

Transmigration, The Indonesian Engineered Community: An Insight from Baras of West Sulawesi

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Abstract

This article is a study of how transmigration has evolved as an Indonesian national policy, contributing to the field of sociocultural studies by offering a contemporary analysis of transmigration's aims and accomplishments from the Dutch colonial era to the present day. Although transmigration is, simply stated, the resettlement of members of the population from a densely populated area to a less populated one within the nation-state, the aims of this policy have evolved across several eras in accordance with changing development objectives and conceptions of progress. This article highlights that Indonesia has been the world's most ambitious country with regard to populations movement, having resettled about 7,936,6651 of its population to mainly the Outer Islands through its transmigration programs. Among the settlement areas focused upon in this study is the first documented state-sponsored Bugis transmigration to Baras of West Sulawesi. The transmigration to Baras was implemented by incorporating the so-called KTM (Kawasan Terpadu Mandiri – Self-Sufficient Integrated Area) and APPDT (Alokasi Penempatan Penduduk Transmigrasi – Special Allocation for Settled-Transmigration Area). The KTM has transformed regions such as Baras into resource frontiers that encompasses settlement, agriculture, economy, and politics. As a result of this historical development, Baras has become a receiving area for both voluntary and involuntary transmigrants endeavouring to access local resources.

Keywords

Baras, frontier; engineered community; transmigration

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is most the state intensively enacting transmigration, a process involving the governmentally sponsored relocation of people from one settlement to another within a country's borders. The term "transmigration" refers to the relocation of a population from a densely populated region to a less populated area, which is typically planned, sponsored, supported or monitored by the government (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 1960, 1997, 2009, 2018; Dirjen Agraria dan Transmigrasi 1967; Arndt & Sundrum 1977; Budiardjo 1986; Kementerian Desa 2015, 2021b, 2021a; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). In Indonesia, transmigration – according to the Act of 1972, number 3 – refers to "the removal and/or the transfer of population from one area to settle in another area determined upon within the territory of the Republic of Indonesia, in the interests of the country's development, or for the other reasons considered necessary by the government" (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 1972, 2018; Hardjono 1977, pp. xiv-xv; Arndt 1983; Martono 1986; Kementerian Desa 2015, 2019, 2021). Recently, the legal definition of transmigration has been changed by Act 29/2009 to refer to: the "voluntary movement of population to improve their prosperity and settle in transmigration sites conducted by the state" (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 1960 1997 2009 2018; Hardjono 1986; World Bank 1994; Pustlitbang Ketransmigrasian 2013b; Kementerian Desa 2015).

Scholars and analysts have also suggested several definitions of transmigration. For example, transmigration refers to "the resettlement of land-poor migrants, primarily from Java, into populated outer island areas, where they endeavor to forge a livelihood (with some state aid) alongside the original inhabitants of receiving areas" (Arndt and Sundrum 1977; Hardjono 1978; Gondowarsito 1990; Elmhirst 1999). The World Bank (1988, p. xviii) defines transmigration as "the movement of people from overcrowded areas of the inner islands to less developed areas of the outer islands". In

general, the transmigration programs were the planned transfer of the population from the densely populated regions of inner Indonesia, including Java, Madura, Bali, and Lombok, to the Outer Islands (Hardjosudarmo 1965; Hardjono 1977; MacAndrews 1978, p. 458; Sainz 1982; Arndt 1983; Abdollah 1987; Levang 1997; Pustlitbang Ketransmigrasian 2013b; Rahma Fitriana *et al.* 2019; MacAndrews 1978, p. 458). The participants of transmigration have been mainly land-poor migrants endeavoring to obtain a better livelihood (Elmhirst 2002, p. 144) and have been provided with an amount of 2.5 hectares of land per family in the areas of settlement (Hardjono 1978; Budiardjo 1986; Leinbach 1989; Leinbach, Watkins and Bowen 1992; Fearnside 1997; Elmhirst 1999; Sukmaniar and Saputra 2019; Lai, Hamilton, and Staddon 2021) (Leinbach 1989, p.85). Participants of transmigration programs have also been sometimes also chosen from poor urban areas.

This article mainly aims to elaborate on the expansion of the aims and scale of transmigration in Indonesia. In this article, we argue that transmigration has proceeded through several phases from 'colonization' in the colonial period through provision of land, mainly for wet-rice agriculture, to the land poor in the interests of national development to a current concern with providing labor for industrialized agriculture through the *Kawasan Terpadu Mandiri* (KTM) or Self-Sufficient Integrated Area scheme. In the case of Baras this most recent phase has catalyzed the transformation of peripheral villages into an intensively exploited resource frontier. The article begins by providing a brief historical account of schemes for the resettlement of Indonesia's population. The following section depicts the problems and challenges of transmigration. Finally, the article briefly analyses how transmigration contributes to district and provincial formation in Indonesia, using the example of Baras in North Mamuju (now Pasangkayu), West Sulawesi province.

Transmigration Revisited

Historically, by the 1900s and during the co-

lonial administration, settlement programs were labelled in Dutch as *kolonisatie* (colonization). Only after 1945, namely, after the independence of Indonesia, was the term changed to *transmigrasi* by the new Indonesian government (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 1960; Dirjen Agraria dan Transmigrasi 1967; Arndt and Sundrum 1977; Hardjono 1978 1986; van der Wijst 1985; Martono 1986; Swasono and Singarimbun 1986; Whitten 1987; Gondowarsito 1990; Evers and Gerke 1992; Holden, Hvoslef and Simanjuntak 1995; Fearnside 1997; Levang 1997 2003; Elmhirst 1999; Hoey 2003; Grillo 2007; Kementerian Desa 2015; Manay 2016; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). According to Egbert de Vries (1986), the colonization program was initiated by H.J. van Mook, later the Lieutenant Governor General of the Dutch East Indies, and G.H.C. Hart, Head of the Department of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Colonies, which managed the program. From 1935 until 1942, it was led by de Vries under the guidance of H.C. Friedrichy from the Department of Home Affairs. They created the transmigration program for inhabitants from villages in Java (deVries 1986). Led by H.G. Heyting (a Sukabumi Assistant Resident), the first colony group consisted of 155 families that left for Lampung to transmigrate (Hardjosudarmo 1965; deVries 1986; Swasono and Singarimbun 1986; Gondowarsito 1990; Levang 1997, 2003). In much literature, the settlers in Lampung are labeled as the first transmigrants. Scholars (1977, p.16; 1988, p. 427-433) also mention the settlement of 155 families in the Gedong Tataan district of Lampung on Sumatra, followed by more than 6000 settlers in 1911 Hardjono (Hardjono 1977 1978 1986; Levang 1997 2003).

Notably, the term *transmigrasi* was first introduced to replace the term *kolonisatie* (or *kolonisasi* in Indonesianised spelling) in 1948 in Indonesia (Levang 1997 2003; van der Wijst 1985; Budiardjo 1986; Whitten 1987; Hugo 1988; Hoey 2003). During 1947 and 1948, jurisdiction over population resettlement was handed from *Kementerian Perburuhan dan Sosial* (Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs) to *Kementerian*

Pembangunan dan Pemuda (Ministry of Development and Youth Affairs). It is also noted that on 16 January 1950 (after the second “Dutch aggression”), the Old Order regime established the Ministry of Community Development, which also covered transmigration (Arndt and Sundrum 1977; Leinbach 1989). For community development, *Kantor Transmigrasi* was established as a *djawatan* (bureau). Then, by December 1950, responsibility for transmigration was handed over to the *Kementerian Sosial* (Ministry of Social Affairs). Subsequently, by 5 July 1959, the program was under the jurisdiction of its own ministry, the *Kementerian Negara Urusan Transmigrasi* (National Ministry of Transmigration Affairs) (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 1960 1972; Hardjosudarmo 1965; Dirjen Agraria dan Transmigrasi 1967; Levang 1997 2003) (Kementerian Desa 2015; Haryatama, Hananto and Indarja 2016).

The fundamental goal of Indonesia's transmigration has been to tackle the uneven spatial distribution of Indonesia's population. However, it has also aimed to “civilize” outer regions of Indonesia by bringing to these areas inhabitants of inner Indonesia who were regarded as having a ‘higher’ culture. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the transmigration project became a primary program of Indonesia's regional improvement during the New Order regime. A former Minister of Transmigration, Martono, formulated the so-called *Panca Matra* (Five Dimensions) of transmigration (Martono 1986). The dimensions include: first, Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution; second, Decision of People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) no. 2 & 4/1978; third, the functional programs of National Ministry III; fourth, the structural coordination among transmigration policymakers; and fifth, operational aspects, i.e., the long-term, middle-term and short-term programs (Martono 1986, pp. 179-200). These dimensions have become a set of guidelines for the transmigration program, particularly in the period from Repelita I until Repelita V.

Practically and technically, the program was carried out by provincial and district administrations coordinating with

the Ministry of Transmigration. The next goal of transmigration, one continuing to the present though also undergoing transformation, was that the sponsored program was expected to accelerate regional development through rural agricultural development. New transmigration sites have been mainly rural areas where “the aims are to utilize the agricultural potential of less populous areas by providing the manpower needed for agricultural expansion” (Arndt and Sundrum 1977: 73; Hardjono 1977, p. xv 1978; Budiardjo 1986). Therefore, transmigration primarily has featured the movement of people from rural-to-rural areas. Notably, the vast majority of transmigrants were individuals from impoverished rural farming communities in Java, Madura and Bali, and later from western Lombok of Nusa Tenggara Barat.

At the national level, according to former transmigration minister Martono, the policy of transmigration aimed to: 1) distribute dense populations; 2) distribute education, health, and social access into the Outer Islands; 3) distribute resources, particularly land for agriculture; 4) create and widen job opportunities; 5) invest for a more extended period in the low-wages society; 6) endorse regional development; 7) support national integration; 8) keep social-national solidarity; and 9) promote political and state defense (Martono 1986, pp. 201-202). In practical terms, scholars have suggested that transmigration was expected: to solve the overpopulation of Java; spread development to Indonesia’s outer islands; create assimilation among various cultures; and assist political integration and economic consolidation in maintaining the unity of the nation (Arndt and Sundrum 1977; van der Wijst 1985; Abdoellah 1987, p. 180; Fearnside 1997; Elmhirst 1999; Tirtosudarmo 2001; Nitiyasa and Sudibia 2005; Grillo 2007). Some of these goals have been fulfilled; yet, much more has yet to be accomplished in many instances.

Furthermore, the implementation of transmigration was focused on promoting regional development, stimulating the dispersion of population and labor, enhan-

cing people’s lives in new locations, and enhancing the country’s cohesiveness. So, transmigration has been not only a policy to move people around, but also an avowed method to help both sending and receiving regions thrive. Centralized and top-down techniques have been supplanted by inter-regional cooperation, particularly between transmigrant-sending areas and transmigration destinations. There are transmigration-sending communities where more than half of the population members are eligible to become transmigrants (Pustlitbang Ketransmigrasian 2013a; Kementerian Desa 2015) (Kementerian Desa, Daerah Tertinggal & Transmigrasi 2015, p. 7).

Some scholars classify the transmigration policy into four categories. First, there is a State-Sponsored or General (*Umum*) transmigration, which is fully supported and implemented by the government for the first five years of settlement. This program provides transportation (from home-origin to settlement destination), land-dwelling, accommodation, and social facilities to transmigrants. General transmigration was integrated with the so-called “family transmigration” (*transmigrasi keluarga*). The general transmigration program commenced in 1952. Second, there is Special Transmigration (*transmigrasi khusus*), i.e., the settlement program carried out by cooperation between government and non-governmental authorities for particular arrangements. This type was also named Sectorial Transmigration (*Transmigrasi Sektorial*); it included, for example, the resettlement of more than 1000 Indonesians from Suriname to West Sumatra. The third category pertains to Local Transmigration (*transmigrasi lokal*), which involves the relocation of groups within the same island or province, or in close proximity to the designated settlement areas, with the aim of these settlers receiving equivalent benefits to those provided to the sponsored transmigrants. One instance of regional transmigration is exemplified by the relocation of individuals from the Priangan in West Java to Lampung as a result of the Darul Islam conflict during the 1950s. Another example, the central

point of investigation in this study, pertains to the provincial relocation of the Bugis community to Baras, situated in the western region of Sulawesi, which is categorized as intra-island transmigration. Fourth, self-initiated or *swakarsa* transmigrants are registered and proceed to relocate at their own cost to a location of their preference. Every transmigrant family is allocated an equal area of 2.5 hectares of land and is entitled to the same range of socio-economic services. Unregistered spontaneous or *swakarsa* transmigrants relocate to a location autonomously and are not eligible for governmental assistance beyond the allocation of land (Arndt and Sundrum 1977; Hardjono 1977; van der Wijst 1985; Budiardjo 1986; Abdoelalah 1987; Fearnside 1997; Hoey 2003).

Others have noted that the transmigration categories and types listed above may be classified into two main types: 1) general or sponsored transmigration, which is fully sponsored (such as facilitated with the necessary infrastructure, transportation, a house, living allowance, and land) by the government until the first harvest; and 2) spontaneous transmigration. The latter type is distinguished in terms of levels of support, creating sub-types of spontaneous transmigrants: those with financial assistance from the government (*Spontan Dengan Bantuan Biaya* – SDBB) and those without support (*Spontan Tanpa Bantuan Biaya* – STBB) (Hardjono 1977) (Hardjono 1977, p. 30). Thus, by definition and type, this study will mainly deal with these two broad categories of transmigration.

During the Reformation era, some governmental and ministerial changes occurred, directly impacting the orientation and paradigm of transmigration. A substantial shift has taken place since the formation of the Reformation cabinet, and this has had an impact on the role played by the transmigration program in the country's economic development. While transmigration is considered a component of the development process in terms of regional development, it is not considered a separate process. As the National Unity Cabinet has proceeded during its tenure, transmigration has grown

more entangled into multi-sectoral development and decentralization concepts. Crucially, due to national political alterations and reforms being implemented, conditions have been created for a shift in the locus of transmigration from the sectoral transmigration program to the regional development and transmigration sector, with the formation of this integrative sector has now emerged as a condition of the program (Kementerian Desa 2015, p. 7).

Through direct and indirect government initiatives, transmigration was implemented between 2004 and 2009 to aid in growing (agro-)industrial hubs and creating new employment possibilities. The revitalization of transmigration areas and the empowerment of communities is needed to ensure that these areas prosper and become important growth centers (Danarti 2011; Yanmesli *et al.* 2014; Kementerian Desa 2015; Maruwae and Ardiansyah 2020) (Kementerian Desa, Daerah Tertinggal & Transmigrasi 2015: 8).

The revitalization of transmigration development is being carried out in compliance with the Minister of Manpower and Transmigration's Decree No. KEP.214/MEN/V/2007 establishing General Guidelines for Development of Independent Integrated Regions in transmigration sites (*Kawasan Terpadu Mandiri* or KTM) (Arndt and Sundrum 1977; Fearnside 1997; Kementerian Desa 2015; Haryatama, Hananto and Indarja 2016). The Independent Integrated City (*Kota Terpadu Mandiri* or KTM) is a transmigration region whose growth and development transform it into a growth hub with urban functions through implementing purportedly environmentally friendly natural resource management practices.

Based on Government Regulation Number 3 of 2014, there have been 23 transmigration areas established by the Ministry of Village & Transmigration. By December 2016, the government had deployed about 1,658 households of transmigrants in 23 KTM, including Salor Region, Merauke Regency; Kobisonta Region, Central Maluku Regency; Bright Water Area, Buol Regency; Kawasan Bungku, Morowali Regency; Pa-

wonsari Region, Boalemo Regency; Subah Area, Sambas Regency; Kayong Gate Area, North Kayong Regency; and Telang Area, Banyuasin Regency. Before transforming into transmigration areas, the government had planned 48 Integrated Cities (*Kota Terpadu Mandiri - KTM*) (Evers and Gerke 1992; Grillo 2007; Danarti 2011; Najiyati and Susilo 2011; Kalsum and Caesariadi 2016; Novanda et al. 2019). KTM is thus the embryo of such transmigration areas (Saragih, Okuhira, and Yoshida 2003; Hendrarto 2020; Kementerian Desa 2021a 2021b; Lai, Hamilton, and Staddon 2021).

Numerous amenities, such as those listed below, have been planned to facilitate transmigration functions, including the following (Kementerian Desa 2015, p. 8):

- a. Regional economic activity center;
- b. Product processing industrial activity center;
- c. Service and trade center;
- d. Health service center;
- e. Education and training center;
- f. Government facilities; and
- g. Public and social facilities. Independent integrated cities are designed with a UPT approach in areas already developed.

Additionally, very recently, the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, through a new paradigm, launched five policies, namely:

- a. Supporting food security and housing needs through efforts to increase land productivity;
- b. Supporting alternative energy policies in transmigration areas;
- c. Supporting national resilience, namely integrating transmigration settlements with the surrounding community;
- d. Encouraging increased economic growth/investment and equitable development;
- e. Supporting poverty and unemployment reduction.

Officially, it has been claimed that transmigration implementation depends on a system of interdependence and dependency between the sending and receiving areas of the transmigration program. Transmigration is predicted to be able to grow the regions in three ways simultaneously: welfare, regional development, and community integration.

Now, in order to qualify as transmigrants, the national government mandates that persons who apply to join the transmigration program must meet the following criteria (Kementerian Desa 2015, p. 10):

1. Character traits of being persistent, tenacious, innovative, and creative;
2. Being an Indonesian citizen and having an I.D. card;
3. Having a family;
4. Aged 20 – 45 years;
5. High school as minimum education level;
6. Having competencies according with the needs of the destination area;
7. Women who have potential can become transmigration participants (status as head of the family);
8. Healthy body;
9. Never before having transmigrated.

Thus, while participation in the transmigration program is voluntary, applicants must meet several eligibility standards before approval. To join the program, transmigrants must be Indonesian citizens in good physical health. Couples must be lawfully married, and the family head (*kepala Rumah tangga*) must be between 20 and 45 to qualify for resettlement, according to the program's requirements. In reality, the bulk of participants have been low-income, landless agricultural workers who own few possessions and lacked formal education (Elmhirst 1999 2012; Widiatmaka, Ambarwulan W, Mulia SP, Ginting Soeka B.D. 2014; Bazzi et al. 2017, pp. 65-66; Novanda et al. 2019; Maruwae and Ardiansyah 2020; Lai, Hamilton, and Staddon 2021). In aggregate, Indonesia has resettled more than seven million members of its population through the transmigration program within more

than five thousand settlement sites (*Unit Pemukiman Transmigrasi* – Transmigration Settlement Unit) (Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration 2013; Kemendes PDPT 2023; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023).

Problems and Challenges of Transmigration

Many studies on transmigration show that, particularly from the 1950s until the 1960s, the program had some significant problems (Arndt and Sundrum 1977, pp. 35-45; Hardjono 1978; Suwarno 1979; Budiardjo 1986; Abdoellah 1987; Sudomo M, Oemijati S, Suwanto 1990; Fearnside 1997; Grillo 2007). As the same challenges will likely feature in the current transmigration era, these and similar issues must be analyzed. First is the attitude of Indonesians to transmigration. The attitude problem can be related to the transmigrants, local indigenous people, and local governments. This attitude problem stems from several assessments: Firstly, some consider transmigration a project wasting money. It has not impacted population density, with population growth remaining at about 2% per year. Therefore, using the budget for agricultural intensification in Java and Bali or other infrastructure in Indonesia would be better. Secondly, transmigration agencies still need to define transmigration's financial allocation in the arrangement in the local governments. Thirdly, transmigration has been confusing to village migrants. Most transmigrants left on their own without being led by the transmigration agency, while they believed their lives would be looked after until they were settled in the designated areas. Fourthly, receiving settlements (provinces) have treated the newcomers like invaders. There needs to be overlapping oversight and a need for consultation among government agencies. For example, poor coordination between provincial and local authorities, on the one hand, and the national-ministerial level, on the other hand, in preparing the settlement sometimes needs to be resolved. Fifthly, many indigenous people of the settlement areas have considered the coming transmigrants as unemployed people from urban

districts in Java, regarding them as a new burden upon local governments and societies. Sixthly, at the national level, transmigration programs have been frequently regarded as established to “fill the empty spaces” to maintain national security and defense (Acciaioli and Sabharwal 2017; Acciaioli 2020; Acciaioli and Nasrum 2020; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023).

There are also several dimensions to the land problem linked to transmigrant occupation. The major problem of land was the procurement of suitable sites for settlement. For example, more than conducting land surveys on project sites is required. Consequently, detailed information has often only been obtained after deciding on a project area, particularly on the quality of soils and water resources. Moreover, individuals or groups have claimed that the settled land is theirs, so legal boundaries between indigenous and transmigration land need to be rendered more precise (Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023).

Further, issues regarding land ownership have emerged from the transmigrants' perspective, mainly if the settlement areas needed to be better arranged. One scholar has suggested that switching to *sawah* farming, particularly in areas where it may not be suitable, has been a poor economic decision, at least initially. The worth of the capital generated via this transformation cannot be determined just by agricultural production. Frequently, many transmigrants' initial investment was money gained via difficult and time-consuming labour on an estate or in their private coconut plantations. Some transmigrants could provide for their families and pay the wages of the Javanese laborers they employed while the rice matured. As a result, these transmigrants' families could eat rice daily, as they recruited laborers to cultivate their home plots in plain view of other transmigrants. Transmigrants gained significant visible symbolic capital due to their conversion of land to wet-rice (*sawah*) cultivation in the context of labour relations and consumption (Bubandt 2014). Because transforming cash into labour and rice is not self-replicating, it requires a continuo-

us infusion of work from outside the local society. While economic considerations play a part in this entrepreneurial cycle, they are based on cultural notions of work and time that eliminate labour intensity and length from the equation (Bubandt 2014).

Next, the status of transmigration has very often become problematic. For example, the local government sometimes considered and treated the land settlements like other areas. For example, transmigrants should pay land taxes, a local requirement. Furthermore, the dimension of time length for the transmigration was also critical, i.e., for how long should transmigration take place in a particular region? Consequently, agricultural problems in transmigration sites have remained a crucial challenge for Indonesia (Suratman and Guinness 1977; Ross 1980; Sainz 1982; Budiardjo 1986; World Bank 1988; World Bank 1994; Saragih, Okuhira and Yoshida 2003; Elmhirst 2012; Rahma Fitriana et al. 2019; Nasichin and Agustina 2021).

A further problem concerns assimilation in transmigration settlements. The problem mainly happens in cultural adjustment to the cultural and linguistic environment of local peoples among whom transmigrants settle; adjustments to local farming patterns are also among the significant problems of transmigrants. Even this could lead to tension between local people, particularly indigenous people, and the settlers (Geiger 2008). Such tension is thus facilitated through the transmigration program. Thus, although a new demographic continuum structured by ethnic diversity in new towns and surrounding rural areas is established through the transmigration process, continuing frictions among the constituent groups and inequalities resulting from transactions in the land-market have prevented any smooth transition toward the projected assimilation.

In a study conducted by Bazzi et al. (2017), the persistence of ethnic diversity was evaluated by comparing the kernel density of village-level data between villages that participated in the transmigration program and those that did not participate in the program. In non-program villages, a lack

of diversity is prominent, as the settlement distribution is biased to the right, and the mean is quite low. On the other hand, the kernel density for transmigration villages exhibits a continuous range of variability. There are many transmigration settlements with a reasonably high population density. If such diverse communities had been located in more typical settings with greater labor mobility, they would have been unstable due to segregation and tipping pressures (Bazzi et al. 2017, pp. 13-14).

Furthermore, according to the research findings of Bazzi et al. (2017), transmigration settlements have a more significant impact on national identity creation than comparable control areas. These settlements diminish the ability for variation to enhance cultural cohesiveness through such mechanisms as the use of a national language. Ethnic isolation and limited intergroup exposure occur as a result of endogenous sorting in control zones. When viewed from this angle, the patterns are understandable, but they contrast sharply with how the public sees the program, which is often negative. The state-sponsored transmigration communities were not as closely related to the significant confrontations between Inner and Outer Islanders that erupted in the late 1990s as had previously been declared. However, our findings are consistent with a recent review of the program. Additionally, the revisionist view contrasts with the suggestions that the program was a typical illustration of how state-sponsored migration may intensify strife involving “sons of the land” (i.e., indigenes) (Bazzi et al. 2017, p. 22). Finally, transmigration has been problematic in its financial aspects. Many instances have shown that there have been overlaps in financing responsibility and a need for coordination regarding whether the Transmigration Agency or the Ministry of Public Works should shoulder such financial responsibility.

In addition, during the Repelita IV, land availability was the main problem of transmigration. The fact was that marginal lands, according to (Hardjono 1977, 1978, 1986, p. 434), could not be used by most

transmigrants, who thus only wanted to engage in short-season agriculture and leave. As has been criticized by one scholar, from Repelita I until Repelita IV in the New Order era, the problems in the transmigration program have remained the same (Abdoellah 1987, p. 189). Therefore, this study addresses potentially similar problems by analyzing one example of the transmigration program pattern after the Repelita IV. It is crucial to this study because the transmigration project in Baras was first implemented after this Repelita, that is, at the end of the 1980s.

Broadly, the transmigration project has contributed to transmigrants' livelihoods, as policymakers and its proponents always claim. An investigation in Sumatra, for example, shows that the living levels of many transmigrants – including social facilities that they access, such as schools, health, and social services, as well as incomes – were better than in their settlement of origin (MacAndrews 1978). More significantly, food production has also increased, opening up more lands in the Outer Islands, especially for more intensive rice production.

However, the program has produced certain externalities. For example, it is widely understood that because transmigration settlement needed extensive lands, it has certainly affected the environment. The destruction of rain forests in many cases of transmigration settlement in Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan has become very clear. Thus, transmigration can be said to be, in some respects, an environmentally unfriendly program.

Empirically, Sulawesi Island, particularly in the north-western region, which is now covered by Mamuju Utara (MaT-ura, now Pasangkayu) and Mamuju Tengah (MaTeng) districts, the destruction of huge forests (*ale teppettu*) as a consequence of the frontier of settlement and the frontier of agriculture is real (Mukrimin 2019a, 2019b, 2022b, 2022a; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). The forests around this region continue to be cut down, and their timber is extracted for population settlement and oil palm plantations (Mukrimin 2022a).

A further critical issue is that transmigration has also affected the movement and distribution of the population in Indonesia. It has been stated that transmigration, directly and indirectly, has been markedly followed by millions of spontaneous migrants in a type of domino effect (Arndt and Sundrum 1977; Arndt 1983, p. 54). What is interesting to address in Arndt's argument is how the mobilization of the population has also catalyzed rural-to-urban migration to an unprecedented degree, particularly in the movement of rural Javanese and Sundanese and outer islanders to the big cities, such as Jakarta and Makassar. Therefore, the aim of transmigration to redistribute and balance Indonesia's population has yet to be achieved. The actual condition of northern West Sulawesi is that mobilizations of new settlers continue to take place further into the upland areas to access resources (mainly land for oil palm cultivation) (Mukrimin 2022a). Indonesians have a phrase related to the attractive power of resources in the population and resource frontier that is fitting for this context: "*Di mana ada gula, di situ ada semut*" ("Where there is sugar, there are found ants") (Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023).

Transmigration In West Sulawesi

Transmigration to Sulawesi dates back to the early 1900s when the Dutch colonial government relocated specific Javanese individuals for agricultural labor (Swasono and Singarimbun 1986; Levang 1997, 2003; Saragih, Okuhira, and Yoshida 2003; Hoppe and Faust 2004). The transmigrants who migrated were predominantly comprised of individuals from rural areas who engaged in agricultural activities, specifically those who cultivated crops for commercial purposes. As observed by numerous scholars, the arrival of these settlers was intended to facilitate the colonial government's demand for rice (Saragih, Okuhira, and Yoshida 2003; Hoppe and Faust 2004). During the period when these transmigrants departed for the island, Sulawesi was regarded as a less developed region among the Outer Islands. The Dutch perceived the indigenous lands as barren and uninhabited areas, commonly referred

to as *woeste gronden* or wastelands. This perception led to the Dutch government's decision to relocate new settlers to Sulawesi. According to Saragih, Okuhira, and Yoshida (2003) and Hoppe and Faust (2004), the Dutch utilized the transmigrants as an inexpensive labor force. Wonomulyo was among the initial recipient areas in the Polewali Mamasa (Polmas) region., which is currently recognized as the Polewali Mandar or Polman district. Presently, Wonomulyo is recognized by the inhabitants of West and South Sulawesi as "*kampung Jawa*" (the Javanese village), due to its status as the initial Javanese settlement in the region that was formerly a part of South Sulawesi. Moreover, this region was initially evaluated for habitation owing to its capacity to meet the rice requirement of the Dutch colony. Presently, the localities of Wonomulyo have earned the reputation of being the primary source of rice production in the West Sulawesi region (Mukrimin 2019a; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023).

The Dutch administration considered implementing similar new projects in other areas within Sulawesi Island. Other regions were projected as transmigration sites, such as Mapilli, Malili, Masamba, and Malangke in South Sulawesi. The sites were still virgin in their view and open to introducing new crops, such as cocoa. Following resettlement in southern Sulawesi, the Dutch sent more Javanese to Central Sulawesi. In this program, Balinese, initially Balinese who had converted to Christianity and, consequently, been rendered non-members of their local communities, were targeted as transmigrants (Davis 1976). It is noted that up to the end of the 1940s, the number of colonization settlers had reached more than 200,000, of which 23,600 settlers were found in Sulawesi Island, located in Mapili, Muna, Masamba, and Kalaena of Luwu, as well as in Central Sulawesi (Hardjono 1977, p. 19). The Dutch colonial policy for the transmigration program was initially based on resettling populations from Java and Bali into the other islands and for political reasons, that is pacifying local populations (Budiardjo 1986; Elmhirst 1999 2000). Thus, unlike

transmigration in Lampung or other areas on Sumatra Island, the program in the Outer Islands of eastern Indonesia (predominantly Sulawesi Island) was not solely to resettle the dense population of Java and Bali but also aimed to control the non-Java regions.

After independence, the Indonesian government (both the Old and New Order regimes) resettled Javanese and Balinese into the Kolaka region of Southeast Sulawesi (Pemerintah Republik Indonesia 1960 1972; deVries 1986; Swasono and Singarimbun 1986; Levang 2003; Pustlitbang Ketransmigrasian 2013b; Kementerian Desa 2015). Proceeding from the transmigration program at Kolaka, the Indonesian government continued to implement transmigration into new settlement areas on Sulawesi. Several studies show that during the Repelita I (1969-1974s), the Indonesian government resettled about 47,692 people to the island. These settlers spread across provinces: 20,102 moved into Luwu of South Sulawesi, while 15,074 went to Central Sulawesi, and the rest, 3505, settled in North Sulawesi (Sainz 1982, p. 24) . Overall, the transmigration program in Sulawesi Island in this period aimed to achieve agricultural expansion (mainly planting of wet rice).

The Indonesian government has extended the implementation of transmigration programs to new settlement areas, primarily tropical forests, following the success stories of such programs across the Sulawesi region. Specific regions allocated for such purposes were found in the north-western portion of South Sulawesi. The aforementioned regions are presently recognized as Mamuju Utara (Pasangkayu) (North Mamuju) and Mamuju Tengah (Mateng) (Central Mamuju), located in West Sulawesi province. As per the Ministry of Transmigration, the selection of locations was based on their seclusion or lack of population, supposedly rendering them still in their "pristine" state. Based on that criterion, Baras and Sarudu were chosen. It is noteworthy that the transmigrants who migrated to West Sulawesi comprised a blend of "general" and "local" transmigrants (Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). The study sample consisted of trans-

migrants of various ethnicities, including Javanese from Central Java, West Java, and East Java, as well as Balinese and Sasak from Lombok in Nusa Tenggara Barat.

Additionally, Balinese from Tabanan in Bali and local Bugis transmigrants from Bone district and Bamanloka of Mamuju district were included in the sample. The government implemented the APPDT (*Alokasi Penempatan Penduduk Transmigrasi*) as part of the integrated transmigration program. This initiative aimed to allocate settlements for transmigrants within the local population's area in the receiving province (Mukrimin 2019a, 2022a; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). In this arrangement, the national government implemented the so-called "*translok*" (*transmigrasi lokal* or local transmigration) to answer the critics against the transmigration program. Among the critical points of those against the program was that transmigration aimed at "Javanizing" Indonesia's outer islands (Budiardjo 1986; Elmhirst 1999 2000). The government (particularly the New Order regime) considered that by resettling and mixing transmigrants, the national population agenda could be managed to create harmony and integration among Indonesia's ethnic groups (Hoey 2003). Therefore, the government used the APPDT to mix new settlers and local receiving communities in a transmigration area. During the same period, Indonesia's government planned to resettle its population into "an integrated town" through the so-called KTM (*Kota Terpadu Mandiri* – Self-Sufficient Integrated Settlement) (see also, Kalsum & Caesariadi 2016, pp. 14-17). Sometimes the "T" in the KTM refers to "*Kota*" (town), and sometimes it denotes "*Kawasan*" (region), which can lead to ambiguity regarding the development objectives and the degree of urbanization projected for the KTM area (Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023).

The Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration (*Kemenakertrans*) continues to endorse the progression of primary transmigration areas into towns. The emerging idea of what shows this change (Hardjono 1978) is called the "new concept of transmigration" or what Lesley Potter (2012) called

the "new transmigration paradigm". The new paradigm has focused on changing the initial transmigration of rural settlement into three types of regions: backward areas, settlement at international borders, and potentially emerging-fast-growing transmigration regions (Potter 2012, p. 274). In this regard, the transmigration projects through the realization of the KTM are seen as "an attempt to create an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991) of an integrated Indonesian nation as part of the national meta-narrative" (Hoey 2003, p. 122).

However, regional variety and national identity are linked differently, as some have suggested. Observational data have various issues when it comes to making this determination. Firstly, people in Indonesia prefer to form ethnic enclaves, which limits opportunities for cross-cultural interchange and increases ethnic segregation at the local level. It is a significant problem. Secondly, variety has been mistaken by local people for other, less significant traits, such as easy access to markets, pleasant surroundings, or a track record of harmonious intergroup relations. The transmission of one's ethnic identity from generation to generation is sometimes slowed down and complicated by the time it takes place (Bazzi et al. 2017, pp. 13-14).

Transmigration: A State-Sponsored Frontier in West Sulawesi

As a new regency, Pasangkayu has become a more heterogeneous region in Sulbar. Statistical data from the local government show that the numbers of Bugis living in this district are: Baras (8060), Sarudu (2508), Dapurang (4493), Duripoku (1780), Lariang (1515), Pasangkayu (5105), Tikke Raya (9325), Pedongga (1090), Bamanlamotu (3910), Bambaira (1708), and Sarjo (419) (BPS Pasangkayu 2019, 2020, 2021, 2023). Based on ethnic categories, along with Mandar, Kaili, Javanese, and indigenous communities, such as Bunggu and Binggi, the Bugis in Pasangkayu (including in Baras sub-district) now constitute a significant majority (Mukrimin 2019b 2022b; BPS Pasangkayu 2023; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). The region

has undergone a remarkable change, which continues to take place as the direct effect of Indonesia's decentralization (Mukrimin 2018, 2019a, 2021; Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023) (see figure 1 for further detail).

As we can see in the figure, Baras was initially part of Vakava hamlet and until the 1980s was an *ale teppettu* (huge forest) area, but has more recently become a town in the midst of oil palm plantations. This evolution over time demonstrated that the state has transformed this region into a resource frontier (Tsing 2003) through schemes for development and progress.

Expanding the state's role in making the frontier reminds us of Michel Foucault's idea of governmentality. In the case of Baras, we have seen that the key actors in creating the frontier have been the state through its governmental bodies, such as ministries. The role of the government pertains not just to territorial boundaries but rather to a complex system of individuals and resources; as Foucault (2009, p. 97) puts it, "[t]

he essential, the main element, then, is this complex of men and things, the territory and property being only variable" (cf. Hamilton 2018, pp. 379-381). The subjects of concern for this form of governance are, in essence, human beings. In the governmentality model, subjects have a complex relationship with a number of external elements, including wealth, resources, means of sustenance, territory, climate, irrigation, and fertility. In addition, they are subject to the effect of traditions, routines, modes of behavior, and ways of thinking. In addition to this, individuals are vulnerable to unforeseeable occurrences, such as starvation, disease, and death (Foucault 1991, p. 93).

Relations between the state and the frontier "are fairly straightforward," as Tagliacozzo (1999) has declared. Furthermore, he has highlighted revenue extraction as a vital feature of the frontier in pre-colonial Southeast Asia (Tagliacozzo 1999, pp. 28-29). Tagliacozzo (1999, pp. 28-29) maintains that the only way for states to continue existing

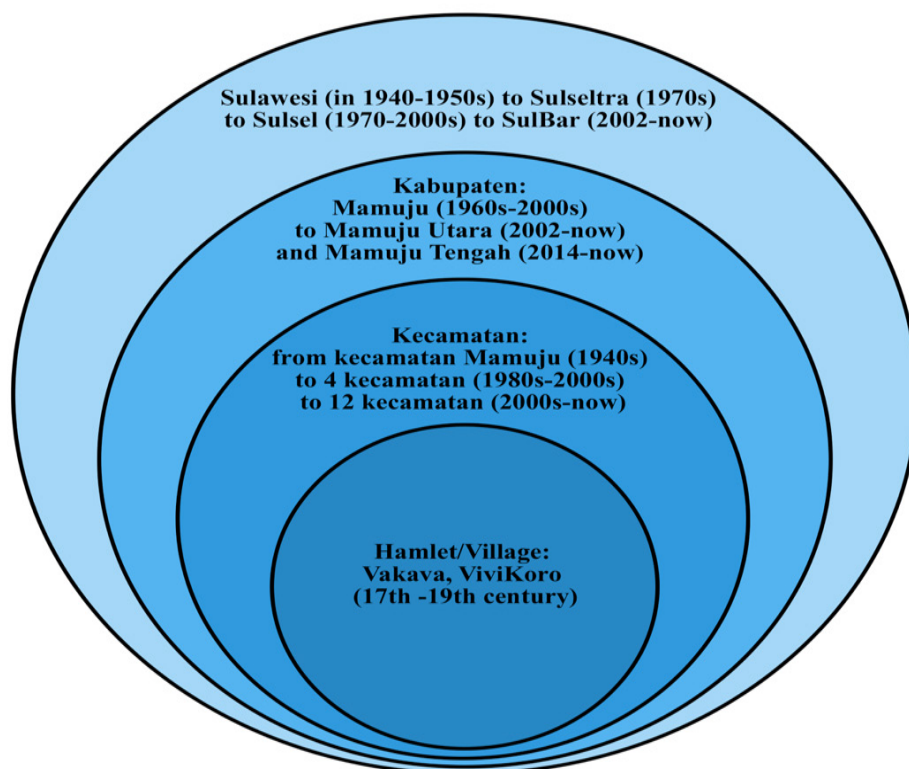


Figure 1. Changing the administrative landscape of the local frontier in West Sulawesi.

Source: Authors 2022.

is for their citizens (or subjects) to engage in commercial activity. In such relations, governments consequently require revenues, and one of the primary methods for raising such funds is the taxation of goods in transit. However, states also monitor which commodities move across their borders, where they go, and who brings them. It is because these issues can be critical to the continued existence of any government.

Regarding this frontier arrangement, scholars are right when they contend that most states have a shorter history than the societies, they are supposed to administer (Hirsch and Warren 1998; Scott 1998, pp. 183-184; 2009; Cons and Eilenberg 2019). Because of this, states are forced to contend with settlement patterns, social relations, and production, not to mention a natural environment that has developed independently of state plans (Acciaioli and Sabharwal 2017; Acciaioli 2020; Acciaioli and Nasrum 2020). It has been argued that states differentiated between a core population subject to state control and a penumbra population that was either not subject to state control or was so autonomous that it could be considered the frontier (Scott 1998, p. 184; 2009). Empirically, the considerations that Foucault, Scott, and Tagliacozzo have adduced have also occurred in Baras. Baras exemplifies how the transmigration program has created frontiers in accordance with state by filling in what it regards as empty or at least underpopulated space with “loyal residents” (transmigrants) (Mukrimin and Acciaioli 2023). The establishment of a new district and province in this region signals a significant transformation of the Indonesian periphery.

CONCLUSION

Significant shifts have occurred before, during, and after the 2000s regarding the goals transmigration has sought to achieve and the policy trajectory it has sought to travel. Transmigration was initially implemented to establish a more balanced population growth in Indonesia (primarily between Java and other Indonesian islands) and for

geopolitical (i.e., security) reasons. Subsequently, the national government introduced other development goals related to land settlement and regional development, eventually transforming into a mechanism for promoting industrial agriculture focused on new urban settlements in the periphery through KTM establishment. At this point, transmigration became a new form of “community engineering” that aimed beyond the earlier goal of offering security for the transmigrants and their families by giving them an amount of land on which to settle and engage in smallholder agriculture. Instead, the goal is now to involve these people in particular schemes of development intended to accelerate national agro-industrialization. Consequently, the program has demanded significantly greater tracts of land for development of production, processing, and residence in the designated zones.

Crucially, the transmigration policy through the implementation of the *Kawasan Terpadu Mandiri* (KTM) programs has sought to construct and engineer communities by advancing a nationalist perspective and storyline regarding territory and culture, one requiring a heightening of the variety and hopefully intermixture of locally settled ethnic groups. While the latter aim of promoting intermarriage has often not been achieved due to continuing ethnic segregation in settlements, the former aim of increasing variety in the local population has been achieved through intentional community development efforts aimed at promoting a particular vision of progress and development, one requiring accomplishment through the promotion of transmigration. These endeavors have created new resource frontiers that give transmigrants, as exemplified by the Bugis in Baras, the opportunity to participate in this vision of progress and development through the settlements that the transmigration program has created and supported in the project of nation building.

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