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# THE ZIMBABWE JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS

(Formerly The Rhodesian Journal of Economics)

Editors: A. M. Hawkins, J. A. C. Girdlestone and J. M. Robertson

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**TRIBAL TRUST LAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED :  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE VICTORIA PROVINCE**

Mrs. B. F. Hanratty\*

**INTRODUCTION**

In Tribal Trust Lands (TTL's) in Rhodesia there have been two distinctly separate approaches to development -

1. As in Tilcor-type development, discussed by Mr. Hawkins, where -
  - (i) Large natural resources exist;
  - (ii) Relatively large amounts of capital are available, and
  - (iii) Considerable expertise is available.

Under these conditions, single viable bases are developed on which urbanization may be promoted.

2. As in Victoria Province within its TTL's, where there are generally no such large single natural resources available at the present time. This is not to say that such resources do not exist at all within these TTL's, but they do not occur in the more accessible and densely populated TTL's of that Province. Moreover, the capital for such development does not exist either.

The problem of relieving land pressure has, therefore, been tackled in two main directions -

- (i) Through agricultural improvements.
- (ii) Through the promotion of urbanisation.

**AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Here a multi-directional approach has been adopted, this Province having been fortunate enough to possess a very progressive Agricultural Department within Internal Affairs.

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\* Formerly Urban Controller with Tilcor. Now works for the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority.

1. The conventional methods of improved dryland farming techniques, the application of fertiliser, formation of co-operatives, etc.
2. The establishment of small-scale irrigation schemes, eight at present in operation. These are limited in scale because -
  - a) Often only very small areas of suitable land are available, sometimes as little as 30 ha.
  - b) There is a shortage of water for irrigation, and most of these schemes are operated from river abstraction rather than storage dams.
  - c) The distance from markets of many of these schemes.

In one respect, these schemes have been highly successful in that unlike many such schemes in Rhodesia they have continued to flourish despite the war and other adversities.

From a planning viewpoint, this is significant, as their success is attributed to the fact that plottolders are responsible for the administration of their own schemes. The Provincial Agricultural Department supplies an Extension Officer for each scheme, but in no other way interferes. The plottolders' communities make all decisions regarding new applications for plots, the removal of unsatisfactory plottolders, etc.

However, these are largely subsistence plots, single units being 0,1 ha. (one-quarter acre) in size, with a 2 to 3 cropping pattern per annum; plottolders may increase their units, depending upon the decisions of the committee, and some plottolders have up to 6 ha. of such irrigation land.

As a result of this, and the fact that such limited areas are available, the total impact of such schemes on the problems of the Province have not been very great. A relatively small number of people has been released from dryland cropping, and many have retained their grazing rights in their original home areas.

However, a multiplier effect has been felt in the Province, and in one TTL, within the Province, over 600 ha (1 500 acres) are being irrigated by individual farmers on holdings from 0,1 ha to 2 ha by installing their own abstraction devices on local rivers.

### 3. Grazing Schemes

Considerable success was achieved with grazing schemes in this Province,

but two factors have had a deleterious effect upon these schemes -

- a) Increasing land pressure has driven farmers to converting grazing land to dryland cropping.
  - b) War and foot-and-mouth disease have disrupted organisation and marketing in the Province.
4. The Province has a history of considerable success in the establishment of Master Farmer Schemes and Master Farmer Training Centres, many of which have survived, despite the war.
  5. There is a very strong Young Farmers' Club movement and an equally strong Women's Club movement in this Province, both of which have contributed greatly to agricultural improvements in the Province. The Young Farmers' Clubs have been the most effective channel for the planning of woodlots, for example.

Despite all these attempts, the problems related to over-population continued to proliferate in this Province. This is because of the many problems which this Province faces -

- a) It has the greatest concentration of population in Rhodesia - 35% to 40% of the country's total in about 1/6th of the land area, and with no major urban centre.
- b) Much of it is poorly watered, in areas receiving 15" - 20" of rain per annum and less, and much of this unreliable and irregular.
- c) Nearly the whole Province lies in Categories III, IV and V agricultural land (the poorest) with minute areas in Category IIB.
- d) Large areas are sandveld requiring much fertilising and prone to erosion, and with little underground water.
- e) A marked lack of surface water in many areas as most of the rivers in this Province have an annual flow.
- f) The peripheral position of Victoria Province in relation to the main core of development along the central watershed, aggravated by the closure of the Mozambique border and further isolation of the south-east.

Therefore, despite all other attempts, the problems were not generally alleviated.

1. Over-population and pressure on agricultural land.
2. Urban drift, with up to 10% of the total population in some TTL's absent from their homes, mainly males between 20 and 40 years of age,

giving rise to problems such as breakdown of family life, lack of labour for certain rural jobs which have now to be undertaken by women and so on.

3. The creation of not only rural poor resulting from all this, but probably also urban poor elsewhere.
4. Capital continued to be tied up on economically marginal land and buildings.
5. Capital is often not invested at all.
6. Capital which is sometimes employed productively but without any "multiplier" effect, as in the marked scattering of tiny business centres, some consisting of nothing more than perhaps a grinding mill or a general dealer.

#### REASONS FOR URBANISATION PROGRAMME

1. In a further attempt to reduce existing problems.
2. As an attempt to harvest capital.
3. To implement the Central Government's regionalisation/decentralisation policy on urbanisation policy which was embarked upon about four years' ago largely under the aegis of the Provincial Authority.

#### STEPS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

1. The first and major problem was to select suitable urban development points, referred to locally as growth points. It was considered uneconomic and impractical to establish new towns. In any case, existing Business Centres tend to be arranged in a sensible pattern in relation to population, infrastructure and reasonable travel distances.

As there are about 1000 business centres in Victoria Province, the scale of the problem was fairly considerable.

2. The second major problem to be overcome was the lack of availability of data and statistics, though Victoria Province is better served in this respect than most areas. Much could be established about Gross Disposable Incomes from Statutory Marketing organisations, etc., available infrastructure was examined, present levels of development were ascertained, and great emphasis was placed on water supplies for future development in view of the lack of such resources in those TTL's.
3. Growth points were finally selected, and definition of regions was

started. Unfortunately, at this point, war intervened, the whole process became complicated by the Protected Village (P.V.) programme. However, care was taken that possible future growth points should be individually planned so that their development would not be hampered in the future by poor planning at present.

4. Gathering of data on villages was undertaken by spending as long as possible in each such centre, observing everything possible from but services, movements of bus passengers, shopping pattern, origins of workers, attitudes of the locals, etc. Unfortunately, neither time nor the war permitted lengthy, efficient Israeli-type investigations. Nonetheless, some quite extraordinary information was revealed by these surveys.

In the cases of two, one with a resident population of 247 and the other with only 37, the number of bus passengers passing through each of these centres annually was estimated to be about 165 000 and 220 000 respectively; not even a supply of drinking water existed. Approximately a half in each case changed buses at these centres, and another third spent money on food and/or drink.

5. Economic bases on which development might be promoted were determined, e.g. much is known about cattle sales, etc., but nothing of the very considerable internal sales.
6. Because of the lack of any single great natural resource base, urbanisation of the Tilcor type could not be promoted. Therefore, the attitude has been adopted that human beings are the greatest single resource in Victoria Province's TTL's, and the development of the human resources must be the prime aim.

However, it was felt that the level of skills is generally such that no sophisticated industries could be established in such growth points at this time even if all other necessary factors for industrialisation were present.

Therefore, it was necessary to stimulate activities which might lead to the training of people to a level where more sophisticated industries might be introduced.

7. Certain factors had to be considered when determining which activities might be introduced -
  - (i) They should be likely to succeed at the level of skills and expertise available in the area at present.
  - (ii) They should, wherever possible, harvest whatever local capital might be available.

- (iii) They should provide for the needs of the area concerned.
- (iv) They should increase the value of local products before being exported from the area, e.g. increase in the value of cleaned maize seed.
- (v) They should be labour intensive to draw off as many people as possible from agricultural land.

#### 8. Activities Promoted

Those which have succeeded or show some sign of succeeding are -

- a) Bus Centres providing better facilities for both passengers and goods.
- b) More efficient and more accessible marketing centres so that even minute surpluses are saleable.
- c) Simple industries, e.g. treatment of gum poles for fencing and building, furniture from local timber, and for local needs, collective drying and preparation of skins, seed cleaning and, possibly, clothing in Gutu TTL where there is an extraordinarily large number of tailors.
- d) Markets for local products, especially for irrigators.
- e) e) Freehold tenure of land for all types within the TTL's. This was considered to be vital because -
  - (i) The urban population is likely to become more settled if they own the land, and this in turn might help to increase urban growth through a multiplier effect.
  - (ii) Hopefully, such people might abandon their agricultural holdings in the TTL's, so releasing land for genuine farmers.
  - (iii) That a greater investment might occur in better buildings, infrastructure, etc.
  - (iv) That retired urban workers might settle in such growth points rather than return to agricultural land where they are unlikely to be highly efficient agriculturalists after a prolonged absence from the land.



- (v) Provide focal points from schools, colleges, etc., which are sorely needed in this Province.

#### CONCLUSION

The methods applied in this Province are obviously a more prolonged and slower growing process than the Tilcor method. It is too soon to tell what effect this policy will have on the problems in this Province, especially with the war situation at present, but it is hoped that a fairly natural evolution into urbanisation is being promoted.



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