

# COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

GOVERNANCE OF GRAZING LANDS AND SCHEMES  
IN ZIMBABWE WITH EMPHASIS ON SCHEMES IN  
MASVINGO PROVINCE

By

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*February 2001*



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PROGRAMME FOR LAND AND AGRARIAN STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE

## COMMONS SOUTHERN AFRICA

*Occasional Paper Series*

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# **Governance of Grazing Lands and Schemes In Zimbabwe with Emphasis on Schemes in Masvingo Province**

Prisca H. Mugabe, H Hamudikuwanda and K. Marovanidze

## **INTRODUCTION**

There have been concerns about land degradation and many other problems associated with agricultural production in the communal lands (areas) of Zimbabwe. Concern over high stocking rates of livestock, "overgrazing", and what was perceived as a low level of productivity in peasant farming areas was first expressed by government officials in the 1920s and has over the years involved several attempts to restructure land use settlement patterns (Cousins, 1988). These attempts include the introduction of grazing schemes.

Grazing schemes are interventions aimed at, firstly, improving livestock productivity in communal areas, and secondly, conserving the vegetation cover of grazing land and reducing the risk of irreversible environmental degradation (Cousins, 1988). It was assumed that the low productivity was due to poor management, both of stock and rangeland feed resources, and that the high stocking rates caused severe land degradation. In general, grazing schemes in the Zimbabwe communal areas aim to control stock numbers, restrict access to communal rangeland by means of fences, and manage the rangeland by means of rotational resting systems. Grazing schemes have involved the modification of traditional tenure rules and the development of a new kind of resource management institution, the committee. Sometimes management decisions and procedures are embodied in sets of by-laws, formally written down and officially sanctioned or else informally held in the memories of community members. They are an example of the evolution of common property management systems.

Grazing schemes have not been assured of success. It has been reported that most problems that have hampered grazing schemes relate to governance. In Southern Africa, governance trends reveal a shift towards decentralizing decision-making structures and processes (Ntshona, 2000). Within the natural resource management sector, most countries of the region have embarked on processes of decentralization. This has been seen in the development of local institutions. Decentralisation is aimed at enhancing local governance and awarding communities greater control over the management of the valuable natural capital of the region. Before changes in the governance of grazing schemes are proposed, it is necessary to conduct in-depth studies on the weaknesses and strengths of grazing schemes that were established hitherto. The lessons learnt could be valuable in deciding on the best models to try in the future.

In this paper principles of good governance, and governance structures and issues of grazing schemes that have been documented will be presented. In addition, governance structures and issues, and case studies predominantly from Masvingo Province will be analysed based on the principles of good governance. Masvingo

Province was selected for study because of the abundance of grazing schemes and the importance of livestock in the farming systems.

### **Analytical Framework**

Cousins (1993) suggested modifications to the Oakeron model for the analysis of common property management. Cousins's model describes the interplay between (i) ecological and technical characteristics (ii) socio-economic structure and (iii) power structures and institutional arrangements to produce (iv) patterns of interaction and struggle and (v) outcomes.

The model has an element of key actors in recognition of the complexity of political dynamics at work in common property situations and the consequent need to clearly identify the agents engaging in interaction and struggle. This paper is not about model validation. We, however, acknowledge that the success of a grazing scheme or any common property (outcome) is the result of sound ecological settings and technical management as well as an effective governance system. For this paper's objectives, we will mainly address the power structures and institutional arrangements component of the model.

### **Principles of Good Governance**

The design principles for sustainability of community based natural resource management (Ostrom, 1990) will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of grazing scheme governance. These principles are:

1. *Clearly defined boundaries*: individuals or households who have rights to withdraw resource units from the common property resource (CPR) must be clearly defined, as must be the boundaries of the CPR itself.
2. *Congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions*: appropriation rules restricting time, place, technology, and quantity of resource units are related to local conditions and to provision rules requiring labour material and/or money.
3. *Collective choice arrangements*: most individuals affected by the operational rules can participate in modifying the operational rules.
4. *Monitoring of common property resource conditions and appropriate behaviour*: monitors who actively audit CPR conditions and appropriator behaviour are accountable to the appropriators or are the appropriators.
5. *Graduated sanctions*: appropriators who violate operational rules are likely to be assessed graduated sanctions – depending on the seriousness and context of the offence – by other appropriators, by officials accountable to these appropriators, or by both.
6. *Conflict resolution mechanisms*: appropriators and their officials have access to low-cost local arenas to resolve conflicts.
7. *Minimal recognition of rights to organize*: the rights of appropriators to devise their own institutions are not challenged by external government authorities.

8. *Nested enterprises*: appropriation, provision, monitoring, enforcement, conflict resolution, and governance activities are organized in multiple layers of nested enterprises.

These principles could be used to evaluate governance structures and the general governance of grazing schemes that have been studied in Masvingo province and elsewhere in Zimbabwe.

## **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES**

Historically, governance structures in grazing land and schemes have involved traditional, local and external authorities. The extent of involvement of these different authorities varied over the historical periods in Zimbabwe (pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence period) as reported by Cousins (1992a; 1996).

### **Pre-colonial period**

Cousins (1992a; 1996) reported that there was no general agreement as to the nature of pre-colonial land tenure and resource management systems in Zimbabwe. However, according to Hughes (1974) (cited by Cousins, 1996) in the "traditional" society, general rights to land were acquired by virtue of membership to a community and from this flowed more specific rights to what the community considered to be "the reasonable use of natural resources available to the community". One of these rights was the "Right of Pasture" which allowed individuals to herd their livestock on community grazing land. The community as a whole owned the grazing land and any member of the community had all the rights for grazing her animals. In this system, there was no strict limitation of an individual's utilization of the resource and the individual was not accountable for management of the grazing land.

The system was not one of free and open access to resources because the group regulated the rights and claims of each in such a way as to obtain their entire share of the common benefits. There was thus a considerable degree of individual security, guaranteed by accepted membership of a community. However, such membership involved obligations as well as rights and the allocation of land rights functioned also as a mechanism of social control.

The land holding community consisted of a hierarchy of land communities: the village or kraal (*musha*) within the tribal ward (*dunhu*), the tribal ward within the chiefdom (*nyika*). Membership within the community depended upon acceptance by traditional authority at all these levels, but specific allocations of land for cropping or grazing livestock were made at lower levels, either at the tribal ward or the kraal. The tribal ward was the most important territorial community and rivers, streams or hilltops marked its boundaries (Cousins, 1996).

According to Cousins (1992a) there was no institutionalized management of grazing land. The Shona people possibly operated a pastoral transhumance system. There is some evidence of the existence of a grazing management system in the pre-colonial Ndebele kingdom in which herds of livestock were moved from the "sourveld" in the wet season down to "sweetveld" areas in the dry season. It can be surmised that traditional authority was responsible for sanctioning any such movements. It is likely that land and grazing resources were abundant and that the decision to move

livestock from “sourveld” to “sweetveld” and *vice versa* was based on the body condition of the livestock. Livestock would be moved when body condition began deteriorating.

Little or nothing remains of this pre-colonial rangeland management systems because of the impact of conquest, settler rule and successive state interventions during the colonial era.

### ***Analysis of governance in the pre-colonial period***

The pre-colonial system of grazing management described by Cousins (1996) indicates the predominant role of the tribal authority, the existence of internal regulation, sharing of common benefits and implied usufruct rights to land and resources. The pre-colonial systems appeared to satisfy most of the principles of good governance of grazing management systems. It could be argued that the existence of accepted kraal and tribal ward boundaries constituted defined boundaries, which could have been respected in the use grazing resources. The movement of livestock from “sourveld” to “sweetveld” and vice-versa is evidence that the community accepted that grazing land in use had to be within a prescribed locus. This would afford all grazing areas some rest during the year. Self-evaluative mechanisms as in the modern sense require some formal arrangements with regard to, for example, frequency of meetings, leadership accountability and representation of local interest. Such arrangements would not have been refined but existed in the pre-colonial era. For example, Cousins (1996) reported that the allocation of land rights to individuals functioned as a mechanism of social control. The ultimate authority of the tribal leaders could be used to deal with cases of abuse of resources.

Adjudications by tribal leaders were based on consensus and consultation, initially, with some form of confidential kitchen cabinet (the council of elders) – on whom they relied for advice (Mbigi, 1997: 27). If the chief could not convince the council of elders, he could only go against their advice through broader consensus and legitimacy by taking the issue for consensus to the people through a village assembly. The chief was a link with the ancestral spirits whose help could be relied upon in times of crisis. Good governance required the avoidance of confrontation and a focus on political accommodation, compromise and tolerance. Freedom of expression, broad consultation and democracy were essential elements of good governance. The preservation of good governance institutions and traditions was more important than charismatic individual leaders.

### **Colonial Era**

Concern over the high stocking rates on grazing land in communal lands and overgrazing was expressed in the 1920s. When persuasion to take up the recommended measures failed to achieve the desired results, the colonial state resorted to coercion. Several acts and policies were adopted, including the Centralisation Policy of Aivord, the National Land Husbandry Act of 1951, and the Natural Resources Board regulations of 1945 (Cousins 1992a). These acts and policies were intended to foster correct use of arable and grazing land and control livestock numbers. They succeeded in generating a deep-seated resistance to interventions of this nature and souring of relations between the state and the

peasantry. In the late 1960s a belated return to the principle of voluntary acceptance led to a certain degree of success.

### ***Grazing schemes in the 1970s (Colonial era)***

Grazing schemes were introduced with the intention of using the principle of short duration grazing. The approach was to persuade and not coerce communal farmers to adopt grazing schemes. Land was demarcated into arable and grazing, and boundaries agreed with the chief, headman and surrounding kraalheads. Grazing lands were further demarcated into at least five paddocks, and plans allowed for stock routes to dips and kraals, and made provisions for existing and potential water supplies and sites for homesteads. Voluntary committees were set up to run the schemes. The participants were trained to keep records and manage finances. Levies for fencing and fines for grazing the wrong paddocks were charged. The grazing schemes collapsed partly due to the effects of population growth. Cousins (1987) also reported that as time grew on, society became increasingly dominated by the liberation struggle and as the state came increasingly under attack, government sponsored programmes such as grazing schemes stood little chance of surviving.

### ***Analysis of governance in the colonial period***

What is clear about governance during the colonial period was the heavy hand of central government, except in the 1970s. There was hardly any evidence of collective choice arrangements, minimal recognition of rights to organize, and appropriate monitoring. In general, sanctions were not considered graduated, with excessive penalties for menial offences. The colonial authorities virtually negated the central role of traditional leaders and the consensus and genuine consultation that was inherent in traditional governance. The numerous acts passed during the colonial era is evidence of the excessive use of legislation as an instrument to solve problems pertaining to management of communal arable and grazing land. The colonial approach to the management of arable and grazing areas had a few governance strengths. Boundaries of operation and community beneficiaries were defined. To some extent nested enterprises were in existence.

The attempts to plan the use of land and implement grazing schemes during the colonial era created deep-rooted suspicions on the intentions of central authority. Forced destocking left a sour taste in communal lands and to this day it is difficult to get correct figures on household livestock herd sizes from those aware of the de-stocking history. The resistance mounted by communal farmers to interventions on land use, introduced by central government during the colonial era, have made external, local and democratically elected authorities over-cautious on issues related land use and distribution. Up to today, the definition of grazing scheme boundaries and stock limits may immediately evoke a sense of coercion reminiscent of the colonial authority. These suspicions and resistance have been observed in densely populated areas; where ironically there is the greatest need to arrest environmental degradation.

In the 1970s the according of some rights to traditional leaders to allocate land and decide how it should be used was recognition of the need for some internal regulation in the communal lands. External influence from central government



was, however, still present since District Commissioners had overall control over land allocation. The importance of this change was that central government had recognized the need for internal regulation, collective action and defining of boundaries by the communities. The ultimate power given to the District

Commissioners to allocate land left some suspicions on the genuineness of devolution of power to local leaders. The general perception was that only local leaders who were pawns of the District Commissioners could allocate land and only as directed by the District Commissioners. The approach taken by extension workers in the establishment of grazing schemes in the 1970s of persuading rather than coercing communities was then novel. These schemes were a success, perhaps because of the approach of soliciting voluntary participation, community management, cooperation of the traditional authority and desisting from employing forced destocking (Cousins, 1992a). These factors conform to Ostrom's principles that relate to internal regulation, collective choice arrangements and clear criteria for membership.

### **The Post-Independence Period**

The ending of the liberation war in 1980 saw order returning to the countryside, and the extension staff again began promoting grazing schemes. Cousins (1992a) citing other authors reported that government policies after independence manifested much continuity with those of the pre-independence era. In addition, some of the problems encountered in the implementation of grazing schemes had their origins in the muted but nevertheless strongly felt resistance by rural producers to state interventions in the locally evolved system of land use, patterns of settlement and tenure. The government of Zimbabwe made several policy changes with regard to land tenure. Notable was the Communal Land Act of 1982.

### **The Communal Land Act**

The Communal Land Act of 1982 deprived Tribal Land Authorities of the powers to allocate land in communal lands. This responsibility was transferred to district councils. Despite this act, there was confusion regarding who was responsible for land allocation.

In 1984 the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe instituted a new structure of development planning. This structure consisted of Village Development Committees (VIDCOs), Ward Development Committees (WADCOs), Rural District Councils (RDCs) and Provincial Councils headed by Provincial Governors. The ward became the planning unit and the Ward Chairperson was an RDC Councillor. Boundaries of VIDCOs were delineated without regard to natural resource endowments, for example, grazing lands used by different villages. Village and ward committees took over the role to allocate land from traditional leaders. Although traditional leaders continued to be recognized, their authority was seriously eroded.

The Communal Land by-laws of 1985 demonstrated the desire by the government of Zimbabwe to have land use in communal areas controlled by district councils. Regarding livestock, they stated that councils could specify the maximum number of livestock that may be grazed. Councils could also require owners to reduce their stock. Planned areas could be declared and persons who were not members of communities within these areas could be prohibited

traditional leaders. Central government gave RDCs powers to control the use of grazing and land resources. The RDCs and their associated non-traditional leaders, through their relevant institutions, were given responsibilities for allocating land and grazing resources but they did not have as much knowledge of these resources as the traditional leaders.

An array of external organizations was involved in the establishment of grazing schemes. This brought in additional actors to the scenario. External donor agents had conditions that had to be met for funds to be donated and funding renewed. Extension agents were involved, and they advocated an approach to grazing scheme governance of persuasion and tolerance, to the extent of underplaying the limiting of stock numbers to match grazing resources available, a fundamental requirement for ecological success of schemes. Thus there was little congruence of appropriation and provision rules and local conditions. It is probably true that the multiple actors involved created some confusion among farmers in relation to the governance of grazing schemes.

In terms of the principles of good governance, there was evidence of defined boundaries, clearly defined community and project beneficiaries, and clear criteria for membership. At least the legal framework appeared to provide for this.

Collective choice arrangements, including the devolution of responsibility and rights to the community were rather limited, ostensibly due to the land and grazing resource allocation powers given to local government institutions and the need to satisfy donor conditions. It is often argued that grazing schemes were started and governed through collective action. However, the freedom accorded a community to make choices was often circumscribed within the laws of local government and donor conditions.

Definition of clear and implementable self-evaluative mechanisms, with leadership accountability and representation of local interest appeared to be inadequate. The local leadership, especially the non-traditional leaders were not always accountable to the community. Monitoring and conflict-resolution mechanisms were weak. Conflicts between the different leadership groups did not foster the establishment of nested enterprises.

Numerous case studies were conducted in several regions in Zimbabwe during the post-independence period. Governance in these schemes was varied. These case studies can serve to illustrate the governance strengths and weaknesses discussed in this analysis.

## **CASE STUDIES FROM THE POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD**

Three case studies and the experience of one non-governmental organization will be described to highlight some governance issues.

### **1. Chamatamba Grazing Scheme**

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Cousins (1992b; 1993a) described a case study of Chamatamba Grazing Scheme in Mhondoro Communal Area, Mashonaland West Province, Zimbabwe. This scheme

was widely regarded as a rural development "success story" having won the National Conservation Prize in 1987 plus others. The community consisted of five villages or kraais. Two members in the grazing scheme committee represented each village. In addition, the kraalhead and his assistant represented each kraal. Thus the grazing scheme committee combined two sources of legitimate authority: the traditional leadership and some notion of representative democracy involving election of the two Committee members by the community. However, cattle wealthy members of the community dominated decision-making.

Very few general meetings of the whole community were held and those that were held were poorly attended. Decisions were communicated to residents by word of mouth through the kraalheads or their assistants. As the scheme progressed from 1983 to 1990 fewer general meetings were held, and there was disillusionment and internal strains within the leadership group. Members of two villages began expressing resentment at the poor commitment of members from other kraals. No attempt was made to invoke by-laws of any kind.

There was no formal written set of grazing by-laws. Some informants interviewed in 1989-1990 including committee members said that they believed a constitution might exist but they had never actually seen it. Informants expressed very different views on the issue of what sanctions could be used to enforce deferred grazing rest. No fines were reported to have been imposed between August 1988 and November 1990 for instance, despite numerous cases of violation of grazing restrictions.

There was ambiguity on boundary lines to the northwest between Chamatamba and Chirata kraal. This may have contributed to the blurring of the social boundary between the two kraais.

There were important external agents in the area including AGRITEX field staff, Forestry Commission, Natural Resources Board, Cold Storage Commission, and Local Government officials, the District Administrator and the Local Rural District Council (RDC).

### Analysis of Governance in Chamatamba

There was some evidence of internal regulation, defined boundaries, and defined community and project beneficiaries. However, the absence of by-laws would compromise internal regulation in the scheme, especially imposition of sanctions and conflict resolution. Although the boundary line with Chirata kraal was obscure, the kraal boundaries delineated the radius of operation. By defining the radius of operation it was implied that residents of the participating kraals would be the beneficiaries of the scheme.

The domination of the scheme by wealthy members could not allow adequate collective choice arrangements, including the devolution of responsibility and rights to the community. Proven success of the leadership of the wealthy members in bringing development funding into the community was some source of support. The presence of external agents, such as the Cold Storage Commission whose interest was increasing cattle off-take for slaughter, could have promoted the legitimacy and national importance of the activities (e.g., pen fattening) of cattle wealthy members. The wealthy members of Chamatamba even welcomed Chirata members whose active participation in the pen-fattening ventures was more important than that of other herd owners within Chamatamba. The poor attendance of meetings and work

sessions reported may have reflected a low level form of resistance to the leadership by the community at large. It is possible that the community felt powerless to influence any change of direction of the scheme because of the dominance of the wealthy members.

It is apparent that there were limited clear, implementable self-evaluative mechanisms (e.g., in the form of regular meetings) with leadership accountability and representation of local interest. Domination by the "power elite" would suggest limited representation of local interest. The balancing role of traditional leaders in situations of this nature was not obvious in this scheme.

Although the Chamatamba Grazing Scheme was regarded as "successful", there are numerous weaknesses in its governance that may adversely affect sustainability of the scheme. It would be of interest to check whether this scheme withstood the test of time.

## **2. Mutakwa Grazing Scheme**

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Cousins (1990) reported on the Mutakwa Grazing Scheme, which is situated in Zimuto Communal land in Masvingo Province of Zimbabwe. This scheme had a long history of state interventions into rangeland management. It was typical of the fully funded and fenced schemes in which AGRITEX played a major role in planning, management and drawing up of by-laws. Mutakwa grazing scheme was an example of a "failed" scheme.

In the late 1980s the two major sources of authority were kraalheads and a grazing scheme committee. The relationship between the two sources of authority was a troubled one. When the grazing scheme was revived after independence a committee was elected. However, in January 1988 a new committee was elected because the previous chairperson and treasurer were allegedly not effective.

A standard set of grazing scheme by-laws, drawn up by AGRITEX, were signed by the grazing scheme committee as a pre-condition for receiving assistance from the then European Economic Community (EEC), but the contents of these were not widely known within the community. The by-laws contained the threat of removal of fencing materials if AGRITEX recommendations were not complied with. An alternative set of loosely formulated rules agreed at a committee meeting was more widely but unevenly known. These by-laws included rules on the use of the correct paddock in the planned rotation, the prohibition of fence cutting and the collection of humus from the paddocks, control of tree felling, and paying a fine for being absent from work sessions.

In 1987 there seemed to be very little knowledge of the existence or nature of the by-laws among the committee members. In the period that followed there was no attempt by extension staff to fulfil their regulatory function as laid down by the by-laws. It proved difficult for the committee to enforce even the locally agreed by-laws. The Local RDC did not formally adopt the model by-laws.

The grazing scheme committee was by and large composed of the cattle wealthy in Mutakwa. Apart from the grazing scheme committee and the two kraalheads, there were other institutions concerned with the development to be considered. The

VIDCO was an extremely weak body and was almost completely inactive. The local councillor too had no effective presence within the community.

There was a fair degree of overlap in the composition of the various committees. For example, the past chairman, the vice chairman, the treasurer and the secretary of the grazing scheme committee were all on the committee of the farmers' club. The secretary and other two female members of the committee were leading members of a women's knitting cooperative. Respondents generally gave as a reason for the election of these individuals their willingness to lead and be active on behalf of the community. This stratum of leadership might be said to have constituted a local "power elite" composed mostly of petty commodity producers (Cousins, 1996:382).

There was conflict between the grazing scheme committee and one of the two kraalheads over when the vlei (a key grazing resource) should be closed off and when it should be re-opened. The decision to close the vlei in the wet season would be made by the grazing scheme committee and yet the kraalhead would make the decision to open it without consulting the committee.

Another problem was the locational unevenness in the spread of benefits, which resulted in tensions between the members of the two kraals. The grazing scheme failed to co-opt the authority of the kraalheads. The local perception was that the important inequities were locational and kraal-based rather than wealth or class related. People on the west of the scheme had less easy access to this resource, and as a result their herds often crossed the ill-defined boundaries in search of vlei grazing outside the scheme.

Conflicts and tensions within the community appeared to result, to a much greater extent, from the mismatch between technology and ecological dynamics.

#### Analysis of governance in Mutakwa

There was some evidence of defined boundaries, and defined community and project beneficiaries. Since the two kraals defined the radius of operation, it was implied that residents of the participating kraals would be the beneficiaries of the scheme.

Collective choice arrangements were inadequate. The inequities in access to the grazing which arose due to different locations of the kraals may have been resolved if there had been effective collective choice arrangements, conflict resolution mechanisms and graduated sanctions. Leadership accountability and representation of local interest appeared deficient.

The weak involvement of the local non-traditional leaders did not bring legitimacy to the scheme and local government authority. The kraalhead who was in conflict with the grazing scheme committee may have been sympathetic to the interests of his subordinates. It is probable that decisions in the grazing schemes were not by consensus.

The failure of AGRITEX to enforce the by-laws with regard to donated materials suggests that without internal regulation and nested enterprises external agents would not have a conduit for enforcement. The grazing scheme committee could not use the influence of traditional leaders to enforce or govern the scheme.

### **3. World Vision Assisted Grazing Schemes**

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Paradza (1990) reported on some grazing schemes in which World Vision was involved. World Vision would open dialogue after being invited by the community, its representatives or local government authorities. If World Vision approved the project, a community development committee of 12 members would be democratically selected at a general meeting observed by councillors, and representatives from the District Administrator's Office and World Vision. The community would select the committee and inclusion of members of already existing management institutions such as VIDCOs, WADCOs, and traditional and religious leaders was left to the discretion of the community.

Paradza (1990) further reported that in many cases the community development committee was a blend of the traditional and non-traditional (e.g., VIDCO) leadership. Ordinary influential villagers found on the committee included teachers and headmasters. The committee was then assisted to draw up a constitution that stated the objects of the project. A project monitor based in the community would help with documentation and basic bookkeeping. The committee was expected to meet regularly, usually once or twice a month.

Apart from the community development committee there was a grazing scheme management committee. This committee's main function was to organize various tasks related to the grazing scheme. Some of the members sat on the community development committee and gave reports to this committee on matters to do with the grazing scheme. Members of the grazing scheme management committee would continually consult councillors and traditional leaders for support on socio-political and socio-cultural matters related to the grazing scheme. Non-stock owners participated in making the grazing schemes operational and in so doing guaranteed their rights of access to the schemes as soon as they acquired stock of their own.

All the nine projects assisted by World Vision had agreed to the use of by-laws as a tool for managing the grazing schemes. AGRITEX normally assisted in putting these by-laws in writing. In 1990 the by-laws were related to attendance of work during fencing, cash contributions to the scheme and vandalism of project fences. Very few cases of imposed fines laid down in these by-laws were experienced in the projects. Emphasis was put on methods of persuasion and appealing to reason instead of the imposition of sanctions on those who breached the by-laws. It was reported that in most cases this approach worked as indicated by good attendance at fencing sessions.

The community as a whole owned the grazing land and any member of the community had all the rights to graze his animals. There was no strict limit on an individual's utilization of the grazing resource and the individual was not accountable for the management of the grazing land. It only became a collective responsibility through village and ward structures. An informal survey conducted by World Vision in all the nine schemes it assisted revealed that the objectives of the scheme were not clearly articulated by target groups. The temptation to fall back to the traditional system of grazing was great.

Incidents of conflicts with neighbouring communities over issues of exclusive rights to grazing land were experienced in almost all schemes. Cutting and lowering of fences and poaching of grazing in the schemes were mainly experienced in two re-

settlement communities where parts of the grazing scheme boundaries were shared with adjacent communal lands. Gumbeze Grazing Scheme in Mount Darwin was devoid of external conflict because it was surrounded by residential and arable land, thereby excluding other communities. Members of the schemes were not necessarily influenced by the existing political and traditional institutions since a democratic election of members was carried out.

### Analysis of governance in the World Vision assisted grazing schemes

While there was insufficient information to evaluate governance in the schemes assisted by World Vision, the model adopted by World Vision attempts to satisfy most of Ostrom's principles of good governance. The model incorporated collective choice arrangements and clear self-evaluative mechanisms. In addition, the boundaries of operation, the community and project beneficiaries and criteria for membership were clearly defined.

The uniqueness of the model was the democratic election of members of a community into the committees without regard to leadership in the community. In other schemes traditional and non-traditional local government leadership were co-opted, *ex officio*, into grazing scheme committees. The two-tiered committee structure was also of interest and is an attempt at establishing nested enterprises. The community development project committee would probably provide a higher platform where issues unresolved by the grazing scheme management committee could be discussed and resolved. The model did not disregard the influence of traditional and non-traditional local government leaders because the committees consulted them on some issues. The inclusion of every member of the communities, including the stockless, promoted participation by the whole community and collective choice arrangements.

The emphasis on persuasion and appealing to reason rather than enforcement of by-laws was a compromise between enforcement and total negation of the by-laws. This approach would probably be successful where there is some cohesiveness and self-evaluative mechanisms within the community. The conflicts with neighbouring communities, which were not in the schemes, suggest some disagreement on the legality of boundaries. Perhaps traditional and local government authorities could have resolved such an issue. The conflict may have arisen from the perception that grazing lands in communal and resettlement areas are open access resources rather than common property resources with community boundaries. Guveya and Gwata (1998) conducted PRA exercises in Mhondoro-Ngezi and Svosve Communal lands, and collected survey data from Chiduku and Buhera communal lands of Zimbabwe to examine grazing utilization in the communal areas of Zimbabwe. They reported that there was open access to grazing resource use in the communal areas of Zimbabwe. They made this conclusion on the basis of the following: There were no boundary rules, although households and communities knew the boundaries of their communities and grazing areas. The rights to community grazing areas were thus poorly defined in terms of excluding outsiders. There were no sanctions for grazing animals in grazing areas of other communities.

Grazing schemes operate within prescribed boundaries and the beneficiaries are often defined. Unless there is consensus on exclusivity of grazing areas and penalties in the event of violation, conflicts between the grazing schemes and those outside the schemes will remain. We were not able to establish whether the World Vision assisted schemes are still operational and how its model has fared.

## **CASE STUDIES OF GRAZING SCHEMES IN MASVINGO PROVINCE IN THE YEAR 2000**

We interviewed committee and ordinary members in three grazing schemes Razi (Chivi District), Segande (Gutu District) and Mafucha (Masvingo District), which were regarded as "successful", "failed" and "totally failed", respectively.

### **1. Razi Grazing Scheme**

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Razi scheme was resuscitated by AGRITEX in the late 1980s and has received assistance from the Lutheran World Federation. The scheme was fenced in the 1980s, was planned by AGRITEX, and later adopted the holistic resource management approach. It has a dam with fish, which does not dry up during the dry season. Heifer Project international and the Lutheran World Federation have been assisting the area. Heifer Project International has provided heifers to the farmers. Lutheran World Federation donated a pump for a small irrigation plot in the scheme. The scheme has a constitution (with by-laws), which was drawn up with the assistance of extension agents. Committee members are neither traditional nor non-traditional (VIDCO) leaders. The scheme is for two kraals. The kraalheads deal with inter-kraal conflicts. The councillor's input was not evident.

#### **Analysis of Governance in Razi Scheme**

There is evidence of the existence of some structures for collective choice arrangements and defined boundaries of operation. The election of the grazing scheme committee appeared to be democratic and none of the traditional and non-traditional local government leaders were appointed *ex officio*. However, it was reported that there was good rapport between the grazing scheme committee and the two kraalheads.

By-laws that would have facilitated internal regulation were drawn up at the beginning of the scheme. However, these by-laws were not enforced. There were cases of poaching of fish by members of the scheme and outsiders. The perimeter fence was down and footpaths were being created without control. Paddocks were no longer being grazed in an orderly manner as in the past. There were some attempts to enforce the by-laws when armed rangers from the Department of National Parks were called in to scare away poachers. This only worked for a few months.

In general, members of the community believe that the scheme is taking a downward turn. The members believe that the current chairman who was voted into office in 1995 is rather weak and has not followed up on a lot of issues. Examples of his ineptitude were failure to attend to the fences, which had been broken at several points, and lack of initiative to raise funds to purchase diesel for the irrigation pump donated by the Lutheran World Federation. The community members were concerned that women were still carrying buckets of water on their heads when the pump had been lying idle for one and a half years. Members of the community also blamed the development agents for not assisting by pushing for action. The general belief was that members of the community had elected the current chairman because he is "soft" and does not bother or push people. However, it was evident that there



was weak institutional support for the constitution and by-laws. In-fact, the by-laws had not been ratified by the local rural district council.

There was little definition of the scheme beneficiaries, criteria for membership, and self-evaluative mechanisms. Although it could be assumed that members in the two kraals constituting the community would be the beneficiaries, there was no clear provision for new families, gender issues were not well articulated and there was, in general, no provision for the wider social catchment. Members of the community complained that since the incumbent chairman was elected there had been no

annual general meeting. There was, therefore, no platform created for the evaluation of the scheme by the members and for the leadership to account to the members. Prior to the election of the current chairman, Razi grazing scheme was considered to be a success, with vibrant intra-community dialogue and policing of the scheme by local "policemen". It appears that the recent demise of the scheme may have been partly due to "weak" leadership, but perhaps more so the absence of some authority to enforce adherence to the constitution. Annual general meetings create a forum for fresh elections and an opportunity for audit of activities by the members of the community.

## **2. Segande Grazing Scheme**

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The scheme was established in the mid-1980s through donor and AGRITEX assistance. The GTZ funded CARD programme was the major sponsor of the scheme. A grazing scheme committee runs the scheme. A constitution that was prescribed by the donor and AGRITEX is available. Two kraals (Taderera and Dauramanzi) participate in the scheme.

The members of the community elect committee members. The current chairman does not own cattle. Land boundaries are defined. Community members provide their own labour for the repair and maintenance of fences. The role of the traditional and non-traditional local government leaders was not clear.

### Analysis of governance in the Segande scheme

There was some evidence of internal regulation, collective choice arrangements, defined boundaries of operation, and defined community and project beneficiaries. This scheme was unique because a non-cattle owner was elected to chair the committee. The impression created is that there is some sense of membership and criteria for membership to the scheme. The constitution and by-laws did not originate from the community. The rather minimal involvement of traditional and non-traditional leaders negated a source of sanctioning powers that would have been useful. While this scheme had some acceptable governance structures, ecologically it was not regarded as a success.

There was little evidence of the existence of self evaluative mechanisms. In general, meetings (e.g., annual general meetings) were no longer regular. Members of the community were unhappy about this. However, the content of the constitution was not public knowledge in the scheme.

### **3. Mafuzha Grazing Scheme**

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This scheme is situated in the Zimuto Communal land of Masvingo District. The scheme started in 1983 as one of the European Union (EU) funded pilot grazing schemes. The beneficiary community was Mafuzha kraal. Mafuzha was one of the four pilot grazing schemes in Zimuto. The design or layout of the scheme was done by AGRITEX. The EU supplied the fencing materials and the community provided the labour to erect fences.

The objectives of the scheme were to rehabilitate the veld, minimize soil erosion and increase veld production through rotational grazing. The constitution was drawn up by AGRITEX and then given to the community. Members of the community and AGRITEX conceded that the constitution had never been instituted effectively. Ordinary members of the community were elected to form a committee. The kraalhead and local councillor were not members of this committee. All households in the community were members of the scheme by default. No cash contributions were made by the members.

The benefit, which was initially realized by the community, was that herding of cattle was no longer necessary. However, the fence is no longer in place. The members of the scheme reported that for several years the fence was lying on the ground. During our visit there was hardly any remnants of the barbed wire and the poles.

The scheme has been beset with problems for years. This scheme, in our opinion, has completely failed. The general condition of the grazing area has not improved. The soils have remained sandy and poor. There is heavy invasion by weeds such as *Helichrysum*. People in the area have been collecting leaf litter from the grazing area for fertilizing their crops thereby depriving the grazing land of useful organic matter.

Farmers in one section of the community are reluctant to drive their cattle to the furthest paddock. There is no effective control of exploitation of the resources in the grazing area. The kraalhead has not shown interest in the project. Some members of the community we interviewed felt that the kraalhead is too weak and has no effective control of development. This accusation was rather surprising since there was supposed to be a committee running the scheme.

#### **Analysis of governance in Mafuzha Grazing Scheme**

In this scheme the boundaries and beneficiaries were clearly defined and circumscribed within the community. However, it would appear that the scheme has degenerated into an open access and not a common property regime. The remainder of the good governance principles listed at the beginning of this paper were hardly satisfied. The non-involvement of the kraalhead and local government authorities (e.g., councillors) are probably most notable. These leaders could have buttressed efforts or the powers that the grazing scheme committee may have had. The sense of ownership of the scheme may not have been engendered at the onset because all the financial inputs were from outside the scheme. It is not clear whether this community ever requested for the grazing scheme and help from AGRITEX in designing the constitution and management plan.

## **CONCLUSION**

Governance in most grazing schemes in Zimbabwe has been deficient in collective choice arrangements, congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions, definition of scheme beneficiaries, monitoring, conflict resolution mechanisms, graduated sanctions and establishment of nested enterprises. During the pre-colonial period grazing resources were abundant and governance was through traditional leaders, often with consensus among members of the council of elders or the village assembly. The ability of the traditional authority structure to manage common property resources during the colonial era was seriously eroded by their co-option into the colonial administration as part of a strategy of indirect rule. These authority systems could not function effectively in land and resource management when the tenure status of the land had changed to state ownership.

Local traditional authorities had usufructural rights only and powers of exclusion and access to certain natural resources (e.g., wildlife) were denied them (Murphree, 1991). There was, therefore, excessive control by central government to the detriment of internal regulation. In this era, enforcement of the laws governing use of grazing resources was the emphasis. It is only during the late colonial period that voluntary participation of farmers and collective choice arrangements were honoured.

The post independence period was characterised by central government creating new local government structures such as VIDCOs and WADCOs. There was an influx of donor agencies who came to assist some grazing schemes. The new local government leaders, in some instances, conflicted with traditional leaders. The insistence on democratic representation and formulation of a constitution by most donors created new conditions for grazing schemes. Internal regulation, collective choice arrangements and self-evaluation mechanisms were put in place, although these were not always honoured. Definition of boundaries, community and project beneficiaries and criteria for membership became sore points, because during the colonial era grazing land in communal lands had degenerated from common property to open access.

Grazing schemes that were established in Masvingo and other provinces encountered these problems apart from the power structure problem. Our recent studies of three grazing schemes in Masvingo suggest that governance of grazing schemes is still a major problem. These problems are likely to get worse if there is no institutional support, especially after withdrawal of donor support. There is a serious need to strengthen and harmonise the roles of traditional and political leaders in grazing schemes.

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