**DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

# HIS 4100: LAND AND LABOUR IN CENTRAL AFRICA, 1750-1964

**FIRST EDITION, 2020**

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**Acknowledgements**

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# Contents

## MODULE OVERVIEW

### Introduction

The course covers the period **1750-1964.** In the course of our discussions, Central Africa will mean parts or all of the following present- day countries; Congo DR, Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Though focus will mainly be on what may be referred to as the former British Central Africa, on account of our historical heritage, our lectures will also draw on examples from the other countries mentioned above. Even though the course is on Land and Labour in Central Africa, one cannot fully appreciate developments regarding land and labour in Central Africa without an appreciation of the factors that affected and brought about change in perceptions over these key factors of production. Therefore, political and social issues will also be taken into account.

Rationale

The skills presented in the module of this course will help you as a teacher to refocus and re-orient yourself to the major challenges that are taking place in both the university and the new career pathway syllabus. At the end of the course, you should therefore, show competence in pedagogical related knowledge and skills in planning, implementing and evaluating teaching and learning processes.

The approach used in the modules and which you are expected to adopt when working in the classroom is probably radically different from that which you have been exposed to during your university training and school training. The approach adopted for the module is much more practical, requiring you to inquire into and reflect upon what you are doing to a far greater degree than you have ever possibly been used to. Throughout the modules and exposure to different approaches and methodologies try to apply each approach and methodology to your work in the classroom. We have combined theory and practice. We are not presenting experiences in order to set ourselves up as models to be emulated, but to ensure that all the ideas are rooted in reality, and therefore, are entirely possible and usable.

Take responsibility for your own learning that the modules offer. You might have probably sat passively for so long in so many learning situations that this change will not be easy. But we

know that it is a very exciting development and ultimately you will welcome it. We have no doubt that you will complete this module successfully.

**Aim**

The aim of the curse is firstly, to make students aware of the importance of land and labour problems in pre-colonial and colonial Central Africa, and secondly, to make students aware of the issues that were involved and are still shaping matters of land and labour and how these were dealt with, as a way of deepening understanding of land and labour problems in contemporary Central Africa.

**Course Outcomes**

By the end of this module, you are expected to;

1. Identify and assess land and labour problems affecting African societies from 1750 to the present.
2. Evaluate the role of land and labour in the development of pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Central African societies.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the changes in land and labour patterns in African societies from 1750 to independence.
4. Assess African responses to the changing land and labour policies in Central Africa.
5. Analyse critically land and labour policies that have had an impact in Central Africa.
6. Evaluate the changes in the land and labour patterns in Central Africa.
7. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of scholarly debates on various land and labour issues.

**Summary**

The course is broken down into units. Each unit comprises:

- An introduction to the unit content.
- Specific Outcomes
- Core content of the unit.
- A reflection

- A unit activity
- A unit summary.

**Study Skills**

As an adult learner your approach to learning will be different to that from your school days: you will choose what you want to study, you will have professional and/or personal motivation for doing so and you will most likely be fitting your study activities around other professional or domestic **responsibilities**.

Essentially you will be taking control of your learning environment. As a consequence, you will need to consider performance issues related to time management, goal setting, stress management, etc. Perhaps you will also need to reacquaint yourself in areas such as essay planning, coping with exams and using the web as a learning resource.

Your most significant considerations will be *time* and *space*, that is, the time you dedicate to your learning and the environment in which you engage in that learning.

We recommend that you take time now—before starting your self-study—to familiarize yourself with these issues. There are a number of excellent resources on the web. A few suggested links are:

http://www.how-to-study.com/

The "How to study" web site is dedicated to study skills resources. You will find links to study preparation (a list of nine essentials for a good study place), taking notes, strategies for reading text books, using reference sources, test anxiety.

http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stdyhlp.html

This is the web site of the Virginia Tech, Division of Student Affairs. You will find links to time scheduling (including a "where does time go?" link), a study skill checklist, basic concentration techniques, control of the study environment, note taking, how to read essays for analysis, memory skills ("remembering").

http://www.howtostudy.org/resources.php

Another "How to study" web site with useful links to time management, efficient reading, questioning/listening/observing skills, getting the most out of doing ("hands-on" learning), memory building, tips for staying motivated, developing a learning plan.

The above links are our suggestions to start you on your way. At the time of writing these web links were active. If you want to look for more go to www.google.com and type "self-study basics", "self-study tips", "self-study skills" or similar.

**Time Frame**

One (1) year comprising three residential.

Four (4) weeks of contact sessions.

You are expected to complete 40 hours of self-study.

**Need Help**

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**Assessment**

**One Assignment**-25 percent

**One Test**-25 percent

**Examination**-50 percent

**Total**-100 percent

**UNIT 1**

# PRE-COLONIAL ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL AFRICA

## 1.1 Introduction

In this unit you will learn about pre-colonial economies in Central Africa. The unit argues that the pre-colonial economies were never static but dynamic.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain how ecology influence human activities .
2. discuss the economy of the people of Central Africa before the arrival of the Bantu.
3. analyse reasons for increased innovations and productivity in Central Africa between 1600 to 1700.

**Definition of Terms**

1. **Ecology**: defined as man's environment (rainfall, soils, temperature) and its relationship to his economic life. In short, the interrelationship between man and his environment.

2. **Ecological differentiation**: the variations that exist in terms of climate, geography and rainfall existing between different ecological zones

3. **Economic specialization**: refers to the development of expert skills and knowledge essential to exploiting a given ecological zone. Different zones spurred different skills.

4. **Pre-capitalist economies/modes of production**: these economies were domestic economies based on family skills, labour planning and consumption before the onset of colonial rule in the 19th century. They were small scale economies in which labour and consumption were organised at family/kin levels. Along with the people participating in them, these economies were not immune from the influences of the ecologies they were practiced.

**Ecology in pre-colonial Central Africa**

Ecology has influenced man's everyday activities. In the past the view has been that man controlled the environment. This is in fact not true because it is ecology that has impacted on man's skills, technologies, and aspects of his economic life. Economic specialization which man developed in pre-colonial Central Africa was due to the environment or the ecological system.

Land in Central Africa was generally less fertile than land in the forest zones. But the environment was less hostile, so there was a better chance for agricultural, agro-pastoral and pastoral economies to develop. Farmers mainly grew grain such as millet and sorghum. Women played a bigger part in farm labour. Men were mainly responsible for clearing land and taking care of the cattle, while women were in charge of all remaining tasks.

**Economy and Economic Change in Pre- colonial Central Africa**

Economies are never static. They are always changes. This was also the case in Pre-colonial central Africa. Long before the arrival of the Portuguese or Arabs in Central Africa, economic change was already in process. For centuries, Africans had experimented with their productive capacities and came up a series of indigenous productive innovations which were later to make it possible for them to participate in Long-distance trade.

The early phase of this economic transformation was under the iron-age Bantu economy during the period from about the first century AD to about 1600. After 1600 to about 1800, the period was to experience more rapid and much more profound change. It were changes that occurred in the period up to 1600 which allowed African societies to produce a surplus and therefore engage in long distance trade.

**The Economy before the Arrival of the Bantu**

Before the arrival of the Bantu, Late stone-age men of the Central Africa were skilled hunters but also lived by collecting honey. Honey was collected during hunting trips. Apart from being consumed directly, this honey was also used to make beer. Women and Children were employed in a variety of gathering activities. They knew their environment well and relied on well suited hunting and gathering technologies for these economic activities.

**Arrival of the Bantu**

Arrival of the Bantu in upper Kasai and upper Zambezi introduced what may be considered to have been revolutionary productive innovations.

(a). The early Bantu replaced stone with iron tools for hunting, agriculture and weapons. In **hunting**, an efficient bow and arrow as well as knives replaced stone tools for hunting. The Bantu were therefore more successful at hunting than were the early inhabitants of Central Africa. However, such technological change was slow rather than sudden. It occurred over a long period of time. Iron may have taken a much longer period to replace stone.

(b). In **agriculture**, the innovations brought in by the early Bantu in agriculture were even more far reaching that those in hunting. They brought about permanent settlement and change in lifestyle. With hoe blades and axes more land could be cleared and cultivated, including more fertile woodland. The early staples crops were; finger millet, sorghum. These two were at first mainly used to make beer. Other crops were squash, Bambara nuts, and cowpeas. The Bantu brought the knowledge of these crops with them from the Central Sudan Zone into South Central Africa. The early Bantu carriers of these innovations may have come into the area through the Great Lakes region and may have arrived in parts of present day Zambia by the fifth century A.D. Even though these early immigrants were also cattle keepers, cattle keeping did not reach parts of Central Africa under discussion till the 19th Century. This may have been mainly on account of the presence of Tsetse fly.

Other economic activities were the cultivation of tubers (yams) rather than growing of grains. This was accompanied by keeping of goats and later, the raising of chickens. Later, collecting of wild tubers, wild fruits, mushrooms, leaves, and insects began to play an important role early Iron Age Bantu food economy. These supplementary economic activities have, in most cases continued up to today. The Bantu (Mbela) in many cases simply adopted existing food gathering technologies of the Kung/Khoisan/Bushmen peoples. In addition, these early Bantu engaged in collecting bee products, which later became important commodities in international trade.

(c). **Fishing:** The Khoisans/Bushmen may have been engaged in some fishing but little is known of its importance or technology used. However, the early Bantu probably used spears, dug-out canoes, fish poison, scooping baskets and perhaps, even nets to catch fish.

(d) **Non-Food production activities:** The introduction of iron tools opened the way for woodwork through which a wide variety of utensils and other materials necessary for intensified food production and a far more sedentary lifestyle could be produced. Among these were, handles for iron tools, mortars, canoes, bows, building materials, ritual figures, drums and xylophones. With these woodworks, more sophisticated ways of preparing, preserving and storing foods and seeds became possible. Pottery of the early Bantu provides ample evidence of this new level of early economic transformation and sophistication.

Experimentation, selection and adaptation together with communication among the Bantu and non Bantu groups, were the basis for innovations over a long period of time. Change was up to 1600, as noted, rather evolutionary rather than revolutionary. Change on the methods of

production and production techniques and productivity was slow. However, these early innovations widened the range of economic activities in Central Africa. While Bantu slowly incorporated the indigenous, aboriginal inhabitants of Central Africa, they also adopted most of the highly skilled hunting and food collecting techniques of the latter. They may in the process have also abandoned some of the techniques they brought with them such as growing of tubers in preference for hunting and gathering.

### 3. Era of Increased innovations and Productivity-1600-1700

The period 1600-1700 brought about a series of more rapid innovations that profoundly altered the economic prospects of Central Africa. They were change in the systems of production, techniques of production and a big rise in productivity. This was also the period which saw the introduction of many new agricultural crops from Asia and then America's among the peoples of the Kasai and Upper Zambezi region of Central Africa. The above innovations had far reaching consequences in terms of food self-sufficiency and the people's ability to produce a surplus.

Among the most important changes was the introduction of new food crops from Asia and the America's, the intensification of fishing and professionalization of hunting and iron working.

(1) It is has never been established very clearly when Asian and American food crops were introduced into Central Africa in the sense that records on pre 19th century are mostly only available for areas near the coasts. Between1600-1700, a complex of American crops reached upper Zambezi. Among the most important were; Cassava, maize, groundnuts, certain types of beans, sweet potatoes and tobacco. These new crops, starting with cassava, transformed existing land use practices and greatly increased productivity. Cassava not only became a crop of strategic importance to the local food economy, local circulation and integration into the wider economy. Maize became more important much later.

**Cassava/Manioc (Manihot esculenta)**

The data and route for the entry of cassava into Central Africa is difficult to establish. However, it would appear that cassava had been domesticated in the tropical forests of South America. After the Portuguese conquered Brazil they also adopted cassava as their staple. The transatlantic trade created a very close link between the South American and West African coasts from the

early 16th century. The food needs of the Portuguese settlers, ships crews and above all, slaves, created the initial demand for cassava in West Central Africa.

At first cassava was imported but slowly begun to be grown in Angola. It entered parts of Central Africa as a commercial food crop to cover the food needs of non Africans between 1548 and 1593. Its slow adoption may have been due to need for a long period of experimentation and reorganization of the labour process required in the processing techniques that cassava required. Cassava contains a poisonous Hydrocyamic Acid (HCN) in varying degrees. Many of its varieties were divided into bitter and sweet ones. A fragmentation process before eating removes the HCN before consumption. Soaking of the tubers in order to produce fermentation could somehow partly explain the delay in adoption of cassava on the coast.

In the interior though, cassava was quickly adopted, together with ground nuts as early as 1614. By mid 17th century, cassava was the dominant crop among the Lunda of east upper Kasai. Cassava also became an important tribute crop that in the 19th century was brought to the Lunda from all parts of the Lunda Empire. State farms emerged in which worked, slaves and "poor women"

**Advantages of cassava**

- Cassava is more drought and disease resistant.
- It could be planted almost continuously in the rain season and could be harvested any time it matured.
- In effect then, cassava growers faced no problem of mobilising labour because they could spread the harvesting and growing.
- In terms of storage facilities cassava could be left in the ground.
- Unlike millet raiders could not easily destroy it.
- Unlike sorghum and millet it could easily grow on poor soils.

**Economic and political importance of cassava**

- Cassava led to greater yields and ultimately became food secure.
- It enabled people of Central Africa to participate in the Atlantic trade and were able to obtain goods such as clothes, liquor and guns.

- It led to an emergence of a rich class people. For example, the Pombeiro.
- Political leaders increased their ability to feed their followers. Thus chiefs could exert more control on people who depended on them for food.

**Hunting**

Innovations did not only take place in agriculture but in hunting too. Until the integration of the region into the world economy, hunting in Central Africa occurred on a small scale. This was done through traps, digging pits, spears and bows and arrows. These methods were used to kill small animals.

In the 19$^{th}$ Century people began to experiment with new ways of hunting in order to kill big game which would enable them to have access to ivory for trade. There was an increased use of guns the Lunda, Chokwe, and Luvale who became skilled hunters. They hunted elephants for tasks and rhinos for horns. There was increased demand for rhinocerous horns in the Middle East and the Far East.

**Economic and political consequences of hunting**

- There was greater output in meat production and people could access protein.
- Depletion of game were guns were used.
- Emergence of people who were specialised hunters.
- The use of guns meant increased violence. People turned the guns against their neighbours. For example, the Lunda chief Shinde. There was growing political insecurity.
- People who acquired guns increased their political power. For example, Kazembe, Chiti Mukulu and Kanongesha.

**Fishing**

Fishing was transformed from a seasonal to an all year round activity. There was change from individual to collective effort. New productive techniques of catching fish were introduced, along with artificial barriers in drainage depressions in flood plains and along small rivers and streams. Other methods of catching fish such as using traps increased the catch significantly. Fish would be caught in traps placed in gates along dams of earth and grass sods up to several

kilometers long. Different types of techniques would be used depending on the season. Surplus increased beyond subsistence.

**Iron working**

Widespread and superior knowledge in iron works, particularly among the Chokwe, Luchazi and Luvale, was acknowledged by foreign visitors in the 19th century. They write about a kind of steel manufacture from which was were produced a variety of arrow heads for different purposes, unique to Central Africa, steel for making fire with flints, iron rings, hoes, axes, ornamental axes, spears, large double-edged knives and a whole range of trusting weapons.

**Activity**

1. In what ways did cassava revolutionalise the pre-colonial economies of Central Africa?
2. How did the arrival of the Bantu in Central Africa transform the region's economy?
3. What are the factors that triggered economic innovations and productivity in pre-colonial Central Africa?

**Reflection**

To what extent did ecology influence the activities of people in pre-colonial Central Africa?

**Summary**

On the basis of oral traditions and other evidence left behind by early visitors to this part of Central Africa, we can safely say that in about the 17th and 18th centuries, a number of rather rapid innovations which allowed for considerable gains in productivity in specific sectors of the pre-colonial economies, in some cases building on a much broader mix of productive activities developed by the San/Khoisan or other aboriginal inhabitants of Central Africa and the early Bantu migrants, took place. People of this part of Central Africa exhibited a "continuous interest in innovation". The changes that occurred laid the foundation for exchange networks that characterized the area up to the time of the imposition of colonial rule.

UNIT 2
LAND TENURE AND LAND USE IN PRE-COLONIAL CENTRAL AFRICA

## Introduction

Land is the origin of property and a symbol of power and wealth in all societies. This was the case in pre-colonial Central Africa. Land has also often been at the centre of many conflicts and wars among men. In all societies, land was the basic means of survival either through simple exploitation of its nature resources or its use to produce man's subsistence requirements. In pre-colonial Central Africa it was the basic means of survival and was closely linked to ethnic identity and religious practices of every society. In this unit we will discuss how land was acquired and what rights regulated its use in pre-colonial Central Africa. The unit will first look at Land Tenure before looking at how one could access land and what rights individuals enjoyed over land in some selected pre-colonial societies.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain the land tenure system that existed in pre-colonial Central Africa.
2. discuss how land use and land tenure has under gone an evolutionary transformation from the simple to the complex in Central Africa.
3. describe some of the food production systems or systems of land usage that existed before the coming of colonial rule in Zambia.

## Pre-Colonial Land Tenure

The type of land tenure that was most prevalent in pre-colonial Central Africa is what scholars have characterized as communal land tenure. In this type of tenure, individuals in various communities had free access to what is now known as common property resources, especially land, forests, rivers, fisheries and wild life. These common property resources were vested in the traditional leaders known as chiefs and even kings and queens.

As long as an individual was an acceptable member of a community in a chiefdom, he was allowed to clear land for a field and for settlement. Such an individual however, did not own the

land, but enjoyed its usufruct. The same applied to the chief. He/she did not own the land either, but held it in trust for his people. The land was owned corporately by the community as a whole.

The perception of land and other natural resources as common property was buttressed in traditional values and what seemed to be a respect for nature, in as far as low population density and technology level did not cause major disruptions in the man environment relationship.

In terms of production, individuals as members of specific households, were free to cultivate the land that they had cleared, hunt, catch fish, extract timber for constructing their huts, harvest honey, trap rodents, graze their animals and gather wild fruits, mushrooms and other non-timber forest products. These activities were undertaken by individuals in order to meet the needs of subsistence or livelihoods and reproduce the groups.

During that time, it was assumed as Yudelman (1964) argues that nobody in the community was to be without land, and land did not naturally have a market value since these were pre-industrial societies. The abundance of virgin land and low population densities ensured that the land resources could be accessed by individuals without any or much restriction. Each household was responsible to meet its own needs of subsistence or livelihood, but weaker members of society, the infirm, widows, orphans and visitors benefited from the operation of social capital in terms of redistribution and sharing of food, and game meat, fish, beer and food between relatives.

With respect to gender relations over land, land was broadly communally held in most of pre-colonial Central Africa, and was allocated to male heads of the families, but women enjoyed usufruct rights over such land in their various capacities as wives, daughters or nieces. Women were not allocated land and did not inherit it in their own rights, especially in patrilineal systems such as Ngoni of Eastern Zambia, where land belongs to men directly, but were granted access to land through marriage.

In the matrilineal systems, women's rights to land were ensured. This was the case among the Bemba, Luvale, Lamba and Tonga in Zambia. Among the Lozi, a daughter was given land by her parents and her husband, but retained rights in land in her own village. The usufructuary rights in land which women held in most parts of pre-colonial Africa, could be exercised when they were single, during marriage, upon divorce or widowhood; and women could inherit land and pass it on to their children.

Married women whose husbands stayed in the wife's village (uxorilocal residence as per custom in the matrilineal groups), were able to acquire and own land over which their husbands had no rights or control. This land was obtained from their matrikin, although husbands could also give them plots of land.

Therefore, although men were considered as heads of household and played a dominant role in politics in most societies, "women had access to productive resources and were able to contribute effectively to the food self-sufficiency of their communities". It can be argued that although these pre-colonial societies were vulnerable to the vagaries of weather (since agriculture in the sub-tropics is rainfed), to locust invasion and inter ethnic conflicts, they nonetheless exhibited a semblance of resilience and (rural) people enjoyed relative food security at the level of subsistence.

It should be noted however, that pre-colonial society was not stagnant. Land tenure and social relations were not static but dynamic. While communal land tenure was probably the original mode of how individuals and communities related to land and other natural resources, it underwent gradual modifications with the passage of time, and especially with increase in population and changes in technology (such as the role of iron implements), changes in land usage and political relations.

Thus, it may be argued that in some societies in Central Africa, land use and land tenure has under gone an evolutionary transformation from the simple to the complex. This transformation involves the emergence of different land use systems from shifting cultivation to semi-permanent and even permanent forms of cultivation, involving crop rotation, use of cattle and green manure, flood plain cultivation and the incorporation of root crops that facilitated continuous cultivation and permanent settlements.

With respect to tenure, communal tenure in some parts of Africa evolved to include lineage and more complex semi-feudal to feudal systems, where there was more tight control of land by members of a particular lineage and by ruling groups. In these systems, certain people were excluded from easily accessing land and other resources on the basis of communal relations as was the case originally. This state of affairs was applicable to some extent in Barotse land among the Lozi people, where land lords emerged and controlled access to some resources. Also, most

of the land and cattle were controlled by the chiefly classes and land lords and some prolific fishing cites, turtle lakes and grazing land were reserved for the king who was considered the owner of land.

These internal changes interfaced with externally introduced influences with the imposition of colonial rule, leading to the emergence of market driven economic relations involving individualization of land tenure in some African societies.

Despite these gradual transformations which created complex agrarian social structures, the original communal set up did not completely disappear. It was resilient and remained the most prevalent system of accessing land and other natural resources for ensuring livelihoods and food security in most parts of pre-colonial Central Africa.

**Pre-Colonial Food Production Systems or Land Usage**

An attempt will now be made to describe some of the food production systems or systems of land usage that existed before the coming of colonial rule in Zambia. These systems were documented by colonial scholars (especially anthropologists) who wanted to understand the workings of pre-colonial African systems. Although the documentation naturally took place during the colonial period, the major elements of the systems were remnants of pre-colonial systems and we can cautiously argue that these descriptions can give us a glimpse of what existed before the imposition of colonial rule.

**The Bemba System of Food Production**

The Bemba people reside in the Northern Province of Zambia where rainfall which exceeds 1,000mm per annum has contributed to the evolution of leached sandvelt soils. Within this high rainfall agro-ecological region, the Bemba developed a system of shifting cultivation know as *citemene*.

In this system, men climbed trees in order to lop the branches that were pulled by women to create a circle that was burnt before sowing crops into the intermixed ash that was rich in potash.

At the micro level, the Bemba were able to identify different soil types such as-sandy soil-this white sandy soil was common on the plateau and was used for growing millet, sorghum,

legumes, groundnuts, cassava and sweat potatoes; red soil-this was a rich red clay loam, which was considered as "the soil for food" and was sown with sorghum; black soil-this soil was found near river banks around large flood plains, swamps and small dambos-this soil was good for cultivation and was not easily exhausted. It was sown with six varieties of maize, the red variety of rice, seven varieties of beans and cucurbits, cassava, sweat potatoes, groundnuts, fruit trees and sugar cane. Then there was refuse soil or umufundo, found on deserted villages. This soil was very fertile. It was sown with maize and cucurbits. These were known as Mputa gardens.

Although the Bemba are reknown for practicing citemene, Richards found out that they were able to practice what she called "sequences" or the beginnings of crop rotation. These rotations were practiced on the very rich red loamy soil on communal land. For instance around Malole Mission, the people were found to be practicing a 10 year rotation including finger millet, sorghum, groundnuts, cucurbits, peas and beans. Other rotations were based on cassava and sweat potatoes with millet.

Similarly, Trapnell (1953) reported that the indigenous food production system which existed among the Bemba involved the practice of sequences which included the following:

- the millet-groundnuts-beans sequence, with the legumes sown on mounds.
- the millet-beans or double millet-groundnuts and beans sequence.
- inter planted sorghum and millet in the first year; then sorghum for two years and then beans (Trapnell, 1953, p.46).

Although the Bemba system of food production was vulnerable due to the fact that it was dependent on rains and also suffered from other environmental shocks such as the locust invation in 1933-34, which destroyed many gardens leading to empty granaries, Richards (1939) made observations about Bemba diet that seem to emphasize the resilience of the system at that time.

She stated that "their environment provides them with a variety of foods-cereal, roots, pulses, green vegetables, fruit, honey, meat, fish and salt ---". She went on further to emphasize that as a staple food, finger millet has had a high nutritive value compared to other cereals since it is superior in minerals like iron, calcium and phosphorous. It was also superior to cassava in protein, fat and mineral salts, although it is inferior to maize in protein and fat.

Richards also observed that the Bemba diet consisted of other valuable food stuffs that included pulses, groundnuts, ground beans and cow-peas. These were a valuable source of vegetable protein and fat. Groundnuts were particularly rich in fat and this added to their importance in a diet in which fats of all kinds were very deficient.

She further observed that animal protein was rare but it was obtained from game meat, fish and caterpillars, while green leaves (either cultivated or wild), which form the main source of vitamin C, were obtained for six or seven months from April to September. Fruits, gourds and mushrooms were also eaten as subsidiary foods, especially during the hunger months, and sweat potatoes were eaten in most seasons except during the rainy months.

These observations would seem to suggest that although the Bemba, like other, ethnic groups in Zambia depended on simple cereal based diets, the nutritive value of such diets was ensured largely by the amount of subsidiary pulses grown in addition to the main cereal crops. This, relative food security at the household and community levels, was ensured through the broadening of the food base that included the cultivation of cereals, root crops, pulses and cucurbits.

**Food Production or Land Usage among the Tonga**

The Tonga people were originally shifting cultivators who practiced subsistence agriculture combined which cattle raising, before the coming of colonial rule. The major crop that they cultivated was local maize. This was done on the fertile plateau soils. It was also possible for the Tonga to keep cattle because the plateau was free from the tsetse fly. Other subsidiary gardens were prepared for sorghum and pulses.

Tonga custom allowed individuals to acquire land for cultivation in a number of ways. Firstly, an individual acquired land by clearing virgin or regenerated and unclaimed land. Secondly, land was obtained by transference of rights from one individual to another, temporarily or permanently. Thirdly, land was acquired by inheritance and by taking into cultivation his own vacated hut sites and their surroundings.

The “waste lands” of the community formed a common pool from which any member of the chisi or community was entitled to help himself as he liked, and was made available for grazing cattle as part of common property resources.

Although the Tonga were originally shifting cultivators, it would seem that there were gradual changes in land usage. The use of cattle manure could have facilitated some families to work the same land for several decades with fallow periods. Earlier on Trapnell and Clothier (1937) had indicated that the Tonga had “developed a more elaborate and stable system ---”of cultivation in the southern plateau woodland. Maize and sorghum were the major cereals which were grown in greater proportions. Sweaty potatoes were planted separately in beds. Each cultivator extended his garden into the bush every year by growing groundnuts, ground beans, pumpkins and finger millet.

It was further stressed that in the Tonga village garden, a system of crop rotation was practiced. In this system, maize, finger millet, sorghum and bulrush millet, were rotated with groundnuts (and other legumes that were nitrogen fixing), creating a situation where “cultivation is thus more or less continuous”.

With respect to land rights, it would seem that once land was obtained in the way stated above, individuals enjoyed a degree of security since there was no interference in the holding. As a matrilineal (but patrilocal) society, Tonga women could own rights in property, both in land and in livestock, especially cattle. It was customary for each wife in a household to cultivate a separate garden, especially part of the extension to the garden in which she planted groundnuts, ground beans and occasionally local maize. A grown, but unmarried woman could be given a garden at either her mother’s or her father’s home, and these women had the same rights in the gardens as men. Often old or widowed women would return to their brothers and cultivate land. When a single woman, neither widowed, nor divorced, got lands at one of her parents’ villages, the gardens and all the crops were hers. In addition, a woman could get cattle from the marriage of her daughters, or as a gift from the head of a relative when redistribution of the estate took place.

Thus, the cultivation of local maize and other cereals, plus pulses, groundnuts, cucurbits, and sweat potatoes; and the rearing of cattle that provided meat and milk to the diet, seem to have

combined (with secure land rights for both men and women), to ensure relative food security for Tonga society, and therefore resilience of rural Tonga communities at a subsistence level, before the advent of colonial rule.

**Food Production and Systems of Land Usage among the Lozi**

The historical experience of the Lozi speaking peoples of Barotse land, now Western Province, shows that the highly complex micro-ecological conditions on the flood plain and upland, facilitated the evolution of perhaps the most complex and intense cultivation systems in pre-colonial Zambia. In the system, no less than eight different gardens were prepared. These included the following:

- Margin gardens (litongo)-These were dry margin gardens on sandy ridges within the flood plain. They were sub classified as moist, dry and plains litongo. The moist litongo for instance were extremely fertile humus rich soils which were kept irrigated by perenial drainage along seepage lines. These soils were heavily cropped with maize, cassava, fruit trees (like paw paw and pineapples), sugar came, tabacco and vegetables. The soils were cultivated in perpetuity and fertility was restored through deposition of silt during flooding and through cattle manuring.
- Clay-gardens (sitapa)-These were also moist and were developed on clay soils. They were planted with sweat sorghum and local maize (with early and late maturing varieties).
- Drainage Gardens (sishanjo)-These were labour intensive gardens which involved the cultivation of seepage peats found along the dambo margins. The gardens were made by excavating a lattice work or network of deep drainage canals which linked up with main water courses and man made canals. The grasses which were cleared and burnt facilitated the growing of heavy crops of maize and sweat potatoes. The gardens were also cropped with millet, pulses and cucurbits. The shishanjo gardens were cropped for long periods.
- Mound Gardens (mazulu). Mazulu refers to gardens that were prepared on mounds/anti-hills that occasionally occur in the Barotse plain. These provided “the most prized gardens and the only practicable site for building. Since their number in relation to the population (was) strictly limited they (were) highly valued”. The mazulu were located in the ecological belt called Bulozi, where they rise above the flood plain and formed

islands during the flood. These were very fertile and scarce. Each cultivator had only about 0.101ha. to 0.202ha., and only a few households could build huts on these mounds. One theory is that these mounds were made as part of public works by slaves. Allocation of such mounds was tightly controlled by the ruling groups. Crop rotation was practiced as all the mounds were fertilized with staked cattle. Local maize, sorghum, cucurbits, pulses, cassava, sweat potatoes, yams, Livingstone potatoes, groundnuts, rice, vegetables, fruits and tobacco were all grown.

- Mukomena-These were subdivided into dry and moist mukomena. The dry mukomena were found throughout central Barotse land. They were raized beds that were used for root crops, especially sweet potatoes, cassava and Livingstone potato. The moist mukomena was prepared in the perennially moist humic sands. Two crops a year were obtained due to the continuous availability of moisture. Maize and sweat potatoes were alternated (Peters, 1960).
- Matema-These gardens were prepared on upland in cleared forest and thicket, with a greater emphasis on the cultivation of cassava. These systems of intensive cultivation that were practiced by the Lozi on the Zambezi flood plain and on the upland made it possible for the cultivators to grow a wide variety of crops on a permanent basis. This contributed to ensuring relative food security. To a great extent, the practice of these food production systems that facilitated continuous cultivation suggests that the food production systems were sustainable and resilient, as the communities enjoyed relative food security.

As indicated later, when David Livingstone visited the Barotse plain in 1853, he was quite impressed with the status of food security of the Lozi peoples. However, despite this, elements of vulnerability did always exist, especially those based on possible environmental shocks such as drought, excessive flooding, livestock epidemics, as well as the impacts of colonial policies.

With respect to land tenure among the Lozi peoples, it could be argued that all land was vested in the Lozi king. Since land was scarce in the kingdom, it was tightly controlled and was allocated through what White (1959) called a descending hierarchy of estates.

Gluckman (1969) stated that “ultimately, the Lozi consider that all the land, and its products, belong to the nation through the king”. However, citizens or subjects were entitled to a right to arable land and a right to use public lands for grazing and fishing in the commons.

On the other hand, Clarence-Smith (1979) seems to suggest that the land tenure system among the Lozi had evolved to resemble what can be characterised as semi-feudal property relations. He states that "arable land, cattle and the more valuable fishing sites were all privately owned by a small minority, in the sense that the minority had privileged rights of access to these resources and could exclude people from obtaining access to them".

In the case of women's rights in land, Peters (1960) indicated that an adult woman obtained land both from her father and from her husband. A woman who was given land by her father retained such rights in land even when she got married and went to settle at her husband's house. She was free to work the land given to her by her father if it was close and the produce from such land was hers absolutely.

In the event of divorce or being widowed, a woman could return to her village and claim either her old garden back or other land could be given to her in lieu of it.

If a widow stayed with her children at her former husband's village, she still had access to the land, but such land was not hers but for the children, granted to them by their father.

When a man marries, he was expected to give land to his wife. Both the man and the woman had equal rights to the produce from that land. Such produce was for the subsistence of the household. Where the marriage was ended by divorce or death, "the produce (was) divided in half, half (went) to each partner or to his or her heirs".

If a man polygamously married a second wife, he was expected to give her land equally with the first wife. A woman could petition for divorce if her husband did not give her land for a garden, and a man could divorce a woman by taking away her gardens.

When David Livingstone reached the Barotse plain in 1853 (south of Mongu and north of Namushakende), he made observations which show that agro-ecological conditions in the present day Western Province, were suitable and supported a wide variety of crops that included maize, millet, sorghum, cassava, sweat potatoes, beans, groundnuts, yams, melons and sugar cane.

He commented that "the soil is extremely fertile and the people are never in want of grain, for, by taking advantage of the moisture of the inundation, they can raise two crops a year---" (Livingstone, 1857, p.215).

Livingstone further commented that apart from cultivation of food crops, the local people (the Lozi), were able to catch fish from the Zambezi river and its lagoons, gather wild fruit and water fowl, and that this abundance of food or livelihood resources," always make the people refer to the Barotse as the land of plenty".

Livingstone also observed that the Zambezi Flood Plain was covered with coarse succulent grasses "which afford ample pasturage for large herds of cattle; these thrive wonderfully, and give milk copiously to their owners ---".

Apart from Barotse land, Livingstone also traveled north through the Luapula valley (on his way to Angola), and made observations on some aspects of ecologies of agricultural systems in the Luapula Valley the home of the Lunda People of Mwata Kazembe.

He indicated among other things that the land of the Lunda appeared very fertile, with many villages and gardens of cassava which was intercropped with beans or groundnuts. He observed that the villages continue to sow and reap all year round. The cereals included maize and millet, while root crops included yams and sweat potatoes. These people extended their generosity to Livingstone and his party, and he observed that "the people of the surrounding villages presented us with large quantities of food ---".

Livingstone did not only visit the Barotse Plain and Kazembe's country. During his expedition along the Zambezi in 1860, he observed that in Tonga country, the river banks were intensively cultivated. He stated that "every damp spot is covered with maize, pumpkins, water melons, tobacco, and hemp" (quoted in Scudder 1962, p.37).

Between 1885 and 1888, George Westbeach also traveled through Barotse land, and he indicated in his diary that at Sesheke, he found women pounding maize and kaffir corn or sorghum in order to make coarse meal (see Tabler, 1963, p.78). This goes to suggest and confirm what Livingstone had observed earlier, that the Lozi people of Barotse land cultivated both cereals as staple crops.

When Selous passed through the present day Southern Province in the 1890's and reached the place of chief Monze near Chisekesi (in present day Monze district), he remarked that "water is

extremely scarce", which suggests that even at that time the region experienced lower annual rainfall as it does in the contemporary times.

However, despite the scarcity of water, Selous found that Tonga people reared large herds of cattle on the "open treeless downs" covered with tall grass, and grew food crops which included maize, sweat potatoes and groundnuts.

Towards the close of the pre-colonial period, at the time when the Northern Province was being incorporated into North East Rhodesia in the 1890's, the Bemba peoples were found to be cultivating a wide variety of food stuffs. Gouldsbury (1911) who resided in Bemba country at the time of incorporation, stated that the indigenous people were found cultivating the following main varieties of crops; Male (Elusine Coracana)-a dwarf species of millet which was the staple; many varieties of sorghum (sorghum vulgare); millet (Pennisetum typhoideum); six varieties of maize; the red variety of rice (which was cultivated before the Arabs introduced the white seed); seven varieties of beans; pumpkins, melons and gourds; cassava; potatoes and groundnuts. Other crops included sugar cane, paw paw and bananas.

Angus, an explorer who had traveled through Ngoni land in the Eastern Province before 1898, observed that Ngoni villages were surrounded by "waving cornfields, which seemed unending "in their extent"; adding that "never before in any of my African wandering had I seen such an extent of land under cultivation---".

It can thus be deduced from the accounts of Livingstone, Selous and others that during the pre-colonial period in Zambia, the ecologies of agricultural systems were suitable for the cultivation of a variety of cereals, root crops, pulses, and others, and the raising of livestock that contributed to ensuring relative food security at the level of subsistence.

**Activity**

1. Describe the Land Tenure that existed in pre-colonial Central Africa.
2. Show how one could access land and what rights individuals enjoyed over land in some selected pre-colonial societies.
3. To what extent did Tonga women enjoy land rights?
4. Is it tenable to argue that the Lozi were food secure in pre-colonial times?

## Reflection

In what ways was the Bemba system of food production resilient?

## Summary

In this unit you learnt about the land tenure system and food production systems of different tribes in pre-colonial Central Africa.

UNIT 3
PRE-COLONIAL/PRE-CAPITALIST LABOUR SYSTEMS

## Introduction

Labour is one of the factors of production in any economic system. In this unit you will learn about the different labour systems that existed in pre-colonial Central Africa. Some of these systems no longer exist while some still exist though in a somewhat diluted form. Slavery no longer formally exists but tributary forms of labour still exist in one form or another in many parts of rural Central Africa. Traditional authorities still have recourse to this form of labour, though in varying degrees.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. describe the gender dimensions of pre-colonial labour.
2. discuss the different forms of labour in pre-colonial Central Africa.

## Gender Dimensions of Pre-colonial Labour

It is important for you to understand the gender dimensions of pre-colonial labour.

In agriculture there was a field of joint activities involving men, women, the elderly as well as children. However, there were certain activities which were exclusively male tasks. Depending on the norms of society, there were situations in which both men and women would be involved in the laborious process of hoeing up the soil and forming it into seed beds (ridges and mounds)

Generally, men performed the following tasks: They cut trees and cleared the bush before cultivation of the field or planting of the fields, among the Lozi, they also decided when to sow seeds. The men therefore were mainly engaged in the arduous task of opening new fields. They cleared riverside gardens and raised mounds on which to plant cassava, sweet potatoes, beans, and other crops. They built storage bins and drying platforms. Men's labour in agriculture was comparatively of a shorter duration but was the most difficult and mostly involved the opening up of virgin land. Elderly men who still had some energy would also participate in cultivation. Men also engaged in other livelihood activities economic outside agriculture. They provided

tools, through craft activities, proteins foods through hunting but depended on women for reproduction.

Women generally, cultivated the different village and riverside gardens, on their own or with the assistance of children but would at times also be helped by their husbands. Planting was mainly a woman's activity. It is also the women who were central to weeding, harvesting, processing the harvest and storage of food. Women were therefore mainly suppliers of starchy foods but also seasonal protein foods such as white ants, caterpillars and many more. Women also collected firewood, prepared meals and brew beer, with the exception of honey beer which was made by men because it did not require cooking and performed most of the household chores.

Most male activities were seasonal while women activities were typically connected with regular day to day reproduction. Preparation of food with all related activities or tasks, bearing and rearing of children, keeping the village tidy, gathering fruit, vegetables, mushrooms, insects, keeping small livestock, chickens and goats were exclusively tasks for women.

In other instances, women also did some fishing in ponds at the end of the fishing season, by scooping fish with baskets, (liyanga) or fished in ponds using poison or baskets. They also took part in making baskets, and other food carrying utensils, made mats and nearly all pottery products.

However, products made by men and women would be different. Rope baskets, bark rope and back cloth, were made by men. Women would among other items, made baskets for meal (ibango), while sleeping mats would generally be made by men. This was the case in Mwinilunga among the Ndembu and among Angolan Chokwe. However, they items were always made by women among the Luvale of Kabompo and Zambezi.

**Different Forms of Labour**

Pre-colonial labour was divided by age, sex or class within a household and between households. It was also divided between the young, adults and the elderly and between free and unfree labour. There were also differences in labour forms between forest and grassland dwellers.

**Family labour**

Family labour was the foremost system of labour in traditional Africa and was central to agricultural production. Kinship labour would also often be called in to supplement family labour for certain agricultural and non agricultural activities. The family or household unit was indispensable as a unit of agricultural labour. A family unit worked together in the fields on all normal agricultural activities. Family labour would usually be supplemented by young relatives or other dependants.

**Specialised labour**

Specialised skills were very restricted and exclusive. These could be in form of a solitary hunter in a village, a healer/herbalist or a black smith. Entry into this exclusive "guild" was through an elaborate system of initiation. Only those selected juniors could gain access to what was an exclusive circle of adepts. Specialised labour conferred a higher social status, next to headmanship. Iron work, specialised wood craft (for the manufacture of products such as royal drums, royal stools, and other types of royal paraphernalia, masks and canoes) required specialist skills. Most of these activities were an exclusive preserve of men, except for a few, such as pottery and salt making.

**Communal Labour**

The family, as a unit of labour featured less prominently. Production was organised around the community. Work teams were formed on the basis one's belonging to a neighbourhood, matrilineal or patrilineal segment, village or chiefdom. Group cooperation was a matter of convenience designed to speed up work in some activities or was a technical necessity.

While a technical necessity in some branches of production, team work was socially determined in others. In collecting Nyika (water lily bulbs), groups of women would descend on the marshes to collect Nyika between September and December or parties of men would descend on the marshes in canoes for a similar activity.

Collecting Mushroom, hunting and fishing, required collective group labour. In this case need for communal labour was a technical necessity. In fishing, some techniques required group cooperation, whereas others did not. Mono fishing was an individual activity but fishing with a

spear required two people. One man steered the canoe the other, speared the fish. Angling was a one man activity while catching fish in a pool at the height of the dry season was communal. Men, women and children from many villages would be involved.

Similarly, hunting required both group cooperation and individual work. (1); every male, including boys took part. Group coordination was a technical necessity. In hunting, leaders would set fire while other members of the group would kill the animals. There was a hierarchical ordering of technical activities. Big game hunting was usually the work of small specialised groups of hunters.

Cloth manufacture required larger group cooperation to speed up work. Every potential worker, man, woman and child took part in the removal of seed from cotton. This was tedious labour. However, spinning and weaving, which was predominantly a male dominated activity, was carried out by smaller groups of two men generally.

Salt making was predominantly, a female enterprise. Salt obtained from grasses would be processed by an individual within a village. However, mining of ground salt was a communal activity. Women from one or more villages, together with their husbands, would mine the salt. Husbands collected wood for burning the salt laden earth and built the temporary hut (msasa) in which lived women and constructed a roofless compound in which the distilling took place. The women were responsible for distilling (kutcheza), which was complex process. Those involved abstained from any sexual intercourse. Normally women past bearing age would be predominant. Iron smithing was a preserve of men. They dug up the ore and collected Masuku wood for making charcoal. The earth-laden ore and charcoal would then be handed over to the smelter. The latter supervised the smelting process. This work was conducted in the bush surrounded by much secrecy and religious rituals. Participants had to abstain from sexual intercourse. A black smith's labour was an individual activity, carried out under a thatched roof on wooden poles.

Ukutumya, was yet another form of communal labour, performed in exchange for beer or food on behalf of members of the community. Groups of men or women would be organized for a day's work such as tree cutting, hoeing, or women would gather to pile branches or help in reaping a millet crop. All able-bodied men and women in a village would congregate for such an outing. These were agreeable parties of relatives and friends and were a way of dealing with

difficult labour tasks or work that needed to be done quickly. Such labour would last for a few hours say, four. Notice (ukulalike nkonko) was given in advance.

Communal labour was variously known as Makolo (Among the Lozi), Butanga, umulasa and many more.

**Child labour**

Like unfree labour, child labour was subordinated to that of adult men and women. Even though in some societies such as among the Mang'anja, children could have their own fields, they had no control over the produce of those fields. Juniors were subordinated to adults but learnt skills in the process of accompanying men on hunts or other economic activities. Girls always accompanied their mothers in their day to day social and economic activities and engaged in labour activities reserved for the latter. At times child labour could be mobilized to perform specific task as a group in exchange for food. This was common among the Shona. Child labour would for example be given meat.

**Tribute labour**

Umulasa, Lifunga, Mutulo, Buzike, Liketiso- (royal labour service that was provided by adults and children) was provided by people living in a chiefdom. All chiefs levied this form of labour. It was employed in the chief's gardens, on public works but would also perform specialized tasks on behalf of traditional rulers and other royal officials. Among the Bemba, Mulasa would be for three or four weeks each year.

Tribute labour was however, an extremely important source of labour among the Lozi. It was paid by all conquered peoples. Large numbers of men and women would be captured and taken back to Bulozi.

- Tribute labour was also obtained through a labour recruitment system known as maketiso. Under this system subject peoples were compelled to send, at given intervals, large numbers of young men and women to Bulozi. This recruitment was effect5ed through Induna's who were sent to live among subject peoples.
- The Makolo System provided both fighting men and labour for works of public nature or royal nature in the Lozi Kingdom. It was an important institution and dates from the

earliest days of the Lozi state. Makolo labour was used in public works, in trade and military. All able-bodied men, women and children of the state, were involved. Makolo labour was organised as kinship labour and 'patronage' units, whose head was an induna/councillor based at the capital. Each Makolo unit was reserved a special site at the capital. All Makolo had names and a leader. The Makolo could be called by king for war, or to work on public works. Or could be called upon to perform different tasks at different intervals. Apart from occasional duties, each Likolo had particular and regular duties. This would for example, consist of a specialised task such as making salt, if that particular unit of Likolo lived in an area that had salt pans.

- Pawn labour: This was the labour that was provided by individuals who would offer themselves as security or the family would offer one of the members of members as a form of collateral in exchange normally for food, if in times of famine or against a debt yet to be paid. A pawned individual or individuals would be put to work for the creditor or the one who provided the food, fed or clothed the poor or starving or until the debt was paid. Pawnship was not slavery but if the pawn could not be redeemed, he or she would become a slave. In some instances this labour would be attached to a royal household and trained in certain crafts.

Pawnship was a common form of labour that was usually provided by the poor or those who suffered lack or found themselves compelled to contract a debt.

- Ukupula-Men and women would engage themselves and work for food. But normally, this form of labour was performed by women. This occurred at bust times of the year such as at harvest time. In return, the worker would receive food either as a share of the family dish or a basket of grain that has just been harvested. It involved distant kins or non kins. Generally those who engaged in Ukupula were considered inferior, looked at as beggars. This type of labour was mostly common during times of hunger or famine.

**Slave and other unfree labour**

Slave or unfree labour was found in nearly all pre-colonial societies especially, centralized ones. The major ways through which slave labour was obtained was through; war (Bamabula), raiding and kidnapping, legal payments (bamusoka), compensation for irreparable damage or injury,

tribute payments, (which was common all over Africa) and pawning. Slavery among the Bemba was not an important source of labour

Slave labour was mostly needed in agriculture, trade and industry. But some slaves would be employed in administration of the state, others in military service, in domestic service, animal rearing, hunting, and fishing as well as in meeting personal needs of individuals.

It was therefore common to have slaves as porters, agents of the state or as merchants. They would conduct trade on behalf of their master. They worked in royal or state farms. The Akapolo also worked as skilled crafts men, worked on.

Among the Mang'anja of present day Malawi, slaves (akapolo) worked on farms. Here, slavery was not a social institution as was the case among the Lozi and slaves themselves did not constitute a distinct social class of oppressed people. A few of the slaves were obtained through inter-village warfare (Uchifwamba) but most through abuse of the traditional legal system. These included murderers and other criminals. A husband could take a man caught in adultery as a Kapolo. Slaves were valued as producers and could be both male and female. They were employed in all sorts of occupations but mostly as agricultural labour. They did the more difficult labour of opening up Dimba fields. At times Akapolo would be owned by an entire community. They would be owned by the Mbumba (community).

And according to Wim Van Vinsbergen and Mainga, in the last quarter of the 19th century, the economy of the luyana/kololo state became largely dependent upon slave labour. Slave labour was controlled by chiefs or their appointees. The lozi carried out raids for slaves against the Ila (Mashululumbwe), the Tonga, Toka Leya, the Nkoya, Totela and other subject ethnic groups. Slaves provided a significant part of the labour in Bulozi and bore the heaviest state burden in form of labour. Lozi chiefs and aristocracy exacted onerous demands on the slave population. Slavery was so important among the Lozi that it became one of the divisive factors in their subject and was to attract the attention of the early colonial administrators in the area. It was officially banned through the Emancipation Proclamation of 1906, even though it persisted for much longer.

Over time however, slaves would be assimilated in the local kin groups and would acquire local clan names such as among the Ila, while the Chokwe and the Mang'anja practiced what has been

called, incorporative slavery, meaning that slaves were eventually incorporated into the existing society.

Slave labour was generally well treated. It enjoyed all the rights such as the right to be fed, clothed and housed and could marry and have children. In some instanced slaves could even have an independent income.

**Activity**

1. Describe the division of labour between men and women in pre-colonial Central Africa?
2. Describe the several of forms of labour in pre-colonial societies in Central Africa.
3. Critically analyse the argument that the Lozi were dependent on slave labour in the 19$^{th}$ century.

**Reflection**

Is it true that women in pre-colonial societies did more work than men?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that pre-colonial labour was organised in many different ways and used in many different activities. Labour was differentiated on the basis of gender, age and social status but was in all cases complementary. It was largely not specialised but there was also specialised forms of it.

UNIT 4
WOMEN CONTROL OVER LABOUR AND ITS PRODUCTS

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn how women had control over labour and its products. The myth that women's labour was always appropriated, exploited and over worked by men should be removed. To the contrary women enjoyed a degree of personal freedom over how they dispensed their labour and over produce. Women's labour was not always under the control of men. They could also make a claim over men's labour and whatever men produced.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. discuss women's bargaining power over labour and its products.

**Factors for their Bargaining Power**

- There was strong interdependence of male and female labour inputs especially with regard to agriculture. While men did labour services like clearing the fields and looked for tools such as axes women planted and harvested crops and prepared the food. Men alone could not have accomplished these without the support of women. This entails that women exercised some control.
- Joint ownership of land was very common not only in the upper Zambezi but in Central Africa. The gardens on which they worked were jointly owned. Wives were expected to dispense the products from such gardens. In contrast to married women, single women had their own gardens cleared for them by brothers as husbands did for their wives. Those brothers did not make claims on the products of their sisters' gardens. This meant that women were less dependent on men.
- In the $19^{th}$ century women participated in trade from their cassava growing. This allowed them economic independence.
- Women had monopoly over harvesting and processing of food. Men were dependent on women for food and could not do without them.
- Women had monopoly over transport in trade. While Men hunted ivory they required women to transport it. Thus women's bargaining power grew.

**Activity**

1. Describe factors for women bargaining power in pre-colonial Central Africa.

**Reflection**

To what extent did women enjoy a degree of personal freedom over how they dispensed their labour and produce in pre-colonial societies in Central Africa?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that women had control over labour and its products. They enjoyed a degree of personal freedom over how they dispensed their labour and over produce. Women's labour was not always under the control of men. They could also make a claim over men's labour and whatever men produced.

**UNIT 5**

## Religion and Natural Resource Management in Pre-Colonial Central Africa

### Introduction

In this unit you will learnt that there was a close relationship between religion and natural resource management in pre-colonial Central Africa. Traditional African religions played a critical role in natural resource conservation, management and exploitation.

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain the types of cults found in pre-colonial societies in Central Africa?
2. discuss how territorial cults played a critical role in natural resource management?
3. analyse the changing dynamics of territorial cults in Central Africa.

### Content

The fact that traditional African religions played a critical role in natural resource conservation, management and exploitation has now been acknowledged. Traditional religious practices were centred on worship, rites of initiation and the invocation of the powers of supreme beings. Supreme beings were considered sacred. These were the gods. The gods communicated their wills to humans through their agents (chief priests) as well as on how they could be atoned/propitiated when provoked.

Some parts of the environment were reserved as the abodes of the gods, while some animals, birds or trees would be considered as totems or protected by taboo. Protection of these abodes from entrance, utilisation and exploitation latently encouraged conservation and management of natural resources. These abodes could be ponds or other sources of water, forests, particular animals, birds and burial grounds. Some would be considered sacred, others evil or forbidden. These beliefs were very important in natural resource conservation, management and regulated how local natural resources could be exploited.

The gods protected individuals, community and society from any harm, hunger, epidemics, impotence, drought and war. However, this was the case for as long as the gods remained happy

through appeasement that came by observance of traditions and customs. This included man's relationship with nature and how he could benefit from its resources.

The process of ecological transformation of nature formed a major element in the religious system of all African societies that were still at subsistence level. All individual shrines were associated with human ecological activities such as hunting, honey-collecting, healing, iron-working, collecting firewood, house building and many more.

For example, all matters relating to land were regulated by spirits. Only the Ngoni had no elaborate or highly ritualised system of religion with regard to land. This was because they had no strong attachment to land. However, every other society's land was closely attached to the spiritual life of society.

African societies relied on strict observance of environmental ethics which helped to regulate their interaction with the natural environment. African traditional beliefs and practices reflected environmental characteristic, features and symbols. These religious beliefs and practices were environment friendly. African tradition religions had inherent environmental resource conservation and management principles.

A set of codes of conduct and ethics guided activities of man in his society and were vigorously enforced. Every community members was charged with the task of enforcing environmental rules, codes and ethical behaviours. Everyone in society from children to adults was involved. The codes of environmental conduct and ethics were not only earnestly observed but provided a basis of many ritual obligations and an inward spirit of reverence. In most societies, cults or sacred groups would emerge to ensure that there was strict observance of societal rules and regulations.

African traditional religions were therefore generally favourable to the environment. They protected natural resources and ensured that these were exploited in a sustainable manner and were conserved for future generations. Through taboos and beliefs, every member of a community was expected or compelled to religiously obey injunctions intended to keep spirits appeased but in so doing also played their part in environmental conservation.

Plants, animals, rocks, water and other non-living things were considered part of nature. They were products of creation and therefore deserved the same respect as humans, who were also part of nature. Since man was simply a constituent part of the environment and god's creation, it was man's duty to protect the interests of other parts of god's creation. Rocks, trees, rivers forests animals were all looked at as manifestations of the power of the Supreme Being and were therefore strictly protected. Nature was considered a critical partner in the struggle for existence.

Certain animals, trees, fishing or hunting grounds therefore could not be tampered with anyhow. Female animals and the young would not be hunted to allow for continued reproductions and for the young to grow.

Trees and other creations of nature were preserved as sacred places. However, Africans did not attach much importance to trees, herds or other objects just for spiritual purposes but also because trees, herbs and plants in general were useful in enhancing human life. Trees leaves, bark, herbs, roots and grasses, provided medicine to human beings and also to domestic and wild animals. A rich natural environment was also seen as a sign of the god's presence.

Among the Tonga of Zimbabwe were the following:

Mupatupatu: Caused sparks when used. It was believed that its use could cause war. This protected both the tree species as well the individual. The tree had medicinal properties. It was used to cure stomach pains. Mukololo: This tree causes sparks when used as wood. It was believed that use of such a tree as firewood would cause lightening Mukolokoto: Believed that lions would come if used as firewood. Mukunku: Believed that all family members would die if used as firewood. It was used as medicine for stomach aches Muteme: If used, cows would not produce milk. This was a fruit bearing tree Mulilabafwa: It was a tree used for burial rituals.

Totem Animals: Munkombe: members belonging to this totem would not kill the buffalo Munsaka: could not kill an elephant Muleya: could not kill or eat goat meat Mudenda: were forbidden to kill the Zebra Muzumba: were forbidden to kill birds Mugunde: could not kill or eat sea food Mwiinde: forbidden to kill the Hyena Mundimba: forbidded to kill the Baboon Mupande: forbidded to kill animals in the Cat family (Lickel Ndebele and Progress Dube, „Indigenous Knowledge and Ecology: Tonga Totenism and Taboos as an environment management Policy", in Itai Muwati, Nhira Edgar Mberi, Emmanuel Chabata, and Mildred

Nkolola-Wakumelo (eds.), Resuscitating Zimbabwe's Endangered Languages: Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Tonga Language, History and Culture. Harare: Africa Institute for Culture, Peace, Dialogue and Tolerance. 2014). These could be considered to have been serious ways of conserving trees and certain animal species that were useful to society ion many different ways.

**Traditional Religions and Agriculture**

Agricultural practices were strictly regulated and rules on how to cultivate the land, when to plant and when to carry out the harvest, were mediated through spirit mediums. Rituals to ensure continued fertility of the soil, a bountiful harvest etc, were performed throughout the year. Fishing in some streams, rivers or ponds would not be allowed at certain times of the year and in some cases could only be done after a certain number of years while certain fishing methods would be considered taboo. Sources of water had to be cleaned and cleared and no one was allowed to clear vegetation or build near a source of water. Infringing existing rules and regulations it was believed, would annoy the „guardian spirits" and consequences could before the whole community or society.

Areas that were left untouched or species that were so preserved were significant in terms of biodiversity conservation and management. Natural resource use, management and conservation were products of people's spirituality, culture, practices, taboo systems and knowledge accumulation over centuries.

Nature was intimately and ultimately correlated to the spiritual world. Nature and culture were symbiotically related. Natural resource use was more than just to satisfy immediate needs but was part of elaborate conservation measures and a celebration of human life itself. Indigenous peoples utilized natural resources in systematic ways centered on strict observance of a rich tradition of norms, taboo systems and a myriad of practices that were grounded in the religio-cultural milieu.

Spirit mediums through which issues of the environment were mediated Household spirits, lineage cults and territorial cults, were the basis for a number of influential complexes of beliefs and rituals which existed and still exist in Central Africa over the environment and natural resources. They were as much concerned with the preservation and use of natural resources as industrial societies have become today. They allowed pre-colonial societies to interpret their

environment and regulated how they dealt with it. Cults provided Africans with a philosophy of the earth and constrained entire societies to accept it and be directed by it. The pre-colonial earth philosophies were articulated and applied through religion. Useful values over the environment were preserved through religious beliefs and practices.

**Types of Cults found in Central Africa**

**Lineage cults**: These were the basis of African religions. They were non elitist and participation in rituals was general.

**Local cults**: At village level. These were most common among the Tonga, Korekore, and Ila. They were non elitist and participation in rituals was general.

**State cults**: Were headed by elite and participation in rituals was limited to a small group. They were common among the Mambwe and Nyakyusa.

**Tribal cults**: These were headed byan elite. This was the case with the Mbona cult among the Manga'nja and Chikang'ombe among the Tumbuka both Central Southern and Northern Malawi, Kapembwa among the Lungu in Northern Zambia and the Dzivaguru cult of the Tavara across the North eastern boundary between Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

**Federative cults**: Among such type of cults, were the Mwari cult of Southern Zimbabwe and the Chisumphi cult of Central Malawi. These were headed by elite, though there was an element of populist participation in them.

**Some specific examples of cults and the environmental roles they played in Central Africa**

Concern over the environment was mediated through a number of religious institutions such as cults. Lineage cults were concerned among other matters with, holding of stock and land. There were also professional cults of hunters, fishermen, ironsmiths and others.

Then there were religious cults that operated on behalf of a whole community rather than a section of it. These were territorial cults. These were concerned with rituals over drought, floods, blight, pests and epidemic diseases that afflicted both man and his animals. In other words, territorial cults operated in respect of the wellbeing of the community; vis-à-vis its fields, livestock, fishing, hunting and general economic interests. However, apart from engaging in

ritual action, they also issued and enforced directives with regard to a community's use of its environment.

- Cults controlled fire. Fire was key in environmental control or in the ecological process. A fire created the environment. Fire was a means to opening new gardens or helped fertilize old ones. Low lying grasslands were burnt early in the dry season to provide a fresh grass crop for cattle. Fire was also used in certain systems of hunting or retrieving. Fire management was an art that was developed to perfection. In the hands of the untrained and irresponsible, it could cause irreversible damage to a community's resources. Therefore use of fire had to be subjected to stringent legislation and severe sanctions. Cults were involved in this. In Malawi, cults were always part of the jurisdiction that imposed limits on burning both with regard to the season in which burning was allowed and areas that could be burnt. The season opened with ceremonial burning of a hill by the priesthood of the Bunda shrine in the first week of September. No burning was allowed before that date. Large tracts of forest and bush land were thus protected from burning by means of ritual interdiction. Transgression could result in a drought and punishment could be severe.
- The Mbona cult in Malawi opposed certain agricultural rules initiated by the colonial government because they went against traditional religious practices and beliefs. It was also opposed to the introduction of some new crops and alienation of land in the interests of individual European planters. The cult could determine methods of cultivation, decided what to produce and could lay down regulations against the monopoly of certain essential resources. Cults would insist on crops to plant taking into account predicted rainfall or possible crop failure it imposed limits on fishing to be done by individuals on pools while cattle grazing was restricted to the drier areas in order to preserve wetland for gardening. These measures or injunctions did not only help preserve scarce resources but also protected the less prosperous against the increasing demands of wealthier cattle keepers.
- The cults also exercised a certain measure of control over population movements and the distribution of people over land. Immigrants would be accepted or not accepted. The Mbona cult was known to act in this way. Kapembwa among the Lungu also played a similar role by indicating what groups were welcome through their economic activities.

- Cults ensured that everyone moving into an area, acknowledged common duties in respect of the shared environment. Members of communities renewed this acknowledgement through periodic material contributions to the cult or when they participated in rituals.
- Cults enjoined on the population standardised forms of ecological behaviour and such injunctions were particularly stringent at times of crisis.
- Cults prescribed forms of behaviour which may have appeared not to have had anything to do with the environment, but which nevertheless had a profound effect on it. For example, there were injunctions against murder and incest. While these could be considered to have been intended to protect tribal customs and maintain social order, the standard threat or consequence for breaking such an injunction, was drought. On the other hand, when droughts occurred, they were usually attributed to instances of public immorality. The reasoning was that public immorality made spirits who were guardians of the land (Schoffeleers book title) angry. Using a symbolic language, incest and murder and general forms of anxiety, stood for irregularities in the social, order while drought, crop failures and pests, stood for irregularities in the ecological order. It was believed that serious abuses in a community led to ecological disaster which in turn was a threat to the community or that, management of nature depended on the correct management and control of society. This was the basis of ecological thinking in Central Africa in general.

**Dynamics of Territorial Cults in Central Africa in the 19th Century**

**Cults before State Formation**

Cults were not static institutions. They changed in terms of organisation and who controlled them. Change was inevitable in order to meet new challenges. Before the emergence of states in Central Africa, cults were limited in area coverage. They were more localised than regional and controlled by image figures who were also lineage heads. They exercised religious functions rather than political functions.

**Cults in State Formation**

With the creation of states, control of cults came to be in the hands of political figures. They transformed the political structures in which cults operated. In order to assert their political control, chiefs linked religious cults and politics. In this way they were able to maximise their political influence over the areas they controlled.

**State Cults and Invaders**

The invaders adopted ideas of the conquered in order to rule them. The conquerors and conquered created new cults. At times, the conquered used these cults to challenge the new comers or invaders for example, the Mwari cult of the Shona and imperial forces.

**Cults and the Atlantic Slave Trade**

The scope of the cult was broadened. They became principal instrument to counteract the impact of the effects of the Atlantic Slave Trade for example, the Lemba cult in the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC). The cult employed judges who mitigated disputes arising from trade. The cult also employed healers whose main responsibility was cleanse and heal people. The integration of Central Africa into the world economy came with a lot of health problems such as smallpox and syphilis. It organised rituals through which such diseases arising from the international commerce could be treated.

**Imperial Conquest**

Territorial cults clashed with colonialism and Christianity. The missionaries demonised the religious basis of cults. In areas that became heavily colonised the influence of Christianity undermined the influence of territorial cults. In some areas some territorial cults embraced the new changes and symbols brought by Christianity. This was the case with the Mbona cult of Malawi who adopted the bible as an important symbol of healing. There was a tremendous transformation in the cosmology of the people. In many areas territorial cults appropriated Christian symbols and in this way they could make sense of Christianity.

Colonialism too provided another challenge; the very roots of territorial cults were shaken. It was a major threat in a number of ways:

- First of colonial authorities changed the role of African leaders. African traditional authorities assumed secular roles rather than religious functions. Chiefs began working as tax collectors for the colonial officials. This undermined the religious functions performed by the traditional leaders.
- Like missionaries, colonial authorities also questioned the rationality of territorial cults. They could not be used to explain the operation of ecology. The colonialist believed in the scientific operation of ecology. Traditional authorities in ancestral spirits as exercising control of ecology. Under colonial rule, some cults disappeared and their leaders arrested. Other traditional authorities adopted symbols of colonial power in their own cults in order to make sense of colonial encroachment. For example, some traditional leaders in North Western Province used the British flag as a symbol of power at their palaces.

**Activity**

1. Discuss how natural resource use, management and conservation were products of people's spirituality in pre-colonial Central Africa.
2. Show how the Atlantic Slave Trade broadened the scope of cults.
3. Analyse the changing dynamics of territorial cults with the advent of colonialism.

**Reflection**

Do you agree with the assertion that a rich natural environment was seen as a sign of the god's presence in pre-colonial societies in Central Africa?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that cults as community based institutions involved everyone/an entire population of a geographical area in a system of common obligation. A system of interlocking cults was thus able to cover an extensive geographical area to provide a basis for wide cooperation in environmental management and natural resource utilisation. Given the fact that they operated at different levels, they were critical in ensuring that every individual, child, adult and the elderly, complied with religious injunctions with regard to the natural environment and the use of available resources, including labour.

No agricultural season could start without seeking the permission and benevolence of ancestral spirits. No hunt, fishing, honey-collecting, firewood gathering, iron smithing or house building could take place without first, seeking the authority of guardians of the land. In other words, no labour could be expended productively without consent and guidance from the owners of the available resources, both animate as well as inanimate. Religion in pre-colonial Central Africa played therefore a critical role in ensuring that available resources were judiciously and carefully exploited for the benefit of all members of society.

UNIT 5
NATURAL CALAMITIES IN PRE-COLONIAL CENTRAL AFRICA AND COPING STRATEGIES

**Introduction**

For too long a time, historians have ignored the significance of natural calamities in shaping the history of people. In this unit you will learn the different calamities that affected people in Central Africa and how they coped with them.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain how culture and ecology determined diseases.
2. discuss the therapeutic methods of healing in pre-colonial societies in Central Africa.
3. discuss the causes of famine and coping strategies in pre-colonial Central Africa.

**Definition of Terms**

- Cosmology-refers to a body of ideas and practices related to diseases: meanings, causes and how to deal with them.
- Etiology-the explanations people give to disease and medicine.
- Ethnic heterogeneity-a situation in which people of different ethnic backgrounds come to live together and have similar disease ecology.
- Supernatural affliction-refers to those diseases which people say they are metaphysically induced. They are not caused by nature but by ancestors or witchcraft.

**Comprehending Disease in the pre-Atlantic Era**

Before the integration of Central Africa into the Western economic system like any part of the world, it was also prone to diseases. These diseases and calamities are difficult to reconstruct because of lack of written records. These diseases may be explained in the culture of the people as well as the ecology in which they lived.

**Ecology (Nature) as a Determinant of Diseases**

Some ecological systems favoured the breeding of certain diseases, for example those living in areas with tsetse fly were prone to sleeping sickness. Those in regions with poor soils became prone to malnutrition because of poor diet.

**Culture as a Determinant of Diseases**

Culture (what people believed in) also determined diseases. In Central Africa level of sanitation and knowledge of hygiene was low, for example, among the Lunda, who buried a man in a hut where the wife and children lived. Others urinated in their huts during the slave trade for fear of being captured if they went outside. In other cultures, it was taboo to cultivate when a chief died (for example one year ban) which led to food insecurity, hence malnutrition. Many people did not have clothes hence they were exposed to cold and suffered from influenza.

**Coping with Affliction**

In order to understand how people coped with affliction, we must understand people's cosmology. In pre-colonial Central Africa people perceived man in two different ways: man as a body and man as a soul. People tried to make sense out of this due to existing social relations just as they did with labour, that is, when there was a disease in your family, the causative agent would be within the family/ancestors. They did not see bacteria, virus, insects, and parasites as causative agents. People comprehended disease in the context of social relations. It was more than physical disorder but a metaphor for social disharmony.

To treat the body from diseases they got medicine which had a characteristic to the disease to beat it. The treatment was individually administered by a close relative or himself. No kinship was involved during the treatment.

The metaphysically induced diseases required kinship discourse to heal them. There was therapy management (kinship discourse) to find out which ancestor was annoyed. Hence they called a diviner to confirm the cause or the responsible ancestor or witch. The diviner decided which medicine and ritual was appropriate to heal the disease. The healing ritual ceremonies were not just for healing but also for normalising the relationship within the lineage because they believed the disease was due to misunderstanding in the family. It also enforced peace in the lineage. This is different from the western medicine which heals direct on the parasite.

## The Atlantic Slave Trade and Changing Conceptions of Disease and Healing

Under this section you will learn the changes that occurred in disease ecology and how people coped with diseases such as jiggers, smallpox, measles and leprosy which came about as a result of involvement in international trade. Traders such as the Ovimbundu who came into contact with Europeans brought these diseases. The coming of these diseases posed a challenge because people lacked immunity against them and had no medicine to treat them.

People reacted to the new situation in various ways:

- Intensified the importation of medicine from other social formations for example in North Western Zambia, the Lunda began depending on the Ovimbundu and Mawiko where they learnt a lot.
- People learnt new ideas of medicine for curing the diseases.
- With the increase in social mingling, the conception that the disease came from the family alone was questioned. They came to believe that diseases could also come from outside. This made people reformulate their disease cosmology.
- Treating diseases associated with foreigners could not be done based on social relations. This meant creating of new healing rituals-the most famous being the Kayongu Cult among the Luvale/Chokwe in North Western Zambia. This was a cult of professional healers and combated diseases such as TB. The treatment was done in a European fashion. Patients dressed in European clothes, ate European food, and danced to European songs. They tried to find ways of treating and coping with new diseases. African societies could adapt to new ways of life. Members of this cult were not related to each other as in others. It created room for greater understanding of issues across ethnic groups.

## Famine and Coping Strategies in Pre-colonial Central Africa

What is Famine?

Famine has been defined differently by different scholars. Some say it is severe hunger characterised by lack of food leading to malnutrition. Others say it is not just a critical shortage of food resulting in increased mortality. Famine has been a major problem in Central Africa. The

19th c, according to Siamwiza, was a period of many droughts in Central Africa, leading to famine.

**Causes of Famine**

- Some were man-made for example intense raiding by foreigners. A society suffered because it could not manage to undertake the cultivation of food during such periods. According to Siamwiza, the arrival of the Ngoni in Central Africa precipitated famine like in Bemba land. As they attacked the Bemba, the Ngoni also destroyed crops, leading to mass starvation.
- Others were caused by nature, for example, drought. Siamwiza argues that, between 1825-1836, the whole of Central Africa witnessed a series of droughts. People perished according to missionary travellers who found human skeletons along the way.

**Survival Strategies during Famine**

Survival strategies which were employed were short and long term.

**A. Short Term Survival Strategies**

- Hunting and Gathering: this was very crucial in coping with an on-going famine. Even during times of plenty people hunted and gathered, but this was intensified during a famine. Scholars say each ethnic group became more knowledgeable about wild fruits. Siamwiza states that the Lamba had knowledge of 27 famine fruits and 12 roots on which people survived during a famine. The Tonga on the other hand, possessed 30 famine fruits and roots which they collected during periods of famine. Some of them required a lot of labour to prepare for example searching and long hours of boiling. It is said others added ash to roots to make them less toxic. David Livingstone found hunger-stricken people eating the core of young palm trees near Linyati area. Others were eating bulbs of water lillies. Hunting activities were also intensified for example using dogs, snares, communal hunts (Litunga). During the 19th c, people in CA. learnt to use guns to hunt big game.
- Patronage and Chiefly Institutions: chiefs would use their reserves to help the poor. The Chitimukulu had two royal granaries to help his subjects during periods of famine. The

popularity of a Bemba chief was measured by how much help one rendered to his people. This created stable kingships. The Litunga did the same.

- "Big Men and Big Women": the rich in society, and those who had a lot of food welded a lot of influence because they could employ people to work for them in exchange for food, some people pawned themselves to this rich class until the famine ended. In times where relatives of the "slaves of hunger" failed to pay, these could be sold to Arabs or Portuguese traders.
- Raiding: for example, the Bemba raided the Lungu and Mambwe for food. The Tonga, especially those on the plateau also raided neighbouring groups, so did the Ndebele whose survival as a society depended on this activity.

**B. Long Term Strategies**

These involved adaptation and careful use of the ecosystem to exploit it to the fullest.

- Settlement: some groups of people could settle in areas that were favourable for example along rivers and dambos which retained moisture and hence could produce crops even when there was a drought. Such places were preferred because during the rain season, these areas would flood and upon water receding, let silt (alluvial) needed to support agriculture.
- Crop culture: an elaborate crop culture also developed. It meant developing your understanding of knowledge of cultivation and soil. Before that people preferred to grow sorghum because of its quick ripening until cassava was introduced. After discovering of cassava's merits, people (North Western Zambia and Luapula regions) stopped depending on cereals.
- Migrations: from a drought-prone to areas of plenty. Siamwiza says that the Tonga crossed the Zambezi into Zimbabwe if that area had more food than in the valley. Later, they would return home.
- Hiding food from invaders: local people developed elaborate ways of hiding grain. People could dig pits, put big fires and after the hole had cooled off, would put food inside and burry it. Cassava growing groups could remove stems and live tubers in the soil. In this way, invaders could not destroy the food.

## The Changing Face of Famine in Central Africa 1890-1900

The face of famine is not static. Earlier in the 19th century famine was caused by ecological causes like drought and human activities like war. However, towards the end of the century other causes emerged. These included:

**Locusts-**Towards the end of the 19th century, Central Africa was hit by locusts. Lake Rukwa was the breeding ground. The locusts affected and devastated Bemba land, Copperbelt and Bulozi leading to famine.

**Smallpox and Rinderpest-**Locusts were accompanied by smallpox and rinderpest. Smallpox was spread by caravan traders. The Swaka people were mostly affected by the disease. The disease affected food production. The rinderpest epidemic ravaged cattle, goats and other livestock animals. It originated from Ethiopia and affected most parts of Malawi and the northern region of Zambia. The Tonga and Ila were also affected. The killing of livestock reduced protein supply.

**European factor-**The coming of Europeans in Central Africa transformed African socio-economic activities. The Europeans defeated powerful chiefs like Chitimukulu and Lobengula and stopped raiding others for food. This led to food insecurity in these societies.

### New Ways of Survival

- Communities hit by famine could seek assistance from European missionaries and administrators.
- People began to participate in wage employment. The German army officer called Wisemann employed as many as 500 Africans.
- Trade was another means of survival. Mission stations became centres were people could sell their grain.
- Continuity in traditional means of survival, for example hunting and gathering.

### Activity

1. Discuss the different therapeutic methods used to treat diseases in pre-colonial societies.
2. Critically analyse the causes and coping strategies of famine in Central Africa.

3. In what ways did the Atlantic Slave Trade change the disease ecology in Central Africa? How did people cope with the new disease burden?

**Reflection**

In what ways were African healing strategies effective in dealing with new diseases imported by Europeans?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt the changing dynamics of diseases and famine in pre-colonial societies. You have also learnt how Africans coped with disease and famine burden.

UNIT 6
THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA IN CENTRAL AFRICA: 20th CENTURY COLONISATION
**Introduction**

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain the reasons for European penetration of Central Africa.

**Imperial Penetration of Central Africa**

This arose due to three main reasons:

**Global expansion of major world powers-beyond their national confines**

Following the Industrial Revolution, Europe underwent profound economic transition from pre-capitalist to capitalist mode of production. It marked the beginning of mass production of goods and services. It was led by Britain where the Industrial Revolution started from. By the 2nd half of the 19th c, France and Germany followed suit. The emergency of these industrial powers brought problems: demand for markets became bigger and bigger because of over production. To protect domestic markets, these three powers embarked upon protectionist barriers. There was growing competition for markets outside Europe and raw materials too. The quest for the control of these markets and raw materials created the need for the establishment of colonies. It was in this context that global expansion began. Central Africa was affected due to this scramble or partition of Africa.

**A product of South African Mineral Revolution**

In 1867 diamond was discovered at Kimberley and later in 1886 gold was found at Witwatersrand. These discoveries were to have profound great consequences for South Africa and the whole sub-region. It brought a massive investment in mining, roads, railways and secondary industries in South Africa. All these required labour which could not be obtained from South Africa alone. The owners of the means of production began to look north to meet demand. As early as 1880, Lozi trekked to the mines. A direct link was established even before formal colonisation began. The presence of minerals gave birth of a dream that minerals could also be found in Central Africa and could be exploited if the region came under colonial control.

Accounts left by early travellers and missionaries such as Livingstone made capitalist think of a "Second Rand". Rhodes came to personify this dream. As a young man, Rhodes came to Cape Town due to ill health (need for warmer climate). He did more than recover health-wise, because he reaped a fabulous fortune through his mining company De Beers. He also used his wealth to become Premiere of Cape Town. Using his economic and political influence, Rhodes promoted the settlement of Europeans in Central Africa.

**European settlerdom in the region**

John Cecil Rhodes is credited for encouraging many Europeans to settle in the region. By 1880s Rhodes had began to look to Central Africa from Cape Town. In Southern Rhodesia, he found means to establish links with King Lobengula, regarded the most powerful monarch north of the Limpopo. In 1889 his agent Charles Rudd signed a treaty with Lobengula, called the Rudd Concession. The terms of the concession was that Lobengula would receive a sum of 2000 per annum, be given 1000 rifles in return for the settlement of Europeans and the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in Matebeleland. In 1890 the Pioneer Column arrived, marking the beginning of the penetration and settlement of Europeans in CA. It was led by F.C. Selous.

In Northern Rhodesia, similar tricks were employed by Rhodes and his BSAC to establish the settlement north of the Zambezi. Frank Elliot Lochner was sent to sign a treaty with Lewanika. In return for mineral rights granted to the BSAC, Lewanika was promised "everything under the sun".

**Activity**

1. Discuss reasons for European penetration of Central Africa.

**Reflection**

To what extent did the mineral revolution in South Africa lead to the colonisation of Central Africa?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that the Industrial and Mineral revolutions led to the colonisation of Central Africa. The incorporation of Northern Rhodesia by the British South Africa Company in 1891 was followed by company rule between 1894 and 1924. After this, up to 1964, the territory was controlled directly by the British Crown.

UNIT 7
LABOUR MOBILOISATION AND STRATEGIES IN EARLY COLONIAL ZAMBIA

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn that the high demand for African labour necessitated the implementation of coercive measures to make them work for European settlers. The imposition of colonial rule led to profound changes in labour utilisation and mobilisation.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain European perspectives to labour issues.
2. discuss the strategies used by colonial authorities to compel Africans to seek wage labour.

**European Perspective to Labour Issues**

In pre-colonial Central Africa labour was not a commodity. But in the capitalist economy labour became a commodity. Most of the capitalist ventures were based in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Northern Rhodesia was seen as a labour reservoir. The major problem confronting authorities was on how to channel this labour to South Africa. Colonial authorities therefore used a number of strategies that compelled Africans in Northern Rhodesia to seek wage labour.

**Strategies**

- Force-Europeans were not slow to resorting to force to make Africans leave their villages for the mines and farms. Brutality was used on those who refused to offer their labour. Others had their huts burnt down. Among the Lamba, Stephenson Chirupula was renowned for such barbaric measures. The use of force was counterproductive, however, because some people resorted to other strategies to beat the system for example running away from their villages. Thus, the colonial state resorted to more civil methods.
- Taxation-By 1903, monetary taxation was imposed on the local people to compel them to earn money to pay taxes. Therefore, it became imperative for them to look for employment. Initially, people could pay in kind, but this system was done away with as it became cumbersome. Thus, it was taxation which drove peasants to work in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and

South Africa. To ensure easy collection of taxes, colonial administrators amalgamated villages into larger units. By 1910 most Africans were meeting their tax obligations by means of labour migration.

- Incentives-In addition to taxation, more civilised ways of inducing peasants to work were employed. Labour recruiters began to give incentives such as blankets, good food, at labour rest camps. There was also the deliberate manipulation of wages to encourage people to work. For example, in Southern Rhodesia between 1896-1903 white-owned mines raised wages in order to attract more men to the mines. The average wage rose from 5shillings to 10 shillings per month respectively. By 1902 the lowest paid surface worker on the mines earned between 20 shillings to 35 shillings per month. These rising wages were sufficient in attracting young men to start work. Such methods worked well, but do not explain fully why Africans began emigrating in large numbers.
- Western goods-the coming of industrial capitalism encouraged people to acquire manufactured goods like guns, clothes, shoes, bicycles and sewing machines. Among the Tonga, these items were incorporated into their own thinking as lubono (wealth). Wage centres such as mines and farms were seen by migrant workers as places where wealth could be attained-banyina lubono (mother of wealth or property).
- Land alienation-in both Zimbabwe and Zambia land was reserved for white farmers. Africans were pushed into reserves were land was poor and inadequate. This forced young men to seek wage labour.
- Outlawing hunting-Africans were forbidden to hunt ivory and other animals for meat. This reduced Africans self sufficiency.

**Recruiting Agencies**

Throughout the region, colonial authorities created labour recruiting agencies. In Northern Rhodesia the BSAC rationalised and invigorated a corporation through the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau. It was given authority to recruit labour for the South African mines. Its agents went into the villages to recruit labour and soon the bureau discovered that recruiting labour was not easy. Africans had their priorities. In order to overcome this challenge, the bureau put up

incentives. For example, a free train ride to South Africa was offered to Africans. Free food and blankets were given to Africans as they arrived in South Africa.

Private agencies too were involved in recruiting labour in some cases. In Luapula Province, an agency run by R.W. Yule recruited up to 5,176 workers to go and work in Katanga by 1928. From the Western Province (formally Barotse land) about 50 percent of the able bodied men at any one time were recruited by an organization known as Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WENELA) that sent them to work on the Copperbelt, Zimbabwe and South Africa. By the end of colonial rule, Barotse land provided 6,000 migrant workers each year. In 1962 alone 16,000 migrants passed through Barotse land to South Africa, and 44% of all taxable males were absent by 1961.

**Activity**

1. Discuss the strategies used by colonial authorities to compel Africans to seek wage labour.
2. Describe Africans' reaction to colonial wage labour demands.

**Reflection**

How effective were the strategies used by colonial authorities to compel Africans to seek wage labour.

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that the high demand for African labour necessitated the implementation of coercive measures to make them work for European settlers. The imposition of colonial rule led to profound changes in labour utilisation and mobilisation.

UNIT 8
LAND ACQUISITION UNDER COLONIAL RULE

## Introduction

In this unit you will learn about land acquisition during colonial rule. You will learn that the imposition of colonial rule changed the value, acquisition and usage of land.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain European perceptions over land.
2. discuss the land tenure system during colonial rule.

## European Perceptions over Land

The coming of Europeans into Central Africa transformed the value of land in the region. The perceptions of land value changed completely from that which Africans attached to it. To Europeans, land was a commodity which could be bought and sold; it was given a market value and entailed ultimate control by the buyer. Due to these differences in perception over land, there was bound to be a clash between these two groups. As a result, the history of Central Africa from about 1880 is marred by the desire to control land/labour and conflicts that arose there from.

Among the earliest European political leaders in Northern Rhodesia was Robert Coryndon. He was a champion of European settlerdom. He was particularly interested in those people who had resources to buy land and engage in agricultural activities. This was aimed at avoiding the problem of "poor whites". By the end of the 20th c, the BSAC sold land to Europeans on an ad hoc basis.

## Stages of Land acquisition

1. Ad hoc basis: those who laid claim to land did not adhere to strict regulations regarding the acquisition laid down by the state. No precedence was followed by people wishing to buy land. However, over time, this changed drastically.

2. "Strict Occupation": by the end of the century, there was a laid down procedure for the acquisition of land in Central Africa. the first condition was "strict occupation". This was firstly a principle intended to avoid the problem of absentee landlords who usually bought land but left

it unoccupied; some left it for sale later when the value had soared. The condition was that whoever bought a piece of land was required to develop it within 5 years of purchase. They paid £10 per acre. By 1907 land along the line of rail in Northern Rhodesia had been split into 3 categories that is, for gardening near towns. This cost £1.6 pence per acre. The next type was mixed land, used for growing crops and keeping cattle. It cost 8 pence per acre. The last type was land for ranching, which was the least expensive costing 3 pence per acre. These measures were aimed at enticing many European settlers into Northern Rhodesia. After paying a third of the cost, one was given legal documentation as owner of the piece of land.

3. Permit of Occupation: once this buyer showed evidence that he could develop land within 5 years, he got the beneficial occupation document. This applied so much especially along the line of rail.

**Land Appropriation**

During company rule when copper mining was still marginal, the colonial state attempted to replicate Southern Rhodesia policy of encouraging European Settlement. Land was bought cheaply, especially in the Southern Province around Kalomo, Choma, and Mazabuka.

From 1903 onwards, white farmers from South Africa settled along the line of rail (from Livingston to the copper belt) especially in Tonga country which had fertile soil and was free from tsetse fly. The settlers grew hybrid maize and raised cattle, mostly for the Katanga market and later for the expanding urban market, especially the copper mines. Maize and beans were produced as rations for the African miners on the copper belt. By 1911, there were 159 white farm holdings in Northern Rhodesia.

To secure sufficient labour for the European farmers and the mines, hut taxes were universally imposed in 1911. The colonial state used hut tax as a means of compelling Africans to offer their services since labour demands by settler farmers and the mines competed with African needs to engage in their subsistence production in the rural areas. Africans could not pay tax in kind, and so they had to offer their labour in order to raise money with which to pay the taxes.

The BSAC also started the creation of native reserves (between 1924 and 1929), in order to set aside more land for further European settlement and also create pools of cheap African labour.

These reserves were established along the line of rail, especially in the Tonga country, in the Eastern Province around Chipata, (formally Fort Jameson), and in the Northern Province. A total of 19 reserves were created in the Eastern Province, 13 in the Northern Province and 16 along the line of rail. In these provinces, land was alienated and set aside for European use, while Africans were forced to relocate into the reserves.

**Labour Tenancy**

The BSAC encouraged Europeans to settle in areas without or with minimum African occupation to avoid conflicts. However, the settlers preferred areas where Africans were already settled because that was regarded as the most fertile tracts of land. They also preferred these areas because of the need to easily have access to cheap African labour, and not just fertility. This state of affairs was bound to create problems because African peasants frequently shifted their gardens, and cut trees in the process. Europeans took great exception to such. Additionally, Africans such as the Tonga had their own livestock which now lived on European-owned land. Europeans feared that African animals would spread diseases to their animals. Africans furthermore, could not come to terms with ultimate control of large tracts of land by one man. As early as 1907 Europeans began looking to the BSAC to intervene on their behalf. As a result, labour tenancy began. This practice was widespread in Nyasaland, known as Thangata.

**Example of Labour Tenancy**

In Kalomo, George Horton bought about 50,000 acres for crops and animals in 1908. Africans who lived on this land were made to work on his farm in return for "free rent". By 1912, Chief Sipatunyana was evicted. More Africans were evicted from the surrounding villages. The colonial state sided with the settlers.

**Impact**

The loss of land meant the loss of dignity. It also meant enormous encroachment on African customs for example they were evicted from areas where they had buried their ancestors. No compensation was paid for uprooting the local people. People were moved to reserves: characterised by lack of arable land, no water and infested by tsetse flies. As a result, conflicts overland emerged as populations of humans and animals increased.

**Activity**

1. Discuss how land acquisition and use changed during the colonial rule.
2. Analyse how changes in land acquisition and use affected Africans.

**Reflection**

In what ways did colonial rule affect the traditional land tenure system?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt about land acquisition during colonial rule. You have learnt that the imposition of colonial rule changed the value, acquisition and usage of land.

UNIT 9
VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE OF AFRICAN PRODUCTION SYSTEMS DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD: 1891 -1964

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn that the policies by the colonial state which triggered labour migration from the rural areas of Zambia created vulnerability of rural societies, as food production systems were negatively affected.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain reasons for the vulnerability of African production systems during the colonial period.
2. discuss the resilience of African production systems during the colonial period.

**Vulnerability of the Bemba Food Production System**

Among the Bemba in the Northern Province, where males were required to climb trees in order to lop off branches that were then heaped together by women and burnt to make fields that were sown with millet (the staple cereal), the absence of the males undermined the citemene system of food production. Up to 70% of the male tax payers were absent from their villages due to labour migration. The women who were left behind could not climb to lop the branches from the trees, and citemene agriculture together with the Bemba village economy suffered greatly.

Between 1939 and 1957, Richards found that "the diet of those left behind seemed to be worse… although clothing had improved and tea and sugar were in common use. A number of women without men to support them purchased food and drunkenness was more obvious in the villages. Food had begun to be bought and sold even in the rural areas".

The reserves that were set aside for the use by Africans experienced congestion and overcrowding by both humans and livestock. This overcrowding led to land degradation, especially soil erosion. The livelihoods of the Africans in the reserves were negatively affected as land degradation led to successively poor crops. In Mkushi, the creation of reserves reduced the land available to Africans by about 64 percent. In some reserves famine conditions obtained

as the food security situation deteriorated because of the failure of Africans to carry on with subsistence production practices based on the shifting cultivation mode of land use, given the limited amount of land allocated to them.

**Resilience and Adaptation of Tonga Society**

Although Tonga society was also negatively affected by labour migration, the food production system (and especially land tenure) exhibited an element of resilience in that the people adapted to the forces of modernization.

The introduction of commercial agriculture by European settler farmers (on crown land) and the adoption by Africans of such methods (hybrid maize and ox-drawn ploughs) triggered a radical transformation in the people's attitudes towards communal land in the reserves. Pressures toward individualization of land tenure became apparent.

North et al observed that powerful socio-economic forces became operative in the Southern Province among the Tonga farmers, who began to experience a "greater sense of personal ownership" of land.

Among the Tonga, permanent commercial agriculture had gained ground and shifting cultivation was on the way out. In Mazabuka, farmland cultivated by some Tonga farmers was being fenced with barbed wire implying personal or individual ownership of land. Even communal grazing land was being fenced.

Furthermore, a land market had also emerged. Land was being sold contrary to customary laws, although sometimes people would try to disguise the sale of land as only being a sale of 'improvements' on land. It was reported that many people in Mazabuka were openly admitting to and advocating the sale of both improvements and the land itself.

People were making permanent or immovable improvements on land such as fences and brick houses. Others were spending large sums of money on purchasing agricultural implements like tractors, ploughs, cultivators, and scotch carts. In addition, White observed that sons were inheriting farm through wills of their fathers instead of inheritance taking place matrilineally as per Tonga custom.

Allan et al were able to distinguish three categories of farmers that had emerged among the Tonga especially in Mazabuka District. Subsistence farmers were the majority who constituted 85% of the population; while small-holders (who cultivated land about twice as much as what they normally did under subsistence) were 14% and farmer families (who had large farms that were three times the size that they could cultivate under subsistence) were only 1%.

Adger (2000) contends that social resilience "is defined at the community level rather than being a phenomenon pertaining to individuals", and is therefore "related to the social capital of societies and communities"

From this point of view, it may be argued that many Tonga people depended on the role of social capital in adapting their food production system, from simple subsistence to semi-commercial and even commercial market oriented production. This was done by adopting new agricultural technologies such as hybrid maize, use of chemical fertilisers, and modern implements (especially ox- drawn ploughs). These had been introduced by White settler farmers, the Seventh Day Adventist missionaries and by interventions made by the colonial state in the Peasant Farming and African Improvement Farming Schemes. In this regard, Chipungu states that many poor individuals in the Tonga communities accessed these new technologies by borrowing ox-drawn ploughs and other agricultural implements from their richer relatives or kinsmen and even from neighbours. Allan et al also made similar remarks. They stated that "the relations between big growers and their fellows are good. The big men even help others, by allowing them to use wells which they have sunk and by loaning implements, and above all, they have close personal ties with many. They help their own relatives to some extent, and they are nearly all Seventh Day Adventists, members of a church which seems to have a deep sense of group loyalty".

Thus, social capital or social networks contributed to the agricultural transformation that Tonga society experienced with the penetration of colonial rule and the introduction of modern methods of agriculture. These transformations occurred despite the negative impacts of taxation, creation of native reserves and labour migration.

It should be underscored that agricultural transformation among the Tonga communities contributed to the generation of agricultural incomes and increased food security. The Tonga

were able to produce maize beyond basic subsistence requirements, and they even competed with European settler farmers for the maize market.

Individuals were thus able to purchase agricultural equipment, clothes, cattle, household goods, and build permanent houses, reflecting an improvement in their standard of living with the introduction of the modern money economy.

However, despite this resilience exhibited through adaptation to the force of modernization, the Tonga food production system seems to have neglected the cultivation of other cereals (like sorghum and millet) and dependent on hybrid maize. This dependency on one cereal that was less tolerant to drought was a built in aspect of vulnerability to future environmental changes or shocks.

Furthermore, the transformations in land tenure that were due to the development of commodity production, led to the vulnerability of women farmers due to the erosion of their land rights. While men devoted more arable land to the production of maize (and other cash crops like cotton and tobacco), women became more marginalized as they were allocated smaller portions of land for the cultivation of food and other subsidiary crops like groundnuts and sweet potatoes. In the native reserves the colonial administration allocated land increasingly to men rather than to women partly due to land pressure.

Although women continued to supply labour in the cultivation of the main fields that were controlled by their husbands for the production of cash crops, they had no control over the use of proceeds arising from the sale of such cash crops. These developments continued even after the attainment of political independence, and highlight the complex interplay between vulnerability and resilience of rural Tonga and Zambian society, to the agricultural policies and transformations that started in the colonial period with the introduction of the money economy.

**Vulnerability of the Lozi Food production System**

The labour intensive flood plain or wetlands food production systems of the Lozi became vulnerable to the impacts of colonial policies. Taxation and the abolition of tribute labour and slavery in 1906, meant that the labour that had previously been provided for the performance of

public works such as digging and maintenance of drainage canals that ensured the cultivation of sishanjo and other gardens was no longer available.

Migration caused a shortage of labour, and especially the shortage of cattle keepers. The combined impact of epidemics such as Contagious Bovine Pleuro-Pneumonia (CBPP); the collapse of drainage networks, with the consequent water logging of some of the most fertile soils on the plain, and excessive flooding, led to a situation where productivity of Lozi agriculture could not even provide adequate food for subsistence. The missionary Coillard who came later after David Livingstone, reported that people in Sefula were dying of hunger.

Thus, because of colonial policies as well as environmental shocks, Barotse land became a food deficit area, and began to import maize from other parts of Zambia by the time of independence in 1964. It was estimated that up to 80,000 bags of maize per annum had to be supplied to the province at independence.

Despite this apparent collapse of the Lozi food production system, the people continued to utilize the wetlands as well as the upland for the cultivation of sorghum, millet, sweet potatoes, rice and cassava at the subsistence level. The massive wetlands remain with great potential for agricultural development and livelihoods sustenance, due to availability of seepage zones with moisture throughout the year, cattle raising (if epidemics are controlled), fishing and timber production on upland.

**Activity**

1. Explain reasons that led to the vulnerability of the Bemba and Lozi production systems during colonial rule.
2. Discuss the tenacity of the Tonga production system during the colonial rule.

**Reflection**

Is tenable to argue that African production systems showed real resilience despite adverse colonial policies implemented against them?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt how colonial policies led to vulnerability of African production systems. You have also learnt that the Tonga people devised ways of coping and were able to compete with white settlers.

UNIT 10
ECOLOGY AND COLONIALISM: THE CASE OF EASTERN ZAMBIA

## Introduction

In this unit you will learn that colonial policies introduced by colonial authorities had a profound impact on ecology. The balance between ecology and man was broken. The new socio-economic policies which were introduced by the colonial authorities impacted on the balance between man and his environment. For example, the region between the Luangwa River and the Zambia/Malawi border was one of the most affected. BSAC policies of village arrangement, game legislation, land alienation, and taxation negatively affected the region between the Luangwa and the border. This imbalance created ecological catastrophes, epidemics, and diseases.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. describe the pre-colonial eastern Zambia's environment.
2. discuss how colonial policies impacted the balance between people and the environment in Eastern Province.

## Pre-Colonial Eastern Zambia

The Portuguese explorer Gamitto who visited the region in 1832 left accounts of what he experienced before Eastern Zambia was colonised. The region enjoyed enormous wealth primarily because the area was fertile, enabling groups such as the Chewa, Nsenga, Tumbuka, Kunda and others to practice agriculture. They traded extensively in tobacco and dried fish; it was free from beasts like lion and buffalo. A picture of peace, affluence and general good life emerges-which was shattered by the imposition of colonialism. By 1900, reports began to suggest that the area was increasingly experiencing poverty. What caused this? This is because the BSAC used force to subdue the region's Chewa and Ngoni. This political control imposed on Africans was a shaky affair as the company did not have enough resources to control the people. It had a skeletal administrative staff. Due to this, they had to find means and ways of reaching people and to tax them. Thus new policies were introduced which undermined the balance between man and environment.

**Colonial Socio-Economic Policies**

1. Village Amalgamation-The first policy regulated settlement patterns. The company began to realign settlements so as to form larger ones for easy administration due to limited staff and resources. This resulted into health problems. In the absence of modern sanitation, large villages became breeding grounds for the habitation of germs leading to diseases like diarrhoea. There was also rapid transmission of diseases in the large villages.

2. Game Legislation-From the 1890s onwards BSAC introduced laws to govern game. The hidden motive for this by the company was to restrict Africans from hunting elephant for ivory so that they could profit themselves. Therefore, they established game reserves for example the Bangweulu-Mweru and Luangwa Reserve (1902). They also insisted on gun licences. These two decisions had profound ecological effects. Restrictions on hunting meant wildlife began to multiply quickly for example elephant population shot up and so did other animals. These animals destroyed people's crops wantonly. Elephants and wild pigs invaded people's gardens destroying crops causing hunger. It also reduced people's access to protein because of restrictions to hunt game.

3. Land Alienation- Another colonial policy with serious implications was land alienation. The BSAC alienated land from Africans in order entice Europeans to settle. In 1895 the company alienated about 10,000 square miles to the North Charterland and Exploration Company in the belief that this would attract other settlers to come and engage in to farming and ranching. However, these Europeans did not arrive. Instead, the alienated land became huge bush-a breeding ground for tsetse fly, leading to increased cases of trypanosomiasis and sleeping sickness. The concession also became a natural haven for wildlife to uncontrollable proportions.

4. Taxation and Labour Migration-To administer the territory, BSAC imposed taxation on the people by 1900s: 10 shillings per annum. This drove many people away from their villages to look for employment down south to meet tax obligations. More and more young men left their villages, more than half left Chama and Fort Jameson. Only the old were left behind. This resulted in few trees being cut due to shortage of able-bodied men; bushes grew wild providing sanctuary to wildlife. The absence of young men meant new houses could not be built, people

lived in old infested huts (diseases, cockroaches, rodents). NOTE: this argument has been disputed in some circles, as the men absent provided money to help relatives home).

**Activity**

1. Discuss how colonial policies impacted the balance between people and the environment in Eastern Province?

**Reflection**

To what extent did the colonial policies impact the environment in Eastern Province?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that the new socio-economic policies which were introduced by the colonial authorities impacted on the balance between man and his environment. The balance between ecology and man was broken.

UNIT 11
EARLY SETTLER AGRICULTURE IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

In this unit you will learn about the constraints that white farmers faced. You will also learn about the reasons why white farmers succeeded in agriculture.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. discuss the constraints faced by early settler farmers in Northern Rhodesia.
2. examine the reasons for European successes in agriculture in Northern Rhodesia.

**Constraints of Settler Agriculture 1900-1925**

Undercapitalisation-They did not have enough capital. Who were these farmers? They may be categorised into two categories;

- Those with British origin who had settled in South Africa and participated in the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.
- The other group were Boers who too had participated in the Anglo-Boer War.

Common to both groups was that they had limited economic prospects and lacked agricultural experience.

Marketing-marketing their produce was a difficult exercise. The economy of Northern Rhodesia was limited to absorb their produce. Who were the limited buyers? They were the following:

- Colonial administration officials.
- The workers constructing the line of rail.
- The meat products were needed in Southern Rhodesia although animal diseases limited the capacity of these farmers.
- British white merchants like Elia Susman, H.C Werner and Sodore Kollorberg. These traders bought much of the crops and meat produced by the white farmers.

Diseases-these hampered white farming. Most farmers did not have farming experience and lacked a good understanding of crop and livestock diseases. It was difficult to import drugs and pesticides.

Transport-It was poorly developed in many parts preventing easy and quick delivery of farm produce.

Banking-Farmers could not access loans due to lack of a thriving banking system.

**Katanga Boom**

The problem of marketing was solved by the opening of mines in Katanga in DRC. As the markets opened in Katanga more and more Europeans came into Northern Rhodesia and by 1910 more land was alienated from Africans particularly on the Tonga plateau. More African too was appropriated into the colonial economy.

**European Agriculture 1925-1939**

**Market and the Copperbelt**

The year 1925 marks the beginning of large scale farming in Northern Rhodesia. Large scale mining created a huge market which triggered commercial agriculture. From 5000 miners in 1925 this number rose to about 30000 after 1930. Due to this, there was an influx of more commercial farmers and competition for African resources (land and labour) increased.

**Political Context**

In 1925 the company rule ended. A Legislative Council was created drawn of members from government departments. By 1930, European settlers were sending representatives. They were able to use their political domination to safe guard their interests. As the competition for land intensified white settlers began to use their influence to agitate for land legislation to create native reserves. Africans were not represented in the Legislative Council.

P.J Macdonald a high court judge headed a Commissioner on Native Reserves. He was guided by the following principles;

- African native reserves to be far away from the line of rail.
- Reserves were to be homogenous and not intermingle with European land.
- Reserves should be tribal in nature.
- The reserves were to be permanent and perpetual.

By 1928 these principles were put in action. Along the line of rail about three reserves were created and in Chipata.

**African Reaction**

African reactions to these reserves varied. Others opposed but were eventually over powered. While others accepted. Overall these reserves worked to the disadvantage of Africans. Overcrowding and soil erosion became rampant leading to socio-economic consequences like hunger.

**Activity**

1. Discuss the constraints faced by early white farmers in Northern Rhodesia.
2. Discuss reasons that led to white farmers to succeed in their agriculture venture after 1925.

**Reflection**

Do you agree that white farmers could not have succeeded without the help of the colonial government?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt about the constraints that white farmers faced. You have also learnt about the reasons why white farmers succeeded in their agriculture venture.

UNIT 12
THE STRUGGLE FOR PRODUCE MARKET AND MARKET CONTROLS IN NORTHERN RHODESIA

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn that the competition for market in Northern Rhodesia emerged between European and Africans as the two entities tried to capture the market. European sought a political solution rather than an economic one by putting pressure on the ruling class.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. discuss the colonial policies that were put in place to reserve markets for white farmers.

**Marketing between 1925-1931**

Realising that marketing was crucial Europeans created a cooperative society for the market of their produce as early as 1914. This was done for farmers to sell their produce at the same price. By 1925 the cooperative had not succeeded in creating this sale of crops at the same price. By 1927 onwards the weakness of the cooperative became evident. This period marked an increase in crop and livestock for both Africans and Europeans. In 1926 there was a maize yield of 60,000 bags which substantially rose to 300,000 bags in 1936.

This produce needed market but the market shrunk remarkably because of the depression in the early 1930s. Mines shut their operations and many employees were out of employment. Added to this was the loss of the Katanga market because of the increased production of food in DRC. The loss of the Katanga market spelt disaster for white farmers in Northern Rhodesia. This meant that they only relied on the local market where competition was stiff from African farmers. African adopted new farming technologies like the use of the ox-drawn plough. Consequently African production shot up tremendously. This competition was made worse by allowing Southern Rhodesia exports of cattle and maize into the colony. This caused a decline in prices.

**White Farmers reaction in Northern Rhodesia**

Stiff competition from Southern Rhodesia and from African farmers in the colony forced white farmers to react. They responded in the following ways:

- They strengthened the cooperative so that it could give them much needed market.
- They elected new leadership to head the cooperative. Tom King, a leading farmer in Mazabuka became a member and used his influence to persuade the governor to sign a 3 years contract with mining companies to sell 70,000 bags of maize annually.
- No African was allowed to be a member of the cooperative society to thwart completion.
- The cooperative recruited more members. By 1934 the cooperative was controlling 80% of the marketed produce.

With these measures a larger share of the market on the Copperbelt went to European farmers. But later some mining companies realised that it was cheaper to buy crop grown by Africans.

**Activity**

1. Discuss the colonial policies that were put in place to reserve markets for white farmers.
2. Analyse Africans reactions to these policies.

**Reflection**

In what ways did African farmers survive in their agriculture amidst unfavourable market policies?

**Summary**

Having read through this unit, you will realise that the competition for market can be understood in three periods: Between 1925-1931 when the creation of mines provided an elastic market on the Copperbelt and from 1932-1934 the period with no market which concided with the World Economic Depression. In the latter period the mines were shut throwing many Africans out of employment. In the third from 1935-1939 Europeans captured a large share of the market.

**UNIT 13**

## EXPANSION OF WHITE SETTLER AGRICULTURE IN NORTHERN RHODESIA, 1933-1953

### Introduction

In this unit you will learn the internal and external dynamics that led to expansion of settler agriculture in Northern Rhodesia after 1933.

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain reasons for slow development of settler agriculture.
2. discuss reasons for tremendous improvement of settler agriculture after 1933.

### Reasons for slow Development of Settler Agriculture

The development of white settler agriculture was slow and painful. Most of the farmers came as demobilised soldiers. They were heavily undercapitalised and did not have knowledge of animal diseases and crops. However, from 1933-1953 European agriculture experienced tremendous improvement. The colony became food secure and stopped importing food from outside. The improvements were triggered by external and internal dynamics.

### External Dynamics

The period between 1933-1953 was a period of recovery of the world economy especially in Europe. In Northern Rhodesia this recovery of the world economy meant that European farmers could easily access agricultural implements and inputs. In addition, British policies after the Second World War supported settler agriculture. Britain embarked on an economic recovery programme which was to boost the economic recovery of its colonies. It put more emphasis in resuscitating the colonies and colonial welfare. The British government put up a Development Fund in 1949 for Northern Rhodesia. Many white farmers had access to loans especially the line of rail. In this way many European farmers increased their livestock and cash crop agriculture.

### Internal Dynamics

The Second World War and Korean War contributed to white settler agriculture expansion in Northern Rhodesia. Copper was an essential element in the manufacture of ammunitions. Being an essential element the production of copper was given priority by both Britain and the colonial administration. The increase in the extraction of copper was to be attained through employing a huge African working force. The African labour force created an insatiable market in the Copperbelt. The colonial government passed legislation to stimulate white farmers. The Maize Control Act and Cattle Control Act of 1935 and 1936 were passed respectively. The Maize Control Act was meant to reserve one third of the external market to European farmers at the expense of African farmers especially those in Sothern Province who had become vibrant peasant farmers.

**Activity**

1. Discuss the internal and external dynamics that led to expansion and improvement of settler agriculture.

**Reflection**

To what extent did the internal dynamics lead to expansion of settler agriculture?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt the internal and external dynamics that led to expansion of settler agriculture in Northern Rhodesia after 1933.

UNIT 14
AFRICAN AND SETTLER AGRICULTURE IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE 1890-1930

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn that Africans unlike the white farmers prospered in agriculture in the initial years of colonial years. You will also learn that after 1908 measures were put in place by colonial authorities to improve settler agriculture.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain reasons that led to a revolution in African agriculture.
2. discuss the constraints white farmers faced in Zimbabwe in the initial years of colonial rule.

## African Agriculture

After 1890 African producers in Zimbabwe managed to overcome most of the constraints (transport, markets and living in reserves) that had affected them. While European agriculture had problems, African agriculture prospered. The Shona led the way in this prosperity of commodity production. There are a number of factors that led to the development of viable peasant agriculture. These included:

- The colonial rule-the breaking of Ndebele power by Europeans meant an end to the incorporation of Shona young men into the Ndebele impis. Young men now among the Shona could work on the land and cultivate.
- Market-the Shona found market for their produce among white settlers and mines. The demand for food enabled food producers to earn a relatively good income.
- Fertile Land-Until 1908 many Shona farmers were still living on the high veld land which was rich and within reach to the European markets.

These factors led to a revolution in African agriculture and by 1914 Africans posed a threat to European agriculture.

**White Settler Agriculture**

Many of the white settlers in Zimbabwe came with a dream of the second rand. Many therefore did not turn to agriculture believing that they could make quick money from mining. But the second rand was more of a dream than reality. By 1908 some whites who had come as miners began to look to agriculture. However, they faced a number of obstacles;

- They lacked capital to buy farming equipments.
- There were ecological challenges like locusts, rinderpest and drought in Zimbabwe.
- There was limited market.

As a result the early European farmers operated at a subsistence level. However, from 1908 onwards things began to change. The white farming community began to prosper due to a number of factors;

- The second rand myth was dismissed. The BSAC changed its attitude and began to encourage commercial agriculture.
- In 1905 the BSAC established a Land Settlement Committee to encourage European settlers to engage in farming. It envisaged that white farming would cut imports, promote food sufficiency and raise the value of land.
- In 1908 the company established an Estate Department to promote European settlement. Its agents went to England to promote Zimbabwe as a country with potential for European settlement.
- Another step taken to promote settler agriculture was the reorganisation of the Department of Agriculture. In 1908 the department recruited a very experienced man in agriculture Dr E.A Nobbs.
- In 1912 a Land Bank was established with a share capital of € 250,000. Only white farmers were eligible to borrow. The interest rate was low thus many white farmers accessed the loans to invest in farming.

**Activity**

1. Explain reasons that led to a revolution in African agriculture.
2. Discuss the constraints white farmers faced in Zimbabwe in the initial years of colonial rule.
3. Describe the factors that were put in place to improve settler agriculture.

**Reflection**

How effective were the measures put in place to improve settler agriculture?

**Summary**

In this unit you will learn that Africans unlike the white farmers prospered in agriculture in the initial years of colonial years. You will also learn that after 1908 measures were put in place by colonial authorities to improve settler agriculture.

UNIT 15
# THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TRIUMPH OF WHITE AGRICULTURE IN ZIMBABWE 1915-1936

## Introduction

In this unit you will learn that before the economic depression white and African farmers competed favourably for markets. However, the depression shrunk the market prompting white farmers to call on the colonial government to impose total segregation in the market against African producers. This was a period of political triumph because the government came to the aid of European farmers by passing certain laws.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain the reasons for the segregation of African farmers in colonial Zimbabwe.
2. discuss the laws that were passed to disadvantage African farmers.

## Period of Limited Segregation

In the first decade (1915-1925) of European success in agriculture there was little clamour from white farmers for government intervention in farming. White farmers were only not happy with the old Cape law which allowed anybody to acquire land regardless of race. For many years however, very few Africans benefited from this law. Only 14 farms had been sold to Africans by 1925. The biggest farms had been sold to Europeans.

## Depression and Political Triumph, 1926-1936

From 1925 Europeans started to look for ways that would prevent the emergence of an African land owning class. If African became land owners they would increase the capacity to buy land at the expense of Europeans. Pressure was put on the government to pass laws that protected white settler farmers. Europeans were favoured by the new settler government that came into power in 1923. The new settler government began to encourage European agriculture at the expense of African agriculture. In 1931 the Land Apportionment Act was passed. This law designated 7.5 million acres of land for purchase by Africans. Under the same law 31 million acres of land was set aside for Europeans who made only 5 % of the population in Zimbabwe.

European farmers raised dipping and grazing fees to systematically disadvantage Africans. Africans complained to district commissioners but their concerns were not addressed. After 1930 African agriculture began to decrease and many opted to work as wage labourers on the mines and white farms.

However, in 1930 white farmers were affected by the depression which threw many whites out of the land. There was unemployment accompanied with poverty. The economic successes were reversed by the depression. Surprisingly African continued to struggle and gave white settler farmers competition. Europeans reacted by calling for total segregation in marketing and production than they had done before. The colonial government passed legislation that out rightly discriminated Africans. The following acts were passed:

- The Maize Control Act of 1931-this act reserved 75% of the maize market for Europeans.
- The Dairy Control Act of 1931-this act allowed European to sell the majority of their daily products.
- The Tobacco-the act reserved majority of tobacco market for Europeans.

**Activity**

1. Explain the reasons for the segregation of African farmers in colonial Zimbabwe.
2. Discuss the laws that were passed to disadvantage African farmers.

**Reflection**

Is it true that colonial policies led to the decline of African peasantry?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that before the economic depression white and African farmers competed favourably for markets. However, the depression shrunk the market prompting white farmers to call on the colonial government to impose total segregation in the market against African producers. This was a period of political triumph because the government came to the aid of European farmers by passing certain laws.

UNIT 16
DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL MINING ON THE ZAMBIAN COPPERBELT, 1922-1953

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn the obstacles that delayed the development of mining in Zambia. You will also learn that the period 1933-1953 saw the mining industry expand tremendously putting Zambia the largest producer of copper in the world. This expansion of the mining industry was a consequence of internal and external dynamics.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain reasons for slow development of mining in Zambia.
2. discuss the internal and external dynamics that led to the development and expansion of the mining industry in Zambia.

**Background to Large Scale Mining**

Industrial mining was preceded by pre-colonial mining. Africans were mining copper long before colonial rule. Part of the copper produced was paid as tribute, used for currency and manufacturing of ornaments. However, there was limitation in early mining because it was confined to surface deposits and not deep underground deposits. Mining was also affected by warfare leading to abandoning of the ancient workings.

From the late 1890 Europeans began to take increased interest in the mineral wealth of the Limpopo and Zimbabwe. More and more prospectors were coming to Central Africa to look for gold, copper and other minerals. They were looking for the second rand. With regard to Northern Rhodesia mineral deposits were discovered at Bwana Mkubwa and Roan Antelope in 1899 and 1902 respectively.

**Reasons for slow Development of Mining**

The following obstacles delayed development of mining:

- The early deposits were surface deposits whose copper content was low averaging between 3-5%. This could not attract investment.

- The BSAC government was not interested in giving large concession to big investors as this would jeopardise its own it. This position was changed in 1922.
- Copper was discovered in areas renown for malaria and other tropical diseases. Health challenges threatened the whites to invest in mining.

However, from 1922 onwards the Copperbelt began to attract large scale mine investors due to the following reasons:

- In 1922 the BSAC began to allow leading financiers to prospect for minerals in the area.
- This was a period of rising prices in copper.
- There was also a surge in electrical, automobile and armament industries in Europe. All these industries depended on copper.

When the British South Africa Company began to grant mining concessions to financially strong companies in 1922 Alfred Chester Betty, one of the outstanding company promoters, acquired the Luanshya claims for his newly floated Rhodesian Selection Trust. He financed the initial exploration, prospecting and drilling programme between 1923 and 1926. Later Otto Sussman, of the American Metal Company joined Betty with a capital of £175, 000 required for the early development of the Roan Antelope Mine. This vast outlay of capital coupled with one of the best mining technology in the world enabled rapid development of the Roan Antelope Mine towards the end of the 1920s. As a result, Roan began large scale mining production early in 1928.

**The Significance of Mining Capital**

- Without this capital the necessary prospecting could not have been possible. From this money best experienced engineers were recruited and mining infrastructure including houses for both white and African miners was erected.
- The best technology mining technology was introduced on the Copperbelt for example floatation method.
- Mining capital also facilitated defeat of tropical diseases which had made it very difficult for early miners to open mines on the Copperbelt. The mining companies pumped in a lot of money to control the diseases. A leading malaria expert Malcom Watson was invited to combat malaria. He had acquired vast experience of combating malaria in Malaysia.

## The Expansion of the Mining Industry, 1933-1953

The period 1933-1953 saw the mining industry expand tremendously putting Zambia the largest producer of copper in the world. This expansion of the mining industry was a consequence of internal and external dynamics.

### External Dynamics

Following the depression of the 1930s many European countries embarked on recovery programmes that had been shattered by the depression. Britain, France and Germany succeeded in these programmes creating an increased demand for raw materials. Thus recovery went hand in hand with the arms race. Hitler made it clear in the middle of 1933 that he was going to abrogate the Versailles Treaty. Other European countries such as Britain and France joined in the arms race. This increased the demand for copper. Copper was required in the manufacture of bullets. Britain came up with a policy of exploitation of African labour to increase copper production in her colonies. The Korean War also raised the demand for copper. The United States of America one of the fighters in the Korean War became the main buyer of the Zambian copper.

### Internal Dynamics

The external forces would not in themselves alone have led to expansion of copper production without what was happening in the country. During the Second World War a good number of white people left their jobs on the Copperbelt to go and fight in the army. Africans moved in and took the jobs left by Europeans. After the war, to resolve this problem the companies began to allow the emergence of a small class of African workers to remain on the mines for some time. This led to labour stabilisation.

With labour stabilisation came improved African skills. Some Africans began to take up those jobs initially done by Europeans. The skills that Africans acquired were important to increase copper production. The dependence on African labour became economical as they paid them lower than the white miners. It became a cost saving measure. The colonial authorities also encouraged people with capital to set up secondary industries like production of explosives and textiles to support the mining industry. Before the war all the explosives were imported.

The post war policies were favourable to the mining industry. The external and internal dynamics led to an increase in copper production.

**Activity**

1. Explain reasons for slow development of mining in Zambia.
2. Discuss the internal and external dynamics that led to the development and expansion of the mining industry in Zambia.

**Reflection**

In what ways did mining capital lead to the development of the copper industry in Zambia?

**Summary**

The period 1933-1953 saw the mining industry expand tremendously putting Zambia the largest producer of copper in the world. This expansion of the mining industry was a consequence of internal and external dynamics.

UNIT 17
HEALTH AND DISEASE IN THE MINING INDUSTRY IN THE MINING INDUSTRY IN COLONIAL ZAMBIA

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn that mining companies in Northern Rhodesia had to contain a number of poor health problems. Poor health problems did not come to an end despite large capitalisation in the mines.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain how the disease environment was a hindrance to the development of large scale mining.
2. discuss the measures put in place to prevent diseases in the mining towns.

**Types of Diseases**

Malaria and black water fever were the deadliest diseases. The ecology in the Copperbelt consisting of swamps, rivers and streams was suitable breeding ground for mosquitoes. The two diseases killed many people and caused absenteeism from work. Black water generated a myth of a sanguine snake snatching people in the Luanshya River. Other diseases included tuberculosis, pneumonia and diarrhoea caused by poor sanitation and nutritional deficiencies.

**Measures to Prevent and Control the diseases**

Many mining companies put measures of eradicating these diseases in order to attract more people to the Copperbelt.

- Quinine was used to treat malaria but was a failure. People continued to die.
- The next measure was to remove the fear that Africans had about Luanshya. A man called Chilupula was involved in removing this fear. Chilupula involved a certain royal family to perform a particular ritual to remove the fear connected to Luanshya River.
- Malcom Watson an expert in malaria control was approached to control malaria. He persuaded the companies to clear and drain swamps within one mile of the mines.

Weekly oiling of stagnant water, daily filling of depressions and mosquito proof houses for whites were other measures employed against the disease.

- Construction of houses and provision of mealie meal to improve sanitation and diet among Africans.

These measures proved successful in combating malaria. However, the mining companies failed to control diseases caused by poverty. Why did they fail? The answers are found below.

The strategies adopted by mining companies of cost reduction and profit maximisation contributed to this failure. They invested little on African working conditions. While they believed in improving working conditions for Europeans, profits could only be made if African labour was paid cheaply. They concentrated on three things; housing, diet and sanitation.

Housing for Africans-small huts made of locally obtained materials were constructed. This type of accommodation led to overcrowding and became fertile ground for diseases like tuberculosis and pneumonia.

Diet-the question of diet also played a key role in the spread of diseases. The mining companies provided mealie meal but did not provide fish or meat rich in protein. Single workers died from diseases associated with diet.

Sanitation-this was another area the companies wanted to cost maximise. Pit latrines were constructed which became breeding grounds for diseases like diarrhoea.

**Activity**

1. Explain how the disease environment was a hindrance to the development of large scale mining.
2. Discuss the measures put in place to prevent and control diseases in the mining towns.

**Reflection**

How effective were the measures put in place to prevent and control diseases in the mining towns?

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that although the mining companies managed to eradicate malaria and black water, poverty related problems relating to housing, diet and sanitation were not resolved. This was because of the policy measures of cost maximisation adopted by the mining companies.

UNIT 18
MOBILISATION AND RECRUITMENT OF LABOUR FOR COPPER MINES IN ZAMBIA

**Introduction**

In this unit you will the sources of labour, labour recruitment processes and stabilisation. Demands for both skilled and unskilled labour in Northern Rhodesia came from the need to exploit copper ores.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. analyse the sources of labour for the mines.
2. discuss the challenges in labour recruitment.

**Sources of Labour**

Most of the labour was recruited from within the country. Although the bulk of the labour was local, it did not come from within the areas where the mines were based because the indigenous people were sparsely populated. Therefore, labour had to be sought from elsewhere in the country. This labour mainly came from Luapula and Northern provinces. Barotseland, Eastern and Central Provinces each also provided small numbers of men. The Southern province provided the least number of migrant miners because the Tonga were successful peasants. This was how contract migrant labour to the Copperbelt began. In the early days of mining, labour was brought in for 180 days ticket.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Northern/Luapula | 3319 | 2432 | 3001 |
| Barotseland | 1398 | 946 | 626 |
| Eastern | 497 | 952 | 364 |
| Central | 668 | 934 | 383 |
| Southern | 88 | 192 | 51 |
| Nyasaland | 357 | 575 | 95 |

There was also foreign labour especially from Nyasaland and Tanganyika. The foreign labour was usually brought in for specific tasks: Nyasas for clerical work, and Nyakusas for the hard and dangerous jobs on the mines.

By 1930, there were already about 30,000 Africans employed by the mining industry.

**Advantages in Labour Recruitment**

It was easier to recruit labour on the Copperbelt because of the late development of the mines, than elsewhere in the region. By the mid-1920s when the mines began on the Copperbelt, people were already used to the rigours of mining in other countries (South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Democratic Republic of Congo). From the late 19th c, agents (WNLA) were getting labour from Barotseland and Eastern Province. From 1911 the mines in the Katanga provided a large number of jobs to locals from the Luapula and Northern provinces. The Mambwe and Lungu in Mbala area easily found work in Tanganyika in sisal and cotton plantations and gold fields. This proved an advantage as miners were also used to wage labour, conditions in the mines, and the nature of underground work.

**Challenges in Labour Recruitment**

However, this also proved to be a disadvantage in that the belated development meant that the mines in Northern Rhodesia had to compete against the older established mines of the region which already offered better conditions of service.

By the 1920s, about 47.8% of the total African labour force in Katanga's Union Miniere Haut de Katanga (UMHK) mines were of Zambian origin. At the same time some 24,000 Zambians were employed in Southern Rhodesia, and in 1938 about 40,000 of them were at work elsewhere outside the territory. Henry Meebelo estimated that in 1929 only 43.4% from Tanganyika and Awemba went to the Copperbelt; 56% of Zambians went elsewhere; 45% from Luapula to the Copperbelt, and 29.7 % from the Eastern province went to the Copperbelt. In total 70% went to Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Competitors had their advantage in geographical proximity.

**Recruitment Strategies of Labour for Copperbelt Mines**

- The first strategy was to recruit labour on a monthly basis within the mine areas themselves.
- The other strategy was to send agents to look for labour in different provinces of the territory. These agents persuaded Africans to sign up for work. They also assisted them with rations and transportation to the mines.
- In March 1931 mine administrators in Northern Rhodesia came together and created the Native Labour Association (NLA) to operate as a private company but under the control of mine owners. Colonel A. Stephenson was appointed as the company's Director and was tasked with the responsibility of securing and supplying sufficient labour to the mines as and when required. The company was paid £5 for each recruit employed by the mines. This amount catered for food for the recruit on his way to the mine, and the first blanket. If a recruit brought a wife/family £5 also meant organising logistics for them (from the 1930s). To facilitate its operations, the company placed 27 agents at strategic places across the provinces. These agents worked with sub-agents in the villages who checked the physical condition of potential recruits. These agents took the recruits to European supervisors who then explained the contents of the contract to be entered into. Once this was done, those selected were sent by road to Bwana Mkubwa where a depot for the reception and deployment of the recruits was done. There, conditions in the contracts were gone through once more and when recruits accepted these, they were signed in the presence of the District Commissioner. Workers stayed there for about 5-7 days, resting and then undergoing thorough medical examination (eyes, heart rate, scurvy, VD). Afterwards, recruits were asked which mine they wanted to work for. Their choice was in most cases respected in this regard. Those who failed the medical tests were sent back home by the NLA. The successful ones went to their places of work. Upon arrival, they were once again examined by the Mine Medical Officer. Unsuccessful ones sent back home.

**Orientation of Labour**

On being admitted, the successful ones underwent an orientation programme at the mine. They were taught names of tools to be used and their purpose, acquainted them with mine safety

procedures, drilling operations, and the language of communication on the mines; a lingua-franca (Chilapalapa) which had developed on the mines of South Africa.

**Labour Stabilisation**

Once the Great Depression hit Northern Rhodesia especially by 1931, the situation changed radically. The need for the NLA was rendered useless because there was now plenty of free labour around. In that year there were 13,838 voluntary recruits against 6086 recruited by the Association. By 1939 the Association became completely redundant. In 1932 there was no contract labour recruited at Roan Antelope, for example. The other contributing factor for this state of affairs was that the period of mine construction (which required a lot of labour) had come to an end.

A more stable and, therefore, long-term labour was hence needed than when they were constructing the mines. This necessitated the issue of labour stabilisation. Women and children began to be allowed to live on the mines (especially at RST-owned Mufulira and Roan Antelope). Anglo American Corporation owned mines did not see the value of a stabilised labour force; they argued that it was very costly to have families on the mines.

**Activity**

1. Analyse the sources of labour for the mines.
2. Discuss the challenges in labour recruitment.

**Reflection**

How effective were recruitment strategies employed by the recruiting companies and mines.

**Summary**

In this unit you have learnt that the sources of labour, labour recruitment processes and stabilisation. Demands for both skilled and unskilled labour in Northern Rhodesia came from the need to exploit copper ores.

UNIT 19
LABOUR CONTROL AND THE COMPOUND SYSTEM ON THE ZAMBIAN COPPPERBELT

**Introduction**

In this you will learn the strategies developed by mining companies to control African labour.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. discuss the strategies put in place by the colonial authorities and mining companies to control African labour.

**Strategies to Control Labour**

The Government developed a legal framework to help the mines control their African workers. Among these laws were:

- Master and Servants Ordinance of 1908: apart from stipulating conditions under which the Africans could be employed and employers obligations to the employees, the law stated penalty sanctions against Africans who broke the law. It stated that conditions of employment be given to the worker; and the punishment to be meted to offending workers for example fines, or imprisonment. Once recruited, an African was tied to the employer. It was replaced by the Employment of Natives Ordinance in 1929.
- Employment of Natives Regulations: these were passed in 1931. They were enacted to limit the number of hours an African had to put to work and provided for a 24 hours continuous rest. The number of hours was limited to 8 per day.
- Native Registration Ordinance: this reinforced other laws regarding African labour because it controlled the movement of Africans into and out of prescribed towns (particularly those along the line of rail). Each African was required to have a pass containing details of his employer and his wage level. This pass law was quite similar to the one in South Africa but was not as ruthlessly enforced as in South Africa or Southern Rhodesia. However, it was an effective instrument of controlling African labour. Employers were also required to state whom the African worked for and the wages that the African earned. Therefore, an African could only go to town on the basis of the pass system (on condition that he has a job in town).

- The Compound System and Worker Control-This system was similar to that which existed in Southern Rhodesia. However, the conditions in Northern Rhodesia were a bit relaxed when compared with the southern territories. Like in the south, single male employees were housed in barrack-like accommodation. The married ones lived in thatched houses with or without a concrete floor. Married men were provided with some plots for gardens and building small kitchen. “The general appearance of huts stretching over a large area pound was a steer with monotonous walls”. It also had beer halls surrounded by thatched kiosks. Mine compounds fell under the supervision of the Compound Manager who was assisted by a number of African clerks and African mine police.

Although employment of the Native Ordinance provided a role for the District Commissioner in administering and controlling conditions of labour in mine areas, their multifaceted functions outside the mine area made it extremely difficult for them to participate in compound administration. The job was thus left to the whims and desires of the Compound Manager and his assistants.

Each Compound Manager supervised and controlled a compound under his charge. The Compound Manager was responsible for worker welfare and discipline although organising African compounds differed from mine to mine. Generally there was a pyramidal command system with the Compound Manager as the ultimate authority. The Compound Manager even imposed fines and administered corporal punishment using sjambok at times. Some Compound Managers were renowned for their brutality towards African miners. W.J. Scrivnar who was Compound Manager at Rhokana mines, being one of the most notorious.

When African miners went on strike in 1935, however, it emerged that a Compound Manager at Mufulira mine called Benjamin Scheefer was even more vicious. Scheefer was a South African and was assisted by Mateyo Msiska from Nyasaland. Scheefer, head clerk Msiska and Chambanange head of mine police took charge of the strike, leading to the death of six miners. Meebelo says “these three, especially Scheefer instituted a regime of terror by which African workers could, on flimsy grounds or unproven charges, receive corporal punishment using a sjambok or slaps on the sides of the face”. Brutality resulted in Scheefer’s dismissal by the RST following an investigation by the Colonial Office in 1936.

Several years after the 1935 strike, the role of maintaining discipline in Mine Compounds was placed in the hands of African personnel department rather than the Compound Police. In 1939 the Labour Department was set up by the colonial government. Fulltime labour officers were appointed.

The methods of worker control in the mines differed depending on the Compound Manager in charge, for example, at Roan Antelope; the Compound Manager Benjamin Spearpoint introduced a system of Tribal Elders which acted as a link between African workers and European managers. This resulted in a reduction of the number of cases of arbitrary corporal punishment and illegal fines as a means of controlling labour.

5. Other Forms of Worker Control

- The Bonus System: workers were rewarded for good and satisfactory performance at the rate of one shilling and three pence a week; for wearing safety boots and coats they could be rewarded nine shillings. On the other hand, deductions could also be made on the bonus or the attire bonus could be denied for mediocre performance. A deducted bonus acted as a fine. These measures were intended to institute loyalty, regularity and efficiency. As such African workers were supervised like children.
- Alcohol: mining companies allowed mine workers to have access to alcohol. The companies provided alcohol particularly on non working days. This was meant to be an attraction to the miners in the compounds. Traditional beer was also nutritious to the workers.
- Credit facilities: these were provided in order to tie the miners to their employees.
- Sex: many mining companies allowed prostitutes to enter the mining companies so that the migrant labourers did not think of their wives they left home. They would also render services such as washing, cleaning, cooking and growing crops.
- Drugs: were allowed in the compounds. Hard working mining workers were given tobacco bonus to attract them to the compounds.

**Activity**

1. Discuss the strategies put in place by the colonial authorities and mining companies to control African labour.

**Reflection**

Of what significance were compound managers in the control of African labour?

**Summary**

You have learnt that mining companies put a number of strategies to control African labour. It was not enough to mobilise labour. Once mobilised, labour was to be controlled in order to make it productive.

UNIT 20
THE SECOND WORLD WAR, PEASANT INNOVATION AND DIFFERENTIATION: A CASE OF THE TONGA PLATEAU

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn that the Second World War acted as a catalyst for peasant innovation and differentiation especially among the plateau Tonga. The colonial policy also favoured and encouraged peasant innovation.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. analyze how the Second World War acted as a catalyst for peasant innovation and differentiation among the Tonga.

**Peasant Innovations**

The Second World War triggered the demand for copper and in an effort to meet this demand mining companies employed a huge work force. The big population employed on the Copperbelt opened a huge food stuff market. Because of the huge market the government relaxed policies that favoured European farmers. This is because the European farmers were unable to satisfy the food demands on the Copperbelt. The government began to carry out measures that peasant farming. The following were the measures put in place.

- The government encouraged the use of scientific agricultural methods among the Tonga.
- Agricultural demonstrators were employed to teach Africans good methods of agriculture.
- The government also encouraged Africans to participate in agricultural shows in order to enhance knowledge sharing among farmers.
- The colonial authorities encouraged Native authorities to pass laws and regulations that forbade the use of unscientific agricultural methods. For example, Chief Sianjalika in Mazabuka district outlawed the planting of maize after 8$^{th}$ January.
- Growing of non-traditional crops like beans and sorghum was encouraged.

The Tonga farmers embraced these innovations and shared them through their social relationships. As a result production increased and they sold the surplus to the markets on the Copperbelt.

1941-38,000

1942-51,000

1943-60,000

1944-115,000

These figures show that Africans were growing more for the market rather than for consumption.

**Peasant Differentiation**

The Second World War precipitated peasant differentiation. It opened up opportunities for people to participate in the colonial economy and earn more money. This participation in the colonial economy led to classes among the peasants. By 1946, three categories of farmers emerged among the Tonga peasantry. These were:

- The poor peasants-subsistence peasants who made up 85%. They were marginal producers who sold up to 10 bags per year.
- The middle farmers-these were the small holders who made up 14% of the Tonga peasants. They sold more than 100 bags of maize per year.
- Rich farmers-these constituted the smallest category of farmers but commanded control over resources than the first two.

The social categories were a reality. Poor peasants could not afford to buy more sophisticated equipment and relied on family labour. They relied more on the axe and the hoe. The middle peasants owned an ox drawn plough per household. They owned ox carts, cultivators and harrows and could afford to hire labour. The third category commanded a greater access to resources. They owned more than one of the essential equipments, that is, ploughs, harrows and scotch carts. Accessibility to labour exhibited differentiation and so was income. The rich peasants' expenditure was much greater. They bought more goods including conspicuous consumption.

**Activity**

1. analyze how the Second World War acted as a catalyst for peasant innovation and differentiation among the Tonga.

**Reflection**

To what extent did the Tonga peasants embrace the agricultural innovations put in place by the colonial government?

**Summary**

In this unit you learnt that the Second World War acted as a catalyst for peasant innovation and differentiation among the plateau Tonga. The colonial policy also favoured and encouraged peasant innovation.

UNIT 21
THE BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT MINING IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn about the reasons for the slow development of commercial mining in colonial Zimbabwe. You will also learn the factors that led to the development of mining after 1903.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. explain the pre-colonial mining activities in pre-colonial Zimbabwe.
2. discuss reasons for slow development of mining in colonial Zimbabwe.
3. analyse reasons for the development of mining in colonial Zimbabwe after 1903.

**Pre-colonial Mining**

Mining in Zimbabwe began long before colonial rule. According to Charles van Onselen, there were mining activities between the Limpopo and the Zambezi for over 600 years before European colonisation. About 1,000 AD Muslim traders ventured into the interior from the east coast of Africa to buy gold and copper. From 1505 the port of Sofala witnessed brisk trade in gold between the kingdom of Mwenemutapa and the Arabs. These activities prove that before colonialism, African metals were already known in Europe. It was gold which also gave impetus to the Mwenemutapa kingdom. Robin Palmer stated that gold was mined and traded extensively in CA between 12th-13th centuries. Phillip Marson also noted that gold, copper, iron, silver and lead were mined in Mwenemutapa kingdom.

**Pre-Colonial Methods of Mining**

1. Alluvial gold washing

2. Actual digging at uphill places. This could be: i. Open-pit mining in small pits using picks and shovels ii. Deep mining off about 100 ft. they could not go beyond that depth as it became unprofitable due to wet conditions, problems of haulage, and ventilation and many more

Pre-colonial mining was thus a skilful activity. Africans had a sense where gold-bearing rocks existed. Actually, most modern European mines were sited on old African mining pits. Thus African mining methods were scientific because they knew how to site, heat, break and process ores. Alluvial African gold mining went up to the 20th century. In Mashonaland in the early 1890s, Africans were already paying tax to the BSAC in gold form. Early 20th century small scale European mine owners faced a critical shortage of labour because they believed that Africans were themselves engaged in gold mining. The Portuguese colonised Mozambique and unlike the Arabs, they themselves engaged into mining in the Zambezi valley.

**BSAC Mining in Zimbabwe**

John Cecil Rhodes looked forward to the Second Rand in Southern Rhodesia. In the 1860s missionaries and hunters and traders also wrote about the presence of gold in Mwenemutapa kingdom. Henry Hartley also wrote about glowing accounts about the presence of gold north of the Limpopo in 1867.

The discovery of gold in 1886 in South Africa gave more credence to the presence of gold north of the Limpopo. Following the formation of the BSAC, Rhodes thought of Mashonaland as the Second Rand. On 29 October 1889 he was granted a Royal Charter to prospect for minerals in Zimbabwe. On 30 October 1888 he had already sent Charles Rudd to sign an agreement with Lobengula. It was the Rudd Concession which gave Rhodes exclusive ownership of both Matebeleland Mashonaland for mineral exploration.

The Rudd Concession was characterised by a lot of cheating on Rudd's part. He said "We will only dig a small pit". Once the Pioneer Column arrived led by F.C. Selous in 1890, it promised to do a lot for the local people in Matebeleland where the most gold was mined. However the Ndebele were very hostile to the settlers. For this reason, a war started in 1893 in which the local people lost with heavy losses on both sides. Europeans thus went ahead and occupied Matebeleland and began to prospect for minerals.

**The Obstacles that Made Mining a Painful Process**

- The early European miners settled in Mashonaland which was least endowed with mineral resources. The gold deposits found there were not in any comparable to the

deposits in South Africa. The mineral deposits did not occur in a continous reef. Therefore attracted less investment. Until the Ndebele were defeated in 1893 mining in Zimbabwe was speculative rather than industrial.

- This problem was compounded by the failure of settlers to stabilise labour. There was shortage of labour because the Ndebele were raiding the Shona of young men to join their impis. The problem of labour was not resolved until the Ndebele power was broken up in 1893.
- The second African rebellion of 1896-1897 was a big obstacle to mining development.
- In 1899 war in South Africa made mining development in Zimbabwe difficult. The shares of the BSAC dropped because investors were scared of investing their money. Despite the resumption of mining in 1899, Zimbabwe remained a country of industrial speculation.
- Industrial mining was also affected by the shortage of both skilled and unskilled labour. The Shona were unwilling to work in wage employment as they were able to meet their tax obligation through farming. In addition, the already established mining companies in South Africa were offering better wages. Therefore, most Africans opted to go and work in South African mines.

**Consolidation of Capitalist Mining in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1903-1933**

The year 1903 marks the starting point of the growth and development of the mining industry in colonial Zimbabwe. This development was strongly tied to the major transformations in South Africa. Following the end of the Anglo-Boer War in 1902, there was surplus capital in South Africa to invest in Southern Rhodesia. Investors with big capital like De Beers bought small scale mines and began large scale mining.

The company also developed legislation to control mining activities, as well as to encourage prospecting and mining. Included in the legislation was the reservation of shares of profits by the company; 50% of shares on listed companies on the stock exchange to be given to the BSAC. In 1895 the New Mines and Minerals Ordinance was passed. By this law, any person resident in Southern Rhodesia could take on mining. It also set to allow for an annual inspection of every mine. The 1895 Mines and Minerals Amendment Ordinance allowed prospectors to take other licences in addition to prospecting. The extra prospecting licences cost £5 for every ten claims.

After payment, the full title could then be given. By the 1898 Mines and Minerals Amendment Ordinance, a claimant could have their property inspected and certified or just inspected. In any case, one had to pay the company. Once production started, inspections stopped.

By 1903, properties which had not been inspected had to be forfeited to the company. This was a way of asking people to pay fees for inspections. The same year, the BSAC stake in other companies reduced from 50%-20%. Licence fees were reduced from £5-£1 for any extra claim. This encouraged more prospecting and development of mines. The floatation of gold mining companies on the London Stock Exchange (LSE) was also encouraged as well as the genuine development of mining. In 1904 Government Notice No. 212 did away with the requirement of companies floating on the LSE in order to work in Southern Rhodesia. Thus, small companies developed. In 1907 BSAC officials and directors visited Southern Rhodesia. They met representatives of mining companies and came face to face with problems in the country. In 1908 20% BSAC shareholding was abolished and in its place introduced royalties of 2½%-5% of output value per month. All mines that produced less than £100 per month were exempted from any form of tax. This encouraged production especially for small scale mines.

Between 1908-1913 a lot of development took place. The industry stabilised with 9-15 firms dominating. There were about 300 small scale producers.

**Activity**

1. Explain the pre-colonial mining activities in pre-colonial Zimbabwe.
2. Discuss reasons for slow development of mining in colonial Zimbabwe.
3. Analyse reasons for the development of mining in colonial Zimbabwe after 1903.

**Reflection**

How successful was pre-colonial mining in Zimbabwe?

**Summary**

In this unit you learnt about the reasons for the slow development of commercial mining in colonial Zimbabwe. You will also learnt about the factors that led to the development of mining after 1903.

**UNIT 22**

MOBILISATION AND RECRUITMENT OF LABOUR FOR MINES IN ZIMBABWE

**Introduction**

In this unit you will learn about mobilisation and recruitment of labour for mines in colonial Zimbabwe.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. analyse the challenges in recruiting labour.
2. discuss the measures put in place to recruit labour.

**Challenges in Recruiting Labour**

The demand for labour mainly came from gold mines. They mostly wanted cheap and unskilled African labour. However, this turned out to be inadequate. This explains why these mine owners experienced problems primarily due to low wages. However, this argument can be disputed because this was the beginning of wage labour except for those who had previous experience having worked in South Africa. Labour working conditions were poor partly due to the difficult conditions and working for white men. This was a new phenomenon for Africans who were not accustomed to regular working shifts. To work in remote parts for Africans was a major obstacle and miners were also compelled to work underground which was completely alien to the Shona and Ndebele. All this created problems to white men.

When Europeans arrived in Mashonaland and Matebeleland to open mines, Africans started producing food for the new markets created by these new mines. Therefore, for as long as Africans were free to produce what they could sale to the mines owners, they felt no need to sign on as mine labourers so long they could pay tax. This meant that availability of market became an impediment to labour recruitment. Even when they were recruited, the unusual working environment led to desertion. Even during ceremonies and seasons, Africans would leave the mines. Others would leave after earning the first wage. The difficulties encountered to retain labour led to wage increment in 1903-1904.

Regional competition also contributed. Rhodesian mines found themselves competing with the mines on the Rand in that the latter were bigger and more profitable. Therefore, they would manage to give better wages and conditions than those in Southern Rhodesia.

**Measures to attract Labour**

Southern Rhodesia mines in seeking official government assistance advanced the argument that African labour be mobilised through compulsion. Africans literally had to be forced out of their tribal economies into the cash economy. This argument was also supported by Christian missionaries who both agreed on the virtues of forcing Africans for steady work that this would be for the highest moral benefit to Africans because to missionaries, Africans appeared lazy as they only indulged in beer drinking, sex and other vices.

This compulsion was however opposed by the Imperial Government in Britain. Secretary for the Colonies Chamberlain argued that it was going to be difficult for him to present and defend the proposal in the Parliament. Instead the British Government proposed indirect inducement that would get Africans to work. This therefore meant that the Native Commissioners (in charge of Districts) would have to be used to recruit labour.

A tax of 2 pounds per adult male and £1 for each extra wife was to be introduced hence compelling African labourers to seek wage employment. In 1903 uniform tax of £1 was introduced. It was based on the ground that it would compel Africans to work.

**Actual Labour Recruitment**

In 1899 the Matebele Labour Bureau (MLB) was set up and tasked with recruiting labour in Matebele land only. On 1st July 1900 the Labour Board of Southern Rhodesia (LBSR) was established to recruit labour for the entire Southern Rhodesia. These two were the first to meet with operational difficulties which were partly due to external as well as internal factors.

Externally, they faced serious competition from the better equipped and licensed recruiters from the Rand who were supported by the richer gold mines of South Africa. Internally, the labour that was supplied by MLB and LBSR was not only spasmodic but also unreliable.

However, the local people showed little enthusiasm in enlisting for mine work. According to van Onselen, nine months into the operations, the LBSR managed to recruit only 4,000 workers in Mashonaland in comparison to 10,000 who volunteered to work in the mines through Native Commissioners. There were more recruits among the Native Commissioners than those who went round the villages. The Native Commissioners used police to ensure that no recruit escaped.

However, Marson explains that the case was so because there was more data about the employees by volunteering through Native Commissioners as they provided them with information and that data from labour recruiting agencies was not reliable as the labourers easily escaped. Later in 1901 the LBSR was disbanded.

Attempts were made at recruiting labour from Ethiopia, Arabic states and Somalia. These attempts however had difficulties because Africans from these countries were not used to mining, and did not like the occupation.

They attempted to bring in Italians, Chinese, English labourers but these failed to materialise because Chinese labour proved a failure and it caused an international scandal.

**The Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau**

After the failure of the Matebele Bureau and the Board in 1903, the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau (RNLB) was established with Government assistance. V Grelgud was made in charge of the bureau because he had experience in matters of native labour. This was also opened to operate as a commercial venture and it was to be self-supporting. The bureau was different from the two previous labour agents because it was given rights to exercise up to north of the Zambezi.

However, it also faced serious operational difficulties. The workers that were recruited by agents like RNLB were costly to employers and the latter found it difficult to recover their initial outlet for the recruits. They ended subjecting recruits to labour conditions which ended up forcing them to desert: poor nutrition and wages, for example. The Bureau was no longer relied upon and with the free flow of labour which Africans had become accustomed to, they started seeking labour freely so as to avoid being subjected to conditions of those who were recruited through agents. This was the case with people from Eastern Zambia. In fact, the bureau was accused of blocking

the free flow of wage labour. By 1930 it was faced by serious problems and employers had stopped depending on it for labour. In 1931 it was only able to supply 124 recruits and in 1933 it closed down.

**Activity**

1. Analyse the challenges in recruiting labour.
2. Discuss the measures put in place to recruit labour.

**Reflection**

How successful were labour recruiting companies in recruiting labour in Zimbabwe?

**Summary**

In this unit you learnt about mobilisation and recruitment of labour for mines in colonial Zimbabwe.

UNIT 23
LABOUR REGULATION AND CONTROL IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

## Introduction

In this unit you will learn about labour regulation and control in colonial Zimbabwe. Although labour was recruited, it would only be of benefit to the employer if it was regulated and controlled. This would ensure that Africans were disciplined and orderly.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you are expected to;

1. describe the labour regulations put in place to control labour in colonial Zimbabwe.

## Regulations

The regulations introduced in Southern Rhodesia were based on similar ones existing in South Africa. They were not just copied, but over time were modified and made to suit local conditions. Some of the major ones were:

1. Master and Servants Ordinance No. 9 of 1901: this law was further amended Ordinance No. 8 of 1929. The Ordinance provided for the need of a contract between the master and the servant. If a worker contracted for labour for three months, they were not required to have a written contract. But for more than three months, they were supposed to have a written contract. The particulars of both the servant and the master needed to be clearly indicated as well as the date and length of the contract. If the worker was ill and could not work s/he was entitled to a full month's wage. Women who needed to work had to obtain consent from their spouse if married or guardian if not. Children had to have consent from their parents/guardians.

2. Importation of Labour Ordinance No. 18 of 1901: stated that the recruited could be punished for certain offences. Some of these were altering details in pass books, failing to clean recruits' rooms, drunkenness, refusal to work, attempting to leave Southern Rhodesia without permission and many more. Offences attracted fines of up to £10 or three months imprisonment.

3. Native Labour Regulations Ordinance No. 16 of 1911: this was slightly amended in 1924 and 1927. It provided for the requirement of licensed labour agents as well as Compound Managers and Conductors. It also stipulated that any recruitment of labour was to be done by authorised

companies that were licensed to do so. Licences showed the names of districts where these recruitments were to be done and the names of the recruiters. Any offence led to suspension of licence. The ordinance provided conditions under which labour could be recruited. It also provided for fines for recruiters, employers and employees, for example, it became an offence for recruiters to fail to report for work after engagement and for an employee to ask for a salary advance. Fines could go up to £10 or two months' imprisonment.

4. Native Ordinance No. 14 of 1927: this required all natives in addition to giving services to obey law and order from headmen, chiefs and Native Commissioners. It was not intended to regulate wage labour but intended to provide wage labour for public utility. It was also for the general advancement of the area occupied by Africans, failure to observe it attracted a fine of £10 or three months' imprisonment.

Other regulations such as pass laws were used by the Government to regulate and control African labour. The enforcement of provisions from these ordinances were carried out by both Government and employers (who were allowed to punish) and even agents, messengers, compound police, and native police.

**Other Mechanisms of Labour Control**

1. The Compound System: this was copied from South Africa. It was first used at Kimberley but by 1900 had become the model for regulating and controlling African workers throughout Central Africa. It was adopted in Southern Rhodesia and, later Northern Rhodesia in all labour intensive industries. It divided workers' areas of residence into three parts: i. Inner part-this was also referred to as the square of the compound. It was the most secure and intended for new recruits; especially those recruited through agents and were therefore under contracts. Van Onselen referred to this group as typical chibaro. ii. Second part-it surrounded the square and was normally made up of huts that accommodated single male recruits. These were employees that had spent some time under the same employers and were considered less likely to dessert. iii. Outer part-normally consisted of units intended to accommodate mainly employees and their families. These were workers who had adapted to mine life. They had become proletariats and were very least likely to leave their employer.

Under the compound system, employers tended to keep their employees for longer periods of time. The longer one stayed the more free one became. This was the case at Shamva Mine.

There were also a number of officials in the compound who ensured that everything was in order. He disciplined workers and their families in the compound. The most important was the Compound Manager who reported to his boss the Mine Manager. In the case of Southern Rhodesia, he was more like a school head teacher. He took care of the compound's residents and dispensed justice for (minor) offences. He had the power to punish offenders for cases of insubordination or insolence. He could warn, fine or even beat offenders using a sjambok.

2. Compound Police: these worked with the Compound Managers to ensure strict discipline in the compound. They were assisted by African police "boys" who had some military background. Most of them had served in the South African police. They came from certain ethnic groups which had certain attributes needed by the European superiors. The most prized came from the Ndebele, Zulu, Ngoni, and Yao. It was members of the police who took roll-call for workers and also checked those who were sick. They were generally equipped with a sjambok and in rare cases, guns. They enjoyed virtually unlimited powers. They were also involved in the issuance of rations. Each compound would have at least half a dozen of them. Police also had the power to search deserters even in areas beyond the compound as they were supported by a network of informers.

3. Ticket System: this was made to control productivity of labour. Employers had to ensure that Africans produced as much as they wanted. It consisted of a ticket given to each worker and at the end of each shift signed by a supervisor. If the supervisor was satisfied that a worker had not done much work, he would refuse to sign it for that particular day or period. Depending on how the supervisor felt, one could be made to work extra days to catch up for the lost day/s. Each ticket lasted 30 days before being paid. The system was meant to keep workers for much longer periods than they signed for.

4. Credit System: like the above system, its main purpose was to help keep African workers longer in employment. Workers were given things on credit which they worked for to ensure they pay for them. The larger the debt, the longer one stayed on with an employer, until such debt was cleared. For example, paying for blankets given when one started work.

5. Token/Box System: a worker would go in a shop, for example, to pick a blanket that would cost more than what he earned. The worker would be given a token by the shop owner for allowing him to buy on credit. To ensure the worker stayed longer, he would be given more tokens. He would also be given a box at the shop where his items were kept before he finished paying for them. Workers got trapped by this system in order to finish paying for their items. These shops were usually in the compound or nearby and colluded with mine owners for the system to work. Prices were also high.

6. Food rations: workers were given bigger portions of meat for job well done to work hard and retain them in this way.

7. Beer: an important way of worker control in the African set up. Beer was given in beer halls. They also added food supplements to the opaque beer. This beer was sold in the compounds for easy control. Life in the compounds was bearable and sociable to prevent mischief if workers went in the villages to drink.

8. Sex: workers sexual needs were met by prostitutes tolerated by mine owners. Wives were also allowed to come to mines to live with husbands after 1930.

9. Education and Religion: missionary education with its emphasis on industrial training, discipline and cleanliness provided a subservient worker. Missionaries began teaching carpentry, gardening, bricklaying, numeracy and many more. Ideology of Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists facilitated the work of mine capital. In turn, they latter played a key role in the establishment of churches on the mines. Education also helped to stabilise African labour. Africans soon realised there was value in education. The idea of night schools emerged. Miners could only go to school at night. Those mines with educational facilities became popular.

10. Recreation: this was provided in the form of cultural activities such as dances; an important weekend activity for migrant contract labourers. Workers would not feel isolated being far away from their villages due to these activities. They became less nostalgic about home.

11. Tea parties and Big Diners: these became popular in the 1920s. They made workers forget about their rural past. New perspectives on life emerged as a result of these Western values.

12. Sporting Activities: these were sponsored by employers, and became a popular form of entertainment to prevent workers from getting into trouble or mischief. The most popular being football.

However, it must be stated that things were not static and labour control measures began to change. In Southern Rhodesia changes were noticed in the late 1920s-the compound system changed. Employers began to rely more and more on free and voluntary labour than contract labour. NLB was no longer relied upon. The new form of labour was less likely to run away. The general welfare of employees was taken into account. Among these factors was that the nature of mining changed, Government applied pressure on mines to improve both living and working conditions of service. The earlier measures by the 1930s were thus not necessary as conditions had improved. There was now better accommodation, health facilities and accommodation was now provided for married miners.

**Activity**

1. describe the labour regulations put in place to control labour in colonial Zimbabwe.

**Reflection**

Among the measures put to control labour, which ones do you think were the most effective? Justify your choice.

**Summary**

In this unit you learnt about labour regulation and control in colonial Zimbabwe. Although labour was recruited, it would only be of benefit to the employer if it was regulated and controlled. This would ensure that Africans were disciplined and orderly.

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