

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION IN TONGAREN
SETTLEMENT SCHEMES IN BUNGOMA DISTRICT 1960-1998.**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the socio-economic changes in Tongaren Settlement Schemes since their inception in 1964. The study attempted to establish the constraints to the transformation of the settlers and in particular examined the extent to which socio-cultural factors such as the kinship system, lineage, clan or tribal loyalties may be hampering the socio-economic transformation of the settlers. The study also sought to establish the reasons for the high rate of commoditisation of land and the consequent proletarianisation that has resulted. Economic and political constraints to settlers' transformation were examined as well.

The process of transformation was viewed within the framework of the dialogical modernization and the definition of the situation theories, complemented by the Malthusian theory to establish whether the problems faced by settlers in the schemes were due to their failure to redefine their situation in the light of the new environment.

This study sought to obtain information by interviewing 90 of the original settlers in all the nine schemes found in Tongaren. This information was supplemented by archival and secondary sources in Nairobi and Kakamega.

The findings from this study reveal that most settlers in Tongaren consisted of the Luyia with the Bukusu as the majority. The study revealed that there was unfairness in land allocation and that the programme favoured the rich at the expense of the poor landless that had been targeted. This was so because not all the poor could raise the purchase price hence the need to involve the rich.

The study also examined the socio-economic changes in the scheme through the dialogical modernization model and the definition of the situation approaches. The findings attribute the slackened development to poor settlement planning which concentrated more on loan repayment than assessment of the impact of the programme on the settlers.

The collapse of co-operatives denied the settlers access to wide markets for their produce. This study also discovered that settlers' problems were due in part to poor leadership on behalf of the elected leaders who encouraged settlers not to repay SFT loan in the hope of getting votes.

The liberalization of agricultural sector has worsened the settlers' plight.