

TILCOR-Sanyati Irrigation: A Case of Development within the Decentralisation Policy Context in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1956-1980

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Abstract

Extensive global and African scholarship exists on how decentralisation has been implemented to achieve rural growth. Pre-eminent scholars like Lühring, Mutizwa-Mangiza, Fortmann and Hankla contend that decentralisation is good for governance and that its merits for development are indisputable. This article interrogates the dynamics of development within the decentralisation policy context in colonial Zimbabwe between 1956 and 1980, using TILCOR-Sanyati as a case study. It is motivated by the challenges of promoting irrigation development in a decentralisation context. Although the observed upsides of decentralisation are well-founded, the article challenges the 'advantaging' notion of the policy in Gowe-Sanyati irrigation. Data gathering combined documentary, case study and archival research. The study's major findings firstly are that TILCOR, operating on the 'modernising' pedestal provided by the colonial government, did not employ the decentralisation strategy to achieve economic growth for rural Africans. TILCOR failed to achieve decentralised development because it was pro-white and anti-African as illustrated by its support for the former and not the latter. Devolution of power to irrigation plot-holders remained a pipedream, as instructions were issued from above. The limits of decentralisation led to peasant disillusionment with the policy as there was a gap between people's expectations and what the state was willing to offer. Secondly, the politically-driven growth dynamics of Gowe-Sanyati during the decentralisation debate (1956-1980) were responsible for bringing 'modernisation' without real development, as colonial-type decentralisation had a 'big centralisation focus'. Thirdly, leveraging community-development planning on the assumption that remarkable agricultural results were to be based on the training of a 'unique' individual to transplant new techniques onto the whole society was difficult.

Development had to be society (people), not individually-driven. Fourthly, while in the period up to 1975 decentralisation was the favoured policy-priority among Rhodesian policy-makers, the state frequently determined the extent and level of application of the strategy. As part of the colonial government's import substitution programme, African agricultural production (for instance, wheat) was merely 'to fill the gap' but not to surpass European production. Hence, the years after 1975 marked a quiescent phase in the decentralisation debate in Sanyati. The article concludes that whilst the post-1980s experienced huge improvement in agricultural production, some of the colonial practices and frameworks like the lease agreement of 1967 remained in force, providing a major source of social resistance. While initiatives were taken to expand the size of land under TILCOR, this did not directly benefit individual irrigation farmers whose holdings remained the same in size, a problem its successor (ARDA) had to grapple with.

Introduction

This article investigates the effects of the Tribal Trust Land Development Corporation (TILCOR) state-agency on decentralisation in colonial Zimbabwe's Sanyati District, and how realistic it was to base community-development planning on the master-farmer category and not on the broad social structure. Decentralisation, also equated to community development, is a strategy for democratic governance which accords local communities responsibility over their own development (Howman, 1969: 3-8). It seeks to transfer power from a central authority to local or grassroots authorities. For the people of Sanyati, achieving social cohesion was not one of TILCOR's paramount considerations. Colonial agricultural performance by rural farmers before the advent of TILCOR (with its decentralisation focus) was determined by relatively insignificant production for subsistence and the market. Title to land did not exist because all communal land in the country was deemed to be state land. Much of the pre-irrigation agricultural arrangements were not radically altered during and after TILCOR irrigation policies were enacted, as the dual nature of the colonial agricultural economy was maintained. This means that judging the success of the smallholders and state policy in the Sanyati region is possible, but not an easy proposition. By independence in 1980, dryland and smallholder irrigative farming in Zimbabwe based on a racially-oriented decentralisation strategy was in an indeterminate state. The country's revered agricultural system was not collapsing, but it was hoped that it would influence a large body of peasant agrarian communities (not individuals) to perform at a higher level than hitherto known. This was not quite the case (save for the post-1980 boom) as there was but insignificant progress towards commercialisation as evidenced by low yields, low agricultural incomes, lack of farm mechanisation, loans and markets, a heavy reliance on a minute group of master-farmers,

dependency on the Main TILCOR Estate after 1974, and the failure by an omnipresent state to devolve power or foster Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) to the African plot-holders. The inequalities of the period (1950s-1980) in accessing agricultural services between black and white farmers seemed ineradicable.

This contrasted sharply with government opinion, for since the inception of TILCOR in 1968 as a rural development agency, the state felt that it was making an effort to redress the situation by investing substantially in the agro-economic sectors and by striving to guarantee a decent livelihood for all non-urban households. Undeniably, Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia) became a major agricultural success story in Southern Africa and on the African continent, not solely on the basis of the white commercial farming sector, but the peasant sector as well. The country boasted of renowned demonstrator and extension services in both the black and white areas. How and why, by 1980, development within a decentralisation context ended in an indeterminate state as well as dissatisfaction from the targets (blacks) of the purported change in TILCOR-governed Sanyati in spite of the optimism surrounding it, is the major counterfactual question and focus of this article. The analysis draws on relevant primary sources and broad literature on decentralisation or state-led programmes to 'decentralise and develop'.

Background: Contextualising Pre-independence Development and Decentralisation

Development within the decentralisation policy context is broadly situated in general debates (of interest to economic historians and to an economic development audience) on irrigation and development studies in Africa and the world. In discussing community development — seen as the same as decentralisation by Mutizwa-Mangiza (1985: 26) and Passmore (1972: 30) — parallels are drawn with the work of Immerwahr (2015: 3-5), which shows that community-based development is nothing new. Development "has been present since the origins of international development practice, existing alongside — and sometimes at the heart of — grander schemes to modernise the global South" (*Ibid*). Although Immerwahr examines the story of how the United States of America (USA) sought "to 'rescue' the world from poverty through small-scale community-based approaches", he also sounds a warning that "such strategies, now again in vogue, have been tried before, with often disastrous consequences" (*Ibid*). As a result, historians commonly interpret US post-World War II development campaigns as ill-advised attempts to impose 'modernity' upon poorer nations. Effectively, the small-scale projects that are popular in contemporary times mark a retreat from a top-down, heavy-handed approach — a retreat in many ways akin to what was attempted in colonial Zimbabwe. As generally believed by anti-poverty

advocates, development should not be about engineers building dams, but about communities shaping their own fates. Yet, the hope that small communities might lift themselves up in Zimbabwe's Gowe-Sanyati region was often frustrated, as self-help and decentralisation in the colonial period gave way to crushing forms of racial oppression. Proponents of poverty-eradication are thus challenged to think again about the risks as well as the benefits of community development. Beyond Immerwahr (2015), the views of pre-eminent pioneering irrigation scholars on the Gezira Scheme in the Sudan such as Barnett (1977: 6) provide a brief, albeit relevant comparative perspective to demonstrate how conclusions and insights in this article, especially on the colonial reluctance to devolve irrigation power, apply to other historical examples.

The implementation and operation of the decentralisation policy in Zimbabwe in general and Gowe-Sanyati in particular can further be measured in the context of the widely-documented large-scale resettlement state-centred programmes in Tanzania, or the relocation programmes (and Special Economic Zones/SEZs) of apartheid South Africa, whose developmental failures during the colonial period are clear (see Chambers, 1969: 3; Mutiti, 1985: chp 3; Fortmann, 1990: 148; Scott, 1998: 87 & 223; Oya, 2005: 3). Tanzania's socialist villagisation/*Ujaama* programmes, for example, were inadequately implemented and have generally been described as a disaster of state active intervention in rural society with the eagerness to 'modernise and develop' through collective farms — the sole agricultural production unit.

The construction of collective farms was confronted with strong resistance and was officially abandoned in the 1980s. As Hyden (1980: 104) stresses, a peasantry that was incorporated into a world capitalist system, and whose production decisions were conditioned by a capitalist mode of production (as in the Gezira and TILCOR cases), did not immediately become a class of rural capitalists, known as agrarian *kulaks* in the then Soviet Union. In South Africa, the role that SEZs play in accelerating economic and employment growth was mooted during the apartheid era through the establishment of the Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC), which was a parallel organisation to TILCOR (Nyandoro, 2008: 2; Bernstein, 2012: 2). SEZs were used as a tool to kick-start industrialisation. In the transition after apartheid, the government planned to revise the law governing the country's Industrial Development Zones (IDZs) following official recognition that the IDZs had failed to achieve their goals of employment-creation and accelerated industrial development. These projects present an important opportunity to learn about decentralisation from South Africa and other countries' experiences. Development scholars generally concur that in the colonial period especially up to the 1960s, the poor performance and outright failure

of large-scale agricultural schemes in Africa was endemic, largely because they failed to devolve power to the irrigation tenants.

For Barnett (1977: 93), the Gezira Scheme illustrates the partnership between the tenants and the scheme management (which was analogous to the relationship between the plot-holders and the Estate in Sanyati), about which the tenants were not consulted and were not to be consulted. It spread the risk of production without, at the same time, spreading the opportunity to participate actively in policy-making (*Ibid*). Barnett (1977: 172-173) has also provided an apt and relevant assertion that tallies closely with the situation besetting the Sanyati tenant: "Because the plot-holder is not allowed to make production decisions, he resembles the industrial wage-worker or other employee far more closely than he does the peasant". Attempts to devolve decision-making power, though, were made, but were always frustrated because the attainment of such a goal contradicted the entire rationale of the scheme which thrived on maintaining the plot-holders as a subordinate category to its administration. That relationship made it easier for the Estate to exploit their labour. According to Chambers (1969: 7), in social and economic terms, the record of past schemes has not been very impressive since in most cases they gave a very poor return on investment. In Munro's (1976: 128) opinion, such grandiose schemes as the Gezira failed because they were merely meant to increase "imperial self-sufficiency" in raw materials, particularly cotton (also Barnett, 1977: 14, 23, 93 & 161). This was the case with the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) of 1947 (Wells & Warmington, 1962: 245), the Kenyan Rice Project (MWEA), and the Gonja Development Company in Ghana — all instituted in the 1950s (La Anyane, 1963: 171) — and the TILCOR-Sanyati Main Irrigation Estate in Zimbabwe of 1974 (Nyandoro, 2008: 15-16).

Just like the Gowe-Sanyati project in Kadoma (formerly Gatooma) District (Mashonaland West Province, North-western Zimbabwe), Gezira which emerged as the centre-piece of British cotton growing promotion in Africa in the 1920s, was designed, primarily, to reduce British dependence on American sources of raw cotton (Munro, 1976: 128). Nevertheless, for Rowland (1993: 11), the contribution of the big schemes to overall food supplies in Sub-Saharan Africa is small, though it may be very important locally. This is contrary to the popularly held view that the ultimate objective of all work in the field of irrigation is to help in raising the agricultural productivity (food security) of African peoples and, at the same time, increasing the tempo of economic development (Wells & Warmington, 1962: 245). In this respect, big schemes failed. They represented the reproduction of underdevelopment. The promotion of small-scale irrigation thus originated as a backlash to this malperformance — a factor which justified government investment in

smallholder irrigative enterprise in many parts of the continent, including colonial Zimbabwe. However, devolution of power to the small-scale irrigation plot-holders under the state or TILCOR's development and decentralisation programme in Zimbabwe remained an unfulfilled dream by the end of the colonial period. The hope for devolution was remote, as Gowe-Sanyati replicated the failed decentralisation experience of the large-scale schemes alluded to here. Against this backdrop, this article therefore analyses how Gowe-Sanyati farmers tried to cope with white settler socio-economic and political engineering in stimulating development premised on a racially-skewed decentralisation policy.

The Case Study: TILCOR Decentralisation Development in Sanyati, Zimbabwe

Decentralisation development in Sanyati was based on TILCOR. In the years preceding independence in Zimbabwe, a number of development theorists in Africa, such as Bailey (1969: 1), Blume (1971) and Lühring (1974) had begun to investigate the relationship between development and state-initiated decentralisation. Bailey argues that in response to the influx of rural migrants into the country's major towns/cities in search of work among other motives, the state through TILCOR (later to become ADA/ARDA)¹ formulated a decentralisation policy to validate the deployment of basic services as well as financial and labour resources away from white-designated areas in the name of developing the rural areas (urban villages) to approximately the same level as Rhodesia's urban-centres. Under the BIC, a similar policy was applied by South Africa in the African areas, so-called 'Bantustans'. However, the decentralisation programme in Rhodesia in the 1950s mainly focussed on securing local development and administration, yet endeavouring to contain the feared black threat to what was termed the 'durable continuance' of the white population. This approach by TILCOR is unique and interesting to study because the Corporation approximated in its structure and functions the type of organisation which Blume (1971) and other scholars have categorised as a "development agency" (Hughes, 1974: 247). It was seen as such an agency because it had a monolithic managerial structure and, at the same time, engaged in commercial activities which not only primarily had an agricultural orientation, but also industrial and commercial ones. TILCOR, thus, differed from many development agencies in Africa as it did not concentrate on a single type of production

¹ TILCOR was renamed the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) between 1980 and 1982. ARDA was established by the *Agricultural Development Authority (ADA) Act* of 1 July 1971 (amended in 1978). When it was first mooted, ADA did not incorporate the rural aspect.

(for instance cotton), but embarked on a variety of enterprises. A large proportion of its activities involved the production of agricultural commodities for sale, but its racist approach led to peasant dissatisfaction.

Notwithstanding its growing unpopularity which engendered popular resistance and agrarian discontentment (*Mangwende Commission*, 1961: 12; Bessant, 1987: 252; Burgess, 1997: 1) among the Gowe-Sanyati outgrower or plot-holder farmers,² the Corporation was never abandoned (Nyandoro, 2009: 56). Instead, after independence it was transformed into an agricultural and rural development agency, the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA). Africans resented TILCOR because they felt it nominally supported decentralisation, was not an altruistic venture, and benefitted the centre at their expense in terms of real productive output, incomes and services. This is in spite of the fact that Masaya, a former board member, contends that to a certain extent, TILCOR benefitted the people more than its successor, ARDA, by availing services and “transforming local societies to go into the cash economy”.³ Nevertheless, the microcosm agrarian discontent it caused was a result of the state rural agricultural policies of the time, coupled with the economic and political instability of the period — the greater part of which comprised the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) era — 1965-1979. Although Masaya maintains that “in terms of income and welfare, people within were better off than those outside the TILCOR structure”, he admits there was no decentralisation of administration by the Corporation (*Ibid*).

Most technical staff came from higher levels of the administration. Land Development Officers (LDOs) and agricultural demonstrators, for example, were run from the District Commissioner’s (DC) office within the structure of central district administration. The equalisation of income between black and white was not allowed. Masaya further argues that in colonial times, “decentralisation came as close as possible to the African projects only as a way of reinforcing the notorious master-servant relationship” (*Ibid*). Community development, which implied democratic decentralisation was, thus, centred on the master-servant principles when taken down to the lower levels. TILCOR perpetuated policies of deprivation of property rights as well as production decisions, and the master-servant relationship

² Outgrowers/“settlers” (save for references to white settlers), tenants, smallholders or plot-holders denote small-scale irrigation farmers adjacent to TILCOR/ARDA-irrigation estates.

³ Interview with Tichaendepi Masaya, former ARDA Board Member, Harare, 25 August 2015 & 22 January 2016. As Board Member (1980-1988) and parliamentarian, Masaya said, “We were the political implementers of ARDA policies”. (Interviews for this article were conducted in Gowe-Sanyati, Harare and Ramsgate (South Africa) between 1993 and 2016).

“constrained the dimension of expansion so that a lot of people were excluded as beneficiaries” (*Ibid*). In certain areas, production was not done by TILCOR per se, but it was linked to TILCOR policy as production was militarised. Responding to a question whether scholars can learn anything new about agencies dedicated to decentralisation apart from the fact that they seem to have been unsuccessful in Zimbabwe, Masaya (*Ibid*) categorically stated, “What we don’t want to learn were the policy aims [outlined in the next section] for the creation of TILCOR, but what we need to learn are the effective implementation methods by TILCOR which transformed the local environment and the lives of those allowed to participate by the Corporation”. Typically, TILCOR constituted an agency which, officially, was ascribed the status of operating within the decentralisation policy but with limits imposed by the state. This operational frame exposed the state-dominated institution to criticism from a Sanyati rural-periphery which was presumed to benefit from the same establishment.

From the literature on TILCOR, two central concepts stand out, that is, ‘development’ and ‘decentralisation’. Development scholars have, over time, grappled with a conceptual treatment of the two. For Alpert (1963: 1), economic development is a complex process in which economic and non-economic factors are closely interwoven. It can best be defined by its major objective — the exploitation of all productive-resources by a country or region in order to expand real income. A broader definition of development emphasises that development concerns not only man’s material needs, but also the improvement of his/her social conditions. Development is therefore not just economic growth, but growth-plus-change, that is, social, cultural and institutional (Alpert, 1963: 1). In colonial Zimbabwe, the TILCOR concept of development was incomplete if it was not accompanied, according to the first Chairman of TILCOR, Warwick A. Bailey, by decentralisation, known in the USA and other parts of the world as federalisation or generically-construed as a programme that bestows development and administration on local governance structures.

Since the 1950s, the actual implementation in Rhodesia of this favoured policy option to improve what Hankla (2009: 632-650) calls political and economic governance was, however, delayed. This was because TILCOR only came on the ground in 1968 following the establishment of the Gowe Pilot/Plot-holders Irrigation Scheme in September 1967 by the then DC for Gatooma (now Kadoma), R. L. Westcott, and the adoption of the TILCOR Act in 1968. From the onset, TILCOR lamented the fact that development in Rhodesia had, in the past, been “carried out mainly along the easiest and most viable areas — the main line of rail” (Blume, 1971; *Rhodesia Calls Magazine*, 1976: 1). It should be noted that TILCOR was not only construed as a ‘development agency’ of the state combining agro-industrial

development following UDI, but was also touted as constituting 'development with a national purpose'. The Corporation officials argued that "this left some 80% of the country out" (TILCOR, 1977: 1). In their view, for development to be inclusive of the outlying or frontier areas of the country such as the dry, infertile and previously tsetse-fly-infested Gowe-Sanyati, the state agency had to adopt the growth-point plan on the basis that "any viable development will only be achieved in tribal [now communal] areas by 'self-sustaining heartbeats' [rural service centres] in the far distant [Tribal Trust Lands] TTLs themselves".⁴ This meant adopting a decentralisation policy — a complex and multifaceted concept that involves the shifting of fiscal, political and administrative authority to lower level governments, and is usually motivated by political considerations. It was a policy tool for devolving power and resources from central or regional authorities to local governments to achieve equity, efficiency and accountability. It entailed the shifting of responsibilities between tiers of government by several instruments. Decentralisation passes responsibility and accountability to local bodies by bringing decision-makers closer to the people, and by enhancing the participation of the community in the decision-making and implementation processes.

Ideally, it was envisaged that decentralisation empowers or enhances local bodies' (local communities) participation in decisions regarding their development, thus making local governments work flexibly and creatively by efficiently mobilising all the available resources in their localities to fulfil set targets. This was not always the case in Sanyati as there was a disjuncture between local government and the irrigation plot-holders. Local governments' close relationship with the people enables them to be aware of local problems and needs, thus placing them in a better position to establish the 'right priorities' compared to a central (or regional) government far away. The rights and wrongs of the policy were, however, determined by the intended beneficiaries of the programme. Broadly, decentralisation creates an environment for planners to get appropriate and up-to-date information about the preferences and problems of the people. It should be an effective channel for the expression of their wants and priorities, and a motivating environment for decision-makers to respond to the local needs quickly and competently (World Bank, 2004: 1). Such a developmental projection was, albeit without consulting the people, designed to be the linchpin of the TILCOR long-term colonial plan of "swinging towards urban rather than

⁴ National Archives of Zimbabwe/Records Centre, hereafter referred to as NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280745, Location R19.10.5.3F, File: DEV/1 Planning Policy, "Township Services", 1971, p. 4.

agricultural development [or bringing the 'urban to the rural']" through creating, *inter alia*,

- (a) growth-points in selected advantage situations remote from [colonial] main centres;
- (b) rural growth-points which must be profitable in concept and sustained by the creation of a profitable aura;
- (c) growth-centres, which must offer job-availability for all sectors of the community, including opportunities commensurate with education and ability (*TILCOR Annual Reports, 1968-1979: 7 & 10*).

The debate over whether the TILCOR idea in reality constituted development and the stated ideal elements of an economic growth agenda has preoccupied economic historians interested in pre-independence development discourse in Zimbabwe. A key issue is whether the decentralisation policy context of the colonial era benefitted or imposed limits to African rural development, thus acting as a potential barrier to Sanyati farmers' success. In state circles, it was often put forward that overall growth would be achieved through broadening economic horizons to include regions situated far from the centre (Salisbury, now Harare). It was envisaged that the decentralisation element would assist in overcoming any barriers to development imposed by concentrating on major economic hubs or white enclaves to the detriment of the outlying rural centres. It was further suggested that under a UDI-driven industrialisation, decentralisation had the effect of raising the living standards of rural Africans and stimulating new economic sectors not merely confined to agricultural production. To ascertain the extent to which development was promoted in Sanyati, a wide array of measures such as archival research, official correspondence, secondary sources and interviews were employed to obtain the voice of the primary targets of TILCOR. TILCOR as an institution was a colonial economic and social 'engineering-agency' of the government. Therefore, exploring and attempting to understand how TILCOR fitted or did not fit into its own *modus-operandi* in view of the African population's disenchantment with racial segregationist policies and the various instruments used to achieve it, is important.

The study, through employing qualitative and quantitative data, recasts development within the broad decentralisation policy context based on a corporate agency implementing a rural growth strategy with few parallels in colonial Zimbabwe. Such a context helps in the appreciation of the rationale behind the implementation of TILCOR irrigation-based development. Actually, decentralisation provides the background to TILCOR as one of the many forms of state intervention in the development of Gowe-Sanyati. TILCOR was mandated in 1968 by an Act of Parliament to spearhead rural economic development in this former British settler-colony. Utilising

overhead irrigation, the Gowe Smallholder Irrigation Scheme predated both TILCOR and the Sanyati Main Irrigation Project (Core Estate) which was set up in March 1974. Although it was the smallest in size of the three major irrigation projects in the then Mashonaland Region, Sanyati (one of the 'high-profile' TILCOR projects) was perceived by the organisation to have perhaps the biggest potential compared to the Mushumbi Pools Estate which started operating in mid-1975, and the Mzarabani Estate established in 1976. The Sanyati Estate, the Gowe Smallholder Settlement Scheme, and Mushumbi and Mzarabani estates have usable areas of 1,000 hectares, 120 hectares, 1,500 hectares and 1,060 hectares, respectively (Gwerengwe, 1995: 1; TILCOR, 1977). In investigating development in Gowe-Sanyati and the possible results of the decentralisation policy in north-western Zimbabwe, political and economic institutions such as the state and agricultural loan-providers are important in understanding how and under what circumstances decentralisation was beneficial or non-beneficial (Hankla, 2009). The introduction of the decentralisation policy (principally meant to secure the white position) put TILCOR in place as an agency with a diversified focus to consolidate the policy.

The scope of the Corporation's activities was very wide. For example, it was involved in the agricultural, industrial, commercial and mining spheres of the country's development. It was not surprising, therefore, that the white settler regime fully backed the agency despite the resentment and resistance it faced from the rural population at the end of colonial rule. Resentment was due to its racially-discriminatory philosophy and administrative flaws. The state claimed it wanted to lure rural migrants from the major urban-centres in the interest of developing the rural-centres through decentralisation, but this was mere colonial rhetoric. The government was driven by the desire, at least in theory, to create additional internal markets to expand the economic opportunities of the rural areas through decentralisation, and the years 1956 to 1975 marked the height of the decentralisation policy debate in Zimbabwe. With TILCOR's foundation solidly resting on a powerful state, the agency survived until it was nominally supplanted by ARDA in 1980. Afterwards, ARDA remained the dominant irrigator of land in the country. In spite of the state declaring decentralisation as its rural development policy, the central government continued to exert so much governance influence which reduced regional authorities and local growers/farmers' power over the course development was to take in Sanyati. The policy became synonymous with centralisation.

As shown in parliamentary debates (1970) leading to the formation of ADA, the former Minister of Agriculture, David Smith, had appointed Nicholas Cambitzis as its Chairman. Cambitzis was assisted on the ADA Board by several whites (that is, Messrs J. H. Charsley, D. Frost, R. T.

Garvin, C. A. Heurtley, L. W. H. McLean, C. Millar, D. S. Morley and H. J. Quinton) believed to have enormous experience in the field of agriculture. ADA commenced operations in 1971 following the passage of the ADA Act (*The Rhodesia Herald*, 1971: 15; *The Financial Gazette*, 1978: 6).⁵ The Authority's principal function as enunciated by government was to implement decentralised development in Rhodesia's rural areas, but analysts ardently stated that the new organisation faced 'the problem of over-centralisation'.⁶ For instance, in the early days of the Gowe Scheme (1960s) and on the insistence of the DC (Westcott), irrigation work was largely routine, involving very strict adherence to instructions in order to ensure proper 'take-off'. Seed was distributed at the same time. The clearing and ploughing of fields had to conform to a clearly stipulated schedule and, most importantly, watering schedules had to be strictly observed by plot-holders. This compulsory synchronisation of activities illustrates that the plot-holders' area of decision in the productive process was tightly circumscribed, contrary to Westcott's argument that "crops suitable to the area and yielding the highest output under the circumstances were chosen by the agricultural staff in conjunction with the plot-holders".⁷

In reality, the plot-holders could not choose the main crop they wanted to grow; they only enjoyed limited choice in respect to their subsidiary crops. They had no leverage to decide when to plant and when to pick cotton (Gowe's main irrigation crop). Although some plot-holders watered their plots illegally, officially, they had no choice as to the frequency and method of watering their crops. Thus, the conditions of tenancy in the scheme meant that the tenants were compelled to cultivate their plots 'in an appropriate way' and in accordance with the scheme of crop rotation dictated by the field assistant in consultation with the DC. The DC maintained that "with an overhead irrigation scheme there had to be uniformity", in the interest of efficiency and viability (*Ibid*). However, despite some convincing scholarly arguments in favour of decentralisation and its envisaged merits, there is little evidence that the decentralised system employed by TILCOR and/or ADA led to the desired development outcomes anticipated by rural communities in Sanyati, an area previously perceived to be a backwater region of the country. The specific and major aims on which the parastatal was premised had wide-ranging application which suited the overall colonial

⁵ Also, NAZ (RC), ARDA, 280745, R19.10.5.3F, File: DEV/1 Planning Policy, "Confidential Correspondence: ADA", Hack, 5 June 1978, p. 1.

⁶ NAZ (RC), 348063, R24.9.6.4F, ADA/POL/1 Part 1: Formation of ADA. "ADA: Notes on Functions, Powers and Organisation". Economics Branch, SLA, 28 February 1969.

⁷ Interview with R. L. Westcott, Former DC-Gatooma, Ramsgate (South Africa), 23 April 1997 and 12 July 2005.

or settler development thinking, and they also demonstrate aspects of decentralisation in operation in Sanyati.

Initiating Decentralisation: A Case Study of Tilcor-Sanyati

Formation and Aims of TILCOR: A Focus on Rural Development

TILCOR, which operated in Sanyati on the basis of the *TILCOR Act*, was preceded by the establishment of the Gowe Pools Irrigation Scheme. The irrigation scheme was seen by the DC as a venture for spearheading development in the rural areas of the north-western region of the country. TILCOR and its Core Irrigation Estate ensured this goal was attained. TILCOR's overriding objectives were to achieve protracted economic development. The drought-ravaged Sanyati communal lands were selected initially for the resettlement of hordes of immigrants from the Rhodesdale Estate under the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) and, subsequently, for the promotion of a pilot irrigation scheme to act as a precursor to the TILCOR/ARDA Main Irrigation Estate. With the advent of TILCOR at Sanyati, the insistence on improving the pilot 'settler' farmers (outgrowers) assumed enormous dimensions. Paramount consideration was given to promoting a viable pattern of irrigation settlement at Gowe in which strict control of both the 'settlers' production programme and their finances was exercised.

Under TILCOR, the management of land, capital and labour was thrust on "technically qualified Europeans" who coordinated and made all decisions regarding land preparation, planting, irrigation, reaping, pest-control, harvesting and marketing, with "African" supervisors to simplify control of the fieldwork of the newly-settled peasants (Mhlanga, 1996: 2-3). The white managers ensured that only the 'most suitable applicants' (those of the 'highest quality' or with master-farmer certification) intending to join the scheme were selected. The 'settlers' had to have abundant previous farming experience, especially with regards to irrigation (*Ibid*: 4). This system was perpetuated throughout the colonial era with no consideration of the 'settlers' ever becoming independent decision-makers. In this respect, TILCOR's aims at Gowe were not different from the Gezira Board's.

The reasons for launching these as TILCOR outgrower-schemes were very clear. Gowe, like other irrigation projects in the country, became an outgrower section in 1974 for purely strategic reasons. According to Pazvakavambwa, Gowe was supposed to act as a "captive labour market" for the Sanyati Main Estate.⁸ The plot-holder's area of effective decision was

⁸ Interview with Simon C. Pazvakavambwa, Technical Co-ordinator — Water Resources Management Strategy (WRMS), Harare, 2 April 1997.

almost entirely restricted to whether or not he/she should work for the Estate. In general, the mushrooming of outgrower irrigation schemes between 1965 and 1974 was part of a programme to boost textiles and exports during UDI — a turbulent phase which was characterised by economic and political instability and microcosm agrarian unrest among irrigation plitholding-households. For Paraiwa, the need to promote a viable pattern of irrigation settlement at Gowe was given a boost towards the mid-1970s as a result of general government policy to establish outgrower settlements at all TILCOR and Sabi-Limpopo-operated Estates.⁹ Nevertheless, TILCOR was unrepresentative and pursued an apartheid-type development policy largely designed to curb the so-called “massively threatening” rural-urban drift.¹⁰

TILCOR, succeeded by ADA which incorporated the rural aspect to become ARDA in 1980, had very broad powers that entitled it to invest in anything that looked as if it was going to be profitable “to the end that the economic requirements of Rhodesia may be met”.¹¹ TILCOR’s responsibilities entailed identifying, initiating, promoting, evaluating, planning, co-ordinating, financing, developing, implementing and administering new agricultural development projects like irrigation schemes and new settlement areas, and the administration of growth-points and agricultural betterment schemes. It also had to improve the efficiency of the existing farming industry by means of longer-term structural improvements. Improvements included buying up and consolidating sub-economic farms, availing the necessary infrastructure, providing risk capital and management services, assisting cooperative ventures between farmers, facilitating research into optimum scales of production and farm management systems as well as the promotion of conservation works in cooperation with the Department of Conservation and Extension (CONEX). Thus, in order to direct these activities, the government decided to have an agency (TILCOR) to organise and implement its projects in the national interest (*ADA Annual Report, 1972: 5*).¹² However, TILCOR operated from a racial point of view in the rural areas, ensuring that the African population was ‘content’ and that it would not ‘flood’ the towns in search of employment. The conversion in 1974 of Gowe into an

⁹ Interview with M. G. Paraiwa, Director, District Development Fund (DDF), Harare, 5 November 1996.

¹⁰ NAZ (RC), 280745, R19.10.5.3F, DEV/1 Planning Policy, “TILCOR Policy with Regard to Agriculture in the TTLs & Township Services”, Meeting between TILCOR and ADA, 23 November 1971, p. 2.

¹¹ NAZ (RC), 348063, R24.9.6.4F, ADA/POL/1 Part 1: Formation of ADA, Parliamentary Debates/ADA Bill, 1970/1971, pp. 14-17.

¹² Also, Parliament of Zimbabwe Library hereafter referred to as POZ, Box FR 2126-2136, File: FR 2132/46950, Rhodesia National Farmers Union (RNFU): Information Folder No. 14, Salisbury: ADA, November 1977.

outgrowers scheme was, therefore, a deliberate effort to retain a reliable pool of labour for the white-run Sanyati Main Estate.

The aim was thus to contain the African threat to the survival of the white population. As stated by Bailey (*The Rhodesia Herald*, 1974: 4):

Every white Rhodesian's duty is to do something for the Tribal Trust Lands...The future for the European in Rhodesia was extremely limited unless the TTLs were developed...The time has come when every white man in Rhodesia must accept that without the development of the tribal areas and the provision of job opportunity for Africans, the future for white people in this country is extremely limited.

Whatever benefit accrued to the African was a bonus as it was always subsidiary to this overall aim. Hence, TILCOR (*Annual Report*, 1971/72: 7) stated that the economic situation of the rural areas could be changed through (a) economic development pitched to accommodate population growth or restraint; (b) diverting pressure from the land to allow the establishment of permanently viable agricultural production-units such as African smallholder irrigation schemes sufficiently flexible to respond to changing needs; (c) creating additional internal markets or growth-centres to expand the economic opportunities of the communal areas and associated incentives. Thus, the inception of the growth-point at Sanyati was fore-grounded by the formation of the TILCOR Main Estate which materialised in 1974.¹³

Emergence of TILCOR-Sanyati Growth-point

Once the main irrigation estate had been established, TILCOR was tasked with the responsibility of creating seven initially selected growth-points. Sanyati was the largest of this "first-generation" of TILCOR-promoted irrigation-based growth centres (Davies, 1981: 77). The others were Mashumbi Pools, Muzarabani, Hauna, Tsholotsho, Ngwezi and Maphisa. However, at estate-inception, the problems of adopting decentralisation alluded to earlier made it difficult to create a growth-point at that time. Although the growth-point theory had existed since the 1950s, it was not practically applied until the late 1970s. The TILCOR growth-point in Sanyati only emerged in 1977 primarily because of favourable and specific advantages of siting which were linked to the existence of irrigation at Gowe and the Main Estate in its vicinity. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, responsible for the affairs of communal areas, appointed TILCOR as its agent for this purpose. TILCOR's intentions were three-fold. In the first instance, it aimed to create rural

¹³ Official growth-points were usually designated in view of their possession of some important economic base — often a large irrigation scheme.

growth-points in the 'best possible situations' away from the main centres. Secondly, such growth-points were nominally intended to profit or benefit the area around them and, lastly, TILCOR was geared to make jobs available, not merely on the Estates and in the towns, but through improved conditions in the surrounding area.¹⁴ Allegedly, one of its social responsibilities was to plough back into the local communities. How TILCOR impacted on the overall development of Sanyati on the basis of its main irrigation scheme is very evident. The establishment of the main scheme by TILCOR gave rise to the service centre and was significant in providing irrigated produce (food and non-food crops) and associated services. Agricultural output from various TILCOR projects fed directly into the mainstream economy and therefore contributed to the overall development of the country.

Nevertheless, beyond the production of irrigated cash-crops for food and non-food purposes, the emergence of the TILCOR growth-point did not guarantee lasting economic security to the African population. TILCOR continued to undermine the security of the rural constituency it purported to serve by not whole-heartedly fulfilling all its undertakings. Schemes such as Gowe were constructed merely to create a group of local African expert farmers who were then used to spread demonstration effects in their areas by buying their own farms, leasing farms in the small-scale commercial farming areas, or simply practising such skills in the communal areas. As confirmed by Masaya, this was in line with TILCOR's segregationist programme of "ordering [its] policies and keeping Africans in the rural areas".¹⁵ The basic principle applied by the whites under territorial separate-development was 'keep them there and develop'. The object was to "develop an economy familiar to Africans and to be able to contain those Africans coming into the cash economy" (*Ibid*). The state and TILCOR insisted on choosing the type of crops Africans would grow so that they would not be competitive to whites. The idea was not to make them rich. In certain areas like Chiredzi, Africans produced maize, but were not allowed to grow cash crops such as wheat. In parts of Manicaland, Africans were not allowed to grow coffee although in 'wild' Nyamaropa (specifically created for Africans), they were permitted to grow this crop in addition to wheat, but using less sophisticated methods. Masaya argues that wheat-growing by Africans in Nyamaropa was merely "to fill the gap, but not to surpass the wheat grown by Europeans in Chiredzi", and this was part of the colonial government's import substitution programme to achieve growth (*Ibid*).

¹⁴ NAZ (RC), 272099, R19.3.12.1F, S10 Public Relations, "TILCOR Aims and Objectives", 1979.

¹⁵ Interview with Tichaendepi Masaya, Former ARDA Board Member, Harare, 22 January 2016.

According to Wekwete (1991: 189), since the 1950s, growth centre-planning was a key feature of regional development planning. It was initially linked with industrial development and economic growth, but increasingly it shifted towards the provision of basic services. The colonial government admitted in the 1960s that there were vivid signs of underdevelopment in the communal areas, which represented poorly developed areas with weak links to the urban centres of the country. In comparison, the European sector had a fairly well-developed hierarchy of settlements reflecting its diverse activities represented by agriculture, mining, manufacturing and commerce. The undermining of the rural areas was in spite of Sanyati's potential for the development of urban centres based on the agricultural operations of the Corporation at Gowe and the Main Estate. With the advent of the growth-point, the Corporation felt it was on course to achieve production success. This though would not be achieved on a state-oriented approach founded on racially-steeped principles of decentralised development until the Corporation was succeeded by ADA, later to become ARDA. Thus, with Euro-centred decentralisation as the basis for development premised on the growth-point idea, popular resistance to the TILCOR initiative emerged. Resistance persisted up to independence because numerous irrigation and dryland farmers felt not much had been done, as originally envisaged, to raise the African areas' level of development to that of the white-dominated urban nerve-centres which were concentrated along the main railway line.

Popular Resistance: Growing Unpopularity of the TILCOR Initiative

The emergence of discontent to the TILCOR rural development idea in Sanyati is not easy to understand. In 1968, the parastatal organisation's idea was perceived by both whites and Africans as a very noble gesture to spearhead growth and advance decentralisation in this frontier locality. However, popular resistance and growing unpopularity to the TILCOR development initiative did not take long to emerge. Directly located within the UDI period, resistance started to manifest itself in the wake of the UDI-prescribed TILCOR lease agreement of 1967 under which irrigation plot-holders were compelled to honour colonial administration-approved land-rent obligations or payments. Land levies became a stark reminder during the Second Chimurenga of similar yet staunchly detested exactions since 1894 such as hut, salt, dog, cattle and poll taxes, which were primarily instituted to procure African labour for European-owned farming and mining enterprises. The resistance of Gowe-Sanyati outgrowers and their dryland neighbours to measures that augmented the whiteman's revenue-collection system was greater than what the state had imagined. Although among some Sanyati inhabitants the TILCOR initiative brought a modicum of

progress, the Gowe irrigation plot-holders constituted one of the most vociferous pockets of resistance to TILCOR and its developmental schemes. Evidence of this can be gleaned from the emotions expressed by farmers (presumably the beneficiaries of the decentralisation policy) against how TILCOR, the Estate and the DC handled their grievances.

Land alienation was a chief grievance of the people as it deprived them of significant real income. Land allocative processes for the TILCOR-managed smallholder irrigators were determined by the Corporation and the state through the Ministry of Internal Affairs. At the inception of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme, prospective applicants for land had to be residents of Sanyati, preferably with master-farmer status.¹⁶ The former DC — Gatooma (Westcott) confirmed this by saying, "Plot-holders, who were in the main local Karanga, provided they were acceptable to the Tribal Authority, were selected on farming ability and experience; holders of Master-Farmer Certificates [of course] would have had a priority".¹⁷ Resistance to the colonial development agenda arose due to the selectivity of the plot allocation process and the allotment of small pieces (two to four hectares per plot-holder) of land — a scenario exacerbated when the main purpose of the system was revealed, that is, facilitation of labour procurement. Clearly, the scheme, just like the others throughout the country, was motivated by the need to make Rhodesia self-sufficient in certain raw materials like cotton required by British textile industries, and to strengthen the country's economy in the face of international sanctions, as well as to promote exports. Such schemes (part of the 'African contribution to white survival') were moreover meant to pre-empt political agitation during the war of liberation by what the settler state called keeping thousands of Africans in the country "busy and contented".¹⁸ Nevertheless, popular protest occurred as most farmers were inclined towards accumulation. Africans derived no contentment from the schemes due to the general smallness of irrigation plots. Small plots hardly made the schemes self-provisioning entities as projected by the state.

Among the most outspoken critics of the limited land allocation of the colonial irrigation programme were Norman Savata Gwacha, E. Munengami, and the late female plot-holder, Keresina Simon. Keresina was only considered by the DC to take over her old and frail husband's irrigation

¹⁶ The scheme for master-farmer awards became more important in the 1950s when prospective NPA or African Purchase Area (APA) farmers were obliged to obtain a master-farmer certificate before qualifying to purchase a farm.

¹⁷ Interview with R. L. Westcott, former DC — Gatooma, Ramsgate (South Africa), 12 July 2005.

¹⁸ Interview with Ian Douglas Smith, Former Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Belgravia, 28 September 1993.

plot. Another critic of the system was the late Emily Mazise who obtained a plot in 1968. As argued, she was allocated a plot merely because she was "a widow with enough family labour to help change irrigation pipes".¹⁹ Emphasis by the colonial land officials was on keeping the male (not female) population on the land. However, the shortage of land subsequently forced Gwacha to abandon the irrigation scheme and concentrate on ploughing his relatively bigger 10-acre dryland plot in Kusi Village (next to Gowe). For many years, he had flagrantly disregarded the DC's authoritarian ruling that dual-ownership of land by the plot-holders (which meant ownership of both an irrigation and a dryland holding) was unacceptable as it compromised their performance in the irrigation sector.

More outgrower grievances centred on less open lines of credit for African farmers during the TILCOR days. It was difficult to access Agricultural Loan Fund (ALF), ADF, Cooperative Society and Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) loans. Before independence, the financing of inputs was the responsibility of the ALF, an undertaking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which was administered by the Gatooma District Administrator for Gowe. It was a responsibility which was also undertaken by the ADF and the Sebungwe Cooperative Society on behalf of the Gowe Irrigation Cooperative. After independence, the new arrangement was that the AFC would provide seasonal credit to the Gowe 'settlers', starting with the 1980/1981 summer-cropping programme (*ARDA Annual Report*, 1986: 11). The day-to-day administration of the loans was in the hands of TILCOR which advised 'settler' borrowers on their indebtedness on a monthly basis (*Ibid*). In most instances, plot-holders were denied loans on account of their indebtedness to loan-providers. Cotton agriculture being a capital and labour-intensive venture required an assured financial backing. Since the availability of capital to the plot-holders was not always guaranteed, considerable personal initiative was required to compete with the rest and measure up to the expectations of the DC or the Estate management in terms of productive output and capacity to repay loans. Not many documented cases of popular resistance to the non-availability of loans exist, but the frustration and

¹⁹ Interview with R. L. Westcott, Former DC — Gatooma, Ramsgate (South Africa), 12 July 2005. For more detail on land allocation at Gowe, see also interviews with Norman Savata Gwacha and E. Munengami, Gowe plot-holders, Gowe-Sanyati, 8 January 1997; NAZ (RC), 158098, C19.10.7R, DC's File: Gowe Irrigation Scheme 1965-1971: Plans, "Sanyati Irrigation Plots", 1967-69, pp. 1-2; NAZ (RC), 158098, C19.10.7R, DC's File: Gowe Irrigation Scheme 1965-1971: Plans, R. L. Westcott to PC Mashonaland South, 14 February 1969; and NAZ (RC), 100817, 3.13.8F, AGR/16 Irrigation Schemes Individual 351-420, Noel Robertson, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Internal Affairs to W. H. H. Nicolle, 6 March 1967, p. 1.

desperation of farmers to secure loans to purchase essential inputs such as seed, fertiliser and cotton pesticides is clear.

Resistance and the increasing unpopularity of TILCOR was revealed by the refusal by plot-holders to synchronise their agricultural operations by planting, applying fertiliser, weeding and harvesting at the same time (according to a pre-determined schedule) as ordered by the DC and Estate management. Such action was, however, not condoned by the authorities and it was usually punishable by eviction, a procedure not only contested, but staunchly resisted. According to Gwacha, the former Acting DC for Gatooma District, D. K. Parkinson threatened plot-holders with eviction from the Gowe Scheme for "refusal to accept agricultural advice and for ownership of both a dryland and an irrigation plot".²⁰ As far as the plot-holders were concerned, such authoritarian measures hampered development within the context of a democratised, decentralisation programme which they wanted to see, but was missing. For Gasper (1988: 431-432), the experience of TILCOR fits Sylvester's "reformist" strand, though firmly within an "authoritarian" setting, and was part of a strategy to keep Africans in rural areas. Hence, the parastatal organisation was strongly resisted even within its parent ministry (Internal Affairs), especially in the district administration section (Sibanda, 1984: 161-74). The draconian colonial measures became significant bases for resistance and a main bone of contention (especially during the liberation struggle) as they did not allow African farmers autonomous decision-making in their agricultural schedules. The decentralisation that was pursued had a big centralisation focus, instead. It did not simply lead to the questioning and ostracising of the policy by the plot-holders, but produced an anti-racial alliance of African irrigators and their dryland farming counterparts against TILCOR. The state's decentralisation policy signified popular resistance and the growing unpopularity of the TILCOR development initiative, thereby marking the quiescence of the decentralisation debate until TILCOR was replaced by ARDA. This resistance, as some documented Latin American and African cases illustrate (Hutton & Cohen, 1975: 105-130), was interpreted by the TILCOR authorities as African resistance to change and not resistance to the detested nature of colonial-type decentralisation. This was not true. Plainly, TILCOR was far from being altruistic, and its inception did not result in efficient allocation of public agricultural or industrial resources as the state Corporation was not entirely disposed towards developing African areas within the decentralisation policy context it purported to pursue in the UDI era. Hence, Gowe-Sanyati farmers' resistance confirmed that the agency, in

²⁰ Interviews with Norman Savata Gwacha, communal farmer and former Secretary of Gowe Cooperative Society, Sanyati, 8 January 1997.

its original structure, had less rural bias, and seemed less people-centred (but pro-settler) in contrast to what the independence government wanted after 1980.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The article has investigated the effects of TILCOR/state-agency decentralisation in Zimbabwe's Sanyati region. An evaluation of the rationale and the development trajectory the Corporation engendered reveals significant findings. The article finds that TILCOR was unsuccessful in its attempt to decentralise because it was influenced by the broad agricultural sector dynamics in Southern Rhodesia where the role of the African peasantry was subordinated to the whims of an overbearing state which supported white settler interests. The state merely gave token support to the master-farmer class. It was neither consultative nor altruistic. Attempts to decentralise economic activity occurred throughout Africa and the world during the colonial period, and continue to be popular in post-independence African economies. However, the Gowe-Sanyati case, despite some modicum of success, replicated the failed decentralisation experience of the large-scale schemes used for comparative purposes in this article in that the hope for devolution by the irrigation and dryland peasantry was never completely satisfied, leading to unique forms of resistance. It was not just resistance to change, but to the nature of colonial-type decentralisation which was illusory. The article offers the TILCOR/state-agency as a case for understanding the successes and failures of Zimbabwe's decentralisation programme and the lessons that can be learned from a politically and not socially-driven process. This is done through connecting the local experience to similar developments in other parts of the world utilising sources that have discussed such episodes.

While development in rural Sanyati was to a certain measure achieved, it rather was inconspicuous and camouflaged development. It was premised on the attainment of ulterior motives by the TILCOR Board which represented the voice of the racist white settlers. The decentralisation attempted in north-western Zimbabwe's Sanyati region had its limits as revealed by the growing peasant disenchantment with the policy and its implementing agents. The colonial state invariably determined the degree of decentralisation that it accommodated. This is why TILCOR was perceived by Gowe-Sanyati farmers not as an agency for their development, but for their underdevelopment as it emphasised 'modernisation' without real development, illustrating a case of sticks and carrots. The gains of TILCOR enterprises were, thus, outweighed and overshadowed by the non-benefits since the central government was clearly dominant and sub-national authorities were mere agents of its will.

Despite TILCOR's non-benevolence towards the outgrower farmers and problems in implementing decentralised development in rural Sanyati in the years 1956 to 1980, there were, however, no signs of collapse of this parastatal agency (save for the temporary challenges imposed by drought and war). This is evident in that it survived into the independence era, as ARDA, but conforming to a structure and performing functions which were not different from its colonial mandate. The organisation remained on the precipice of achieving great things throughout its existence. Whatever the intrinsic worth of TILCOR, the fact remains that the decentralisation debate continued to exist in Zimbabwe in one form or another, but was never really resuscitated in a fundamental way up to 1980. The development path pursued by ARDA from the 1980s onwards may be a subject for another inquiry, but this article helps question the future relevance (in light of unfulfilled expectations) of the TILCOR development initiative. Public enterprises like TILCOR laid the bases of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation and underdevelopment of rural irrigation communities. The TILCOR racialised approach (a negation of the promised deployment of basic services away from white-designated areas), thus, had to be discarded by its successor (ARDA) for a new development paradigm whose relevance to 21st Century development and anti-poverty efforts is yet to be assessed.

It is thus recommended that for greater appeal to the irrigators, the successor to TILCOR should apply more genuine, effective and transparent decentralised development which allows for the promulgation of policies that bestow power to regional as well as sub-regional and community-based authorities. This would prevent instructions from above whilst encouraging the separation of powers between the plot-holders, ARDA and the government. Clearly-separated powers help avoid conflict between various levels of government and, at the same time, promote cooperation between the centre (state), regional authorities and the local communities (villagers) for efficient public policy delivery in the interest of development.

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