

## **The Making of the Nandi in Diaspora, 1905-1963**

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### **Abstract**

The majority of Nandi community inhabit Nandi, Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia counties in the Rift Valley. Colonial land alienation in Kenya aimed at providing land and labour to White settlers led to acute land shortages in African reserves, Nandi reserve was no exception. This article adopts a historical perspective to examine how land alienation and the assault on squatter livestock in the white highland led to the dispersal of the Nandi to Bringo, Maasai, Pokot, western Kenya and the neighbouring countries of Uganda and Tanganyika. It argues that while the Kikuyu in Central Kenya engaged in the Mau Mau revolt, the Nandi, due to their experience in the resistance against the establishment of colonial rule, looked for alternative regions to move to when faced with land shortage. It also highlights the ways in which the colonial government offered support and monitored their movement through reports and visits. These developments created a large group of Nandi in Diaspora to date.

**Key words:** Migration, Diaspora, Squatters, Nandi. Land, Colonial Kenya

### **Introduction**

Migration is part and parcel of human nature and it is a major carrier of innovation from one region to another. Migration into and out of Kenya is older than Kenya itself. Individuals or communities have been leaving the borders of present Kenya since the times of early man millions of years ago in search of better lives elsewhere. Likewise, individuals and entire communities have been entering the borders of Kenya. Hence, immigration and emigration is intertwined with the history of the country. There is evidence that the Nilotic, Bantu, and Cushitic ethnic groups migrated to Kenya. Migration of these ethnic groups would have continued were it not for the establishment of colonial rule in Kenya and the continent at large.

Shanguhiya (2015:210) asserts that, in pre- colonial period, individuals and families initiated their own out migration to neighbouring regions. They started by establishing links with host communities in the destination areas. This continued in the colonial period. Where land was made available to individuals or families the Kenyan colonial government stepped in and negotiated with Uganda's and Tanganyika's administration for long term settlement plans for larger groups of migrants. Native Registration Ordinance of 1920, made the registration of every male above 15 years compulsory and restricted the movement of Africans. This did not prevent the Nandi from moving to new regions when faced with the onslaught of squatter livestock and land shortages. Many Nandi, with the knowledge and support from the colonial government relocated to new regions including Uganda, Tanganyika, Maasai, Pokot and Western Kenya.

This article examines the causes, course and role played by the colonial government in the dispersal of the Nandi during the colonial period. It is based on both primary and secondary sources; archival research, and the review of related literature. The archival information used included a wide range of reports of the colonial period.

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### **Nandi resistance and early dispersal of the Nandi**

The earliest dispersal of the Nandi during this period was closely related to Nandi resistance and land alienation during the establishment of colonial in this region. In its enthusiastic encouragement of European settlement, the colonial state paid little attention to the rights of Africans to land. The Crown Land Ordinance of 1902 gave the commissioner of the protectorate power to grant land to European immigrants. Crown land was defined as all public land in East African protectorate, which was subject to the control of the king of the United Kingdom (Lonsdale, 1989:19). During early colonial period the colonial state endeavoured to alienate African land for European settlement. The amount of land occupied by Africans was reduced. It also assumed that Africans had no right to “unoccupied” and “uncultivated” land and that there was much “waste” land available for European settlement. Africans were confined to small and less productive parts of the land.

Nandi reserve was one of the earliest to be drawn in Kenya because of their resistance to the establishment of colonial rule. The Nandi lost grazing land and also part of the territory they occupied. Grazing land (*kaptich*) alienated included Uasin Gishu plateau, Trans Nzoia and parts of Nakuru. Apart from losing their grazing land, Leo points out that their defeat led to a peace settlement which provided for the removal of part of the Nandi from areas adjacent to the railway. After their forcefully removal some 3200 square kilometres of land initially occupied by the Nandi was made available for European settlement. The Nandi were left with a reserve of about 1800 square kilometres (Leo, 1984:40). The territorial units (*pororiosiek*) affected were Kapchepkendi and Kamelilo in the south east part of the territory.

The Nandi who occupied this region were forcefully moved to the northern part of the territory some hundred kilometres away in the name of safeguarding the railway line which was occasionally destroyed by the Nandi. The journey was devastating emotionally as well as economically. Over 16,000 head of cattle out of a total of 18,000 and 36,205 small stock were rounded off from the Nandi to pay for the war. Nandi resistance to colonial rule lasted for eleven years it came to an end after the killing of Koitalel arap Samoei in 1905 (Orkoiyot- a foreseer who would be consulted by the community before engaging in any war). There was a strong dissatisfaction among the Nandi over the loss of their land. From the foregoing it is clear that their grazing land (*kaptich*) which was not occupied and also a large part of the land they occupied were alienated by the colonial government. This left the Nandi in total economic devastation (2015:28). The force used and the consequences on the Nandi were so server that a number of Nandi opted to move to other regions. Sang points out that Nandi eviction led to deep distrust of Europeans and many opted to move to new regions rather than submit and live in Nandi reserve.

Many Nandi dispersed to Kipsigis, Tugen, Mount Elgon, Nyanza and Uganda (Ibid: 29). Traces of this early dispersal are found among the Tugen of South Baringo, a group also known as Lembus. Majority of them trace their origin to Nandi and some retained contacts with their relatives in Nandi to date. This was not the end of land alienation in Nandi reserve, Kaimosi and Kipkarren areas occupied by the Nandi were alienated after the First World War (Leo, 1984:40). Despite the fact that Nandi reserve boundaries had been defined, the reserve was further reduced. Ellis points out that it is not generally noted that the Nandi lost more land to European settlement than many other Kenyan people (Ellis, 1976:555). An excision of a further 180 square kilometres of supposedly guaranteed Nandi land occurred (Youe, 1988:400).

In 1920 the then Nandi District Commissioner C.S Hemsted attempted to justify the alienation of Nandi land by reporting that “the alienated land from the reserve was not beneficially occupied or required by the Nandi (KNA/DC/NDI/1/2, Annual Reports, 1904-

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1920). The Kenya Land Commission claimed that the changes were made after an agreement of Nandi chiefs had been obtained (Leo, 1984:40). However, it is apparent that land alienation led to land shortages in Nandi reserve early in the colonial period and the need of the colonial government to provide labour to white settlers was met. After the First World War, Youe points out that there was an increase in the number of Nandi moving to the white highlands as squatters due to shortages of land (Youe, 1988:400). They became squatters on white settler farms in Trans Nzoia, Uasin Gishu and Kisumu, Londiani districts.

Land shortages caused by alienation led to the Nandi protest of 1923, the first expression of organised uprising by the Nandi since the resistance war of 1905-1906 (Ellis, 1976:40). Ellis further points out that, unlike other protests in colonial Kenya, Nandi protest was based on the traditional leadership of Nandi elders and Orkoiyot Barseron arap Manyei, a son of Koitalel Samoei (Ibid, 556). They depended on traditional leaders because of the isolationist policy pursued towards the Nandi by the colonial administration due to their protracted resistance. Compared to other regions, such as Nyanza and Central where western education and Christianity were introduced in early 1900s, developments of western education and other relevant development opportunities started late in Nandi, that is in the 1920s. Nandi uprising was to coincide with the handing over ceremony (*saketab eiito*), whereby warriors were promoted to the position of elders. However, the colonial government forestalled the uprising and Orkoiyot Barseron arap Manyei deported to exile in Meru District. It was customary for Nandi to consult the Orkoiyot before launching any war and raids against their neighbours. The removal of the Orkoiyot was meant to destroy their indigenous military organization so as to avoid any further uprising. Barseron arap Manyei remained in exile until 1961. The reduction of Nandi reserve led to land shortages forcing the Nandi to seek wage employment in the adjacent White Highlands as squatters in large numbers.

### **Nandi Squatters in the White Highlands**

The movement of the Nandi from the reserve to adjacent White Highlands, where they offered labour as squatters started around 1910. The cereal boom of the 1920s led to an increase in acreage of wheat and maize in the white highlands. The demand for labour was quite high. Large numbers of Nandi squatters moved to the adjacent white farms with their families and livestock in large numbers. A process named by the Nandi, from the blue ink used in entering into labour agreements signed using a thumb print- *keteben bulu*. White settlers were concerned with the availability of squatter labour for production of wheat and maize. The presence of large numbers of squatter livestock was not a threat to them. Thus the 1918 Resident Native Labourers Ordinance which defined and fixed squatters relations with White settlers did not affect the Nandi squatters in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia compared to Central Kenya (Youe, 1988:400). This development provided the settlers with the much needed labour and for the Nandi pasture for their livestock in a region they used in pre-colonial period.

Squatting system preserved *kaptich* system whereby the community continued to graze their livestock in White highlands just like during the pre-colonial period. It also encouraged the continuity of the custom of loaning out of cattle to friends and relatives who became caretakers (Ibid: 401). The practice of loaning cattle to a friend or relative was known as *Kamanagan* by the Nandi. Although the latter did not own the cattle loaned to them, they could use the products from the cattle, that is, milk and blood. The practice was known to provide insurance against epidemics and reinforced ties between friends and relatives' in white highlands and Nandi reserve. This arrangement provided a strong link between the

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squatter and reserve political economy and rapidly increased the number of livestock each Nandi squatter had in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia.

It was not until the post-Depression years, when low cereal prices promoted a switch by white settlers from cereal production to livestock farming that the presence of large numbers of squatter livestock became a problem and the first real crackdown on squatter cattle was initiated in western Kenya (East Africa Royal Commission, 1953:165, Youe, 1988:402). In 1932, the organisation of settlers in Kenya, the Convention of Association supported a legislation that empowered local authorities, the District Councils, to prohibit squatter stock in their area. In 1933 the removal of squatter in the white highlands in the Rift Valley began and implemented by a number of white settlers. In 1934, the Provincial commissioner for Rift Valley reported the movement of 12000 cattle to Nandi reserve (Ibid). The number of Nandi squatters who moved back to the reserve was high. However, Nandi reserve was already crowded as indicated above and was not able to be absorbed back the squatters and their livestock. Former Nandi squatters were forced to look for alternative land elsewhere. Matson points out that squatters and a few Nandi from the reserve migrated to Bukusu, Sebei, Pokot, Samburu, Masai, Lango and Tanganyika in the 1930s (KNA/MSS/10/5/6, Matson, Nandi Political Consciousness). The exodus of the Nandi squatters from Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia, as already indicated, was in large numbers that by the beginning of 1936, acute shortage of labour was experienced in this region (KNA/PC/RV/2/8//10, Uasin Gishu Annual Report, 1936). This forced the White Settlers to retract and allowed squatter stock in their farms. By mid-1936 white settlers were increasing the number of squatters in their farms with the full support of the District Councils. However, former squatters who had moved to the new regions such as Uganda did not reclaim their positions as squatters. The new squatters were from Nandi reserve and White Settlers were faced with the hard task of training their new employees.

### **Movement of Nandi to Sebei (Kapchorua district) in Uganda**

The Sebei culture and language is closely related to that of the Nandi. The movement of Nandi squatters to Uganda started from the 1930s as indicated by the reports written by colonial administrators. On 25/6/1937 police Superintendent in charge of Eldoret informed the Nandi District Commissioner that "... he had received information that several more families of Nandi intend to go to Sebei and settle there." He also expressed his fear that stock theft would be rampant. (KNA/DC/KAPT/1/1/53, Nandi Movement 1936-59). This indicates that the movement of Nandi to Sebei in Uganda had started after the onslaught on squatter stock in western Kenya highlands started in 1933. The Nandi had not stopped their tradition of raiding for cattle from neighbouring communities thus the fear that stock theft would be rampant in Sebei.

The numbers of Nandi who moved to Uganda was high as indicated by the letter written by the District Commissioner Eldoret to the Colonial Secretary on 30/ 8/1937 informing him of the "serious state of affairs caused by the emigration of Nandi from the colony to the Sebei area in Bagishu district of Uganda. He also indicated that movement of squatters across the Kenya Uganda border was difficult to stop. On 30/12/1937 the Colonial Secretary wrote to the District Commissioners of Eldoret and Kitale instructing them to report to the District Commissioner Uganda any other movement across the boundary (Ibid). From the foregoing it is clear that Nandi squatters started moving in large numbers to Uganda in the 1930s when it became compulsory for them to reduce their stock in the white highlands. It is not clear why they chose Uganda, it is possible that there were prior links with the Sebei or there were some Sebei who worked in the White highlands and invited the Nandi to their home when the

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onslaught on squatter stock started. *Kapleba*, from the word labour, as the process was known by the Nandi was meant to reduce their cattle and change squatters terms of labour.

The Nandi who moved to Uganda during this period were welcomed by the communities who lived in this region. The District Commissioner Nandi in his report to the Provincial Commissioner Rift Valley on 23/4/1938 wrote that;

....so far as Uganda is concerned, the influx of Nandi and Kitosh (Bukusu) is viewed with complete indifference. The fact that the Nandi and Kitosh immigrants have broken veterinary regulations does not render them ipso facto undesirable and although 13 have been convicted of illegal movement of cattle before the Nandi court, the fines amounting to a maximum of 10% of the cattle involved had proved not deterrent (Ibid).

This indicates that the movement to Uganda was not undertaken by the Nandi alone, the Bukusu then known as Kitosh also moved to Uganda. The number of Nandi charged for illegal immigration to Uganda was too small compared to the number of those who had relocated to Uganda. This indicates that the number of Nandi families that migrated to Uganda during this period was high. The District Commissioner Nandi reported that a large number of Nandi immigrants to Uganda had escaped prosecution because the local headmen of Sebei were illiterate and could not read the passes issued to the Nandi squatters in Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu to return their cattle to Nandi reserve. They thought the passes allowed them to move to Uganda. The District Commissioner concluded that "Uganda authorities were legally unable either to return the Kenya natives now in Uganda or effectively discourage further immigration" (Ibid).

It can be deduced from the foregoing that large numbers of Nandi squatters in Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu migrated with their families and livestock to Uganda in the 1930s. Kenyan colonial government and that of Uganda were not able to stop them from crossing the border. The colonial government seemed to have celebrated the fact that the Nandi had provided a solution to a volatile situation because a return of large stock of former squatters to Nandi reserve that was already overcrowded would cause more problems. Nandi Squatters had been issued with passes to go back to Nandi reserve and there were chances of such a situation leading to an uprising due to scarcity of land. This view is confirmed by the contents in a letter written by District Commissioner Nandi to the Assistant Superintendent of police Kitale on 8/2/1940 because of a rumour of the return of Nandi in Uganda to Kenya;

I am informed that those Nandi residing with their stock in Uganda are contemplating returning to Kenya on account of the Uganda authorities considering the question of branding all stock over there. This is to request you to check if the information is true (Ibid).

The letter was replied on 23/12/1940 that there was no knowledge of any contemplated move by the Nandi settled in Uganda back to Nandi reserve (Ibid). This answer must have pleased the District Commissioner Nandi who was worried about the congestion already experienced in Nandi reserve. The Nandi who moved to Uganda in 1930s did not return to Kenya even though the white settlers retracted in enforcing laws that limited squatter stock in 1936 due to shortages of labour. However, their positions were filled within a short period due to congestion in Nandi reserve and the competition for

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land by cash crops encouraged by the colonial government in reserves during the Great Depression.

In the 1950s other Nandi squatters also moved to Uganda to avoid the reduction of their livestock in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia which started in 1948. A large number of Nandi are still in Uganda today while some came back to Kenya after independence. The 1995 constitution of Uganda does not recognize Nandi as one of its ethnic group. There is need to examine the experiences of these people in Uganda from the time they moved to Uganda and why some of them moved back to Kenya.

### **Introduction of Individual Land Enclosure in Nandi in the 1940s**

From late 1930s to early 1940s squatter stock in Uasin Gishu increased at a greater rate than before. The stocks were more than those found in Nandi reserve. During this period the reserve was devoting more land to maize cultivation (Oboler, 1989:167-170). This was mainly because of the economic depression of early 1930s that made the colonial government to encourage Africans to produce more cash crops which would be sold in low prices to cushion the colony at a time when agricultural exports by white settlers had decline due to low prices. The cash crop encouraged in African reserves was mainly maize.

The Nandi also positively responded to the colonial campaigns to have Africans produce food for the war effort from early 1940s. Maize remained the main crop produced in Nandi reserve and the war period witnessed an increase in production of this crop. An increase in maize production led to competition for land space in the reserve for both grazing and maize production. Youe points out that this served to futher increase reliance on squatter holdings for cattle grazing Youe, 1989:403). That is, many Nandi took their livestock to the white highland, to the farms where relatives or friends worked so as to get enough land to produce maize in the reserve.

At the height of all this, the process of individual land ownership started in Nandi reserve. Official encouragement played a major role in changing land tenure in Nandi reserve. The then District Commissioner, H. R. Carver encouraged male individual enclosure of land in northern part of the reserve in 1943-1945. This region (Mosop) neighbours Uasin Gishu District. He argued that land enclosure would improve farming and also would be the basis of orderly development of land in Mosop (KNA/PC/NKU/3/13/15/ Alienated land, 1931-1957). In the real sense, the Commissioner who estimated that 150,000 Nandi squatter lived in the White Highlands knew that it was a matter of time before these squatters would be forcefully removed from the adjacent White highlands. He was also aware that it was impossible to accommodate them in the reserve without grave embarrassment He strongly advocated for individual land enclosure arguing that it would improve farming and also be the basis of orderly development in Mosop (Ibid). However, in the real sense, the District Commissioner encouraged individual land enclosure in Nandi so as to forestall the disaster which would be caused by allowing squatter stock to drift back to the reserve.

Nandi reserve was already exhibiting signs of soil deterioration. As already motioned earlier, squatters in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia consisted largely of the Nandi who kept large numbers of cattle (KNA/DC/NDI/5/3, Notes on Resident Labour Problems (n.d), Tanui, 2005:71). The developments in Nandi reserve made squatters to be more dependent on settler land and by the time of the outbreak of Second World War, their position was becoming increasingly vulnerable. This explains the large number of Nandi young men who joined the army voluntarily. Individual enclosure of land in the reserve and greater degree of unity amongst settlers regarding the repatriation of squatter stock arising from wartime and post-

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war growth in agrarian capitalism, made the time ripe for the transition of labour tenancy to rural proletarianization (Youe, 1988:403).

### **Enforcement of squatter ordinances in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia in the 1940s**

In 1939 the district councils of Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia were given the power to limit squatter cattle, control the number of squatters and increase the number of days to be worked to 270 per year (Lagat, 1995:79). The aim was not to evict squatters but to drastically reduce their herds and land available to them. Squatters were supposed to change and work more for White settlers and less for themselves, but still have small plots to produce food for their subsistence. However, squatters in Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia refused to agree to new contracts and once again left the white highlands in large numbers. A problem that began as a land question turned into a labour question (Youe, 2002:589).

The return of squatters in 1940s caused a lot of problems in the reserves in Kenya. Fitzhenry points out that, "...the return of squatters dramatised their own situation to the reserve dwellers and encouraged the emergence of a demand for new land" (Fitzhenry, 1979:15). The squatter's abortive attempts to re-establish land claims in the reserve were not successful. This greatly contributed to the Mau Mau uprising in central Kenya. In other parts of Kenya the situation was no better as pointed out by Solly;

It is worth pointing out, that the Kikuyu people, alone of all the people of Kenya tribes have resorted to revolting methods of violence and savagery to express their anti- European point of view, though they suffered no more, if not less, than the Nandi and Kipsigis in the years between 1902 and 1919, nor are their problems of overcrowding more acute than in some parts of Nyanza Province (KNA/MSS/66/126, Correspondence and Notes on Political Economy of Kenya, 1951).

In Nandi reserve, the colonial administration was faced with the challenge of settling squatters. They pressed for the allocation of new land as a solution (Fitzhenry, 1979:15). The demand for more land in Nandi started from 1944, Matson points out that chief Elijah Cheruiyot in 1944 made a forceful plea to the colonial government for the return of Kaimosi and Kipkarren farms at the end of the war as an act of justice, as compensation for Nandi sacrifices in the fighting and in recognition of the response which the tribe had made to the government wishes in other fields (KNA/MSS/10/5/11, Chief Elijah Cheruiyot: A Great Nandi Leader: 30). However, this request was not heeded by the colonial government. Chief Elijah was appointed the first Vice President of the Nandi African District Council (ADC) in 1950. He used his new position to continue making demands for addition of more land for the Nandi.

For instance, in a meeting held by ADC in the same year attended by J. H Lewis; a government specially appointed administrative officer, the expulsion of the Nandi squatters from Uasin Gishu and other European areas was discussed. Chief Elijah's contributed by saying that; 'if the government agreed to Europeans removing Nandi from European land it should equally agree to the Nandi removing Europeans from Nandi land' (Ibid: 37). Matson indicates that Elijah's reaction was predictable because three days earlier he had told Nandi District Commissioner the same point by observing that "it seems that government readily agreed to the request by the farmers to remove squatters and their stock from the White highlands, but paid little attention to the request of the Nandi. He cited the request made

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earlier for the return of Kaimosi and Kipkarren” (Ibid, 37-38). The two regions had been allocated to White settlers but they were not fully utilized by the owners

These consistent demands made the Governor announced at Kapsabet, a few weeks later, that part of Kaimosi and Kipkarren had been bought by the government and returned to the Nandi. This, he said, was done with the understanding that the Nandi would not lodge any more claims for land again in future. However, the land returned to the Nandi was too small and could not meet the pressure for land in Nandi, two years later; the demand for land was repeated by Chief Elijah arap Cheruiyot. This was done on a day when two members of the legislative assembly Michael Blundell and Ole Tameno visited Kapsabet. Elijah reminded the minister that, “the Government many years took away the land of Tinderet from the Nandi because they fought against the government for many years, but now there has been peace for many years, the Nandi cooperated with and assisted the government, and now deserve to have this land given back to them “( Ibid).

Chief Elijah Cheruiyot was referring to the land alienated in 1906, the territorial units of Kapchepkendi and Kamelilo. He indicated that the land was taken as a punishment to the Nandi for resisting colonial rule for a long period. He also pointed out that the Nandi had accepted the colonial rule and even assisted the colonial government; he was probably referring to the large number of Nandi soldiers who fought hand in hand with the British during the Second World War. This request was not heeded.

Africans across the continent deeply resented policies designed to reduce their livestock. District Commissioners feared unrest in their districts over culling or destocking (Shutt, 2002:264). The administration long held fear of an uprising occurred in 1952 in Central Kenya when the Mau Mau uprising started. The colonial administration had to ensure that a solution was sought for other tribes facing a similar problem. It was against this backdrop that fresh movement of the Nandi to other regions occurred. The majority Nandi squatters during this period moved to Tanganyika, Uganda, Masai, Baringo and Pokot. Matson also notes that squatters and a few Nandi from the reserve migrated to Bukusu, Sebei, Pokot, Samburu, Lango and Tanganyika (KNA/MSS/10/5/7, Matso, Nandi Political Consiousness: 2). This is in agreement with what the District Commissioner Nandi wrote on 30/5/1951 that “There already large numbers of Nandi permanently residing outside their “homeland” such as Uganda, West Suk (Pokot), Masai and North Nyanza ( KNA/DC/KAPT/1/1/94, Infiltration in Native Land Units). It is clear from the above that there were new areas that Nandi moved to identified in the 1940s and there was also a continuation of movement to regions identified earlier such as Uganda and Baringo. The dispersal of the Nandi in the 1940s and 1950s was in a large scale compared to earlier periods.

### **Movement of the Nandi to Maasai land**

A large number of Nandi also moved to Laikipia and Narok, land that was occupied by the Masai from late 1940s. Lagat points out that a section of Nandi squatters consulted the last Nandi Orkoiyot, Barsiran arap Manyei, to provide a solution to their problem. Manyei had been released from exile in Murang’a where he spent almost forty years. He responded by directing them to a large empty and fertile land on the Laikipia plateau and in February 1951. That he led a large group of Nandi ex-squatters and their livestock to Laikipia plateau where he also settled (Lagat, 1995:96). However, he organised another Nandi uprising against colonial rule in Laikipia in 1957, he was betrayed by some of his trusted men. He was arrested once again and exiled to Mfangano Island in Nyanza (Sang, 2015:159). The District Commissioner Nandi also indicated that a number of Nandi squatters were moving with remnants of Uasin Gishu Masai in Uasin Gishu who were being or had recently been sent to

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Maasai. A report from the same District Commissioner Nandi, P.D Adams to the Provincial Commissioner Rift Valley in 1951 also reiterated this when he wrote that;

As you are aware a large scale exodus of Nandi from European farms on the UG plateau has taken place in the last 18 months following the start of enforcement of the Resident Labour Rules. The Nandi endeavoured to move to Masai in view of the general over-crowded stock position in Nandi and many are already in Masai (KNA/DC/KAPT/1/1/94, Interpenetration and Infiltration in Native Land Units).

This report indicates that the government was aware that many former Nandi squatters had migrating to Masai and were not opposed to this move. Their movement provided a solution to lack of land in Nandi reserve. Nandi District Commissioner also reported that Chief Isaiah had accompanied him on their visit to Narok where some Nandi had settled. He further reported that the Nandi are not happy in Maasai (Ibid). Maasai elders were putting pressure on them to lead a nomadic life and not to cultivate. However, he did not offer a solution to their problem; they were left to make the best out of the situation they found themselves in. The love for cattle and availability of land to graze livestock made them to persevere and gradually they were assimilated into the Maasai community. A large number of Nandi are still settled among the Maasai but most of them maintained contacts with relatives in Nandi to date.

Movement of the Nandi to Maasai took place up to the 1950s. Sang indicates that by 1952 a total of 400 Nandi families had moved to Trans Mara. Many Nandi ex squatter families opted to move to Maasai rather than see their stock reduced (Sang, 2015:153). Nandi squatters preferred to move in large numbers to Maasai where land had not been subdivided into individual holdings.

### **Movement of the Nandi to Pokot**

Nandi squatters from Uasin Gishu and Trans Nzoia also moved in large numbers to Pokot. Nagulu points out that in the 1930s and 1940s; there was an infiltration of newcomers chiefly the Sabaot, Nandi and Bukusu in Pokot district. She indicates that, the only condition for their acceptance was a payment of 15 cattle per tax payer to the colonial government and adoption of Pokot customs. The fact that these immigrants were willing to part with 15 cattle to be allowed to settle in Pokot, indicates the high number of livestock squatters kept in settler farms. It is estimated that there were over 100 Nandi in Mnagei location in Pokot District by 1947 (Nangulu, 2009: 42).

More Nandi moved to Pokot in the 1950s with their cattle. The relationship between the Pokot and Nandi in Pokot was not smooth. Tension between them went back to the 1930s and 1940s (Ibid: 42). The killing of two Nandi in December 1947 worsens the relationship between the two ethnic groups, culminating in an open confrontation in 1955. The colonial government intervened and evicted a few Nandi who were labelled as trouble makers from Pokot district in the same year (Ibid). Nandi immigrants were looking for land to settle and had witnessed Nandi reserve being enclosed by the Nandi who had remained there, in the process closing them out. In Pokot land was still communally owned, however Nandi immigrants enclosed large tracts of land and each year, they put a greater area was cultivated. The Pokot were also realizing that they had given away their best agricultural land (Ibid). Oral sources indicate that there were cattle raids between the two communities. Most of the Nandi

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who settled in Pokot were pushed back to Trans Nzoia and Uasin Gishu by the Pokot in the 1980s

**Movement of the Nandi to Western Kenya**

The Nandi also migrated to North Nyanza and lived among their neighbours the Luhiya from early 1940s. On 8/12/1947 Chiefs from North Nyanza and those of Nandi held a meeting to discuss the Nandi living in North Kavirondo. Later it was reported that 75 Nandi had relocated to North Kavirondo by 1948 (KNA/DC/KMGA/1/1/5, Annual Reports, 1947-1952). The number of Nandi in North Kavirondo differed from region to region. On 2/8/1951 the District Commissioner North Nyanza Osborne P.S wrote in his report that; “I have received names of 16 Nandi who have comparatively recently moved to Isukha location. In most cases they have joined Nandi residents of some duration and in no case have they received permission to enter the district.” Acceptance by the Isukha made the Nandi to relocate without seeking for permission from the government. Their numbers in Isukha gradually grew; by 11/11/ 1954 the Chief of Khayega submitted a list of 105 Nandi living in Isukha location (KNA/DC/KMGA/1/1/6, Annual Reports, 1952-1959).

The Nandi also moved to Kabras in the period between 1942- 1954. On 30/1/1954 the chief of Kabras location reporting to the District Commissioner Nyanza gave the following list of Nandi who had relocated to his location (Ibid). The way some of their names were written indicates their indigenization into luhiya dialect as indicated in the table below.

**List of names as reported by Kabras chief ----- Correct way of writing the names**

Juma Arapkesyo	Chumo arap Kesio
Arapchebaywa	Arap Cheboiywo
Aramuguni	Arap Mugun
Arap Kogo	Arap Kogo
Kangani arapsambu	Kangani arap Sambu
Kipsonga Araplagat	Kipsanga arap Lagat
Aramaleli	Arap Malel
Arabaywa	Arap Boiywo
Arapkaptwale	Arap Kapatwele
Aramutwa	Arap Mutwa
Sirma Masai	Sirma Masai
Kipkoech Arap Chebaiywo	Kipkoech arap Cheboiywo

Commissioner Nambale Division on 27/11/1954 submitted a list of Nandi in Nambale Division to the District Commissioner North Nyanza to be 43 and 15 in Bukhayo. The Nandi also dispersed as far as Teso land. In 1954, Chief Alexander Seme of Amakura gave a list of 28 Nandi who moved to Teso between 1944- 1954 to the Assistant District Nyanza (Ibid). From the foregoing it is clear that the Luhiya and Teso provided room to some Nandi families who in earlier decades had lost their land to European settlement. The colonial government was not interested in their return to Nandi; they only requested chiefs in North Nyanza to report the number of Nandi who had settled among them. A large number of Nandi relocated to Tanganyika.

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### **Movement of the Nandi to Tanganyika**

The beginning of movement of the Nandi to Tanganyika (present Tanzania) is not clear. Oral sources indicate that they settled in a number of districts including; Musoma, Tarime, Butiama, Bukombe, among the Nyamuswa in Chamriho, Bunda, Geita and Mwanza region among the Sukuma. Nandi District Commissioner P.D Adams wrote to the Provincial Commissioner Rift Valley on 25/5/1951 that; “As you are aware a large scale exodus of Nandi from European farms on the Uasin Gishu plateau has taken place during the last 18 months following the strict enforcement of the Resident labourers rules” (KNA/KAPT/1/1/94, Administration: Interpenetration and Infiltration on Native Land Units). Oral sources indicate that a Nandi man who had a debt ran away to Kisii and settle there. With time he crossed the border with his new friends and noticed that Tanganyika was sparsely populated and conducive for cattle keeping. That the man went back to Nandi at the height of the squatter problems and encouraged the Nandi to move to Tanganyika. A report from the Provincial Commissioner Rift Valley on 6/6/1951 to the Chief Secretary indicated in early 1949 a small number of Nandi were given permission by one of the Native authorities in Tanganyika to settle in Musoma district. That the District Commissioner Musoma, at that time informed DC Nandi, that there was no room for new settlers and no Nandi was allowed to cross the border but even so it is believed that there are already a number of Nandi residing in Musoma (Ibid). Earlier, on 30/5/1951 District Commissioner Nandi had written to the Provincial Commissioner Rift Valley on the movement of the Nandi to Tanganyika that;

....such an emigration if possible would considerably help to ease the all problem of the returning squatter and the overall stock density in Nandi.....These Nandi has shown admirable enterprise to find a practical solution to the squatter problem and relieve the increasing human and stock pressure in Nandi and I consider that their initiative should be supported( Ibid).

This communication indicates that the District Commissioner celebrated the solution found by Nandi so as to alleviate the problem overcrowding in the reserve. Most squatters were also not able to acquire land in the reserve because land had been subdivided to individuals. It is also clear that he was requesting for government support in the movement of the Nandi to Tanganyika. However, the Provincial in turn wrote to the Chief Secretary on 6/6/1951 and part of his letter read that; “It is of course unfortunate that the Nandi should wish to emigrate when there is more pressing population problem in Kikuyu District...” (Ibid). It is clear that the movement of Nandi to Tanganyika occurred at a time when Mau Mau uprising in central Kenya was a major problem. This probably made the Colonial Secretary to support the movement of Nandi to Tanganyika.

Later in October 1951, the District Officer Nandi Mr. G S Snell visited Musoma with Nandi chiefs and councillors. They were looking for a possibility of migration that would relieve the pressure on Nandi District caused by the eviction of squatter livestock from Uasin Gishu. In his report he indicated that:

Both sides appear genuinely to favour settlement of the Nandi in Musoma District. The Nandi cannot be said to be enthusiastic as the country is clearly less fertile than their own but they believe that many squatters and ex-squatters who cannot find room in the reserve would be glad to avail themselves of this opportunity to move to Musoma District (Ibid).

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Nandi Chiefs were requested to provide lists of people willing to resettle in Tankanyiga. Chief Joel Malel of the northern part of Nandi, on 14/11/1951 gave a list of 459 people willing to be resettled in Takanyiga. An indicator that land shortage was worst in the northern part of Nandi reserve. The Secretariat Dar es saalam on 19/4/1951 wrote to the District Commissioner Nandi informing him that 121 families will be welcomed in Musoma (ibid). However, many Nandi found their own way to Musoma before the colonial government found a way of assisting them to move and settle in Musoma. This is clearly demonstrated by the letter written by the District Commissioner Musoma to the District Commissioner Nandi on 26/6/1952 that; “.....if the immigration of 121 families from your district can help the overpopulation I understand exist there, I can assure you that well over that number of Nandi have now dribbed(sic) to this district to settle.” This occurred before the two colonial governments concluded their negotiations on the movement of the Nandi to this region (Ibid).

An agreement between Kenya and Tanganyika was concluded as demonstrated by the letter written by the District Commissioner Musoma to District Commissioner Nandi on 21/3/1953 in which he stated that; “I am glad the two Governments have now agreed in principle to the immigration of Nandi and that arrangements can now be made officially to receive a few more.” Thereafter the movement of the Nandi to Tanganyika was facilitated by the colonial government. Chiefs were given the mandate to register those who were willing to migrate by making sure that their cattle not more than 20 were vaccinated. Women and children were transported by Lorries provided by the government, while men walked with their stock through Kisii.

The movement of the Nandi to Tanganyika ended in mid-1955 due to the agitation of the people of Musoma as pointed out by the District Commissioner Musoma J.H. Hall when communicating with District Commissioner Kericho; “After considerable agitation in this District by the local people who are beginning to be hard pressed by immigration from Kenya, authorities agreed that no more Wanandi will be received here.” The numbers of Nandi who migrated to Musoma was high to the extent of causing agitation from the local inhabitants of this region (KNA/PC/NZA/3/1/55, Correspondence between DC Musoma and DC Kericho).

Sang points out that many of the Nandi chose to take their livestock to Musoma in Tanganyika and to date there is a considerable number of Nandi living in Tanzania. As soon as they settled in Musoma, they requested for the appointment of their own headman to take care of their own interests (Sang, 2015:154). A large number of the Nandi moved back to Kenya after independence in 1963 and in 1973 when Nyerere’s Ujamaa policy was enacted by Tanzania. Compulsory villagization and resettlement of the country’s entire rural population started. However, a large number of them remained in Tanzania to date.

## **Conclusion**

The dispersal of the Nandi in the colonial period was a response to the establishment of colonial rule and alienation of land by the colonial government for white settlers. The Nandi were agro-pastoralist, the land for their use in Nandi reserve, after alienation could not support their economic activities thus many of them dispersed to new regions in Kenya and East Africa. The earliest dispersal occurred in 1906 due to forceful movement of the Nandi to a new region to the north of the reserve (Kapiyet), loss of livestock, cereals in granaries and and both grazing and settlement land. A number of them preferred to move to neighbouring regions and the earliest move was to Baringo, among the Tugen, where they settled permanently. The second dispersal occurred from 1910, land shortages experienced in Nandi reserve as early as this, and the availability of jobs in white settler farms as squatters made the Nandi to seek for employment in the White Highland in large numbers.

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The third dispersal occurred in 1933-1936 when a number of settlers in Uasin Gishiu and Trans Nzoia attempted to implement government laws aimed at regulating squatter labour. This resulted in mass movement of the squatters away from settler farms. Due to land shortages in Nandi reserve, a number of them for the first time during the colonial rule; crossed the border and settled in Uganda among the Sebei. The last and largest number of Nandi moved in the 1940s and 1950s to Tanganyika, Uganda, Maasai, Pokot and Western Kenya.

Shortage of land made the Nandi initiate their own out migration to neighbouring regions and colonies. This depicts the relations that existed among Africans in pre-colonial period, whereby a person could move and settle among a different ethnic community, and was welcomed provided he/ she respected the culture of the hosting community. Such people would eventually be assimilated. The colonial government welcomed the movement of the Nandi to new regions because it provided a solution to the implementation of the destocking policy in settler areas and alleviated the pressure already felt in the overcrowded Nandi reserve which could lead to a revolt similar to Mau Mau uprising. There is need to examine the experiences of the Nandi in Diasporas, especially those who settled in Uganda and Tanzania, constitutions of the two countries do not recognize the presence of Nandi ethnic group in their countries.

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