

CHAPTER FIVE

POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA: CONTINUITY OR CHANGE (1980-1990)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the period from independence on 18 April 1980 to 1990. The intended and unintended outcomes of government interventionist policies in the Sanyati irrigation schemes (Gowe and the Main Estate) are examined. The advent of a black government was welcomed by many peasant farmers. It was perceived as a government that would redress the injustices of the past and promote the interests of African farmers in particular. The chapter focuses on the process which determined interaction between the plottolders⁹⁸⁰ and the Main Estate and how the former manipulated new government agricultural policies⁹⁸¹ to secure their individual and collective requirements. This process is manifested in the informal actions of the plottolders when contrasted with the formal rules and the governance and management systems in irrigation. Chapter five provides the setting for chapter six as the two irrigation schemes continued to be a prominent feature of Sanyati agriculture in the post-independence period. Management of these projects was taken over by ARDA⁹⁸² whose aims and objectives, as shall be illustrated, provide a useful measure of assessment of the new government's irrigation policies in the countryside.

In the main, the operations of Gowe and the Core Estate and the ensuing differentiation process that emerged in the period after the attainment of majority rule will be analysed

⁹⁸⁰ In this study the terms plottolders, settlers (save for references to white settlers), outgrowers, tenants and smallholders are used to denote small-scale irrigation farmers adjacent to ARDA Irrigation Estates. In other cases a tenant refers to one who rents land temporarily and a plottolder is one who farms on a plot but has no title deeds or perpetual rights.

⁹⁸¹ The evolution of irrigation agricultural policy can best be explained against the background that when Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 it inherited a dual irrigation structure. The larger sub-sector comprised commercial, large-scale production of cotton, wheat, tobacco and soyabean. The smaller sub-sector comprised smallholder schemes scattered over the communal areas of the country where the majority of the peasant farmers live and practice both food and cash crop production. The devastating drought of 1981-1984 primarily re-focused the government's policy of reducing dependency on rain-fed agriculture where this is feasible. One of the key issues of the policy is the role of smallholder irrigation in meeting this expectation and how smallholders could reduce dependency on government as far as developing and running the schemes is concerned. N.B. Problems related to achieving this overall objective stem from historical process and evolution of the schemes. A thorough evaluation of irrigation policy has been presented by Mandivamba Rukuni, "The Evolution of Irrigation Policy in Zimbabwe, 1900-1986," Working Paper AEE 4/86 Presented at the Forum on Irrigation Systems and Applications, USA: Cornell University, (May 13-15, 1986), 1-15. See also Malcolm J. Blackie, "A Time to Listen: A Perspective on Agricultural Policy in Zimbabwe," Working Paper 5/81 Presented as his inaugural lecture to the University of Zimbabwe, Salisbury: Department of Land Management, University of Zimbabwe, (1981), 1-9.

⁹⁸² ARDA was given the responsibility of running all the settler schemes adjacent to its Estates by the Government under the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. The administration of the settlement schemes was initially under Internal Affairs. Later it was handed over to DEVAG and on the 11th September 1980 the schemes were handed over to TILCOR now trading in the name of ARDA. N.B. The Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) is a parastatal institution responsible for agricultural and rural development on behalf of government. It is the largest single irrigator of land in the country.

in an attempt to discern the element of continuity or change in the way the two irrigation schemes were run. This is explored through a detailed analysis of government intention and what was achieved on the ground. The gulf between the rich and the poor, which appeared not so easy to ascertain up to the 1960s, was broadened even further as the government availed abundant technical and financial resources at the onset of independence to empower formerly disfranchised and disadvantaged black farmers. For instance, substantial resources were invested in smallholder agriculture supporting the delivery of such services as extension, credit and marketing. Some plottolders enjoyed privileged access to these and became relatively wealthy but others who were less endowed with the same resources remained poor. Although the *Chavunduka Commission of Inquiry into the Agricultural Industry* discusses the weight of poverty and ecological degradation in the communal lands in detail,⁹⁸³ this chapter argues that poverty cannot be used to dispute the existence of greater forms of differentiation in the rural areas. The plottolders carried over their battle to improve their lot from the colonial period into the 1980s and most benefited from the re-invigorated drive to promote cotton⁹⁸⁴ cultivation in all the communal areas of the country. This drive, coupled with favourably wet seasons, contributed to the post-independence cotton boom not only in Sanyati but also throughout the country.

On the whole, government placed high emphasis on improving incomes in communal areas by promoting the commercialisation of agriculture and reducing the proportion of the population engaged in “subsistence” farming.⁹⁸⁵ This chapter demonstrates how agricultural growth and commercialisation informs and intensifies existing inequalities in peasant farmers’ access to the means of production. When the agricultural boom began in 1980, it is important to note that rural irrigators, just as in the period before independence, were expected to operate within a coercive-co-operative framework. In a land-shortage district like Sanyati, unequal access to land, water and credit produced numerous inequalities in income and wealth. The strength and power of peasant agency often assisted the farmers to influence policy but the mismatch of expectations between policy implementers and policy recipients is illustrative of the fact that government needed to make irrigators active decision-makers rather than mere consultative partners. A more co-operative framework had to be applied to government intervention in irrigation or agriculture in general for independence to fulfill its earlier promise of equitable distribution of land and other opportunities.

In spite of the smallholder irrigators’ determination to use the environment created by independence to improve their yields, their efforts were frequently hampered by the perennial cultivation of very small plots and the omnipresent influence of the ARDA Estate. No major effort was made to achieve a meaningful and equitable distribution of land between Gowe and the Main Estate. While the Main Estate was 1 000 hectares in

⁹⁸³ *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Agricultural Industry (Chavunduka Commission)*, Harare: Government Printers, (1982), 6.

⁹⁸⁴ Cotton is commonly referred to as the “white fibre” by the local farmers.

⁹⁸⁵ Petronella Jeche, Reneth Mano and Joseph Rusike, “A Discriminant Analysis of Factors Affecting Productivity and Profitability of Smallholder Households,” Working Paper AEE 6/200, Harare: Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe, (March 2000), 1.

size, Gowe was about ten times smaller.⁹⁸⁶ The distribution of income was also skewed in favour of the “big landowner” – the Estate. The resultant “crisis of expectations” that emerged in the post-colonial period will be explored in this chapter as this partly contributed to the land invasions of 2000, a detailed discussion of which is beyond the scope of this study.

Individuals and households who had embraced irrigation before 1980 took maximum advantage of higher crop prices and improved agricultural services after independence to amass wealth. They used their earnings from the crop boom to expand their productive capacity. The more successful irrigators invested their instantaneous wealth in new farming equipment, made improvements to their dryland plots or purchased much bigger farms in the small-scale commercial farming areas of Chenjiri and Copper Queen. Those farmers who had not joined the irrigation bandwagon or did not own land in the dryland area lagged behind. These formed the lowest social strata in Sanyati in, what were, otherwise, years of prosperity. Hence, the cotton boom eluded them. This stratum also comprised irrigators whose plots had been seized after being declared vacant by ARDA.

The process of rural differentiation in the Sanyati irrigation schemes was not only exacerbated by influences from the changing political and economic landscape of Zimbabwe as a whole, but was complicated by the unilateral claim to other plots by land-hungry plottolders whenever these fell vacant. In apparent competition with the smallholder farmers, ARDA also laid claim to the vacant holdings. For instance, in the 1989/90 season, of the total Gowe hectrage of 120 ha under cotton, the outgrowers were cropping only 86 ha, whereas the central estate was utilising the 34 ha vacant plots.⁹⁸⁷ During the DC’s tenure of office there were clearly laid down rules on how vacant plots would be filled, but independence introduced a new form of land grabbing (madiro) at Gowe and within the Main Estate. Land grabbing of part of Estate land will be discussed in Chapter six.

As plottolder families were growing in size, some daring individuals began the unofficial process of seizing the land of those who had left the scheme for various reasons, as illustrated in Chapter four. Because land was never made available to the offspring of plottolders or “the rising stars”⁹⁸⁸ as one of Mjoli’s sons, Weddington, calls them, their

⁹⁸⁶ J. Gwerengwe, “Sanyati Estate Corporate Plan,” ARDA, (1995).

⁹⁸⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Cotton Production,” Settlement Officer’s Quarterly Report for November 1989 to January 1990, N. K. Kamudzandu.

⁹⁸⁸ Weddington Mjoli, (“Plottolder”), Personal Interview, Gowe, 14th May 2005. The term “Rising Star” has been coined by Weddington who sometimes prefers to call himself “Dhlamini” which is his family’s totem. He occupies one of the vacant plots that has been unofficially obtained for him by his father upon marriage, which actually makes him an illegal plottolder. The “Rising Stars” are a new “revolutionary” group campaigning for land or irrigation plots at Gowe. They comprise sons of Gowe farmers who are now married but have been deprived of the opportunity to own or lease land because the land is simply not there. Their parents are also demanding that their sons be given first priority when ARDA is allocating vacant plots because their children have gained valuable experience in irrigation operations e.g. the proper handling of irrigation pipes, dealing with cotton pests et cetera. For more detail on this issue see NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Minutes of the General Meeting Held at Gowe Offices on 13 November 1989,” E. Chiwombe (Secretary – Gowe Irrigation

parents used their own resources and the inflow of capital from their migrant sons to plough more land which they viewed as lying idle after it had been vacated. This was a way of laying claim to the vacant plots on behalf of their children staying with them or away performing wage labour. Such unilateral seizures of land actually took place in spite of the fact that the Settlement Officer always warned the tenants against this practice. The full text of one of his warnings read:

Please be warned that illegal plots are prohibited. Therefore you are only permitted to cultivate those plots allocated to you when the scheme was initially demarcated. The degree of erosion on illegal plots is alarming. Moreover there are no conservation works. The land you are cultivating was earmarked for residential sites. In future, anyone found practicing illegal cultivation will lose his/her plot.⁹⁸⁹

Ideally a vacant plot had to be filled in by someone whose name appeared on the official waiting list, but probably because of the need for political votes the Estate management, acting on behalf of the government, did not always intervene and question this practice which assumed major proportions between 1990 and 2000 as will be shown in the next chapter. The Government's populist stance, therefore, inadvertently created a group of large land-owning plotters at Gowe.

The process that led some farmers to plough more land than others helped to redefine positions of authority, relationships and social status in the ARDA irrigation schemes. For resource-rich plotters, acquisition of more land has enhanced their productive capacity and cotton profits. Resource-poor plotters have not benefited much from possession of vacant plots because their yields remained significantly low. However, both rich and poor irrigators are clinging on to such land for the benefit of their absent sons (e.g. Mjoli has a son working in Johannesburg and another in Bulawayo) and for speculative purposes. Differences in access to land have led to the accumulation of wealth by many innovative plotters. This, in addition to the other bases of differentiation (i.e. access to labour and capital) in the Sanyati irrigation schemes, has led to the shifting in emphasis of the differentiation process. Commercialisation in agriculture has given rise to both wealthy and poor peasants, hence, throughout this period, the Sanyati rural economy was never an example of commercialisation without progressive peasant differentiation. Clearly, commercialisation or rather spontaneous commercialisation⁹⁹⁰ has occurred on plots of many peasant cultivators. Such

Committee).

⁹⁸⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Illegal Cultivation," N. K. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to all Gowe Scheme Tenants, 9th February 1988.

⁹⁹⁰ Generally, spontaneous commercialisation on peasant farms applies to those cash crops which do not require complex processing. It also occurs where existing processing facilities (e.g. cotton ginneries) become available to peasant producers. A case in point, which bears close resemblances with Sanyati, is cotton growing in the Lowveld of Swaziland. The peasant farmers in this area were keenly aware of price increases for this crop and the ensuing profitability of cotton cultivation on small farms. For further detail on commercialisation of this type see J. Hinderink and J. J. Sterkenburg, *Agricultural Commercialization and Government Policy in Africa*, (London: KPI Ltd., 1987), 79-80 and J. J. Sterkenburg and J. Testerink,

commercialisation is proof of the flexibility and adaptability of peasants to respond to new economic opportunities and to make use of income obtained from and outside the agricultural sector. In fact, one of the major contributions of this study is that it helps rewrite the story of rural differentiation in an irrigation sector compared to what Nyambara and Worby have found in the dryland sector.

Irrigation has produced additional dimensions to rural differentiation. The bases of such differentiation have also increased beyond the orthodox ones which are land, labour and capital. Manipulation of lease regulations, marketing principles and other policies determined plowholder survival. Overall irrigation development, Estate and settler performance in Sanyati were premised on aims enunciated by government since 1967 and modified in 1980. These objectives governed the operation of the smallholder scheme and were designed in such a way that they were in tandem with the ARDA lease arrangements, which invariably were resisted by many outgrowers.

ARDA: Post-colonial objectives and opposition to irrigation leases:-

When ARDA succeeded TILCOR in 1980/81, the need to improve the condition of the settler farmers assumed a lot of importance. The promotion of Gowe, which used to be run and administered by ARDA on behalf of the Rural State Land Division of the Ministry of Lands and Water Resources⁹⁹¹ into a viable irrigation scheme, became paramount. In the post-colonial era, emphasis shifted significantly from a preference for subsistence crops in favour of the production of cash crops. As the Government of Independent Zimbabwe was “looking more beyond the subsistence level,”⁹⁹² more remunerative crops had to be grown, for instance, cotton and wheat.

In the period after Independence, Gowe, just like the other settlement schemes in the mould of Ngwezi (Plumtree), Antelope (Maphisa/Kezi), Tsovane, and Dande,⁹⁹³ was designed to cater for the average peasant with little to no formal education. The qualification criteria for candidates to become settlers at Gowe were, as before, based on master farmer skills, personal discipline and ability to manage one’s family workforce. On the whole, since 1980, land, water resources as well as professional management were made available by the Sanyati Core Estate,⁹⁹⁴ but labour was provided by the settlers themselves,⁹⁹⁵ who,

“Agricultural Commercialization in Swaziland: Cotton Production on Swazi Nation Land,” Utrecht: Department of Geography of Developing Countries, University of Utrecht, (1982).

⁹⁹¹ Liberty Mhlanga, “Outgrower Settlement Schemes and the Commercial Settlement Scheme,” A paper prepared for the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU) Workshop on Land Reform and the Environment, Harare: ARDA, (1996), 1.

⁹⁹² Simon C. Pazvakavambwa, (Technical Co-ordinator – Water Resources Management Strategy/WRMS), Personal Interview, Kurima House, Harare, 2nd April 1997.

⁹⁹³ M. G. Paraiwa, “The Economic and Financial Implications of the Transfer of the Administration of Antelope Settler Scheme and Ngwezi Settler Scheme from DEVAG to TILCOR,” Salisbury: ARDA, (21st November 1980). See also *Tsovane Irrigation Scheme: Study to Formulate Proposals for the Handing Over of the Management of the Scheme to Smallholder Farmers: Final Report*, Price Water House, Agriculture, (June 1996); *Dande Irrigation Feasibility Study: Final Report (Draft)*, Ministry of Lands and Water Development, Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe, (March 1996); and *Dande Irrigation Feasibility Study: Main Report*, Euroconsult-Burrow Bennie Ltd., (March 1996).

⁹⁹⁴ Historically, irrigation development has largely been a function of private investment. Recently, it has

depending on the success of their yields, sometimes hired contract workers to assist in the harvesting of produce.

After independence, whenever irrigation plots fell vacant, interested persons were invited to apply for occupancy of these.⁹⁹⁶ By 1996, such plots were advertised and applications were vetted by the Agricultural Land Settlement Board which sits at ARDA.⁹⁹⁷ Applicants had to be physically fit Zimbabwean citizens aged between 25 and 50.⁹⁹⁸ Physical fitness was, however, difficult to determine as no clear yardstick has been put in place to measure it, fitness being determined merely on the basis of outward appearance.

Intending applicants were advised that tenancy would be granted on a leasehold basis. In the lease agreement ARDA, a body corporate established under and by virtue of Section 2 of the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority Act (Chapter 100), was referred to as the “Lessor” and the plotholder as the “Lessee.” The latter was allowed to hire a certain piece of land whose boundaries and abutments were pointed out and agreed upon by the two parties. Such a “holding” would legally not exceed a maximum of 4 hectares.⁹⁹⁹ Once an irrigation holding had been allocated, it was subject to the following terms and conditions:

- (a) the lease was deemed to have commenced on the day of allocation. Provided its conditions were faithfully and fully carried out, the lessee shall have the free and undisturbed possession of the holding for an initial or probationary period of 2 years after which the lease shall continue indefinitely (i.e. for 99 years) unless terminated in the manner provided in the agreement;
- (b) the annual rental for sprayline equipment, administration and pump house amounting to \$219,00 per hectare per crop per annum shall be payable through the AFC Loan arrangement in each and every year during the currency of this lease at Sanyati Estate Offices or at such other place as ARDA may direct in writing. ARDA reserves the right to increase the rental after having taken account of escalation of costs without prior notice to the lessee;
- (c) no warranty is given that the holding is necessarily an economic unit and ARDA accepts no liability or obligation in this respect; and
- (d) the lessee shall permit any right of way necessary to give access to other properties or permit any other rights should he be required to do so by ARDA.¹⁰⁰⁰

attracted more and more government attention. With the significant exception of the AGRITEX, now AREX-administered smallholder irrigation schemes, the ARDA concept for commercial small-scale farmers is to have a core estate which bears the cost of providing management assistance and services to the farmers as part of its overheads.

⁹⁹⁵ Mhlanga, “Outgrower Settlement Schemes and the Commercial Settlement Scheme,” 2.

⁹⁹⁶ Ministry of Lands and Water Resources Headquarters, File: H/340 Advertisement of Farms, “Agricultural and Rural Development Authority: Irrigation Plots,” Harare: 1990.

⁹⁹⁷ Mhlanga, “Outgrower Settlement Schemes and the Commercial Settlement Scheme,” 4.

⁹⁹⁸ Ministry of Lands and Water Resources, File: H/340 Advertisement of Farms, “Agricultural and Rural Development Authority: Irrigation Plots,” Harare: 1990.

⁹⁹⁹ NAZ (RC), Issued to ARDA by the Minister of Local Government property, Sanyati Gowe Irrigation Scheme, “Memorandum of an Agreement of Lease made and entered into between ARDA and the Plotholder,” s.a., 1.

¹⁰⁰⁰ NAZ (RC), Issued to ARDA by the Minister of Local Government property, Sanyati Gowe Irrigation

The lease was subject to the following additional conditions:

- (1) the holding shall be used for agricultural purposes for the lessee's exclusive benefit only;
- (2) during the subsistence of the lease the lessee shall:
 - (a) personally, actively and continuously carry on farming operations on the holding. This was a very clear clause against the sub-leasing of irrigation plots;
 - (b) permit officers, servants, contractors and duly authorised agents of ARDA, together with such vehicles, equipment, implements, tools, animals and other things as may be necessary to enter upon the holding at all reasonable times for the purpose of inspection and for any other purpose that ARDA may require in order to exercise his rights under the lease;
 - (c) comply in all respects with the provisions of and regulations made under the Natural Resources Act (Chapter 150), Animal Health Act (Chapter 121), Noxious Weeds Act (Chapter 127) and all other laws relating to soil husbandry, farming practices and livestock management, and shall further comply with all requirements which in the opinion of ARDA are necessary for: (i) the prevention of damage to or deterioration of the source or course of public streams; (ii) the prevention and control of plant and animal pests and diseases; (iii) the control or eradication of weeds harmful to crops and livestock; and (iv) the protection against soil erosion of all lands through conservation practices and the maintenance of soil conservation works and the like;
 - (d) comply with existing or subsequent regulations imposed by the Department of Veterinary Services regarding the control and movement of animals;
 - (e) keep all permanent improvements on the holding in good order, condition and repair at his own expense;
 - (f) keep, or if so required by ARDA, cause to be kept by a person approved by ARDA, proper books and records of all farming operations and transactions carried on the holding, together with such records as ARDA may require for the purpose of assessing the costs of the lessee's farming operations and his ability as a farmer. He shall further furnish to ARDA or his duly authorised agent within a time to be fixed by ARDA, in his discretion, such books and records together with a balance sheet as at a date to be fixed by ARDA, and profit and loss account of the farming operations carried upon the holding prepared by an Accountant or Management Service;
 - (g) reside on the scheme at a place approved by ARDA;

Scheme, "Memorandum of an Agreement of Lease made and entered into between ARDA and the Plotholder," s.a., 1.

- (h) undergo such training and instruction in irrigation farming as ARDA may require and attend such field days or farming demonstrations as ARDA may require;
- (i) enter into an agreement with the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for the supply of irrigation water and pay for the water as stipulated by ARDA from time to time;
- (j) lay out the irrigable land on the holding, apply water through the flood system and drain water from the holding in accordance with the water requirement laid down by ARDA, and draw water from the system only at the times and in the manner approved by ARDA; and
- (k) follow a cropping programme approved by ARDA.¹⁰⁰¹

Last but not least, the lessee shall not, without the written consent of ARDA:

- (a) permit any other person to occupy or use any land upon the holding;
- (b) permit any person, which term includes a company whether or not owned and controlled by the lessee, to use any land upon the holding in terms of any sharecropping agreement or any contract whereby such person is to render any service or payment to the lessee in return for the right to use such land (a further clause against sub-leasing);
- (c) carry out nor permit nor cause any other person to carry on any trading, commercial nor industrial operations upon the holding, provided that the lessee may sell or permit to be sold the fruits or produce of his farming operations in or from a place on the holding;
- (d) engage in any other occupation or employment during the currency of the lease. This was a way of compelling the plottolders to devote all their time to their irrigation plots in order to maximise and stabilise agricultural production. Not surprisingly, ARDA was also using this as a way of ensuring a constant supply of labour from the Gowe Settler Scheme tenants to the Estate;
- (e) cede or assign the said lease nor hypothecate (i.e. give as security or mortgage) any of his rights hereunder, nor sublet nor part with the possession of the holding or any portion thereof nor grant any portion thereof nor grant any form of right of occupation in respect of the holding or any portion thereof;
- (f) absent himself from the holding for more than thirty consecutive days, without the knowledge of ARDA. This was another carefully calculated way of controlling and monitoring labour and guaranteeing scheme productivity; and
- (g) depasture cattle, sheep, goats, donkeys or other animals on the holding.¹⁰⁰²

¹⁰⁰¹ NAZ (RC), Issued to ARDA by the Minister of Local Government property, Sanyati Gowe Irrigation Scheme, "Memorandum of an Agreement of Lease made and entered into between ARDA and the Plotholder," s.a., 2-3.

¹⁰⁰² NAZ (RC), Issued to ARDA by the Minister of Local Government property, Sanyati Gowe Irrigation Scheme, "Memorandum of an Agreement of Lease made and entered into between ARDA and the

To ensure uniformity of purpose it was mandatory for plottolders on all ARDA schemes in the country to abide by these stipulations. A major loophole in the lease agreement, though, was its apparent total disregard for female land rights in irrigation. One of the former Sanyati Estate Managers, Petros Bvunzawabaya, has observed that women were considered for plot ownership but “they were very few,” adding that “Officially, less than five women were allocated plots [and] the others obtained plots through inheritance.”¹⁰⁰³ Job Gwacha insisted that “Men only were allocated plots by the DC. It was felt that women were not good farmers as men ... Women [only] got land after the death of their husbands.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Robbie Mupawose concurs with Bvunzawabaya and Gwacha by saying “Women were always sidelined [but] not because it was a principle.”¹⁰⁰⁵ This seems to confirm Pankhurst and Jacobs’ findings that land tenure policies in the communal areas stipulated that land was held by a male household head with wives only having access to land through the household head or husband.¹⁰⁰⁶ Although a few women plottolders had been allocated land in the smallholder irrigation scheme the lease arrangement did not specifically spell out the position of female holders in this period. Nonetheless, their reduced access to land is very clear. Thus, their tenure status remained unclear if not obscure since the time of the DC. During his time the authority to allocate land was vested in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but after independence this authority was held by the Ministry of Lands acting on behalf of government. The two ministries primarily gave land to individual male heads of families most of whom were certificated master farmers.¹⁰⁰⁷ However, when irrigation commenced in Sanyati in 1967, no record existed of female master farmers, hence they did not qualify for plots on that score. The tenure system, therefore, practically discriminated against women and rendered them insignificant despite their contribution to irrigation production. This, as shall be demonstrated in chapter six, stimulated socio-economic disparities that were also gender based and qualification oriented.

Notwithstanding this, there were also clear regulations governing the termination of plottolder leases. For example, ARDA reserved the right to cancel the lease forthwith, or after such notice as ARDA may deem fit, in the event of any breach of the terms and conditions herein or if in the opinion of ARDA, the lessee has permitted his farming activities to decline to such an extent that the holding is not being properly farmed. The lease may be further terminated as follows:

Plottolder,” s.a, 3.

¹⁰⁰³ Bvunzawabaya, Personal Interview, 17th October 2006.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Telephone Interview, Nyandoro with Job Gwacha (COTTCO Accounts Clerk), 18th October 2006.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Mupawose, Personal Interview.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Donna Pankhurst and Susie Jacobs, “Land Tenure, Gender Relations and Agricultural Production: The Case of Zimbabwe’s Peasantry,” in Jean Davison (ed.), *Agriculture, Women and Land: The African Experience*, (Boulder, Colorado, USA: Westview Press, 1988), 203.

¹⁰⁰⁷ For a parallel analysis of this sort of allocation of land in other parts of Mashonaland Province especially by chiefs see H. V. Moyana, *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe*, (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984), 13 and T. O. Ranger, “Religions and Rural Protest: Makoni District, Zimbabwe 1900-1980,” in J. M. Bak and G. Beneke (eds.), *Religion and Rural Revolt*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), 216.

- (a) by the lessee giving not less than three months notice in writing of his intention to do so; and
- (b) forthwith upon the death or insanity of the lessee, notwithstanding the fact that ARDA may in its sole discretion enter into a further agreement of lease with the lessee's heirs or successors.

For example, when Meki Zimunda who was farming Plot D5 passed away during the course of the 1988/89 season, the Settlement Officer for Sanyati, N. T. K. Kamudzandu who assumed duty on the 5th of October 1987, recommended that his wife, Elizabeth, who was born on 28 December 1944, takes over the plot since she was the most active partner in the farming operations.¹⁰⁰⁸ He also requested for the signing of a new lease agreement by the proposed lessee (Elizabeth). The Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement duly approved this recommendation in July 1990.¹⁰⁰⁹ However, Elizabeth requested permission to transfer her plot to a close relative since she had decided to revert to her old profession as a teacher.¹⁰¹⁰ Although the Agricultural Land Settlement Board in its meeting of November 1986 had granted authority to ARDA to effect such changes an unusual request like this required the Board's approval.

When cancelling lease agreements, ARDA may at its sole discretion make any agreement which in its opinion is equitable for the disposal or management of any crop which may be in the ground at the time of the lessee's death or insanity; or forthwith, if the property of the lessee is attached in execution of judgement of any court, or should the lessee's estate be declared insolvent, or if the lessee surrenders his estate as insolvent.¹⁰¹¹ Upon termination of the lease for any reason, ARDA shall have the right to resume possession of the holding without prejudice, however, to his rights to claim arrears of rent, damage or otherwise. Where the lease has been terminated no compensation shall be payable to the lessee, his trustees, assignee or legal representatives as the case may be for improvements effected on or to the holding. This makes it difficult for tenants to effect meaningful developments on the holding. In addition, prior to vacating the holding upon termination of the lease, the

¹⁰⁰⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum – Death of Meki Zimunda, Plot D5," N. K. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer – Sanyati) to Settlers Programme Co-ordinator (ARDA), 3rd February 1989 and NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Take-Over: Mrs Meki Zimunda," C. B. Mbwanda (for General Manager – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Causeway, Harare, (Attention – R. L. Nkomo), 23rd February 1989.

¹⁰⁰⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Ministerial Approval: Succession of Leases – Middle Sabi Stage IIIA, Sanyati/Gowe, Chisumbanje and Rusitu," R. L. Nkomo (for Secretary for Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement) to the General Manager, ARDA, Causeway, Harare (Attention – R. Maposa), 13th July 1990.

¹⁰¹⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Change of Lessees – Settlement Schemes," R. Maposa (for General Manager – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Causeway, Harare, (Attention – S. S. Musodza), 3rd August 1989.

¹⁰¹¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum – Death of Meki Zimunda, Plot D5," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer – Sanyati) to Settlers Programme Co-ordinator (ARDA), 3rd February 1989 and NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Take-Over: Mrs Meki Zimunda," C. B. Mbwanda (for General Manager – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Causeway, Harare, (Attention – R. L. Nkomo), 23rd February 1989, 4.

lessee shall destroy all crops and crop residues as are required by regulation to be destroyed, notwithstanding that the date prescribed for such destruction falls after the date by which the lessee is required to vacate the holding and if the lessee fails to comply with this condition ARDA shall have the right to effect such crop destruction and to claim the costs from the lessee. On the whole, ARDA or any person authorised by it shall have the right free of charge and without compensation to lay and construct roads, irrigation works, conservation works, pipe lines, electric lines, sewers, drains and works ancillary thereto upon or under the said land and to enter thereon at all reasonable times for the purposes of operating, inspecting, repairing, maintaining or renewing such works whether in existence to or after the date thereof.¹⁰¹²

The conditions set out in the lease agreement underlined the fact that the state had a greater say in the sort of differentiation that emerged in ARDA's irrigation schemes, not only in Sanyati but also throughout the country. A social and economic mobility, if not mode of stratification, which was controlled by ARDA, characterised most of its schemes. The impermanency of status accorded the outgrowers was just as counterproductive as it was self-defeating. It meant that the lease could be revoked any time. Such discretionary authority exercised by ARDA gave the corporate body enormous powers that were sometimes detrimental to settler progress. The feeling among the targets of ARDA policies was one of inadequate disenfranchisement. It can be noted that the conditions of the lease-hold tenure that obtain on the Gowe plots combine with the historical scarcity of capital for their occupants to produce less visible effects on the landscape. Clearly, plotters were less inclined to make major improvements on the land due to the non-availability of title deeds. At Independence, Gowe was placed under Model C of the Communal Lands Act which did not provide for any security of tenure and thereby encourage innovation. The Act was different from the Purchase Areas Act whereby a farmer rents to buy, whereas under the Communal Lands Act a farmer only has usufruct rights to land. Under the latter Act, farmers were told: "whilst you are within the scheme you are not allowed to do what you want, but expected to do what you are assigned to by the owner of the land."¹⁰¹³ This stipulation in the Act curtailed independence of action by the Gowe farmers which also affected productivity. On qualification, a settler was allocated a village stand with essential water supplies and sanitary facilities. These were rather inadequate. Each applicant was also expected to have a minimum capital outlay of \$1 000,00 in cash,¹⁰¹⁴ for their initial expenditure on the plot. Because there was no accommodation facility, successful applicants were expected to erect their own houses.¹⁰¹⁵

However, in Sanyati, the conditions of lease did not go unchallenged by some Gowe I and II irrigation plotters who felt disadvantaged by them. (For the position of Gowe I in

¹⁰¹² NAZ (RC), Issued to ARDA by the Minister of Local Government property, Sanyati Gowe Irrigation Scheme, "Memorandum of an Agreement of Lease made and entered into between ARDA and the Plotter," s.a., 4.

¹⁰¹³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Minutes on Lease Agreement Held at Gowe Irrigation Scheme Offices on the 9th September 1986," 1. N.B. This was the first lease agreement meeting with the Gowe plotters.

¹⁰¹⁴ Ministry of Lands and Water Resources, File H/340 Advertisement of Farms, "Agricultural and Rural Development Authority: Irrigation Plots," Harare: 1990.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Ibid.*

relation to Gowe II See Appendix X). In a stunning revelation of the plight of Gowe farmers, G. Katsande, acting on behalf of the Secretary for the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, admitted that he and B. F. Vutabwarova of the same Ministry had a meeting at Ngungunyana Building in Harare on September 23 1986 with four farmers who came to the capital from the Gowe Irrigation Scheme claiming to have been sent on a representative capacity to complain and also to clarify their position against the introduction, a couple of weeks earlier, of the Lease Agreement between ARDA and the individual farmers. The four representative farmers were T. Mandivava (then Chairman of the Gowe Farmers Irrigation Committee), C. Mhara (then Vice Chairman of the same committee), T. Masawi (Secretary), and A. M. Motsi (Vice Secretary).¹⁰¹⁶ They made three major accusations. Firstly, the farmers alleged that they were forced to sign the lease agreements. Secondly, they stated that they were not told the entire implications to their livelihoods and general welfare of the new agreement. In particular, their protestations were stronger on the issue of rates, which they considered to be too high to be sustained from their crop yields. The farmers complained that if the total crop expenses were compared to the crop income after taking land rent, sprayline equipment and irrigation charges into consideration they would not remain with any profit. Finally, the irrigators also alleged that the amounts they paid as diesel charges for tillage purposes were inflated due to the fact that the diesel tanks are situated at Sanyati Estate which is far from their scheme. Therefore, the tractors waste a lot of diesel in travelling from the point of refuelling to the tillage point. In the circumstances, they would rather have a tank at their scheme.¹⁰¹⁷

In view of these and other complaints put forward by these farmers, the Ministry concluded that ARDA's working relations with them was "not all that good" and needed "to be put right."¹⁰¹⁸ However, these allegations were refuted by ARDA. In providing answers to the plotters' three main grievances, D. P. Mtetwa, the Rural Development Co-ordinator or the Settler Programmes Co-ordinator for ARDA, defended his organisation by saying the

¹⁰¹⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settler Problems: Middle Sabi Scheme and Gowe Irrigation Scheme," G. Katsande (for Secretary for Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement) to the General Manager (ARDA) – Attention D. P. Mtetwa (Rural Development Co-ordinator - ARDA), 1st October 1986, 1. N.B. The full irrigation committee also included E. Chiwombe (member), D. Mafumana/Mjoli (member) and Chirandata (member). However, these three were not part of the delegation that went to Harare to present plotter grievances. Save for these representative delegations monthly, quarterly, annual reports and other communication with ARDA Head Office tried to give details of all the problems encountered and any grievances aired by the farmers including issues requiring further investigation. See NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Memorandum: Monthly, Quarterly, Annual Reports and General Communication with Head Office," R. Maposa (Settlers Programme Co-ordinator) to Settlement Officer – Middle Sabi Stage IIIA, Settlement Officer – Chisumbanje Estate, Settlement Officer – Sanyati Estate, Settlement Assistant – Antelope Estate and Outgrowers Supervisor – Katiyo Estate, 21st February 1990.

¹⁰¹⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settler Problems: Middle Sabi Scheme and Gowe Irrigation Scheme," G. Katsande (for Secretary for Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement) to the General Manager (ARDA) – Attention D. P. Mtetwa (Rural Development Co-ordinator - ARDA), 1st October 1986, 2.

¹⁰¹⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settler Problems: Middle Sabi Scheme and Gowe Irrigation Scheme," G. Katsande (for Secretary for Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement) to the General Manager (ARDA) – Attention D. P. Mtetwa (Rural Development Co-ordinator - ARDA), 1st October 1986, 2.

farmers were not forced to sign the lease agreements because this issue was an outstanding one from B. M. C. Sibanda's Final Working Report on all schemes¹⁰¹⁹ and the farmers knew about the lease agreements months before signing them. He went on to say the full implications of the new agreement were well explained to the farmers, but they only wanted to claim for land title deeds in a scheme situated in the communal area. Title deeds could not be granted in such an area because all communal land in the country is deemed state land. It was pointed out that the rates stated at the first meeting on 9 September 1986 were not final and a considerable reduction had been made after cutting down some of the administration costs¹⁰²⁰ of running that scheme. An economic and financial analysis done in the same year for Chisumbanje, Tsovane, Middle Save Stage III A and Sanyati Gowe I and II settlement schemes revealed that a charge of \$219,00 per hectare per crop per annum at a minimum of 2 hectares per farmer per crop per year was manageable. For example, the average Sanyati settler's yields of cotton alone was above 2 500 kgs/ha at a ± gross income of 65 cents per kg which gives one average farmer a total gross income of \$1 625,00 per hectare per cotton crop per year.¹⁰²¹ The average input costs¹⁰²² per hectare was about \$800,00, which gives a farmer a ± net income per hectare per crop per settler per annum of \$825,00 (\$1 625,00 – \$800,00). Therefore, a farmer subtracted about \$219,00 per hectare per that crop per year for administration, pump house, irrigation equipment and other expenses and leaves the farmer with an average of \$606,00 net income per hectare per crop per year.¹⁰²³

Finally, ARDA argued that the amount paid by the settlers as diesel charges for tillage purposes was never inflated. The way this was calculated was uniform at all ARDA Estates in Zimbabwe. The calculation is as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total Mechanical Equipment Unit (MEU) expenditure}}{\text{Total number of litres used/consumed}} = \text{charge-out rate}^{1024}$$

¹⁰¹⁹ This report was compiled by B. M. C. Sibanda shortly before he left ARDA. Before his departure he was the Rural Development Co-ordinator for the Authority.

¹⁰²⁰ Since 1980 to 1986 all administration costs (i.e. the day to day costs of running the scheme) were met by ARDA without any return of income. From 1986 onwards it was seen by ARDA that farmers could meet the administration costs, consisting of sprayline equipment (\$47,00 per ha), irrigation charges (\$100,00 per ha) and land rent (\$100,00 per ha), and still be viable. The expenses per hectare were \$247,00 (\$47,00 + \$100,00 + \$100,00). For a 3ha plot, therefore, the total charges were fixed at \$741,00 per year on all crops. It was felt that with plot sizes that varied from 3ha to 4ha per farmer this would enable the farmer to pay for the administration expenses and still be viable. However, for resource-poor plotters irrigation viability still remained a pipe dream. Given these charges resource-rich outgrowers also clamoured for more land but less charges.

¹⁰²¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settler Problems: Middle Save Stage III A Scheme and Gowe Irrigation Scheme," D. P. Mtetwa (Rural Development Co-ordinator – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement – Attention G. Katsande, 25th November 1986, 2.

¹⁰²² Input costs were an indication of the source of finance (AFC or Bank loan). Input costs for each settler farmer were calculated on a per hectare basis for each crop grown.

¹⁰²³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settler Problems: Middle Save Stage III A Scheme and Gowe Irrigation Scheme," D. P. Mtetwa (Rural Development Co-ordinator – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement – Attention G. Katsande, 25th November 1986, 2.

¹⁰²⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settler Problems: Middle Save Stage III A Scheme and Gowe Irrigation Scheme," D. P. Mtetwa (Rural

This “charge-out rate” is used across the board on an Estate for all tillage on the Estate Sections and the settlers. The installation of diesel tanks at the Gowe Settlers’ Scheme plus security costs was actually an added expenditure to be borne by them.

This was ARDA’s defence. However, while ARDA denied the representative farmers’ allegations, there was some truth in these accusations. On the question of the charge-out rate, serious anomalies were revealed. For example, the Settler Programmes Co-ordinator admitted that the per litre rates, which included actual fuel costs and overhead expenses, were considered by the tenants as excessive when compared to the price of diesel fuel bought at the nearest filling station at Sanyati Growth Point. To further complicate the issue, the ARDA rates were being compared with the District Development Fund (DDF) rates, which, according to the farmers, were lower.¹⁰²⁵ Unfortunately, it never dawned on the farmers who were making these comparisons that the DDF fleets only came in for ploughing but not for planting, spraying, harvesting and transporting hence their charges appeared cheaper.¹⁰²⁶ Regarding the first complaint, the Rural Development Co-ordinator, D. P. Mtetwa, confessed that the confusion surrounding the signing of the leases was internally fuelled when he said:

Maybe the inconvenience was caused by the Estate Manager, Mr Mutambirwa, who had told farmers not to sign the lease agreement, due to the fact that farmers will be handed over to Agritex to administer the scheme, but he was told by Head Office to reverse his statement which he had published.¹⁰²⁷

Development Co-ordinator – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement – Attention G. Katsande, 25th November 1986, 2.

¹⁰²⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers’ Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA’s Office (Kadoma),” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2. N.B. Although this source does not divulge specific figures to illustrate this comparison, oral interviews with the Gowe farmers reveal that ARDA’s tractor charges were \$528,00 per ha whereas DDF charges were a paltry \$100,00 per ha. A. T. Chishiri (Gowe Committee Member and Plotholder), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 2nd May 1996 furnished the author with these figures.

¹⁰²⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers’ Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA’s Office (Kadoma),” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2.

¹⁰²⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Minutes of 2nd Lease Agreement Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on the 14th October 1986 at 12.30 PM,” 1. N.B. The Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX, now AREX) has the mandate for irrigation development, and is directly involved with the planning, design and operation of most smallholder irrigation schemes in Zimbabwe. It also co-ordinates and directs donor participation in irrigation development. However, the confusion referred to above might have emanated from the new Estate Manager’s apparent ignorance that settler schemes throughout the country are not administered by AREX, then AGRITEX, but by the government through ARDA which at that time fell under the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. Today ARDA falls under the reconstituted Ministry of Agriculture.

Most of the disputes emanated from the interpretation of the lease agreement. N. K. Kamudzandu, the Settlement Officer, conceded: “It is very difficult to administer the scheme because of indiscipline due to the fact that there are no rules currently governing the scheme ... the proposed meeting on the issue [should] be held so as to make the scheme governable.”¹⁰²⁸ Complaints against land rent became even stronger when individuals took it upon themselves to write directly to the Co-ordinator. In one such incident Elias Matamba, a Gowe II plotholder writing on behalf of his semi-literate colleague, Moffat Gomani, stated that the latter wanted clarification on land rent which he was being forced to pay. Citing the unfairness of the practice in operation at Gowe he said:

We were supposed to grow beans (sic) during the winter season of 1987. But due to the fact that our water pipes broke down, our turn to plant appeared (sic) after planting time so we were (myself and four others) told that it was late for beans (sic). We were not offered any other alternative. Our plots remained unplanted. But now I was surprised by our Settlement Officer who told us that we owed ARDA land rent of up to \$800,00. This, he said was for the winter crop, which he claims is the agreement as per our lease (sic) forms. But when we pointed out that it was impossible to raise the money without the crop, our cry was turned down. So help us please.¹⁰²⁹

Responding to Gomani’s letter, Mtetwa accused him of resisting payment of properly instituted rent and failure to establish a winter bean crop in the 1986/87 season as per the cropping programme approved by the Lessor (ARDA). He was also one of the five people who resisted slashing down his cotton crop or cutting stalks by end of May 1987, maintaining that he would pick to the last ball. Referring to the broken pipe the Co-ordinator reminded Gomani that had he adhered to the experts’ advice of stopping picking cotton by end of May 1987 and followed an approved cropping programme he would have definitely established his 1986/87-winter bean crop well before the bursting of the underground pipe.¹⁰³⁰ However, the wrangle between Gomani and ARDA persisted when the former insisted that he had not erred at all because he had followed the Settlement Officer’s directive and that the pipe break down Mtetwa was referring to was secondary to an earlier one. Challenging the allegations of breaching the settler contract he said

As it is, it’s the Lessor (ARDA) who is breaching (sic) our lease agreement’s terms ... by trying to benefit from the holding [D8] that is supposed to be used for agricultural purposes for the Lessee’s exclusive benefit only ... [and] by barring the farmer to personally, actively and continuously carry on farming operations on the holding.¹⁰³¹

¹⁰²⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “N. Kamudzandu – Settlement Officer’s Annual Report for 1988/89 – Gowe Irrigation Scheme,” 2.

¹⁰²⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Moffat Gomani I.D. No. 24029070 D: Land Rent,” Elias Matamba (for Moffat Gomani - Gowe II Irrigation Scheme farmer) to the Co-ordinator Irrigation Schemes – ARDA, 26th January 1988.

¹⁰³⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Payment of Land Rent on Plot No. D8 of 3 ha,” D. P. Mtetwa (Settler Programmes Co-ordinator – ARDA) to Moffat Gomani I.D. No. 24029070 D (Gowe II settler farmer), 18th February 1988.

¹⁰³¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme,

Despite this settler's effort to defend himself, ARDA maintained that he should act in compliance with the very lease contract which he was so vociferously questioning. In short, this settler was being advised, on the one hand, to pay his rent and on the other to behave like a master farmer or still face eviction. In reality, though, the increase in irrigation charges affected Sanyati farmers more adversely than other peasants in Gokwe for example since they cultivated smaller plots which meant that their total net incomes were also low.¹⁰³² Invariably, this reinforced farmer tendencies to rely on supplementary dryland plots notwithstanding official effort to discourage this practice.

Even the DC was reluctant to select people who already farmed dry land to join the irrigation scheme. Primarily, experienced farmers were preferred. To date, qualification criteria to become a plotholder at Gowe are still based mainly on exhibition of "master farmer" qualities.¹⁰³³ In an advertisement for vacant plots that appeared in a Friday issue of *The Herald*, ARDA made the selection procedure for prospective irrigation plotters abundantly clear:

Applicants must be citizens of Zimbabwe who are 25 years and above but not over 50 years, must be physically fit and have farming experience preferably in irrigation. Intending applicants are advised that tenancy will be granted on a lease-hold basis. Each applicant is expected to have a minimum of \$1 000 in cash. Successful applicants in the case of Chisumbanje, Middle Save and Tsovane will be required to rent accommodation which is available in the scheme. In the case of Sanyati scheme there is no accommodation facility, and applicants are expected to build their own houses.¹⁰³⁴

In fact, the Government of Zimbabwe has decided to alter the existing settler selection system to give more emphasis to Master Farmers or farmers with a proven record and potential to fully utilise the land at their disposal irrespective of whether they are Sanyati residents or not. Because the land area of Zimbabwe is limited, Gowe and the country at large cannot afford to under-use this valuable natural resource with impunity.¹⁰³⁵

However, since people with "master farmer" qualities were ARDA's target group, a multitude of African peasants have not been catered for under this programme, which could delay the elimination of the scourge of poverty among Zimbabwe's rural population. One of the handicaps confronting the government is the failure to acquire more land for

"Land Rent on Plot No. D8," Elias Matamba (for Moffat Gomani - Gowe II Irrigation Scheme farmer) to the Settler Programmes Co-ordinator - ARDA, 3rd March 1988.

¹⁰³² Mandivamba Rukuni, "An Analysis of Economic and Institutional Factors Affecting Irrigation Development in Communal Lands of Zimbabwe," PhD thesis, Harare: Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Land Management, University of Zimbabwe, (October 1984), ix.

¹⁰³³ Mhlanga, "Outgrower Settlement Schemes and the Commercial Settlement Scheme," 4.

¹⁰³⁴ "ARDA - Agricultural and Rural Development Authority: Irrigation Plots - Chisumbanje Settlement Scheme (4 vacant plots), Middle Save Stage IIIA (4 vacant plots), Tsovane Settlement Scheme (7 vacant plots), Sanyati Settlement Scheme (7 vacant plots)," *The Herald*, Harare: Friday June 22 1990.

¹⁰³⁵ Rukuni and Eicher (eds.), *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, 312.

redistribution; otherwise the net could have been cast much wider to embrace all the rural folk.

Last but not least, ARDA envisages a situation in which the Gowe plotters will eventually take full charge of their own affairs. ARDA with the backing of the Ministry of Lands and Water Resources and now the Ministry of Agriculture is hoping to phase out the virtual dependence of Gowe on the Main Estate and offer the former to independent settlers if they “prove efficient and viable.”¹⁰³⁶ The idea is to try and “economically empower the settlers to enable them to do their own planning and make decisions.”¹⁰³⁷ The need for the Gowe settlers to “grow” and become “self-sustaining entities”¹⁰³⁸ has been repeatedly and publicly stated for some time now.

It has been argued that after an establishment, initiation and grooming period, the settlers should mature and become increasingly autonomous. This should eventually eliminate the need for a “core estate.”¹⁰³⁹ The “Core estate” is essentially vital in the provision of technical advice to the Gowe farmers. However, conflicts arise between the Main Estate management at Sanyati and the Gowe plotters due to the misconception of each other’s intentions. Clearly, settlers need to be in control of the critical factors of production if their operations are not going to be prejudiced. These include, mechanical equipment to control timing of operations and working capital. On the strength of this, settler schemes such as Gowe should be handed over control to operate on their own terms in line with the goals set out at the time of their inception. Overall agricultural development and the operational performance of Gowe and the Core Estate from 1980 to 1990 will be analysed in the context of these post-colonial objectives.

IRRIGATION AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Entanglement with grass root development:-

In the colonial period the state had emphasised smallholder irrigation agriculture as a precursor to rural development in Sanyati. Precisely six years before the dismantling of settler rule, the Sanyati Estate was established by TILCOR to bolster rural development initiatives which had been started by the DC for Gatooma in the 1960s. It was development that was based mainly on irrigated cotton. “Immigrant” entrepreneurs who had been moved from European Crown Land since the 1950s spearheaded cotton cultivation in Sanyati and its adjacent areas. Their astute farming organisation accompanied by their highly developed marketing strategies led to the emergence of an auspicious class of rural irrigation and dryland capitalists who thrived on this crop. Although land was a major constraint to accumulation, the “immigrants” were determined to take advantage of the cotton programme that had been vigorously

¹⁰³⁶ S. S. Musodza, (Principal Executive Officer, Department of Lands and Technical Services), Personal Interview, Harare, 15th October 1996.

¹⁰³⁷ A. Jaure (ARDA, Assistant General Manager, Planning and Development Services), Personal Interview, Harare, 5th September 1996.

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰³⁹ Mhlanga, “Outgrower Settlement Schemes and the Commercial Settlement Scheme,” 5.

encouraged by the colonial government since the early 1960s. Most of them became so successful from delivering huge amounts of cotton to Gatooma and other clandestine or unofficial markets that they built corrugated iron or asbestos-roofed houses,¹⁰⁴⁰ erected shops and even employed labour on their irrigation plots. Others were poor and subjected to inadequate water and sanitary facilities as well as substandard housing. Following a number of health meetings and surveys carried out on the Gowe Irrigation Scheme the health inspectorate recommended the provision of improved water and sanitary facilities, a proper housing scheme and the services of a village health worker within the scheme.¹⁰⁴¹ In spite of this dire need for amenities at Gowe there was no improvement for many years prompting the Settler Programmes Co-ordinator, R. Maposa, to correctly observe as late as 1989 that “The issue of providing decent accommodation for the Sanyati-Gowe Settler Farmers has remained unresolved since the days when the scheme was transferred from the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development to ARDA.”¹⁰⁴² He expressed concern when he said “The present arrangement, whereby Settler Farmers build their huts on plots scattered all over the scheme makes it very difficult to provide adequate and decent amenities.”¹⁰⁴³ In addition, general scheme management was made difficult by a number of factors prominent among which were the following:

- (a) Agricultural inputs are acquired and transported to these residential plots by the individual settler farmers, and their subsequent utilisation on the irrigated plots is difficult to monitor and control;
- (b) Water application on the irrigated plots is uneven as a result of pressure fluctuations in the irrigation system due to the fact that some farmers obtain their drinking water from in-field hydrant positions;
- (c) The harvesting and marketing of the produce is difficult to monitor, since some farmers “illegally” transport their produce to their homesteads for parallel or side marketing purposes; and
- (d) Eviction as a disciplinary measure is difficult to implement, since those evicted continue to occupy homesteads on the scheme and resort to illegal cultivation of erosion prone dryland portions around the irrigated blocks.¹⁰⁴⁴

¹⁰⁴⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum: Rural Development Promotion Unit’s Handover/Takeover Final Working Report - Set/10 Sanyati-Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme,” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Settlement Officer - Sanyati, 26th August 1988, 3. N.B. Gowe settlers do not have houses provided for them by ARDA as is the case with other similar schemes, and this complicates management especially with evicted farmers because they remain living on the scheme using water from the pump house. Farmers live in their self-built poll and dagga houses/huts. However, well-to-do farmers have built decent brick houses for themselves.

¹⁰⁴¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Environmental Health Situation – Gowe Irrigation Scheme,” J. Kutadzaushe, Health Assistant (for Principal Health Inspector, Kadoma – Mashonaland West) to the Settlers Programme Co-ordinator ARDA Head Office, Causeway, Harare, 27th May 1988.

¹⁰⁴² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme – Settler Accommodation Facilities,” R. Maposa (Settler Programmes Co-ordinator – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Causeway, Harare – Attention R. L. Nkomo, copied to the Controller (Planning and Development), the Regional Manager (Mashonaland), the Estate Manager (Sanyati) and the Settlement Officer (Sanyati – Gowe Settlement Scheme), 20th September 1989, 1.

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme,

Given this position, it was crucial to provide funds to develop a decent residential area for the settler farmers to ensure effective reorganisation and sustainable agricultural production on the scheme. Poor farmers like F. Tizira, David Mjoli and R. Muponda who in the summer of 1988/89 harvested cotton worth \$3 186,00, \$3 906,00 and \$3 782,70¹⁰⁴⁵ each hardly afforded building their own decent housing. These, including H. Marufu, had also been refused loans by the AFC.¹⁰⁴⁶ On the contrary, the well-to-do plotters built better shelter for themselves. The most successful, for example, Thompson Nyamutova, Office Dangaiso and Ephraim Chiwombe who in the summer of 1988/89 produced total cotton yields of 11 671, 10 311 and 11 332 kgs and realised total incomes of \$10 501,20, \$9 277,20 and \$10 198,80¹⁰⁴⁷ respectively also engaged cotton pickers during bumper harvests and occasionally staged lavish *humwes* to assist in a wide array of activities ranging from weeding, picking and cutting of stalks. These became the envy and subjects for emulation by their poorer counterparts.

Cotton and colonial administrative practice, thus, had tended to complement market forces in promoting a class differentiation within rural Sanyati which was akin to most major cotton-producing areas in Zimbabwe and the rest of Africa. In view of this unfolding differentiation process it is less paradoxical that the Zimbabwean government decided in 1980 to seek a new rural development strategy at the “grass roots” which focused on equalisation of social and economic status. The strategy found expression in the co-operative movement. In January 1980 the Marketing and Co-operative Services Section of the Ministry of Home Affairs circulated a paper which set forth the Government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia’s plans for “the development of the black co-operative movement to facilitate a very considerable expansion of its services to tribal farmers and farmers in the former Purchase Land.”¹⁰⁴⁸ The paper stressed: “With the end of the war now in sight, the time has come to examine the role that the Co-operative Movement will be called upon to play in the future.”¹⁰⁴⁹ As a consequence of the historical development of Zimbabwe, communal farmers faced major obstacles in

“Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme – Settler Accommodation Facilities,” R. Maposa (Settler Programmes Co-ordinator – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Causeway, Harare – Attention R. L. Nkomo, copied to the Controller (Planning and Development), the Regional Manager (Mashonaland), the Estate Manager (Sanyati) and the Settlement Officer (Sanyati – Gowe Settlement Scheme), 20th September 1989, 1-2.

¹⁰⁴⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Gowe Irrigation Scheme – Cotton Yields for Gowe II Farmers 1988/89 Summer Season,” N. K. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer).

¹⁰⁴⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “N. Kamudzandu: Settlement Officer’s Monthly Report for Month Ending 30 November 1989 – Gowe Irrigation Scheme.”

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, “Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement.” C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillet, Causeway, Salisbury, 29th January 1980.

¹⁰⁴⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, “Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement.” C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillet, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 1.

delivering surplus production to the market.¹⁰⁵⁰ At independence this necessitated, therefore, plans for the development of marketing facilities and the arrangements for financing such development. It was against this backdrop that co-operative marketing institutions were evolved.

The major functions of the co-operatives included the supply of agricultural inputs to large numbers of small farmers, spread over a large area, and the marketing of their crops. In justifying the creation of these institutions or marketing agencies the government argued that world-wide¹⁰⁵¹ they were the most satisfactory type of organisation to provide these services and that the farmers benefited greatly from participating in the running of these societies. Nevertheless, the ordinary membership was often systematically sidelined from administering these institutions. Administrative responsibilities were thrust squarely on government-appointed co-operative officials. By 1980 there were 12 co-operative unions and 326 co-operative societies throughout the country serving the African farming community.¹⁰⁵² These in spite of suffering in varying degrees the effects of the war, were nonetheless, deemed by government to be sufficiently viable, given financial assistance, to form the foundation on which to build an efficient marketing and supply service. The financial assistance required can be categorised under three headings, namely (a) immediate or short-term reconstruction grants to be applied for through Provincial Commissioners (PCs or NCs); (b) medium and long-term loans for capital items or financial requirements for capital expansion; and (c) seasonal finance for the purchase of crops and the procurement of agricultural requisites.¹⁰⁵³ The projected capital expansion consisted of 31 depots situated at various centres throughout the country.

In Mashonaland West, Sanyati together with Karoi and Chegutu was also selected for the location of the proposed co-operative depots (See Map 14). These depots were required as distribution centres for agricultural inputs and also served as marketing centres for the following purposes: (a) the processing of payments and debt recoveries in respect of

¹⁰⁵⁰ *Chavunduka Commission*, 10.

¹⁰⁵¹ In many countries of the world marketing agencies were one means of rectifying unfair business practices by countervailing the power or competition provided by middlemen (i.e. the intermediaries through whom price jolts are transmitted in an economy). Because the agricultural industry is characterised by perfect competition, naturally farmers themselves feel vulnerable in such an oligopolistic economic environment and can seek redress by setting up marketing agencies of their own. The classic form has been the co-operative. These play an important, sometimes even a dominant, role in several countries. For example, Denmark's emergence as an exporter of bacon and dairy produce in the late nineteenth century was based on co-operative marketing agencies. Similarly, in the 1920s the co-operatives founded by Western Canadian farmers wrested control of grain exporting from private merchants. For a detailed assessment of several marketing policies in the world see Graham Hallett, *The Economics of Agricultural Policy*, Second Edition, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), Chapter 12.

¹⁰⁵² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, "Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement." C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillet, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 1.

¹⁰⁵³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, "Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement." C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillet, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 1.

controlled crops and (b) the receipt and bulking up of uncontrolled crops. The depots were operated by the co-operative unions that were responsible for the capital and interest re-payments which were spread over a minimum of 25 years.¹⁰⁵⁴ In order to provide the agricultural marketing service required by the large numbers of people in the rural areas it was necessary for the co-operative societies to re-open their produce collection points closed during the war.¹⁰⁵⁵ Approximately 1 000 such points were planned but the majority consisted of nothing more than an open piece of ground where produce could be bulked into economic lorry loads.¹⁰⁵⁶ Others were more elaborate with “fencing, hard-standing and limited storage space.”¹⁰⁵⁷ The latter were at the end of the chain of supply for the distribution of inputs, and facilitated the provision of a more sophisticated marketing service than the basic collection points that purchased produce for spot cash.¹⁰⁵⁸

It is important to note that the marketing and supply service envisaged was to be provided for all the people in the rural areas and former purchase areas. It was not only confined to members of co-operatives. Membership of co-operatives was, however, open to those who wanted to join, but the services provided by the co-operatives were available to all who wished to use them. It was accepted that the appropriate channel for loan funds to the co-operatives should be the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC)¹⁰⁵⁹ and that the loans should be secured by mortgage bonds over the fixed assets of the co-operatives concerned. In some cases it was also desirable to obtain notarial bonds over all assets of the co-operatives. In all cases conditions were written into the agreements to give powers to the Registrar of Co-operatives and his staff to exercise a degree of control over the activities of the co-operatives. While the third category focused on seasonal finance for marketing and the procurement of agricultural inputs it was often a target for criticism. One of the major criticisms of co-operatives concerned delays in payments to farmers for the produce that they would have delivered. The main reason for this is the inevitable delay between accepting produce, “bulking it into economic loads,” delivering it to the government marketing boards (often the only legal buyers at a price determined by them)¹⁰⁶⁰ and then waiting for payment from the boards. These delays, however, could be

¹⁰⁵⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, “Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement.” C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillett, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 1.

¹⁰⁵⁵ The Ministry of Home Affairs had accepted that for the co-operatives to perform the task of supplying inputs to farmers efficiently, and as cheaply as possible, it was essential that they had adequate buildings and access to sufficient funds after the war.

¹⁰⁵⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, “Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement.” C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillett, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 2.

¹⁰⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, “Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement.” C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillett, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 2.

¹⁰⁵⁹ The Agricultural Finance Corporation actually wanted the co-operatives to take over full responsibility for the supply of inputs to all communal farmers who qualified for AFC loans.

¹⁰⁶⁰ Anne O. Krueger, Maurice Schiff and Alberto Valdés, “Measuring the Effects of Intervention in

overcome if the co-operatives had overdraft facilities made available to them. Lamentably, the amounts that the banks were prepared to give without guarantees or security were inadequate to meet the total need. Similar delays were encountered with supplies of inputs and as a result the co-operatives were unable to take full advantage of early delivery rebates and discounts because they did not have access to adequate funds. It was imperative, therefore, that government guarantees for overdrafts be made available to those co-operative unions that agreed to operate in accordance with advice given by government staff. In fact, a heavy responsibility was placed on the staff of the Marketing and Co-operative Services Section to ensure that the co-operatives measured up to their responsibilities to the people and the Government. In order that this responsibility was properly discharged, steps were taken to ensure that the section was provided with an establishment commensurate with its responsibilities.

On the one hand, following government advice would enable them to engage in the purchase of uncontrolled crops for spot cash, make prompt payment for deliveries of controlled crops and carry adequate stocks of agricultural inputs to satisfy the demand.¹⁰⁶¹ On the other, it however, made it difficult for ordinary members to wrestle co-operative control from the government or local notables who had also developed strong ties with the government. In the Gowe Irrigation Scheme it was already the case that a minority of predominantly cotton growing households controlled the major part of the cotton market and available labour resources. Successful adaptation to cotton farming on a commercial basis had enabled some irrigators to expand their holdings by illegally laying claim to plots vacated by those going back to their dryland plots or those who had just acquired land in the NPA. Others were compelled by their economic position wrought by their limited resources, late adaptation or outright refusal to grow cotton¹⁰⁶² to continue to farm the original small plots. Wealthier plotters had reinforced their dominance by lending resources to the less well endowed and sometimes by influencing trade between the scheme at Gowe and the outside world especially the trade in vegetables with the Sanyati Growth Point. In short, a relatively privileged irrigation rural class had emerged under colonial rule and had secured control of many crucial economic and irrigation resources after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980.

Existing forms of social and economic differentiation since the colonial period have revealed that after independence egalitarian institutions were more or less impractical despite government's avowed position on community development and scientific

Agricultural Prices," in Anne O. Krueger, Maurice Schiff and Alberto Valdés (eds.), *The Political Economy of Agricultural Pricing Policy: Asia – A World Bank Comparative Study*, 2, (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 1-14. See also Robert H. Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Alberto Valdés and A. Siamwalla, Chapter 7 in J. W. Mellor and R. Ahmed (eds.), *Agricultural Price Policy for Developing Countries*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988 and World Bank, *World Development Report*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

¹⁰⁶¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, "Proposals for Development of the African Co-operative Movement." C. B. Roberts (Director, Marketing and Co-operative Services – Ministry of Home Affairs, Causeway, Salisbury, to the Controller Agricultural and Rural Development Authority for attention E. R. Tillet, Causeway, Salisbury, 23rd January 1980, 2.

¹⁰⁶² Some Sanyati peasants had earlier proved recalcitrant to grow cotton because it could not be eaten.

socialism. Official references to Co-op Societies or farmer organisations in Zimbabwe did not disregard the alarming precedent of the period 1950s to 1960s when there had been a brief efflorescence of both government and privately constituted marketing co-operatives. These in effect became alliances of rural notables, that is, chiefs, irrigation committee members, traders and state representatives for the pursuit of private gain. Clients of these dignitaries were expected to join and sell their harvest to the “co-operative” so that dependence on the patron was increased. Although local notables like the Gwachas did not readily accept this, they regarded the institution as their private property. It was easy for them to access credit. Cotton loans were used, above all, to satisfy the personal needs of the more affluent classes in Sanyati irrigation who often purchased grinding mills, retail shops and trucks that were used to ferry cotton bales to the market. This confirms the existence of differentiation in Sanyati and helps dispel a popular misconception that these peasant cultivators are “primitively homogeneous” and that African rural society is classless.¹⁰⁶³

The Zimbabwean government’s response to the perceived growth of rural differentiation at independence was contained in the community development programme of “Rural Animation”¹⁰⁶⁴ similar to the one adopted in post-colonial Senegal, originally conceived with a view to bringing about a new peasant consciousness which would undermine the dominance of the nascent rural bourgeoisie. This was an initiative in the direction of a rural “African Socialism.”¹⁰⁶⁵ The new government, as much as its predecessor, thus, tried to stifle the unquestionably rising wave of rural differentiation. However, socialist orientation could not supplant capitalist commercial enterprise already entrenched in many sectors of the Zimbabwean economy including agriculture. The supposedly animation movement subsequently became moribund as benefits persistently flowed above all to the already privileged irrigators with a capitalist orientation hence the intensification of socio-economic differentiation in the rural areas continued unabated.

More and new producer co-operatives were established by the government throughout rural Zimbabwe in the mid-1980s. Their functions were to be effectively restricted to provision of credit, supply of agricultural implements and other input materials and marketing of members’ produce. The proclaimed purpose of this “programme of co-operation” was to end the exploitative tendencies of the colonial marketing system, which had maintained peasants in semi-permanent indebtedness.¹⁰⁶⁶ However, the new system

¹⁰⁶³ Lionel Cliffe, “Rural Class Formation in East Africa,” *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 4(2), (January 1977), 195.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Donal B. Cruise O’Brien, “Co-operators and Bureaucrats: Class Formation in a Senegalese Peasant Society.” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 41(4), (October 1971), 270.

¹⁰⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁶ Due to the discriminatory marketing practices sanctioned by the Agricultural Marketing Authority (AMA), albeit other state interventions in peasant agriculture, the Sanyati smallholder farmers could hardly avoid perpetual indebtedness. For a full discussion of Agricultural Marketing and Supply (AMS) Co-operatives, their operations and impact see Burgess, *Smallholders and Political Voice in Zimbabwe*, 75, 120, 124, 158-159; Michael Bratton, “Farmer Organizations and Food Production in Zimbabwe,” *World Development*, 13(3), (1986), 367-384, and John C. Abbott, *Agricultural Marketing Enterprises for the Developing World*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). For regional comparisons see Crawford Young, N. Sherman and T. Rose, *Cooperatives and Development: Agricultural Politics in Ghana and Uganda*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981).

of government scarcely prevented “immigrant” entrepreneurs from seizing and perpetuating their control over wealth in Sanyati. The less well-endowed members of the community often resigned themselves to the idea that the co-operative was “not their affair.”¹⁰⁶⁷

At the same time, as already seen in chapter four, co-operative officials used their positions to turn the institution for their own economic purposes. They were able to profit from their status as privileged intermediaries. A wide variety of illicit and fraudulent arrangements flourished. For example, cotton growers were defrauded by being unjustifiably accused of delivering wet fibre, stuffing bales with stones to augment their weight or being subjected to false weighing scales. Some of these arrangements, such as the elementary device of the false weighing scales, have a long history in the Sanyati cotton trade. Even the central estate was sometimes accused of delivering wet cotton to the CMB (now COTTCO). In one incident recorded in the 1987/88 season, CMB Sanyati had bitterly complained through ARDA Head Office that Sanyati Estate “had been continually dispatching wet cotton to their Depot.”¹⁰⁶⁸ Responding to these allegations the Estate Manager denied any wrongdoing when he said:

This had provoked the consciences of the managers because they had never done so with the exception of cotton with trashes. Had this happened, the Authority [ARDA] could have responded [by] writing unpalatable memos to the managers concerned.¹⁰⁶⁹

His defence revealed that he was not amused by this development whose authenticity seemed very difficult to prove. Various government services that were channeled to the peasants through co-operative officials were also subject to abuse or fraudulent practices. For instance, agricultural credit, relief food supplies, medical supplies, refunds on the sale of crops, all became objects either of commercial speculation or of differential distribution to those with kinship or other ties to officials. It can be noted that legislation establishing co-operatives and other state marketing institutions had a number of loopholes that were exploited by corrupt officials to their advantage. Economic inequalities in rural Sanyati were thus strongly reinforced by the co-operatives as much as they were exacerbated by cotton commoditisation and commercialisation. The experience of co-operative movements elsewhere reveals that there was nothing particularly unusual with Sanyati as H. A. Landsberger in another context has identified this model as that of the “co-operative path to capitalism.”¹⁰⁷⁰

¹⁰⁶⁷ O’Brien, “Co-operators and Bureaucrats,” 271.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Sanyati Main Estate, ARDA, File: 6.1 Management Meetings – ‘CMB Sanyati’s Complaint About Wet Cotton’ - “ARDA Sanyati Estate: Management Meeting: Report from the Meeting Held by the Estate Manager in Regional Manager’s Office at Mashonaland Regional Office on 5 January 1988 at 5.10 PM,” 1.

¹⁰⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁰ H. A. Landsberger, “Social and Political Pre-conditions for Co-operatives among Poor Farmers in the United States South,” Unpublished paper delivered to the conference on “Social Prerequisites for Agricultural Co-operation,” at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, (1969). See also O’Brien, “Co-operators and Bureaucrats,” 271.

As a general rule, co-operative societies across the world are born of the producers' desires, but in Zimbabwe they have been the work of the government. At the end of colonial rule, just like in the succeeding decades a number of co-operative officials had emerged as the rural privileged elements. Most of them had amassed a lot of wealth compared to the irrigation and dryland holders of land who were not co-operative officials. The licit and illicit benefits that accrued to these rural notables can indeed be seen as the price of their political co-operation or alliance with government. By a series of measures the government after independence had made it necessary if not compulsory for all rain-fed and irrigation farmers to join a co-operative in order to sell their crops. "Membership" in the irrigation committees not least in the co-operative did not of course imply any effective control of the institution from below. Co-operative committee meetings were rather silent gatherings, held only in the presence of government officials who could ensure that popular decisions were in conformity with administrative regulations. Thus, agricultural marketing co-operatives can be seen as the subordinate local agencies of the national bureaucratic apparatus. The extent of central control has of course been justified as necessary to help the "illiterate" peasants to help themselves. Yet in view of the widely decried and continuing failure to provide members with basic services this expectation becomes increasingly illusory. Hence co-operatives have indeed come to appear more parasitic on existing production than generative of economic progress.

Both dryland and irrigation farmers grew increasingly aware of the disadvantage imposed by their marketing intermediaries. The malpractices of these co-operatives were naturally resented. Some peasants evaded the government's economic control exercised through co-operatives by side-marketing their produce. Since the 1980s, others as a means of an effective passive resistance to low prices and exploitation by the state have drastically reduced the amount of cotton they grow. In this category are farmers who were concentrating on maize which is much cheaper to produce and less labour intensive than cotton. Many others were producing more beans than cotton. These were unfortunately constrained by unanticipated bean seed shortages.

A peculiar matter concerning bean seed shortage was brought up in a meeting held on 20 December 1988 between ARDA management and the Gowe tenants. Ephraim Chiwombe alluded with dismay to what he termed as an unfair management practice done when bean seed for that season was issued out. The speaker said he was given insufficient seed while a counterpart with the same hectrage as his was given 9 bags instead of 7.¹⁰⁷¹ In defence, the Settlement Officer said Chiwombe's mode of comparison was based on ignorance because the farmer who was given more seed had a bigger area on the 4 ha-standard allocation for Gowe II and giving him more seed was a justified requirement. The meeting heard that it was through this misunderstanding that the complainant, Chiwombe, assaulted the Settlement Officer (Kamudzandu).¹⁰⁷² The Estate Manager,

¹⁰⁷¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Bean Seed Shortage - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers." 1.

¹⁰⁷² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Bean Seed Shortage - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by

Gwerengwe, who chaired the meeting advised that there should be no animosity between settlers and their superior. He stressed the importance of working together harmoniously and urged farmers to bring their grievances to his office, through the Settlement Officer in the event of failure to reach a compromise with the latter. This incident illustrates the disproportionate manner in which ARDA distributed inputs such as seed, which was not different from the selective way in which the AFC allocated loans. The farmers, though, expected more sympathy from ARDA than from a distant partner like the AFC.

During the same meeting farmers queried the groundnut seed shortage to one of the farmers. They alleged that the smooth running of the Sanyati Rural Development Planning Unit (RDPU) ¹⁰⁷³ was being hindered by lack of constant management at the Estate resulting in inconsistent rules and regulations. ¹⁰⁷⁴ Furthermore, they called for a document which states their rights as settler farmers. ¹⁰⁷⁵ The Chairman replied that their rights were as laid down in the lease agreement forms. He asked the house to avoid “making historical references and instead look at matters as they currently appeared.” ¹⁰⁷⁶ Gwerengwe as Chairman called for a comment from the Settlement Officer regarding groundnut seed. Kamudzandu said groundnut seed could have been easily obtained but it was realised that the planting period had elapsed. He said there was an understanding between management and the affected farmer, that he be allocated 3 ha of an already established groundnut crop in the Estate vacant plot. In return, the farmer’s 5 ha were to be used for soya bean trial. ¹⁰⁷⁷ The farmer, who happened to be in the meeting, did not object to this arrangement.

With permission from the Chairman of the meeting, Charles Mhara, the Gowe Settlers Chairman, interjected to caution his team to “stop discussing specific problems but keep to given topics.” ¹⁰⁷⁸ In making this point of interjection, he appeared to be on the side of the Estate but he was actually warning against digressing from the main agenda. Farmers also asked why they had to pay land rent ¹⁰⁷⁹ even if a crop was not established because of ARDA’s fault. The Estate Manager responded by saying if a cropping programme was presented on time, he did not see why farmers should fail to get inputs from the Estate. This came in the wake of the Gowe farmers’ claim that their cropping programme had

ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers.” 1.

¹⁰⁷³ This Unit is also known as the Rural Development Project Unit, Rural Development Promotion Unit or the Rural Development Production Unit.

¹⁰⁷⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Bean Seed Shortage - “Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers.” 1.

¹⁰⁷⁵ Settler farming refers to operations by small-scale commercial farmers who are attached to the ARDA and sugar estates. The farmers generally do not have title deeds to their plots.

¹⁰⁷⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Bean Seed Shortage - “Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers.” 1.

¹⁰⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷⁹ Land rent was part of ARDA’s sundry income (administration income) derived from levying the outgrowers a tenant’s fee. See NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Gowe RDPU Operating Accounts for 3 Months to 31 January 1990 – Sanyati Estate,” N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer).

been dramatically altered without explanation and that the new programme left them operating “below the poverty datum line.”¹⁰⁸⁰ They further claimed that they used to grow two crops in summer, namely maize and cotton and beans or wheat in winter, but this was no longer the case. Due to diseases on some plots, the summer cotton crop was also replaced by groundnuts on the affected plots and for the 1987 and 1988 winter seasons farmers were allowed to grow sugar beans which proved to be very lucrative.¹⁰⁸¹ However, it is important to note that pest and disease outbreaks played a significant part in determining crop combinations. From the 1987/88 to the 1988/89 seasons the disease fusarium wilt had put a halt to the growing of cotton on some plots. Nematodes were also threatening the cotton, sugar bean and soyabean crops.¹⁰⁸² The bone of contention in this issue, though, was the fact that Scheme Management had opposed the growing of maize on the irrigated land as this was economically non-viable and was not going to receive sponsorship from traditional financiers notably the AFC and ZIMBANK. Nonetheless, as far as management was concerned, the payment of land rent was obligatory and did not need to be mixed with the issue of input distribution.

Despite the position adopted by financiers like the AFC, Gowe tenants were not happy that they were prohibited from growing food crops especially maize. In one incident in the 1987/88 season, they alleged that the Estate had sent a tractor to destroy crops established within their allocated stand perimeters. They said while they were not permitted to grow maize in the Irrigation Scheme, they had to survive by ploughing in the limited area of their stands, which crop the Estate destroyed. Management argued that whatever crop was destroyed, it was because the farmer had violated a regulation and ploughed beyond the demarcation line.¹⁰⁸³ There was a controversy as to the perimeter of stands. Chiwombe produced a map which was briefly studied. The map was not of much use because it was a confusing “bull board.” However, in the long discussion that followed, the Estate Manager agreed that there was an anomaly in how plougher stands had been demarcated. He promised that he was going to liaise with the Planning Department so that stands would be properly marked. In a conciliatory tone he further pointed out that if it was established that the destroyed crop was within the allocated area, the loss suffered by the farmer would be compensated for, but if the reverse became the case then no farmer should dispute the decision made. He drew the attention of farmers to

¹⁰⁸⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District.” B. B. Chahuruva (District Administrator - Kadoma) to the Project Development Officer - ARDA, Harare, 16th February 1989, 1.

¹⁰⁸¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers’ Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA’s Office (Kadoma),” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 1-2. N.B. In attendance at the presentation of this “Grievance Paper” was a DA’s office official, M. Dzinoreva, who stood in for the DA who was on sick leave.

¹⁰⁸² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers’ Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA’s Office (Kadoma),” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2.

¹⁰⁸³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Destruction of Farmer’s Lands - “Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers.” 2.

the Estate's responsibility on conservation works, saying ploughing on unrecommended places caused serious drainage which the Estate was obliged to control.

In another development, it was heard that the farmers' bean crop had been harvested and was still lying idle in the Estate shed awaiting sale. The Estate Manager said ARDA was not prepared to buy the bean crop at the given price of \$2 per kg.¹⁰⁸⁴ The farmers argued that there was a need for the crop to be bought so that they would return loaned sums to the financiers who were charging them interest. They also indicated that they were in dire need of school fees and other personal requirements. The Manager instructed the Settlement Officer and the Senior Bookkeeper to contact possible prospective buyers as a matter of urgency.¹⁰⁸⁵ In the meanwhile, the farmers requested management to consider seriously their position in the Gowe Irrigation Scheme, regarding food. They said they were starving because the money that was left after paying their financiers was not enough for their families.¹⁰⁸⁶ They admitted that it was because of hunger that some farmers resorted to ploughing indiscriminately.¹⁰⁸⁷

Farmers persistently requested to be allowed more hectrage since many plots were vacant. The central estate Manager pointed out that it was government policy to keep the hectrage on the minimum per farmer so that more people could be accommodated in the scheme.¹⁰⁸⁸ He said the motive behind this was to educate as many people as possible on farming methods for the good of the nation. At this point farmers informed the meeting of their unhappiness at being denied more land and exercising their experience and knowledge gained over the years by mere drivers and pump attendants. In reply, the Manager deliberately avoided the question of land when he once more emphasised on the need for good relations between the two groups. He said, since farmers were expected to know the basics, they should not be refused to comment on, or advise the drivers where necessary.¹⁰⁸⁹

Regarding electricity, Chiwombe said farmers were also interested in the monthly electricity bill. He represented popular sentiment when he said they wanted to see how the charges were shared between ARDA vacant plots and themselves.¹⁰⁹⁰ His request was unanimously accepted. Continuing with their diverse complaints, farmers called for clarification on wire maintenance. They said, they were expected to maintain the fence,

¹⁰⁸⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Bean Crop Sales - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers." 2.

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Starvation - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers," 3.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Increase on Hectares - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers," 3.

¹⁰⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Electricity Bill - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers," 3.

when in fact, in their opinion, this fence should be maintained by the Estate out of the land rent paid.¹⁰⁹¹ Moreso, they said ARDA had its vacant plot within the fenced area. The Senior Bookkeeper remarked that the statement was not wholly true, saying that at one time the Estate sent their maintenance man to work on the wire.¹⁰⁹² The meeting also heard that the Estate had in possession, a battery charge belonging to farmers.¹⁰⁹³ They claimed that since the charge was theirs, they should be allowed to have their batteries charged free. They argued that the recently introduced fee of \$3,00 needed an explanation. Noone in the meeting, however, could confirm that the current battery charge in the workshop belonged to farmers although it was mentioned that the particular charge was purchased in 1972 and was brought to the estate around that period. It was, then, resolved that a follow up on the charge will be made.¹⁰⁹⁴ B. M. C. Sibanda, the Rural Development Co-ordinator, told the meeting that the Security Guards who escorted the Settlement Officer, on the day the crops were destroyed instilled fear in the Gowe neighbourhood.¹⁰⁹⁵ He said since the officer had not committed a crime, why was this matter not solved on a much lighter note. In an emotional speech, Sibanda said the guards were aggressive and abusive whilst noting that despite their presence the Settlement Officer was attacked. He concluded by saying, if the exercise of destroying crops was justified, there was no need for the estate to send their policemen. The Manager (Gwerengwe), in his closing speech, said all problems had been taken note of and where possible things will be corrected. He said since this was his first meeting with the farmers, it was his hope that relations would quickly improve.¹⁰⁹⁶ Indeed, relations needed remedying as the central estate thrived on the labour of the same outgrower farmers with whom antagonism seemed to be growing.

Estate labour: Harmony or acrimony:-

Most of Sanyati's residents, both rich and poor, have in common a distinctively cosmopolitan outlook which distinguishes them readily from the people of Gokwe across the Munyati river. These perceived differences emanate not only from the local dominance of "immigrants," the core of whom were transferred from the Rhodesdale Estates between 1950 and 1953, but also from historical peculiarities arising from land shortages. Because of land scarcity the majority of Sanyati dryland and irrigation plotters did not engage in the form of domestic farm management that Angela Cheater calls the "traditional idiom of accumulation," which was a labour-intensive strategy characterised by the recruitment of several wives, other affines and distant

¹⁰⁹¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Fence Maintenance - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers," 3.

¹⁰⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Battery Charge - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers," 3.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, Police Probe - "Minutes of a Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on 20 December 1988 by ARDA Management and Gowe Settlers," 4.

¹⁰⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

agnates onto the farm to work as quasi-labour tenants.¹⁰⁹⁷ For example, because of limited carrying capacity there are fewer polygamous marriages and more absent spouses compared to Gokwe. What this meant was that households that became wealthy had at least one member working at Sanyati Growth Point or in Kadoma. Thus, Sanyati was caught in a labour trap, and one of the best investments a peasant farmer could make was to educate his family so that they could obtain urban employment. However, to pay for this education he too had to seek work as a wage earner. In this instance, the farm family was left with only wives, young children and old people. Such peasant or irrigation families usually lacked the labour resources necessary for successful agricultural production. Their long engagement with the wage economy, their proximity to the main route through which all produce was evacuated to the market and their intensive exposure to the labour discipline imposed by Estate and smallholder irrigation gives Sanyati more developmental sophistication compared to Gokwe.

In fact, so keen were Sanyati peasants to improve their access to markets after independence that they volunteered in 1981 to contribute one dollar for every cotton bale they delivered that year to pay for the construction of a wide tarred road through the communal area to the Sanyati CMB depot.¹⁰⁹⁸ Such civic activities were aimed at economic improvement. This degree of civic participation or at least co-ordination was also manifest in the relationship between the community of communal area farmers and the ARDA Estate. Before the mid 1980s it appears there was abundant labour supply to pick cotton from both the outgrowers and their communal area neighbours. The coming of independence coupled with the economic buoyancy caused by the cotton boom made peasants engaged in the cotton growing business reluctant to provide picking labour as they concentrated on their own fields. With the demand for workers by communal area farmers, labour deficiencies became acutely commonplace in the two ARDA irrigation schemes. The acute shortage of casual labour on the Estate in particular was partly attributable to the harnessing of cotton by many local peasants and partly to the crippling boycott by the communal area farmers who would ordinarily be earning extra money by picking there.

Appealing for help in one of the meetings held at ARDA Sanyati and attended by ARDA management, honourable local chiefs, school headmasters, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) Chairmen, the local council Chairman and Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) representatives, the then Estate Manager, Gwerengwe, said “the estate relied on locals, both adults and children, to provide manual labour and that without their valuable contribution, the nation as a whole would face up to a crisis in production.”¹⁰⁹⁹ He added: “it was of paramount importance that the local community ... establish good relations with the Authority.”¹¹⁰⁰ Taranhike, the Workshop Manager at the time,

¹⁰⁹⁷ A. Cheater, *Idioms of Accumulation: Rural Development and Class Formation Among Freeholders in Zimbabwe*, (Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984).

¹⁰⁹⁸ The road between Golden Valley (Patchway) and the southern border of Sanyati remains for the most part a dangerous single-lane tar strip.

¹⁰⁹⁹ Gwerengwe (Estate Manager), Sanyati Main Estate, File: 6.1 Management Meetings, “Minutes of the Meeting Held in the Sanyati Guest House on Saturday 25 February 1989 to Review the Cotton Picker Turn Out,” 1.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

informed the meeting about the incentives the Estate management was offering for the 1989 cotton-picking period. These were as follows:

- (a) The price per kg would be 6 cents for school children and 7 cents for adults;
- (b) That school children would be provided with “mahewu” (a traditional sweet brew) and teachers would be offered lunch;
- (c) That transport would be provided as usual; and
- (d) Prizes of \$300,00 were offered for picking 80 000 kgs and above, \$200,00 for picking 50 000 kgs and above and \$100,00 for picking any amount exceeding 25 000 kgs plus a certain percentage for extras on targeted kilograms.¹¹⁰¹

In spite of these seemingly lavish incentives, there was still an air of incertitude among those who attended the meeting. This uncertainty emanated from ARDA’s reluctance to offer packages that were lucrative enough to lure the hordes of available local labour. From the many divergent views expressed at this meeting, it was clear that most parents were not happy with the parastatal’s labour arrangements which were not community friendly. This signaled the beginning of a labour boycott. A catalogue of grievances was presented to the Estate management for their consideration if there was to be an amelioration of the pickers’ crisis facing them. These grievances were articulately presented as follows:

- (a) Parents, in particular PTA chairmen, requested for an increase in the price per kilogram picked;
- (b) Parents wanted guarantees on safety in the transportation particularly of children. They quoted an incident in the 1985-picking season in which a school child fell from a tractor and died. In this connection Chambe, the Neuso Primary School Headmaster, suggested that a meeting be arranged between ARDA management and Neuso parents where ARDA should apologise for this unfortunate disaster, which has ever since created strained relations between the School and the Estate. He said parents were still bitter about the incident and were quite unwilling to permit their children to come for cotton picking;
- (c) Parents expressed with serious concern their disapproval of the offer of “just” mahewu to the children who were expected to pick cotton after a hard day’s work at school. They requested management to review the matter;
- (d) Parents called for a solution to what they termed “daylight robbery.” They alleged that weighing scales were being “adjusted” to read false figures.
- (e) Headmasters advised ARDA to give trophies and souvenirs to schools as incentives;
- (f) Headmasters advised ARDA to identify themselves as much as possible with schools by way of offering prizes at school competitions and in other variable activities;

¹¹⁰¹ Taranhike (Workshop Manager), Sanyati Main Estate, File: 6.1 Management Meetings, “Minutes of the Meeting Held in the Sanyati Guest House on Saturday 25 February 1989 to Review the Cotton Picker Turn Out,” 1-2.

- (g) Parents called upon management to offer employment to successful school leavers.¹¹⁰²

In short ARDA were being urged to stop exploiting pickers especially school children and to implement safety regulations. They had (in the post-independence opinion of the community) a social responsibility to plough back into society the proceeds of their enterprise. The general consensus was that if all these matters presented during the meeting were resolved amicably, there was bound to be firmer relations between the Estate and the local community. It was also hoped that the outcome of the meeting would bear fruitful results in the future.¹¹⁰³

In reply to some of the points put forward the Estate Manager said: “The price per kg would then be 7 cents to all [pickers]” but emphasised on clean cotton from school children. He made it clear that the Estate was not going to prepare food for school children probably because it was financially draining because of their numbers. The Manager further pointed out that improvements on transport would be made by way of fitting angle irons on lorry and tractor edges. He must have riled a large section of the meeting when he mentioned that the possibility of accidents could not be overruled but that all necessary precautions to avoid them would be taken. On the other points raised (i.e. d to g) the Estate Manager’s response was not immediately reassuring as he said he could not give replies offhand as he would have to consult his team before coming out with solutions.¹¹⁰⁴ However, his reply agitated most parents as ARDA continued to appear disinclined to promise comprehensive concessions to the pickers.

The boycott revealed the extent of resentment the pickers felt towards the Estate management which was subject to constant changes. Apparently, ARDA did not have an unblemished labour record. The Estate Accounts Clerk, Alexander Machicha, revealed during an interview that in 1985/1986 and in 1987/1988 the labour crisis was so serious that the army was called to assist.¹¹⁰⁵ The soldiers were deployed to pick cotton on separate blocks of the Estate as a way of exercising “maximum” discipline on civilians and the army.¹¹⁰⁶ However, even this drastic use of military labour had proved as costly as it was ineffectual. The army had been dispatched to rescue ARDA’s cotton crop, but of

¹¹⁰² Sanyati Main Estate, File: 6.1 Management Meetings, “Minutes of the Meeting Held in the Sanyati Guest House on Saturday 25 February 1989 to Review the Cotton Picker Turn Out,” 2.

¹¹⁰³ Mpunzwana (Estate Secretary), Sanyati Main Estate, File: 6.1 Management Meetings, “Minutes of the Meeting Held in the Sanyati Guest House on Saturday 25 February 1989 to Review the Cotton Picker Turn Out,” 3.

¹¹⁰⁴ Gwerengwe (Estate Manager), Sanyati Main Estate, File: 6.1 Management Meetings, “Minutes of the Meeting Held in the Sanyati Guest House on Saturday 25 February 1989 to Review the Cotton Picker Turn Out,” 2.

¹¹⁰⁵ A. Machicha, (ARDA Sanyati Estate Accounts Clerk), Personal Interview, ARDA Sanyati, 17th May 2005.

¹¹⁰⁶ Sanyati Main Estate, ARDA, File: 6.1 Management Meetings – “ARDA Sanyati Estate No. 71: Minutes of the Management Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 31 May 1988 at 7.30 AM,” 1-3. See also Sanyati Main Estate, ARDA, File: 6.1 Management Meetings – “ARDA Sanyati Estate No. 71: Minutes of the Management Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 20th June 1988 at 4.40 PM,” 2 and Sanyati Main Estate, ARDA, File: 6.1 Management Meetings – “ARDA Sanyati Estate No. 71: Minutes of the Management Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 4th July 1988 at 4.00 PM,” 2.

the four hundred-strong contingent released for this purpose only 200 soldiers lasted more than one and a half to two weeks. The rest chose to go home soon after withdrawing their labour. Apparently, armed labour is expensive. According to the Regional Agritex Extension Officer (RAEO) based at Sanyati, “they must be fed breakfast, lunch and supper everyday, and they must be fed what they want, or you will be in trouble.” The RAEO also confirmed the story of the Sanyati community boycott of ARDA: “they got off the ARDA truck and ran straight for the Gowe Irrigation Scheme.”¹¹⁰⁷ The local chairman of the National Farmer’s Association of Zimbabwe (NFAZ), which represented the communal area farmers, told the RAEO that it was a question of poor public relations on ARDA’s part. Claims of inept public relations were authenticated by the local CMB manager when he narrated the ordeal of the pickers:

... the children of ARDA workers had been locked up for two days for eating groundnuts that dropped off the back of a company lorry ... also ARDA was paying less than the prevailing piece [wage] rate in the surrounding communal area. They finally raised the rate, but only after ... requiring that the workers grade the cotton into 3 separate bags as they picked, reducing the picking rate to under 10 kg per day.¹¹⁰⁸

ARDA’s labour procurement problems can be underscored by the many recruitment forays they launched as far afield as Binga, Mhondoro, Rio Tinto, Chegutu and Gokwe. In one incident, the RAEO also confirmed that a trailer had been sent all the way to Binga to recruit pickers, but the trailer had broken down and the truck came back with only 20-30 workers – a far cry from the figure of 300 that had been anticipated. A further 200 pickers had been expected to come from Mhondoro communal lands but not as many turned up.¹¹⁰⁹

This was not the first time that ARDA had experienced such problems. Each year, the new managers, who seemed to come and go with alarming frequency, mounted similar efforts to police the casual labour force in this way – a wretched labour record indeed. They did so in apparent ignorance if not denial of the existence of a wider market with which the Estate was in fact competing for agricultural labour.

Since loans became widely available to Sanyati and Gokwe peasants and the creation of jobs clearing land especially in land-abundant Gokwe, weeding and picking for “immigrant” entrepreneurs, the flow of workers that used to come to ARDA annually from local sources, including Gokwe and the Zambezi Valley, virtually dried up. Hence the Estate is now perennially shackled by the absence of a ready supply of labour. As already indicated in the previous chapter the attempt to discipline labour was not confined to the Estate lands alone but extended to ARDA’s fifty tenants in the attached

¹¹⁰⁷ The Regional Agritex Extension Officer (RAEO) cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 210.

¹¹⁰⁸ Sanyati CMB Manager cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 211.

¹¹⁰⁹ Sanyati Main Estate, ARDA, File: 6.1 Management Meetings – “ARDA Sanyati Estate No. 71: Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting Held in the Estate Manager’s Office on 11 April 1988 at 2.00 PM,” 1. See also the RAEO cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 211.

Gowe Irrigation Scheme as well where the ARDA Estate behaved like a feudal Estate with the people in there as serfs. These outgrowers, who leased ¹¹¹⁰ three to four-hectare plots from ARDA, were denied any control over their cropping practices at all, with irrigation and tractor services being supplied by the Estate according to a recommended or predetermined schedule (i.e. the synchronisation of activities) so as to realise economic yields. ¹¹¹¹ The cost of these services was then attached as a stop order on their cotton deliveries to the CMB, along with the cost of loans taken for fertiliser and pesticides. In fact, one aspect of all the delivery systems associated with settler production which seems problematic is the stop order method of loan recovery whereby debts owed to ARDA, AFC, ZIMBANK and the Co-ops are recovered from any sales made by farmers to the CMB or GMB before any surplus is paid out to them. ¹¹¹²

Since 1986 the farmers have been charged rent for the land as well, which was a source of deep resentment among the tenants. Stop order arrangements continued to be detested because they impoverished the outgrowers. One Gowe tenant interviewed by Worby, Masauke M, explained the details of the tenancy contract in a tirade of complaints:

Things started to go bad in 1985/86 ... when the extension workers on the scheme told them to wait too long before harvesting their irrigated winter wheat. The crop was damaged by early rains and lost most of its value. His first delivery of cotton in 1986/87 was worth \$3 097,60 but all of it was deducted to pay off the stoporder to the AFC. Then he sent 5 more bales to the CMB, but received no check at all: they had simply deducted the proceeds from his outstanding debt. Then he sent two more bales; again, he received nothing. Finally, he sent 33 bags of maize to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), but the AFC again took all the proceeds, so he began to sell his remaining maize for 50 cents per teacup to other farmers. ¹¹¹³ He still has Z\$655,26 in debt remaining from that year ... and

¹¹¹⁰ In the settler irrigation scheme land leases were granted by the then Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement to original recipients of plots (i.e. the first generation of plottolders who were hand-picked from a small cadre of Master Farmers deemed capable of managing a farm/plot as a business enterprise – an expectation, according to Angela Cheater, *Idioms of Accumulation*, 9, that only emerged in government policy after 1948 as positive measures of farming viability were not really established until the mid-1960s). It was not easy for sons in the second generation to inherit the lease from their fathers.

¹¹¹¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “ARDA Sanyati Estate: Settlement Officer’s Report for the Period 1st November to 31st December 1987,” N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati), 1-2. See also NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “ARDA Sanyati Estate: Settlement Officer’s Report for the Period up to 31st January 1988,” N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati).

¹¹¹² Among some of the most important studies that deal with the stop order method of recovering loans are M. Bratton, “Financing Smallholder Production: A Comparison of Individual and Group Credit Schemes in Zimbabwe,” Working Paper, Harare: University of Zimbabwe, (1985), 21; M. J. Drinkwater, “Loans and Manure: The Dilemma of Access,” Working Paper AEE 3/87, Harare: Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe, (May 1987), 2 and DANIDA, *Zimbabwe: Assistance to the Resettlement Credit Scheme*, (Copenhagen: Danish International Development Agency/DANIDA, 1985), 4.

¹¹¹³ Technically, this practice constitutes what is termed the side marketing of produce, which is affectionately known as the “black” market or in contemporary terms the parallel market. However, whilst this practice has proliferated since the 1980s as a way by farmers to beat off inflation or to run away from

suspects that ARDA is keeping some of the inputs that have been charged to his stoporder.¹¹¹⁴

A receipt for his latest cotton delivery revealed that the total value of his cotton delivery of 10 bales, less rental on the cotton packs (Z\$55,00), was Z\$1 585,63. His basic AFC stop order deduction was \$1 553,63 plus an additional \$30,00 for transport and a \$2,00 stop order or processing fee. When all these inbuilt costs had been taken into account the “balance” to be paid out to him was “Nil.”¹¹¹⁵

Such a system restricted plotholder performance, notwithstanding the unwillingness by the Estate to allow farmers to cultivate the so-called undemarcated lands. Some Gowe tenants like Judith Chikowore challenged these restrictions. When ARDA management ordered her to destroy the cotton plants growing in a portion of the field that her family had, in defiance of regulations, ploughed with their own oxen,¹¹¹⁶ she said, “you can come and destroy the plants yourself.”¹¹¹⁷ They challenge the Estate in other, less overt ways as well. For example, they did that by hiring casual labour at better rates of pay or with better conditions of work.¹¹¹⁸ However, resource-poor plotholders who had no access to AFC loans were not in a position to hire labour. These were often compelled to resort to piecemeal working arrangements on the Estate characteristic of tenants with poor access to lines of credit. The working relationship between the Estate and the outgrowers was more of an acrimonious than a harmonious affair and captures the ideals of lowered moral value on the part of the Gowe tenants.

ESTATE AGRICULTURE AND GOWE SETTLER PERFORMANCE: THE POST-COLONIAL PERIOD (1980-1990)

The way forward: Changing basis after Independence:-

The attainment of Independence by Zimbabwe in April 1980 seemed to herald a new phase in the development of smallholder and Estate farming. For many, time had come to implement the necessary structural and managerial changes which were obviously long over-due. The pre-independence era emphasised agricultural development based on a core estate. On the one hand, it had brought a lot of despair and untold economic hardship to the Gowe plotholders. They had been deprived of land, agricultural loans, markets, autonomy and flexibility of action on their plots. As shown in earlier chapters, in the colonial period

increasingly inflationary agricultural prices the practice is illegal. The early 1960s to the mid-1980s was a period marked by significant volatility in the prices of major agricultural commodities on the international market hence peasants devised these survival mechanisms.

¹¹¹⁴ Masauke M cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 211-212.

¹¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 212.

¹¹¹⁶ The keeping of cattle in the Gowe Irrigation Scheme for long a taboo was in the 1980s being practiced by most plotholders in contravention of standing regulations because ARDA tillage services had gone beyond the reach of many.

¹¹¹⁷ Judith Chikowore cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 212. See also Judith Chikowore, (Gowe Irrigation Committee Member and Plotholder), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 2nd May 1996.

¹¹¹⁸ Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 212.

state power was used in a multitude of ways to guarantee labour supply. The ever present influence of European commercial farmers continued to skew the availability of agricultural resources and the marketing services to their own benefit and, very secondarily, towards a few of their African neighbours on the other divide of the main railway line. On the other hand, with independence there were enormous pressures to diversify the benefits and integrate the black farming community into the mainstream economy. The Government of newly independent Zimbabwe expressed its intentions of stimulating economic development in the African areas, which it argued were lagging behind. This, for the agricultural sector implied an acceleration of the commercialisation process. In pursuit of a new development ideology the post-independence period, therefore, became characterised by intensified intervention¹¹¹⁹ and control by the national government and parastatal institutions¹¹²⁰ like ARDA over the agricultural sector. One of the main objectives of this intervention was to stimulate irrigation performance very broadly defined by the International Irrigation Management Institute (IIMI) as “... the results delivered by an irrigation system towards a set of objectives including productivity, equity, reliability, sustainability, profitability and quality of life.”¹¹²¹

Thus, the coming of Independence, which ushered in a black government, was heartily welcomed as a move that would radically redress the existing socio-economic and political imbalances in the country. The new government was expected to give a further boost to the regeneration not only of Gowe but also all the small-scale farming interests which had hitherto been neglected. More resources had earlier been expended for the benefit of commercial or Estate agriculture. It is not a secret that the future of Zimbabwe largely depends on the success of the agricultural sector. The government, through ARDA, therefore, had to create the right framework for the maximum implementation of the rural development programme.¹¹²²

ARDA, which succeeded TILCOR after 1980, was set up as a planning and co-ordinating agency for rural development. Its major functions are to plan, co-ordinate, implement and promote:

- (a) agricultural and rural development in Zimbabwe;
- (b) schemes for the betterment of agricultural and rural development; and

¹¹¹⁹ State intervention is one of the main characteristics of post-independence agricultural policy in Zimbabwe.

¹¹²⁰ A general survey of the administration of parastatal organisations in Zimbabwe can be gleaned from POZ Library, No. ZF 351.0092096891 ZIM/55674-6, *General Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Administration of Parastatals Under the Chairmanship of Justice L. G. Smith*, (Harare, Zimbabwe: Government Printer, January 1989), 1-181.

¹¹²¹ IIMI, *Managing Irrigation in the 1990s: A Brief Guide to the Strategy of the International Irrigation Management Institute*, (Colombo, Sri Lanka: IIMI, 1989), 11 and M. Hvidt, *Water, Technology and Development: Upgrading Egypt's Irrigation System*, (London: Taurus Academic Studies, 1997), 45 cited in Clare L. Johnson, “Politics and Power: Government Intervention in the Muda Irrigation Scheme, Malaysia,” PhD thesis, Middlesex: Flood Hazard Research Centre (FHRC), School of Social Science, Middlesex University, (August 1999), 170.

¹¹²² *Rhodesia Parliamentary Debates*, Harare: Government Printers, (28 January 1982), 497.

(c) schemes for the development and utilisation of specific State lands.¹¹²³

To a large measure, these functions were similar to TILCOR's stated objectives. Since all communal land in Zimbabwe is classified as State land, the government was obliged to institute and promote development in such areas including Gowe. The success of the State in this endeavour will be measured later in the course of this chapter.

Relationship between ARDA (Sanyati) and Gowe:-

This section will give insights on ARDA's operations and its association with the Gowe settlers who reside adjacent to the Sanyati Main Estate. As a key instrument of State involvement in the development of agriculture and overall rural development in its wider sense,¹¹²⁴ ARDA's efforts in enhancing the standard of living of the rural folk in Sanyati will be examined.

The Gowe settlers were expected to adopt similar cropping schedules as outgrowers to the core estate. This was a requirement for all the settlement schemes in the country. ARDA's argument was that, it was essential for the settlers and the Estate to synchronise operations to lessen the burden of water, administrative and extension management.¹¹²⁵ The settlers, however, viewed this as being subordinated to the parastatal. A major problem was likely to hinge around the need to provide the settlers with various services in connection with their agricultural operations. Since the inception of the Main Scheme the assumption and practice was that services would be provided from a central Mechanical Equipment Unit (MEU).¹¹²⁶

The MEU was supposed to have sufficient capacity to serve both the ARDA Estate at Sanyati and the Gowe Settler Scheme. Settlers were expected to hire machinery at the same rates as the Main Estate. Before the take-over from DEVAG of the Gowe Settler Scheme by ARDA in 1980, the settlers were paying for land preparation only at the rate of ±\$30,00 per hectare, and free infield transport was provided by the DA for Kadoma.¹¹²⁷ It was hoped that the Estate Manager, who controlled the MEU, would exercise his discretion in this connection in such a way as not to prejudice the settlers. If the Estate Manager were to use his discretion in a manner that was prejudicial to settler interests, the future of the settlement scheme could be jeopardised.¹¹²⁸

As of 1990 (and even beyond), the Scheme was divided into Gowe I and II, which at full capacity consists of 36 and 58 settlers respectively who are accommodated on 3 to 4 hectare plots per holder after the enlargement of the Scheme to 120 ha in 1974.¹¹²⁹ The restructured

¹¹²³ *Statistical Yearbook of Zimbabwe 1987*, (Harare: Central Statistical Office, 1987), 140.

¹¹²⁴ *Spearheading Zimbabwe's Future, ADA Booklet*, (Harare: NCR City Printers, s.a.), 1.

¹¹²⁵ Jaure, Personal Interview.

¹¹²⁶ Paraiwa, "Policy Proposals for TILCOR-Administered Settlement Schemes," Salisbury: ARDA, 10th February 1981, 3.

¹¹²⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), "TILCOR Ltd. Interim Report on Take-over of Gowe I and II," B. M. Visser, 15th September 1980, 1.

¹¹²⁸ Paraiwa, "Policy Proposals for TILCOR-Administered Settlement Schemes," 3.

¹¹²⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/General (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Regional Manager (TILCOR-Mashonaland), 15th December 1980. See also Mhlanga, "Outgrower Settlement Schemes and the Commercial Settlement Scheme," 3. N.B. Gowe I denotes Stage I settlers, and

and increased plot sizes on the scheme has slightly improved the performance of the farmers. Productivity has also reasonably gone up since some of the farmers' commitment has improved. However, other settlers are not very productive and co-operative.¹¹³⁰ On the whole, these settler farmers contribute towards scheme operating costs and the cost of shared services which include electricity and water charges, maintenance of infrastructure and land rent. In June 1985 ARDA signed a contract with the Electricity Supply Commission, ESC, now the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, ZESA, to increase the supply capacity to serve the Gowe Irrigation Project. The Authority, after protracted deliberations, accepted the installation of a 200 KVA to 300 KVA transformer at a connection fee of \$3 500,00.¹¹³¹

Land charges are levied on all settlers and these are either based on the costs of developing the scheme or the estimated current value of the land.¹¹³² In the TILCOR days, land rent, in its current form, was not demanded from the plotters, but a similar payment, known then, as a land preparation fee was charged on the small pieces of land. It can be noted that in the 1980/81 cropping season, the settlers owned relatively small tracts of land, that is, 1,4 hectares per plotter at Gowe I and 1,2 hectares at Gowe II.¹¹³³ Notwithstanding the size of the plots and the land charges, the settlers were realising fairly reasonable profit margins judging by the demand for loans shown in these tables:

TOTAL LOAN REQUIREMENTS: 1980/81 SEASON

Table 5.1: GOWE I CROPPING PROGRAMME: PLOT SIZE 1,4 Ha

Area 50 hectares

(Private) Enterprise	Cotton	Maize	Total
Area ha.	0,7	0,7	1,4
Per ha. Costs	\$262,86	\$285,90	
Actual Costs per settler	\$184,00	\$200,13	\$384,13

No. of settlers = 36
Total Loan requirements = 13 828,68¹¹³⁴

Gowe II, Stage II settlers. Gowe I is 50 ha in size whereas Gowe II is 70 ha – see NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “N. Kamudzandu - Settlement Officer’s Annual Report for 1988/89 – Gowe Irrigation Scheme,” 1.

¹¹³⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum: Rural Development Promotion Unit’s Handover/Takeover Final Working Report - Set/10 Sanyati-Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme,” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Settlement Officer - Sanyati, 26th August 1988, 3.

¹¹³¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272081, Location R19.3.11.9F, File: EST/9A Sanyati Estate: Water Vol. 2, “Confidential Memorandum,” 9th July 1985.

¹¹³² Paraiwa, “Policy Proposals for TILCOR-Administered Settlement Schemes,” 3.

¹¹³³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), “Gowe Settler Scheme: Cropping Costs for Cotton and Maize only 1980/81 Season,” 15th September 1980, 1-2.

¹¹³⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), “Gowe Settler Scheme: Cropping Costs for Cotton and Maize only 1980/81 Season,” 15th September 1980, 1-2.

Table 5.2: GOWE II CROPPING PROGRAMME: PLOT SIZE 1,2 Ha.

Area 70 hectares			
Enterprise	Cotton	Maize	Total
Area Ha.	0,6	0,6	1,2
Per Ha. Costs	\$262,86	\$285,90	
Actual Costs per settler	\$157,72	\$171,54	\$329,26

No. of settlers	= 58
Total Loan requirements	= \$19 097,08
Total Loan requirements Gowe I and II	= \$32 925,76 ¹¹³⁵

The economic performance of an average irrigator was measured at between \$854,00 and \$995,00 per farmer for Gowe II and I respectively. ¹¹³⁶ Better than average settlers did even better. Compared to the minimum wage of \$30,00 per month or \$360,00 per annum gazetted by the government for farm workers in 1980/81, the settlers were capable of earning well over twice the relative minimum wage. ¹¹³⁷ Although this was not the optimum income that a single settler might have wanted to get, it is only being used as an indication that the plottolders were making some economic headway.

The explanation for the sizeable profits the plottolders made in the season in question can be found in good yields during the agricultural boom and in the fact that total irrigation charges were quite manageable. For instance, each plottolder paid \$40,00 in total irrigation expenses. ¹¹³⁸ Furthermore, the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) was willing to disburse the required loans to 89 of the 94 settlers after ARDA had produced crop budgets for each one of them. ¹¹³⁹ It can be pointed out here that such loans were granted to recipients upon application and were based on strict repayment conditionalities.

¹¹³⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), "Gowe Settler Scheme: Cropping Costs for Cotton and Maize only 1980/81 Season," 15th September 1980, 1-2.

¹¹³⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), M. G. Paraiwa, "The Economic and Financial Implications of the Transfer of the Administration of Gowe Irrigation Settlement Scheme from DEVAG to TILCOR," Salisbury: ARDA, 1980, 6.

¹¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹¹³⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), "Gowe Settler Scheme: Cropping Costs for Cotton and Maize only 1980/81 Season," 15th September 1980, 1.

¹¹³⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), M. G. Paraiwa "The Economic and Financial Implications of the Transfer of the Administration of Gowe Irrigation Settlement Scheme from DEVAG to TILCOR," Salisbury: ARDA, 1980, 4.

Before independence, the financing of inputs was the responsibility of the Agricultural Loan Fund (ALF), an undertaking of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (now the Ministry of Home Affairs), which was administered by the Kadoma District Administrator for Gowe.¹¹⁴⁰ The new arrangement was that the AFC would provide seasonal credit to the Gowe settlers,¹¹⁴¹ starting with the 1980/81 summer cropping programme. On the other hand, the day-to-day administration of the loans was in the hands of ARDA, who advised settler borrowers on their indebtedness on a monthly basis.¹¹⁴²

Starved of loans: Limited facilities hamper smallholder irrigation:-

A very problematic area has been in the sphere of finance. Many small-scale farmers have been starved of loans to raise their agricultural performance. Real problems for the farmers started in 1982 when the AFC (now the Agricultural Development Bank of Zimbabwe, AGRIBANK) decided to revise its arrangements for the extension of credit facilities for the Gowe ploholders.¹¹⁴³ The idea was to bring the Gowe Scheme which was managed by the Rural Development Promotion Unit, RDP, within the Agricultural Operations Division of ARDA, in association with the Sanyati Estate Management, into line with the system of credit in vogue at Chisumbanje (Chiredzi).¹¹⁴⁴

Basically, the proposals were as follows:

- (a) that individual loan facilities are negotiated by each farmer with the AFC on the basis of an agreed budget and then consolidated into a Single Loan Facility available to TILCOR/ARDA, Gowe, to be disbursed on a monthly basis;
- (b) income from the sale of crops be retained by the Estate, from which the full AFC debt, with interest, is liquidated;
- (c) interest charged by the AFC will be recovered from farmers by ARDA on a per hectare basis;
- (d) farmers be paid out any amounts due to themselves by the Estate immediately the final crop proceeds have been received;
- (e) monthly statements of costs incurred by individual farmers will be issued to them by the Estate;
- (f) the liability for amounts remaining unpaid in the event of a crop failure will remain with the individual farmers. In order to protect AFC and ARDA

¹¹⁴⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), M. G. Paraiwa "The Economic and Financial Implications of the Transfer of the Administration of Gowe Irrigation Settlement Scheme from DEVAG to TILCOR," Salisbury: ARDA, 1980, 4.

¹¹⁴¹ ARDA Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st October 1986, 11.

¹¹⁴² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), M. G. Paraiwa, "The Economic and Financial Implications of the Transfer of the Administration of Gowe Irrigation Settlement Scheme from DEVAG to TILCOR," Salisbury: ARDA, 1980, 4.

¹¹⁴³ NAZ, File S4252: Agricultural Finance Corporation Reports 1971 -, Current Issues; Agricultural Finance Corporation Annual Report and Accounts for The Year Ended 31st March 1982, 3.

¹¹⁴⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 271081, Location R19.3.11.9F, File: EST/4D Middle Sabi Estate - Water, I. Moyo (Planning and Development Controller) to the Senior Irrigation Engineer, 16th September 1985. See also ARDA Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st October 1985, 11; and ARDA Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st October 1984, 9.

- interests it will be necessary for farmers to sign Acknowledgements of Debt for the amount of their loans and for an endorsement to be registered against leases [if available]; and
- (g) individual farmer's accounts are to be kept by TILCOR/ARDA at Sanyati and to be available for inspection at any time.¹¹⁴⁵

These were really stringent measures imposed on the farmers, who were in the meanwhile contriving to force the parastatal out of any involvement in the Gowe Settlement Scheme. Even the AFC Branch Manager, Western Division, R. R. C. Davis, understood that "there could be problems with certain of the Gowe settlers in that they may be reluctant to relinquish their individual Growers Cards [or Marketing Cards] but in the circumstances, it would be necessary for this to be a condition of any assistance granted."¹¹⁴⁶ In short, the AFC were seeking collateral security for their loans.

Inevitably, the system of individual registration of Growers with the GMB and the Cotton Company of Zimbabwe (formerly CMB), when it came to marketing their produce, had to be abandoned. It had to be abandoned in favour of Estate control of all inputs as per agreed budgets and loans.¹¹⁴⁷ ARDA would be debited accordingly, and market the crops under the Sanyati Estate Registration and Growers Number.¹¹⁴⁸ In turn, the Estate would distribute the proceeds to the farmers after the necessary deduction for inputs and interest. This had the effect of perpetuating the exploiter-exploited relationship between Gowe and the Main Estate or the subordination of Gowe to the Main Estate.

Furthermore, it was difficult for farmers to market their wheat or be recipients of wheat loans, granted in 1981 at the rate of \$335,00 and \$280,00 for Gowe I and II respectively.¹¹⁴⁹ In this year, the AFC was unable to finalise the loans for a large number of farmers on both sections of Gowe, because they were not registered as wheat growers with the GMB. Among the unregistered farmers were J. Chikowore,¹¹⁵⁰ M. Sakala and J. Makusha of Gowe I as well as S. Sibanda, T. K. Munoti and L. Chigogo of Gowe II.

This lack of finance partly explains why Chikowore has been cited as an example of a "horrible" or "very unsuccessful" farmer by the former Estate Manager.¹¹⁵¹ It is important to note that Estate management influences how farmers are perceived in the "modern" and "backward" dichotomy. The yardstick used to measure failure here, could quite easily be at fault. Admittedly, the truth was that since 1978 wheat was among the controlled group of crops together with maize, sorghum, groundnuts, soya beans, coffee, cotton and tobacco.¹¹⁵²

¹¹⁴⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), R. C. Davis (Branch Manager, West - AFC) to the Secretary (TILCOR), 12th February 1982, 1-2.

¹¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹⁴⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Agricultural Finance Corporation Small Farmers Credit Scheme (AFC - SFCS), 17th August 1981.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), S. J. Edmondstone (Managers Assistant, West) to TILCOR, 10th August 1981, 2 and 3.

¹¹⁵⁰ Chikowore, Personal Interview.

¹¹⁵¹ Gwerengwe, Personal Interview.

¹¹⁵² NAZ, Agricultural Marketing Authority: Economic Review of the Agricultural Industry of Zimbabwe for the Year Ending 31st December 1986, 21 and 50.

The marketing of these commodities in the urban areas as a whole, and in Sanyati town in particular, was deliberately declared a government monopoly, which has been in effect since the Maize Control Act of 1931.¹¹⁵³ The Act, which was replaced in 1950 by the Grain Marketing Act (No.31), placed the marketing of grain under statutory control.¹¹⁵⁴ Today the Agricultural Marketing Authority (AMA), set up in 1967, co-ordinates the operations of four boards (CMB, GMB, DMB and CSC) which handle the marketing of commodities which are subject to Statutory Control.¹¹⁵⁵

The marketing control of certain crops, in conjunction with the unavailability of loans or high interest charged on loans has adversely affected smallholder farmers' agricultural activities. For example, in 1986 the AFC itself admitted that there were no major changes in the Corporation's lending policies.¹¹⁵⁶ The viability and repayment capacity of agricultural programmes remained the main criteria for processing loan applications.¹¹⁵⁷ Loan advances were also made after careful evaluation of the risks attached to each application for financial assistance.¹¹⁵⁸ Risks like drought and crop diseases¹¹⁵⁹ sometimes are a hindrance to the Gowe plotters' quest for loans, as high levels of indebtedness by some farmers to the corporation make them ineligible for further loans until they pay up.¹¹⁶⁰ In 1989, the AFC embarked on group lending in the small-scale farming sector as a deliberate strategy to arrest rising loan administration and processing costs.¹¹⁶¹ According to J. Gwacha, since that date, the plotters had to group themselves and make an estimate of their agricultural

¹¹⁵³ For detail on the Maize Control Act see C. F. Keyter, *Maize Control in Southern Rhodesia, 1931-1941: The African Historical Contribution to White Survival*, The Central African Historical Association: Local Series, (34), (1978).

¹¹⁵⁴ *Zimbabwe: Towards a New Order*, 55-56.

¹¹⁵⁵ *Statistical Yearbook (1987)*, 140.

¹¹⁵⁶ NAZ, File S4252: Agricultural Finance Corporation Reports 1971 -, Current Issues; Agricultural Finance Corporation: Annual Report 1986, 6.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵⁸ NAZ, File S4252: Agricultural Finance Corporation Reports 1971 - Current Issues; AFC: Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1994, 4.

¹¹⁵⁹ Cotton plants from the settler scheme at ARDA Sanyati were often infected by Fusarium wilt. It can be assumed that Estate crops also succumbed to this fungal disease because it is more prevalent on sandy soils characteristic of this irrigation scheme than verticillium wilt (also a fungal disease) which is common on heavy soils. Fusarium wilt's symptom expression is enhanced by hot weather conditions (i.e. mean daily temperatures above 23°C) found in this area. The commonest cotton problem pests were the red bollworm (requiring at least 2 sprays of the chemical, carbaryl) and the heliothis, jassids and aphids (requiring at most 4 sprays of a combination of thionex and dimethoate). The jassids and aphids could do with at least 2 sprays of dimethoate per season. For more detail on these crop diseases see NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Wilted Plants on Settler's Farm - ARDA Sanyati," R. Chinodya (Senior Research Officer - Pathology, Cotton Research Institute, Kadoma) to the Deputy General Manager, ARDA Harare (Attention - J. Made); copied to the Estate Manager, ARDA Sanyati (Attention - Kamudzandu, Settlement Officer), 3rd March 1988 and NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "N. Kamudzandu: Cotton Production - Settlement Officer's Quarterly Report for November 1989 to January 1990."

¹¹⁶⁰ NAZ, File S4252: Agricultural Finance Corporation Reports 1971 -, Current Issues; AFC: Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st March 1989, 8.

¹¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

requirements.¹¹⁶² This estimate was presented to the AFC, who in turn, assessed the needs and repayment capacity of the farmers before approving the loan.

Once the loan had been approved, the plotters obtained a cheque from the AFC, which they took to COTTCO especially for a quotation to buy such inputs as fertilisers and cottonseed.¹¹⁶³ Prior to 1980, the Corporation, which was established in 1971 through an Act of Parliament, only served the large-scale white-dominated Commercial Farming Sector.¹¹⁶⁴ This evidence has been corroborated by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) who argue that up to 1980 scarcely any communal area farmers were extended credit and that the bulk of the loans extended were to farmers in natural region II which is not where the bulk of the communal area population is located.¹¹⁶⁵ (See Map 15 showing Zimbabwe's Natural Regions). COTTCO, on the other hand only, provided input assistance to plotters who have a three-year proven farming record.¹¹⁶⁶ In a similar fashion to the AFC's policy, COTTCO also prefers group lending. It advances non-financial loans to smallholder farmers who can organise themselves in groups of 30-50 each.¹¹⁶⁷ J. Gwacha has made it clear that "COTTCO does not give cash loans to small-scale farmers but only to commercial farmers."¹¹⁶⁸ However, it would benefit the Gowe plotters more if COTTCO were to consider giving them both material and financial loans under conditions that would not peculiarly exacerbate indebtedness and lead to the imminent collapse of the scheme.

Because of the unfavourable loan climate, calls were being made for the government to put in place low-interest loans to assist small-scale farmers who have been marginalised for years and cannot utilise their farms to full capacity due to financial limitations.¹¹⁶⁹ Indeed, limited loan facilities continued to hamper smallholder irrigation in this period despite government effort to have this service extended to all members of the farming fraternity. Farmers were finding it difficult to secure loans not only from the AFC, but even the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU) has failed to come up with a solution to the financial problems besetting the small-scale farmers.¹¹⁷⁰

This failure could also mean failure to adopt practical steps to mitigate against food shortages due to persistent droughts.¹¹⁷¹ Although irrigation schemes such as Gowe have been designed to sustain many communal farmers, and that in public fora it has been stated

¹¹⁶² J. Gwacha, Personal Interview, 9th January 1997.

¹¹⁶³ Gwacha, Personal Interview.

¹¹⁶⁴ NAZ, File S4252: Agricultural Finance Corporation Reports 1971 -, Current Issues; AFC: Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1990, 10.

¹¹⁶⁵ DANIDA, *Zimbabwe: Assistance to the Resettlement Credit Scheme*, 16-17

¹¹⁶⁶ NAZ, File S4252: Agricultural Finance Corporation Reports 1971 -, Current Issues; AFC: Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 1990, 10.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶⁹ "High Interest Loans Marginalise Farmers," *The Sunday Mail*, Harare: (November 10, 1996), 7. See also "Small-Scale Irrigation Lacks State Support," *The Herald*, Harare: (Wednesday April 16, 1997), 5.

¹¹⁷⁰ "High Interest Loans Marginalise Farmers," *The Sunday Mail*, Harare: (November 10, 1996), 7.

¹¹⁷¹ "Let's Have Plan to Transform Peasant Farming," *The Herald*, Harare: (Thursday February 1 1996), 11.

that smallholder farming is high on the agenda,¹¹⁷² this feat might not be achievable unless there is determined effort on the part of government to make the AFC (AGRIBANK today) and other financial institutions such as the Zimbabwe Banking Corporation, ZIMBANK, agro-industrial concerns, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or the donor community in general bail out this group of farmers. All the farmers were granted loans for the 1990/91 season¹¹⁷³ despite such plottolders as Tasara Govoro, E. Sibanda, E. Chirandata, David Mjoli and A. M. Motsi's 1989/90 cotton crop being a complete write off due to high weed infestation which encouraged pests like aphids, heliothis bollworm and red spider mite.¹¹⁷⁴ The latter actually got out of control because of these farmers' reluctance to spray against the mites. Most farmers in Gowe II were also reluctant to apply the nematicide, carbofuran, to control nematodes in their bean crop but this did not affect their loan applications in the short term. In the long term it did. Chikowore and Chiwombe were subsequently not considered for loans because of poor performance. The outbreak of the fusarium disease also made it difficult for them to pay back the previous loan. In the face of the fusarium disease and lack of loans to purchase, among other things, a cotton curator, which is very expensive, the farmers' yields continue to decline in as much as their repayment capacity continues to dwindle.

A more secure land tenure system¹¹⁷⁵ could also be considered by the government. This could curtail the rigorous exercise of culling and eviction of existing plottolders. For instance, in consultation with the Estate Manager who seems to have taken over the functions of Settlement Officer since the departure, in 1981/82, of the then Settlement Officer or Extension Manager for Gowe I and II and Copper Queen, Terrence Ngwena,¹¹⁷⁶ the current and past performance of the plottolders is assessed and those who do not meet requirements are sometimes served with eviction orders. Eviction, though difficult to effect in practice,¹¹⁷⁷ is mainly on the basis of poor agricultural performance and failure to repay AFC loans.¹¹⁷⁸ Watering outside the irrigation schedule also warranted eviction. A case in point involved N. Mavengere (Plot No. B2) who was repeatedly warned by the Settlement Officer for this "farming offence." One such warning read:

You are warned that on 27 August 1989 you deliberately (sic) opened two irrigation lines which were outside the irrigation schedule thereby severely

¹¹⁷² "Smallholder Farming High on Agenda," *The Herald*, Harare: (Friday October 25 1996), 7.

¹¹⁷³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Gowe Settlement Scheme – Settlement Officer's Annual Report for 1989/90," N. K. Kamudzandu.

¹¹⁷⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settlement Officer's Report for Month of February 1990 – Gowe Irrigation Scheme," N. Kamudzandu.

¹¹⁷⁵ "Call for More Secure Land Tenure System," *The Sunday Mail*, (Harare, December 3 1995), 7. N.B. Under the Lease Agreement there was clear-cut reluctance on the part of Government to grant ARDA settler farmers security of tenure.

¹¹⁷⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Estate General Manager (Chisumbanje), 23rd October 1981. N.B. Since the departure of Terrence Ngwena and before the appointment of N. K. Kamudzandu there has been a steady whittling away of the power and independence of the field staff. The latter was the last Settlement Officer to be engaged by ARDA, which currently leaves the Estate Manager doubling up as Estate Administrator and settler adviser.

¹¹⁷⁷ Musodza, Personal Interview.

¹¹⁷⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Gowe Settlement Officer; Sanyati Estate Manager and the Budget Controller, 26th August 1981, 1.

lowering pressure on blocks which were being irrigated. This affected the irrigation efficiency adversely. On some occasions I warned you verbally not to carry out any operations without being instructed to do so but to my surprise this behaviour is not stopping. If this type of behaviour doesn't stop forthwith, I won't hesitate to recommend your eviction from the scheme.¹¹⁷⁹

Sometimes farmers are evicted because of their failure to devote sufficient time to their plots, and effect correct management as they have divided interests in the dryland portion of the surrounding communal areas.¹¹⁸⁰ Although ARDA has insisted that these farmers' interests must be either centred on the scheme, or dryland holdings elsewhere and not both,¹¹⁸¹ it can be noted that some of them were genuinely moving in search of new "economic frontiers."¹¹⁸² These farmers hoped to maximise their economic gain by the dual cultivation of dryland and irrigation plots. In view of this, then, the assertion that Gowe was or is a "self-provisioning asset" is a misconception which should be dispelled at once.

On the strength of this argument alone, it can be noted that ARDA-Sanyati, in this particular respect, is not achieving some of the objectives for which it was set up. Perhaps, it is axiomatic that Gowe is not doing so well, especially considering the fact that the Sanyati Estate, which is supposed to run and manage it, does not seem to be an effective and viable developmental agent. Broadly speaking, the Estate is continually operating at a loss,¹¹⁸³ and

¹¹⁷⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum: Plot B2 Gowe Irrigation – Improper Irrigation Procedure," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer – Sanyati) to N. Mavengere (Gowe Plotholder), copied to the Settlers Programme Co-ordinator and the Estate Manager, 30th August 1989. N.B. To a large extent, this warning by the Settlement Officer mirrors the ever-growing competition for water or fights over water among smallholder irrigators as well as between these irrigators, the Estate and other needs. Apart from revealing the importance of water rights, it also shows that conflicting claims challenge the social institutions which mediate access to water. For detail on this see Leif Ohlsson, "Introduction: The Role of Water and the Origins of Conflict," in Leif Ohlsson (ed.), *Hydropolitics: Conflicts over Water as a Development Constraint*, (London and New Jersey: ZED Books Ltd., 1995), 1-7 and Stephen Merrett, *Introduction to the Economics of Water Resources: An International Perspective*, (London: UCL Press Ltd., 1997), 1-3. A more recent evaluation of water rights has been provided by Ruth S. Meinzen-Dick and Bryan Randolph Bruns, "Negotiating Water Rights: Introduction," in Bryan Randolph Bruns and Ruth S. Meinzen-Dick (eds.), *Negotiating Water Rights*, (International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI): Intermediate Technology Publications Ltd, 2000), 23-24. Even more recently, Turton and Henwood have added a political dimension to water-related issues by emphasising that water is a multifaceted resource which because it is scarce and because it is essential for life, health and welfare, it has become a contested terrain and therefore a political issue. For further detail on the politics of water see Anthony Turton, "Hydropolitics: The Concept and its Limitations," in Anthony Turton and Roland Henwood (eds.), *Hydropolitics in the Developing World: A Southern African Perspective*, (University of Pretoria: African Water Issues Research Unit - AWIRU, 2002), Chapter 1. Last but not least, Petrella, more than his counterparts in the study of water, has advocated a World Water Contract initiative. He believes the best solution to water conflicts lies in co-operation and respect for mutual interests. For detail see Riccardo Petrella, *The Water Manifesto: Arguments for a World Water Contract*, (London and New York: ZED Books, 2001).

¹¹⁸⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser (TILCOR Regional Manager-Mashonaland) to The Secretary, Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development, 26th February, 1981, 2.

¹¹⁸¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Gowe Settlement Officer; Sanyati Estate Manager and the Budget Controller, 26th August 1981, 1.

¹¹⁸² Paraiwa, Personal Interview.

¹¹⁸³ ARDA Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st October 1987, 5.

it is ironical that the Core Estate, which is itself a loss-making organ, should be employed as a medium through which the economic betterment of Gowe and the surrounding areas can be achieved. If ARDA is really serious about making Gowe plottolders successful small-scale commercial producers,¹¹⁸⁴ it in the first instance, has to make Sanyati Estate commercially viable so that it becomes a case worth emulating by the Gowe settler outgrowers and other peasant communities in the country.

More importantly, withdrawing ARDA management and services and handing the scheme over to the settlers would be ideal on the grounds that the parastatal's scheme costs can never be justified in economic terms.¹¹⁸⁵ Its either ARDA are top-heavy or they are ill funded. The former description is more applicable than the latter as the organisation has been well financed and heavily subsidised by the state. Its overall performance does not seem to justify the hefty investment Government is making in it. ARDA itself has admitted to incurring not economic but huge social costs and expenditure to service the settlers at all its schemes. Among some of the major social costs it incurs include the cost of supplying water for irrigation; maintenance and repairs of irrigation equipment; and the regular measurement of water usage.¹¹⁸⁶ Regrettably, at Sanyati, and indeed anywhere in Zimbabwe, conversion from estate to individual settlement as will be seen in chapter six has not yet been accomplished in practice. The idea, therefore, only continues to be cherished in principle. ARDA's very lethargic approach in weaning its settler components has been its major bane. Outgrowers have not been sufficiently economically empowered to achieve this goal and it should be remembered that weaning them is a process not an event. It needs time. Success in this regard is, therefore, pretty remote and is not even in sight in comparison to the Tsovane and Dande Irrigation Schemes which the Ministry of Lands and Water Resources thinks are drawing much nearer to fulfilling this expectation than Gowe.¹¹⁸⁷ However, these two schemes (Dande and Tsovane) are beyond the scope of this study.

Cotton, profitability and the dilemma of loans:-

As already noted in previous chapters cotton cultivation did not bestow equal benefits to all the growers. Attempting to answer the question whether growing cotton was a profitable venture for peasants in a place like Sanyati with limited land available and theoretically no land market at all through which people might be able to invest in production on a larger scale is not an easy task. The answer lies in the agro-business acumen vested in individual farmers. Some irrigators who exhibited rare qualities produced phenomenally high yields. Others under similar circumstances but without the necessary liquidity to purchase inputs at the start of the cotton season suffered production setbacks. Their profit margins were either very low if not negligible. Plottolders such as Charles Mhara and Ennie Nyandoro fell into

¹¹⁸⁴ ARDA Annual Report and Accounts 1991/92. See also ARDA Annual Report and Accounts 1992/93; and ARDA Annual Report and Accounts 1993/94, 3.

¹¹⁸⁵ *Rusitu Intensive Resettlement Scheme, Zimbabwe: Options Study Consultancy, Draft Report*, (Cambridge: Overseas Development Administration, MacDonald Agricultural Services Limited, May 1991), S-5.

¹¹⁸⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "Memorandum," D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner) to Settlement Officers (Chisumbanje, Middle-Sabi, Antelope, Ngwezi, Mzarabani, Sanyati and Pungwe Valley), 22nd May 1984.

¹¹⁸⁷ Musodza, Personal Interview.

this category. On the contrary, Thompson Nyamutova and Office Dangaiso were probably near the apex of prosperity achieved by cotton growers in the Gowe Irrigation Scheme. Their sons working in town repatriated earnings that to a large extent subsidised their fathers' agricultural investments. For households like these that drew on a constant, year-round source of income in order to finance the cash purchase of crop inputs and labour, the growing of cotton was an economic boon, but for their poorer counterparts who did not have a regular wage income the precariousness of their position was too obvious to warrant elaboration. They were in a big dilemma. Their net agricultural income was despicably low. Without much recurrent turnover from their plots and without any off-farm earnings such resource-poor farmers depended upon a small-farmer credit facility administered since 1980 through the parastatal AFC.¹¹⁸⁸ It was so small that it did very little to alleviate their financial distress.

While the state, through the AFC, may have envisioned an increasingly rationalised and regimented relationship with its peasant clients, those clients themselves did not have so clear an understanding of the obligations into which they were being drawn. In the smallholder irrigation scheme farmers seemed uncertain as to what the exact role of the AFC in their particular circumstance was. Although its role was seen by the state as aiding cotton growers to become rich the growers viewed it as an organisation that impoverished and marginalised them. The farmers' perception of this lending institution was informed by the stringent and totally inflexible repayment conditions attached to each loan. Plotters subscribing to the loan programme were obligated to take deliveries of fertiliser and seed whose full value they had to pay back irrespective of whether there was a drought or not, which placed them in a perennial debt-trap. The loan was repaid through a stop order attached to the card number of the registered grower and this number was also sewn onto the grower's bales for easy identification of a grower's cotton for purposes of payment. The occurrence of drought meant poor or no yields and subsequently failure to honour their debt obligations. Whenever this happened it incapacitated them, as they would not qualify for another loan from the AFC. Failure to get an AFC loan also meant that their leases would have to be terminated. Once terminated the Land Settlement Board, upon ratification, would then cancel their leases, which made the farmers' position immensely precarious.

As leases were cancelled land belonging to the affected lessees was immediately declared vacant. There were several reasons that led to lease cancellations. After the 1986/87 summer cotton harvest, for example, plots C1 and C2 of 3 ha and 4 ha respectively fell vacant. The former belonged to Garu Musariraone of Gowe I and the latter to Kariba Siamusandano of Gowe II. The two settlers failed to obtain loans from AFC because of their poor performance, side marketing and failure to honour their loans with AFC. Musariraone owed the AFC \$4 596,00 whereas Siamusandano owed \$2 537,56 accumulated since 1983.¹¹⁸⁹

¹¹⁸⁸ The loans themselves were of three types. Firstly, short-term loans were limited to \$348,00 per farmer in 1987/88 and comprised seed, fertiliser and pesticides. A special additional amount could be allocated for a ULV or backpack sprayer. Secondly, medium-term loans of 3-5 years were given for cattle, a scotch cart or a tractor. Finally, long-term loans – usually 10-30 years and reserved for large-scale farmers – were for the purchase of lorries, irrigation equipment etc.

¹¹⁸⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Vacant Plots at Sanyati – Gowe I and II Settlement Scheme," D. P. Mtetwa (for General Manager - ARDA) to the Secretary for Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement - Attention B. F. Vutabwarova and

Both of them were non-resident on the scheme and used to manage their plots by remote control. Siamusandano's crop management was said to be "below model C standard." He was not following advice and was viewed as "a self-styled farmer who [believed] in delegating without any follow ups." Hence, he was farming "communally than commercially," which jeopardised his chances of getting a fresh loan.¹¹⁹⁰ They were both interviewed by AFC local management and ARDA's Settlement Officer in an effort to see if they could be able to secure money elsewhere and pay their dues to Sanyati AFC Branch Office. Nevertheless, because they had side marketed their previous crop and used the money for their own personal needs, they were unable to pay AFC or get any other source of funds.¹¹⁹¹ The lease agreement was always enforced to discourage side marketing of crop packs (obtained through AFC loans), side marketing of produce (to avoid AFC loan repayment), the illegal practice of keeping livestock on the scheme and the cultivation of erodible areas off the irrigated lands. Hence, these two offenders were ultimately evicted from the scheme for not following advice and it is understood they acquired land elsewhere. As soon as they had been dismissed ARDA began to seek Land Settlement Board approval, as was common practice, to re-allocate new settlers to the plots as a matter of urgency since Estate management could not utilise them due to budget constraints. As already noted those farmers who flouted the provisions of the lease agreement were removed from the scheme and their place taken up by more deserving applicants as a way of rationalising plot allocation. New incumbents were necessary because if vacant plots were not filled, there would be the hazard of pests affecting other settlers' cotton crop.

The plottolders were forced into this debtor-creditor relationship with the AFC because loan refusal by a smallholder irrigation farmer was officially not tolerated. The case of Imbayago Sekerere (Plot No. B6) who joined Gowe on the 1st of May 1977 bears ample testimony to this. This farmer initially had not applied for a loan and was approached on several occasions by the Settlement Officer for Sanyati to go to AFC offices to register for a loan but he "was deliberately delaying."¹¹⁹² Finally, he went to AFC Sanyati Branch and as a pre-condition for a loan was asked to produce vouchers and receipts for previous crops to prove if he had marketed through the right channel and had paid his debt since stop orders for Gowe farmers were ineffective and every farmer had been advised to pay cash to clear the loan. However, Imbayago, despite being an above average producer, never produced these documents because he was black marketing part of his produce and was a bad debtor as reflected by his erratic payments tabulated below.

C. G. Thomas, 30th October 1987, 1-2. See also NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Vacant Plots at Sanyati – Gowe Irrigation Scheme," R. Maposa (for General Manager – ARDA) to the Secretary Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Causeway, Harare – Attention R. L. Nkomo, 28th June 1989.

¹¹⁹⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "AFC Loan Refusal," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to the Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, 28th January 1988, 1.

¹¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "AFC Loan Refusal," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, 11th December 1987, 1.

Table 5.3: DEBT POSITION

<u>Amount(\$)</u>	1984/85		1985/86		1986/87	
	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>	<u>Summer</u>	<u>Winter</u>
Loaned	2 026	1 030	2 781,07	1 409,72	2 878,38	2 798,05
Paid	2 026	1 320,83	NIL	978,63	NIL	NIL

Total owed = \$8 888,59

PRODUCTION

Year	Ha	Total Harvest (kgs)	Average Yield (kgs/ha)	Remarks
84/85 Summer	2,8	8 864	3 165	Cotton
84/85 Winter	1,2	5 335	4 445	Wheat
85/86 Summer	4,2	8 200	1 952	Cotton
85/86 Winter	1,4	5 196	3 711	Wheat
86/87 Summer	3,0	6 339	2 113	Cotton
86/87 Winter	3,0	1 800	600	Beans ¹¹⁹³

Black marketing and failure to honour debt payments led to the severance of this farmer's association with the AFC. Incidentally, he had no other source of income to finance the 1987/88-summer crop. Since there was no alternative source of finance the Settlement Officer for Sanyati, N. K. Kamudzandu, did not hesitate to recommend eviction after declaring him inactive on the scheme and that the affected plot should be immediately filled. ¹¹⁹⁴ Similarly, Peter Ngandu (Plot No. D1), a satisfactory performer, who owed the AFC \$7 783,87 but was frequently absent from the scheme without authority was presumed to have deserted because he black marketed part of his produce and could not pay back his loan. ¹¹⁹⁵ The Settlement Officer then recommended that a new tenant should take over the plot since the farmer had shown that he was no more interested by

¹¹⁹³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "AFC Loan Refusal," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, 11th December 1987, 1.

¹¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹⁹⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Absence From Scheme," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, 11th December 1987.

not applying for a new loan. Probably, his departure was caused by a self-realisation that he had no future in the scheme. Another tenant, Shadreck Takawira (Plot No. B5), whose crop management skills were also satisfactory but whose chief defect was black marketing, was refused a loan because he was a bad debtor.¹¹⁹⁶ He was asked by the AFC to pay some money into their account to which he agreed but never did so even under constant reminders. Because he had no alternative source of income to finance the 1987/88-summer crop he could not avoid eviction. As already indicated in this chapter, the eviction clause was always evoked by ARDA in the event of any breach of the terms and conditions of the lease and whenever the parastatal felt that the lessee had permitted his farming activities to decline to such an extent that the holding was not properly farmed. Nevertheless, evicting farmers from land to which they had become physically and emotionally attached for failing to pay the AFC debt was cruel and painful. It revealed iron-handedness on the part of this lending institution and gross lack of empathy with the farmers by ARDA.

The moneylenders never considered the impact of drought. Between 1982 and 1985, the national irrigated area dropped from 165 000 ha to 136 000 ha as a result of the severe drought.¹¹⁹⁷ In the same period, although there are no statistics to back this up, a number of plots in the irrigated area lay idle due to the financial strain imposed by this natural calamity. Despite the AFC expanding its services to the extent that in the 1985-86 season over 85 000 peasant farmers were given loans worth \$41,8 million,¹¹⁹⁸ the iron hand it exercised on the farm recipients of credit was also evident. Following the drought in 1982, 1983, 1985 and 1987, a certain peasant farmer called Ruza K originally from Njelele in Gokwe who settled in Gunyungu in 1963 before subsequently moving to Sanyati in 1979 to join his mother after the death of his father recalls how heavy-handed the AFC was in dealing with farmers who had failed to pay back their loan. Although the AFC had apparently agreed to give him a special dispensation to pay back only half the loan amount in light of the drought he was still outraged:

The AFC must understand that if I get 10 bales, they must leave me half-half (i.e. with five) so that I have something left for school fees and for food. Instead they take everything. Who is to blame if we can't plough after a drought year if they refuse to give us another loan? It can encourage someone to grow maize only, at Z\$17 a sack - - - nothing!¹¹⁹⁹

Reinforcing his father's position his son whose name has not been provided chided: "Our father had better work doing maricho (casual labour) for my brother and I, because if he dies, his debt will fall on us!"¹²⁰⁰

¹¹⁹⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "AFC Loan Refusal," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, 11th December 1987.

¹¹⁹⁷ Water Reports, *Irrigation in Africa in Figures*, 7, (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1995), 331.

¹¹⁹⁸ DANIDA, *Zimbabwe: Assistance to the Resettlement Credit Scheme*, 14-15.

¹¹⁹⁹ Ruza K cited in Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 208.

¹²⁰⁰ Ruza's son cited in Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 208.

In the dryland area agricultural activity came to be characterised by the huge demand for input loans from the state, represented at that time by the AFC, and attempts on the part of those overburdened by these loans to evade payment. Some farmers like Sophie M (an “immigrant” from Masvingo) of Kasirisiri, a relatively poor ward bordering the Chenjiri small-scale commercial area, until 1982 sold cotton to the CMB on her father-in-law’s grower’s card. Sophie and her husband got their growers cards in 1987 and 1982 respectively. In 1988 their family delivered two bales through the card belonging to Sophie’s mother-in-law in order to avoid paying back the Z\$387,00 loan they had accessed from the AFC for a one-hectare packet of pesticides and fertilisers.¹²⁰¹ The evasion of loan repayment by diverting cotton sales through cards unburdened by debt seemed to be a perfectly tenable strategy to ensure accumulation as long as new family members could obtain cards. However, to send cotton through more distant relatives or friends required a high degree of trust since the cheque was issued in the name of the cardholder who must then share the proceeds with others who would have used the same card to send bales.

Whilst loan evasion might have been rampant in the dryland area it was not so liberally extended in ARDA’s outgrower sections throughout the country. The omnipresent “policing” role of the Estate and the state’s “co-operation” with the AFC in “developing” the Gowe I and II settlers ensured that there were no incidents of loan evasion in the ARDA smallholder irrigation schemes. Centrally controlling the loan disbursement and repayment system meant that ARDA and subsequently AFC kept a tight rein on the settler farmers. Concerning the 1987 bean crop produced by Gowe I and II farmers, an AFC official, A. T. Rusare, demanded that the selling arrangements had to comply with his Corporation’s requirements. In a letter to Mtetwa of ARDA he directed that “the beans being bought by Deltrade shall have the funds for payment forwarded to you [ARDA]. After the delivery of all the beans and final payment made, then the whole amount shall be forwarded to AFC whose loan schedules will be waiting.”¹²⁰² In giving assurance to AFC, Mtetwa promised to abide by standing lending regulations when he concurred that “payment of the beans being bought by Deltrade through our Head Office [ARDA]; shall be forwarded to AFC after final payment for you [AFC] to facilitate refunds to ARDA and various farmers at the ... scheme as per your loan schedules with the respective settlers.”¹²⁰³ Contractually, Gowe farmers paid their loans to the AFC through ARDA. In fact, in conformity with this procedure after the settlers had delivered their 1987/88 bean crop (496 bags x 90 kgs) to Deltrade, ARDA received a total amount of \$78 120,00 and forwarded a cheque for the same amount to the AFC.¹²⁰⁴ Thus, given this system the avoidance of loan repayment by changing identities or

¹²⁰¹ Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 209.

¹²⁰² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Gowe Settlement Scheme Farmers – Sanyati,” A. T. Rusare (for AFC Provincial Manager – Midlands) to D. P. Mtetwa (Settler Programmes Co-ordinator – ARDA), 19th November 1987.

¹²⁰³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Sanyati - Gowe I and II Settlers’ Bean Sales,” D. P. Mtetwa (Settler Programmes Co-ordinator – ARDA) to the AFC Provincial Manager, Midlands – Attention A. T. Rusare, 1st December 1987.

¹²⁰⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Sanyati Estate - Gowe I and II Settlers’ Bean Sales,” A. T. Danha (for Settler Programmes Co-ordinator - ARDA) to the Manager (AFC Sanyati), 28th December 1987. See also NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Purchase of Beans from Gowe Resettlement Scheme Farmers,” E. Dziva (Assistant Branch Manager - AFC Sanyati) to the Settler Programmes Co-ordinator (ARDA Harare), 25th January 1988.

creating fictive growers was not commonplace at Gowe. This gave the AFC the advantage of recouping most of the loans disbursed to the smallholder irrigators.

Sanyati farmers on the whole were quick to realise that the AFC was a profit-seeking enterprise and that it represented the government. They were equally aware that the cost of inputs purchased with these loans had been rising faster than the buying price offered by the CMB (COTTCO) for cotton and that they were being squeezed. The profitability of growing cotton could therefore be maintained by shifting allegiance to a new loan provider whose repayment conditions were less stifling. Continued attachment and repayment of accumulated loans to the AFC meant that the plotters' net income would be negative. This became sufficient justification for the plotters' abrogation of the loan contract with "Finance" as the AFC had come to be known.¹²⁰⁵ They immediately shifted their allegiance to a local commercial bank, the Zimbabwe Banking Corporation Limited (ZIMBANK Sanyati). The Bank Manager, C. Dangaiso, confirmed in 1988 that his corporation had started assisting farmers such as Mafumana Mjoli, David Mjoli, Judith Chikowore, Simon Mushonga, Cephass Wira, Office Dangaiso, Thompson Nyamutova, Ngazimbi Mavengere, Kandulu Chipala, Edington Munengami, Ephraim Chiwombe and Charles Mhara.¹²⁰⁶ Because of this ARDA was advised that "all monies due or may become due should be sent direct to the Manager, ZIMBANK Limited, Sanyati Branch."¹²⁰⁷

In the 1988/89 season ARDA made out a cheque to the bank for \$65 835,00 in respect of winter beans purchased by the parastatal from the Sanyati Gowe settler farmers at a price of \$1,75 per kg.¹²⁰⁸ From the end of the 1980s onwards bean production, which was jointly financed by this registered commercial bank and the AFC, had become one of the major success stories and indeed one of the main bases of differentiation apart from cotton. The breakdown of the amount of \$65 835,00 which is detailed below reveals that some farmers were performing better than others.

¹²⁰⁵ Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 209.

¹²⁰⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Gowe Settlement Farmers," C. Dangaiso (Manager – Zimbank Sanyati Branch) to the Financial Controller, (Attention: C. Kupakuwana, ARDA Harare), copied to the Estate Manager, ARDA Sanyati, 12th October 1988.

¹²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Sanyati Gowe Settler Farmers Winter Beans," N. Ncube (for Financial Controller – ARDA) to the Bank Manager (Zimbabwe Banking Corporation Limited – Sanyati Branch), 3rd January 1989.

Table 5.4: Gowe, ZIMBANK-financed Winter Bean Production (1988/89)

<u>Name of Farmer</u>	<u>Total Weight (Kgs)</u>	<u>Total Amount (\$)</u>
T. Nyamutova	5 940	10 395,00
C. Mhara	3 960	6 930,00
T. Mavengere	6 120	10 710,00
E. Chiwombe	3 870	6 772,50
K. Wira	4 500	7 875,00
O. Dangaiso	5 940	10 395,00
A. Mjoli	2 340	4 095,00
S. Mushonga	4 950	8 662,50
Total	37 620	65 835,00 ¹²⁰⁹

In the same season ARDA sent a cheque for \$61 385,16 payable to AFC Sanyati. This payment was in respect of winter beans purchased by the parastatal from the Sanyati Gowe settler farmers at the ruling price of \$1,75 per kg. This amount, which was broken down as follows, also demonstrates the generally poor performance of farmers in this category:

Table 5.5: Gowe, AFC-financed Winter Bean Production (1988/89)

<u>Name of Farmer</u>	<u>Total Weight (Kgs)</u>	<u>Total Amount (\$)</u>	<u>Deductions (\$)</u>	<u>Net Payable (\$)</u>
P. Chekeche	1 980	3 465,00	-	3 465,00
T. Chengu	2 970	5 197,50	53,46	5 144,04
M. Gomani	2 970	5 197,50	20,23	5 177,04
H. Marufu	2 610	4 567,50	-	4 567,50
T. Matapure	780	6 615,00	14,49	6 600,51
M. Mungoha	2 520	4 410,00	-	4 410,00
R. Muponda	1 890	3 307,50	42,39	3 265,11
A. Motsi	4 950	8 662,50	67,66	8 590,84
K. Muzanenhamo	2 520	4 410,00	-	4 410,00
F. Tizira	1 710	2 992,50	-	2 992,50
G. Ranganai	3 780	6 615,00	156,61	6 458,39
M. Ziunda	3 600	6 300,00	-	6 300,00
Total	35 280	61 740,00	354,84	61 385,16 ¹²¹⁰

¹²⁰⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Sanyati Gowe Settler Farmers Winter Beans," N. Ncube (for Financial Controller – ARDA) to the Bank Manager (Zimbabwe Banking Corporation Limited – Sanyati Branch), 3rd January 1989.

¹²¹⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Sanyati Gowe Settler Farmers Winter Beans," N. Ncube (for Financial Controller – ARDA) to the General Manager (AFC – Kurima House, Harare, 3rd January 1989.

A close examination of the statistical information presented in these tables reveals that the small number of farmers who were financed by ZIMBANK was the more successful compared to the many whose production was sponsored by AFC. Clearly, Nyamutova, Mavengere and Dangaiso were the most successful. This was because they had paid off their loans contrary to some of their counterparts like Chengu, Gomani, Matapure, Muponda, Motsi and Gidion Ranganai who were in arrears to the tune of the amounts reflected in Table 5.5 above, demonstrating that farmers from a range of income groups all received loans, but the impact of such assistance on their production was different. Mavengere, in particular, realised better yields because he sometimes clandestinely opened more irrigation lines for his use. In that winter season farmers like E. Sibanda, M. Musauki and Tasara Govoro who had been struck off the loans register for poor performance were recommended by Kamudzandu for loan reconsideration. This was due to the fact that they had harvested 67, 63 and 48 bags of beans respectively. Sibanda's total yield¹²¹¹ weighed 6 030 kgs whereas Musauki and Govoro's was 5 670 and 4 320 kgs each. Selling at \$2,00 per kg, they realised varying incomes of \$12 060,00, \$11 340,00 and \$8 640,00 which qualified them for an AFC loan.¹²¹² However, by 1990 farmers like Mafumana Mjoli (hugely indebted to ZIMBANK to the tune of \$13 997,68), E. Munengami (owing \$10 888,03) and C. Mhara (owing an amount of \$9 676,73)¹²¹³ could hardly pay up. They were inextricably indebted to this commercial bank. In spite of previous arrears and their virtual credit unworthiness they continued to press for more loans every growing season. What this flirtation with ZIMBANK and AFC meant was that the Gowe farmers were not achieving a complete break with finance, but were simply moving from one lender to another. This was not without its consequences as competition between ZIMBANK and AFC had a huge effect on accumulation.

It is a common tenet of many policy package recommendations¹²¹⁴ for the development of peasant agriculture in different countries that improved access to externally supplied and often state-controlled production resources¹²¹⁵ is needed. According to M. J. Drinkwater when such recommendations are made one of two attitudes appears to be adopted.

¹²¹¹ Total yield refers to marketed produce and the total income realised per farmer after selling that produce. It did not include the amount retained for home or domestic consumption.

¹²¹² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum: Loan Reconsideration," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer – Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Sanyati) to the Branch Manager-AFC Mashonalnd West, copied to the Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, Senior District Inspector (Chegutu) and the District Inspector (Sanyati), 9th November 1989.

¹²¹³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Sanyati Estate – Gowe Irrigation Scheme: Zimbank Financed Farmers Loan Position Account – Settlement Officer's Annual Report for 1989/90." N. K. Kamudzandu.

¹²¹⁴ In Zimbabwe the recommendations of the World Bank and other researchers fall into this category. For more detail on these recommendations see World Bank, *Zimbabwe: Country Economic Memorandum*, World Bank, 1983; World Bank, *Zimbabwe: Country Economic Memorandum*, World Bank, 1985 and Blackie and Rohrback in M. Rukuni and C. K. Eicher (eds.), *Food Security for Southern Africa*, (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1987).

¹²¹⁵ Such resources include seed and fertiliser inputs, credit, marketing facilities, research and extension advice, and in some cases even land.

Either it is taken for granted that it is in peasant farmers' interests to have improved access to these externally supplied and controlled resources, and thus to be thoroughly incorporated within a single, state-regulated national economy, or, because incorporation is the main concern, it is an irrelevance whether or not such access is entirely beneficial to peasant producers.¹²¹⁶

That such policies may not always be in the interest of a peasant population, especially where the state has an overt intention to extract agricultural surpluses on unfavourable terms has been pointed out by Hyden and Bates, amongst others.¹²¹⁷ However, in Zimbabwe generally and Sanyati in particular few researchers have attempted to write from the perspective of peasant or communal area farmers' interest. Similarly, not many questions have been posed whether state incorporation of this kind was wholly desirable or not. Clearly it was desirable to those who benefited from it, especially the rural notables. Their poorer counterparts extracted little if any recognisable benefit from it. Thus, in quantitative terms the delivery of credit to peasant outgrowers can be claimed to be a growing success, although in terms of access the greatest percentage of the loans extended have been either to the richer plotters, the "Bigger Brother" (the Estate) or to the much larger commercial farmers.

Thus, an essential factor influencing the impact of loans is the type of farmer they are made to. Whether or not loans should be made to poorer farmers is much debated and in practice it is usually only the better-off farmers who receive them.¹²¹⁸ Different types of farmers have differential access to production resources including education. This affects farmers' ability to successfully utilise the inputs being supplied through credit and thus to repay the loans. This point may seem axiomatic, yet often the resource distinctions between "rich" and "poor" farmers which affect their capabilities appear underemphasised. For example, ARDA through its settlement officers only gives one type of advice to the tenant farmers and thus implicitly assumes that this is appropriate for all of them. The agricultural extension agency in Zimbabwe (AREX, then AGRITEX) also proffers similar advice to the farmers. ARDA, together with AREX, should therefore take more practical steps to give advice that recognises the farmers' differential access to productive resources. Such an approach is likely to enhance peasant productivity in a big way.

Over the years cropping, advice and agro-financing has been restricted to the production of cotton and maize in summer and wheat in winter. Prior to 1980, a 4-crop rotation involving cotton, maize, wheat and groundnuts or beans had been practised. At independence, half of the total area of the plot was planted to maize and the other half to cotton, while the maize area was double-cropped to wheat in winter.¹²¹⁹ Although groundnut was grown it was not

¹²¹⁶ Drinkwater, "Loans and Manure," 1.

¹²¹⁷ R. H. Bates, *Essays on the Political Economy of Rural Africa*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983) and G. Hyden, *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania*, (London: Heinemann, 1980).

¹²¹⁸ Bratton, "Financing Smallholder Production," 9.

¹²¹⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), M. G. Paraiwa, "The Economic and Financial Implications of the Transfer of the Administration of Gowe Irrigation Settlement Scheme from DEVAG to TILCOR," Salisbury: ARDA, 1980, 3.

a very popular crop. Of the few farmers who tried this crop some realised good yields whilst others were not so successful. In the 1988/89 summer season, for example, the best producers were E. Chirandata and N. Mavengere who produced 7 067 kgs each compared to the lowest producer, K. Chipala, with 3 848 kgs.¹²²⁰ The general expectation though was that every farmer, rich or poor, given available resources, should be able to do well. However, groundnut production was less well funded than cotton and beans and lack of adequate funding meant that the dilemma of loans persisted as some farmers' yields remained low.

Crop yields: Measure of Estate and settler productivity:-

Apart from the need for finance from various lenders smallholder irrigation agriculture in Sanyati also required ARDA's administrative and technical support to improve yields. This support irrespective of the strings attached to it to some extent raised settler farm output. A detailed performance of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme for the 1982/1983 season can be illustrated in figures. Although maize, cotton and wheat were grown during this season only the details of individual settler farmers' performance for maize and wheat are given in Tables 5.6 to 5.9 below.

¹²²⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Gowe Irrigation Scheme - Groundnuts Yield for Gowe I Farmers 1988/89 Summer Season," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer).

Table 5.6: Gowe I Maize Yield 1982/83.

<u>Plot No.</u>	<u>Yield in bags/plot (0,7/ha)</u>	<u>Yield in Tonnes/ha</u>
1	35	4,56
2	30	3,90
3	33	4,29
4	32	4,16
5	30	3,90
6	27	3,51
7	32	4,16
8	26	3,38
9	36	4,68
10	33	4,29
11	26	3,38
12	36	4,68
13	31	4,03
14	31	4,03
15	35	4,56
16	34	4,42
17	37	4,81
18	41	5,33
19	39	5,07
20	29	3,77
21	37	4,81
22	41	5,33
23	26	3,38
24	24	3,12
25	31	4,03
26	30	3,90
27	38	4,94
28	33	4,29
29	32	4,16
30	28	3,78
31	33	4,29
32	35	4,56
33	33	4,29
34	22	2,86
35	32	4,16
36	18	2,33 ¹²²¹

Average per plot in bags x 90 kgs = 32 bags
Average yield in tonnes per ha = 4,16 tonnes
Total yield = 104 tonnes

¹²²¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "Rural Development Planning Unit (RDPU)," R. D. Nyahangare (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner), 8th June 1984.

Table 5.7: Gowe II Maize Yield 1982/83.

<u>Plot No.</u>	<u>Yield in bags/plot (0,6/ha)</u>	<u>Yield in Tonnes/ha</u>
41	34	5,15
42	23	3,48
43	20	3,03
44	26	3,12
45	26	3,12
46	35	5,30
47	35	5,30
48	35	5,30
49	38	5,77
50	37	5,61
51	34	5,15
52	33	5,05
53	43	6,53
54	43	6,53
55	39	5,92
56	27	4,10
57	34	5,15
58	40	6,07
63	23	3,48
64	24	3,64
65	27	4,10
66	26	3,12
67	29	4,04
68	31	4,71
69	30	4,55
70	30	4,55
71	28	4,25
72	29	4,40
73	30	4,55
74	33	5,05
75	30	4,55
76	26	3,12
77	21	3,19
78	27	4,10
79	27	4,10
80	34	5,15
81	34	5,15
82	29	4,40
83	40	6,07
84	21	3,19
85	26	3,12
86	27	4,10

87	27	4,10
88	29	4,40
89	27	4,10
90	31	4,71
91	27	4,10
92	29	4,40
93	28	4,25
94	22	3,34
95	32	4,51
96	18	2,74
97	24	3,64
98	22	3,34
99	25	3,80
100	39	5,92 ¹²²²

Average yield per plot in bags x 90 kgs = 30 bags
 Average yield in tonnes per ha = 4,55 tonnes
 Total yield = 153 tonnes

Gowe I total = 25,4 ha
 Gowe II total = 33,6 ha
 Total bags shelled Gowe I = 1 149 x 90 kgs
 Total bags shelled Gowe II = 1 664 x 90 kgs
 Scheme average for both sections = 4,77 tonnes/ha

This scheme average for the two sections of Gowe was generally lower than the normal of about 6 tonnes per hectare because of the drought. ARDA could not cope with water requirements of this crop either.

¹²²² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "Rural Development Planning Unit (RDPU)," R. D. Nyahangare (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner), 8th June 1984.

Table 5.8: Gowe I Wheat Yield 1982/83.

<u>Plot No.</u>	<u>Yield in bags/plot/ha</u>	<u>Yield in Tonnes/ha</u>
1	36	4,68
2	27	3,51
3	26	3,38
4	30	3,90
5	32	4,16
6	30	3,90
7	28	3,64
8	30	3,90
9	30	3,90
10	29	3,77
11	29	3,77
12	30	3,90
13	32	4,16
14	31	4,03
15	34	4,42
16	30	3,90
17	33	4,29
18	35	4,56
19	33	4,29
20	29	3,77
21	33	4,29
22	35	4,56
23	34	4,42
24	31	4,03
25	30	3,90
26	31	4,03
27	32	4,16
28	39	5,14
29	35	4,56
30	35	4,56
31	37	4,81
32	34	4,42
33	32	4,16
34	32	4,16
35	34	4,42
36	33	4,29

Average yield per plot in bags x 90 kgs = 31 bags
Average yield in tonnes per ha = 4,03 tonnes
Total yield = 101 tonnes

Table 5.9: Gowe II Wheat Yield 1982/83.

<u>Plot No.</u>	<u>Yield in bags/plot (0,6/ha)</u>	<u>Yield in Tonnes/ha</u>
41	6	0,91
42	7	1,06
43	13	1,97
44	14	2,12
45	7	1,06
46	12	1,82
47	17	2,55
48	18	2,73
49	13	1,97
50	15	2,27
51	11	1,66
52	16	2,57
53	15	2,27
54	15	2,27
55	10	1,51
63	5	0,75
64	5	0,75
65	7	1,06
66	7	1,06
67	7	1,06
68	15	2,27
69	16	2,57
70	10	1,51
71	13	1,97
72	22	3,33
73	21	3,18
74	22	3,33
75	24	3,64
76	23	3,48
77	24	3,64
78	27	4,09
79	21	3,18
80	27	4,09
81	22	3,33
82	25	3,79
83	21	3,18
84	23	3,48
85	24	3,64
86	22	3,33
87	16	2,57
88	20	3,03
89	18	2,73

90	10	1,51
91	10	1,51
92	12	1,82
93	13	1,97
94	15	2,27
95	11	1,66
96	10	1,51
97	9	1,36
98	10	1,51
99	8	1,21
100	30	4,55 ¹²²³

Average yield per plot in bags x 90 kgs = 15 bags
 Average yield per ha in tonnes = 2,3 tonnes
 Total yield = 72 tonnes

Gowe I total hectares = 25 ha
 Gowe II total hectares = 32 ha
 Total bags combined Gowe I = 1 116 x 90 kgs of wheat
 Total bags combined Gowe II = 795 x 90 kgs of wheat
 Scheme average for both sections = 3,12 tonnes per ha

It is important to note that the Gowe II average was low not because of drought as the wheat was well irrigated, but because the plottolders were badly hit by termites. According to ARDA they refused to take extension advice to apply dieldrin which resulted in about 50% loss of crop.¹²²⁴

These tables point to significant variations in output by the smallholder farmers. Several factors such as personal initiative, coupled with having the “right” political connections or links with the state, sound relations with the estate bosses which in turn guaranteed the “right” to use unoccupied or untenanted plots as well as preferential access to facilities such as water, pipes, agricultural advice, tractors and other vital equipment account for these differences. Whilst these tables give a clear indication of Gowe’s maize and wheat production it is not possible to do the same for cotton because of the intricacies involved in the harvesting and marketing of this crop. For example, the cotton is picked and weighed individually daily and marketing is also done individually. Therefore, there is a tendency to mix cotton from within and without the scheme. Black marketing compounded the problem. Therefore, to attempt to submit figures would not show an accurate picture. However, rough cotton yield surveys on a couple of the more honest farmers show a variation in yield of between 2 000 and 3 000 kg/ha with an average of 2 400 kg/ha.¹²²⁵

¹²²³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, “Rural Development Planning Unit (RDPU),” R. D. Nyahangare (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner), 8th June 1984.

¹²²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²²⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, “Rural

For the 1983/84 season maize was dropped on AFC advice because the crop was not profitable. The discouragement of this staple crop, however, did not take into account household consumption factors and the fact that crop surpluses from the scheme were sold locally to villagers who had maize deficit problems. The Corporation was prepared to finance cotton despite its inedibility. The cotton hectrage was then doubled to 116 ha. Sixty hectares of wheat were planned but only 25 ha were planted. It is important to note that the settlers paid for all direct crop costs which according to the submitted budgets for 1983/84 were estimated at a total expenditure of \$99 644,00. Direct crop expenditure was the total cost of supplying water for irrigation or irrigation electricity (\$19 628,00), fertiliser and seed (\$35 334,00), transport (\$10 920,00), herbicides and pesticides (\$9 822,00), land preparation (\$15 300,00), harvesting and packing (\$8 160,00) and insurance cover (\$480,00).¹²²⁶ As a rule, all direct crop costs were claimed as RDPU income from AFC. The costs they were not paying for were for administration expenses which in the 1983/84 fiscal year were pegged at a total of \$112 310,00. This figure was calculated to include, inter alia, the cost of maintenance and repairs of irrigation equipment as well as the maintenance and repairs of scheme fences, roads and buildings; the cost of supplying water and electricity including water to the communal area; entertainment, education, health and welfare. These were categorised as social costs which were mainly incurred on Estate employees' salaries, wages, irrigation bonuses and other expenses.

ARDA Sanyati Estate's direct crop costs of \$103 977,00 for the 1982/83 season were slightly higher than the Gowe figures for 1983/84, but its administration expenses of \$55 143,00 were much lower than those for Gowe.¹²²⁷ The operating account or budget for 1985/86 prepared by ARDA's Agricultural Operations Division which fell under the RDPU revealed that in running the Gowe Settlement Scheme the parastatal suffered net administration overheads to the tune of \$152 319,00 - a huge figure by any standards - which also translated to a net loss of \$152 319,00.¹²²⁸ These statistics illustrate that ARDA was incurring more costs to run the smallholder scheme at Gowe than to run the Estate itself, which partly explains why the former needed to be made independent. The figures for Gowe were essential to calculate project viability. Using these budgets, the Rural Development Co-ordinator was working out a new viability basis not only for Sanyati but

Development Planning Unit (RDPU)," R. D. Nyahangare (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner), 8th June 1984.

¹²²⁶ These figures have been extracted from the budgets for 1983/84 and the October 1983 operating statement. For more detail see NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "Rural Development Planning Unit (RDPU)," R. D. Nyahangare (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner), 8th June 1984.

¹²²⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "Rural Development Planning Unit (RDPU)," R. D. Nyahangare (Settlement Officer Sanyati) to D. Saungweme (Small Livestock Development Planner), 8th June 1984. See also NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "Memorandum: Settlers Budgets," B. M. C. Sibanda (Rural Development Co-ordinator) to all Settlement Officers and Estate Managers, 17th July 1984.

¹²²⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 349225, Location R24.10.11.11F, File: SET/16 Settlers Budget, "ARDA Operating Accounts for 1985/86 Budget," Cost Centre (RDPU Sanyati), February 1985. See also NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Physical Quantities of Inputs for the Cotton Crop and Direct Cotton Crop Costs 1989/90," Cost Centre (RDPU Gowe Irrigation Scheme), 1989/90.

also for each scheme in the country. The plan included guaranteeing the Estate the basis on which to produce cotton and other crops for the local as well as the export market.

Sanyati's Main Scheme produces a variety of cash crops chief among which is cotton. In fact, ARDA Estates in Zimbabwe contribute relatively significant amounts of crops to national production. A comparison of ARDA's production of the three major controlled crops (cotton, wheat and maize) with national production of the same crops for the period 1982 to 1984 can be used to illustrate its contribution to the agricultural industry. The Table below shows ARDA's performance over a three-year period.

Table 5.10: ARDA PRODUCTION TREND VERSUS NATIONAL PERFORMANCE

<u>Products</u> <u>(Units Tons)</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>ARDA</u> <u>Production</u>	<u>ARDA % Share of</u> <u>National</u> <u>Production</u>	<u>Estimated</u> <u>National</u> <u>Production</u>
A. Controlled				
1. Cotton	1982	14 585	26,1%	157 673
	1983	15 314	25,5%	167 280
	1984	20 000	24,3%	-
2. Maize	1982	9 530	0,7%	1 391 266
	1983	3 555	0,6%	616 900
	1984	2 700	0,3%	798 000
3. Wheat	1982	20 768	9,8%	212 945
	1983	11 312	9,1%	124 250
	1984	23 728	39,5%	92 000
B. Imports				
1. Cotton	<u>National Consumption</u>		<u>Exports</u>	
-	12 051		52 431	
-	11 444		45 775	
-	12 434		69 735	
2. Maize				
-	1 000 000		491 982	
610 000	1 200 000		252 305	
600 000	1 200 000		-	
3. Wheat				
31 403	244 348		-	
57 167	181 417		-	
100 000	160 000		-	
			1229	

¹²²⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272099, Location R19.3.12.1F: File: ADA/MAR/2 Marketing – General, “ARDA Production Versus National Production of Selected Agricultural Products,” R. D. Mshoperi

This table apart from illustrating ARDA's contribution to national production of certain major crops also reveals the considerable disparities in yields between the parastatal and its settler growers. As already noted this can be explained in terms of the cordialness of the relations between the three major players, that is the state, the estate and the plottolders. These relationships, though not so much in favour of the small-scale irrigators, determined the amount of resources, technical or otherwise, that were availed by the state to boost productivity. One of the purposes of these tabulated figures was to assist management measure the Authority's effort in meeting the nation's food and raw material needs.

Gowe just like the Main Estate largely concentrated on cotton, as maize was not as profitable. However, the continuous cultivation of cotton had a debilitating effect on soil fertility. Gowe II, for example, was very badly eroded in 1980. In spite of this, the emphasis on cotton growing has never changed because the farmers realise handsome profits with which to pay back their loans.¹²³⁰ The perennial cultivation of this crop, therefore, means that erosion remains one of the leading plagues not only of Gowe but also Sanyati agriculture.

Erosion continues unabated: The need for more land:-

Due to the continuous cultivation of the small pieces of land, the soils eventually got exhausted. Even the *Chavunduka Commission* of 1982 acknowledged that the process of land degradation was increasing at a rapid and frightening pace.¹²³¹ The situation was aggravated by the alleged lack of commitment and dedication to duty by the extension assistants, L. Sithole and M. Mushawarima, who were originally DEVAG employees but later seconded to ARDA. The two extension assistants, whose involvement with Gowe dates back to the colonial period, were sometimes accused of unilaterally absenting themselves from work or when they were available, their performance "left a lot to be desired." On one occasion Sithole spent two days away from the scheme on the pretext that he was collecting his pay and attending an extension staff meeting in Kadoma.¹²³² Because soil erosion continues to affect Sanyati agriculture, Sithole had been instructed by ARDA on the 17th of October 1980 to peg and construct contours in the Gowe II block of land. However, by the 29th of the same month, he and Mushawarima had only managed to peg two contours, which had a total length of not more than 300 metres.¹²³³ This dragging of feet occurred in spite of repeated requests by ARDA to get the job done quickly as the maize crop on Gowe II had to be planted.

(Marketing Officer) to Deputy General Manager (ARDA), 27th July 1984.

¹²³⁰ Job Gwacha (COTTCO Records Clerk, former plottolder and Kusi Village communal farmer), Personal Interview, COTTCO, Sanyati Growth Point, 9th January 1997. See also Robson Muponda, (Gowe II Irrigation Committee Member), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 14th May 2005 and Goliath Mangweni, (Communal Farmer), Personal Interview, Kusi Village, Sanyati, 18th May 2005.

¹²³¹ *Chavunduka Commission*, 26.

¹²³² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), G. Fischer (TILCOR, Sanyati, Gatooma) to Lister, the Provincial Agricultural Officer (Mashonaland West), 29th October 1980.

¹²³³ *Ibid.*

The two settlement assistants' main excuse was that they were always occupied by meetings. This untenable situation was of grave concern to ARDA who were doing their "best to make a success of running this scheme (Gowe) and [were] being continually hampered by staff that should be working for its improvement not its downfall."¹²³⁴ Nevertheless, whilst the issue of ineffectual extension staff is clear, ARDA seemed to be running away from the crux of the problem. As has been acknowledged in chapter four, overcrowding and the attendant problem of soil erosion could not be solved without allocating adequate land to the Gowe plotters, the majority of whom were Master Farmers who were used to tilling bigger tracts of land in their home districts. It can be succinctly pointed out that more land was required to accommodate these people satisfactorily.

One of the extension assistants who joined Gowe in the 1980s, S. J. Sithole, supports this view when he says:

From a conservation point of view, contour ridges were good, but the farmers whom the Conservationist had to convince to accept the contours, whilst they appreciated the importance of these structures, felt they [contours] would negatively impinge on [the farmers'] already small pieces of land.¹²³⁵

He goes on to say that, although the plotters initially resisted the idea of contours because they "reduced the size of their plots" they later accepted it after seeing that "their fields were being further reduced not by contours but by erosion."¹²³⁶ In 1988 the Settlement Officer agreed that the degree of soil erosion was alarming on the whole scheme due to the absence of adequate conservation works.¹²³⁷ With or without erosion and contours, therefore, the need to increase the size of plots for the production of more cash crops could not be over-emphasised.

Even ARDA Regional Manager for Mashonaland, B. M. Visser, admitted that the plot sizes at Gowe were inadequate if the farmers were to meet realistic input costs and certain fixed charges.¹²³⁸ Consequently, a proposal was made that plots should be increased to a minimum of 2,8 and 2,4 hectares and a maximum of 3-4 hectares for Gowe I and II respectively.¹²³⁹ It was envisaged that this decision would further encourage those participating in the scheme to devote all their energies to the venture to realise increased returns and at the same time solve the problem of dual ownership of land. Nonetheless, the proposed plot sizes were still not big enough to adequately meet the subsistence and cash

¹²³⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), G. Fischer (TILCOR, Sanyati, Gatooma) to Lister, the Provincial Agricultural Officer (Mashonaland West), 29th October 1980.

¹²³⁵ Shupile J. Sithole, (Agritex Extension Officer), Telephone discussion with Nyandoro, 6th May 1997.

¹²³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²³⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settlement Officer's Report for the Period up to 29th February 1988," N. Kamudzandu (Settlement Officer - ARDA Sanyati Estate).

¹²³⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Gowe Settlement Officer; Sanyati Estate Manager and the Budget Controller, 26th August 1981, 1.

¹²³⁹ *Ibid.*

requirements of the plottolders. A lot needed to be done by the government to achieve a more equitable distribution of land among the peasantry in general.

Because many plottolders were basically rural accumulators who were hungry for more land they availed themselves the opportunity of cultivating extra pieces of land whenever plots fell vacant. Sometimes they encroached on land that had not been set aside for cropping. The Estate Manager even conceded:

For years both the Estate Management and the RDPU Officers have paid a blind eye to the illegal cultivation (ploughing beyond their land requirement) of the ARDA farm by the registered Gowe settler farmers. This malpractice has only got worse over the years and by now [1988] the whole settler residential area is under cultivation.¹²⁴⁰

This was happening on highly erodable sandy soils devoid of any soil conservation measures. Consequently, the damage to the land resource was not difficult to imagine. The rate of siltation at the Gowe suction pool was enormously rapid and for the first time ever, the pool dried up during the 1988 dry season. Continued cultivation of these lands could only accentuate this problem. In fact, this illegal cultivation and the soil denudation that accompanied it earned ARDA severe criticism from the Natural Resources Board (NRB). It is clear that the whole settler community was involved in this illegal cultivation “as a means of supplementing their contracted or leased plots.”¹²⁴¹ The effect was that some inputs designated for the official plots found their way onto these illegally cultivated lands. The registered output was, therefore, the combination of official and illegal plot yield. According to the Estate Manager “This scenario [distorted] all designed production objectives and indeed field records.” Hence, “any violations [of the terms of the Lease Agreement] ... must, of necessity, result in eviction.”¹²⁴² Members of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme were, thus, genuinely worried about their security under the lease at a time when ARDA was more concerned about curbing the pernicious effects of erosion. Indeed, their future in the scheme was not assured. The imposition of a land charge further complicated matters.

Land rent: Justice or injustice:-

The plottolders, despite the shortage of land, were furthermore required to pay land rent. This demand was instituted in 1986. Charles Mhara, a plottolder and former Gowe Irrigation Chairman, emotionally pointed out that the farmers were “not happy and will never be happy about the payment of land rent in independent Zimbabwe.”¹²⁴³ In 1987 land rent was charged at \$72,00 per plot.¹²⁴⁴ Ten years later the plottolders paid land rent to the

¹²⁴⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum: Illegal Cultivation,” J. S. Mukokwayarira (Estate Manager - Sanyati) to RDPU Co-ordinator, 10th February 1988.

¹²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴² *Ibid.*

¹²⁴³ Charles Mhara, (Plottolder and Former Gowe Irrigation Committee Chairman), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 9th January 1997.

¹²⁴⁴ Mafumana Mjoli (Gowe Plottolder), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 9th January 1997.

tune of \$320,00 per hectare.¹²⁴⁵ According to Munengami the total land rent charged for his 4-hectare plot was \$1 280,00 per season.¹²⁴⁶ He was disappointed with this exorbitant land charge because of the frequent pump breakdowns and the long time taken to repair them. Munengami contends that, this had the effect of reducing yields and poor yields made financiers reluctant to grant agricultural loans.¹²⁴⁷ His objection to land rent stems from the fact that before independence nothing of the sort existed. He feels that the government should not profit from land transactions since to do so in circumstances where the land had been expropriated from the Africans in the first place, was morally wrong.¹²⁴⁸

In a very bitter tone, Munengami says, with regret, in Shona, “Taiti tiri kurwira vhu muhondo asi hapana kurwira vhu kwatakaita kana tobhadhariswa vhu.”¹²⁴⁹ Literally translated this means “we thought we were fighting to regain possession of the land (soil) during the war but when the war came to an end we were surprised that we were being asked to pay rent for the same soil.” By this, he was questioning the rationale behind paying a fee to be allowed to cultivate the soil for which the people had fought during the liberation struggle. Another plotholder, T. Nyamutova, who was part of the delegation that went to Harare in 1987 to see the Minister of Lands and Rural Resettlement and express their bitterness against the institution of land rent still feels cheated.¹²⁵⁰ After informing the Minister that they had been “duped into signing the land rent agreement forms by the Sanyati Estate Manager,”¹²⁵¹ they were surprised to find that the Minister did not sympathise with their plight. Instead, he argued that they should not have signed the agreement paper had they not understood it.¹²⁵² The delegation then returned to Gowe in extreme despair. The position taken by the Minister, however, confirms the fact that the concerns of the plottolders were often disregarded. In fact, there was very little or no participatory consultation with the plottolders in matters that affected their own livelihoods.

The Estate Manager, J. S. Mukokwayarira, admitted that the demand for land rent had become one of the most contentious issues at Gowe after independence. There was stiff resistance against its payment. Whilst acknowledging the existence of opposition he, however, was adamant that land rent was justifiable. In his memorandum to the RDPU Co-ordinator, he complained: “The Sanyati Gowe Settlement Farmers are causing the Estate a lot of unnecessary problems over the land rent issue,” adding that “Some resist land rent payment because of their crop failure, [and others] resist payment because they have failed to establish a crop for a season.”¹²⁵³ For example, during the 1986/87-cotton season the

¹²⁴⁵ S. Mapondera (Estate Manager, ARDA Sanyati), Personal Interview, Sanyati Estate, 8th January 1997. N.B. Mapondera replaced Gwerengwe as Estate Manager with effect from 1st October 1996.

¹²⁴⁶ Munengami, Personal Interview.

¹²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴⁸ Munengami, Personal Interview.

¹²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵⁰ Thompson Nyamutova, (Plottolder, Former Secretary and Vice Secretary of the Gowe Irrigation Committee), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 9th January 1997.

¹²⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵² *Ibid.*

¹²⁵³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum: Land Rent,” J. S. Mukokwayarira (Estate Manager - Sanyati) to RDPU Co-ordinator, 19th January 1988, 1. See also NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Settlement Officer’s Report for Month of February 1990 – Gowe Irrigation Scheme,”

RDPU Co-ordinator explained to the settlers the advantages of growing sugar beans *vis-à-vis* wheat. To the farmers he emphasised the importance of the timeliness of operations although at times, due to equipment breakdown, delays had been encountered. Scheme management tried to justify the frequent breakdowns by saying that these affected the Estate and the smallholder scheme equally.¹²⁵⁴ Clearly, the Estate was less affected because it could use other pumps not only the one at Gowe Pools. To ensure timeous operations the tenants were required to finish picking their cotton by the last week of May in order to establish their beans in early June. This would entail a loss of their last 2 top bolls but was seen as a worthy sacrifice for a better impending bean crop. The bean crop would also be removed in time for the October cotton crop. Nevertheless, when it came to implementation the farmers resisted slashing down their cotton crop by end of May. They maintained they would pick to the last boll. This delayed the planting of beans. The bean crop was to be established in late June to the first week of July. On the 9th July 1987, under-ground water pipes burst at the Estate-Gowe junction. There was no water till the 18th of July. This period of water scarcity meant that the last 14 ha could not be planted. The tenants affected were R. Muponda, Plot No. D10; M. Mungofa, Plot No. D7; G. Maturure, Plot No. D9; M. Gomani, Plot No. D8 – all cultivating 3 ha each and G. Ranganayi, Plot No. D11 (2 ha). Scheme management's explanation of this "delay" on the settlers' plots was that it was "a product of a vicious circle created as a result of the farmers' insistence on picking every boll on the cotton plant and their unwillingness to slash their cotton early enough to allow land preparation for the winter crop."¹²⁵⁵ At the same time the above tenants were demanding from the Estate a Land Rent refund of \$3 066,00 i.e. 14 ha x \$219,00.¹²⁵⁶ A "sober" explanation of the mechanism and implication of land rent to these 5 tenants by the Estate Manager on the 11th of January "would not stop them boiling over."¹²⁵⁷ In their angry mood they proceeded to the local police camp to report that ARDA had defrauded them of their money in the guise of land rent.¹²⁵⁸ The Manager conceded that it was very disquieting to work under such relations. In defending the introduction of land rent and at the same time opposing the suggestion of rent refunds he proffered the following argument:

The external auditors had a scrutiny of the land rent collected vis-à-vis the RDPU Administration Overheads. Land rent collected was more than

N. Kamudzandu and NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Settlement Officer's Monthly Report for March 1990 – Gowe Irrigation Scheme," N. Kamudzandu. N.B. As long as the land rent problem was not resolved and remained the "talk of the place" generally the working atmosphere between the Estate and Gowe would not improve.

¹²⁵⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers' Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA's Office (Kadoma)," Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2.

¹²⁵⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers' Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA's Office (Kadoma)," Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2.

¹²⁵⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum: Land Rent," J. S. Mukokwayarira (Estate Manager - Sanyati) to RDPU Co-ordinator, 19th January 1988, 1.

¹²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

Administration Overheads by \$1 320,00. The auditors' verdict was that this sum was an opportunity sundry income [administration income] and as such not refundable to tenants. Rent is rent irrespective. We overrecovered [sic] by reason of salary increase freeze for the year 1986/87. If the freeze should thaw this year, we are going to underrecover [sic] in 1988 and the Estate is to sustain the loss. If the concept of land rent is to be upheld and honoured, the office of the RDPU Coordinator should intervene with fuller explanations to the settlers. The Estate is still obliged to help the settler farmer as long as the settler farmer puts his house in order. But I cannot see a chance of ARDA refunding \$3 066,00 to the settlers for the bean crop they did not grow as sitting tenants.¹²⁵⁹

Reiterating the position of the Estate regarding land rent he said:

The Estate holds the view that all sitting tenants must pay a sum of \$438,00 per hectare per annum notwithstanding. We hold that Section 2 of the Land Lease Agreement which states inter-alia that '\$219.00 per hectare per crop per annum' is just but the modality of payment towards the fixed \$438.00 per hectare per annum.¹²⁶⁰

All effort to explain this mechanism to the tenants met with determined resistance. This was so because the stance taken by the Estate regarding land rent was not different to that of the Minister. The situation was aggravated when the Estate Manager insisted, in flagrant disregard of mounting opposition, that the tenants should pay the land charge as required under the lease agreement. The request for a reduction of the land rent could only be considered when authentic records of performance were produced by the farmers which in turn would be used to determine their Gross Margin and Returns per dollar invested figures to reflect enterprise viability.¹²⁶¹ Any hope of achieving a thaw in relations between the two bickering parties was, therefore, destroyed.

In further pursuance of justice the Gowe tenants decided to approach the highest office in the district for arbitration. Exasperated members of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme who leased plots from ARDA Sanyati Estate had approached the then District Administrator, B. B. Chahuruva, on several occasions wanting assistance to their problems. Towards the end of 1988 they sought audience with him again. They stated that they were seeking solutions on "a wide range of issues including their legal rights and status which they seem[ed] ignorant about, policy matters regulating their operations in the scheme and administrative problems affecting their day-to-day activities."¹²⁶² At this penultimate

¹²⁵⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum: Land Rent," J. S. Mukokwayarira (Estate Manager - Sanyati) to RDPU Co-ordinator, 19th January 1988, 2.

¹²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹²⁶¹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers' Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA's Office (Kadoma)," Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 3.

¹²⁶² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme,

meeting with the DA, the insensitivity of ARDA to settler grievances was brought to the fore. The DA Kadoma, ARDA Estate Manager (Gwerengwe) and seven representatives of the farmers attended the meeting. When the farmers tried to articulate their problems the Estate Manager advised them to seek redress with the ARDA General Manager's office in Harare as he pointed out that most of the issues raised fell outside his purview. Not satisfied with this response the tenants appealed to the DA for assistance. The District Administrator admitted:

The farmers have now approached me to formally seek a meeting with a representative from your office to explain to them their legal position vis-à-vis ARDA, their rights, policy matters governing their scheme and a host of administrative issues they claim perturb them. Apparently a significant number of farmers have left the scheme in pique and it seems more are inclined towards following suit if better communication with ARDA is not effected. My role as District Administrator in this matter is merely to facilitate communication which seems to be uneasy at the local level. I would be most obliged if the aspirations of these disgruntled members to have an audience with your office were met. Please advice whether and when the proposed meeting can take place preferably on site.¹²⁶³

Nevertheless, the District Administrator's intervention failed to break the impasse between the "warring parties," as ARDA refused to budge to settler demands thereby paving way for open hostilities and more meetings of this nature. ARDA made it clear that arrangements would be made by the officer responsible at Head Office for the administration of the Settlement Schemes under its control to organise a meeting with the Estate Manager and Settlement Manager or Officer to investigate the problems which the members of the Scheme had raised with the DA.¹²⁶⁴ However, it was considered that it was necessary to obtain full details of the settlers' problems before further action could be taken.

In March 1989 the Gowe settlers sent another grievance paper through the DA's office. Although the way land rent was expended at state level was explained at various fora the settler farmers still queried the method of determining it and further alleged that the yield estimates used to calculate their viability were excessive.¹²⁶⁵ Even today, they also want

"Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District." B. B. Chahuruva (District Administrator - Kadoma) to the General Manager - ARDA, Harare, 6th October 1988.

¹²⁶³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District." B. B. Chahuruva (District Administrator - Kadoma) to the General Manager - ARDA, Harare, 6th October 1988.

¹²⁶⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District," J. Mackenzie (Projects Development Officer - ARDA) to the District Administrator's Office, Kadoma, 2nd November 1988.

¹²⁶⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers' Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA's Office (Kadoma)," Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 1.

to be given a detailed statement of how the money collected as land rent is used on the Scheme since they allege that no maintenance is actually carried out on their plots. The farmers concurred with Scheme Management on their reluctance to keep records to reflect the authentic yields or output from their plots which are necessary for the calculation of Gross Margin and Return per dollar figures as a means of determining enterprise viability.¹²⁶⁶ On this issue, Scheme Management suggested that this reluctance to divulge authentic figures was due to the rampant black marketing of both inputs and outputs on the Scheme as a whole. However, management was too naïve to advance such a reason which ignored the tenants' affinity for accumulation. Under-declaring yields was a common tactic they employed to avoid land rent exactions and thereby use the opportunity to further their accumulation interests.

In a related development, ARDA was blamed for insisting on settler discipline without taking an introspective look at itself – its conduct and its manner of handling outgrowers' complaints. In one instance the Settler Programmes Co-ordinator even appealed to other stakeholders' intervention to ensure the enforcement of discipline. For example, he asked that the settler farmers be addressed by a quartet comprising ARDA officials, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, the DA's office officials and local Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front, ZANU (PF), officials to explain the role of ARDA in rural development and the need for discipline on the scheme.¹²⁶⁷ Towards the end of the 1989/90 season the outgrowers held a meeting with the local Member of Parliament (MP) and lodged the usual complaints. They petitioned the MP to assist them obtain title deeds which would give them more farming independence. Other complaints hinged on the charge-out rate which was too high, the acute shortage of tractors for tillage and the lack of decent accommodation and purified water for the settlers. Despite the MP promising to seek audience with the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement on the matter, no immediate redress came through.¹²⁶⁸ The 1990s, therefore, ended on this acrimonious note as far as ARDA and the settlers' relations were concerned. In fact, as the Gowe settlers claimed, ARDA was completely disinterested in them and their welfare. They believe ARDA cannot assist them, as it is also a producer - a competitor -, which puts its interest first, and those of the tenants last.¹²⁶⁹ Quite evidently, farming implements are made available very expensively and late when ARDA has finished with them, resulting in the tenants planting late and producing very low yields. Tenants claim the ultimate objective of ARDA is to force them off the land

¹²⁶⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers' Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA's Office (Kadoma)," Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 1.

¹²⁶⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers' Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA's Office (Kadoma)," Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2-3.

¹²⁶⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Gowe Settlement Scheme – N. Kamudzandu: Settlement Officer's Annual Report for 1989/90."

¹²⁶⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District." B. B. Chahuruva (District Administrator - Kadoma) to the Project Development Officer - ARDA, Harare, 16th February 1989, 1.

through creating hardships for them or turning a blind eye to their problems.¹²⁷⁰ This they argue is in sharp contrast to when the scheme operated under Ministry of Internal Affairs. To support their claim, they say there are many vacant stands presently and that no one is willing to take them up because of the unfavourable conditions on the Estate.¹²⁷¹

The farmers also claim the Ministry of Lands had promised them assistance to build better houses when the Minister visited the area. The question of housing was never followed up although both Scheme Management and settler farmers agreed that drastic action was required to correct the situation. Scheme Management revealed that a plan had been drawn up (Drawing No. GO-3 dated May 1983) by B. M. C. Sibanda but it had either been shelved or forgotten in spite of the fact that it required immediate attention.¹²⁷² It needed urgent attention particularly in view of the significant potential ripple effects it could have on both farmer morale and scheme management. A more disciplined and systematic management structure could evolve as seen at Middle Sabi.

Finally, outgrowers question whether there has been a shift in Government policy towards irrigation schemes in the country. They claim that most of what is happening at ARDA is contrary to Government policy which should support the small farmer. Hence, they feel ARDA is bent on squeezing the very farmer it is supposed to support.¹²⁷³ It can be noted that in the past the small farmer was heavily subsidised. However, the policy today is that the scheme must be self-supporting with strict adherence to regulations. Rigid observance of regulations means that the settler-management instrument is not favourable since communications at the local level are very difficult.

Apart from the shortage of land and problems arising from the exaction of land rent, there is a host of other factors which seem to impair settler agricultural performance. The area is characterised by poor soils and insufficient water supply in excessively dry years because “what used to be perennial rivers are now, most of the time, sand beds”¹²⁷⁴ due to siltation. Some of the major causes of siltation are the illegal vegetable gardens on either side of the Lodestar Weir,¹²⁷⁵ ploughing down stream and too close to the Munyati river banks by the

¹²⁷⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District.” B. B. Chahuruva (District Administrator - Kadoma) to the Project Development Officer - ARDA, Harare, 16th February 1989, 1.

¹²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 2. N.B. Most plottolders view the conditions on the Estate as appalling.

¹²⁷² NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Memorandum - Sanyati-Gowe Settlement Scheme: Settlers’ Grievance Paper Submitted Through DA’s Office (Kadoma),” Settler Programmes Co-ordinator to Planning and Development Controller, 21st March 1989, 2.

¹²⁷³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, “Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Arda Estate Sanyati - Kadoma District.” B. B. Chahuruva (District Administrator - Kadoma) to the Project Development Officer - ARDA, Harare, 16th February 1989, 2. See also Rukuni, “An Analysis of Economic and Institutional Factors Affecting Irrigation Development in Communal Lands of Zimbabwe,” Rukuni, “The Evolution of Irrigation Policy in Zimbabwe, 1900-1986,” 1-15 and Blackie, “A Time to Listen,” 1-9.

¹²⁷⁴ J. Gwerengwe (Estate Manager, ARDA Sanyati), Personal Interview, Sanyati Estate, 2nd May 1996.

¹²⁷⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272081, Location R19.3.11.9F, File: EST/9A Sanyati Estate: Water Vol. 2, “Siltation Robbs and Lodestar Weirs for Sanyati Estate,” D. P. Mtetwa (ARDA Regional Secretary) to the

people of Mero or Ganyungu and Chikari Matsito Settlement areas.¹²⁷⁶ Due to economic hardships the people are trying to find alternative means of survival through gold panning along the river. This activity has also intensified the siltation problems.

The major weirs, for example, the Robbs and Lodestar are now silted and cannot store reasonable quantities of water. The inadequacy of water in the Munyati river to serve both the Estate and Gowe II at Changwe, Gowe I at Gowe Pools abstraction point, domestic and industrial requirements especially during the critical dry season periods was a major limiting factor.¹²⁷⁷ Water shortage problems were compounded by the illegal abstraction for communal and cattle purposes,¹²⁷⁸ which compelled the estate management to contemplate mounting a “Night Irrigation Curfew.”¹²⁷⁹ The so-called “Rebel” water abstraction points needed to be guarded over night because this is when the activity was quite rampant.¹²⁸⁰

On the other hand, the main rivers, especially the Munyati, have been rather “over-dammed” up stream.¹²⁸¹ Thus, both Gowe and the Main Estate require another big dam down stream to curb the draining of a lot of water to Lake Kariba particularly during flood periods.¹²⁸² It was hoped that the Ministry of Lands and Water Resources, which was responsible for Gowe and the Estate, would address this problem as a matter of urgency, but this has not happened. The construction of the proposed Kudu Dam at the confluence of the Munyati and Ngondoma rivers (See Map 5), if undertaken, could provide a lasting solution.

The frequent and regular maintenance, as well as repair of the Gowe water pumping installations is another necessity. Sometimes repair work takes too long before it is effected. Most of the delays in fixing the pump station problems were due to lack of spare parts or lack of foreign currency to import these.¹²⁸³ Thus, land rent and a host of other factors were viewed as unjust by the outgrowers who also perceived the parastatal as an institution not inclined towards their betterment but their doom.

Regional Manager (Mashonaland), 16th April 1984.

¹²⁷⁶ Judith Chikowore (Plotholder and Gowe Irrigation Committee Member), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 2nd May 1996.

¹²⁷⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Crops (Sanyati), B. M. Visser (Regional Manager, Mashonaland) to the Estate Manager, Sanyati, 1st September 1981, 2.

¹²⁷⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Water (Sanyati), “Memorandum,” P. Bradbury (Engineer) to I. Wright (Deputy Agricultural Controller), 22nd March 1982.

¹²⁷⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Water (Sanyati), H. A. Wicksteed (Estate Manager, Sanyati) to the Manager (Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Sanyati), 5th December 1979.

¹²⁸⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272081, Location R19.3.11.9F, File: EST/9A Sanyati Estate: Water Vol. 2, L. Mhlanga (ARDA General Manager) to The Secretary (Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development), 4th November 1982, 1-2.

¹²⁸¹ Gwerengwe, Personal Interview.

¹²⁸² *Ibid.*

¹²⁸³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/General (Sanyati), J. N. Hilligan (pp. Secretary for Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development) to the General Manager (ARDA), 13th November 1981.

Strained relations: The “Crisis of Expectations”:-

Plotholder voices against what they have termed “malpractices” and “exploitation”¹²⁸⁴ by ARDA have been incessant. The plotholders’ grievances and complaints have been mainly channelled through the Committee of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme which is headed by a Chairman.¹²⁸⁵ The current Chairman of the Committee is Mafumana Mjoli. Their disenchantment with ARDA, among other things, has assumed multifarious attributes. Since this can be used to gauge the success or otherwise of the entire scheme, the multifaceted nature of their problems, therefore, deserve attention here. It has been noted with serious concern that “When TILCOR came to us they promised that they would work hand in hand in agreement with plotholders on every job they will be carrying [out] in the scheme.”¹²⁸⁶ In practice, this expectation has not been fulfilled. Instead, in the eyes of the plotholders, exploitative tendencies on the part of the corporate body have manifested themselves more and more.

Plotholders have expressed profound dissatisfaction with the “unrealistic” charges demanded by ARDA for services rendered to the former, which were said to deviate from what had been promised. Continuities with the TILCOR days can be discerned here. The farmer previously paid a fixed ADF charge of \$70,00 per annum, which was broken down into \$40,00 for summer and \$30,00 for winter crops.¹²⁸⁷ Each settler was expected to bear the total costs of water applied, which could have been twice as much as before on full irrigation requirements. However, the summer crop cost could be variable depending on the availability of rains and the actual costs could not have been much higher compared to the previously fixed charges.

The tables below reflect the water requirement cost distribution at Gowe I and II in 1981.

Table 5.11: WATER REQUIREMENT COST DISTRIBUTION (1981):

PRIVATE	Summer Cropping		Winter Cropping	
	<u>Maize</u>	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>Wheat</u>	
GOWE I	\$1800	\$1800	\$2700	=\$ 6300
GOWE II	\$2486	\$2486	\$3728	=\$ 8700
			TOTAL	=\$15000 ¹²⁸⁸

¹²⁸⁴ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), the Chairman (G. Maturure) and the Secretary (T. Masawi) of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme to the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development, 5th February 1981, 2.

¹²⁸⁵ B. Jongwe, (Chairman, Gowe Irrigation Committee), Personal Interview, Gowe-Sanyati, 8th January 1997. N.B. The chairmanship changes hands almost on a rotational basis among the sitting tenants or plotholders. The current Chairman is Mafumana Mjoli.

¹²⁸⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), the Chairman (G. Maturure) and the Secretary (T. Masawi) of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme to the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development, 5th February 1981, 1.

¹²⁸⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Gowe Settlement Officer; Sanyati Estate Manager and the Budget Controller, 26th August 1981, 2.

¹²⁸⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to Estate Manager (Sanyati), 1st June 1981, 1.

Table 5.12: COST PER PLOT (1981):

PRIVATE	<u>Maize</u>	<u>Cotton</u>	<u>Wheat</u>	<u>Total</u>
GOWE I (1,4ha.)	0,7 ha. \$50,00	0,7 ha. \$50,00	0,7 ha. \$75,00	\$175,00
GOWE II (1,2ha.)	0,6 ha. \$42,86	0,6 ha. \$42,86	0,6 ha. \$64,28	\$150,00
Per ha. Costs	\$35,71	\$35,71	\$53,58	\$125,00 ¹²⁸⁹

Irrigation costs, which were charged at these rates, imposed a heavy burden on most of the plottolders. The less-to-do farmers in particular were caught up in the cost and performance-related bottlenecks concurrently imposed by the Estate on the one hand and the government on the other.

Land preparation charges also had a similar effect. The charge of \$1,80 per litre of diesel for the MEU operation on Sanyati Estate was not favourably perceived as it was to be passed on in its entirety to the settlers for their land preparation requirements.¹²⁹⁰ Bearing in mind the fact that there would be no subsidisation by the government, the settlers had to strive for their own sustenance. It was often argued that in this type of settlement scheme, the settlers were regarded as “commercial farmers” who had to bear the true inputs, which contained no subsidising element.¹²⁹¹ However, because the Gowe settlers had grown accustomed to previously subsidised rates, they categorically resisted the charge rates dictated to them by the Estate.¹²⁹² In fact, to regard these settlers as “commercial farmers” was an over-statement. An examination of the size of their plots, the level of farm inputs, loan opportunities available to them and their annual income would reveal, beyond doubt, that these people were peasant farmers pure and simple. No doubt they strove to earn cash and have a decent life style, but the commercialisation drive they possessed was always obstructed and limited by ARDA policies which were unfavourable.

Most of the plottolders perceive ARDA’s tractor charges as much higher than those charged by the District Development Fund (DDF) as far as ploughing and discing is concerned. The only snag was that the DDF, as a cheaper option, was not always available when the farmers needed this service. This was due to bureaucratic red tape.

Continuity or change: Further “Crisis of Expectations”:-

ARDA found itself in the invidious position of having to be the agency to impose higher land preparation costs, which had previously remained unchanged by DEVAG over at least

¹²⁸⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to Estate Manager (Sanyati), 1st June 1981, 1.

¹²⁹⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser to the Gowe Settlement Officer; Sanyati Estate Manager and the Budget Controller, 26th August 1981, 2.

¹²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁹² *Ibid.*

a period of 5 years.¹²⁹³ The parastatal's argument was that land preparation costs charged to the settlers were justifiably higher because they were based on "present day costs."¹²⁹⁴ The Authority felt it had to make the necessary adjustments to keep pace with the rocketing cost of living since Independence. Nevertheless, such a departure from past practices was automatically looked upon with suspicion, hence the allegation levelled against ARDA that it was exploiting the settlers by over-charging them on tractor, fertiliser and chemical inputs. A list of complaints which was subsequently drawn up mainly contained questions why ARDA had unilaterally hiked tillage and input costs; why the parastatal was ignoring settler participation in decision making and why Gowe in spite of being a pilot irrigation project in Sanyati was being treated as an appendage to the Estate.

What is clear from this list of grievances is that ARDA had deviated from the original agreement with the settlers, which stated that the settlers would always be consulted whenever any work was to be carried out on the land and any other matter affecting them.¹²⁹⁵ In a nutshell, the factors, which contributed to this crisis situation between the settlers and ARDA, were as follows:

- (a) lack of empathy for the settlers on the part of the Estate Management;
- (b) lack of consultation of the settlers by the management in matters of vital concern to them;
- (c) the arbitrary manner of management in dealing with the settlers;
- (d) the abruptness in dealing with settlers;
- (e) the condescending attitude of the management towards the settlers; and
- (f) the bullying tactics of the management towards settlers.¹²⁹⁶

Equally clear from the evidence is that the settler representatives were adamant that they should not continue to be treated as an extension of the Main Estate. They wanted to be isolated from the Main Sanyati Irrigation Scheme.¹²⁹⁷ Indeed, there was need for due respect to be paid to the settlers by everyone concerned since the small-scale scheme existed specifically for them as outlined in the original objectives. Unfortunately, they rarely got this respect.

In the final analysis, the settlers started to blame the government for their plight, because most of the farmers "thought they [sic] were going to be a great change as from the previous government. But now it shows things are becoming harder than before."¹²⁹⁸ With specific reference to ARDA, it was further remarked that

¹²⁹³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), B. M. Visser (TILCOR Regional Manager - Mashonaland) to The Secretary, (Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development), 26th February 1981, 2.

¹²⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁹⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), "Report of a Meeting Held Between a Delegation from the Gowe Settlement Scheme and ARDA and TILCOR Representatives Held in the TILCOR Board Room on the 3rd March, 1981," 2.

¹²⁹⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹²⁹⁷ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 272081, Location R19.3.11.9F, File: EST/9A Sanyati Estate: Water Vol. 2, M. M. Charasika (Irrigation Officer) to the Irrigation Engineer (Tinto Industries Ltd), 12th November 1984.

¹²⁹⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), the Chairman (P. Kuzangah) and the Secretary (T. Masawi) of the Gowe Irrigation Scheme, Sanyati, to the Ministry of

there had been no effective and noticeable changes in attitudes by TILCOR [now ARDA] management since the inception of majority rule government early last year [1980] but instead the opposite had happened and there had been a hardening of attitudes by TILCOR Management.¹²⁹⁹

Thus, because of the disadvantages the plottolders experienced as a result of their relationship with the Main Estate, they perceived the problems as political. Expression of their grievances was, obviously, never muted. The irrigators, contrary to general expectation after independence that the small-scale farmers would be loath to challenge the state machinery, exhibited no fear of political repercussions in voicing their problems. Their voice was loudly and clearly heard in almost every meeting with ARDA, Government officials and in their own irrigation committee meetings, illustrated earlier.

This aptly summarises how the independence government has lamentably failed to redress the horde of problems smallholder or African farmers, as a whole, are currently experiencing. In fact, the action of the Gowe plottolders was probably a product of the “crisis of expectations,”¹³⁰⁰ which has been prevalent in the country since Independence. It also demonstrates very graphically how peasant agency was at work in the post-independence period. This level of discontent was also a by-product of the development of dissatisfaction reminiscent of the development of a vociferous nationalist movement in both the rural and urban areas in the 1960s and 1970s.

IRRIGATION AND RURAL DIFFERENTIATION.

In Sanyati’s state-run schemes agriculture has become synonymous with the irrigation of cotton, maize and wheat. Sugar beans, soya beans, groundnuts and tomatoes are sometimes grown. These cash crops and in particular cotton, adopted as part of a state-sponsored programme, and to some extent beans enabled the farmers who were deemed to be subsistence producers to achieve an unprecedented increase in income and wealth. The entire area constitutes a booming economy that is anchored by the production and trade in cotton and, together with Gokwe, produces a complex regional economy. Sanyati town itself grew around cotton whose production as well as agricultural extension services had been rehabilitated after the disruptions caused by the guerrilla war (1966-1979). The “immigrants” from Rhodesdale and the southeast of the country had a greater say in this rehabilitation process because of their considerable farming skills which made them dominate economic and political life in the area. Most of them became schoolmasters, major cotton transporters, shop owners, master farmers and extension workers. Cotton pioneers and “immigrant” entrepreneurs such as the *Madheruka* (“immigrants” from the southeast of Zimbabwe) have been behind Sanyati’s cotton

Lands, 23rd December 1980.

¹²⁹⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), “Report of a Meeting Held Between a Delegation from the Gowe Settlement Scheme and ARDA and TILCOR Representatives Held in the TILCOR Board Room on the 3rd March 1981,” 1.

¹³⁰⁰ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 280742, Location R19.10.5.3R, File: P23/2C/Gowe (Sanyati), “Report of a Meeting Held Between a Delegation from the Gowe Settlement Scheme and ARDA and TILCOR Representatives Held in the TILCOR Board Room on the 3rd March 1981,” 3.

success story. Apart from the wealth they derived from selling their own produce, Worby correctly observes that many made small fortunes purchasing the cotton of cash-poor farmers and reselling it at a profit to the CMB (COTTCO). Such transactions were illicitly carried out because of the legal implications¹³⁰¹ behind them and as such not all the plottolders had the guts to engage in this rather risky business. The close monitoring of plottolder production made this impossible, hence, this clandestine activity was rife in the dryland section of the community more than anywhere else. Thus, whilst this practice occurred in many parts of Sanyati's dryland area, it was not as widespread in the ARDA irrigation schemes.

However, cotton continued to register impressive results. Increased production and distance from major markets informed the process that gave birth to numerous handling centres. The rapid expansion of the cotton boom into Sanyati communal lands after independence outstripped the capacity of parastatal institutions such as the AFC and the CMB to retain control over the very processes they had set in motion.¹³⁰² The chaos at the transit depots and the deep involvement of civil servants and some "immigrant" farmers in the side marketing of cotton were ample illustrations of this. Indeed, the transformations brought by the boom period to the northwest of Zimbabwe had a profound impact not only on the dryland sector but also on Sanyati's irrigation schemes.

Sanyati: Cotton and the new irrigation capitalists:-

Sanyati, small as it is, had no land left for ambitious cotton farmers with capital to expand. Because of the existing pressure for land in the dryland area bordering the irrigation schemes, there was virtually no prospect for the expansion of the schemes themselves. However, both the dryland farmers and irrigation plottolders continued to cultivate their small pieces of land and produce a saleable surplus. Although they sold produce, there were limits to accumulation because of the small size of their plots, the predominantly poor soils and, above all, the area's proneness to drought, which makes access to water very critical. Contrary to Mtetwa of ARDA's statement that "after taking into account all expenses basing from the actuals against the actual income, a middle management farmer will remain with a profit of \$3 367,00 plus,"¹³⁰³ this was not the case for some farmers. The farmers disagreed with these figures which grossly inflated their real income. They often complained that their crop expenses far outweighed their crop income. Hence the majority of them were not operating at a profit. The farmers who were doing well, however, still demanded a reduction of the various deductions on their net income because these acted as a brake on accumulation.

For both these farmers a number of institutional factors facilitated production. Sanyati farmers' cotton cultivation skills have always been boosted by their close proximity to

¹³⁰¹ Because such dealings were illegal, offenders risked being arrested or evicted from the scheme. For not selling through the official channel sometimes they were denied further access to input loans which had a negative effect on their next harvest.

¹³⁰² Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 195.

¹³⁰³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Minutes of 2nd Lease Agreement Meeting Held in the Estate Manager's Office on the 14th October 1986 at 12.30 PM," 2.

the Kadoma Cotton Research Institute, an institution established in 1925 by the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation (ECGC) and taken over in 1947 by the government to develop more productive seed strains tailored to local growing conditions and to respond more effectively to changing international markets.¹³⁰⁴ In the ECGC's vicinity is the Cotton Training Centre (CTC), born out of efforts begun in 1972 by the Commercial Cotton Growers Association (CCGA) to train field supervisors and pest scouts for white farmers. It was just before independence that its mandate was dilated to include the training of small-scale cotton growers the majority of whom were black farmers. Under the auspices of the CTC selected farmers, extension workers (including ARDA Settlement Officers), university students and even foreign agricultural officers went through an intensive residential training course in crop, pest and conservation management. Field Recorders also attended cotton refresher or production courses at the same centre.

The establishment of the CTC was financed by the Agrochemical Industry (Windmill, Agricura and Shell Chemical) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and for a long time before the current impasse between Zimbabwe and leading industrialised nations like Britain and the USA continued to draw on operating grants from USAID, the European Economic Community (EEC – now the European Union/EU) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations (UN).¹³⁰⁵ Support for agricultural initiatives was strong between the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s. Since 2000 much less is going into the area of development assistance.¹³⁰⁶ Dwindling donor financing is hampering multilateral agricultural projects. Very little is being done to prevent the swindling of peasant farmers either by the state or trans-national organisations. Currently, a new initiative to protect smallholder cotton farmers from being ripped off by the government or multinational companies has been mounted by the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) called the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD).¹³⁰⁷ Its achievements are still to be evaluated.

Among other institutions the CCGA had a rather nefarious agenda. Analysing this institution, Worby rightly observes that the Commercial Cotton Growers Association apparently had everything to gain from embracing the small farmers in this way. This gesture must have suggested to the new government that white farmers were now willing to lend a hand and share expertise with their poorer brethren in the impoverished communal areas. At the same time, the CCGA may have already recognised the strength that thousands of black cotton farmers would add to their own efforts to lobby for higher

¹³⁰⁴ Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 196.

¹³⁰⁵ Available statistics reveal that 12 000 commercial farm employees were trained by the CTC between 1972 and 1987. In the same period over 17 000 communal area farmers had also received training. These statistics can be gleaned from: "Cotton in Zimbabwe," *The Herald: Special Supplement*, Harare: (June 17 1986), 2 and *Agriserve*, (Harare: 1987), 81. See also Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 197. N.B. The Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) is an international development agency (IDA). IDAs have many of the same characteristics as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), especially service organisations as opposed to technical organisations..

¹³⁰⁶ Telephone Interview, Nyandoro with Deprose Muchena (USAID), 2nd November 2005.

¹³⁰⁷ ZIMCODD is an NGO whose primary concern is to assist small-scale farmers improve their productive capacity and access to markets.

crop and input prices.¹³⁰⁸ Less obviously, the training programme must have addressed the old fears of some white farmers that the cotton fields of some “untutored” African growers would provide a haven for pests that would endanger the “national” industry.¹³⁰⁹

Two major scenarios emerge from this. On the one hand, if any single interest sought to gain from the expansion of the cotton-training programme, it was the multinational-owned fertiliser and pesticide companies that sought to develop the untapped potential demand for their products among hundreds of thousands of African cultivators in places like Sanyati. In this regard, the CCGA Chief Executive Officer (CEO) suggested at the time: “It is obviously in the interests of manufacturers of pesticides, fertilizers and other products for the agricultural industry to expand their markets. We will be introducing the use of these products to farmers, who otherwise would never know about their applications.”¹³¹⁰ On the other, the farmers who had the brazenness to harness this chemical technology produced greater yields which were an important distinguishing mark from the yields of their kinsmen who either least afforded these or were reluctant to embrace this new technology.

Cotton benefited both the farmers and the lorry owners who ferried the farmers’ produce, initially, to the CMB main depot in Kadoma and, later, to Sanyati since the establishment of the local depot in 1976. Cotton was transported at \$23,00 per bale in the late 1980s and, at these rather extraordinarily high rates, its transportation was yielding some individual transporters a gross income of well over \$5 000,00 a week,¹³¹¹ a handsome profit which was rarely achieved by the greater percentage of the communal growers and the smallholder irrigators themselves per annum. That cotton transporters were making more money than the farmers themselves is less surprising because some unscrupulous transporters charged more than the commercial rates, which, of course, varied from season to season. Farm owners-cum transport owners like the Mazivanhanga family were among the wealthiest people in the area.¹³¹² These farmers and lorry drivers engaged in the buying and selling of cotton. In fact, the crop was of considerable profit to the lorry-driving agrarian capitalists. In the independence era, their appetite for accumulation had been made greater by the favourable economic and political environment created by the government. Outgrower families were not among the major lorry drivers, though, but some “immigrant” plotters used proceeds from cotton to put up family stores at Sanyati Growth Point when it was established in 1977. For most of them the small pieces of land they cultivated imposed limits to accumulation to a point that they became ultimately interested in investing not only in cotton but retail shops some of which were used to buy local producers’ cotton at cheaper prices and then selling it at higher prices.

¹³⁰⁸ Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 197.

¹³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁰ *The Herald*, Harare: (January 17 1980) cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 197.

¹³¹¹ Nyamutova, Personal Interview.

¹³¹² Morgan Gazi (Madiro Village head, Ward 23), Personal Interview, Agricura, Sanyati Main Growth Point, Sanyati, 15th October 2004. N.B. Major transport companies compete for the cotton transshipment contract especially during bumper harvest years. To avoid serious transport bottlenecks sometimes the contractor or the CMB itself sub-contracted additional, privately owned lorries such as Lozane and Mazivanhanga’s to move cotton expeditiously out of the Sanyati district. Later the business came to be dominated by distant transport owners from Chegutu, Kadoma and Harare.

Others, in particular G. Maturure, established a family retail business within the Gowe irrigation scheme to service the area. He used the profits to buy a car and a bicycle.

During the 1988/89 season Maturure planted a quarter of his plot to cotton and reaped a total of 22 bales and grossed \$4 617,00.¹³¹³ All the plottolders put together planted 64 hectares of cotton (excluding the 6 ha from vacant plots C1 and D1 cultivated by the central estate), picked about 650 bales and realised a gross income of approximately \$103 177,80. This excluded the \$15 859,80 realised by the Main Estate on their two plots.¹³¹⁴ Estimated average cotton yields for 1989/90 were between 700 and 2 600 kgs per ha.¹³¹⁵ Maturure had deliberately reserved three quarters of his plot for beans the following season. In that season he achieved a phenomenal total yield per ha of 2 070 kgs against an average yield for all plottolders of 1 218 kgs per ha.¹³¹⁶ He was closely followed by E. Chiwombe with 1 958 kgs per ha. The lowest ranked bean producer was David Mjoli with 518 kgs per ha. Put together, all the 22 Gowe farmers who grew beans that particular season produced a whopping total of 26 786 kgs and realised handsome profits selling their crop at \$2,00 per kg.¹³¹⁷ Farmers like G. Maturure together with K. Muzanenhamo, A. Motsi and G. Chekeche had, by the winter of 1990, benefited immensely from irrigation that they cleared their outstanding AFC loan accounts at a time when another outgrower, C. Mhara, had an outstanding balance of \$11 177,35.¹³¹⁸ Admittedly, he was less likely, short of it being wholly redeemed by the Corporation, to pay up this colossal debt not even in the foreseeable future. By the same winter other successful farmers, notably T. Nyamutova and O. Dangaiso had also paid all their dues to ZIMBANK with the exception, among others, of M. Mjoli who was still owing a sum of \$7 695,66.¹³¹⁹ It is clear from the few farmers that managed to free themselves from the burgeoning debt burden that Sanyati's cotton boom, together with the accelerated cultivation of beans, had generated its own regionally based class of aggressive entrepreneurs who were crossing residual historical boundaries in land tenure and labour markets to constitute a nascent class of small-scale irrigation capitalists at Gowe.

¹³¹³ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Memorandum: Gowe Irrigation Scheme – Cotton Yields for Gowe II Farmers 1988/89 Summer Season," the Settlement Officer (Gowe Irrigation Scheme – Sanyati) to the Settlers Programme Co-ordinator, 15th November 1989.

¹³¹⁴ *Ibid.* N.B. Plottolders were not happy that the Estate was not paying land rent for the vacant plots it was utilising. For more information on this complaint see NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "Operating Accounts for 10 Months to 31 August 1990 – Cost Centre (Sanyati Estate No. 72): ARDA Gowe Settlement Scheme – Settlement Officer's Report for August 1990," N. Kamudzandu.

¹³¹⁵ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ARDA Gowe Settlement Scheme – N. Kamudzandu: Settlement Officer's Annual Report for 1989/90."

¹³¹⁶ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "1990 Gowe Farmers Bean Crop Yield/Ha: Settlement Officer's Annual Report for 1989/90," N. K. Kamudzandu.

¹³¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³¹⁸ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "AFC Loan Account Schedule as at 22 June 1990: ARDA Gowe Settlement Scheme – Settlement Officer's Report for July 1990," N. Kamudzandu.

¹³¹⁹ NAZ (RC), ARDA, Box 348041, Location R24.9.6.1R, File: SET/10 Gowe Pools Settlement Scheme, "ZIMBANK Loan Account Schedule as at 31 July 1990: ARDA Gowe Settlement Scheme – Settlement Officer's Report for July 1990," N. Kamudzandu.

Some very successful plottolders who did not have adequate family labour hired cotton pickers during peak periods from the surrounding community. Since farmers were assured of a crop even in times of drought, cotton – a drought resistant crop - became very popular. It also generated employment for both rich and poor even in difficult years. Worby has cited a case of an agrarian capitalist from Sanyati only referred to as Charity C. who deigned to pick cotton for a week on the irrigated Gowe scheme during the 1986/87 drought. For him “this underscored ... not only the flexibility with which labour moved between different agricultural sectors that might have different abilities to survive climatic and economic change but also the fluidity with which individuals circulated through economic positions over time.”¹³²⁰ However, the system of hiring labour was not so common in the Gowe Irrigation Scheme. Sometimes in a bumper harvest year like 1988 workers were so scarce that they were able to drive up the price of their labour twice over the course of the season and Gowe plottolders could not afford them. The smallness of the irrigation plots made it difficult particularly for resource-poor irrigators to engage alternative non-wage systems such as work parties (*humwe*) or rotational work groups (*machangano*). The solution for these plottolders has been to tap as well as depend on family or household labour. However, it was not an uncommon feature in the Main Irrigation Estate to engage wage labour.

The Estate hired pickers from the adjoining communal area, parts of Gokwe, the Zambezi Valley (especially the Tonga country), the sparsely populated Muzvezve Resettlement Area which is situated along the road from Kadoma to Sanyati and sometimes the army was called upon to assist when labour supply conditions were acute. The pickers were paid at rates determined by the Estate Manager per kg of cotton picked and the Estate provided extra incentives such as food and other inducements. Whilst the ARDA Estate employs about 250 permanent employees it, however, almost entirely depends on casual or seasonal (*maricho*) workers – 1 500 annually – for the bulk of its labour requirements.¹³²¹ These performed seasonal work since the inception of the Estate in 1974 and continued to promote the “casualisation” of the labour force to this day. For the ARDA Chief Executive Officer, “most of them have been so seasonal that they are almost permanent.”¹³²² The engagement of semi-skilled casual labour was a departure from a proven practice since the Second World War when the large mine owners and big ranchers had been interested in recruiting a more highly skilled, permanent or stable labour force that would settle permanently on the mines or farms with their families.¹³²³

The Estate’s recruitment policy, which entailed the hiring of more contract workers as opposed to permanent employees, was a common means of avoiding the higher labour costs entailed by post-independence minimum wage legislation applicable only to full time farm workers. The stipulated minimum wage in the 1980s was \$30,00 per month –

¹³²⁰ Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 205-206.

¹³²¹ *Ibid.*, 201. N.B. Estate managers go out into the villages to negotiate and solicit for contract labourers from traditional chiefs. The bulk of ARDA Sanyati Estate employees are contract workers and retaining them on a long-term basis is very costly. See J. Z. Z. Matowanyika, (ARDA Chief Executive Officer), Personal Interview, ARDA Head Office – Harare, 20th October 2006.

¹³²² Matowanyika, Personal Interview.

¹³²³ Bradbury and Worby (1985) cited in Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 200.

itself a pittance by any standards. Having established themselves as capitalist irrigators, the plottolders at Gowe sought to draw on opportunities for profit that were becoming available as a result of Sanyati's cotton miracle. The story of the cotton boom highlighted the changes that were occurring in the regional agrarian economy and how this led to the emergence of cotton irrigation capitalists in the area.

Irrigation agriculture: Modernising impact:-

The development of Sanyati has been premised on irrigation agriculture. The establishment first of Gowe and later the Main Estate as well as the proliferation of cotton growing since the 1960s influenced the creation of an irrigation-based town or growth point in the late 1970s. Sanyati Growth Point, which is older than Gokwe, was established almost three years after the TILCOR Estate.¹³²⁴ It was a logical choice for a business centre because it was a focal point for many areas in the northwest because of its proximity to already-established urban centres such as Kadoma, Kwekwe and Chegutu. The growth point was established around a number of pre-independence objectives. In the decade before independence, Sanyati was clearly envisioned as the future nucleus of development in the region, serving as one of the pilots for the "growth point" strategy of the Rhodesian government. That strategy aimed to maximise benefits thought to emanate from optimal concentrations of people and economic activities in central places such as Sanyati. By integrating regional cash crop production with agro-processing and by providing training and infrastructure to support a core of master farmers on irrigation schemes, the growth point strategy was intended to divert the surplus labour flowing to the towns back into the rural zones from which they originated.¹³²⁵ These objectives continued to drive the developmental tempo in the area even in the post-independence era. It is important to note that the Sanyati town population has grown rapidly since 1977 with the number of residents recently estimated at between 3 000 and 5 000, swelling to

¹³²⁴ TILCOR, renamed ARDA in 1981/1982 and ADA in 1989, was a parastatal created by the Smith regime in order to promote development in what were then known as Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs). Under the TILCOR model, a central irrigated estate devoted to the production of cash crops was established with the hope that it would provide both rural employment and associated "spin-offs." Before the inception of the Main Estate in 1974 Gowe had not existed as an outgrower component. Gowe plottolders became outgrowers situated on the periphery of the Estate, utilising the latter's irrigation and machinery, and marketing their produce through TILCOR only after 1974. The Estate's total irrigated area is approximately 1 200 ha although only 1 000 ha are being utilised. Its production cycle entails the cultivation of cotton, groundnuts and sugar beans in summer, wheat and green maize (mealies) in winter. It employs roughly 250 permanent staff and 1 500 seasonal workers annually. The 36 outgrowers account for a further 120 ha. The Sanyati cotton depot was opened in 1976 and upgraded to a ginnery in 1984 – the first in a communal area. Its ginning capacity was doubled to 50 000 tonnes annually in 1989. See Agriserve (Pvt) Ltd., *The Impact of Sanyati Gin on Smallholder Cotton Production: Report to United States Agency for International Development and Cotton Marketing Board Zimbabwe*, (Harare: Agriserve and Ronco Consulting Corporation, May 1986, Appendix 10); Whitsun Foundation, *Rural Workshop and Machinery Centre: Report and Recommendations of the Director on the Proposed Rural Workshop and Machinery Centre, Sanyati TTL*, (Salisbury: Whitsun Foundation Project, 1977) and Tapela, "Growth Points and Regional Development in Zimbabwe." The growth point at Sanyati was first established in 1977 and 3 864 persons were recorded in the 1982 census.

¹³²⁵ Tapela, "Growth Points and Regional Development in Zimbabwe" and Wekwete "Growth Centre Policy in Zimbabwe" cited in Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,"201.

between 7 000 and 8 000 with the influx of seasonal workers, traders and transporters during the cotton harvesting period.¹³²⁶

Although the growth point at Sanyati has given rise to a variety of small-scale manufacturing, service and distribution enterprises and continues to serve as a major conduit through which crops and people flow to and from remote parts of Gokwe, Sanyati's orientation is undeniably still towards the major towns of the highlands to the southeast especially Kwekwe and Kadoma. Because Gowe-Sanyati is small and its soil fertility is deteriorating as a result of population pressure, cotton monoculture and due to some farmers' inability to buy inorganic fertilisers, potential yields have reached a ceiling. As a consequence, some male plotters and their sons seek full-time employment either locally or in town, thereby leaving behind their spouses to manage the small irrigation plot or the dryland plot in the crowded "reserve." In this respect, the demographic and residential history of many Sanyati households illustrates the "split" family prototype that has been observed by Wolpe, Bush and Cliffe which features heavily in "labour reserve" models of most rural economies.¹³²⁷ This confirms the aptness of Worby's argument that such models posit that women's labour in underdeveloped and resource-poor "reserves" like Sanyati historically served to subsidise the cost of reproducing wage-labour for employers in industrialising centres such as Kadoma and Kwekwe.¹³²⁸ However, it should be pointed out that, in a number of instances, female participation in production activities also mirrors their class position in society.

This case exemplifies the extraordinary range and complexity of exchange relations that Sanyati households are engaged in at various points in time. Their strong links to the formal wage economy are obvious. For instance, over 80% of the Sanyati households had a history of wage-employment in the family, although the dominant sources of employment had shifted over the last thirty years from the mines, towns and farms in the former European highlands to local jobs with the CMB ginnery, GMB, the ARDA agricultural estate and the District Council.¹³²⁹ With limited land, it is clear that households in Sanyati were unable to accumulate capital through cultivation alone. Thus, the manner in which labour was deployed in this district was not at variance with conventional wisdom about the substantive activities and wider economic functions of a rural labour "reserve."

Estate and smallholder irrigation agriculture in Sanyati does not concentrate on producing subsistence crops which is an unreliable enterprise. As already demonstrated in this chapter, an array of cash crops was grown for sale at the Growth Point and beyond. This

¹³²⁶ Tapela, "Growth Points and Regional Development in Zimbabwe," 74.

¹³²⁷ Wolpe (1972), Bush and Cliffe (1984) – cited in Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 202. For additional detail on "labour-reserve areas" see also Philip Raikes, "Rural Differentiation and Class-Formation in Tanzania," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 5(3), (April 1978), 285-325.

¹³²⁸ Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 202. For another perspective on women's role in agricultural production see also Miriam Sharma, "Caste, Class and Gender: Production and Reproduction in North India," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 12(4), (July 1985), 57-88.

¹³²⁹ Agriserve (Pvt) Ltd., *The Impact of Sanyati Gin on Smallholder Cotton Production*, 64. See also Worby, "Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity," 203.

means that despite outgrowers cultivating small plots, they are not merely eking out a living, but they are also engaged in accumulation. The Estate produces, among other things, cotton and wheat, which help to finance, to some extent, their own operations, but to a large extent, head office operations. The Gowe plottolders, on the other hand, are more than willing to cover maize uncertainties by continuing to invest in cotton – a crop that can be easily exchanged for cash, which can then be used to purchase locally available grain. In the diversified wage-labour economy that embraces both the communal and small-scale commercial areas (Copper Queen and Chenjiri),¹³³⁰ as well as the parastatal ARDA Estate, the plottolders, who since 1974 exist as a “semi-proletarianised peasantry,”¹³³¹ are able to rely on the availability of casual employment opportunities to earn cash and cover food shortages. Well-to-do irrigation farmers can hire local labour on their plots for specific tasks such as ploughing, weeding and harvesting just like any “capitalist” farmer. The basic difference is that most of them do not own mechanical equipment such as tractors, harrows and ploughs. Their plight is further compounded by the fact that they lack other means of production such as cattle, since the DC effected the prohibition order against livestock rearing in the Gowe Irrigation Scheme in 1967. They cannot hire machinery from the Growth Point because it is expensive. As a result, in order to fully utilise their plots, they have to rely on the ARDA Estate for the provision of traction power and this has intensified their subordination to it.

Conclusion

In conclusion, therefore, irrigation agriculture precipitated wider forms of socio-economic differentiation than those found under dryland farming. This was partly due to irrigation’s capability to produce both a summer and a winter crop – a very remote possibility in the rain-fed area. It was also partly attributable to the fact that cropping in the irrigated area was conducted on a more intensive basis than in the non-irrigated area where it was mainly extensive. Plottolders, therefore, profited from increased yields per hectare per annum. Cash inflows to these farmers were also guaranteed throughout the year. On the whole, the decade 1980 to 1990 witnessed broader differentiation processes compared to the two earlier periods because of the cotton boom and the increase in the number of services availed to farmers at independence. More of these services were distributed on a more intensive though disproportionate basis in the outgrower schemes than in the dry farming area. Plottolders received credit from a wide spectrum of lenders. Various institutions such as ARDA itself, the Co-operatives, the AFC and ZIMBANK

¹³³⁰ The boundaries of the Copper Queen small-scale commercial farms in Gokwe were drawn in 1962 three years after the Chenjiri farms on Sanyati’s northeastern flank were similarly demarcated for African purchase and occupation. The most recently available evidence for the region produced by the Surveyor-General in 1983 indicates 210 demarcated farms in Chenjiri and 282 in Copper Queen, although the latter figure has increased recently to 408 with the subdivision of large unallocated farms in the northern section. 1982 census figures indicate a total of 19 177 persons and 3 220 households for both of these areas, plus the Copper Queen Resettlement Areas I and II and the Sechuru Resettlement Area. See Agriserve (Pvt) Ltd., *The Impact of Sanyati Gin on Smallholder Cotton Production*, 64. An unknown number of “squatters” were probably not enumerated even though many, who entered these areas during the war, were eventually allocated plots.

¹³³¹ Worby, “Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity,” 204.

supported them. Despite plotholder reservations with lease conditions, marketing arrangements, land charges and other unpalatable services, as the main developmental agent of outgrower sections, ARDA offered a more comprehensive package to the recipients than any other single organisation. The Authority attended to all aspects of farming such as ploughing, planting, irrigation water supply, extension advice and marketing.

Despite the many services plotholders received there were, however, big differences in social structure between dryland and irrigation producers. Traditionally, most peasants were mixed farmers who specialised in crop cultivation and livestock rearing, hence, their agriculture was highly diversified. On the contrary, irrigation farming was extremely specialised. For example, once allocated irrigation plots farmers had to give up everything they were doing. They were not allowed to keep cattle and were barred from staying with relatives on these plots. There were no traditional leaders either. The DC, ARDA, the Estate Manager or the Minister of Lands was the ultimate authority in Sanyati irrigation, a role that has been taken over by the Minister of Agriculture. Thus, there was a completely different social structure in irrigation and this system was weaker than the typically peasant one where there were communal arbitative and credible social structures in the form of chiefs and headmen.

This chapter has further demonstrated that the rural commercialisation process associated with the post-independence cotton boom did not only widen the accumulation gap between plotholders but also shows that cotton or the “white fibre” was not the only source of differentiation in this period. It can be asserted that there emerged different forms of socio-economic differentiation in Sanyati because it was not only the actual cultivation of the “white fibre” that led to peasant accumulation. A number of activities ranging from the cultivation of other crops, access to loan facilities, inputs, land, labour and off-farm income made Sanyati farmers relatively wealthy. Thus, in order to understand the implications of smallholder farmers becoming involved in a commodity crop like cotton it is counterproductive to predict in advance that there is going to be a single process of class differentiation, but what actually transpires depends on questions of opportunities available to individual households and the economic culture of the region which for years has been beyond the surveillance of the state.

If, from the outset, farmers who were already wealthy, that is, those with Master Farmer certificates or proven farming experience (which category excluded women) were the only ones selected to occupy irrigation plots at Gowe the question to ask is would rural differentiation manifest itself clearly? The assumption is that there would be no poor farmers in this case. However, as demonstrated in this chapter Sanyati outgrowers were differentiated on the wide basis of (a) gender (b) personal capacity;¹³³² (c) political connections; (d) connections with the Estate management and (e) privileged access to vacant holdings, water, irrigation pipes, tillage and extension services. The economic and social status of the plotholder was, thus, determined by how he related to the Main Estate

¹³³² Although Gowe tenants were allocated plots of approximately the same size, they possessed differential farming experience as farmers think and plan differently. Some plan ahead of others whilst many were already wealthy from Rhodesdale.

and the state. The relationship with the Estate, though, was a prescriptive one. For instance, a plotholder was told how to irrigate his crops. He would plant, weed and harvest when told to do so. Refusal to obey these instructions entailed removal from the scheme. In such a highly paternalistic relationship the plotholder was, therefore, not learning anything from his association with the Estate. He was a glorified labourer. There was no other system he could go to save for the more prosperous ones who could afford to purchase land in the small-scale commercial farming sector.

There were numerous consistencies as well as inconsistencies in the manner the two irrigation schemes were operated in the first decade of independence in contrast to the way they were administered in the colonial period. The latter period was characterised by much stricter discipline than the former. The regulatory framework imposed by the state through the DC would not be challenged. This does not mean that there were subsequently no rules and regulations but irrigation discipline had become more relaxed as evidenced by the many deputations sent to challenge Estate, ARDA or parent ministry authority since 1980. These were meant to ameliorate plotholder suffering, but in spite of these representations irrigation plotholders have remained in a parlous state. There is, thus, much continuity in the manner of administering these schemes, although some changes can be discerned.

The chapter also illustrates that ARDA tried to administer its schemes in a uniform manner. The monthly, quarterly and annual reports were designed to ensure uniformity in the recording and reporting systems adopted on the ARDA managed settlement schemes. The data presented in these reports was used in planning and evaluating scheme performance with a view towards ensuring sustainable production. However, attempting to achieve sustainable production on the basis of limited access to land and other services such as finance was reflective of lack of genuineness on the part of government. Insufficient land and finance impeded plotholder progress. Those who were recommended for loans by ARDA's Settlement Officer often received them and those who were not did not. Differentiation was, therefore, enhanced by the selective practice of agricultural extension, whose agents limited credit to those who followed "approved farming practices." Selectivity of this nature meant one particular class of farmers became more affluent than the other hence the inappropriateness of the term egalitarian classlessness for Sanyati. This society was neither traditional nor homogeneously egalitarian. Thus, although notions of an undifferentiated peasantry abound these do not apply to Sanyati.

In spite of the occasionally unfavourable loan climate, this chapter has demonstrated how significantly the agricultural boom of the 1980s contributed to heightened forms of socio-economic inequalities. The end of the war ushered in an era of prosperity for some peasant irrigators. Others remained in the doldrums of this same prosperity. Outgrower disenchantment with policies that clipped their wings and proscribed accumulation prospects in this period became very pronounced. The farmers were perturbed not only by lease arrangements that deprived them of land ownership but also by numerous other injustices that perennially tied them to the whims of the Estate. To a large extent, this contributed to the emergence of the "crisis of expectations" reminiscent of the post-

independence period. However, although they did not succeed all the time to wring the sort of concessions they wanted from Estate management, the mere fact that they made themselves heard had a consoling and liberating effect on them. Feeling liberated from the tyranny and overbearing influence of the Estate, however, did nothing to reduce their seemingly eternal dependence on it. The forced reliance on Estate services heightened uncertainties about settlers ever achieving their full emancipation from Estate control. Demands on their labour continued to escalate. The story of this decade thus captures the social, economic and moral decadence of the Estate's relationship with the outgrower – the goose that lay the golden egg – in as much as it expresses the ideals of lowered moral value on his part. This was so because first, the outgrowers had been forced into a very small scheme and then they were relegated to mere labourers in a scheme they perceived as their own. It was more painful for them to accept a subordinate position in spite of being the pioneers of irrigation in Sanyati.

Despite the problems experienced by the tenants the relative advantages they derived from independence and the boom period that ensued were considerable. A sizeable number became rich. Proceeds from selling cotton, beans and other crops had a positive effect on their standard of living. However, irrigation did not bestow equal opportunities on the tenants. Some benefited more than others from their participation in this enterprise. Because ARDA still wanted the settler scheme to act as their exclusive labour reservoir it can be concluded that their action was designed to maintain it as such and proscribe the emergence of differentiation. Obviously, accumulation militated against labour supply, but the various tactics employed by outgrowers to challenge Estate authority meant that their march towards accumulation could not be hindered. The post-independence era, therefore, unleashed a flurry of activities that aided accumulation and widened the differential gap between irrigation farmers. In fact, with the cotton boom differentiation as a process transcended any proportions ever witnessed in Sanyati since the 1960s.