

Policy Intervention, Livelihood Sustainability and the Environment: TGLP

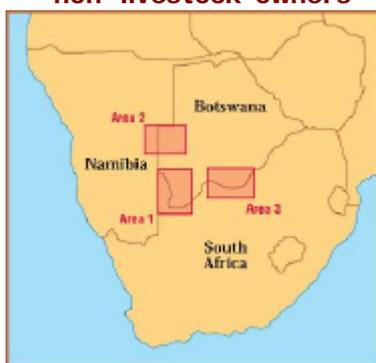
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PANRUSA Briefing Notes

PANRUSA, Poverty Policy and Natural Resource Use in Southern Africa. A DFID funded research project at the University of Sheffield UK.

Key points

- TGLP attempted to address several development issues simultaneously
- The policy was 'top down' with little consultation with affected groups
- Many policy assumptions were unfounded
- Some outcomes were the opposite of those intended, e.g. rural poverty increased for non-livestock owners



Research areas:

1 Arid southwest:

- a) Mier, South Africa
- b) SW Kgalagadi, Botswana

2. Semiarid northwest:

- a) Ghanzi Dist, Botswana
- b) Omaheke, Namibia

3. Dry sub-humid southeast:

- a) NW Province South Africa
- b) Barolong, Botswana

This briefing examines Botswana's Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP), which was introduced in 1975 and funded under the country's Second Livestock Development Project (LDPII). The TGLP was introduced to address an ambitious range of issues linked to the country's post-independence development: to enhance the commercial livestock industry and allow it to compete on the world market; to address issues of environmental pressure in the most heavily grazed area (the eastern hardveld); and to achieve social and economic development in the remotest parts of the country: the sandveld.

TGLP objectives, assumptions and underpinning

Livestock production is a key industry in Botswana, but has largely been concentrated in the wetter eastern hardveld area. At independence in 1966 Botswana was grossly underdeveloped and one of the poorest countries in the world. TGLP aimed to address simultaneously several related issues, with the objectives of improving range management (thereby reducing environmental degradation), increasing livestock productivity (thereby improving outputs and income generation through commercialisation), and protecting and enhancing the livelihoods of non-livestock owners (thereby increasing development and wellbeing in the drier parts of the country).

These objectives were based on several key assumptions, including: environmental degradation was occurring and limiting productivity; greater productivity and better environmental conditions could only be achieved by commercialisation (i.e. the traditional communal system was failing); large empty tracts of land were available for establishing ranches in the western sandveld.

The TGLP was underpinned by the zonation of land in Botswana, including the establishment of borehole-centred ranches. These ranches would be available to lease to individuals or consortiums, with the rents collected being used to develop communal areas and benefit non-livestock owners. For the latter groups displaced by ranch development, service centres were established where new livelihood opportunities, health care and schooling would be available. In communal areas Land Boards would limit animal numbers to prevent problems reoccurring.

TGLP implementation

218 TGLP ranches were established by 1984 in 20 blocks across the whole of the Botswanan Kalahari. Each ranch has a borehole due to the absence of surface water. In few cases were ranch areas previously 'empty', as they supported traditional livelihoods and in some cases even boreholes that were used opportunistically by livestock owners in years of good grazing. Ranches have been progressively fenced - further encouraged by the 1991 National Policy on Agricultural Development - both around perimeters and in some cases into paddocks to aid management of the grazing resource. Some lessees live on ranches but many ranch lessees are town-dwellers. Many ranches are run by a few employed staff, often from the local populations whose traditional activities have been displaced. In some cases ranches have never been used as no water was found in trial boreholes.

Land use zones in Botswana



What impact has TGLP had?

TGLP has often been criticised as a failure. The following examples are cited as indicators of the effects of TGLP on the livestock industry, development and the environment:

- Has not reduced livestock pressures in the east- many ranch lessees (e.g. in the Makoba ranches) still keep cattle in communal areas.
- Has not improved livestock production- too little advice and help for livestock owners.
- Range pressures increased- boreholes allow year round pressure on grazing even in drought years. Changes in vegetation communities have occurred.
- In some areas (e.g. Ncojane) fences have led to dramatic declines in wildlife populations
- Areas with ranches were not empty, so other livelihoods have been displaced, become less effective or ceased. Non-livestock owners in ranch areas have become worse, not better, off. Poverty has increased.

- Service centres have had mixed success- schools and health services beneficial but alternative livelihood provisions have largely failed.
- During the time of TGLP, communal areas were neglected and continued to suffer environmental pressures and be over crowded with animals.
- Low rents meant sums raised for service centre & communal area support were insignificant

Working within TGLP

We found e.g.s of people trying to overcome TGLP limitations directly - lessees experimenting with environmentally-sensitive production - such as wildlife (such as ostrich) rather than cattle, and others treating ranches just like cattle posts, moving animals and even dropping fences in droughts to maximise grazing and minimise detrimental effects on environment and animals.

TGLP- a single policy?

We have found marked differences in the effect of TGLP from area to area. Closer to Gaborone, the capital city, the policy has been implemented most formally. Further away lessees have been more opportunistic and the ranches set up more flexibly. In all the areas we visited however our research supported that of others: that non-livestock owners had suffered greatly in access to natural resources, welfare and poverty. Some argue that TGLP failed because it wasn't 'owned' by those it affected: it was implemented 'top down' with little consultation. By the late 1980s the government recognised TGLP failures, noting that it was probably too ambitious in trying to bring about many changes at once. The NPAD attempts to address some of these issues e.g. dual grazing rights- but still favours intensive livestock production over other livelihoods that may be better suited in dry regions.

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The PANRUSA website is <http://www.shef.ac.uk/panrusa>
Staff can be contacted by email at d.s.thomas@sheffield.ac.uk
d.sporton@sheffield.ac.uk
c.twyman@sheffield.ac.uk
Fax: +44 114 279 7912



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