern and behavior: a review', *International Journal of Psychology* 49, 3: 141–57.
- [18] Gleditsch, N.P. 1998. 'Armed conflict and the environment: a critique of the literature', *Journal of Peace Research* 35, 3: 381–400.
- [19] Hauge, W. & T. Ellingsen. 1998. 'Beyond environmental security: causal pathways to conflict', *Journal of Peace Research* 35, 3: 299–317.
- [20] Hess, G.D. & A. Orphanides. 1995. 'War politics: an economic, rational-voter framework', *American Economic Review* 85: 828–46.
- [21] Huq, S., H. Reid, M. Konate, A. Rahman, Y. Sokona & F. Crick. 2004. 'Mainstreaming adaptation to climate change in least developed countries (LDCs)', *Climate Policy* 4, 1: 25–43.
- [22] Huho, J. (2012). Conflict resolution among pastoral communities in west pokot county, Kenya: A missing link. *Academic research international*, 3(3).
- [23] Inglehart, R. 1990. *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Inglehart, R. 1995. 'Public support for environmental protection', *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28, 1: 57–72.
- [24] Johannes, E.M., L. Zulu & E. Kalipeni. 2015. 'Oil discovery in Turkana County, Kenya: a source of conflict or development?', *African Geographical Review* 34, 2: 142–64.
- [25] Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). (2019). *Raiding democracy: development in pastoral communities*
- [26] Kim, H.S. 2023. 'Oil extraction and the changing dynamics of pastoral conflicts: a conjoint experiment in Turkana, Kenya', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 61, 1: 23–47.
- [27] Kim, H.S. & Y. Lee. 2020. 'The effects of environmental costs on public support of foreign direct investment: differences between the United States and India', in C. Beverelli, J. Kurtz &
- [28] Kinuthia, J., & Lakin, J. (2016). *Sharing public resources within counties in Kenya: How fair are emerging approaches?* Nairobi: IBP Kenya.

- [29] D. Raess, eds. *International Trade, Investment, and the Sustainable Development Goals: World Trade Forum*. Cambridge University Press, 270–309.
- [30] Kim, H.S. & K. Mkutu. 2021. 'Oil extraction and public attitudes: a conjoint experiment in Turkana, Kenya', *The Extractive Industries and Society* 8, 3: 100956.
- [31] Kochore, H.H. 2016. 'The road to Kenya? Visions, expectations and anxieties around new infrastructure development in Northern Kenya', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 10, 3: 494–510. LAPSET Corridor Development Authority. n.d. <<https://www.lapsset.go.ke>>.
- [32] Leff, H.L. 1978. *Experience, Environment, and Human Potentials*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [33] Leiserowitz, A. 2007. 'International public opinion, perception, and understanding of global climate change', *United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report 2007/2008*.
- [34] Lind, J. 2021. 'Enclaved or enmeshed? Local governance of oil finds in Turkana, Kenya', *Geoforum* 124: 226–35.
- [35] Lind, J., D. Okenwa & I. Scoones. 2020. 'The politics of land, resources and investment in Eastern Africa's pastoral drylands', in J. Lind, D. Okenwa & I. Scoones, eds. *Land Investment and Politics: reconfiguring eastern Africa's pastoral drylands*. Oxford: James Currey.
- [36] Macias, T. & E. Nelson. 2011. 'A social capital basis for environmental concern: evidence from Northern New England', *Rural Sociology* 76, 4: 562–81.
- [37] Miguel, E. & S. Satyanath. 2011. 'Re-examining economic shocks and civil conflict', *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* 3, 4: 228–32.
- [38] Miguel, E., S. Satyanath & E. Sergenti. 2004. 'Economic shocks and civil conflict: an instrumental variables approach', *Journal of Political Economy* 112, 4: 725–53.
- [39] Mildner, S.A., G. Lauster & W. Wodni. 2011. 'Scarcity and abundance revisited: a literature review on natural resources and conflict', *International Journal of Conflict and Violence (IJCIV)* 5, 1: 155–72. Mkutu, K. 2022. 'Anticipation and contestation along the LAPSET infrastructure corridor in Kenya', *Nomadic Peoples* 26, 2: 190–218.
- [40] Mkutu, K. & A. Mdee. 2020. 'Conservancies, conflict and dispossession: the winners and losers of oil exploration in Turkana, Kenya', *African Studies Review* 63, 4: 831–57.
- [41] Mkutu, K., T. Mkutu, M. Marani & A.E. Lokwang. 2019. 'New oil developments in a remote area: environmental justice and participation in Turkana, Kenya', *Journal of Environment and Development* 28, 3: 223–52.
- [42] Mkutu, K., M. Müller-Koné & E.A. Owino. 2021. 'Future visions, present conflicts: the ethnicised politics of anticipation surrounding an infrastructure corridor in northern Kenya', *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 15, 4: 1–21.
- [43] Zakharia, Z., Bartlett, L. (2014). *Literacy Education in Conflicts and crisis. Affected contexts*. Washington D.C USAID.