

**Assessing the effectiveness of village land councils in resolving land conflicts between
pastoralists and peasants in Tanzania:a case of Rufiji district council**

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The study was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the Village Land Councils in resolving land conflicts between pastoralists and peasants in Rufiji District Council, Tanzania. The study is anchored on the fact that, the government has been trying to employ different mechanisms to bring an end to land related conflicts but these conflicts have been escalating into unbearable situation causing several effects such as death and destruction of properties. Case study design, Questionnaires, Interviews, Documents review methods, qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to gather information and analyze data. The sample size used was 100 and key respondents involved were pastoralists; peasants; Rufiji District Council officials; wards and villages' executive officials and members of the Village Land Councils. The finding indicated that, the causes of land conflicts includes, Breach of land ownership conditions, political influences, corruption and mistrust, lack of clear land use plan, lack of local authorities involvement in land management and limited demarcated areas, the procedures and actions taken by VLCs members includes receiving and filing cases, gathering pertinent information and convening a meeting for hearing of disputants. In general the capacity of Village Land Councils to resolve land conflicts was low and marked only 40% of its usefulness. Therefore the study concluded that the Village Land Councils were ineffective mechanisms of resolving land conflicts between pastoralists and peasants in Rufiji. The study also recommended measures to improve its effectiveness as follows; VLC members should be empowered with the mediation and negotiation skills; members should regularly consult the Councils' land and legal officers on all matters related to land law and policy; and allocation of practical budget for VLCs activities.