



**DELIVERING LAND  
AND  
SECURING RURAL LIVELIHOODS:  
POST-INDEPENDENCE LAND REFORM  
AND RESETTLEMENT IN ZIMBABWE**

**EDITED BY  
MICHAEL ROTH and FRANCIS GONESE**

**Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe  
Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin–Madison**

**June 2003**

This volume was made possible in part through support provided by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), under the terms of USAID/ZIMBABWE CA 690-A-00-99-00270-00.

The Land Tenure Center of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe provide technical assistance, training, capacity building, and research in support of Zimbabwe's Land Reform and Resettlement Program II.

*Project website: <http://www.wisc.edu/ltc/zimpfl.html>*

All views, interpretations, recommendations, and conclusions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the supporting or co-operating organisations.

Copyright © by CASS and LTC. All rights reserved.

Readers may make verbatim copies of this document for non-commercial purposes by any means, provided that this copyright notice appears on all such copies.

# Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgements	vii
Acronyms	viii
Preface	ix
Relief map of Zimbabwe	xi
<b>SECTION ONE: AGRARIAN CONTRACTS</b>	<b>1</b>
— <i>Chapter 1</i> — Rural Landlords, Rural Tenants, and the Sharecropping Complex in Gokwe, North-western Zimbabwe, 1980s-2002	<b>3</b>
1. Introduction	3
2. Common Misconceptions about Sharecropping	4
3. Influx of in-migrants into Gokwe Villages, 1950s-1990s	5
4. The Harvest of Independence: Cotton Boom in Gokwe villages	8
5. Sharecropping in Gokwe Villages	10
6. Conclusions and Recommendations	18
References	20
— <i>Chapter 2</i> — Rezoned for Business	<b>23</b>
1. Introduction	23
2. Campfire Thought	25
3. Pioneers in Improbable Places	31
References	38
— <i>Chapter 3</i> — Resettlement and Contract Farming in Zimbabwe	<b>43</b>
1. Introduction	43
2. Mushandike Resettlement: Background	44
3. Banners and Contract Farming	46
4. The Nature of Contract	48
5. Surveillance and Control	50
6. Peasant Views	52
7. Conclusion	53
References	54
— <i>Chapter 4</i> — Green Harvest	<b>57</b>
1. Introduction	57
2. Tea production in Zimbabwe: Background	58
3. Tea Production in Zimbabwe: Practice	61
4. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations	77
References	80
— <b>PERSPECTIVES — AGRARIAN CONTRACTS</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>The Complexities of Agrarian reform</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Leasing and Sharecropping Contracts for Increasing Beneficiary Access to Land</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Role of Private Land Markets in Delivering Land and Beneficiary Support Services</b>	<b>86</b>
1. Historical Overview of the Land Question	86
2. The Private Sector in the Land Reform Debate	87
3. Land Market Reform	87
4. Conclusion	88
<b>SECTION TWO: LAND REDISTRIBUTION THROUGH PRIVATE LAND MARKETS</b>	<b>89</b>
— <i>Chapter 5</i> — Subdivision Policy and Informal Subdivisions	<b>91</b>
1. Introduction	91
2. Subdivision (Theoretical Benefits)	92
3. Legal and Economic Viability Constraints on Subdivision in Zimbabwe	97
4. Subdivision and Consolidation of Agricultural Land in Practice	105
5. Conclusions and Policy Implications	112
References	114
— <i>Chapter 6</i> — Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa	<b>117</b>
1. Introduction	118

2. Land Reform Instruments in South Africa	119
3. Public and Private Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal	126
4. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations	134
References	136
<b>— Chapter 7 — Government-assisted and Market-driven Land Reform</b>	<b>139</b>
1. Introduction	140
2. Agrarian Structure	140
3. Legal and Regulatory Framework	144
4. Data Sources and Methodology	150
5. Private Land Market Redistribution	151
6. Public Land Market	158
7. Analysis and Concluding Comments	161
References	164
Annex A. Gender Characteristics, Advantaged	167
<b>— Chapter 8 — Seeking Women Land Owners and Ownership in Zimbabwe</b>	<b>169</b>
1. Introduction	169
2. Background	170
3. Methodology and Field Work	174
4. A New Typology	177
5. Typology Description	179
6. Case Study Themes	183
7. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations	185
References	187
<b>— PERSPECTIVES — LAND REDISTRIBUTION THROUGH PRIVATE LAND MARKETS</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Role of Private Land Markets in Financing and Accelerating Agricultural Growth</b>	<b>189</b>
1. Background	189
2. Land Policy	190
3. Role of Private Land Markets	190
4. Conclusion	192
<b>Land Reform, Land Markets and Financial Capitalisation of Agriculture</b>	<b>193</b>
1. Background	193
2. Tenure Security and Collateralisation	193
3. Institutional Capacity	195
4. Conclusion	196
<b>A Practitioner’s Perspective on the Regulation of the Subdivision of Land held Under Title</b>	<b>197</b>
1. Introduction	197
2. Rationale for Subdivision Regulation	197
3. Legislative and Institutional Framework	199
4. Trends	200
5. Observations and Conclusions	201
<b>SECTION THREE: RESETTLEMENT AND BENEFICIARY SUPPORT</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>— Chapter 9 — Beneficiary Selection, Infrastructure Provision and Beneficiary Support</b>	<b>205</b>
I. Introduction	205
2. Beneficiary Selection	209
3. Infrastructural Development and Beneficiary Support	220
4. Emerging Issues for Policy Consideration	230
References	234
<b>— Chapter 10 — Comparative Economic Performance of Zimbabwe’s Resettlement Models</b>	<b>236</b>
1. Introduction	236
2. ‘Overall’ Performance	237
3. Agricultural Performance	252
4. Conclusion	259
References	262
<b>— Chapter 11 — The Fast Track Resettlement and Urban Development Nexus</b>	<b>265</b>
1. Introduction and Context of the Study	265
2. Policy Framework for Urban and Peri-Urban Development in Zimbabwe	267
3. Concluding Remarks	281
References	282

— <i>Chapter 12</i> — <b>Water Reform in Zimbabwe</b>	<b>287</b>
1. Introduction	288
2. The Water Reform Process	289
3. Land Reform and Resettlement	297
4. Water Utilisation and Land Reform	300
5. Interfaces of the two Reforms	302
6. Policy Implications and Conclusions	305
References	306
— <i>Chapter 13</i> — <b>An Analysis of Institutional and Organisational Issues on Fast Track Resettlement</b>	<b>309</b>
1. Executive Summary	309
2. Research Results	313
3. Conclusions	320
References	321
— <b>PERSPECTIVES — RESETTLEMENT AND BENEFICIARY SUPPORT</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>Settlement and Resettlement Models in Zimbabwe</b>	<b>323</b>
1. Pre-independence (1890-1980)	323
2. Phase I Resettlement Programme (1980–1998)	324
3. Phase II Resettlement Programme	326
4. Observations on Land Reform and Resettlement	327
5. Support to the Farming Sector	327
<b>Beneficiary Selection and Infrastructure Provision in Resettlement Areas</b>	<b>329</b>
1. Settler Selection and Planning	329
2. Infrastructure Planning and Development	330
3. Conclusions	330
<b>Supporting Resettled Farmers: The Experiences of the Zvishavane Water Project</b>	<b>331</b>
1. Introduction	331
2. Work in Resettlement Schemes	331
3. Problems Encountered by Farmers	332
4. Projects Supported by ZWP	332
5. Suggestions for the Future	333
<b>Farmworkers: The Missing Class in Zimbabwe’s Fast Track Resettlement</b>	<b>334</b>
1. Introduction	334
2. Farmworkers and Land Rights	335
3. Current Realities	335
3. Conclusion	337
References	337
<b>Delivery of Land Services to Land Reform Beneficiaries</b>	<b>339</b>
1. Introduction	339
2. Services and Infrastructure to Support Production	339
3. Credit Services	340
4. Research and Extension Services	340
5. Environmentally Sustainable Land Use	340
6. Assessment	340
7. Conclusion	341
<b>SECTION FOUR: LAND ADMINISTRATION AND DECENTRALISATION</b>	<b>343</b>
— <i>Chapter 14</i> — <b>Devolution for Land Administration in Zimbabwe</b>	<b>345</b>
1. Introduction	345
2. Devolution in Theory	347
3. International Experience with Devolution	350
4. Perspective from the Field: Masvingo Province	357
5. Conclusion—Devolution for Land Administration: Opportunities and Challenges	359
References	361
— <i>Chapter 15</i> — <b>Administration by Consensus</b>	<b>365</b>
1. Introduction and background	365
2. Research Findings	367
3. Demand-side Analysis	373

4. Discussion	377
5. Conclusion	380
References	381
<b>— Chapter 16 — Whose Land Is It Anyway?</b>	<b>383</b>
1. Introduction	383
2. Why a devolved institutional structure for land administration?	384
3. Conceiving a Devolved Land Administration Structure	390
4. Framework for a Capacity-building Plan	398
References	400
<b>— Chapter 17 — Designing a Land Information System for Rural Land Use Planning</b>	<b>403</b>
1. Introduction	403
2. Methods	405
3. Findings	406
4. Recommendations	417
References	420
<b>— PERSPECTIVES — LAND ADMINISTRATION AND DECENTRALISATION</b>	<b>421</b>
<b>Delivery of Extension Services to Land Reform Beneficiaries</b>	<b>421</b>
<b>The Challenge of Bringing Effective Governance in the Administration of Land and Land Rights in Zimbabwe</b>	<b>427</b>
1. Introduction	427
2. Review of Current Debate and Policy Recommendations	427
3. Principles and Values Agreed at Inception of the Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe	428
4. Challenges of Sustainable Institutional Development in Zimbabwe	429
5. Conclusion	432
References	432
<b>Rural District Councils: Need for Decentralisation and Capacity Strengthening to Deepen Agrarian Reform</b>	<b>433</b>
1. Introduction	433
2. RDC Involvement in the Land Reform Process	433
3. Strategies for Moving Forward	434
<b>Agrarian Reform and Rural Development: Strategies for Moving Forward</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>SECTION FIVE: THE WAY FORWARD</b>	<b>439</b>
<b>— Chapter 18 — Strategies for Agrarian Reform in Zimbabwe</b>	<b>441</b>
1. Introduction	441
2. Guiding Principles for the Way Forward	442
3. Broad Strategies for the Way Forward	444
4. Putting the Small-scale Farmer First in a Process-oriented Reform	447
References	455
<b>— Chapter 19 — Delivering Land and Securing Rural Livelihoods</b>	<b>457</b>
1. Introduction	457
2. Incoherencies	457
3. Trust	459
4. Transition?	461
5. Policy Path for Moving Forward?	463
6. Community-led Land Development	469
7. Chronology	471
8. Conclusions	472
References	472

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ACRONYMS

AFC	Agricultural Finance Corporation	GMB	Grain Marketing Board
AGRITEX	Agricultural and Technical Extension Services	LAMA	Legal Age of Majority Act
AMS	Alternative Models Study		Land/Geographic Information System, (LIS/GIS)
ANCA	African National Congress	LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
ARDA	Agricultural and Rural Development Authority	LRCF	Land Reform Credit Facility
AREX	Agricultural Research and Extension	LTC	Land Tenure Center, university of Wisconsin
BASIS CRSP	Broadening Access and Strengthening Input Market Systems Collaborative Research Support Program	MLARR	Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement
CAMPFIRE	Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources	MLGPC & NH	Ministry of Local Government, Public Construction and National Housing
CASS	Centre for Applied Social Science, University of Zimbabwe	NDA	National Department of Agriculture
CBO	Community Based Organisation	NERP	National Economic Revival Program
CMB	Cotton Marketing Board	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
DANIDA	Danish Agency for Development Assistance	NLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act
DDF	District Development Fund	PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
DERUDE	Department of Rural Development	PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programme
DLC	District Land Committee	RDC	Rural District Council
DLA	Department of Land Affairs	SFO	Small Farmer Organisation
EEC	European Economic Commission (later European Union)	SLAG	settlement/land acquisition grant
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation	ZFC	Zimbabwe Fertiliser Company
FWES	farm-worker equity-sharing	ZFU	Zimbabwe Farmers' Union
		ZISCO	Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company

## PREFACE

At the time of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual economy characterised by skewed landownership and white minority control over the country's land and water resources. For a decade following independence, the Government of Zimbabwe made significant headway in redistributing land to the black majority population, but these efforts had substantially stalled by the late 1980s. In September 1998, the Government of Zimbabwe, in seeking to reaccelerate land and agrarian reform, organised the Joint Donors Conference to plan for the development and implementation of the second phase of its Land Reform and Resettlement Program (LRRP II). Since then, the political and economic changes in Zimbabwe have been tumultuous. The joint initiative initially took steam, reached momentum, and soon after was displaced by Fast Track Resettlement beginning in 2000. Donor support for the LRRP II initially mushroomed then withered, and donor after donor withdrew support for the program.

In October 1999, the US Agency for International Development provided the Land Tenure Center of the University of Wisconsin and the Centre for Applied Social Science at the University of Zimbabwe with three-year funding aimed at assisting Zimbabwe with the implementation of the LRRP II and the Land Policy Framework. The program, which include technical assistance, training, capacity building, and applied policy research, ended in May 2003. It concluded with the conference *Delivering Land and Securing Rural Livelihoods: Post-Independence Land Reform and Resettlement in Zimbabwe*, held 26-28 March 2003 at the Mont Clair hotel, Nyanga. This volume is a collection of research outputs prepared by research teams for the conference, along with a number of invited perspectives by development practitioners from within Government and civil society.

Reaching this point has not been easy. Indeed, beginning in 2000, the project had to contend with a rolling series of problems that included fuel shortages, hyperinflation, and foreign exchange volatility. For extended periods, project personnel had to spend considerable time and energy on project logistics, reprogramming workplans and budgets, and managing day-to-day crises. At times field research had to be postponed due to security concerns in rural areas. Because of tensions between Government and the international community over fast track land reform and land confiscations, it was not always possible or feasible to work directly with key actors within Government.

The very fact that this volume is produced is testament to the dedication of a large number of people who persevered despite these hardships. These include first and foremost the research teams charged with carrying out the research, including stakeholders who participated as policy focal groups. It also includes members of the Program Management Committee and the stakeholder panels charged with overseeing the technical program and advising on implementation. It also includes the management of the US Agency for International Development who stuck with the project through thick and thin to its conclusion, oftentimes against major political challenges.

The land reform program in Zimbabwe is at its beginning, not at its end, and the chapters in this volume articulate the major challenges that lie ahead. While this volume is testament that good work is possible despite difficult odds, it also underscores the need, now more than ever, to encourage dialogue, build capacity, and rebuild the bridges between Government, civil society, and donors.

This volume is directed at professional researchers and development practitioners with an interest in land and agrarian reform. Land issues have significant currency in the southern Africa region and globally, and while capturing lessons from Zimbabwe, the volume is also designed to feed into the broader regional and global discourse. Land reform in Zimbabwe has excited considerable debate amid competing and often conflicting interpretations of the policy process, its implementation, and outcomes. Its challenges are every bit as profound as its strategic importance. This volume thus offers a broad base of research-based insights and perspectives from (and useful for) researchers, policymakers, and other civil society actors, that both reflect upon past implementation and construct a new roadmap for the future.

The professional ethic embedded in CASS and LTC scholarship and implied in the applied nature of the science they pursue has guided this research effort. Sound theoretical grounding, problem relevance, and an exacting search for workable solutions based on context-specific realities and constraints were programmed at all levels of the project. The chapters and perspectives presented here focus on the search for workable solutions in a context where the policy environment rapidly changes and easy solutions are elusive.

As the culmination of a three-year research project, the thrust and critical purpose of this volume is twofold. First, it seeks to provoke and inform the land policy debate in the country with a view toward building consensus on issues of policy, process, and implementation. Second, it is intended to serve as a depository of research findings and critical thinking of stakeholders who will advise future land and water reform initiatives.

Land reform in Zimbabwe is greatly in need of solutions and a feasible path for re-engaging civil society, Government, and donors. This volume begins that process.

**Kudzai Chatiza**, Project Coordinator

*Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe*

**Phanuel Mugabe**

*Director, Centre for Applied Social Sciences,  
University of Zimbabwe*

**Michael Roth**, Project Director

*Land Tenure Center and Department of  
Agricultural and Applied Economics,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA*

# RELIEF MAP OF ZIMBABWE





*SECTION ONE:*

**AGRARIAN CONTRACTS**



—Chapter 1—

# Rural Landlords, Rural Tenants, and the Sharecropping Complex in Gokwe, North-western Zimbabwe, 1980s-2002

**Pius S. Nyambara**

Department of Economic History, University of Zimbabwe

*In Eurocentric historiographical circles, sharecropping in Africa often has been described as a form of 'pre-capitalist' or 'quasi-feudal' system of production in which a small class of people monopolises the most important productive factor—land. Sharecropping as a production system therefore has been regarded as repressive, inequitable and inefficient. For these reasons, officials in some countries seek to proscribe this system of production. This chapter uses a case study of smallholder cotton growers in the Gokwe region of north-western Zimbabwe to argue that sharecropping is adaptive to the needs of increasing production and profit for enterprising farmers, both landlords and tenants. In Gokwe, sharecropping has helped cater to the needs of many landless in-migrants who have poured into Gokwe in search of land in the last four decades. Sharecropping also has contributed significantly to the reduction of land conflicts, which have characterised the Gokwe region since the 1980s. What is needed for the Gokwe smallholders to derive maximum benefits from sharecropping, among other things, is for state organs to create an enabling framework to increase the security of tenure and the utility of leasing and sharecropping contracts for both the lessee and lessor.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1950s, the Gokwe region of north-western Zimbabwe has experienced a large influx of migrants who came in search of land. After independence in 1980, the wave of migration into Gokwe increased rapidly largely due to severe land shortages in other areas, the post-independence cotton boom, and the effects of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) initiated in the early 1990s, which resulted in massive retrenchments of people from work. The majority of the retrenched found their way into Gokwe villages. By the 1990s, there were clear signs that the frontier was closing and land pressure was manifested in ubiquitous land disputes among various land claimants<sup>1</sup> (Nyambara 2001).

As land shortages became a reality in Gokwe villages, landless households resorted to various forms of sharecropping arrangements with land rich households. Yet, the main models of Zimbabwe's land reform program take little account of sharecropping as a way to access

---

<sup>1</sup> For details on land conflicts in Gokwe villages, see, for instance P. Nyambara (2001).

factors of production, especially land. Recent in-migrants, especially young adults and single women of all categories often lack sufficient land to produce food and cash crops.

Sharecropping gives the land-poor farmer access to additional land. In turn, the landlord overcomes his shortage of labour. Such arrangements have become very common in Gokwe villages recently, partly because of land shortages and partly because cotton, the main cash crop of the region, is labour intensive.

This chapter examines the roots of sharecropping in selected Gokwe villages. It seeks to determine under what circumstances sharecropping became one of the significant means of accessing factors of production. It pays particular attention to the parties involved in sharecropping arrangements: i.e., years of settlement in Gokwe, areas of origin, reasons for coming to Gokwe, position in the family cycle, and ethnic background. More specifically, the chapter seeks to analyse the division of the harvest, duration of arrangements, purchase of inputs, credit and the dynamics of these factors over time, especially as more and more in-migrants poured into Gokwe since 1980. The chapter further examines the nature of agreements, verbal or written, and the problems that often arise in the event that one party fails to comply with the terms of the agreement. Sharecropping is not a unique feature of Gokwe. Sharecropping characterises most communal areas of Zimbabwe. However, the difference between Gokwe and other areas of the country is one of scale. In Gokwe sharecropping has taken place on a wider scale perhaps because of the unique circumstances of the region, i.e., a longer history of large-scale in-migration because of the perceived abundance of land. Since 1963, Gokwe also experienced successful cotton cash cropping, which attracted in-migrants.

In this chapter, sharecropping is contextualized within the broader framework of the post-independence land reforms. How, for instance, has the slow progress in land reforms before 2000 affected sharecropping arrangements? Does sharecropping undermine the official land reform programme in any way? How can Government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) regulate sharecropping, or what role can they play in facilitating it? What steps can be taken to formalise sharecropping as a mechanism for reducing land pressure and land conflicts that have often characterised the Gokwe region in recent years? Before we answer these questions, let us examine some of the general misconceptions in the literature about sharecropping.

## **2. COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SHARECROPPING**

Sharecropping has been defined in the literature as an arrangement in which two or more parties agree to combine their privately held resources in a productive enterprise, and to share output in prearranged proportions. It is a means of spreading the risks of production in the effort to secure subsistence, but it is also sufficiently flexible as a mode of collaboration to allow either or both parties to gain when circumstances beyond their immediate control—the caprices of weather, markets or official policy—are favourable (Robertson 1987). Most writers on the subject have argued that sharecropping is inert, repressive and inefficient. Sharecropping has been designated ‘pre-capitalist’ or ‘quasi-feudal’, a system in which a

small class has monopolised the most scarce productive factor—land—and bonded the suppliers of labour in rigid fabric of contractual obligations. For these reasons, governments in some countries have sought to proscribe sharecropping (see for example Sen 1966; Jacoby 1971).

Most recent empirical enquiry in other parts of the world has made it clear that sharecropping can accommodate innovation readily, produce high yields and help redistribute productive resources and wealth.<sup>2</sup> Sharecropping is potentially so versatile that there is no justification for regarding it as an obstacle to progress. Its role in historical transformation has been vital. It is a means by which capitalist relations take root and small-scale farmers are drawn into world markets. For this reason, it merits the constructive attention, not the disdain of those concerned with organising rural development (Robertson 1987).

Robertson has argued that sharecropping can adjust to good and bad crops, and high and low prices, better than any other mode of renting. It releases the peasant farm family from some inherent limitations by allowing it to combine with others whatever privately held resources it may have. The hazards of dependence on a single staple crop or on an unreliable production process, and the broader uncertainties of weather, disease or infestation, may also prompt this sort of collaboration. But it must be emphasised that dispersing risk in this way involves the construction of a relationship usually more complicated than fixed rents and labour hire, and with longer-term costs and benefits that may elude conventional economic analysis (*ibid.*).

Many criticisms of sharecropping seem distant from the realities and complexities of peasant agriculture. Many believe it is a device for extracting a surplus from the peasantry in certain kinds of agrarian setting usually termed ‘quasi’ or ‘semi-feudal’. According to Lehmann (1984, p. 36), ‘there does not seem to be any inherent incompatibility between sharecropping and capitalist development’. For one thing, ‘sharecropping does not in itself denote an exploitative relationship in which the landlord inevitably has the upper hand and he may be the impoverished victim of the contract and the tenant the prosperous capitalist’ In a similar vein, Bardham and Rudra (1980, 290), in their study of sharecropping in an Indian village, argue that, ‘the institution of sharecropping tenancy as it has been evolving ... does not at all conform to the stereotype of landlord-serf relationship familiar from European or Japanese history. On the contrary, there is a considerable amount of evidence that the institution has been adapting itself more and more to the needs of increasing production and profit by enterprising farmers, both owners and tenants’.

### **3. INFLUX OF IN-MIGRANTS INTO GOKWE VILLAGES, 1950s-1990s**

In order to fully understand why sharecropping has become such a significant factor in Gokwe, one has to trace the history of in-migration into Gokwe since the 1950s. Prior to the

---

<sup>2</sup> Keegan (1983) gives one of the most successful stories of sharecropping in Southern Africa in the early twentieth century.

1950s, the indigenous Shangwe<sup>3</sup> sparsely populated the Gokwe region of north-western Zimbabwe. However, since the early 1950s, Gokwe was settled by many in-migrants who were evicted by the colonial state from Rhodesdale Crown land to give way to the land demands of European ex-servicemen, and to accommodate the increased number of European immigrants (Nyambara 1999, Palmer 1977).<sup>4</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, Gokwe witnessed another major wave of in-migrants especially from the southern parts of the country where land pressure had become excessive. During the guerrilla war in the 1970s, many people took advantage of the war to immigrate to Gokwe where land was still available and cotton had become an established cash crop. While the first wave of in-migrants came primarily from Rhodesdale, and was forced, subsequent in-migrants originated from many parts of the country and were largely 'voluntary', in that they left their original homes on their own free will, but they were forced to do so by land shortages largely created by colonialism.

Following the end of the guerrilla war in 1979 there was a large and immediate increase in the number of in-migrants pouring into Gokwe from overcrowded parts of the country, particularly Masvingo and Mberengwa in the south who took advantage of the end of the war to migrate to Gokwe. Another major source of in-migrants was the Mapfungautsi Forest Area, just to the south-east of Gokwe town, where, after independence, the new Government evicted a number of squatters who had occupied the Forest Area during the war. As the war wound down in the late 1979, thousands of families who had run away to towns and other more secure places, returned to their homes, took up farming again, and expanded their holdings. Young couples took advantage of this period of flux to move away from their parents and establish independent farms. Fields abandoned during the war were reclaimed and farmers expanded into lands designated as grazing areas (Rohrbach 1988; Masst 1996).

In the late 1980s and early 1990s Gokwe witnessed yet another significant wave of in-migration, this time of people who were retrenched from work. The majority of the immigrants came from Kwekwe town where many people were retrenched from the Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (ZISCO), due to ESAP.<sup>5</sup> The devastating drought in 1991/92 affected much of southern Africa, particularly Zimbabwe. The drought accounted for further in-migrations of families to Gokwe in search of better-quality land with more reliable water supplies. In addition, there were the ongoing, localised problems of land degradation and soil infertility, land shortage and illegal and/or insecure settlement elsewhere that prompted migration. The result was that during this period, many land-hungry families from

---

<sup>3</sup> 'Shangwe' is a pejorative term used by in-migrants to name the indigenous of Gokwe. The term is associated with primitiveness and backwardness. The indigenous people object to be called as such and insist that the term Shangwe describes the place in which they live rather than who they are. The Shangwe, on the other hand, call the in-migrants 'Madheruka', which means people who came from another place and were dumped in Gokwe by Government trucks. For more details, see Nyambara (2002).

<sup>4</sup> Rhodesdale was a vast Estate bounded by a line roughly connecting Gwelo, Que Que, Hartely, Enkeldororn, Umvuma, Lalapansi and Gutu. Lonrho, a British multinational company, owned the Estate. By the end of the Second World War, 10,000-12,000 'squatters' resided on this property under the Private Locations Ordinance (1908). After the war, these squatters were evicted to give way to European settlement (Bhebe 1989).

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed analysis of the performance of ZISCO up to 1990, see Pangeti (1995).

other parts of the country, and from other parts of Gokwe itself, poured into Gokwe in search of plentiful, fertile land they had heard about from friends and relatives, from strangers on buses and in beer halls, and in some cases from politicians, bureaucrats and chiefs (Hammar 1999).

Politicians, especially Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF) officials, have also been responsible for encouraging people to migrate to frontier regions such as Gokwe for political reasons. Local politicians argue that in-migrants who have a long history and experience of agriculture and animal husbandry in their areas of origin will impart their skills to their counterparts in Gokwe upon settlement.<sup>6</sup> They claim that it is the national duty of the in-migrants to teach 'better methods of agriculture' to those who had been neglected by colonial agricultural policies in the past, such as the Shangwe, the autochthones of Gokwe. The politicians further argue that once in-migrants settled in these areas, they would help boost agricultural production and this would make the country the breadbasket of the region. Thus, as Dzingirai (1996, pp. 23-24) argues, 'politicians tactfully present immigration as a phenomenon that is in line with national goals of self-sufficiency and national identity'.

In other instances, politicians claim that the in-migration of other ethnic groups into frontier regions would bring about ethnic fusion, thus fostering genuine national unity. Thus, in-migration is also presented as a useful ideological tool in nation building. These arguments usually are presented towards parliamentary and rural district council elections and are widely publicised at political meetings, on the radio and in the press (ibid.). Yet, it is well known that politicians encourage in-migrants primarily in order to get more people to vote for them. The actions of some politicians have therefore been responsible for the influx of in-migrants who find themselves without land when they arrive in Gokwe. Table 1 shows population growth and density in Gokwe largely as a result of in-migration up to 2000.

---

<sup>6</sup> A detailed study of the perceived differences in agricultural skills between in-migrants and the indigenous of Gokwe is given in Nyambara (2002).

**Table 1: Population Growth and Settlement Density in Gokwe, 1962-2000**

Year	Population	Density*
1962**	60,320	4,19
1969**	130,400	9,07
1982**	238,566	16,59
1989	281,801	19,66
1990	291,851	20,29
2000	399,906	27,81

Source: (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1990, 13).

Notes: \* Persons per square km.

\*\* National population census years.

#### **4. THE HARVEST OF INDEPENDENCE: COTTON BOOM IN GOKWE VILLAGES**

After 1980, the communal areas of Zimbabwe in general experienced an unprecedented agricultural boom that has been widely documented in the literature (Amin 1992; Burgess 1997; Robrbach 1988). The key to the agricultural ‘revolution’ was the distribution of agricultural services. Agricultural institutions, including the extension service-Agricultural Technical Extension Services (AGRITEX), the credit agency, Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC), and parastatal marketing boards such as the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) and Cotton Marketing Board (CMB) were reoriented to assist communal area farmers. Programs of infrastructure development, including road construction and the installation of marketing depots and collection points, were initiated throughout the communal areas. The Government also adjusted producer prices upwards as a result of farmer lobbying, though the rate of inflation led to a gradual decline in real prices (Burgess).

Cotton production in Gokwe in particular grew faster than in any other region, perhaps because of favourable weather conditions and because of cotton’s superiority over the other crops in this area. The importance of cotton in Gokwe can be judged by the fact that on average, cotton accounts for about 30% of the cropped area compared to 5% in other cotton growing areas of the country. While Gokwe’s contribution to national cotton output since the mid-1970s fluctuated between 31-51%, other communal areas contributed 21-38% (GOZ 1991). The table below shows the increase in the number of registered cotton growers and value of cotton in Gokwe from 1979 to 1988:

**Table 2: Cotton Growers and Value of Cotton (Z\$) in Gokwe: 1979/80-1987/88**

Year	Production (mt)	Area (ha)	Number of growers	Value Z\$ (000)
1979/80	13,300	14,088	8,760	4,700
1980/81	30,300	na	24,800	12,160
1981/82	17,800	na	31,000	7,141
1982/83	18,600	na	36,700	9,141
1983/84	30,000	60,900	47,400	18,950
1984/85	50,000	65,200	55,700	28,437
1985/86	55,000	55,400	na	40,830
1986/87	37,000	44,000	na	28,100
1987/88	40,000	48,000	na	na

Sources: Agriserve 1986; Agritex Office; Reid, 'Gokwe Cotton Major Events Sequence'.

Survey data for 1986 show that established and experienced cotton growers increased their acreage and new producers came onto the scene. The new producers began with cotton in a modest way and built up their hectareage as they gained experience. It therefore appears that the increase in production was largely due to the expansion rather than the intensification of cultivation. For instance, the gross area cultivated in the communal areas as a whole increased from about 1.3 million hectares in 1980 to 1.7 million hectares in 1988, an increase of about 33% at the expense of pasture and marginal areas (Bruce 1990). In the Munyati area of Gokwe, as early as 1981 official reports were expressing concern at the rapid increase in migrant population and the shortage of grazing and arable land. According to one report, 'there is a general shortage of arable land and the problem is worsened by recent immigrations into the district'.<sup>7</sup> The Sebungwe seminar held in 1982 similarly noted that in Munyati, 'the human population had grown to such an extent that soil erosion had become a major threat to deforestation of the area to get access to the arable land' (de Swardt 1984).

The resettlement program, initiated by the Government in the early 1980s, has been painstakingly slow in dealing with land shortages in the communal areas. Literature on this subject is enormous, but suffice it to say that although the Government's intention as stated in its first policy document, 'Growth with Equity', was to resettle 162,000 families within a period of three years from 1982-1985, by the time the next major policy statement was issued in 1986 in the First Five Year Development Plan, 1986-1990, only 36,000 families had been resettled on 2.5 million hectares of land. The next target for 1990 was set more modestly: 75,000 families, of which about 16,000 were resettled (GOZ 1981; 1986).

---

<sup>7</sup> GOK/16A: Munyati Area File, Cheziya-Gokwe District Council, 1980-1984.

Progress in tackling land shortages in the communal areas has therefore been inadequate, constrained by, among others factors, lack of finance, lack of suitable land available on the open market, soaring land values, the Lancaster House Constitutional limitations, which stipulate land purchases on a 'willing-seller, willing-buyer' basis, drought during 1981-82 and 1983-84, which affected the economy severely, and lack of political will to readily address the constraints. In addition, since the mid-1980s, the criteria for selecting settlers for resettlement schemes were tightened to give priority to master farmers with an impressive agricultural track-record (Amin 1992; Palmer 1990; Moyo 1995).

In Gokwe by 1985, only 45 families from the entire district had been resettled in Copper Queen resettlement scheme in the north. Less than 100 families from Gokwe had been settled in Copper Queen and other resettlement schemes by the end of the 1980s. In 1997, for instance, out of a population of about 400,000 people in Gokwe, more than 60,000 families were on the waiting list for resettlement.<sup>8</sup> Field research revealed that landlessness, especially among young household heads, recent in-migrants and single women (widowed, separated, unmarried, divorced) has reached grave proportions and is growing at an alarming rate. Conflicts over land have become ubiquitous between various categories of land claimants.<sup>9</sup> It is within this wider context of land pressure and landlessness that the significance of sharecropping in the agrarian structure of Gokwe should be understood.

## **5. SHARECROPPING IN GOKWE VILLAGES**

Sharecropping in Gokwe villages usually takes place between, on the one hand, households that have accumulated land but are unable to sufficiently utilise it due to resource constraints and, on the other hand, the landless in-migrants. It is, however, not uncommon for some land rich farmers to enter into sharecropping arrangements with other land rich farmers for the purpose of maximising their production capacity, especially during good cotton seasons. This chapter examines two categories of parties that enter into sharecropping arrangements: rural 'landlords' and rural 'tenants'.

### **5.1. Rural 'Landlords'**

What are the origins of the rural 'landlords' and how did they accumulate the land they currently hold? The post-independence cotton boom provided the means for some farmers to acquire rights to more land than others, and a process of agrarian accumulation was clearly underway. According to Weiner (1988, 71-72), 'In all the regions, a small group of households had considerably more land available to them ... it is these few farmers who produce the bulk of the market produce in the communal areas'. The acquisition of land has facilitated the production of cotton as well as increased access to labour through sharecropping, among other mechanisms. Land acquisition through political connections,

---

<sup>8</sup> *Herald*, 27 January 1997.

<sup>9</sup> For a more detailed study of land conflicts in Gokwe villages since the 1980s, see P. Nyambara (2002).

individual initiative and outright purchase, has enabled some farmers to increase output and other forms of wealth.



**Sharecropping couple picking cotton in a Gokwe village.**

Photo by author, June 2001.

---

---

Although inequality in land sizes in the communal areas is not as spectacular as it is in Asia or Latin America, the process of land concentration has only begun and further concentration of property is likely to occur. The difference between having access to, say, two acres and ten acres may not seem much, but in terms of cash crop production capacity, it can represent the difference between hunger and comfort. In a situation of land scarcity differentials in the amount of land between households is significant and access to greater amount of land increases the ability of the household to accumulate and ensure security. Although obtaining more land is not necessarily equated with becoming richer and losing land does not necessarily mean getting poorer, it has in many cases had the result of enriching the rich and depriving the poor (Testerink 1991).

The rapid commercialisation of agriculture after independence generated intense competition for land. In this increased competition, the powerful and wealthy often manipulate land allocation institutions and rules and engage in what Bruce (1991) calls 'land grabbing'. With the increase in cash crop production, land increases substantially in value.

In these circumstances, competition for land increases and inevitably, some members of the community, because they are more powerful or wealthy or aware, move faster than others. The rules of the game are changing, and such transitional situations offer clear opportunities for land grabbing, often through manipulation of traditional land tenure rules and institutions. (ibid., p. 2).

Since the 1980s, some households in Gokwe villages where research was conducted have managed to open up additional land in the virgin soils of *chidhaka* areas, a low-lying area with fertile soil in what was formerly a grazing area. In the period around and shortly after independence, old authority structures broke down, and many people used this period of flux to secure a piece of arable land on virgin land and in areas that had hitherto been designated for grazing. Worby has vividly described *chidhaka* soil as,

very rich heavy black clays ... for which Gokwe district is renowned.... The soil holds moisture for long periods of time, enabling plants to successfully endure the mid-season droughts that plague the lowlands almost annually. Their typically rich nutrient content fosters rapid plant growth; cotton plants often grow to the height of an average adult in the richest soils of Gokwe, a sight which rarely fails to impress visitors to the district. (1992, p. 164)

According to an informant, '*Chidhaka* soil is the richest you can ever get in Gokwe. It is dark and fertile. You do not need to use fertiliser during the first two or three years of cultivation'.<sup>10</sup> *Chidhaka* land is where much of the cotton in Gokwe can be grown profitably. *Chidhaka* is both an area as well as a soil type, and it is a privilege to own this type of land. In villages where research was conducted, *chidhaka* constituted between 15-20% of the cultivable area. The remainder of the land is largely composed of sandy soils that require heavy inputs of fertilisers to yield a profitable cotton crop. This type of poor land was allocated to households under the Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA) of 1951<sup>11</sup> and is therefore exhausted because of continuous use without rotation. It is no wonder that *chidhaka* land is highly priced and competition for this land intensified especially after 1980. Powerful and well-placed people in the villages seem to be the only people with access to *chidhaka* land.

The few households that hold land in the *chidhaka* area have more than 20 acres and are mostly lineage heads and their families and friends, as well as powerful individuals like rainmakers, village development committee (VIDCO)<sup>12</sup> members and village heads. Some

---

<sup>10</sup> Interview, Gokwe, June 2001.

<sup>11</sup> The NLHA was the most ambitious rural 'development' programme instituted by the colonial Government with the intention of replacing 'traditional' land tenure with individual tenure. Literature on the NLHA abound. See for instance, Southern Rhodesia (1955); Duggan (1980); Bulman (1975).

<sup>12</sup> A VIDCO (Village Development Committee) is the smallest unit of local government in Zimbabwe. VIDCOs were formally established by the Government in 1983 to attend to development programmes in the villages. Ideally, each VIDCO is composed of five to six traditional villages each comprising about 200 households. The five to six committee members of the VIDCO are also known as VIDCOS. See Murombedzi (1990); Mutizwa-Mangiza (1990); Brand (1991).

wealthy and influential recent in-migrants have been able to secure land in the *chidhaka* by 'buying out people'. For example, one of the village heads acquired control of *chidhaka* land through appropriating the *zunde ramambo* field. This is a field associated with the village head title. Because it was traditionally the village head's privilege and obligation to host strangers who visited his village, he would normally have more farmland than other villagers. The colonial Government recognised this practice when it implemented the NLHA in the 1950s. The village heads were also entitled to labour services in cropping these fields. However, in recent years, such labour services have disappeared, but the *zunde* still exists.

In another village, one of the occupants of *chidhaka* land is a very powerful rainmaker who used his influential position to acquire as much as 60 acres of *chidhaka* land in the mid-1980s under very mysterious circumstances.<sup>13</sup> Lineage head and powerful rainmakers are not the only people who have managed to accumulate good quality land; some powerful recent immigrants have been able to 'buy people out' in order to secure land in the *chidhaka*. One such individual virtually monopolises transport in the local area. Most farmers employ his services to carry crops to Gokwe and cotton to Kadoma, and he has been able to secure over 80 acres.<sup>14</sup> These rural 'landlords' with fairly large holdings lack the capacity to fully utilise them, and therefore often enter into sharecropping arrangements with landless young men and recent in-migrants who immigrated to Gokwe.

## 5.2. Rural 'Tenants'

Who are these rural tenants and what are their origins? The majority of the tenants are landless young men as well as recent in-migrants who came to Gokwe in the 1990s, when there was no more land. The landless young men are mostly from in-migrant households. In one village, when the elders decided to allocate a forest area, the young men from in-migrant households were left out. They were considered outsiders who had not stayed in the village for a long time and therefore did not deserve to be allocated land at that point. It is common in some of the Gokwe villages to find 10-15% of the households not registered with the ward councillor because they were brought in by village heads illegally. In some of the villages, the proportion of unregistered households is as high as 25%. Legitimacy for residents in Gokwe villages is sought by formal registration. Village heads bring in most of the in-migrants illegally after having been paid substantial amounts of money. They are allocated residential stands only in the hope that eventually they would be allocated a piece of arable land when it becomes available.

The majority of in-migrants who came to Gokwe villages between 1990 and 1995 originated from Kwekwe town where they had worked at ZISCO.<sup>15</sup> In one of the villages, about 30% of the households in the village (20 households out of a total of 60 households) were all

---

<sup>13</sup> Interview, Gokwe 1997.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Anonymous C, Gokwe Village, November 2001.

<sup>15</sup> ZISCO is the largest iron and steel company in the country. It is located in Kwekwe town, 140 km south of Gokwe.

retrenches from ZISCO who came to Gokwe in 1992. ZISCO faced a host of financial and organisational problems in the early 1990s, largely due to ESAP, that led to the downsizing of its operations. This exercise entailed the retrenchment of many semi-skilled and unskilled workers. In 1993, for instance, ZISCO retrenched over 1000 employees with retrenchment packages of between Z\$3,000 and Z\$7,000.<sup>16</sup> Many of the retrenchees found their way into Gokwe villages, perhaps because of Gokwe's proximity to Kwekwe, but more important these in-migrants hoped to get land because they believed it was still available in Gokwe. Unfortunately, because of land shortages, these retrenchees were only allocated residential stands on which to build their huts. In their first year of settlement in Gokwe, they used their retrenchment money to enter into sharecropping contracts with the land rich. They bought inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, etc., and provided labour in return for the right to use land and a share of the crop.<sup>17</sup>

### 5.3. Contract and Sharecropping Arrangements

The majority of sharecropping contracts are usually unwritten and dependent on the sanctions of communal relationships rather than on the formal force of law. Only a fraction of the contracts are written down. According to one informant, 'Here they just trust each other. They do not want any witnesses or written agreement when they enter into sharecropping contracts'.<sup>18</sup> Another informant said that, 'We make a verbal agreement without any witnesses present'.<sup>19</sup> Most of the informants emphasised the power and binding nature of the verbal contracts. They all agreed that verbal agreements bind the parties concerned—i.e., stranger, neighbour or brother—with equal vigour.<sup>20</sup> It is therefore a mistake to assume that contracts involving close relatives or friends cannot be 'contracts' in a legal, binding sense. In other words, social proximity does not necessarily connote contractual leniency. There is no reason to presume that writing makes the process more efficient and comprehensive, or minimises disputes. Written agreements may not include all binding details, and written details may not all bind. Successful oral contracts depend much more on trust, which is more a product of relations of community than of domination. The power and binding nature of verbal sharecropping contractual agreements are clearly manifested in a popular saying in Gokwe: 'the conduct of a person is worth more than all the contracts in the world [and] the words of a man are worth more than pieces of paper'.<sup>21</sup> The table below gives particulars of sharecropping contracts in two Gokwe villages.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Herald*, 9 July 1993.

<sup>17</sup> Interviews, Gokwe, June 2001.

<sup>18</sup> Questionnaire 5, Gokwe, June 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Questionnaire 2, Gokwe, June 2001.

<sup>20</sup> Interviews, Gokwe, June 2001.

<sup>21</sup> Interview, Gokwe Village, August 2001.



**Sharecroppers weigh and pack the cotton before sharing it.**

Photo by author, June 2001.

**Table 3: Particulars of Share Contracts in Gokwe Villages (based on a sample of 25 households in each village)**

<b>Number and percentage of contracts involving...</b>	<b>Village A</b>	<b>Village B</b>
<b>Kin</b>	15 (60%)	20 (80%)
<b>Non-kin</b>	10 (40%)	5 (20%)
<b>Oral</b>	22 (88%)	20 (80%)
<b>Written</b>	3 (12%)	5 (20%)
<b>Witnesses</b>	5 (20%)	8 (32%)
<b>No witnesses</b>	20 (80%)	17 (68%)

Source: Compiled from interviews and questionnaires.

It is clear from the table that the majority of contracts are oral and involve close kin. Because they involve kin, there does not seem to be any reason for witnesses to be present. In a few cases, however, contracts are written down with witnesses present. Written contracts are few

but common especially among large-scale landholders who enter into sharecropping arrangements with total strangers. Most of the contracts are initially for a short period, usually one season, but can always be extended, sometimes for indefinite periods. Short contracts are preferred, especially from the point of view of the landlord, until he gains some trust and confidence with the lessee.<sup>22</sup> Longer contracts can help to disperse the risk of inter-seasonal variations, allow improvements, which may be in the interests of both parties and reduce transactions costs. This is because the longer the contract the more likely the tenant will feel a sense of security and ownership and therefore likely to invest on the land. In some cases, contracts are assumed to continue indefinitely until one party, for whatever reason, opts out. The table below shows the duration of the contracts in two villages.

**Table 4: Duration of Share Contracts (based on a sample of 25 households in each village)**

Percentage of contracts...	Village A	Village B
with duration of more than one season	15	25
with duration of one season	80	70
with duration of smaller than one season	2	3
indefinite contracts	3	2

But even where the relationship is continuous and apparently tacit, there is invariably some discussion and rescheduling of arrangements for the forthcoming year. Competence to contract is regulated by age, sex and identity, among other things. So much of what they can do is sustained within the complex webs of interaction (villages, communities, etc.) whose dynamism is continually changing not only the relationships among people themselves, but the value of goods and services exchanged. However, that subtle commodity—trust—can absorb costs and confer benefits in the economic enterprise of sharecropping. By trust, one does not wish to imply some utopian communitarianism, rather those more complicated and costly sentiments of dependence and self-interest of friendships and suspicion, which are the product of enduring, multiplex social relationships. There are occasions when the currency of trust is no substitute for legal sanctions or for close personal vigilance (Robertson 1987).

It is not easy to find a definite pattern in crop sharing. Crop share varies from one contract to another even in the same village depending on the varying bargaining power of individual lessors and lessees or on their differential risk-aversion or on farm size used as a screening device. There is a remarkable association between the crop and the incidence of cost sharing by the landlord. When the landlord does not share in the costs, the tenant's crop share is in general higher in the villages; when the landlord shares in the costs, the tenant's crop share is

---

<sup>22</sup> Interviews, Gokwe June 2001.

usually one-third or lower. In 20% of the contracts, the landlord leases and ploughs the land, but both parties contribute towards the purchase of inputs like fertilisers and seeds. Labour for weeding and harvesting is provided by the tenant who normally mobilises household labour or employs paid labour if he has the means. In this type of contract, the landlord takes two-thirds of the harvest and the tenant a third. However, there are rare cases of tenants who successfully negotiated for half the share of the harvest, because, in addition to providing the labour, the tenants also provided all necessary inputs. The landlord only provided the land and ploughing services. This was at a time when the price of inputs had risen by a substantial margin.<sup>23</sup>

In extremely rare cases, the proportion of the harvest swings in favour of the tenant, where the tenant gets more than half the share of the harvest. This normally happens when the landlord provides only the land, and the tenant provides everything else, including ploughing services, land preparation, inputs and the labour for weeding, spraying and harvest. Village B had a fairly large proportion of tenants who obtained more than 50% of the share harvest, and in one case the tenant gets as high as 75% of the harvest. The explanation for tenants getting more than half the share has to do with the life-cycle of the landlord household. In one particular case, the landlord had scaled down his agricultural operations due to old age and only insisted on getting one-quarter of the harvest without contributing anything else except the land. The only role played by the landlord was to make decisions about what crop to grow.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 5: Proportion of Harvest Share between Landlord and Tenant**

Percentage of tenant's harvest share	Village A	Village B
More than 75	3	1
Between 50-75	12	5
50-50	15	9
Between 25-50	60	75
Less than 25	20	10

Conflicts often occur when one of the parties to the agreement does not comply. Disputes take place over the use or misuse of the land or over the share of the crop. Sixty percent of the disputes in the sample villages take place largely over the share of the harvest, and 25% occur over cost sharing, especially on inputs. With the rise of the cost of inputs like fertilisers, seeds and pesticides, disputes over cost sharing have been on the increase. The remaining 15% of the disputes occur as a result of misuse of land by the tenant, control of the

<sup>23</sup> Interview, Gokwe, July 2001.

<sup>24</sup> Interview, Gokwe, June 2001.

production process and other reasons. When disputes occur, a number of channels are open for resolving them. The most common method is for the two parties involved to resolve the dispute without the mediation of a third party. This channel constitutes 75%, which is the largest proportion of dispute resolution mechanism. Where no agreement is reached over the dispute, the intervention of a third party becomes necessary. Often legal action is resorted to,<sup>25</sup> or the tenant will opt out of the agreement and enter into an agreement with another landlord, hoping for better terms.<sup>26</sup> Sometimes the matter is taken to elders, for instance, the village head, for hearing.<sup>27</sup> The table below gives a sense of some of the common reasons for share contract disputes and the channels that are available for dispute resolution. It is difficult to tell precisely the frequency of share contract disputes in the areas studied.

**Table 6: Common Reasons for Share Contract Disputes and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms (based on a sample of 25 households in two villages)**

Percentage of disputes...	Village A	Village B
over harvest sharing	55	65
cost sharing	25	20
misuse of land by tenant	15	11
other reasons	5	4
Percentage of disputes resolved...	Village A	Village B
by parties involved	75	70
by village heads	24	27
by legal action	1	3

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Share contract is a versatile programme of productive arrangements, an often lengthy process by which labourer can be transformed into independent farmer, or lessee into lessor.

Cumulatively and in the long term, it is a means by which the institutions governing land, labour and capital are themselves modified. The contract transforms not only resources but also relationships, intervening between generations and between people in geographically separate areas. Given that the majority of contracts involve friends, relatives and other kin, and that such types of contracts extend beyond one year, some kind of trust and understanding develops over time and eventually the tenant might negotiate taking over the land from the landlord. This evolution from a tenant to a landowner is determined by several factors. The most significant factor is the lifecycle of the landlord. When the landlord is old,

<sup>25</sup> Questionnaires 2, 3, 9, 14 and 15.

<sup>26</sup> Questionnaire 5.

<sup>27</sup> Questionnaire 16.

he has a tendency of scaling down agricultural operations and resorting to a smaller piece of land, in which case, he would be more willing to let go of the land to the tenant.

Sharecrop contracts mediate the movement of resources between households, often over many years. As such, they contradict the ideal-typical image of the autonomous peasant family farm, operating snugly within its own resources. This case study reveals how share contracts can accommodate the quest for subsistence and for profit. In Gokwe, sharecropping matures from an interest in subsistence crops towards the production of cotton. There is also a pattern in the development of a contract, which proceeds from an investment of labour, to the accumulation of capital, to the consolidation of land resources. What makes a share contract worthwhile for many young sharecroppers is the knowledge that, over time, terms are likely to mature in their favour as they may be in a position to eventually secure a piece of land for themselves after years of sharecropping as tenants.

In the Gokwe region, which has been characterised by land conflicts involving young landless men, sharecropping offers some ray of hope, in that it gives the landless a channel to secure a piece of land through the processes already described.<sup>28</sup> Not only do the landless get access to land for subsistence farming, but they can engage in cotton production, which has become a profitable cash crop in Gokwe. Sharecropping is therefore a mechanism for reducing land conflicts and disputes; even more so in view of the fact that very few young men in Gokwe would like to be resettled under the fast track programme. Most landless young men indicated that they are used to growing cotton in Gokwe and fear they may be resettled in areas where cotton is not the major crop.<sup>29</sup>

What recommendations can be advanced to policymakers to make sharecropping an attractive option for landless peasants as well as for landlords? One major recommendation is that the state should play a crucial role to increase security of tenure for the rural tenant. Insecurity of tenure is a major factor in explaining why most tenant cultivators do not rotate their crops or manure their fields. The possibility always exists that the tenant family can be ejected, or that a conflict will arise that can make it difficult for the tenant to stay on. Tenants are never sure when they will have to move off land without any hope of compensation for improvements they made. Security of tenure for the tenants would in turn give tenants increased access to financial institutions.

Secondly, NGOs should be more involved in providing a sound financial footing, so as to give tenants a strong bargaining position in their relationship to the landlord. There is also an urgent need for some kind of written agreements formalised through state organs. These organs could be involved in assisting in the formulation, regularisation and enforcement of the contracts. Their involvement is likely to reduce manipulations of contracts by landlords and lessen conflicts over harvest sharing.

---

<sup>28</sup> This sentiment is also expressed by Rourke (1970).

<sup>29</sup> Interviews in Gokwe, June 2001.

It has become common in the literature on production relations, to equate tenancy with feudalism and indebtedness by poor peasants to their landlords. This chapter argues that, Eurocentric historiographical terms like 'feudalism' or slavery often qualified by weak prefixes like 'semi-' or 'quasi-' are not helpful in understanding the antecedents and functions of sharecropping in Africa. Nor is there much merit in an analysis that sees sharecropping as expressive of some 'pre-capitalist mode of production' engaged dialectically with other modes of production.

## REFERENCES

- Agriserve (Pvt) Ltd. and Rancho Company. 1986. *The Impact of the Sanyati Gin on Cotton Marketing Production: Report to the United States Agency for International Development and Cotton Marketing Board*. Harare: Agriserve.
- Amin, Nick. 1992. 'State and Peasantry in Zimbabwe since Independence'. *European Journal of Development Research* 4(1): 112-62.
- Bardham, Pranab and Ashok Rudra. 1980. 'Terms and Conditions of Sharecropping Contracts: An Analysis of Village Survey Data in India'. *Journal of Development Studies* 16(3).
- Bhebe, Ngwabi. 1989. *Burombo: African Politics in Zimbabwe, 1947-1958*. Harare: College Press.
- Brand Coeraad. 1991. 'Will Decentralization enhance Local Participation?' In *Limits to Decentralization in Zimbabwe: Essays on the development of Government and Planning in the 1990s*, edited by C.M. Brand, D.R. Gasper, A.H.J. Helmsing, N.D. Mutizwa-Mangiza and K.H. Wekwete. The Hague: Institute of Social Studies.
- Bruce, John. 1990. 'Legal Issues in Land-Use and Resettlement: A Background Paper'. Madison: University of Wisconsin, Land Tenure Center.
- Bulman, Marry. 1975. *The Native Land Husbandry Act of Southern Rhodesia: A Failure in Land Reform*. Salisbury.
- Burgess, Stephen. 1997. *Smallholders and Political Voice in Zimbabwe*. New York: University Press of America.
- Central Statistics Office. 1985. *Main Demographic Features of the Population of Zimbabwe: An Advance Report Based on A Ten Percent Sample*. Harare: Central Statistics Office.
- de Swardt, L. 1984. *Report on the FARM PROJECT at the University of Zimbabwe Jointly Financed by USAID and FAO*. University of Zimbabwe, Department of Land Management.
- Duggan, William. 1980. 'The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 and the Rural African Middle Class of Southern Rhodesia'. *African Affairs* 79(315).
- Dzingirai, Vupenyu. 1996. 'Every Man Must Resettle Where He Wants: The Politics of Settlement in the Context of Community Wildlife Management Programme in Binga, Zimbabwe'. *Zambezia* 23(1): 19-29.

- Government of Zimbabwe. 1981. *Growth with Equity: An Economic Policy Statement*. Harare: Government Publications.
- Government of Zimbabwe. 1986. *First Five-Year National Development Plan, 1986-1990*. Harare: Government Publications.
- Government of Zimbabwe. 1991. *Cotton-Sub Sector Study: Final Report, Technical Annexes*. Harare: Government Publications.
- Hammar, Amanda. 1999. 'Retrieving Lost Lands, Livelihoods and Leadership in Gokwe North: Struggles over Power and Entitlement in Zimbabwe's Communal Lands'. Seminar Paper presented to the Graduate School of International Development Studies, Roskilde University.
- Jacoby, Erich H. 1971. *Man and Land: The Fundamental Issue in Development*. London: Andre.
- Keegan, Timothy. 1983. 'The Sharecropping Economy on the South African Highveld in the Early Twentieth Century'. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 10(2, 3): 200-224.
- Lehmann, David. 1984. *Share-cropping and the Capitalist Transition in Agriculture: Some Evidence from Highlands of Ecuador*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Masst, Mette. 1996. 'The Harvest of Independence: Commodity Boom and Socio-Economic Differentiation among Peasants in Zimbabwe'. Roskilde University. Ph.D. dissertation.
- Moyo, Sam. 1995. *The Land Question in Zimbabwe*. Harare: SAPES Trust.
- Murombedzi, James. 1990. 'Communal Land Tenure and Common Property Resource Management in Zimbabwe's Communal Lands'. Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe.
- Mutizwa-Mangiza. n.d. 1990. 'Decentralization and District Development Planning in Zimbabwe'. *Public Administration and Development* 10: 423-435.
- Nyambara, Pius. 1999. 'A History of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Northwestern Zimbabwe, 1945-1997'. Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. 'The Closing Frontier: Agrarian Change, Immigrants and the 'Squatter Menace' in Gokwe, 1980-1990s'. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 1(4): 534-549.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2002. 'Madheruka and Shangwe: Ethnic Identities and the Culture of Modernity in Gokwe, Northwestern Zimbabwe, 1963-1979'. *Journal of African History* 43(2): 287-306.
- Palmer, Robin. 1977. *Land and Racial Domination in Rhodesia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University Press of California.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1990. 'Land Reform in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990'. *African Affairs* 98.
- Pangeti, Evelyn. 1995. 'The State and Manufacturing: A Study of the State as Regulator and Entrepreneur in Zimbabwe, 1930-1990'. University of Zimbabwe. D.Phil Thesis.
- Reid, M. 1977. 'An Agricultural Programme at Gokwe'. *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal* 71: 54-60.
- Robertson, A. F. 1987. *The Dynamics of Productive Relationships: African Share Contracts in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Rohrbach, David. 1988. 'The Growth of Smallholder Maize Production in Zimbabwe: Causes and Implications for Food Security'. Michigan State University. Ph.D. dissertation.
- Rourke, B.E. 1970. 'Wages and Incomes of Agricultural Workers in Ghana'. A Report to ILO under the auspices of the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana, Lagon.
- Sen, A.K. 1966. 'Peasants and Dualism with or without Surplus Labour'. *Journal of Political Economy* 74(5): 425-50.
- Southern Rhodesia. 1955. 'What the Land Husbandry Act Means to the Rural African and to Southern Rhodesia: A Five-Year Plan to Revolutionise African Agriculture'. Salisbury: Government Printers.
- Testerink, A. Jan. 'Land relations and conflict in Eastern and Southern Africa'. Indian Ocean Centre for Peace Studies, Occasional Paper no. 4.
- Warriner, Doreen. 1962. *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East: A Study of Egypt, Syria and Iraq*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Weiner, Dan. 1988. 'Land and Agricultural Development'. In *Zimbabwe's Prospects*, edited by C. Stoneman, pp. 63-89. London: Macmillan.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1991. 'Socialist Transition in the Capitalist Periphery: A Case Study of Agricultural Productivity in Zimbabwe'. *Political Geography Quarterly* 10(1): 54-75.
- Worby, Eric, 1992. 'Remaking Labour, Reshaping Identity: Cotton Commoditization and the Culture of Modernity in Northwestern Zimbabwe'. Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University.

—Chapter 2—  
**Rezoned for Business**

**How Eco-tourism Unlocked Black Farmland  
in Eastern Zimbabwe<sup>30</sup>**

**David McDermott Hughes**

Department of Human Ecology, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, USA

*Eco-tourism is undermining black smallholders' entitlement to land in Zimbabwe. In the 1890s, British administrators restrained whites from alienating the whole of the country by demarcating native reserves. In terms of this limited aim, the policy of native reserves worked. It ensured a land base for black agriculture, particularly for women and children. In the late 1980s, however, the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (Campfire) invited the tourism industry to begin operations in the lowland reserves. These firms have claimed land, made money, and relocated smallholders. Based on economic and ecological arguments, Campfire has redefined the black entitlement as merely a claim competing with those of other 'stakeholders'. No guarantees exist for residents and cultivators. Indeed, Government and NGOs are fast transforming the lowland reserves into privileged and subsidised investment zones. Held in check for a century, a new kind of settler colonialism is sweeping down from the highlands.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Native reserves represent the best and worst aspects of settler colonialism, past and present. In one view, expanding 'neo-Europes', such as the United States and Australia, used reservations to dispossess and partially annihilate aboriginals.<sup>31</sup> The 'rez' (in Native American parlance) served as a concentration camp. From another perspective, a handful of well-meaning colonials established reserves to protect native people from total dispossession and enslavement. Particularly in tropical settler colonies, metropolitan offices had to balance the interests of a small white population and against those of the native masses. They did so spatially, by allocating fertile, disease-free highlands to whites and retaining lowlands as reserves. Patently unfair, this rural segregation 'put the lighter skins in control of the darker soils, and vice versa' (Shipton and Goheen 1994, p. 363). Nonetheless, the darker skins *did*

---

<sup>30</sup> The author gratefully acknowledges the *Journal of Agrarian Change* for permission to republish this chapter from its original, longer version in *Journal of Agrarian Change* 1(4): 575-99 (2001).

<sup>31</sup> Crosby (1986) coins the term 'neo-Europe'.

find sanctuary on 42.1% of the land.<sup>32</sup> At least some of Rhodesia's district-level native commissioners demarcated reserves not to confine blacks—as the concentration camp thesis would suggest—but to confine *whites*. The reserves kept settlers and business out, and they allowed black farmers, grazers, and hunters to survive and reproduce themselves. Rural people, especially women, children, and the elderly, came to depend on the reserves. And they could depend on the reserves: the weakest, poorest, economically least productive individuals were *entitled* to farmland. Against tremendous white opposition, that entitlement survived 84 years of colonialism, 14 of which were under a settler-run regime (1965-1979). The 'communal areas', as they became known after independence, stand as the most humane achievement of an inhumane period.

That is not saying much. Such an extraordinarily low benchmark gave post-colonial authorities ample scope for progress. Yet, by the standard of entitlements, the Government of Zimbabwe has actually retrogressed. To its credit, the longstanding resettlement program has established new zones that blacks from the reserves can *claim* to farm; however, such claims are particularly weak—a far cry from entitlements. Administrators have threatened to evict smallholders for infractions ranging from streambank cultivation to wage employment (Kinsey 1983, 17). It is unlikely that residents' descendants will be farming the same resettlement areas 84 years from now. Meanwhile, district-level governments have rolled back the hard-won accomplishments of their colonial counterparts: they have redefined the reserves from zones of entitlement to zones of opportunity and claim-making. Beginning in the late 1980s, district councils and rural district councils allowed business to use land, forests, and wildlife in the communal areas. Through profit- and power-sharing arrangements, under the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (Campfire),<sup>33</sup> smallholders could, in theory, gain something. Promotional reports have made much of this theory and contributed to Campfire's rosy reputation. In fact, local government often arrogates to itself the money and responsibilities earmarked for local people. Scholars and practitioners have amply demonstrated the shortcomings of Campfire as an effort towards community-based conservation and government decentralisation (Campbell, Sithole, and Frost 2000; Derman and Murombedzi 1994, 125-7; Duffy 2000, 107-11; Gibson 1999, 113; Hill 1996, 114; Murombedzi 1992; Murphree 1997, 21). They have written much less on Campfire's impact on land distribution. From many smallholders' point of view (and from the perspective of Zimbabwe's *longue durée*), Campfire constitutes a perplexing kind of land reform. The programme maintains many of the fortress walls excluding smallholders from resources in national parks (Neumann 1998, 211).<sup>34</sup> At the same time, it encourages tourism

---

<sup>32</sup> The figure for communal land as proportion of Zimbabwe land area derives from the 1982 census (cited in Zinyama and Whitlow 1986).

<sup>33</sup> 'Campfire' refers variously to a set of principles, a collaborative group of NGOs and government agencies, and to an association of rural district councils (local government). 'Campfire' acts only to the extent that the Association and rural district councils implement changes in the name of those principles.

<sup>34</sup> Where Campfire *has* removed the walls, smallholders have been allowed to graze cattle and collect resources, such as, thatching grass, inside national parks (Gus Le Breton, pers. com., 23 February 2001).

firms to expand from their established redoubts in the parks onto agricultural fields and pastures (Moyo 1995, 271).<sup>35</sup> Zimbabwe has crossed a Rubicon: government—local government in particular—is tearing up the minimal Rhodesian guarantee of black farmland.

At bottom, state agencies, donors, and NGOs have been losing faith in smallholder agriculture. This movement started in the late 1980s in the most logical place, western Zimbabwe. There, low rainfall severely constrains both cultivation and stock-raising. On Kalahari sands, sport-hunting and other forms of wildlife-based tourism seemed to offer higher returns to land than either crops or cattle.<sup>36</sup> Brute economics argued for what a founder of Campfire termed ‘wildlife-based “industrialization”’ (Child 1993, 296). So did the ecological imperative of saving game habitats from the plough. In short, the new alliance of ‘conservation and development’ concluded that drought-prone Zimbabweans ought to farm less and tend tourists’ campsites more—or simply do nothing (Adams and McShane 1992, 180-1). Then Campfire’s backers disregarded agroecology. Beginning in the mid-1990s, they transplanted the programme from the sandy soils of Zimbabwe’s western, northern, and southern fringes to the fertile Eastern Highlands, chiefly to Chimanimani District. There, agriculture earns far more, and, since big game are lacking, tourism earns far less. In Chimanimani, bananas trounce hiking and birding. Moreover, fruit tree planting in reserves has provided household food security and security of land tenure. Why, then, does a phalanx of agencies promote touristic white elephants? Have globalisation and ‘market triumphalism’ (Peet and Watts 1996) taken over? Perhaps, but, more precisely, planners in Southern Africa are falling back upon what Peet and Watts (*ibid.*, p. 16) call a ‘regional discursive formation’ of settler-led development. New, frontier-crossing investment of any kind with any potential has a green light. White- and black-owned firms are now leaping the fences that hemmed them into eastern Zimbabwe’s white highlands, and local governments are helping them to do so. Conditions are ripe for a territorial scramble.

## 2. CAMPFIRE THOUGHT

From its inception, Campfire contested the conventional spatial order. The academically savvy ‘Campfire intelligentsia’ raised ecological, economic, and, in particular, social challenges. To begin with the ecological, reforms leading up to Campfire introduced the concept of bioregionalism. Having started in the United States in the 1960s, the bioregional movement questioned administrative and national borders (Aberly 1999; Berg and Dasmann 1977). Surely, proponents argued, those who wished to preserve nature had to think and act with ecological units of analysis—watersheds, valleys, mountain ranges, etc. Developments in the East African savannah supported this reframing. During the mid-1970s drought,

---

<sup>35</sup> Elsewhere I have described the ways in which Campfire managers try and fail to negotiate for firms and communal land residents to share parcels of land. Zimbabwe’s endemic cadastral politics—conflict over the demarcation and bounding of land—often overwhelm such negotiations (Hughes 2001). Derman (1995, 209) raises a parallel issue at a smaller scale, that is, among smallholders. Land-use planning linked to Campfire in Omay (Nyaminyami District) may alienate land from Tonga-speakers to other smallholders.

<sup>36</sup> Scoones et al (1996), however, defend the productivity of even Zimbabwe’s driest soils.

elephants inside Kenya's Tsavo National park ate the woodland and then starved in enormous numbers. This carnage—the effect of insularisation—incriminated the entire system of discrete protected areas. Nature now had to exceed its colonially-mandated enclaves. Before independence, Rhodesia's Director of National Parks, Graham Child (1996, p. 361), convinced white land-owners to 'allow space for wildlife on their land, thus providing corridors between the protected areas'. Elephants should reconstitute their archaic Zambezi Valley migration. Meanwhile, managers adopted what one principal described as a 'landscape strategy'<sup>37</sup>: bioregions spanning the escarpment between highlands and lowlands. Ultimately, roaming animals accomplished what trekking colonists had failed to do. They overcame the colonial partition of white, black, and natural zones.

Economic thinking also helped weaken those walls. Unwittingly, Campfire's advocates borrowed the principles and vocabulary of 19<sup>th</sup>-century frontier boosterism. Proponents of investment in the western United States had expounded that the right configuration of natural resources *inevitably* generated wealth. As the story went, soil, climate, and navigable rivers would make (and did make) Chicago and the Great West.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps Zimbabwe's fauna, sunshine, and (to stretch the parallel) air routes and roads could produce a similar success story. So thought wildlife managers in the 1980s and 1990s. Indeed, tourism exploited the 'big-five' species, and visitors doled out dollars to photograph and/or kill them. How could it be otherwise? Wildlife, Graham Child later wrote, possessed an '*inherent* financial comparative advantage' (1996, p. 358; emphasis added). Development and entrepreneurial possibility seemed to emanate from the very landscape, unmediated by culture. Hayfield B estate, boasted its owner, contained a fail-safe location for a new-age spiritual retreat: spot on latitude 20 South, longitude 33 East.<sup>39</sup> Deeply flawed, such boosterism assumed the unalterable attractiveness of the region and an unending flow of travellers.<sup>40</sup> When tourism collapsed in 2000, Campfire proponents would have reason to reconsider their assumptions. Until then, boosterism and bioregionalism freed the Campfire intelligentsia to concentrate on what really troubled it: rural black society.

In the 1980s, various public and private agencies converged on one point: fewer people should live in Zimbabwe's reserves (or at, least, the rate of increase should go down). The resettlement programme transferred over 70,000 families from the communal lands to parcels abandoned or sold by whites (Kinsey 1999, 173). With less success, industry created urban jobs, complete with family accommodation. Programmes aimed at population growth helped lower the birth rate while conservationists consistently bemoaned the 'population problem' in

---

<sup>37</sup> Interview, Harare, 13 July 1999.

<sup>38</sup> Many such boosters, however, were also speculators, attempting to manipulate public opinion in order to make their predictions come true (Cronon 1991, 31ff). Boosters of Southern African eco-tourism, by contrast, believed fully in their assertions.

<sup>39</sup> Interview, Hayfield B, 23 July 1997.

<sup>40</sup> Bond (1998, 401) argues that many foreigners visited Zimbabwe precisely because structural adjustment had weakened its currency. Tourism owed its boom, in part, to economic woe in most other sectors and in the lives of ordinary Zimbabweans.

Zimbabwe's low veldt. As a result, the reserves, once a place to go *to*, officially became a place to go *from* in search of opportunity elsewhere. At the very least, this unlikely consensus among proponents of industry, conservation, and resettlement stipulated that the reserves' population should be stabilised. Yet, the people did the opposite. In the most significant post-independence migration, smallholders moved from the south-east to the north-west low veldt. They filled up communal lands of the cotton frontier in Gokwe, Binga, and Nyaminyami Districts. As other government agencies eradicated tsetse fly, migrants and their cattle advanced towards the Zambezi. Meanwhile, the resettlement program stalled in 1985, and industry hit its own ceiling around 1990. Against most official hopes, people discovered opportunity in the reserves.

Campfire blossomed in this atmosphere of demographic disappointment. The programme identified the reserves as zones of wild abundance and human threat, a longstanding conservationist view (Schroeder 1999, 361-2). As opposed to old-style 'fortress conservation', however, the designers of Campfire imagined that local people themselves could reduce the excess population. In support of this belief, conservationists elaborated a historical narrative of the reserves that sanctified local natives and demonised in-migrants (without, however, including that narrative as an explicit component of policy). As Simon Metcalfe, a social scientist and early Campfire organiser, explained, 'The traditional roots of communal life are still strong, providing a web of affection and social and material security'. Yet, he continued, two problems impinged from outside. First, 'the modern state apparatus .. imposed [itself] on communal Africa' (Metcalfe 1994, p. 185). Campfire found a legal solution to that externality: in 36 districts, it transferred control of game from the central Government to local people or their representatives in district government. As for the second problem, new settlers—stigmatised as 'immigrants'—were overrunning wildlife habitats of the Zambezi Valley.<sup>41</sup> Metcalfe (*ibid.*, p. 184) predicted:

Unless modern and traditional authorities pull together locally, membership of Campfire producer communities will be threatened by a lack of exclusivity, spontaneous unplanned settlement and fragmentation of wildlife habitat. The ability to exclude settlers, if necessary, may be a prerequisite for ultimate success.

In other words, headmen, chiefs, and the whole 'web of affection' were embracing outsiders too readily. Could technical support reform these institutions, making them less hospitable?

Metcalfe and others certainly thought so, but their faith misconstrued the *raison d'être* for 'traditional authorities' and for the reserves as a whole. In Zimbabwe, in-migration constitutes the founding principle of reserves and their leadership. As explained above, the Native Department created reserves as zones of arrival. Headmen rose to power precisely when and because people did arrive in the reserves (the 1950s in Ngorima).<sup>42</sup> Newcomers,

---

<sup>41</sup> Even authors sympathetic to migrants use this terminology, helping to conflate foreignness to a locality with foreignness to Zimbabwe (Dzingirai 1994, 2000; Nyambara 1999).

<sup>42</sup> Hughes (1999a, 102f). As opposed to Metcalfe's 'communal Africa', Cheater (1990) argues that men as well as women had owned and bequeathed land virtually as private property (cf. Bruce 1988, 24-5).

petitioned them for access to farmland and, from that moment on, owed their tenure to higher authorities. Each migrant added to the power of headmen—certainly not a ‘traditional’ power.<sup>43</sup> Of course, newcomers and latecomers competed and still compete for land and other natural resources. On the other hand, migrants contributed to the critical mass of people necessary to obtain a clinic, school, bus route, member of parliament, and other services that benefit everyone. As Worby (1998, p. 567) writes, migrants turned Gokwe from a wildlife-infested backwater into ‘the pre-eminent cash-crop zone of Zimbabwe’s widely-heralded small-holder revolution’. To many rural and development-oriented Zimbabweans, migrants mean modernity.

Still failing to grasp this popular idea of progress, Campfire agencies spent the late 1980s and the 1990s trying to convert rural Zimbabweans to another belief. Proponents narrowed their focus to the economics of reserves—the commodities and markets linked to them. Could the reserves generate more income from the conservation of wildlife than from cattle grazing and other activities that jeopardised wildlife? ‘Yes’, said the economists, and tourism was the answer. In the 1990s, Europeans and North Americans recycled their growing incomes and investments as holidays in the African savannah. Some of the wealthiest would pay US\$800 per day to hunt big game and thousands more for the necessary trophy fees. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) calculated that sport-hunting would almost certainly generate higher profits than extensive stock-raising. Such comparisons overlooked cotton and so came to a rosy conclusion: if smallholders could only capture the revenues from wildlife, they would gladly and immediately return cultivated areas to wildlife habitat.<sup>44</sup> Surely, they would also prohibit in-migration, both to preserve their own share of the loot and to further protect the habitat. In other words, ‘rational peasants’ would voluntarily relinquish their entitlement to farm and graze the reserves. Meanwhile, local governments would contract with eco-tourism firms and—acting altruistically—devolve the lion’s share of revenues to the ‘producer communities’. These ‘Campfire principles’ envisioned far-reaching alternatives to conventional national parks and fortress conservation. Yet, Campfire’s protocol has worked almost nowhere. Many councils, it is now widely acknowledged, act like true ‘rational peasants’ and monopolise the money.<sup>45</sup>

Yet, even in the two Campfire cases widely heralded as successful, rural district councils have done structural damage to rural security and land tenure. The programme and its principles rezoned the two reserves. In Masoka, Guruve District, residents delineated an enclosure for agriculture. The WWF donated an electric fence to protect people and crops

---

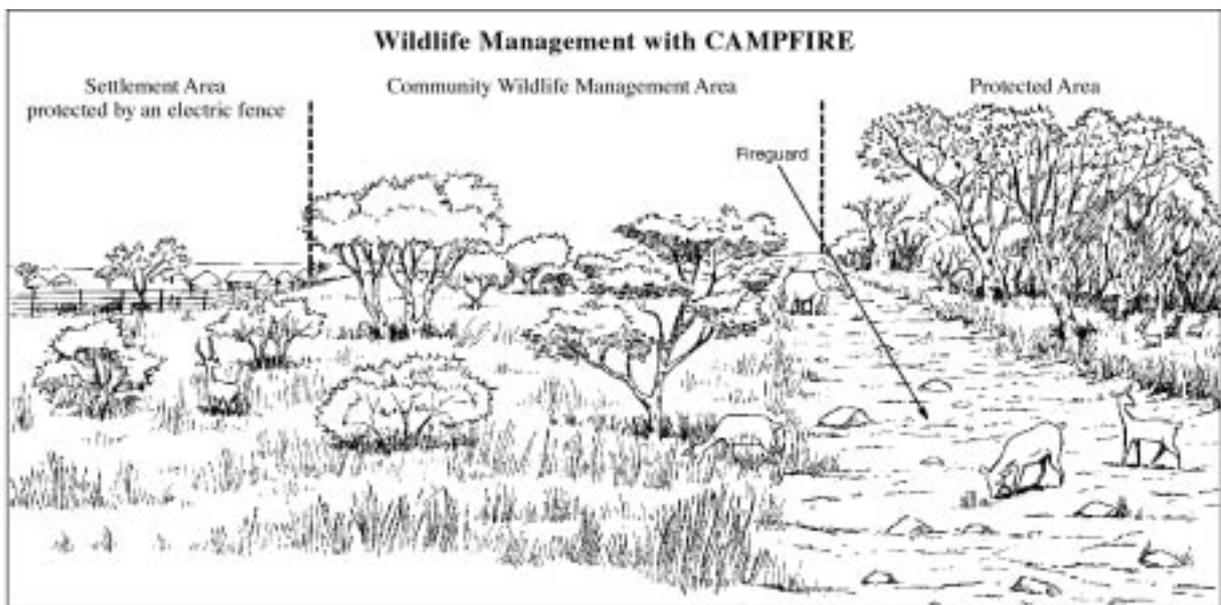
<sup>43</sup> Nyambara (1999, 441ff.) Some migrants, however, settled with their own chiefs and headmen, thus empowering a transplanted leadership.

<sup>44</sup> For the cattle-wildlife comparison, see Jansen, Bond, and Child (1992). Comparisons with cotton would have been complex since that crop is grown intensively whereas wildlife and cattle roam intensively (Ivan Bond, pers. com., 15 September 2000).

<sup>45</sup> Authors are cited in the introduction to this article.

from wildlife (and vice-versa).<sup>46</sup> Leaders of Chikwarakwara, Beitbridge District drew up a similar plan for villagisation and for ‘retain[ing] remote and wild land which is valuable for tourism and wildlife’ (Child 1993, p. 290). Both the relevant district councils returned revenues directly to local people. ‘Cash is the best extension agent’, boosters told me in 1994, and that cash inoculated Masoka and Chikwarakwara from criticism. Proponents then inflated these two cases into a general model. A widely circulated diagram from WWF suggested that animal-rich reserves be remapped into two zones: ‘community wildlife management areas’ and much smaller, agricultural ‘settlement areas’ (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: WWF Diagram**



Source: World Wide Fund for Nature 1997. *Quota Setting Manual*. Harare: World Wide Fund for Nature, Zimbabwe Trust, and Safari Club International, p. 7.

Conservationists and the tourism industry would, thereby, enclose the bulk of the reserve, converting farmland into a buffer zone for the adjoining protected area. This ‘*enclosure of resident human populations*’ (Schroeder 1999, p. 365) would prejudice non-residents to an even greater degree. Rump reserves would surely lack residual space to support in-migrants.

---

<sup>46</sup> (Matzke and Nabane 1996, 77-81; Murphree, 1991, 10) Early on, a National Parks ecologist expressed the ambivalent nature of these fences as follows: ‘[T]he project *cannot* promote wildlife management—through *restriction of access to arable and grazing lands*—as a replacement for traditional crop and livestock productions. Instead, it must be viewed as a complementary system which is compatible with the established system. One element of this compatibility is to protect, people, crops, and livestock from marauding wildlife by *fencing the village areas off from the game management areas*’ (Murindagomo 1990, p. 130 emphasis added).

Unborn children—WWF seemed to assume—would need to limit their numbers so as not to overcrowd the settlement areas. In short, WWF deftly overturned the inclusionary logic of the reserves—with the full support of Campfire agencies.

On the ground, this type of partition generated irate peasant protest and muted dissent from the intelligentsia. In 1989, Nyamandlovu District called upon Campfire scholars to help it launch sport-hunting. Council and the Department of National Parks had already zoned a wildlife-rich ‘buffer zone’ within communal land adjacent to Hwange National Park. The affected residents, Council hoped, would retreat ‘voluntarily’ from the outer edge of the reserve to a more secure and well-served location. One Campfire fieldworker recalled Council officers coaxing: ‘We want to bring you back into the lines [of Land Husbandry] so it is easier for Council to do what Council is supposed to do’. Certainly, the provision of schools, clinics, and water points was attractive; ‘it made sense’, recalled the social scientist.<sup>47</sup> Another social anthropologist noticed a contradiction: ‘If wildlife production is to be, as is postulated, a real money-spinner, they [local residents] should benefit from their location. Why move them?’<sup>48</sup> For a more visceral view, authors deferred to local voices: ‘You have moved us to let your wildlife in’, declared one virtual evictee in an unpublished document (qtd. in Madzudzo 1996, p. 7).<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, Campfire-related rezoning provoked an even more blatant conflict elsewhere in western Zimbabwe, in Binga District. Violating an agreement on fencing, Broom Safaris unilaterally encircled a farming area much smaller than that stipulated. A safari operator encountered in 1994 in the disputed zone, called it ‘my best hunting ground’.<sup>50</sup> Again, a Campfire scholar intervened in print, quoting the lament of Binga elder: ‘Campfire is now ransoming everything that we have. First it was the animals.... Now it is the land’ (Dzingirai 1995, p. 7). In the face of an escalating row, District Administrator Dumisani Ncube clarified the situation to the press:

The Campfire project... is, in fact, a people’s project. What is being done at the moment is to demarcate the concession area from other parts of the communal land so that safari operators can do their work without any disturbances. People should not panic.<sup>51</sup>

This valiant defence of partition calmed no one. Five years later, as discontent still simmered, the Campfire manager for Binga sowed panic himself. Calling migrants ‘foreigners in inverted commas’, he startled a conference with his own update on the conflict:

---

<sup>47</sup> Interview, Harare, 26 March 2000.

<sup>48</sup> Interview, Harare, 29 March 2000.

<sup>49</sup> For an earlier assessment, see Murphree (1989). Alexander and McGregor (2000, 621) describe a Campfire-related eviction in nearby Lupane Communal Land.

<sup>50</sup> Interview, Kabuba, Binga District, 7 July 1994. I am grateful to Vupenyu Dzingirai for allowing me to accompany him during fieldwork.

<sup>51</sup> ‘ZANU(PF) intervenes in Binga row’, *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 22 May 1994.

This issue of migrants is now a needle in the Manager's tongue. It is high time [a] council resolution should be implemented to get the environmental disturbance rubbed off once and for all... This illegal occupation of our promised land will seek an intervention by high ranked politicians. (Lunga 1999)

Thus, smallholders, who once enjoyed a guaranteed sanctuary, now squat insecurely on someone else's business district. The logic of Campfire culminates in eviction.

### 3. PIONEERS IN IMPROBABLE PLACES

Spreading to eastern Zimbabwe, Campfire lost its economic rationale altogether. Compared with the arid, game-rich west, eastern Zimbabwe benefits far less from tourism and far more from agriculture. The region contains the most fertile land with the highest annual rainfall in the country. Estates grow tea, coffee, and various fruits. In the early 1990s, smallholders started planting these crops as well. By 1994, the banana boom had gripped Ngorima Communal Land, and especially Vhimba, the area under consideration for eco-tourism (cf. Manzou 2000, 10-12). In that year, Vhimba's two fruit marketing groups grossed US\$4,388. Each group member earned, on average, US\$61, while the top five producers brought in a mean of US\$296 each (Figure 2).<sup>52</sup> One household, Wilbert and Ester Yaibva, grossed US\$307 annually per hectare (Figure 3).<sup>53</sup> The accumulation—even if lopsided—was unmistakable. Indeed, so profitable was the banana boom that the Rural District Council itself alienated 20ha in Vhimba in 1994 for a parastatal farm. Planners intended to intensify production to the incredible level of US\$4,851 in profits plus local wages per hectare per year (Figure 3).<sup>54</sup> Combined with smallholder fields, the plantation left little room for tourism, even for chalets or campsites. Of course, any such facility—if it truly represented

---

<sup>52</sup> Neglected by all previous studies (cited below), these data derive from the 'production books' of the Nyakwaa and Marirangwe groups of the Rusitu Valley Fruit Growers Association. Since farmers used no inputs, revenues from sales are equivalent to profit plus the cost of labour. The production books indicate only a portion of each member's harvest of bananas. Depending on price and terms, farmers often marketed outside the Association. Hence, total production might have gone much higher. I counted as members only those people who marketed bananas through the groups in a given year. Hence, the total number of producers varies from year to year, as does the identity of the top five producers. Official exchange rates apply to 1 July of the given year (8.21, 8.56, and 9.86 for 1994-96). All figures are in current dollars. Amounts for 1997 and onwards are misleading due to rapid devaluation of the Zimbabwe dollar and hyperinflation.

<sup>53</sup> These are pseudonyms. The income figure is an average of 1994 and 1995, as recorded in the production books of the Rusitu Valley Fruit Growers Association. The field size (2.3ha) derives from my examination of the Zimbabwe Surveyor General's 1996 aerial photograph #077 (Chipinge series). Wilbert Yaibva himself stated that his field size as roughly 2ha and his number of banana plants as 2,600 at 3-meter intervals (giving a field size of 2.34ha). (Interview, Vhimba, 4 February 1997.)

<sup>54</sup> 'Project Appraisal Report, Haroni Banana Project', p. 11. The pre-tax figure was based on a 1 September 1994 exchange rate of 8.20. Bananas were to be planted at only 2-meter intervals, rather than at Yaibva's 3-meter spacing. Council also assumed perfect transportation and zero spoilage, conditions certainly not experienced by Yaibva. Nonetheless, as the banana plants matured, the chairman of the Rural District Council announced a comparably high figure: 'Chimanimani to Earn \$3m from Bananas', *The Herald* (Harare), 1 May 1995, p. 6.

development—would have to top the US\$4,851 per hectare mark. Council’s wildly optimistic numbers boxed it into a corner.

**Figure 2: Vhimba Smallholders’ Revenue from Bananas (US\$)**

	1994	1995	1996
<b>Mean of top 5 producers</b>	296	312	267
<b>Mean of marketing members</b>	61	54	60

**Figure 3. Profitability of Land Uses (US\$)**

	<b>Chimanmani Rural District Council’s estimates of profit plus local wages per hectare p.a.</b>	<b>Actual profit plus local wages per hectare for the year immediately following the estimate</b>
<b>Banana production</b>	4,851	307
<b>Eco-tourism</b>	1,471	0
<b>Opportunity costs of eco-tourism</b>	3,380	307

How could tourism, especially when limited to bird-watching and hiking, beat the banana? Boosters trusted in a future ‘eastern circuit’ and in travellers’ desire to foray into little-known communal lands (Africa Resources Trust n.d.). On the front lines of this campaign, NGOs fastened on Vhimba, in the deep recesses of Ngorima Communal Land, where rains regularly interrupted vehicle traffic. The quixotic proposal for a ‘Vhimba Eco-Tourism Project’ predicted local benefits of only US\$1,924 per annum. According to the proposal, the project committee would then divide this grand sum between a revolving fund and dividends to beneficiaries.<sup>55</sup> At the maximum level conceivable, each of the more than 200 households would take home at most US\$10. Such a pittance could hardly justify any household’s opportunity cost of giving up a banana field. Delicately, another study admitted that ‘the estimated annual income [will] have possible negative repercussions to the [local] people’s continued interest to participate in the project’ (Matikinyidze 1995, p. 12). Truly, bird-watching amounted to petty cash as against Vhimba’s golden fruit! Among Campfire

<sup>55</sup> The figure represents profits plus the wage bill for staff. The author of the report included this cost because jobs would constitute a benefit to the community (SAFIRE 1996, 19, 27). Thus, the comparison with smallholders’ banana revenue (where labor was the only cost) is exact. The exchange rate refers to 1 January 1996 (9.33).

agencies, however, interest remained strong. Tourism, profitable or not, might help protect forests and rezone the reserves for future investment of unknown proportions.

Boosters of eco-tourism began by demonising black newcomers to Vhimba and sanctifying white ones. At least some of the blacks migrating to Vhimba had jumped the Mozambican border—sometimes in both directions (Hughes 1999b). In the early 1990s, National Parks sounded its usual alarm with more than the usual double-speak: ‘the main cultural and political difficulty is the problem of illegal immigrants [who may] have family in both Mozambique and Zimbabwe hold both Mozambiquan [sic] and Zimbabwean papers’ (Kawadza and Rogers 1993). Parks blamed these itinerant dual citizens and refugees from Mozambique’s war for partially clearing the Haroni and Rusitu Botanical Reserves in favour of bananas and other crops. Of course, Parks could have helped protect the forest by providing land to refugees elsewhere in the district (Hughes 1996). Instead, Parks sought assistance from another outside group with interests in Vhimba: plantation owners and other whites on the highlands. Gathered together under the banner of the Chipinge Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, these conservationists provided transportation and uniforms to National Parks patrols. Until Parks’ provincial office explicitly banned the assistance—as a violation of civil service rules—armed scouts arrested and assaulted numerous Vhimba smallholders. By that time, Parks had decided to defer to Campfire-style initiatives and outside investment. In 1996, the only true immigrant involved—a one-time British Hong Konger and stock-trader—approached the Rural District Council for a business license to operate in Vhimba. John Oberlander envisioned a string of backpacker lodges and adventure outposts anchored at Vhimba and supporting local communities. Council joined in the effort.<sup>56</sup> It hired a British tourism officer (a VSO volunteer), and she advised that Vhimba should ‘work with an experienced partner’ to develop its ‘tourism product’ (Steward 1997, p. 4). A white expatriate thus obtained a privilege local government had long denied to local whites and even to Mozambican dual nationals: an official invitation to do business in the native reserve.

Once inside the reserve, Oberlander rapidly claimed land. NGOs were surprised; for they had assumed that birding would take no land from agriculture. Local government was not surprised. In fact, Council actually pushed Oberlander and his junior partner—Colin Walker, a white Zimbabwean—to claim land. In a move that stirred much controversy, Council granted them access to a ‘business centre’ located next to Council’s banana plantation. Vhimba people knew of only one business centre, a block of locally-owned stores some kilometres from this site. Maps showed no similar ‘business centre’ here, and Council did not officially declare one. There was a disused ‘corner store’ then serving as a storage shed for the banana plantation. In effect, Council enlarged the store into an enclave, excised it from the reserve, and ceded it to investors. Thereupon, heated debate ensued as to the boundaries of this investment zone (and the parties called upon me to mediate and translate). A smallholder, C., was cultivating along its eastern edge. He and his crops might have to go,

---

<sup>56</sup> John Oberlander is a pseudonym.

and Vhimba smallholders began to relive past evictions. Oberlander ‘will take our land from us’, warned one farmer. Another interrupted a meeting with Oberlander to demand: ‘Where will we farm now, [across the border] in Chief Mafussi’s area’?<sup>57</sup> To Vhimba people, whites seemed poised to complete Moodie’s unfinished business: to colonise the whole of Melsetter and push the natives clear into Portuguese territory.

The community, however, won this battle in a circuitous and provisional fashion. Trying to make the best of a bad situation, Council and NGOs urged Oberlander to form a joint venture with a local committee in Vhimba and to operate according to Campfire principles. That committee had, in fact, agreed in 1994 to run its own, independent tourism facility. (As a means of resolving the conflict between conservationists and local people, the Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources [an NGO] sought funds for such a project as well as for agricultural initiatives.) Now, the increasingly fatalistic committee had been waiting three years for its grant from the Campfire Association. Thus, the marriage between external capital and local entrepreneurship seemed to be made in heaven. It would give Vhimba people money and give Oberlander political legitimacy. A joint venture would also lay the groundwork for the ‘culture based activities (crafts, music, dance, etc)’ that the tourism officer recommended to tourism investors (Steward 1997, p. 4). Walker, who believed that business in the reserves required ‘a mixture of subtlety and brutality’, assessed this possibility in blunter terms: Vhimba, he later reminisced, has ‘got black people smiling. They wave. It’s not like Harlem’.<sup>58</sup> Despite these auspicious conditions, Vhimba people soon stopped smiling. Having identified Oberlander as a landgrabber, headmen, in particular, pressured the committee to renege. The District Administrator added his considerable weight until, in mid-1997, the Committee performed a dramatic about-face. To a stunned planning workshop, the committee chair pronounced, ‘Death before partnership!’ Reluctantly, Council withdrew its invitation to Oberlander.

Nonetheless, Council persevered in rezoning the Ngorima Reserve. For the next three years it vetted proposals for investment and/or partnership with the unwilling people of Vhimba. Council turned first to the Chipinge Branch of the Wildlife Society. Despite their earlier para-police involvement, members of the Branch desired to collaborate with Vhimba residents for tourism and conservation. Terry Eagle, a birder already running the nature-oriented Kiledo Lodge, had thought for years of expanding operations and providing employment in Vhimba. If blacks could only ‘improve their lot’ off-farm, he fervently believed, then they would spare wildlife and forests from the ravages of the plough.<sup>59</sup> He made scant progress and soon ceded the field to others in the Wildlife Society. In 1999, one of its Branch officers met with a consultant to the Campfire Association to discuss the Branch’s construction of five chalets in

---

<sup>57</sup> Respectively, ‘*Anozitorera nyika yedu*’; ‘*Tinongorima papi? KwaMafussi?*’ (Vhimba, 26 July 1997; addendum to my minutes of 4 March 1997 meeting).

<sup>58</sup> Respectively, interview, Chimanimani National Park, 7 August 1999; interview, Harare, 8 July 2000. Walker had never been to Harlem.

<sup>59</sup> Interview, Chipinge District, 28 July 1999. Terry Eagle is a pseudonym.

Vhimba. Again, nothing came of the idea.<sup>60</sup> In the same year, Rainbow Tourism Group, owner of the nearby Chimanimani Hotel, developed the most ambitious plan. On a detailed map, the company plotted a wide footprint of nine structures, quite similar to Eagle's Kiledo Lodge. In a breathtaking solution to the perennial transport problem, the company also sited a helicopter landing pad. The complex would occupy 36.9ha of arable land<sup>61</sup>—at a staggering annual opportunity cost of US\$179,002 (based on Council's figure for per-hectare banana revenues in the parastatal farm). Then, the Rainbow Tourism Group sold the Chimanimani Hotel and turned its attention away from eastern Zimbabwe. Still, as of mid-2000, the manager of the Hotel clung to his Vhimba dream. A black businessman, he spoke more openly about eviction than any other would-be investor in Vhimba: 'Talk to him [the local farmer], give something [or] else compensate [him]. Then you can take over there. If he says 'no that is not good enough', just go ahead and take over'. The hotelier utterly misunderstood the communal lands. He referred to them only as 'remote areas' and informed me, 'You can get title deeds there. I am sure'.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps he understood only too well.

Such investor confidence rests on nearly blind adherence to settler-led development. In 1999 and 2000, Chimanimani's local government endorsed this concept in stronger and stronger terms. According to the financial tenets of settler-led development, residents of the reserves cannot succeed through self-help. Regarding tourism, the Campfire officer explained, Vhimba people 'can't just bump into it without the necessary expertise'.<sup>63</sup> Thus, local government has discouraged Vhimba's committee from building their own campsite while seeking an investor to train the community in 'basic tourism management and operations'.<sup>64</sup> This form of partnership could possibly generate valuable spin-off effects. Tourists, the boosters claim, would demand a more comfortable road. A new road would stimulate an even bigger banana boom (although the subsequent scheme of flying tourists by helicopter may make this plan moot). Yet, the numbers do not add up. Council's most recent and professional feasibility study of a tourism investment in Vhimba projects a staggering loss of US\$290,754 over five years.<sup>65</sup> International donors, the study anticipates, will cover such start-up costs *gratis*. Even when eventually self-sustaining, the chalets will earn only US\$54,279 per year, or US\$1,471 per hectare.<sup>66</sup> Based on Council's own estimates, Vhimba smallholders would lose roughly US\$3,380 of potential income for every hectare rezoned

---

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Humphrey Hayes, Chipinge, 2 August 1999.

<sup>61</sup> Much of the area is currently cultivated or under crop rotation, and the soil, rainfall, and agro-ecological classifications are equivalent to those of the banana plantation (Bromley et al 1968, maps 1,2, and 4).

<sup>62</sup> Interview, Chimanimani, 12 July 2000.

<sup>63</sup> Interview, Chimanimani, 12 July 2000.

<sup>64</sup> Chimanimani Rural District Council, 'Draft Tender Notice', 1999, p.2.

<sup>65</sup> Mazambani (1999, 29, 32). The conversion rate for 1 August 1999 is 38.4 .

<sup>66</sup> The aggregate figure derives from the fifth year estimates of the revenue and expenditure (Mazambani 1999, 29, 32-5). I have excluded local salaries from expenditure and—generously—used the exchange rate at the time of the writing of report (38.4) rather than the rate as of late 2000 (55.0). The per-hectare figure assumes a compound equivalent in size to that proposed by the hotelier above. Mazambani himself gave no estimate of the amount of land required for tourism.

from farmland to tourism. Shortly after this report, political violence demolished the tourist trade throughout the country. When I visited Chimanimani in July 2000, I stayed at the only hotel (of four) in the district centre not closed, and there I was virtually the only guest not attending a workshop. Close to year-end, the Kiledo Lodge was running at 15% occupancy, and only 40% of these guests were nature-lovers. From eco-tourism, the Lodge's rate of profit (really negative profit, or losses) plus local wages lay at or below zero!<sup>67</sup>

Against these odds, the dream of a Vhimba hotel lives on. How can NGOs, donors, and the investors themselves continue to hope? Campfire's ideology has blinded them to the negative economic indicators—including the slump in tourism nation-wide—and even eclipsed the positive ones. From east to west, utopianism is breaking out. In common with the liberal 'born free' (after 1980) generation, idealists inside and outside Government are groping towards a new dispensation of race and space. They would shrink exclusionary zones or abolish them altogether. In smaller, WWF-style reserves, people would live more compactly and vertically: 'OK', explained a leading Campfire professional, 'let us expand upwards, and, if we can have some five-storey buildings, rather than expanding that way [arms outstretched]'.<sup>68</sup> Needless to say, his one-storey office had not yet run the numbers on this vision. In mid-2000, in the Council's new tourism officer, a young, black Zimbabwean, articulated an even grander future, completely without reserves: 'Why should there be segregation? Whites, blacks ... we are all out to help each other, to build a better nation. So why should we be segregating?'<sup>69</sup> Such ideals of urban modernity and racial harmony lift Campfire from the banality of (in)feasibility studies and breathe life into it.

They are risky ideals, however, and desegregation is especially so. Long stuck in the rear seats (the reserves), some smallholders now may soon lose their place on the bus (or train or restaurant) entirely. The Campfire programme undermines their time-honoured entitlement to farmland. However paltry, an income stream from tourism might help sweeten that bitter pill, but only if rural people were *entitled* to that income in perpetuity (and in hard currency!). Even in the animal-rich west or in South Africa or Namibia, eco-tourism projects have never warranted such confidence. As events have now shown, moreover, no one in Zimbabwe (or perhaps anywhere in Southern Africa) should bank on the tourist dollar. Thus, Campfire's benefits are fast evaporating, leaving a hazardous residue. As in other development schemes, the intended, planned effects are giving way to undesirable, only half-anticipated 'side effects' (Ferguson 1990). The partial alienation of Vhimba is one of these. No land has yet changed hands, but, as a principle, Chimanimani's black lowlands are already gone.

\* \* \*

---

<sup>67</sup> Interview, Mutare, 9 November 2000. Sixty percent of the guests were businessmen visiting nearby Chipinge town. Such travelers would have no reason to stay in Vhimba. As the only land use within a 250-ha. private forest, the hotel must earn a relatively low rate of profit per hectare even in good times.

<sup>68</sup> Interview, Harare, 31 March 2000.

<sup>69</sup> Interview, Chimanimani, 13 July 2000.

Old and new processes of colonisation are underway in eastern Zimbabwe. In some respects, the current crop of potential investors descends from the ‘fortune hunters’ of 1890-1896. Crossing their own Limpopo, they are seeking profit on the other side of the reserve boundary. In spatial terms, they are building upon Moodie’s legacy. Current colonisers may evict the great-grandchildren of those evicted by the original colonisers. Yet, the new colonisers are different and operate differently. First, most act with good will. They do not ‘*sjambok*’ the natives, as Moodie did. Indeed, many investors are sharing profits with local communities. Second, many investors and boosters are black, although virtually all the tourists themselves are white. A business ethic, rather than racial solidarity, gives these colonisers their unity of purpose. Third, they justify their claim to obtain and retain land on grounds of conservation. Here is an ironic reversal: whites in the 1890s held land by cutting trees—the ‘beneficial occupation’ clause. To use another term of the era, homesteading ‘opened’ the highveldt. Among blacks, homesteading and migration also fulfilled the inclusionary mandate of the reserves. A century later, eco-tourism firms apply for business licenses to the reserves with a promise to *protect* native flora. Tree-cutting smallholders, especially migrants, lose out. Fourth and finally, these colonisers differ from the trekkers in that they avail themselves of state and donor subsidies. The ‘fortune hunters’ of the 1890s mostly found their own fortunes, if they found any.<sup>70</sup> The Moodies grabbed directly and crudely from the natives. Comparatively coddled, today’s settler-cum-investor may draw upon studies and management services paid for by donors. Ultimately, ‘Campfire’ has come to denote an expensive public-private partnership for latter-day colonisation. Or, at the very least, it is laying the ideological groundwork for foreseeable material change. Settler-led, investor-led development has re-emerged as the leading model for Zimbabwe’s remote areas.

How might investment and colonisation proceed? Already the outlines of three strategies are emerging: partition, land titling, and contract farming. Each one merits strict monitoring and regulation on the part of NGOs and Government. This article addressed the first and most straightforward of these incipient land-grabs, partition. Rural district councils and investors are erecting real and imaginary fences—ranging from electrified wildlife barriers to the ‘business centre’—within reserves. If repeated, these acts of enclosure will reduce the reserves geometrically until there is nearly nothing left. Family-level land titling—to speculate on the second possibility—would eradicate the reserves in one fell swoop. The Movement for Democratic Change, Zimbabwe’s opposition party, recently revived this moribund notion, perhaps proving the Chimanimani hotelier foresightful. Under a system of titles, that investor could simply buy the site for a lodge and heli-pad.<sup>71</sup> Such real estate costs

---

<sup>70</sup> Although after the initial period of conquest, colonial subsidies in markets, etc, were substantial.

<sup>71</sup> For similar criticism of individual titles, see Rukuni (1994, 49-50). The ‘Manifesto’ of the Movement for Democratic Change (2000, section 3.3) seems to agonize over the issue of titles and land alienation: it advocates ‘the provision of title deeds in communal areas to enable land to be used as security [i.e., as collateral] to attract much-needed investment but in a manner that ... provides strong safeguards against the transfer of land from poor people to the rich or to finance houses [i.e., in manner that prevents creditors from claiming the collateral of debtors in default]’. Such a system would contradict itself: collateral is not collateral unless it can be confiscated.

little and will cost even less if, as predicted, Zimbabwe's economy crashes (Rotberg 2000). Finally, the most imaginative of the new strategies breaks the mould, so to speak, of land-grabbing. Contract farming allows an investor to control production without controlling land per se. Land-limited firms can accumulate from a wider hinterland, as Chipinge tea estates are now doing in communal land. In all of these ways—partition, titling, and contract farming—business will derive profits from natural resources in the reserves. Some smallholders will, doubtless, benefit too, but there are no guarantees, certainly not to land.

With this loss of entitlements, the century-old order of race and space is crumbling. From 1896, settler colonialism established and maintained rural apartheid. The Southern Rhodesian Native Department segregated land *for natives* (especially for women, children, and the aged) while accepting the permanence of white highlands established after 1890. The policy created a stalemate rather than the neo-Europe of some temperate zones. And, for nearly a century, neither the gun nor the market could separate smallholders from their land. Now, desegregation is rapidly removing those barriers and protections. Thanks to Campfire, white-owned firms and white tourists are coming onto black land. (As of late 2000, 36 of Zimbabwe's 55 districts had 'appropriate authority' to proceed with Campfire). Similar processes began shortly before the transition in South Africa as white 'organized agriculture' invested in Bantustans (Bernstein 1996, p. 22-4). Meanwhile, blacks are also coming onto white land. In 2000, hundreds of 'invasions' have shattered white entitlements in Zimbabwe, and this activism may cross the Limpopo into South Africa (Cousins 2000). In the midst of such actual and potential dislocations, whites, blacks, and business are grasping for a social law of land access. They must now *claim* land by reference to economic productivity, past occupation, conservation, sheer force of arms, or all these criteria together. As in Vhimba, neither the colour of one's skin nor the heft of one's profits is sufficient to preclude eviction. There is cause for a bizarre nostalgia—for the comfort and security of black lowlands. Today's times recall the frontier spirit of Moodie and the fortune hunters: ambitious, dangerous, and rife with opportunity for squatting, resettling, or for doing both at the same time.

## REFERENCES

- Aberly, Doug. 1999. 'Interpreting Bioregionalism: A Story from Many Voices'. In *Bioregionalism*, pp. 13-42, edited by Michael Vincent McGinnis. London: Routledge.
- Adams, Jonathan S. and Thomas O. McShane. 1992. *The Myth of Wild Africa: Conservation without Illusion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Africa Resources Trust, n.d. 'Community-Based Tourism: a New Direction for CAMPFIRE'. Harare: Africa Resources Trust.
- Alexander, Jocelyn and JoAnn McGregor. 2000. 'Wildlife and Politics: CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe'. *Development and Change*. 31: 605-27.
- Berg, P. and R. Dasmann. 1977. 'Reinhabiting California'. *The Ecologist* 7(10): 399-401.

- Bernstein, Henry, 1996. 'How White Agriculture (Re)Positioned itself for a "New South Africa"' . *Critical Sociology*. 22(3): 9-36.
- Bond, Patrick. 1998. *Uneven Zimbabwe: a Study of Finance, Development, and Underdevelopment*. Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press.
- Bromley, K.A., R.C. Hannington, G.B. Jones, and C.J. Lightfoot, 1968. *Melsetter Regional Plan*. Salisbury: Department of Conservation and Extension.
- Bruce, John W. 1988. 'A Perspective on Indigenous Land Tenure Systems and Land Concentration'. In *Land and Society in Contemporary Africa*, edited by R.E. Downs and S.P. Reyna, pp. 23-51. Hanover, NH: University Press of America.
- Campbell, Bruce M., Bevelyn Sithole, and Peter Frost. 2000. 'CAMPFIRE Experiences in Zimbabwe'. *Science* 287: 42-3.
- Cheater, Angela. 1990. 'The Ideology of 'Communal' Land Tenure in Zimbabwe: Mythogenesis Enacted?' *Africa* 60(2): 188-206.
- Child, Brian. 1993. 'Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE Programme: Using the High Value of Wildlife Recreation to Revolutionize Natural Resource Management in Communal Areas'. *Commonwealth Forestry Review* 72(4): 284-96.
- Child, Graham. 1996. 'The Role of Community-based Wild Resource Management in Zimbabwe'. *Biodiversity and Conservation* 3: 355-67.
- Cousins, Ben. 2000. 'Why Land Invasions Will Happen Here Too ...'. Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape, South Africa.
- Cronon, William. 1991. *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York and London: W.W. Norton.
- Crosby, Alfred W. 1986. *Ecological Imperialism: the Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Derman, Bill. 1995. 'Environmental NGOs, Dispossession, and the State: Ideology and Praxis of African Nature and Development'. *Human Ecology* 23(2): 199-215.
- Derman, Bill and James Murombedzi. 1994. 'Democracy, Development, and Human Rights in Zimbabwe: A Contradictory Terrain'. *African Rural and Urban Studies* 1(2): 119-43.
- Duffy, Rosaleen. 2000. *Killing for Conservation: Wildlife Policy in Zimbabwe*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, Oxford, UK: James Currey; and Harare: Weaver.
- Dzingirai, Vupenyu. 1994. 'Politics and Ideology in Human Settlement: Getting Settled in the Sikomena Area of Chief Dobola'. *Zambezia* 21(2): 167-76.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1995. "'Take Back your CAMPFIRE': A Study of Local Level Perceptions to Electric Fencing in the Framework of Binga's Campfire Programme'. Harare: Center for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2000. 'Migration and the Future of CAMPFIRE in the Zambezi Valley, Zimbabwe', *Commons Southern Africa* (University of the Western Cape, South Africa) 2(1).
- Ferguson, James. 1990. *The Anti-Politics Machine: 'Development', Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Gibson, Clark C. 1999. *Politicians and Poachers: The Political Economy of Wildlife Policy in Africa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Hill, Kevin A. 1996. 'Zimbabwe's Wildlife Utilization Programs: Grassroots Democracy or an Extension of State Power?'. *African Studies Review* 39(1): 103-21.
- Hughes, David McDermott. 1996. 'When Parks Encroach upon People: Expanding National Parks in the Rusitu Valley, Zimbabwe'. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 20(1): 36-40.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999a. 'Frontier Dynamics: Struggles for Land and Clients on the Zimbabwe-Mozambique Border'. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999b. 'Refugees and Squatters: Immigration and the Politics on Territory on the Zimbabwe-Mozambique Border'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25(4): 533-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 2001. 'Cadastral Politics: The Making of Community-Based Resource Management in Zimbabwe and Mozambique', *Development and Change* 32: 741-68.
- Jansen, D., I. Bond, and B. Child. 1992. 'Cattle, Wildlife, Both, or Neither: Results of a Financial and Economic Survey of Commercial Ranches in Southern Zimbabwe'. Harare: WWF Multispecies Animal Production Systems Project, Project Paper No. 27.
- Kawadza, Emmanuel and Cathy Rogers. 1993. 'A Report on the Haroni-Rusitu Botanical Reserves'. Memo, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management, Harare.
- Kinsey, B.H. 1983. 'Emerging Policy Issues in Zimbabwe's Land Resettlement Programmes'. *Development Policy Review* 1: 163-96.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1999. 'Land Reform, Growth and Equity: Emerging Evidence from Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25(2): 173-96.
- Lunga, S.L. 1999. 'Migrants and Experienced Impacts to the CAMPFIRE Programme'. Paper presented to the International Conference on Natural Resources Management, University of Zimbabwe, Harare, 26-29 January.
- Madzudzo, Elias. 1996. 'Producer Communities in a Community Based Wildlife Management Community: a Case Study of Bulilimangwe and Tsholotsho District'. Harare: Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- Manzou, Chrispin. 2000. 'Communal Fruit Production and Processing: the Case of the Rusitu Valley in Chimanimani, 1980-1999'. Bachelor's Thesis, Department of Economic History, University of Zimbabwe.
- Matikinyidze, L., 1995. 'Report on a Preliminary Study to Assess the Potential of Developing a Campfire Type Project in Chimanimani Rural District Council with Specific Reference to Nyakwaa Forest Area'. Harare: Zimbabwe Trust.
- Matzke, Gordon Edwin and Nontokozo Nabane. 1996. 'Outcomes of a Community Controlled Wildlife Utilization Program in a Zambezi Valley Community'. *Human Ecology* 24(1): 65-85.
- Mazambani, David. 1999. 'Community-Based Eco-Tourism Development: the Vhimba Community Project, Chimanimani District'. Harare: Edit Resource Centre.

- Metcalfe, Simon. 1994. 'The Zimbabwe Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE)'. In *Natural Connections: Perspectives in Community-Based Conservation*, edited by David Western and R. Michael Wright, pp. 161-92. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Movement for Democratic Change. 2000. 'Manifesto'. Harare: Movement for Democratic Change.
- Moyo, Sam. 1995. *The Land Question in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Southern Africa Regional Institute for Policy Studies.
- Murindagomo, Felix. 1990. 'Zimbabwe: WINDFALL and CAMPFIRE'. In *Living with Wildlife: Wildlife Resource Management with Local Participation in Africa*, edited by Agnes Kiss, pp. 123-39. Washington, DC; the World Bank.
- Murombedzi, James C. 1992. 'Decentralization or Recentralization?: Implementing CAMPFIRE in the Omay Communal Lands of the Nyaminyami District'. Harare: Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- Murphree, Marshall W. 1989. 'Wildlife Utilization in the Tsholotsho Communal Land, Nyamandhlovu District, Zimbabwe'. Harare: Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1991. 'Communities as Institutions for Resource Management'. Harare: Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1997. 'Congruent Objectives, Competing Interests, and Strategic Compromise: Concept and Process in the Evolution of Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE Programme'. Paper presented at the conference on 'Representing Communities', Helen, Georgia, USA, 1-3 June 1997.
- Neumann, Roderick P. 1998. *Imposing Wilderness: Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Nyambara, Pius S. 1999. 'A History of Land Acquisition in Gokwe, Northwestern Zimbabwe, 1945-1997'. Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois.
- Peet, Richard and Michael Watts. 1996. 'Liberation Ecology: Development, Sustainability and Environment in an Age of Market Triumphalism'. In *Liberation Ecologies*, edited by Richard Peet and Michael Watts, pp. 1-45. London: Routledge.
- Rotberg, Robert I. 2000. 'The Final Stages of African Dictatorship'. *Southern Africa Report* 18(15): 7.
- Rukuni, Mandivamba, editor. 1994. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems*. Vol. 1. Harare: Government Printers.
- SAFIRE (Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources). 1996. 'Community-Based Tourist Development in Zimbabwe: The Vhimba Eco-Tourism Project', Harare: SAFIRE.
- Schroeder, Richard A. 1999. 'Geographies of Environmental Intervention in Africa'. *Progress in Human Geography* 23(3): 357-78.
- Scoones, Ian, et al. 1996. *Hazards and Opportunities: Farming Livelihoods in Dryland Africa—Lessons from Zimbabwe*. London: Zed.

- Shipton, Parker and Mitzee Goheen. 1994. 'Understanding African Land-Holding: Power, Wealth, and Meaning'. *Africa* 62(3): 307-25.
- Steward, Helen. 1997. 'Report to Vhimba Consultative Committee', 20 May.
- Worby, Eric. 1998. 'Tyranny, Parody, and Ethnic Polarity: Ritual Engagements with the State in Northwestern Zimbabwe'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24(3): 561-78.
- World Wide Fund for Nature. 1997. *Quota Setting Manual*. Harare: World Wide Fund for Nature, Zimbabwe Trust, and Safari Club International.
- Zinyama, Lovemore and Richard Whitlow. 1986. 'Changing Patterns of Population Distribution in Zimbabwe'. *GeoJournal* 13(4): 365-84.

—Chapter 3—  
**Resettlement and Contract Farming  
in Zimbabwe**

**The Case of Mushandike**

**Vupenyu Dzingirai**

Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and Public Policy, University of Virginia, USA

*While arguments have and continue to be made in favour of private sector dominated agriculture in resettlement zones, little is known about the viability and usefulness of this agrarian intervention. It is not known whether peasants benefit from this partnership with the private sector. This chapter argues that private business has and should have a role in the development of smallholder agriculture in new resettlement zones. The trouble is that smallholders are not organised in ways that make them able to tap into the benefits of the private sector. The result is that resettlement zones become fertile grounds for exploitation by the sophisticated and profit-minded private sector.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Until the introduction of the structural adjustment programme, post independent smallholder agriculture in Zimbabwe's resettlement schemes was dominated by the state (Bratton 1994). Inspired by the experiences of the socialist countries that played a key role in the predominantly land based liberation struggle, the state played, for most resettlement schemes, the role of manager, deciding how, when and what was to be grown. The state could afford to do this because it was the source for all inputs, from seeds and fertilisers to pesticides and herbicides. This high-handed managerial role was complemented by another sophisticated one: control of marketing. Eager to get as much as possible from the peasants and doubting the ability of peasants to conduct marketing, the state cast itself as the only purchaser of resettlement produce. To capture grain from peasants as well as reduce wastages, the state installed, as everywhere in Africa, marketing depots, filling up these with state functionaries (Bates 1981, Barnett 1984, Scott 1998). For various reasons including those relating to the collapse of socialism, the state's dominant role in resettlement agriculture has, now, been dismantled and from its ruins has emerged a new regime based on partnership with private business. With inputs in hand and assured markets for every crop sown under contract, private business promises a lighter yoke to the smallholder. While these partnerships now mark the landscape and continue to multiply with each new resettlement scheme, there is very little research problematising them. Though there is a rich corpus of knowledge about contract farming elsewhere (Little and Watts 1994, Barnett 1984), there remains a need to learn how these contracts are formed and to illuminate their nature. Could it be that these

contracts are ambiguous about obligations of buyers and clear about obligations of growers? What has been the impact of these contracts on the growers? Such questions touch on the significance of these contracts on Zimbabwe's unfolding resettlement and land reform programme.

This chapter represents an attempt to understand these new relationships in the context of land resettlement in Zimbabwe, in particular how these agrarian contracts are framed and what this framing means for smallholders. The chapter also seeks to understand whether contract farming can complement and enrich the ongoing land reform and resettlement programme, which has tended to be mechanistic and state driven. The conclusion is that contract farming emerges as a mechanism to reorient smallholder agriculture in ways that answers to the needs of private business. The politics of ambiguity and clarity in agrarian contracts and the increased surveillance through placement of local level agents constitute the strategic instruments for this reorientation of agriculture. The attempt to interlock smallholder agriculture with industrial needs and operations, in turn, generates bitterness among smallholders who remain in the partnership for lack of viable alternatives. The condition where smallholders become tied to private business persists in part because there is no mechanism to restrain private business in ways that protect smallholder interests. The utility of contract farming as a vehicle for improving smallholder agriculture even in the new resettlement schemes of Zimbabwe will depend on the degree to which farmers reorganise to become a force to engage private business.

The material for this chapter comes from Mushandike, a planned resettlement scheme where 'Banners' (not its real name), a big agribusiness concern, is enticing unorganised people into amorphous contracts for perishable products and non-perishable crops (beans and tomatoes) from which it is easy to make a case for the company but predictably difficult to make peasant claims or restitution from it.

## **2. MUSHANDIKE RESETTLEMENT: BACKGROUND**

Mushandike is a planned resettlement scheme in Masvingo, a semi-arid province that has been the focus of state-initiated agricultural development seeking to modernise smallholder agriculture. Its members are randomly selected by lots and, as private business wishing to control smallholders through community control would painfully discover, do not share common backgrounds. The 445 smallholder households in the entire scheme (49 for the study village) come from the surrounding densely populated hilly districts. These districts or reserves, into which Africans were colonially concentrated and protected (Arrighi and Saul 1973, Hughes 2001), include Chivi, Masvingo, Nyajena and Mapanzure.

From its inception, Mushandike represented a nationalist project in which farmers existed for the state. The new settlers were mandated to industriously produce commodities for the good of country and to justify the war of liberation, whose bloody battlefields included the hills

and valleys of Mushandike<sup>72</sup>. Each farmer had a 1.5 hectare plot, each located in one of the three blocks devoted to a particular crop determined by the state. The seeds (for cotton, maize and wheat) fertilisers, pesticides, and water were all advanced by the state, which recovered the costs through a stop order system that made it (the state) the sole market for all crops in which inputs had been advanced. This arrangement ensured not only that settlers produced but also that they did so in ways that met the requirements of the state. Paradoxically, many settlers did not mind being state labourers. In Mushandike, the state, through its various marketing arms, which included the Cotton Marketing Board (now Cotton Company of Zimbabwe—COTTCO) and the Grain Marketing Board (GMB), bought smallholder produce at preset prices, and after deducting multiple costs (which included transport, levies, inputs) passed the balance (where applicable) to the producer. This irked peasants and, as this chapter will show, was the source of friction even with those private companies that displaced the state but inherited its infrastructure.

Smallholders lived in numbered homesteads, which were slotted in lineal villages modelled after the colonial villagisation programme of the sixties (Drinkwater 1989). This form of organisation, which was also mapped, enabled the state to pinpoint and access those individuals believed to be lazy, growing the wrong crop or investing in immovable property. Although not a single settler had permission to stay in the scheme revoked by the state, many, including those with prior claims to Mushandike, were aware that their chance of a peaceful sojourn depended on their being in step with the state. If there is any reason the smallholders would welcome the private sector in the framework of contract farming, it is because they needed a break from the state's continuous precepts about resettlement tenure and tenuous conditions.

In Mushandike, as indeed in all other resettlement schemes, the state was never far away. It was represented by the department of Agriculture and Extension whose motorised staff reduced risk through timely provision of technical advice (on diseases, pest control and coordinating marketing to the state) and also enforced the block system, which devoted a single crop to all plots constituting a block. Yet it was the Resettlement Officer who epitomised the state, because on him rested the formal power to expel settlers from the scheme. Far from facilitating smallholder agriculture, these officers gave weight to nationalist objectives, ensuring that resettlement agriculture smoothly reflected those needs. Quite unpredictably, the same agrarian functionaries would later transfer their loyalty to private business, which in the 1990s displaced the state in smallholder agriculture. In Mushandike, state agricultural officers now mingle with contract farming managers from agribusiness firms.

If resettlement as a nationalist project was tolerable in the formative years of resettlement, when liberation war memories were still fresh, it became increasingly unacceptable to the new farmers wanting to accumulate personal wealth. As in other places where state control is

---

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Chief Charumbira, Mushandike, 25/7/2002.

pronounced, this lack of fit between what smallholders wanted and imagined about resettlement and what they realised ultimately generated discontent and rebellion even if this was of a hidden nature (Hyden 1980, Hart 1982, Scott 1992). Thus at night, when visibility was difficult and when state officials were retired to their removed compound overlooking the scheme, or during those days when the functionaries were absent, perhaps attending to their family needs or participating in the many workshops on rural development held in the town of Masvingo, embittered farmers crossed with their loaded and covered carts the Tokwe River in the west to sell grain to the food-deficient areas that included Chivi, Shurugwi and Charumbira<sup>73</sup>. Tenants also transferred their labour and effort to dry-land farming within the scheme and secretly rented their plots to colleagues able to farm without credit support from the state. In the village as many as a third of the tenants leased land to the urban dwellers of Masvingo. For this reason, some farmers reversed their settlement in favour of those places in the margins, including the Zambezi Valley, Gokwe and the Lowveld (Nyambara 2001; Dzingirai 1999). If there is anything smallholders learned from this form of collectivisation, it was that champions of development, including the state, can be beaten and cheated if the victims are brave, smart and take risks.<sup>74</sup> It is a lesson the producers, in order to survive, would reluctantly apply in the framework of new private sector-driven agrarian contracts.

Partly because of the shift to a market economy, the state has partially withdrawn from Mushandike and other schemes and has been superseded by agribusiness firms that traditionally prefer working with big commercial farmers. The firms would rather they did business within the framework of contract farming. This urban-based contingent desiring to work within this framework is varied and includes COTTCO, GMB and 'Banners'.

A huge vegetable processing company that has been working with Mushandike growers since 1998, Banners is located in the hilly town of Mutare, some 300km from the low-lying smallholder resettlement. For the company, Mushandike constitutes an agrarian frontier into which it is expanding from other schemes and commercial farms bordering Mutare. The vision the company has is of a landscape of contracts, one in which every small producer is networked to the company as its predictable producer. As the section below suggests, this is a vision that can only be realised through a careful manipulation of symbols. The section below discusses how the company presents contract farming.

### **3. BANNERS AND CONTRACT FARMING**

Although the company constantly refers to the need for formalisation and regularisation, Mushandike agrarian contracts are oral. Smallholders are promptly proffered starter packs (seeds, chemicals and fertilisers) by the company; acceptance constitutes a signature to the

---

<sup>73</sup> Residents of Chivi and Shurugwi confirmed these clandestine sales of grain that emerged in the 1980s (Dzingirai 1999). As a young man in the 1980s, I recall my parents dealing with these sellers, who by the break of day would have crossed the Tokwe River to do business with Chivi people located 20km from the scheme.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Mr. Dumbe, Mushandike, 22/7/2002. Throughout the chapter, false names for informants are used, in part to protect them from the state and the private companies with whom they do business.

contract, locally known as *jendiremeni kondirakiti*<sup>75</sup>. These contracts are not memorialised or witnessed, nor are they accompanied by any ritual that would formalise them. This is not an oversight; this constitutes a strategy to maximise company claims on the smallholders while reducing the claims of the smallholder; any formal and clear contract would provide a basis for smallholders to claim redress and restitution, and this is what the company is anxious to avoid.

Like many private companies that targeted Mushandike, desperate to win smallholders, Banners depoliticises contract farming by casting it as a gift<sup>76</sup>. The company says it provides the gift of contract because it is friendly to smallholders. As a friend it feels naturally obliged to extend its hand to another friend<sup>77</sup>. In some instances, the company cites contract farming as a gift intended to prepare for a great and fruitful relationship<sup>78</sup>. Presented in this way, contract farming is important not for what it is but for what it makes or might make possible. Banners says it invites smallholders into contract farming to strengthen its relationship with smallholders<sup>79</sup>. It says that this invitation is the only meaningful, if not the only available, way the company can cement its old relationship with smallholders.

Whether presented as arising out of friendship, as an indicator of solidarity or as a mechanism to strengthen a relationship, the gift is always presented as making a difference in the recipient's life. The company claims that contract farming uplifts smallholders through a systematic modernisation of agriculture. Contract farming (and even the most sceptical of smallholders would undoubtedly nod to this assertion) lays at the door of the farm, seeds, fertilisers, chemicals, and the ready market—in short all the essentials for commercialisation of agriculture (Dzingirai 1992). For the company this transfer of technology is not only important in assuring productivity but also in improving the dignity of the sector and the smallholder battered by years of colonial strangulation<sup>80</sup>. In Mushandike especially, this political element is obviously intended to resonate with smallholders who, although no longer colonial subjects, are still its victims. Thus from this perspective contract farming is not simply a gift but a dynamising one.

As will be shown in the section below, contract farming is far more complicated than gifts, because it links smallholders to exploitative and uncontrollable markets. This simplified presentation of contract farming is intended to hide its exploitative nature. As indicated above, Mushandikeans are emerging from a protracted and bitter encounter with the state, and any outsider wishing to coerce or endear them must rely on effective strategies, including the use of metaphors and language. The presentation of contract farming in these terms

---

<sup>75</sup> Corruption for 'gentleman contract'.

<sup>76</sup> 'Chipo chatinokupai'. Mr. Gavhu's field day address to smallholders, 17/6/2002

<sup>77</sup> 'Imwi muri hama dzedu, ndizvo tichikupai zvose izvi'. Mr. Gavhu's address to smallholders, Mushandike, 17/6/2002.

<sup>78</sup> 'Izvi zvaitinoita kutsvaga ukama'. Mr. Gavhu's address to farmers, Mushandike, 17/6/2002

<sup>79</sup> 'Urwu rubatsiro nderwekusimbaradza ukama'. Mushandike, 17/6/2002.

<sup>80</sup> Mr. Gavhu's address to smallholders, Mushandike, 17/6/2002.

allows for Banners to reach an otherwise uncaptured or unreceptive smallholder peasantry. That the contracts are illusory becomes clear when one examines their nature and how they serve to control smallholders.

## 4. THE NATURE OF CONTRACT

### 4.1. The Politics of Ambiguity

That the contracts are not intended to benefit smallholders is evident in the manner in which they are formulated. While acknowledging the inevitability of risk in growing perishable crops, the contracts are vague, if not silent, about what the role of the company should be in the event of problems arising. Thus the contracts do not commit the company to compensate the farmer when a proffered crop variety fails under severe or unfamiliar weather conditions (see Box 1).

In addition to making growers bear the risk of weather, the contracts do not oblige the company to compensate farmers whose produce rots while awaiting collection. This is quite clear from the case shown in Box 2, where smallholders lost tons of tomatoes while awaiting collection by the company.

Moreover, the contracts are vague on the mode of payment. That is, the contracts are silent about where and when farmers receive payment. Thus when they grew the tomatoes for the company in 1999, growers were not told when or how they would be paid. Unsure about when they would be paid and where, growers had to travel to the company depot, only to be told that payment had not been processed. In one case, the growers' representative was told the money would be posted. In another case, the representative was told the Banners would bring the check to the growers. While the practice is unjust because growers cannot make concrete plans, it protects the company, allowing it to process payment of farmers at its own convenience.

#### **Box 1: New crop variety does not survive**

In 1999, for the first time, Banners provided farmers with a new bean variety: Michigan. The crop did well, which was expected because the company eagerly provided fertilisers and extension services and admonished smallholders to irrigate the crop liberally for maximum results. Trouble started when the crop was near to maturity and when it seemed the smallholders would cash in from the crop. A two-day downpour of rain destroyed the entire crop. The loss was enormous, as one smallholder noted:

We were disappointed, because I did not get anything from my half-hectare crop. This is why I no longer want to grow beans for Banners<sup>1</sup>.

For a long time, the company did not show up in the field, a very serious error for smallholders used to some sort of comfort and assurance after an agricultural disaster. But while they could bear this neglect and in some sense expected it, they could not understand why the company continued to demand for the repayment of the inputs used for the inappropriate variety it introduced.

### **Box 2: Tomato loss**

The incident, so deeply ingrained in social memory because it had no precedence and because each smallholder witnessed the daily rotting of tomatoes that had been staked at the homestead, caused huge financial losses on the part of the capital-deficient farmers who had locally borrowed cash to cover both the monthly cost of water and labour. When it became clear that the company would not come, it was already too late and the market was already glutted<sup>1</sup>. During this difficult time in which five households secretly abandoned the scheme in favour of communal lands, farmers sold tomatoes below cost and when this failed, resorted to throwing the produce away. Despite the loss, the company refused to compensate farmers, only promising them better response next time.

Finally, the contracts do not make it the responsibility of the company to pay for commodities affected while within its custody. In 2000, smallholders whose tomatoes were fortunate to be collected by the company were not paid because the tomatoes were said to be bad. Affected smallholders insist that the tomatoes were good at the time of collection, a point that would explain why the company agreed to collect them in the first place. If tomatoes were

later rejected, it is because they became bad while under company care. The company however faulted farmers and refused to pay for the loss, an action that has led some farmers to demand a formal apology<sup>81</sup>.

Especially because doing so would entail losses on its part, the company has, rather predictably, refused to correct the contracts. Smallholders debated about instituting legal action against the company, but the realisation that their agreements were too vague and loose to make a strong case has prevented them from following this route. The matter is also complicated by the view, steeped in Mushandikeans social memory, that the legal system is intended to protect the educated and not the smallholder. And so it is that the smallholders remain locked in ambiguous contracts whose objective is to minimise their gains.

## **4.2. The Politics of Clarity**

While they are deliberately ambiguous in order to reduce risk and loss on the part of Banners, the contracts are strategically clear on what the company demands and expects of the smallholders. These demands, which are constantly amplified and clarified at field days and other well-publicised village meetings, include that farmers must grow the crop variety offered by the company. They must also grow it according to a standard set by the company<sup>82</sup>. Among other things, this means that they plant the crop on specified date, use the required fertilisers, monitor the crops for pests and diseases and water liberally, harvest the crop on a due date, grade it and package it. In addition to ensuring that smallholders remain bound to the company, these demands ensure that the company extracts a good product from

---

<sup>81</sup> Interview with Mr. VeVezera, Mushandike, 16/6/2002.

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Mr. Tembani, Mutare, 12/7/2002

the growers. It must be stressed that these demands are not unreasonable, because agroprocessing has to operate under tight and controlled conditions if it is to be viable.

The fourth requirement is double-barrelled because smallholders must sell crops only to Banners and not to what it terms *matsotsi* (crooks)—not because these people traditionally cheat farmers of their crops but because they threaten contract farming. The company requires that smallholders accept the price it unilaterally sets. In 2002, the company set the prices of beans at \$175/kg and the price of tomatoes at \$20/kg. While appearing good, the prices were half of what was offered on the parallel market. Even though the company has been quick to describe the prices it provides as just, because they are set through consultation with big commercial farmers and because the company is committed to smallholder agriculture<sup>83</sup>, smallholders rightfully find this demand unacceptable for two related reasons. First they hold that they are knowledgeable about costs of production, knowledge that is critical in determining any price. Secondly they hold that they make agriculture possible and therefore must be provided the opportunity to have input in pricing<sup>84</sup>. The company has clung to its position and has not revised its requirements, which suggests that it considers these injunctions to be important in ensuring a predictable and cheap produce necessary for its own operations.

## 5. SURVEILLANCE AND CONTROL

Amplifying the company position through meetings and demonstrations is not adequate to make the cunning and crafty farmers comply with the contracts. As part of ensuring continued smallholder compliance, the company has developed a pervasive monitoring and control mechanism. The first form of control is internal and relies on social capital. Farmers are all organised into groups of which there is one in the village under study. Farmers are given inputs on condition that they persuade one another to honour their debts to the company or that they all market their produce to the company<sup>85</sup>. Since villagers must know and associate with each other, the company hopes they will use this intimate interaction to discipline each other in dealings with the company. ‘They expect us to be their ZRP’<sup>86</sup>. While it ensures the delivery of some produce to the company, this mechanism does not fully deliver desired results. This is mainly for two reasons. First, smallholders have gradually come to view Banners as an enemy from which members should shield one another<sup>87</sup>. Second, the smallholders, while increasingly becoming a community with shared norms and beliefs, are not as yet one. Unlike other resettlement areas into which people migrated as

---

<sup>83</sup> Mr. Gavhu, Mushandike, 26/6/2002/

<sup>84</sup> Mr. Chivanda, 27/7/2002

<sup>85</sup> Interview with Chivanda, Mushandike, 27/7/2002.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with Mr. Moyo, Mushandike, 27/7/2002. ZRP stands for the country’s police, Zimbabwe Republic Police. The force is of course not very effective in controlling criminal behaviour, but the point of the informant is that Banners is using local people to influence behaviour.

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Mr. Chidyamakono, 12/8/2002.

whole communities (Madzudzo 1996), in Mushandike, smallholders share diverse backgrounds in part because they were drawn by lots and cast onto mapped villages. It is therefore difficult and sometimes dangerous for the groups to persuade each other to confirm to a certain pattern. Farmer groups that represent Banners and encourage smallholders to pay up their debts are often threatened with punishment by those who have been aggrieved by the company<sup>88</sup>. The dissatisfaction with social capital has shifted the company's position from one relying on internal forms of control to one that is externally reinforced.

The externally based form of control has taken the form of placing within the midst of the resettlement scheme a *munhu wavo*<sup>89</sup>, or company agent reporting to the office in Mutare. The groundsman's role is cast as that of co-facilitating with AREX farming among farmers, teaching farmers to do proper farming and serving as a strategic link with the office<sup>90</sup>. In practice his function is mainly to reduce company risk. This he does by ensuring that farmers plant the right variety and on time, monitoring the health of the plants, alerting the company to take remedial action if diseases break out, which might affect crop production and delivery. His most important function, though, is preventing leakage of contracted products. This he does by policing and surveillance. With his red motorcycle, he criss-crosses the resettlement scheme, scanning the landscape for illegal marketers whose details are noted down in the computer. He surveys the crop, and once its ripens provides packing materials (sacks for beans and crates for tomatoes) and alerts the company to promptly dispatch a specified haulage truck to a specified location. All the time, he makes himself visible to the villagers, especially those whose crop is ready, the point being to convey the notion that they are being watched for any possible mischief<sup>91</sup>.

Even though this appears quite exhaustive, the company is not altogether content with the results and is busy realigning its policy to keep farmers in control. In addition to the surveillance, the company threatens the people with desertion. Thus it has been threatening smallholders with desertion should they continue to interrogate and contest its marketing policy. Because smallholders do not mind being deserted<sup>92</sup>, and because they sense the company to be desperate for cheap agricultural produce<sup>93</sup>, it is very likely that they will simply ignore the threats of desertion. Perhaps aware that this policy will not work, the company is upgrading it to a more robust strategy organised around fear. Two cases hint at this new direction: At a 2002 village meeting, when farmers criticised the company for

---

<sup>88</sup> Interview with Mr. Chivanda, 16/6/2002.

<sup>89</sup> *Munhu wavo* does not simply describe another person. Rather it suggests a person who does not fit within the moral community of smallholders, one representing aliens while at the same time claiming to be part of it.

<sup>90</sup> In fact the company refers to him as *mudumeni*, a corruption of demonstrator. Demonstrators used to be colonial agents for agricultural change.

<sup>91</sup> The agent believes that if there is an reduction in side-marketing its because of his efforts: 'I have locked these guys in by my visibility'. Interview with Tembani, Mutare, 12/7/2002.

<sup>92</sup> Interview with Mrs. Simbi, Mushandike 2/6/2002.

<sup>93</sup> As one of the farmer noted, it is because Banners can't find cheap agricultural produce that it is coming to Mushandike.

unilaterally fixing prices and treating farmers like children, a Banners official threatened to auction the properties of defaulting smallholders, from chickens and donkeys to goats and cattle, a threat that was understood by smallholders whose livelihoods depend on livestock. So worried were smallholders that they asked for the speaker to move to another matter on the agenda not involving auctions and attachments. At yet another meeting, the same official claimed to have jailed smallholders who contested the price set by the company and sold their produce to other lucrative markets. Since jails are centres of extreme forms of violence, this threat, though illegal, constitute a very serious form of control, especially to the vulnerable growers who believed the threat.

## 6. PEASANT VIEWS

Before concluding this chapter, it is useful to systematically document how peasants view contract farming and how it is operationalised. Such a treatment will enable us to understand peasant behaviour as well as enable us to chart the way forward for contract farming in the resettlement areas of Zimbabwe.

When it comes to contract farming, smallholders have an unresolved tension. On the one hand, contract farming has broken down barriers and brought inputs closer to the farmers<sup>94</sup>. They now have access to fertilisers, seeds and, most important of all, the technical know-how to grow these crops<sup>95</sup>, unlike their communal area counterparts (Kinsey 2000). For this, farmers are thankful, and indeed welcome private business. At the same time, however, smallholders are upset by what contract farming is doing to them. They say that Banners buys their products for *mahara*, for nothing, and always according to a price they unilaterally set, a situation that they claim has reduced them to being mere labourers for the company<sup>96</sup>, or, as some say, to being impoverished slaves<sup>97</sup>. Yet despite this corporate despotism, smallholders remain as partners to Banners. For the majority of such smallholders, this continued patronising of Banners is a function of poverty, which they say causes them to work with 'crooks and robbers'.

Among Mushandikeans, there is no doubt that this poverty arises not from laziness or fault of their own but rather from the perennial low prices offered by the company<sup>98</sup>. Indeed, it is this perception that leads them to regard Banners in criminal terms such as those used above. Yet how poverty actually causes a continued relationship with Banners is not clear; it seems however, that the condition prevents farmers from being self-reliant in ways that would enable them to raise their inputs or source appropriate markets. The situation is made worse by declining support from kinsmen, a trend that has been put in motion by the economic

---

<sup>94</sup> Interview with Mr. Dhubhe, Mushandike, 26/7/2002.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Mr. Chapfuka, Mushandike, 13/6/2002.

<sup>96</sup> Interview with Mr. Magevha, Mushandike, 28/7/2002.

<sup>97</sup> Interview with Mr. Mhitimi, Mushandike, 28/7/2002.

<sup>98</sup> Interview with Madasimbi, Mushandike, 26/6/2002.

reform programme (Bouman 1992). The second reason relates to the absence of viable alternatives.

But there is a third reason explaining the continued relationship between smallholders and the company. Smallholders say that the contracts allow them to grow beans and tomatoes, which can be consumed and even privately sold on the black market. As in other irrigation schemes, there is not one single smallholder who does not confess to either side marketing or storing some of the contracted crops for their own use (Manzungu and van der Zaag 1996). The town of Masvingo, the nearby business centre, the adjacent drought stricken areas, the mobile indigenous businessmen—all those provide a ready or, as the smallholders say, a fast market for crops under contract<sup>99</sup>. The practice is so widespread that Banners estimates it loses up to 50% of the crop to black market<sup>100</sup>. But having to prosper through theft and to undertake risky operations in order to improve one's welfare is an unbearable condition, one that makes smallholders bitter. Smallholders say it is undignified for them to have to conduct business in the darkness 'as if farming is criminal activity'<sup>101</sup>. That they reconcile themselves to this and continue being parties to contract farming suggests their realisation that they can best prosper mostly as thieves and criminals. But this is a hypothesis requiring further support.

## 7. CONCLUSION

The most important point to be drawn from this chapter is that the new agrarian contracts have, as with the old state-peasant contracts, not introduced meaningful opportunities for Mushandike smallholders beyond improving access to inputs. The contracts, it seems, have done more to improve Banners' control of smallholder agricultural production and to match that same production to its own industrial operation. This interlocking of agriculture to industrial operation has inevitably limited opportunities for the smallholder, and the negative disposition to contract farming bears testimony to this. What does the case of Mushandike say about contract farming as a practice?

While it will be misleading to regard it as no more than an instrument to enslave smallholder agriculture, or as a tool to extract as much as possible from smallholder agriculture with limited risks, contract farming is not apolitical and unproblematic, as states and their new partners customarily represent them. As the Mushandike case suggests, there are entrenched interests in the practice. These interests express themselves in the politics of ambiguity and clarity, where the powerful strategically remain vague to reduce claims on them and correspondingly clarify contractual aspects to increase their claims on the smallholder. This politicisation of agrarian contracts engenders hostility of the smallholders, who however are disorganised and unable to restrain Banners. What does this all mean for land resettlement

---

<sup>99</sup> The term for fast markets is *kwekumanyisa*, a place where one quickly sells something.

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Mr. Tembani, Mutare, 12/8/2002.

<sup>101</sup> Interview with Vezera, Mushandike, 8/9/2001.

and reform in Zimbabwe? Can these agrarian contracts unlock opportunities for the newly resettled farmers, and in the process justify land reform and redistribution in Zimbabwe.

Resettlement farmers, especially because they are starting farmers, require some sort of partnership that makes possible access to markets and inputs. In fact given the remoteness and inaccessibility of the new resettlement areas and the limited ability of Government to remedy the situation, the degree to which these farmers will succeed will depend on their ability to mobilise these resources, and so some partnership with the private sector is not only desirable but also necessary. Simply unleashing private business on smallholder resettlement schemes does not automatically unlock the intended opportunities; in fact it may make things worse, as the case study suggests too well. Part of the problem is that holders are small and are dealing with powerful and equipped partners whom they cannot restrain. The task, in addition to developing the capacity of smallholders to formulate and insist on well written contracts, is to enable smallholders to do business with the private sector on an equal basis. That means getting the different and individual farmers organised into associations that protect collective interests against the private sector and indeed any other outside bodies seeking to do business with smallholders. Experience elsewhere has demonstrated that community organisations work well when they form alliances with other groups with similar interests, groups like trade unions, non-governmental organisations, student movements, human rights groups, lawyers and academics. Perhaps by networking broadly beyond the field, smallholders can tackle private business, whose yolk has proved unnecessarily heavy. And perhaps it is such networking beyond the small plots that will justify and edify land resettlement and reform in Zimbabwe, and indeed anywhere it occurs.

## REFERENCES

- Arrighi and J. Saul. 1973. *Essays in Political Economy of Africa*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Barnett, T. 1984. *The Gezira, An Illusion of Development*. London: CASS.
- Bates, R. 1981. *Markets and States in Tropical Africa*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bouman J. 1992. *Hospes Financial Landscapes Reconstructed*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Bratton, M. 1994. 'Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990'. In *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, edited by M. Rukuni and C. Eicher. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publication.
- Drinkwater, M. 1989. 'Technical Development and Peasant Impoverishment: Landuse Policy in Zimbabwe's Midlands Province'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 15(2): 287-305.
- Dzingirai, V. 1999. *Human Migration and Natural Resources Management in Communal Lands: The Case of Binga in Zimbabwe*. Ph.D. Thesis. Centre for Applied Social Sciences: University of Zimbabwe.
- Hart, K. 1982. *The Political Economy of West Africa Agriculture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Hughes, A. 2001. 'Rezoned for Business: How Eco-tourism Unlocked Black Farmland in Eastern Zimbabwean'. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 1(4): 575-599.
- Hyden, G. 1980. *Beyond Ujaama in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry*. London: Heinemann.
- Kinsey, A. 2000. 'Land Reform, Growth and Equity: Emerging Evidence from Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme'. *Journal of Southern Africa Studies* 25(2): 173-96.
- Little, Peter D. and M.J. Watts, editors. 1994. *Living Under Contract: Contract Farming and Agrarian Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Madzudzo, E. 1996. *Social and Political Relations in Smallholder Irrigation Scheme: A Study of Biriri Resettlement Village*. Master's thesis. Department of Sociology: University of Zimbabwe.
- Manzungu, P and Pieter van der Zaag. 1996. *The Practice of Smallholder Irrigation*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- Nyambara, P. 2001. 'The Closing Frontier: Agrarian Change, Immigration and the Squatter Menace in Gokwe'. *Agrarian Change* 1(4): 534-549.
- Scott, B. 1992. *Weapons of the Weak*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, J. 1998. *Seeing Like a State*. New Haven: Yale University Press.



—Chapter 4—  
**Green Harvest**

**The Outgrower Tea Leaf Collection System  
in the Honde Valley, Zimbabwe**

**J.P. Mtisi**

Economic History Department, University of Zimbabwe

*This chapter is an analysis of part of a research project on the relationship between tea outgrowers and tea-buying firms in the eastern districts of Zimbabwe. The chapter specifically examines the process by which green tea leaves are collected from the fields of smallholder tea growers for processing in factories owned by the tea companies. Discussed are the various methods employed to transport green tea leaves to the weighing stations and thence to the factories, quality assessment processes and the interaction between outgrowers and company representatives. Also reported are the unionisation of the outgrowers into the Honde Valley Tea Growers Union and the formation of the Honde Valley Smallholder Development Company. The chapter ends with recommendations that could make the relationship between outgrowers and buyers more equitable.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Many studies have been carried out on peasant agriculture in general and contract farming in particular. In general, contract farming (outgrower farming) can be referred to as ‘agricultural production carried out according to an agreement between farmers and a buyer which places conditions on the production and marketing of the commodity’ (Minot 1986, p. 2). Within that general definition, scholars (see Little and Watts 1994) have identified different types of such arrangements. In most cases, this is determined by the nature of the relationship between the contract farmers and the buyers, in other words, the different roles each party plays or is expected to play under the contractual relationship. For example, Minot (1986) has identified three types of contract farming: ‘market specification’, ‘resource providing’ and ‘production management’. Some of these arrangements are written while others are verbal.

But why do firms (i.e., buyers) and farmers enter into contract farming arrangements? There are many considerations that attract both the farmers and buyers. From the perspective of the buyers, for example, in some cases such arrangements enable them to increase their production by incorporating independent producers as contract farmers. As a result of this type of incorporation, although the contract farmers own the land, they do not quite own what they produce on the land. As for those firms that have used up their land and have nowhere to expand, they may be able to achieve the same end by entering into contract farming agreements with producers. Also of crucial importance to buyers is the fact that contract

farming arrangements often allow them to force farmers ‘to bear the brunt of market fluctuations by adjusting the quality standards: when demand is low, they raise the standards to limit the volumes they must purchase and when demand is high, they lower the standards’ (qtd. in Minot 1986, p. 2, Buch-Hansen and Marcussen 1982, p. 18).

Also, there are possible benefits to farmers under contract farming arrangements. A market is guaranteed, and agricultural inputs like fertiliser and pesticides are advanced on credit to smallfarmers who normally are unable to access them because of lack of capital (Grossman 1998, Van de Laar 1976). Minot (1986, p. 2) argues ‘The buyer frequently a processing and/or exporting firm finds it profitable to contract growers to assume reliable supply of commodity. In order to obtain sufficient supplies of the right quality and at the right time, the firm (buyer) often provides technical assistance and inputs to the farmer’. However, notwithstanding some benefits, which at times accrue to contract farmers, talking of a ‘contract’ between buyers and farmers gives the misleading impression that this is an agreement entered into by equal parties. This is certainly not true in the majority of cases, as the relationship is terribly skewed in favour of the firms. Although not exactly the same, the relationship between the outgrowers and the buyers approximates the proverbial ‘horse and rider’ partnership.

Based on interviews with ten outgrowers and a number of company officials, this chapter examines the dynamics of green leaf collection from the fields of the outgrowers to the processing factory owned by the tea companies in the Honde valley. This tea-producing area is approximately 100 kilometres north-east of Mutare, the capital of Manicaland in eastern Zimbabwe.

## **2. TEA PRODUCTION IN ZIMBABWE: BACKGROUND**

Commercial tea production in Zimbabwe was started in the 1920s in Chipinge District by Tanganda Tea Company<sup>102</sup>, which, for some 30 years, was the only tea company in the country until South Down Holdings in Chipinge and Eastern Highlands Estates Ltd., and Aberfoyle Plantations in the Honde Valley joined it in the 1950s.<sup>103</sup> In the late 1960s, the Tribal Trust Land Development Corporation (TILCOR, now ARDA) started Katiyo Tea Estate, also in the Honde Valley.<sup>104</sup> As was the case in colonial Kenya (Kosqei 1981), ideological and economic considerations restricted African participation in the tea industry in colonial Zimbabwe to that of workers on company-owned estates, and not as direct producers of tea. However, influenced by developments in other parts of tea growing Africa, especially Kenya, the Zimbabwean colonial state began in the late 1960s to change its attitude towards African participation in cash crops. In Kenya, the Deputy Director of Agriculture, R.J.M. Swynnerton, drew up the so-called Swynnerton Report in 1951, and it became official policy

---

<sup>102</sup> Interview with T. Evers, Mutare, 1984.

<sup>103</sup> Interview with D. Plowes, Mutare, April 2001.

<sup>104</sup> Interview with J.G. Baxter, Mutare, April 2001.

in 1954. In that report Swynnerton criticised the existing policy that prohibited Africans from growing certain cash crops like tea, coffee and pyrethrum (Berman 1990, Mosley 1983).

Swynnerton's ideas spread to other British colonies, including Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). But it was not only external forces that influenced state agricultural policy in colonial Zimbabwe, internal debates on the best land use patterns were equally important. Thus in 1958, the Government appointed a Special Purposes Committee, which ultimately recommended that Africans in the eastern districts, in areas where the soil was suitable, should be allowed to produce cash crops, including tea (Government of Southern Rhodesia 1958). In response to that change in policy, in 1961 the colonial state started a tea outgrower scheme in the Honde Valley (Lewis and Chinhoyi 1992). In March 1964, it was reported that the 'first tea ever grown by African farmers in Southern Rhodesia was plucked and delivered to a tea company factory in January' (*Outpost* 1964). The company referred to was Eastern Highlands. The tea outgrower scheme then spread to other districts in Manicaland, and by the late 1960s Southdown Holdings and Tanganda Tea Company were running outgrower projects in Chipinge District.<sup>105</sup> After independence, the Rusitu Valley Smallholder Tea Project was started in Chimanimani District (McDonald n.d.).

From four outgrowers in the early 1960s, there are now over 2000 in the Honde Valley alone. These are communal farmers, generally within a radius of some 40km from company-owned plantations, who have entered into contracts with tea companies to produce tea on their communal lands and sell it (green leaves) to the companies, who then process it into made tea, which they sell in local and international markets.

The outgrowers in the Honde Valley do not have a wide choice of buyers; they can sell to either, or both, Eastern Highlands Plantations or ARDA-Katiyo. Their position in relation to the buyers of their tea is weak, partly a result of the characteristics of their produce. Tea is very perishable and the manufacturing process must start soon after plucking. This is a source of serious problems for outgrowers. The biological characteristics of tea do not give the outgrowers sufficient space (holding period) within which they can withhold selling while, for example, they negotiate for a better price. Another aspect of the crop is that producers have to observe plucking rounds, the frequency at which a tea bush is plucked. Depending on climate and weather, a tea bush should be plucked every 5-7 days. If this period is exceeded beyond a certain point, the leaves become too hard for processing into made tea, which means a loss to the producer. Again, in this case, the grower is limited as to the period during which he/she can hold out, even when the tea is still in the field, which weakens the grower's bargaining power vis-à-vis the tea companies.

The majority of tea outgrowers depend on the tea companies, the buyers, for transport and agricultural inputs. Of course, they are forced to sell their tea to the tea companies because they do not have a factory of their own. Another important point to note with regards to the tea outgrower arrangements in Zimbabwe is that the companies are not entirely dependent on

---

<sup>105</sup> Interview with T. Evers, Mutare, 1984.

the outgrowers for their supply of tea. Rather, they have their own estates from which they can get sufficient supply to feed their factories. Thus the outgrowers need the tea companies, but the latter can do without the outgrower. This enables the companies to be arrogant and, sometimes, dictate terms to the outgrowers on a take-it-or-leave-it basis.

The collection of leaf from tea outgrowers has its basis in the contracts entered into between the growers and the tea companies. The tea buyers, Eastern Highlands and ARDA-Katiyo, are expected to provide transport to ferry outgrowers' green leaf from different parts of the Honde Valley to the factories.<sup>106</sup> The buyers also provide field clerks and assistants together with scales for weighing tea from growers who are not members of co-operatives<sup>107</sup> and who, therefore, sell their tea to the companies as individuals. The co-operatives do not get clerks and scales from tea buyers, but, instead, have their own. Nevertheless, they are provided with transport by the tea companies, as is the case with the independent outgrowers.

The process of transferring green tea leaves from the outgrowers to the buyers' factories consists of a number of stages that can differ quite significantly depending on the buyer and whether the outgrower sells his/her produce as an individual or as a member of a co-operative. Before the tractor comes to collect tea at prearranged sites, the outgrower has to carry his/her leaf from the field to the weighing point



**Smallholder's tea field in the Honde Valley.**

---

---

where he/she removes it from whatever container would have been used and spreads it on the ground to allow free circulation of air. It is very important that the leaf is constantly turned to make sure that it does not burn itself out while the grower waits for the tractor to arrive. Under sunny conditions, the leaf has to be kept under shade so that it does not get sun burnt.<sup>108</sup> The grower, therefore, has to constantly shift it to follow the shade if the tractor is delayed, as is usually the case, especially during the peak of the season. Meanwhile, the

---

<sup>106</sup> Interview with Informant 1, Honde Valley, January 2002.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Informant 2, Honde Valley, January 2002. There are many outgrower (marketing) co-operatives in the Honde Valley. However, there are still many growers who are not members of any cooperative and thus sell their tea as individuals.

<sup>108</sup> Interview with Informant 3, Honde Valley, December 2000.

grower also removes old hard leaves, commonly known as *mbanje* (marijuana), which would have accidentally been plucked, for it is very difficult to pluck tea that is totally free of these old leaves as plucking is usually done at great speed.<sup>109</sup>

The first thing that is done when the tractor arrives at a weighing point is to assess the leaf to determine whether or not it is of acceptable quality. The clerk is responsible for checking the quality and can either accept or reject the tea, depending on his/her judgement.

When he/she is satisfied the quality meets minimum requirements, the leaf is weighed. This weighing process, as will be discussed below, is fraught with problems. The clerk records the weight of every grower's tea. As soon as their tea is loaded onto the tractor, growers who are not members of co-operatives cease to be involved while those belonging to co-operatives continue to be involved through their clerk who goes with the full tractor to the factory.

At the factory, the tractor, together with its load is weighed on a weighbridge. The weight of leaf determined at the weighbridge is then compared with the total weight recorded at the fields. The two figures rarely agree; the difference is what is called variance and can be either positive or negative. When the weight recorded at the field is greater than what was recorded at the factory, the variance is said to be positive, and negative when it is otherwise.<sup>110</sup> The quality of leaf is assessed for a second time at the factory. If it is below standard, the leaf is rejected. This, however, is a rare occurrence.

### **3. TEA PRODUCTION IN ZIMBABWE: PRACTICE**

#### **3.1. Transport of Leaf**

The contracts entered into between tea buyers and outgrowers make it an obligation on the part of the buyers to provide transport to growers. Transport is supposed to be provided on agreed days and times to different parts of the Honde Valley where tea is grown. For example, the contract between one of the tea companies and the outgrowers, in part, reads, 'Leaf will be delivered [by the growers] to the collection point on the days and times specified by the management [of the company concerned] who will under no obligation accept leaf except on the days and times specified'.<sup>111</sup> The two buyers, Eastern Highlands and ARDA-Katiyo, provide transport at different times in the same areas. The buyers also provide transport on different days in different areas. In the peak period, for example, ARDA-Katiyo provides transport to Mhanda area on Tuesdays and Thursdays, whereas Eastern Highlands does so on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.<sup>112</sup> The frequency with which leaf is collected varies with the season. During the rainy season, usually November-March, Eastern Highlands

---

<sup>109</sup> Interview with Informant 4, Honde valley, December 2000.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with Informant 5, Honde Valley, 31 December 2001.

<sup>111</sup> Tea Growers Green Leaf Purchase Agreement.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December 2000.

provides transport about three times a week, while ARDA-Katiyo does so only twice a week.<sup>113</sup>

The poor road network in some areas hampers collection. The Samutete and surrounding areas are among the most seriously affected by this problem.<sup>114</sup> Consequently, the collection of leaf from these areas is very difficult. Growers have to travel very long distances, carrying leaf on their heads to the nearest collection points, which tractors can access. Some growers use donkeys to carry the leaf to the weighing points.<sup>115</sup> The problem gets worse during the rainy season because donkeys cannot be used too frequently as they can develop wounds on their backs. This is at a time when they are needed most, as tea shoots vigorously during the rainy season and production rises to a peak. Thus the only way leaf can be taken to the weighing points is by growers carrying it on their heads. However, a problem is that not much leaf can be carried using this method.

The poor road network has also discouraged many potential tea outgrowers from embarking on tea projects, and those who already grow tea find it difficult to expand their fields. According to one grower in the Nyanjereka area, the poor road system has kept his plan to expand his tea field at bay. As he put it: 'In fact I have got a plan to build a compound for my workers. What is really stopping me is the road issue. Once a good road is established, I will start expanding my project'.<sup>116</sup> The problem of the non-existence of roads in some areas has made it more difficult for growers to meet the quality standards demanded by buyers. According to one respondent, tea quality is affected mostly because growers carry their leaf on their heads over long distances; as a result, some of the leaves are broken and others constantly rub against each other, thereby affecting their freshness.<sup>117</sup>

For growers whose tea fields are small or their plants are still very young, the transport that the buyers provide is adequate. Their production is low and they, therefore, need transport once or twice a week. The situation is, however, different with larger growers for whom transport provided by buyers is not adequate, given their volume of production. Indeed, one of them claimed he needed to have his own truck to ferry his leaf to the factory on a daily basis. Because of inadequate transport, this grower's tea usually overgrows, especially during peak periods. The problem of inadequate transport became worse during the year 2000 because of the fuel crisis that hit the country. The buyers could not get sufficient fuel to enable them to send out tractors to outgrowers as usual, and they had to cut the number of days they were collecting leaf.

Growers face a number of problems when there is inadequate transport. First, they may have to find their own private means of transport and this costs money. Second, inadequate

---

<sup>113</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>114</sup> Interview with Informant 7, Honde Valley, 2 January, 2002.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with Informant 8, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Informant 9, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>117</sup> Interview with Informant 10, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

transport results in leaf not being plucked on some days and thus it overgrows. As a result, the grower loses because instead of it being sold, the leaf remains in the field. One grower added that when tea overgrows, the quality deteriorates because the leaves become harder and more fibrous; it also becomes difficult to pluck.<sup>118</sup> As a number of scholars on contract farming have argued (Buch-Hansen and Marcussen 1982, Minot 1986, Glover and Kusterer 1990), contracts between the outgrowers and buyers favours the latter since growers appear to bear all the risks while the buyers risk nothing.

There are, however, some growers who are located close to buyers' estates. These are less affected by transport shortages. If there is no transport provided, they pluck their tea and take it to the buyers' plantations where company employees will be working. These growers can pluck their leaf anytime regardless of whether or not the buyers provide transport on that day.<sup>119</sup> What this means is that the proximity of a grower to a particular buyer also affects his/her choice of a buyer. One respondent said he chose to sell to ARDA-Katiyo because he is close to its plantations, thereby enabling him to sell his leaf almost anytime he wants. Growers in Mapokana said that at times they sell their leaf to Eastern Highlands, not because this buyer is their first choice but because they are able to pluck their tea when no buyer provides transport to them and take it to the Eastern Highlands estate nearby. When they get there, the buyer's clerk weighs the leaf and when the buyer's leaf is taken to the factory, their tea is taken at the same time.<sup>120</sup>

According to many growers, Eastern Highlands' transport service is much more efficient than ARDA's. There are two tractors from Eastern Highlands that go out to collect outgrowers' leaf. On the other hand, ARDA provides only one tractor. As a result, Eastern Highlands usually collects all the leaf from outgrowers in time whereas ARDA may not be able to do so until the following day. Perhaps with a bit of exaggeration, a grower commented:

Eastern Highlands' transport service is wonderful. They always make sure that tea is ferried to the factory while it is still fresh. With ARDA-Katiyo, transport service is poor because they have one tractor that serves outgrowers, and it is not enough. The [Katiyo] workers refuse to work late in the evening because they say they are not paid for overtime.<sup>121</sup>

The issue of transport service has, therefore, also tended to affect choice of buyer. Growers find themselves not selling to ARDA because the latter's transport is not reliable. In December, 2000, one grower said he preferred selling his leaf to ARDA which, at that time, was paying a higher price of \$6.40/kg of green leaf whilst Eastern Highlands was offering a

---

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December, 2001. See also Interview with Informant 12, Honde Valley, January 2002.

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Informant 13, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>120</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>121</sup> Interview with Informant 14, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

mere \$3.65/kg. However, this grower often ended up selling to Eastern Highlands because ARDA did not supply sufficient transport.<sup>122</sup>

The times at which leaf is collected from outgrowers are stated in the contracts and vary from place to place, and also according to the buyer. In Mapokana, for example, ARDA-Katiyo provides transport around eleven in the morning while Eastern Highlands does so in the same area around three in the afternoon. Notwithstanding what is stated in the contract, in reality, leaf collection times are not strictly adhered to, especially in the peak season during which time the buyers often change their pick-up times. In Mapokana, for example, growers have complained bitterly about the time ARDA provides transport in their area, pointing out that the ARDA tractor comes too early, around ten o'clock in the morning, at which time the growers would have plucked very little tea, and they are thus forced to leave most of it in the fields.<sup>123</sup> According to one outgrower in Mapokana, 'Eastern Highlands is better on transport because it gives us time to pluck our tea, and it comes around 3 p.m. Katiyo comes too early; sometimes around 10 a.m., it will have come already [when] we will not have done much in the field'.<sup>124</sup>

When buyers provide transport too early growers usually have problems in securing labour, with the latter arguing that they cannot afford to work for just a few hours and be dismissed around ten o'clock in the morning when the buyer comes to collect leaf. As a result, most labourers end up preferring to work on the buyers' estates where they can work for the whole day and get more money. On the other hand, some growers complained that buyers provide transport only once per day and by the time the tractors come in the late afternoon or evening the leaf will have lost weight. According to some outgrowers, the buyers give first preference to their estates when it comes to transport. As one of them put it: 'We do not have our own transport so ... the company can tell us that, 'our vehicles are busy at the moment', and they send a tractor at 2.30 am. The tea will have deteriorated badly'.<sup>125</sup>

Commenting on the same issue, an official of one of the outgrower co-operatives stated:

When we first went there to make transport arrangements, they [the company] gave us the regulation [Mutemo] that they would be providing transport around 11.00 am, 12 to 1 p.m. However, in practice, sometimes the tractor comes around 9 p.m., and people will be waiting for it ... The tractor first of all ferries tea from the [buyer's] estates before it is sent out here to outgrowers.<sup>126</sup>

This seems to be a common problem in most contract (outgrower) farming arrangements. Writing on what they refer to as 'the difficulty of coordinating the production and deliveries of many farmers so as to ensure an optimal flow of raw material', Glover and Kusterer (1990,

---

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Informant 15, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>123</sup> Interview with Informant 16, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>124</sup> Interview with Informant 18, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Informant 17, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

pp. 127-128) state, ‘An example of a coordination problem is the competition for company-owned machinery at harvest time; growers must often wait until the firm has completed its own harvest—before obtaining access to the equipment’.

Clearly, this is very inconvenient and costly not only to the growers but also to their workers who have to wait for the tractor to come so that they can weigh and find how much tea they have plucked. Even when growers allow their workers to dismiss and go home and then remain and do all the weighing, the workers may not be certain whether the growers would have been faithful about weight of the tea or would have cheated them in order to pay them less. What happens when buyers delay in coming to collect leaf is that some growers who have their own scales, or who can borrow them from other growers, weigh the leaf that would have been plucked by their workers to let them go home. However, when transport finally does come, the leaf will have lost a lot of weight. The result is that growers may then have to pay their workers for more kilograms than determined by the buyers. This is money out of the outgrowers’ profits.

Commenting on the transport issue and speaking on behalf of growers in his area, one outgrower angrily complained:

‘They come only once per day so that if they come in the afternoon, the tea will have lost a lot of weight due to exposure to the sun. And if it gets sun burnt, they no longer accept it’.<sup>128</sup>

#### **Problems with leaf pickup**

One day in December 2000, an outgrower hired workers who plucked a total of some 200kgs of leaf but ARDA did not send their tractor in time. The outgrower borrowed a scale and weighed the green leaf that his workers had plucked and allowed them to dismiss. Unfortunately, the tractor only came the following morning, by which time the leaf had not only lost a lot of weight but, even worse, some of it had burnt itself out during the night, turning brown completely. The grower had to throw it away since the clerks would not accept it. When the tractor came, the leaf weighed some 20kgs less than it had weighed the previous day. This despite the fact that the grower had plucked a little more leaf early in the morning and mixed it with that which had been plucked the previous day to improve its appearance.<sup>127</sup>

### **3.2. Weighing and Quality Inspection**

Along roads throughout the tea growing areas in the Honde Valley there are numerous weighing points, where the weighing of outgrowers’ tea usually takes place. In the past, growers had to find their own transport to ferry their tea to Eastern Highlands.<sup>129</sup> This was unlike the case with ARDA-Katiyo, which has provided transport to growers since the beginning of the tea outgrower scheme in the 1960s.<sup>130</sup>

---

<sup>127</sup> Interview with Informant 18, Honde Valley, January 2002.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with Informant 19, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with Informant 13, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

All outgrowers who sold to Eastern Highlands in the early days had their tea weighed at the factory. They encountered many problems. For instance, some of them had to carry tea on their heads for several kilometres since they had no better means of transport. Also, the weighing of tea was a long process. According to one grower, those who assessed the quality at the factory were very strict. A grower could spend the whole night at the factory, sorting what was considered to be bad quality leaf. This usually resulted in conflicts between growers and clerks who were responsible for assessing quality. Growers queued up to have their tea weighed, and some of the clerks favoured growers who were known to them; this was another major source of conflict.<sup>131</sup> The clerks, it is alleged, were so rude that normally growers would not dare oppose them on any matter. Stated one grower, 'If you complained why they were giving first preference to growers who were known to them, they would punish you by ordering you to continue grading your tea alleging that it was yet to reach the required quality standard'.<sup>132</sup> A number of these clerks earned derogatory nicknames because of their behaviour.

Generally speaking, tea outgrowers are responsible for deciding which place along the roads they want to designate as weighing points. Growers within a particular area agree on which place is appropriate for weighing their leaf. Usually there are no conflicts over this as the appropriate place is, in most cases, obvious. In some cases, however, growers disagree over the location. According to one respondent, growers in the area where she farms at one time failed to agree on which place should be a weighing point, some growers arguing that the proposed place was further away from their fields than it was from others.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, some weighing points are far away from the fields of some growers. This problem is especially pronounced in areas where the road network is very poor. According to one grower, the nearest weighing point is some 12km from her field. She has to carry her leaf over such distances on her head or use donkeys.<sup>134</sup>

At some weighing points there are structures—'shades'—under which the tea is stored before weighing takes place, but most of the weighing stations do not have such facilities. They simply have two vertical poles and a third one across where scales are tied when weighing takes place. Shades are very important to prevent the sun from burning the leaf. In addition, when it is rainy the shades keep the leaf, as well as the growers, from the rain while they wait for the arrival of the tractor, which at times is midnight or later.

Tea quality assessment is carried out by a field clerk who looks for a number of qualities before arriving at a decision about whether to accept or reject the leaf. These include leaf freshness, length of branches, and the presence of old, hard or broken leaves.<sup>135</sup> The leaf has to be fresh in order for the clerk to accept it, which makes it imperative for growers to sell

---

<sup>131</sup> Interview with Informant 20, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>132</sup> Interview with Informant 21, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>133</sup> Interview with Informant 22, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>134</sup> Interview with Informant 23, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>135</sup> Interview with Informant 24, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

their leaf on the day it is plucked. But selling the tea on the day it is plucked does not on its own provide a guarantee to outgrowers that their leaf will be accepted on the basis of freshness, for it can quickly lose that freshness if kept under inhospitable conditions. To remain fresh, the leaf should not be heaped or kept in a closed container. If kept under such conditions, it burns itself out and turns brown and is, therefore, unacceptable since buyers only accept leaf that is fresh and green.<sup>136</sup>

The clerks also look at the branches to see if they are of the recommended length. The buyers require only the two youngest leaves and a bud, called '2½' or '2 and a bud' in the tea trade. When branches are longer than 2½, the clerk may order the grower to remove the bottom part of the branch or reject the leaf outright.<sup>137</sup> Indeed, many growers have had their tea rejected and thrown away because of failure to abide by the 2½ standard. The contract is very explicit on leaf quality and an outgrower may face a penalty for not abiding by the requirement. It states: 'The standard of leaf required is ... two leaves and a bud in good condition and management reserve the right to reject leaf below the required standard or considered to be in poor condition'.<sup>138</sup> The two tea buyers, Eastern Highlands and ARDA, differ quite significantly on their emphasis on quality. ARDA is far stricter when it comes to length of branch than Eastern Highlands. As one grower put it: 'But then ARDA's problem is that they mostly want two and a bud. Eastern Highlands are not too specific on this. So that is the other reason why some people prefer [to sell to] Eastern Highlands'.<sup>139</sup> The buyers are stricter about leaf quality during the rainy season when there is usually a lot of leaf from the outgrowers. This is in sharp contrast to their attitude in the off-peak season, usually in winter, when buyers may accept three leaves instead of the 2½ that they usually advocate for because tea does not shoot vigorously during that time and there is, therefore, very little leaf.<sup>140</sup>

As plucking takes place, some old leaves are accidentally picked since the process takes place at tremendous speed. The clerks do not weigh growers' leaf if they observe the presence of these old leaves, commonly referred to as *mbanje*, for they are considered an impurity. The presence of these old leaves negatively affects the quality of made tea. If leaf is processed in spite of them, a lot of fibre is produced which, according to buyers, means more losses and less profits.<sup>141</sup> Also, for the tea to be of acceptable quality in the eyes of buyers the leaves must be intact. The contracts stipulate that the leaves should not be broken and that if a grower brings such leaves, the buyer is at liberty to reject them. What usually causes the breaking of leaf is the fact that some growers carry the leaf on their heads over long distances to weighing points.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> Tea Grower Green Leaf Purchase Agreement..

<sup>137</sup> Interview with Informant 25, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>138</sup> Interview with Informant 26, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>139</sup> Interview with Informant 27, Honde Valley, January 20001.

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Informant 28, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>141</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>142</sup> Interview with Informant 29, Honde Valley, January, 2001.

Clearly, the issue of quality is a very contentious one in the relationship between contract farmers and the buyers. The perception of the tea outgrowers in the Honde Valley, for example, is that the buyers demand unreasonable high quality tea from them. What they overlook, however, is that for the tea to be competitive in international markets, it should meet the world quality standards. This may explain the buyers' insistence on high quality. Explaining the importance of quality in the world tea markets, an official of one of the tea companies in Honde Valley ably captured the concerns of the buyers. He stated:

Quality is the target. We always stress this to our clerks—that they should accept only good quality leaf to curtail unnecessary losses. Poor quality tea leaf stays long on the market before it is bought, or else we have to sell it at very low prices. The [overseas] tea buyers do not compromise on quality. They would rather buy a good quality product at a high price than to buy a poor one at a very low price. Our tea has been returned on several occasions on account of poor quality. That means losses to us since we would have spent money on labour, transport and other overheads ... It is better to have [fewer] kilograms of good quality green leaf than tons and tons of rubbish.

When the clerk is satisfied that the leaf is of good quality, weighing then takes place. In some cases, the buyer brings sacks into which the leaf is put before it is weighed. These sacks are



**Outgrowers' tea being weighed.**

---

---

made of thin plastic-like material that is very light, with numerous holes three centimetres in diameter that allow free circulation of air so the leaf inside the sack remains fresh. In other instances, growers have to use their own containers. This is especially the case for those dealing with Eastern Highlands, which does not provide sacks for the purpose of weighing leaf. The sacks brought by growers vary

in their type and size; some are quite thin and light while others are thick and heavy.

According to some respondents, a large sack can weigh up to as much as one kilogram, and the buyer subtracts that from the weight of leaf each time a sack full of tea is weighed to

account for the weight of the container.<sup>143</sup> A dispute can arise when a grower brings a sack that does not weigh one kilogram, since the clerk still subtracts one kilogram from the weight.

Members of the Honde Valley Zindi Co-operative sell their tea to Eastern Highlands, which does not provide them with containers for weighing. They use weighing sheets that weigh between two and three kilograms; in the rain, these weighing sheets can weigh up to five kilograms.<sup>144</sup> To deal with the weight of such containers so that it does not affect the weight of leaf, the clerk adjusts the scale such that it starts at a point behind the zero mark. In cases where the buyers do not provide containers that are used for weighing and growers use their own, they later have to empty the leaf into box-like wire containers that are carried on the tractor.<sup>145</sup>

Some of the scales used for weighing the leaf belong to outgrowers while others are owned by tea buyers. Growers who sell leaf through co-operatives have the co-operative's scales, while those who sell otherwise are provided scales by the buyers. According to the clerk of one co-operative, a scale can be faulty and it is important to check if it is working properly each day before it is used. He added that to minimise the likelihood of the scale showing inaccurate figures, the scales have to be sent for servicing. The problem with growers' co-operatives is that they normally do not engage the services of specialists to service their scales. It is the field clerks for these co-operatives who do the servicing in some cases, despite their limited knowledge and experience with these scales. As a clerk of a co-operative stressed: 'Scales are a problem; we don't send them for servicing. When the scale is not working properly, I do the repairing'.<sup>146</sup> He claimed that every time before he goes out to the fields to weigh growers' tea, he checks if the scale is in good order by taking an object with a known weight and putting it on the scale.

The fact that a scale can, as a result of a fault, show a lesser weight than it really is supposed to, creates room for some clerks to connive with some growers and record for them more kilograms than they are entitled to. The clerks can put aside the difference each time a bag of tea is weighed and then put up the total when weighing is complete. The difference is not difficult to tell since they would have tested the scales before leaving for the fields and can calculate what percentage of the true weight the difference is. Using percentages, the clerks can calculate that difference by using the total number of kilograms for the day. Indeed, many clerks have been fired from their jobs after being caught conniving with some outgrowers and recording more kilograms for them in secret arrangements.<sup>147</sup> One grower complained, 'They

---

<sup>143</sup> Interview with Informant 30, Honde Valley, December 2001.

<sup>144</sup> Interview with Informant 18, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

<sup>145</sup> Interview with Informant 31, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with Informant 33, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

<sup>147</sup> Interview with Informant 22, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

[the buyers] will always trick us. As long as they bring their faulty machines the kilograms won't come out right'.<sup>148</sup>

Normally, before a load is mounted onto the scale, its pointer should be at position zero; however, this is not always the case when outgrowers' tea is weighed. The clerks can adjust the scale and move the pointer either to the left or to the right of the zero mark. When the pointer is behind the zero mark, the effect will be that each time weighing takes place, the scale shows a weight that is less than the correct one, and, of course, the grower loses. One grower stated that at times the buyers' clerk turn down the scale to behind zero, where there are no numbers at all.<sup>149</sup> In that case, a number of kilograms have to be 'lost' to bring the pointer up to zero before it starts recording the weight, a situation which obviously short-changes the grower.

This practice was much more prevalent before growers formed co-operatives. According to one grower, this was one reason why growers decided to weigh their leaf on their own as a co-operative.<sup>150</sup> In some cases, the scales are tuned in such a way that the pointers move backwards. In that case, the pointer is placed at the 50kg mark before any load is mounted; and when loaded, the pointer moves backwards down to point zero, and the weight is arrived at by subtracting the number. This is more complicated since the actual weight is arrived at by subtracting figures and mistakes are bound to be made. It also leaves room for clerks to take advantage of some growers who are unable to do subtractions.

The clerk is responsible for reading figures on the scale and entering them into a book. The growers also look at the scale to make sure the figures that the clerk writes down are the correct ones as reflected on the scale. One respondent said the growers have to be very alert because sometimes the clerks understate the figures.<sup>151</sup> When reading the scale, fractions are not included. If, for example, the scale reads 50.5kgs or 50.7kg, the clerk simply writes down 50kgs. Growers who do not sell as co-operatives are not paid for those fractions, and the buyer takes them for free. For those who sell through co-operatives, the fractions may contribute towards a positive variance and the co-operative benefits from it since ignored fractions may add up to hundreds of kilograms in a day.

When there is rain, 7.5% is subtracted from the weight as water loss.<sup>152</sup> Of course it makes sense to subtract some weight, yet questions arise as to whether the percentage subtracted reflects the true weight of the moisture.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, asked how the buyers know the correct weight of moisture, one outgrower replied: 'That is where the trickery is'.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> Interview with Informant 3, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>149</sup> Interview with Informant 34, Honde Valley, January 2002.

<sup>150</sup> Interview with Informant 5, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>151</sup> Interview with Informant 39, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

<sup>152</sup> Interview with Informant 35, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>153</sup> Among others - Interviews with Informants 3, 6, 31, Honde Valley, December 2000.

<sup>154</sup> Interview with Informant 36, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

### 3.3. Where the Trickery Is

A number of tricks and fraudulent activities take place during the leaf collection process. Growers have their own tricks to increase the weight of their tea. Buyers and their representatives (the clerks) also engage in fraudulent activities to try for monetary benefits. In response to various tactics engaged by buyers and/or clerks, some growers include objects such as stones with their tea during weighing. According to some respondents, one grower put a stone that weighed some 20 kilograms in his leaf during weighing, which was only discovered at the factory.<sup>155</sup> In response, the buyer subtracted an equal fraction from all the growers whose tea had been part of that consignment. According to a number of respondents, outgrowers employ these tricks simply because they want money; itself, a commentary on the prices they are paid for their tea. Asked about the practice, one grower had this to say:

Yes, that happens very often. One plucks their tea and puts a stone in that tea to make it heavier. People want money, which is why they do that. That happened one time when a stone ... passed through the weighing stage and into the factory. It was only when the tea was being off-loaded to be processed ... that the stone struck one worker and so it was detected. From then on, it was a requirement that one [every plucker] has to pour out their tea so that it is inspected.<sup>156</sup>

Another trick growers engage in is sprinkling water onto their leaf so it gains weight. Buyers constantly warn that they may refuse to buy tea should anybody be found doing this.<sup>157</sup> Some growers, however, sprinkle water on their leaf in good faith, for instance, to prevent the leaf from losing too much moisture on hot days and thus to keep it fresh. According to a former clerk of a co-operative, the trick that growers most frequently use is to weigh their leaf twice. After weighing leaf for the first time, the grower checks if the clerk is paying attention. If the latter is busy, the grower can stealthily take his/her sack back to the weighing queue and then have it weighed a second time. This usually happens at night, especially during the peak season when the tractors come as late as midnight.<sup>158</sup> The trick is more commonly employed by growers who are not members of co-operatives, for the latter guard against such practices among themselves because they can result in negative variances when tea is weighed again at the factory. According to an official of a co-operative, members of co-operatives agreed among themselves to identify and report anybody found engaging in tricks that are likely to negatively affect the co-operative.<sup>159</sup>

Field clerks also engage in tricks that prejudice growers. The tightening of scales has already been referred to, resulting in the understating of the weight of outgrowers' tea.<sup>160</sup> It appears

---

<sup>155</sup> Interview with Informant 24, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

<sup>156</sup> Interview with Informant 35, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>157</sup> Interview with Informant 27, Honde Valley, January, 2001.

<sup>158</sup> Interview with Informant 36, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>159</sup> Interview with Informant 6, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with Informant 37, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

the problem of scale tightening mostly affects growers who do not sell their leaf through co-operatives because they have little control over company clerks and cannot require them to correct scales. Members of co-operatives have some degree of control over the clerks since they are the ones who employ them. If a clerk does anything irregular, members can report this to the co-operative committee to have the issue investigated.

Many growers said there are clerks who understate the weight of tea for some outgrowers and then have secret agreements to credit it to another grower. On this issue, one grower complained:

The major problem that we are facing these days concerns clerks who fleece off some of our kilograms and add them onto other growers' records. Sometimes they simply understate your kilograms and keep the difference. They give that to their own friends, who give the owner [clerk] some of the payment after selling.<sup>161</sup>

Relations between growers and clerks vary depending usually on whether the clerk is employed by a co-operative or by a buyer. Clerks who are employed by growers are usually friendlier than those who work for the buyers. A clerk employed by one of the co-operatives said that in order to maintain good relations with growers, he at times must accept leaf that is of a quality company clerks would normally reject.<sup>162</sup> He covers it up with good quality leaf. On the other hand, one grower complained that buyers' clerks are very rude. As he put it, '[They] are not humble in their dealing with growers. If you try to oppose them on any matter, they will just leave your tea'.<sup>163</sup> But some clerks are more considerate than others. Stated one grower:

A lot depends on the heart [leniency] of the clerk. One [clerk] may tell you to grade your tea so that when it mixes with that from other farmers [outgrowers], it gets neutralised, at least. However, those who are hard-hearted simply look at your tea and tell you ... 'Your tea is bad. I will not take it'. Even if you protest that it is not different from that of other outgrowers, they will not listen.<sup>164</sup>

Another grower added that, at times, it is necessary for growers to befriend clerks so they are treated accordingly when it comes to grading and scaling their tea. Indeed, some respondents claim that clerks occasionally demand bribes from growers lest such growers' tea would not be passed.<sup>165</sup> At times quarrels between clerks and growers arise, especially when the latter's leaf is rejected because of alleged poor quality. According to an informant, some growers' tea

---

<sup>161</sup> Interview with Informant 36, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>162</sup> Interview with Informants 6, 8 and 10, Honde Valley, December 2000.

<sup>163</sup> Interview with Informant 37, Honde Valley, December, 2000.

<sup>164</sup> Interview with Informant 38, Honde Valley, January, 2001.

<sup>165</sup> Interview with Informant 11, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

is rejected in spite of it being of good quality, and yet the buyers in their own tea estates accept tea that is of much worse quality than that which they reject from outgrowers.<sup>166</sup>

According to an official of one of the co-operatives, women are more vulnerable to ill treatment by clerks. If there are only women at a weighing point, a lot of leaf is rejected because of alleged poor quality. He went further to say clerks are ruder in the absence of co-operative committee members, but when the latter are present, the weighing process is conducted much more fairly. He stated:

If they [the clerks] hate you, they may tell you that your tea is of poor quality and you have to select to remove the leaves that they say are not suitable. In other cases, they accept tea that is exactly the same as that which they would have rejected from another grower.... This is the problem we are working to eliminate in our co-operative.<sup>167</sup>

### **3.4. Leaf at the Factory**

When the weighing process is through at a weighing station, the tea is taken to the factory where it is weighed for the second time. In the fields, individual growers weigh their own leaf separately. At the factory, tea is anonymous: all the leaf on the tractor is weighed in bulk on a weighbridge.

Growers who sell their leaf as individuals, as opposed to those who sell through co-operatives, are not affected by the outcome of the weighbridge weight. Whether the outcome produces a negative or positive variance makes no difference to them; they are still paid accordingly to the number of kilograms recorded at the fields. On the other hand, growers who are members of co-operatives and sell their leaf through them are always affected by the factory weight. When there is a positive variance, the excess money goes into the coffers of their co-operative, and they may later use it to buy fertilisers or seedlings. When there is a negative variance, the co-operative's financial resources may be negatively affected to the extent that members will have to contribute money to save the situation.

Before leaf is weighed at the factory, its quality is assessed. With ARDA-Katiyo, the leaf almost always meets the minimum requirements. However, there have been a few cases when the leaf fails to meet the required quality standard, in which case it is thrown away and growers are not paid for it. A clerk of one of the co-operatives stated that at one time, in the past, a whole tractor consignment of tea weighing 2900kgs was rejected and thrown away, and growers were not paid because the quality was considered poor.<sup>168</sup>

In mid-2001, Eastern Highlands Plantations introduced a new system of evaluating leaf quality (in bulk) at the factory. The quality was expressed in percentages that were paid for differently. When a consignment arrived at the factory, 100 grams of tea was picked at

---

<sup>166</sup> Interview with Informant 38, Honde Valley, January 2002.

<sup>167</sup> Interview with Informant 40, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

<sup>168</sup> Interview with Informant 41, Honde Valley, January, 2002.

random from the lot. From this sample, acceptable leaves were separated from the bad ones. The weight of the good tea was then expressed as a percentage of the sample. That was then taken to represent the quality of the whole consignment, and thus the corresponding price per kilogram.

Explaining the system, the clerk of one of the co-operatives stated:

They [the clerks at the factory] take an amount of tea from any sack in the trailer, at random, and put it there. They measure it to 100 grams—that represents the tea from that particular area. They then assess that lot, looking for the type of tea they require, which is 2½. They



**Transporting green tea leaves to factory.**

pick out the good leaves and put them aside, and they do the same with the bad leaves. They take the ‘broken tea’, and also what they call ‘hard *mbanje*’. They then weigh the good quality tea to find its percentage of the 100 grams. If it measures to 70 grams, then your percentage is 70%. The separation will tell you what is wrong with your tea on any particular day—whether there is too much *mbanje*, whether it is too long or crushed.<sup>169</sup>

Indicated on the ‘green leaf percentage assessment’ form are points that evaluating clerks at the factory are expected to take particular note of. One such reminder, for example, reads:

The required standard [quality] is one in which the minimum percentage of clean undamaged two and a bud, three and a bud, and soft two leaf *bhanji* 80%. No shoot should exceed in length, measured from the base of the bud—11 cm.<sup>170</sup>

<sup>169</sup> Interview with Informant 36, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>170</sup> Papers in Private Anonymous Hands. Green Leaf Count Form.

And another instruction simply reads: ‘Particular note should be made of over-heated or burnt leaf’.

Below is an edited ‘green leaf count’ form, which gives an indication of how percentages are arrived at.

### Leaf Count Form

		% NCN STANDARD					STANDARD
Time in	Field No.	Over 11cm	Broken &/or damaged	4 plus a bud	Hard bhanji	Total	% Good
17.10	O/G	—	17	7	12	36	64
19.00	O/G	3	13	6	19	41	59
		1	15	6	16	38	62
19.00	O/G	—	25	3	10	38	62

Source: Papers in Private Anonymous Hands. Green Leaf Count Form

The example above shows the tea logged in at 17.10 (5:10 p.m.) scored 64% after a leaf count assessment. This was arrived at by adding the unacceptable tealeaves, totalling 36 (36%), this leaves the percentage good of 64 (64%). As already stated, different percentages were paid for at different prices as follows:

### Quality Premiums

Percentage	Price/kg
Below 50%	\$5.26
50-54%	\$6.13
55-59%	\$7.01
60-64%	\$7.88
65-69%	\$8.76
70-74%	\$9.64
75-80%	\$10.51
81-100%	\$11.57

Source: Interview with a clerk of one of the co-operatives, Honde Valley, January 2002.

This system was very unpopular with the outgrowers in the Honde Valley. It used a collective responsibility approach that was not always fair. In the event that one grower's tea in a particular consignment was of poor quality, the whole consignment was negatively affected if the sample was picked from his/her tea. On this issue, one respondent had this to say:

[The] disadvantage with Eastern Highlands is that growers' tea is mixed which means that those people who have poor quality tea spoil other people's good quality tea. At the factory, that tea may be judged to be of poor quality yet others would have worked hard to pick good quality tea.<sup>171</sup>

Of course, theoretically, the system also could work in favour of outgrowers if the sample was picked from a very high quality tea when, in fact, the consignment, as a whole, was of poor quality. However, in most cases, the outgrowers appear to be unlucky, as their tea rarely scored above 65%.

Another problem for growers with this system was that outgrowers who employed pluckers paid them per weight of plucked tea, and the wage was generally negotiated before the work was done. In other words, the workers demanded to know their wages in advance, but the outgrowers had no way of knowing the monetary value of their tea in advance. Complaining about this system, one respondent stated:

We are not happy with being paid for our tea according to the percentage scale. This system irks us because you can pluck a lot of tea but at the end, you get less money to the extent that you cannot pay your workers. My tea can be said to be 50% which means that I will get \$5.26 [per kg] and yet I will have to pay my workers \$3.00 [per kg]—which is a great loss.<sup>172</sup>

After the quality assessment exercise at the factory, the tea is then weighed and the result, as already stated, could be a negative or positive variance. There are a number of reasons for variances. A positive variance arises mostly because fractions of kilograms that are ignored at the fields are taken into account at the factory. The fractions will be so numerous that when added together, they total several kilograms. This is where growers who sell as individuals lose out because they are never paid for these fractions. Another reason for positive variance is that when reading the scales at night, the clerk may not be able to see properly and thus write down a figure that is less. The other reason why positive variances arise is because the scale may be adjusted to start behind the zero mark. This, it is claimed, is to counter the weight of containers, but the adjustment may be excessive and more weight is disregarded than the actual weight of the containers.

Negative variances are caused, in some cases, by the fact that leaf may lose weight before it gets to the factory, especially when it is very hot. The moisture evaporates to an extent of offsetting the effect of fractions when they combine at the weighbridge. In addition, some

---

<sup>171</sup> Interview with Informant 36, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

<sup>172</sup> Interview with Informant 38, Honde Valley, January 2002.

growers weigh their leaf twice in an effort to have more kilograms recorded for themselves. This usually happens under the cover of darkness at night when tractors are delayed. Inaccurate reading of the scale at night may also result in negative variances. One informant explained that, 'the problem is that, at times, the tractor comes late in the evening when it is dark. In that case, it may not be possible to clearly see the numbers on the scale and a 20 may appear like a 30, for example'.<sup>173</sup>

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The tea outgrower scheme in Manicaland in general, and the Honde Valley in particular, is expanding rapidly. With the worsening unemployment situation in the country, more and more people who have access to land in areas suitable for tea growing are likely to make efforts to join the scheme. The irony is that this expansion, at least in the Honde Valley, is taking place notwithstanding bitter complaints from current outgrowers regarding their relationship with the tea companies. Despite this seeming contradiction, it is clear that the tea outgrower arrangement needs to be attended to, as it is fraught with problems. The contracts that are 'signed' between the growers and the tea companies are clearly one sided. While the companies can breach them with impunity, the outgrowers cannot do so. With regards to transport, for example, the companies are supposed to collect tea from the outgrowers at certain agreed times. But very often they do not abide by this clause, at times sending transport so late that the tea quality has deteriorated. Although responsible for this deterioration, the companies very often reject the tea on grounds of poor quality; thus punishing the outgrowers for their own failures to arrive at the agreed to times. Further, the growers are unfairly treated in the way their tea is weighed. Scales are tampered with in all sorts of ways, some of which are sanctioned by the companies and others are perpetrated by the clerks for their own benefit, and fractions are rounded down.

Is there a way forward? The answer, however guarded, seems to be yes. On the basis of the latest developments, the situation appears to contain a ray of hope. The outgrowers in the Honde Valley have recently come together and formed the Honde Valley Tea Growers Union. This should enhance the growers' position vis-à-vis the tea companies. Already there are indications in that direction. At a meeting in July 2002, between the Honde Valley Tea Growers Union and the representatives of Eastern Highlands Plantations, the latter indicated that they were prepared to assist the outgrowers with money to the tune of Z\$50 million, which the outgrowers would use to form a company. This company would then be responsible for selling outgrowers' leaf. Subsequently, in late 2002, the Honde Valley Smallholder Development Company was formed.

Apart from the Z\$50 million to develop the outgrower scheme in the Honde Valley, Eastern Highlands also indicated that they would introduce 10,000 shares at \$5.00 each, open to all outgrowers who are members of the tea outgrowers' union. Further, the company also

---

<sup>173</sup> Interview with Informant 14, Honde Valley, December, 2001.

indicated its intention to build and maintain roads in the tea growing areas to facilitate the collection of green leaf from the outgrowers. This could be the dawn of a new era in the development of the tea outgrower scheme in the Honde Valley.

Of critical importance in the outgrower tea schemes in the Honde Valley in particular, and Manicaland Province more generally, is the contract signed between the growers and the buyers. It should not be vague and it should be written to safeguard the interests of both parties. The contract should be drafted by both sides concerned, the buyers and the sellers (or their representatives) in order for it to represent the interests of both parties in a fair manner. Since most growers are semiliterate, a third party should be present during the drafting of the contract. This will assure growers that buyers will not take advantage of their expertise to manipulate the contract.

The contract should be written in clear and simple language. The majority of tea outgrowers do not understand English, and even the few who do are not likely to understand legal language. Therefore, the contract should be written in both English and Shona. It is important that the contract be clearly understood by both parties, as this is a key requirement for a contract to be binding and enforceable in law. It is important that there be a committee of buyers' and outgrowers' representatives to monitor the operation of the contract. It is clear

#### **A written contract has advantages over a verbal contract**

- Parties can refer to it to remind themselves of what is expected of them.
- The chances of wrong interpretations are reduced through clearly laid down conditions of sale.
- It can be produced as evidence of an agreement between buyers and producers.
- It fosters commitment since both parties are aware that if they do not carry out their obligations, the contract can be used to sue them.

from the research on tea outgrowers in the Honde Valley that one area of conflict between buyers and producers is over quality. It is important that growers are constantly encouraged to supply good quality produce by giving them tangible support to achieve this.

Some growers fail to achieve acceptable quality because of lack of adequate inputs, as most of them do not have available development capital. It is recommended that buyers introduce input credit schemes for the benefit of their growers.

There should be a *transparent* method of rewarding good quality and for punishing bad quality. The percentage premium system introduced by Eastern Highlands Tea plantations in 2001 was a good idea. The only problem with it was its implementation, as tea from outgrowers was assessed for quality in bulk. Thus outgrowers were rewarded for good quality or punished for bad quality collectively. This did not give sufficient encouragement to individual growers to pluck good quality tea. Thus the leaf count (percentage premium) should be implemented and each and every grower's tea consignment should be assessed separately. Each grower's produce should therefore be labelled in order to facilitate this.

Outgrowers could also be encouraged to pluck good quality tea by introducing monthly, quarterly, or annual prizes for growers that produce the most consistently high quality crop for that period.

The important thing is that any quality assessment system should be seen by outgrowers to be fair and transparent. There is need to have an independent party to whom growers and buyers could appeal to when there is disagreement over quality. Perhaps the Ministry of Agriculture could provide this arbitration service.

It is possible that some growers pluck poor quality because they do not quite appreciate the importance of good quality crop in the business as a whole or, in some cases, recognise the difference between good and poor quality tea. Therefore, it might help if buyers hold regular meetings with growers where they explain the significance of quality and demonstrate how to pluck the good quality crop that they expect. They could also show the various grades that are acceptable.

As noted, tea is highly perishable in its unprocessed form. Thus there is need for reliable transport to ferry it to the factory as quickly as possible. Normally, outgrowers are not able to provide their own transport to ferry their tea. Although buyers in the Honde Valley have been providing transport, outgrowers often complain about the lack of reliability of this transport. It is therefore recommended that the following measures be put in place to improve the transport arrangement:

Tea buyers should set aside vehicles specifically for outgrowers. There is need for these vehicles to reach out to all areas where there are growers. Every effort should be made so that the distances from growers' field to inspection (weighing) stations is as short as possible. This will help preserve the quality of tea leaf as it will not be carried over long distances, apart from the fact growers will be motivated to produce more leaf.

Government should assist both outgrowers and buyers by providing an efficient road network in tea growing areas. Buyers and growers should set aside people employed to make transport arrangements, and this will help to avoid situations where growers pluck their leaf and buyers fail to come and collect it.

One additional area of constant conflict and tension between outgrowers and buyers is weight of produce. To avoid suspicion, the scaling of produce, be it at inspection stations or at the factory weighbridge, should be done in the presence of outgrowers or their representatives. To deal with growers' complaints that buyers' scales are faulty, the growers could come together and buy their own scales so they can weigh their produce before the buyers send in their clerks to weigh the tea. This would enable the growers to have an idea of the weight of their produce and would also reduce chances of unscrupulous clerks who adjust scales to prejudice growers and later connive with other growers to share the spoils.

Under rainy conditions, it is necessary to adjust the weight using a scientifically proven formula to estimate how much the leaf would weigh without the additional water. As water content depends on the amount of rain, water loss during a light drizzle is lower than water

loss during heavy rains. It is therefore important to have a range of percentages of water content that may be subtracted as water loss, depending on the intensity of the rain. To arrive at acceptable percentages of water loss, both growers and buyers could carry out experiments with leaf during both drizzle and heavy rain conditions and jointly determine the percentages of additional water content.

## REFERENCES

- Berman, B. 1990. *Contract and Crisis in Colonial Kenya: The Dialectic of Domination*. London: James Currey.
- Buch-Hansen, M. and H.S. Marcussen. 1982. 'Contract Farming and the Peasantry: Cases From Western Kenya'. *Review of African Political Economy* 23.
- Government of Southern Rhodesia. 1958. Special Purposes Committee.
- Grossman, L.S. 1998. *The Political Ecology of Bananas: Contract Farming, Peasants, and Agrarian Change in the Eastern Caribbean*. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press.
- Glover, D and K. Kusterer. 1990. *Small Farmers, Big Business: Contract Farming and Rural Development*. London: Macmillan.
- Kosqei, S.J. 1981. 'Commodity Production, Tea and Social Change in Kericho, Kenya, 1895-1963'. Ph.D. Dissertation Submitted to the Department of History, Stanford University.
- Lewis, R. and C. Chinhoyi. 1992. Proposals For the Further Development of Smallholder Tea in Manicaland, Volume 2.
- Little, Peter D. and M.J. Watts, editors. 1994. *Living Under Contract: Contract Farming and Agrarian Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- McDonald, B. n.d. *The Tea Factor: Smallholder Tea Production in Zimbabwean Communal Area*. International Cooperation for Development, CIIR.
- Minot, N.W. 1986. 'Contract Farming and Its Effect on Small Farmers in Less Developed Countries'. Working Paper: Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, East Lansing.
- Mosley, P. 1983. *The Settler Economies: Studies in the Economic History of Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1900-1963*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Outpost*, March 1964.
- Van de Laar, A.J.M. 1976. 'The World Bank and the Worlds Poor'. *World Development* 4(10/11).

# AGRARIAN CONTRACTS

## THE COMPLEXITIES OF AGRARIAN REFORM

**Vincent Hungwe**

Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing

It would be appropriate for us to locate any commentary on the research findings included in this volume within the framework that was originally agreed upon. As I understand it this project, which is anchored at the University of Zimbabwe and specifically at the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) and the Land Tenure Centre (LTC) at the University of Wisconsin, USA, was that in the context of implementing the national Land Reform and Resettlement Programme we might not benefit much by planning to completion before implementation. Therefore the approach underpinned the fundamental desire to learn how to do things by doing them. The learning and innovation approach reinforced the understanding from the outset of how land reform was to be implemented. However, in the process of doing that, there are dangers that need to be addressed. The dangers might be gaps and deficiencies in terms of policy content, programme design, and programme implantation. There would most certainly be gaps and deficiencies in monitoring and implementation of the whole programme against some benchmarks we have identified for ourselves. That was the context in which this action-oriented, problem-oriented type of research was agreed upon, and it was going to be anchored at CASS and LTC. The research was intended on a continuous basis to inform policy, programme design, programme implementation as we put into operation the Land Reform programme in Zimbabwe. It is within this context that I comment on the chapters in this section.

The chapter on Mushandike appears to pose contract farming as a polarity between small farm holders who are put forward as option-less, powerless and defenceless. Then there is the State that is assaulting these option-less, powerless and defenceless smallholder farmers. However, if you substitute 'private sector' for 'the State' the polarity remains the same. I am not sure whether inherently this ought to be or it could be the manner in which we have structured the contract farming process itself. It ought not to be an inherently exploitative structure; it is the way we structure it that can render it exploitative. We need to locate this discussion in the context that identifies the critical elements that constitute a Land Agrarian Programme. Contract farming therefore becomes one of the many areas of endeavour within

the broader context of Agrarian Reform. The way we structure Agrarian Reform should necessarily inform and impact on the extent to which the action taking place in the various terrain of Agrarian Reform is ensuring that the objectives of the national programme are achieved. The experiences of both Mushandike and Honde Valley question the way we have structured our Land Reform agenda.

Agrarian Reform is not a simple matter, it is extremely complex, and it has so many elements, so many inter-linkages, and relationships. It is not unidirectional; it is multidimensional. The critical challenge is how to identify those critical elements, put them together in order to ensure that the total package delivers on the critical objectives such as food security, production, manufacturing and exports to generate foreign currency.

The nature of tenure in Zimbabwe is not sufficiently secure. Tenure has become an issue because it impacts on our ability to rid contract farming of the exploitative elements that are indicated in the studies. Related to the issue of tenure security, is the need to enhance agricultural productivity. We can have the land in a secure fashion but there will be need for us to enhance the productivity of that land.

Even when farmers are producing, this will not be sufficient if the farmers are not marketing to the best advantage. We engage in agricultural activity to increase incomes, which we can utilise to access basic needs, as farmers. As we extend the capacity in terms of our ability to produce, we should extend our capacity in terms of technical skills to produce and also extend the capacity to engage in business, manage business and ensure effective marketing and improved entrepreneurial skills. I am not sure that AGRITEX has the technical competence to go beyond the extension of competence to produce and ensure that the farmers are sufficiently mobilised and organised for purposes of engaging in business to the best advantage. This is the kind of information that we require from research. What is it that we have to do to ensure that we rid contract farming of its exploitative elements?

Agribusinesses exploit farmers because there is no alternative market. We must develop the capacity to develop market access. Market access resolves around the issues of production and fair play, providing roads to markets and providing information to the farmers. Market intelligence becomes key in terms of expanding market access by farmers and this applies to Mushandike and Honde Valley. We need a robust legal system where, in case of injury, there is recourse to law. In the absence of well-defined legal frameworks within which all this happens, we may not achieve the desired partnerships between Government, private sector and farmers. There must true partnership among Government, private sector, farmers as producers and the processes that consume the product from the farmers. The fundamental point is that in order for us to able to address the issues that seemingly are taking place in a separate terrain, we must of necessity look at Agrarian Reform as comprising a host of integrated factor markets that need to be planned for and will inform the activities that take place to the mutual benefit not only of producers but also consumers of agricultural enterprise. I have had some experience with an organization called IDEAA. IDEAA focuses on smallholder farmers ensuring that the critical elements that affect productivity are

mainstreamed so as to ensure that this endeavour improves rural livelihoods, which is the issue here.

I am amused by the chapter on eco-tourism. It revives in one's mind the notion of a colonial master in defence of African interest and space—the view of securing territory for the native. In line with this view is the post-independence Government, which apports itself the responsibility of assaulting the territorial space of the native in the communal area. This reminds me of Cornell West's critique "The Evolution and Substance of Multi-culturalism" in the context of the United States, where the slave master is looked upon as the compassionate and good man because he feeds his slaves. I find this notion particularly problematic and I hope it remains as an anecdote. This notion must not inform the way we critique the situation in communal areas and view the Government when it is offering alternatives of extending or increasing sources of income for communal lands as an assault on the colonially engineered notion of the territorial space of the native. I think that is unfortunate. But it is in the nature of scholarship that you have these detours, which are morally and politically challenging. The point is also made in this research that that we must be clear as to what our options are in the communal area. Is it tourism? Tourism might be an option in one area but not in another. We must not look at tourism as always fed by images of the desire of the Europeans or Eurocentricism, which states that you can only have successful tourism if you pander to the interests of those coming from Europe. There are so many alternative sources of tourism.

Agriculture can still remain as an option for generating income but there are other options. I hope it is not being said that Government should not get into communal areas and establish other sources of economic endeavour. If we do not intervene then we are allowing the communal areas to continue in enterprises that may not be to their best advantage. I hope that the research will look into those options. If it is to make sense research must relate to the original idea of informing policy, programme design, programme implementation, and programme monitoring and evaluation. As Government we are expecting the project management team to consult and interrogate the original submissions in this project, and to submit to us a document that has questioned policy, that has identified deficiencies in policy, and that makes recommendations as to the way forward as we implement this national programme.

# LEASING AND SHARECROPPING CONTRACTS FOR INCREASING BENEFICIARY ACCESS TO LAND

**David Hasluck**  
Commercial Farmer

I prefer to be referred to as a farmer, rather than as the former Director of the Commercial Farmers Union because it sounds as though I was deposed! I conduct my farming operations from Manyera Farm in Burma Valley. As I shall explain, the circumstances under which I operate are difficult.

Both leasing and sharecropping contracts rely fundamentally on the ability of the parties entering into these agreements to deliver and respect their obligations. Simple contracts are the most enduring and easy to execute. They are based on a mutual understanding and a common vision or objective, which will result in both parties obtaining what they want, be it production, cash or services.

The question I would like to examine is whether leasing and sharecropping arrangements are relevant and appropriate in furthering the lot of the new beneficiaries of the new land reform programme. My answer to that is an unequivocal, 'Yes'. However, the efficacy of these arrangements relate very much to what is actually happening on the ground, from the farmers' point of view. I submit that the operating environment for both commercial farmers and settlers is very insecure because of the uncertainty surrounding their tenure.

The situation on Manyera and Chalgrove Farms, which I operate as a single unit under an agreement reached in the Administrative Court with Government, is uncertain, not because the Agreement is wrong, but because the farms were subject to three waves of settlement by different authorities (Government, the Ruling Party, and war veterans). The operating environment on the farm has been made very difficult because disputes between settlers over who has access to which plot and, more recently, the demarcation of the boundaries of the remaining extents of Manyera and Chalgrove that were confirmed by mutual agreement with Manicaland Land Committee and Government Officials in the Administrative Court, remain unresolved.

Insecurity of tenure has had a negative impact on the production of commercial farmers and new settlers alike. However, sharecropping and leases are still being entered into for different reasons. For example, grazing land located in resettlement areas is often leased back to farmers by absentee settlers. Sharecropping arrangements are entered into between farmers and their workers, particularly for food crops, in order to circumvent marketing regulations that require delivery of maize and wheat grown on commercial farms to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) within 14 days of harvest. Sharecropping arrangements are also being entered into between commercial farmers, their workers and newly resettled farmers to spread risk, share resources and have co-responsibility for minimising theft.

There has been some evidence presented in the preceding chapters, particularly in the case of tea outgrower schemes in the Honde Valley, where outgrowers feel they are being exploited by tea estates, to which their production is contracted. My experience of leases and contracts is that they will never succeed unless they are simple, practically enforceable and recognised by both parties as fair. There is a difference between fairness and what some people refer to as equality. The concept of equality is prejudged by a perception of who is the stronger one of the parties before the contract is entered into. There has been other evidence of contracts being broken by both parties (the example cited was tomato growers at Nyanyadzi, who sell outside their contract when prices are higher than the contracted price and the processor improperly rejecting tomatoes on the grounds of quality).

The issues of financing, accountability, transparency and enforceability of contracts and leases of necessity rely on a system of security of tenure that gives the parties, and indeed third parties such as banks, confidence that contractual arrangements will not be interfered with during the contract or lease.

A national policy that supports rural livelihoods through instruments of sharecropping and leases does not exist. Different policies are applied in different provinces in Zimbabwe and, indeed, different districts. Therefore, a flexible approach has to be adopted, taking into account the existing local conditions on the ground. Those farmers who hold title deeds do not currently enjoy the protection of the law as far as the right to use, and protection from interference on their land.

To conclude, leases and sharecropping arrangements are important instruments that can be used for improving the lot of the new farmers in the future. What is required is a consistent policy environment that recognises security of tenure in communal, commercial and resettlement areas and a liberalisation of market controls that are a constraint to the pricing of produce under contractual agreements. However, this will only be possible when the anarchistic situation that exists on the ground in many former commercial farming areas sees the rule of law restored. It is clear that commercial farmers can only survive in Zimbabwe if their newly resettled neighbours are successful themselves and there are obligations on both sides to ensure that this is so. Facilitation rather than interference by the State would be most helpful.

# **ROLE OF PRIVATE LAND MARKETS IN DELIVERING LAND AND BENEFICIARY SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Daniel Ncube, MP**

Portfolio Committee on Land, Agriculture, Water Development and Rural Resources

## **1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LAND QUESTION**

The land issue has been a dominant factor in the history of Zimbabwe since the colonial settlers established their power through conquest over one hundred years ago. The state has historically played a dominant role in land tenure administration since then. In a series of steps the colonial regimes established their own forms of tenure, expropriated the best quality land for white commercial farmers and restricted the black African peasant into dry marginal areas. The administration of land and its planning were undertaken through centralised government mechanisms that reflected the power and interests of the dominant colonial white community. This history is well known but it is worth repeating at this juncture of our national history.

In 1930, a piece of legislation, the Land Apportionment Act, formalised the separation of land between blacks and whites. This Act was the result of the recommendations of the Morris Carter Commission of 1925. The Land Apportionment Act excluded Africans from that half of the country that contained the best farming land, despite the fact that Africans constituted over 95% of the population. The confinement to the poorest land accomplished the objective of forcing Africans into the labour market. Thus, Africans were forced to work for subsistence wages on white farms, mines and factories in virtual servitude.

The delivery of land therefore has always been a politically contentious issue and the Government must be commended for launching the Accelerated Resettlement Programme. The land question has been and remains the central social, political and economic issue for Zimbabwe today. It is central to the attainment of social, spiritual and political stability and economic development in the country. The majority of the nation's poor, particularly rural families live directly off the land. The land reforms are an attempt to redress the legacy of colonialism. It cannot therefore be expected that the private sector should play a leading role in the delivery of land back to the Africans.

In addition, the greater part of the industrial development of the economy depends on the strength of the agricultural sector. There is, therefore, an urgent need at all levels to find a meaningful resolution of the land question.

## 2. THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN THE LAND REFORM DEBATE

It is becoming increasingly apparent that if land tenure services are to be delivered to citizens, the private sector would have to play a bigger role. The transfer of tasks from public to private actors should be implemented as follows:

- private actors (for example, real estate agents) should process information required for buying and selling property,
- the private sector should be involved in facilitating transactions (for example, through notaries),
- final management of transactions, however, should remain in public hands.

It is against this background that Government agencies will be responsible for all work concerning land redistribution. However, the sheer quantity of work to be undertaken in transforming these property systems exceeds the capacity of any government.

This situation reinforces the need to operationalise new legal frameworks to enable Government to deliver services, which the public demands. By allowing the private sector to perform time consuming and technologically expensive tasks, Government will be able to focus on the main task of quality assurance and guaranteeing the fair and transparent nature of land tenure procedures. Government agencies should increasingly be responsible for quality control functions and should not place great importance on acquiring processing tools. The private sector should instead be encouraged to invest in the use of new technologies.

### Key land policy recommendations

- Land rights and procedures for transferring land need to be clear and transparent
- Farmland rationalisation, consolidation and an improved leasing market are needed to revitalise land values
- Introduction of land tax to encourage subdivision of land, but regulations need to be relaxed to enable subdivisions
- Security of tenure will allow the private sector to provide resources

## 3. LAND MARKET REFORM

Few developing countries have succeeded in establishing land markets capable of delivering affordable land to the poor. The poor are often forced to settle informally on vacant, and sometimes marginal lands at the urban periphery. Public policy therefore plays a crucial role in both the supply of and demand for land. Through planning, public authorities can direct transport and infrastructure towards opening new land and 'follow up' the settlement through regularisation and enhancement of processes. Responsibility for formulating and enforcing rules of tenure and use of land ultimately rests with the Government.

It is clear that a transparent land market is a basic condition for general economic development in a country. Land markets are also essential for needed infrastructure (communication, transportation and services) to emerge. Such infrastructure is required to

encourage and support investments that in turn create much needed employment opportunities.

Farmland rationalisation and consolidation is of great importance. An improved leasing market should lead to consolidation in order to revitalise agricultural land values. The meaning of land consolidation should not be restricted to land distribution but should embrace the many aspects that lead to land development in the broadest sense (development of other economic activities such as commerce and services for the rural population, for example) The private sector should play a major role in this regard.

The introduction of land tax would encourage subdivision of land to targeted groups who are the previously disadvantaged individuals. Subdivision regulations should be relaxed in order to encourage commercial farmers to subdivide their farms and allocate subdivided portions to farmworkers.

In order to reduce the dependence of agriculture on climatic conditions, the private sector should be allowed to direct resources at harnessing rain water and rivers for irrigation through construction of dams especially, in the semi arid areas of the country. However, this cannot be done without security of tenure.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The Government must consider providing financial assistance to the people in the resettled areas and, more importantly, write-off their existing debts. White commercial farmers were assisted by successive colonial governments. The Government should do the same for the black small-scale farmers; yet, the Government does not have adequate resources and therefore the private sector should be allowed to assist in this regard.

**SECTION TWO:**

**LAND REDISTRIBUTION THROUGH**

**PRIVATE LAND MARKETS**



—Chapter 5—  
**Subdivision Policy and  
Informal Subdivisions**

**Contradictions Affecting Land Delivery and  
Secure Property Rights in Zimbabwe<sup>174</sup>**

**Chrispen Sukume**

Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe

**Michael Roth**

Land Tenure Center and Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

*Beyond Phase I of Zimbabwe's Land Reform and Resettlement Program (1980-1998) and fast track resettlement, the private land market has created an important process of shadow land reform and de facto land redistribution. However, legal constraints on subdivision and the high costs of subdividing and defining property rights on the ground are creating a legal limbo where the current owner is de facto subdividing property but the new claimants are unable to secure land rights or financial capital to aid in development. This chapter analyses the legal and institutional constraints to subdivision and consolidation, the financial and time constraints to subdivision, and the contribution of subdivisions and consolidations to the expansion and/or contraction in land supply. It also presents findings of current case study research contrasting subdivision constraints with de facto subdivision that is nonetheless occurring on the ground, and the detrimental effects informal subdivision is having on land use management and capital investment unless current policies are modified.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

At the time of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual economy characterised by skewed landownership and white minority control over the country's land and water resources. For a decade following independence in 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe made significant headway in redistributing land to the black majority population, but these efforts had substantially stalled by the mid-1980s. In 1998, the Government of Zimbabwe sought to reaccelerate the land reform and resettlement program through a joint Government-donor initiative that included a two-year implementation phase, and pilot experimentation with 'improved government' and 'new complementary' models of land reform and resettlement.

---

<sup>174</sup> The authors gratefully acknowledge the helpful comments provided by Andrew Mlalazi, Mr Mbiriri (Department of Lands, Harare), and Honorable Mackenzie Ncube (MP).

The redistributive land reforms implemented in Central America and Asia in the 1950s-1970s included coercive measures to redistribute land from landed elites to beneficiaries, including expropriations, land taxation, and limits on number and size of landholdings. The 1980s witnessed a global downsizing of land reform efforts and the beginning of the shift from redistributive land reform to market-assisted land reform (1990s) and presently to community-assisted land reform. The reasons for this policy shift are multiple and complex, but a number of factors played a role: 1) the after-effects of the Arab Oil embargo in the late 1970s and a shift in policy focus to structural adjustment programs to address macroeconomic imbalances; 2) sagging support for land nationalisations in donor countries; and 3) shrinking funds for state land acquisition and resettlement costs. In addition, according to Van den Brink (2002), redistributive reforms have proved bureaucratic, cumbersome, slow, and costly.

In contrast with state acquisition and state planned resettlement, community-driven or market-assisted land reform gives grants or subsidised loans to communities, groups, and individuals for land purchase or land development costs. In both instances of land acquisition and resettlement, land reform beneficiaries make greater use of private land markets to identify land for acquisition, and have greater ownership and choice in determining appropriate resettlement investments and land use planning. Even within market assisted approaches, however, there often remains the need for public provision of services that the private sector either does not provide or provides at a cost that exceed the means of the poor to pay. Assistance may be needed by beneficiaries in negotiating the sales transaction, securing land rights, and planning land use and investment including the demarcation of towns and villages and improving access to electricity, schools, roads, water, sewage, and communications.

It is debatable whether the land market (even with facilitation and modest grant support) can in and of itself adequately serve the needs of the poor through speedy land delivery. However, the purpose of this chapter is to address a different but related question in Southern Africa. In instances where the land market can and should be used in place of or in tandem with Government-assisted land redistribution, is national policy on land markets and subdivision constraining the ability of the land market to deliver land to the poor?

## **2. SUBDIVISION (THEORETICAL BENEFITS)**

The issue of restrictive subdivision regulations is particularly important to the Southern African countries of Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, countries currently embarking on large-scale land redistribution exercises. These countries are pursuing varying mixes of market-based as well as government-assisted redistributive schemes to avail land to both resource poor landless and to enable blacks with some resources to enter commercial agriculture. In all countries however, the pace of market based approaches has been markedly slow and restrictive subdivision regulations has been identified as one of the major limitations. Of late, the rapid decline in agricultural production in Zimbabwe coinciding with

the fast track resettlement programme has raised concern about productivity in redistributing subdivided land.

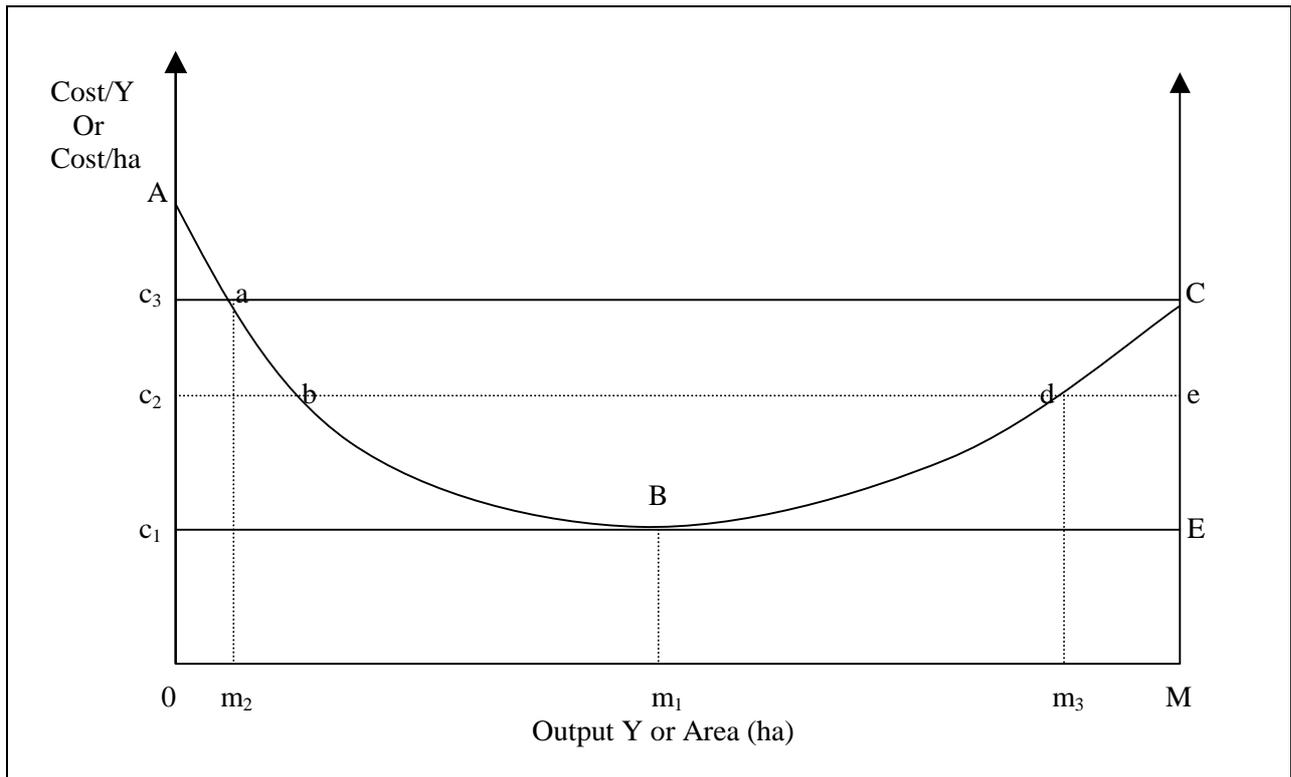
Subdivision is the process of subdividing one parcel of land into two or more contiguous sub-parcels or stands. A number of stereotypical examples help illustrate how subdivisions through community or market-assisted land reform facilitate land acquisition and resettlement (see Roth 1993 for further elaboration on market assisted land reform options). For example, the owner of a 'large-farm' or estate might subdivide the parcel and allocate subdivided portions to his or her farmworkers for the establishment of residential stands or arable land for farming. The owner of the large-farm, in exchange for tax deferments or relief of progressive land taxation, might subdivide the land and sell off underutilised landholdings to disadvantaged private investors or land reform beneficiaries with access to government grants. Individuals or groups in communal areas might negotiate with a potential land seller for a block (a subdivision) of land that is then sold to the community or further subdivided to individuals within the community. Or, a farm on the outskirts of a municipality might be subdivided into lots for urban real estate development or residential stands.

These and similar solutions that deliver land to the poor through market assisted mechanisms depend on 'sellers' and 'buyers' negotiating land transfers in the private land market with minimum government intervention in parcel or beneficiary selection, or scale of land acquisition or resettlement. As long as subdivision results in the transfer of land from 'landed elites' to the poor, land redistribution by definition will in most cases enhance equity. Whether such land redistribution also improves efficiency or agricultural productivity is a separate question, illustrated by the hypothetical graph in Figure 1.

Consider the situation of a large farm, plantation or estate comprised of one or several parcels of land or farming units totalling  $M$  hectares in size. Curve ABC in the figure depicts the long-run average costs of a firm exhibiting increasing returns to scale over farm size  $0-m_1$  and decreasing returns to scale over farm size  $m_1-M$ . Assume that land throughout the farm is of more or less homogeneous quality and that farm size efficiency to the right of point  $m_1$  or B declines due to labour and capital constraints that result in land under-utilisation. Assume further that any portion of this farming unit (either one farm as a parcel or a portion of one farm) might be redistributed to 'n' land reform beneficiaries with identical average costs ( $c_1$ ,  $c_2$  or  $c_3$ ).

Under redistributive land reform, the Government could designate one or more farms within the farming unit for redistribution, acquire these through expropriation or through 'willing-seller, willing-buyer' mechanisms, and redistribute the land to beneficiaries. Subdivision constraints need not apply if the state waives subdivision regulations for smallholder resettlement, or acquires a farm and settles the beneficiaries but does not legally demarcate the sub-parcels for the new beneficiary landowners.

**Figure 1: Indicative Long-Run Average Cost Curves**



Under market-assisted or community-assisted land reform, low-cost subdivision is crucial to the effectiveness of the land redistribution effort if the intent is to enable one or several beneficiaries to carve off a piece of an existing farm parcel for group or individual settlement. While Government could waive or ease subdivision restrictions for private land market transactions that support land reform, governments in Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe have not shown a willingness to do so to date. The rationale for this reluctance is addressed shortly, but for the moment, subdivision of the large farm, plantation or estate into smaller subdivisions may offer land reform beneficiaries several hypothetical efficiency paths:

1. **Exclusionary Growth Subdivision.** The average costs of beneficiary (land reform) households ( $c_3$ ) exceed the average cost of the large farm enterprise over its domain  $OM$  (with exception of total costs  $Ac_3a$  associated with farm size  $Om_2$ ). While land reform may be justified for equity benefits, total costs of beneficiary landholdings exceed that of the large-scale farm by area  $aBC$  less  $Ac_3a$ . Higher costs from smallholder agriculture might result from different technology, limited access to markets and credit, unskilled management, or landholdings too small in size.
2. **Peripheral Growth Subdivision.** Any reduction in average costs from  $c_3$  to for example  $c_2$  would enable efficiency gains by smallholder beneficiaries. All else constant, in figure 1, aggregate efficiency would be improved by the large-farm estate downsizing to size  $Om_3$  with area  $m_3M$  redistributed to beneficiary households. Small parcels carved off from the large farm estate will tend to be dispersed and may be peripheral to the agricultural

operations of the estate, but nonetheless benefit land reform through, for example, giving landownership to workers of the farm estate. Growth is enhanced by lowering costs equivalent to area  $deC$ .

3. ***Growth Enhancing Subdivision.*** Average costs of beneficiary (land reform) households ( $c_1$ ) are equal to the average cost of the large-scale enterprise at point B on the average cost curve. Redistributing  $m_1$  to  $M$  hectares to land reform beneficiaries would reduce total costs by area  $BCE$ . Any partial reduction in the size of the large farm enterprise from  $m_1$  to  $0$  would maintain average costs of beneficiary holdings at  $c_1$  but drive up average costs of the remaining large-scale enterprise. Land reform might thus take two forms—maintain the core estate at  $Om_1$  and redistribute  $Om_1$  to  $M$  to land reform beneficiaries; or redistribute the entire farm size to ‘ $n$ ’ land reform beneficiaries.
4. ***Integration Dependent (Core Estate + Smallholdings) Subdivision.*** A variant of growth enhanced subdivision (3) above, the efficiency gains from subdivision are dependent on a core nuclear estate being maintained to reduce the average costs of land reform beneficiaries. Assume average costs of land reform beneficiaries are  $c_2$  using small farm based technology, but decline to  $c_1$  when beneficiaries are able to take advantage of lower marketing costs of the core estate (achieved through economies of scale or improved management) or through improved access to technology, resources or economic opportunity. The core estate or remaining large farm enterprise benefits from secure labour supply and output contracts with farm workers or new land reform beneficiaries. Beneficiary households benefit from the marketing expertise and improved access to markets, technology, financial capital and high valued-added activities provided by the core estate. An internal division of land resources is achieved with area  $0$  to  $m_1$  maintained by the core estate and  $m_1$  to  $M$  redistributed to farmworkers, tenants or land reform beneficiaries.

In all four cases, subdivision and redistribution of land from the large-scale estate to land reform beneficiaries would be equity enhancing. With reduction of average costs of the  $n$ -beneficiary households initially from  $c_3$  to  $c_2$ , partial subdivision of the farming unit from  $M$  to  $m_2$  would result in efficiency gains. Further cost-reductions from  $c_2$  to  $c_1$  would justify further land redistribution from  $m_1$  to  $m_2$  and may easily justify total redistribution of  $m_1$  to  $0$ . There nonetheless remains the very important question whether land reform beneficiaries have the means or ability to engage in production at costs less than or at least comparable with the large-scale estate from which the land is being redistributed?

The classic inverse relationship between farm size and yield per hectare (Berry and Cline 1979, Dyer 1997) is often invoked to support land redistribution (and, one might add, support for ‘Growth Enhancing Subdivision’ above). Large farms experience greater difficulties in supervising wage labour to control absenteeism and labour shirking, while small farms directly reap the benefits of employing their own labour in the farming enterprise (Bhalla 1979, Feder 1985).

However, the inverse size-productivity relationship is neither immutable nor universal (Ahmad and Quereshi 1999). Costs or yields will not vary systematically with farming enterprises or farm size. Price distortions in factor (capital and land) and output markets can more than offset the labour advantage of smallfarmers, particularly if large farm estates are the beneficiaries of farm subsidies or state support. Smallfarmers often face higher transaction and transportation costs in accessing financial, input and output markets, and gaining access to knowledge and new technology, particularly in situations where markets are highly centralised and developed to serve large farm interests not a dispersed population of small farming units. Smallfarmers are further constrained in farming enterprises that require high levels of management (horticulture, flower growing) or vertical coordination between production and marketing (plantation crops) (Van den Brink 2002).

Consequently, the global experience with smallholder productivity under land reform is mixed (El-Ghonemy 2002) with successes observed in Asia and stagnant to low smallholder productivity gains in Latin America (Thiesenhusen 2002). Despite Zimbabwe's maize revolution, which demonstrated smallfarmer comparative advantage in maize production (Eicher and Rukuni 1994; Roth and Bruce 1994), other studies have shown muted productivity response by resettlement farmers (Bratton 1990; Owens and Kinsey 2001). According to Roth and Bruce (1994), resettled smallholders have had to contend with limited farm management skills and experience, being given only temporary permits conferring land use rights, poor access to markets and extension advice, inadequate social cohesion (because settlers are taken from around the country), and Government's inability to fill the void of input distribution and marketing services that land reform has left void.

The problem with basing land reform arguments on the inverse size-productivity relationship is that it tends to aggregate all land available for redistribution regardless of land use, land quality, location, access, or management differences. Zimbabwe's Government since the early 1990s has favoured the acquisition and resettlement of large tracks of designated land to enable scale economies in the delivery of schools, clinics, roads and services. The problem inherent in this strategy, as demonstrated in figure 1, is that wholesale replacement of the large farm sector can result in efficiency losses as efficient large-scale farmers are displaced along with the inefficient ones. While the case for wholesale replacement is no doubt warranted in certain situations, it can also be argued that spinning off portions of farms (peripheral growth subdivision or growth enhancing subdivision) or retaining the core estate while transferring a portion of the farm estate to farmworkers, tenants, or contract labourers (integration dependent subdivision) is also a win-win situation for beneficiaries, the large farm estate, and the nation. Yet such strategies require a land market policy that enables time responsive subdivision at low transactions costs.

### 3. LEGAL AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY CONSTRAINTS ON SUBDIVISION IN ZIMBABWE

#### 3.1. Prevailing Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Zimbabwe Regional Town and Country Planning Act 1976, Chapter 29:12 (Part VI) governs the subdivision and consolidation of any property. In terms of Section 39 of the Regional Town and Country Planning Act, the subdivision of land held under title into two or more properties requires a subdivision permit granted in terms of Section 40 (see Box 1). Such permit is required for any subdivision of the parcel, change of ownership on any portion of the parcel, or granting of leases or rights of occupancy 10 years or longer in duration.<sup>175</sup> Property held in undivided shares is exempt from the permit.<sup>176</sup>

In urban areas, the local authority—city, municipality or town council—reviews such applications and makes final decisions. For rural areas, the Department of Physical Planning processes the application on behalf of the Minister of Local Government and National Housing. If the subdivided property is to be used for agricultural purposes or a feedlot, the permit requires in addition an assessment of economic viability by the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Rural Resettlement through the Department of Agricultural Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX).<sup>177</sup> These procedures operate in conjunction with the provisions of relevant Outline Plans or Master Plans, and Town Planning Schemes or Local Plans.<sup>178</sup>

---

<sup>175</sup> According to section 39, no person shall consolidate two or more properties into one property, or subdivide any property or enter any agreement except in accordance with a permit granted in terms of section 40, including: change of ownership of any portion of the property; lease of any portion of the property for a period of 10 years or more or for the lifetime of the lessee; conferring on any person a right to occupy any portion of a property for a period of 10 years or more or for his lifetime; or, renewal of the lease of, or right to occupy any portion of, a property where the aggregate period of the lease or right to occupy, including the period of renewal, is 10 years or more.

<sup>176</sup> There are other exemptions including land within the jurisdiction of (and owned by) a municipal council or town council; land within a local government area administered by a local authority which is owned by that authority or by the state; leases or rights to occupy any building or portion thereof where the occupation is consistent with operative master plans or local plans, or any condition registered against the title; and land which is alienated by the State, or land which falls within the jurisdiction of a municipality or town that is to be consolidated with other land.

<sup>177</sup> Rural agricultural land is defined in the Act as: ‘property outside the...jurisdiction of a municipal council or town which is used or to be used for agricultural purposes or feedlot’.

<sup>178</sup> Whereas outline plans are, in the main, more than 25 years old and have largely been replaced by more recent plans, one cannot say the same about rural town planning schemes that have remained in use. Regrettably, case law has ruled that provisions of Town Planning Schemes may not be overruled by new Master plan provisions but that Local Plans may replace old Town Planning Schemes.

### Box 1: Application for (Subdivision) Permit

1. **Permit Application.** The landowner or legal representative must submit an application for subdivision according to the local planning authority in terms of Section 40 of the Act. A complete application entails: a) a TPSC 1 form; b) certified copies of the Title Deed to the property being subdivided; c) 1 Sepia copy and 18 copies of drawings of the proposed subdivision; d) letter of representation; and e) application fees. Such application should be accompanied by the consent in writing of the owner of the property, every holder of a mortgage bond registered over the property, and if required by the local authority, the consent in writing of the holder of any other real right registered over the property.
2. **Acknowledgement.** Once an application is deemed 'complete' or satisfactory by the local planning authority, it must acknowledge receipt of the application within two weeks according to Section 40 (2) Paragraph A.<sup>179</sup>
3. **Notification.** In accordance with subsection 3, the local authority shall require the applicant at his or her own expense to give public notice of the application, and to serve notice (and submit proof that notice is given) of the application to every owner of property adjacent to the parcel to be subdivided, and other owners advised by the local planning authority in cases where the proposal:
  - Conflicts with any condition registered against the title deed of the property concerned and which confers a right that may be enforced by the owner of another property;
  - Proposes any use which in terms of the operative master plan, local plan, or approved scheme may only be granted by the local planning authority; or,
  - Proposes any use or subdivision in an area for which there is no operative master plan, local plan, or approved scheme and the land use is materially different from, or the size of any proposed subdivision for residential purposes is smaller than, the land use or size of residential properties.
4. **Consultation.** In accordance with Section 40 (4) paragraph b, consultations with other Ministries and Government Departments may be undertaken to ascertain the suitability of the proposed subdivision.
5. **Objections and Representations.** Any objections or representations in connection with notification must be received within one month of the date of public notice of the application, or from the Ministers responsible for roads and aviation. The local planning authority shall advise the applicant of the nature of any objections and provide time for the applicant to submit comments before the application is decided upon.
6. **Granting of Permit.** (Section 40 (5)). The local planning authority may after objections or representations grant a permit subject to the relevant regional plan, master plan, local plan, or approved scheme provided that approval of the Minister responsible for agriculture is obtained for land outside the jurisdiction of a municipal council or town council. In addition, any permit authorising the subdivision of any property shall require that the survey records concerned be submitted to the Surveyor General (as required in the Land Survey Act).
7. **Refusal and Right of appeal.** In the event a permit for subdivision is refused, the local planning authority must provide reasons in writing for the refusal. If the local planning authority has not decided upon the subdivision application within 4 months of the date of acknowledgement of receipt of application, or by the date of any extension of that period granted the applicant in writing, the application is deemed refused by the planning authority. The applicant has right of appeal (Section 44) to the Administrative Court.

---

<sup>179</sup> Applications for subdivision of any land adjacent to any state road or obstacle limitation area of an aerodrome must also be forwarded to the Ministers responsible for roads and aviation for advisement.

Once the application is submitted, the local planning authority will seek consent in writing of holders with vested legal rights in land such as mortgages and will review the business plan proposed for the subdivision(s) and the remainder of the parcel. For both rural and urban land, the local authority scrutinises the planning application for road access; availability of water for primary use; concern about ‘ad-hoc’ subdivision; need for the subdivision or separate title; standard size of properties in the area; electricity; telecommunications; provisions of a relevant statutory plan; social facilities, schools, and clinics; agricultural viability; and water for irrigation/horticulture.

Provision of electricity, roads, telephone and water are not always critical factors in approval as these can be made available, funds permitting.<sup>180</sup> The need for subdivision for schools, churches and clinics is also seldom a problem. Concerns relating to ad-hoc subdivision, however, are contentious due to lack of a clear definition of what is ‘ad hoc’. Operative Town Planning Schemes are binding and have *tour de force* no matter how outdated the scheme may be. As noted in Box 2, various agencies or departments may be consulted in this process.

All comments are to be submitted to the Department of Physical Planning within six weeks of the request being received by the appropriate department or ministry,

**Box 2: Agencies or departments potentially involved in the subdivision process**

1. *Department of Agricultural Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX)*. Advises on the economic viability of the proposed subdivisions for agricultural purposes or a feedlot. A permit requires the approval of the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement.
2. *Department of Physical Planning*. In cases where the application creates more than five new subdivisions, the Provincial Planning Officer needs to be consulted. The Director compiles overall recommendations to be submitted to the National Subdivision Committee.
3. *Mines and Minerals Act*. Any parcel greater than 100 hectares in size to be subdivided requires a certificate from the Commissioner of Land.
4. *Surveyor General*. Reviews surveying diagrams or the general plan.
5. *Registrar of Deeds*. Advises on title.
6. *Registrar of Administrative Court*. Advises on conditions of registered water rights or permits.
7. *Provincial Water Engineer*. Comments on availability and adequacy of water supplies.
8. *Chief Hydrological Engineer*. Comments on underground water resource availability.
9. *Provincial Roads Engineer*. Comments on any subdivision adjacent to a state road.
10. *Provincial Natural Resources Officer*. Comments on natural resources and environment.
11. *Rural District Council*. Advises on property in conjunction with local development plans.
12. *Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority*. Advises how proposals might affect power lines.
13. *Ministry of Transport and Communication*. Advisement is required if the application relates to any property adjacent to a state road or within obstacle limitations of an aerodrome.

<sup>180</sup> While not critical, both the Posts and Telecommunication Corporation (PTC) and Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) are regularly consulted on subdivisions to assist them with planning and managing their respective telephone and electrical networks. Subdivision proposals generally mean additional revenue to which they seldom object.

which forwards the recommendations to the National Subdivision Committee.<sup>181</sup> In most cases the subdivision of land from the date of application to the granting of a permit should not exceed four months. In the case where an applicant makes an application and it is not acknowledged within four months, the application is considered ‘refused’ by the Local Planning Authority.

Whereas the provisions of the relevant Town Planning Scheme are critical, there are other important considerations based on case law. The principle of *res judicata* prevents a subdivision proposal that is materially the same as an application previously rejected from being resubmitted. Proposals consistent with ‘more desirable landownership’ and ‘special circumstance’ based on well articulated policy positions (e.g., indigenisation and resettlement) could invoke approval from planning authorities. There is another common subdivision request—subdividing property split or severed by a road or railway. However the courts have repeatedly stated that severance cannot be used as a basis for subdivision because of the precedent this would set for thousands of similarly affected properties. Finally, many subdivision proposals are motivated by financial difficulties to dispose of property or to subdivide land for inheritance purposes. Unfortunately, neither Town Planning principles nor case law are sympathetic to these justifications. The result on the ground is a proliferation of land held in undivided shares, joint ownership, and de facto subdivisions.

### **3.2. Minimum and Maximum Land (Farm) Size Constraints**

Subdivision policy enforces minimum land-size holdings for urban, peri-urban, and rural land consistent with prevailing land use criteria. The minimum subdivision area for peri-urban properties is 0.4-0.8 hectares for residential use and 2-3 hectares for agricultural plots depending on soil type, geology, and availability of adequate water.<sup>182</sup> For land outside a municipal or town council used for agricultural purposes or a feedlot, minimum land size subdivision constraints are imposed indirectly through economic viability requirements. Each subdivision proposal is subjected to an agricultural viability assessment including yield or output from the proposed subdivision and earnings using the prevailing farming system norms appropriate to the agroecological region.

Maximum land size constraints also apply. The Rural Land (Farm Sizes) Regulations 1999 places ceilings on farm sizes according to Natural Region (NR): NR I 250 ha, NR IIa 350 ha, NR IIb 400 ha, NR III 500 ha, NR IV 1,500 ha, or NR V 2,000 ha. Any person or company who, immediately before the date of commencement of these regulations, owned a farm that

---

<sup>181</sup> The National Subdivision Committee normally meets once a month under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. The National Committee comprises the following membership: Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, AGRITEX, Department of Physical Planning, Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU), Commercial Farmers Union (CFU), Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union (ICFU), Department of Natural Resources, and the Civil Division of the Attorney General’s Office.

<sup>182</sup> The boundaries of peri-urban areas are defined by: i) Master Plan boundaries, for example in Bulawayo, Kadoma and Harare; ii) 5 kilometers distance from existing municipal boundaries where no master plans are in place; and iii) all townships outside the 5km distance and outside areas defined by master plans.

exceeds the maximum size may continue to own that farm, but it shall not be sold, transferred or disposed of unless it has been subdivided into plots conforming to the maximum size regulations. Due to recent widespread designation of large-scale commercial farms, too few applications have come in to enable one to test the comparability between agricultural viability requirements and the maximum farm size regulations.

### **3.3. Economic Viability Assessment**

Two aspects of land use planning are considered when assessing subdivision applications, namely: planning considerations (e.g., access to roads, water, electricity, and size of property relative to size of adjacent properties); and agricultural viability, in particular profitability and food security.

Based on interviews with officers involved in the adjudication of subdivision applications, planning issues can be dealt with quickly by reviewing the application and making a site visit if necessary. It is more difficult to determine agricultural viability. The Government's current policy for subdivision within the Small (SSCF) and Large Scale Commercial Farming (LSCF) sectors is to ensure that all subdivisions are viable based on general farming systems of the area. Subdivision assessments are based on the potential viability of the land or land use, and not the ability of the individual owner or landholder. Potential viability is calculated on the assumption of an average investment infrastructure and availability of mechanical equipment and tools. A viable farm is defined as one capable of providing a net income equivalent to the salary of a middle manager in the financial and industrial sectors of the economy applicable at the time of the subdivision assessment. The current (2002) net farm income threshold is about Z\$ 1.2 million (or approximately US\$22,000 at the official exchange rate of 55 to the US dollar) for large-scale commercial farming areas (AGRITEX, personal communication), and 20% of this figure for small scale commercial farming areas and formerly freehold and leasehold sectors reserved for black commercial farmers.

Pegging target farm incomes to those of relatively affluent skilled workers in the industrial sector that occupy less than 1% of formally employed Zimbabweans sets a very high crossbar for profitability. Meeting such a threshold effectively pre-selects farmers/landowners with means and ability to operate larger holdings, and precludes many lower income households who lack such means (at least without substantial public grants or assistance). It further ignores cost of living differentials between urban and rural areas and fails to adjust rural income needs for non-monetary benefits (e.g., autoconsumption) that evade measurement in national income accounts. As a result, farm sizes tend to be significantly larger than their communal area counterparts in order to spread fixed costs or to accumulate sufficient per-hectare earnings over a larger land base. These thresholds further ignore off-farm earnings and the benefits of part-time farming that have become the norm world-wide.<sup>183</sup> Furthermore, using a lower profit threshold for the mainly 'black' small-scale commercial farming sector

---

<sup>183</sup> Given the tight credit conditions prevailing in Zimbabwe, part-time farming has become the only practical way of ensuring the ability to buy farm inputs through substitution of off-farm earnings for credit.

(SSCF) merely perpetuates unequal land distribution between ‘white’ and ‘black’ commercial farming areas. Demonstrating how unrealistic these thresholds are, Chasi et al (1994) show that in 1993 only 22% of the then existing 8,000 SSCF met the Government-stipulated profit criteria.

Also problematic is the notion that farms can be neatly clustered based on the ‘general’ farming systems of the area and that Government can assess the economic potential of land without carefully considering individuals and their resourcefulness. Forcing all farmers to work identical areas of land, whatever their levels of skill, or means, risks severe wastage of scarce management resources and land/labour and land/capital ratios that are asynchronous with intrinsic resource scarcity. As noted by John Robertson (qtd. in KPMG/GOZ 2000), ‘A skilled strawberry grower with sufficient capital could successfully produce many tons of berries from 10 hectares in the Plumtree area, but a cattle producer in the same area might need 15 hectares for every animal’.

Technocrats in the organisations managing land subdivisions tend to attribute the conservatism within Government and AGRITEX in creating small farms to the desire to safeguard food security. This argument is underscored implicitly by the belief that large-scale farming (on a per hectare basis) is more productive than small-scale farming. However, recent evidence shows that the communal sector produces nearly three times more maize, ten times more sorghum, and two and half times more cotton than the commercial farming areas (GOZ Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement 2000). Despite the existence of farm consolidation legislation, some technocrats within Government believe that once land is subdivided it is difficult to ‘undo’ the subdivision. In principle, application for consolidation of contiguous properties for agricultural purposes is processed in the same manner as land subdivision. According to Chasi et al (1994), such applications for land consolidation are rarely opposed on grounds of agricultural viability.

To compound the above philosophical problems with viability assessment, the implementation of administrative procedures to process subdivision applications are slowed by lack of resources. AGRITEX cites lack of personnel as part of their problem in speeding viability assessments. They lack expertise in some specialised types of farming (horticulture, wildlife, etc.) and often need to refer decisions back to the head office. In addition, due to budgetary constraints, staff is frequently unable to travel and have to rely on subdivision applicants to come and collect them for site visits, creating the perception of lack of independence in decision-making.

### **3.4. Problems of Administration**

Transactions costs involved in administering subdivision policy present at times insurmountable hurdles, certainly for the land seller and buyer but perhaps as well for the implementing agencies involved.

1. **Costs:** The applicant is responsible for paying not only the application fees but also a percentage of the value of the stand as recompense for services used<sup>184</sup>; applications with commercial and industrial uses stipulated incur a fee amounting to 12% of the value of the stand, and 7-10% for residential uses. Most of the services required for the application/permit—surveying and registration fees—also require payment by the applicant before a certificate of compliance is issued. In instances where the subdivision application is rejected and the applicant appeals, legal fees will be required.
2. **Getting a Foot in the Door.** An application cannot be processed until it is complete, and that requires time, costs, and know-how that disadvantage all but the initiated. The subdivision request is held or never processed waiting for a completed application.
3. **Waiting for Approval.** Approvals and evaluations required from multiple departments, agencies and ministries delay processing to the speed of the slowest common agent. The National Subdivision Committee, in waiting for comments, fails to make appropriate recommendations for the issuance or refusal of a subdivision permit within the application period, or within the extension granted, resulting in protracted delays.
4. **Subdivide First, Seek Approvals Later.** Applicants' exchange or sell land subdivisions before applying or receiving a subdivision permit placing infrastructural investments at risk. Applicants engage in strong lobbying attempts to compel office bearers to endorse their applications, against a rigid planning infrastructure that is not kindly disposed to unplanned initiatives.
5. **Non-Viable Stands.** Most subdivision applications in peri-urban areas are either for land speculation or for payment of loans to financial institutions. The application is filed for agricultural purposes when the intended use is for residential or commercial use since change of use applications are more difficult to justify.
6. **Cash Flow and Moral Hazard.** In cases where proposed land uses are novel, current subdivision policy requires that infrastructure development in proposals be put in place and a trial period under conditional permit be implemented until the applicant proves beyond reasonable doubt that the intended production is viable. In terms of underground water potential, borehole yield certificates are required before appropriate recommendations can be made. Investments (proposed in the subdivision application) must be made prior to the subdivision being approved. Many peri-urban subdivision proposals are considered non-viable in terms of general agricultural viability.<sup>185</sup> The insistence on the installation of infrastructure and a viability track-record creates the

---

<sup>184</sup> Since a local authority may object to a subdivision on the basis it imposes undue strain on its provision of services, it has become standard for developers to grant to the authority a payment to mitigate the effects of new developments.

<sup>185</sup> Initially, there was insistence that a proposed horticultural activity should be proved agriculturally viable before a subdivision permit could be granted.

proverbial 'chicken and egg' situation for first time farmers by requiring considerable funds spent on investment without a guarantee of the permit being granted.

7. ***Subdivisions Unjustified.*** Subdivisions are rejected because financial and family considerations do not justify subdivision, or the proposed land use according to Government is not economically justifiable.
8. ***Sluggish Information.*** The current information flow from one department to the other is slow since all stakeholder comments must be submitted to the Provincial Planning Officer of the Department of Physical Planning who in turn must compile a summary recommendation for the Physical Planning Director.

There is widespread recognition that subdivision regulations are too restrictive. In recent judgements, the Administrative Court has described the current subdivision policy and criteria as 'too rigid' and has advised greater flexibility in assessing subdivision proposals. The Land Tenure Commission of Inquiry Into Appropriate Land Tenure Systems in Zimbabwe (GOZ 1994) recognised the underutilisation of land in the LSCF sector and recommended smaller commercial farms by relaxing subdivision restrictions. The GOZ Department of Physical Planning (1997) advised the subdivision of commercial farms between 3,000-20,000 hectares in size and the expansion of smallholders in peri-urban areas whose population would grow from 350,000 to 3.5 million. While the Rural Land (Farm Sizes) Amendment Regulations (1999 and 2000) further lowered these land ceilings, there nonetheless is lack of practical reasoning for the chasm that separates small and large size farming in Zimbabwe.

The Draft National Land Policy Framework Document (GOZ 1998) further underscores the rigidity of subdivision policy:

[T]he classification of land according to agro-ecological potential has been fundamental to rural land use planning and regulation.... This planning approach has been used to prescribe rigid land use and sub-division controls, which undermine dynamic land use changes. (p. 19)

The draft National Land Policy Framework further laments the conflictual relations inherent in the current subdivision policy:

The sources of statutory land use planning and regulation are poorly co-ordinated and conflictual as they originate from a multiplicity of sources. Such regulations are implemented by numerous authorities with scattered responsibilities and conflicting powers located in both central and local government. Most land use regulation is prescribed by central Government with little regard to reality and actual land use practice. (ibid., p. 21)

And with regard to peri-urban areas:

The existing regulatory framework of operative town planning schemes coupled with subdivision and consolidation permits is proving incapable of meeting legitimate needs and changing economies. The planning schemes are out-of-date

and subdivision policies [are] rigid, inefficient and inequitable. The subdivision approaches require drastic overhaul in favour of greater flexibility, decentralisation and community involvement. (ibid., p. 24)

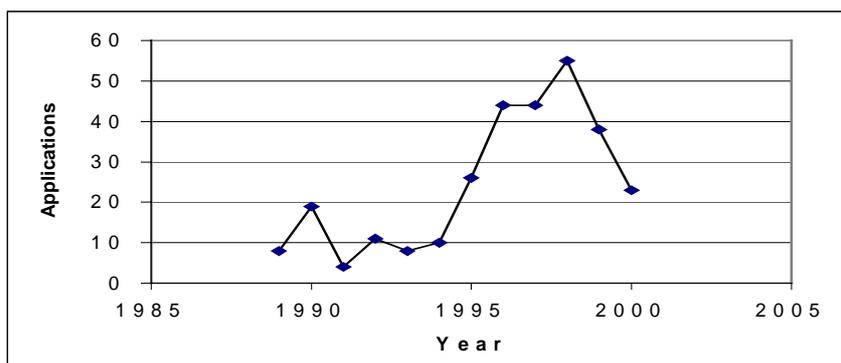
The draft National Land Policy Framework concludes with two key recommendations. First the process of land redistribution should be used as an opportunity to promote equitable access by smallholders to high quality land, irrigation and other infrastructural facilities and services, certainly not work against them. Second the process of subdivision should be facilitated by (a) total deregulation (leave it to the market); (b) partial deregulation (e.g., subdivision is changed to accept much lower farm sizes as viable; or (c) dynamic deregulation under which the a national land board prescribes tri-annually reviewed changes of maximum and minimum farm sizes.

## 4. SUBDIVISION AND CONSOLIDATION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND IN PRACTICE

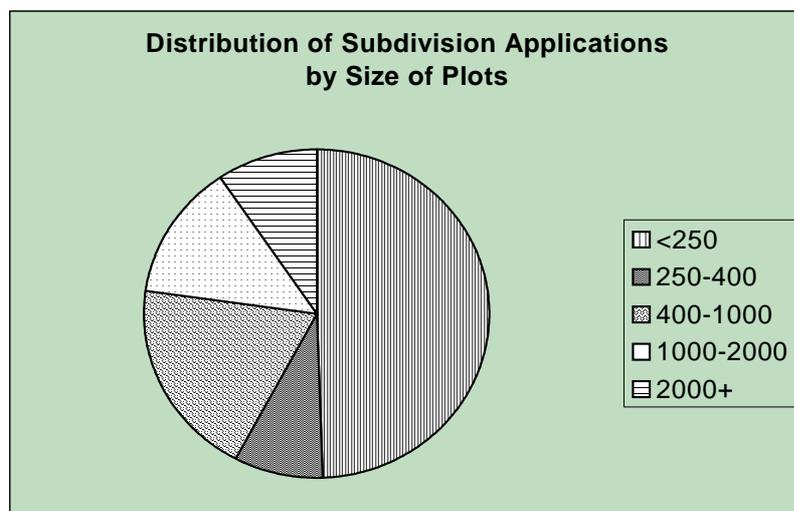
### 4.1. Subdivision and Consolidation and Delivery of Land

One effect of subdivision regulations has been discouragement of applications by farmers wishing to subdivide their land. According to public records, only 310 agricultural applications for land subdivision and consolidation were processed nationally between 1989 and 2000, although the rate of growth increased in the last decade. The number of applications increased from an average of 10 applications per year between 1990-94 to a peak of over 55 in 1998 (figure 2). Accompanying this growth has been a growing number of subdivision proposals in peri-urban areas, particularly involving plot sizes less than 250 hectares (figure 3). Table 1 also shows the majority of applications coming from farmers in rural areas of Mashonaland East and Matebeleland North, which surround the major cities of Harare and Bulawayo, respectively. This trend has been partially motivated by the boom in the horticultural industry and the demand for smallholdings as a status symbol, wrote the Director of Physical Planning as far back as 1990. However, since 1998, the number of applications has declined due to disruptions in the farm economy and in the delivery of land administration services that accompanied Government's expropriation of land from the commercial sector.

**Figure 2: Subdivision Applications, 1989-2000**



**Figure 3: Size Distribution of Subdivision Applications, 1989-2000**



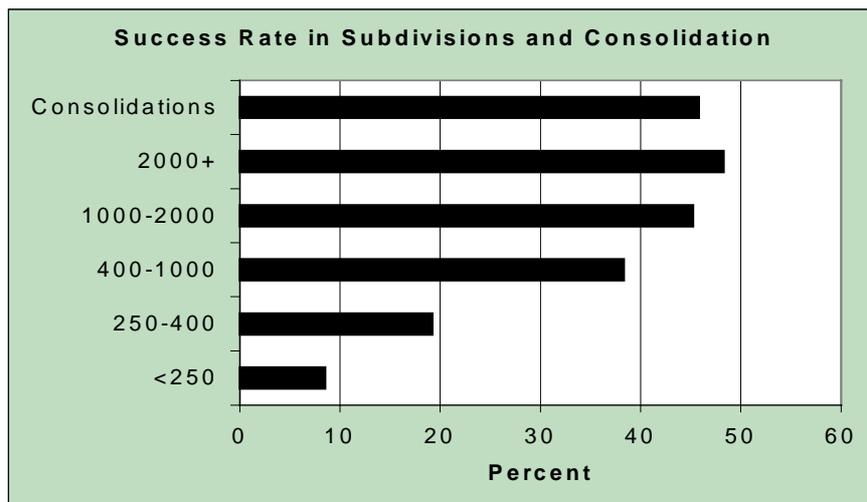
**Table 1: Distribution of Subdivision and Consolidation Applications by Province, 1989-2000**

Province	Subdivision and Consolidation Applications
Mashonaland East	115
Mashonaland West	53
Mashonaland Central	27
Masvingo	14
Matebeleland North	53
Matebeleland South	27
Midlands	33
Manicaland	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>358</b>

Despite the long-term upward trend in subdivision applications, the success rate in approvals has been very poor. From 1989-2000, a total of 358 subdivision and consolidation applications were processed of which 310 were subdivision applications. Of these 310 applications, only 27% of the applications were approved (and even fewer may have actually taken place due to the land sellers' inability to survey properties or meet requirements for land improvements) (figure 4). The results of the adjudication process for applications show substantial bias towards consolidation to maintain larger farm size, and a bias against subdivisions that reduce farm sizes below 400 hectares. Fewer than 20% of applications proposing subdivision plots less than 400 hectares were successful (figure 4); it is these

smaller farm sizes which were preferred by blacks. Based on data published by the GOZ (2000), 59% of the farms owned by blacks are below 400 hectares and 66% are below 500 hectares in size. Poor supply of small plots has led to low numbers of blacks buying into Large Scale Commercial farming. Since independence in 1980, only 1,063 blacks on 1,186 farms have managed to enter large-scale commercial farming using the market such that, by the year 2000, this class of farmers constituted just 35% of commercial farmers in the sector.

**Figure 4: Success Rate in Subdivisions and Consolidation: 1990-2000**



In assessing applications, records show that the main reason given for rejection is agricultural viability. In a sub-sample of applications from Mashonaland East Province over the period 1990-2000, the National Subdivision Committee concurred with the decision of the AGRITEX Planning Branch in all 29 cases.

According to statutes regulating land subdivisions, the time from submission of application to granting of permit should take about four months. In the sample of 29 applications in Mashonaland East province, only seven were concluded within this period. The average period, from receipt of application to the National Subdivision Committee meeting making the determination, was estimated to be nearly seven months with a maximum time of nearly 13 months. The net result of these delays, combined with 'ease' of consolidation, has been a loss in the supply of farmland for redistribution. Table 2 estimates the new farms created, and the potential new farms that could have been created, by legal subdivisions. The total applications (i.e., 310) submitted during the 1989-2000 period had proposed creating 2,022 new farms. However, only 84 applications covering 254 new farms were actually approved. The number of approved consolidations over the same period (Table 3) led to a reduction in the number of new farms by 27 such that only a net of 227 farms was actually created. A total of 226 subdivision applications covering 1,768 farms and an area of 322,000 hectares was

rejected. Thus, starting with 2,022 farms that could have been created, the land administration bureaucracy managed to deliver only 227 new farms over the 11-year period.

**Table 2: Effect of Restrictive Subdivision Regulations on Supply of Farms: 1989-2000**

Maximum subdivision plot size (ha)	No. of subdivision applications	Potential farms created had all applications been approved <sup>a</sup>	Farms actually created
<250	152	1495	113
250-400	26	58	10
400-1000	60	265	48
1000-2000	42	95	40
>2000	30	109	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>2,022</b>	<b>254</b>

a. New farms proposed in all applications including those approved and rejected.

**Table 3: Loss of Farms Due to Consolidations: 1990-2000**

Province	Consolidation applications	Successful applications	Loss in number of farms
<b>Mashonaland East</b>	12	5	7
<b>Mashonaland West</b>	1	0	0
<b>Mashonaland Central</b>	4	2	2
<b>Masvingo</b>	2	1	1
<b>Matebeleleland North</b>	9	7	11
<b>Matebeleleland South</b>	8	1	1
<b>Midlands</b>	10	6	6
<b>Manicaland</b>	2	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>

a. Refers to the total number of farms absorbed in successful consolidations less the number of successful applications.

## 4.2. Informal Subdivisions and Security of Tenure

Beyond slowing the rate of land subdivisions, the legal and regulatory environment governing land subdivisions and problems with administrative implementation have encouraged the creation of new tenure forms supporting informal de facto subdivisions. The block share scheme is one type of informal subdivision found in Zimbabwe near urban and peri-urban areas. Six block share properties in the vicinity of Chegutu have been created during the past few years including Sable, Bushy Park, Tetbury, Chigwell Extension,

Kwabino and Drummond farms. Other variants of the scheme are found around Goromonzi, Marondera and in Mutare and Nyanga areas.

Most block share schemes were started by black indigenous farmers seeking to acquire property near towns and cities for purposes of subdividing land into smaller agricultural stands for subsequent resell. Very few if any of the farmers claimed knowledge of land use regulations prevailing in Master Plans or the Town and Country Planning Act. Most said they assumed that since these properties were close to urban areas, they could be subdivided and sold as peri-urban plots for agricultural use. For the properties located near to Chegutu, some of the farmers acquired land through the Commercial Farm Settlement Scheme while others acquired land through sales transactions. Nearly all the farmers admitted having difficulty obtaining subdivision permits from the Department of Physical Planning (on grounds that the units were not viable or lacked infrastructure—e.g., boreholes—to enable intensive commercial farming).

The first scheme in the Chegutu area was implemented on the ‘Remainder of Kalembo of Chigwell Extension of Railway Farm No. 14’ and Kwabino farms in September 2000 (see Box 3). The properties lie in Agroecological region IIb, a high potential area suitable for intensive crop and livestock production. However, the area is vulnerable to severe dry spells and short rainy seasons.

The scheme is administered as a company registered under the Companies’ Act. Each member upon completing the purchase price and fulfilling conditions of the contract is entitled to a share certificate and becomes a shareholder in the landholding company, but the controlling shares remain with the scheme developer. Lease regulations do not apply as the new member is not leasing property. As most of the scheme developers have not yet applied for subdivision permits, these de facto subdivisions have not been registered with the Deeds Office or the Department of Surveyor General. Once the downpayment is made, the purchaser is able to occupy the property and make improvements of a residential or agricultural nature. However, they cannot change the plot’s use without the consent of the Owners’ Association and the Local Authority.

### **Box 3: Case study of Railway and Kwabino Farms**

The two properties (1,417 hectares combined) are located 14 kilometres west of Chegutu along the Chegutu-Kadoma highway. The block share scheme was implemented in September 2000 and is commonly referred to as Chegutu Country Village. All stands, 248 in total on the two properties, have been sold ranging in size from 3-8 hectares. The remainder (about 185 hectares), owned by the scheme developer, has most of the developments—e.g., water, electricity and boreholes.

In setting up the scheme, a civil engineer was hired to design and supervise the implementation of all civil works including road construction and proposed plans for the homesteads. A surveyor carried out the land survey and produced the survey diagram. A town planner developed the subdivision layouts for the entire scheme. An agricultural consultant prepared a plan of potential agricultural activities to be undertaken by the new purchasers including production, infrastructure, markets, production costs and returns. The new landholders are free to choose their own agricultural activities and land use. However, approval of the Owner's Association and the Local Authority is needed for any land use other than residential or agricultural. It is up to individual members or shareholders to make any connections to electricity and telephone networks. Each is also responsible for his or her own borehole(s) and sewage disposal through septic tanks.

The base price paid per undeveloped stand (other than access roads) was roughly Z\$ 0.5 million for a 10 hectare plot.<sup>186</sup> Purchasers were required to either pay cash up front or make a 10% downpayment with the balance due in equal (interest free) instalments over a 5-10 year period. The purchaser may decide to shorten the payment period by using higher instalments. Occupation can begin as soon as the deposit is paid.

The landholder or member, upon full payment of the purchase price, is issued with a share certificate and becomes a shareholder of the farm's holding company and a member of the owners' association, which will be responsible for administering the scheme. The number of shares allocated to an individual depends largely on the size of the plot as a proportion of the whole property. The scheme developer maintains a significant portion of the land and voice in running the scheme.

For road upkeep, each plot holder is required to pay a levy to the scheme developer for road maintenance. Remaining improvements are the responsibility of the plot holder. Once one has paid the developer in full, he/she is free to sell their plot to other shareholders or to private individuals without notifying the scheme developer. One is also free to lease part or the whole of their plot to other individuals but the land use has to be agricultural. No other further subdivision is allowed without the approval of the Owner's Association. Scheme participants also cannot use their share certificates as collateral to finance their own farm operations.

Maps demarcating individual plot holdings exist but are not registered with any government department or the Deeds Office as the developer has not yet lodged an application for subdivision permit with the Department of Physical Planning. The reason given by the developer is that the scheme must first be made operational with investments in infrastructure made before the Department will grant a subdivision.

Unfortunately, as presently developed, the scheme would not likely pass the requirements for agricultural subdivision. The property in question is in an area zoned 'rural agricultural land' where it is a requirement that any subdivisions created be economically viable for general agriculture. Water shortage is likely to be another problem; assuming that each unit has at least 2 boreholes, a serious depletion of the water table can be expected.

---

<sup>186</sup> Actual prices varied according to proximity to urban centres and communication networks; production potential based on soil, topography and water resources, improvements on the land (e.g., dams, boreholes, electricity, farm buildings, roads and irrigation), and demand.

A shift from individual to corporate ownership of land has been a dominant feature of agrarian structure in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe at least since the 1980s, if not before. However, two characteristics distinguish the block scheme from the general trend of corporate landownership. First, the Association or Company in the block scheme does not manage land use or the agricultural operations on behalf of its members; the members/shareholders for all intents and purposes are individual farmers. Second, the companies are comprised principally of indigenous black land farmers who would otherwise prefer owning their land outright but lacking this option have turned to a landholding company model that holds the land on their behalf. In the presence of inability to subdivide the land and secure individual landownership, such an arrangement is more permanent and secure than subleasing arrangements particularly for residential stands. But without individual ownership or control of the assets of the company, the individual (lacking ability to mortgage his or her portion of the land) is left with insecure access to financial capital for improvements.

The original landowner receives revenue from the land sale, as does the land developer who assists with forming the company and selling the lots, improved or otherwise. The company retains the title. By retaining the largest subdivision, the developer has leverage in controlling or influencing the decision-making of the Association. However, it is the goal of most block scheme members/shareholders that, once established, the developer would eventually persuade the local planning department to formally subdivide the land and issue individual titles to the shareholders. Should this fail, the owner is at risk of the tenants objecting to future payments or wanting their money back.

The purchaser can immediately occupy the subdivision upon making the downpayment. While the new member or landholder cannot further subdivide the land without consent of the Owners Association, shareholders, having completed their payment in full, are granted the right to sell their landholding to others within the scheme or to another willing buyer on the open market. In addition, the landholding can be sublet. But, the new members or shareholders also face a number of important challenges:

- Although the landholder engages in individual farming, s/he is unable to obtain mortgage credit or short term working capital from financial institutions for his or her individual farming operations using the land as collateral or security for the loan.
- Block schemes using company ownership remain untested in terms of secure property rights for the individual plot holders and their legal recourse.
- The scheme developer, by retaining a controlling interest in the company has leverage in decision-making or control of the landholding company. Without adequate protection, the new landholders are at risk of having their land shares sold or compromised by unscrupulous land developers for landholding companies.

While, all the subdivisions are less than the stipulated maximum farm sizes for the agroecological region, satisfying current subdivision regulations will nonetheless be a challenge for most of the block schemes. Under the current land reform program, the

Government is giving individuals between 6-15 hectares of arable land and about 20 hectares grazing land under the model A1, between 2-15 hectares for peri-urban farmers, and 30-2000+ hectares for small, medium and large scale-farming units under the model A2 commercial farming scheme. The land units being sold under the block share scheme would qualify in terms of size under the peri-urban scheme. However, they are too small for other model A2 and A1 variants. Because the farms currently under the block share scheme are located in a rural agriculture zone, they contradict current land reform regulations. Since the area is zoned for rural agricultural use, local government will assess the subdivision in terms of economic viability that (according to local government officials) helps protect new farmers lacking adequate resources and technical know-how becoming engaged with specialised and diversified agriculture. The onus is therefore on the developer to provide the necessary infrastructure for intensive production before the subdivision is granted.

However, a more fundamental problem of block schemes is that they are surviving because the Government has chosen not to impose sanctions on them based on provisions of the Regional, Town and Planning Act and the Rural Lands Act, No. 22 of 1976. According to this Act, a permit is required for 'anything which might be an attempt to accomplish what amounts to a subdivision: an agreement for a change in ownership of any portion of a property; for a lease of any part for ten years or more or for a lifetime; a right to occupy for those periods; or for a renewal or a lease or right to occupy which take the period over ten years' (Bruce, 1990, p 26). Block share schemes by allowing occupation of portions of the farm to co-owners without a permit violate this provision. Another piece of legislation which runs counter to the Block Share schemes is the Rural Lands Act (GOZ 1979), which stipulates that land may not be sold or leased to two or more individuals jointly without the consent of the Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. The Block Share scheme essentially involves transforming large individually owned landholdings into co-owned properties. Section 10 of the Act also prohibits sharecropping without ministerial approval. Violations of these provisions attract criminal penalties including a two-year prison term (section 11). These limitations on reallocation of land use rights prompted Bruce (1990, p. 27) to conclude that 'the sharecropping provision appears to have been intended to prevent de facto subdivision of large holdings among share-cropping black tenants'.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

It is not a question whether subdivision policy is needed for land use management and regulation, or for regulating peri-urban expansion. The answer is yes—but within reason! The far more important question is whether Government will ever have the wherewithal to implement a subdivision policy with more acumen than it does at present, or whether Government regulation can do a better job than the land market in supporting agricultural growth. Granted, environmental degradation and peri-urban settlements are a serious concern, as are problems of food security. Yet, it ought to be possible to decouple environmental degradation and land use planning from restrictions on the land market by simply imposing

certain minimum restrictions on land use husbandry to protect soil, water and the environment.

Such recommendations as annually changing maximum and minimum farm sizes in the national Land Policy Framework both grossly overestimate Government's capacity to implement policy, and seek to preserve a land bureaucracy that in its current form is a relic of the past. It is frequently complained that the subdivision criteria are out of date and not in keeping with modern farming practices where technology and skill prevail over plot size. Pegging subdivision approvals to archaic concepts such as 'economic viability' and 'full-time farming' ignore both the dynamics of modern day agriculture and the widespread prevalence of part-time farmers in rural Zimbabwe—and globally. How much should an individual or farming household earn? In today's world of rapid technology growth, changing prices, competitive markets, part-time farming, and substitution possibilities of capital for land, the question is impossible to answer. The land administration machinery, in trying to control land sizes, has constrained the ability of the land market to deliver land to formerly 'disadvantaged' persons. Furthermore, it is locking in land sizes that, while seeming viable today, will undoubtedly be wrong-sized tomorrow.

The current system is muddling along, driven by agencies that are too conservative to change, despite large cracks emerging. It is understandable that rigorous land sizes are enforced for urban and peri-urban residential and commercial development. However, it is far less clear why estates of 1000 hectares or so in size must undergo the same scrutiny in terms of economic viability. What is perhaps most ironic is that a rigorous subdivision policy can be so strictly enforced to maintain notions of 'agricultural viability', while at the same time fast-track resettlement since 2000 has resulted in massive transfer of land to smallholder beneficiary households that presently lack the means to sustainably use or develop the land resource. And, while the land bureaucracy puts on minimum farm size constraints to ensure the viability of economic (often large) farming units, other sectors of government are imposing land ceilings to force redistribution. These and other contradictions only act to underscore what people have known for some time—the current system of land administration (including subdivisions) is unworkable and not serving the needs of agriculture, real estate development, or society at large. They in turn seek to overturn subdivision rejections in Administrative Courts clogging the legal machinery with claims, or stake out informal subdivisions to build a house or engage in agriculture on the basis of very tenuous legal rights.

Will there be a need for subdivisions after the fast track reform program? There are strong arguments that this will be the case. Sizes of some A2 Scheme plots distributed, at greater than 250 hectares, may need to be downsized in the future. There is also uncertainty about the status of those currently resettled under fast track given the high number of legal contestations involving land that has been distributed. There is a possibility therefore that some of the farms may revert to their original owners in their original large sizes. Even if the farmers are forced to downsize to the plot sizes stipulated under the Maximum Farm Size Regulations (1999), the farms will be large enough to warrant possible subdivision at future

dates. Thus, subdivisions and subdivision regulations will be needed whatever the conclusion of the land reform exercise in Zimbabwe.

What might be done instead? Eliminate subdivision controls in all areas outside urban and peri-urban zones. Protect the environment and natural resource base through better monitoring and enforcement of environmental regulations, not through choice of beneficiaries or agrarian structure. Streamline subdivision procedures and requirements in urban and peri-urban areas, and focus Government efforts on updating or upgrading obsolete master plans. Invest resources in private surveyors and ease surveying regulations to expand surveying services while lowering costs. Reform land legislation related to undivided shares, adopt new methods of group registration (condominium or group registration), and strengthen community based governance and group ownership models to obviate the need for minute subdivisions. Minute subdivision need not be the inevitable outcome of an unfettered land sales market, if a land rental market is supported that strengthens both rights of the lessor and lessee. Finally, ease subdivision procedures, processing time and fees, but only after the extent of subdivision policy has been limited in scope.

While beneficiaries of land reform are always in need of stronger support services, in the area of subdivision policy, less not more, should be the mantra of the new land reform policy.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmed, M. and S.K. Qureshi. 1999. *Recent Evidence on Farm Size and Land Productivity: Implications for Public Policy*, The Pakistan Development Review 34(4): 1135-53.
- Berry, R. A. and W.R. Cline. 1979. *Agrarian Structure and Productivity in Developing Countries*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.
- Bhalla, S. 1979. 'Farm Size Productivity and Technical Change in Indian Agriculture'. In *Agrarian Structure and Productivity in Developing Countries*, edited by R.A. Berry, and W.R. Cline. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.
- Bratton, M. 1990. 'Ten Years After: Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe'. In *Agrarian Reform and Grassroots Development: Ten Case Studies*, edited by R.L. Prosterman, M.N. Temple, and T.M. Hanstad. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Bruce, John W. 1990. Legal Issues in Land Use and Resettlement, Zimbabwe Agriculture Sector Memorandum. Background Paper, Southern Africa Department, The World Bank, Washington D.C.
- Chasi, M., F. Chinembiri, C. Mudiwa, G. Mudimu and P. Johnson. 1994. *Land Fragmentation: Report Prepared for the Commission of Inquiry into Land Tenure Systems in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.
- Dyer, G. 1997. *Class, State and Agricultural Productivity in Egypt: Study of the Inverse Relationship Between Farm Size and Land Productivity*. London: Frank Class.
- Eicher, C. and M. Rukuni. 1994. *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Press.

- El-Ghonemy, Riad. 2002. 'Agrarian Reform Policy Issues Never Die'. Keynote Speech prepared for the *Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development: Taking Stock*, organised by The American University of Cairo, Social Research Center, Cairo, Egypt, 5-7 March 2002.
- Feder, G. 1985. *The Relationship Between Farm Size and Farm Productivity: The Role of the Family, Supervision and Credit Constraint*. *Journal of Development Economics* 18: 297-313.
- GOZ Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. 2000. *The Agricultural Sector of Zimbabwe: Statistical Bulletin March 2000*, Government of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- GOZ Department of Physical Planning. 1997. *Relationship Between Economics and Physical Planning in Zimbabwe*, Harare.
- GOZ. Regional, Town and Country Planning Act [Chapter 29:12], No. 22 of 1976.
- GOZ. 1979. Rural Lands Act [Chapter 20:18] of 1979.
- GOZ. Rural Land (Farm Sizes) Regulations 1999.
- GOZ. 1998. Draft National Land Policy Framework Document, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and rural Resettlement, Harare.
- GOZ. 1994. Commission of Inquiry Into Appropriate Land Tenure Systems in Zimbabwe (M. Rukuni, Chairman), Harare.
- GOZ. Land Survey Act. [Chapter 20:12] of 1933.
- GOZ. 1998. Draft National Land Policy Framework Document, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and rural Resettlement, Harare.
- KPMG/GOZ. 2000. Draft Report on Land Tax Study by KPMG Consulting, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and rural Resettlement, Harare.
- Ncube, N. 2001. Guidelines for Procedures in Processing Applications for Certificate of Compliance to Statutory Instrument 288 of 2000 of the Rural Land (Farm Sizes) Amendment Regulations 2000 No. 1, October.
- Owens, Hoddinott and B. Kinsey. 2001. *The Impact of Agricultural Extension on Farm Production in Resettlement Areas of Zimbabwe*. Working Paper No. WPS/2001.6, Centre for the Study of African Economies, University of Oxford, United Kingdom.
- Roth, Michael. 1993. 'A Critique of Zimbabwe's 1992 Land Act: Quasi-Market Versus Non-Market Options for Land Reform'. In *Beneath the Surface of Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, edited by M. Rukuni and C.K. Eicher. Harare: University of Zimbabwe's Publication Office.
- Roth, Michael and John Bruce. 1994. *Land Tenure, Agrarian Structure and Comparative Land Use Efficiency in Zimbabwe: Options for Land Reform and Land Redistribution*. LTC Research Paper 117. Madison: Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin.
- Thiesenhusen, W.C. 2002. 'Land Tenure Issues in Latin America'. Paper presented at the *Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development: Taking Stock*, organised by The American University of Cairo, Social Research Center, Cairo, Egypt, 5-7 March 2002.

Van den Brink, Rogier. 2002. 'Land Reform Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Consensus and Controversy'. Paper presented at the Regional Workshop on Land Issues in Africa, Kampala, Uganda, 29 April to 2 May, 2002.

—Chapter 6—  
**Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal,  
South Africa**

**Five Census Surveys of  
Farmland Transactions, 1997-2001<sup>187</sup>**

**M.C. Lyne and M.A.G. Darroch**  
University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

*The South African Government initiated land redistribution in 1995, offering cash grants to historically disadvantaged households who wished to purchase commercial farms from white owners on a willing-seller, willing-buyer basis. Together, land restitution and redistribution transferred one million hectares (less than 1.2% of available area) to beneficiaries during 1995-2000. Most of these transfers were directed to resettlement schemes on low quality land with communal tenure arrangements in order to reach many beneficiaries quickly and at modest cost. This chapter presents the results of five annual census surveys of farmland transactions recorded in the province of KwaZulu-Natal from 1997 to 2001. The object was to learn more about private land transfers to historically disadvantaged people. During this time, historically disadvantaged people acquired a total of 121,484 hectares, or just 2.3% of the 5.31 million hectares available for redistribution in the province. Government-assisted purchases accounted for 45,121 hectares, private land purchases (cash and mortgage loans) for 60,266 hectares, and private non-market transfers (mainly bequests) for 16,097 hectares. Private purchases not only redistributed more land than did Government-assisted purchases, they also redistributed farmland of much better quality. Although private purchases redistributed relatively more land, and much more wealth, transfers to disadvantaged owners accounted for less than 6% of the total area transacted. Clearly, the market has much greater potential to redistribute farmland than what has been realised to date. Strong response to innovative financial products administered by Ithala Bank and the Land Reform Credit Facility (LRCF) to finance medium-scale farmers and equity-shareholders suggests that access to the land market is constrained primarily by inflation-induced cash flow problems associated with conventional mortgage loans, and by the costs, delays, and uncertainty associated with the registration and transfer of affordable subdivisions. Repeal of the 1970 Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act would make it easier for poor and part-time farmers to finance smaller, more affordable farms. Likewise, reducing the inflation rate and lowering the statutory costs of subdividing and transacting farmland would allow commercial banks to finance lower income farmers and equity shareholders. Access to larger land reform grants for farmworkers and aspiring farmers would also improve the outreach of private financiers because the poor cannot make significant contributions of their own when financing equity and land.*

---

<sup>187</sup> A slightly different version of this chapter will appear in *The Challenges of Change: Agriculture, Land and the South African Economy*, edited by W.L. Nieuwoudt and J.A. Groenewald, to be published by The University of Natal Press later this year.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

South Africa's legacy of racially-biased landownership was formalised in 1913 by the Natives Land Act. This legislation restricted African landownership to native reserves where the principal mode of tenure was 'customary' and administered by traditional leaders. By 1991, these former homelands covered 17 million hectares, or roughly 13.9% of the national area (National Department of Agriculture [NDA] 2000, p. 5). In addition to these laws that prevented Africans from owning land in white farming areas, other legislation prevented white farmers from leasing their land to black tenants and sharecroppers. In some cases African farmers resorted to exchanging their labour for the use of land owned by white farmers—the infamous labour tenancy arrangements that have persisted in parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga Province.

This discouragement or prohibition of black farmers was one of the major forces that drove Africans out of the commercial farming areas into the former homelands. Between 1960 and 1980 the population of the former homelands increased from 4.5 to 11 million people (Turner and Ibsen 2000, p. 2). Evictions from white farms accelerated in the early 1990s, partly in response to commercial farmers' concerns about legislation intended to improve the security and working conditions of their labour. Some moved to the overcrowded homelands, while many erected shacks in urban shanty settlements. It is now estimated that almost 13 million of South Africa's 40 million residents live in the former homelands, and that over 80% of rural people in South Africa in 1993 were living in poverty (ibid. 2000, p. 2; South African Data Profile 2002).

This was the situation facing South Africa's first democratic Government as it took power in 1994 and began to deal with land and agrarian reform. Faced with the need to balance strong demands from the dispossessed with the need to preserve the commercial farming sector and a fragile political compromise, the African National Congress (ANC)-led Government opted for a three-pronged land reform policy:

- Land restitution—a legal process whereby people who can prove that they were dispossessed of their land after 1913 can regain their land or receive due financial compensation for it.
- Land tenure reform—which aims to address insecure tenure in the former homelands.
- Land redistribution—which aims to redress the racial imbalances in rural landownership.

As the current political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe clearly illustrates, land redistribution is not a sufficient condition for political stability and economic growth. To achieve these goals, the commercial farming sector must be restructured to try to narrow wealth and income gaps between farmers of different race, and to promote the efficient use of land and other agricultural resources in the long term.

The South African Government's land restitution, tenure reform and redistribution strategies, first publicised in the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme, and the principles underlying them, were entrenched in South Africa's new Constitution approved by

Parliament in 1996. The most significant principle is contained in the ‘property clause’, which insists on the payment of fair, market-related compensation for land taken in the public interest, including via land restitution and land redistribution. Land redistribution through voluntary market transactions was to be the leading edge of land reform, transferring 30% of white-owned farmland to over 800,000 previously disadvantaged households over five years. The ANC expected that this would result in a highly efficient small-scale farm sector that would generate economic growth. (Note that the terms ‘previously disadvantaged’ or ‘historically disadvantaged’ used in this chapter refer to people in South Africa who were previously excluded from land markets on the basis of racial segregation.)

This chapter analyses the past performance of land redistribution policies, in particular comparing how Government programmes have performed relative to private transactions in redistributing farmland. Unfortunately, such comparative data exist only for the province of KwaZulu-Natal where census surveys of farmland transactions have been conducted during 1997-2001 as part of a Broadening Access and Strengthening Input Market Systems Collaborative Research Support Program (BASIS CRSP) commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Nevertheless, these data provide the detail necessary to examine the performance of key land redistribution instruments, and to comment on recent policy initiatives intended to achieve the Government’s new and somewhat less ambitious goal of transferring 30% of white-owned farmland to emerging farmers over a period of 15 years (Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs 2001, p. 5). This new timeframe and target group reflects, in part, poor performance of the government grant programme first used to redistribute land (see section 2.3.1).

The chapter first gives a brief overview of the three main strategies in South Africa’s land reform programme—land restitution, tenure reform and land redistribution—with special emphasis on the instruments used to achieve (or impede) land redistribution. Section 3 then compares the relative effectiveness of public and private efforts to redistribute farmland in KwaZulu-Natal, in terms of the total area redistributed, the number of transactions, and the quality and total value of farmland redistributed. Section 4 concludes the chapter with some policy suggestions to help the Government meet its goal of redistributing commercial farmland in order to promote rural stability and economic empowerment through improved access to land markets and productive use of farmland (Department of Agriculture 2001, pp. 8-9).

## **2. LAND REFORM INSTRUMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA**

### **2.1. Land Restitution**

Restitution was never meant to be an open-ended process. Following the promulgation of the Restitution of Land Rights Act, Act 22 of 1994, members of the public were invited to submit land claims before a deadline that was extended to 31 December 1998. A total of 68,878 restitution claims were registered with the Land Claims Commission, which investigates the

validity of each claim, and recommends a resolution to the Land Claims Court for approval or adjudication in the event that a claim is contested.

This legal process started very slowly. By September 2000, 12,623 households had received a total of 268,306 hectares (Turner and Ibsen 2000, p. 26)—or less than 1% of the land available for redistribution. However, following an instruction to the Commission by President Thabo Mbeki to finalise all land claims by the end of 2005, the pace accelerated remarkably. By October 2002, more than half of the claims (35,173) involving 84,928 households had been settled (*Natal Witness* 2002). Most (70%) of these settled claims related to urban rather than rural land, and only one-third of the R1.8 billion awarded to beneficiaries was used to purchase land (437,021 hectares). Turner and Ibsen (2000) raise a concern that these land transfers could create new rural ‘dumping grounds’ as they are not linked to a development process that offers livelihoods to beneficiaries.

## **2.2. Land Tenure Reform**

Officially, land in the former homelands belongs to the State. In the past, traditional leaders, magistrates and the Department of Agriculture each played a role in administering this land in a predictable way. In recent years these governance systems have become less predictable and tenure has become increasingly insecure in the former homelands. In 1996 an interim law (Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act, Act 31 of 1996) was passed to protect homeland residents against abuses such as the sale of their land by corrupt traditional leaders, while a new Land Rights Bill was being developed with the aim of transferring ownership from the State to people living on the land.

The logistics of assigning exclusive rights to individuals accustomed to more flexible and overlapping customary rights were, however, far too complex, and the drafters of the Bill opted for a system of ‘protected rights’ that would be determined through a local process of negotiation facilitated by Land Rights Boards. These rights could be assigned to individuals or to groups constituted as legal entities with democratically elected management committees. The Bill was ready to go to Parliament before the second round of democratic elections in May 1999, but was withdrawn for political reasons as it challenged the power base of traditional leaders.

On taking office in June 1999, the new Minister of Agriculture and Land Affairs, the Honourable Thoko Didiza, shelved the Bill, stating that new legislation would be drafted to enable the transfer of communal land to ‘tribes’ as well to individuals and communities. August 2002 saw the release of draft 8 of the Communal Land Rights Bill. While earlier versions of this Bill were criticised (Cousins 2002) for sanctioning the transfer of title to tribal authorities and entrenching the arbitrary and sometimes corrupt administration of land by traditional leaders, draft 8 comes closer to the original Land Rights Bill and, predictably, has been denounced by the Inkhata Freedom Party as an attempt to dis-empower traditional leaders.

In the meantime, the Department of Land Affairs focused its attention on enforcing the provisions of the Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act, Act 3 of 1996 (which aims to secure the land rights of labour tenants on commercial farms), and ESTA, the Extension of Security of Tenure Act, Act 62 of 1997 (which aims to protect the farmworkers against unlawful eviction). Anecdotal evidence suggests that these Acts have damaged labour relations on many farms and, despite their good intentions, have encouraged commercial farmers to substitute machinery for labour, thereby accelerating lawful evictions of redundant farmworkers and their dependants.

### **2.3. Land Redistribution**

Acceptance of the property clause in the South African constitution indicates that land reformers in South Africa had generally accepted the notion of market-based land redistribution prior to 1994. In the months leading up to the first democratic election, debates on this issue focused on what the future government should do to help disadvantaged people access the land market. Should they offer cash grants to prospective buyers, or should public funds be used in a way that would give disadvantaged people better access to mortgage loans from commercial banks?

#### **2.3.1. Cash grants**

In their proposals for land reform in South Africa, the World Bank recommended the use of cash grants to help historically disadvantaged farmers to finance land purchases (World Bank 1993, p. iii). This advice reflects the view that poor people are unable to finance land with mortgage loans because the market value of land exceeds what proponents of this view call its 'productive value' (Binswanger, Deininger, and Feder 1993). According to Deininger and Binswanger (1992, pp. 9-12), the market value of farmland in South Africa exceeded its productive value owing to a long history of input and product subsidies granted to white commercial farmers. Between 1994 and 1999, the South African Government vigorously pursued a policy of market liberalisation in commercial agriculture and—at the same time—implemented the settlement/land acquisition grant (SLAG) of R16,000 (initially R15,000) per beneficiary household.

In terms of the SLAG programme, historically disadvantaged South Africans who were landless and poor could apply for a cash grant to purchase and develop farmland. In practice, beneficiary households had to pool their meagre grants in order to buy a (whole) farm from a willing seller. The group established a legal entity (usually a community land trust or communal property association) that was formally registered as the owner of the property. In most cases, farms financed with land grants and settled by groups (of up to 500 households) were much too small to support all of the beneficiaries as full-time farmers. The Department of Land Affairs (DLA) anticipated that emerging farmers would use the grant to leverage loan finance for additional land. However, most creditworthy farmers did not qualify for a land grant as the means test applied to potential beneficiaries precluded individuals with a monthly household income greater than R1,500 from receiving the grant.

By the end of 2000, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs had approved 484 projects under the SLAG programme, transferring a total of 780,407 hectares to 55,383 households of which some 14% were headed by women (Turner and Ibsen 2000, p 12). Taken together, land restitution and land redistribution had transferred roughly one million hectares, or less than 1.2% of the 86 million hectares of white-owned farmland, to disadvantaged South Africans over a period of six years. Unimpressed with the performance of the SLAG programme, Minister Didiza imposed a moratorium on further SLAG projects in July 1999 while the Departments of Agriculture and Land Affairs redesigned the grant programme.

The Minister released her proposals for a new programme, Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD), late in 2000. The LRAD programme was implemented in August 2001 after several revisions. It differs from SLAG in one major respect: Beneficiaries do not have to be poor to qualify for a minimum grant of R20,000—and those who have more savings and who can raise bigger loans to finance their farms qualify for successively larger grants. A beneficiary must inject equity and debt capital totalling at least R400,000 to qualify for a maximum grant of R100,000 (Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs 2001, p. 8). This marks a distinct shift in the South African Government's land redistribution policy away from poverty alleviation and group settlement, in favour of settling prospective farmers on their own farms. In its first year, LRAD redistributed approximately one million hectares of farmland in South Africa (Shabane 2002).

### **2.3.2. Diminishing, finite interest subsidies**

Binswanger's explanation of why poor people are unable to buy land with mortgage loans was disputed by Nieuwoudt and Vink (1995), who countered that the removal of subsidies would not make it any easier for prospective buyers to finance land in South Africa because the underlying problem was relatively high inflation. Inflation raises immediate costs (higher nominal interest charges) while deferring returns (future earnings increased by inflation). The result is inadequate cash flow to service debt repayments during the critical early years after land purchase.

An investment in land is similar to an investment in the stock market in that current returns (dividends) are usually low relative to capital growth. Empirical evidence from South Africa shows that the average annual current return to agricultural land seldom exceeds 5% of its market value. During periods of inflation when nominal interest rates are high (say 17% per annum) relative to the current return on agricultural land, conventional mortgage loans with constant repayment schedules create a formidable but temporary liquidity problem for borrowers who are unable to make a substantial down-payment on the purchase price of a farm. This liquidity problem diminishes over time if expected continued inflation raises future earnings relative to the constant flow of required loan repayments. One method of addressing the liquidity problem is to graduate the loan repayments by subsidising interest charges at a decreasing rate over a finite period of time.

Nieuwoudt and Vink (1995, pp. 509-517) showed that cash grants and diminishing interest rate subsidies impact differently on a beneficiary's future expected cash flow. In particular,

an interest rate subsidy that diminishes at the expected rate of inflation can completely eliminate cash flow problems in the first few critical years after entry, whereas a cash grant (drawing the same level of public funding) does not. In their case study they show that the interest rate subsidy will phase out after 11 years if the annual inflation rate is 12% and the beneficiary pays (an affordable) 5% interest rate on the full purchase price in the first year. A variant of this graduated repayment concept has been used by private-sector sugar millers to sell farmland to emerging commercial farmers in KwaZulu-Natal since 1995.

When Illovo Sugar Limited invited applications for 20 medium-scale sugarcane farms (ranging from 55 to 105 hectares in area) in 1995, none of the more than 100 previously disadvantaged applicants could afford an equity contribution large enough to reduce the size of a conventional mortgage loan down to a level that could be serviced from farm income. To mitigate this problem, Illovo agreed to sell the farms to successful applicants at market-related prices and to invest 18% of the purchase price with Ithala Bank. This capital amount, plus accrued interest, would then fund a finite interest rate subsidy for mortgage loans that Ithala granted to each farmer. In effect, Illovo discounted the price of its land by 18%, and Ithala used these funds to reduce annual interest payments by a diminishing amount over time. The current mortgage loan rate was reduced from 16.5% to 10% in the first year. The subsidy declines to zero at the end of year six, in line with expected increases in nominal income associated with an annual expected inflation rate of about 10%. The buyer then pays the full annual interest rate of 16.5% for the remaining 14 years of the 20-year mortgage loan.

To put the size of these transactions into perspective, the average market price of a medium-scale sugarcane farm is about R900,000 of which 18% or R162,000 is invested by Ithala Bank to finance a finite, diminishing interest rate subsidy on its mortgage loan. The buyer pays the full purchase price and is expected to make a down-payment of at least 10% (R90,000). Ithala provides a mortgage loan for the balance (R810,000) and the seller receives a net amount of R738,000 (R900,000 less R162,000) for the land. Clearly, the programme is elitist as it benefits emerging farmers who are relatively wealthy and creditworthy.

Nevertheless, it attracted support from other sugarcane estate owners and by March 2001 had financed 107 medium-scale farms with a total market value of almost R100 million—mainly during 1997 and 1998. Early indications are favourable in the sense that the medium-scale farmers are meeting their loan obligations (Simms 1997). Growing concern about levels of reinvestment on these farms has, however, prompted a detailed study of their performance and ways to improve the scheme (Mashatola 2001).

One criticism of the above graduated repayment scheme focus on medium-scale farms is that it did not include smaller, more affordable farms that were creditworthy. The scheme emphasised medium-scale farms because (a) private companies providing the interest subsidy insisted that land should be sold to full-time farmers, and (b) subdivision and transactions costs are largely fixed costs that raise the unit price of land as farm size diminishes. Had part-time farmers (i.e., applicants capable of financing family drawings and debt repayments partly from non-farm income) been considered, a larger number of smaller, creditworthy farms could have been sold, exposing buyers to lower levels of leverage and less financial

risk. Smaller farms would also be more feasible if transaction, subdivision and survey costs were lower, or if the borrower could augment his or her down-payment with a public cash grant. Medium-scale sugarcane farmers were effectively precluded from SLAG by its means test, but now qualify for LRAD grants. Eleven of the initial 54 LRAD grants made in KwaZulu-Natal during 2002 were awarded to medium-scale sugarcane farmers that will participate in the next round of the graduated repayment scheme.

In summary, a finite and diminishing interest rate subsidy on mortgage loans used to finance the purchase of agricultural land improves the risk exposure of both the borrower and the lender when inflation and nominal interest rates are relatively high. Finite interest rate subsidies create fewer distortions in capital markets because they do not become entrenched. Moreover, the present value of a phased interest rate subsidy is significantly lower than that of a comparable cash grant. In other words, the State would have fewer liquidity problems of its own if it sponsored a diminishing interest rate subsidy rather than a cash grant of equivalent value to a beneficiary.

### **2.3.3. Subdivision of farmland**

In South Africa, the cash flow problem associated with land purchase has been compounded by another impediment to *private* land transactions—the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, 70 of 1970. In terms of this Act, farm owners must get permission from the Government to subdivide their land. This introduces uncertainty and delays that add to the costs of registering, surveying and transferring affordable parcels of land to aspiring farmers. Although Act 70 has been rescinded, President Mbeki has not yet signed the repeal into law. The delay has been attributed to the absence of national zoning legislation regulating the conversion of agricultural land into residential or industrial uses (Graham 2000, p. 19). Repeal of Act 70 will make it easier for the many poor and part-time farmers who will be rationed out of the proposed LRAD programme to finance smaller, more affordable farms.

### **2.3.4. Equity-sharing projects**

Costs, delays and uncertainty associated with the formal transfer of small subdivisions of land in South Africa have contributed to the growing popularity of farm-worker equity-sharing (FWES) projects as a means of redistributing wealth and incomes while maintaining or improving agricultural performance (Eckert, Hamman, and Lombard 1996, pp. 693-712.). In 1998 it was estimated that about 50 FWES projects had been initiated in South Africa, mostly in the Western Cape (Department of Land Affairs 1998, p. 2) and it is clear that this number has increased substantially in recent years. For example, in December 2001, the Land Reform Credit Facility (LCRF)—discussed in section 2.3.5—approved loans for a further 11 projects (LCRF, 2001a, p. 3). Today, FWES projects are spread across all nine of South Africa's provinces and involve wine, fruit, vegetables, olives, poultry, cut flowers, dairy and eco-tourism enterprises (Knight, Lyne, and Roth 2002).

In general, these projects are company operations in which financial equity is owned by workers, former owners, managers and other investors (Ngqangweni and van Rooyen 1995,

pp. 211-214) in the form of tradable shares that define their individual rights to vote for directors and to benefit from the profits and capital gains generated by the company. This is quite distinct from a co-operative or collective farming enterprise where voting and benefit rights are egalitarian and non-marketable, resulting in free- and forced-rider problems that undermine incentives to invest time and money in the enterprise (Sykuta and Cook 2001). In addition, FWES projects benefit from experienced management (frequently the former white owner) and have been able to attract finance from commercial banks and venture capitalists (Knight and Lyne 2002). These private financiers have a strong incentive to help their clients build sound business organisations and to train worker-shareholders for their active participation in a successful company.

While workers do recognise the future potential for dividends and capital gains, field interviews show that workers' immediate interest in joining equity-sharing projects centres more on the opportunity to influence managerial decisions affecting wages, working conditions, housing and tenure security for their families (Department of Land Affairs 1998, p. 5). Concerns about the lack of worker empowerment in early FWES projects (Surplus Peoples Project 1999) appear to have been addressed in more recent projects (Knight and Lyne 2002). Case studies analysed by Knight, Lyne, and Roth (2002) show that both skills transfer and gender representation are positively related to the workers' share of equity in the enterprise. In essence, empowerment requires that workers buy a significant shareholding. Initially, farmworkers had to finance their equity in the company with loans, creating the usual cash flow problems. This situation changed in 1996 when the DLA allowed farmworkers to finance equity with SLAG grants, and more recently (in May 1999) when it piloted the LRCF. The LRAD programme explicitly supports equity-sharing projects (Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs 2001, p. 5), as does the strategic plan for South African agriculture (Department of Agriculture 2001, p. 9)

### **2.3.5. The Land Reform Credit Facility (LRCF)**

The LRCF was established with the intention of drawing private sector finance and human capital into commercially viable land reform projects. As an alternative, but partial, solution to the liquidity problem associated with conventional mortgage loans, the LRCF offers unsubsidised loans with deferred or graduated repayment schedules to commercial banks who finance, on similar terms, equity-sharing projects and land purchased by aspiring farmers (Department of Land Affairs 1998, pp. 21-26). In essence, the LRCF inherits the project's (temporary) cash flow problem. Private lenders and investors who apply for loans from the Facility are expected to conduct their financial evaluation and screening of projects thoroughly, adhering to sound business criteria, as they are putting their own resources at risk. The LRCF is administered by just one full-time manager, as there is no need to conduct or review these financial analyses. Rather, the manager's principal task is to approve loan applications submitted by accredited financial intermediaries according to criteria for eligibility, outreach, empowerment and land reform, established by the DLA. In the case of equity-sharing projects, the land reform criterion requires that at least 10% of the LRCF loan

must finance the purchase of land or a long-term lease to secure worker-shareholders' rights to residential property.

The LRCF was initially capitalised at a level of R63 million via a R32 million grant made by the Department of Land Affairs that was matched by grants from the European Union (R29.4m) and The Danish Agency for Development Assistance (DANIDA) (R1.7m) (LRCF 2000, p. i). Simulation exercises based on anticipated loans with deferment periods ranging from one to three years (longer deferment periods render most projects unprofitable) indicated that approximately R15 million could be disbursed annually without reducing the real value of the LRCF fund to a level where it would not recover in the longer term. Although the DLA's moratorium on land grants prevented commercial banks from financing all but highly elitist projects (whose beneficiaries did not require grants), the Facility approved loans worth R32 million between May 1999 and April 2001, with applications for another R34 million pending its re-capitalisation.

Of this R32 million approved by the LRCF during its pilot phase, R4.8 million financed mortgage loans made to individual farmers and R27.2 million financed long-term loans made to equity-sharing projects. In May 2001, the DLA and the European Union accepted proposals to re-capitalise the LRCF. The DLA approved a grant of R60 million during the 2001/02 financial year, and the European Union is likely to provide a further grant of R10 million (LRCF 2001b). ABSA Bank, the Facility's largest client, intends to make much greater use of the LRCF in future, especially if the DLA accepts a recommendation to allocate a portion of the proposed LRAD grants to the LRCF and to fast-track these grants to the beneficiaries of projects financed by the Facility (LRCF 2001c, p. 53).

### **3. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LAND REDISTRIBUTION IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

While it is possible to get information about the value and area of farmland redistributed through the LRCF and Ithala Bank, very little is known about other private land transactions. In 1997, USAID commissioned researchers from the School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness at the University of Natal to monitor all farmland transactions in KwaZulu-Natal as part of its BASIS CRSP programme. This section reports the results of annual census surveys of the Deeds of Transfer recorded in KwaZulu-Natal over the period 1997-2001, paying particular attention to the rate of land redistribution and the relative effectiveness of private market transactions and those financed with settlement/land acquisition (SLAG) grants from Government. The data are drawn from Lyne and Darroch (2001) and the most recent annual census survey of farmland transfers.

KwaZulu-Natal is one of nine provinces in South Africa. It is the province with the largest population (about nine million people) but it is relatively small in area (about nine million hectares). At the time of South Africa's political democratisation in 1994, 50.04% of the farmland (including provincial parks) area of 8.19 million hectares in KwaZulu-Natal was controlled by a small minority of white owners. It is estimated that 6,755 large-scale commercial farms accounted for 4.13 million hectares (Lyne and Ortmann 1996, p. 70). Of

the remaining 4.06 million hectares, 2.84 million hectares was occupied by about three million black South Africans under communal tenure, 0.04 million hectares was privately owned by ‘non-whites’, 0.42 million hectares was farmed by the State itself (including forests) and the remaining 0.76 million hectares was used for provincial parks.

The census surveys required that all land transactions recorded each year in KwaZulu-Natal had to first be stratified into urban and rural transactions. Within the rural group, transactions listed separately for each parcel, or subdivision of land acquired by one owner (plus the spouse in the case of married co-owners), were consolidated. All transfers of ‘farms’ smaller than one hectare or with a per hectare market price greater than that commanded by the best quality farmland in KZN were removed. The transfers remaining were then classified as either to ‘white’ or to ‘previously disadvantaged entrants’, with the latter being stratified into unique strata according to their method of financing/acquisition, namely Government-assisted (grant financed), mortgage loan financed, cash purchase, or by private non-market transfers—mainly bequests and some donations and court orders (see Graham and Lyne 1999 for a full description of the stratification process).

Transfers to ‘previously disadvantaged entrants’ refer to transactions that transfer farmland from white owners to new owners who were previously excluded from land markets on the basis of racial segregation. However, this subset excludes a small number of transactions that shifted land from one disadvantaged owner to another—unless ownership transferred from males to females. The Deeds of Transfer do not explicitly record the race or gender of new landowners, and so the race and gender of individual entrants was established primarily on the basis of their names. While every effort was made to identify disadvantaged landowners, the authors accept that some of these new entrants may have been misclassified—the true rate of land redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal is, therefore, slightly understated. Note also that the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, 70 of 1970, prevents groups of individuals from owning undivided shares in farmland—except when property is jointly owned by a husband and wife married under national law. Where land had been acquired by corporate entities (e.g., companies and trusts) information obtained directly from the entity or indirectly from the Registrar of Companies, Master of the Supreme Court, financiers, and the Provincial Department of Land Affairs was used to establish whether or not the land had transferred predominantly to disadvantaged people.

Table 1 reports the area of farmland acquired each year by disadvantaged owners in KwaZulu-Natal during the calendar years 1997-2001. This census estimate was used to compute the rate of land redistribution for each study year by expressing the area acquired by disadvantaged entrants as a percentage of the total area of farmland potentially available for redistribution in the province (5.31 million hectares=4.13 million hectares owned by whites plus 1.18 million hectares of State farms, and game parks) at the time of political democratisation in 1994. The area of commercial farmland that transferred to white and disadvantaged owners rose markedly from 372,995 hectares in 1997 to 603,522 hectares in 1998, fell to about 300,000 hectares in 1999 and 2000, and dropped further to 267,233 hectares in 2001. Annual farmland transfers to the disadvantaged group ranged from 17,345

to 36,109 hectares per annum, representing between 5.8 and 11.8% of the farmland transferred annually, or between 0.33 and 0.68% of the original area available for redistribution.

**Table 1: Estimated Annual Rates of Farmland Redistribution to Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001**

Study year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
1 Area of farmland originally available for redistribution (ha)	5,308,559	5,308,559	5,308,559	5,308,559	5,308,559
2 Area of land transacted (ha)	372,995	603,522	306,433	300,799	267,233
3 Area of farmland acquired by, or for, disadvantaged people (ha)	22,934	17,772	36,109	17,345	27,324
4 Rate of land redistribution (%) ([3/1] x 100)	0.43	0.34	0.68	0.33	0.52

Although these rates are low, they are considerably higher than estimates made in previous years. In 1995, it was estimated that only 0.05% of the farmland available for redistribution transferred to previously disadvantaged people in the Northern Province of South Africa (Kirsten, van Rooyen, and Ngqangweni 1996, pp. 218-223). In KwaZulu-Natal, the estimate for 1995 was 0.09% (Lyne and Darroch 1997, pp. 561-568.). Since 1997, about 121,484 hectares, or 2.3%, of the available farmland has been redistributed to disadvantaged owners in KwaZulu-Natal. Figure 1 graphs the annual rates of farmland redistribution reported in Table 1, and shows the cumulative rise in the total area of land that was redistributed. Of course, the area transferred says nothing about the *quality* of the redistributed land.

**Figure 1: Estimated Annual and Cumulative Rates of Farmland Redistribution to Previously Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001**

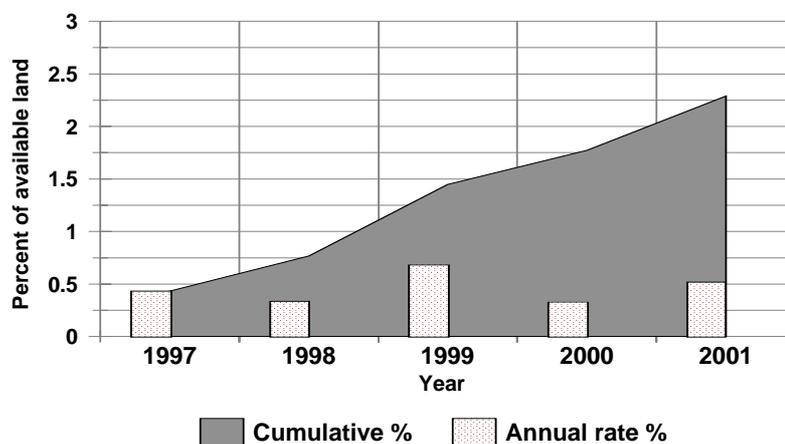


Table 2 presents the mean area of all farms acquired by white and disadvantaged entrants in KwaZulu-Natal, and—for those farms purchased—the mean price of farms and the weighted price of land, during 1997-2001. All prices are expressed in real terms using the calendar year 2000 as the base year. The t-values reported in Table 2 test for differences in the mean characteristics of farms acquired by white and disadvantaged groups of entrants. The mean area (and hence price) of farms transacted is consistently smaller for the disadvantaged group than for the white group, but there is no consistent difference in the weighted average land price (total value of hectares traded in market transactions, divided by the total hectares of market transactions).

**Table 2: Characteristics of Farmland Acquired by White and Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001 (2000=100)**

Farm characteristic	Year	White group	Disadvantaged group	t-value
<b>Mean farm area (ha)—for all farms transacted (including non-market transfers such as bequests and donations)</b>	1997	365	125	3.6***
	1998	1,007	100	2.4**
	1999	287	114	6.7***
	2000	268	109	5.7***
	2001	294	179	3.8***
<b>Mean real farm price (R)—for all farms purchased</b>	1997	1,193,882 <sup>a</sup>	532,775	1.4
	1998	754,373	318,086	4.4**
	1999	879,400	312,339	3.4***
	2000	638,808	355,668	3.6***
	2001	652,318	382,006	3.3***
<b>Weighted real land price (R/Ha)—for all farms purchased</b>	1997	2,554	2,796	
	1998	1,442	1,791	
	1999	2,761	1,678	
	2000	2,337	2,326	
	2001	1,993	1,660	

Notes: \*\*\* and \*\* denote statistical significance at the 1 and 5% level of probability, respectively.

<sup>a</sup> Approximately R8 = US\$1 at the end of calendar year 2001.

For farms of equal quality land, a lower per hectare price would be anticipated for larger farms as the fixed transactions costs and the value of fixed improvements are spread over a larger land area. This situation prevailed in 1997 and 1998 when private sugar millers

working with Ithala Bank—as described in section 2.3.2—provided interest rate subsidies to 51 emerging farmers to buy medium-scale sugarcane farms on high quality land. The dip in 1999 values shows that farms purchased by disadvantaged buyers were not only much smaller, but also of poorer quality than those purchased by whites—partly because no farmers were settled under the graduated repayment scheme in that year. The quality gap, however, closed in 2000 and 2001, as the last group of 18 farmers under the graduated repayment scheme were settled, and because there were few new purchases of lower quality land by communities due to the moratorium on SLAG Government grants (see Figure 4).

The transactions involving disadvantaged entrants were further analysed according to the method of financing/acquisition—grant financed (Government-assisted), private market transfers (mortgage loan financed or cash purchases), and private, non-market transfers. Table 3 disaggregates the land redistributed in KwaZulu-Natal each year during 1997-2001 into these four mutually exclusive strata. Figures 2 to 6 visually summarise this information, highlighting important differences in the quantity, market value and quality of land transferred by each mode of land redistribution. Figure 2 shows that there were far more private than Government-assisted transactions redistributing land to disadvantaged people in KwaZulu-Natal during 1997-2001. In all, there were 905 private transactions, 471 of which were market transfers financed with mortgage loans (184) or cash (287). By contrast, only 89 transactions were financed with Government (SLAG) grants. While the number of private purchases has been consistent over the study period (ranging from 79 to 120 annually), the number of Government-assisted transactions declined from 32 in 1999 to nine in 2000 and rose to 22 in 2001, reflecting the imposition of the moratorium on further SLAG grants after July 1999, and its subsequent lifting in 2001.

**Figure 2: Total Number of Farmland Transactions by Mode of Land Redistribution to Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001**

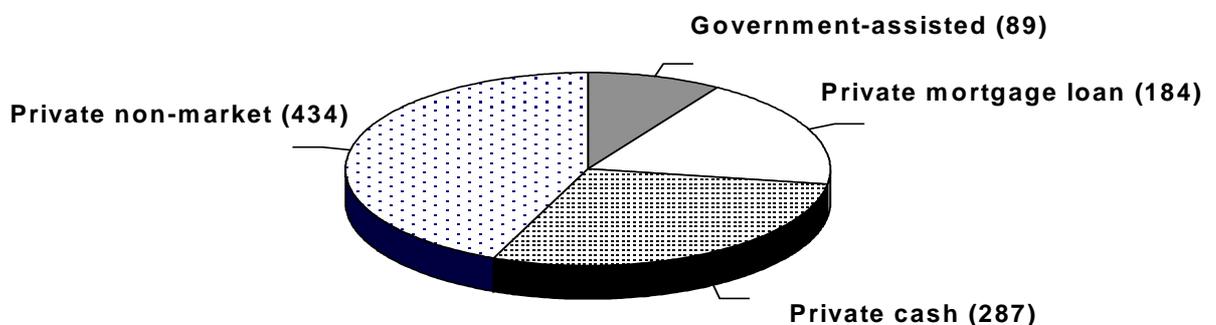


Table 3 and Figure 3 clearly indicate that private, non-market transactions (mainly bequests) transfer relatively small areas to new entrants (a mean of 37 hectares per transaction, and a total of 16,097 hectares). Farms purchased privately with cash averaged 85 hectares in area, and those financed with mortgage loans 196 hectares. Although groups of grant beneficiaries purchased the largest areas (mean of 513 hectares per transaction), the total area of farmland redistributed by private market purchases (60,266 hectares, being 36,148 hectares via private mortgage loans and 24,118 hectares via cash purchase) comfortably exceeded that redistributed by the Government-assisted transactions (45,121 hectares), and consisted of higher quality land (greater weighted farmland price per hectare).

**Table 3: Modes of Land Redistribution to, and Characteristics of Farmland Acquired by, Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001 (2000=100)**

Farm characteristic	Government-assisted	Private mortgage loan	Private cash	Private non-market	Total
<b>Number of transactions</b>	89	184	287	434	994
<b>Total area of land (ha)</b>	45,121	36,148	24,118	16,097	121,484
<b>Total market value of land (R million)</b>	36,92	134,55	39,75		211,22
<b>Mean area of farms (ha)</b>	513	196	85	37	
<b>Weighted farmland price (R/Ha)</b>	833	3,722	1,615		

Figure 4 confirms that the area purchased with Government grants peaked in 1999 (at 14,727 hectares) and then fell sharply (to 2,133 hectares), after the moratorium on new SLAG projects, in 2000. Conversely, the area purchased privately (cash plus mortgage loans) increased steadily during 1997-1999, stayed at the 1999 level in 2000, and then fell in 2001 when there were no sales of medium-scale sugarcane farms financed by private sector interest subsidies.

**Figure 4: Annual Area by Mode of Land Redistribution to Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001**

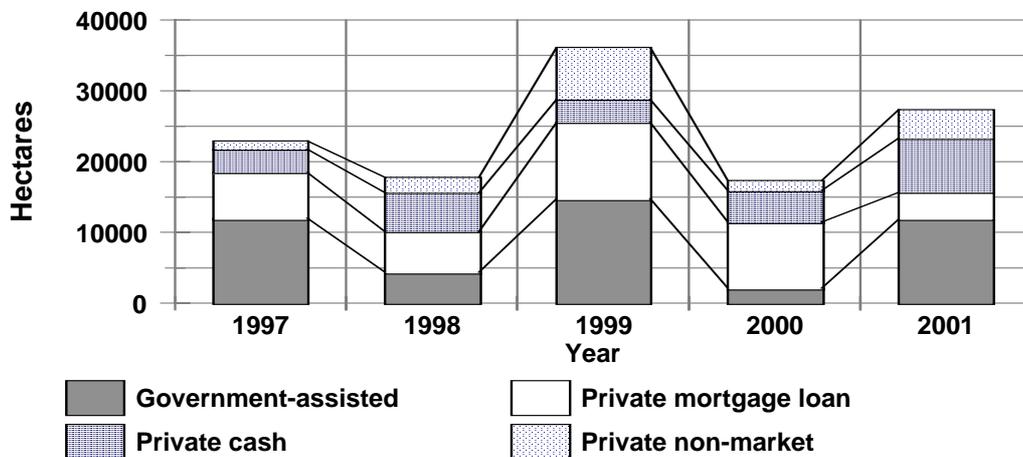
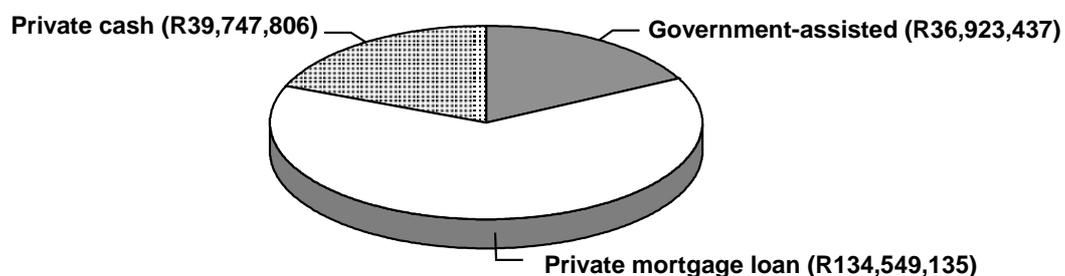


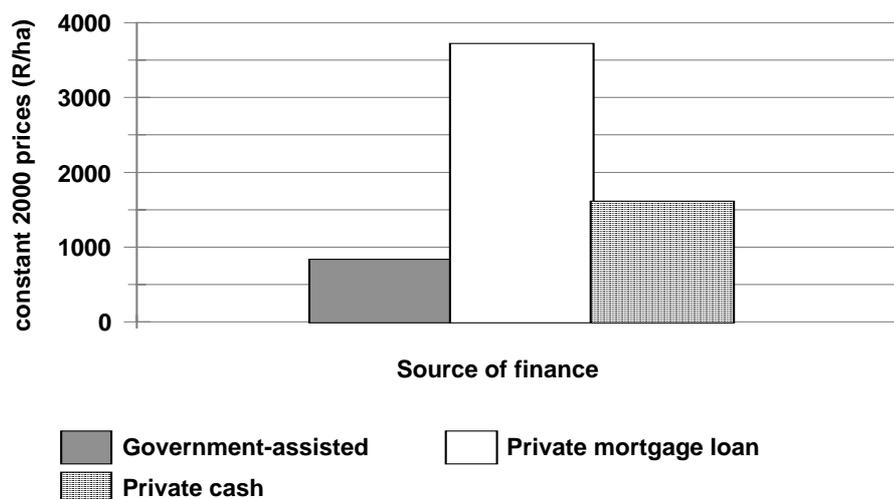
Figure 5 shows the impact of Government-assisted and private land purchases on wealth redistribution in the commercial farming sector of KwaZulu-Natal during 1997-2001. Private cash and mortgage loan purchases redistributed nearly *five* times more land wealth (R174.3 million) than did Government-assisted transactions (R36.9 million). This contrast in wealth is much greater than the difference in total area transferred by these modes of land redistribution. The implication is that agricultural land financed with Government grants is of poor quality relative to that purchased privately (see Figure 6).

**Figure 5: Total Market Value of Farmland by Mode of Land Redistribution to Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001 (2000=100)**



The census data presented in this section show that within the set of private purchases in KwaZulu-Natal during 1997-2001, the number of cash purchases (287) is high relative to the number financed with mortgage loans (184). This gap in numbers widened as the number of medium-scale sugarcane growers that used interest rate subsidies under the graduated repayment scheme declined. These observations are consistent with Nieuwoudt and Vink's (1995, pp. 509-517) argument that buyers with limited equity cannot finance large, quality farms using a conventional mortgage loan owing to inflation-enhanced cash flow problems. Instead they pay cash for relatively cheaper farms. From Table 3 and Figure 6, it is evident that farms financed with cash are about 43% of the area and of the quality of farms financed with mortgage loans. Moreover, it has recently been observed that within the group of medium-scale sugarcane growers, part-timers with off-farm income are more likely to repay debt and to reinvest capital into their farms.

**Figure 6: Weighted Farmland Price (R/Ha) by Mode of Land Redistribution to Disadvantaged Owners in KwaZulu-Natal, 1997-2001 (2000=100)**



The relatively poorer performance of Government programmes in redistributing farmland, especially high quality land, has been compounded by other problems. Under the SLAG programme, diverse groups of beneficiaries struggled to assign exclusive property rights to individual beneficiaries, or to design and enforce sound constitutions to manage communal resources. This institutional vacuum has already generated highly visible adverse outcomes on Government land reform projects: Commercial farmland has been needlessly lost to residential uses, private ranches have been converted into open access grazing resources (no restrictions enforced on livestock numbers), and insecure tenure has undermined investment

in crop production (Lyne and Graham 2001). This situation is expected to change now that the LRAD programme that aims to help settle farmers has replaced the SLAG programme.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The annual census surveys of transfer deeds reported in this chapter show that a total of 121,484 hectares of farmland were acquired during 1997-2001 by historically disadvantaged people in KwaZulu-Natal. Private, non-market transfers (mainly bequests) accounted for 16,097 hectares of this land, Government-assisted purchases for 45,121 hectares and private purchases (cash and mortgage loans) for 60,266 hectares. All told, this area of 121,484 hectares means that 2.3% of the farmland available for redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal transferred to disadvantaged owners during these five years. Clearly, the SLAG programme did not generate a rate of farmland transfer in KwaZulu-Natal consistent with the South African Government's goal of redistributing 30% of white-owned farmland to disadvantaged people over 15 years.

The SLAG programme not only redistributed less land than did private purchases, but also transferred land of much lower quality, and about *five* times less total wealth, to beneficiaries whose tenure is relatively insecure. The weighted average farmland price for SLAG transfers during 1997-2001 was R833 per hectare, about *one-half* that for cash purchases (R1615 per hectare) and *one-quarter* that for mortgage bond transactions (R3722 per hectare). Over the same period, the SLAG programme redistributed farmland worth R36.9 million, compared to farmland worth R174.3 million transferred by the private purchases. There is also further survey evidence that insecure tenure on SLAG projects in KwaZulu-Natal has impacted adversely on the beneficiaries' ability and incentive to finance seasonal inputs and improvements to cropland. Again, this outcome is not consistent with the expectation that land redistribution would result in a highly efficient small-scale farm sector.

The number of private transfers (905—of which 184 were mortgage loans and 287 were cash purchases) also exceeded Government-assisted transactions (89) redistributing land to disadvantaged people in KwaZulu-Natal during 1997-2001. A moratorium on new SLAG projects after July 1999 reduced annual transfers by this instrument in KwaZulu-Natal from a peak of 14,727 hectares in 1999 to just 2,133 hectares in 2000. Although the replacement LRAD programme is designed to extend larger grants to creditworthy farmers, there are some valid problems with the design and delivery of LRAD that must be addressed. For example, there is an implicit cap on LRAD grants imposed by commercial banks that usually require a debt/equity ratio of less than one when financing investments. Under optimal conditions when the lender is assured that the borrower will receive a grant, a prospective owner-operator would have to provide R100,000 in own equity in order to qualify for an LRAD grant of R90,000 and a commercial bank loan of R190,000. Under conditions that are less certain, and for previously disadvantaged farmers that lack savings, the implicit cap on LRAD grants would be much less generous.

Secondly, barriers to the subdivision of farmland imposed by the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, 70 of 1970 will prevent many emerging farmers from making private purchases. LRAD discounts the impact of Act 70, stating that ‘permission to subdivide for sale under LRAD will be effective immediately upon the launch of LRAD’ (Ministry for Agriculture and Land Affairs 2001, p. 6.). While this commitment is welcomed, it does not address other significant costs associated with the formal subdivision, registration and transfer of agricultural land. Moreover, it applies only to Government-assisted transactions and, therefore, does nothing to improve market access for private buyers. Third, LRAD relies heavily on private ‘design agents’ who will help prospective buyers to identify willing sellers, prepare their land-use plans and cash flow projections, negotiate sale agreements, arrange finance, and facilitate applications for LRAD. These agents are expected to recover most of their costs from a planning grant that is awarded once the project has been approved. However, this arrangement is fraught with uncertainty as there is no guarantee that Government will approve a project. Consequently, existing landowners, property developers, estate agents and non-government organisations may be unwilling to act as design agents.

Although private purchases redistributed more land, and much more land wealth, to previously disadvantaged owners than did Government-assisted purchases in KwaZulu-Natal during 1997-2001, these purchases together (105,387 hectares) accounted for less than 6% of the total area transacted (1,850,982 hectares). Clearly, the market has much larger potential to redistribute farmland than what has been realised to date. While some might argue that few disadvantaged people aspire to become farmers, the overwhelming response to innovative financial products administered by Ithala Bank (see section 2.3.2) and the Land Reform Credit Facility, LRCF (see section 2.3.5), to finance medium-scale farmers and equity shareholders suggests that access to the land market is constrained by inflation-induced cash flow problems associated with conventional mortgage loans, and by the costs, delays and uncertainty associated with the registration and transfer of affordable land subdivisions.

Obstacles preventing the repeal of the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act, 70 of 1970, must be addressed without further delay. Scrapping this Act will make it easier for those poor and part-time farmers who are rationed out of the LRAD programme to obtain finance for smaller, more affordable farms. Likewise, the Government should contain or reduce the inflation rate, and lower the statutory costs of subdividing and transacting farmland, to enable commercial banks to reach further down the income scale when financing prospective farmers and equity shareholders. Access to larger land reform grants for farmworkers and aspiring farmers would also improve the outreach of private financiers because the poor cannot make significant contributions of their own to the purchase of equity and land. Ideally, the LRCF should be allocated a share of these grants and authorised to award them contingent upon the disbursement of a loan. Under these conditions, the LRCF will have to be capitalised at scale if it is to keep pace with growing demands for its loans from commercial banks.

Recent invasions of commercial farms in Zimbabwe highlight the urgent need for bold interventions to de-racialise the structure of commercial agriculture in South Africa. An

effective alternative to the destructive ‘fast track’ policy adopted in Zimbabwe is to subsidise interest rates for a finite period on loans made to creditworthy land reform projects. The problems associated with cheap credit programmes are well documented and have encouraged the South African Government to resist interest rate subsidies. Many of these problems, however, could be avoided by channelling *finite* interest rate subsidies *that decline over time* through commercial banks. This has the added advantage of drawing private sector finance and expertise into the land reform process. For example, the LRCF could either discount the wholesale interest rate that it charges commercial banks for its existing financial product, or it could allocate public and donor funds directly to commercial banks to support finite, diminishing interest rate subsidies on loans made to previously disadvantaged buyers of land and equity. These awards could be apportioned according to the value of transactions in land and equity that each lender expects to support during the forthcoming fiscal year. This process will give potential borrowers an opportunity to ‘shop around’ for favourable terms from a variety of decentralised and expert lending institutions.

A key area for future research would be to assess the extent to which land redistribution efforts countrywide may be constrained by the different approaches that the Provincial Departments of Land Affairs (PDLA’s) use to apply the Government’s land reform strategies. For example, the KwaZulu-Natal PDLA has not supported any equity-sharing projects despite the relative success of these projects in other provinces. These discrepancies point to persistent differences in the willingness or capacity of staff in the PDLA’s to implement relatively sophisticated projects. A national exchange programme involving mentors (drawn from Government, NGOs and Commercial Banks) with experience in successful land reform projects is recommended to broaden views and transfer skills.

## REFERENCES

- Binswanger H., K. Deininger, and G. Feder. 1993. ‘Power, Distortions and Reform in Agricultural Land Markets’. In *Handbook of Development Economics: Volume 3*, edited by J. Berhman and T. Srinivasan. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Cousins, B. 2002. ‘Controversy and Consensus in South Africa’s Land Reform Programme. Paper presented at a World Bank regional workshop on land issues in Africa, 29 April-2 May 2002, Kampala.
- Deininger, K. and H. Binswanger. 1992. *Are Large Farms More Efficient than Small Ones? Government Intervention, Large-scale Agriculture, and Resettlement in Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe*. Unpublished working paper, Department of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota.
- Department of Agriculture. 2001. *The Strategic Plan for South African Agriculture*. Department of Agriculture, Directorate of Agricultural Information Services, Pretoria.
- Department of Land Affairs. 1998. *Feasibility Study for the Support of Commercial Land Transfer Projects*. Department of Land Affairs, Pretoria.

- Eckert, J. J. Hamman, and J. Lombard. 1996. 'Perceiving the Future: Empowering Farm Workers through Equity Sharing'. *Development Southern Africa* 13(5): 693-712.
- Graham, A. 2000. *Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal: An Analysis of Farmland Transactions Recorded in 1997 and 1998*. Unpublished MScAgric thesis, Agricultural Economics, School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness, University of Natal.
- Graham, A. and M.C. Lyne. 1999. Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal: An Analysis of Farmland Transactions in 1997. *Development Southern Africa* 16(3): 435-445.
- Kirsten, J., J. van Rooyen, and S. Ngqangweni. 1996. 'Progress with Different Land Reform Options in South Africa. *Agrekon* 35(4): 218-223.
- Knight, S.L. and M.C. Lyne. 2002. 'Perceptions of Farmworker Equity-share Schemes in South Africa. *Agrekon* 41(4): 356-374.
- Knight, S.L. M.C. Lyne, and M. Roth. 2002. *Best Institutional Arrangements for Farmworker Equity-share Schemes in South Africa*. Unpublished working paper, Agricultural Economics, School of Agricultural Sciences and Agribusiness, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- LRCF. 2000. *The Land Reform Credit Facility: Progress report for the period 4 November 1999-27 January 2000*. Unpublished management report, Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd., Johannesburg.
- LCRF. 2001a. *The Land Reform Credit Facility: Progress report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October - 7<sup>th</sup> December 2001*. Unpublished management report, Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd., Johannesburg.
- LRCF. 2001b. Minutes of the sixth quarterly meeting of the LRCF Steering Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2001. Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd., Johannesburg.
- LRCF. 2001c. *Implementation plan to establish the Land Reform Credit Facility (LRCF) on a permanent basis*. Unpublished report, Khula Enterprise Finance Ltd., Johannesburg.
- Lyne, M.C. and G.F. Ortmann. 1996. 'Estimating the Potential for Creating Additional Livelihoods on Commercial Farmland in KwaZulu-Natal'. In *Land, Labour and Livelihoods in Rural South Africa: Volume 2: KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Province*, edited by M. Lipton, F. Ellis, and M. Lipton. Durban: Indicator Press.
- Lyne, M.C. and M.A.G. Darroch. 1997. 'Broadening Access to Land Markets: Financing Emerging Farmers in South Africa'. *Development Southern Africa* 14(4): 561-568.
- Lyne, M.C. and M.A.G. Darroch. 2001. 'Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: Four Census Surveys of Farmland Transactions, 1997-2000'. Paper presented at a USAID BASIS CRSP synthesis workshop, 22-25 July 2001, Magaliesburg.
- Lyne, M.C. and D. Graham. 2001. 'The Impact of Land Redistribution on Tenure Security and Agricultural Performance in KwaZulu-Natal. *Agrekon* 40(4): 656-668.
- Mashatola, M. 2001. Regional Economic Advisor: North Coast, South African Cane Growers' Association. *Personal communication*. Durban, South Africa.
- May, J. 2000. 'The Structure and Composition of Rural Poverty and Livelihoods in South Africa'. In *At the Crossroads. Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa into the 21<sup>st</sup>*

- Century*, edited by B. Cousins. Cape Town: Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), University of the Western Cape.
- Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs. 2001. *Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development: A Sub-programme of the Land Redistribution Programme*. National Department of Agriculture, Pretoria.
- National Department of Agriculture. 2000. Abstract of Agricultural Statistics. The Directorate: Statistical Information, Pretoria.
- Nieuwoudt, W.L and N. Vink. 1995. 'Financing of Land Purchase by Small-scale Farmers'. *Development Southern Africa* 12(4): 509-517.
- Ngqangweni, S. and J. van Rooyen. 1995. 'Equity Sharing as a Unique Local Agrarian Reform Experience: Perceptions of Farm Workers'. *Agrekon* 34(4): 211-214.
- Simms, P. 1997. 'Land Redistribution in South Africa—Some Practical Lessons'. In *Proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> International Farm Management Congress: Volume 1*, edited by L. Bauer. Alberta, Canada: International Farm Management Association and The Canadian Farm Business Management Council, Olds.
- Shabane, P.M. 2002. 'LRAD in KwaZulu-Natal'. Paper presented at the Annual Symposium of the South African Society for Agricultural Extension: KwaZulu-Natal Branch, 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2002, Cedara.
- South African Data Profile. 2002. World Development Indicators Database, World Bank, Washington, D.C., United States of America.
- Surplus Peoples Project. 1999. 'An Examination of the Impact of Share Equity Schemes on Beneficiaries in the Western Cape and Mpumalanga'. Unpublished report, Surplus Peoples Project, Cape Town.
- Sykuta, M. and M. Cook. 2001. 'A New Institutional Economics Approach to Contracts and Cooperatives'. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 83(5): 1271-1277.
- The Natal Witness*. 2002. 'Land Reform Process has Accelerated'. *The Natal Witness* newspaper, 16th November 2002, Pietermaritzburg.
- Turner, S. and H. Ibsen. 2000. 'Land and Agrarian Reform in South Africa: A Status Report'. Unpublished report, Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), University of the Western Cape, Cape Town.
- World Bank. 1993. 'Options for Land Reform and Rural Restructuring in South Africa'. Unpublished World Bank report, World Bank, Southern Africa Department, Washington D.C., United States of America.

—Chapter 7—  
**Government-assisted and  
Market-driven Land Reform**

**Evaluating Public and Private Land Markets  
in Redistributing Land in Zimbabwe<sup>188</sup>**

**Lovemore Rugube**

Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe

**Sam Zhou**

Gentina Engineering, Harare

**Michael Roth**

Land Tenure Center and Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

**Walter Chambati**

Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, University of Zimbabwe

*Upon independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual economy characterised by skewed landownership and white minority control of land. For a decade, Government made headway in redistributing land to the black majority population through state-assisted land reform, but these efforts had substantially stalled by the late 1980s. A joint Government-donor initiative in 1998 sought to reenergize Zimbabwe's land reform program using improved Government- and market-assisted approaches, but this initiative by 2000 had become displaced by 'fast track'. Two other mechanisms—the private land market (deeds transfers) and public leasing of state lands—have also been active in redistributing land. This chapter evaluates the role and potential of these two mechanisms in the future land reform debate. While Government-assisted land resettlement averaged +/- 85,000ha/year from 1984-2001, the private land market redistributed 25,000-80,000ha/yr to 'black' farmers from 1996-1999. Unfortunately, beginning in 2000 with fast track, the private land market for both 'black' and 'white' farmers has all but collapsed, as have land valuations and mortgage financing. Meanwhile, the public leasing market in the late 1990s accelerated as Government began to unload its properties on the public leasing market. Neither process—financial distress in the rural sector or Government ownership and leasing of land—provide the foundations for a productive agricultural sector. The chapter concludes with concrete recommendations for both public leasing and private land markets that would improve delivery of land to the black majority, both men and women.*

---

<sup>188</sup> The authors thank Sue Mbaya for assistance with gender and legal analysis, Mr. Munaiwa, Chief Registrar of Deeds, for helpful comments, research assistant Sheila Kanhukamwe for help obtaining, screening and analysing records of land transactions, and officials in the Deeds Registries of Bulawayo and Harare who provided access and technical support.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

At the time of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe inherited a dual economy characterised by skewed landownership and white minority control over the country's land and water resources. For a decade following independence in 1980, the Government of Zimbabwe made significant headway in redistributing land to the black majority population through state-led land reform and resettlement, but these efforts had substantially stalled by the late 1980s. In 1998, the Government of Zimbabwe sought to reaccelerate the land reform and resettlement program through a joint Government-donor initiative. Since then, the political and economic changes in Zimbabwe have been tumultuous. The joint initiative initially took steam, reached momentum, and soon after was displaced by fast track resettlement.

Much debate has ensued about the efficacy of fast track land reform in redistributing land to beneficiaries and the use to which the land is being put. At present, the basic definitions of land rights under fast track seem lost in a cloud of uncertainty over whether the new beneficiaries will remain on the land, whether they will have formal rights, and whether the land will be used productively. Fast track was in part motivated by the slow pace of Government-assisted land reform during the first decade after independence. What is less known, is that the private land market in Zimbabwe has also been significant in redistributing land to black farmers without Government assistance with land acquisition or resettlement. As long as Government budgets are tight and reach limited, private market solutions are an important tool in the policy kit of land reform, either as a complement to Government-led approaches or by strengthening the integration of land and financial markets to aid in the private commercialisation of agriculture.

This chapter evaluates the role of public and private land markets in redistributing land in Zimbabwe through monitoring of private deed transactions and the public leasing of state lands. It first reviews the legal framework governing land administration, registration, and mortgage financing as they relate to private land transfers. It also identifies the roles of organisations, committees and processes that govern public and private land market transfers through key informant interviews with heads of the institutions involved. It finally compares the performance of private and public markets in redistributing land in Zimbabwe by analysing key data on deeds transactions and public lease agreements. The chapter concludes with a discussion of constraints that are impinging on the performance of the land market, but concrete solutions are proposed that would strengthen the delivery of land to black farmers in Zimbabwe.

## **2. AGRARIAN STRUCTURE**

In 1969, the colonial Government gazetted the Land Tenure Act, which replaced the Land Apportionment Act. The total land area in Zimbabwe was roughly divided equally between Europeans and Africans (see Table 1), but in real terms the division was unequal, as whites constituted a minority group (Bond-Stewart 1986).

**Table 1: Division of Land According to the Land Tenure Act of 1969**

	<b>European (‘000 ha)</b>	<b>African (‘000 ha)</b>
<b>Forest area</b>	753.0	171.6
<b>General land</b>	15,580.1	
<b>Tribal Trust Land</b>		16,151.9
<b>Specially designated land</b>	0.7	117.8
<b>Purchase area</b>		1,483.0
<b>Parks and wildlife</b>	1,770.9	254.7
<b>Total</b>	18,111.4	18,179.1

Source: Riddell and Dickerman 1986

At the time of independence in 1980, it was estimated that the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs) or native reserves were overpopulated by about 51% (Bond-Stewart 1986). The new Government embarked on the first phase of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme (LRRP-1) to redress the unequal land distribution and set itself an initial target of resettling 18,000 families on 1.2 million hectares over three years; due to political pressure this target was later increased to 162,000 families on 10 million hectares (World Bank 1991). Government land acquisition and resettlement did indeed accelerate in the first few years after independence (Roth and Bruce 1994), but the pace of land reform had substantially stalled by the mid- to late-1980s due to clauses entrenched in the Lancaster House Constitution (Hlatshwayo 1993), prohibitively high prices for land on offer, and unsuitable land offered by white farmers in Natural Regions IV and V (GOZ 1990a, World Bank 1991). Other authors (Bratton 1994, Maposa 1995, Mhishi 1995) attribute the slow progress to lack of political will on the part of Government. Also, the Government holding land or leasing or selling land to selected individuals is used as evidence that it was not land that was short, but effective resettlement schemes.

After amending the Constitution, with the expiration of the Lancaster House Constitutional constraints in 1990, the Government crafted a new National Land Policy in which new targets were put in place. The Government sought to reduce the area under large-scale commercial farming to 5 million hectares while increasing the area under resettlement to 8.3 million hectares (Moyo 1998). Other categories of land were to remain unchanged save for the state owned farms. As of 1997, the total area under resettlement had increased by only 300,000 hectares to 3.6 million hectares, far short of the target, and the large-scale sector had been reduced to 11.0 million hectares (Table 2).

**Table 2: Land Distribution after Independence**

Land Category	1980 '000,000' ha	1990 '000,000' ha	1997 '000,000' ha
<b>Communal areas</b> <sup>1,a</sup>	16.4	16.4	16.4
<b>Resettlement areas</b> <sup>1</sup>	0.0	3.3	3.6
<b>Small scale commercial farms</b> <sup>2,b</sup>	1.0	1.4	1.4
<b>Large scale commercial farms</b> <sup>2,c</sup>	14.8	11.4	11.0
<b>State farms</b> <sup>1</sup>	0.3	-	0.1
<b>National parks &amp; wildlife and urban settlements</b>	6.0	6.0	6.0
<b>Total</b>	38.5	38.5	38.5

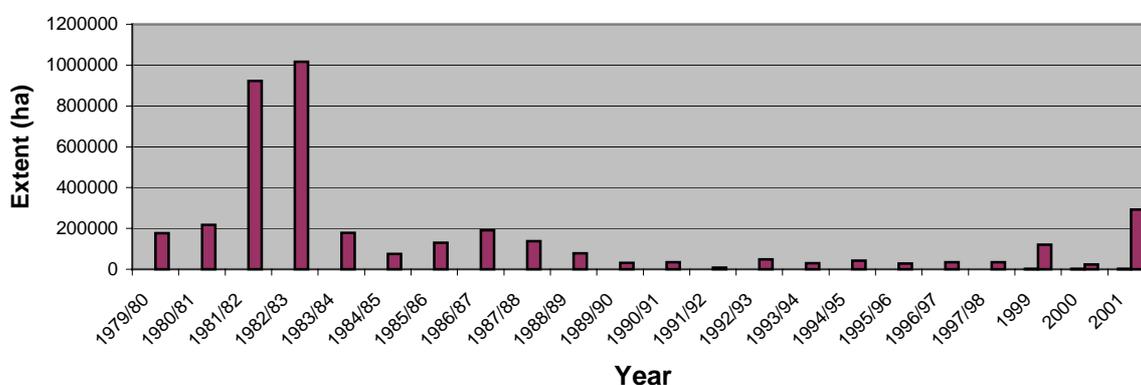
Source: 1. GOZ (1999); 2. CSO (1998).

Notes:

- a. Communal areas formerly known as Tribal Trust Lands or Native Reserves.
- b. Small scale commercial farms formerly known as Purchase Areas.
- c. Large scale commercial farms formerly known as European Areas or General land.

In 2000, Government launched fast-track to speed the pace of land acquisition and transfers under the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme phase 2 (LRRP-2). Beneficiaries under fast track land reform, at least in theory, are resettled according to two models—A1 (communal) and A2 (small to medium-scale commercial). Table 3 and Figure 1 show the scale of Government farm acquisitions from 1980 to 2001. By December 2000, a total of 2,540 farms with a total area of 5.88 million hectares had been identified and gazetted for compulsory acquisition (Msika 2000). By December 2002, fast track land reform had resettled 310,000 families under the A1 villagisation scheme and 50,000 other new farmers in the A2 commercial farming scheme (*The Herald* 2002).

**Figure 1: Extent of Farms Acquired by Government, Zimbabwe 1979-2001**



**Table 3: Government Land Acquisition since 1980**

Year	Extent (Ha)	No. of Farms	Cost (Z\$)
1979/80	176,667	76	3,477,080
1980/81	217,869	97	4,259,607
1981/82	922,919	313	18,290,340
1982/83	1,016,941	471	23,287,957
1983/84	177,716	148	5,996,789
1984/85	75,623	67	4,444,930
1985/86	130,292	64	5,153,010
1986/87	191,133	70	7,091,407
1987/88	138,349	52	5,786,315
1988/89	78,203	51	7,255,575
1989/90	31,050	26	7,626,150
1990/91	34,911	28	7,952,770
1991/92	8,275	7	3,860,000
1992/93	48,924	35	35,526,980
1993/94	29,964	24	19,349,500
1994/95	42,721	27	25,470,000
1995/96	28,575	11	8,335,000
1996/97	34,563	10	4,810,000
1997/98	34,873	22	65,310,000
1999	119,953	50	171,121,000
2000	23,346	13	100,740,000
2001	293,350	140	<i>not available</i>
Total	3,856,217	1,662	535,144,409

Source: Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement undated files

State land acquisition reached a peak between 1979/80 and 1982/83, then slowed dramatically even after the removal of the constitutional constraints in 1990. Of the 3.9 million hectares of land acquired over the period 1979 to 2001, 60.5% had been acquired by 1982/83, and the remaining 39.5% acquired over the subsequent 18 years at an average of roughly 85,000ha/yr. While land may have been 'too expensive' under the willing-seller, willing-buyer provisions of the Lancaster House Constitution, there was nonetheless land on offer that could have been purchased, and later under legislative changes that enabled compulsory acquisition, Government implementation proved slow. In 1993, 73 farms were designated for compulsory acquisition, but none were acquired as 50 farms were delisted and the Minister failed to comply with the period stated in the designation order for the remaining farms (CFU 2000). Again in 1997, the Government gazetted 1,471 farms for compulsory acquisition. Of these, 624 were delisted for various reasons (Moyo 1998), and in the end, Government managed to pay for only 22 farms.

### 3. LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Zimbabwe's legal system is based on Roman Dutch Law, which governs property rights in Zimbabwe outside communal and resettlement areas. Land registration and transfer is by way of registration of title deeds where the state issues title and administers the system through statutes and regulations. The Deeds Registries Act (Chapter 20:05) and the Land Survey Act (Chapter 20:12) both revised in 1996 are the two pieces of legislation that govern land transfers in Zimbabwe. Other acts are occasionally, in particular the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act, the Finance Act, the Deceased Estates Act, and the Land Acquisition Act, among others.

#### 3.1. Land Surveying

Land surveying is regulated by the *Land Survey Act, Chapter 20:12*. Its purpose is to control and regulate the survey and charting of land for registration in the Deeds office. In terms of the Act, no General Plan or diagram of any piece of land shall be accepted in the Deeds registry for registration unless signed by the responsible Land Surveyor and Surveyor General. The Surveyor General, as the custodian of cadastral information, supervises the work of qualified and registered land surveyors involved in cadastral surveys and in the process administers the Act on behalf of the Minister of Lands. A cadastral survey results in the production of a survey diagram,

#### Progression of law governing state land acquisition

**1. Constitution:** Section 16(1) states that '*No property...or interest or right therein shall be compulsorily acquired, except under authority of a law...*' The legal framework governing land redistribution in Zimbabwe has undergone various transformations since independence.

**2. Lancaster House Constitution of 1979.** According to section 16, only land not used continuously for at least five years could be compulsorily acquired for settlement and agricultural purposes. Adequate compensation was to be paid promptly, not less than the highest price obtained in the open market during the five years prior to acquisition, and payable in foreign currency at the option of the owner.

**3. Land Acquisition Act of 1985.** Still only underutilised and derelict land could be compulsorily acquired on a 'willing-seller, willing-buyer' basis. All agricultural land for sale had to be offered to Government on the basis of 'right of first refusal'. Compensation was to be paid promptly to the owner or others suffering deprivation. In case of disagreement over compensation, owners were given legal recourse to the court.

**4. Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Bill No. 11 of 1990.** Section 16 of the Constitution was amended so that all land including utilised land, buildings and unexhausted improvements could be acquired compulsorily (Hansard 1990 Vol.17 No. 58) versus only underutilised and derelict land in the 1985 Act. The basis for compensation was shifted from 'adequate' to 'fair' and could now be settled in a 'reasonable time' instead of 'immediately'. Parliament was authorised to fix the compensation payable and the settlement period. Government removed from the court's jurisdiction determination of fairness of compensation, and abolished payment in foreign currency.

**5. Land Acquisition Act of 1992.** The Act was updated to include provisions of the Amendment Bill No.11. In addition, a clause was added empowering the Minister of Lands and Agriculture to designate any land for settlement and other purposes. A compensation committee was established to determine the compensation payable for designated rural land. Legislation provided for owners to make objections to designations in writing to the Minister.

**6. Land Acquisition Amendment Act of 2000.** After losing the referendum in February 2000, Government amended the 1992 Act. It removed its obligation to pay compensation for agricultural land acquired for resettlement purposes. Compensation was made payable for improvements but not for land unless adequate funds are available per section 16A of the Constitution. Although the composition of the compensation committee changed, it retained responsibility for fixing the compensation payable.

which contains geometrical, numerical and verbal representations of a piece of land or a line, feature or area forming the basis for registration of a real right. The diagram represents the final docket that the Registrar of Deeds uses for his/her parcel description and appends to the title deed. The diagram shows various attributes of the land including the extent or area of the land, length of the sides of the property, direction of each line, and the description of beacons.

Land surveying is critical in the land delivery process, especially in cases where unalienated state land is to be alienated and where new title deeds are required following a subdivision or consolidation. For properties where title deeds are already in existence, surveying will not be required unless it is to correct errors on the original diagram. However, the Registrar of

Deeds often calls for conversion of measure from the imperial system to the metric system, which is now the legal unit of measurement for all new surveys.

### 3.2. Land Registration

Once the Surveyor General has approved a land survey diagram and/or General Plan, the next step is to effect its registration. Land registration is governed by the *Deeds Registries Act Chapter 20:05*. The Chief Registrar of Deeds on behalf of the Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs administers the Act. The Act provides for registration and transfers in land, bonds, mortgages,

rights in immovable property, servitudes, and leases (as described in the 'Processes' box). The Act thus caters for the needs of people, companies, and the state who wish to transfer land rights to another party. Transferable land rights include ownership rights, lease rights, mortgage rights, subdivision and consolidation rights, and inheritance rights. The Act also provides the processes through which each of these rights can be recorded or transferred.

While there is provision for registration and transfer of state land, it is noteworthy that the Act is silent about registration of leases pertaining to state land. This situation makes it very difficult to assess the progress or lack of it by the Government in parcelling out land to

#### Processes for recording or transferring rights

Deeds registration only takes place when deeds attested or executed by a Registrar have the Registrar's signature (section 10(1)).

Deeds are registered for land transfer or to cede real rights in land.

Ownership rights can only be *transferred* from one person to another by way of a *Deed of Transfer* executed or attested to by a Registrar.

Other real rights must to be registered by means of a *Deed of Session* attested to by a legal practitioner and registered by a Registrar.

Unalienated state land (land without a title deed) is transferred from the state to any person only through *registration* at the deeds office.

Land held under state title is transferred by way of a *Deed of Transfer* while State land not held under title is transferred by a *Deed of Grant* with the diagram of the land attached thereto.

Land acquired by the state from any person is usually not held in terms of a title deed, unless it is registered in favour of the President. Once the state acquires land, it orders the Registrar to cancel the title deed and reflect land as state land.

Before land may be transferred, a conveyancer (lawyer) must prepare a Deed of Transfer in the form prescribed by law or as approved by the Registrar. Once prepared, deeds are executed in the presence of the Registrar by the owner of the land or by a lawyer authorised by power of attorney (section 19). The Registrar only registers the deed of transfer prepared by a conveyancer.

beneficiaries through leases. From experience and for a number of years, the Government has bought a number of farms on the open market and especially through ‘willing-seller, willing-buyer’ arrangements, and it is known that most of these farms have been leased, most of them with an option to purchase. There is evidence to suggest that some of these farms have since transcended to full title after the lessees exercised the option to purchase.

### 3.3. Procedures for Transferring Land

The organisational framework coordinating land survey and land registration in Zimbabwe is shown in Figure 2. It is the function of estate agents to value land and undertake most of the bureaucratic and legal procedures associated with land transfer (see ‘Land Transfer’ box ). Once the survey has been accepted, a registered conveyancer is required to process the title deed for registration. Once approved by the Registrar of Deeds, the applicant finally receives the document.

The *Regional, Town and Country Planning Amendment Act of 1998 (Chapter 29: 12)* governs the transfer of agricultural land that is held on the basis of a title deed or lease through the requirement of permits for subdivision and consolidation of land (Section 39). The Minister of Local Government, Public Construction and National Housing administers the Act. Application procedures for obtaining a permit as set out in Section 40 are cumbersome, time consuming and bureaucratic (see Roth and Sukume 2003). The process is all-inclusive, however, it has also often been sited as having introduced bureaucratic hurdles to timely subdivision and the transfer of land, especially in the pre-independence era where it served to discourage land transfers (see Rukuni 1994 and Roth and Sukume 2003, chapter 5 in this volume, for further details).

### 3.4. Gender

Clearly, the above regulatory framework embodied principally in the Survey and Deeds Registration Acts is probably *not* sufficiently user-friendly in terms of time, costs, and knowledge for prospective land reform beneficiaries. The skills and

#### Land transfer procedures

1. Estate Agent advertises a farm property in the press.
2. Interested buyer approaches Deeds Registry Office and conducts search to ascertain existence of property.
3. Caveats on the property checked; these must be uplifted before purchasing or bond registration.
4. Agreement of Sale signed between owner (or estate agent, if authorised) and prospective buyer.
5. Signed documents sent to Deeds Registry Office by a conveyancer who has appeared before the Registrar.
6. Documents lodged through two pigeonholes in the Deeds Registry office.
7. Documents examined by Chief Examiner and accepted or rejected.
8. Rejected documents sent back to conveyancers for corrections.
9. Accepted documents registered and sent to Registrar for final approval.
10. Documents finally rejected or approved.
11. If registered, they are sent to Surveyor General for deduction. Surveyor General completes the deductions and forwards the Deeds through the Deeds Registry Office.
12. Rejected documents sent back to lawyers for corrections. Registered ones signed and returned to conveyancers. Office copies filed.

wherewithal to navigate the organisational apparatus regulating land transfers, to survey land, to register title, and to successfully argue for subdivisions and consolidations would be a daunting task for all but the 'well-to-do' and the 'well-connected'. One can also probably conclude that the hurdles to accessing land delivery services for women are higher than for men. For women that have been widowed or divorced, their ability to pay has been further disadvantaged by their weak economic status.

### **Gender and communal tenure**

*The Communal Land Act (Chapter 20:04) 1982* provides for the classification of land as communal. It regulates the occupation and use of communal land and repeals the Tribal Trust Land Act, 1979. In accordance with Section 8(2), access to and use of communal land shall be in accordance with customary law. Yet, customary law has, in many instances, been deemed discriminatory towards women in that it curtails their access to and control of resources. Hence, this provision along with Section 23 of the Constitution are sometimes seen as perpetuating the marginalisation of women in the allocation of land under communal tenure.

*The Traditional Leaders Act (Chapter 29:17) 2000* provides for the appointment of traditional leadership, i.e., chiefs, headmen, village heads, and other subsidiary functionaries such as the village assembly, and spells out their duties, functions and powers. In terms of Section 23, all communal land is to be surveyed and boundaries drawn demarcating each village. Each village shall then be issued a village registration certificate describing its boundaries. The Rural District Council will be required to prepare a land use plan for each village and shall issue a settlement permit to the head of each household in the village. According to Section 24(4), each settlement permit shall bear names of all spouses. In terms of Section 24(4), unmarried women who are heads of household can have permits in their names as can widows and girls or child headed households. However, while these provisions would seem to be sufficient to protect women's rights, other provisions requiring the permit holder to have consent of adult members of the household and the Rural District Council would nonetheless compromise gender rights if there is latent intent to discriminate.

According to Section 23(1)(a) of *The Constitution of Zimbabwe*, no law shall make any provision which is discriminatory either in itself or in its effect. However, this restriction is qualified in two subsequent paragraphs. First, Section 23(3) states that nothing contained in any law shall be held to be contravention of sub-section (1)(a) to the extent that the law in question relates to personal law (i.e., adoption, marriage, divorce, burial, devolution of property on death). Second, this restriction does not apply in situations where African customary law is applicable and (in sub-section (f)) 'according to tribes people, to the exclusion of other persons, or to rights and privileges relating to communal land'.<sup>189</sup>

In essence, in the above three scenarios, people are not protected from discrimination. Quite the opposite, discrimination on all the enumerated grounds including gender remains lawful, and will often coincide with those instances where women are powerless or vulnerable, for instance, women seeking ownership of their deceased

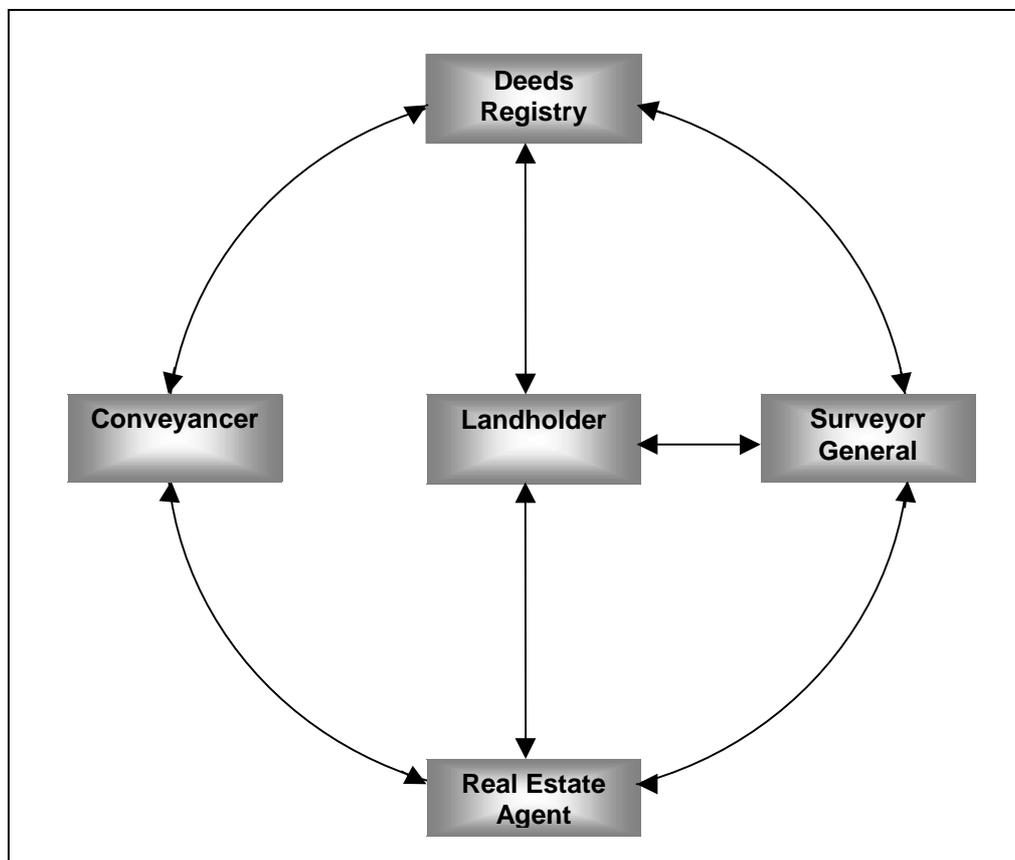
---

<sup>189</sup> Communal Land is in terms of the Communal Land Act and the Traditional Leaders Act. The Chief of an area is given overall responsibility of allocating land through traditional leaders, i.e., village heads who are often the custodians of customary law. These usually are males whose patriarchal notions of women's social status can further work against the allocation of land to women.

husband's estates or women seeking a portion of their matrimonial estate after divorce. It is particularly significant that the Constitution, the supreme law of the land, allows discrimination with respect to rights in communal lands where the majority of poor, marginalised women live and depend on land as their key source of livelihood (see 'Gender' box).

As of January 1929, all marriages in Zimbabwe were said to be automatically out of community of property. Joint estate under these marriages automatically fell under the administration of the husband by virtue of his marital power. However, the marital power vested in men in marriages out of community of property (the prevailing marriage union in Zimbabwe) can be seen to marginalise women married under this arrangement.

**Figure 2: Organisational Framework for Land Survey and Registration in Zimbabwe**



Section 15 of *The Deeds Registries Act* provides that a married woman incapacitated by her marital status (and this presumably applies to those married in community of property) requires the assistance of her husband in executing any deed or document. This provision has the effect of limiting the ease with which certain women can participate in land transactions.

The Act does stipulate that such women can acquire property without the assistance of her 'husbands' by submitting an application to the Deeds Registry.

However, other legislation seeks to protect or reinforce women's rights in land and property. The *Immovable Property (Prevention of Discrimination) Act (Chapter 10:12) 1982*, for example, is aimed at protecting against discrimination on the grounds of race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex of any person or class of persons with regard to the selling or leasing of immovable property.<sup>190</sup> The *Deceased Persons Family Maintenance Act (Chapter 6:03) 1994 (Amended in 1997)* seeks to make provision for a range of beneficiaries, 'from (1) spouses of unregistered customary law marriages; (2) children born out of wedlock who were receiving maintenance; to (3) parents of the deceased who may have been supported by their now deceased child'.<sup>191</sup> The *Matrimonial Causes Act (Chapter 5:13) 1996* provides for matters relating to marriages, dissolution or nullity as well as the division of assets after the dissolution of the marriage.<sup>192</sup> The 1997 amendment of *Administration of Estates Amendment Act (Chapter 6:01)* can be described as a milestone for customary law marriages. Prior to this Act only the first-born son could inherit the estate of his deceased father. The widowed spouse was considered a tenant on the property together with any other children. Under the 1997 amendment, the spouse of a deceased person has specified rights to the immovable and movable estate.

---

<sup>190</sup> Section 12(b) of this law prohibits giving advantage to, or discriminating against, a party as a result of conditions, terms or restrictions upon such sale or the disposition of property. Section 12(4) refers to discrimination in the granting of finance in respect of immovable property. No employee or agent of financial organisations shall, on the grounds of the race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex of any person:

- a) refuse to grant to such a person a loan or other financial assistance for the acquisition, hire, construction, maintenance or repair of any immovable property.
- b) or fix in respect of a loan or other financial assistance granted or offered to such a person for the acquisition, hire, construction, maintenance or repair of any immovable property terms and conditions less favourable than those fixed in respect of any other class of persons.

<sup>191</sup> Under this Law, any surviving spouse of the deceased has the right to occupy any immovable property, which the deceased had the right to occupy, and which the surviving spouse was occupying immediately before the death of the deceased. The Act protects this right from laws that make provisions that are to the contrary (while protecting the rights of any existing mortgagors, for example, landlords.) This is a significant law in the face of the very frequent dispossessions and evictions of widows (and very rarely widowers) after the death of a spouse.

<sup>192</sup> Upon the dissolution of a marriage, a spouse holding property that is considered co-owned by the court is asked to make such payments or transfer as specified, or transfer to the trustee powers previously held by the spouse personally. However, with property proven to have been owned by the spouse before the commencement of the marriage is not necessarily shared with the other spouse upon the dissolution of the marriage. In making the decision on the division of assets, the court takes consideration of such factors as:

- a) Income earning capacity of both the spouses as well as their needs expenses now and in the foreseeable future.
- b) The standards of living of the family including the manner in which the child was being educated as well as future expectations.
- c) The direct and indirect contribution made by both spouses to the family as well as well contributions made in looking after the home, caring for the family, and domestic chores.

#### 4. DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to monitor the rate and means by which farmland in Zimbabwe is transferring to disadvantaged people (non-whites, women) over time, both as a result of private land market transactions and through public leases on state land.

A census survey of deeds transactions (private land market) was conducted for the whole of Zimbabwe for the years 1996 to 2001<sup>193</sup> including only land parcels over 1 hectare in size to exclude primarily residential transfers. The data collected for the survey were obtained from the Harare Deeds Registry (for Mashonaland, Manicaland, and parts of Midlands and Masvingo) and the Bulawayo Deeds Registry (for Matabeleland and parts of Midlands and Masvingo provinces.)<sup>194</sup>

The Registrar of Deeds has records for all registered land/properties and owners in the country at any point in time, and includes changes in landownership that take place. Each Deed of Transfer contains: a) names of new and previous owners; b) when they bought and/or sold the property; c) name of farm and subdivisions transacted; d) size of farm, subdivisions transacted and graphic representation; e) property value at the time of transaction; f) mode of payment used (cash, loan, inheritance or donations); and g) location of parcel (district). Reference was also made to other sources of secondary data including maps and records obtained from the Surveyor General's Department, information acquired from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, and the Ministry of Local Government, Public Construction and National Housing.

Purposive sampling was used to identify all commercial farmland that experienced some sort of permanent transfer for the period 1996 to 2001 drawn from a list comprising more than 4,000 commercial farms. It must be noted that over the years some farms were subdivided into residential or industrial areas; however, these were excluded from the database by filtering all cases involving farms smaller than one hectare. Table 4 shows the resultant sample frame of private land transfers (>1 ha in size) for the years 1996-2001.<sup>195</sup>

**Table 4: Private Land Transfers, Zimbabwe 1996-2001**

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>Total Private Land Transfers</b>	407	373	302	185	127	141

---

<sup>193</sup> Land transactions from the Deeds Registry were tracked from 1996 to 2001 solely for the purpose of synchronizing with parallel studies in South Africa and Namibia to allow for comparisons.

<sup>194</sup> It is important to note that government assisted transactions are not normally recorded with the Deeds Registry, but are kept at the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement.

<sup>195</sup> The Deeds Registries in Harare and Bulawayo processes in excess of 25,000 transactions for properties per year. In the last calendar year, the Deeds Registry processed 28,950 transactions for properties of which, 15,589 were deed of transfers and 13,661 mortgage bonds (Deeds Registry, personal communication).

The final sample of farmland transactions was partitioned into two groups—white and disadvantaged, the latter term referring to people who were historically precluded from the land market by racial segregation, mostly blacks. Within the disadvantaged group, farmland transactions were further stratified according to mode of financing (Government-assisted, private cash, private bonds and non-market transactions) and gender of new owner (male, female, co-owned, and corporate entities).

Public land in Zimbabwe is transferred through two options—direct sale (cash or mortgage) or by lease, usually with an option to purchase. Most direct sales manifest in the Deeds office as Deed of Grant and were identified through a deeds search (as indicated above). However, compared with private deed transfers, public leases are more difficult to track. First, two different Government Ministries—Local Government and Lands and Agriculture—issue these leases. Second, they are never registered at the Deeds office, but rather by the respective Ministry that administers the lease. Third, some lessees may never exercise the option to purchase, and it is only at the stage of purchase or transfer of ownership that the transaction is recorded in the Deeds registry.

Most of the land that has been acquired by Government in the last two decades has either been set aside for resettlement or allocated through lease arrangements. Between 1980 and January 2000, Government acquired land on a willing-seller, willing-buyer basis. However, rather than resettling beneficiaries on isolated and scattered farms, in some cases it has preferred to designate a number of farms to form one ‘large block’ for purposes of planned resettlement. The problem arose over what to do with individual farms it had acquired while waiting for surrounding properties to be acquired. Public leasing was one option adopted by Government. In other instances, where it was determined that resettlement would hamper agricultural productivity, decisions were taken to make an outright sale to beneficiaries on a lease-to-purchase arrangement. As of the September 1998 Joint Government-Donors Conference, Government held farms totalling 223,112 hectares.

Secondary data on public farmland leases and Government land acquisition since 1980 was obtained from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. Data on public leases comprise: a) name of the lessee, b) name of the farm, c) size in hectares; d) value of farm; e) annual lease rental; and d) date of lease agreement commencement and expiry. Similar to the Deeds Registry data, some of the records on public farmland leases did not have information on gender of beneficiaries and these were deduced on the basis of names.

## **5. PRIVATE LAND MARKET REDISTRIBUTION**

Data on the total area of land redistributed for the period 1996 to 2001 were used to calculate the rate of land redistribution for the white and disadvantaged sub-populations in Table 5. The rate of land redistribution is computed as the ratio of land acquired by either group as a

percentage of the total amount of land available for redistribution.<sup>196</sup> The private land market redistributed a peak of 79,502ha (0.5% of the total area of farmland available for redistribution) to the disadvantaged group in 1999, and a peak of 178,153ha (1.2%) to the white farming community in 1996.

**Table 5: Estimated Rate of Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe**

Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
<b>Area of farmland available for redistribution (1980 base year, 000 ha)</b>	15,106.5	15,106.5	15,106.5	15,106.5	15,106.5	15,106.5
<b>Area of land transacted (ha)</b>	237,875	168,467	132,337	166,858	88,432	21,900
<b>Percentage of area redistributed (ha)</b>	1.42	2.32	1.96	0.88	0.61	0.10
<b>Area of farmland acquired by disadvantaged people (ha)</b>	59,722	32,715	24,685	79,502	33,059	9,279
<b>Area of farmland acquired by white people (ha)</b>	178,153	135,752	107,652	87,356	55,373	12,621
<b>Rate of Land Redistribution for disadvantaged people (%)</b>	0.40	0.21	0.16	0.53	0.22	0.06
<b>Rate of Land Redistribution for advantaged people (%)</b>	1.18	0.90	0.71	0.58	0.37	0.08
<b>Cumulative rate of land redistribution for disadvantaged people (%)</b>	0.40	0.61	0.77	1.30	1.52	1.58
<b>Cumulative rate of land redistribution for advantaged people (%)</b>	1.18	2.08	2.79	3.37	3.73	3.81
<b>Total cumulative rate of land redistribution (%)</b>	1.58	2.69	3.56	4.66	5.25	5.39

Over the six-year period, the private land market cumulatively redistributed 1.6% of the total farmland available to people of disadvantaged status, and 3.8% to the white population. In all years under consideration, the private land market redistributed more land to the ‘white’ group than the disadvantaged group. While these amounts are significant, it is important to note that the private land market in Zimbabwe fared poorly relative to South Africa (Lyne and Darroch 2001) and to more developed economies where roughly +/- 5% of the land area is transacted in any given year. Based on this benchmark, the total rate of redistribution ranging from 1.6% in 1996 to 0.1% in 2001 suggests both a very ‘thin’ land market and one that had substantially collapsed by 2001.

<sup>196</sup> Estimated at 15,106,479 hectares in 1980 based on personal communications with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement.

This medium-term secular decline in land transactions can be attributed to a number of factors including, inter alia, economic regress after 1996, severe economic contraction beginning in 2000, and high positive real interest rates between 1996 and 1998 (see Table 6). Real interest rates (nominal interest rate less the inflation rate) began to decline to more reasonable levels by 1999, but by 2001 had sunk to a negative real interest rate of -40.6% which had the effect of curtailing the mobilisation of domestic savings. Combined with compulsory land designations and land invasions, financial institutions had all but closed the door on mortgage financing for farm purchases beginning in 2000.

**Table 6. Macro Economic Indicators**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Inflation rate</b>	<b>Interest rate on working capital</b>	<b>Nominal interest rate</b>	<b>CPI (1995=100)</b>	<b>Real interest rate</b>	<b>Rate of economic growth</b>
	<b>(A)</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>(C)</b>	<b>(D)</b>	<b>(E=C-A)</b>	<b>(F)</b>
<b>1996</b>	21.4	10.8	33.6	121.4	12.2	9.7
<b>1997</b>	18.8	13.3	34.7	144.3	15.9	1.4
<b>1998</b>	31.7	15.8	49.3	190.1	17.6	0.8
<b>1999</b>	58.5	21.8	66.0	301.3	7.5	-4.1
<b>2000</b>	55.9	26.5	68.3	469.6	12.4	-6.8
<b>2001</b>	71.9	10.4	31.3	807.5	-40.6	-7.5 <sup>197</sup>

Source: IMF 2002.

Table 7 provides data on characteristics of farmland acquired by white and disadvantaged owners between 1996 and 2001. T-values (at the 5% significance level) in the table test for statistical differences between white and disadvantaged groups; in addition, t-tests were calculated for the same group across time (not reported in Table 7.) For most periods, the mean area of farms acquired by the disadvantaged group is lower than that of white owners. White owned farms paid higher weighted land price than the disadvantaged group from 1996 to 1998, but this trend reversed after 1999 when real farm prices for white owned farms began to decline precipitously. While black owned farms also experienced declines in real farm prices after 1997, the decline was less severe than for the white farm community.

---

<sup>197</sup> Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe personal communication for 2001 rate of economic growth figure.

**Table 7: Characteristics of Farmland Acquired by White and Disadvantaged Owners in Zimbabwe, 1996 to 2001 at Constant 2000 Prices (2000=100)**

Farm characteristic	White	Disadvantaged	t-value
Mean Farm Area (Ha)	1996 694 n=260	406 n=147	
	1997 1,089 n=280	346 n=93	
	1998 673 n=218	294 n=84	
	1999 651 n=83	779 n=102	0.96
	2000 932 n=63	636 n=52	-1.41
	2001 229.5 n=55	107 n=87	-2.23
Mean Farm Price (Z\$ '000 000)	1996 4,033,454 n=247	2,219,697 n=132	
	1997 10,757,905 n=280	2,912,973 n=87	
	1998 5,220,830 n=218	2,187,655 n=72	
	1999 2,952,887 n=71	3,197,920 n=81	-0.54
	2000 2,558,621 n=57	2,695,842 n=41	-0.23
	2001 371,455 n=55	608,960 n=66	-1.33
Weighted Land Price (Z\$/Ha)	1996 5,651 n=247	6,020 n=132	
	1997 9,883 n=280	8,140 n=87	
	1998 7,761 n=218	6,413 n=72	
	1999 3,880 n=71	3,939 n=81	
	2000 2,483 n=57	3,973 n=41	
	2001 1,618 n=47	4,331 n=66	
Weighted Land Price (Z\$/Ha) 1996-2001	5,213	4,819	

Under more normal circumstances, land quality (measured by the weighted land price, would appear to be slightly higher for the white group over the entire period based on the six-year average. However, the macroeconomic instability observed during this period combined with Government gazetting of white owned farms and the land invasions, probably also had the effect of dampening demand by whites for farmland and their 'willingness to pay'.

Since independence, various modes of land redistribution have resulted from changes in policy. Government-assisted land acquisition (based on a willing-seller, willing-buyer basis) and resettlement dominated the land reform landscape from 1980 to 1992. In the first four years after independence, communities played a leading role in land identification through occupation of underused or unutilised land, after which, Government moved in to acquire the land at market prices. This approach re-emerged again in 1998 as landless people and war veterans occupied many farms gazetted for resettlement (but so far without compensation being paid). Complementary models of market-led redistribution, whereby a public grant is provided to beneficiaries for land purchase and resettlement costs, and land acquisition and resettlement is defined by beneficiary needs and interests (with assistance from the private sector) was discussed at the 1998 conference. However this approach never took off as Government opted instead for compulsory acquisition. Most recently, following the amendment of Land Acquisition Act of 1992, Government has turned to compulsory acquisition, whereby the state only pays for land improvements. Outside these state centred approaches, land redistribution has been occurring through private land transfers.

Land transactions were stratified according to four modes as illustrated in Table 8: private mortgage, private cash, Government-assisted, and non-market transactions. Private cash transactions include those transfers financed with savings and personal cash. Private mortgage land transfers refer to financing with private bonds from financial institutions. Non-market transactions comprise mainly inheritances and donations. Government-assisted transactions include land transfers whereby Government acquires the land (or title deed) either on a willing-seller, willing-buyer basis or through compulsory acquisition.

Private cash transactions dominated the period 1996 to 2001 both in terms of number of transactions and total market value of land transacted. For the disadvantaged group, 333 out of a total of 554 transactions involving Z\$686.2 million (in constant 2000 prices) were transacted over the six-year period. For the white farming group, 471 out of 784 transactions involved cash purchases totalling Z\$1,674.7 million. Private bonds financed 131 transactions (Z\$385.4 million) and 217 transactions (Z\$1,140.1 million) respectively for the disadvantaged and white groups. By comparison, Government-assisted transactions and non-market transactions represented a very small to small contribution whether measured in terms of number of transactions, area transacted, or total value of land transferred.

**Table 8: Characteristics of Farmland by Mode of Redistribution in Zimbabwe, 1996 to 2001 at Constant 2000 Prices (2000=100)**

Farm characteristic	Disadvantaged						Whites				
	Year	Govt Assisted	Private mortgage	Private cash	Private non-market	Total	Govt Assisted	Private mortgage	Private cash	Private non-market	Total
Number of transactions	1996	0	58	74	14	146	0	79	110	25	214
	1997	0	34	53	4	91	0	78	108	9	195
	1998	0	23	49	4	76	0	37	98	16	151
	1999	1	8	72	21	102	0	15	91	6	112
	2000	2	7	32	11	52	0	7	45	5	57
	2001	20	1	53	13	87	0	1	19	33	55
	Total	23	131	333	67	554	0	217	471	94	784
Total area of land (Ha)	1996	0	34,638	14,042	11,042	59,722	0	72,051	85,229	20,873	1,781,548
	1997	0	11,706	19,430	1,419	32,554	0	66,683	64,414	4,653	135,752
	1998	0	2,785	21,776	62	24,623	0	32,711	64,993	9,946	107,651
	1999	343	8,906	56,508	11,176	76,933	0	13,190	71,307	2,858	87,356
	2000	1,811	4,142	21,866	5,240	33,059	0	6,456	46,107	2,808	55,373
	2001	2,486	10	5,476	1,037	9,279	0	544	4,841	4,953	12,620
	Total	4,640	62,187	139,368	29,976	236,171	0	191,639	336,895	46,094	576,909
Total market value of Land (000 ZW\$ )	1996	0	134,955.5	157,837.0		292,792.5	0	287,589.8	378,607.4		666,197.2
	1997	0	122,072.9	131,355.8		253,428.6	0	535,707.3	371,074.5		906,781.8
	1998	0	70,638.9	868,723.0		157,511.2	0	237,359.0	371,592.2		608,951.2
	1999	492.5	37,102.6	221,436.4		259,031.5	0	62,064.8	264,264.5		326,329.3
	2000	1,260.0	20,570.0	88,699.5		110,529.5	0	15,960.0	125,150.3		141,110.3
	2001	1,787.2	17,744.2	37,860.5		57,391.9	0	1,453.5	164,000.0		165,851.2
	Total	3,539.7	385,339.8	686,201.0		1,073,293.3	0	1,140,134.4	1,674,688.9		2,815,221.0
Mean Area of farms (Ha)		138	459	380	399		0	876	664	499	
Weighted farmland price 1996-2001 (ZW\$/Ha)		762	6,196	4,294			0	5,949	4,971		

**Table 9: Gender Characteristics, Disadvantaged**

Year	Number of transactions			Total area of farmland (ha)			Market value ('000 ZW\$)			Weighted land price (ZW\$/ha)		
	Male	Female	Corp	Male	Female	Corp	Male	Female	Corp	Male	Female	Corp
1996	51	53	34	12,585	6,294	28,715	70,224.5	55,959.4	140,646.1	5,561	8,896	4,875
1997	47	36	25	12,676	4,642	14,968	125,403.6	50,019.7	94,197.1	10,255	10,771	6,280
1998	34	42	21	5,621	5,524	13,952	63,565.2	42,334.4	69,728.5	12,613	7,601	5,017
1999	27	21	53	10,650	11,639	56,870	38,906.8	22,211.8	208,773.0	3,661	1,890	3,692
2000	17	9	24	9,408	4,928	18,722	10,890.0	13,570.0	90,353.5	1,448	2,840	4,807
2001	31	32	22	3,396	4,276	1,606	16,813.4	19,921.0	0,415.7	5,006	4,443	2,588
<b>Total</b>	207	193	179	52,546	37,303	134,832	325,803.5	204,002.3	582,957.5	<i>Average \$6,200</i>	<i>Average \$5,468</i>	<i>Average \$4,323</i>

Over the six years under study, a sharp decline is observed in the share of private bond transactions for both white and disadvantaged populations. While private cash transactions held up relatively well for the white population, cash purchases by blacks had fallen precipitously from the 1996-1999 peak. Based on these data, the growing uncertainty surrounding land invasions and Government gazetting of farms from 1999 onward had substantially undermined the importance of private cash transactions and mortgage financing, particularly for black Zimbabweans who found their savings depleted by economic regress and their access to bond financing halted in face of banks reluctant to finance farm purchases.

Names in the Deeds Registry records were reviewed and classified according to category of ownership—i.e., corporate entities (e.g., companies, trusts, and communal property associations), males, females and co-owned farms. In cases where land was transferred to a corporate entity, a visit to the company registry revealed names of the directors that were used to categorise the entity as disadvantaged (less than half the directors being whites males or females) or otherwise. Female owners in the disadvantaged group included those owned solely by a female(s) or co-owned (male & female/husband and wife), while for the white group there is a separate co-ownership category mainly composed of husband and wife. The co-ownership category was combined with the female category for the disadvantaged group because the number of transactions were very few.

A review of the data in Table 9 and Annex A reveals that while female transactions are important, transactions tend to be dominated by males and corporations in terms of both area and market value transacted. Over the six-year period, the quality of land (as measured by the weighted land price) acquired by women tends to be equivalent to that acquired by men and corporations with considerable year to year variation. Land transactions by whites tend to be even more heavily dominated by corporations, a deliberate move to both increase access to credit from financial institutions, and to help minimise the risk of land loss. Overall, within

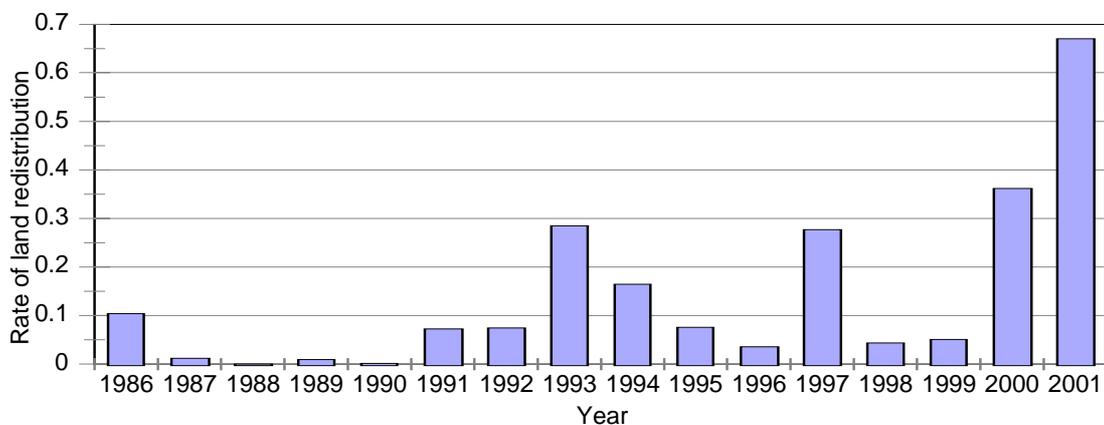
the disadvantaged (advantaged) group, women represented 33.3% (16.3%) of transactions, 16.6% (11.9%) of total area transacted, and 17.8% (7.0%) of market value.

Mode of ownership was also compared with mode of financing. Based on the six years of data combined, within the disadvantaged group, Government-assisted transfers are dominated by corporate ownership, private mortgages and private cash transactions by male and corporate ownership, and non-market transactions by female ownership. However, within the white only category, corporate ownership tends to dominate all modes of payment.

## 6. PUBLIC LAND MARKET

Similar to data on private land transactions, the rate of land redistribution was calculated for the data obtained from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement on public land leases. Overall, public land leases redistributed 338,041ha (2.23% of the total land available for redistribution) during the period 1986 to 2001, compared with 3,494,129ha distributed through the private market in the six year period from 1996 to 2001. Even when the two sectors are combined the rate of land redistribution still falls short of the +/-5% norm in developed land markets. The rate of redistribution in public land leases market averaged 0.14% over the sixteen-year period (see Figure 3 and Table 10.)

**Figure 3: Rate of Land Redistribution of Public Land Market, Zimbabwe 1986-2001**



The data in Figure 3 and Table 10 also show that the rate of land redistribution accelerated in 2000 and 2001. Most of the land being leased was acquired in the 1990s and would not include land expropriated since February 2000.<sup>198</sup> After 1998, Government parted ways with

<sup>198</sup> These expropriations from 2000 to the present fed fast track land reform, but researchers stayed clear of these data due to political sensitivities. Recent data show that most of the land government is acquiring is being used to augment small-scale commercial farms (model 2) and the resettlement areas. Figures recently released by government (*The Herald*, 10 December 2002) indicate that about 50,000 new small scale commercial farms

the international community, and through fast track, began to increase its compulsory acquisitions of land, and in addition, accelerated the leasing of land to demonstrate ‘action’ on the ground. Government also felt compelled to deliver land in response to very real and significant pressure for land from people, particularly in the run up to the 2002 elections. Unfortunately, due to Deeds and Surveys legislation, expropriated land does not show up as a transfer at the Deeds office. Instead, notations are made on compilation charts at the Surveyor General’s office where it is cancelled as private property and designated as State land. Land title issued on a lease-to-purchase basis would eventually show up on the deeds register once again, but according to Government policy the title deed is not issued until full payment is made to Government and development conditions set out in the lease are met in full. In the current environment where the private mortgage sector has collapsed, one would not expect an upswelling in individual registrations any time soon.

**Table 10: Characteristics of Farmland Leased to Disadvantaged Owners by Government, Zimbabwe 1986-2001 (constant 2000 prices)**

Year	Cases	Farmland area (mean ha)	Total area (ha)	Land available for redistribution (%)	Market value (mean ZW\$)	Total value (000 ZW\$)	Weighted land price (ZW\$/ha)
1986	12	1,315	15,779	0.104	211,132	2,533.6	330
1987	3	600	1,800	0.012	131,490	394.5	568
1988	0	0	0	0.000	0	0	0
1989	2	734	1,468	0.010	907,551	1,815.1	1,236
1990	2	124	249	0.002	26,188	52.4	211
1991	6	1,815	10,887	0.072	39,268	235.6	22
1992	9	1,246	11,217	0.074	32,326	290.9	26
1993	34	1,265	43,008	0.285	62,801	2,135.2	84
1994	10	2,482	24,823	0.164	62,483	624.8	102
1995	24	477	11,453	0.076	293,212	7,037.1	614
1996	4	1,336	5,343	0.035	75,587	303.4	57
1997	78	537	41,901	0.277	2,595,216	200,000.0	477
1998	20	331	6,626	0.044	4,028,475	81,000.0	12,160
1999	13	586	7,619	0.050	4,004,097	52,053.3	6,832
2000	68	804	54,695	0.362	1,963,249	133,500.9	2,441
2001	69	1,466	101,174	0.670	923,376.3	63,712.9	630
Total	354		338,041	2.238	15,356,451	545,689.8	1,614

Also as seen in Table 10, the size of farms redistributed through issuances of public leases was relatively larger than those transacted through the private land market. The weighted land price per hectare from 1998 onward is roughly equivalent to that of private land market

---

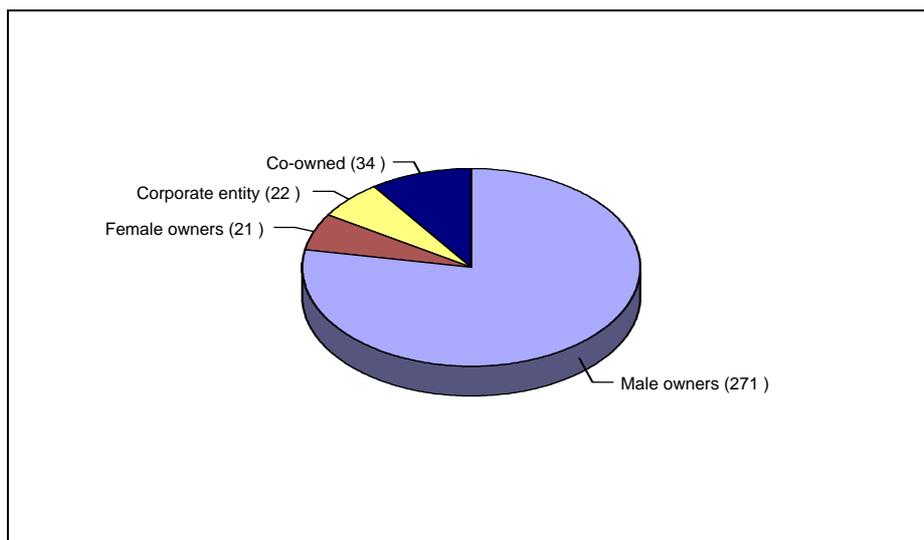
were allocated under fast track resettlement (parcel sizes ranging 200-500ha) and 300,000 smallholders (plot sizes ranging between 10-15ha).

transactions. Land prices (in constant 2000 prices) declined from ZW\$12,160/ha in 1998 to ZW\$630 by 2001. While it's possible that the public leasing market was hit by macroeconomic instability in ways similar to that described for the private land market, it is also probable that Government was subsidising land prices for public leases during this period to help promote the participation of the disadvantaged group.

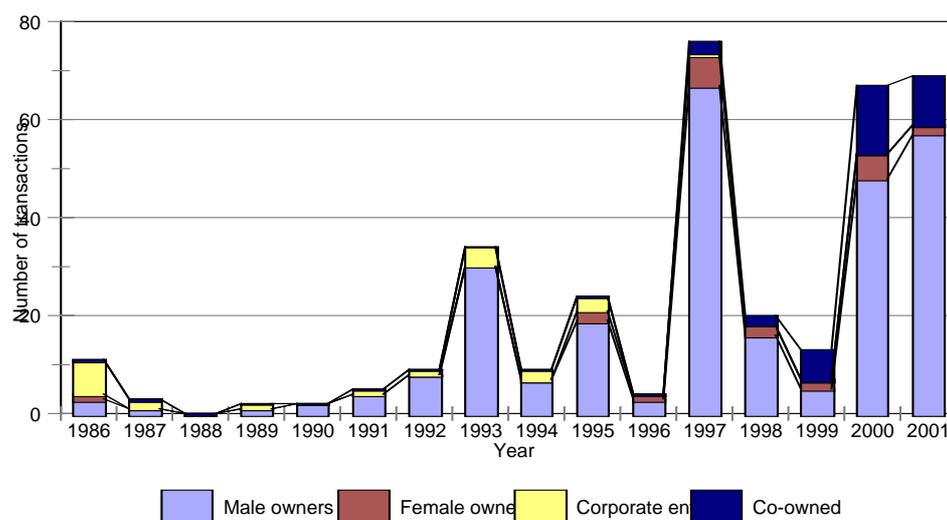
Data on public land leases did not contain information on gender of beneficiaries except in few cases, hence gender had to be deduced solely on the basis of names—male, female, corporate entities and co-owned (husband and wife) categories. The majority of beneficiaries under the public leasing program were males, accounting for 76% of all transactions, while females as sole owners were just under 6% (Figure 4.) Women also benefited as joint lessees with their husbands which accounted for only 34 transactions. When gender is disaggregated it is disheartening to note that during the period 1987 to 1994, not a single female benefited from obtaining a public land lease as shown in Figure 5. Access to land is still heavily biased towards males, both in terms of number of transactions, and the total area and market value of farmland redistributed.

Since males dominated the transactions of public leases, it follows that the largest area was leased out to males than all other categories. During the 16-year period, 238,166ha or 75% of land redistributed through Government leases was redistributed to males. During the early years of independence, Government policy made it very difficult for females to have title to land. This is clearly reflected in public land market, where no single female benefited from the Government farmland-leasing programme between 1987 and 1994. The public land market redistributed minimal quantities of land in the 1980s, below 5,000ha per year.

**Figure 4: Distribution of Public Land Leases by Gender, Zimbabwe 1986-2001**



**Figure 5: Farmland Leased by Owner Category, Zimbabwe 1986-2001**



## 7. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS

One should not discount the achievements that Government has made in land redistribution since independence (excluding fast track). While there is not always agreement with Government policy and choice on issues of compensation, or the cost and effectiveness of state administered land acquisition and resettlement, a large number of beneficiaries in Zimbabwe today have land and livelihoods as a result of Government-assisted land reform. Unfortunately, these achievements have been offset by a number of state failures that continue to hamstring the livelihoods of small rural producers in present day Zimbabwe: limited and insecure land rights held by beneficiaries; slow progress in individualisation and title deed registration when title is wanted by beneficiaries; maintenance of outdated economic thresholds that constrain land subdivisions; and lack of affirmative action in targeting women and speeding the process of title transfer to them.

The problem is not always that Government is insensitive to these concerns and has purposefully chosen the wrong land policy path. The more immediate problem, is that the Government of Zimbabwe has adhered to a policy of state-administered land reform, heavily regulated land markets, and centralised Government decision-making against the backdrop of fiscal crisis and lack of Government wherewithal to implement the policy choices it makes.

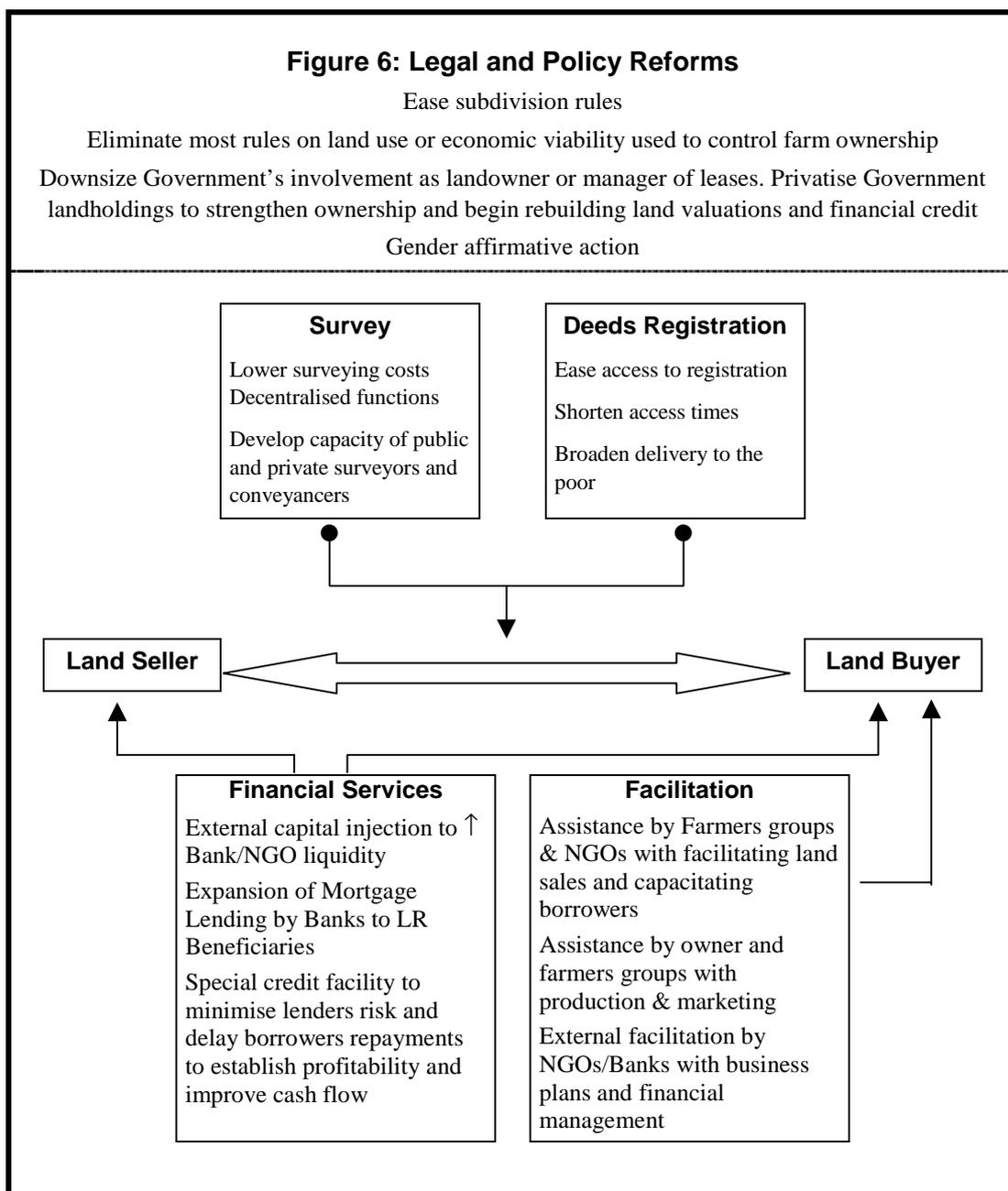
This chapter does not propose sidelining Government in the land reform policy debate. Rather it seeks to redirect Government's energies and focus toward land policy solutions that help strengthen the private land market's role in redistributing land to black beneficiaries. It is important to note that while Government resettlement programs averaged around 85,000 hectares per year from 1984 to 2001, the private land market had redistributed between 25,000-80,000 hectares per year between 1996 and 1999 before the collapse of the land market. While this might seem to depict the private land market as a 'small' contributor to

land reform, it is also important to note that the private land market in the late nineties collapsed due to the Government's policy of fast track land reform, as have land valuations and commercial farmland financings in rural areas. Unfortunately, since 1999 the private land market for both 'black' and 'white' farmers has all but collapsed, as have the financial markets used to help finance these land transfers.

Might this situation be reversed? The answer is, 'Yes', but with the caveat that Government's approach to private land markets needs to change. The data in this chapter show that there are indeed white commercial farmers who are willing to sell land to black farmers in the private land market. Rather than too few 'prospective' black land buyers to purchase land, the problem instead is expensive land surveying, long processing times, subdivision constraints, lack of decentralised land delivery services, a collapse of rural financial markets, and gender discrimination that make land delivery services 'unaffordable' in terms of time and opportunity costs, if not direct fees.

Hence one might anticipate a policy solution (see Figure 6) that makes land survey and deeds registration more affordable and accessible, but these outcomes alone would not likely reaccelerate land transfers or restore land valuations. In addition, there is need to give greater policy focus to strengthening the integration between land and capital markets. The current situation sees prospective land buyers having to turn to individual savings and cash holdings for land purchases which act to slow demand, while the financial sector is considered risky in light of macroeconomic instability, uncertain property rights in land, and weak Government resolve in face of land encroachment. Should adequate land and financial institutions be restored, one could imagine a situation where the financial sector could play a leading role in expanding long term mortgages to enable and facilitate land purchases, but lenders are likely to shy away from this role unless their risk is ensured through, for example, donor injection of capital, and donor underwriting of risk (at least until macroeconomic stability is restored).

Landholders will not likely accelerate their demand for land without credit facilitation to offset expectations of weak profitability and cash flow problems at least in the early years of landownership. As observed by Lyne and Darroch (2001) for South Africa, it is possible to design special credit facilities to achieve these goals, but a close partnership would be needed between Banks and the various arms of Government to facilitate the land market, and donor grant funds would be required to mitigate the effects of economic regress in the short- to intermediate-run.



Government since 1980 has operated as the 'Land Buyer' in Figure 6 and either: a) operated these farms as state farms; b) redistributed the land to beneficiaries in resettlement schemes; or c) leased this land out, sometimes on a lease-to-buy basis. Clearly, the private land market does not always serve the poor and disenfranchised well, thus the need for facilitation by Government, civil society, or the private sector. However, Government's acquisitions on a compulsory basis and its payment of compensation only for improvements is acting to undermine land valuations, the potential collateralisation of land in the eyes of financial institutions, and the viability of the financial sector. A more appropriate policy stance would

be one where compulsory acquisitions are stopped, rights of all current landholders (black and white) are assured, and procedures are developed to determine fair and adequate compensation (with payment by the donor community). But, in addition, there is risk that Government's interventions will undermine the land and financial markets for decades to come by such policies as withholding title until full payment is made, imposing restrictions on land transfers (oftentimes back to Government at the end of the lease period), and depriving smallholders of out right ownership.

The private land market in not the panacea for land reform in Zimbabwe. Yet, neither is it a villain to be ignored at all costs. The Government of Zimbabwe will never have the wherewithal to acquire land (even compulsorily), identify new landholders, and engage in resettlement in ways that assure productivity and sustainable land use management. If fast track land reform has a lesson, it is that land access is given value only if livelihoods are secured. And based on the high rates of absenteeism among the newfound beneficiaries, aggregate production losses, and depletion of economic assets since 2000, a better way is needed. That development approach envisions the need for a stronger Government-private partnership where Government gives to the private sector what the private sector is best able to deliver, and Government retains for itself the public goods that the private sector will not provide. The dimensions of this public good dimension need to be urgently rethought and reconceptualised with a more targeted focus on what Government is best able to deliver.

Public-private market solutions will not always be an easy marriage, but combined, they are stronger than when either is divided or suppressed.

#### **Policy Recommendations: Public Lease Market**

The following options should be implemented to increase tenure security of the leaseholder, restore liquidity and confidence to the financial sector, and facilitate Government's withdrawal from the land market:

1. Where Government has assisted beneficiaries to access land, this should be followed by registration of rights by way of lease with an option to purchase or a certificate of entitlement that is upgradable to full title.
2. In the case of lease to purchase, the leasee should be required to purchase the property with personal cash or financing from a commercial bank to move Government out of the business of financial intermediation.
3. Once the owner has been completed, the title deed should be issued promptly.
4. Banks approached for bond financing will be responsible for evaluating business plans. In the event of foreclosure, the property would revert to the Bank.
5. Sector Ministries and Departments, along with private sector conveyancers, should be assisted to build capacity to survey and register all land now in the name of Government.

## **REFERENCES**

- Bond-Stewart, K. 1986. *Land*, Mambo Press, Gweru.
- Bratton, M. 1994. 'Land Redistribution, 1980-1990'. In *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, edited by Rukuni and Eicher. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications.
- CSO. 1998. *Statistical YearBook 1997*, Harare.

- CFU. 2000. 'Chronological sequence of events relating to Land Reform since Independence'. Unpublished files.
- GOZ. 1979. Lancaster House Constitution, Government Printers, Salisbury.
- GOZ. 1981. *The Married Persons Property Act of 1981*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1982a. *Communal Land Act of 1982*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1982b. *The Immovable Property (Prevention of Discrimination) Act of 1982*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1984a. *The Settled Estates Leasing Act of 1984*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1984b. *Titles Registration and Derelict Lands Act of 1984*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1985a. *Statute Law of Zimbabwe 1985*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1985b. *Land Acquisition Act of 1985*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1990a. *National Land Policy*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1990b. *Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Bill No. 11 of 1990*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1992. *Land Acquisition Act of 1992*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1993. *Land Survey Act of 1993*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1996a. *The Urban Councils Act of 1996*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1996b. *Deeds Registries Act of 1991 (Revised 1996)*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1996c. *Matrimonial Causes Act of 1996*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1996d. *Land Acquisition Act of 1992 (Revised 1996)*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1997a. *The Deceased Persons Family Maintenance Act of 1994 (Amended 1997)*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1997b. *Administration of Estates Amendment Act of 1997*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1998. *Regional, Town and Country Planning Amendment Act of 1998*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1999. *National Land Policy Framework Paper: Discussion Paper*, Supported by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN.
- GOZ. 2000a. *Land Acquisition Amended Act 2000*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 2000b. *Traditional Leaders Act of 2000*, Government Printers, Harare.
- The Herald*. 2002. 'Land acquisition process has economically empowered indigenous people: Zimbabweans reclaim birthright', 10 December, Harare.
- Hlatshwayo, B. 1993. 'Land Expropriation Laws in Zimbabwe and their Compatibility with International Legal Norms'. *Zimbabwe Law Review*. II: 93-94.

- IMF. 2002. *Zimbabwe Statistical Appendix*, IMF Country Report No. 02/126, Washington, D.C.
- Lyne, Mike and Mark Darroch. 2001. *Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: Five Census Surveys of Farmland Transactions, 1997-2001*, BASIS Research Paper.
- Maposa, I. 1995. *Land Reform in Zimbabwe: An Inquiry into the Land Acquisition Act (1992) combined with A Case Study Analysis of the Resettlement Programme*. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe, Harare.
- Mhishi, G. 1995. 'A Critical Analysis of the Resettlement Programme in Zimbabwe'. Resettlement Programme in Zimbabwe: Options for the Future. Workshop held at Harare Sheraton March 1995, Friedrich –Ebert Foundation.
- Msika, J. 2000. 'Status report on the Land Reform and Resettlement in Zimbabwe'. Paper presented at the ZANU (PF) Congress in Harare, 14-16 December 2000.
- Moyo, S. 1998. *Land Acquisition Process in Zimbabwe (1997/98)*, UNDP Resource Centre, Harare.
- Riddell, J.C. and C. Dickerman. 1986. *Country Profiles of Land Tenure Africa 1986*, Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA.
- Roth, Michael and John Bruce. 1994. *Land Tenure, Agrarian Structure and Comparative Land Use Efficiency in Zimbabwe: Options for Land Tenure Reform and Land Redistribution*. Research Paper No. 117. Madison: Land Tenure Center.
- Roth, Michael and Chris Sukume. 2003. *Farm Size Protection, Informal Subdivisions: The Impact of Subdivision Policy on Land Delivery and Security of Property Rights in Zimbabwe*. LTC and CASS Research Paper.
- Rukuni, M. 1994. 'Report on the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems'. Volume One: Main Report presented to the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.
- UNDP. 1998. *Zimbabwe Human Development Report 1998*, UNDP Publishers, Harare.
- World Bank. 1991. *Zimbabwe Agriculture Sector Memorandum, Vol. II: Main Report*, World Bank Publishers.

## ANNEX A. GENDER CHARACTERISTICS, ADVANTAGED

Year	Number of transactions				Total area of farmland (ha)				Market value (ZWS\$ millions)				Weighted land price (ZWS\$/ha)			
	Male	Female	Corp- orate	Co- owned	Male	Female	Corp- orate	Co- owned	Male	Female	Corp- orate	Co- owned	Male	Female	Corp- orate	Co- owned
<b>1996</b>	108	13	52	38	92,743	8,001	36,621	32,683	327	34	249	99	3,521	4,270	6,808	3,029
<b>1997</b>	22	10	151	12	14,519	4,614	110,584	6,035	799	14	78	47	5,506	3,080	7,078	7,824
<b>1998</b>	21	10	112	8	11,634	4,435	88,689	2,892	948	18	528	7	8,153	4,162	5,954	2,661
<b>1999</b>	9	3	96	3	4,528	3,672	78,486	327	190	4.5	303	6	4,201	1,252	3,861	20,445
<b>2000</b>	7	0	47	3	7,291	0	47,702	381	14	0	128	2.3	2,002	0	2,702	6,102
<b>2001</b>	31	12	24	20	4,910	1,406	1,607	2,871	16	5.3	4.1	14	4,951	3,807	2,586	4,831
<b>Total</b>	198	48	482	84	135,624	22,129	363,691	45,188	2,294	75.8	1,290.1	196	<i>average</i> 4,722	<i>average</i> 3,425	<i>average</i> 3,547	<i>average</i> 4,337



—Chapter 8—  
**Seeking Women Land Owners  
and Ownership in Zimbabwe**  
**Case Studies of Women’s Access  
to Land and Land Use**

**Ragan Petrie**

Department of Economics, Georgia State University

**Michael Roth**

Land Tenure Center and Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

**Kizito Mazvimavi**

Ph.D. in Development Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison

*There are limits to which any government can mobilise public resources to fund land acquisition and resettlement costs for land reform, particularly in Zimbabwe’s present day state of economic regress and weak borrowing capacity. Private market initiatives that increase the capacity of the socially disadvantaged (women) to acquire and develop land can be powerful catalysts for land redistribution, but only if the land and financial markets work on their behalf. An analysis of deeds registration in the late 1990s in Zimbabwe reveals a significant percentage of land purchases titled to black African women financed through the private land market. This research based on case study methods seeks to tease out this trend and to better understand the process by which these women are gaining access to land, the sources of financing they use, and the special constraints they encounter. It is found that landowners are not necessarily the operators of the land; while one third of the parcels in the case-study sample are classified as legally female owned, only 36% of these are actually managed by a woman. While men and women share similar problems in securing farm inputs, women in addition are constrained in their capacity to secure land rights through deeds registration and to mobilise credit and farm equipment. A new typology that incorporates de facto landownership and decision-making is proposed and used to analyse the effect of gender constraints on land tenure security and land use management.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

A number of countries in southern Africa, most notably South Africa and Zimbabwe, are seeking to redress the legacy of racially skewed landownership and distribution resulting from the colonial era. Zimbabwe’s war for independence that concluded in 1980 was fought over land, and since that time Government has made significant strides in redistributing land from the former large-scale commercial sector to the socially disenfranchised and poor. Nevertheless, there are limits to which any government can mobilise sufficient public

resources to substantially fund land acquisition and settlement costs, particularly in Zimbabwe's present day state of economic slowdown and weak borrowing capacity. Private market initiatives that increase the capacity of the poor to acquire and develop land through, for example, targeted credit facilities or favourable tax write-offs to the banking sector, can be powerful catalysts for land redistribution, but only if the land and financial markets work on behalf of (not against) the poor.

This chapter seeks to examine the robustness of the private land and financial capital markets in redistributing land to the black population in Zimbabwe, and in particular to women who tend to be the most disenfranchised group in terms of landownership. Over the period 1996-2000 in Zimbabwe, there has been an increase in the number of land purchases titled to women financed through the private market. This trend is positive news for Zimbabwe's land reform because it suggests that women are successfully acquiring land in the land market, and they are doing so through private market mechanisms, not only with Government assistance. This research seeks to deconstruct this finding to better understand the process by which women are gaining access to land, the sources of financing used, and the special constraints they encounter. Does this increase in land titled to women also translate into de facto land management and decision-making? Might a special credit facility be developed using the mortgage bond market to aid women with land purchase and to broaden their access to productive resources? Answers to these questions are intended to help the design of targeted policy interventions that better enable the private land market to deliver land and tenure security to women and improve their ability to access financial markets.

## **2. BACKGROUND<sup>199</sup>**

Women are central to the population, food and environmental nexus in Africa through their various roles in household reproduction, as primary managers of the natural resource base, and as farmers responsible for a very substantial share of food crop production (Cleaver and Schreiber 1994). However, while representing a large and significant group of farmers, women have been relatively neglected in attempts to raise farm productivity. Compared with the support they have received to date, women need better and more targeted technical support, better education and skills training, better access to tools and inputs, and better access to land and to tenure security to raise farm productivity and reduce their vulnerability to technological and economic change (Mehra 1995). A number of studies have documented the ways that women are conferred inadequate property rights through customary tenure systems in southern Africa (Mushunje 2001, Walker 2002). But in addition, Lastarria (1997) describes how with the conversion to private property tenure systems, property rights in land have become concentrated in the hands of those persons (community leaders, male household heads) who successfully exert their ownership right to land, while poor rural women lose the few rights they had and are not generally able to participate fully in the land market.

---

<sup>199</sup> For further information on the constitutional constraint limiting women's access to land in Zimbabwe, and legislation relating to land access and transfers, refer to chapter 6 in this volume.

The problem according to Mushunje, is that

In many colonial governments [in Southern Africa] women were relegated to the periphery in decision-making and also in issues considered to be of importance including access to land. This colonial legacy resulted in an unequal structure of society and also unequal distribution of resources including land ... [an outcome] that has been perpetuated in the post independence era.... Where women have tried to access land, they have met up with ... 'roadblocks' ... [n]otably exclusionary policies and practices. (Mushunje, p. 2)

She goes on to say,

In Zimbabwe ... women may be refused the right to inherit land in the event of the death of a husband or a woman may not [bequeath] ... the land as she wishes as it does not belong to her.... [C]ommunal land is administered under ... the Traditional Leaders Act and the Communal Land Act.... These are enforced within a framework of customary law ... [but] the perceived traditions and customs in many areas ... [are] that women can only access land through their male kin. (ibid., pp. 6, 7)

Women fair little better in accessing resources through land allocations administered by Government:

As long as private land is accessed by one's ability to access resources, women's best choice is [nonetheless] communal tenure... [The Government of] Zimbabwe advertised for people who wanted to be allocated land for small scale commercial farming. Those wishing to be considered needed to be in a position to mobilize resources (e.g., finance) to purchase ... inputs and machinery, to have qualifications in agriculture and to show that they had collateral. As a result of this loaded criterion, many women will be unable to access land under this scheme. (ibid., p. 7)

There is the fallacy however of assuming that all women are landless and poor. Walker (2002) shows for South Africa how small numbers of generally elite women have been able to access land through the market and also successfully invest in land and agricultural production in communal areas. There is evidence that women in Zimbabwe are also slowly gaining individual ownership of land through the private land market, but the process is not without difficulties. According to Ncube et al. (1997), married women are beginning to register residential property in their name alone, without their husband, but they encounter resistance from registry officials obligated by Section 15 of the Deeds Registries Act (see Box 1). In state-owned commercial farming areas, female Master Farmers were unable to acquire small-scale commercial farms in their own right, as the allocation always went to the

man (Land Commission 1994). Women are also gaining sole access to land through Government resettlement programs, but few have legal rights.<sup>200</sup>

Why are women facing such difficulties in landownership? Before independence in 1980 and up to a few years thereafter, women were not legally allowed to own property in their own right. Under customary law, married women are not allowed to own property jointly with their husbands, and widows cannot inherit the estate of the husband because a man's claim to family inheritance takes precedence over a woman's, regardless of the woman's age or seniority in the family. This situation changed with the 1982 Legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA) and the 1985 Matrimonial Causes Act whereby women were recognised to have the right to own property independently of their husbands or fathers. However, while LAMA attempts to amend customary law, in practice, land farmed by husband and wife is usually held in the man's name, and it is the eldest child who inherits, not the wife.

**Box 1: Section 15: Special provisions relating to women, Deeds Registries Act 1996**

'(1) A married woman shall be assisted by her husband in executing any deed or document required or permitted to be –

- registered in any deeds registry; or
- produced in connection with any deed or document referred to in paragraph (a);

if, by virtue of her marriage, she has no legal capacity to execute such deed or document without the assistance of her husband.

(2) A registrar shall record the change of marital status and any consequent change of name of a woman in a deed or document filed in the deeds registry on written application by such woman accompanied by the relevant deed or document and proof to his satisfaction of such change of marital status'.

In 1997, the Administration of Estates Amendment Act removed inheritance laws unfavourable to widows in civil and registered customary marriages. While regarded as a major step toward ending the unequal distribution of inherited assets for women, there have been some anomalies in interpretation of this law. In some court cases, women have lost access to their husband's estate when customary law took precedent over the amended inheritance act (AFROL 2001).

More recent evidence suggests that women are indeed gaining access to land through purchases and inheritances. Using data gathered from the Deed Registry as part of a larger research project on land monitoring,<sup>201</sup> Rugube and Chimedza (2000) and Rugube and Chambati (2001) documented trends in land transfers to male owners, female owners and

---

<sup>200</sup> While over half of the resettled population is female, few women hold resident permits (Jacobs, 2000). One estimate, based on survey data, is that 98% of husbands hold resettlement area permits to farm and graze lands, but only 2% of wives do (Peters and Peters 1998).

<sup>201</sup> This project has monitored land transactions to disadvantaged people in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe from 1996 onwards. These data only include farm land (parcels > 1 hectare in size) to focus on rural land and not urban residential property.

female co-owners, and corporations for the period 1996-2000. Table 1 documents these trends in ownership and shows a slight increase in the percentage of land transactions purchased by female owners and female co-owners, from 27% of all transactions in 1996 to 39% in 1998. The percentage of transactions by female owners and co-owners declined in 1999-2000, but this may not be informative as roughly half of all land sales were to companies, not individuals.<sup>202</sup>

**Table 1: Percentage of Land Transactions to Disadvantaged Buyers<sup>203</sup> by Gender of Owner**

Ownership	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
<b>Male owners</b>	44	45	36	28	35
<b>Female owners or co-owners</b>	27	30	39	20	20
<b>Corporations</b>	29	25	25	52	45

Source: Rugube and Chambati 2001.

**Table 2: Average Size of Landholding (in hectares) of Disadvantaged Buyers by Gender of Owner**

Ownership	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
<b>Male owners</b>	253.8	309.5	168.3	392.9	527.8
<b>Female owners or co-owners</b>	175.0	178.6	158.6	575.0	500.0
<b>Corporations</b>	848.8	652.2	690.5	1075.5	826.1

Source: Rugube and Chambati 2001.

While the percentage of transactions to female owners and co-owners combined<sup>204</sup> declined over the 1999-2000 period, the average size of landholding purchased increased. Table 2 shows that the average landholding size for this group was more or less stable over the period

<sup>202</sup> However, based on a cursory look of the list of directors of each corporation during the 1999-2000 period, only 15% of corporations had at least one director who was female.

<sup>203</sup> A disadvantaged buyer was defined to be one involved in a land transaction that transferred land from a previously advantaged seller (white) to a previously disadvantaged person (black, coloured, or Indian). This also includes land transfers from black males to black females but does not include transfers from black males to black males.

<sup>204</sup> The Rugube and Chimedza (2000) and Rugube and Chambati (2001) database lumped together female and co-owner transactions so some caution is warranted in drawing conclusions about 'female' transactions.

1996-1998, but tripled in size in 1999-2000. This evidence suggests that female/co-owner transactions accounted for a significant percentage of the total in 1996-1998, and thereafter fewer but larger parcels were acquired.

### **3. METHODOLOGY AND FIELD WORK**

A case study approach was chosen to interview landowners who had acquired their land through the private market and had the land registered in either a woman's name, a man's name, or a woman and man's name. Male landowners were included in the sample for comparative purposes. The goal was to interview a sub-sample of the land acquirers on the Deeds Registry, specifically women, to inquire about case acquisition histories. The case study questionnaire itself inquired about the history of land acquisition, land use and management, household demographics, employment, land use decision-making, and any problems the landowner may have encountered in land acquisition and farm operations.

Using the list of land deeds transactions from 1996-2000, a sample of female and male land acquirers was compiled,<sup>205</sup> sampling within female, male, and female-male purchases and within mode of acquisition (cash, loan, and inheritance). The data set as designed (based on information available from Deeds records) provides information on name of land buyer, name of land seller, name of farm purchased, name of administrative district<sup>206</sup>, date of purchase, and mode of acquisition ('cash', 'loan', or 'inheritance' for private transactions, or 'Government' for Government acquisitions). From this information, one can determine whether the land acquirer was disadvantaged (black) or a woman, and the location of the farm with reference to District and surrounding properties indicated on the title or survey diagram. Parcels smaller than 1 hectare were excluded to enable focus on rural and peri-urban properties. Land purchases located greater than 400km from Harare were also excluded because of resource limitations at the time.<sup>207</sup>

The goal to interview a sub-sample of the land acquirers on the Deeds Registry, specifically women, ran into a number of difficulties and forced a reconsideration of the original research design. Table 3 categorises the specific reasons why the original sample of women targeted for the research could not be interviewed.

---

<sup>205</sup> Most of the sample came from the 1996-1998 period. The list of company directors for 1999 and 2000 were obtained after the completion of field work in July 2001.

<sup>206</sup> The name of administrative district at times coincides with the name of closest town, but not always, exacerbating the task of locating farms.

<sup>207</sup> The field work was conducted during two periods, March 2001 and June-July 2001. Severe fuel shortages at this time delayed the commencement of field work in March and hampered long-distance travel to locations far from Harare in both March and June-July.

**Table 3: Reasons for Erosion in Sample Size of Women Listed on registry list in the initial sampling frame**

Reason Not Interviewed	Number
Could not be located, no one in the area knew them	16
Not using land/out of country	3
Refused to be interviewed	5
Land transferred to someone else	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

First, many of the female owners could not be located and/or did not live on the land associated with their name. Over 60% of attempted interviews failed because the owner could not be found. While the information from the Deeds Registry does include the owner's name and the general whereabouts of the parcel, this information was not always sufficiently specific, and does not include an address or telephone number. Numerous attempts to locate owners through the telephone book or by inquiring at the location of the farm proved to be unproductive.

Second, there were a few absentee female landowners, and some female landowners refused to be interviewed. In terms of one absentee landowner, researchers were able to confirm the farm ownership, but the owner was out of the country and had left a relative to manage the farm. In terms of refusals, a few women, when initially contacted by phone, agreed to be interviewed, but when called again were no longer available or did not answer the phone. Also, many potential interviewees expressed scepticism as to the purpose of the study. It is possible that concerns over privacy were an issue. Indeed, the process of land invasions and expropriation of commercial farming properties beginning in 2000 were important factors in their own right, as well as creating considerable 'unease' in rural areas and fear about loss of property.<sup>208</sup>

Third, in a number of cases the person whose name was on the title was not the person using the land. There were cases of land titled to men being exclusively used by women, and land titled to men and women used exclusively by men. This situation might be expected in the event where the landowner was engaged in land rental or sharecropping arrangements. But in many of the cases in this study, the owner had died or departed the country, and the current operator (a woman) was seeking to have the title changed to her name without success.

---

<sup>208</sup> The farm invasions by 'war veterans' began in February 2000 and were substantial up to the parliamentary elections in July 2000, then declined slightly. During the initial period of research in March 2001, the farm invasions were minor and did not affect the field work. But, during the second stage, June-July 2001, the activity had increased considerably. In the interest of the research team's safety, several interviews had to be cancelled or were not pursued.

Because of the difficulties in finding female landowners, the methodology had to be revised to identify women landowners beyond those located on the Deeds Registry. The research design was expanded to include any female farmer who had recently purchased land in the research area. Quite simply, local farmers, agricultural officers, and farmers union officials were asked if they knew of female farmers in the area. While this approach departed from the original research design, it proved effective in locating female farm operators and landholders.

Uncovering these additional female farmers yielded 32 interviews in total. Only 5 of those interviews were with landowners from the Deeds Registry list. Table 4 outlines the reasons why. The main reason is that some landowners had acquired their land prior to 1996, with the earliest acquisition in 1980 and the most recent in 1995. These transactions would have been missed, by definition, in the Rugube-Chimedza database.

**Table 4: Reasons Why Interviewees Were Not on Deeds Registry List**

<b>Reason Not On Deed Registry List</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Pre-1996 purchase</b>	11
<b>Widowed and seeking to get title transferred</b>	5
<b>Unknown reason, should have been on list</b>	4
<b>Lease-to-own</b>	4
<b>Post-2000 purchase</b>	2
<b>Cannot get title transferred</b>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

However, there are three other important reasons as well. First, there were several widowed women whose husbands had died 1-5 years before but still did not have the title transferred to their name because of legal constraints or long turn-around time for deed registration. While these women recently acquired their land, fitting the criteria of the original research design, they had not yet shown up on the Deeds Registry list.<sup>209</sup> Second, there were several landowners who had recently acquired the rights to land and were using the land productively, but these were on a lease-to-buy arrangement, either through a private landowner or a company (see Roth and Sukume 2003, chapter 5 this volume, for a more detailed description of these arrangements). In the case of a private landowner, title and issuance of title deed would be possible only with formal subdivision which Roth and Sukume point out is unlikely. In the case of purchasing land through a company, the land purchaser as shareholder in the company is eligible for a 99-year lease through the company,

---

<sup>209</sup> In our sample, this problem was unique to women and will be explored further in subsequent sections.

but only the company's name would appear on the public register in the Deeds office. Finally, there were several landowners who had purchased their land during the 1996-2000 period and should have appeared on the Deeds Registry list but did not. This discrepancy may be due to inaccurate reporting by the interviewees, inaccurate accounting at the Deed Registry Office, or delayed transfers of title due to local government bureaucracy.<sup>210</sup>

In summary, 67 interviews were attempted. Twenty-five of these interviews, all from the Deed Registry list, did not take place because of the reasons outlined in Table 3. Another 10 (not on the Deeds Registry list) were attempted but could not be completed because of difficulties in finding the farm and local instability due to farm invasions. After expanding the sampling criteria, 32 interviews were completed, with only 5 of them coming from the Deeds Registry list. The remaining 27 were not on the list because of a variety of reasons outlined in Table 4.

#### 4. A NEW TYPOLOGY

One of the stronger themes emerging from the case study research is the difference in legal ownership and de facto land use. In terms of legal classification, when the case study interviews are classified by the gender of the person's name currently on the legal land title,<sup>211</sup> they can be evenly divided into male-titled land, female-titled land, and male and female-titled land as shown in Table 5.<sup>212</sup> However, this does not tell the whole story, as the landowner may not be the land user. Widows use and manage the land while waiting for the land title to be transferred from their husband's name to theirs, and husbands exclusively use and manage land titled to a husband and wife.

**Table 5: Land Title Classification of Case Studies**

Legal Classification	Number
Female titled	10
Male-female titled	11
Male titled	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

---

<sup>210</sup> The Deeds Registry Office computerized most of their records in 1999 but the computerization process is incomplete. Some paper records were not in the electronic database, and some computer records were lost during various system crashes. In addition, according to Sam Zhou (personal communications), local authorities have begun to introduce by-laws that impede the transfer of properties to the deeds office, for example, the requirement for rates (local taxes) and levy clearance certificates that stand to prejudice the new property owners.

<sup>211</sup> This assumes that the lease-to-own cases will go through to legal title as they are currently registered.

<sup>212</sup> Note that this table shows how land titles were distributed given our research strategy, which was specifically designed to seek out female landowners. It does *not* show the distribution in the population.

Instead, Table 6 proposes another classification of the results from the case studies that takes into account who is de facto using and managing the land. Six groups are proposed based on the results of the case studies, ranging from exclusive female ownership, use, and management to exclusive male ownership, use, and management. These are called:

1. *Female Independent*
2. *Female Widowed*
3. *Female Dependent*
4. *Husband and Wife Partnership*
5. *Ostensive Husband and Wife Partnership*
6. *Male Independent.*

Under this typology, there are two significant shifts in classification. First, each legal title classification is now spread among 2 or 3 groups. For example, the 11 cases of land that are legally classified as titled to a husband and wife, are now categorised in two groups: *Husband and Wife Partnership* (9) and *Ostensive Husband and Wife Partnership* (2). Second, landownership that is distinct legally may be in the same group. For example, in the group *Female Widowed*, these are cases of land inherited by women and managed by women, but legally titled to men, women, or both.

**Table 6: Typology of Land Use and Land Management Groups**

	<b>Group</b>	<b>Legal Title</b>	<b>Mode of Acquisition</b>	<b>Management</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>I</b>	Female independent	Female	Cash/loan	Female	4
<b>II</b>	Female widowed	Female, Male, or Joint	Inheritance	Female	7
<b>III</b>	Female dependent	Female or Male	Cash/loan/inherit	Female & Male	5
<b>IV</b>	Husband and wife partnership	Joint	Cash/loan	Joint	9
<b>V</b>	Ostensive husband and wife partnership	Joint	Cash/loan	Male	2
<b>VI</b>	Male independent	Male	Cash/loan	Male	5
	Total				<b>32</b>

Also, note that less than half of single landowners are also the land users. For example, only four of the 10 female-titled cases are classified in the *Female Independent* group, and only five of the 11 male-titled cases are classified in the *Male Independent* group. The remaining single-ownership cases are classified in *Female Widowed* or *Female Dependent*, implying that the legal owner is not the land user.

## 5. TYPOLOGY DESCRIPTION

Table 7 summarises the characteristics of each land use and land management group. Across all typologies, land was acquired between 1981 and 2001, and included both small and large parcel sizes (ranging between 1.5ha to 1040ha). Women tend to be better off, both in terms of income and tenure security, in the groups where land is jointly owned by men and women (typologies IV and V). Land management responsibilities are more firmly in the hands of women when the land is owned solely by them, but access to financial capital is strongest when land is jointly owned by men and women. The six groups are described in more detail below. Note that all case study names have been changed to preserve the confidentiality of the respondents.

**Table 7: Summary of Characteristics of Typology**

	Typology					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
<b>Parcel characteristics</b>						
Size, in hectares (range)	4 – 300	50-1214	44-1040	6-570	11-300	1.5-900
Registered (I=individual or J=joint)	I	I&J	I	J	J	I
Holder (W=women or M=men)	W	W&M	WorM	W&M	W&M	M
<b>Transaction history</b>						
Mode of financing acquisition (cash, loan, inheritance)	C/L	I	C/L/I	C/L	C/L	C/L
Date of acquisition (range)	1981-2001	1981-2001	1982-1998	1988-2001	1986-1996	1983-1998
<b>Socio-economic status of women</b>						
Well-off	~	-	+	++	++	+
Secondary or tertiary educated	++	-	~	++	++	+
Owner resides abroad	+	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Gender</b>						
Woman handles day-to-day management	+++	+++	-	+	---	---
Woman is sole/primary manager	+++	+++	--	--	---	---
Woman is sole/primary decision-maker	+++	+++	--	--	---	---
<b>Socio-economic status</b>						
Tenure Secure	+	~	+	++	+++	+++
Access to financial capital or Equipment secure	~	--	~	+++	+++	++

Codes: +++ strongly so; + somewhat so; ~ mixed; - somewhat not so; --- strongly not so.

## 5.1. Female Independent

These women either have the land currently titled in their name or are taking steps to title the land in their name or purchase it when the lease-to-own option comes along. They are the sole or primary managers of the farm, and the land was purchased by cash or with a private mortgage loan. Three of the four women are either college or professionally educated. Some are well-connected to the Government, and half have lived abroad. One woman is divorced, one single, one widowed, and the last married to a college-educated husband.

## 5.2. Female Widowed

All of these women are widowed, have inherited their land, and are the sole or primary decision-makers on the farm. In some cases, the land is still legally titled to their husbands or in both of their names. In these cases, the women are trying to have the title transferred into their names, but the process is tied up in legal issues, outstanding debt, or family claims to the land. In other cases, the land has been transferred to them, and they hold the land title in their name. Most cases took several years to transfer the title, with one case taking 13 years and another a few months. The former case entailed a lengthy transfer process involving the husband's brother. The latter case seems to have been expedited by social connections.<sup>213</sup>

While the majority of women in the *Female Independent* group are highly educated, the women in the *Female Widowed* group are less educated and they lack experience and training in farm management. Education is not a panacea for financial troubles, as even the educated women in this group face cash-flow problems when their husbands die. Widows also tend to face problems that stem from lack of farm management experience; i.e., they may have worked on the farm with their husbands, but did not engage in the day-to-day decision-making, leaving them with little experience managing a farm or dealing with banks. Indeed,

### Box 2: Female Independent

Tafadzwa settled on her 263ha farm in 1994 when the previous owner was in the process of subdividing his property. She finished paying for the subdivision of her farm in 1995, but she still does not have the title deed and the legal process is ongoing. Tafadzwa is trained as a nurse and spent 16 years working in the U.K. She returned to Zimbabwe 10 years ago and started to look for land where she could farm and raise cattle. She currently grows cotton, paprika, maize, and soybeans and raises 50 head of cattle. She manages the farm herself now, after having trouble with a male farm manager, and has 10 permanent workers and several casual workers. All of her three children are in the U.K. in college, and she consults with her son on issues of livestock management and land sale. She says she faces discrimination because she is a single woman farmer. Other farmers will not rent her their tractors, claiming she will damage them. She has also battled with the local bank to obtain credit to start a market gardening project. The bank said they needed a guarantee and refused to take her two houses in Harare as collateral. However, after her persistence and the passage of time, the bank offered her a loan.

---

<sup>213</sup> Both the husband and wife were well-paid professionals in the community. The husband was the general manager of a bank before he died, and the wife was a public relations officer.

most women in this group cite difficulties in accessing formal credit. Responses included banks that are reluctant to give loans because the title is not in their name, or discrimination on the part of banks because they are women and lack farming experience.

### **Box 3: Female Widowed**

Mrs. Maphosa purchased her 50ha farm with her husband in 1987 with money from his retirement package. Since his death in 1997, she has been trying to transfer the title (in her deceased husband's name) to her name without luck. Before the title could be transferred, her farm first needed to be reassessed for payment of state duty. After the assessment was completed in 2000, she had to sell 10 hectares to pay the duty and her creditors. While the duty has been paid, the title transfer is still pending. She used to operate a large poultry project with her husband but this was abandoned after his death due to cash flow problems. While she needs cash for the farm's operations, she has not applied for a loan because she is old, lacks collateral as security, and is a woman. She initiated a savings scheme with other local women whereby they pool their money and invest in a money market fund. The payoffs were good until the recent downturn in interest rates. She grows maize primarily to feed the chickens, and she is now renovating an old barn into living quarters in hopes of renting it and the chicken coops to someone who might like to start a poultry business.

Mrs. Dlamini inherited her 1,214ha farm in 1995 following the death of her husband. Her husband was a top government official who acquired the land through his contacts. The title is in her name and the names of her two school-aged children but is currently held by the bank as security for a loan. The land is managed by her with the assistance of a manager. She is college educated and gained experience working on her parent's small-scale commercial farm as a youngster. While the farm is now devoted to maize and sorghum, she plans to move into cotton and vegetables next season. She currently faces cash flow problems and difficulties paying off her loan, difficulties which she did not face when her husband was alive. She would like to rent out part of the farm to her white neighbours for cash, but they are reluctant because of the land invasions.

### **5.3. Female Dependent**

In this group, the land is registered in either the man or women's name, but in all cases, a man is involved in farming operations, either as landowner or the decision-maker. The women tend to have high school or tertiary education. The land may have been purchased by cash or loan or may have been inherited. In the cases of land titled in the man's name, the husband and wife may be managing the farm together or the woman may be running or managing the farm alone. If the woman is managing

### **Box 4: Female Dependent**

In 1995, Vimbiso's husband (a general in the military) bought the 1,000ha farm without consulting her. The husband managed the farm until being posted in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1998, after which Vimbiso took over full control of the farm. Had she been given a say, she would have chosen land with mixed farming potential (arable and grazing) rather than solely pasture land. Vimbiso's husband agreed to have her title the farm in her name before he left, but she has not yet been able to do so. There is no debt outstanding on the land, as her husband paid off the loan with his salary. She is now looking for another farm to register in her name, one that is suitable for mixed farming. But the process is difficult. She is fearful of the unknown and the prospect of trying a new land investment seems risky. She is not very familiar with banks and other institutions that might help in land acquisition as her husband took charge of this side of the business. Most resources are in her husband's name and that makes decision-making and obtaining credit difficult.

the land alone, she is also seeking to transfer the title to her name. In the case of land titled in the woman's name, a husband or son is involved in the farm operations. They either participate in decision-making or run the farm exclusively.

#### 5.4. Husband and Wife Partnership

All the case studies classified in this group have their land registered in both the husband and

##### **Box 5: Husband and Wife Partnership**

Mr. and Mrs. Masango settled on their 64ha farm in 1998. The land was initially titled in the husband's name, but a few months ago, they submitted the papers to the lawyer to have the title put in both of their names. Mrs. Masango is a housewife and farmer, and Mr. Masango owns and operates several businesses in town, including commuter taxis and supermarkets, but works on the farm on weekends. They grow tobacco, maize and vegetables, and keep chickens, which they sell to local people in town. They have 12 permanent workers and some casual labourers. Mrs. Masango handles the market gardening and chickens, and Mr. Masango handles the field crops. However, they consult each other on planting, livestock, and financial decisions.

Mr. and Mrs. Dumisani bought their 296ha farm together in 1996 for residential and farming purposes and the farm is titled in both their names. They both have MBAs and run successful businesses in town, including a consulting business and a property management business. They obtained a loan from Agribank to purchase the property and are currently withholding further investments in the property in order to pay off the loan and avoid the high variable-interest payments (currently 25-65%). Neither has farming background, so use of the land has largely been based on trial and error and experimentation. They started out with a dairy, then turned to raising chickens, and are currently raising cattle and maize. They admit they have lost money on their farming experiments but have been able to cover those losses with income from their outside sources. They consult each other on all farm management decisions and plan to increase the cattle herd once their loan is paid off.

wife's name. Some have had the land titled in both names from the initial purchase, others have recently changed the title into both names, and others, on a lease-to-own option, will put both names on the 99-year lease. Also, in all of these cases, both husband and wife, and sometimes elder children, use and manage the farm. Decision-making is joint on most decisions, with the wife often specialising in marketing the crops and the husband in planting. Most of the landowners have tertiary education, and about one third have some college or professional training. Some are retired teachers, and some run the farm in addition to other businesses in town.

#### 5.5. Ostensive Husband and Wife Partnership

On the surface, this group is very similar to the *Husband and Wife Partnership* group. However, they differ in one important area: decision-making. While both groups have the land titled in the husband and wife's name, in this group, the wife's participation in decision-making is non-existent or peripheral. In the two cases in this group, either the wife has no participation in the land use and management decisions, or the wife works on the farm, but her role is more of a farm worker, rather than a landowner. The few cases in this group

may not be surprising since in such decision-making structures it would be more likely that the land would be titled to the husband alone, rather than to both husband and wife.

## 5.6. Male Independent

In this group, the land is male-titled, purchased by cash or loans, and used almost exclusively by the landowner. There were no cases of male inheritance in this sub-sample.<sup>214</sup> If there are women using the land, it is peripheral, with one or two women having small garden plots. Decision-making is made by the male landowner. This differs from the *Female Dependent* group because women in that group have a more active role in farming. Some of the male landowners have only a primary school education, and others have college education. Some have additional businesses on the side, and some are retired school teachers. The most successful farmers in this group are the ones who have access to cash from family or outside businesses, have access to markets to sell their produce, and get farming advice from neighbouring farmers, both white and black. The only male landowner who was struggling had a large (900 ha) farm that he could not farm because of his age, lack of financial help, and small family. He applied to subdivide his land, so that he could sell off part of it, but was refused approval.

## 6. CASE STUDY THEMES

The typology outlined above seeks to identify patterns in de facto land use management that cannot be discerned from legal title classification. Several important case study themes transect these six typologies.

### 6.1. Independence of Landownership, Use, and Access

Landowners are not necessarily the land users, and women and men are accessing and using land independent of the name on the title deed. Indeed, less than half of single, legal landowners, be they male or female, are also the land users. If we wish to understand de facto land management, the legal classification of landownership may be misleading because women and men access and manage land titled to someone else. Women solely manage land still titled to their deceased husbands, and men solely manage land titled to both husband and wife.

Women certainly participate in this private land market, but primarily through their husbands. There are women who both own and manage the land, but this group comprises only 12% of the sample. Most women access land through husband and wife ownership (28% of the sample.) Sole female land use is not as prevalent as the legal classification suggests, however women do access land and participate in land use management decisions through co-ownership with their husband. Indeed, in general, these partnerships are more successful at running their farms because they have a larger economic resource base from which to pull for farm operations. Sole female landowners also have resources from which to draw, but it is the

---

<sup>214</sup> Note that, by the definition of ‘disadvantaged buyer’, land transferred from black men to black men were excluded from the census data research. Therefore, if a son inherited land from his father, it would not be included in the census list and would not have been sought to be interviewed in the original research design.

widowed women who are the most disadvantaged as their resource pool typically dwindled with the death of their husbands.

## 6.2. Problems Unique to Women

While women are gaining inroads in landownership through inheritance, there are certain unique problems faced by women that are not faced by other groups and hamper the productive use of their land. Widows face long periods of time where they manage and use the land but the land title is not in their name. The delay to transfer the title usually takes 2-3 years but can take much longer. During this time, widows find it difficult to access formal credit, as they do not have legal title to use as collateral. Expanding farm operations is difficult, and women are often confined to a low-level of farm productivity. Title transfer delays are due to outstanding debt that needs to be cleared before title can be transferred, a protracted legal process, and family claims to the land. Husbands die and widows find it difficult to mobilize resources to pay debt or legal fees to expedite title transfer. Moreover, relatives of the husband may lay claim to land under customary practice.

Women also tend to lack farm management experience, training, and advice. This problem is most pronounced with widows, but appears also with women in the *Female Dependent* and *Female Independent* category. This problem may stem from low enrolment levels for women in agricultural colleges and training courses. The Food and Agricultural Organization (1995) estimates that women made up only 30% of the student body in agricultural colleges and 26% in universities in 1993. Most women gain farming experience by working with their husbands. However, they learn little of farm management or mobilising resources, such as labour or credit, as these tasks are typically undertaken solely by the husband. Finally, while women could enrol in agricultural extension courses, few do. Peters and Peters (1998) note that the national agricultural office, AGRITEX, does not offer extension services geared towards the special circumstances of women, such as their work burden or lack of access to livestock or credit. Finally, while men spoke of obtaining agricultural advice from neighbouring farmers, both black and white, women did not. This seems to reflect a certain 'thinness' in women's networks when accessing formal markets or seeking farm management advice.<sup>215</sup>

Women's inability to mobilize financial capital and equipment is another recurring theme. Both men and women complained of inadequate financial capital to run their farm operations, but only women said the bank refused them credit because the title is not in their name. Many women said they were refused credit because they were women or that the banks would not authorise a loan without the signature of their husband. Women also tend to have little experience with banks, again, due to farm and business operations being run primarily by

---

<sup>215</sup> This could well be a reflection of cultural factors as well. Even though men and women can comfortably seek advice from people of the same gender, seeking advice across genders is less common. If women, as a group, are less informed about agricultural management, then women seeking advice from other women will not increase women's knowledge of agricultural management.

husbands and lack of knowledge and empowerment to negotiate the banking system. Therefore, when asked where they would go if they needed money for farming operations, many women said they would go to relatives or their husbands. Either it did not occur to women to apply for a loan from a bank or they did not try because they were sure they would be refused. Finally, women also have a more difficult time borrowing or renting farm equipment from neighbouring farmers than do men.

### **6.3. Problems Shared by Men and Women**

While women face unique problems, there are some problems faced by both male and female farmers. Both face financial constraints due to high interest rates. Many landowners complained that they would not borrow money from the bank because they could not afford to pay back the loan. Indeed, many are delaying farm investments so that they can first pay off the loan. Many said they would like to expand their operations, but there was not enough finance available. All farmers face low crop income from export crops and high input costs. When asked if they would rent out or sell part of their land, many said they would but have had difficulties getting subdivision approval for selling or renting out land. Others said they would not rent out their land because they were instead looking for additional land to rent in and expand operations.

### **6.4. Prevalence of Middle Class**

Finally, another broad theme emerging from the case studies is the prevalence of the middle class. That is, most landowners interviewed in this research are not poor. Indeed, most have access to financial resources outside of banks. Many have other successful businesses on the side, and many are multiple property owners, with rental properties in urban areas in addition to the farm. Many have community and social connections that have helped them locate land in the first place and subsequently run a successful farming business. This suggests that the private market is primarily accessible to those who already have the wherewithal to mobilize economic resources, not to those who lack resources to begin with and need land to start accumulating economic wealth.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

This research sought to delve deeper into the recent trend in Zimbabwe of land acquisition through the private land market by women. Using land transfer records from the Deeds Registry for the period 1996-2000, attempts were made to interview disadvantaged female landowners to better understand their land acquisition history, land use, and land management. However, efforts to locate these women by and large proved futile. By modifying the research design, additional women were found using and managing land that were not, as of yet, recorded in the Deeds Registry. These included widowed women who are still trying to change the land title to their names and several cases of women using land on a lease-to-own basis.

While the Deeds Registry is serving a valuable public service in registering rights in land and monitoring the land reform process, women's efforts to obtain title were confounded by a number of problems including land transfers not registered in a timely manner and slow progress of transferring titles. However, the fact that so many women wanted title deeds in their name, but could not, speaks volumes for the benefits from keeping transactions costs to land registry services low for all parties, especially women.

The private land market is redistributing land to non-white populations, but the rate of transfer is still low. According to Rugube and Chambati (2001), on average during the period 1996-2000, only 1.5% of commercial land available for redistribution was actually redistributed to disadvantaged people. Of that redistributed land, for the same period, roughly 86% is being redistributed through private transfers, with the remaining through public mechanisms.<sup>216</sup> While land is getting to the disadvantaged through private mechanisms, the magnitude of the change is small.

Against popular notions that women in Zimbabwe do not own land, the land market data reveal that women are using the Deeds Registry process to strengthen ownership rights. Indeed, the case study research shows that women understand the importance of having land title in their names and are actively seeking title transfer or land purchase. Moreover, many other women are acquiring land through the private market, albeit through informal mechanisms, such as inheritance. But, again, this percentage is small.

Individual female owners and managers still represent a small percentage of all landowners, and women still face problems in acquiring land rights and benefiting from land use. Only 12% of our case studies were single ownership and managed by women. While this percentage is similar to single ownership by men, single female owners face problems mobilising resources for farm production that single male owners do not. Women spend years in limbo while awaiting title transfer from deceased husbands, during which time formal credit is unavailable.

The review of the case studies also revealed that a number of factors, such as influence and education at the time of transfer, were important factors that segregate the haves from the have nots. The private land market is certainly accessible to those with the means but not to those who are still poor.

Can the private land market help complement Government mechanisms in redistributing land? Absolutely. But, the private land market will not be a panacea any time soon until transactions costs in the land market are reduced or purchasing power is increased. This can be done through broadening access to incomes, economic opportunity, and financial capital markets. Even then, women would not be expected to benefit strongly due to provisions in the land policy that discriminate against women's ownership.

---

<sup>216</sup> Note that the percentage of land redistributed to disadvantaged buyers through public mechanisms is underestimated for two reasons; land may be purchased or transferred by the government and not picked up by the Deeds Registry; and the estimates do not capture land transferred through land invasions.

Are financial markets sufficiently robust to stimulate land purchases? Under the current economic environment in Zimbabwe, profitability is too low and uncertain to maintain land values, in particular for those that are disadvantaged in input and product markets. In the short-run, emphasis needs to be placed on a land policy that broadens access of the poor to secure land rights. In the long-run, additional measures aimed at increasing the profitability of the agricultural sector will be required to both broaden wealth accumulation by potential land buyers and lower risk aversion by private banks.

## REFERENCES

- AFROL. 2001. AFROL Gender Profiles: Zimbabwe, [www.afrol.com](http://www.afrol.com).
- Cleaver, Kevin M. and Gotz A. Schreiber. 1994. *Reversing the Spiral: The Population, Agriculture, and Environment Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Food and Agricultural Organization. 1995. 'Women, Agriculture, and Rural Development: a Synthesis Report of the Africa Region'. Rome, Italy.
- Government of Zimbabwe, Legal Age of Majority Act 1982.
- Government of Zimbabwe, Matrimonial Causes Act 1985.
- Government of Zimbabwe, Deeds Registries Act 1996.
- Jacobs, Susie. 2000. 'Zimbabwe: Why Land Reform is a Gender Issue'. *Sociological Research Online* 5(2) <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/5/2/jacobs.html>.
- Land Commission. 1994. Report of the Commission of Inquiry Into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems, Chairman M. Rukuni, Government Printers, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Lastarria-Cornhiel, Susana. 1997. 'Impact of Privatization on Gender and Property Rights in Africa'. *World Development* 25(8): 1317-1333.
- Mehra, Rekha. 1995. 'Raising Agricultural Productivity: The Role of Women Farmers'. In *Agricultural Competitiveness: Market Forces and Policy Choice*, edited by G.H. Peters and Douglas D. Hedley, pp. 387-402. Dartmouth: International Association of Agricultural Economists.
- Mushunje, Mildred. 2001. 'Land Administration: Women's Access to Land in Communal Areas'. Presentation prepared for the National Land Tenure Conference: Finding Solutions, Securing Rights held 26-30 November 2001 at the ICC, Durban.
- Ncube, Welshman, Julie Stewart, Kebokile Dungu-Zvobgo, Beatrice Donzwa, Elizabeth Gwaunza, Joyce Kazembe, Tsitsi Nzira. 1997. 'Paradigms of Exclusion: Women's Access to Resources in Zimbabwe'. *Women and Law in Southern Africa Research Project*. Harare, Zimbabwe.
- Peters, Beverly and John Peters. 1998. 'Women and Land Tenure Dynamics in Pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Post-Colonial Zimbabwe'. *Journal of Public and International Affairs* 9(0): 183-203.

- Roth, Michael and Chris Sukume. 2003. *Farm Size Protection, Informal Subdivisions: The Impact of Subdivision Policy on Land Delivery and Security of Property Rights in Zimbabwe*. LTC and CASS Research Paper.
- Rugube, Lovemore and Ruvimbo Chimedza. 2000. *Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe: Census Surveys of Farmland Transactions, 1996-1998*. Working Paper, University of Zimbabwe.
- Rugube, Lovemore and Walter Chambati. 2001. *Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe: Five Census Surveys of Farmland Transactions, 1996-2000*. Working Paper, University of Zimbabwe.
- Walker, Cheryl. 2002. 'Ensuring Women's Land Access'. Paper prepared for the World Bank Regional Workshop on Land Issues in Africa and the Middle East held in Kampala, Uganda, 29 April to 2 May 2002.

# LAND REDISTRIBUTION THROUGH PRIVATE LAND MARKETS

## ROLE OF PRIVATE LAND MARKETS IN FINANCING AND ACCELERATING AGRICULTURAL GROWTH

**Ngonidzaishe Murota, Economist**  
Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe, Jewel Bank

### 1. BACKGROUND

The country is undergoing a massive transformation that requires concerted efforts by all stakeholders to manage the process. This transformation is taking place at a time when the economy is on the brink of a recession as macroeconomic fundamentals worsen. While the Zimbabwean economy largely depends on a number of key economic sectors, namely agriculture, manufacturing, mining and tourism, agriculture is by far the most important in the country. The forward and backward linkages to the rest of the domestic economy, to international trade and with poverty alleviation are very important. A bad year for agriculture due to drought or other natural calamities has extremely adverse effects on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth, living standards of the population and the balance of payments position. Revival of the agricultural sector is the key to economic revival, rebuilding prosperity and providing hope in our drive towards self-sustenance and livelihood.

Zimbabwe's agricultural sector over the years has been dominated by two major players, commercial farmers and peasant farmers in communal areas. Despite being situated in poor, sandy, rocky soils in semi-arid regions, which make agricultural production difficult, communal farmers produced 70% of the country's annual staple maize crop. Approximately 30% of the maize comes from the commercial sector, which includes some indigenous blacks, numbering about 700 compared to the 4,300 whites in that sector. In addition to this,

Government's Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA), also produces maize at a large scale.

## **2. LAND POLICY**

Zimbabwe inherited a number of statutes effectively constituting land policies from the colonial administration. The Zimbabwean Government has therefore not drafted completely new legislation, but has only been making policy reforms.

The objectives for land policy reform include, political, economic, social, cultural, environmental protection and self-sustainability, among others. Land policy incorporates issues of land tenure, land redistribution, land use and land planning. As such the overall objective of the national land policy is to provide an enabling framework for the development and implementation of land-related legislation in an integrated and harmonious manner. In as far as this is concerned, the specific objectives depend on the prevailing and historical circumstances. In our case, the post-independence Government implemented the land reform program as a means of meeting basic needs and eliminating poverty by providing a resource to enable the poor, landless and aspirant farmers to improve their quality of life. The program contributes to building the economy through providing a resource and asset base that can generate employment and income, particularly in rural areas. Land reform holds the potential for improving productivity and equity, given the large tracts of unutilized or under-utilized land on large farms, the inverse relationship between farm size and productivity.

However, the provision of land and tenure security alone is not sufficient to guarantee an improvement of life for land reform beneficiaries. To ensure the productive use of land, the program should include settlement support for land development and capacity building to enable the beneficiaries to maximize the benefits gained out of securing access to land. To this end, the role of both public and private land markets becomes imperative.

## **3. ROLE OF PRIVATE LAND MARKETS**

In theory and in practice, the main function of land markets is to facilitate the flow of land from one economic agent to another. Land market activities include buying and selling of land, leasing, surveying among others.

Before embarking on the current fast track land reform program, the private land market had facilitated the transfer of land from large-scale commercial farmers to black farmers and this has been done through the provision of mortgage finance. Since 1999, the number of private market assisted transfers has been declining and the role of the private market has generally been changing. To fully realize, improve and consolidate the role of private land markets, there is need to ensure that the agrarian reform program is fully instituted and adequately supported. To achieve the objectives of the land reform programme, there is need to revamp the role of the private market. However, the current legislation supporting the land reform provides obstacles to the development of the land markets in the country. These include:

- administrative restrictions on land transactions
- uncertain property rights as there are many political and legal debates surrounding landownership and lack of enforcement mechanisms
- legal restriction on potential owner or user—there is a requirement that owner must cultivate the land or lose ownership

To revamp the land market there is need to:

- complete the processes of formalising private ownership rights to agricultural land and implement a system that protects private land rights. Registration of ownership rights in the real estate register accelerates the development of land markets. Widespread financing of land transactions depends on reliable land market procedures and reasonable transactions costs
- support the development of the private land market and its institutions including the legal profession, agricultural insurance and appraisal system

#### **Key land policy recommendations**

- Complete the processes of formalising private ownership rights to agricultural land and implement a system that protects private land rights.
- Support the development of the private land market and its institutions including the legal profession, agricultural insurance and appraisal system.

Unless a sound system that protects the rights of private landowners is implemented, a private land market is unlikely to develop. As these institutions develop and public confidence in the real estate register increase, commercial financial institutions will begin financing land transactions on a broader basis, making it easier for farmers to find sources of private capital for investment.

The agrarian reform needs to be well coordinated with other sectors of the economy, including the development of the agro-industry, physical and social infrastructure, transportation, construction and the export industry in general. This therefore calls for the country to ensure that the private land markets, and in particular the financial services sector, are mobilized to support both agrarian reform and related activities. This will no doubt make substantial improvements on unemployment levels, poverty and the spiraling cost of living.

The financial sector has over the years financed agricultural activities in the country even though there has been minimal financial support towards the rural sector. Statistics from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe reveal that loans and advances by both commercial and merchant banks to the agricultural sector, although not categorized by use, rose from about Z\$0.13

billion in 1995 to about Z\$26 billion by July 2002<sup>217</sup>. The marked increase, especially from the year 2000, while attributed partly to increase in input costs accentuated by inflationary pressures in the economy, signifies the growing confidence the financial sector has in the agricultural sector. The reciprocity in relations has been demonstrated by the increase in deposits from the agricultural sector rising from Z\$0.05 billion in 1995 to about Z\$15 billion by July 2002. When the economy registered a robust economic growth of 9.7% in 1996, agriculture grew by more than 15% and the same time the financial sector expanded by about 4%. Such symbiosis needs to be nurtured and consolidated for the benefit of the economy.

It is against this background that financial support should be sought to promote rural investment, strengthen agricultural research and extension services, encourage private sector involvement in agriculture and mitigate risks in agriculture and ensure food security, income and employment for vulnerable groups. Risk mitigating measures include adopting a policy on risk management and improving agriculture insurance.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

Financial support will help increase productivity and reduce risks of the agricultural sector. After the country embarked on the fast track land reform program, the agricultural sector has suffered from low productivity. Closely related to low productivity is the lack of marketing channels to provide incentives for farmers. There is therefore need for financial support to provide critical services such as expanding small-scale horticulture production, strengthening veterinary services, rehabilitating wells in pasture areas, training for cooperatives and improving rural communication links. This will help develop a more market-orientated, efficient and sustainable agricultural sector that will reduce poverty by providing increased income opportunities. Zimbabwe's land reform programme will not jeopardise the country's food security needs, as it is designed to give more land to the people who produce the bulk of the nation's food requirements.

---

<sup>217</sup> Constant Z\$ in 2002 terms.

# LAND REFORM, LAND MARKETS AND FINANCIAL CAPITALISATION OF AGRICULTURE

**Rhodwick Chigumete**

Land Information Services Consultant

## **1. BACKGROUND**

There have been several versions of land reform over the past 23 years of Zimbabwe's history of independence. The most dramatic land reform program, which began in early 2000, has left an indelible mark on Zimbabwe's political economy through the occupation and designation of large-scale commercial agricultural land for resettlement purposes. This reform is meant to be the basis of the National Economic Revival Program (NERP), wherein the Government of Zimbabwe seeks to boost the national economy through a variety of initiatives targeted at improving agricultural activity. This strategy involves the distribution of commercial farmland previously owned by white commercial farmers. These farms produced cash crops such as maize, tobacco, cotton as well as beef, milk and horticultural products.

The Government of Zimbabwe is desirous of a speedy outcome of reforms that empower the indigenous population to engage in agricultural activities and, in turn, lead to viable and sustainable growth. The land is owned by Government and is distributed to those who have indicated a desire to farm and have produced proof of capacity to work the land. The up-take or land occupancy rate by the beneficiaries is reportedly low for a variety of reasons, chief among them, the lack of capacity to undertake commercial farming, the lack of security of tenure and the absence of institutional support for commercial farming that has hitherto been the preserve of commercial farmers. As an example, the recent floatation of agricultural bonds failed to attract support to finance the activities of new farmers.

The most profound effect the land reform programme has had is on trade in land and land rights. The other impact has been the stretching of the capacities of institutions that deliver land, land services and land rights. These inseparable problems appear not to have been solved at policy level, but their impact on the ensuing agrarian reform is critical to the success of land reform and the revival of land markets. This paper futuristically looks at the reforms' impact on land and land markets and how institutions of land delivery, land administration and management can optimise land utilisation by exploring two critical factors that may steer the programme towards its logical and gainful objective.

## **2. TENURE SECURITY AND COLLATERALISATION**

It is correct to say that commercial farmland was a source of working capital and means of wealth creation. This real estate was capable of collateralisation, and many financial

institutions, including the Government, set aside substantial financial resources to finance agriculture with land as collateral. The collateral power of land was predicated on the strong property rights of title to land and whose security allowed access to investment funds. Commercial farming was however, the preserve of a few due to barriers of entry in the form of land costs and improvements. The numbers of land exchanges post-1980 have been low, with ownership skewed in favour of existing landholders.

The current reforms have given possession of land to many indigenous beneficiaries, but they have also created or highlighted institutional problems relating to tenurial arrangements/security for beneficiaries, access to capital for financing agricultural activities, food security and economic growth. The current lease arrangements cannot substitute the title system for landownership, which encourages financial institutions to release investment funds to farmers. The Government should concern itself with providing a 'golden straight jacket' for investment in land through the provision of incentives to prospective players in the agricultural industry. However, if Government provided policy guidance and a secure landholding framework, the private sector and other players could contribute towards the success of the programme through financial intervention, provision of agricultural inputs, support and markets for agricultural produce.

The foregoing is currently not feasible as land is in Government possession much as it was in the hands of the few commercial farmers previously. It is not possible for beneficiaries to

#### **Key land market problems**

- Land is in Government possession, much as it was in the hands of the few commercial farmers
- Insecurity is engendered by land acquisition legislation, which effectively locks out dealings in land
- Reforms are being administered by the political establishment to the exclusion of the private sector
- Financial institutions have withdrawn support in the face of uncertainty

trade in land. The demand for agricultural land by investors has dropped due to the insecurity engendered by land acquisition legislation, effectively locking out dealings in land. The political establishment, to the exclusion of the private sector, currently administers the reforms. This lack of inclusiveness of key players and stakeholders in the formative stage of a key policy change militates against future input and support by important players. Financial institutions that have hitherto supported agricultural activities have withdrawn support in the face of such uncertainty, leaving Government as the sole provider of inputs and other support to resettled farmers. Indeed the financial services sector has balked at supporting the Government initiative for lack of assurances regarding collateral or security resulting in the under-subscription of the agricultural bond floatation. The downstream effect of limited

agricultural activity on the manufacturing sector is devastating leading to the high cost of food products caused by low supply of agricultural output.

### 3. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The large volume of land units has put a strain on the capacity of land and agricultural institutions to provide land administration and management support to agricultural activity. Lack of qualified or experienced personnel, duplication of functions, structural inadequacies and lack of autonomy impact negatively on functions such as land identification, land planning and information, land survey and registration and resettlement. The relevant institutions have remained largely unformatted and unresponsive to the new dispensation. They are housed in different ministries, operate disjointedly, fast losing capacity and institutional memory and are focused on current subsistence and commercial tenures with unstable legislation. Infrastructure in the form of roads and water resources and weak financial resources to support land and agrarian reform renders them ineffective in delivering services to the beneficiaries. The farmlands used to be sources of revenue for local authorities through unit taxes but this appears to have disappeared as old farmers have been replaced.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Institutional capacity constraints</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Large volumes of land units have strained capacity of land and agricultural institutions</li><li>▪ Land identification, land planning and information, land survey and registration and resettlement functions are affected by lack of qualified or experienced staff, duplication of services, structural inadequacies and lack of autonomy and unstable legislation</li><li>▪ Institutions have remained largely, unformatted and unresponsive to the new dispensation and lack coordination and integration</li><li>▪ Delivery of relevant services ineffective due to lack of infrastructure in the form of roads and water resources to support land agrarian reform</li><li>▪ Lack of sources of revenue for local authorities</li></ul>
---

A re-engineering process that will remove the systemic institutional inertia and bring quality, reasonable cost and efficiency to a stable tenure is required. This strategy involves the refocusing of relevant institutions that administer land-related issues and appropriately resource them to deliver land and security of ownership to beneficiaries. This could take the form of the recommended autonomous land board that will be responsible for land identification, facilitation of land markets and monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of Government policies. The existence of such a body will impact on the value addition in the agricultural sector. The Government is party to regional and international protocols that could benefit the local agriculture through the availability of marketing intelligence capacity in the SADC region and beyond.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The removal of the constraints mentioned above, are key to any Government strategy that will see the opening and expansion of land markets. The Government must seriously address issues related to the following areas:

- Financial resourcing of its implementing organs
- Human resource development and retention
- Land information for effective decision-making
- Promotion of investment in land through appropriate legislation and incentives that engender stability, viability and sustainability of the Land Reform Program.

The current lack of trade in land and its derivatives is a direct result of Government policy that can only be rectified through appropriate policy prescriptions that facilitate investment in land and related agricultural activities.

# **A PRACTITIONER'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE REGULATION OF THE SUBDIVISION OF LAND HELD UNDER TITLE**

**Ethel Mlalazi**

Physical Planning, Ministry of Local Government,  
Public Works and National Housing

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Concern has been expressed on the difficulties faced by agricultural landowners that may want to subdivide their pieces of land. It has been suggested that land subdivision regulation has been prescribed and applied by central Government with little regard to reality and actual land use practice. There has been an attack on the rigidity of the system and the delays and frustrations this causes. There has been a particular attack on the criteria adopted for determining subdivision applications, especially the agricultural subdivision criteria. The criterion is said to set standards that are too high and unrealistic for the level of development in Zimbabwe. There thus have been calls to remove the regulations altogether or to subject them to major changes so that they are responsive and relate better to practicalities on the ground.

These calls are not new; they have been here for some time but have become louder as a result of the ongoing Government-led land reform and resettlement programme. It thus becomes very difficult to assess the authenticity and genuineness of some of these submissions. Here, an attempt will be made to respond to some of these concerns by going back to examine the rationale for subdivision regulation, the statutory and institutional arrangements for managing the process, past trends, and the viability question that is always raised. I do not claim objective results based on rigorous scientific inquiry but present a picture as seen by a practitioner who has spent two decades administering these subdivision regulations. An attempt will be made to put the situation into proper perspective and at the same time try to relate the subdivision data presented and analysed in the papers to the actual situation on the ground.

## **2. RATIONALE FOR SUBDIVISION REGULATION**

Regulations concerning the subdivision and consolidation of land held under title are part of the wider planning system on regulation and management of land in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is, by third-world standards, a well-planned country. The planning system has sought to create an environment that is safe, convenient and supports rather than restricts investment and development. The subdivisions and consolidation regulations sought to strike a balance between the need for development and the nature and standards of infrastructure required to

support that development. In order to achieve this balance, a standard was set that no land could be occupied or developed if a minimum level of infrastructure was not provided. In order to enforce this standard, it became a requirement that the Surveyor General could not approve survey diagrams of land or the Registrar of Deeds to register a property title before a subdivision permit was issued by Government through the Department of Physical Planning or the local authority with powers to do so. The standards were also set in order to protect the buyer and the local authority. It made it possible for a buyer to purchase a serviced property ready for development. The farming operations could thus not be delayed because there were no services and the property could be used as collateral to obtain loans.

It has been suggested that such an arrangement is not always pro-development because it excludes other options for land exchange, for example, some form of barter deals. Situations could arise whereby a farmer is poor and cannot therefore meet the relatively low costs of subdivision. In such cases, the poor farmer could be given an opportunity to sell off portions of the farm to raise capital for investment and for the subdivision infrastructure required. There could also be situations whereby the farmer gives responsibility for infrastructural development to the potential buyers. The subdivision regulations have never excluded such options. The system allows for such pre-subdivision arrangements to be made but only safeguards the interests of the property by ensuring that no registration and transfer occurs before certain conditions, especially infrastructure, are met. These are necessary checks and balances when you are dealing with a finite resource like land.

For the local authority, it meant there was no development ahead of infrastructure. The major outcry against 'fast track' today is that development went ahead of infrastructure. The experience with squatter upgrading in urban areas all over the world has shown beyond reasonable doubt that it is easier to provide infrastructure in advance than to try to follow with same afterwards.

The planning system has also been used for other purposes. It is used for distributing scarce resources like water through sharing of water rights among existing properties. Water is allocated according to the needs of each property and when it becomes scarce it is equitably shared among all existing properties. The regulations are also used to ensure safety along main roads. Each property is granted specific access rights that are enforceable by the local authority and these are endorsed in title deeds and cannot be contested. The suggestion that this function can be achieved by local authority plans is not feasible because in the rural areas there are no detailed plans and expertise for the regulation of land. An attempt to prepare them will be more cumbersome than just adhering to the regulations. The plans can be contracted out but once prepared they will have no one to enforce them. Rural District Councils do not have trained and experienced manpower to enforce sophisticated development codes. Zimbabwe has successfully used conditions endorsed on title deeds to create the quality of environment that are the envy of many developing countries.

Subdivision and Consolidation Regulations were also introduced to protect property and interests of the financial sector. People have in the past made attempts to subdivide, register

and transfer properties that do not belong to them. The regulations, by insisting that the property owner must sign and show proof of ownership, became a way of safeguarding property interests. The application procedure also requires that the applicant shows whether the property is mortgaged or not and the processing authority is obliged to confirm the information provided. This is to prevent financial frauds by people selling off properties when they know they are heavily mortgaged. Relaxing these rules and standards could destroy the financial sector.

Probably the most known and publicised reason for regulating subdivisions is the attempt to maintain agricultural viability and thereby guarantee food security. Stringent agricultural viability criteria has been set and enforced. As noted in the chapters of this section, each subdivision proposal is subjected to an agricultural viability assessment including yield or output from the proposed subdivision and earnings using the prevailing farming systems norms appropriate to the agro-ecological region. In this situation, it is assumed that the farmer wishing to own and farm the land will be an ordinary farmer without sophisticated technology or heavy capital. It is assumed that this farmer will have no other means of making the land productive. It was thus concluded that the minimum requirements for granting a subdivision permit must attach to the farm or land rather than the individual owning the land. These are fair assumptions in an area where Government is attempting to distribute land to poor or formerly disadvantaged groups.

The agricultural viability criteria used in the processing of subdivision applications have been the subject of heavy criticism and the reasons for such criticism has been adequately documented. Added to this are the staffing constraints faced by agricultural extension departments. The issue is worth reviewing and it is touched on again below.

### **3. LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

The regulations governing the subdivision and consolidation of land held under title are contained in the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act. The key actor is the local planning authority for the area that has the responsibility of consulting and co-ordinating with service providers. The local authority also has a responsibility for liaising with the ministry responsible for agriculture regarding the agricultural viability of the property.

The process to be followed in a subdivision application is relatively simple. The applicant prepares a very simple diagram, proves that he is the rightful owner of the property or is authorised by the owner to proceed with the subdivision, is ready to meet condition(s) the local authority may impose and then submits an application, with required material for approval. The obligation of the local authority is to consult the service providers, for example Ministry of Transport for access roads, the Administrative Court for water rights, the Department of Natural resources for environmental matters and the Ministry of Agriculture for agricultural viability of the proposed subdivision or its remainder.

There have been very few problems regarding procedures themselves. Nobody has found them complicated but the complaint has been on the time taken to complete the process. The

regulations have an allowance of four months for processing subdivision applications. In practice, the time taken is now longer, sometimes up to twelve months—a period that is not acceptable. This situation has been caused by a combination of institutional, organisational and staffing problems in the institutions involved. With the rapid staff turnover in the civil service, this situation is inevitable.

Delays have been more common in the assessment of agricultural viability. There have been two causes for this:

1. There have been staffing problems in the agricultural extension departments. Consultations have taken much longer than necessary. One hopes the staffing problem is being addressed.
2. The viability assessment criteria based on dryland farming systems and imaginary incomes have been challenged and in some cases have led to court appeals that have caused further delays. An attempt has been made to set the maximum sizes; maybe another attempt needs to be made to set minimum farm sizes. But like maximum farm sizes there will still be a debate on the criteria used for this determination. What happens to those farmers capable of making huge profits from properties smaller than the designated minimum farm sizes, for example, a viable flower growing concern on two hectares? The chapters here have not added value to this debate, which has been going on for the last ten years. An alternative to the currently used viability criteria is required. Clear direction and further research work is thus required.

#### **4. TRENDS**

Allegations have been made to the effect that one of the consequences of maintaining the present subdivision regulations is the discouragement of applications by farmers wishing to subdivide their land and sell it to those who wish to enter into farming. None of the chapters has provided evidence for this; for example, there is no clear data to indicate the actual demand for formal subdivisions or suggestion that farmers have stopped submitting their applications because they were afraid of the cumbersome procedures and delays. Data from the Department of Physical Planning shows very little activity in the area of subdivision—there was an average of ten to fifteen refusals per year against a high figure of over seventy permits issued per annum. Data from Rugube and Zhou is not conclusive either. It actually shows that subdivisions are contributing very little to the transfer of land. The chapter by Roth and Sukume does not have tangible data either. A better case therefore needs to be built.

It would appear that the demand for subdivisions as a contribution to land reform is a recent phenomenon. It has come about as a result of pressure by Government to compulsorily acquire commercial farmland and distribute it to poor peasants. Some applications are taking advantage of the gazetting of maximum farm sizes to fulfil the condition of one-man one farm. By retaining the maximum farm size the farmers hope to save the portions of the farms they occupy. So far these initiatives have not made much progress not because of the subdivision regulations but other policies made by Government.

Other trends also show a different picture. In the early 1980s there was a steady flow of applications for subdivisions in the drier parts of the country. This was not for land distribution but for sharing irrigable soils among farmers. A similar trend was witnessed in the 1990s, but this time for creating conservancies through a process of subdividing and consolidating.

The explanation for the slow pace of private market land transfers must therefore be sought elsewhere other than in the subdivision regulations. An attack on subdivision regulations including a suggestion of doing away with the regulations will require further thought and interrogation from all those concerned. As shown earlier on, the processing of subdivision serves needs other than agricultural ones.

#### **Generalised observations and conclusions**

- Regulation of land use and subdivision are necessary for the maintenance of high standards in the environment, protection of property rights, arresting land speculation and contributing to food security
- Administrative and procedural mechanisms for subdivisions are not as complex as envisaged. Minimum requirements for completing an application form are not complicated
- There are delays in processing subdivisions. This follows from the need to consult a wide range of agencies in order to guarantee safety, order in the environment and shares resources equitably
- Costs of processing a subdivision application are not as high as often reported. Application fees are far less than the cost of preparing the simplest of feasibility studies
- The problematic issue on subdivisions concerns the viability criteria in use for determining subdivision applications
- There is a problem relating to capacity of existing institutions to manage the complex tasks and perform them in a more efficient manner

## **5. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The need for regulating subdivisions does not seem to be in dispute or should not really be in dispute. What maybe disputed are components of the system and the way subdivision regulations are managed. There is much room for discussion on this. Regulation of land-use and subdivision are necessary for the maintenance of high standards in the environment, protection of property rights, arresting land speculation and contributing to food security.

The administrative and procedural mechanisms for subdivisions are not as complex as envisaged by some stakeholders. The minimum requirements for completing an application form are not complicated – the applicant shows his intentions for subdividing, the applicant proves he owns the property or has permission from the owner to subdivide the property, he indicates whether the property is mortgaged so that the financial institution affected can be consulted and shows the infrastructure proposed to make the property functional.

There are delays in the processing of subdivisions. This follows from the need to consult a wide range of agencies in order to guarantee safety, order in the environment and share resources equitably. This is part of the rule of law that is often under discussion. The local authority is responsible for processing the application and thus does not impose a burden on

the developer or applicant. However, it must be admitted that the information flow from one department consulted to another has tended to be slow and that is unacceptable. This is not the fault of the system but the actors concerned.

The costs of processing a subdivision application are not as high as often reported. The application fees charged are far less than the cost of preparing the simplest of feasibility studies. The major costs to the applicant are those associated with preparing diagrams or commissioning surveys and registration of property. With or without submitting a subdivision application these costs would still need to be borne by the applicant or potential landowner. There is need to show the intentions of the farmer, to demarcate the extent of the property as well as some legal evidence to give the occupier some security over occupation. The endowment fee is charged to enable the local authority to raise the amounts required to provide social services. A subdivision that creates 1,000 properties also creates a demand for education and health services as well as recreation facilities. In Zimbabwe, the provision of primary health and education services is the responsibility of the local authorities and the local authority is expected to raise local revenue for this.

The problematic issue on subdivisions concerns the viability criteria in use for determining subdivision applications. As has been noted in the chapters and also discussed above, each subdivision proposal is subjected to an agricultural viability assessment including yield or output from the proposed subdivision and earnings using the prevailing farming system norms appropriate to the agro-ecological region. Persuasive arguments have been advanced for relaxing this criteria particularly when it has been shown that there is no scientific basis for setting the standards but that some thumb-suck figure on what would constitute a comfortable life for a white commercial farmer is still the standard in use. Government's concern that if agricultural viability criteria is totally removed the land quality will degenerate into what obtains in the communal lands is equally valid. What is not provided, and needs to be provided, are clear recommendations that show an alternative to the current system. The technological argument of decisions that are made based on business and feasibility plans, cannot be relied on in an environment that lacks trained and experienced staff. In the current resettlement effort a number of people are allocated farms based on pieces of paper called business plans, that are not worth the paper they were written on.

There is also a problem relating to capacity of existing institutions to manage the complex tasks and perform them in more efficient manner. Capacity should be viewed at the institutional, organisational, and staffing levels.

Each of these is an enormous challenge that requires a more organised response. The discussion on land administration will be a useful starting point but this should also be linked to debates taking place elsewhere in the public service, for example public service reform and privatisation.

**SECTION THREE:**

**RESETTLEMENT AND**

**BENEFICIARY SUPPORT**



—Chapter 9—

# Beneficiary Selection, Infrastructure Provision and Beneficiary Support

**Francis T. Gonese**

Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe

**Charles M. Mukora**

Department of Geography and Environmental Science, University of Zimbabwe

*On attainment of Independence in 1980 Zimbabwe implemented a major land redistribution and resettlement programme whose main goals were to restore land rights to the majority indigenous black population and extend livelihood opportunities to hitherto disadvantaged sectors of the population. Immediate objectives included resettlement of war-displaced families and returning refugees, provision of infrastructure and social services in areas devastated by war, as well as providing population relief in over-crowded communal areas. A clearly defined organisational framework for implementing the programme facilitated coordination and interaction among participating stakeholders during the first decade (Phase One) of programme execution. Phase Two of the programme experienced greater stress in resource availability, implementation organisation, and accountability, as well as heightened beneficiary demand for improved outputs from the redistribution process. With these increased pressures the programme has been unable to deliver expected outputs as operational parameters have exceeded policy provision. Operational realities suggest a clear and urgent need for reviewing and strengthening the guiding policy framework in order that resource productivity and beneficiary success may be realised. Experience from the two Phases of resettlement implementation suggests the following as essential elements in improving delivery of desirable outputs without adverse social and economic effects or with maximum long term sustainability of the land resource: a set of unambiguous, realistic beneficiary selection criteria, a streamlined, transparent and accommodative implementation atmosphere, and a suitable support mechanism to enhance beneficiary productivity and growth.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

Zimbabwe embarked on a massive land redistribution programme on the attainment of Independence in April 1980 following an armed struggle during which the black majority population fought to, among other things, regain land rights deprived by British colonialism and the subsequent entrenchment of white settler rule. The decade and half armed fight for Independence was a culmination of country-wide resistance by the indigenous population to the systematic dispossession and displacement suffered at the hands of the colonialists since 1890. It was also a process through which the question of access to and ownership of the land

resource became the rallying point in the call for reasserting indigenous nationhood. With the attainment of nationhood, it was indeed to be expected that an independent, majority African government would implement a land reform programme to address the nearly century-old contentious land disposessions and subsequent ownership structures (see Moyo 1986, 1995; Bratton 1994) and placate the high expectations of the black populace. At the same time the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the communal areas (including high population pressures on habitable lands, degraded natural resources, limited livelihood and productivity opportunities, and general poverty) provided impetus for popular demand for greater access to the land and other natural resources to ameliorate declining livelihoods.

Land redistribution in Zimbabwe has thus been implemented as a logical sequel to the demise of the colonisation process and the attainment, in political terms, of national self-determination. It has essentially been characterised by the resettlement of black smallholder farmers on land acquired by the state from former commercial farmland that historically fell under large-scale white settler ownership and operation or corporate control. The resettlement process ultimately sought to address the three major dimensions of the national land resource in the country, namely, historical inequality in distribution, optimality of use, and long term sustainability (GOZ 1999a).

The post-Independence redistribution process has variously been documented in Government of Zimbabwe policy statements and operational guidelines of the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in terms of criteria and procedures for beneficiary selection, implementation, organisation as well as provision of state support for consolidating the establishment of beneficiaries on resettled lands. Both policy outlines and empirical evidence over the first two decades of Independence show a clear transition from, initially, a rehabilitative resettlement programme reflective of post-war recovery activities to, subsequently, consolidation processes that seek to address more candidly issues of productivity, own-contribution and self-reliance on the part of beneficiaries. Where a highly centralised state implementation and management machinery was the dominant factor in programme execution and services provision in the 1980s, greater demands for resources and increasing calls for more beneficiary contribution and enhanced stakeholder participation effectively diluted the state's capacity in terms of level and quality of services rendered in the second half of the 1990s onwards. The 1980s and the first half of the 1990s coincide with Phase One of the programme—the intensive resettlement phase which was characterised by elaborate planning and infrastructure provision that preceded emplacement of beneficiaries (mainly war-affected and ex-communal land households) on the land specifically purchased by the state or effectively abandoned during the War of Liberation; this was a period of land availability and relative abundance that facilitated planning for large numbers of beneficiaries in contiguous land blocks. The second half of the 1990s and beyond represents Phase Two of the programme, characterised by greater scarcity of land for resettlement, reduced resource availability on the part of Government, as well as rejuvenated demand for resettlement land by communal land households and other prospective programme beneficiaries. This phase exerted greater demands on Government in terms of emplacement outputs, infrastructural

needs and support services. It is convenient to analyse the performance of the resettlement process in terms of the two phases as they clearly represent the state's varying capacities regarding the parameters that permitted effective resettlement implementation.

This chapter analyses the experiences of Zimbabwe's land redistribution programme in terms of beneficiary selection, infrastructure development and overall support for the resettled communities to facilitate and consolidate their establishment in the new land schemes.

## 1.2 Objectives of Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme

Specific objectives of land redistribution at Independence were enunciated in the document *Intensive Resettlement: Policies and Procedures*<sup>218</sup> (GOZ 1980) as presented in Box 1.

These policy objectives clearly represent a rehabilitative programme, targeting war-displaced

### Box 1. Stated objectives of the intensive resettlement programme as of 1980

- provide some relief of the pressure on over-populated land;
- extend and improve the base for productive agriculture in the peasant farming sector through individuals and co-operatives;
- improve the standard of living of the largest and poorest sector of the population of Zimbabwe;
- ameliorate the plight of the people who have been adversely affected by the war and rehabilitate them;
- provide, at the lower end of the scale, opportunities for people who have no land and who are without employment and may, therefore, be classed as destitute;
- bring abandoned or under-utilised land into full production as one facet of implementing an equitable policy of land redistribution;
- expand or improve the infrastructure and services that are needed to promote the growth of people and of economic production; and
- achieve national stability and progress in a country that has only recently emerged from the turmoil of war.

Source: GOZ 1980, p. 2.

communities (including former inhabitants of concentration camps (euphemistically termed 'protected villages'), returning refugees (both extra-territorial and urban), demobilised war combatants, and the identified landless from the communal areas), as well as abandoned farmland that required infrastructural and productivity revival. They also portray a programme that focused on *translocation resettlement*, involving physical re-location of beneficiaries to take up and develop the allocated holdings on the Government-acquired land. In addition to the rehabilitation focus, the programme also sought to extend 'productive

---

<sup>218</sup> This document was subsequently revised in 1983 and 1985 to update operational guidelines for implementing the programme as well as the criteria for providing support services and facilitating the interaction of the various participating institutions. For all intents and purposes the Document – in its various versions—remained the fundamental policy guide in operationalizing land redistribution and resettlement in the country in the two decades following Independence.

agriculture’ and employment opportunities to the ‘peasant’ farming sector and the destitute, as well as provide some infrastructure for social and economic development.

The programme objectives thus defined planning parameters and considerations that had to be taken into account in the process of programme implementation and service provision. For example, given the stated or intended target beneficiaries, other criteria for selecting those to be resettled became secondary, while the provision of services and infrastructure had to be made in a manner that recognised the plight and productive capacity of the stated beneficiaries. Furthermore the socio-economic background and condition of the targeted beneficiaries warranted that infrastructure and other support services be provided primarily from state resources, partly as a public responsibility and partly an expression of national priorities in sectoral development and resource allocation.

The initial objectives were modified under Phase Two of the Programme to reflect changed circumstances and redefined priorities. Box 2 summarises the new objectives.

**Box 2. Modified programme objectives under Phase Two resettlement**

- acquire five million hectares from the Large-scale Commercial Farming sector for redistribution;
- resettle 150,000 families, youths graduating from agricultural colleges and others with demonstrable experience in a gender sensitive manner;
- reduce the extent and intensity of poverty among rural families and farmworkers by providing them adequate land for agricultural use;
- increase the contribution of agriculture to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by increasing the number of commercialised small-scale farmers using formerly under-utilised land;
- promote the environmentally sustainable utilisation of land; and
- increase conditions for sustainable peace and social stability by removing imbalances in landownership.

Source: GOZ 1999b, p.3.

These modifications were introduced in order to put more focus on the question of optimal use and sustainability of the land resource. The identification and selection of resettlement beneficiaries, together with the modalities of providing support services, were thus to be altered accordingly to reflect the changed circumstances defined by the objectives. In particular, policy identified the catchment of the programme at this stage in terms of the numbers and attributes of intended beneficiaries, as well as their expected contribution to the national economy.

In summary identified programme objectives helped determine the operational configuration of resettlement implementation in terms of land use, beneficiary and settlement organisation, as well as identity and relationships of players in the selection and implementation process.

Table 1 summarises the different phases of resettlement experience in Zimbabwe and presents the respective models adopted over time.

## 2. BENEFICIARY SELECTION

### 2.1 Background

Land reform policies were formulated to benefit selected groups of the Zimbabwean populace. The selection of beneficiaries was guided by specific criteria, which were considered by identified institutional structures following set procedures. It should, however, be noted from the onset that the selection criteria and institutions differed according to different resettlement models and during the different phases.

This section considers these criteria, institutions and procedures as they are set out in the Policies and Procedures for the first and second phases. It analyses and critiques the application of these selection criteria and procedures during the two phases and during the current fast track resettlement programme.

**Table 1: Phases of Resettlement and the Models Implemented in Zimbabwe**<sup>219</sup>

Resettlement model/approach	Period implemented	Main features and provisions	Typical schemes/projects <sup>220</sup>
<b>1. Pre-Independence</b>			
Small scale commercial farms (purchase lands)	1940-1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-contained residence, arable and grazing</li> <li>▪ Lease with option to purchase</li> </ul>	Chitomborwizi, Gamwa, Nyazvidzi, Vuti
New communal lands	1950-1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Village settlement with individual residential stands and arable lands, and communal grazing land</li> </ul>	Gokwe, Hurungwe, Muzarabani, Nyaminyami
Small scale Irrigation	1934-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Irrigation schemes developed to exploit identified potential in communal lands</li> <li>▪ Settlement in villages surrounding irrigation land block</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries allocated individual irrigable plots (0.1 to 2ha depending on land availability) to supplement dryland farming</li> <li>▪ Individual residential stand and arable land in dryland</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing</li> </ul>	Nyanyadzi, Makonese*, Mhende*, Mutambara*, Zananda*
<b>2. Post-Independence</b>			
<b>2.1 Intensive Resettlement Phase I</b>			
Model A	1980-1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individual residential plot (0.5ha) within village block</li> <li>▪ Individual arable (5ha.) land</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing land (25- 60ha, depending on village size and natural region)</li> <li>▪ Communal water points and other social services</li> </ul>	Nyagundi*, Shinja*, Nyamajura*, Mushandike, Tokwe 1, Sengezi*, Mupfurdzi*

<sup>219</sup> This list includes resettlement (and settlement in some cases) activity implemented by colonial governments before 1980 to either effect the occupation of remote rural areas or realize their grand plans for land use and the distribution of ethnic groupings in the country.

<sup>220</sup> Symbol marking\* denotes schemes studied by Research Team during field research visits

B	1980-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperative residence and collective farming on specialised enterprises</li> <li>▪ Voluntary group membership based on legal registration</li> <li>▪ Cooperative asset holding and produce sharing</li> <li>▪ Collective grazing</li> </ul>	Gutsaruzhinji*, Makwikwi*, Magura Batanai, Garika Tangenhama*, Kuedza Masimba
C	1980-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Central core estate run by Parastatal (ARDA) as a commercial entity</li> <li>▪ Outgrower farmers settled in villages and pursuing farming operations as in Model A</li> <li>▪ Outgrowers contribute labour to estate which in turn supplies essential services (e.g., draught power, transport and marketing, seedlings and processing of specialised crops etc.) to outgrowers</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing</li> </ul>	Nyamajura* Rusitu
D	1984-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Availing land for rotational grazing to communal area livestock in drier natural regions (agro-ecological zones)</li> <li>▪ May involve translocation of human population</li> </ul>	Doddie-burn - Manyoli Ranch*
Communal Area Reorganisation	1986-1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intended for decongestion of communal areas</li> <li>▪ Land allocation similar to Model A and A1 depending on land characteristics and natural region</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing, woodlots, water points and social services</li> </ul>	Mid Zambezi*, Mwenezi, Chipinge South
Irrigation Schemes	1984-1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Based on National Master Plan for construction of dams to utilise available irrigation potential</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries allocated separate irrigable plot and residential unit.</li> <li>▪ Land allocation parameters depend on recommended farming enterprise and available land and water resources</li> <li>▪ Allocations may include grazing rights</li> </ul>	Mushandike*, Mukwasine*
<b>2.2 Phase II Resettlement – Fast Track</b>			
A1 Self-contained	1992 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self contained residential, arable and grazing land (estimated 25-50ha, depending on land characteristics and natural region) with own water supplies per household</li> </ul>	Hoyuyu. Circle V* (Lancashire Estate, Shurugwi)
A1 Villagised	1992 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Villagized settlement with individual residential and arable plots (3-5ha, depending on land characteristics and natural region)</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing land, woodlots and water points</li> <li>▪ Some land set aside for communal projects and future growth</li> <li>- Similar to Model A</li> </ul>	Runde* (Zvishavane), Ruchanyu (Shurugwi)
Small scale commercial farm settlement	1993-1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Farm units allocated to selected indigenous persons with resources and high agricultural production potential</li> <li>▪ Deliberate step for indigenising commercial agriculture</li> </ul>	Nyamajura*, Battlefields
A2	1998 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-contained farm units for residential, cropping grazing and woodlot purposes</li> <li>▪ Unit expected to be run as commercial production unit</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries utilise own and private market resources for land development and production</li> <li>▪ Similar to A1 self-contained except for unit size</li> </ul>	Mavhumashava*, Fairfields (Chirumanzu), Central Estates (Mvuma)
Three Tier	1998 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suitable for drier areas where livestock ranching is the only suitable land use in the absence of irrigation.</li> </ul>	Bulalima*

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intended for commercial livestock production</li> <li>▪ The three tiers comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a cluster of residential villages, arable land and social services</li> <li>▪ the 'near grazing', where benefiting households maintain domestic livestock for day to day use, and</li> <li>▪ outer grazing zone for commercial herd</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ No translocation of human population</li> </ul>	
--	--	--	--

## 2.2 Selection Criteria, Participating Institutions and Procedures Involved as Set out in Policies

During Phase I of the programme settler selection was the responsibility of Government agencies responsible for the functions and activities relevant to the resettlement process. Of particular importance was the overall responsibility and accountability of the Department of Rural Development (DERUDE), together with the functional responsibilities of Department of Co-operative Development and the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) in coordinating and administering beneficiary selection for model B and model schemes (Mukora 1984). Rural District Councils and some non-governmental organisations also participated in the selection process—the latter mainly on the basis of their financial support to specific schemes.

The framework within which resettlement models were determined, beneficiaries identified and different institutions participated in this segment of the programme is presented in Table 2. It is worth noting that beneficiary identification during Phase I was basically a responsibility streamlined around line Ministries of central Government (which may or may not have been decentralised to project implementation sites) and RDCs as the local authorities from which beneficiaries were drawn.

**Table 2: Framework for Land Resettlement Implementation 1980-2002**

<b>Resettlement objective</b>	<b>Selection criteria and targets beneficiaries</b>	<b>Applicable settlement model/land use</b>	<b>Selecting institutions and players</b>
Rehabilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ War displaced; returning, extra-territorial refugees</li> <li>▪ War combatants</li> <li>▪ Poor households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model A (villagised)</li> <li>▪ Model A1 self-contained</li> </ul>	Govt Departments centred on DERUDE, Social Services, AGRITEX; District Councils
Communal land de-congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Landless</li> <li>▪ Qualifying Individual households</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model A (villagised)</li> <li>▪ Model A1 self-contained</li> <li>▪ Model B Cooperatives</li> <li>▪ Model C outgrowers</li> </ul>	DERUDE; AGRITEX; Local Govt.; DDF; ARDA; RDCs
Collectivised agricultural production	Registered Cooperative groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model B Cooperative farming</li> </ul>	Dept of Cooperative Development; DERUDE; AGRITEX; Supporting NGOs
Livestock production, utilisation of purchased land in Natural Regions IV and V	Livestock owners bordering purchased farms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model D and Three tier land use</li> <li>▪ Non-translocation of beneficiary households</li> </ul>	ARDA; AGRITEX; DERUDE; Veterinary Services; DDF; RDCs; Supporting NGOs
Enhanced agricultural production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trained and experienced farmers</li> <li>▪ Master farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model A1 self-contained</li> <li>▪ Small Scale commercial farms</li> </ul>	DERUDE; AGRITEX; ARDA; DDF; MLARR; MLGPC&NH
Commercialised small-scale agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trained and experienced farmers</li> <li>▪ Resourced landless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commercial settlement schemes</li> <li>▪ Leased farms</li> </ul>	MLARR; AREX; ARDA Farmers' Unions
Indigenised commercial agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aspiring farmers with own resources and means</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Model A2</li> <li>▪ Irrigated farming</li> </ul>	MLARR; AREX; MRR&WD; MLGPC&NH; RDCs
Accelerated restructuring of access and ownership of agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aspiring farmers with potential to raise resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fast Track settlement</li> <li>▪ Model A1</li> <li>▪ Model A2</li> </ul>	MLARR; LGPC&NH; AREX; DDF; MRR&WD; provincial Governor; Provincial and District Land Committees; Ruling Political Party; war veterans

Table 3 shows the relative Province by Province planned resettlement capacities of the models that were operational by 1989. As evident in the table, Model A accounted for the majority (over 70%) of all planned resettlement, followed by Models B and D.

**Table 3: Resettlement Beneficiaries: Provincial Breakdown of Planned Capacity by Models as at December 1989**

PROVINCE	Planned resettlement capacity by model					
	A	Accelerated (Variant of A)	B	C	D	All Models
<b>Mashonaland West</b>	6 684	-	1 243	-	-	7 927
<b>Mashonaland Central</b>	2 182	106	1 660	-	7 600	11 548
<b>Mashonaland East</b>	5 824	34	1 124	-	-	6 982
<b>Manicaland</b>	12 659	138	1 485	827	-	15 109
<b>Masvingo</b>	5 539	143	195	-	-	5 877
<b>Midlands</b>	6 868	47	1 006	-	-	7 921
<b>Matebeleland North</b>	1 596	24	-	-	-	1 620
<b>Matebeleland South</b>	2 144	557	145	-	-	2 846
<b>Total</b>	43 496	1 049	6 858	827	7 600	59 830
<b>% of Grand Total</b>	72.70	1.76	11.46	1.38	12.70	100.00

Source: Gonese 1990, p. 9-10

Beneficiary selection criteria and procedures for Models A and A2 are presented in Boxes 3 and 4 as the main significant land use approaches in Phase I and II.

### **Box 3. Model A: Selection criteria and procedures**

*Successful candidates had to be:*

- effectively landless, i.e., having no or little land to support oneself and dependants;
- unemployed (either self or the spouse) ;
- poor, as the intention was to reach and cater for the rural poor;
- married or widowed with dependants. Widowed or unmarried women with dependants were to be allocated land in resettlement schemes in their own right;
- aged 18 to 55 years and physically fit and potentially able to make productive use of the land allocated;
- prepared to give up all land and grazing rights in the communal area of origin;
- a returning Zimbabwean refugee—this category received special consideration at the conclusion of the liberation war; or
- experienced and master farmer willing to give up all land rights in the communal areas and wage employment elsewhere.

*The following procedures were followed:*

- Resettlement registration forms were distributed to potential settlers through Rural District Councils.
- A Resettlement Officer held meetings and travelled through the area to explain resettlement policy and assisted in the filling in of the forms.
- The registration forms were returned to the Rural District Council through the Ward Councillors.
- Ex-farm labourers were registered directly by the Resettlement Officer.
- Applicants from the urban areas applied through the Rural District Council of their home area.
- Illegal occupants were required to go back to their Rural District Council area and register, as for the law abiding citizens, unless they occupied the land prior to July 1981 when they would be registered directly by the Resettlement Officers.

During Phase II responsibility for beneficiary selection was expanded to include more direct participation of other stakeholders, including traditional leadership (i.e., Chiefs, headmen and village heads); traditional assemblies at various levels; Rural District Councils, and Local Government structures at various levels—i.e., District Administrators, Provincial Administrators and Governors. These institutions were assisted by farmers' unions at various levels, together with local non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations as locally appropriate. Government also decided during this phase to widen the catchment of candidates for resettlement to accommodate groups that were earlier not specified in its operational policy documents—including groups of poor households from over-crowded communal areas and over-populated villages, retrenched farmworkers, and special categories of persons such as women, ex-combatants, agricultural graduates, master

farmers, ex-mine workers and persons of means and ability who intend to engage in agriculture in different resettlement models. Settlers in Model A1 and its variants, and three-tier models were primarily to be selected from lists established by RDCs in conjunction with responsible Government institutions assisted by Agritex. All involved were expected to carry out and manage the selection process in an efficient, transparent and gender sensitive manner.

**Box 4: Model A2 Resettlement: Objectives, beneficiary selection criteria and selection procedure**

Land allocation and settlement under Model A2 are specifically intended for the indigenisation of the large-scale commercial farming sector, where beneficiaries are given a 99-year lease with option to purchase.

**Objectives**

The model is expected to achieve the following specific objectives:

- create a cadre of black indigenous farmers;
- empower black entrepreneurs in the economy of Zimbabwe; and
- facilitate access to input support for commercial agriculture by indigenous farmers.

**Selection Criteria**

For selection for Model A2 settlement an applicant should meet the following criteria:

- An acceptable minimum level of academic education or certified technical competency in agriculture;
- A demonstrated capacity in farming, such as trained master farmers;
- Preparedness to reside permanently on the allocated unit, or demonstrating a capacity to employ a competent manager; and
- Development of a financially viable and agro-ecologically suitable five-year farming programme for the unit being applied for.

**Selection Procedure**

- Available farms were advertised widely in the national media and at all Provincial and District offices in both vernacular languages (Shona and Ndebele) and English.
- Application forms were initially available for a fee at MLARR Head Office, and at Provincial and District offices. The forms were later made available for free at the Ministry Head Office and Provincial centres.
- The Application forms were processed by a national Selection Board chaired by ARDA General Manager and composed of relevant Government Departments, Parastatals and identified relevant organisations and those who qualified for land allocation were publicised in the national print media.

Table 4 presents a selection of ARDA Settlement schemes and their relative settler capacities and average plot sizes.

**Table 4: Settlement Capacity and Average Plot Sizes at Selected ARDA Settlement Schemes**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Settlement capacity (households)</b>	<b>Average plot size (hectares)</b>
<b>Middle Save</b>	88	10
<b>Chisumbanje</b>	118	3 to 6
<b>Gowe</b>	35	3 to 4
<b>Tsovane</b>	84	2
<b>Antelope</b>	40	1.5
	Plus cooperative of 46 members	
	150	69
<b>Ngwezi</b>		0.1 to 3

Source: Mhlanga 1995.

### **2.3 Application of Beneficiary Selection Policies on Selected Models**

It is pertinent at this point to examine the empirical application of the outlined beneficiary selection policies and criteria in the various resettlement approaches. To illustrate the country's dynamic experiences in settlement implementation, a longitudinal analysis was adopted to assess the application of the respective criteria over the time that the programme has been implemented. Field visits were carried out and discussions undertaken with identified beneficiaries regarding their selection and the procedures they went through leading to land allocation and settlement. This section discusses the major observations and findings.

Table 5 summarises the relative proportions of major social groups making up the beneficiaries in the schemes studied, the attributes qualifying them for resettlement as well as the selection procedure they underwent.

**Table 5: Overview of Empirical Application of Beneficiary Selection Criteria in selected Schemes**

Model/scheme category studied	Major social groupings resettled and estimated proportions	Qualification criteria applied	Actual selection procedure undergone
Small scale commercial farms (former Purchase Lands)	Trained ('Master Farmers') and experienced farmers – 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agricultural Certificate Holder</li> <li>▪ Farming track record</li> <li>▪ Resource ownership<sup>ψ</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recommended by Agricultural Demonstrator</li> <li>▪ Interviewed by District (Native) Commissioner and District Agricultural Officer</li> </ul>
ARDA settlement scheme	Communal farmers – > 95% Master farmers - < 3% Other - < 2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Agricultural discipline, not necessarily training or experience</li> <li>▪ Potential for agricultural productivity</li> <li>▪ Resource ownership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Applications evaluated by ARDA – chaired Settlement Board appointed by MLARR</li> <li>▪ Proof of asset holding verified</li> </ul>
Model A2, Commercial farm (Medium and Large scale) settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Persons with own capital resources – &gt; 80%</li> <li>▪ Aspiring farmers in employment – 15%</li> <li>▪ Other – 5%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Own resource ownership</li> <li>▪ Ability to raise or access capital and agricultural equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formal application with fee payable</li> <li>▪ Recommended by Extension Officer</li> <li>▪ Applications evaluated by MLARR</li> </ul>
Fast Track (Model A1, A villagised)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mixed groups</li> <li>▪ Communal farmers – 60%</li> <li>▪ Urban workers – 15%</li> <li>▪ Ex combatants – 20%</li> <li>▪ Ex farmworkers - 5%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Landlessness</li> <li>▪ Aspiration for landownership</li> <li>▪ Readiness to translocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Selection / land allocation by District Land Identification and Resettlement Committees</li> <li>▪ Land occupation approved by local war veteran and Council Officials</li> </ul>

<sup>ψ</sup> Refers specifically to finance, livestock farm implements, equipment and other farming tools.

Source: Data from study team's field visits and adopted from ARDA (1999); Mhlanga (1995); Mushuku (2001); and Spear (1995).

As expected, farmers from communal areas form the dominant group among programme beneficiaries and this is enhanced in cases where trained and experienced farmers are targeted for land allocation. While this is consistent with the policy objective of de-congesting communal areas, the actual impact of this observation remains uncertain as beneficiaries have been 'siphoned' from their original home areas as individual households rather than en block to create meaningful 'vacant' space.

A significant existent social grouping not specified by policy are urban workers—who were, incidentally, deliberately excluded by Phase I policy (GOZ 1980, 1983, 1985). Policy changes in the later stages of the programme (particularly in Phase II and Fast Track) have consolidated the proportion of this group as there has been deliberate emphasis in settling persons with resources and potential access to capital for private development initiative and enhanced productivity. Table 6 gives a closer look at the origin structure for selected schemes and highlights the significant positions of communal areas and urban centres as sources of resettlement beneficiaries.

**Table 6: Beneficiary Origin Structure at Selected Schemes**

Model	Scheme	Total capacity	Settler origin percentage		
			Communal areas	Urban	Ex-farmworkers
A1	Circle V	26	30	58	12
B	Gutsaruzhinji	82	95	-	5
Irrigation	Zananda	51	100	-	-
Irrigation	Mushandike				
	Village 15	56	84	16	-
	Village 16	35	78	13	9
A	Mushandiike Dryland	52	94	6	-
A2	Mavhumashava	56	89	11	-

Source: From study team field data

Empirical evidence thus shows that there are social groups among de facto beneficiaries which may be excluded or not given priority by policy. Similarly, those finally settled might not necessarily have acquired their land through the outlined policy procedures—this is particularly so under Phase II/fast track as many land allocations decisions basically hinged on preceding occupations and were made by those most active in the process—Table 5. Again the prospects for decongestion in communal Areas under this situation are uncertain as the process in effect selected beneficiaries on the basis of their initiative and linkages with local decision-makers. These local dynamics in land allocation in effect made political processes precede procedural policy provisions and rendered the Governor-led Provincial Committee the de facto beneficiary selection institution for the bulk of land redistribution under the fast track resettlement. The war veterans who spearheaded the initial farm

occupations (triggering subsequent acquisitions by Government) effectively ‘identified’ or sanctioned the majority of Model A1 settlers; as a result, their nation-wide association was a major player in the selection process for Model A1 schemes, alongside the other institutions specified by policy. When some of the farms previously occupied were planned and reallocated under Model A2 settlement, disqualified incumbents were resettled under Model A1. It is estimated that up to 41% of the failed applicants for the Model A2 commercial farm settlement scheme ended up being recommended for resettlement under Model A1 (Government of Zimbabwe, 2001).

Phase II and fast track thus represent a major transition from the highly centralised sequential process pursued under the intensive resettlement programme, yielding a highly decentralised activity implemented simultaneously national-wide. Owing to the expanded scope of the activity, the implementation process in effect transcended the operations and functions of line Ministries to encompass multiple agencies with diffuse decision-making and divergent agenda—including local authorities, lobby groups interested in the subject of indigenous land rights restoration.

#### **2.4 Assessing Empirical Beneficiary Selection for Transparency and Consistency with Policy**

Official policy statements on beneficiary selection for the resettlement programme are, thus, clear and transparent, providing ample opportunity for the participation of a wide range of stakeholder institutions. Empirical observation, however, suggests a diversity of operational departures from policy provisions prompted by situational decisions and de facto conditions on particular lands affected by acquisition for redistribution. Situational alterations to policy provisions and programme implementation plans are abound under fast track, particularly given the politicisation of the land issue against the background of the 2000 and 2002 Parliamentary and Presidential elections. Numerous decisions by respective Identification and Selection Committees have, reportedly, been ignored and/or reversed by political ‘heavyweights’ whose actions not only compromise formal planning processes, but also seriously undermine the role and effectiveness of officials responsible for implementing the programme—experiences that are most pronounced in the selection of beneficiaries for Model A1 and A2 schemes.

Accountability protocol in settler selection also seems unclear and problematic: theoretically, the lower level should be accountable to the next higher level, but this does not seem to apply on the ground.

Some apparent disparities are noticeable in the selection of the particular groupings for resettlement—e.g., women, youth and ex-farmworkers. For women the selection process appears to be seriously gender insensitive. While policy provides for joint allocation and registration for land, most male applicants do not seem inclined to implement this and the implementation process has not intervened. As for youth, the problem has been one of definition. Some authorities have defined youth by age, say between 18 and 21 years; some by marital status, while others define it by political activism or agricultural productive

capacity. Because of sectional interests some committees have used one or the other of these definitions to disadvantage the youth.

Different committees also have different views on the resettlement of foreign displaced farmworkers. Some argue that foreign nationals cannot access land in terms of land reform policies in the absence of Zimbabwean citizenship, and should go back to their original homes if they cannot secure other employment; others argue that most of the ex-farmworkers (including local citizens) are not interested in farming on their own and can therefore not be considered for land allocation for agricultural production—instead they may need to be allocated land for residential purposes only<sup>221</sup>. It is however clear that most of the ex-farmworker community is seriously constrained by a lack of resources and the self-propelled initiative essential for meaningful productivity. For most of this community, having been workers for long durations in their lives, seeking employment with the incoming new farmers is a more realistic option than managing productive commercial land on their own.

There are also reports of favouritism and/or parochial preferences in land allocation where applicants' cases may be prejudiced or not considered altogether because they are not familiar to members of the Selection Committees, or because they originate from Districts that have no commercial farmland, such as Buhera or Chivi.

### **3. INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND BENEFICIARY SUPPORT**

#### **3.1 Rationale and Objectives of Infrastructural Development under Land Redistribution**

The provision of infrastructure in resettled lands is prompted by the need to complement the process of emplacement of incoming communities, ensuring that the latter access within reasonable reach necessary social services, production facilities as well as pertinent physical infrastructure. It was also essential at the start of the resettlement programme in Zimbabwe to provide infrastructure items that revived the productive capacity of areas earlier devastated by war. Furthermore, resettlement invariably introduced large numbers of human population (together with domestic animals) into areas that were hitherto sparsely settled (frequently also remote and underdeveloped), thereby increasing the demand for physical, social and economic infrastructure and services. For the Zimbabwean case the resettlement process entailed:

- resuscitating, or developing anew altogether, water supplies for both consumption and agricultural production;

---

<sup>221</sup> Along the lines of this argument, the Mashonaland West Provincial Land Committee informed the researchers that as an operational guide, District implementation teams in the Province are instructed to allocate interested ex-farmworker households two (2) hectares each. While virtually all District Officials talked to in the Province testified to this, it has not been possible to empirically verify the universal application of this provision on the acquired farms.

- opening up or repairing and subsequently maintaining both through and access roads to link new settlement schemes and internal villages with major communication routes—with bridges, culverts, etc on rivers and other impassable channels and places as may be necessary;
- establishing residential housing units and arable fields that invariably involved the use and clearing of natural vegetative resources like trees, grass and other forest products; and
- constructing community service facilities such as schools, clinics, service centres and programme administration infrastructure

## 3.2 Policy Provisions for Infrastructure

### 3.2.1 Implementation Organisation, Infrastructure Planning and Scheme Development

During Phase I of the resettlement programme the Government of Zimbabwe sought to provide infrastructure in accordance with the professed socialist egalitarian philosophy that emphasised increasing the access of services and productive capacity to rural communities. Land redistribution was thus regarded as a major rural development thrust through which these services and developments could be realised for the hitherto disadvantaged and poor sectors of the population. Policy therefore specified infrastructure provision criteria to guide both planners and implementing agents in determining the quantities and locations of the items required. Box 5 summarises the criteria employed in providing physical infrastructure in the newly settled schemes. It is important to emphasise here that funding was provided by Government on a programme basis through Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) allocations to the then Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development (and its successors charged with the overall responsibility for programme implementation and co-ordination).<sup>222</sup> Coordination of services was however critical among the various players to ensure timely linkages between infrastructure establishment and subsequent manpower deployment and service application by respective participating line institutions. As indicated in Box 5, various Government Ministries and Departments were expected to deploy staff to service their respective functions and responsibilities in resettlement schemes to the magnitudes specified by policy. The roles of agricultural and cooperative extension and animal health, education and health were of particular significance, given the status of the

---

<sup>222</sup> Within the Ministry the Department of Rural Development (DERUDE) was established in 1982 as the implementation arm assigned the roles of

- demarcation and tillage of landholdings, and development of initial infrastructure through Development Teams;
- management of the resultant resettlement schemes through Resettlement Officers; and
- overall coordination and management of the programme through several Inter-institutional forums established to facilitate the participation and collaboration of various stakeholders.

DERUDE was however disbanded in 1993 and its responsibilities and personnel parcelled out and reassigned to several other Organizations, including District Development Fund (DDF), AGRITEX, ARDA, etc., signalling the end of provisions for residential scheme management, tight programme monitoring and streamlined implementation accountability

**Box 5: Planning criteria for providing physical infrastructure, social facilities and support services in resettlement schemes under Phase One (1980-1998)<sup>224</sup>**

**1. Physical Infrastructure**

Water Supplies (Repairs or new installations):

- Domestic needs—1 borehole (with a hand pump) per Village of up to 25 families
- Livestock needs—Surface water, otherwise borehole equipped with windmill, reservoir and troughs

Roads (Repairs or new construction)

- Through Road—Responsibility of Ministry of Roads
- Village Access Road—Project-financed, budget depending on length

Fencing

- Scheme Boundary—Govt purchased materials, beneficiaries erected fencing
- Internal / Paddock lines—own contribution and self-reliance by beneficiaries

Dip Tanks and Cattle Handling Pens (Repair or new construction)

- Provision to vary with number of villages or planned livestock units, depending on Natural Region of settlement

**2. Social Services**

- Primary Schools—Project-funded at rate of 1 classroom per 20 families
- Secondary Schools—Self-reliance by beneficiaries in consultation with Ministry of Education
- Clinics—Project-funded at rate of 1 per 300 to 500 families: Staffing by Ministry of Health

**3. Production Services**

- Tillage—Project-funded 0.5 hectare per family for initial establishment
- Agricultural Advice and Extension—Target: 1 Extension worker per 200 families
- Animal Health Advice—Target: 1 Assistant per 500 families
- Cooperative Extension—Target: 1 Assistant per 600 families
- Cooperative Depot for grain storage and marketing—Project-financed at rate of 1 per Rural Service Centre established

**4. Project Administration and Management Facilities**

- Government staff Housing and Offices for Resettlement staff, Extension, Animal Health, Cooperative, Education and Health staff
- Rural Service Centre layout and access roads demarcation and development
- Scheme Telephone installation

Source: Adapted from GOZ 1980, pp. 6-9.

schemes and the high expectations of achievement that the areas carried—for this reason the ratios of these production support staff per number of farmers were, for example, much higher here than in communal areas and small scale commercial farms (former purchase lands).<sup>223</sup>

---

<sup>223</sup> Compare the ratio of 1 extension assistant:200 resettled farmers, to 1:over 400 obtaining in the communal lands.

<sup>224</sup> A standard Model A scheme with 500 families (averaging 15 to 20 families per village) was assumed for planning purposes in providing minimum infrastructure and services, with provisions for larger schemes pro-rated on the basis of this standard. Requirements for other Models closely matched these criteria if schemes

The Department of Rural Development undertook the implementation of the programme through its Development and Resettlement Management teams that were responsible for translating all project plans into provisions on the ground. While development teams were responsible for the delivery of physical infrastructure and related services (either directly through their own effort or by contract elsewhere), the Resettlement Officers as Project Managers interacted more directly with beneficiaries during the processes of beneficiary selection (see Section 2.2 above), settler mobilisation for communal services general scheme development, and soliciting other agencies' services. Because schemes were then implemented as distinct projects following a clearly defined project appraisal and approval process within the framework of the national programme, the department had specific accountability for progress in both physical implementation and financial expenditure; its respective teams, therefore, necessarily had to generate and maintain comprehensive, up-to-date records and reports for both internal and external scrutiny. While this arrangement may have posed operational constraints due to centralisation and bureaucratic delays, it effectively provided for accountability and transparency. The presence (and residence) of the Resettlement Officer in the scheme also facilitated prompt trouble-shooting among settlers as well as developing a data bank that could prove invaluable in documenting the land redistribution process in the country.

An important component of Phase I resettlement is the accelerated programme under which beneficiaries were allocated land (or effectively sanctioned to utilise the land after unauthorised initial settlement) without corresponding provision of infrastructural services<sup>225</sup>. Having existed for some years without formal water supplies, access roads, scheme fencing, dip tanks, schools or clinics in close proximity, several former 'squatter settlements' were either upgraded and formalised into schemes of their own or incorporated into larger contiguous other entities which were subsequently afforded infrastructure. Experience from the Accelerated programme could well be instructive in dealing with some of the outcomes of Fast Track resettlement which have perhaps reproduced the earlier situation at a much more grandiose scale.

Tables 2, 3 and 4 present major developments in infrastructure for selected models at different times in Phase I of the programme. Considerable achievements were evidently registered in the physical development of services in the resettled lands (Bratton 1994; Rukuni and Eicher 1994; GOZ 1996), ensuring that the incoming communities gained access to either their allocated landholdings or the production facilities and services to realise the full potential of their new circumstances.

---

involved were not within or contiguous to the Model A scheme which ordinarily received the primary provisions.

<sup>225</sup> This programme may be considered an earlier version of Fast Track resettlement in Phase II, the only differences being due to scale and time of implementation, and the retrospective approach in which Government viewed the former. In response to the plight of the beneficiaries and Government's desire to 'regularise' the settlements, some Accelerated schemes were upgraded during the period 1983-87 through the financing of infrastructure and full development by the EEC and a few NGOs.

While, in principle, Government funded infrastructural development through either budgetary allocations or provision of personnel through line institutions, the resettled communities made significant contribution by providing labour, own resources and locally available materials in the construction of items like schools, clinics and community centres as a cost-cutting measure and a way of engendering participatory development through self-reliance. To minimise costs as well, the farmers also had to construct their own housing; it was only after 1984/85 that resettled farmers were able to benefit from the Improved Rural Housing programme which offered some housing construction credit repayable through marketed agricultural produce.

**Table 7: Major Infrastructure Development Outputs of the Resettlement Programme as at December 31, 1989**

<b>Item</b>	<b>No. of units realised</b>	<b>Units outstanding (planned)</b>
<b>Water supplies</b>		
▪ Boreholes	1 314	-
▪ Protected wells	289	-
<b>Road Network (km)</b>		
▪ Gravelled	875.5	-
▪ Through roads	2 489.0	-
▪ Village access	4 209.8	-
▪ Bridges	-	198
<b>Dip Tanks</b>	323	
<b>Health Facilities</b>		
▪ Clinics	45	-
▪ Medical staff houses	93	-
<b>Educational Facilities</b>		
▪ Classrooms	1 474	(192 schools in all)
▪ Teachers' houses	1 305	-
<b>Rural Service Centres</b>		
▪ Operational	43	-
▪ Operational commercial business stands	151	-
▪ Service industry stands	53	-
▪ Other Govt. staff housing	352	-
<b>Improved Rural housing units</b>		
▪ For the beneficiaries	2 022	-

Source: Gonese 1990, unpublished, pp. 10-11.

### 3.3.2 Production Facilities and Support

While the programme financed physical infrastructure, functional institutions were responsible for personnel recruitment and management, and recurrent costs to service resettlement schemes. Policy provided for agricultural production services, namely,

- agricultural extension, land husbandry and farmer training;
- animal health and
- collective farming, input supply and marketing services.

Housing and offices for respective Agencies (AGRITEX, Veterinary Services and Department of Cooperative Development) would be accommodated at Rural Service Centres. Subsequently other ancillary activities became increasingly important—e.g., tree conservation and general natural resources management represented by the Department of Natural Resources and Forestry Commission.

Agricultural credit has been a critical production service in the context of land redistribution. In terms of policy, the former Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) was to provide credit to enhance farmer productivity in the newly acquired lands. Agricultural credit lending in Phase I is however fraught with varied farmer experiences of contentment and frustration as the corporation experimented on a diversity of lending and recovery approaches and delivery mechanisms—ranging from seasonal/annual group loans to individual short- to medium-term support facilities (GOZ/UK Annual Joint Appraisal Reports 1981-1986). Unique organisational and operational mechanisms for servicing resettlement farmers were tried during the period 1981 and 1988 (under the names of Resettlement Loan Fund; Resettlement Credit Scheme, etc.) before they (the farmers) were incorporated into the mainstream smallholder farming community.

**Table 8: Level of Infrastructural Provision under the Resettlement Programme as of September 1996**

Infrastructure component	Units	Target number	Actual accomplishment	% achievement
Boreholes	No.	3 238	2 940	91
Fencing	Km	19 718	6 510	33
Schools	No.	358	309	86
Clinics	No.	130	108	83
Staff houses	No.	1 035	971	94
Administration blocks	No.	89	71	80
Dips	No.	603	544	90
Land Preparation	Ha.	35 000	29 000	83
Toilets	No.	66 850	23 024	34
Roads	Km	9 496	7 752	82

Source: GOZ 1996, p.10.

**Table 9: Three Tier Schemes: Level of Completion of Infrastructure**

Item	Unit	Target	Actual	Balance	% Complete
Boreholes	No.	74	60	14	81
Windmills	No.	48	49	19	60
Water troughs	No.	18	-	18	0
Reservoirs	No.	22	-	22	0
Piping (PVC)	Km	96	-	96	0
Engine	No.	1	-	1	0
Fencing					
▪ boundary	Km.	1 649	596	1 053	36
▪ paddock	Km	264	160	104	61
Dips					
▪ new	No.	10	-	10	0
▪ repair	No.	5	-	5	0

Source: GOZ 1996, p.21.

Exclusive state funding of infrastructure (as was the case in Phase I) proved expensive to the fiscus as social services and physical infrastructure together accounted for over 65% of the total resettlement costs by 1987/88 (DERUDE 1989). With the onset of the structural adjustment thrust in the late 1980s calling for reduced spending on social services and emphasising cost-recovery and beneficiary contribution-based development strategies, it was not surprising that Government initiated measures in beneficiary selection and service provision that in effect discriminated in favour of those with resources and means to shoulder land development costs and maximise their own productivity with little dependence on state coffers.

### **3.3 Empirical Observations on Scheme Development and Beneficiary Support**

Field visits by the research team revealed that considerable changes have occurred in the organisation, implementation and management of resettlement as stipulated by policy documented in Phase I and outlined above. A reconfiguration of institutions and reassignment of responsibilities has relegated the programme to a mainstream activity of land allocation, agricultural production and social services provision, with as much evident adverse effects on the management of infrastructure and services in existing (Phase I) schemes as serious implications for planning and implementing new resettlement activity (Phase II).

#### **3.3.1 Project Management and Overall Institutional Support**

The project management role previously played by Resettlement Officers has in effect been discontinued, and seems to be filled variously (as circumstances require) by district

administrators, extension workers or the DDF technicians. As all schemes are now incorporated into the Rural District Authorities surrounding them, the streamlining of services and support to resettled farmers is no longer possible (sometimes considered not necessary) as they are invariably now administered from the District centres. The absence of the Resettlement officer also deprives the area and community of the decisive enforcement function that enabled a resident officer to resolve inter-personal conflicts and other practical problems that the extension worker or the distantly-based District Administrator may not be able to tackle. A more critical effect of this absence, however, is the apparent dearth of records, information or data about the affairs of and developments at the schemes—particularly relating to

- settler emplacement status;
- farmers' socio-economic attributes;
- scheme production statistics;
- operations of various stakeholder institutions, etc.

This is all very vital information for evaluating the long term performance and impact of the programme. Some agricultural production data are maintained by locally-based extension workers, yet these are invariably incomplete for the programme<sup>226</sup>.

### **3.3.2 Community Institutions**

In the absence of Resettlement managers beneficiaries have had to play active roles in local scheme administration, constituting management structures that attend to local needs—a development that may help to locally democratise decision-making, but may also be divisive if not properly managed or guided. Such structures tend to be project specific to address local needs and problems and may, where necessary, require assistance in linking up with relevant external services or resources.

Local community structures noted in the schemes visited, ranging from management Committees that undertake internal administrative functions to social groupings acting to promote or safeguard particular farmer interests. Committee operations complement the functions of external service providers, while interest groupings are intended to enhance community cohesion, networks and linkages that consolidate the farmers' welfare, such as relations with national farmers' unions and marketing boards. While clearly diverse in terms of their unique interests or peculiar circumstances, such management structures play a vital role in engendering beneficiary participation in scheme administration, development planning and general local resource management as they provide a crucial means of interaction between schemes, Government and external non-government players.

---

<sup>226</sup> This problem was highlighted during the study team's fieldwork when it became extremely difficult to obtain useful or reliable data in some schemes (particularly under Phase II) where the required data were either non-existent in the absence of a project manager or locally perceived 'sensitive' or confidential.

Table 10 lists some of the community management structures operating in schemes studied, together with their respective functions.

**Table 10: A Classification of Existing Community Management Structures and their Respective Functions**

<b>Community organisational committees</b>	<b>Typical functions and responsibilities</b>	<b>Schemes observed to be operating</b>
Ward / Village Development Committees (WADCO / VIDCO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Area administration and management of community affairs</li> <li>▪ Area Development planning</li> <li>▪ Administrative and political representation at Rural District Council</li> <li>▪ Settlement of disputes and other social conflicts</li> </ul>	All schemes visited
Water Committees (Irrigation Management Committees)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overseeing water allocation and management under irrigation</li> <li>▪ Monitoring irrigation operations and general water application</li> <li>▪ Negotiating for water pricing</li> </ul>	Zananda, Makonese, Mukwasine, Mushandike, Mutambara
Production and Marketing Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Oversee developments and problems in</li> <li>▪ Land preparation and cropping</li> <li>▪ Tillage and equipment hire</li> <li>▪ Input supply</li> <li>▪ Marketing and transport channels</li> <li>▪ Provision of marketing intelligence</li> </ul>	All irrigation and Model B Schemes
Security and Maintenance Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infrastructure maintenance—e.g., fencing, canal network, dip tanks, access roads, etc.</li> <li>▪ Assurance of general security of scheme area</li> <li>▪ Community discipline</li> </ul>	All schemes
Social Services and Development Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community organisation for social services development—e.g., school, clinic, service centre, child care centre construction</li> <li>▪ Ensure smooth running of social and community services</li> </ul>	All Model B and irrigation schemes
Grazing / Livestock Development Committees (particularly active under Model D and Three Tier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Managing and control of grazing resources, including pastures, fencing and water facilities</li> <li>▪ Organising livestock loans, dipping taxes and marketing services</li> <li>▪ Control of livestock and grazing capacity</li> </ul>	Model D and Three Tier schemes
Natural Resources / Forestry Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organising tree planting activities</li> <li>▪ Ensuring general sound natural resource use and management (soil and vegetation protection and forest health)</li> <li>▪ Ensure environmental protection</li> </ul>	All schemes

Source: Data from study team's field visits, January-October 2002.

The established schemes visited confirmed receiving some back-up support and technical services from various Government departments. Except for extension workers and Animal Health Assistants officially housed within the schemes, the Government agents, however, operate from District Centres from which they also service other parts of the Districts. The institutions most frequently listed as being functional in the schemes are AREX (former Agritex); Veterinary Services; DDF (either technicians attending to water (borehole) or road maintenance problems or as representing the former Resettlement management function), and Forestry Commission. The frequency and quality of service provided was however difficult to ascertain, especially because of long distances now travelled and wider areas covered by the officials. It is generally accepted that the provision of services by different Government institutions has deteriorated significantly due to depleted state resources and the de-concentration of provisions to resettlement scheme areas. Even those officials still able to service the schemes have to cope with inadequate financial resources in trying to satisfy their mobility and subsistence requirements and end up visiting the schemes less frequently than they would prefer.

### **3.4 Infrastructure Provision and Support Services in Phase I**

As noted earlier, the mid-1990s mark the climax in Phase I of Zimbabwe's land redistribution programme in terms of both beneficiary emplacement and infrastructural development. Thereafter, depleted land availability and competing demands for limited state financial resources in the wake of economic structural adjustment prompted a noticeable reduction in both budgetary allocations for, and physical development outputs from, the programme. While policies guiding service provision remained applicable, the means for accomplishing these dwindled significantly, forcing Government to consider complementary other ways of responding to the programme demands. A major ensuing policy response was the de-emphasis on the provision of infrastructure prior to beneficiary emplacement. In the absence of the anticipated external (donor) funding to support the Inception Phase Plan of 1999 to 2000, Government adopted the fast track (accelerated) programme that sought to hasten land acquisition and maximise beneficiary emplacement without immediate provision of commensurate physical infrastructure; physical developments were to follow later in complement of the resettled communities' immediate access to and use of the land resource. In terms of the new policy, only basic infrastructure was to be provided at the time of land allocation, covering:

- farm and village surveys
- pegging of arable plots and homesteads
- opening up of access roads
- sinking of deep wells and boreholes
- cattle dips (repairing or construction)

- land preparation and crop packages for half a hectare per family<sup>227</sup> (GOZ 2000 p.5).<sup>228</sup>

In contrast to Phase I when the implementation process was highly centralised and streamlined, with well-defined financial resource allocation and accounting responsibilities, fast track in effect decentralised land allocation and infrastructure support to Provinces and Districts, allowing for a simultaneous implementation process country-wide that mobilised virtually all Government agencies and various interest groups to participate in the massive programme. As it allowed for greater political play and control in its execution at the local levels than Phase I, fast track ultimately focused more on the allocation or redistribution of the land resource and less on the infrastructure and supportive framework and services that could facilitate or complement effective agricultural productivity and consolidate community development.

## 4. EMERGING ISSUES FOR POLICY CONSIDERATION

### 4.1 Identified Problem Areas and Constraints

Table 11 summarises the range of problems that face resettlement beneficiaries under the various models and seriously inhibit their operational efficiency and productivity in farming. While there are obvious peculiarities among models, there are several constraints that are common and appear fundamental in their impact on farmers ability to utilise the allocated land and provide the desirable robust foundation for the agriculture industry. Most significant among these are tenure insecurity in the wake of contested allocations or counter claims by rival beneficiaries; weak or absence of supportive production services, infrastructure and credit facilities and a general lack of capitalisation. Experiences during fast track have also underlined the operational difficulties of the programme in terms of possible disjointed implementation and undefined accountability and responsibilities.

---

<sup>227</sup> These items were to be made and seen in consistency with the earlier (Phase I) policy that was more comprehensive and detailed in its coverage of provisions since the fast track approach ‘is a component of the overall National Land Reform and Resettlement Programme...an accelerated implementation of existing Government approaches with emphasis on compulsory acquisition rather than focusing on land offered under the willing-seller, willing-buyer principle’ (GOZ 2000 p. 2).

<sup>228</sup> The rest of the services were to be provided ‘in subsequent phases, through the Ministerial/Departmental recurrent budgets and PSIP allocations ... including

- Tenure arrangements (certificates of occupancy, village certificates, leases and upgrades)
- Secondary infrastructure (schools, service centres, clinics, staff housing, energy and communications)
- Extension services (including personnel from AGRITEX and the Department of Veterinary Services)
- Agricultural credit
- Marketing services
- Social support plan
- Conservation matters’ (ibid.)

**Table 11: Priority Requirements for Different Categories of Resettlement Farmers**

<b>Farmer category/model</b>	<b>Identified problems</b>	<b>Proposed solutions</b>
Communal Farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inadequate land</li> <li>▪ Poor infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Lack of draught power</li> <li>▪ Lack of credit facilities and productive inputs</li> <li>▪ Inadequate support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acquire and redistribute more agricultural land to decongest communal areas</li> <li>▪ Involve more players in provision of infrastructure and productive services (e.g., roads, bridges, marketing depots, etc)</li> <li>▪ Institute cost recovery measures to raise maintenance resources</li> <li>▪ Encourage complementary support packages by private financial institutions through suitable and effective incentives</li> </ul>
Established (Phase I) Schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of management</li> <li>▪ Inadequate production support</li> <li>▪ Poor and unmaintained infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Lack of credit facilities and productive inputs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restore scheme management, programme accountability and support services</li> <li>▪ Activate and enable utilisation of existing infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Institute cost recovery measures to cater for effective maintenance</li> <li>▪ Enhance beneficiary participation in scheme development</li> </ul>
Model B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of management</li> <li>▪ Poor group cohesion</li> <li>▪ Poor infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Lack of productive support</li> <li>▪ Lack of credit facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Modify operation plans to introduce individual farming</li> <li>▪ Resuscitate infrastructure and productive facilities</li> <li>▪ Revive and continue to provide extension and training services</li> </ul>
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of infrastructure and social services</li> <li>▪ Weak production support services</li> <li>▪ Lack of credit, marketing and input supply services</li> <li>▪ Insecurity of tenure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Involve more players in infrastructure provision and introduce cost recovery in services</li> <li>▪ Provide training and extension to enhance farming skills</li> <li>▪ Institute credit support at affordable rates</li> <li>▪ Enforce adherence to stipulated settlement policy</li> </ul>
A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tenure insecurity</li> <li>▪ Lack of commitment</li> <li>▪ Weak supportive credit, marketing and input supply services</li> <li>▪ Lack of capitalisation and productive infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training for management skills</li> <li>▪ Institute credit support at affordable rates</li> <li>▪ Define and confirm acceptable tenure systems to enhance commitment, investment, productivity and development</li> </ul>
Three Tier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land shortage</li> <li>▪ Low beneficiary interest</li> <li>▪ Poor capitalisation and weak infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Inadequate support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Acquire more suitable land in proximity to communal areas</li> <li>▪ Facilitate provision of infrastructure provision through involvement of other players</li> <li>▪ Provide and strengthen credit and marketing facilities targeted at commercialising livestock production</li> </ul>
Irrigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Unviable plot sizes</li> <li>▪ Land shortage</li> <li>▪ Expensive water costs</li> <li>▪ Inadequate representation in water management institutions</li> <li>▪ Free riders in control and management of water use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construct more dams and plan and exploit identified irrigation potential</li> <li>▪ Improve on irrigated plot sizes to make activity more viable</li> <li>▪ Introduce and adapt appropriate irrigation technology that is cost effective</li> <li>▪ Improve farmers' representation on water management institutions</li> <li>▪ Strengthen capacity and effectiveness of local management committees in dealing with free riders in water use control</li> </ul>
Small-scale Commercial Settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Poor capitalisation</li> <li>▪ Low beneficiary commitment</li> <li>▪ Poor infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Lack of support services</li> <li>▪ Tenure insecurity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define and confirm acceptable tenure systems to encourage commitment and productivity</li> <li>▪ Introduce appropriate productive infrastructure and services</li> <li>▪ Encourage provision of favourable credit investment capital packages to complement own resources</li> </ul>

## **4.2. Summary of Suggested Recommendations**

The following areas are put forward as considerations that need to be examined and implemented in order to address the identified problems; create a conducive environment for enhancing the effectiveness of the land redistribution process, and consolidate the productivity of both resettled and prospective farmers in utilising the allocated land resources.

### **4.2.1. Capacity Enhancement for the Resettled Farmers**

For those already settled there is clear need for Government to provide security of tenure over allocated land, as a means for both enhancing their commitment and enabling them to invest in the development of the holdings. Their agricultural production and management skills also need to be developed and consolidated through targeted training and extension programmes to ensure productive and sustainable use of the land.

### **4.2.2. Improved Criteria for Beneficiary Selection**

For planned and future schemes clear beneficiary selection criteria need to be adopted that ensures fairness, transparency and easy application and implementation, guided by the objective of ensuring that the land resource is held equitably among the country's citizens and utilised efficiently and effectively for the national benefit. It appears essential that in the process of achieving equitable redistribution, identification and selection for allocation should aim at affording access to and use of the scarce and finite resource only those with the best prospects and potentials of utilising it effectively and productively. Only competent and

#### **Box 6: Recommended beneficiary selection criteria to ensure maximum land and farmer productivity**

Consideration for selection for land allocation under the resettlement programme should be made only to:

- those farmers who have demonstrated high levels of competence in terms of production and productivity in their present communal lands and whose current main constraint to increase their production is shortage of land.
- those people who have demonstrated competence through the management of commercial farm enterprises as employed farm managers.
- those persons who have undergone the required training in agriculture at certificate, diploma or degree level and have an interest in farming. Such persons should, however, undergo supervised on-farm training before they are let out loose on their own.
- those Zimbabwean nationals with both the private means and interest to pursue agriculture as an economic activity and who show proven willingness to invest in the activity as a chosen pre-occupation.

*Such a selection framework should be complemented by the implementation of an appropriate support system comprising training and extension, credit, input supply and marketing services that ensure agricultural productivity, economic viability of operations as well as the long-term sustainability of the land resource.*

potentially competent farmers should be allocated land under the resettlement programme. Prospectors and others either not committed to or capable of utilising the land efficiently and effectively should be excluded from the public programme and instead restricted to private land markets. Recommended priority considerations aimed at maximising potential of success for the redistribution and resettlement programme—based on the cardinal principle of potential or proven competence—are listed in Box 6.

#### **4.2.3. Rationalising Fast Track through Provision of Infrastructure and Support Services**

The absence of infrastructure under fast track not only deprives the resettled communities of access to essential infrastructure and social services, but also seriously constrains their productivity and development, ultimately retarding the desired economic growth of the affected rural areas. The starting point in redressing this situation is the confirmation of land allocations done under the process, ensuring that demarcations made are formalised and accorded official recognition through recognised tenure security.

As with the experiences of the mid-1980s when accelerated resettlement schemes were upgraded (see Section 3.2.1), it is as essential as it is possible to rationalise resource utilisation, services provision and infrastructural development through enhanced support in order to realise the full potential and productivity of both the settled land and beneficiaries. Infrastructure provided should be complemented by the introduction and adoption of cost recovery measures that ensure efficient and rational use and suitable maintenance capacity.

#### **4.2.4. Complementary Non-state Financing**

In addition to the operational demands of the massive fast track Programme in terms of multiple participating organisations and agents and the requisite coordination processes, there have been overwhelming budgetary needs for affording corresponding support services to resettled communities. The scale of the programme entails resource requirements that effectively surpass state capacity and would suggest a clear need for mobilising and facilitating the participation of both private sector players and beneficiaries to cater for initial development of infrastructure and subsequent maintenance. Greater participation of non-state players in the programme reduces Government's fiscal burden and facilitates more effective priority setting and resource allocation while also instilling a sense of pride and self-reliance in the beneficiaries. Experience in both phases of the programme has shown that considerable scope exists for the resettled communities to contribute their own labour and local materials towards the development of their areas; at the same time Phase I also abounds with empirical evidence of local and external non-governmental organisations that contributed immensely financial and material support for the development of infrastructure and services in the established schemes.

#### **4.2.5. Streamlining Implementation Responsibilities and Accountability**

To avoid confusion in the implementation process, reduce resource wastage and facilitate co-operation as well as coordination among stakeholders, there is need for streamlining the

operational framework under which the programme is executed. A clear and transparent implementation arrangement also ensures that beneficiaries are appropriately informed and are able to effectively play their expected roles, without unwarranted uncertainty or ignorance. There is also need to adopt an effective framework for scheme management, programme accountability and implementation coordination that would enable the achievement of output levels comparable to Phase I.

#### **4.2.6. Emphasis on and Investment in Productive Infrastructure, Support Services, and Water Development for Irrigation Farming**

The provision of social services needs to be suitably guided by considerations of productivity and long-term sustainability of not only the resettled communities and their environment, but also the national economic resources involved. As an activity involving structural changes in ownership, operation and investment patterns, the process of land resettlement and redistribution needs to develop and establish a firm foundation that makes it an attractive and sustainable alternative to the preceding situation. Fast track has, within a very short period of time, in effect enabled a wholesale transfer of high value and high potential land and water resources from the white commercial farming sector to predominantly smallholder black farmers; a correspondingly robust framework that effectively supports the new farmers and ensures their long-term growth and viability is essential. Such a framework would necessitate the formulation or designing of a package of productive services and inputs that enhances the farmers' effectiveness—encompassing the crucial ingredients like extension and training; credit and input services, and marketing infrastructure. Given the ecological conditions of the bulk of the areas affected by the land transfers (particularly in terms of rainfall receipt and variability), the development of water storage infrastructure for small to medium irrigation farming should be an integral component of such a package, buoyed on enhanced private sector and beneficiaries' own resources.

## **REFERENCES**

- ARDA. 1999. Unpublished. Commercial Farm Settlement Scheme: A Report on Progress, Harare
- Bratton, M. 1994. 'Land redistribution, 1980-1990'. In *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, edited by M. Rukuni and C.K. Eicher. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications.
- Gonese, F.T. 1990. Unpublished. An analysis of the Resettlement Programme: Public Policy: Progress and Prospects in the Policy of Land Redistribution.
- GOZ. 2001. Model A2 Resettlement Scheme.
- GOZ. 2000. Accelerated Land Reform and Resettlement Implementation Plan: 'Fast Track'.
- GOZ. 1999a. National Land Policy Framework Paper.
- GOZ. 1999b. Inception Phase Framework Plan: 1999 to 2000. An Implementation Plan of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme—Phase 2.
- GOZ. 1996. Policy Paper on Land Redistribution and Resettlement in Zimbabwe. Harare

- GOZ. 1980, 1983 and 1985 editions of *Intensive Resettlement: Policies and Procedures*.
- GOZ/United Kingdom. 1981 to 1986. Annual Joint Appraisal Reports on Resettlement.
- Mhlanga, L. 1995. Unpublished. ARDA Settlement Scheme.
- Moyo, S. 1986. 'The Land Question'. In *Zimbabwe: The Political Economy of Transition*, edited by I. Mandaza. Dakar: CODE SRIA.
- Moyo, S. 1995. *The Land Question in Zimbabwe*. Harare: SAPES Book Publications.
- Mukora, C.M. 1984. Unpublished. The Resettlement of Collective Farming Cooperatives.
- Mushuku, A. 2001. Unpublished. Honours Dissertation. 'Sugar Cane Production in the Irrigated Small-Scale Commercial Sector: The Case of Chipiwa Irrigation Scheme in Mkwasine'. University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- Rukuni, M. 1994. 'The Prime Movers of Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution'. In *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, edited by M. Rukuni and C.K. Eicher. University of Zimbabwe Publications, Harare.
- Rukuni, M. and Eicher, C.K., editors. 1994 *Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, University of Zimbabwe Publications, Harare.
- Spear, P. 1995. Unpublished. Chipiwa Settlement Scheme: A Decade of Success, Harare

—Chapter 10—

# Comparative Economic Performance of Zimbabwe's Resettlement Models

**Bill Kinsey**

Department of Agrarian and Labour Studies, Institute of Development Studies,  
University of Zimbabwe

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter compares economic performance across a range of Zimbabwe's resettlement models. The point needs to be made at the outset, however, that a comprehensive evaluation of the economic performance of the models included in the study is impossible. Even in the more mature schemes, Government has failed to collect data systematically that would allow such an evaluation; and there is simply no performance data for the schemes established more recently. Moreover, while the fieldwork under the Alternative Models Study (AMS) was designed to permit comparison across schemes and models, there were weaknesses in the fieldwork that restrict the depth of analysis.<sup>229</sup> Nevertheless, the data collected through the fieldwork do capture important elements, and it is the task of this chapter to summarise the more salient differences across the models. In cases where the data cast doubt on the conclusions drawn, this is noted at the appropriate point in the presentation.

Several points should be made at the outset. We attempt to evaluate the performance of resettlement models—and not that of the households that find themselves living on a scheme set up according to a particular model. The chain of causality thus visualises the various resettlement models as enabling—or not—families to be 'successful' in agriculture by realising potentials crippled by the previous landholding regime. Our underlying premise is that there are likely to be significant differences in the way the various models enable people to be successful in agriculture. We assume the causality lies in this direction, and not the reverse—where the talent and energies of farmers would make a model look 'successful' no matter how flawed the model.

Eleven resettlement schemes, representing five different models or variants, were visited in April and May 2002. These schemes are identified in Table 1.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, a comparative assessment is made of the performance of the schemes in terms of selected outcomes insofar as these can be compared

---

<sup>229</sup> Details of methodology and fieldwork are contained in the final report of the Alternative Models Study (AMS 2003).

across schemes at this time. The more recently established schemes, of course, are still in a transitional phase and have not had time to realise their potential. Second, attention turns to analysis of factors that may shed some light on the outcomes observed.

**Table 1: Schemes Visited by the Alternative Models Study Team**

Name of scheme	Model	Identifier	Location	Year established	Agro-ecological region	No. of households interviewed
Gutsaruzhinji	B (modified)	1982-B	Midlands/Shurugwi	1982	3	21
Mavhumashava	A2	1996-A2	Midlands/Shurugwi	1996	3	11
Makonese	Irrigated	1973-Ir	Masvingo/Chivi	1973	4	18
Mkwasine	Irrigated	1981-Ir	Masvingo/Chiredzi	1981	5	18
Mushandike	Irrigated	1986-Ir	Masvingo/Masvingo	1986	3/4	27
Nyagundi	A1	1980-A1	Manicaland/Mutare	1980	3	20
Nyamazura	A1 and C	1982-A1	Manicaland	1982	3	20
Zananda	Irrigated	1988-Ir	Midlands/Shurugwi	1988	4	16
Zhaugwe	A1	1997-A1	Midlands/Shurugwi	1997	3	8
Lancashire Circle V	Fast-track	2000-F1	Midlands/Shurugwi	2000	3	15
Runde	Fast-track	2000-F2	Midlands/Zvishavane	2000	3	15
Brooklands			Midlands/Shurugwi	1997	3	

Note: The identifiers, which combine the model with the year the scheme was established, are used in the graphs that follow.

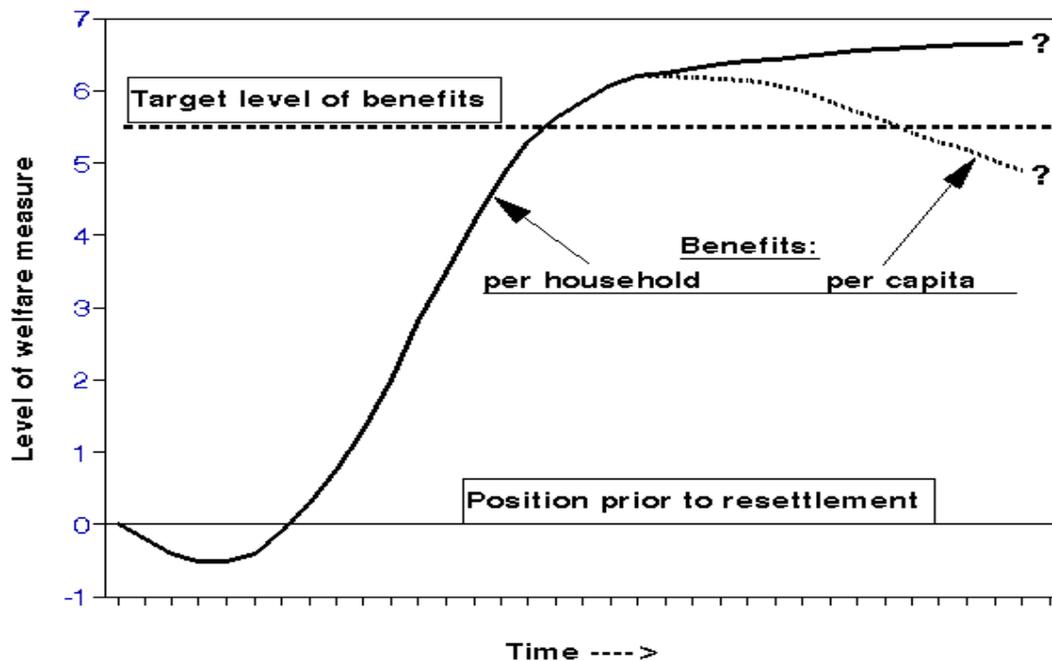
## 2. 'OVERALL' PERFORMANCE

Given the vagaries of agriculture, it is not wise to use farm incomes as a benchmark against which to assess performance—whether long-term or seasonal. Incomes are so positively correlated with the amount and timing of rainfall and with other exogenous factors, such as inputs and labour supply, that a single season's income may be more a reflection of luck than of skill or performance. Contemporary development theory argues that farmers—in the face of an unpredictable environment—do not attempt to stabilise income in any event. Rather what they seek to do is to avoid negative shocks to consumption through strategies that make available in lean years the surplus production and income from good years. Thus, they may store physical stocks of foodstuffs, hold cash in the form of savings, or build a mutual support network by assisting others in difficult times. They may also accumulate a variety of assets in good times in order to be able to draw upon them in unfavourable seasons.

Given that our portfolio of schemes includes some established prior to independence as well as some created only since 2000, it is useful to have a common conceptual framework upon which to hang the evaluation. Figure 1 draws upon resettlement experience internationally

and within Zimbabwe to construct an idealised trajectory of welfare following resettlement—whether on managed schemes or cases of spontaneous resettlement.

**Figure 1: The Trajectory of Welfare Following Resettlement**



Experience shows that welfare levels are almost universally lower following resettlement than before. The period following resettlement is one of stress and adjustment from which most—but not all—households will recover. There is then an upturn as farmers complete the post-relocation adjustment process and begin to reap benefits from their enhanced resource base. As experience accumulates and collaborative efforts begin, benefits continue to grow—often quite rapidly. At some point, as the potential of the resource base and the technologies employed are more fully realised, the rate of growth of benefits slows. Depending upon what happens subsequently in the realms of technology and markets, the growth of benefits may level off, or even begin to decline. If the rest of the economy is not dynamic enough to absorb the growing population in the settlement sub-sector in the longer term, then benefits per capita will certainly decline as resettled households increase in size. Finally, it should be noted that the shape of the curve tracking the growth of welfare is extremely sensitive both to specific interventions—such as the provision of effective extension, ensuring timely delivery of inputs, etc.—and to the wider economic environment.

Guided by this conceptual underpinning, then, we begin our evaluation with an assessment of performance in this broad sense.

*Asset accumulation.* The first indicator we examine is the accumulation of assets. Although we avoid using a single season's farming income as our primary indicator, we postulate at the outset that schemes that score well in terms of asset accumulation and consumption will be those with surplus incomes that could be used for these purposes. As a preliminary piece of evidence on this point, Table 2 gives the actual uses to which the proceeds from crop and livestock sales were put following sales from the 2001 harvest.

Revenue from both cropping and livestock sales is used primarily to purchase food and to pay for educational expenses. Consumption claims about 40% of revenue from cropping but only about a quarter of that from livestock sales. However, something over a quarter of reported uses for crop revenue relate to acquisition of assets and/or reinvestment in the farming—or another—business, although this proportion is much smaller for livestock sales.

**Table 2: Main Uses for Crop and Livestock Revenue, 2001-2002**

Stipulated use	Crops		Livestock	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
<b>Consumption</b>				
Purchase food	107	34.5	19	25.0
General purchases	16	5.2	1	1.3
General expenditure for children	2	0.6	0	0
Subtotal	125	40.3	20	26.3
<b>Investment</b>				
Purchase assets	40	12.9	6	7.9
Agricultural inputs	29	9.4	2	2.6
Reinvested in business	12	3.9	4	5.3
Subtotal	81	26.2	12	15.8
<b>Other</b>				
Education	83	26.8	20	26.3
Pay for services	7	2.3	3	3.9
Saved	7	2.3	0	0
Health	5	1.6	4	5.3
Other*	2	0.6	17	22.2
Subtotal	104	33.6	44	57.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

\*For livestock, the reasons for selling include: paying bridewealth, assisting relatives, paying taxes or levies, and the age or health of the animal.

The fieldwork gathered information on three types of moveable assets: farm equipment and implements, household durables, and a third, residual category that includes vehicles, bicycles, grinding mills, solar installations and so on. Respondents were asked two questions:

how many of each item they possessed when they first resettled and how many they had on the day of the interview.

Preliminary analysis performed a simple count of the number of items in each category and calculated the change in the number of items over the period since resettlement. Mean and median values were then calculated for all households in all schemes and for each scheme individually. The results for all households are set out in Table 3.

**Table 3: Representative Values for Movable Assets, All Households, 2002**

Category	Median	Mean	Std. dev.
<b>Farm equipment</b>			
In early 2002 ( <i>no. of items</i> )	26.5	29.8	21.2
Percentage change since resettlement	8.0	239.6	578.6
<b>Household durables</b>			
In early 2002 ( <i>no. of items</i> )	30.0	40.0	33.1
Percentage change since resettlement	41.0	320.7	852.0
<b>Other equipment</b>			
In early 2002 ( <i>no. of items</i> )	4.0	4.4	3.8
Percentage change since resettlement	1.0	89.5	203.6

Source: 2002 AMS fieldwork.

The next task was to compare asset ownership across schemes and to identify the schemes that stand out in terms of both possession and acquisition of assets. The outcomes for these schemes are shown in Table 4. Two irrigation schemes—Mkwasine and Mushandike—had the highest levels of ownership of farming equipment in 2002, but the ownership of equipment appears to have been more evenly distributed across households in Mushandike, as indicated by the relative values of the median and mean. A model B scheme—Gutsaruzhinji—has made the greatest percentage gains in terms of equipment ownership, although these gains were made from a relatively modest initial endowment. In terms of ownership of household durables, the Zhaugwe villages appear to be not only extraordinarily well-equipped but also to have made the greatest gains over time.<sup>230</sup> Finally, Mkwasine has the largest holdings of equipment in the other category, while Mavhumashava and Nyagundi have recorded the greatest gains.

Given earlier comments regarding the variability within the data set, the information in Table 4 has been presented with both median and mean values. It can be seen that the choice of

<sup>230</sup> It should be noted, however, that only eight households were interviewed from Zhaugwe villages, thus no results from this particular scheme can be considered representative of the scheme as a whole.

summary statistic selects different schemes as ‘best performers’ for farming equipment and other assets but makes no difference in the case of household durables.

A more comprehensive picture of the variability across the different schemes can be had from Table 5, which sets out the median values for ownership of capital asset items across all schemes, both aggregated and individually. Also included in the table are the median values for the percentage changes in asset ownership since resettlement. It is readily apparent just how enormous the differences among schemes are.

The tabular presentation in Tables 3 to 5 can be somewhat difficult to absorb. Accordingly, a graphical approach is taken in Figure 2, which plots asset ownership in two dimensions—the ownership of farm equipment and other durable nonhousehold items (most of which assist in processing or marketing in some way). For example, items such as vehicles and solar panels are included under the latter heading.

**Table 4: Schemes with Greatest Asset Ownership, Median and Mean Values**

Asset category and scheme	Indicator	
	Median	Mean
<b>Farm equipment</b>		
<u>In early 2002 (number)</u>		
Mkwasine	36.5	<b>52.0</b>
Mushandike	<b>38.5</b>	35.1
<u>Change since resettlement (%)</u>		
Gutsaruzhinji	<b>350.0</b>	<b>497.1</b>
<b>Household durables</b>		
<u>In early 2002 (number)</u>		
Zhaugwe	<b>105.5</b>	<b>92.6</b>
<u>Change since resettlement (%)</u>		
Nyamazura	<b>350.0</b>	<b>1023.3</b>
<b>Other equipment</b>		
<u>In early 2002 (number)</u>		
Mkwasine	<b>7.0</b>	<b>8.7</b>
<u>Change since resettlement (%)</u>		
Mavhumashava	200.0	<b>309.3</b>
Nyagundi	<b>300.0</b>	281.8

Source: 2002 AMS fieldwork.

Note: Highest values are shown in bold.

**Table 5: Physical Assets and Percentage Changes in Ownership, Median Values, by Scheme and Overall**

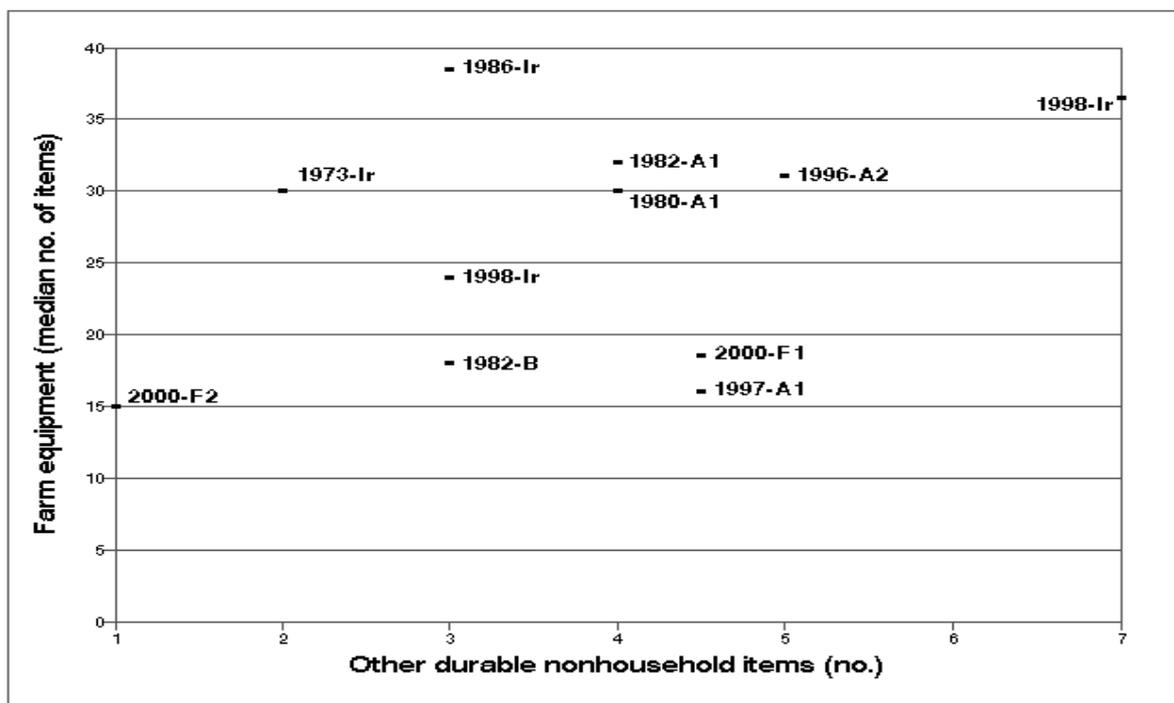
Scheme	Farming equipment		Household durables		Other assets	
	2002	Change (%)	2002	Change (%)	2002	Change (%)
Overall	26.5	41.7	30.0	14.3	4.0	0.0
Gutsaruzhinji	18.0	<b>350.0</b>	34.0	<b>466.7</b>	3.0	200.0
Mavhumashava	31.0	145.5	27.0	122.7	5.0	200.0
Makonese	30.0	<u>0.0</u>	25.0	<u>0.0</u>	2.0	<u>0.0</u>
Mkwasine	36.5	<u>0.0</u>	57.5	<u>0.0</u>	<b>7.0</b>	<u>0.0</u>
Mushandike	<b>38.5</b>	<u>0.0</u>	19.0	2.7	3.0	<u>0.0</u>
Nyagundi	30.0	235.0	26.0	414.3	4.0	<b>300.0</b>
Nyamazura	32.0	191.7	29.0	350.0	4.0	75.0
Zananda	24.0	60.0	36.0	71.8	3.0	45.8
Zhaugwe	16.0	71.2	<b>105.5</b>	68.8	4.5	10.0
Lancashire Circle V	18.5	<u>0.0</u>	22.5	<u>0.0</u>	4.5	<u>0.0</u>
Runde	<u>15.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>	31.0	<u>0.0</u>	<u>1.0</u>	<u>0.0</u>

Source: 2002 AMS fieldwork.

Notes: See text for method of construction of variables. Highest values are in bold and lowest are underlined.

The data plotted in Figure 2 confirm the ability of farmers in the older-established, larger-scale irrigation schemes to accumulate farming equipment. Mushandike and Mkwasine are the outstanding performers. The small-scale scheme—Zananda—lies in an intermediate position. The four schemes with the lowest levels of farm equipment include the three most recently established (including the two fast-track schemes), the one Model B scheme, and the most recent Model A scheme. The pattern for other durable assets again attests to the ability of Mkwasine farmers to build capital assets and suggests that those resettled more recently—Mavhumashava, Lancashire Circle V and Zhaugwe—enter schemes already fairly well endowed with these assets. Runde, however, is clearly the least well-capitalised scheme of all. The two early A1 schemes cluster together in both dimensions.

**Figure 2: Median Ownership of Farm Equipment and other Durable Nonhousehold Items, by Scheme, 2002**



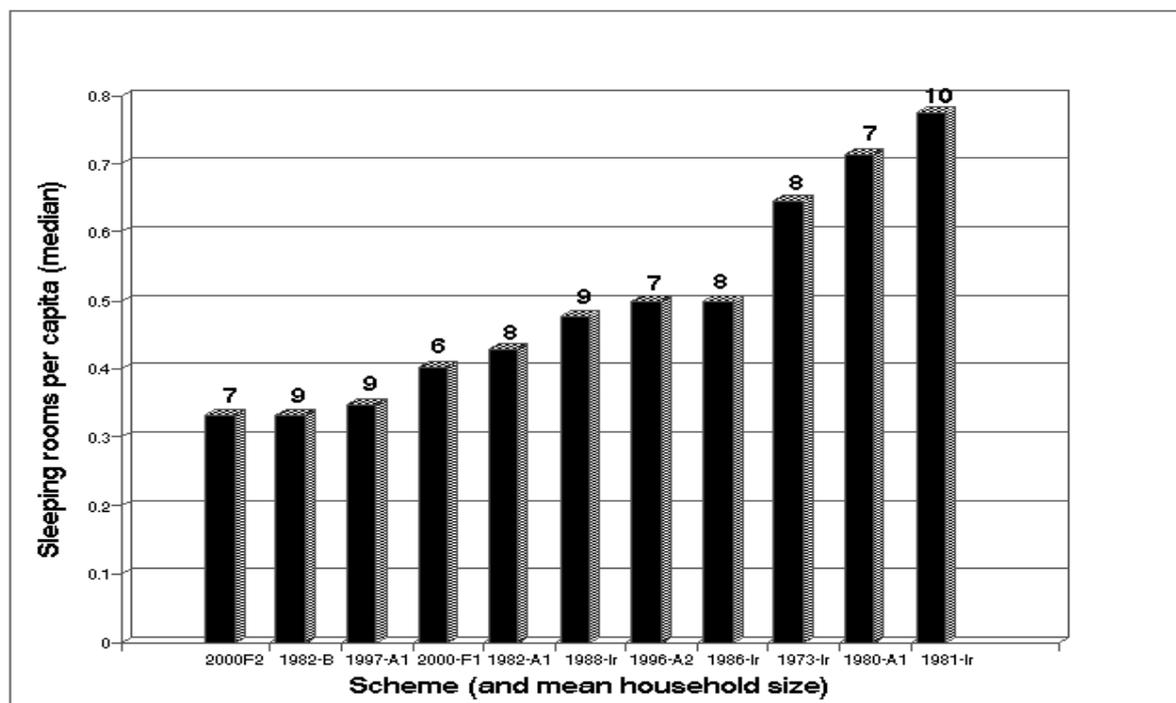
Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Note: See Table 1 for the names corresponding with the scheme identifiers.

The AMS team also collected data on fixed assets in the form of housing and other structures, and this data can be used to gain a somewhat different perspective on asset accumulation. Recorded along with the data on structures was information on how many rooms in each structure are used for sleeping. This information is important in two senses. First, it tells us the total number of such rooms and thus provides an indicator of investment in residences. Second, when considered in parallel with household size, it gives us the number of rooms used for sleeping per household member. This latter dimension is important in a wider development sense because crowded sleeping quarters are both an indicator of poverty and more conducive to the spread of disease. We therefore use this second concept as a simultaneous indicator both of asset accumulation in the form of housing and of the social adequacy of the family's stock of housing.

Eight of the eleven schemes have on average one sleeping room or less for two persons (Figure 3). Three schemes—the model B, one of the fast-track schemes, and the most recent A1—have on average three people sleeping per room. The adequacy of provision of sleeping facilities seems independent of household size. Mkwasine, with the largest mean household size, has also invested most in sleeping facilities. Along with Mkwasine, Nyagundi and Makonese have also invested relatively significantly in sleeping facilities.

**Figure 3: Median Number of Rooms Used for Sleeping, per Household Member, by Household Size**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

In Zimbabwe’s resettlement areas, farmers do not typically indulge in distress sales of capital assets in times of acute stress. They do however dispose of biological capital in the form of livestock, which serve an important function in many ways—not least as a buffer to help maintain consumption over time. (Kinsey, Burger and Gunning 1998). For this reason, information was collected on the size, composition and value of livestock holdings in early 2002. Selected indicators for all households interviewed are displayed in Table 6.

**Table 6: Livestock Holdings, All Households, 2002**

Item	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	Maximum
Total bovines owned ( <i>n</i> )	188	7.7	6	8.8	85
Total smallstock owned ( <i>n</i> )	188	26.8	16	43.7	400
Total value of bovines (Z\$)	186	151,859	101,000	165,739	903,000
Total value of smallstock (Z\$)	184	19,432	10,250	28,414	212,250
Total value of all livestock (Z\$)	183	173,818	125,400	175,471	1,115,250

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Notes: Smallstock includes goats, donkeys and all poultry. Mean values include those households with no livestock assets. Minima in all cases are zero.

What is immediately striking from Table 6 is how unevenly distributed livestock ownership is among resettled farmers. In all cases, the standard deviation is larger than the mean and the mean exceeds the median—and in some instances dramatically so. The figures imply little reliance can be placed on the mean values for livestock ownership across all models. It might reasonably be surmised, however, that such large variation has its origins in the aggregation of irrigated with non-irrigated resettlement schemes. Farmers in irrigated schemes practice an intensive form of agriculture and may well have less time and inclination for comparatively extensive forms of livestock management, or even for intensive approaches such as poultry-rearing. Moreover, the regulations to which farmers in irrigation schemes are subject normally prohibit the keeping of largestock within the scheme, at least at certain times of the year.

This hypothesis can be explored by repeating the earlier exercise of identifying those individual schemes that stand out in each category. The results of this exercise are set out in Table 7.

**Table 7: Livestock Holdings, Individual Scheme Performance, 2002**

Item	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	Maximum
<b>Total bovines owned (no.)</b>					
Mkwesine	18	10.3	0	20.7	<b>85</b>
Zhaugwe	8	<b>14.3</b>	<b>13</b>	7.6	26
<b>Total smallstock owned (no.)</b>					
Mavhumashava	11	26.3	<b>26</b>	14.5	43
Mkwesine	18	<b>75.0</b>	20.0	119.0	<b>400</b>
<b>Total value of bovines (Z\$)</b>					
Zhaugwe	8	<b>324,255</b>	<b>307,900</b>	203,347	665,000
Mkwesine	18	66,944	0	21,962	<b>903,000</b>
<b>Total value of smallstock (Z\$)</b>					
Makonese	18	36,831	<b>27,150</b>	24,934	106,500
Mkwesine	18	<b>43,319</b>	10,000	65,984	<b>212,250</b>
<b>Total value of all livestock (Z\$)</b>					
Zhaugwe	8	<b>338,223</b>	<b>318,400</b>	211,265	702,800
Mkwesine	18	110,264	10,000	263,142	<b>1,115,250</b>

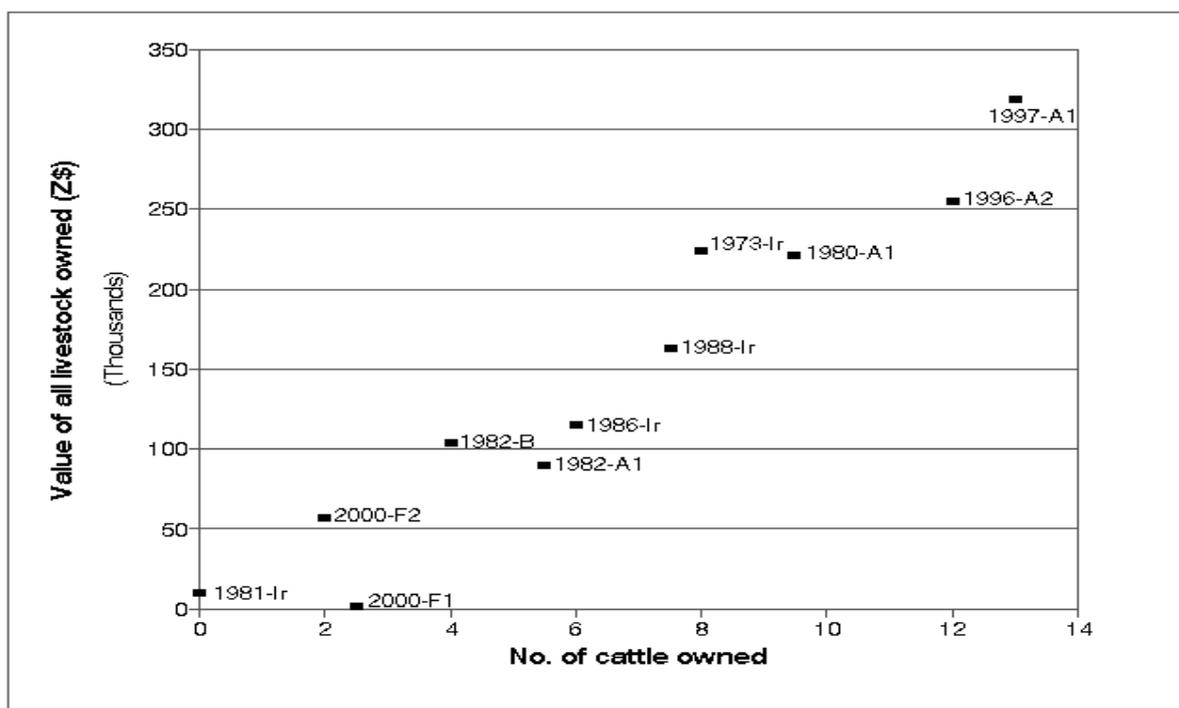
Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Notes: Smallstock includes goats, donkeys and all poultry. Figures in bold are the highest values for the entire sample.

The figures in Table 7 reveal dominant performances in livestock assets by two schemes: one irrigated—Mkwasine, and one rainfed—Zhaugwe.<sup>231</sup> The mean results for Mkwasine, however, are unrepresentative, since over 60% of respondents own no cattle at all and the median number of cattle owned is zero, while the largest cattle herd is 85 beasts. A more meaningful way to compare schemes in terms of livestock holdings is shown in Figure 4, which plots median cattle ownership against the median value of all livestock owned. Here, Mkwasine ranks lowest, while the two fast-track schemes do only slightly better. It is the two most recently established A1 and A2 schemes—Mavhumashava and Zhaugwe—that rank most highly on bovine assets, an indication that farmers in these schemes were already well-endowed with cattle when they entered the schemes.

Average values notwithstanding, 24% of resettled households reported owning no cattle in early 2002, while 20% also reported owning no smallstock and poultry.

**Figure 4: Median Values for Cattle Ownership and Total Value of Livestock, All Schemes, 2002**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

*Consumption.* If households generate cash surpluses, they have the choice of investing them in capital assets to generate future income, in education for family members or of spending

<sup>231</sup> It is striking that the farmers interviewed in Mkwasine keep 80% of their cattle off the irrigation scheme. Farmers on two other irrigated schemes—Mushandike and Zananda—however, keep all their cattle on the scheme.

the surplus on immediate consumption.<sup>232</sup> The previous section examined the acquisition of capital assets. This section assesses differences in consumption across schemes. The procedure utilised can be summarised as follows.

Ideally, consumption is measured on a per-capita basis. Even better, it is measured using units adjusted in terms of adult-equivalents. That is, all comparisons are made in terms of consumption units calculated in relation to a ‘standard’ adult unit, usually taken as an adult male of working age. Thus, children, women and the elderly are treated as some fractional equivalent to the standard. Both approaches are used here. First, we work with per-capita measures that treat all resident members of the household the same. This procedure may, of course, make households with large numbers of the very young or the very old appear worse off in per-capita consumption terms than they actually are. Thus, as a second step, we recalculate consumption—in expenditure terms—based on adult-equivalents.

Household sizes vary significantly across the schemes examined. The mean size is 8.1 resident persons per household, with a standard deviation of 3.7 (Table 8). The range is from one to twenty persons.<sup>233</sup>

A measure of total consumption is defined to comprise three components as follows. First, total household expenditure on 18 foods or food categories is calculated for the month preceding the interview. Second, market values are attached to the food consumed out of the household’s own production for the previous month. Finally, comparable valuations are done for ten categories of non-food expenditure (clothing and footwear, water, transport, taxes, etc.). Each of these three components is in turn calculated individually on a per-capita basis, and all components are summed to obtain total per-capita consumption expenditure.

It should be noted that the measure used here refers only to the month prior to the interview, and no attempt has been made to extrapolate this one-month’s reported consumption to an annual basis.<sup>234</sup> Another point to note is that we take only partial account of the value of food and consumer goods transfers into the household.<sup>235</sup>

The procedure employed here is identical to that used above, i.e., first, overall statistics are presented for the consumption of all households across the eleven different schemes, and then the focus shifts to identifying those schemes that exhibit superior performance.

Table 8 sets out the results for all households for the consumption indicators calculated.

---

<sup>232</sup> There is, of course, the additional possibility that households may decide to reinvest surpluses in agricultural enterprises in the form of non-capital expenditure. This possibility is investigated subsequently.

<sup>233</sup> The maximum number of persons resident in some households may exceed 20, however the survey instrument used allowed details to be collected for only 20 persons.

<sup>234</sup> Purely for the sake of illustration, the median monthly total per-capita consumption would be equivalent to US\$1.63 (range US\$0.19 to US\$10.39) per day at the highly overvalued official exchange rate or US\$0.07 (range US\$0.01 to US\$0.48) at the parallel exchange rate prevailing in April 2002.

<sup>235</sup> The data allow us to consider transfers in cash, and this is done in a subsequent section.

**Table 8: Consumption Indicators for All Households, March-May 2002**

Item	N	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	Range
Household size ( <i>persons</i> )	187	8.1	8.0	3.7	1-20
Food expenditure per capita (\$)	178	1428	1117	1284	136-10,273
Food value per capita (\$)	164	1385	1057	15,934	0-13,571
Total food per capita (\$)	164	2790	2257	2273	239-14,266
Nonfood expenditure per capita (\$)	180	609	217	1163	0-8160
Total consumption per capita (\$)	161	3420	2693	2880	306-17,140

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Note: See text for derivations.

It will be noted that the sample size of 161 on which the estimated total value of consumption is based is some 15% less than the full sample of 188 households. This is largely because the enumerators and/or respondents proved very poor at reporting consumption out of own production and/or stocks. As a result, total food and nonfood expenditure are more representative than those elements in the table that attempt to incorporate the value of consumption of own produce.

Based on the calculations shown in Table 8, it appears that a representative figure for the value of consumption per capita is some Z\$2700 per month, or some \$90 per day. In the present climate of hyperinflation, however, calculations of this kind are very rapidly outdated.

The data in Tables 8 and 9 are easier to grasp in graphical format, and Figures 5 and 6 present the main findings from the tabular data.

Considering only food consumption, Figure 5 plots data for mean per-capita food consumption and breaks this down into food purchases and the market value of food consumed from own production. One thing is clear: there is a linear relationship between the value of food produced and food purchased. The more home-produced food is consumed, the more food is purchased. The two fast-track schemes, which consumed almost nothing from own production, are anomalies, as they had to feed themselves almost entirely from purchases or transfers. Nyamazura and Mkwasine are also exceptions to the common pattern because cash cropping both reduces availability of own-produced food and provides the means to purchase food. Nyagundi is exceptional both in terms of consumption from production and from purchases.

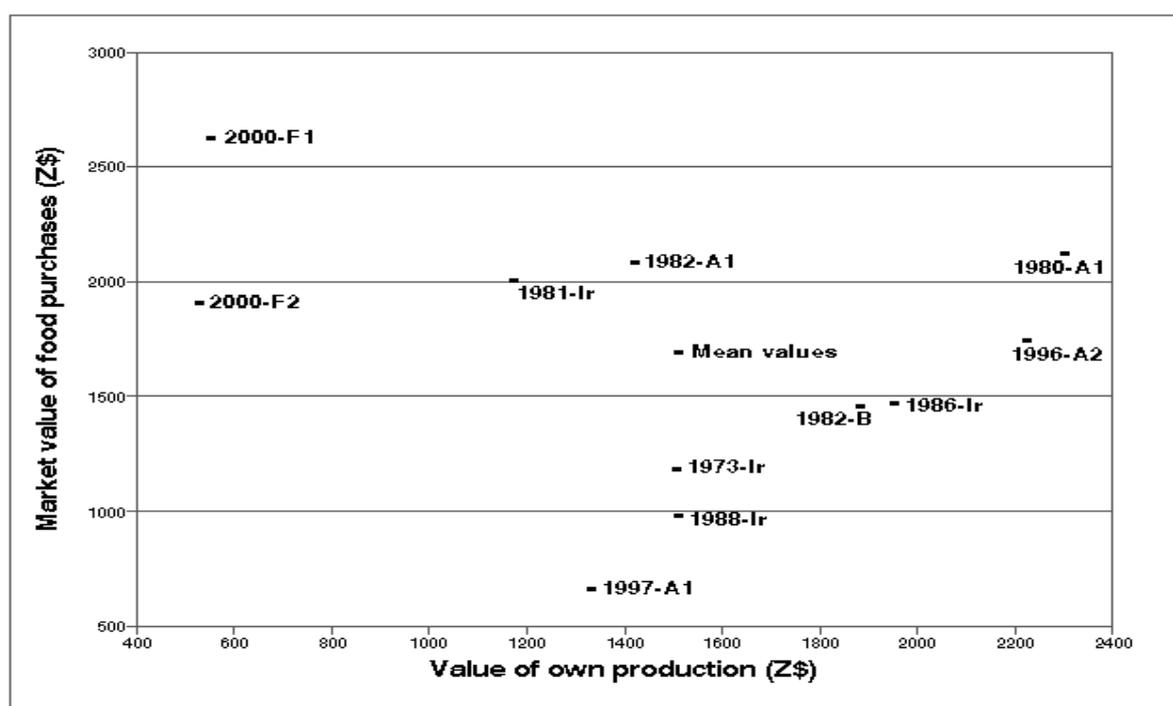
**Table 9: Comparison of Mean Per-capita Consumption Levels, by Scheme, March-May 2002**

Scheme	Size of household (n)	Food expenditure (Mean per capita values in \$)	Value of food (Mean per capita values in \$)	Nonfood expenditure (Mean per capita values in \$)	Total consumption (Mean per capita values in \$)
Gutsaruzhinji	9	1116	1444	509	3069
Mavhumashava	7	1477	1940	213	3629
Makonese	8	1075	1127	257	2466
Mkwesine	<b>10</b>	1751	1043	<b>2257</b>	<b>5191</b>
Mushandike	8	1361	1664	398	3397
Nyagundi	7	1823	<b>2026</b>	558	4406
Nyamazura	8	1373	1455	874	3597
Zananda	9	875	1352	<u>124</u>	2351
Zhaugwe	9	<u>604</u>	1174	420	<u>2199</u>
Lancashire Circle V	<u>6</u>	<b>2366</b>	523	279	3652
Runde	7	1660	<u>443</u>	469	2728

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Notes: Highest value in each column is in bold and lowest value is underlined. Columns 3 to 5 do not sum to column 6 in all cases because the number of valid observations across columns 3-5 varies for some schemes.

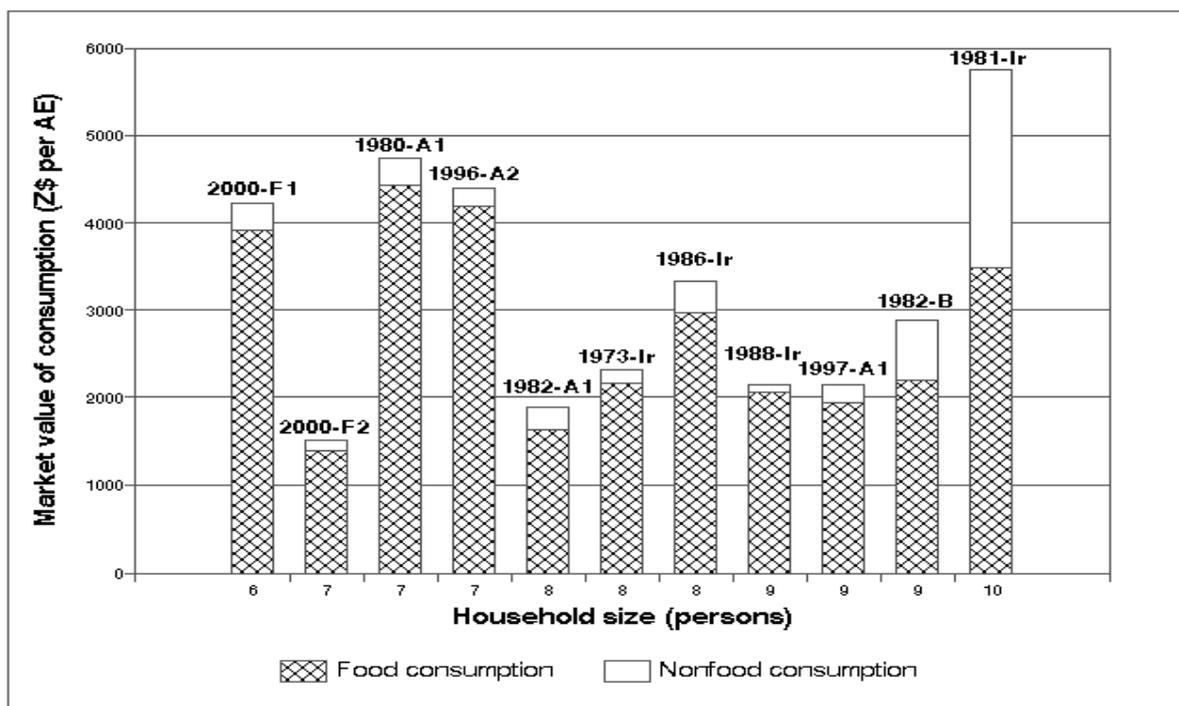
**Figure 5: Per-capita Food Consumption by Mean Value of Consumption from Own Production and from Purchases**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Broadening the perspective on consumption, Figure 6 combines both food and nonfood consumption and presents these in terms of medians and adult-equivalent values. The figure also compares consumption for the schemes by mean household size. The value of food consumed per adult-equivalent tends to be greater among the smaller households. For households with a mean size below eight persons, for example, median food consumption is valued at \$3484, whereas it is only \$2353 among larger households. The opposite is true for nonfood consumption. In this case, households with a mean size below eight persons have a median consumption per adult-equivalent valued at \$235, whereas the nonfood consumption of larger households is valued at \$579.

**Figure 6: Median Value of Food and Nonfood Consumption per Adult-equivalent, by Mean Household Size, March-May 2002**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Measured in terms of total consumption and corrected for household size and composition, Mkwasiine then stands out above the other schemes. Consumption in Mkwasiine is some 20% higher than in the next closest scheme—Nyagundi, one of the earliest A1 schemes. Consumption in two of the new ‘commercial’ schemes—Lancashire Circle V and

Mavhumashava—is also relatively high, an indication that the households sampled did not come from the poorer strata of Zimbabwean society. The second fast-track scheme—Runde—exhibits the lowest levels of consumption. There is also little difference between the oldest and newest irrigation schemes, as well as between the two most recently established A1 schemes.

*Combining Asset and Consumption Space.* In concluding this section, it is useful to consider how the schemes compare in both asset accumulation and consumption corrected for household size and composition. Figure 7 therefore plots the median values for ownership of all livestock against the median values of all consumption, both food and nonfood, and includes the mean of the medians.

Six schemes lie below the mean for consumption and six below the mean for value of livestock assets. While one fast-track scheme—Runde—is the poorest performer overall, the other—Lancashire Circle V—somehow manages consumption levels well above average. One of the earlier A1 schemes—Nyamazura—also does comparatively poorly when ranked in two dimensions.

Two schemes—the A2 Mavhumashava and A1 Nyagundi—cluster together well above the mean values and are clearly the outstanding performers according to these combined criteria. No other schemes excel under both criteria. Two schemes, however—Mushandike and Gutsaruzhinji—lie close to the mean in both dimensions. Although it is beyond the scope of the analysis here, the underlying reasons for the relative ‘success’ of Mavhumashava and Nyagundi are likely to be completely different. Those who resettled in Nyagundi just after independence were selected according to the criteria employed in the phase one resettlement program; these criteria emphasised need, as assessed mainly by landlessness and unemployment.<sup>236</sup> This group of farmers has undoubtedly worked hard for 22 years to achieve what they have accomplished. Those in Mavhumashava, on the other hand, have only had some five years to build up their farming operations, so it is likely that this group were very well off even before they began farming.

*Conclusion.* This section constructs a ‘league table’ for the eleven schemes where data were collected in 2002. There is huge variability in the data, reflecting not only both enormous variations in the populations but also the small sample sizes. Thus, the choice of a particular representative statistic for any given criterion signals different schemes as the best performer. Nevertheless, some broad conclusions are possible. The preceding section flags two schemes as outstanding performers using median values for total consumption and one possible measure of capital accumulation. These are Nyagundi, one of the very first A1 schemes, and Mavhumashava, one of the early commercial farm resettlement schemes. In the case of the latter, it is likely that the new farmers entered the scheme already well endowed with capital and savings adequate to maintain consumption until earnings commenced, whereas farmers in

---

<sup>236</sup> See Kinsey (2002) for a detailed discussion of the selection of beneficiaries for the original resettlement programme and the extent to which those selected met the defined criteria.

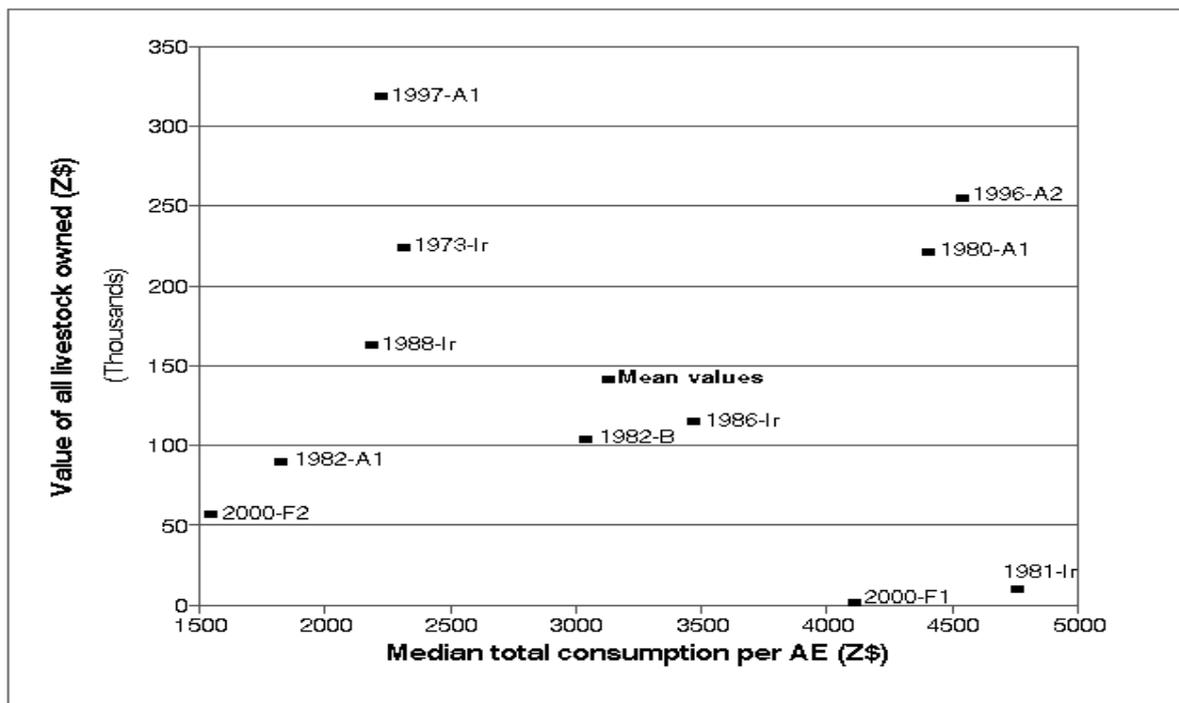
Nyagundi will have struggled to generate earnings and reinvest them into capital formation. This interpretation is also supported by the evidence in Table 5 for example.

It is the task of the next section to examine the evidence available as to why these variations in outcomes exist.

### 3. AGRICULTURAL PERFORMANCE

Zimbabwe has always expected her resettled farmers to be productive; indeed, in the early years, they were required to earn their living entirely from agriculture. How well have the farmers across the different resettlement models done in terms of successfully managing their farming enterprises?

**Figure 7: Schemes Ranked in both Asset and Consumption Space, Total Value of Livestock and Total Consumption per Adult-equivalent, Median Values for March-May 2002**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

We really do not have the data to answer this question convincingly. Instead, we need to approach it indirectly. For example, we have data on only a single farming season, 2000/01, which will have varied across the different sites where data were collected. In order to approach an answer to our question, we begin by looking at an indicator—income—that was rejected earlier as a criterion for judging success. We do so because income measures may tell us something useful about the capacity of the different resettlement models to enable

farmers to enhance consumption levels and accumulate assets. Today's asset holdings and consumption are largely a consequence of past income and/or borrowing, while surplus income, and savings are, in turn, outcomes of enterprises well run.

*Income Streams.* Earlier discussion made the point that income is an inappropriate indicator of performance or changes in socio-economic welfare. Nevertheless, having examined asset accumulation and consumption, it is useful to draw comparisons between these two indicators and household income. Here we examine briefly three income streams: *i*) the gross revenue earned from crop sales in the 2000/01 agricultural season, *ii*) the gross revenue from sales of livestock and livestock products and services in the 12 months preceding April-May 2002, and, *iii*) income in the preceding year from non-agricultural sources (transfers and remittances, off-farm and non-agricultural enterprises and employment, and labouring on the farms of others). These three components are then taken to represent total household income, while the first two are summed to provide figures for total gross agricultural revenue.

One scheme—Mkwasine—stands out strikingly in terms of its ability to generate revenue from cropping. Not only is revenue of \$1 609 500 from crop sales four times higher (on the basis of means) than the next closest scheme—Nyamazura—but also it is far more consistent. The median value for revenue is close to the mean, an indication that revenues are high among most farmers. Another indicator that the level of earnings is fairly uniform is the small coefficient of variation (the standard deviation divided by the mean).

Indeed, on this same basis, there is a striking divergence in outcomes. For cropping revenue, there is far more variation across schemes than within them.<sup>237</sup> For livestock revenue, the variation across all schemes is virtually identical to the average variation for the individual schemes. What this means is that the ability to generate revenue from cropping is scheme-specific. Schemes in more favourable areas, with irrigation, or longer established, tend to outperform others. In contrast, the ability to earn revenue from livestock tends to be household-specific. And livestock ownership in Zimbabwe is known to be highly skewed.

Across most schemes, total agricultural revenue is substantially determined by revenues from crop sales. Only in the case of the two fast-track schemes does livestock revenue amount to as much as half of total agricultural revenue; in these two cases livestock revenue accounts for almost all of farm revenue.

Turning to the third component of total household revenue, for each scheme the cash revenue was calculated that derived from *i*) nonfarm activities and enterprises by those resident on the holding (formal employment, building, craftwork and repairs, trading, transport, rent, etc.<sup>238</sup>);

---

<sup>237</sup> The coefficient of variation for all schemes together is more than double the mean coefficient of variation for the individual schemes.

<sup>238</sup> It should be noted that market gardening of fruit and vegetables is included in this component since it is not regarded as farming.

*ii*) earnings from farm work on someone else's holding; *iii*) transfers, aid, gifts, pensions, etc.; and *iv*) and remittances from members of the household working away from home.<sup>239</sup>

The revenues earned from these activities vary enormously, as do participation rates. Just under half the settlers interviewed reported that their households earned some revenue from nonfarm enterprises, just under a quarter reported remittances, and around 10% earned from farm work or benefited from transfers.

Perhaps the most striking result is the fact that Mkwesine farmers do not participate in off-farm activities at all, even though some family members clearly live and work elsewhere in order to remit. This evidence, together with that elsewhere in this chapter, points to the conclusion that Mkwesine farmers focus exclusively on their agricultural activities. A contrasting pattern is seen in the case of the two fast-track schemes—Runde and Lancashire Circle V, where reported off-farm earnings average more than 8000 times as much as agricultural revenue.

It is easier to appreciate these data when the schemes are compared in a graphical format. Treating revenues as income, Figure 8 shows there is a loose clustering of schemes according to the proportion of total household income that derives from agriculture. The households in four schemes—including the two fast-track schemes—earn less than 30% of household income from farming. Households in five other schemes earn more than three-quarters of their income from farming. This latter grouping includes two older irrigation schemes, the two oldest A1 schemes, and the single A2 scheme. This group includes, of course, Mkwesine, where families rely upon farming for almost all their income. Aside from the group of outliers comprising the three most recently established schemes, there is a generally positive relationship between total income and the proportion of income that comes from farming.

It is also abundantly clear from Figure 8 that provision of irrigation alone is no guarantee of high farm incomes or even that irrigated farming will contribute substantially to household income. Zananda (1988-Ir) and Makonese (1973-Ir) do surprisingly poorly compared to schemes where rain-fed farming is the norm.<sup>240</sup>

In Figure 9, the schemes are arrayed from left to right in order of total household income, and the shadings of the bars indicate the proportion of total household income derived from the six different components set out in Tables 10 and 11. Mkwesine (1981-Ir) and Nyamazura (1982-A1) are particularly striking for the dominant role played by cropping, while crops and livestock combined are important in Nyagundi (1980-A1), Mushandike (1986-Ir) and Mavhumashava (1996-A2). At the other extreme, from this portrayal it is hard to recognise as

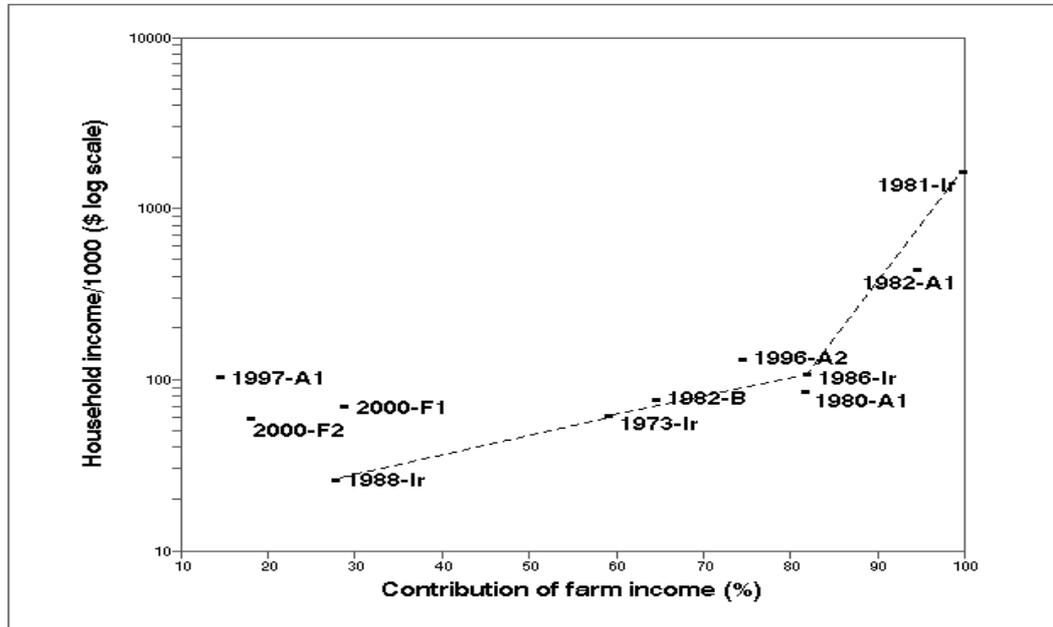
---

<sup>239</sup> Although these four components can generate substantial flows of goods in kind—such as farm inputs, building materials and the like, no attempt is made here to value these.

<sup>240</sup> Regression analysis that explains gross crop revenue by whether or not a scheme is irrigated reveals that irrigated schemes have revenues 178% higher than those without irrigation (with a standard error of 88%), however the presence or absence of irrigation explains only 5% of the total variation in revenues.

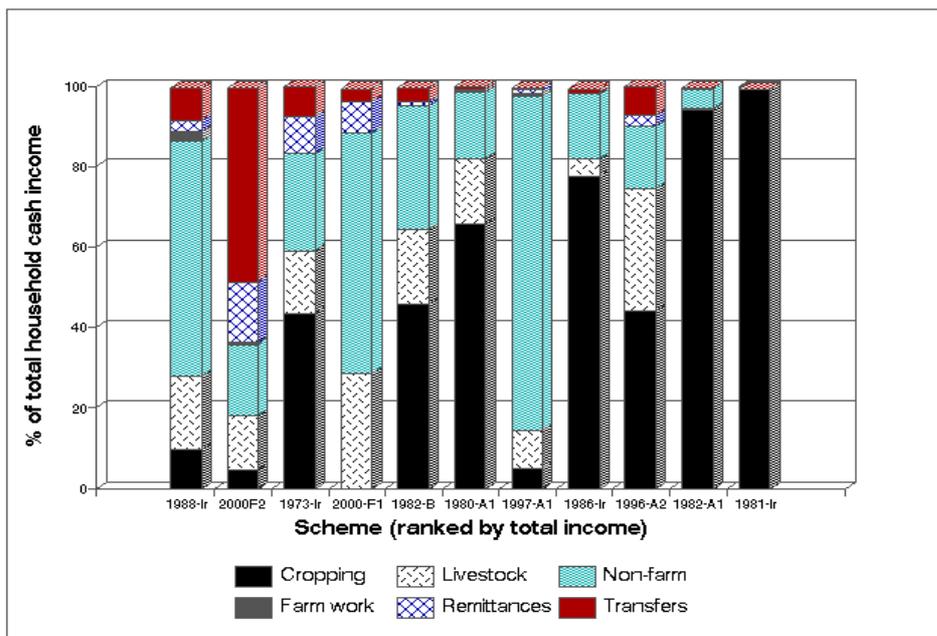
agricultural resettlement schemes Zhaugwe (1997-A1), the two fast-track schemes (2000-F1 & F2), and Zananda (1988-Ir).

**Figure 8: Farm 'Income' as a Percentage of Total Household 'Income', 2001-2002**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002. Note: The dotted line connects the four irrigation schemes.

**Figure 9: Composition of Total Household Cash Income, 2001-2002**



Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

Even though cropping contributes the major share of income across the schemes as a whole, there is clearly enormous variation among schemes and models. Both because of this wide variation, and because the success of resettlement is predicated upon success in cropping, it is important to look in some detail at cropping activities. This is the task of the following section.

*Crops and Cropping Activities.* The ability of resettled farmers to contribute to exports and domestic commercial production is critical. During the fieldwork in 2002, farmers were asked to provide details on the five most important crops—as defined by them—that they grew the previous year. In addition, those who grew cotton were asked to provide details on this crop. Table 10 lists all crops or crop categories grown by the surveyed farmers. To some extent, of course, the patterns shown are a consequence of the schemes selected for study. Thus, wheat and cotton are the most common cash crops, followed by sunflower, sugarcane and tobacco.

Using a somewhat arbitrary classification system, the crops reported have been grouped into those that are primarily cash crops (tobacco, sunflower, cotton, sugarcane, paprika and wheat) and those that may be cash crops but that are grown primarily for home consumption (maize, groundnuts, rapoko, mhunga, sorghum, nyimo, vegetables and fruit, legumes, rice, and roots and tubers). According to this classification, about one-quarter of the crops grown by resettled farmers are cash crops.

**Table 10: Most Important Crops Grown, 2000/01 Season**

Crop	Growers	
	Number	Percentage
Maize	165	27.9
Groundnuts	105	17.7
Rapoko	14	2.4
Sorghum	10	1.7
Nyimo	44	7.4
Tobacco	21	3.5
Sunflower	27	4.6
Cotton	51	8.6
Vegetables/fruit	34	5.7
Beans/nyemba/soya	56	9.5
Rice	3	0.5
Potatoes/sweet potatoes	8	1.4
Sugarcane	22	3.7
Wheat	29	4.9
Other	3	0.5
Total	592	100.0

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

The wide range of crops grown and the relatively small number of growers for each—aside from maize—makes comparison of performance in terms of yields difficult. Eighty-eight percent of farmers grew maize. The mean reported yield across all schemes is just under two tonnes per hectare—1960kg. The validity of this figure is called into question, however, by the very high maximum yields reported in Zhaugwe (15 tonnes/ha) and Mushandike (20 tonnes/ha). A more representative figure, therefore, is likely to be the median maize yield of 1081kg/ha, a figure that more closely resembles maize yields in communal areas than those in commercial areas. Even if this yield reflects the outcomes from maize planted with a mixture of marketing and consumption objectives, it is still abysmally low. While in each scheme (except the fast-track schemes) there are farmers achieving creditable maize yields, only two schemes—Mushandike and Zhaugwe—achieve mean yields that are anywhere close to those that would be found on commercial farms. The small number of farmers interviewed from Zhaugwe appear to achieve strikingly high mean yields. The only other crop grown by a majority of the farmers interviewed is groundnuts, and yields for this crop are even more variable than those for maize. The median yield for 105 growers is only 140kg/ha, although some farmers on two schemes report up to four tonnes per hectare.

Can the data collected tell us something about the reasons for the wide variability in performance in cropping? As suggested by the data in Table 11, there is as much or more unevenness in the factors associated with agricultural productivity as there is in the observed outputs. It is impossible even to calculate the percentage variation in cropped area, credit received, wages paid or days of labour hired, and fertiliser use because the minimum in each case is zero. If it were possible to narrow the wide disparity in results by improving the performance of those near the bottom of the distribution, the gains would be substantial. For example, the maximum revenue per hectare is some 111 times the median revenue, which is itself less than one-third the mean revenue.

**Table 11: Factors Influencing Overall Performance, All Schemes, 2000/01 Season**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std dev</b>	<b>Median</b>	<b>Maximum*</b>	<b>No.</b>
<b>Total area cultivated (ha)</b>	7.9	9.1	5.0	66.0	179
<b>Total amount borrowed (\$)</b>	20 403	71 879	0	565 000	185
<b>Total wage bill (\$)</b>	11 990	48 969	0	516 000	183
<b>Total labour-days hired</b>	54	173	0	1 080	183
<b>Labour-days hired per hectare cultivated</b>	4	11	0	88	172
<b>Total revenue per day of hired labour (\$)</b>	367	429	200	1 900	69
<b>Rate of fertiliser use (kg/ha cultivated)</b>	205	238	115	1 000	173
<b>Total fertiliser use (bags)</b>	31	75	7	550	184
<b>Gross crop revenue (\$)</b>	231 296	650 782	32 000	6 024 000	185
<b>Gross crop revenue per cultivated ha. (\$)</b>	20 235	55 187	6 185	684 545	174

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002. \* All minima are zero.

It is, however, beyond the scope of the treatment here to explore further the factors underlying the observed variation in use of inputs and value of outputs. One relevant observation can, however, be made. The selection of beneficiaries for land reform is a topic of perennial debate in Zimbabwe, and the world-wide literature in agricultural economics has addressed the issue of the role of management for decades. Our data do not allow us to develop even a rudimentary model to explore the impact of management on agricultural performance because the data on the key education variables are unreliable. What we do instead is to estimate in very simple terms the returns to skill, where skill levels are proxied by years of farming experience. A simple OLS model employed years of farming experience as the dependent variable to explain differences in the median gross revenue from cropping. This formulation explained 25% of all variation in median revenues, and the increase in gross revenue with each additional year of farming experience was \$13 794 (with a standard error of \$2 618). At the sample mean of 16.8 years of farming experience, this experience was worth some \$232 000 in additional revenue.

In parallel with previous discussion, the treatment here concludes by identifying the schemes with the best performance according to the indicators employed. At the same time, comparative data on a more limited set of indicators are provided for all schemes.

The upper section of Table 12 uses seven indicators of performance to identify the best-performing scheme. Six of the seven indicators select the same scheme—Mkwasine, a large-scale irrigated scheme specialising in sugarcane. The other outstanding scheme is Zananda, a small-scale irrigated scheme, where the intensity of cropping results in the highest fertiliser application rates observed.

The lower section of Table 12 uses efficiency criteria rather than maximum values to identify superior performance. In spite of the relatively large areas cultivated, Mkwasine farmers again excel in terms of revenue per hectare cultivated. Two different schemes are identified when the criterion is the highest returns per day of employed labour. Nyamazura has the highest mean returns, but the median return for another irrigation scheme—Mushandike—is three times the median for Nyamazura. Despite the fact that Nyamazura ranks sixth of eleven schemes in fertiliser application rates, Nyamazura farmers achieve the highest returns per kilogram applied. In contrast, Zananda farmers, who apply fertiliser at a rate three to four times that of farmers in Nyamazura, earn a return from fertiliser only about one-sixth that of the Nyamazura growers.

**Table 12: Indicators of Superiority by Scheme**

Indicator	Scheme	Value (mean (median))
<b>Highest level of performance indicated by mean/median values</b>		
Area cultivated ( <i>ha</i> )	Mkwasine	28.9 (26.0)
Total value of credit for cropping (\$)	Mkwasine	168 611 (150 000)
Total wage bill for cropping (\$)	Mkwasine	120 963 (114 000)
Total labour days employed ( <i>days</i> )	Mkwasine	467 (365)
Total gross crop revenue (\$)	Mkwasine	1 609 530 (1 475 000)
Total employed labour days per cultivated hectare ( <i>days</i> )	Mkwasine	17.7 (14.5)
Fertiliser use per cultivated hectare ( <i>kg/ha</i> )	Zananda	535 (500)
<b>Highest level of performance according to efficiency indicators</b>		
Gross crop revenue per hectare cultivated (\$)	Mkwasine	59 397 (57 692)
Gross crop revenue per labour day employed (\$)	Mushandike Nyamazura	28 760 (23 575) 89 830 (7985)
Gross crop revenue per kg. of fertiliser applied (\$)	Nyamazura	251 (134)

Source: AMS fieldwork 2002.

## 4. CONCLUSION

In an effort to differentiate among the ability of different resettlement models to unleash the capacities of farmers, this chapter has examined asset accumulation, consumption and the stream of revenues from both farming and non-farming activities alike. The major conclusion here is that, in aggregate, the resettlement schemes and models examined are failing to meet their original objectives in terms of agricultural productivity. The single exception to this generalisation appears to be Mkwasine—an irrigation scheme with exceptional levels of organisation, extension and management.

While in each scheme there are outstanding farmers, overall performance—as we have remarked repeatedly—is extremely heterogeneous. Abject poverty may or may not exist in all the schemes, but it is clearly present in both the old and the new schemes. In concluding, therefore, it is worth returning briefly to comment on the role of resettlement schemes as vehicles not only for enhanced agricultural production but also for evidence of their actualised potential in terms of the wide distribution of the benefits of land reform.

The indicators of performance considered heretofore have been subjected to further analysis to assess how evenly the outcomes of resettlement are distributed. Table 13 compares the distributional equity of three revenue measures, two asset measures and one measure of consumption—all on a per-capita basis. As before, the best and worst performing schemes have been identified.

Some of the results in Table 13 have to be interpreted in a specific context. For example, the high variation and inequality for the livestock asset for Mkwesine relates, as noted earlier, to the prohibition on holding livestock in the irrigation scheme plus the fact that Mkwesine farmers are fully engaged in cropping. Similar arguments apply in the case of non-farm incomes for Mkwesine. The generally positive results for Zhaugwe are undoubtedly influenced by the very small sample size—only eight households. This is certainly the case for the Theil index, which depends upon the size of the population.

Although there are a few exceptions, the three measures generally concur in identifying schemes with greater or lesser variation and distributional equity. The separation of the indicators into those connoting performance over a longer period, in the top panel of Table 13, and those measuring revenues and income, in the lower panel, shows why it is hazardous to rely solely on the latter to evaluate performance. Indicators based on current revenue/income reveal much more erratic outcomes. For example, the overall coefficient of variation for total revenue/income is triple that for total consumption, while the overall distributional equity of revenue/income is some two to four times worse than for consumption.

That said, what patterns emerge from the presentation in Table 13? First, it is obvious that distributional equity is very poor in the fast-track schemes. Because they are so recent, these schemes reflect more the pre-settlement history of the ‘new farmers’ than performance based on agriculture. The schemes are also at that early stage, shown in Figure 1, where they are struggling to cope and welfare is less than what it was prior to resettlement. But those in these schemes are not suffering uniformly.

Second, certain schemes—Makonese, Zhaugwe, Mavhumashava, Mkwesine, and Zananda—tend to exhibit a more even distribution of performance indicators than do others. It seems that farmers in these schemes have been able to attain over time results that are more uniform.

Third, the levels of within-scheme distributional inequity in revenue/income indicators are astonishingly high in certain cases, as well as overall. Runde, Lancashire and Nyamazura all have Ginis above 0.80, indicating extreme concentrations of revenue.<sup>241</sup> As noted previously, Runde and Lancashire are fast-track schemes, with all their attendant problems. In the case of Nyamazura, three-quarters of the sample grew tobacco, but with very inconsistent results, while the remaining quarter more closely resembles subsistence producers.

---

<sup>241</sup> A Gini of 1.0—perfect inequality—would indicate that all wealth was held by a single person.

**Table 13: Distributional Equity of Performance Indicators**

Per-capita indicators of overall resettlement performance									
Scheme	Total value of livestock			Total consumption			Sleeping rooms		
	CV	Gini	Theil	CV	Gini	Theil	CV	Gini	Theil
Gutsaruzhinji	1.03	0.54	0.49	0.70	0.34	0.19	0.49	0.26	0.13
Mavhumashava	0.74	0.39	0.28	0.45	0.24	0.09	0.51	0.26	0.11
Makonese	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.36</b>	<b>0.22</b>	0.68	0.36	0.21	0.43	0.23	0.09
Mkwasi	<u>2.11</u>	<u>0.79</u>	<u>1.27</u>	0.60	0.31	0.16	0.66	0.35	0.21
Mushandike	0.75	0.41	0.27	0.84	0.37	0.27	0.54	0.27	0.12
Nyagundi	1.38	0.57	0.62	0.74	0.39	0.25	1.02	0.45	0.36
Nyamazura	1.44	0.59	0.67	1.08	0.50	0.44	0.90	0.43	0.31
Zananda	1.39	0.56	0.59	0.49	0.26	0.10	0.68	0.32	0.18
Zhaugwe	0.76	<b>0.36</b>	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>0.14</b>	<b>0.03</b>
Lancashire	1.52	0.70	0.98	1.10	0.43	0.37	<u>1.30</u>	<u>0.49</u>	<u>0.51</u>
Runde	1.43	0.68	0.88	<u>1.44</u>	<u>0.56</u>	<u>0.61</u>	0.56	0.29	0.14
Total	1.26	0.57	0.60	0.83	0.40	0.28	0.83	0.37	0.25

Per-capita indicators of revenue/income									
Scheme	Gross farm revenue			Non-farm income			Total gross revenue/income		
	CV	Gini	Theil	CV	Gini	Theil	CV	Gini	Theil
Gutsaruzhinji	1.13	0.54	0.53	1.24	0.55	0.57	1.12	0.50	0.46
Mavhumashava	0.76	0.40	0.33	<b>0.59</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>0.21</b>	0.64	0.35	0.20
Makonese	0.85	0.47	0.42	2.20	0.73	1.15	1.22	0.51	0.50
Mkwasi	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.09</b>	<u>3.59</u>	<u>0.93</u>	<u>2.45</u>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.09</b>
Mushandike	0.68	0.36	0.20	2.39	0.83	1.51	0.71	0.37	0.22
Nyagundi	1.33	0.58	0.63	1.11	0.57	0.59	1.23	0.55	0.53
Nyamazura	<u>3.23</u>	0.82	1.77	2.57	0.84	1.61	<u>2.91</u>	0.79	<u>1.56</u>
Zananda	1.07	0.54	0.54	1.30	0.60	0.68	0.91	0.49	0.41
Zhaugwe	1.03	0.49	0.42	1.49	0.67	0.85	1.07	0.50	0.45
Lancashire	3.00	<u>0.88</u>	<u>1.98</u>	2.23	0.82	1.51	2.10	<u>0.80</u>	1.39
Runde	2.40	0.84	1.57	2.61	0.85	1.66	2.48	<u>0.80</u>	1.42
Total	2.79	0.80	1.47	5.25	0.88	2.33	2.43	0.76	1.26

Source: AMS fieldwork, 2002.

Notes: Most-equitable values are in bold; least-equitable values are underlined. *CV* is the coefficient of variation—the standard deviation divided by the mean. *Gini* is the Gini coefficient, one of the most commonly used indicators of income inequality. The larger the Gini, the greater the degree of inequality. *Theil* is Theil's entropy index. This measure of inequality, proposed by Theil (1967), is a weighted geometric average of income relatives. Under perfect equality, i.e., everyone receives the mean income, the index has a value of zero. There is no upper limit for the inequality index since the measure depends on the size of the population.

These results can be compared with those from an analysis of some 400 farmers resettled under model A1 and 150 communal area (CA) farmers across three agro-ecological zones. For the 1995/96 season, the Gini coefficient for cropping revenue was 0.58 and for the value of livestock 0.47 for the resettled households (Kinsey 1999). These results closely resemble those for Nyagundi, resettled under the same model and at the same time. In contrast, the comparable results for the CA households in 1995/96 were Gini coefficients of 0.74 for crop revenue and 0.54 for value of livestock.

On the strength of the analysis here, what can one conclude about the relative economic performance of different models of resettlement? In fact, very little. A single scheme appears clearly to be a success story in terms of economic outcomes and consistently impressive

agricultural results. But is this finding generalisable? It is clearly not the provision of irrigation alone that is the key ingredient explaining success, for the other irrigated schemes do not turn in such impressive results. Rather the explanation is likely to lie within a complex of factors including, among others, irrigation, technology, choice of crop, management, and selection of beneficiaries. How widely can Zimbabwe replicate the Mkwesine story?

In terms of the models as policy interventions to boost agricultural output and improve rural welfare, we would have to label them all as—at best—partial successes and—at worst—failures. And considerable elements of failure seem inherent in resettlement *per se* as much as in any given model. The performance outcomes both within and across all models is so patchy that it is clear that the resettlement experience is failing to enable large numbers of households to achieve what is hoped and expected of them.

Poverty in resettlement areas remains high, perhaps just as high as it is in the communal areas—from which resettlement was to have provided such a contrast.<sup>242</sup> In this context, a policy intervention that would have major benefits would be simply to raise the incomes of the less-well-off in existing resettlement areas to the level of the mean income. Such incremental improvements, let alone the current ambitious expansion of resettlement, will not bear fruit without a complete turn-around in macroeconomic fundamentals. Resettlement will not be the engine of growth for Zimbabwe's economic recovery—but it has an integral role to play in terms of beneficial interactions with other sectors of the economy.

## REFERENCES

- AMS. 2003. Final Report of the Alternative Models Study. Centre for Applied Social Sciences. Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- Burger, Kees, Hans Hoogeveen, Bill Kinsey and Robert Sparrow. 1999. 'Poverty Dynamics in Resettlement Households in Zimbabwe'. Report submitted as a contribution to World Development Report 2000/01. Washington, DC: The World Bank. (22 July 1999, revised June 2000).
- Deininger, Klaus, Hans Hoogeveen and Bill Kinsey. 2002. 'Benefits and Costs of Land Reform in Zimbabwe, with Implications for Southern Africa'. Paper presented at the conference: Understanding Poverty and Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford University, March 18-19.
- Hoogeveen, J.G.M., Bill Kinsey and Karin Bouwmeester. 2003. 'Poverty in Zimbabwe: Consequences of Drought and Economic Reform for Communal and Land Reform Households'. Draft.
- Kinsey, Bill, Kees Burger and J. W. Gunning. 1998. 'Coping with Drought in Zimbabwe: Survey Evidence on Responses of Rural Households to Risk'. *World Development* 26(1): 89-110.

- Kinsey, Bill. 1999. 'Land Reform, Growth and Equity: Emerging Evidence from Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme'. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 25(2): 173-196.
- Kinsey, Bill. 2002. 'Who Benefits from Asset Redistribution in Zimbabwe? Targeting, Beneficiary Selection, and Economic Performance'. Paper presented at the conference: Understanding Poverty and Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa. Centre for the Study of African Economies, Oxford University, March 18-19.
- Theil, Henri. 1967. *Economic and Information Theory*. Amsterdam: North Holland.

---

<sup>242</sup> Three recent analyses explore in detail the extent and long-term trajectory of poverty among model A1 and communal area households. See Burger, Hoogeveen, Kinsey and Sparrow (1999). Deininger, Hoogeveen and Kinsey (2002) and Hoogeveen, Kinsey and Bouwmeester (2003).



—Chapter 11—  
**The Fast Track Resettlement and  
Urban Development Nexus**

**The Case for Harare<sup>243</sup>**

**Nelson Marongwe**

ZERO, Regional Environment Organisation

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

The year 2000 farm occupations witnessed a massive movement of people from various localities into large-scale commercial farms in search of agricultural land. While most land occupations took place in commercial farming areas in predominantly rural areas close to communal areas, there was also a steady movement into and occupation of various forms of urban and peri-urban areas as the ‘landless’ urban people also took the opportunity and exploited the chaotic situation created by farm occupations countrywide.

On the other hand, Zimbabwe’s land policy had already realised the importance of peri-urban settlement in the country’s land reform process (GOZ 1998). For instance, the Inception Phase Framework Plan proposed, among other things, to develop mechanisms for monitoring urban growth and the demand for and supply of urban land both within and outside existing towns and cities. One of the aims of the policy document is to manage peri-urban areas as zones of transition that maximise the enjoyment of positive elements of both town and country. The rural-urban nexus is therefore an important area for policy analysis and research. It is commonly understood that urban development can only occur at the expense of rural land. The changing land-uses, policy environments, landownership patterns and land administrative mechanism that occur in such transitional zones are key factors that define the dynamics of development in urban and peri-urban areas.

Studies world-wide have shown that small farms almost always produce far more agricultural output per unit area than large farms. This has been proven to be the case for both industrialised and developing countries. There is wide literature that has confirmed the inverse relationship between farm size and output (Ellis 1993; Berry and Cline 1979; Feder 1985; Prosterman and Riedinger 1987; Cornia 1985; Netting 1993). For example, various studies have showed that the smallest farms have greater dollar output per acre than larger farms. There are many reasons that explain this situation, with the most obvious ones being that smaller farms tend to specialise in high value crops like vegetables and flowers, that

---

<sup>243</sup> Part of this chapter was presented at the IASCP Conference in Victoria Falls, June 2002.

there is more labour and inputs applied per unit area and that there is a tendency towards the use of more diverse farming systems (Strange 1988). Peri-urban areas provide the greatest opportunity and environment for the implementation of small-farm based resettlement approaches. Intensity of land-use is most practical in the peri-urban areas. The experience of urban allotment gardens in developed countries provides a useful insight on how urban and peri-urban farming can be modelled<sup>244</sup>. This debate largely provides the rationale on why Zimbabwe's land reform processes has carved a niche for urban and peri-urban settlement. This approach in a way accommodates the land requirements of urban agriculture, especially for peri-urban areas.

This chapter discusses the nexus between fast track resettlement and urban development. As is mentioned elsewhere in this chapter, land occupations cum-fast track resettlement in urban and peri-urban areas was driven by two main motives. Firstly, it was the desire by certain sections of the urban populace to access land for residential purposes. Secondly, there was also an inherent desire by settlers to access land for the practice of urban and peri-urban agriculture. Many other scholars have demonstrated the importance of urban agriculture in urban areas and that access to land was the greatest constraint to the activity (Mbiba 1995; Mudimu 1986; Masoka 1997; ENDA-Zimbabwe 1994). Thus some settlers seized the opportunity presented by fast track to access land for the practice of urban agriculture.

### **1.1. Research Methods**

This study employed both primary and secondary methods of data collection. In-depth discussions were held with settlers on selected farms within the Harare environs. Direct observation was also used to collect data on some of the sites. Given the highly politicised nature of fast track resettlement, a strategy had to be worked out to facilitate access to data on selected schemes. This entailed co-opting as research assistants some of those who were directly involved in the land allocation process through the various committees that had been put in place. The researcher moved into the selected schemes together with individuals who were already known to the settlers. The study selected Retreat farm and Saturday Retreat farm for more in-depth analysis of the dynamics of fast track resettlement at the local level. Retreat farm was selected because of the diversity of issues that affect this particular scheme. As is elaborated in the case study itself, some of the settlers were relocated from another farm that was close to the Harare International Airport while others had been there from the beginning. The settlement is also physically very conspicuous as one drives along the Harare-Chitungwiza road and is close to Waterfalls and Hatfield residential areas. It therefore

---

<sup>244</sup> The historical evolution of the allotment gardens has its roots in the desire to eradicate urban poverty. In Germany for example, the success of the allotment gardens is centred on a number of parameters, chief of which include the facilitator role of municipalities which availed clusters of plots ranging in size from 200-400m<sup>2</sup> to the urban poor, organisation of urban farmers into associations or garden clubs which manage the affairs of the farmers, including the management of leasing contracts, the levying of contributions from members for the purpose of financing the association's activities and provision of support infrastructure including water, transport, health and hygiene (drinking water and toilets) (Drescher 2001).

became more interesting to choose it as one case study. Saturday Retreat farm is located a little bit far away from Harare and does not border any residential area. The scheme was also known for its leadership wrangles. These factors added various dimensions on the fast track-urban development conflict that the study sought to understand further.

Numerous other examples are also mentioned through-out the study. For example Aspidale farm and Whitecliffe farm were used as examples mainly because they represent the epitome of the crisis between fast track resettlement and urban development. Settlement was also extensive on these particular schemes. Further, such farms have also received intensive publicity and therefore any researcher would be enticed to learn more about the factual issues on the ground. Consequently, the study sought more information that would contribute to a better understanding of such schemes. Interviews were also held with the city planning authorities.

The researcher also did field visits that allowed a direct observation of some of the processes taking place at some of those schemes. This also enabled the researcher to take photographs that captured different aspects of the emerging settlement patterns, including the types of houses and roads being developed, types of construction materials being used etc.

An intense literature search was also done. The City of Harare and the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture provided the bulk of the secondary information. The key documents reviewed included the operational development plans of the City of Harare, progress reports of the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture and the minutes of various committees that have been put in place to take charge of fast track in Harare. A research assistant who was directly involved in fast track resettlement was hired to facilitate easy access to the data. This proved extremely useful in accessing information that would have been otherwise 'inaccessible' through the normal channels.

A major limitation of the study was that for reasons of a political and financial nature, it was not possible to develop more case studies. Thus the scope of issues raised by this study could be quite limited. However, despite this limitation, the study managed to generate credible information that has immense value to both researchers and policymakers.

## **2. POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR URBAN AND PERI-URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE**

This section describes the policy framework for urban and peri-urban development in Zimbabwe. It provides the conceptual framework that defines the plane of interaction between fast track resettlement and urban development. Thus, in urban areas, fast track took place on land that was more or less covered by particular development plans that in essence determine the type of land-uses that can be developed in defined zones. The section therefore provides the context within which contradictions between fast track resettlement and Government policies guiding urban development are placed.

In Zimbabwe, urban development is often guided by development plans prepared by local authorities as provided for by the Urban Councils Act and the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act. The conventional land-uses provided for in such plans are housing, industrial, commerce, open spaces and servitudes (roads, electricity, telephone, etc.). Urban agriculture is practised within pegged residential stands (on-plot) or outside the pegged residential stands (off-plot). In the low-density areas, stand sizes are bigger and there is often enough space for limited agricultural activities. Some of the bigger low density areas are classified as agro-residential, meaning that occupants are allowed to practice urban agriculture. The Tynwald area in Harare is one such example. The situation is quite different in the high-density areas where stand sizes vary from about 150-300 square metres. There is hardly any space left for urban agriculture and yet the activity is mostly needed for the purposes of sustaining the livelihoods of people in these areas<sup>245</sup>. It is for this reason that some settlers occupied land in the urban and peri-urban areas of Harare. This was evident, for example, at Retreat farms where settlers had also planted crops on their self-allocated plots.

The current situation in Zimbabwe is that agriculture is not classified as an urban activity and hence, by and large, city planners do not plan for urban and peri-urban agriculture.

Agriculture is mainly permitted in the peri-urban areas, a zone that is normally dominated by titled properties that are way beyond the reach of the poor. The major challenges in the development of urban and peri-urban agriculture are the issues relating to access to land and the management of the activity. In a survey by Mudimu (2001), it was shown that most households involved in the activity in Harare had accessed land through making a first claim on an open piece of land. This is particularly in relation to access to land by the majority of people in the high-density areas and other low-income people in the low-density residential areas. This process of self allocation of plots was intensified under fast track where settlers went beyond the 'open spaces in urban areas' to include farms in the peri-urban areas of major cities.

The policy framework for the development of urban agriculture is slowly starting to be supportive of the activity. For example, major cities like Harare, Bulawayo and Gweru have developed Master Plans that make provision for urban farming in designated zones. A good example is the Harare Combination Master Plan of 1992, which provided for intensive agricultural smallholdings within the city and the peri-urban areas surrounding it (City of Harare 1992). What still remains outstanding is the practical implementation of such policy proposals in the face of minimal technical capacity and meagre financial resources. Both central and local government are generally acknowledging the role of urban agriculture in their decision-making structures. At the recently held 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Conferences of the Urban

---

<sup>245</sup> In most cases, it is the residents of high-density areas, out of dire need to survive, who practise urban agriculture in the various kinds of open spaces such as vlei or marsh areas that are not suitable for urban built development, stream banks, service reserves and land for future development. This is land that has been acquired for future urban development but has not yet been developed for a variety of reasons. In the eyes of the majority (blacks), such land is viewed as under-utilised or idle land and hence they see it as an opportunity that needs to be seized in their daily struggles to enhance livelihood strategies.

Councils Association of Zimbabwe, a resolution was made that encouraged all local authorities to recognise the role of urban and peri-urban agriculture in poverty alleviation and enhancement of urban food-security, employment creation and economic development. Such a stance is ideally supposed to provide the framework for the planning and development of urban agriculture.

**Table 1: Main Operational Local Development Plans in the City of Harare**

<b>Plan</b>	<b>Extent of planning area</b>	<b>Minimum subdivision for residential stands</b>
Ventersburg-Sunway City Local Development Plan No. 33	1595.81ha	400 m <sup>2</sup> for high density areas 600 m <sup>2</sup> for medium density areas 1000m <sup>2</sup> for low density areas
Borrowdale Brook Local Subject Plan No. 30	1 750ha	0.4 ha
Waterfalls/Hatfield Local Development Plan No. 26	5 013ha	700m <sup>2</sup> for high density 1000m <sup>2</sup> for medium density 2000m <sup>2</sup> for low density
Southern Incorporated Areas, Local Development Plan No. 31	15 400ha	150-300m <sup>2</sup> for zone 2A 300-900m <sup>2</sup> for zone 2B 1000-2000m <sup>2</sup> for zone 2C 8000m <sup>2</sup> for residential/agricultural zone
Saturday Retreat Local Development Plan No. 50, 2001	2727ha	200m <sup>2</sup> for high density areas 500m <sup>2</sup> for medium density area 1.5 ha for residential/agricultural zone 50 ha for rural agriculture zone
Gletwyn Farm Local Development Plan, 2000	1170ha	8000m <sup>2</sup> for residential dispersed zone 2000 m <sup>2</sup> for mixed residential/recreation 2000m <sup>2</sup> for medium density

Source: decoded from respective planning documents, City of Harare.

The local development plans prepared under Harare's Combination Master Plan however still need to be synchronised in terms of their approach to urban agriculture (see Table 1). As an illustration, the local development plan for the Waterfalls/Hatfield area is silent on urban agriculture and even talks of rezoning the agricultural land in the area for urban land-users. The same applies to the Gletwyn local development plan of 2000, which covers an area of approximately 1170 hectares. Despite the fact that the farm was mainly being used for commercial farming, the local development plan proposed to use all the land for urban development with no reference to urban agriculture. Under Local Development Plan No 31 of 1999, which covers an area of approximately 15 400 hectares, provision is made only for a residential agricultural zone where the minimum subdivision was pegged at 8000m<sup>2</sup> which

effectively makes the whole scheme beyond the reach of the poor. On the other hand, the Saturday Retreat Local Development Plan No. 50 of 2001, covering an area of 2727 hectares, makes provision for a residential agricultural zone. The minimum subdivision size was fixed at 1.5 hectares and a rural agricultural zone where the minimum subdivision is anchored at 50 hectares was provided for. What is evident is that despite the fact that some of the local development plans also seek to develop high and medium density residential areas, they do not make reference to the urban agriculture land needs of the would-be settlers. Thus while local authorities like the Municipality of Harare have acknowledged the importance of urban agriculture, there is no corresponding movement of things on the ground in terms of planning and providing resources for the activity. Under fast track resettlement, the provision of these developments were essentially ignored as people settled in 'areas of their choice'.

Interesting to note is that most of the land that has been planned for urban development was/is predominantly under agriculture and hence there is already massive agricultural investment that has been made on the land, but would be dismantled if all the land is converted into strictly 'urban land-uses'. For example, under Local Development Plan No 31 to the south of Harare, the main agricultural land-uses being practised included tobacco farming, maize farming, dairy farming, cattle and ostrich ranching, poultry farming, wheat farming as well as flower growing (see Box 1). A local plan accommodative of urban and peri-urban farming would not seek total extinction of the land-uses but rather provide for the intensification of selected land-uses that can then be blended with urban-land-uses.

Through a policy directive to local authorities by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development that encouraged the formation of peri-urban agricultural co-operatives, access to land for the practice of urban agriculture was formally provided for in policy. In the City of Harare, a cooperative section was set-up within the department of housing and community services whose main purpose was to identify land that was not immediately needed for urban development and could therefore be leased to agricultural co-operatives (Mudzura n.d.). At the beginning of each rainy season, agricultural co-operatives would approach the Department of Housing and Community Services for allocation of land to cultivate. The agricultural co-operatives however did not survive for long as most of the land leased to them was gradually taken for urban development. The city of Bulawayo was even more creative as it went on to provide garden allotments for use for vegetable production by the city's destitute women with extension services and environmental management being provided by the Municipality. Other major cities like Gweru and Mutare used to have similar opportunities that allowed access to land that was not immediately required for urban development. Under fast track resettlement, the idea of forming co-operatives to facilitate access to land was revived as is illustrated in later sections of this chapter.

**Box 1: Existing agricultural land uses for the area under  
Local Development Plan No 31**

- A couple of farms that included Stoneridge, Eyercourt, Dray Court, Chedgelow and Retreat, and Kutsaga Research Station and Tobacco Training Institute were involved in tobacco growing. An estimated 500ha was under tobacco in the plan area, of which 350ha was being used on a commercial basis.
- A fraction of the plan area was also being used for horticultural production. A survey by the Municipality of Harare in 1994 showed that four properties were engaged in horticultural production on land-sizes ranging from one to eight hectares but were realising a very high turnover.
- Maize production was the dominant land-use in the plan area and was being practised for subsistence on the majority of small plots and for commercial purposes on plot sizes ranging from 20-70ha.
- Cattle ranching was being practised on some of the properties for both subsistence and commercial purposes while horse breeding was being practised on Stoneridge farms.
- Derbyshire Estates under Irvine's Day Old Chicks (Pvt) Ltd was involved in extensive processing and distribution of frozen chicken and eggs. Farms like C of Apsley and remainder of Apley were also involved in poultry production as well as other plots, though on a smaller scale.
- Draycott farm was producing ostriches; piggery was being practised on Lot 2 Derbyshire and C of Apsley, while goats were also being raised in the area.
- Market gardening was being practised on a large scale on Chedgelow farm and on a subsistence level elsewhere.
- Properties along Manyame river were engaged in wheat farming on plot sizes ranging from 20-105ha while groundnuts were also being produced on plot sizes ranging from 10-58ha.

Source: City of Harare 1999.

Owing to financial difficulties, most of the municipalities have since stopped the support they gave to agriculture (Chaipa 2001). In Harare, a few agricultural co-operatives are still involved in urban agriculture and have received varied forms of support from the Municipality and private companies, while NGOs like Zambuko Trust offer credit to urban farmers. The bulk of the farmers involved in urban agriculture, especially those in high-density areas, still practise illegal urban agriculture. A clear policy on urban agriculture supported by an appropriate institutional framework will encourage such farmers to organise their farming activities and thus paving the way for better management of the activity.

What is evident from this section is that although the policy framework is slowly becoming supportive of urban and peri-urban agriculture, little has been achieved on the ground and people still need land for the practice of such activities. The land delivery system for the residential development has also failed to meet the demand for housing development in urban areas. Fast track resettlement therefore provided the 'space and opportunity' for settlers to occupy land in urban and peri-urban areas.

## 2.1. Overview of Fast Track Resettlement

The Government of Zimbabwe started implementing the fast track resettlement programme in July 2000. The ultimate objective of the programme was to accelerate both land acquisition and land redistribution. Fast track is officially viewed as a component of the overall National Land Reform Programme. The failure by the Inception Phase Framework Plan to realise fruition resulted in the land reform programme recording its slowest progress ever in the period between October 1998 and June 2000. In the eyes of Government, this became the justification for the adoption of fast track. The objectives of fast track resettlement are



**Photo 1: Residential Development and Urban Agriculture at Whitecliffe Farm.** A ZESA employee had formally acquired a stand on Whitecliffe Farm. A section of this farm was later occupied. Photograph by K. Chatiza, May 2003.

---

---

elaborated in Box 2. As of 14 March 2002, some 114 901 households had been formally settled on 2028 farms with a total area of 4 387 091 hectares (Table 2). An additional 14 286 households were informally settled on some 156 farms with a total area of 416807 hectares. The rapid progress under fast track has raised more questions than answers in relation to the discourse on land rights. Farm occupations and the fast track resettlement that followed created an environment of uncertainty with regards to the land rights of the affected large-scale farmers while those of the incoming settlers largely remain unclear and unprocessed. The legitimisation of land occupations by the Rural Land Occupiers Act has made freehold title for rural land in Zimbabwe one of the most insecure forms of land tenure.

At the start of fast track resettlement in 2000, land occupations were clearly an illegal process according to the legal framework that prevailed at the time. This included the Constitution of Zimbabwe, Land Acquisition Act and the Zimbabwe Government Policy on illegal

**Box 2: Objectives of fast track resettlement**

- Immediate identification for compulsory of not less than 5 million hectares for Phase II of the resettlement programme, for the benefit of the landless peasant households
- Planning, demarcation and settler emplacement on all acquired farms
- Provision of limited basic infrastructure (such as boreholes, diptanks and scheme roads) and farmer support services (such as tillage and crop packs)

Source: GOZ 2001a.

settlements, which all recognised the supremacy of private property rights. For various reasons, the Government embarked upon a total revamp of the legal and judiciary framework in an effort meant to ‘normalise’ the situation created by farm occupations and fast track resettlement that had thrown the concept of security into disarray, particularly as it relates to freehold lands. First was the amendment of the Constitution of Zimbabwe in 2000, which placed the responsibility for compensating large scale commercial farmers whose land would have been acquired for resettlement to the UK as the former colonial power. New procedures for paying compensation were also outlined.

**Table 2: Fast Track Resettlement as of March 2002**

Province	Formal settlement			Informal settlement			Totals	
	No. of farms	Area (ha)	No. of settlers	No. of farms	Area (ha)	No. of settlers	Settlers	Area (ha)
Manicaland	178	157 363	9874	9	21934.2	1842	11716	179297.2
Mash-East	298	321552.5	17 549	43	28790.0	2038	19587	350342.5
Mash-Central	264	324726	10649	4	4936.30	203	10852	329662.3
Mash-West	406	565569.6	18741	53	67879.9	1805	20546	633449.65
Midlands	217	463819.5	16708	19	37042.7	1382	18090	500862.3
Masvingo	226	1139108.1	25933	9	129395.8	4377	30310	1268503.9
Mat. South	253	890507.5	8080	16	118913.7	2474	10554	1009421.2
Mat North	186	524443.8	7367	3	7915.0	165	7532	532358.8
Totals	2028	4387091.1	114901	156	416807.8	14286	129187	4803897.8

Source: GOZ 2002.

The Land Acquisition Act was later amended to reflect changes made to the constitution as well as introducing new procedures for land acquisition. Although no resettlement is supposed to take place on the land until the Administrative Court confirms the acquisition, regard then shifts to the Rural Land Occupiers Act, which protects occupiers who were settled on the land by the first of March 2001. Amendment of Section 5 of the Land Acquisition Act to the effect that S 5 (9)(b) states that ‘the making of an order in terms of section 8(1) shall constitute notice in writing to the owner or occupier to cease to occupy, hold, or use that land immediately on to the date of service of the order upon the owner’ has the ultimate effect of allowing occupation immediately after designation. This essentially



**Photo 2: Occupation of Whitecliffe farm.** Settlements are being developed haphazardly at the occupied portion of Whitecliffe Farm. Photograph by K. Chatiza, May 2003.

---

---

erodes the right of the owner to contest acquisition in court as success or failure is almost meaningless as the land would have been occupied. The most recent amendment to the Land Acquisition Act in 2002 gives the acquiring authority, after issuing the land acquisition order in terms of Section 8 of the Land Acquisition Act, the right to start surveying, demarcating and allocating the land.

The main conditions outlined by the Rural Land Occupiers Act for the purposes of protecting occupiers from eviction are that:

- one was occupying the land on the first of March 2001 and was still occupying the land at the date of commencement of the Act;

- one occupied land in anticipation of being resettled by an acquiring authority on that or any other land for agricultural purposes in terms of the Land Acquisition Act [*Chapter 20:10*]; and,
- one qualifies for settlement on that or any other land in accordance with the relevant administrative criteria fixed by an acquiring authority for the resettlement of persons for agricultural purposes (GOZ 2001b).

Such provisions have far-reaching effects if the settlers are on farmland which is within the urban and peri-urban areas where the provision of social services (water and sewerage) is of paramount importance. Indeed, informal settlements have mushroomed in many parts of Harare.

Settlers were allocated land under the modified A1<sup>246</sup> and A2<sup>247</sup> resettlement models. For settlers allocated land under the self-contained units system of the Model A1 variant and those under the A2 schemes, their land tenure rights were 99-year leases with option to purchase. Such leases were issued under the Agricultural Land Settlement Act. For the settlers under the villagised resettlement scheme, settlers were supposed to be given leases with option to purchase within ten years, or 99-year leases for arable land, as outlined in the 1998 National Land Policy Framework. The huge volumes of settlers under fast track have placed immense pressure on any efforts towards the processing of leases, and it is most likely that most settlers are already on the land while their land rights (leases) largely remain unprocessed, particularly for those settled under villagised variant of Model A1. In fact, evidence from the field has shown that fast track settlers under model A1 are being given a resettlement certificate that specifies the holder's right to erect a residential structure as well as engaging in farming activities on the said plot. It also mentions that the settler's activities must be done in conformity with the respective Rural District Council's Land-Use and Conservation bylaws, as well as abiding within the framework of the main environmental legislation that include the Natural Resources Act, Forest Act and the Rural District Councils Act. As has been always the case, the permit is not transferable.

## **2.2. Fast Track and Peri-Urban Settlement**

Under fast track, which was adopted in the year 2000, the Government introduced a Model A2 variant for the redistribution of land in the peri-urban areas. Under the peri-urban model, farm sizes are expected to range between 2-50 hectares. Peri-urban farmers are expected to intensify production with a bias towards horticulture, market gardening or crop farming.

The demand for land under the Model A2 peri-urban variant was quite significant as illustrated by the fact that, of the 88 389 applications that had been received by August 2001

---

<sup>246</sup> Under model A1, settlers are allocated land in two ways. One is through the villagised settlement pattern while the other is the self contained units. The model targets the decongestion of rural areas.

<sup>247</sup> Model A2 has taken the place of the Commercial Farmer Settlement Scheme and it seeks to indigenise large-scale commercial farming. Land is allocated in four variants namely small, medium and large scale commercial farming.

for Model A2 farms, 9473 (10.7%) of these were under the peri-urban model. Further, as of March 2002, a total of 6424 plots had been allocated under the peri-urban resettlement model, of which 5044 of these were in the three Mashonaland provinces.

Within the Harare environs, more than 100 farms ranging in size from less than 10 hectares to close to 7000 hectares were at some stage occupied. The ownership of the farms and the land uses practiced on those farms were quite varied. Indigenous farmers, municipalities (Harare and Chitungwiza), individual white farmers and private agro-industrialists and the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing represent the broad cross-section of stakeholders who owned the occupied properties. Several other farms were also covered by country-to-country agreements. For these reasons, a large number of the farms were delisted, although in reality it did not mean automatic removal of settlers on the land. To this end, some of the farms are still occupied to date (see Table 3).

**Table 3: De-listing of Farms in the Harare Environs**

<b>No. of farms</b>	<b>Hectarage</b>	<b>Main reason for delisting</b>
6	4 479.3	Chitungwiza urban development;
2	1 630.4	Zimbabwe Investment Centre Permit
7	8 223.1	Agro-industry
1	84.8	Ruwa urban development
1	8.9	Part of Prince Edward Dam
3	2 156.7	City of Harare Sewerage Treatment
5	5 888.0	Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing
2	1 266.0	Country-to-country agreement
16	21 917.1	Indigenous owned
2	1 939.2	Single farm ownership
<b>Totals: 50</b>	<b>47 592.9</b>	

Land occupations, and the subsequent fast track resettlement, affected various forms of land-uses in the urban and peri-urban context. For example, settlement on farms used for sewerage treatment works had the potential of affecting the City of Harare's Health delivery services, while at the same time it also exposed the health of the settlers to a high risk. Settlement on land that forms part of Prince Edward Dam, which is one of the dams that supplies water, had the potential effect of silting the dam as well as polluting its water. The road infrastructure in these settlements remain undeveloped (Photo 3) and thus exposing the soil to a high risk of erosion. Unregulated extraction of construction materials (bricks, river-sand and pit-sand) also resulted in fast track contributing directly to the deterioration of the environment.



**Photo 3: An internal Road on Whitecliffe farm.** There is no proper infrastructure planning on occupied farms. Photograph by K. Chatiza, May 2003.

---

---

Box 3 illustrates some interesting details on fast track resettlement. For example, among other things, it gives some general description on the type of beneficiaries that got land. However, the social characteristics of beneficiaries seemed to vary from one scheme to the other. At Retreat farm, it is evident from the type of developments being put up by settlers that they are generally in the low-income group. However the situation changes drastically if one examines the situation at Aspindale and Whitecliffe farms. The type of houses that have been put up by some settlers are a clear indication that some of the settlers were not low income earners (see Photos 4, 5, and 6 at end of chapter). Others, however, were poor, as evidenced by the type of shacks they put up.

Fast track resulted in the acquisition and distribution of rural and peri-urban land alike. As already mentioned, land occupations in the peri-urban areas (which preceded fast track) were driven by the desire by urban residents to access land for residential purposes. From the policy point of view, rural land in the peri-urban areas was supposed to be considered mainly for peri-urban agriculture. However, available evidence shows that demand for residential land became the main driver for land occupations in most of Zimbabwe's major cities, including Harare, Bulawayo, Gweru, Chinhoyi, etc. As a matter of policy, land in the peri-urban areas was supposed to be settled under the Model A2 only and none under the villagised settlement.

### **Box 3: Settlement of Retreat Farm**

Retreat Farm lies between the Cities of Harare and Chitungwiza. Before the occupation of the farm by war veterans and landless people (at the instigation and invitation of war veterans) in the year 2000, the farm was used for both crop and livestock production. Tobacco was the main cash crop on the farm while cattle's ranching was the dominant activity in the livestock section of the farm. The farm was also known for poultry production (eggs and chickens) and citrus (oranges) production. Essentially, these constituted the core business of the farm. However, in addition to these, the farm also practised aquaculture, while racehorses were also kept at the farm.

Most of the settlers on the farm used to reside in the high-density residential areas of Sunningdale and Epworth and the low-density areas of Hatfield and Waterfalls. Generally, most of these were low-income earners lodging in these areas while others were unemployed or self-employed residents of these suburbs. While some settlers express the need for farmland for crop and livestock production, the majority cite the need for accommodation as the key motivation factor for participating in the land occupations and fast track resettlement.

Initially, there were about 120 families at the farm but these more than doubled to 250 when settlers from Arlington Farm were relocated to that farm. As already mentioned, most settlers at the farm are more interested in affordable accommodation than in farmland for agricultural production. As such, developments at the farm reflect more activity on residential development. Originally, settlers were each allocated 900m<sup>2</sup>. War veterans are in charge of the allocation process and they expect that each aspiring resident must be a cardholder of the ruling party. Further, each individual is expected to make an initial contribution of \$9000 to cover for land survey, water reticulation and road infrastructure costs. Meanwhile, the settlers depend on social services within Hatfield, Waterfalls and Sunningdale areas.

The settlers have also organised themselves into groups to further their interests, and there are two main Housing Cooperatives, namely, Hatidzokere Shure and Chenjerai Hunzvi Housing Cooperatives. Membership contributions were pegged at \$7 500.00.

Field Survey 2002.

A special committee was put in place to guide identification and allocation of land for peri-urban agriculture purposes in the City of Harare. The committee comprised the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing, Ministry of Lands and Agriculture, ZANU P-F Harare Province, war veterans, representatives from the three Mashonaland Provinces and the Municipalities of Harare and Chitungwiza. In an effort to assist the City of Harare in dealing with settlers who had occupied land within city boundaries in anticipation for accessing land for housing development, a sub-committee was also formed. The composition of the sub-committee was made up of the Ministry of Local Government and National Housing (Housing section), Department of Physical Planning, war veterans, ZANU P-F, City of Harare and Chitungwiza, Ruwa and Norton Town Boards and Epworth Local Board.

The urban 'landless' took advantage of the opportunity created by fast track to present their own land demands. A common characteristic was that they formed housing co-operatives as a strategy of spearheading their land demands. This saw the establishment of more than 18 housing co-operatives in Harare, which were operating from the occupied land spread right round the city. This form of organisation by the settlers/occupiers became the link between

the settlers and authorities that included the City of Harare and the two committees that had been put into place.

Some of the farms that were settled under fast track resettlement in most districts surrounding Harare fell within the City of Harare’s Combination Master Plan boundary and such land was effectively occupied for residential purposes. However, some of the farms were outside the Combination Master Plan boundary, and it was resolved that these be used for peri-urban settlement and, in terms of administering of the land allocation process, be handled by the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture.

The haphazard manner in which farms were occupied or settled under fast track led to a serious deviation from the planning procedures and also created a huge demand for the servicing of the ‘demarcated’ stands by the City of Harare. In a number of cases, such land occupations contradicted with the planned use for the area. For example, Arlington Farm, is classified as a security sensitive zone next to the Harare International Airport and other defensive structures. This resulted in the relocation of some 500 people who had parcelled out stands among themselves and most of these were off-loaded to Retreat farm, along the Harare-Chitungwiza Road. Another example was Whitecliffe farm, which was actually owned by a black Zimbabwean who had already started a housing development project. Hopley farm owned by the Harare Municipality was also settled. A portion of this farm had actually been donated to the Child Survival Foundation for street kids but the Child Survival Foundation had not developed the land.

**Table 5: Examples of Farms Settled under Fast Track in Harare**

Farm Name	Area
Remainder of Odear Farm	605.8
Saturday Retreat	46.2
Lot 2 of Saturday Retreat	22.1
Remaining extent of Retreat Estate	1057.4
Stand 48 Aspindale Park Township	100.3
Remaining Gletywin of Gletywin	6913.9
Stand 1, Gletwyn Township	255.9
Remainder of Garlyn Barton	71.8
Pangoula of Sternblick	299.9
Remaining extent of Garlick Creagh Section 4	

Source: Harare City Council Documents.

A more conspicuous example is Aspindale farm, which is located between Kambuzuma and Mufakose suburbs. An absentee landlord owns the land and at one time the Zimbabwe

Republic police demolished the structures that had been put-up only to be re-erected. The farm itself is zoned for residential uses by the City Council. High- and medium-density stands were planned and allocated to about 4000 people, and 200 structures were at different stages of construction (field visit December 2002, Harare City Council Records).

Fast track resettlement presented serious implementation problems to planning authorities. Firstly, the planning and demarcation of stands was not done following any planning standards, making service delivery (water, sewerage, roads, electricity etc.) very difficult to provide. Secondly, the cost of service delivery could not be met both by the central Government and the Harare Municipality. Thirdly, the structures that were developed do not conform to the building bylaws. This was so because the occupiers cannot at law submit any planning applications for approval by the Municipality, as they were not the titleholders of the land. As a result of this, it becomes illegal for the city planners to advise the new settlers on what they should do to ensure that their structures meet the planning standards.

While most settlers have organised into housing co-operatives, there are leadership wrangles as different factions wrestled each other to take control of the process. A typical example has been the development of New Cerney Township, where different factions are claiming to be leaders. As a result, land allocation was even more problematic as a result of multiple leadership structures, which at times culminated in physical fights (see Box 4).

This study supports the argument by Marongwe (2002) that farm occupations and fast track resettlement in the peri-urban and urban environs have placed urban localities in a dilemma. It has already been pointed out that settlement patterns created under fast track are in direct contradiction with land-use plans that guide development in respective urban areas. In some

#### **Box 4: Settlement of Saturday Retreat farm (New Cerney Township)**

Saturday Retreat farm is located 16km from the city centre along the Harare-Masvingo road. Part of the farm, now known as New Cerney Township, was developed in the 1970s as a medium density suburb. About 800 stands were demarcated and surveyed, and it was also partially serviced (roads and water). As a result of the intensity of the liberation war, the development was not finished, nor was it completed in the post-independence period. The area was then occupied in November 2000 and an additional 2500 stands were parcelled out. A four-member committee chaired by a war veteran (base-commander) has been put in place to run the scheme.

The scheme is home to Ushewokunze Housing Cooperative. The cooperative has also managed to get hold of the Harare City Council Plan for the area, Saturday Retreat Local Plan No. 50, and have made an attempt to implement the plan provisions. The joining fee for members was initially \$5000.00 but has since been raised to \$100 000.00. The fees collected are being used in financing the servicing of the area.

However, the settlement pattern that has been established does not fully comply with council plans. For example, areas that have been planned for industrial areas and school sites had been settled. Some of the settlers have access to piped water, while others have dug deep wells. Generally, the scheme is badly organised and they do not have one recognised leadership structure. As such, there is a leadership crisis as some leaders are not recognised, while physical fights often erupt among youths representing different factions.

ZERO Field Survey 2002.

situations, permanent physical structures have already been put into place and yet do not meet the planning standards as defined by various statutes. Any attempt to regularise such developments is directly opposed to the practicalities of urban planning, urban development and urban management. Thus fast track has created conflict between settlers and urban managers, at the same time providing the ideal environment for an uncontrolled sprawling of urban agriculture. However, an interesting case was observed in the City of Gweru where the Municipality argued that fast track resettlement eased the demand for land for the practice of urban agriculture, as most people opted for fast track plots that were generally out of the city (Interviews with mayor of Gweru, 15-10-2002).

### **3. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Urban development is primarily a planning activity that is executed through the development and implementation of various forms of development plans. On the other hand, fast track resettlement is/was about putting people on the land first, with planning to be done at a later stage. This effectively defines the interface between fast track resettlement and urban development. It has been illustrated that the overriding motivation for land occupations and fast track in urban and peri-urban areas was the desire to access land for residential development. However the planning and development of residential areas in an urban context is legally required to respect the planning and development control functions of local authorities. Firstly, development is expected to take place in an area/zone that has been planned for such purposes. This was, however, almost impossible given the ‘urgency’ and political nature of fast track resettlement. Secondly, those planning to develop in an urban area have got to establish their *loci standi*. In this respect, any development plans submitted to urban councils for approval will have to be accompanied by legal documents that show that the applicant owns the property where development is expected to take place. A major flaw of fast track resettlement is the unclear nature of land rights accorded to new settlers. More importantly, most farms have still not been confirmed as legally acquired, hence new settlers in urban areas cannot submit any development plans for approval by local authorities. What is clear from this study is the collision between municipal development plans and settler plans. Options on the way forward include:

- Government must recognise the importance of municipal development plans. In cases where settlements contradict such plans, settlers need to be relocated to areas that are zoned for such land-uses. In situations where settlement patterns do not contradict land use planning zones, then the state should mobilise resources that enable regularisation of such developments.
- The legal status of farms that were not delisted need to be sorted out as quickly as possible. The state needs to move with speed to complete acquisition of such farms and pay compensation, thereby setting the pace for the transfer of title to Government and ultimately to settlers.

- Where it would have been confirmed that the settlement is permanent, there is an urgent need to allow the proper and formal demarcation of stands to be done. This will set the pace for the municipality to start providing utilities and other infrastructure on the land.
- Given the high cost of servicing land in an urban area, the Government should consider establishing a fund that will enable beneficiaries to obtain grants for housing development with injections of private capital.

The current situation where nothing seems to be taking place in relation to the developments associated with fast track is a recipe for the development of shanty settlements in the model of Epworth and Hatcliffe Extension settlements in Harare. This has to be avoided at all costs, as it defeats the whole purpose of development planning, which is supposed to improve and not threaten the livelihoods of people. The history of illegal settlements is characterised by extremely poor conditions, and hence it is necessary for political leaders and policymakers to respect their own policies, in this case those that regulate urban and peri-urban development.

## REFERENCES

- Berry, R A and W.R. Cline. 1979. *Agrarian Structure and Productivity in Developing Countries*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Chaipa, I. 2001. *The Status of Urban Agriculture and Identification of Information , Training and Communication Needs in Zimbabwe*. Study Commissioned by the Municipal Development Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa., Harare.
- City of Harare. 1992. *Harare Combination Master Plan: Study Report and Written Statement*. Unpublished Report, Department of Works, Harare
- City of Harare. 1999. *Local Development Plan No 31, Southern Incorporated Areas*. Unpublished Report, Department of Works, Harare.
- City of Harare. 2000. *Gletwyn Farm Local Development Plan*. Draft Report of Study and Written Statements, Unpublished Report.
- City of Harare. 2002. *Saturday Retreat Local Development Plan NO. 50; Report of Study and Written Statement*. Unpublished Report, Department of Works, Harare.
- Cornia, G.A. 1985. 'Farm Size, Land Yields and Agricultural Production Function: An Analysis of Fifteen Developing Countries'. *World Development* 13(4): 513-534.
- Drescher, A.W. 2001. 'The German Allotment Gardens: A Model for Poverty Alleviation and Food Security in Southern African Cities?' Published in the Proceedings of the Sub-Regional Expert Meeting on Urban Horticulture, Stellenbosch, South Africa, 15-19 January 2001, FAO/University of Stellenbosch.
- Ellis, F. 1993. *Peasant Economics: Farm Households and Agrarian Development*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- ENDA-Zimbabwe. 1994. *Urban Agriculture in Harare: report on an IDRC-supported project*, ENDA-Zimbabwe, Harare.

- Feder, G. 1985. 'The Relationship between Farm Size and Farm Productivity'. *Journal of Development Economics* 18: 297-313.
- GOZ. 1941. *Natural Resources Act* No 9 of 1941, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1978. *Agricultural Land Settlement Act*, Chapter 20:01, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1979. *Constitution of Zimbabwe*. Zimbabwe, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1988. *Rural District Councils Act*, No 8 Zimbabwe, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1992. *Land Acquisition Act*, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1996. *Forestry Act*, revised edition, Govt. Printers, Harare
- GOZ. 1996. *Regional, Town and Country Planning Act*, Chapter 29:12, Revised Edition, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1996. *Urban Councils Act*, Chapter 29:15, Revised Edition, Government Printers, Harare.
- GOZ. 1998. *Inception Phase Framework Plan 1999-2000: an implementation plan of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase 2*. Ministry of Lands and Agriculture, Harare.
- GOZ. 2001. *People First: Zimbabwe's Land Reform Programme*, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Harare.
- GOZ. 2001. *Rural Land Occupiers (Protection From Eviction)*, No. 13/2001, Cap.20:26 Government Printers, Harare.
- Marongwe, N. 2002. *Conflicts over Land and other Natural Resources in Zimbabwe*. ZERO Publications, Harare.
- Masoka, M. 1997. *The Potential Role of Cultivators in Open Space Cultivation Reform in Harare*. Unpublished MA Dissertation, Department Of Geography, University of Zimbabwe.
- Mbiba, B. 1995. *Urban Agriculture in Zimbabwe, implications for Urban Poverty and Management*. Aldershot, Avebury.
- Mudimu, G. 1986. 'Urban Agriculture Activities and Women Strategies in Sustaining Family Livelihoods in Harare, Zimbabwe'. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 17(2): 179-194.
- Mudimu, G.D. 2001. 'Political Economy of Land for Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture in Zimbabwe: Research Perspectives and Current Issues on Dynamics of Land Markets, Strategies for Access and Patterns of Land-use'. Paper in MDP 2001: The Political Economy of Urban and Peri-Urban Agriculture in eastern and Southern Africa, Proceedings of the MDP/IDRC workshop, 28 February to 2 arch 2001, Bronte Hotel, Harare.
- Mudzure, E. n.d. *The Problems of illegal Urban Agriculture and its impact on the Environment: the Case of Harare*. Institute for Housing Studies and Municipal Development Programme.

Netting, R. McC. 1993. *Smallholders, Householders: Farm families and the Ecology of Intensive, Sustainable Agriculture*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Prosterman, R and J.M. Riedinger. 1987. *Land Reform and Democratic Development*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Strange, M. 1988. *Family Farming: A New Economic Vision*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Food First Books.



**Plate 4: Brick-making at Whitecliffe Farm.** These kilns have been made on site, contributing to the defacing of environment. Photograph by K. Chatiza, May 2003.

---

---



**Photo 5: Settlement at Aspindale Farm.** It was certainly not the urban poor who developed this house.  
Photograph by N. Marongwe, May 2003.

---

---



**Plate 6: Another huge house under construction at Aspindale.**  
Again, it cannot be the urban poor who put up some of the huge houses at Aspindale Farm Photograph by N. Marongwe, May 2003.

---

---



—Chapter 12—

# Water Reform in Zimbabwe

## Its Multiple Interfaces with the Land Reform and Resettlement

**Bill Derman**

Michigan State University, USA

**Francis Gonese**

Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe

*Zimbabwe embarked on a land redistribution and resettlement programme at Independence in 1980 that sought to correct colonial imbalances in landholding and the agricultural production structure of the economy. The country also embarked on a water reform programme starting in 1993-95 in response to international trends and local demands seeking to achieve integrated water resources planning and management and streamline irrigation development. In line with global trends, Zimbabwe's water reforms rest on the main principles of establishing representative and democratic institutions for water management; promoting stakeholder participation in resource planning and management; and adopting a cost recovery approach to infrastructure and services delivery in water consumption and management. The two sets of reforms thus broadly share similar goals, centred on the need to correct historical imbalances in resource access and broaden the participation of small- to medium-scale resource users. The planning and implementation of the reforms have however been disjointed, leading to conflicts and contradictions in the manner in which resource users in effect access or utilise the resources. The land reform has widely transferred resource rights from the minority, yet economically powerful large-scale white commercial farmer sector to the more numerous, yet weak and diffuse small- to medium-scale black farming sector. Through its material contribution and experiences, the former sector has been able to evolve a robust water planning and management infrastructure that enabled it to play a dominant role in the country's economy through irrigated agriculture. The latter sector on the other hand has broadly remained ill-equipped and inappropriately positioned to effectively play the newly unfolding roles. Both strong state policy and deliberately targeted private sector support are necessary to consolidate the new players' in resource access and ensure long-term agricultural prosperity and overall economic growth. Under the new circumstances, the new farmers have to grapple with questions relating to not only land management but also water planning and development, as well as the protection of existing infrastructure for both present and future needs. Considerations of access to and participation in resource usage increasingly will be overshadowed by questions of cost recovery and economic charges for resource use as the interfaces of the two reforms manifest. This chapter argues that it is essential to integrate the two reform processes to ensure efficient access and exploitation of the two fundamental resources, together with their mutual long-term protection and sustainability.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>248</sup>

In its endeavour to correct historical imbalances in landholding and landownership in the country, the Government of Zimbabwe has since Independence in 1980 acquired land from the minority large-scale white settler commercial farmers for redistribution to and resettlement of the majority black population. While in the first two decades compensation covered the acquired land and physical developments thereon, the acquisition process since 2000 has, for political reasons, limited payment of compensation to only infrastructural improvements. Policy provides for no charge to be levied on the new landowners. In contrast, existing water policy requires that those intending to use water apply for permission and pay for use in accordance with the amount drawn or allocated. By giving land to beneficiaries on political and social grounds, has Government undermined its own policy in water utilisation, development and management? What are the implications of land redistribution for the principles of ‘*user pays*’ and ‘*stakeholder control*’ under the water policy? Will water utilisation follow the policy provisions for land? What will be the new institutional configurations for water allocation, control and planning in light of complex bureaucratic and social struggles? Can the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) override other interests to have water paid for and run water provision as a commercial enterprise? What concessions will be made to new land and water users who actually irrigate for commercial purposes (in contrast to small-scale irrigators)? Will the strengthening of traditional authorities in both the resettled lands and the communal areas mean that their view that water should not be paid for becomes predominant? What consequences will the absence or collapse of rural land markets have for investments in water development? What will be the likely consequences for irrigation with the new land reform models of A1 and A2? What are the implications for the land/water interface—including irrigation in the communal, resettlement and small scale commercial farm areas—of the concentration of resources in the new resettlement areas? What will the new relationships be between land tenure and water tenure where water rights have historically been linked to rights to land? Can land and water reform be integrated at this late date in both processes?

---

<sup>248</sup>The bulk of material for this chapter is drawn from the wider research on water reform in Zimbabwe and Malawi funded under the BASIS Water and BASIS II Research programme during the period 1998-2003. The methodology adopted for the Zimbabwean portion included:

- Review and analysis of international documents and policy statements on water resources a review and of Government of Zimbabwe policy and project documents and new laws;
- Attendance at, and participation in, the major planning and training workshops held over five years for the Mazowe and Sanyati Catchments and four years for the Manyame on Zimbabwe’s new water policy, acts, statutory instruments and principles of water allocation;
- Closed and open-ended interviews with donors and national policymakers, and
- Intensive field research involving: interviews with stakeholders on Catchment and Subcatchment Councils in selected research sites; village histories with an emphasis on water resources and use; and, surveys of water use, water law knowledge, and water investments in selected villages and commercial farms in the research areas. These surveys generated baseline information on water use and investment and examined if and how the water reform was addressing critical rural livelihood issues.

Like many other nations in Southern Africa, Zimbabwe has embarked on a simultaneous process of water and land reform. Water reform has entailed a long process of rewriting national laws; stakeholder consultations; multiple workshops; the creation of a new regulatory authority (the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), as well as the establishment of new stakeholder institutions for water management—Catchment Councils, Subcatchment Councils and a Third Tier. Zimbabwe’s new Water Act (1998), along with those of Namibia and South Africa, reflects the need for altering the historical divisions in water management, to specify the environment as a significant water user and to provide for greater stakeholder participation and decision-making in this critical resource.

Land reform has proceeded concurrently with water reform. The land reform programme discussed in greater detail in other chapters dramatically changed character in year 2000 with the commencement of ‘fast track’ resettlement. With the failure of the 1998 Donors’ Conference on Land Reform and Resettlement to generate meaningful financial resources for the implementation of principles agreed at the Conference, veterans of the War of Liberation together with communal land farmers began a series of commercial farm occupations in the first half of the year, prompting the Government to adopt fast track land acquisition aimed at accelerating the allocation and settlement of land without awaiting elaborate planning and infrastructure provision. This process has resulted in over 95% of former commercial farmland being gazetted for acquisition for redistribution. The resultant shift in land tenure arrangements has multiple consequences for not only the water reform but also long-term planning and management of the water resources. The water reform process was designed and initiated assuming that the land tenure structures of Zimbabwe would change gradually. At the same time, land reform has in implementation terms proceeded as though there were no water reform taking place. This situation has created a mismatch between the two reforms and given rise to operational conflicts that undermine the reforms and seriously threaten long-term effectiveness in managing both resources.

The chapter proceeds as follows: section 2 briefly describes the water reform process and some of its history. Section 3 highlights the major objectives and provisions of the land reform process. Section 4 examines how the water resource has been utilised and managed during the process of land reform and resettlement, from the early years of intensive resettlement to the more recent period of fast track. Section 5 considers the linkages of the land and water resources and analyses areas of interface between the two reforms. In section 6 the chapter concludes with suggestions for a stronger integration of the reforms as they affect the two fundamentally interdependent resources, land and water.

## **2. THE WATER REFORM PROCESS**

### **2.1. Historical Context**

The historical division of lands in Southern Africa is reflected in the division of its waters. The waters have been as unequally appropriated and owned as the land. Water issues have, however, tended to be less contentious to the general populace than those on land in both pre-

and post-independent periods. In Zimbabwe three events have combined to produce the context in which the country began to first plan and then implement a water reform programme:

- The severe drought of 1991-92 followed by another one, although less severe, in 1994-95. The drought experience emphasised the need for better water management.
- The 1994 *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems* (the Rukuni Commission) underscored the close relationship between inequalities in land and water and the need to revise water laws and design a national irrigation strategy; and
- The World Bank's *Water Resources Sector Strategy* of 1993 detailed how to plan integrated water management. The Bank organized seminars in Washington and internationally to promote their views. Members of Zimbabwe's Department of Water Development and Hydrology attended a World Bank-organized regional seminar in Victoria Falls in 1993.

In summary, both internal and external forces propelled the adoption of Water reforms in Zimbabwe.

The Rukuni Commission considered, in part, the land/water interface and recommended that Government develop a comprehensive water master plan and an irrigation policy and strategy aimed at accelerating the development of irrigation (Recommendation 574 (Vol I: 141)). The Commission listed potential components for such a strategy as presented in Box 1.

As was to become evident later, the water reform process closely reflected the Commission's recommendations with respect to water; the linkages between that resource and land reform as identified by the Commission were however not followed through in the reform implementation process for either resource.

Independently of the Rukuni Commission, a consultancy was engaged within Government in 1993 to develop the guidelines for spearheading a new water resources management strategy. This led to the introduction of a new project known as the Water Resources Management Strategy (WRMS Project) funded by the British, Dutch, German and Norwegian governments. The purposes of the WRMS strategy are summed up in Box 2.

**Box 1: Major potential components of the water development strategy identified by the Rukuni Commission**

- reforms in the legal framework for water
- institutional restructuring to accelerate dam and irrigation construction
- adopting a river basin approach to planning and development
- implementing all new state (water) projects planned with the objective of redressing the current imbalance in water rights
- investing in people through training and experience in water planning and development processes
- involving all interested parties and stakeholders in the planning and development process.

As WRMS undertook its assignment during the period 1995-98 the Department of Water Development simultaneously revised the Water Act of 1976 and prepared the legislative and institutional groundwork for a new regulatory parastatal for the water sector, the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA). The Department also formulated and implemented the Mupfure pilot catchment management project and supported the Mazowe catchment initiative. Although WRMS was phased out in 1999 after a series of stakeholder meetings to discuss the final report<sup>249</sup>, the former head of WRMS Secretariat is now the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry responsible for implementing and managing the water reforms (Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development)—an arrangement that assures continuity in the work and planning of the strategy.

## 2.2. Essence of the Water Reforms

Zimbabwe's water reforms are structured and guided by two Acts of Parliament passed in 1998, namely, The Water Act and the ZINWA Act. Though the former has generally received more emphasis than the latter, the two Acts cannot be understood in isolation of each other.

The main thrust of the Water Act was to provide for the integrated management and planning

### **Box 2: Objectives of the Water Resources Management Strategy (WRMS) Project**

- clearly define and provide a sound basis for equitable and sustainable allocation of water
- provide a framework for comprehensive water resources planning and management
- provide guidelines for water pricing and subsidy structures
- design new institutions that improve horizontal and vertical communication
- define clear and sustainable objectives for capacity building in water planning and management.

of the country's water and related resources based on identified River Basins or Catchments run by popularly constituted Catchment Councils and other relevant decentralised stakeholder institutions. In terms of this Act Zimbabwe is divided into seven (7) Catchments run by a hierarchy of Councils, Subcatchment Councils and Lower Tier institutions.<sup>250</sup>

The ZINWA Act, on the other hand, had the explicit purpose of establishing the parastatal of the same name as the Regulatory Authority for the Water sector. The Authority is also intended to provide technical back up to the Catchment Councils, which are the Planning and Management authorities for their respective River Basin Catchments.

---

<sup>249</sup> This Report is titled *Towards Integrated Water Resources Management: Water Resources Management Strategy in Zimbabwe*; it provides the major guidelines for implementing the country's water sector reform programme

<sup>250</sup> Based on the major river basin systems in the country, the seven Catchments are Gwayi, Manyame, Mazowe, Runde, Sanyati, Save and Mzingwane, each of which is constituted by several Subcatchments, which themselves comprise Third Tier areas defining the basins for smaller streams and tributaries.

Several differences between the old and new (1976 and 1998, respectively) Water Acts are significant. For example

- Unlike the old Act, the 1998 Water Act vests posts all water in the state President. Accordingly, water can no longer be owned by any private individual or corporations.<sup>251</sup>
- Water is now to be regarded as a unified system and the previous distinctions between ground and surface waters no longer hold. Ground water and surface waters are to be subject to all provisions of the new act.
- In a continuation of past policy, however, Zimbabwe's waters continue to be divided into the categories of commercial and primary—a distinction dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century and reflecting the core land tenure division between commercial (formerly European) lands and communal (formerly Tribal Trust) lands. The distinction also reflects the dual legal system where imported Roman Dutch law and British common law applied to the white settlers while relationships between black Zimbabweans were regulated by customary law (Derman and Hellum 2002).

In the Water Act of 1998, primary water is defined as water used for:

- domestic human needs in or about the area of residential premises,
- animal life,
- making of bricks for private use,
- dip tanks (Water Act 1998 section 32,1).

Commercial water is similarly defined by the uses to which it is put. Commercial purposes include, among others, agriculture, mining, large-scale livestock, hydroelectric power, clothing manufacture, etc. Water used for commercial purposes must be permitted while that for primary use is not. It is the obtaining of a permit that legitimises the use of Zimbabwe's waters for commercial purposes, no matter what these might be—including urban water works. ZINWA, in turn, is supposed to authorise and account for the water that it uses since it is, itself, a major water user.

According to WRMS, the cardinal, guiding principles of water reform are

- stakeholder participation and decision-making,
- the notion of user pays or cost recovery for urban and large scale rural water users.

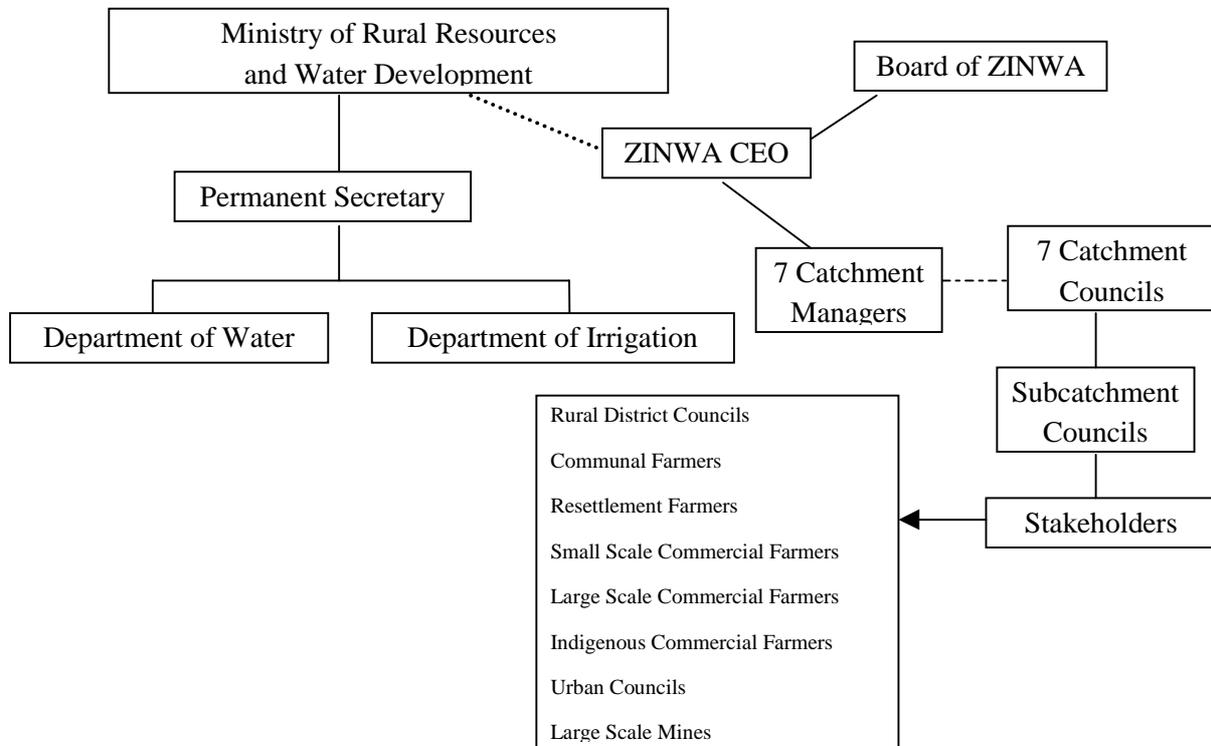
Figure 1 presents the organisational structure for the central institutional players in the Water reform process in Zimbabwe, namely ZINWA, Catchment Councils and the Department of Water. The resultant operational relationships represent an innovative reorganisation that

---

<sup>251</sup> The Act states that all water is vested in the President and any person shall be entitled to ownership of any water in Zimbabwe and no water shall be stored, abstracted, apportioned, controlled, diverted, used or in any way dealt with except in Accordance with this Act. (GOZ 31/98 3 & 4)

renders the Catchment Councils semi-autonomous although they have presently remained dependent on ZINWA for funding in the wake of the withdrawal of donors.

**Figure 1: Water Reform Organisational Chart**



Notes:

- The Department of Irrigation was moved from the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement to the Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development in 2002.
- The list of stakeholder categories / groups is specified in the 1998 Water Act.

**2.3. Two Cardinal Goals of Water Reform**

Two fundamental goals of the water reform are to increase access to water, especially for those previously disadvantaged, and to recognise water as an economic resource.

**2.3.1. Stakeholder Participation**

The new Water Act provides for the creation of Catchment and Subcatchment Councils to manage the seven major watersheds identified in the country according to the Act. Each Catchment Council has to prepare a Catchment Plan for its river system; review applications and grant permits; regulate and supervise the exercise of rights to and use of water in the river system for which it is established, and supervise Subcatchment Councils and ensure compliance with the Water Act. These Catchment Councils are at the heart of the reform process and represent an innovation in the state’s management of natural resources comparable to other innovative natural resource management strategies such as the

Communal Area Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE)<sup>252</sup> and co-management efforts underway in the forestry sector. While Zimbabwe has long had River Boards responsible for overseeing the distribution of water to commercial farms, the innovation of the Catchment Councils is that they are to involve a much wider range of water users in decision-making processes than did the River Boards and they would take on issues of importance to all water users, not just permit holders.

The water reform institutions and process have encouraged co-operation across the different sectors of the Zimbabwean society including different forms of land tenure (communal, large-scale farming, small scale farming, etc) and divergent economic activities (mining, industrial, agriculture, etc.), though not by gender. Unlike land, water was to be managed by stakeholder groups which comprise black and white farmers, as well as other resource users of varying scale (large and small). Catchment and Subcatchment Councils continued to function throughout the commercial land occupations of 2000-2001 spurred by the focus of meetings on issues of good water management and not political deliberations. Despite the huge gulf between large-scale and small-scale farmers, genuine patterns of co-operation have emerged through the water reform process which could be of relevance to the land reform process. There were, however, conflicts initially over whether or not the Catchment Council business needed to concentrate exclusively on issues of either water management or water development, or on both<sup>253</sup>. Either way, though, Catchment Councils believed that they would function more efficiently and effectively if they were to handle the financial resources emanating from the control, development and management of water. As previous water management structures (mainly River Boards and other commercial farmer organisations) had actively participated in funding these water management roles, many white farmers on the Catchment Councils clearly opposed and resisted land reform on the pretext that it eroded Councils' financial base and undermined their operational capacities through landownership transfers and farmer mobility in various areas.

---

<sup>252</sup> CAMPFIRE is Zimbabwe's world-acclaimed approach to natural resources (initially based on wildlife) management under which planning and management functions and responsibilities are devolved to communities through respective local authorities (Rural District Councils), which hold planning authority powers.

<sup>253</sup> This issue has remained a major point of departure in priorities and planning targets between large scale (commercial farmers, and municipal, industrial and commercial water users) and small scale (communal and resettlement) water users, with the former's concern centred mainly on the control, allocation, distribution and protection of water resources while for the latter water management should hinge on the provision of boreholes, small dams, better bridges, dam maintenance, etc.

The overall goal of the water reform process was, thus, to bring more water users to use commercial water and to bridge distinctions between communal and other areas in this regard. Box 3 highlights the key provisions of the 1998 Water Act which facilitated greater access to water resources among water users. Decisions regarding managing and distribution were for the first time made in a procedural framework for allocation, management and dispute resolving manner which cut across all other divisions of water management and planning. How and in what ways this framework can remain viable and effective in the dynamic rural landscape of Zimbabwe is highly problematic, and is indeed fertile ground for extensive future research.

**Box 3. Key provisions for increased equality of access to water resources under the 1998 Water Act**

- Changing water rights to water permits held for periods of up to 20 years, compared to perpetuity under the old Act.
- Replacing the priority date system with a different water allocation system. The priority date system entailed those who received water rights earliest having precedent claims to water, often described as the First In, Last Out (FILO) principle. The new allocation system remains undefined but will presumably be some form of proportional allocation so that in drought years all users will lose an equal proportion of their water and in wet years they will gain in proportion to their permits. This, however, remains uncertain in current circumstances.
- Broadening the scope of who can apply for a permit to use water. Communal area residents can now apply for permits on their own without having the District Administrator do so on their behalf. For water to be used for agricultural purposes, it is still tied to land. This means linking water use with what crops are to be grown, over what area and how much water to be needed.
- Democratising water management by increasing the participation of stakeholders, especially small-scale (communal and resettlement) farmers. Under the previous Act, water was managed by either Government institutions or River Boards whose membership was restricted to water rights holders, typically white commercial farmers. It was up to the discretion of Government to represent the interests of communal area residents. The 1998 Water Act provides for water is to be managed through Catchment Councils and Subcatchment Councils, which comprise various nationally legislated stakeholder groups (see Figure 1) including communal area residents and other small-scale water users. The Councils are expected to carry out their work in coordination with the new Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA).
- The wide definition of primary water remains although Catchment Councils are empowered to limit it.

The policy underlying stakeholder participation is that these new institutions view water as an economic good.

### **2.3.2. Water as an Economic Resource**

Increasing access to water is linked in the reform to considering water as an economic good. It is expected that in a properly functioning water management system revenues generated

from appropriate pricing and economic policies should fund improvements to the system as well as subsidies for those who need them.

In the Zimbabwe reform process the economic value of water has been captured in the phrase ‘*user pays*’, referring only to commercial water since primary water cannot, in terms of the law, be priced<sup>254</sup>. Two observations on the ‘*user pays*’ principle arise from field observations, namely,

- there is a general belief in rural Zimbabwe (particularly in the communal areas) that water should not be paid for,
- those water users who are amenable to paying for the resource would like to know what in the water charges they are paying for.

These observations touch the core of stakeholders’ readiness and effectiveness in participating in the water reforms since, for any Catchment area, the monitoring of which users use how much water and if they are using only what is legally appropriated to them relies largely on local knowledge and internal policing arrangements. Neither ZINWA nor Catchment Councils have the capacity to monitor and enforce water use and payments due to both capacity limitations and remoteness from the point of use; it is therefore critical that the lowest possible level of stakeholder involvement be drawn in to manage water usage. Water users’ willingness to pay for the resource also defines the potentials and capacity of the system in generating revenues and supportive services that can make it efficient and self-sustaining. This is particularly relevant as both ZINWA and Catchment and Subcatchment Councils are meant to derive their funding largely from the sale of water and the levies on water permit holders.

Empirical evidence indicates that the majority of Zimbabwean farmers do not have water rights or permits in the legal sense of the term, and are not likely to gain them as a result of the new laws. What rural farmers have are primary use rights enabling them to draw water (without payment) for drinking, washing, watering livestock and tending small gardens, as described above. Village level surveys carried out in three Catchments under our study indicate that over 90% of those interviewed did not think they should pay for the use of water. Payment is acknowledged for only such developments as irrigation, canals, pumps and other facilities, alongside storage and infrastructural works, not water per se. Another widely held belief in the studied sites is the assertion that the institution of traditional authorities

---

<sup>254</sup> The idea was incorporated in the statement by the Minister of Rural Resources and Water Development (Mrs Joyce Mujuru when presenting the ZINWA Bill, stating, ‘The proposal for the formation of ZINWA is in line with the objective of the economic structural adjustment programme (ESAP) to streamline civil service operations and promote economic efficiency. The proposal is also in line with the new economic strategy of decentralisation, commercialisation and privatisation’ Source: *Zimbabwe Parliamentary Debates*. Vol. 23, No. 8. September 15, 1998, p. 207.

(chiefs, village headmen, etc.) and/or spirit mediums be used in regulating water use and management<sup>255</sup>.

In the rural areas the principle of ‘*user pays*’ applies to only the small number of consumers (mostly large-scale irrigated farms and mining operations) who use water for commercial purposes as legally defined<sup>256</sup>. While few in number, commercial users consume most of Zimbabwe’s waters. The question of water pricing is pertinent in ensuring acceptability and compliance among users.

Another issue in payment for water is that stakeholder groups, Catchment and Subcatchment Councils alike would want to know how funds from water charges and levies paid to ZINWA are used—that is whether for the Authority’s own programmes and needs, on respective Councils’ development plans and priorities or on any other activities across Catchments irrespective of which areas the money is collected from. Questions of transparency and accountability are indeed raised regarding the manner in which ZINWA will manage and utilise the funds vis-à-vis Catchment and Subcatchment needs and priorities. Thus the efficiency with which the Authority manages these revenues is not only a consideration of water as an economic good, but also a major determinant of stakeholders’ active participation in the new integrated water planning and management systems espoused by the reforms.

### **3. LAND REFORM AND RESETTLEMENT**

There has been a long history of land reform in Zimbabwe. Its major goal has been the restructuring of access and ownership of the land resource and agricultural production relations with the purpose of correcting historical injustices. In essence, this process has involved reducing the number and sizes of large-scale commercial farms to smaller units operated by individual indigenous farmers and groups of farmers in accordance with the different models of resettlement (GOZ 1980, 1983, 1985, 2000). The country has undergone two broad phases of land acquisition and subsequent resettlement. The first Phase was from 1980-1998, characterised by more or less gradual acquisition of land by Government and elaborate planning prior to actual settlement. Government implemented several different resettlement models, the most dominant being Model A. Table 1 summarises the different models and their main features and provisions. Schemes under the different models were supervised and managed by Resettlement Officers with substantial support from different

---

<sup>255</sup> The new laws do not specifically affect urban users as they are, presumably, subsumed in urban authorities representing them. While the majority of urban households use water for ‘primary’ purposes, they are increasingly being charged for water consumption. Little attention has been paid to the urban and peri-urban dimensions of the reform process, although almost a substantial proportion of Zimbabweans now live in these areas. The urban and peri-urban dimensions of water usage closely mirror the trends and patterns of land utilization in the same areas, which have increasingly had direct implications for the Land reform programme, particularly since 2000, as settlements and general agricultural activity have mushroomed in the urban environs in ways not catered for or defined under the Reform policy.

<sup>256</sup> The term ‘*Commercial*’ is not defined but ‘*Commercial uses*’ are specified as agricultural, industrial, urban, electrical, etc. including a category of miscellaneous for all those uses not defined.

Ministries. The relative abundance in the availability of land, financial and human resources during the first decade enabled the programme to attain substantial achievements in land redistribution and social and infrastructural development in accordance with specified policy criteria<sup>257</sup>. Under these circumstances the programme undertook rigorous planning for both infrastructure and settlement patterns prior to actual emplacement of beneficiaries.

Phase Two of the resettlement programme entailed accelerated acquisition by Government of land identified for settlement or that already settled following the wave of land occupations that started in early 2000 as a reaction to the slow pace of the implementation process and inadequate deployment of resources for the programme.

**Table 1: Resettlement Models Implemented in Zimbabwe 1980-2002: A Summary of Main Features and Provisions**

<b>Model of Settlement</b>	<b>Period implemented</b>	<b>Summary of main features and provisions</b>
A	1980-1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Individual residential (0.5 hectare) and arable (5 hectares net) holdings in village settlement blocks</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing (estimated 25-60 hectares depending on village size and natural region)</li> <li>▪ Communal water points and other social services</li> </ul>
A1 Self-contained	1992 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self contained residential, arable and grazing land (estimated 25-40 hectares depending on land characteristics and natural region) with own water supplies per household</li> </ul>
A1 Villagised	1992 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Villagised settlement with individual residential and arable plots (3-5 hectares depending on land characteristics and natural region)</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing land, woodlots and water points</li> <li>▪ Some land set aside for communal projects and future growth</li> </ul> <p>-Similar to Model A</p>
A2	1998 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Self-contained farm units for residential, cropping grazing and woodlot purposes</li> <li>▪ Unit expected to be run as commercial production unit</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries utilise own and private market resources for land development and production</li> <li>▪ Similar to A1 except for unit size</li> </ul>
B	1980-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperative residence and collective farming operations on farms with specialised enterprises</li> <li>▪ Voluntary Group membership based on legal registration</li> <li>▪ Cooperative asset holding and sharing of produce</li> <li>▪ Collective grazing</li> </ul>

---

<sup>257</sup> A full coverage of these developments is given in the chapter by Gonese and Mukora in the present Volume.

C	1980-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Central core estate run by Parastatal (ARDA) as a commercial entity</li> <li>▪ Outgrower farmers settled in villages and pursuing farming operations as in Model A</li> <li>▪ Outgrowers contribute labour to estate which in turn supplies essential services (e.g., draught power, transport and marketing, seedlings and processing of specialised crops etc.) to outgrowers</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing</li> </ul>
D	1984-1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Availing land for rotational grazing to communal area livestock in drier natural regions (agro-ecological zones)</li> <li>▪ May involve translocation of human population</li> </ul>
Three Tier	1998 to date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suitable for drier areas where livestock ranching is the only suitable land use in the absence of irrigation.</li> <li>▪ The three tiers comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a cluster of residential villages, arable land and social services</li> <li>▪ the ‘<i>near grazing</i>’, where benefiting households maintain domestic livestock for day to day use, and</li> <li>▪ outer grazing zone for commercial herd</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ No translocation of human population</li> </ul>
Communal Area Reorganisation	1986-1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Intended for decongestion of communal areas</li> <li>▪ Land allocation similar to Model A, A1 depending on land characteristics and natural region</li> <li>▪ Communal grazing, woodlots, water points and social services</li> </ul>
Irrigation Schemes	1984-1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Based on National Master Plan for construction of dams to utilise available irrigation potential</li> <li>▪ Beneficiaries allocated separate irrigable plot and residential unit.</li> <li>▪ Land allocation parameters depend on recommended farming enterprise and available land and water resources</li> <li>▪ Allocations may include grazing rights</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from GOZ 1980; 1983; 1985; 1996; 1998; 2001.

This Phase officially became known as ‘fast track’<sup>258</sup> resettlement which, due to inadequate resource availability and its accelerated nature, provided for land allocation and settlement without the detailed or formalised planning and infrastructural provision characteristic of Phase One. Under fast track funding has been made available for land demarcation and only the very basic or essential infrastructural needs and services, if at all (GOZ 2000). Since much of the commercial land acquired for resettlement has been in the drier areas of the country, and also because of the large numbers of beneficiaries involved (particularly after 2000), the need for water planning and provision prior to (or concurrently with) beneficiary

---

<sup>258</sup> The accelerated acquisition of resettlement land became possible following the passing in Parliament of Constitutional Amendment No. 16 in April 2000 to obviate the legal constraints that had crippled the acquisition process in the previous decade and virtually grounded land redistribution.

emplacement has become a central concern in terms of both consumption supply needs and agricultural productivity enhancement.

Phase One made comprehensive water provisions for the resettled communities through budgetary allocations for:

- domestic needs including boreholes for villages and schools,
- production purposes including boreholes for dip tanks, troughs and other reservoirs for watering livestock,
- commercial and other needs including reticulated supplies for Rural Service Centres and Growth Points, health clinics, etc.

The provision of primary water was thus an integral component of scheme development, catered for under project budgets. Water facilities for more elaborate production needs and more sophisticated agricultural development were left to the initiative and responsibility of individual farmers under the assistance of credit facilities and other supportive services as part of the 'Second stage planning' process (GOZ 1983; 1985). Similarly community effort and local scheme organisation were expected to be the custodians of any developed water structures existing in the resettled farms, ensuring that the resources were utilised and maintained to the best benefit of the area and its population. Only where medium to large-scale irrigation infrastructure (and potential in some cases) existed were specific budgetary provisions made to sustain and further develop greater agricultural productivity.

#### **4. WATER UTILISATION AND LAND REFORM**

The major use of water in Zimbabwe has been irrigated agriculture (Manzungu 1999, and others), the main purposes of irrigation being to:

- increase the potential of good harvests through supplementary irrigation during the rainy season,
- increase productivity through early season irrigation,
- increase farm productivity and profits through dry season irrigation.

In general, irrigation increases water security and therefore leads to a more secure and productive farm enterprise. Much of the success of Zimbabwean commercial agriculture has rested on the great expansion of private irrigated agriculture in the drought prone 1990s. The large-scale farming sector has immensely benefited from past state assistance and subsidies (especially during the colonial period), although private sector funding has also recently become significant. Small-scale irrigation has, in contrast, historically received only erratic and insignificant support from state funding and practically none from the private sector.

Irrigation represents the most important interface between water and land resources. Government has over the years initiated many small-scale irrigation schemes (largely in communal areas) while commercial farms have sustained extensive large-scale irrigation systems accounting for over 85% of irrigated cropland (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Estimated Irrigation Extent by Land Tenure System in Zimbabwe<sup>259</sup>**

Tenurial system	Hectares under Irrigation	Number of units	% of total irrigated area
<b>Communal</b>	8,580	178	5.5
<b>Small-scale commercial</b>	2,030	not available	1.3
<b>ARDA/State</b>	11,000	18	7.2
<b>Commercial</b>	130,000	1,600	85.5
<b>Total</b>	152,000	not applicable	99.5

Source: Adapted from GOZ 2001, p. 94.

Table 3 presents the relative contribution of irrigated production for selected commercial crops in the country. Further to the given crops, irrigation is also critical for the horticultural sector, tobacco seedlings and fruit trees.

Water for irrigation is supplied through a complex and growing infrastructure of dams and boreholes. There are approximately 8,000 dams of various sizes throughout the country with around 5,700 small and medium dams having been constructed privately on commercial farms. The District Development Fund (DDF), which is the quasi-governmental agency responsible for the installation and maintenance of public sector rural water facilities, has listed some 24,300 boreholes used primarily for drinking and stock water but does not have an accurate count of the number of boreholes located in commercial farm areas.

**Table 3. Contribution of Irrigated Production for Selected Commercial Crops in Zimbabwe**

Crop	% of irrigated crop out of national output
Tea	55
Coffee	70
Cotton	45
Wheat	100
Sugar cane	100

Source: Adapted from GOZ 2001.

<sup>259</sup> The data in the table do not include small-scale informal irrigation in Communal and Resettlement areas which is estimated to total about 20 000 hectares

For reasons that are not clear to the authors, Government did not act to ensure the protection of irrigation systems on commercial farms during the land occupations of 2000 to 2002. Neither policies nor supervisory personnel were in place to oversee the transition of the systems from outgoing to new farmers. In most cases the new model A1 farmers for example, are clearly ill equipped to run the large irrigation systems previously managed by single commercial operators. Similarly many commercial farms had large dams built by multiple owners who jointly had water rights in the stored water; new land allocations have not adequately taken account of existing water rights and numerous practical difficulties have arisen in the reallocation of such waters. Where new farmers are eager to pursue irrigated farming, it is difficult to envisage how resettled farmers will, in the absence of operative land markets, be able to access private sector credit and resources to rebuild or maintain the irrigation infrastructure existing on the farms.

Only basic infrastructure has been provided at the time of land allocation and settlement during the fast track phase, including, among others the sinking of deep wells and boreholes, and cattle dips repairing or construction (GOZ 2000). Empirical evidence indicates that Government has been able to provide and sink a much lower ratio of water supplies (per resettled households) in the period 1999 to 2002 (largely under fast track resettlement) than occurred previously.

## **5. INTERFACES OF THE TWO REFORMS**

While the need for integrating land and water policies was articulated in the Rukuni Commission Report, there is little discussion of the intersections between land and water reform in the water documents and policies to date. The major policy documents remain *Towards a Water Policy for Zimbabwe* (2001) and the *Water Act (1998)*. The former deals with the issue only in Chapter 8, entitled 'Integrating Land and Water Use Planning' which is two and half pages long. The text primarily notes the need for more comprehensive planning but without specifying how it can and should be done and by whom. The chapter does note that each Catchment has, as part of the Water Act, to produce a Catchment Plan. Part II of the Act (Sections 12-19) specifies what must be included in each Catchment Outline Plan. Catchment Councils are not authorised to issue water permits until these plans receive Ministerial approval. It is envisaged that the plans will address not only water utilisation issues but also those to do with land and other natural resources falling within the bounds of river systems of respective Catchment areas. As a commercial parastatal ZINWA is expected to manage former Government-owned dams, to plan for new ones, to manage all of Zimbabwe's waters on a user pay basis.

The extent of Government funding for the new resettlement areas has some implications for Zimbabwe's communal areas. For example, Recommendation 575 (Vol I; 141) of the Rukuni Commission Report addressed the need to considerably increase investment in irrigation in communal and resettlement areas. We, however, observe that this was not accomplished in

the period 1994-2002. At the same time land acquisition and redistribution have remained the major thrust affecting people in these areas. The use of water for productive purposes continues to be a major concern for both small and large water users. The major constraint to more effective and equitable water use has been the availability of water when and where needed. The WRMS report notes that there are large dams that have been built but have had no irrigation developed for communal areas surrounding them, including Mazvikadei, Osborne, Manyuchi and Zhovhe (GOZ 2000, p. 12). Irrigation is indeed expensive and the profitability of irrigated production is critical in justifying both short and long term viability of the enterprise. It is never simply the availability of water which renders land productive under irrigation but rather how to move the water to when and where it is needed<sup>260</sup>.

There is no mention of water reform in the land reform documents or in the critiques of land reform. More significantly, the accelerated resettlement process under fast track has affected the implementation of the water reform process as a whole and jeopardised its viability. The omission of water reform considerations from the land reform process has in effect meant the underestimation of the full scope and impact of the latter, considering attendant dynamics in water use and pricing in terms of maintaining dams, boreholes and other reservoirs.

Ultimately, the linkages between agricultural production (for both domestic consumption and exports, as for tobacco, horticulture, cattle, etc.), irrigation and water reform have not been adequately considered in the land reform program.

The large-scale commercial farming sector has actively participated in water development and productivity enhancement programmes in the country. Due to its resource endowment, the sector has been less dependent upon Government funding for irrigation development than other farming sectors. It has, consequently, employed this position to enhance its profitability and dynamism within the agriculture industry, and maintain a distinct dominance in the country's economy. Commercial farmers followed various strategies to obtain water security for cropping options, including:

- purchasing water from Government, called agreement water, which has historically been priced below cost, though ZINWA has sought to at least recover the cost of water provision,
- investing in dams and entering into syndicates to build medium- to large-scale water reservoirs for commercial farming and other purposes,
- investing in boreholes and paying for the electricity or diesel sustaining their operation.

In terms of the water reforms boreholes are to be registered and owners to pay for the waters extracted. This is intended to provide rational estimations of total amounts of water extracted and to limit ground water extraction to acceptable environmental limits.

---

<sup>260</sup> The estimated costs of establishing a new hectare under irrigation are quite high. For the Dande Irrigation project, for example, this stood at US \$20 000.

We note that the large-scale commercial farming sector has played a crucial role in both water administration and management (through data collection, water allocation and use control), and the financing of the water sector reform process (through budgetary support, secretarial services and other logistics). The new challenges in data collection and management requirements, however, transcend this sector to include greatly expanded numbers of water substantive and prospective users. The tasks involved appear logistically overwhelming in terms of required manpower and equipment and relevant processes.

Land redistribution in Zimbabwe has, in effect, seen a huge increase in the numbers of potential water users in the former commercial farms. In principle, the control and management of water has shifted from a relatively small number of commercial farmers to a multitude of smallholder farmers but only if they are able to utilise the waters. As noted above the Catchment Councils have not appropriately addressed the needs and aspirations of smaller scale farmers. While the formal incorporation of the resettlement sector into national water management policy is a significant development, supportive resources are required to fund the sector's attendance of meetings and enhance its participation in the reform process. A stable revenue base needs to be developed to facilitate meaningful and effective participation by all stakeholders in the planning and management activities. Given the substantial reduction in the size of the large scale commercial sector in the wake of land redistribution, there is a clear need to mobilise and enhance the capacity of the new farmers to not only participate in financing the reform process but also strengthen and expand in the long run water development possibilities to levels commensurate with the new status of the resettlement sector.

Evidence from attendance at Catchment and Subcatchment Council meetings indicates that one of the reasons for the slow (or in some cases stagnant) pace in the implementation of institution formation and general Catchment business is the much weakened financial base of commercial farmers and the uncertainty facing them in the wake of land acquisitions. Expectation would therefore ordinarily be high for the new farmers to play a significant part in financing water development and management but this process may be restricted by economic and other constraints. The difficult question remains what will be the incentives for new farmers to participate and where will the resources come from?

We suggest that this is a pivotal moment for water reform. The water reforms were based on a mixed economy with growing recognition of the private sector. Banks previously provided loans for dam construction, purchase of irrigation equipment, etc. and most elements of commercial agriculture depended upon banking for loans, the private sector for equipment, seeds, fertilisers, etc. and for a relatively stable investment climate protected by Government. The Government has already downsized the Department of Water decentralising much of its personnel and its functions. It has launched a complex set of legal and administrative procedures to manage water while expecting water users to fund these processes. A major challenge does exist for banks and other private sector institutions to provide the same decisive support to the new farmers that they effectively afforded previous white commercial farmers.

A key observation here is that a regularised system of water allocation with farmers knowing how much of the resource they will draw and when, strongly depends on accurate hydrological data and respect for regulations. Our conversations with personnel in Catchments and Subcatchments indicate much ignorance of the new water laws and procedures, with often-competing authoritative messages. Thus, while the Catchment Manger may be urging saving water for urban use, the District Administrator could be urging farmers to use as much water as possible for agricultural production to offset food shortages and threats of famine among rural communities.

## **6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

The water reform process was crafted to incorporate declining Government capacity to fund necessary water development by shifting to a complex strategy of stakeholder participation, user pay and increasing access to water. The water reform strategy was premised on the continued vibrancy of commercial farming with the expectation that new black commercial farmers would be entering the sector. Unlike the land reform program, funding for the water reform program was to be based on the users of water rather than on Government. Fast track has yielded more settlements and beneficiaries under A1 and A2 than any other models. A1 farmers appear the least prepared or equipped to either continue or to initiate irrigation using existing infrastructure. Their water needs are very similar to those of other Model A beneficiaries—the most important and immediate being primary uses (drinking, cleaning, livestock and small gardens). They will also need water for productive purposes but the water infrastructure on the former commercial farms was typically highly centralised for the farmers' and the farm workers' requirements and not the relatively dispersed village models being implemented. Model A1 has not been designed to have cooperative or corporate groups of farmers manage the dam and irrigation systems, when they exist. In some cases the long period of occupation without formal transition to resettled farmers has led to the sale and or destruction of much valuable irrigation equipment or infrastructure.

Model A2 settlement is, in principle, much more conducive to the use of commercial water in addition to the ordinary primary water requirements. While there is great variation in the size of A2 plots and how farms have been divided, there remains the potential that former irrigation can continue or that new systems can be put into production. The reported low take up rate among those allocated A2 landholdings will, however, make it difficult to maintain irrigation and water infrastructure. Lastly, there are many A2 farms without primary water supplies which will need wells, etc. However, since A2 farmers are supposed to be primarily those with the means to farm commercially they should be able to afford their own water provisions.

The need for the integration of the two programmes cannot be overemphasised. As illustrated, water and land are interdependent resources; the exploitation of one directly impacts on the other. The long-term sustainability of one hinges on the protection and sound management of the other. The crucial mismatch between supplying land for free, at least in the short term, and charging for water usage, makes it difficult to have farmers invest in

irrigation without the expectations of Government funding and/or security of tenure and water. With non-functional rural land markets, what security and incentives will there be for farmers to invest in water? Without fundamental changes in policy, the declaration of irrigation as a strategic resource may remain rhetorical and without substance.

The highest short-term priority for the land/water interface is to assure the maintenance of existing water infrastructures. These include dams, weirs, irrigation pipes, pumps, tractors, etc. still on the farms as well as the personnel who operated these. ZINWA is the new owner of all former Government-owned dams. While it will operate and maintain the public water infrastructure it does not link directly or clearly to the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement which implements land redistribution and resettlement. Furthermore, while ZINWA is responsible for the water, it is not responsible for private or syndicate-owned dams whose ownership after resettlement remains unclear. As already noted, land tenure is directly linked to water.

Commercial agriculture in Zimbabwe has, especially in poor rainfall years, largely depended on irrigated production which in turn has depended on successful allocation and use of its waters. There have been long and difficult debates during the water reform process as to what system should replace the current first in, last out approach which has privileged white commercial farmers. For a range of reasons no alternative system is in place yet. In short, in this critical arena, especially in drought years, water policymakers and water users will have difficulty in knowing what to do, which opens up the system to abuse and corruption and enables the most powerful and the most well-connected to improperly access water in the absence of clear regulations.

## REFERENCES

- Derman, Bill and Anne Hellum. 2002. 'Neither Tragedy nor Enclosure: Are There Inherent Human Rights in Water Management in Zimbabwe's Communal Lands?' *The European Journal of Development Research* 14(2): 31-50.
- GOZ, Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development. 1980. *Intensive Resettlement: policies and procedures* (1980, 1983 and 1985 editions) Government of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- GOZ, Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development. 1996. *Policy Paper on Land Redistribution and Resettlement in Zimbabwe*, MOLA, Harare.
- GOZ, Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rural Development. 1999. Inception Phase Framework Plan 1999 to 2000: An Implementation Plan of the Land reform and Resettlement Programme B Phase 2, MOLA, Harare.
- GOZ, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, and Resettlement. 2000. *Accelerated Land Reform and Resettlement Implementation Plan: Fast Track*, MLARR, Harare.
- GOZ, Ministry of Rural Resources and Water Development. *Towards Integrated Water Resources Management: Water Resources Management Strategy in Zimbabwe*. Harare.

- GOZ, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. *Model A2 Resettlement Scheme*. Harare.
- Mujuru, Joyce. Comments by the Minister of Rural Resources and Water Development on the Zimbabwe National Water Authority Bill. P 307-308, Parliamentary Debates, Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1998.
- Rukuni, Mandivamba. 1994a. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems. Volume Two: Technical Reports*. Harare: Government Printers.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1994b. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems. Volume One: Main Report*. Harare: Government Printers.
- Water Tec (pvt) Ltd. 1997. *Integrated Catchment Strategy in Zimbabwe*. Consultants Report prepared for WRMS. Harare.
- World Bank. 1993a. *Proceedings of the Workshop on Water Resources Management in Southern Africa*. Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.
- World Bank. 1993b. *Water Resources Management*. World Bank: Washington D.C.



—Chapter 13—

# An Analysis of Institutional and Organisational Issues on Fast Track Resettlement

## The Case of Goromonzi District

**S.C. Marimira**

MSc. Student, Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe

**K. Odero**

Mentor, Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe

*The current Land Reform and Resettlement programme has created significant challenges and changes in the politics of Zimbabwe. It has become increasingly complicated, highly emotional, and, in some cases, highly politicised. The major issues of concern relate to planning and organisational modalities. The Government of Zimbabwe's failure to provide basic infrastructure, credit-input support and strengthening of local level institutions and organisational structures largely intertwines these. Also included in the challenges are modes of land acquisition, redistribution and perceived micro and macro-economic benefits. Despite the economic and financial hardships, the Government of Zimbabwe still maintains a hard-line approach towards giving land to the landless. The current land resettlement programme is being implemented under two distinct models: 'fast track' land resettlement, officially known as the A1 Model, and the A2 Model. The A1 Model typifies peasant agriculture models while the A2 is aimed at promoting indigenous commercial agriculture. A1 fast track was embarked on in 2000 to regularise the invasions. Settlers have moved into the farms without proper land-use planning and the provision of basic infrastructure, like clinics and boreholes for safe drinking water. Land reform and resettlement has been implemented with minimal attention on institutional reforms. The challenge both for the Government and settlers is to develop sustainable low-cost mechanisms that recognise the use of indigenous local knowledge and context sensitive approaches to development. This chapter presents planning and organisational issues with the aim of highlighting some of the major challenges and constraints.*

### **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Land and economic growth issues in Africa over the decade have been characterised by the need to increase agricultural productivity and at the same time maintaining a sustainable environment (FAO 1996; Moyo 1998). Also embedded in the discussion are issues of creating meaningful land tenure regimes that ensure increased food production sustainability and laws that protect the most vulnerable groups in societies, mainly women and children (Woomer and Swift 1994; Dalton 1996; Scoones and Toulmin 1999). Land reforms seek to

redress landholding imbalances. Across the world, land reform programmes are both evolutionary and revolutionary.

The current land reform exercise in Zimbabwe has drawn both local and international approval and criticism. The land reform exercise has been embarked on under the idiom of redressing socially biased land imbalances whose origins are believed to have emanated from the colonial legacy. The second phase of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme in Zimbabwe was characterised massive and rapid farm invasions, which were disorderly. The Government moved swiftly to regularise the settlements and plan for the provision of rudimentary infrastructure and services to the newly settled farmers (GOZ 2001).

Government efforts in providing infrastructure, however, are paralysed by lack of both financial and human resources, which is largely attributed to the failure of Government policy to recognise that the agriculture sector was a dynamo for the success of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). For instance, the failure to integrate Land Reform initiatives into ESAP heavily affected the large-scale commercial farmers and the country as a whole. For example, between 1991 and 1995, agriculture exports contracted by 40%, though the decline was also exacerbated by recurrent droughts (Moyo 1998; Chipika 1998).

Opponents of the land resettlement exercise strongly believe that, in the short run, agriculture productivity will be negatively affected owing to a number of socio-economic factors. For instance, the land resettlement exercise is being implemented while the Government is experiencing economic hardships. The current land resettlement phase is characterised by lack of financial resources to provide hard and soft infrastructure in the farms, inadequate resources to support emerging institutions and organisations. Also, there is evidence of increased levels of environmental degradation.

The study investigates local level institutional and organisational setups so as to understand local level dynamics and operational strategies embarked on by the settlers. Using quantitative and qualitative research methods, the study explores socio-economic factors that influence planning and seeks to suggest participatory planning initiatives as strategies of empowering local-level planning. Participatory project planning is viewed as a key element in bringing about effective institutions and development of projects that are sustainable and responsive to local needs.

### **1.1. Conceptual Framework**

The research project is grounded in a conceptual framework that recognises the importance of local involvement in setting institutional and development agendas. The framework provides a critical and analytical approach that views institutional and organisational issues as strongly linked to beneficiary needs and ability of respective actors to articulate agendas that meet both individual and communal interests (Murphree 1991; Murombedzi 1991). Furthermore, an initiative that seeks to undertake socio-economic change (land reform) of such huge magnitude requires serious grounding and recognition of the importance of involving stakeholders in decision-making and setting of voluntary institutional and development agendas.

Development institutions that empower beneficiaries are viewed as the prerequisite for locally initiated development initiatives. Planning is viewed as a political process, a game of power, but the challenge is for stakeholders to devolve and deconcentrate powers so as to foster participatory and democratic planning (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1989; Seiderman 1992). The framework recognises that institutions are dynamic, influenced by past and present contexts, as well as macro-socio-economic events and internal societal issues (Ostrom 1986; North 1990; Toulmin and Quan 2002). The framework also recognises that the setting up of powerful and effective institutions is only possible through well constituted organisational structures. Given the challenges of the land resettlement in Zimbabwe, the research is premised on the assumption that socio-economic contexts facilitate the emergence of effective and legitimate institutions. The hypotheses of the research is that existing formal organisations have little or no positive effect in terms of service delivery to the newly resettled farmers.

## **1.2. Methodological Framework**

Meaningful research and recommendations on Zimbabwe's land reform exercise have to incorporate an objective methodological framework that seeks to unearth realities on the ground. The study was conducted in Goromonzi District, Mashonaland East Province. The selected study area represents an area where the first farm invasions were recorded in 1997. The selected sites also represent a continuum of the rural-urban dichotomy. The specific study sites are Dunstan and Rochester Farms in Goromonzi District. Both farms are former Large-scale Commercial Farming areas and both farms were settled under the A1 Model (Fast Track Land Resettlement Scheme). People originating mainly from urban areas, which include Chitungwiza and Epworth, settled Dunstan Farm. On the other hand, settlers from Rochester Farm originated from Rusike and Goromonzi Communal Areas. The sharp contrast in the two study sites generated interesting findings.

The study employed survey methods to collect quantitative data. Qualitative methods comprised participatory research tools such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions, community meetings, one-to-one informal discussions, participant observation, transect walks and ranking and scoring. A close-ended questionnaire was administered to 92 randomly selected households in the two study sites.

The sampling frame consisted of Government heads at Provincial levels and some of the respondents included the Provincial Planning and Resettlement Officer from the District Development Fund (DDF), Provincial Lands Officer from Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, a representative from the Provincial Administrator's office and staff from Agriculture Research and Extension (AREX). At District level, respondents included the District Administrator as the Chairperson of the District Land Committee and also in his capacity as an administrator (policy enforcement agent) and District heads for different government departments.

The other level of inquiry was at community level, where several community leaders were interviewed. For instance, some of the informants included Chiefs<sup>261</sup>, village chairpersons (Base Commanders), chairpersons of local groups for example agriculture commodity groups, and community members during community meetings, individual interviews or focus group discussions. The last level of inquiry was the household, and the tool used was the closed questionnaire. Table 1, shows the methods employed, the type of information collected and target respondents.

**Table 1. Research Methods, Information Collected and Target Respondents**

<b>Research technique/tool</b>	<b>Information collected</b>	<b>Target informants</b>
Household questionnaire	Background information (place of origin, date of occupancy), social and educational background, income generating activities, crops grown and yields, infrastructure, extension services availability	Randomly selected beneficiaries at both sites
Semi-structured/Key informant interviews	To solicit information on places of origin, educational (both academic and technical), income sources, perceptions on roles of traditional leadership and customs, perceptions on service delivery and how these can be improved, Issues of local level development initiatives	Government Officials (Provincial and District level), Community leaders e.g., Chiefs (2 Chiefs were interviewed), base commanders or Farm Chairpersons (conducted 4 detailed interviews), Chairpersons of agric. and social groups
Focus group discussions and community meetings	Perceptions on how Government service delivery, local initiatives, perceptions on improvements	Leaders of social clubs/groups, land committee leadership,
Participant observation	Largely used to validate claims by settlers and to get an impression of power relations. Non-verbal communication like facial expressions was key for triangulation purposes	All informants

---

<sup>261</sup> Two Chiefs, one headman and four nominated village heads (chairpersons) were interviewed in both study areas.

## **2. RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **2.1. Key Result Areas**

This section presents results from the two study sites. Major aspects of the research findings include the following characteristics:

- educational background,
- places of origin,
- age and gender,
- period of settlement,
- perceptions on acceptability by resident ex-farm workers,
- traditional leadership: roles and legitimacy,
- perceptions on institutional and organisational performance,
- participation by locals in decision-making, planning and implementation of projects,
- settler-state interface-support.

### **2.2. Age, Place of Origin and Educational Status of Respondents**

Age, sex, place of origin and educational status of respondents were explored in both study areas. From the research findings, respondents in Dunstan are fairly older than those in Rochester. Table 2 presents age groups and percentages in both study areas. For example, 35.3% of respondents in Dunstan fall within the above-50 years old category, while 19% of respondents in Rochester are over 50. Rochester has a more youthful composition of respondents, with 31.0% in the 20-30 years old category. Differences in age group composition in the two study areas are largely explained by land shortages in the neighbouring communal area (Rusike and Domboshava) for Rochester. Young people see an opportunity to earn livelihoods through farming, an occupation they have been denied before. Older people own most of the land in the communal area. On the other hand, in Dunstan, a greater percentage of the respondents are in the above-50 category, and perhaps this is because they are less competitive in the job market. Also, most of the farms were compulsorily acquired by the Government, hence leaving ex-farm workers with limited sources of income.

**Table 2: Respondents' Age Groups and Percentages in Dunstan and Rochester Farms**

Age (years)	% Dunstan	% Rochester
Below 20	3.9	9.5
20-30	21.6	31.0
30-40	19.6	14.3
40-50	19.6	26.2
<b>Above 50</b>	35.3	19.0

Of the total sampled households in Dunstan and Rochester farms, 83.3% and 90.5% are male-headed, while the rest are female-headed. Respondents who were enumerated during the survey comprised 51% and 61.9% males in Dunstan and Rochester, respectively. The questionnaire also sought to establish the relationship of the respondent to the household head. In Dunstan, 43.3% of the respondents are either wives or owners of the farms. However, in Rochester 42.4% of the sampled households are manned by owners (wives and husbands).

Follow up interviews revealed there are more relatives manning the allocated family farms in Rochester because of its proximity to Rusike Communal Area, where most of occupiers originate. Since most of the occupiers in Dunstan are from urban areas it is more difficult for them to attract relatives to stay in this remote and undeveloped area. The data showed that workers man 46.8% of the family farms in Dunstan. Moreso, since most of the respondents in Dunstan are in the above-50 category, farms provide refuge from the vagaries of urban unemployment, in which they cannot compete because of old age.

A land shortage in Rusike Communal Area has attracted more relatives to join farm occupiers, as this has created increased opportunities for earning better livelihoods through farming and selling forest products, an occupation they are more accustomed to, unlike their urban-based counterparts in Dunstan. Generally, people in Dunstan originate from Epworth and earn their livelihoods as casual labourers in neighbouring farms. In this case, relatives would not be attracted to the newly resettled farms because of lack of infrastructure and opportunities for income generating activities. Also interesting is the fact that 80.4% and 64.3% of the respondents in Dunstan and Rochester, respectively, indicated that they are married. In Rochester 28.6% of the respondents reported that they are still single, and this is directly linked to their stated ages.

### **2.3. Educational Status and Employment History**

In terms of educational status, 43.1% of respondents in Dunstan and 26.8% in Rochester have only acquired a primary level education. Thirty seven percent (37.3%) of respondents in Dunstan attained secondary school level while Rochester has 56.1%. This is largely attributed to differences in their respective backgrounds and age. Since the majority of settlers in

Rochester originate in rural areas, they therefore had the opportunity of attending secondary level in the schools that were established following the attainment of independence in 1980. Settlers in Dunstan could not take the same opportunity because they had already attained adulthood when the schools were established. Comparing agriculture training, farmers in Rochester are more trained, with 7.3% of the respondents in Rochester having attained Master Farmer certificate and only 2.0% for Dunstan. This difference is largely attributed to the fact that Master Farmer training is mainly provided for rural farmers from where a large majority of farmers from Rochester originate.

In relation to employment history, both formal and informal, there is a marginal pattern of trends between the two farms. However, in Dunstan 21.6% of the respondents indicated that they were/are formally employed, whereas 13.7% reported that they were engaged in informal employment. For Rochester, the percentages are 14.3% and 2.4% for formal and in formal employment, respectively. The data for formal and informal employment are not very much in favour of educational levels attained by the respondents from the two farms. For instance, respondents from Rochester are more educated than their counterparts. The trend maybe explained by the fact that there are more employment opportunities for urban dwellers than those from rural areas. Respondents in Dunstan who indicated they were employed probably were working in farms surrounding Epworth, while some were engaged in urban informal activities.

#### **2.4. Period of Settlement**

Respondents were solicited for the time they settled on the farms. According to the survey results, 4% of the respondents in Dunstan moved into the farm in 1998. On the other hand, Rochester Farm was not yet invaded by 1998. This scenario can be explained by the fact that Dunstan is surrounded by urban areas such as Chitungwiza and Harare (Epworth, Ruwa and Mabvuku), whereas Rochester Farm is near a communal area (Rusike) and is also surrounded by farms. The war veterans who took the initiative reported that they got to know of the invasions through both the electronic and print media.

The assumption is that farmers living close to urban areas get information much quicker than their rural counterparts. The other hypothesis is that urban dwellers take quicker action than rural-based people. According to the survey results, 78.4% of the settlers moved into Dunstan between 2000 and 2002. Ninety eight percent (97.6%) of the settlers in Rochester Farm indicated that they moved into the farm between the same periods as those in Dunstan. However, the majority of settlers were allocated plots by the District Land Committee between 2001 and 2002. For instance, 49.0% and 64.3% of the settlers in Dunstan and Rochester Farms were allocated plots between 2001 and 2002. The people who were being allocated plots were coming from the lists that were compiled by the Base Commander at farm level. The lists were then sent to the District Lands Committee for record keeping and planning purposes. Table 3, below, shows the proportion of the total number of settlers who settled on the farms during the different periods indicated.

**Table 3: Proportion of settlement by year: Rochester and Dunstan Farms**

Year	% Dunstan	% Rochester	Comments
1998	4	-	Settlers mostly war veterans taking the lead
1999-2000	16	2.4	Urban based war vets coming from Ruwa and Chitungwiza invading Dunstan Farm
2000-2001	30	33.3	Political instability following the national referendum encourages more invasions
2001-2002	50	64.3	Farms are listed for A1 and official allocations begin
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

## 2.5. Place of Origin and Internal Institutional Dynamics

A detailed analysis of the origins of the respondents shows that in Dunstan nearly half originate from urban areas (49.0%), with Epworth contributing the largest percentage (28.6%), Chitungwiza, (16.3%) and Marondera (4.1%). Of the remaining 51.0% respondents in Dunstan, the largest percentage originates from Goromonzi District, a rural area. While in Rochester, 97.7% of the respondents originate from rural areas with Goromonzi District accounting for 85.7%. There are more settlers originating from rural areas in Rochester because the land resettlement procedures stipulated that people must be resettled on the farm nearest to them.

Place of origin and period of settlement greatly shape institutional dynamics in both study areas. For example, informants explained that they were being discriminated against because of the period they came to the farms. The scenario is characterised by denial of inputs to farmers who came later. It appears that earlier settlers have formed a common identity, through which they want to establish and recreate a social grouping capable of amassing resources in their favour. Ex-farm workers who are still resident on the farms and in the neighbourhood represent a silent but formidable challenge and dynamic to the establishment, meaning settlers. From the survey results, informants reported acrimonious relationships between settlers and ex-farm workers.

One example is that of witchcraft accusations, as in cases where ex-farm workers are accused of having defecated in water wells and homesteads belonging to settlers: a taboo in African culture and a sign of disapproval (Sithole and Bradley 2001)<sup>262</sup>. Furthermore, farm workers are accused of stealing and harassing new settlers. On the other hand, former farm workers accuse the settlers of having taken away their employment. If institutions are viewed as rules and norms that govern behaviour, such actions by ex-farms workers indicate a breakdown of social modes. This is possibly explained by the fact that the two sets of people (settlers and

---

<sup>262</sup> The ex-farm workers expressed fear of the war veterans, and, according to Sithole and Bradley, actions of the ex-farm workers constitute 'the weapons of the weak'.

ex-farm workers) on Rochester Farm come from different socio-cultural backgrounds. Further inquiry revealed that the ex-farm workers were not aware of the traditional implications of their actions. Some of the respondents felt that since the programme was hasty, there was no time for social organisation and reorientation resulting in some these localised conflicts, which are being manifested in different ways.

## **2.6. Perceptions on Settler-Government Interface: Institutional and Organisational Issues**

Organisations working with the settlers were identified, characterised and ranked based on perceived contributions to infrastructure provision and service delivery. The most prominent are the District Development Fund, AREX, District Land Committee, Grain Marketing Board (GMB) Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU), Rural District Council (RDC), Zimbabwe Fertiliser Company (ZFC), Ward Coordinator, Traditional Leadership and Village Committees. Informants indicated a general lack of adequate service delivery by all government departments. They mentioned that Government is experiencing serious financial problems that ultimately have implications on infrastructure provision and service delivery.

However, informants applauded GMB, a state owned grain dealer, for giving them inputs like seed and fertiliser. Some informants complained that they could not get the inputs since the local land committee was accused of being corrupt. Seventy-nine percent (78.8%) of the informants at Rochester Farm mentioned that they have formed their own social and agriculture clubs to mobilise funds to meet some of their needs, mainly in procuring agriculture inputs. Informants mentioned that by coming together they reduce transactions costs that include travelling, information sharing and transportation. On the contrary, 11.5% of settlers at Dunstan Farm have formed social groups among themselves. The social groups are mainly for offering assistance at funerals. HIV/AIDS has become the leading cause of the deaths in the area and elsewhere in the country. Most informants mentioned that settlers on the farm originate from far away places, and they reported that this club is very helpful since most of their relatives are far away.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of the respondents mentioned that the settlers are not keen to come together for communal projects. This is probably explained by the fact that most of them originated from the urban areas and there is limited social coherence among them. Furthermore, the sharp contrast between the two study sites in terms of specific group composition exhibit different and divergent motives. For instance, a higher percentage (79%) of the settlers at Rochester farm have joined the agriculture commodity group unlike their counterparts at Dunstan who have not formed such group. Instead, the settlers there have formed a social group that assists at funerals. A greater percentage of the settlers at Dunstan perceive the new settlement as for retirement rather than commercial agricultural enterprises. Table 4 presents perceptions by informants on characteristics of District level and local organisations.

**Table 4: Perceptions by informants: District Level and Local organisation**

Organisation	Characteristics/Remarks
Agriculture Research and Extension	Very well known by informants. Works with a limited number of farmers. Most activities are outside the resettlement area. Must provide widespread extension, technical support and play a bigger role in demarcating plots. The major constraint is that in recent years the Department was restructured in line with Government policy guidelines. Also, fast track has resulted in increased spatial coverage and yet resource supply is actually dwindling. The Department also has high staff turn over.
District Development Fund	Should drill more boreholes and provide tillage services. Boreholes must be drilled close to settlements. Its services are out of reach for most settlers. The officers are corrupt and only provide services to top governmental officials. Ordinary people are ignored, even if they pay for services. The organisation lacks both financial and human resources. The Department was heavily funded by donors, but all donors were reported to have pulled out. Government is financially constrained to fund its activities. Its major task of providing rudimentary infrastructure is almost at a standstill. Exacerbating the situation is failure to retain qualified personnel.
Grain Marketing Board	Sole buyer of grain in the country. Provides inputs to farmers, but only to a small number because of limited financial resources. Receives input credit funds from the Government with the intention of getting the money through crop sales by farmers to the GMB. Sometimes inputs are provided late in the season. Input collection points are also located far away from the settlers.
Rural District Council	Perceived as inactive in the resettlement areas. Has mandate to provide infrastructure in the newly resettled areas but not doing so because of weak financial resource base and underfunding from the Government. Also, the RDC is not represented in the District Land Committee, which therefore sidelined them in terms of decision-making and deliberating on certain issues. RDC has introduced a land tax being resisted by settlers.
Zimbabwe Farmers' Union	ZFU promises a lot of things, but seems more concerned with raising funds by selling membership cards to farmers. Some things they promise are sorghum and finger millet contract growing with settlers. Very limited interaction between ZFU officials and settlers owing to limited financial resources. At Dunstan, the structures are non-existent.
Ward Coordinator	Ward Coordinators work under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth Development Gender and Employment Creation. Their mandate is to mobilise communities for various activities, including identification and implementation of projects. Informants reported that they have seen them only once after the leadership frantically searched for them. So far, only promises about HIV/AIDS patient care and building toilets. The Department is experiencing financial problems.
Zimbabwe Fertiliser Company	Not very active but expected to provide more information on new products/inputs
District Land Committee	Chaired by the District Administrator. Members include all technical government departments, war veterans, ex-detainees, the armed forces, traditional leaders and District Women's League representative. Instrumental in land identification, pegging and demarcation and placement of settlers. Conducts periodic land audits, also gave farmers 'confirmation letters' they can use to secure loans from banks, DDF and GMB.
Village Action Aids Committee (VAAC)	Perceived important by assisting HIV/AIDS victims and orphans in Rochester only. The Committee is providing care, food, counselling and awareness though informants complained about delays in service delivery. The Committee works closely with Ministry of Youth Development Gender and Employment Creation.
Traditional Leaders	The Chief is a District Land Committee member. He visited both sites twice and laid down the traditional rules to the settlers. Generally, their legitimacy is not recognised

	and unsuitable for the resettlement context.
Farmers' groups	Groups are formed ostensibly for members to be able to get loans from GMB and inputs and extension. Farmers with same groups also share skills and information. Each group has an elected Chairperson who conducts meetings and is responsible for making loan follow-ups. He/she mediates between settlers and Government officials.
Local Land Committee	The local land committee is responsible for arbitrating conflicts on land boundaries, arresting thieves and those who vandalise property on the farm. They also make sure settlers respect the traditional taboos pronounced by Chief, e.g., not cultivating on <i>chisi</i> <sup>263</sup> . In a way the local land committee compliments the work of the Chief though not popular on this role with settlers.
Village Committees	Responsible for the day-to-day running of the settlement and also compliments the duties of the local land committee. Consists of village heads, female and youth representatives and war veterans. Hold meetings monthly and forward the minutes to the local land committee for implementation.

Source: Survey Results 2002

In both study areas there is a general lack of respect for traditional leaders and traditional values and taboos. For instance, in Dunstan, the informants mentioned that they do not observe the traditional resting day (*chisi*) even though the Chief announced the day. However, the inclusion of Chiefs (and also village heads) in the District Land Committee has provided Chiefs with some power over the settlers. This has also created opportunities for them to arbitrate over land and boundary disputes. This might create more leverage for them, unlike in the first phase for land resettlement where Chiefs had no say in land identification, allocation and arbitration of land disputes. Box 1, presents some of the problems traditional leaders currently face in some of the study sites. Chiefs are eager to impose their authority over newly resettled farmers.

Informants were generally not happy with the level of interaction between settlers and the state. For example, more than 70% of the respondents felt that all government departments except GMB have not fulfilled their mandates. In most cases, informants are not consulted in decision-making and implementation. Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents also felt that the information gap between them and government officials is the major challenge since the officials will not come to know of the problems of the settlers. They recommended that there be effective and efficient two-way communication between them.

---

<sup>263</sup> *Chisi* is a day that is set aside by traditional leaders for people to rest and they are not allowed to cultivate their fields. It is believed that if they cultivate, their crops will be eaten by birds or wild animals.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, land reform and resettlement issues are so complex, politicised and dynamic that a holistic approach has to be implemented in order to obtain meaningful results. The

#### **Box 1: Interview with Chief Chikwaka**

'As the Chief of settlers at Rochester Farm, I strongly feel a lot has to be done in terms of people learning to respect our traditional values. This bad behaviour, in terms of disrespect for chiefs comes from people who were resettled in the early 1980s. These people do not have respect for chiefs at all. They should respect me because they know me though I was not their chief. They are Chief Rusike's people. I have so far met with them twice and they have sent their rapoko (finger millet), black cloth and black goat for reconciling their spirits with mine. I heard some of the settlers refused to contribute and it will catch up with them very soon. I am actually angry with some of the settlers, though some of them do not stay on this farm. They have labelled me a squatter on this farm. I have reported my concerns with the District Administrator. I want all the settlers to be evicted or to pay a heavy fine to me. I have only met once with the local land committee and the community at Rochester. And the community reconfirmed their allegiance to me and my authority over them. At that meeting, I told them that they should respect ancestral spirits of the area, that is, if they want to live in peace. I told them about the importance of the traditional resting day, to desist from cutting down sacred trees and killing pythons. The sacred trees are associated with rainmaking ceremonies while the pythons keep water in the wells'.

setting up of effective key organisations and institutions is key for the success of the programme. Several government departments need to be capacitated with financial, technical and human resource requirements; also market conditions, technological innovations and interaction among stakeholders must be improved for the programme to produce favourable results.

Furthermore, land reform programmes must seriously consider decentralisation and devolution of power to the beneficiaries to allow for democratic and transparent planning processes to emerge. In addition, Government and other authorities must not try to impose traditional leadership structures in situations where they are either lacking or obsolete. This has the problem of creating illegitimate institutions that may fall-prey to the VIDCO dilemma. Institutions must be allowed to emerge, as well as reconstitute themselves according to local contexts. The study has clearly demonstrated that the Government has failed in providing basic requirements such as infrastructure and extension services.

The other challenge is that the public displayed relative ignorance on the services each organisation or Government department must provide to them. As long as there is no full commitment by Government to be transparent, decentralise and devolve power to communities, the ignorance will continue to prevail. The hypothesis that existing formal organisations have little or no positive effect in terms of service delivery to newly resettled farmers holds water. From the research findings, the Government is financially constrained to fund the operations of various departments. The current financial crisis has been worsened by recurrent droughts and negative publicity, which has resulted in most donors withdrawing their funding.

However, institutions are already emerging and asserting themselves in the newly resettled areas. The institutions and organisations are responding to local needs and contexts. It is more important than ever that researchers continue to monitor institutional and organisational change in the fast track resettlement areas.

## REFERENCES

- Chipika, J. 1998. *The Impacts of Some Macro-economic Policies and other Interventions on Household Strategies in the Miombo w/land Region*. The case of Zimbabwe, IES Special Report 12.
- Dalton, P.J. 1996. *Land Law*. London: Pitman Publishing.
- FAO. 1996. *Recapitalisation of Soil Productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Rome: FAO.
- GOZ. 2001. *People First, Land Reform in Zimbabwe*. Government Publications, Harare.
- Moyo, S. 1998. 'The Land Question'. UNDP Report, Issue No. 4.
- Murombedzi, J. 1991. 'Wetlands Conservation Under Common Property Management'. CASS, Harare.
- Murphree, M. 1991. 'Communities as Institutions for Natural Resource Management'. CASS, Harare.
- Mutizwa-Mangiza. n.d. 1989. *Decentralisation in Zimbabwe: Problems of Planning at District Level*. RUP Occasional Paper No. 6. Department of Rural and Urban Planning, University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- North, D.C. 1990. 'Institutions'. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5(1): 97-112.
- Ostrom, E. 1986. 'An Agenda for the Study of Institutions'. *Public Choice* 48: 3-25.
- Scoones, I. and C. Toulmin. 1999. *Policies for Soil Fertility Management in Africa*. Issues. DFID Report, London.
- Seiderman, A., et al. 1992. 'Transforming Southern African Agriculture'. In *State, Law and Agricultural Institutions: A theoretical Framework*, edited by A. Seiderman. World Press.
- Sithole, B. and P.N. Bradley. 2001. *Institutional Conflict over Management of Communal Resources in Zimbabwe*. Stockholm Environment Institute. Stockholm.
- Toulmin, C. and J.F. Quan, editors. 2002. *Evolving Land Rights, Policy and Tenure*. DFID Report, London.
- Woomer, P.L. and M.J. Swift, editors. 1994. *The Biological Management of Tropical Soil Fertility*. John Wiley and Sons, Toronto.



# RESETTLEMENT AND BENEFICIARY SUPPORT

## SETTLEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT MODELS IN ZIMBABWE

**N. Chatora**

An analysis of the Zimbabwean Land Reform and Redistribution Programme cannot be complete without an understanding of land settlement programmes before and after independence, and the evolution of the many post independence resettlement models.

### **1. PRE-INDEPENDENCE (1890-1980)**

#### **1.1. Large-scale Commercial Farm Settlement**

Successive settler governments gave political and material assistance to white settlers who wanted to venture into agriculture. The assistance varied from free to cheap agricultural productive land, assistance in the development of infrastructure such as dams, weirs, irrigation canals, etc, subsidies and assured access to finance. This can be regarded as the birth of the large-scale commercial farm sector. The beneficiaries became successful large-scale farmers.

#### **1.2. Small-scale Commercial Farm Settlement**

This scheme targeted qualifying black master farmer certificate holders. The original beneficiaries performed fairly well. Three decades down the line, the children and grandchildren of the original farmers, who themselves may not be farmers in their own right, have taken over the farms. In some cases, the farms have been subdivided into sub-

economical units. In 1978 the Government of Rhodesia indicated that it was going to set aside 4 million hectares for the resettlement of displaced black families.

## **2. PHASE 1 RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME (1980–1998)**

### **2.1. 1980-1984**

This was a rehabilitative programme that targeted returning refugees and families displaced by the war. When looking at the economic performance of this model, critics more often than not fail to note that the beneficiaries were the poorest among the poor. The phase was characterised by elaborate planning. The 1980 Intensive Resettlement Policies and Procedures Document spelled out three resettlement models.

**Model A.** This is the villagised type of resettlement where settlers are allocated 6 hectares gross arables and individual residential stands in a 20-25 household village, grazing, woodlots, water points and services are communal, and tenure was in the form of permits.

**Accelerated Resettlement.** The planning process was bureaucratic and slow, so much so that in some schemes settlers were emplaced while the planning was being done. Between 1932 and 1984, the Government of Zimbabwe decided to go for a parallel Accelerated Resettlement where settlers were emplaced on farms where there was no infrastructure at all. After 1984, the Government started revisiting these schemes for the purpose of providing infrastructure. These early schemes suffered from invasion by squatters, and subdivision of arable plots when the population increased. The Accelerated Programme schemes did not perform well.

**Model B.** This is an intensive settlement with communal living and co-operative farming. All property, land and equipment were co-operatively held, housing could be co-operative or private, livestock was privately owned. Beneficiaries were as for Model A. Most of the farms had sophisticated irrigation equipment and farming equipment. The co-operative model failed. Many of the original co-operators deserted the schemes. Those who remained did not have the skills to run such sophisticated enterprises.

**Model C.** This incorporates a commercial central core estate run by co-operative communities or by the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority, and the settlers as outgrowers. Settlers contribute labour to the core estate. The core estate supplies essential services to the settlers, such as mechanical draught power, transportation of produce and inputs in bulk, production of seedlings for specialised crops, specialised crop processing and marketing etc. Settlers pay for services rendered at economic rates. Beneficiaries were as for Model A. This model performed better than Models A and B; however, there were only a few pilot schemes.

### **2.2. 1985-1989**

The revised 1985 Intensive Resettlement Policies and Procedures Documents added a fourth model: Model D. Beneficiaries for Models A, B, and C had to qualify by possessing Master

Farmer certificates, owning farm implements, and not being gainfully employed elsewhere. Performance of the three models was marginally higher than during the first five years.

**Model A.** The only modifications were the addition of the common field or ZUNDE concept and irrigation models where settlers were allocated 0.5 to 2 hectares arable. Performance was generally higher than in communal areas. **Model B.** Addition of Game Management component to the model design. Performance only improved marginally. Many co-operators started taking out individual plots. **Model C.** No modifications. Very few farms were made available to this model. **Model D.** This model was designed for the grazing of communal area herd in the dry natural regions 4 and 5 of Matabeleland. Each benefiting community had access to the ranch once every 3 to 4 years, thus giving the communal area pastures time to recover. The benefiting families contributed towards costs of running the ranches and paddocking of their grazing areas. Models A, B and C were not acceptable to the people of Matabeleland. Only one Model D scheme was tried out in Matabeleland South Province. The model failed.

**Communal Land Reorganisation (CAR).** Wards or villages from where families had been translocated to resettlement schemes, had to be re-planned and re-organised. CAR was to proceed parallel to translocation resettlement. Most wards were so heavily congested that when the few families which were offered resettlement were translocated, there was no real elbow room created to warrant re-organisation.

### **2.3. 1990-1994**

Emphasis remained on qualifying beneficiaries. General performance was similar to the '1985-1989' Schemes. *Model A:* No modification. *Model B:* Emphasis shifted from giving new land to Model B to making existing Model B schemes viable. *Model C:* No new land was allocated to Model C. *Model D:* Model D only remained an experimental or pilot model at Doddieburn-Manyoli.

**Three Tier.** The Three Tier Model superseded the Model D. The land in the scheme is divided into tiers as follows: the first tier comprises residential, some arables and social services, the second tier is where benefiting households keep 5 livestock units for day-to-day use, and the third tier is the grazing area for commercial purposes. The Three Tier Model was popular in Matabeleland South province. Performance was fair.

**Farmer Development Trust (FDT).** The FDT was established in 1994 as private sector initiative to complement Government agricultural extension effort and resettled farmer support service provision in Model A resettlement schemes. The FDT also trains graduates in diploma courses at Government owned training centres. The FDT is partly funded by Government. The beneficiaries were as for the Model A and also some agricultural graduates. In this model the farmers are guaranteed access to inputs and labour. The model has scored major successes. The majority of beneficiaries have become richer than they ever imagined.

## **2.4. 1995-1997**

In 1995, Cabinet approved a Land Tenure Commission recommendation that the Model A design be changed from villagised to self-contained plots. Unsuccessful Model B's were to be replanned and re-demarcated into self-contained plots. The Three Tier Model remained unchanged. No new land was allocated to Models B and C.

1996 and 1997 saw attempts at revising the policies and Procedures Documents. The Villagised Model A was re-introduced, this time the programme objective was singly to decongest over-populated and overstocked villages. The self-contained plots were re-classified as Small Scale Commercial Scheme and not a resettlement model. Although those changes were implemented on the ground, the revisions to the Policies and Procedures Documents remained unpublished drafts. Since 1980, Arda has carried out the management of Model Cs as the core estate in a production relationship with out-growers. The Three Tier Model has not produced resounding successes yet. The intended beneficiaries are not keen to be translocated to the newly acquired farms.

**Commercial Farm Settlement Scheme (Tenant Scheme).** Under this scheme large-scale commercial farms were subdivided into medium size farms, which were leased out to beneficiaries. Government support to the scheme was minimal. Persistent non-performers were evicted. Government support to Tenant Scheme farmers was minimal. The performance of this settlement scheme was only fair.

## **3. PHASE II RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMME**

### **3.1. 1980-2002 ('fast track')**

Cabinet approved the Revised 1998 Policies and Procedures document. Beneficiaries can now input into the design of their schemes. Government accepted the notion of complimentary models. The improved Government Resettlement models were modified as follows.

**Model A1.** The villagised Model A was renamed Model A1, to benefit the landless from congested villages adjacent to the farms. Government put some commendable effort at providing beneficiaries with inputs. **Model A2.** The Small Scale Commercial Scheme (Self-Contained Plots) returned to be a resettlement model as Model A2. In the new model A2 scheme beneficiaries were allocated small scale, medium scale, large scale and peri-urban farms. Government showed seriousness in providing the new farmers with inputs. **Three tier model** was retained.

## 4. OBSERVATIONS ON LAND REFORM AND RESETTLEMENT

### 4.1. Performance of the Resettlement Models

There were too many resettlement models. The planning process was complex and tended to slow down implementation. The performance of the settlement programmes and resettlement models up to 1999 can roughly be ranked as shown in the table below.

No.	Model scheme	Beneficiaries	Comments
1	Pre-independence Large Scale Commercial Settlement Scheme	White settlers with interest in farming	Most beneficiaries became successful commercial farmers. Government support was strong.
2	Farmer Development Trust (FDT) Scheme	Normal Model A applicants and agriculture graduates	Beneficiaries are guaranteed availability of inputs and labour. Most of them are successful smallholder farmers.
3	Small Scale Commercial Farm Settlement Scheme	Black peasant experienced farmers with certificates in farming	The original farmers performed very well
4	Model C	Qualifying peasant farmers	Performed fairly well
5	Tenant Scheme	Black Zimbabweans with assets and/or money and/or training in agriculture	Did not perform too well. Government support was too little
6	Earlier Model A	The destitute, returning refugees	Beneficiaries are no longer destitute. From owning nothing, they are now peasant farmers of sorts.
7	Later Model A	Qualifying peasant farmers	Most beneficiaries are definitely enjoying a better quality of life. They could have done with more Government support.
8	Three Tier Model	Overgrazed wards	Performance not too impressive
9	Model B	Ex-farmworkers and landless peasants, preferably with some experience in farming	Failed.
10	Model D	Overgrazed wards	Remained at pilot scheme level. Performed badly.

## 5. SUPPORT TO THE FARMING SECTOR

In the current phase, Government has been injecting a lot of money and support to the Agrarian Reform Programme. A lot of inputs have been acquired by Government for distribution to farmers. While giving assistance to farmers is commendable, the manner in

which the support is given needs to be structured properly. The questions that need to be asked are:

- Is it Government's core business to be involved in handling inputs?
- Can strategic grain reserves be improved in the environment where controlled producer prices do not have a profit margin for the farmer?
- What are the implications of importing grain?
- Should Government re-introduce subsidies?
- The private sector is already supporting certain crops like tobacco and cotton. Can similar support be mobilised for grains?

# BENEFICIARY SELECTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION IN RESETTLEMENT AREAS

**Lexton T. Kuwanda**

Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing

## 1. SETTLER SELECTION AND PLANNING

It is correct that the consultation process for settler provision has expanded to include Rural District Councils and traditional leadership. However, I believe that planning has not been thorough, which explains the difficulties with settler co-operation in expanding infrastructure, conservation and other aspects connected with sustainable land use management in resettlement areas. The main constraints in the current attempts to implement resettlement projects have been caused by the following:

- Government, donors and NGOs failure to pay sufficient attention to long-term institution building and capacity development processes that are key to unlocking community actions or potentials. Thus community ownership and desire to participate in local development remains underdeveloped in resettlement areas.
- There has been a tendency to focus on short-term infrastructure projects. As the farming activity becomes more complex and sophisticated the resettled farmers find their infrastructural base inadequate. Marketing and financial services are in short supply.
- Past attempts have focused largely on infrastructural improvements (roads and water) at the expense of social processes in communities that can bring positive change to peoples' lives. Communities tend to view resettlement areas as transient settlements, returning to their ancestral lands where they feel a sense of ownership and belonging.
- Short-term processes have failed to inspire institutional innovations necessary for sustaining local development effort.

The experiences gained so far show that there is benefit in co-opting community participation in the selection of settlers and the planning of new schemes. Resettlement planning must be included in the ongoing community development plans by the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing. While there may be little scope of selecting new settlers now the process will help in confirming the error of past and existing settler selection processes. The following areas require local community involvement:

- **Ownership.** This must be community plan, not that of a particular interest group or local authority.
- Improved **quality** of product. The more ideas and contributions are made, the better the plan will be.
- The **action** nature of the plan must be emphasised. This will capture the imagination of the community and lead to change, especially increased productivity.

## **2. INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Central Government ministries through Government's Public Sector Investment Programme lead infrastructure planning and provision. The execution of the projects have posed no difficulties, as schemes were implemented as projects within an overall national framework. However, problems have arisen with respect to sustainability of that infrastructure. The infrastructure has been handed over to Rural District Councils who can neither expand, nor maintain it. There is no meaningful financial transfer from central Government to Rural District Councils to undertake this work. The resettled farmers are neither willing nor able to pay heavy levies to Rural District Councils resulting in poorly maintained infrastructure. The answer to this is to involve Rural District Councils in the initial planning for this infrastructural development.

Rural District Council are Local Planning Authorities in terms of the Rural District Councils Act. They are responsible for the provision of infrastructure and social services to all ratepayers in their areas. These include developers of large estates within a local authority area. In the latter case the developer will plan the area and submit a proposal for servicing the area before development commences. The Rural District Councils assess and approve the services that are proposed. In the Resettlement schemes, there is very little consultation between central Government and the Rural District Councils.

For infrastructural maintenance Rural District Councils depend on two sources of revenue namely grants from central Government and property taxes. Currently, these two sources are poorly developed in resettlement areas.

## **3. CONCLUSIONS**

Improvements can be made in resettlement areas if a new planning approach is adopted that meets the following principles:

- Inclusiveness. Allow all those who are to be resettled and those remaining to take part in the planning processes. After all, they are planning for the same space.
- Planning should be realistic and practical. The planning process must be implementable using available resources, especially from within the district. Plans must link and integrate with other processes, particularly Rural District Council Planning Process.
- Planning must be linked to a legitimate structure with funding.
- Resettlement planning should not be a once off exercise, but should be part of long-term process.
- Planning must be people-focused and empowering.
- Plans developed must be holistic and cover all sectors.
- Planning should promote accountability from the Community, Government and Rural District Councils.

# **SUPPORTING RESETTLED FARMERS: THE EXPERIENCES OF THE ZVISHAVANE WATER PROJECT**

**Irene Dube**

Zvishavane Water Project

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Zvishavane Water project (ZWP) is an NGO based in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. This organisation has only started recently to work with resettled communities, hence I have only had a short period of direct interaction with the land reform and resettlement programme. I have, however, worked closely for a longer periods with households and communities in the communal areas, which I believe have similar interests, expectations and constraints in utilising their land, water and other natural resources. I can share some of my organisation's experiences in supporting the resettled farmers in their development efforts as a positive way of complementing the overall development thrust that we have pursued in the communal lands of our province.

ZWP operates in Zvishavae and Chivi Districts in the midlands and Masvingo province. The mandate of ZWP is to promote programmes in water harvesting , environment management and food and income security. ZWP programmes are targeted mainly at small scale communal (subsistence) farmers. The majority (80%) of the farmers are women, because most men in the area work in the surrounding asbestos, gold and chrome mines, while a few work in towns and cities. Of late ZWP has started working with resettled farmers. The decision to work with the resettled farmers was arrived at after ZWP realised that the resettled farmers were even more disadvantaged than the communal farmers.

## **2. WORK IN RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES**

ZWP works in two resettlements schemes in Zvishavane District, namely Mapirimira and South Devon. Mapirimira was established in 1998 while South Devon was established in 2001. One hundred (100) families were settled in Mapirimira, while 58 families were resettled in South Devon. The farmers came from different wards in Zvishavane. Their main reason for opting to be resettled was to have access to fertile land with water for livestock. Most farmers had no access to land in the communal areas because the land had been subdivided to uneconomic units through inheritance. Those who had bigger pieces of land complained that soils were very poor. The families are mostly monogamous with a few polygamous ones. The amount of land allocated to the polygamous families is the same as that allocated to monogamous families. Even family size is not considered in the allocation of land.

The Department of Agriculture and Extension Services (AREX) allocated plots of six (6) hectares arable land per family and communal grazing land for the whole scheme. The

families were settled in villages and each village is headed by a committee. In addition there is an overall scheme committee for leadership purposes.

### **3. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY FARMERS**

The problems encountered by the farmers in both schemes include lack of facilities for drinking water, sanitation, and health education, transport and communication. Farmers also lack resources to carry out effective farming, information resource conservation, watershed management, agricultural production and marketing. Another problem encountered by resettled farmers in general is friction over resource sharing with neighbouring communities. These resources include grinding mills, school, shop, health centres in the neighbouring communal lands.

ZWP did not participate in land acquisition, selection of farmers and resettlement of the farmers. This was the responsibility of Government. Mapirimira has black clay soils that are good for agriculture while those in South Devon are less suitable for crop growing and better suited for livestock rearing. Both schemes have good vegetation cover, which however has been subjected to considerable cutting down for the construction of homes, fencing and fuelwood.

The main constraints of the resettled farmers include lack of daft power and agriculture implements and shortage of income for input purchases. Nonetheless farmers have a vision of the kind of development they want to have at the scheme, group and family level. The resettled farmers are highly motivated, committed to development and are prepared to contribute financial material and labour to the projects.

### **4. PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY ZWP**

ZWP intervened in the resettlement schemes at the invitation of the resettled farmers. ZWP has intervened at the research, development planning and project implementation levels. The following activities were carried out - awareness meetings, base line data collection, needs assessment, planning, fund raising and implementation of projects.

The projects promoted by ZWP include:

- water and sanitation projects—protecting wells and constructing toilets,
- environment management,
- group gardens and micro irrigation.

ZWP intervention is limited by lack of resources. There is room for other stakeholders to come in, especially the government ministries and departments. ZWP has worked with resettled farmers over a short period of time but has learnt valuable lessons worth mentioning. The lessons learnt were:

1. The role played by the scheme leadership is critical in spearheading development in the scheme. A weak leadership committee hampers development in the scheme.

2. Resettled farmers know their problems and priority areas and do not lose sight of them even when working with a non governmental organisation such as ZWP and when working under difficult conditions.
3. Resettled farmers do not appreciate the work they have done on their own in well digging, toilet construction and road construction, yet they have made impressive progress on a self help, self reliance based.
4. Baseline information is critical in implementing a programme but accurate information only becomes available after a long period of time working with the farmers.
5. Farmers got impatient with the long process of building relationships and fund raising and did not appreciate why it took us so long to implement the projects.

## **5. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE**

1. The Government of Zimbabwe need to spend more time dialoguing with farmers on their expectations and the realities in the scheme before they actually move to the farmers.
2. ZWP and other stakeholders need to educate the resettled farmers on the process to be followed in implementing programmes so that there is no frustration with the delays caused by the process.
3. Basic infrastructure should be put in place before farmers are resettled.
4. Resource conservation should be a priority when farmers are resettled so that forest resources are not plundered for house constructions, fencing and fuelwood. Alternative sources of material should be made available.

The relationships built with the resettle farmers are good and strong. The participatory approach to development will enable farmers to carry on with development issues even after ZWP has stopped working with them. In conclusion, ZWP has learnt that resettlement is a process that is not an end in itself but a means to an end that needs careful planning, allocation of relevant resources and commitment from all stakeholders.

# FARMWORKERS: THE MISSING CLASS IN ZIMBABWE'S FAST TRACK RESETTLEMENT

**Godfrey Magaramombe**

Director, Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Land reform can be one of the most effective ways of ensuring social justice and addressing rural poverty. This is particularly so for the landless and land short communities, as this provides them with a productive resource base. The farmworker community in Zimbabwe is one group of landless people who appear to have been excluded from the current land reform programme.

Before the implementation of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in the year 2000, commercial farmworkers and their families were variously estimated to be between 1.75 and 2 million people, or approximately 15% of the country's population. Geographically these workers were concentrated in Mashonaland East, West and Central and Manicaland Provinces.

Farmworkers include a larger percentage of people of foreign origin. Many of these people do not hold foreign citizenship, but are second or third generation Zimbabweans. This creates a particular problem because the majority of these farmworkers have neither access to communal lands in Zimbabwe, nor homes to return to in Malawi, Zambia or Mozambique. Only 40% of farmworkers in Mashonaland maintain communal homes; for other provinces, the percentage ranges from 56% in Matebeleland South to 74% in Midlands (Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe (FCTZ)/Famine Early Warning (FEW) System 1999) This makes many farmworkers, particularly in Mashonaland, vulnerable in the event of displacement from their farms.

Farmworkers have always been one of the most impoverished and vulnerable groups in the country, with limited wages and limited access to services. Since the beginning of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme the situation for a large number of them has worsened substantially, as the closure of the farms resulted in a total loss of livelihoods and sometimes of their homes too. While some former farmworkers have been resettled under the land reform programme, this number is small in comparison to the numbers that have been retrenched. It is estimated that there are only 400 commercial farms still in operation across Zimbabwe, out of a total of 4,247 farms reported by Central Statistical Office (CSO) in 1997, importing that 91% of farms have closed.

Official Government statistics as of the end of March 2002 indicated that only 2017 former farmworkers or 0.5% of all farmworkers had been resettled (GOZ 2002) This is compared with an estimated 140,000 who had lost their jobs at that time, that is less than 1%. Since that

time it would appear that proportionally, more farmworkers have been resettled, but indications are that the number is still low, at just over 10% of those retrenched.

## **2. FARMWORKERS AND LAND RIGHTS**

Many authors have noted that the disadvantages faced by farmworkers in their living and working conditions, and with respect to their political and social rights, derive from their lack of land rights in Zimbabwe (Loewenson 1992; Amanor-Wilks 1995; Moyo et al 2000; Sachikonye et al 1999).

Farmworkers were not considered as a relevant category in the land division of the colonial era. Many were of foreign origin and were viewed as belonging to the white farmer and thus were ignored. During the immediate post independence period farmworkers were not considered as a specific category in the resettlement programme, though they did fall within the broad category of 'poor and landless,' who were the main targets of the initial programme. (Kinsey 1999; Moyo et al 2000).

However, a number of farmworkers succeeded in resettling themselves on abandoned farms and State land in different parts of the country, and thus were officially recognised as resettlement farmers (Herbst 1990: Rutherford and Worby 1999). A later shift in land policy in the mid 1980s towards more 'efficient' and 'productive' farmers resulted in a negative official policy towards farmworkers, who became characterised as foreigners, as unproductive and *persona non grata* on resettlement farms. (Rutherford 1996)

It was only in the 1990s when Government was reformulating the land policy, and the concurrent advocacy efforts by the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union (GWPU) of Zimbabwe, non-governmental organisation (NGOs) and academics, that farmworkers come to be accepted as a category to be resettled (Moyo et al 2000). This advocacy drive resulted in the incorporation in the draft Land Policy Document of 1992, issues of land rights for farmworkers, both in terms of residential rights and rights to resettlement under the Land Reform Programme (Moyo et al 2000).

## **3. CURRENT REALITIES**

The Inception Phase Framework Plan (1999-2000) acknowledged the need for incorporating farmworkers in the land reform and resettlement programme. This was an achievement in that the debate on land reform had shifted from being dominated by the need to transfer land monopolised by white farmers to its redistribution to small-scale (mainly male) farmers. The Inception Phase Framework Plan provided room for complementary approaches, including the notion of farm settlements for residential purposes by continuing farmworkers.

However, the introduction of the 'Fast-Track' resettlement model, had the effect of negating all the gains that groups engaged in farmworker advocacy had made, in terms of farmworker rights to land.

The revised Land Reform and Resettlement Programme 11 (LRRP 11 February 2001) reveals that Government has reneged on its commitment to land rights for farmworkers. Whilst one of the overall objectives remains that of reducing the extent and intensity of poverty among the communal people and farmworkers through the provision of land, farmworkers are no longer considered as a target group under the two resettlement models, and their variants (GOZ 2001)

The target beneficiaries of the Model A1 (villagised), the livestock based Model A1 (three tier land use) and the self-contained units are the land less peasants and the war veterans. On the other hand farmworkers are viewed in some quarters with suspicion, if not outright hostility. Although senior government officials claim that it is not Government policy to displace farmworkers, and that this group would be considered on all fast tracked farms (either for resettlement on that farm or another property) the reality on the ground contradicts this statement.

There appears to be a resurgence of the perception that the majority of farmworkers are aliens, who have no rights in Zimbabwe other than those, bestowed upon them by their employers. Politicians and the media have used this argument since the late 1980s to disqualify farmworkers from securing land rights in resettlement schemes or even communal areas. This position was underlined by a new land policy that was emerging that emphasised 'efficient, productive and skilled settlers' (Moyo et al 2000). This shift in policy was necessitated by the alleged 'failure' of resettlement in terms of farm productivity, by early resettlement schemes of the 1980s.

Farmworkers and foreigners in general are blamed for the inferred failure of the resettlement policies of the 1980s. (Rutherford 1996). This is despite the fact that numerous studies have shown that resettlement, including those settlements with so-called foreign farmworkers, have had positive results (Kinsey 1999).

If land reform aims to address the issues of inequality in access to economic and social opportunities and resources, then farmworkers should be considered as a specific target. The absence of a holistic approach to land reform has led to serious repercussions on marginalized groups such as farmworkers.

The 'Fast Track' programme has social and economic implications on the livelihoods of commercial farmworkers. Permanent farmworkers in these situations are amongst some of the most vulnerable groups experiencing displacement, destitution and loss of employment, which cause further hardships.

Another group of people being affected by the 'Fast Track' programme are the seasonal workers, who in most cases are females. Permanent workers are now monopolising piecework employment opportunities workers because of declining work prospects. Since piecework is an important source of income, its loss has a serious impact on women, their food security and livelihood (FCTZ 2001)

Low levels of education make it difficult for farmworkers to secure other forms of employment outside the farms. Some resort to illegal settlement on private property or in prohibited areas as a large number have no relations in communal areas and therefore have nowhere to go. The loss or reduction of income also affects workers' children who are subsequently deprived of education, which they would have otherwise benefited from whilst residing at the farm. In the absence of alternative employment opportunities, ex farmworkers are finding it extremely difficult to be self-sustaining. The people thus affected may also resort to anti-social behaviour and/or engage in other forms of illegal trade.

There is an assumption that the new settlers in particular the A2 farmers would provide employment opportunities for the farmworkers. To date, this has not materialised in any meaningful way, as the up-take rate of the scheme has been very low.

While it is inevitable that some farmworkers would be displaced and retrenched by the Land Reform Programme, especially the older and infirm piece workers, we strongly believe it should be possible for the resettlement programmes to provide for the needs of all stakeholders.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

Land Reform is one of the key instruments for addressing rural poverty and it should therefore be a means for emancipating farmworkers. This can be achieved through an inclusive Land Reform Programme, which will provide tenure security for farmworkers and their families. This will enable farmworkers to be integrated into the national economy, not only as a contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) but as part of all national development programmes.

### **REFERENCES**

- Amanor-Wilks, Dede Esi. 1995. *In Search of Hope for Zimbabwe's Farmworkers*. Harare: Dateline Southern Africa and Panos Institute.
- Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe (FCTZ) / Famine Early Warning (FEW) System. 1999. *Survey of Commercial Farm Workers Characteristics and Living Conditions in Zimbabwe*. Harare
- Farm Community Trust of Zimbabwe (FCTZ). 2001. *Report on the Impact of land Reform on Commercial Farm Worker Livelihoods*.
- GOZ. 2001. *Land Reform Resettlement Program and Implementation Plan (Phase II)*.
- GOZ. 1999. *Inception Phase Framework Plan 1999-2000*.
- Herbst, Jeffrey. 1990. *Land State Politics in Zimbabwe* Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- Kinsey, Bill H. 1999. *Emerging issues in Zimbabwe's Land Resettlement Program*. Development Policy Review.
- Lowenson, Rene. 1992. *Farm Labor in Zimbabwe Modern Plantation Agriculture*, London Zed Books.

- Moyo, Sam; Blair Rutherford, and Dede Esi Amanor-Wilks. 2000. 'Land Reform and Changing Social Relations for Farm Workers in Zimbabwe'. *Review of African Political Economy* 84:181-202. ROAPE Publications Ltd.
- Rutherford, Blair. 1996. Traditions of Domesticity in Modern Zimbabwe Politics: Race Gender, and Class in the Government of Commercial Farm Workers in Hurungwe District. Ph.D. thesis McGill University.
- Rutherford, Blair and Eric Worby. 1999. 'Zimbabwe's Agrarian Answer: The Rhetoric of Redistribution'. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* (Special Issue) 'Uprooted: Dispossession in Africa' 22(4) 56-59.
- Sachikonye, L.M. and O.J. Zishiri. 1999. Tenure Security for Farm Workers. Working Paper No 27. Economic Advisory Project, Harare: Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

# **DELIVERY OF LAND SERVICES TO LAND REFORM BENEFICIARIES**

**Mtoliki Sibanda**  
Tsholotsho Constituency

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Delivering land and securing rural livelihood is a mammoth task for any Government and demands careful planning and serious budgetary estimates. The whole idea of empowering the people through land delivery is of primary importance, since an empowered nation is in itself a strengthened economy. Therefore, maintaining productivity and actually enhancing the living standards of reform beneficiaries is not a foregone conclusion, but requires careful planning for post-reform agriculture and social services. Initial agrarian structure does not pre-determine success or failure.

Providing beneficiaries with only land, and not a package of agricultural and social services, undermines the potential of land reform to increase production and enhance the lives of beneficiaries. Land reform inevitably involves dislocation in links for input supply and crop marketing, and changes in farm scale and farmer capital/labour availability can necessitate adoption of alternative technologies.

## **2. SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT PRODUCTION**

The Government expressed the wish to support newly settled farmers as well as other small farms with part of their financial requirements for seasonal inputs for crops and livestock production during the 2001/2002 season. The cost of this requirement was estimated to be in the vicinity of Z\$15,5 billion. By early December 2001, however, the total of funds released from the Ministry of Finance was only Z\$6.5 billion, leaving a shortfall of Z\$ 9.0 billion. Most of these funds were for land preparation, seeds, fertiliser and various chemicals. I should here express my concern about the public distribution of agricultural inputs, since international experience shows that such distribution has rarely been successfully sustained. It would, in my judgement, be more prudent for the Government to encourage a greater private sector role in the land reform program. For example, incentives could be designed for private traders to provide support services to agriculture. Such incentives could form the basis for a stronger role for the private sector in providing services to rural settlements in the future.

As regards infrastructure, the provision of roads, schools, clinics and boreholes, etc. is lagging far behind settler emplacement. Officials expect farm infrastructure to be converted into temporary facilities. Most basic services and infrastructure are to be developed in the years that follow. This reflects the minimalist planning targets of the fast track program and can not be regarded as a satisfactory plan for sustained development of the new settlements.

### **3. CREDIT SERVICES**

Access to private sector bank credit in Zimbabwe has tended to be concentrated on the large scale commercial farm sector, while public sector financial institutions have slowly begun to increase their coverage of smallholder farmers. Although the capacity of these public sector institutions to provide long-term credit has been limited, the Government's financing of seasonal credit through parastatal suppliers has been growing relatively to the role of the private sector.

Government funds for seasonal credit are channelled to settlers mainly through the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) and to a small extent, through the Agricultural Development Bank (AGRIBANK). The GMB uses its branch structure for distribution but repayment rates have been disappointing. The Farmers Development Trust (FDT) also obtains funds from the Government to provide seasonal credit to tobacco farmers.

### **4. RESEARCH AND EXTENSION SERVICES**

Agricultural and extension services are essential elements of any resettlements or agricultural development program. In general, extension officers in Zimbabwe are well trained and competent, but in recent years the flow of new research has declined and this has made the impact of extension workers less effective. Moreover, the resources allocated to extension workers for field travel, training and planning support in the resettlement areas has been dwindling. The capacity of the existing staff to provide new settlers with extensive advice required at the initial stages is indeed limited.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE LAND USE**

Older settlement has not caused long-term damage to the environment. With adequate advice from the extension service and compliance by farmers, it is anticipated that there will be no damage to soil following clearing and cultivation. On the other hand, major environmental damage has already resulted from the indiscriminate cutting of trees for firewood and for sale or use in tobacco kilns. Major efforts such as small-scale plantations and land use control, will need to be made to avoid further damage. The promotion of land use for eco-tourism among the newly resettled may increase sustainability.

### **6. ASSESSMENT**

Evidence suggests that there have been considerable slippage in the planning and implementation of fast track. It is clear that providing domestic water supplies, sanitation and agricultural support services to all the beneficiaries with a reasonably timeframe is possible on the basis of the Government's current implementation capacity. Where seasonal inputs on credit have been provided for new settler, the volume of inputs has been inadequate to total needs. Even if seasonal inputs supplied are sufficient, supplies will not be sustained in future years because the repayment rate is low.

It is also apparent that most beneficiaries are likely to have major difficulties establishing agricultural and pastoral activities in the short term unless they already have farming skills and capital. Nevertheless, evidence from resettlement programs in the eighties suggests that families can improve their welfare.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

It can be said, however, that when the Land Reform Program is completed, most of the rural and urban households in Zimbabwe are likely to have gained access to land assets. This does provide them with a starting point from which to pursue more remunerative livelihood strategies. Since most beneficiaries are not well-prepared for farming, some infrastructure development is in most cases totally inadequate, and some social and agricultural support services are weak, it is extremely difficult for the beneficiaries to successfully settle in a new environment. There should be a considerable infusion of resources to finance the necessary infrastructure and support services. This will create a stronger basis for optimism on the part of the beneficiaries about their future leading them to form viable community organisations aimed at ensuring the sustainability of new settlements.

I must hasten to point out that assessment on the ground regrettably reveals some commercial farmers lost their properties through this fast track program for various unknown reasons. This is regrettable in that it cuts across and negates Government policy of 'one man, one farm'. Traditional leaders, the custodians of our cultural heritage also lost recognition or national respect as they are now at times referred to as a bunch of *Sabukus*—village heads—a reference that is not taken kindly.



**SECTION FOUR:**

**LAND ADMINISTRATION AND**

**DECENTRALISATION**



—Chapter 14—  
**Devolution for Land Administration  
in Zimbabwe**  
**Opportunities and Challenges**

**Harvey M. Jacobs**

Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Gaylord Nelson Institute for  
Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

**Charles Chavunduka**

Development Studies Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

*This chapter assesses the feasibility and form of devolution for land administration in Zimbabwe. A lack of transparency and accountability, inadequate administrative capacity, fragmentation and lack of good quality information characterise the existing system of centralised land administration. Insights into alternatives are provided through a review of devolution theory, empirical evidence from Botswana's devolved land boards and Tanzania's decentralised state-leasehold system, and fieldwork in Masvingo Province. Both of the comparative cases point to growing interest in land administration systems that promote the adaptation of existing institutions rather than the initiation of radical reform. Studies undertaken about land reform in Zimbabwe endorse the idea of land boards for land administration. Findings from fieldwork show the existence of opportunities for devolving land administration, given that on a day-to-day basis village heads and councillors are already engaged in substantial land administration. However, the fieldwork revealed constraints concerning fiscal viability, contested jurisdiction, poor capacity, and inconsistent land administration policy. Overall, it is the authors' conclusions that there exist significant challenges for devolution of land administration. Although a theoretical case can be made for devolution, the practical difficulties of devolving land administration may overwhelm its opportunities and promises.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Zimbabwe has been a centre of international attention since 2001. The invasions of white-owned farms, the presidential elections in March 2002, and the eviction of white farmers from their farms in August 2002 have left leaders of adjoining countries, donor countries and non-governmental organisations profoundly confused about the right course of action to take with regard to development assistance.

Zimbabwe's land resettlement program emphasises land redistribution for social justice. However, the land reform program has not had a complementary institutional reform component to support this principal objective (Cousins and Robins 1993, Rukuni et al. 1994).

The lack of attention to institutional reform has led critics to question the political will and institutional imagination of both the central Government and international organisations involved with the program (Bryant 1998). The consensus is that, in the absence of an attendant institutional reform, the economic benefits from land reform and resettlement will not be forthcoming.

After independence, the long-term land reform program emphasised the acquisition of commercial farmland and its redistribution to people drawn from overpopulated communal areas. Resettlement consisted of land allocation and the provision of rudimentary infrastructure and services. However, in the period 1980-1992, there was no local authority for resettlement areas. Instead, land reform was implemented with the institutional form and structure of land administration from colonial times (Moyo 1999). This approach is generally centralised, bureaucratic and inflexible. The lack of participation by local people has resulted in an ambiguous definition of property rights, insecure tenure, a general failure to utilise land reform as a vehicle for economic development, and failure to appreciate the value and place of land in the country's overall development thrust.

Global, African and Zimbabwean dialogue about land reform and land administration is currently focused on the need for substantial devolution (e.g., Kingsley 1996, Toulmin and Quan 2000, World Bank 1997, 2000). The idea is that this model of land administration draws from and respects local knowledge about land and people, places responsibility largely within the community, and allows space for member-controlled institutions. In theory, devolution should provide for better problem solving capacity, greater incentives for local economic development, better provision of infrastructure services, and more appropriate and sustainable (and therefore effective) initiatives for involvement among those most affected by problems. This approach also recognises the budgetary and political reality that central Government does not have the resources for full implementation of a land reform program.

This chapter reports on a bi-country collaborative research project undertaken in 2002 assessing the feasibility and form of devolution for land administration. Included is a brief summary of the theoretical literature on devolution, the experience with devolution among a set of African countries with parallel objectives and problems, and data from field visits in one province in southern Zimbabwe in the summer of 2002, where interviews were conducted with a range of land administrators and users. (This is one of three provinces where field work was conducted.)

What seems clear to almost everyone who works in Zimbabwe is that the current structure for land reform in Zimbabwe is unsustainable. The question is whether an alternative, devolved, structure is any more feasible given the political circumstances, the hunger for land, tribal tensions, and, importantly, the dire ecological conditions of long-term drought. Despite the obvious failures and shortcomings of centralised land administration, is devolution for land administration a workable alternative—are the opportunities for devolution greater than the challenges to its development?

## 2. DEVOLUTION IN THEORY<sup>264</sup>

The concept of devolution has evolved over time and in the process has undergone changes in terminology and meaning. In 1937, during the great economic depression in the United States, and during the only period when the United States had a national planning agency, Wirth (1937) prepared a classic essay on the tension in governmental organisation. In this essay he referred to devolution as localism. He recognised many of localism's shortcomings (e.g., it can be parochial in its perspective, and it can be exclusive as to participation and thus contribute to elite decision-making), but also its strengths (it can embellish freedom, cultivate diversity, support democratic political institutions, and promote administrative flexibility).

In more modern parlance decentralisation manifests itself in three generic forms—deconcentration, delegation and devolution (Litvack, Ahmad and Bird 1998, Cohen and Peterson 1999).

*Deconcentration* involves ministries retaining power over key tasks at the centre while transferring the implementation roles related to such tasks to staff located in ministerial field offices. Deconcentrated activities are those that the centre, for political reasons, believes only it can or should control or closely supervise but that require field level implementation in order to be effectively carried out.

*Delegation* is the transfer of government decision-making and administrative authority for clearly defined tasks to organisations or firms that are either under the indirect control of the transferring authority or are actually functionally independent. Most typically, delegation is done by the central Government to semi-autonomous organisations not wholly controlled by the government but legally accountable to it.

*Devolution* is the transfer of power and authority by central Governments to legally established, locally elected political authorities. In a devolved system, local governments have clear and legally recognised geographic boundaries over which they exercise authority and within which they perform public functions.

Of these three types of decentralisation, devolution is considered the most effective. The attraction of devolution lies in appropriating authority to institutional levels that are best placed to deal with specific issues. Compared to deconcentration and delegation, devolution can provide for better problem-solving capacity, which takes into account local knowledge and conditions. Apart from providing an opportunity for clarifying jurisdictions among different forms of local governance, devolution generates greater incentives for economic development and improved provision of public services. Devolution engenders local participation, good government and democratisation. It also addresses the reality of cutbacks in central Government expenditure.

There has been debate on whether to devolve to the regional or local level and concerning the question of 'function' or 'area' (Hutchcroft 2001). A related debate concerns the question of

---

<sup>264</sup> This section draws on the authors' paper, Jacobs and Chavunduka (2002a).

‘function’ and ‘power’. According to these debates, power can be devolved either to lower levels of government or to territorial units. More persuasive arguments aver that it does not matter whether a central, regional or local government should provide a certain service, but how to organise the joint production of the service by the various levels (Prud’homme 1995). This school of thought is recognised in the early work by Wirth (1937) who argues that the issue need not be one of identifying the right scale for organising government but rather one of suiting areal units to planning purposes. It is the ends that should determine preference for central, regional or local authority.

Rather than seeing the types of decentralisation as discrete, it is important to note that in practice deconcentration, delegation and devolution can occur singly or in various combinations. Similarly, power and resources can be decentralised to one or more levels. Decentralisation can take the form of the creation of federal systems or the empowerment of authorities at or near the grassroots, and it is possible to have assorted mixtures.

Proponents of decentralisation emphasise the fact that it increases efficiency. In principle, it is believed that since local governments are closer to the people, they should be more responsive to them. In the same vein, local officials are thought to have stronger incentives for efficiency. If local officials improve service delivery, it is assumed that citizens will respond by showing more willingness to pay for them, thus potentially enhancing revenue collection (Kingsley 1996).

The efficiency argument has been questioned by Prud’homme (1995) who asserts that decentralisation can actually undermine efficiency. Prud’homme questions whether local provision is more cost-effective than national provision. The argument is that central bureaucracies are likely to operate closer (than local bureaucracies) to the technical production frontier, even though both central and local bureaucracies probably operate quite far from this frontier. Central bureaucracies have an advantage in their higher capability to attract more qualified people.

Decentralisation’s proponents argue that it promotes control by citizens over decisions that affect them. It promotes equity and the operation of a variety of wills and interests that are dominant in a variety of local areas. Indeed, decentralisation is associated with good government that is achieved through the distribution of powers and opening the institutions of governance to wider civic participation. It increases accountability and responsiveness to local interests.

Despite this noble intention, Agrawal and Ribot (1999) observe that most decentralisation efforts end up without increasing the powers of local authorities or peoples. Using four case studies of India, Nepal, Mali and Senegal, the authors confirm the tendency of central governments to retain control even in the context of decentralisation initiatives.

For developing countries, decentralisation can promote parochial and separatist tendencies and deepen enclaves of authoritarianism as well as exacerbate inequalities (Fesler 1968, Smith 1985). Where decentralisation is given the official objective of mobilising the poor in development efforts, it may be that empowering local institutions simply provides yet more

resources and power to be commandeered by already powerful elite and propertied interests (ibid.).

In its deconcentration mode, decentralisation can lack downward accountability. In deconcentration, civil servants who get posted to the local level are accountable to their Ministers and not the communities which they are employed to serve. In Africa, the tendency has been to go for deconcentration rather than devolution. On the one hand, lower-level bodies may be accorded power but remain upwardly accountable, thus strengthening central Government. On the other hand, local bodies may be downwardly accountable, but seldom receive significant powers. Even in successful cases of decentralisation, local actors come to gain only subsistence benefits, far smaller in comparison to the potential commercial revenues.

In developing countries, decentralisation faces many challenges. The major challenge seems to be political. In some developing countries there is a legacy of authoritarianism that is difficult to change. In cases where traditional rulers were autocratic and colonial rule centralised and repressive, post-independence despots have found it expedient to perpetuate the status quo. So huge is the political challenge that substantial political reform is often a necessary condition for effective decentralisation.

Hutchcroft (2001) observes weak capacities at all levels, shaky financial viability of local government units and difficulties in determining the optimal size of local government as challenges facing decentralisation in developing countries. The problems become inexorable in programs where decentralisation is expected to provide a cure to all ills of the economy.

Ironically, a strong central Government seems to be a pre-condition for successful decentralisation. It requires a strong central Government to obtain the collective will to decentralise, facilitate decentralisation, and not get threatened by gains in influence by localities (ibid.). Further, Tendler (1997) observes that the creation of civil society whose existence is central to good governance requires a strong activist central Government.

Successful decentralisation consists of a package that enhances accountability, governance and capacity. Crucial to the package is fiscal and human resource decentralisation and devolution. Another critical component of the package will be the need to inform, train and provide support to local people, create a rule structure and systems for engendering accountability.

An effective decentralisation program needs to be context specific. As such, decentralisation should take into account cultural, historical, political, institutional, economic and environmental circumstances that determine a country's fit in a centralisation-decentralisation continuum. Such a program should, to all intents and purposes build on existing institutions (Wirth 1937).

Instead of going for blanket decentralisation, the literature suggests the need to identify the functions and areas that can most fruitfully be decentralised. At the same time there is need to consider the different roles appropriate to different levels for each issue as well as the

temporal dynamics of social organisation. Such an approach calls for a need to break conceptual boundaries and the adoption of a more nuanced approach to decentralisation.

### **3. INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH DEVOLUTION**<sup>265</sup>

As part of the research project from which this chapter is drawn, four countries—Botswana, Tanzania, Philippines and Brazil—were reviewed for their lessons with various forms of devolved land administration. In addition, Zimbabwe’s own experience with land administration was reviewed. For this chapter, only the African countries experiences are reported.

#### **3.1. Botswana—Land Boards for Devolved Land Administration**

Botswana is located in southern Africa and shares its north-eastern border with Zimbabwe. It gained its independence in September 1966. With a population of 1,597,000 (1999) and area of 581,730 square kilometres, Botswana is traditionally a pastoral country with 0.7% of the land devoted to arable use and 45.6% under scrub and tree savannah. Partly as a result of its diamond wealth (it is the second most important diamond exporter behind Russia), Botswana had the fastest growing economy in the world during the period 1965-1996, when per capita income grew at 9.2%. The per capita GNP in 1998 was \$3,070. The agricultural sector is dominated by intensive cattle raising that is exerting severe pressure on the natural environment. Botswana is made up of nine administrative districts and is a democracy.

In Botswana, 70% of the total land area is held under customary tenure; the rest being state and freehold land, which are about 23% and 7% of the land area respectively. Botswana has four main local government institutions at the district level—district administration, district council, tribal administration and land boards. Land boards were established through the Tribal Land Act of 1968, with a purpose to improve land administration. Prior to that date, chiefs administered customary land. Since the time of their establishment, Botswana’s land boards are the best known and considered by many the most successful form of local (devolved) land administration in Africa.

Land boards were established because it was felt that district councils had many responsibilities, which meant they could not focus on the special needs of land administration. This led to the idea of a separate institution with the sole purpose of improving land administration. In part, land board creation had to do with circumventing the power of traditional chiefs. Up to 1968 chiefs were the authority for customary land. They were understood to be authoritarian in the use of their authority, they kept few records of their activities, and it was felt that they were not responding to the contemporary development needs of Botswana society. Botswana established land boards to overcome these perceived problems and provide a mechanism for decentralised decision-making for land allocation and land use planning.

---

<sup>265</sup> This section draws on the authors’ paper, Jacobs and Chavunduka (2002b).

Botswana's land administration system is based on customary tenure and local institutions. To policymakers, one of the attractions of land boards as they are constituted is that as local institutions they can represent both central Government and local institutions. Land boards are legally vested with three sets of powers and duties. First, they are charged with the responsibility for allocating land for residential, arable, industrial, and commercial use, and allocating grazing rights. Second, they adjudicate land disputes in tribal areas. Third, they are responsible for overall land tenure and land use planning in their areas.

The membership of land boards varies from 8 to 12 depending on the size of the district. A meeting of people actually present in the *kgotla* (traditional assembly or forum) chooses elected members. For a board of 12 members, the Minister for Local Government, Lands and Housing appoints five from a slate of ten elected candidates. The Minister then appoints five additional members, and the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Commerce and Industry each appoint one member respectively. In addition to its formal membership, land boards may, with the consent of the Minister of Local Government, get assigned up to two people with appropriate expert knowledge or experience to assist them in the discharge of their functions.

The official position given by Mathuba (1994, p. 20), is that 'the Land Board institution in Botswana has been a success in that land administration has been improved'. Among the several achievements of land boards, Mathuba notes that their establishment has streamlined land administration and that they maintain written records. Further Mathuba (ibid.) notes that by creating the land board institutions, government has avoided top-down control of customary land. In the same vein, she notes that land boards are performing their duties of land allocation and settling disputes fairly well despite constraints.

The success of land boards is further acknowledged by Hope (2000) who reckons that in Botswana, decentralisation to land boards, local authorities and tribal administrations has championed representative local government, boosted awareness of the importance of good governance and improved local accountability.

The advantage of land boards is that they provide a way of removing customary land allocation from the absolute control of traditional chiefs, without rejecting the principles of customary land law, and while allowing traditional leaders to retain some representation on the board. Land boards can devise simple methods for recording customary land allocations and transfers, which meet local needs but stop short of requiring detailed surveys and registration.

Although Botswana's land boards are an acclaimed success, more has been written concerning their weaknesses than strengths. The official position is that land boards bring together central and local level stakeholders in land administration. To this effect, Quan (2000, p. 197) has this to say about land boards in Southern Africa, 'on the one hand, they can take account of local conditions and provide a platform for the interests of local stakeholders, including civil society groups and traditional authorities. On the other hand, land boards can also be used as a vehicle for implementation of policies on land and rural

development, drawn up by central Government, since their membership is usually determined by government'. Increasingly, critics note, land boards have been seen to serve the interests of central Government rather than local communities. There are regular instructions from central to local levels of government, and frequent central Government interference in local decision-making. Land boards are seen as serving the interests of the state because a larger number of district-based representatives of central Government institutions are now involved in the operations of land boards and the technical groups which advise them.

The domination of land boards by central Government is compounded by the weak development of civil society organisations and poor representation within many local communities (Toulmin 2000). Thus land boards tend to be dominated by local elite and central Government interests. In some areas, land boards have been criticised for lack of consultation with communities prior to allocation of land.

In addition, it has been noted that land boards are poorly staffed, empowered and funded. 'The land boards still do not have adequate offices, equipment or vehicles and they have a shortage of qualified staff. These adversely affect their performance' (Mathuba: 1994, p. 20). The low level of education of most members of land boards has resulted in them finding it difficult to understand the provisions of the Tribal Land Act (1968), and thus be able to implement it effectively (Hope 2000).

Also, land boards are poorly equipped to resolve problems arising from overlapping rights and claims, and the needs of different ethnic groups. Given that there exist three other local government institutions, the cost of setting up and staffing land boards is considerable (Quan 2000). Land boards do not have an independent and viable revenue base to finance their operations; rather they depend on central Government appropriations for their existence. Of late, it is becoming difficult to fund land boards because of cuts in central Government expenditure as a result of ongoing economic reforms.

Further, substantial criticism has been levelled against the Tribal Land Act because of its inability to address the socio-economic needs of modern society (Mathuba 1999). Specific provisions need to be made for representation of the full range of stakeholder groups, including women and different ethnic groups. Consideration needs to be given to how these groups can engage effectively as members of the board, to ensure that they are not dominated by a more vocal, better educated elite (Quan 2000).

One of the problems experienced by land boards is that the Act does not give them sufficient powers to enforce their decisions. Even if land boards hand down decisions on certain issues, they lack enforcement capacity to make sure that those decisions are observed. Relatedly, one of the weaknesses of land boards is their tendency not to act on violations of land use laws and regulations. For instance, because of bureaucratic delays, rural people will often allocate themselves land. Instead of enforcing the law, most land boards will formalise these informal allocations by issuing certificates to the people involved.

Land boards face problems of poor information systems. According to an early study by Machacha (1981), land boards do not keep proper records. The main problem is that of record

fragmentation, such that when one traces the history of a single plot, it may be necessary to go through more than 10 sets of records. Thus people can extend or change plots without the land boards finding out. Land boards sometimes never know whether their decisions have been implemented or not. Some land boards do not have local land inventory maps. The problem of poor information systems is compounded by claims on land from old allocations. 'Administrative inadequacy is particularly apparent when land boards are asked to confirm land rights claimed prior to their creation. No adequate registers of such claims exist. Therefore no land board can with assurance declare what land has or has not been allocated—this weakness continues because there does not exist an adequate register to systematically record allocations, relate them to a particular piece of land and to a national map' (Machacha 1981, p. 42).

The weaknesses outlined above have led Quan (2000) to observe that more needs to be done to make land boards effective institutions.

### **3.2. Tanzania—Land Administration Reform: Customary, Community or Both?**

Tanzania is located in east Africa and has a population of 32,792,000 (1999). The country has an area of 883,749 square kilometres, of which 3.2% is devoted to arable use and 35.4% is under forest and woodland. Tanzania achieved independence in 1961 and its current form of government is a democracy. Between 1967 and the introduction of economic reform in 1986, government practised the ideology of socialism. Tanzania has 26 administrative regions. The agricultural sector accounts for 51% of the GDP and per capita GNP in 1998 was \$220.

The general consensus is that Tanzania has neither comprehensive nor coherent land policy (Chachage 1999, Angelson and Fjeldstad 1995, Bruce 1994). However, a National Land Policy was adopted in 1995. Following the adoption of the National Land Policy, two pieces of legislation, the Land Act Number 4 and the Village Land Act Number 5 were passed in 1999. The two pieces of legislation reduced the mosaic of more than thirty-six ordinances and acts that constituted Tanzanian land law but only became operative in 2001 and their impact is not yet known.

In Tanzania, land has remained state property, and there is ever more centralised power in the state. As the ultimate owner of all land, the President, in his capacity as head of the executive branch, remains the repository of title to all land. He then delegates his powers to Ministry officials to administer and manage land.

The present land tenure system in Tanzania, as in many other developing countries, is based on a system of dualism and hierarchy (Izumi 1998, Angelsen and Fjeldstad 1995). The dualism is between the smallholder sector governed by customary land tenure under the right of occupancy (usufructuary rights) and the plantation/urban sector governed by the statutory system, with property rights secured in the national written law. Smallholders do not have property rights protected by law, and their property is subject to expropriation by the state without compensation. The structure is hierarchical in that the statutory system is considered

superior, with far greater security of tenure than the customary system. Progress in the hierarchy entails movement away from the customary to the statutory system. In practice, this movement usually involves expropriation of customary land, as has been the case throughout colonial and post-colonial history.

The recently enacted Land Act (1999) Number 4 and the Village Land Act (1999) Number 5, place customary land tenure on equal footing with statutory land tenure. The two pieces of legislation have provision for people who occupy land under the customary system recourse to law should they have any grievances concerning acquisition of their land by the state. However, as noted, the actual impact of the new legislation is unclear.

To date, land tenure has maintained the fundamental colonial tenet of merging property with sovereignty. The administration, management and allocation of land are placed squarely in the executive branch of the central Government under a centralised bureaucracy. Land tenure places great emphasis on administrative law. The powers given to the executive in all land matters, by virtue of the fact that the state owns all the land, has resulted in a failure to administer land in such a way that security of tenure could be extended to customary landholders. The greatest threat to local land users is exposure to arbitrary action on the part of the government.

Shivji (1999) ascribes the enormous problems in Tanzania's land management to centralised state administration. State ownership of land allows the expropriation of customary lands without the authority of law. Linking landownership to the executive is fraught with uncertainty. Any changes in government can have immediate and adverse effects on the administration of land as happened with the decentralisation experiment of 1972 and the re-introduction of local government ten years later. Local land committees barely function at all. District and regional commissioners with their respective land development officers wield ultimate power in land allocation decisions. At the national level, senior civil servants and political leaders, both in central and local governments, tend to be most influential persons with regard to land matters.

Shivji (1999) is a vehement critic of the vesting of all title in the executive. He thinks the ownership of all land by the political sovereign is the most fundamental question for Tanzania, and that it remains unaddressed. Accepting that government has a duty to regulate the ownership, use and distribution of land, Shivji (1999) argues that regulatory powers can be exercised without vesting title in the state.

The vesting of title in the presidency means land is a pawn in the hands of powerful officers and organs of the central and local governments (Angelson and Fjeldstad 1995). The institutional arrangements provide fertile ground for abuse of authority. This is greatly facilitated by a lack of accountability, transparency or legal and institutional checks and balances in the top-down system of land administration. Not surprising, complaints abound of corruption, nepotism and unconscionable allocations.

Genuine and meaningful participation of land users becomes virtually impossible when land is administered from the top. Thus one of Tanzania's declared fundamental principles of land

policy—to involve people in the administration of land—remains a declaration without intent.

A common grievance of villagers is the absence of an efficient and legitimate process of settling land disputes (Shivji 1999). The state has sole powers to resolve land disputes including those in which it is an interested party. Villagers are thus denied the benefit of the separation of power principle in resolving disputes. Villagers do not have faith in the bureaucratic land administration machinery.

There are two broad models of reform that have been put forward, and both preserve a broad role for public institutions in land administration (Bruce 1994). One is the decentralised state-leasehold system and the other stresses broad reliance on customary law administered by village authorities and on the evolution of custom to meet new needs.

In the decentralised state-leasehold system, the state would remain the owner of all land. Villages would receive 99-year leases and could confer households' subleases of less than that term. This model aims to replace customary tenure. The second model involves a radical decentralisation of land administration, vesting title to village land in the governing bodies of the villages, recognising existing community rules (which often have a customary foundation) and allowing discretion in developing those rules over time.

Both models of reform are paternalistic and reflect a lack of confidence in farmers as private-sector actors responding to economic incentives. The assumption is that farmers need to be protected against imprudent decisions they might make if allowed to transfer land freely. On the other hand both land reform models would potentially strengthen the rights of farmers against the state and permit limited market based transactions in land.

Model one, the demarcation and titling of villages, and the giving of 99 year leases to villages with subleases from the villages to households, has progressed slowly, covering about 20% of the country. The decentralised state-leasehold system erodes the jurisdiction of local political communities and substitutes the authority of the government's local administration. Model two, the radical decentralisation of land administration model, has not been well received by government and thus not implemented (Bruce 1994). Specifically, it does not sit well with those in the Ministry of Lands and Settlement Development, who believe in strong central control. While land policy options have been floated and some attempts at implementation made, detailed policy prescriptions have been absent and village communities have often drawn on customary preferences to govern land access and inheritance. Thus land administration varies considerably from village to village and region to region in its combinations of old and new norms.

Centralised land administration is fraught with problems. Most prominent is the arbitrary tendency of the state to expropriate land at the local level without payment of compensation. This raises the broad issue of social injustice and the use of land by the state for coercive control of rural people.

There has been growing interest in approaches to land reforms that promote the adaptability of existing institutions rather than the initiation of radical reform. In this scenario, titling and registration of land in private ownership can be the capstone to the process of evolutionary adaptation under the influence of democratic and market forces. The question is to what extent can policy utilise customary tenure and its evolution to produce needed changes in the land tenure system and to what extent must government supplement or supplant these institutions to ensure the achievement of this end?

### **3.3. Zimbabwe—Synthesis of Documented Advice on Land Administration**

Zimbabwe is a southern African country of 11,529,000 people and 390,760 square kilometres. Of the total area, 7% is arable and 22.5% is in forest and woodland. Zimbabwe is a parliamentary democracy and is made up of 8 administrative provinces. The country achieved political independence in 1980.

To support the land reform and resettlement program in Zimbabwe a series of studies have been commissioned (Rukuni et al. 1994, Shivji et al. 1998, Chonchol et al. 2000, Janneh et al. 2002).

Five major findings in the studies pertain to land administration. First, the land administration system in Zimbabwe was found to be dual and top-down, without transparency and accountability. Second, the institutional framework for land administration is fragmented, with overlapping responsibilities and poor co-ordination. Third, decision-making on land matters is hampered by a lack of good quality information. Fourth, there is inadequate administrative capacity to meet existing demands for services at all levels. Fifth, some institutional structures derive their authority not from the legislative instruments but from the executive, which constitutes and reconstitutes them.

The studies proffer advice on how the outlined problems could be resolved. In order to address the first problem, decentralisation to local government (Rukuni et al. 1994) or decentralisation to local boards (Shivji et al. 1998) is suggested. Second, Rukuni et al. (1994) recommended the formation of a Department of Lands to perform all land administration duties including those hitherto carried out by other government departments. The Department of Lands has been established but the transfer to it of relevant land administration duties from other ministries is still to take place. Third, developing a comprehensive land database to be located in the Department of Lands (Rukuni et al. 1994) or establishing a research and information unit within the National Land Board (Shivji et al. 1998) could facilitate good quality information. Fourth, the issue of administrative capacity of land boards could be addressed through using revenue from a proposed land tax and service charges (ibid.). Fifth, Shivji et al. (ibid.) recommend that agencies should derive their mandate from the constitution and/or law and not from the executive or administration.

The studies that have had the greatest impact on land policy in Zimbabwe, the Rukuni Commission (1994) and the Shivji Report (1998) both endorse the idea of Botswana style land boards for devolved land administration in Zimbabwe.

#### **4. PERSPECTIVE FROM THE FIELD: MASVINGO PROVINCE<sup>266</sup>**

In July 2002, semi-structured questionnaire interviews were administered to 70 respondents in Masvingo Province by a team of Zimbabwe researchers associated with the Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe. This was the first of three provinces where similar research was conducted in the summer and fall of 2002; see Mamimine (2003) for a discussion of all three provinces. The interviews sought the views of respondents as to the opportunities and challenges to land administration in the context of the ongoing land reform program.

The questionnaires were administered to provincial and district level respondents.

Of seven administrative districts within the Province, two were selected for the questionnaire interviews on the basis of having a distribution of the types of land for which devolution of land administration is concerned: communal, commercial farming and resettlement areas. Respondents were partitioned into two groups; one group representing recipients of land administration services and the other group providers of the services. All the recipient-respondents were randomly drawn from villages within the two selected districts. The provider-respondents were drawn from key providers of land administration services at the district (sub-provincial) and provincial level. The key respondents in this latter group included representatives of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Resettlement, Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing at the provincial level, and representatives of rural district councils, district administrators and traditional leaders at the district level. A separate questionnaire was administered to the recipient and provider groups.<sup>267</sup>

The Masvingo Province case highlights a number of issues. Key among these are the fact that there are multiple providers of land administration services and most of these institutions operate in a top-down mode. Key players include the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Resettlement, local authorities, traditional leaders, war veterans, representatives of the ruling party, and land identification and local government committees. The role of each of these political and administrative structures is often not clearly defined to themselves and each other. Local land identification committees are intended to bring together all stakeholders in land administration; however, these committees have overwhelming central Government representation. The results of this situation has been poor delineation of lines of

---

<sup>266</sup> Masvingo Province lies to the south of Zimbabwe and has a total area of 56,566 square kilometres and population of 1,222,581 (1992). Out of the total population, 8% is urban and 92% rural. With an average annual rainfall of 500 mm, the Province is highly susceptible to the occurrence of drought. The dominant economic activity is rain-fed subsistence agriculture that supports an average rural population density of 21.6 persons per square kilometre. In addition to agriculture, the province is home to the Great Zimbabwe, which, during stable economic and political times, serves as a significant attraction for international tourists.

<sup>267</sup> Complete details on the research methodology are provided in the chapter by Mamimine in this volume.

responsibility, poor communication, and confusion over roles of legally and administratively mandated land administration structures.

It was evident from interviews with provider-respondents that some institutions derive their mandate from Roman-Dutch law while others have their basis in customary law. The Zimbabwe Constitution recognises both Roman-Dutch and customary law. A problem arises because central Government is applying both legal regimes to the same people and areas. A case of this contradiction appears in the confusion between the village head and rural district council, whereby customary law denotes responsibility for land administration to the village head, while common law shifts that responsibility to rural district councils.

Based on interviews, opportunities for devolving land administration seem to exist. For example, activities such as identification of unoccupied land, land allocation, land use planning and enforcement are, to varying degrees, being exercised at the village level by village heads and/or councillors (depending on power balance in the locality). In the year 2000 traditional leaders were put on the central Government payroll; this has led to them playing an increasingly active role in land administration.

In spite of the evident opportunities mentioned above, provider-respondents generally felt that there are numerous and substantial challenges to devolution. Power and authority for land administration remains vested with the central state, as the owner of all communal and most resettlement land. Most government officials felt government involvement in land administration needed to continue because of capacity problems at the local level as well as the need to maintain the state's share of land related revenue. At the local level there are inadequate resources to support effective land administration; there is no provision for such in the national budget and local institutions do not, at this time, have significant powers to generate revenue. Relatedly, the thinking was that any decline in revenue that would follow from devolution would adversely affect central Government's capacity to carry out its functions. Civil servants currently involved in land administration argued that centralised administration facilitates more equitable access to land by poor rural households.

The recipient-respondents see opportunities to identify functioning structures at local level and grant them land administration powers. The local level institutions could be funded through the retention of money raised from local taxes and levies. It was argued that the high literacy rate of 76% provides an opportunity for local people to be trained in land administration.

However, recipient-respondents point to the absence of clear policy guidelines as a major constraint to devolution. The future roles of local authority vis-à-vis traditional leaders are not known given policy inconsistencies in the past. The feeling is that government is strengthening the role of traditional leaders while not clarifying how they will relate with ministries involved in land administration. It is also not known whether the stakeholder land committees are intended to be permanent or transitional institutional structures.

Given the general feeling of insecure land tenure among recipient-respondents, the feeling is that agents of the state would remain the legitimate authority over land. Some recipient-

respondents felt government would be wary to entrust its property to localities given uncertain repercussions. In resettlement areas that are state land, government has insisted that any settlers who decide to leave the scheme have to surrender their land registration card to the resettlement officer who then reallocates the land to interested applicants. Concerns of tenure insecurity were raised in that some recipient-respondents believe that in the absence of a secure property rights regime, devolution becomes untenable.

In general, recipient-respondents observed that central Government policy has maintained the role of state agents in land acquisition, land use planning, land allocation and enforcement. Many were of the opinion that prospects for devolution have been undermined by the recent co-optation of traditional leaders into local government structures.

Concern was raised over the fact that revenue that is raised from the local level is not reinvested in the locality. Apart from investment delivered through the work of non-governmental organisations, there has been no recognisable capital inflows to localities. Recipient-respondents link any plans for devolution to the need to address the issue of power over resources, as the current system of government channels resources to the centre. Overall, they are not hopeful about devolution as they think its attainment would require a change in the very rules that sustain those in power.

Surprisingly, there seems to be a broad convergence of opinion among providers and recipients of land administration services. On the one hand, they both note that on a day to day basis, substantial land administration is occurring in a devolved fashion, at the village level. Recognition of this reality, would, *prima facie*, provide a logical basis for formal devolution. However, provider-respondents and recipient-respondents both see significant challenges to devolution, though the constraints they identify are different. Provider-respondents are worried about local capacity and fiscal viability in a devolved land administration system. Recipient-respondents believe the issue is fundamentally a power game in which control over land provides substantial political power, and that because of this the odds are stacked against a currently centralised system endorsing any substantial devolution. For a related discussion on these points see the chapters by Mamimine and Chatiza in this volume.

## **5. CONCLUSION—DEVOLUTION FOR LAND ADMINISTRATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

The Zimbabwe case presents a paradox. The theoretical literature is clear as to the failing of centralisation, especially in the case of Africa and as it relates to land reform (e.g., Wunsch and Olowu 1990, van den Brink 2002). Zimbabwe's experience with land administration seems to bear this out. The literature also is clear that the alternative to centralisation is some form of or approach to devolution. Devolution, as noted throughout this text, should have many administrative, political, and policy advantages (though it is not clear that experiences with devolution have borne out its promises [Olowu 1990, Toulmin 2000]).

Studies which have been undertaken about land reform in Zimbabwe endorse the idea of devolution, from both a negative and positive point of view (i.e., a sense that the present situation can not continue, it must change, and the only direction for creative change is towards devolution). These studies seem especially intrigued with the option of a Botswana-style Land Board structure for devolution. But the literature on the Botswana experience is mixed. Some scholars suggest that the experience is a success, and should be emulated. Other scholars have been and are more sceptical, and wonder how much of what is praised is a function of having few other 'successful' alternatives to point to. In addition, as is true with most institutional innovations, some caution that the ability to construct the Land Boards was dependent on very particular circumstances which may be difficult, if not impossible, to replicate. In Botswana land boards were established in 1968 as part and parcel of the transitional program of the newly independent government. Further, since historically Botswana was a protectorate and not a colony, the country experienced minimal if any disruptions to local institutions.

The field data from Masvingo Province in Zimbabwe adds further confusion to the paradox of the Zimbabwe case. The on-the-ground reality of land administration practice appears to be one of substantial devolved authority. This would suggest that it should be possible to build on this authority towards more formalised devolution. But both provider and recipients of land administration services are wary of formalised devolution, though for different reasons. Providers are concerned about the capacity of existing structures to successfully manage devolution; recipients are sceptical that existing beneficiaries of centralisation would cede authority, and in addition recipients seem to wonder if devolution would further exacerbate existing power-based problems among groups (an issue noted in the theoretical literature).

In interpreting the findings from the Masvingo Province fieldwork, it is useful to keep at the back of one's mind the structural constraint offered by the colonial legacy of central control which has continued post-independence. Provider-respondents seemed content with the status quo, but upon probing during interviews it became clear that there is no shared vision among government ministries concerning the governance system that they are collectively working towards.

It is easy to make the case for devolution on theoretical grounds, it is much harder to understand how it would come to exist. By saying this, we are not, in any fashion, endorsing the existing or any alternative system of centralisation. We are, however, acknowledging the political and administrative difficulties of devolution, given the current situation in Zimbabwe.

What does this conclusion portend for a strategy for change? If there is to be devolution in land administration in Zimbabwe, the actors involved (government, donor agencies, NGOs, central and local administrators, recipients) have to embrace a multi-faceted strategy for devolution. Devolution will not just happen. To occur, it must be created within the context of a rich set of support structures—training, record keeping, dispute resolution processes,

fiscal empowerment, etc.—that will facilitate its success. Only when there is a commitment to this level of support, where it will be possible to generate the conditions for a devolution which will not be as failed as the centralisation it is designed to replace.

## REFERENCES

- Agrawal, A. and J. Ribot. 1999. 'Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Cases'. *Journal of Developing Areas* 33(4): 473-502.
- Angelson, A. and O. H. Fjeldstad. 1995. *Land Reforms and Land Degradation in Tanzania: Alternative Economic Approaches*. Working Paper, WP 1995:3. Bergen, Norway: Chr. Michelson Institute, Development Studies and Human Rights.
- Bruce, J. 1994. 'Individualization, Titling, and Registration of Land Rights and National Land Policy in Tanzania'. Prepared for the land policy component of the Forest Resources Management Project. Gainesville, FL: Tropical Research and Development, Inc.
- Bryant, C. 1998. 'Property Rights for the Rural Poor: the Challenge of Landlessness'. *Journal of International Affairs* 52(1): 182-205.
- Chachage, C. S. L. 1999. 'Land Issues and Tanzania's Political Economy'. In *Agrarian Economy, State and Society in Contemporary Tanzania*, edited by P.G. Fotster and S. Maghimbi, pp. 57-74. Ashgate.
- Chatiza, K. 2003. 'Whose Land Is It Anyway? A Rationalization of and Proposal for a Devolved Institutional Structure for Land Administration in Zimbabwe'. Prepared under the project: *Institutional Structures for Land Reform: Existing Opportunities and Obstacles, and Alternative Policy Options*, cooperatively undertaken by the Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the Center for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- Chonchol, J. et al. 2000. 'Land Reform Process in Zimbabwe'. Unpublished report by the United Nations Development Program Mission to Zimbabwe.
- Cohen, J.M. and S.B. Peterson. 1999. *Administrative Decentralization: Strategies for Developing Countries*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Cousins, B. and S. Robins. 1993. *Institutions for Land Redistribution and Management: The Zimbabwean Experience*. Land and Agricultural Policy Center, Johannesburg.
- Fesler, J.W. 1968. 'Centralization and Decentralization'. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* 2, edited by D.L. Sills, pp. 370-379. New York, NY: MacMillan.
- Hope, K. 2000. 'Decentralization and Local Governance Theory and Practice in Botswana'. *Development Southern Africa* 17(4): 519-534.
- Hutchcroft, P.D. 2001. 'Centralization and Decentralization in Administration and Politics: Assessing Territorial Dimensions of Authority and Power'. *Governance* 14(1): 23-53.
- Izumi, K. 1998. *Economic Liberalization and the Land Question in Tanzania*. Ph.D. dissertation, Roskilde University.

- Jacobs, H.M. and C. Chavunduka. 2002a. 'The Theory of Decentralization: A Review of Recent Literature'. Prepared under the project: *Institutional Structures for Land Reform: Existing Opportunities and Obstacles, and Alternative Policy Options*, cooperatively undertaken by the Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- Jacobs, H.M. and C. Chavunduka. 2002b. 'International Experiences with Devolved Land Administration: Lessons for Zimbabwe'. Prepared under the project: *Institutional Structures for Land Reform: Existing Opportunities and Obstacles, and Alternative Policy Options*, cooperatively undertaken by the Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- Janneh, A. et al. 2002. 'Zimbabwe Land Reform and Resettlement: Assessment and Suggested Framework for the Future: Interim Mission Report of the United Nations Development Program'. Unpublished report.
- Kingsley, G.T. 1996. 'Perspectives on Devolution'. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 62(4): 419-426.
- Litvack, J. Ahmad, J. and Bird, R. 1998. *Rethinking Decentralization in Developing Countries*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
- Machacha, B.N. 1981. *Land Boards as Land Management Institutions*. Master of Science (Land Resources). University of Wisconsin-Madison. 395 pages
- Mamimine, P.W. 2003. 'Administration by Consensus: A Quest for Client- centred Institutional Structures for Land Administration in Zimbabwe'. Prepared under the project: *Institutional Structures for Land Reform: Existing Opportunities and Obstacles, and Alternative Policy Options*, cooperatively undertaken by the Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the Center for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe.
- Mathuba, B.M. 1994. 'Land Boards in Botswana: A Paper Prepared for the National People's Conference on Land Reform'. Mariental, Namibia, September, 1994. 22 pages
- Moyo, S. 1999. *Land and Democracy in Zimbabwe*. No. 7. SAPES Books Monograph Series.
- Olowu, D. 1990. 'The Failure of Current Decentralization Programs in Africa'. In *The Failure of the Centralized State*, edited by J.S. Wunsch and D. Olowu, pp. 74-99. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Prud'homme, R. 1995. 'The Dangers of Decentralization'. *The World Bank Research Observer* 10(2): 201-220.
- Quan, J. 2000. 'Land Boards as a Mechanism for the Management of Land Rights in Southern Africa'. In *Evolving Land Rights, Policy and Tenure in Africa*, edited by C. Toulmin and J. Quan. London, England: DFID/IIED/NRI.
- Rukuni, M. et al. 1994. 'Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems'. Government of Zimbabwe Publications. Harare. Zimbabwe.
- Shivji, I.G. et al., 1998. 'National Land Policy Framework Paper. Ministry of Lands and Agriculture'. Government of Zimbabwe. Unpublished report.

- Shivji, I.G. 1999. 'The Land Acts 1999: A Cause for Celebration or Celebration of a Cause?' Paper presented to the Workshop on Land held at Morogoro, Tanzania.
- Smith, B.C. 1985. *Decentralization: The Territorial Dimension of the State*. Boston, MA: George Allen & Unwin.
- Tendler, J. 1997. *Good Government in the Tropics*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Toulmin, C. 2000. 'Decentralization and Land Tenure'. In *Evolving Land Rights, Policy and Tenure in Africa*, edited by C. Toulmin and J. Quan, pp. 229-246. London: IIED and University of Greenwich Natural Resources Institute.
- Toulmin, C. and J. Quan, editors. 2000. *Evolving Land Rights, Policy and Tenure in Africa*. London: DFID.
- van den Brink, R. 2002. 'Land Policy and Land Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa: Consensus and Controversy'. Unpublished paper; delivered as 2002 Distinguished Alumni Lecture to the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 27.
- Wirth, L. 1937. 'Localism, Regionalism and Centralization'. *American Journal of Sociology* 42(4): 493-509.
- World Bank. 1997. 'Bringing the State Closer to the People'. Chapter Seven of *World Development Report 1997: The State in a Changing World*, pp. 110-130. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- World Bank. 2000. 'Decentralization: Rethinking Government'. Chapter Five of *World Development Report 1999/2000: Entering the 21st Century*, pp. 107-124. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wunsch, J.S. and D. Olowu. 1990. 'The Failure of the Centralized African State'. In *The Failure of the Centralized State*, edited by J.S. Wunsch and D. Olowu, pp. 1-22. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.



—Chapter 15—  
**Administration by Consensus**

**A Quest for Client-centred Institutional Structures  
for Land Administration in Zimbabwe**

**P.W. Mamimine**

Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe

*Land administration is a puzzle in every epoch of human history, but an appropriate rise to the challenge seems to lie in adaptive policy formulation and institutional realignment. This provides the system with tools to cope with the challenges of access and control by any generation of land users. Using data collected mainly through interviews, this chapter examines the functionality of the existing institutional structures for land administration in Zimbabwe in light of the current land reform and resettlement program. Old institutional structures are collapsing in Zimbabwe, while clear definitions of functions in new institutions have yet to be formed and are not taking shape in ways that lead to a functional land administration system. What is emerging are multiple land administration systems, the 'old' the 'new', de jure, and de facto, all trying to operate side-by-side in order to bring order to chaos, and creating it in the process. State agents of land administration are generally upwardly accountable, dis-empowering clients to an extent where institutions have become self-serving and degenerate in quality of service rendered. Therefore, the mix of institutional arrangements required to ensure downward accountability and improved service delivery should be carefully considered lest power shifts from one self-serving institution to another. Devolution is therefore essential to change the direction of accountability, relocate power and control in land administration to local level institutions. Devolution, though essential, on its own cannot ensure downward accountability in Zimbabwe's land administration system, which has a long history of marginalising participatory decision-making. It should be accompanied by a restructuring of institutions in order to render them more people-centred. Making institutions more people-centred is not an event but a process, which should be initiated by conducting vigorous civic education, to enable people to demand downward accountability as a right and develop a culture of questioning.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND<sup>268</sup>**

Land has been described as the most fundamental resource in any society and as the basis for survival of all human beings (Mbaya 2001; WLSA 1998). The land reform program in Zimbabwe is predominantly concerned with the transfer of land from the mainly white-owned, large-scale commercial farms to the overpopulated communal areas occupied by the

---

<sup>268</sup> Much of this background and problem statement draws on research undertaken by Charles Chavunduka, as part of his graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

black majority<sup>269</sup>. In the main, resettlement consisted of land allocation and the provision of rudimentary infrastructure and services (see GOZ 2000). In the period 1980-1992, there was no local authority for resettlement areas, instead, resettlement areas fell within the jurisdiction of the central Government's Department of Rural Resettlement. Consequently, Resettlement Areas formed a sort of insular enclave in many ways separate from the surrounding areas, with minimal opportunity for local input in land administration. In essence, the exercise retained the institutional form and structure of land administration from colonial times (Moyo 1999) of being generally centralised, bureaucratic and inflexible.

While Zimbabwe's land reform program principally emphasised land redistribution for social justice, the program was not accompanied by an institutional reform component to support this principal objective. With particular reference to land, institutions are enduring legal frameworks for safeguarding a society's values and aspirations in resource ownership. Hence the lack of attention to institutional reform led critics to question the political will of both the central Government and international organisations involved in the program (Bryant 1998). In the absence of an attendant institutional reform, at both the central and sub-national (local) levels, the socio-economic benefits from land reform and resettlement will be hardly attainable. Global, African and Zimbabwean dialogue about land reform and land administration is currently focused on the need for substantial devolution (Toulmin and Quan 2000). Essentially, a devolved land administration model provides optimum social justice through better problem solving capacity, better incentives for local economic development, better provision of infrastructure services, and more appropriate and sustainable initiatives for involvement among those most affected by problems. This approach also recognises the budgetary and political reality that central Government does not have the resources for full implementation of a land reform program. The development of more self-reliant communities allows central Government to focus on more macro-policy issues, while 'assisting' or 'complementing' local initiatives. However, in practice, devolution is often criticised for fostering conditions that are parochial, elitist and leading to land and natural resource management regimes that ignore on-the-ground ecological conditions (Kingsley 1996; Jacobs 1989; Wirth 1937).

The objective of this study was to assess the functionality of the existing institutional structures for land administration in Zimbabwe from the point of view of selected beneficiaries/landholders and institutional representatives.

## **1.1. Methodology**

The study largely adopted the qualitative paradigm as a method of enquiry. This was because the phenomenon under investigation involved assessing the opinions of a diversity of stakeholders. The data was collected through conducting interviews with officials/service

---

<sup>269</sup> See pre-independent Zimbabwe's Land Apportionment Act for the genesis of land inequalities between blacks and whites.

providers from various institutions<sup>270</sup> involved in land administration and administering questionnaires to some landholders/clients<sup>271</sup> from three administrative provinces. The following table summarises the research sample.

**Table 1: Study Sample**

Province	Masvingo <sup>272</sup>	Mashonaland East <sup>273</sup>	Matabeleland North <sup>274</sup>
Service providers	50	42	46
Clients/landholders	150	135	149
<b>TOTAL</b>	200	177	195

In each province, the study pitted the views of the supply side (suppliers of service) against the demand side (clients/recipients of the service) with regard to their perceptions of the functionality of the current institutional framework of land administration.

This chapter argues that land reform and administration must be demand driven. Results of the study indicate that the existing institutional structures for land administration in Zimbabwe did not put the interests and aspirations of clients at the centre. A combination of lack of commitment by Government to devolve meaningful authority to the local levels and upward accountability by most officials manning institutions of land administration resulted in a systematic dis-empowerment of the clients. This perpetuates the existence of land administration institutions that exist for themselves and not for the constituency which they save. Government's hesitation to devolve land administration authority to the local level, projects lower tiers of administration as irresponsible entities requiring absolute control.

## 2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

The interviews focused on issues of institutional mandate and overlaps, their operational structure and procedure, operational constraints, synergy and nature of farmer support service. The following is an illustration of how *de jure* and *de facto* mandates intersected in

---

<sup>270</sup> Specifically, the supply side interviews targeted Traditional Leaders (TLs), Rural District Councils, District Administrators, Provincial Governors, Provincial Extension Offices (AREX), Political Parties, War Veterans Association, District Development Fund Offices, Forest Commission, Ministry of Lands, Farmers' Associations and others.

<sup>271</sup> Selection of landholders covered old irrigation schemes, communal lands, old resettlement schemes, A1 model and the jambanja (illegally occupied land).

<sup>272</sup> Interviews conducted in Zaka and Masvingo districts.

<sup>273</sup> Interviews conducted in Marondera and Manyame districts.

<sup>274</sup> Interviews conducted in Bubi and Umguza districts.

land administration. De jure overlaps refer to overlaps that emanated from the legislative framework and the latter to informal or on the ground operations.

**Table 2: Mandate Overlaps**

Land Administration Functions	Responsibility/Operational Interface	Institutions Involved
<i>Land Allocation</i>		Rural District Council
Land Demarcation		Department of Lands
Land Use Planning		Ag. Research & Extension
Conservation of Natural Resources		Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife Management		Chief
Environmental Policies		Forestry Commission
Identification of Land for Resettlement		Ministry of Water
	Department of Parks and National Wildlife	
	President's Office	
	District Development Fund	
		War Veterans

A number of institutions had overlapping mandates in land administration. In some instances this augured well for service delivery as clients looked up to more than one institution for service. A case in point was in natural resource conservation where Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Commission and others joined hands to either promote or monitor natural resource conservation. However, overlaps did not go down well in situations where some institutions used different criteria for identifying land for resettlement and recommending its designation for that purpose to government. Ministry of Local Government officials used government-set criteria for recommending a property for resettlement such as a farm sharing a border with a crowded communal land. War veterans used the social history of a property owner in the pre- and post-independence era to determine whether or not the property was to be designated for resettlement. A property owner regarded by neighbouring rural communities to be racist or anti-social would have his farm targeted for designation.

War veterans also involved themselves in land demarcation without adhering to any planning or demarcation principles. Although not officially mandated to involve themselves in this facet of the land reform program, there were a number of cases where, for political or peace's sake, authorities ended up legitimising the war veterans' politically-planned settlements, again despite their violation or lack of observance of planning laws.

Generally all institutions involved in land administration claimed to be rendering essential service to their clients as evidenced by the high demand for their service. However, while most of the institutions claimed to be rendering invaluable service to the public with significant appreciation, AREX officials were highly critical of their ability to deliver the required services. They noted that while there was a high demand for their services from the public, they fell far short of satisfying their clients due to lack of resources such as transport and others. On some occasions, they teamed up with officers from Forestry Commission. The Commission officials did not have transport or financial problems inhibiting their travel because they were well funded by donors.

A number of institutions assessed whether they had sub-units playing an active part in land administration at the local level. The most well-developed institution was the Ministry of Local Government being represented by the District Administrator at district level, Rural District Councils, Chiefs, Headmen and Village Heads at the local level. Nevertheless, it is important to note that below the level of the District Administrator and the Rural District Council, devolution took the form of devolving responsibilities rather than authority. At the level of Chiefs and below, none of the incumbents had enforcement authority even in dispute resolution.

In the case of AREX, it had Extension Officers representing the Department in Rural District Councils. In fact, their officers chaired committees on Agriculture in Council. At the community level they also had staff assisting communities in farming. Nevertheless, the efficiency of the community level staff is limited by lack of a fast and reliable means of transport. For transport, most of them used bicycles that are already worn out.

DDF was very visible at the District level. However, the department did not have any officer stationed at the community level. This made its provision of infrastructural services more supply-driven than demand driven.

While the Forestry Commission has a Forest Officer in every district and advise Rural District Councils on matters concerning forestry and conservation in general, the department does not have any staff at the local level. Although AREX and DNR represented the interests of the Commission at the local level, the professionalism of the Commission in management of trees and forests could not be matched by the two assisting sectors.

DNR has staff at the district level and are represented in the Rural District Council's Conservation Committee. Staff from the department was invisible at the community level whereas the department was the only one with the authority to enforce conservation laws. This places the departments working at the local level such as AREX in a very difficult position when it comes to curbing natural resource degradation by rural people.

The Department of Lands' lowest representation is at the district level, where they also sat in the District Lands Committee. They assisted the district land administrative authority in resolving problems pertaining to land. However, the fact that they were ill-equipped in terms of access to records on landownership or boundaries since the Surveyor General's Office is not decentralised, generally made it difficult for them to solve land disputes in an expedient manner.

### **Box 1: Decision-making powers at various levels**

**AREX.** Officers at district level carry out planning and demarcation of land. Provincial staff check whether the planning is done according to required standards before the planning and demarcation is approved. However, all issues to do with technical aspects of farming are handled by the frontline staff at the local level. Most of the technical administrative issues have been devolved, that is, resource allocation, staff discipline and others.

**DNR.** The Department has 8 Provincial Natural Resources Officers and each district was allocated one Natural Resources Officer. The district officers were free to implement the department's annual policy as they deem fit. These officers were empowered to deal with most of the natural resources problems arising in their respective areas. However, where a problem requires new policy or policy change because it would not be possible to deal with it within the confines of available guidelines, then the matter was referred to the Provincial Officer.

**Forestry Commission.** Staff at both district and provincial level were guided by Commission policy and were given the objectives of the organisation. The province produced one annual work plan which guides the activities of the department for that year. This exercise involves the participation of all District Forest Extension Officers (DFEO). Each DFEO then decides on the modalities of implementing the Action Plan. At district level, they have the power to interpret the Forest Act to the people and decide with communities the forestry projects to carry out with communities every year. Any other problems arising in the district are dealt with by the DFEO guided by the Commission policy.

**Department of Lands.** Provincial staff deal with policy and other complex technical staff. District officers only deal with technical aspects of land administration.

**Ministry of Local Government.** Issues pertaining to land administration were dealt with at the district and local level in accordance with the powers vested in various lower tier institutions. For instance, RDCs administer land in accordance with the powers vested in them under the Rural District Act, Traditional Leaders, in accordance with the Traditional Leaders Act. Each Act specifies each institution's mandate in land administration and that mandate is carried out without referring to Provincial Offices especially where there are clear guidelines. However, where a problem arises without a clear policy guideline, the lower tier institutions refer the cases to the Provincial Administrator's Office.

The study assessed the decision-making powers available at various levels of service delivery by a number of institutions. Box 1 indicates the spectrum of decision-making powers given to officers at various levels by their respective organisations.

**Table 3: Forum for Public Participation Provided for in Local Level Land Administration**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Form of public participation</b>	<b>Essential participants left out</b>
Ministry of Local Government	Rural District Council	None
District Lands Committee	Selected Chiefs	Representatives of Rural District Councils
Department of Lands	None	Rural District Council Representatives; Chiefs
Forestry Commission	PRA Workshops; Field Days	None
Department of Natural Resources	Field Days; Rural District Council Conservation Committees; Conservation Competitions	None
District Development Fund	Rural District Council	Chiefs
Agriculture Research and Extension (AREX)	Rural District Council; Community Field Days	Farmers' Associations
Department of National Parks and Wildlife	Communal Areas for the Management of Indigenous Resources; Rural District Council	None

Noteworthy is that institutions that scored high in public participation were generally those that plugged into local level structures of governance, specifically Rural District Councils. A system of elected representatives provided a forum through which the public participated in decision-making. However, a caveat is necessary. Unless councillors consult their respective constituencies widely before coming to Council, public participation cannot be said to exist but just assumed. In some RDCs there was a general outcry that once elected, councillors represented their own interests rather than those of their constituencies. This made a mockery of public participation through representative democracy. Ribot (1999) argues that in most instances elected officials are not accountable. This automatically renders the existing channels of public participation dysfunctional.

**Box 2: Institutional accountability in land administration**

Most government institutions involved in land administration in one way or another were upwardly rather than downwardly accountable. Ribot (1999) argues that governments generally create institutions that are upwardly accountable to the central state. Yet logic has it that accountability should rather be downward to the local resource users (Matondi 2001). The public was perceived as a vehicle for pleasing 'vakuru' (those in higher offices) and not as a pivotal element in legitimising or justifying the existence of an institution. The common talk was of being accountable to 'my immediate superior' as if pleasing the immediate superiors provided a justification for the existence of an institution. Generally, public interests were considered to be of tangential importance in executing the institutional mandate. Pleasing the immediate superiors seemed to carry the day as the core business.

## 2.1. Problems Faced in Executing Mandate

The major problems faced in executing an institution's mandate in land administration ranged from lack of material and financial resources to flawed policies. Lack of expertise impacted negatively on service delivery for most institutions.

Institution	Problem
Forestry Commission	Majority of staff not professional foresters.
District Development Fund	Most staff not qualified for the jobs they do.
Agricultural Extension	Lacked transport and finance to execute mandate; policy precluded department from charging the rich for the service.
Department of Parks and Wildlife	Stale policies on punishing offenders (e.g., fines too low to deter would-be offenders).
Department of Natural Resources	Stale policies on fines for degrading resources.
Chiefs	Lacked enforcement powers; dispute resolution lacked clear procedure.
Department of Lands	One-man, one-farm policy not adhered to in allocation.

With regard to devolution the RDC Act, in scope, is the most serious attempt by central Government to devolve land administration to the local level. It grants extensive powers to the RDC, although the powers are subject to Ministerial controls and regulations. It empowers RDCs to formulate development policies for their respective areas and empowers councils to compulsorily acquire land for any reasonably justified public benefit. However, the devolution process is inadequate since Councils cannot make fundamental decisions, without seeking approval from the Minister, the Act does not give landownership rights to the Council nor the leasing rights. In essence, central Government does not want to cede full control of rural areas to RDCs. Worse still, ordinary people do not have much say in land administration at the local level. They are literally bystanders to the whole exercise.

### **Box 3: Farmer support service in land reform**

Newly re-settled farmers were generally provided with technical and financial services. AREX provided the bulk of technical support of farmers through its extension services with four officers per ward. Nevertheless, due to transport constraints, the impact of the staff fell far short of providing a real-time solution to farmer problems. Department of Lands provided new farmers with a land prospectus on land allocated. The prospectus contained a profile of suitability of farms for various land uses and a farmer could also request for a consolidated land use plan that could be produced on request. Through its rural tillage scheme, DDF provided newly settled farmers with tillage services and small dams but the tillage units were too few to satisfy the demand for the service, especially to farmers deserving free tillage. Government also provided free inputs to farmers such as seed and fertiliser. Again, these were not enough to meet the needs of all the farmers.

DNR provided environmental education in fast track resettlement areas. They addressed new farmers on the importance of natural resource conservation. The Forestry Commission formed resource management institutions in villages and trained new farmers in woodland management. This was done through launching awareness campaigns for the formation of resource management committees (RMCs).

The Ministry of Agriculture mobilised loans for farmers from various financial institutions. It enabled most of the farmers in A1 and A2 resettlement models to secure loans without collateral security. However, it should be pointed out that farmer support service was being conducted in a haphazard manner to the disadvantage of the new farmers. There was need for a concerted approach by all the sectors involved. A joint planning approach, beginning by a needs survey and prioritisation of needs of farmers in different resettlement models would go a long way in ensuring a more efficient farmer support service.

### **3. DEMAND-SIDE ANALYSIS**

The demand-side study solicited the opinions of selected recipients of the land administration service with regard to the functionality of the institutions involved.<sup>275</sup> The opinion survey focused on a number of institutional issues, *inter alia*, allocation procedure, ensuring equality of access to land, engendering awareness of rights and obligations to land, fostering appreciation of necessity of bylaws to conserve land and others. The following table is a summation of opinions on various issues from the three provinces.

---

<sup>275</sup> See the introduction section for sample size and the districts targeted for conducting interviews.

**Table 4: Public Opinion on Local-level Land Administration Issues N=434**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Major remarks</b>	<b>Statistical significance % (highest frequency reflected)</b>
<b>Allocation procedure</b>	Generally confusing since both government officials and war veterans were involved.	90
	Transparent. <sup>276</sup>	91
<b>Ensuring equality of access to land</b>	Very high, widows, divorcees and single mothers were also considered.	81.4
<b>Security of tenure</b>	Not allowed to lease or sell although meant to believe they own the land once allocated.	61.7
	People can still be displaced from land after allocation.	68
<b>Fostering awareness of rights and obligations to land</b>	Awareness of illegality of leasing.	61.7
	Awareness of need to protect the environment.	35.1
	Freedom to decide what to grow.	68.3
<b>Procedure to follow when rights to land are violated</b>	Report to village head/chairman.	91
<b>Fostering appreciation of necessity of bylaws to conserve land</b>	Excellent effort since everyone is informed of bylaws on taking up land.	93.1
<b>Role of village heads in solving land disputes</b>	Fairly active and is the first port of call.	64.5
<b>Role of village heads/chairperson<sup>277</sup> in land allocation</b>	They hardly play this role. Allocation done by offices ignorant of the really 'land hungry'.	73.4
<b>Role of Headman</b>	Where institution exists, their function is to assist chiefs in solving disputes over land and coordinating land redistribution. Generally, they are chiefs' shadow.	63.6
<b>Role of Chief</b>	Solves disputes over land mainly but should take active role in land allocation since he knows the needy best as informed by village heads or headmen where applying.	53.5
<b>Village Assembly</b>	Hardly meet but sometimes constituted to settle land disputes. Have no say in land allocation yet they are vehicle for participatory decision-making and ensuring fairness.	40.6

<sup>276</sup> Refers to 'fast track' period. This finding glosses over the truth and is characterised by insider-bias, since the respondents were people who had been allocated land. If some of the unsuccessful candidates had been included in the sample of interviewees a different result would have emerged.

<sup>277</sup> Term 'village chairperson' applies to resettlement areas created after independence.

Results of the survey indicated that there were too many actors involved in land allocation. This did not only create confusion in terms of procedure one could follow to gain access to land. A number of respondents were allocated land by actors who lacked a legal mandate. For instance, unless the allocation by war veterans and village heads was ratified by the District Lands Committee and the RDC, respectively, the beneficiaries lacked security of tenure. It should be central Government's responsibility to streamline institutions involved in land administration and inform the public on institutions recognised to engage in land allocation. Before the promulgation of the Traditional Leaders Act and the amended RDC Act, traditional leaders such as chiefs and village heads had the authority to allocate land. It seemed people were ignorant of the changes. War veterans, did not have a legal mandate to allocate land. The War Veterans Act only empowered the executive of the War Veterans Association as a welfare organisation to look after the interests of war veterans as a pressure group. It was never meant to be an organ of central Government with a mandate in land administration such as land allocation. The figures of respondents allocated land illegally by village heads and war veterans in the three provinces was disturbing: 24.0% in Masvingo, 36.3% in Mashonaland East and 32.2% in Matabeleland North. The scenario of institutions involved in Land Administration in Zimbabwe then, was nothing short of the reign of chaos.

Tenure is largely believed to be an important incentive in any agricultural system. Respondents were asked questions centred around tenure and the freedoms, restrictions and ownership rules they had over the newly acquired land. Combined data from the three study sites indicate that a majority of respondents (57.5%) were allowed mainly, to practice conservation activities on their properties.

One shocking result was that a large number of respondents from the three provinces were ignorant of lack of rights to sell the land. The ignorance seemed to be more pernicious in Masvingo province with 62.9%, followed by Mashonaland East with 39.3%.

It is significant to note that although the village head/chairman was perceived to be a key factor in the resolution of land disputes, the Traditional Leaders Act did not expressly grant him or her the enforcement authority. The Act mostly conferred village heads administrative authority. Consequently, there was a contradiction between the village head's formal and informal authority over land administration. In theory, they were not supposed to handle land disputes, though in practice they did.

Data analysis from the three provinces indicated that respondents recognised the following bylaws to be operating in their respective areas: not damaging of the environment (68.2%), animal protection (2.4%), not working on traditional resting days (18.8%) and not selling of land (7.4%). A very small percentage (3.3%) of respondents neither knew nor was aware of the bylaws. On a positive note, 93.1% of the respondents viewed the bylaws to be necessary. Unfortunately, only 47.7% of the respondents acknowledged being consulted when the bylaws were formulated.

**Table 5: Public Opinion on District/Provincial-level Land Administration N=434**

<b>Issues</b>	<b>Major remarks</b>	<b>Statistical significance % (highest frequency reflected)</b>
<b>Role of Rural District Council</b>	No idea of their role but they should be spearheading development in the area under their jurisdiction. Seemed to be more preoccupied with tax collection.	71.2
<b>Role of District Administrator</b>	Coordinated land redistribution program representing central Government.	60.7
	Not aware of his role in land administration.	19.1
<b>District Land Committee</b>	Not aware of its existence.	48.7
<b>Provincial Lands Committee</b>	Never heard about it.	98.2
	Allocated land to new settlers but criteria used not known.	38.3
<b>Provincial Administrator</b>	Aware of the existence of his office but not accessible to ordinary people.	89.4

### **Perceptions of role of civic society**

**War Veterans Association.** The highest number of respondents (39.9%) said war veterans pioneered land invasion but should take a back seat in land administration because they lacked the technical know-how. Other views given were that, war veterans lobbied for a new land policy (36.9%), allocated land (20.4%), disrupted land reform (2.1%) and a very small percentage of the respondents (0.6%) said they did not have any comments to make.

**Farmers' Unions.** More than half the respondents (50.8%) did not know the role of farmers' unions in the land reform process. Eight percent of the respondents said the farmers' unions were not doing enough. Other views expressed by the respondents on the role of farmers' unions were that they helped members get funding (15.6%), trained farmers (14.3%), provided inputs (4.9%), were agents of the government (4.9%) and slightly above one percent (1.3%) of the respondents said the unions identified markets for produce.

**Political Parties.** According to forty-five percent of the respondents, the role of political parties was to promote land reform. Close to a fifth of the respondents (19.4%) said the agenda of political parties was not clear. Others said the role of political parties was to monitor the land reform programme (14.3%) and see to the transparency of land allocation (13.7%). About eight percent (7.6%) said political parties actually disrupted the resettlement programme. Generally, results of the survey on political parties did not seem to support their involvement in land administration. Except for 13.7% who saw the need for political parties to play a role in land allocation, the majority's message was one of 'political parties hands off' land administration. They were seen, especially the ruling party, as a necessary framework for addressing land imbalances but not to operate as a permanent feature of land administration. Land was perceived too be too important an economic resource for sustainable development to be exposed or inter-linked with the vagaries of political manoeuvrings.

### 3.1. Support Service

Respondents were asked about mechanisms that were put in place to assist them in having access to financial and material resources for farming. All the respondents to the question indicated that there were some mechanisms in place. Forty-four percent cited GMB mechanisms. Other institutions that had some mechanisms in place cited were DDF (34.1%), Agribank (10.1%), tractors from government (9.3%), ARDA (1.6%) and a very small percentage of the respondents (1.2%) said some NGOs have put some mechanisms in place. The support was in form of access to seeds and fertilisers (35.8%), soft loans (29.9%), land tillage (29.4%) and distribution of inputs (4.5%). On perception of how the service was delivered, 60.9% of the respondents said the support service was good while 39.1% saw the farmer support program as poorly organised and riddled with corruption.

#### View of Departments Active in Land Administration

Department	Dominant view
Agriculture Research & Extension	Indispensable in productive farming but officers not easily accessible
Department of Lands	Hardly interfaces with landholders in the planning process
District Development Fund	Infrastructure maintenance and setting up very poor
Forestry Commission	Doing little to stem forest degradation
Department of Natural Resources	Very active in promoting conservation of land and other resources

### 3.2. Devolution

Respondents were asked to identify any decision-making powers relating to land administration vested in higher offices that they felt should be vested in either the headman/village head or chief. Thirty-one percent (31.3%) of the respondents did not know of any decision-making powers that should be devolved to the headman or chief. Twenty-two percent (21.8%) thought land allocation should be done at village level while twenty-one percent (20.7%) felt that the village committee had enough power. Other responses given by the respondents were that chiefs should be empowered (12.4%), some roles not considered in the scheme should be vested in the headman or chief (8.4%) and close to six percent (5.5%) felt there should be no changes.

## 4. DISCUSSION

First and foremost, land administration entails property surveying, demarcation, allocation, registration, and enforcement of rights and management of land. The results of the study indicated that the last five functions were taken for granted in Zimbabwe's land

administration system. There was no serious attention paid to demarcation since non-professionals, such as war veterans, were also involved in their own 'style' of demarcation, disorderly in nature. Registration of land allocated to people during the land redistribution program lacked finality as beneficiaries could be displaced from land without recourse to justice, even after receiving 'certificates of occupation'. In essence, the certificate served to perpetuate the illusion of access, since it could not be equated in any way to the gamut of rights conferred by the issuance of title deeds to land occupied.

The benefits of access to land are therefore unthinkable in a situation where the provider of the resource, the state, in this case, displaces the beneficiary willy-nilly. Lack of protection against undue displacement by any party negates the whole claim of access. Ribot and Peluso (2003) perceive the 'notion of access as bundles and webs of powers that enable actors to *gain, control and maintain* access'. The issue of access is closely linked to tenure. A durable land administration system cannot be attained in a situation where landholders are not fully aware of their gamut of rights over the land they possess. The issue of tenure should not be taken for granted. Rihoy (1998) argues that it is one of the principal factors determining the way in which resources are managed and used, and the manner in which the benefits are distributed. Defining one's tenure on a piece of land enables the landholder to have control over the resource and be aware of the rights deriving therefrom. Elsewhere in literature, tenure is seen as a vehicle for conferring security and defining property rights (Place, Roth, and Hazel 1994).

The study was very revealing of the carefree attitude of state agents in land administration. Majority of them confessed to upward accountability. Therefore, the message resonating from this scenario is that the interests of the people they served did not matter. As a matter of fact, the practice of upward accountability was exacerbated by a docile clientele. Lack of civic education, making people knowledgeable of their rights, powers and obligations of their representatives, be they sub-national or national, resulted in institutions existing without people knowing their public mandate. However, it is noteworthy that the narrative of the *benevolent state*, redistributing land for social justice, partly accounted for the uncontested upward accountability by state functionaries involved in land administration. Naturally, when institutions insulate themselves against public interests and criticisms of any nature, they cease to exist for the public and become self-serving burdens to taxpayers. Transparency is one major casualty of self-serving agents of central Government. They cannot be seen to be allowing the general public access to their internal dynamics when they are principally geared to cater for the interests of the centre or elites. Transparency and accountability 'ensure efficiency and honesty' (Rothchild 1994, p. 6) by those whose mandate is to provide a public good such as service in land administration. Although most people interviewed in this study claimed that the land allocation process was transparent, their opinions about the district and provincial land committees, District Development Fund, District and Provincial Administrators' offices speak volumes about lack of transparency in land administration.

Devolution is one mechanism for ensuring downward accountability. Its objective is to empower the most broadly representative and downwardly accountable local institutions (see

Ribot 2002). With regard to land redistribution, the results of this study indicated that demarcation, allocation, registration and enforcement of rights were largely functions handled beyond the local level institutions. Would it not be plausible to devolve allocation, registration and enforcement of land rights responsibilities to local level institutions, given that these institutions are placed closest to *action arena*? Moreover, it would enhance accountability and transparency in the execution of these functions of land administration once they are placed in the hands of elected officials. Furthermore, wouldn't the farmer support scheme be rendered more efficient and transparent if it were handled at the local level such as the Rural District Council?

Matondi (2001) observes that the overlaps among institutions commonly referred to by Ostrom (1990) as the *nesting of institutions* should be seen as an opportunity for ensuring that institutions among themselves compete to serve the people thereby gaining legitimacy. The overlaps noted in this study did not result in better service to the people. Instead, it culminated in subtle conflicts caused by differential operational and legal mandates. The synergy, if ever there was any, between and among institutions was generally token and never cascaded to the clients in form of improved service. Can one therefore justify overlaps in a situation where synergy lacks tangible outputs and the quality of service continues to deteriorate as a result?

A well-devolved land administration system is characterised by a high level of public participation. RDCs and councillors were supposed to represent the interests of local communities in settler selection. Nevertheless, the voice of these local level representatives was hardly heard or represented in settler selection. The District Lands Committees largely operated independently in their deliberations and decision-making process. The land identification, planning and demarcation were done outside the purview of the intended or prospective beneficiaries.

Lack of transport was a chronic problem in service delivery. Institutions like AREX whose mandate was of critical importance to agricultural productivity was literally grounded from provincial to district level. What is the point of giving a mandate to an institution without ensuring that the resources necessary for the execution of the mandate are put in place. What is the point of paying field staff to sit in offices due to lack of transport? This results in the public losing confidence in the existence of the institution in question. Does it make sense on the part of central Government to afford the salaries of such staff and not the resources which makes them functional and deserving of their pay?

The message from the respondents seemed to be that land administration needed to be approached in a very stable manner. War veterans and political parties in general were not supposed to meddle with land administration. A resource key to an agricultural economy such as that of Zimbabwe surely needed to be administered in a politically neutral manner for the benefit of all despite their political leanings.

Over fifty percent of the respondents pointed out that they did not know of any farmers' unions. This was very startling in that farmers' unions, which are supposed to provide a

forum or framework for farmers to lobby for their interests, were barely known by most of the respondents. Without speaking with one voice on issues of strategic importance to the farming `enterprise' they lose out on lobbying for producer prices that assure them of viability in the industry, controlling runaway input costs and other factors that would negatively impact on their sector. The bottom line is, farmers' unions should be as broad-based in their membership as possible to ensure the formulation of policies that are favourable to their sector or membership. Farmers' unions should provide a framework for the socio-economic empowerment of farmers by ensuring that they do not speak for only a minority but majority of farmers.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter was to examine the functionality of the existing institutional structures for land administration in Zimbabwe. A reflection on the basic tenets of a functional land administration system and the subsequent discussion revealed serious flaws in the existing system in Zimbabwe. Functional institutional structures for land administration cannot be attained in a milieu where downward accountability and transparency are a misnomer. Ideally, institutions exist to serve the interests of people (the public), hence they should be made accountable to the people. Nevertheless, in Zimbabwe, downward accountability requires the repositioning of some existing institutions and, where necessary, creating new ones, to ensure a well devolved land administration system. The mix of institutional arrangements required to ensure downward accountability and improved service delivery should be carefully considered lest power shifts from one self-serving institution to another.

The current system in Zimbabwe, where key functions of land administration such as surveying, planning, demarcation, allocation, registration and enforcement of land rights, are handled above the district level, does not augur well for downward accountability. One does not perceive any insurmountable complexity if these functions were to be devolved to the local and district level once capacity building is provided for. However, changing the direction of accountability or relocating power and control in land administration to local level institutions cannot occur without empowering local communities to develop a culture of questioning and demanding accountability. This may require initiating civil education programs that are non-partisan but enlighten communities to demand participatory decision-making in land administration. Public participation in land administration matters should be the norm rather than an exception. It allows people to have input in the nature of land rights or tenure system that protects their interests most.

Admittedly, land administration is a puzzle in every epoch of human history, but an appropriate rise to the challenge seems to lie in adaptive policy formulation and institutional realignment. This provides the system with tools to cope with the dynamics of access and resource utilisation by any generation of land users. The main point is that old institutional structures are collapsing in Zimbabwe, while clear definitions of functions in new institutions have yet to be formed and are not taking shape in ways that lead to a functional land

administration system. Perhaps, there are multiple land administration systems, the 'old' the 'new', de jure, and de facto, all trying to operate side-by-side in order to bring order to chaos, and creating it in the process.

## REFERENCES

- Bryant, C. 1998. Property Rights for the Rural Poor: the Challenge of Landlessness. *Journal of International Affairs* 52(1): 182-205.
- GOZ. 1998. Inception Phase Framework Plan 1999-2000: An Implementation Plan of the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme [Phase 2].
- GOZ. 2000. Minister Mudenge Honours the UNDP Administrator and Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General, Maark Malloch Brown. 30 November, 2000.
- Jacobs, H.M. 1989. 'Localism and Land Use Planning'. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 6(1): 1-17.
- Kingsley, G.T. 1996. 'Perspectives on Devolution'. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 62(4): 419-426.
- Kinsey, B. 2000. 'Land Reform as Conflict Management in Southern Africa'. Unpublished Report.
- Matondi, P.B. 2001. The Struggle for Access to Land and Water Resources in Zimbabwe: The Case of Shamva District, Doctoral Thesis, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala.
- Mbaya, S. 2001. Land Issues in East and Southern Africa: An Overview Volume 1: Southern Africa, A Mwengo Publication, Harare.
- Moyo, S. 1999. Land and Democracy in Zimbabwe. No. 7. SAPES Books Monograph Series.
- Ostrom, E. 1990. *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge University Press, NY.
- Place F, M. Roth, and P. Hazel. 1994 'Land Tenure Security and Agricultural Performance in Africa: An Overview of Research Methodology'. In *Searching for Land Tenure Security in Africa*, edited by J.W. Bruce and S.E. Migot-Adhola. World Bank.
- Ribot J.C. and Peluso N.L. 2003 A Theory of Access, Final Draft, Forthcoming in *Rural Sociology*, (Unpublished).
- Ribot J.C. 2002 Democratic Decentralisation of Natural Resources: Institutional Choice and Discretionary Power Transfers in Sub-Saharan Africa, Final Draft submitted to Public Administration and Development.
- Ribot, J.C. 1999 Decentralisation, Participation and Accountability in Sahelian Forestry: Legal Instruments of Political Administrative Control; Africa, Volume 69, pp. 23-65.
- Rihoy, L. 1998 Natural Resource Tenure in Africa: Policy Brief, IUCN, Harare.
- Rothchild, D. 1994. Strengthening African Local Initiative: Local Self-Governance, Decentralisation and Accountability, Hamburg, Institut fur Africa-Kunde

Toulmin, C. and J. Quan, editors. 2000. *Evolving Land Rights, Policy and Tenure in Africa*. London: DFID.

Wirth, L. 1937. 'Localism, Regionalism and Centralization'. *American Journal of Sociology* 42(4): 493-509.

WLSA. 1998. *Trust, Family Belonging for Women in Lesotho*. WLSA, Morija, Lesotho.

—Chapter 16—  
**Whose Land Is It Anyway?**

**Proposal for a Devolved Institutional Structure  
for Land Administration in Zimbabwe**

**Kudzai Chatiza**

Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe

*Zimbabwe is going through its second major land reform and resettlement phase, with a thrust towards achieving social justice and economic empowerment. The main strategy is government-managed redistribution of former (mainly white) commercial farmland for the benefit of the black majority using two distinct models (A2 and A1, with variants). As with Phase One (1980-98), planning and implementation of the program is centralised and not accompanied by an institutional reorientation, especially regarding structures for land administration. This is notwithstanding that, starting with the Rukuni Commission, leading to the 1998 Donors' conference and the draft National Land Policy Framework Paper, among others, broadening spaces for citizen participation in land reform has been discussed as central to enhancing the performance of the reform program. Like other natural resources, the management of land needs to be more firmly in the control of the communities. This chapter proposes a devolved institutional structure for land administration to foster attainment of land reform objectives, obviate the excesses of centralisation and improve rural development and governance. The structure is based on fieldwork findings in Zimbabwe, a tour to Tanzania and Botswana, as well as broader international experiences.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Zimbabwe is in the process of implementing a land reform and resettlement program, second phase. The program's precursor was a two-year Inception Phase Framework Plan (IPFP) for 1999 to 2000, designed to acquire and redistribute some 1 million hectares of privately-owned commercial farmland. The IPFP was not as successful as anticipated and considerable arguments are presented as to how and why this was so. The slow pace of land delivery, political pressure, and limited financial resources to acquire land and to place settlers all played varied but significant parts. Frustration over the failure of IPFP led to government introducing the 'fast track' program in 2000 with the objective of acquiring not less than 5 million hectares on which it would settle people with minimal or no basic infrastructure (GOZ 2001). Planning and plot demarcation were done in retrospect, and the program, in both policy intent and political rhetoric, retained its emphasis on land redistribution for social justice and economic empowerment. Other principal objectives of the program as derived from the National Land Policy include democratising land tenure systems, ensuring security of tenure, providing for participatory management processes in land use planning, and

promoting sustainable use and management of land. Decision-making processes and structures regarding land administration aspects (land allocation, land-use planning, the definition, conferment and protection of land rights) need to be more accessible to communities.

Critical reflection on the stated land policy objectives and the land reform program itself (see Box 1) shows that a process of institutional reorientation, from top-down centralised strategic and operational mindsets,

to bottom-up decentralised

bases for policy

formulation and

development management

ought to be a centrepiece

of Zimbabwe’s land and

agrarian reform efforts.

This is in addition to the

need for increased human,

financial and other

resources for the program.

Institutional and

organisational

arrangements in the

management of the land

reform and resettlement

program and beyond are

critical. The broader study

on which this chapter is

based sets out the problem

with previous land reforms

in Zimbabwe as showing

lack of institutional

imagination on the part of government.

Key land administration issues	Suggestions
<p>Weak community involvement in decision-making.</p> <p><i>Majority of the people lack knowledge of their rights, duties and responsibilities.</i></p> <p><i>Executive not committed to devolution (fear of losing political power and patronage).</i></p>	<p>Broaden stakeholder participation in land policy matters (transparency).</p> <p>Establish legally defensible community-managed structures accessing Parliament and Presidency directly (not through Ministries).</p> <p>Build fiscal, administrative and technical capacities of local actors and people served by these actors.</p> <p>Enhance information flow and management.</p>
<p>Centralised resources, i.e., limited resources for local institutions.</p>	<p>Streamline budget process to slant resource allocation to local needs and actors.</p> <p>Simplify structures and enhancing effectiveness.</p>
<p>Inaccessible and expensive justice system (land rights).</p>	<p>Decentralise land court system.</p> <p>Simplify legal and land policy literature.</p>
<p>Source: Consolidated from the Mamimine and Jacobs and Chavunduka chapters in this volume..</p>	

## 2. WHY A DEVOLVED INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE FOR LAND ADMINISTRATION?

This chapter arises from a study that explored the prospects for establishing a devolved land administration system in Zimbabwe. Fieldwork in three provinces of Mashonaland East, Masvingo and Matabeleland North (in which two districts per province were selected) was complemented by a regional study tour to Tanzania and Botswana, as well as a review of literature on international experiences focusing on Botswana, Tanzania, The Philippines and

Brazil<sup>278</sup>. Analysis of the field evidence, literature and international experiences informs this chapter, which argues that a devolved land administration system is essential for Zimbabwe. Next the chapter presents a proposed institutional structure, with details on functions and relationships. The chapter asserts that a comprehensive process of establishing a devolved institutional structure for land administration will further the main objectives of Zimbabwe's

land reform program. The land reform program in Zimbabwe has not had a complementary institutional reform component to support it (Cousins and Robins 1993, Rukuni 1994). Institutional reform is key because tenure per se does not bring about productivity and security (Bruce 1996, Rukuni 1994). Security of tenure significantly depends on use and occupation (Shivji 1997) as well as the resolve and ability of social and technical institutions to protect and uphold land rights accorded to individuals or groups. A devolved land administration system brings decision-making processes and structures within reach of the landholders and thus makes them more accessible to the farmer. Legally and in practice, ownership of land implies the power to control,

manage and administer (ibid.). If these powers are vested in government officials (via presidential delegation), given the absence of political accountability, bureaucratic aloofness can set in and the people significantly lose control over their prime resource.

State control of the planning and implementation of earlier resettlement schemes in Zimbabwe has been criticised extensively. The institutional structures have been criticised for having retained a centralised (colonial) land administration system (GOZ 1998a) as well as for being deficient, prone to conflict, churning out unfocused policies and strategies whose execution is not properly co-ordinated (Rukuni 1994). Direct state control of processes and structures for land administration has not necessarily and of itself resulted in increased productivity and security of tenure. The principal Ministries and state departments involved in land administration essentially operate in an overlapping maze that confuses

**Box 1: Objectives of the Land Reform and Resettlement Program Phase 2**

- Acquisition of not less than 8.3 million hectares from the large-scale commercial farming sector for redistribution.
- Decongesting overstocked and overpopulated wards/villages in communal areas.
- Indigenising large-scale commercial farming.
- Reducing the extent and intensity of poverty among rural families and farm workers by providing them with adequate agricultural land.
- Increasing the contribution of agriculture to GDP and foreign currency earnings.
- Promoting environmentally sustainable land use through eco-tourism and agriculture.
- Developing and integrating small-scale farmers into mainstream commercial agriculture.
- Creating conditions for sustainable economic, political and social stability.

Source: GOZ 2001.

---

<sup>278</sup> The chapter by Mamimine presents field findings and the chapter by Jacobs and Chavunduka presents the theory of decentralization and international experiences.

unsophisticated service users (farmers) in terms of which to approach for what, and is a drain on their limited time and other resources (Masvingo Provincial Workshop 2003).

Responsibility for land issues is dissipated between the President's Office on the one hand and the Minister of Lands and local government on the other, with other Ministries (e.g., Environment) having responsibility over certain land functions (GOZ 1998a). Essentially the problems of land administration have been presented as arising from overlaps in ministerial and intra-governmental authority and ambiguities with regards to authority hierarchies (Shivji 1997). Invariably the solution has been to tinker with institutional titles and mandates, while retaining or centralising and concentrating power over land in the executive.

Institutional overlaps must be unravelled and synchronised. Without dealing with ownership issues between the state and land user, land administration will remain problematic and land rights will remain vulnerable to executive whims. In Zimbabwe, the Ministries of Lands, Rural Resources and Local Government have overlapping functions both at Ministerial and Departmental levels. At the District level, civil servants owe more operational and strategic allegiance to their parent Ministries than to the local (land and planning) authorities or Rural District Councils. Given the centralised budget system and resource allocation process, the bottom-up planning process has essentially suffocated local aspirations, dismissing them as inconsequential 'shopping lists'. However, the formal (*de jure*) ownership of land and performance of functions by the state *vis-à-vis* land administration have traditionally been counterbalanced by the resilient (*de facto*) performance of similar or related functions by traditional leaders.

The Presidential Commission on Land Tenure established that the most serious conflicts over land took place in communal areas and were exacerbated by the breakdown of administrative structures, erosion of authority and responsibility (Rukuni 1994). These epitomised the tension and active conflict between traditional and elected leadership, especially over land allocation (Marongwe 2002). Changes envisioned and being effected within the framework of the Traditional Leaders Act of 1998 are received with both scepticism and guarded enthusiasm. Traditional leaders had been sidelined at independence because they were perceived as instruments of indirect rule by the colonial administration; therefore, the timing of giving these traditional leaders fuller roles in land administration is seen as part of the State's intention to retain control of the rural population and not democratise rural governance (Masvingo Provincial Workshop 2003). A reward system brings traditional leaders firmly under state control and effectively makes them civil servants susceptible to manipulation as they become dependent on the executive. It is also possible to assert that the political establishment (ZANU-PF), rather than the State, that is pursuing its political ambitions through the use of the institution of traditional leaders to firmly control rural citizens. Traditional leadership has therefore been compromised, in our view, by both the colonial and post-colonial state to a point where an alternative dispensation is needed. The extension of the control of traditional leadership institutions into resettlement areas where land allocation is largely devoid of the patronage of chiefs and headmen, and where the

socio-cultural and economic statuses of beneficiaries vary significantly, is a test case in terms of their effectiveness and acceptability.

Global trends towards participatory development planning and management are filtering into official rhetoric (and perhaps policy intentions) in Zimbabwe, as evidenced by reference to empowering locals and indigenising commercial agriculture against a background of previously (colonial and post-colonial) discriminatory, marginalising and impoverishing policy formulation processes (Bruce 1996). Pursuing these trends will require increasing people's participation in land administration, and devolution as a mode of decentralisation offers more promise than other mechanisms. This is because existing land administration processes exclude the community from participation in the development and implementation of land administration; decision-making is opaque, unaccountable and geographically removed from where people live (GOZ 1998a).

Significant research focusing on institutional dynamics has dwelt on natural resources. In view of most natural resources being land-based, the conclusions arrived at and insights offered are relevant to the discussion on institutional structures for land administration. One view is that it is unrealistic to proceed on the assumption that there should be one composite institution responsible for natural resources management at the local level (Sithole and Bradley 1995). The alternative view urges the need for institutional synchronisation and/or harmonisation in recognition of the fact that a multiplicity of institutions lends itself to the development and recurrence of counter-productive institutional conflicts (Moyo et. al. 1991, 1992; Sithole and Bradley 1995). Institutional conflict, while a feature of socio-economic development and invariably positive in terms of generating desired outcomes, can, if unchecked, undermine sustainable utilisation of natural resources. Institutional multiplicity and role/jurisdictional overlaps largely result from a sector approach to planning and implementation of rural development projects (e.g., water, forestry, wildlife and land). Extensive literature on different types of conflicts at the local level exists (GOZ 1998a; Marongwe 2002; Matondi 2001).

These conflicts forestall development, especially because the time invested in dealing with them could be better spent. Experience from Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, South Africa and Zimbabwe shows that the State shapes and reshapes the form and structure as well as the evolution of State and non-state local level institutions involved in land and natural resource management. As such the conflicts (or lack thereof) among the institutions can also be moderated by the State through policy directives and legislative amendments. It is therefore generally in the State's power (and indeed a modern day function) to facilitate the smooth functioning of local citizen-controlled decentralised structures within an overall national policy framework (the enabling role of the State).

Success stories in relation to local level institutions involved in community-based natural resource management require careful examination as therein might lie the key success factors that could be applied to land allocation, management and administration. Institutions involved in the management of common property resources or various forms of resources and

development initiatives include Community Property Associations and Trusts in South Africa, Land Boards in Botswana, Communal Area Management Program For Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) committees in Zimbabwe, ADMADE in Zambia and Tchuma Tchato in Mozambique, and, among others, project committees involved in NGO or government-funded rural development activities. The way these institutions are constituted is as varied as the institutions themselves. While local-level citizen-controlled institutions have received justified rave reviews they are also prone to corruption, elite control and bureaucratic tendencies, which have to be checked if the virtues arising from proximity to service users are to lead to effective service delivery.

The wave of and interest in participatory development planning in general and its application through community-based natural resource management approaches arises from a bottom-up development paradigm, which acknowledges that the state alone should not be the only development actor. The question is therefore around how a positive relationship can be structured to ensure community empowerment. Essential in this respect is the empowerment of communities to manage the land and land-based resources upon which their livelihoods are based. As an approach the bottom-up participatory planning and institutional configurations can achieve efficiency by eliminating the problems of rural development, particularly the challenges of coordination, intervention relevance, implementation and sustainability. Another critical dimension is that of resourcing development interventions in terms of the extent to which locals are willing and able to contribute (in cash and/or kind) towards their own development. This is invariably referred to as the 'dependency syndrome', and dealing with it depends significantly on the perceived legitimacy of the institutions facilitating the interventions notwithstanding their track record or past performance in generating benefits. Application of participatory frameworks in institutional set-ups in this respect can therefore be a panacea to the rural development questions of institutional coordination, intervention sustainability and the dependency syndrome.

Space for and involvement of non-state agencies in development planning and management in Zimbabwe was given form and content and significantly aided by the promulgation of a new planning framework through the 1984 Prime Minister's Directive on decentralisation and development, which created sub-national structures supportive of public participation. The objective of the directive was:

To define the administrative structures at provincial and district level ...  
relationships and channels of communication between all participants ... in order  
to achieve coordinated development of provinces and districts in Zimbabwe.  
(Makumbe 1996, p. 36)

The fundamental tenets of these structures remained the same over the years until the Traditional Leaders Act. The Act has tried to reconcile the overlaps and the role/authority conflict between traditional leaders and the representative structures of village development and ward development committees (headed by a VIDCO Chairperson and Councillor respectively). The new structures and institutional arrangements respond to some of the Land

Tenure Commission recommendations especially regarding the establishment of village and ward assemblies (Rukuni 1994). However some of the new structures are still evolving and have not been fully established in some parts of the country. This state of flux is posing a number of challenges and prompts different responses from the different actors and beneficiaries of rural development services.

Critics and sceptics have noted that some of the consultative processes are smokescreens and ends rather than means of arriving at decisions based on a collective vision. In short, as envisioned and effected, the structures have not empowered communities. The criticisms have been on the basis of a number of points (Murombedzi 1997). First, the structures did not respect the existing territorial jurisdictions as they defined planning units using demography rather than geography and in the process disturbed the boundaries that defined associational life and identities. The traditional village forms a viable basis for relationships and identity, both of which are critical for defining communities and act as central components of social capital essential for planning and managing community/rural development. Second, there is rampant abuse of the structures by bureaucrats who use them as means of community mobilisation, institutions of rubber stamping and policy implementation, rather than as vehicles for land administration and participatory development planning. Central Government functionaries dominate local structures like the Rural District Development Committee (RDDCs), and thus essentially crowd out locals. Center-local relationships are weak and often conflictual with some CEOs resenting being monitored by DAs, for instance. The DAs' responsibility to chair the RDDC (a council structure) is codified into law but given that DAs are not members of the council, their participation is for monitoring (if not policing) on behalf of Government. As such, therefore, the structures are not ideal for a devolved land administration system. Current systems and institutional arrangements therefore do not link local planning processes to the national budgeting process, which has remained centralised.

The current land reform and resettlement program has been controversial in terms of both substantive and procedural issues. Certain institutions' roles were frozen, receded or extended creating relative confusion. One of the commonplace problems has been multiplicity of allocating authorities, leading to the problem of multiple allocations either in terms of one person being given more than one piece of land or one piece of land being allocated to more than one person. Institutional responsibilities and procedures established as part of the program with respect to land identification, allocation, beneficiary selection and settler emplacement were followed to varying degrees of detail in different parts of the country and even within the same administrative areas. Key stakeholders in the Land Identification Committees, like war veterans, politicians and other powerful citizens at both national and subnational levels, exerted themselves differently on the formal land administration structures. The Rural District Council (RDC) has in some areas been sidelined despite being the land and planning authority in terms of local government legislation, RDC Amendment Act of 1998. As such, a thorough review is needed to close gaps and to create administrative and procedural safeguards that will curtail elite self-interest and the general pursuit of political aspirations at the expense of effective (fair, equitable) land administration after 'fast-

track'. Previous reviews of institutional structures for land administration have been ad hoc and essentially failed to remove duality and discrimination across tenure regimes (GOZ 1998a). While the Rukuni Commission as well as the National Land Policy Frameworks recommended extensive improvements to land administration in the country, the government has adopted components thereof rendering the essential thrusts of the proposed structures less effective. Box 2 summarises the proposals made by the Rukuni Commission of 1994 and the NLPF of 1998. The critical aspects of any institutional restructuring relate to asserting or reasserting ultimate (radical) title over land and then expressing this through appropriate structures. At the national level this ordinarily entails dealing with addressing the problem of undue executive influence, while at the local level land administration merges with broader local government issues. The structure presented in this chapter approaches the issue broadly, in this way adopting previous arguments at national level and rehashing the need for

### **Recommended structures ...**

#### **... by Rukuni in 1994**

- Advisory Land Board system (national, provincial and district).
- Regroup land functions under a national Department of Lands.
- Provincial and District Secretary to which government departments report.
- Abolished Village Development Committees and reinstated Dare/Inkundla, presided over by the various tiers of traditional authority.

#### **... by the NLPF in 1998**

- An executive and extra-ministerial National Land Board (NLB) with Provincial Offices offering technical services. NLB responsible for all land functions and answerable to Parliament.
- Elected district land board with RDC representation.
- District land offices.

Source: Decoded from GOZ 1998a.

streamlined and empowered local structures.

### **3. CONCEIVING A DEVOLVED LAND ADMINISTRATION STRUCTURE**

The above constitute some of the reasons why we argue that a devolved institutional structure for land administration is key to the stabilisation of the rural socio-economic fabric after fast track land redistribution. Devolution as a concept is used in this chapter in reference to an institutional framework where authority is transferred from central Government to autonomous local level units with a corporate and/or legal persona bequeathed and guaranteed through formal national legislation. If all land matters are public matters and people are allowed to take (an active) part in land administration (Shivji 1994), then it is our view that a devolved structure best suits such a dispensation. The institutions or structures to which the authority is transferred will exist and function in clearly distinguishable (spatial)

areas and performing public functions. A devolved land administration system essentially limits the State's role to land policy formulation, as well as removes direct State control from land administration, thus creating a basis for democratic land governance. Regarding land administration, the key functions relate to allocation (or de-allocation) of land rights, resolving conflicts over land and land-related resources (i.e., protection of group and individual land rights), liaising with outside bodies on land matters in connection with alienation of land, land-use planning, beneficiary selection and implementation of resettlement and other support programs. It also encompasses the managing or conserving of the land resource to enhance its productivity. These are functions that are better performed by institutions close to farmers to obviate transactions costs, improve turnaround time for decisions, and increase accountability and transparency, which are critical for the legitimacy of public institutions involved in land administration, (Rukuni 1994; GOZ 1998a). A devolved land administration system will also act to remove the negative fast-track components while consolidating or regularising positive aspects of the program. Such a system will also empower rural landholders and their institutions as well as broadly increase and safeguard democratic spaces available in the arena of rural development and governance. In view of security of tenure being, in part, a function of the institutions protecting land rights, a devolved land administration system will also enhance people's rights to and over land as a socio-economic asset and basis for agro-based livelihoods.

The other relevant objectives of the proposed structure relate to removing the field of land administration from the terrain of political manoeuvring while at the same time entrenching Rural District Councils into the primary role of service provision in a unified structure, as opposed to retaining central Government service provision structures at the district level. Our focus on these objectives is based on the fact that both the Rukuni Commission and the National Land Policy Framework paper dwelt a lot on the issues of a unified land law regime and the need for a national land policy. Land administration functions with which this chapter is concerned are those that can be devolved, including land identification, allocation, land-use planning, regulation of land markets, definition, conferment and protection of land rights. The village is used as a basic unit to which the land administration functions are to be devolved, with streamlined technical assistance from the RDC and a District Land Board.

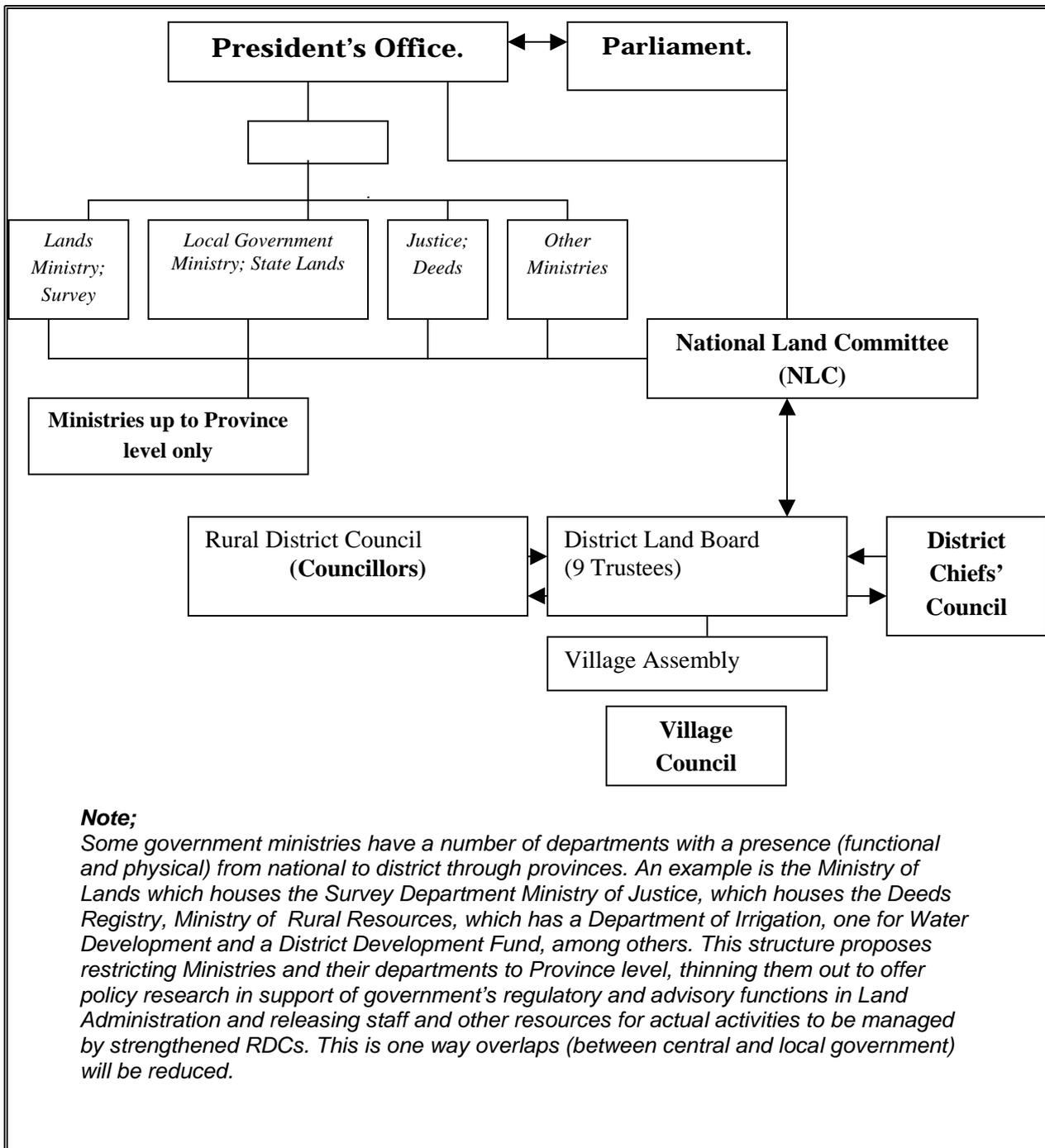
Our view is therefore that the time is opportune for developing a national land administration structure that responds to local needs and aspirations as effectively and efficiently as is possible. The proposed structure places due emphasis on the local level and is premised on the primacy of the traditional village as a basis for land administration and basic unit for specific and general planning of interventions. To this end, the critical preoccupation of the land administration system should be protecting village land from alienation, for instance, which could lead to landlessness. As such a land administration system that allows for effective service delivery as well as protecting the land rights of the poor and powerless is critical for the country's social development. A view permeating this proposal is that, as little institutional inhibitions as is possible should be put in the interaction between people and their land.

It is our view, corroborated by previous studies as well as field evidence, that a case for more devolved and effective structures for land administration has been made and a number of proposals submitted for policy consideration. Key reference in terms of broader land policy and particularly with regards to land administration has to be made to the Land Tenure Commission (commonly referred to as The Rukuni Commission) and the National Land Policy Framework paper, 1994 and 1998 respectively, which made far-reaching recommendations, some of which have been implemented. The institutional structures being proposed in this chapter are based on a number of principles and values as outlined below.

- ***Accountability and transparency:*** relate to the existence of checks and balances regarding decision-making procedures, information dissemination especially on how land and related services can be accessed. Accountability and transparency determine the extent to which an institution is accessible to and perceived as legitimate by its clientele.
- ***Change and continuity:*** relate to being responsive to changing aspirations of landholders and other stakeholders in terms of service delivery structures and focus (vision and mission).
- ***Vesting local structures with legal/corporate personalities:*** includes divestiture of radical (ultimate) title over communal and resettlement land from the state as a first step to empowering local institutions. Removing all institutional hindrances to the operations of local-level land administration institutions, i.e., the State receding into regulatory functions and acting in an advisory capacity, is also key.
- ***Policies and institutions putting ‘landholders first’:*** institutional frameworks that provide for the active, equitable and meaningful participation and consultation of farming families (male and female headed) respond better to people’s needs and are generally perceived as legitimate. Enforceable safeguards against discrimination on the basis of gender, status or political orientation, awareness raising and building the strategic capacities of people have to be an integral and continuous part of a devolved land administration system.
- ***Political neutrality and insulation from partisan politics:*** institutions involved in land administration need protection from partisan politics as exercised by national and sub-national politicians. Without being politically neutral or at least being seen to be, the public image of an institution will suffer, and with it its acceptability and legitimacy. Political neutrality can be guaranteed through establishing direct institutional accountability channels with Parliament and direct access to the Presidency.

Figure 1 presents the proposed structure/organogram for land administration in Zimbabwe.

**Figure 1: Institutional Structure for Land Administration in Zimbabwe**



For this institutional structure for land administration to work effectively the following fundamental prerequisites should be in place:

- A clear/concise national land policy constantly updated in keeping with changing imperatives. In the (proposed) structure, facilitating the development and/or revision of a national land policy will be a cardinal function of the National Land Board.
- Unified land law (e.g., a principal land act) and relevant constitutional provisions. Many commentators have made a case for a unified land law to obviate confusion and ambiguities.
- The same can also be said about Zimbabwe's local government legislation whose streamlining will remove a lot of overlaps and contradictions and in the process help to steer the capacity building of the local government system in the country to benefit land reform and other rural development interventions.
- Streamlined institutions without any ambiguities and overlaps.
- Well-resourced institutions/organisations (financial, technical and human resources) with resources coming from a combination of national budget, revenue generation, taxes and levies as appropriate. A clear policy and legal framework has to be established to facilitate institutional viability.
- Synergy in terms of both the pace/timing and policy visions of reform processes, e.g., local government and civil service reforms, land reform and local government reform, etc. This will ensure that changes in one sector do not contradict or render inoperable changes in another.

The first two prerequisites have received considerable attention since the Rukuni Commission of 1994, but, as many commentators have observed in the cases of Zimbabwe and Tanzania, reforming land law and institutional arrangements without an alignment with or accompanying local government addresses the problem in a piecemeal and ad hoc fashion. The plan of action proposed here therefore focuses on a local government reform program sensitive to developments in the land reform sector and designed to pursue complementary objectives especially with regard to the democratisation of rural governance.

At national level a National Land Committee (NLC) will be created independent of the Agricultural Settlement (ARDA) Board. The NLC will be an extra-Ministerial body made up of stakeholders in the land and agrarian sector reporting to the Parliament of Zimbabwe through the Office of the President (GOZ 1998a). It is proposed that the membership of the committee be drawn in such a way as to represent the interests of the diverse land stakeholdership consisting of and resourced by central Government ministries, farmers' unions and the business community. Members to the committee will be nominated by the relevant parliamentary committee through extensive public consultations and ratified by Parliament. At least 30% of the members of the NLC should be women and members should generally be persons knowledgeable in land matters, of high standing, integrity and be outside state employ, not political party leaders and members of parliament. The NLC will be

a land policy melting pot, i.e., facilitating the creation of a national land policy framework and being a focal point for coordinating the planning and management of the land resource. The committee will co-ordinate the functions of land-related Ministries, institutions and departments like the Deeds Registry (department) and district land boards taking charge of any land reform and resettlement processes and programs. However the actual structure and divisions or units for the NLC require considerable design consideration to ensure coherence and obviate overlapping of functions.

At the district level a District Land Board (DLB) will be instituted as a land policy and watchdog institution representing the interests of Traditional Leadership (with a District Chiefs' Council as the repository of such interests), the RDC (full Council) and the citizens (Village Assemblies and Farmers' Unions). Regarding formulation and function, the DLB will operate like the national Tripartite Negotiating Forum, which has government, labour and business as equal social partners. The Board will be autonomous and independent of both the Chiefs' and the Rural District Councils so that it provides an unbiased and legitimate

**Simplified flow diagram for land redistribution and land-use planning/servicing**

Village identifies and quantifies own land needs or any land issue requiring resolution (e.g., rationalising land use).

Village submits an application (proposal) to the DLB prepared with technical input from relevant RDC sections.

DLB considers the application in consultation with NLB and with formal input from traditional authorities and RDC on policy matters and the Admin Court on other matters.

If satisfied, DLB approves the plan, facilitates land acquisition and hands over to RDC for actual planning of identified land to fulfil need or reorganisation of area.

platform for discussing and executing land administration functions. Unlike in Botswana where Land Boards are a state creation and the executive largely appoints members, Zimbabwe's District Land Boards will be free of executive meddling. It is proposed that the membership be nine, with two people being from full council (RDC), one representative of the traditional leadership in the district, a representative of the farming unions with a presence in the district and five members elected from Village Assemblies (i.e., from amongst the members of the Village Councils or Village Governments). The RDC Chief Executive Officer will be an ex officio member of the DLB. The secretariat of the DLB shall have a Board Secretary heading the administration of the DLB and the secretariat shall be structured to provide services to Village Assemblies in land administration matters.

The primary functions of such a Land Board will be the issuance and protection of rights over communal and resettlement land for the benefit of village land applicants on the advise of Village Assemblies (VAs). The board will also generally support and advise VAs in the allocation of land and general management of their land resources, formulate bylaws, relevant regulations and policies within the overall national land policy framework and in consultation

with VAs, the NLB and other stakeholders. The DLB will also offer training and general capacity building on land rights issues to relevant institutions (e.g., VAs and district citizens). Disputes over matters of procedure or 'political disagreements' in relation to land matters between traditional leaders and citizens, RDCs and traditional leaders or such other disputes will be brought to the attention of the District Land Board. To ensure transparency in the administration of land, allocations will be on the basis of formal applications on DLB-approved stationery and submitted through the Village Council for onward transmission to the VA. Once the VAs agree to allocate land in keeping with prevailing priorities, bylaws and land policy considerations, the form will be forwarded to the DLB with a note from the relevant VAs for DLB confirmation and registration. Should the DLB not be satisfied with the recommendation or decision of a VA to allocate land such decision will be communicated through the VC's.

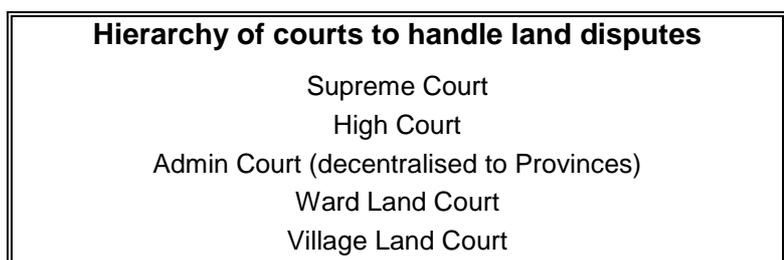
It is important to emphasise that RDCs or local authorities in general are critical in servicing or developing land in support of people's livelihoods and not conferment of land rights outside planning areas. The present local authority system where Rural District Councils (RDCs) are directly controlled by central Government and thus susceptible to 'executive bullying' and disabling friction with traditional leadership structures owing to lack of full integration makes them (RDCs) ill-adapted to perform land administration functions outside planned areas. Land reforms in Zimbabwe have basically entailed land transfer from the private to state sector without an accompanying transfer from the central state to local authorities as resettlement schemes were administered on a state-issued permit and state leasehold basis. No signs exist for the state to cede land administration and ultimate ownership to either RDCs or traditional structures. A central realistic role for RDCs, which justifies a restructuring process to make them more efficient by removing all conceivable technical, institutional and resource encumbrances, therefore relates to land-use planning and servicing. Institutional hindrances to the thriving of RDCs include ministerial conflicts, the tussles with traditional leadership structures and lack of institutional coordination at district level.

To obviate such problems it is proposed to keep Ministerial overlaps and conflict as far away from the local level as is possible through restricting Ministerial institutional presence to national and provincial tiers only. This creates a basis for an unencumbered local government system where all technical and professional staff working in the districts falls within the complete employ of Rural District Councils. The Presidential Commission on Land Tenure made a related recommendation through the proposed District Secretary's Office, which was not taken on board. It is our view that the proposal by the Commission was weak in that it implied a co-ordinatory function as opposed to a full-fledged executive responsibility empowered in relevant (revised and unified) local government legislation. The proposed restructuring and strengthening of RDCs will be done with a view to ensure that there is no overlap between the proposed DLBs and the RDC. To ensure this is the case, RDCs will be restricted to administering land in planned areas/settlements while all other land outside planned areas will be the responsibility of the DLB. For their part RDCs will have a land

subcommittee that will formulate council perspectives on land for contribution to DLB deliberations, as the latter will be the ultimate authority in matters of land policy at district level. A lot has been said about RDCs lacking the requisite capacity to deliver effective services to communities while other commentators cite the need to counterbalance their relative power vis-à-vis communities. All in all, however, the assertion that RDCs are weak largely comes from central Government and is invariably used to justify a central presence in local affairs. With the restriction of Ministries to the province, a lot of qualified staff currently working for ministries within and outside districts will be released as will other resources for reallocation/assignment to RDCs. The chiefs' council and the DLB will together counterbalance RDC powers and enhance transparent service delivery and accountability.

In keeping with the principle of change and continuity and also in recognition of the provisions of the Traditional Leaders' Act, VAs (being established throughout the country) will be the basic land administration units and will comprise all adults (people over 18 years of age) residing within a village, whether with or without a piece of land properly allocated to them. Quorums for VA meetings shall be 60% of the villagers, with at least 40% of those present being women. A VA shall meet at least twice yearly to plan, review developments and consider any matters brought to its attention by the VC or any other bona fide residents of the village, writing minutes of every meeting. An elected adult member of the village shall chair the VA meetings with the village head being an advisor and ex officio member of the assembly. A properly constituted VA shall have the mandate to elect six members of the VC from amongst eligible adult villagers and at least a third of the VC shall be women. The village head (the seventh member) shall chair all VC meetings and report on its deliberations to the VAs as a way of ensuring transparent and accountable traditional leadership. As the Village Government the VC shall administer all village land for and on behalf of the VA, liaise with all extra-village stakeholders within the framework set by the village assembly and pursuant to the aspirations and interests of the villagers. The council shall operate on the basis of subcommittees as decided upon or needed by the villagers with the subcommittees having the leeway to co-opt other villagers and technical people to assist in performing specific tasks before reporting to the VC and subsequently to the VA. Other functions of the VC shall be to develop and maintain a village land register complete with a community map (however rudimentary), collect and disseminate information to villagers as well as arrange meetings where outsiders visit the village.

The incidence of land conflicts going unresolved for lack of a dedicated and devolved judiciary structure is a cause for concern. While insufficient field evidence was gathered to firm up a proposal, it is our view that a land conflict resolution structure be established aligned to but



administratively separate from the hierarchy of courts in Zimbabwe. To this end the lowest court with original jurisdiction over matters of land conflict should be a Village Land Court (VLC). The VLC shall hold public hearings with five members in attendance of which at least two shall be women.

All members shall be VA-elected and at least one be a trained person on issues of land rights and other legal matters. Familiarity with the customs of the area as well as the general land policy will be important for any VLC members. In the event that a matter presided over by a VLC is not satisfactorily dealt with, or if it is a matter transcending one village, this can be brought to a Ward Land Court before being referred to The Admin Court (decentralisation to Provinces already in progress) via the District Land Board and subsequently referred through the hierarchy of courts up to the Supreme Court.

Recognising the resilient and important role of traditional leaders at district level in Zimbabwe but without unduly detracting from the intention to democratise land administration, a district chiefs' council will be established, nominating members (one each) to represent its interests in Council as well as the Land Board. The chiefs' council will be the repository of customary wisdom brought to bear on RDC and DLB decision-making in the form of recommendations presented by representatives. Given the reality that they are now essentially civil servants (as is the case in Botswana in many respects), traditional leaders' roles in the community and customary court system should be strengthened and formalised with a referral system for all land matters to the VA and the DLB.

#### **4. FRAMEWORK FOR A CAPACITY-BUILDING PLAN**

Resolving the land administration problem in Zimbabwe almost always falters because of the state's inability and unwillingness to devolve and the inability of RDCs to confer and protect secure land rights, especially to smallholders without title. The land board system in Botswana and being proposed (with adaptations) in South Africa offers considerable promise, at it engages with the resilient question of traditional leadership structures and ultimately the fundamental question of whose land it is after all. If land is for the ordinary smallholder and other categories of land users then structures like the land board system that place little to no institutional inhibitions to the interaction between people and their land are key to tenure security. This chapter argued for such a land administration system but also recognised the importance of RDCs and traditional leadership structures for whom space is provided without unduly over-empowering them to an extent where one replaces a central bureaucracy with a local but centrally-controlled one. The proposed system does not rob RDCs of their functions but streamlines their role in land-use planning and service provision, thus ensuring that both institutions are strategically and operationally complementing each other.

Another resilient question with regards to local level institutional structures always relates to their funding. Sources of funding can be limited largely because of the desire to obviate loss of autonomy arising from 'dirty' money coming with strings and eventually eroding any policy/strategic and operational independence and/or institutional legitimacy. To this end

therefore the funding for the proposed institutional structures ought to be a combination of district level levies, taxes and other RDC charges complemented by contributions from farmers' organisations, annual government grants, business sector contributions and DLB-fundraising efforts. The contributions of government beyond huge set up outlays ought to be reduced to a level where self-secured resources (alternative funding) contribute 60-70% of DLB annual budgets.

As noted, the devolution of institutional structures for land administration is not something the government of Zimbabwe violently opposes. However the nature of the party-political establishment in terms of its ambitions and strategies or influences act to postpone if not derail progression towards autonomous land administration and broader rural governance institutions. The curtailment of open public debate over land has detracted Zimbabwe from laying clear land policy contours protected from executive and ruling party unilateralism. Read in conjunction with the almost complete merger (perceived and actual) of the party and government frustrates reform efforts in terms of the policy formulation regime as well as the outlook of the actual policies themselves and the institutions with a mandate to execute them. In keeping with the slant maintained in this paper the following next steps will engender a new dispensation in the country. The proposed activities include:

- Adopting a devolved institutional structure for land administration as proposed in this paper with necessary modifications arising from public debate over issues. Such a structure will then be a reference point for the administrative and legislative changes to be enacted to ensure that it functions as effectively as is possible. Previous reform processes invariably saw government adopting components of a structure and selectively applying recommendations associated therewith. It is our view that the starting point ought to be the structure followed by catalysing debate aimed at creating national consensus and a firm basis for proceeding to evolve the legislative safeguards and other aspects necessary for executing the structure.
- Developing a program of action complete with a budget with Parliament taking a lead in executing the plan of action including accountability for resources availed for the execution of the plan. The state ought to be able to provide sufficient space for and resources to execute this plan (up to a minimum of 40%) to ensure ownership and identification with the outputs of the program of action whose main features of necessity have to include the following.
- A streamlined national land policy without the 'fast-track' induced confusion and ambiguities. One of the often quoted 'policy positions', which in our view is both misleading and leads to lots of pressure being visited upon land administration institutions relates to 'land to all people'. As a finite resource land will never be availed to all who need it and the land policy as well as those executing it need to be emboldened to begin informing their actions accordingly:
- A unified/streamlined land law regime (legislation) taking account of existing legislation, national land policy objectives and people's aspirations.

- Related to the above is a process of ensuring that the local government legislative environment is also streamlined to establish and empower new structures as well as remove overlaps and other institutional constraints. The land law and local government legislative reviews ought to be coordinated to enhance process synergies and symmetries essential for effective service delivery in view of the fact that both focus on the same constituents.
- A capacity building program (including actual setting up of institutions) drawn in relation to the new local government and land policy and legislative imperatives. The starting point in this capacity building should ideally be at district level and with institutions at this level i.e., the restructured RDC, the DLB and subsidiary structures as well as the structures associated with the Traditional Leadership. The process will then cascade upwards building a grassroots anchored national consensus on the key policy issues and institutional arrangements.

An essential caveat to all this worth repeating relates to the fact that the Parliament of Zimbabwe ought to be leading this process as much as is possible to ensure accountability for and legitimacy of both the processes and the outcomes. Essential values that need to be embedded in the process include empowerment of people through provision of adequate information and legislative guarantees for effective citizen participation and consultation in public policy formulation, monitoring and review.

## REFERENCES

- Bruce, J.W. 1996. *Country Profiles of Land Tenure: Africa*. Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- Cousins, B. and S. Robins. 1993. *Institutions for Land Redistribution and Management: The Zimbabwean Experience*. Land and Agricultural Policy Center, Johannesburg.
- Government of Tanzania. 1998. Policy Paper on Local Government Reform. Ministry of Local Government and Public Administration.
- GOZ. 1998. National Land Policy Framework Paper. Ministry of Lands and Agriculture with FAO Technical Support and UNDP Funding.
- GOZ. 2001. Land Reform and Resettlement Program, Revised Phase 2.
- GOZ. 1998. Traditional Leaders Act, CAP 29:17, Government Printers.
- Jacobs, H..M. and C. Chavunduka. 2002a. 'The Theory of Decentralization: A Review of Recent Literature'. Prepared under the Institutional Structures for Land Administration: Existing Opportunities and Obstacles and Alternative Policy Options Scope of Work, LTC/CASS Collaborative Research Project.
- Jacobs H.M. and C. Chavunduka. 2002b. 'International Experiences with Devolved Land Administration: Lessons for Zimbabwe:' Paper prepared under the Institutional Structures for Land Administration: Existing Opportunities and Obstacles and Alternative Policy Options Scope of Work, LTC/CASS Collaborative Research Project.

- Makumbe, J.M. 1996. *Participatory Development: The Case for Zimbabwe*, University of Zimbabwe Publications.
- Marongwe, N. 2002. *Conflicts Over Land and Other Natural Resources in Zimbabwe*. ZERO.
- Matondi, P.B. 2001. *The Struggle for Access to land and Water Resources: the Case of Shamva District*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Swedish university of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala.
- Moyo, S. et al. 1991. *Zimbabwe's Environmental Dilemma: Balancing Resource Inequities*, ZERO, Harare.
- Moyo, S. et al. 1992. *Local Level Natural Resource Management, Conceptual and Methodological Issues for The Makoni Project*, Draft Report, ZERO, Harare.
- Moyo, S. 1995. *The Land Question in Zimbabwe (1997/8)*. UNDP Resource Center, Harare.
- Murombedzi, J. 1997. *The Implications of the Land Tenure Commission on Rural land Tenure Systems, Renewable Resources and Development in Zimbabwe*. CASS Publications.
- Rukuni, M. 1994. *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems*, Government of Zimbabwe Printers.
- Shivji, I.G. 1997. 'Grounding the Debate on Land—The National Land Policy and its Implications'. *Change* 5, First Quarter.
- Shivji, I.G. 1994. *Report of The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Land Matters: Volume 1—Land Policy and Land Tenure Structure*, United Republic of Tanzania in cooperation with Uppsala, Sweden.
- Sithole, B. and P.N. Bradley. 1995. *Institutional Conflicts Over the Management of Communal Area Resources in Zimbabwe*. Stockholm Environment Institute, Stockholm.
- ZERO. 2000. *Perspectives on Land Reform in Southern Africa: A ZERO Newsletter*, Issue No. 2 of 2000.



—Chapter 17—

# Designing a Land Information System for Rural Land Use Planning

## A Situational Analysis and Feasibility Study

**Phanuel Mugabe**

Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe

**Wilson Magaya**

University of Zimbabwe

*It is one thing to have data and another to have information readily available. Information, not mere data, is useful in decision-making. If information is scattered all over, it is difficult to get a holistic picture of the problem at hand. It was with this in mind that this project was born, to investigate the feasibility of constructing a national Land/Geographic Information System (LIS/GIS) for the purposes of rural land use planning, a system that would be able to be easily used by the different stakeholders. Existing institutional structures of organisations that use spatial data were examined. Issues pertaining to data acquisition, human resources, computer hardware and software capabilities were investigated. The Department of the Surveyor General came out as the leading supplier and source of digital data in this country. As a result it was suggested as the most logical choice to virtually house the Land/Geographic Information System (LIS/GIS), its purpose being that of overseeing all issues that deal with digital data.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Management of information is an important task that is linked to the ability of institutions to make decisions. Important information about land relates to the characteristics of land resources and related productive capacity of the land. This aspect of land management and planning relies on information on soils and soil chemistry, terrain, people's production culture and socio-economic objectives of agricultural production. Each of the aspects in the foregoing is related to many classes of information that can be represented spatially by a number of layers or related maps. Other attributes of land that are important in land management are landownership, soil type, and slope.

Information analysis and management is critical to decision-making on land use. Classes of information important to this are parcel sizes, quality of land in terms of production potential, biological and chemical characteristics, and physical attributes of land. Ownership records that identify a parcel's outside coordinates, ownership by name, economic group, and issues related to gender are important in the process of making decisions on parcel reallocation.

The Zimbabwean government has embarked on a land redistribution exercise in an effort to reduce pressure in over populated parts of the country. This has seen new farms emerging as

the large farms are subdivided and redistributed, and consequently the land transaction incidence has increased.

Problems requiring information management services have become more complicated in recent times due to the current land reforms taking place. Applications in agriculture now require high-level analytical capabilities for which manual approaches have become almost irrelevant. Analysis of spatial landscape data needs to be integrated into an analysis that has specific applications in economics, land management, and social planning. These are applications that are difficult to manage outside computerised land information management systems (Mugabe 1999).

Computer applications have improved the quality of information management and its accessibility to users. Computers have increased the capacity to store, manipulate and analyse large amounts of data. Information in computers is easily accessible through query processes. GIS are computerised systems that have a capability of storing attribute data that is linked to the spatial dimension of land.

Data is stored in GIS in three-dimensional format, that is  $x$ ,  $y$ , and  $z$ . The ability of GIS to handle three-dimensional data makes it a suitable tool for analysis of landscape data. The capacity of GIS is further enhanced by computer capacity to analyse data at high speeds. GIS enables users to capture change without changing the whole map, as is necessary with paper maps. The versatility provided by GIS for spatial data manipulation, storage and retrieval on request makes it an appropriate tool for the fast track land reform process currently underway in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, activities on managing data related to land management are mostly manual. The Office of the Surveyor General handles data related to land use, aerial photo coverages of the nation, and is responsible for production of maps covering a broad range of themes, including agricultural production, relief, urban development, land classification, climate, and land use. Most of the information is currently in hard copy; however, the department is in the process of converting the hard copy maps into digital format.

Manual processes of managing land information present problems related to capacity of handling large amounts of data and the difficulties of updating such information. It is not easy to change information related to an individual parcel that appears with other parcels. If one farm changes ownership, a new ownership map would have to be generated to reflect this change. This can be easily overcome by operating a digital spatial database. GIS provides an advanced tool for capturing, manipulating or analysing spatial data.

### **1.1. Study Objectives**

The goal of this study is to investigate the feasibility of constructing a GIS/LIS for the purposes of rural land use planning by looking at the existing institutional set-ups that use GIS and other forms of spatial data analysis in the country. Data acquisition, human resource capacity, computer hardware and software capabilities are variables that will be considered in the study.

The study went through objective steps including:

1. Assess and identify necessary information types that are important for land use planning processes and activities, and other applications of LIS.
2. Analyse digital and analogue data sets that have relevance and application in land use planning.
3. Determine the technical or institutional issues (if any) that would impede the co-utilisation of existing databases.
4. Define the structure of LIS for rural land use planning constructed from existing data bases (i.e., what layers would it contain), and specify what rural land use planning questions could be addressed with such an LIS.
5. Identify data gaps that interfere with efficient application of LIS/GIS in land use planning activities and how they could be dealt with.

## **2. METHODS**

Data collection started with a stakeholder workshop. The workshop was intended to focus on the study objectives. The research processes were keyed to the specific study objectives. Participants were identified from organisations that had been part of a GIS network that existed in Zimbabwe before this study commenced. The network was used for sharing ideas and carrying out seminars and discussions on GIS applications. It was coordinated from the Institute of Environmental Studies, in the University of Zimbabwe.

Respondents to interviews were selected at national, provincial, and local area levels and were identified on the basis of knowledge and involvement in the land reform and planning activities. These interviews were carried out partly to obtain information requirements for activities dealing with land reform and land use planning. It was also done to get views on information requirements for application of LIS and GIS in rural land use planning, and to get a feel of the understanding of all phenomena related to this. The research process sought to establish possibilities for collaborative work, integration of data acquisition and analytical activities.

An inventory of existing LIS/GIS, and data layers already developed by public, NGO and other organisations, which would have relevance for a rural land use planning LIS/GIS, was compiled. This task was done most closely with Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement, Forestry Commission, Department of Natural Resources, Deeds Registry, and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The foregoing process was used to identify data requirements that could not be satisfied locally. Organisations and researchers expressed the data requirements necessary to make their applications more effective that were not locally available. These are gaps in available data.

Questionnaires were used to collect more quantitative information relating to hardware capacities of organisations using GIS, staff numbers, levels of training, and periods of relevant experience. They were used to document data requirements and sources of information by organisation. Each organisation had to respond to its activities on the questionnaire as well. This question dealt with the activities for which GIS and other computerised forms of data analysis would be relevant.

Key informants in the data collection process were from the Department of the Surveyor General Harare and Bulawayo offices, Deeds Registry in Harare and Bulawayo, Geological Survey, Forestry Commission, WWF, Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement and Department of Physical Planning.

### **3. FINDINGS**

The data collection revealed that there are organisations whose primary activities were related to production and generation of information that fed into digital data production. Other organisations were grouped as users of information. This study worked more with organisations whose legal mandate it was to generate spatial data, although some effort was spent on user organisations. This section outlines findings from each of the organisations that participated in the study.

#### **3.1. Department of the Surveyor General (DSG)**

The department of the Surveyor General falls under the Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. The department was established through an act of parliament, the Land Survey act (chapter 20: 12). The act outlines the duties of the surveyor general as well as those of land surveys; it also outlines the procedures for the survey of land for registration of title in Zimbabwe. The DSG's main responsibility is to supervise the survey and charting of land in Zimbabwe (see chapter 7 by Rugube, Zhou, Roth and Chambati).

The department is divided into Administration, Research and Development, Geodesy, Cadastral, and Cartography sections. The department compiles geodetic, photogrammetric, cadastral and topographic layers. Cadastral data is predominantly analogue. The few layers that are in digital form are in the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) projection system and the analogue compilations are in gauss (meters).

The department collects data from various sources, which include aerial photography, land survey, satellite imagery and global positioning systems. They share data with any organisation that is prepared to satisfy copyright requirements. Data is sold in the form of maps and aerial photographs to members of the public.

The department generates digital data using aerial photographs and maps. Themes captured by this are administrative boundaries at international, provincial, district, and local area classifications, topography, land use, and cadastral sets that are in field or source books. Source books are field books in which the surveyor records all measurements done in the field. A summary of the data available at the DSG is shown in the tables.

Geodetic and cartographic sections of the department update their information outputs more frequently. Most of the data they generate is now digital. This mainly is converted from aerial photography. Metadata base in these sections exist and they are regularly updated. The geodetic section updates their database as soon as changes are made to the geodetic coverage in Zimbabwe and the cartographic section updates their maps on each aerial photograph coverage of the country. This is supposed to be done every five years. The last full coverage was done in 1997. This implies that the next was to be done this year, 2002. This is however a very doubtful situation given the unavailability of funds in the national fiscus. Table 1a and 1b shows the classes of data that are available from the Surveyor General's Department.

**Table 1a: Cadastral and Geodetic Section**

<b>Data layer</b>	<b>Scale</b>	<b>Ref. system</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Date of production</b>	<b>Data source</b>
Cadastral layers	1:1250,1:2500, 1:5000, 1:10000, 1:25000, 1:50000, 1:250000	Gauss/UTM	Analogue and digital	Continuous	Field surveys
Administrative boundaries	1:1250 to: 1000000	Gauss	Analogue	Continuous	Local government
Town survey marks	1:1250 to 1:5000	Gauss	Analogue	Continuous	Geodetic branch
Trigonometric beacons	1:10000 to 1:50000	Gauss	Analogue	Continuous	Geodetic branch
Servitudes and boundaries	1:1250 to 1:50000	Gauss	Analogue	Continuous	Field surveys
Electoral boundaries	1:30000 to 1:250000	Gauss	Analogue	Every 5 years	Registrar General
Trigonometric beacons	National	UTM, Gauss, Geographical and WGS 84	Analogue and digital	Digital from 1998	Field surveys and DSG archives
Benchmarks	“	“	“	“	Field surveys, DSG archives
International boundaries Zim	“	“	“	“	Field surveys and boundary beacons and relevant international treaties
Town survey marks	“	“	“	“	

**Table 1b: Cartographic Section**

<b>Data layer</b>	<b>Scale</b>	<b>Ref. system</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Date of production</b>	<b>Data source</b>
Roads	1: 1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	Ministry of roads
Relief and streets	1:1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	Geodesy
Land classification, soils and natural regions	1:1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	MoLARR
Administrative	1:1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	Physical planning
Tourist map	1:1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	Natural resources
Aeronautical map	1:1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	Civil aviation
Vegetation and woody cover	1:1000000	UTM	Digital	Ongoing	Forestry commission
Population map	1:1000000	UTM		Ongoing	Central statistics

The department is being commercialised. The commercialisation process has seen the department moving towards provision of demand driven services and products. This makes it difficult for them to satisfy some of their statutory obligations that may not necessarily be profit generating. Some activities that have suffered due to this are production of adequate maps for educational purposes and production of maps adequate to circulate for government operations.

The department has pride in being sole custodian and owner of spatial information in the country. It determines types and nature of symbols used in publication of maps. Its symbols provide a guide that organisations producing maps should follow strictly. These are used in representation of map features like scale, rivers, mountains, roads, footpaths, boundaries, and settlements. The department manages the process of adaptation of international cartographic standards in Zimbabwe. It also administers copyright regulations as they apply to circulation of spatial data as contained in maps and other forms of digital information.

Enforcement of copyright law is handled through an officer who advises the public and other members purchasing data on restrictions to circulation. This is information on what could happen if data were illegally passed to unauthorised users. This falls short of the follow-up that would be necessary in enforcing such regulations. There is a requirement that makes it a responsibility of individuals to notify the Department when they come across maps circulating outside copyright provisions.

The Copyright Act provides for use of the digital data in organisations outside the DSG upon payment of purchase fees, or annual license fees, whichever is applicable. The DSG can use digital data internally. Conversion of data from analogue to digital should only be done with permission from the DSG. It also permits for organisations to go into special arrangements with the DSG for manipulating data. The Forestry Commission has taken advantage of this and obtained a permit to produce vegetation data, including baseline features like roads, railway lines, topography and administrative boundaries in digital format.

Procedures for updating maps have been established in the department. All new cadastral data coming into the department is incorporated into map compilations. The same is done with geodetic data. Boundary maps are updated when descriptions change. All updates done to maps are also done on digital datasets.

The department enforces accuracy standards on their products. All data that comes out of the department must comply with these accuracy requirements. All maps are checked for accuracy before they are passed for circulation. When the required updates to maps are found accurate they get passed on through data capture and changes on maps are effected. The system for updating maps is still being developed. Old maps are all backed up in digital format in the time updating goes on.

Admissible error ranges on manually drawn place points on maps should not exceed 10mm in terms of variation from verified actual location. Root Mean Square error on digital data is limited to 0.025. This figure is a statistical representation derived from the square of differences between variation of point locations in the  $x$  and  $y$  dimensions of a map. Accuracy and quality are maintained across the organisation through adherence to minimum standards.

Information that has importance of security like maps showing military bases is highly classified and confidential. A selected group of civil servants is allowed to have access to that type of information. This category includes descriptions of other sites that are regarded as security risks. The Official Secrecy Act controls circulation of security information.

Geodetic data has an error margin of maximum 1cm for gauss and UTM and 3cm for lat/long positional coordinates. Data is categorised into primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary classes. Heights are given to a maximum of 1cm and 10cm for trigonometric beacons. The branch has a statutory obligation to collect and update national geodetic data.

The data held by the DSG falls short of the complete set that they should hold as per the provisions of their statutory requirements. Some cadastral and topographic maps have not as yet been converted to digital formats. This operational problem is due to insufficient funds being made available to the department by the treasury. The department concentrates personnel efforts on production of items that clients require the most. Much less effort is put to production of data for public and national interest. With the land reform exercise by government, the department has put focus on some areas that are considered problems areas.

The DSG is part of a nation wide public service network that links all government departments to the Ministry of Finance. The department comes in all organisations consulted

as a major supplier of spatial data. This means that there is an existing network of partnerships that could be enhanced for increased functionality.

The department has not undertaken a survey of information requirements by their clients. This means that the DSG is not able to tell gaps in the data they provide and how it can be improved to meet specific requirements of their clients. Its knowledge of the size of the market is based only on purchases and enquiries handled through the office.

Sale prices for DSG products are set by the department and send to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Resettlement for approval. This can be a long process in some cases and has proven not to be very efficient. Consumers for digital data are still very few. This observation is made from demand levels for digital information. The small size of the market means that consumers have not started to benefit from economies of scale. Data is still relatively more expensive because of that. Users continue to share information illegally because of the high market prices that make costs unbearable, especially for small users.

### **3.2. Deeds Registry**

The Deeds Registry falls within the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing. It is mandated to keep records of all land transactions in Zimbabwe. The department receives information from lawyers, building societies, chartered accountants, individuals and anyone involved in land transactions. It supplies information to anyone who would like to use it. Its information system, be it manual or digital, is public domain. Any interested party only needs to pay a search fee to have access to information. Information at the Deeds Registry is descriptive information on the transactions that take place on land parcels and the bounds of the land parcel are stored in the form of a cadastral diagram at the DSG cadastral section. Diagrams and descriptive statements are used to differentiate land parcels.

The department has both manual and digital systems working. The digital system has two databases, the Alpha and Oracle systems. The Alpha system replaced the manual indexing system and the Oracle database is the digital land register, replacing the manual registers. There are data capture clerks whose job at the Deeds Registry office is to enter data into these database systems. Data is derived from the deed itself. The land register keeps a record of all transactions that may have occurred for a particular land parcel. This means that although the Deeds office has digitalised its land register and indexing system, it still has to digitalise the transaction process, which includes the workflow of a deed of transfer across the board up to the storage of the deed at the Deeds Registry.

The processing of the deed of transfer, from buying to final transfer and storage of information, can take up to three months. A deed lodged with the Deeds office will take eight working days to process. This information when lodged with the office is examined to see whether it complies with the Deeds Registry Act and the Deeds Register Regulations. The Deeds Registry office has a very impressive quality control and compliance system in operation.

The office runs a back-up system for digital information. Deeds are manually filed and there is no electronic storage for these. The Alpha database is backed up weekly and the Land register is backed up when the storage space on the server has reached a certain level. These back up copies are kept off site. The back-up system is, however, not adequate. It only effectively backs up the indexing system and does not take care of the most important component of the Deeds Registry process.

The Deeds Office maintains some confidential data sets. These include the statistics database, which includes all land transactions, their value, and the schedule of properties transferred database (SPTD). These two databases are in Microsoft Access.

The department has never done a user-needs analysis. This is a very important department in terms of land transfers and property holdings in the country. No other organisations hold the type of information they have. It might be a good idea to improve the applicability of their information; regular consultations with clients could help in this direction. Price adjustments have to be approved by the Ministry of Finance and this usually takes long.

Most of the data available at the Deeds Registry is data pertaining to property of people with the money that purchase land for investment purposes. It is not a good idea to subsidise the production and sale of this information since the clients can afford it. The department is one of the biggest revenue collectors for the national Treasury.

### **3.3. Forestry Commission**

The Forestry Commission is a Government Parastatal falling under the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. The Commission runs commercial forest operations, including nursery establishment and logging, and also has a State Forest section that deals with Community Forestry and extension. Inventory of national vegetation resources is an activity being handled by the research section at the Commission's Head Office. This activity has expanded in the last few years to include mapping and production of digital data, and analogue analytical vegetation maps. The list of maps identified at the Commission is given in Table 2. They hold a very comprehensive metadata base in digital format for all maps they have produced.

**Table 2: Data Available at the Forestry Commission**

Data	Scale	Ref. system	Format	Date prod.	Data source
Woody cover map	1:250000 1:1 million 1:3 million	UTM TM TM	Digital & Analogue	1996	Land Sat TM 1992, aerial photos 1992 and local knowledge
Land classification 1 <sup>st</sup> phase resettlement	1:1 million	TM	Digital & Analogue	1995	DSG
Agro-Ecological zones	1:1million	TM	Digital & Analogue	1995	DSG
Vegetation type maps	1:2.5million	TM	Digital & Analogue	2000	Wild and Barobosa 1968/VegRis 1996
Rivers & roads topographical maps	1:1million	TM	Digital	1994	DSG
Silvicultural zones	1:3million	TM	Digital	1995	DSG
Administrative boundaries					

As evidenced in Table 2, the Forestry Commission obtains most of their data from DSG, Spot Image, Satellite Application Centre in South Africa, District Development Fund (DDF) and the Ministry of Lands Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. The District Development Fund is a unit operating under the Ministry of Local Government. They have a specific function of land use planning in communal areas. Their other activities relate to development projects like road construction, water development, provision of rural amenities, and planning of settlements. The unit produces maps and spatial data that is meant to service their activities and interests.

The Research unit at the Forestry Commission has in the past produced data for requirements by environmental consultants both local and foreign, international educational institutions like International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC) Holland, three German institutions, forest companies, and government departments. Most of their activities in vegetation maps are in response to requirements by clients who are expected to bear the full cost of the activity. The clients also own products they fund. Circulation of data paid for by a client can only take place with the permission of the respective client. Mapping is not the primary function at the commission. Production of updates is dependant on client requests and preparedness to pay.

The DSG and Forestry Commission have established protocols for sharing data and these are guided by governing agreements. Forestry Commission relies on other organisations like DDF for primary data that they use for base lining maps. This brings about problems related to data compatibility and raises questions related to accuracy.

Accuracy of commission maps varies between 80% and 90% depending on resolution. Higher resolution maps are more accurate than the lower resolution data. Symbols used

correspond to those adapted by the DSG. The Forestry Commission has strict quality control requirements on data and accuracy is taken very seriously. All data that is obtained from other organisations goes through accuracy tests and verification before internal use.

There is high demand for vegetation data by organisations working in areas of ecology and agriculture. Government departments requiring this type of information include AREX, Natural Resources, Agricultural and Rural Development Authority. The University of Zimbabwe requires vegetation information in teaching. WWF uses this data for ecological analysis. A number of NGOs in the environmental sector need this data as well. Data is available at very high costs at the moment. Some of the remotely sensed data that the commission has is quite old and organisations may not want to buy it for analytical work.

### **3.4. Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF)**

The World Wide Fund for Nature is an international non-profit organisation with a mission to save life on earth. Central to their mission is the strategic approach to accommodating nature in sustaining human livelihoods. Management of ecosystems, human and ecological interactions, and environmental governance are issues central in the design and execution of their activities.

In Zimbabwe, they have been very active in the management of the Zambezi River Basin, an ecosystem that is marginal and fragile. This region is rich in hardwoods and provides habitat to a wide range of wildlife species. They have also done work in many other parts of the country and continue to hold interest in the expansion of their natural resource conservation program.

Among the datasets are a metadata base held in Microsoft Access on conservancies, forestry areas, CBNRM areas, livestock densities, large herbivore distributions, veterinary fences, tsetse areas and major minerals. The data sets that are available are shown in Table 3.

There is a comprehensive metadata base of all the information that is available at WWF Harare office. Most of their data is obtained from detailed studies by scientists and produced as maps overlaying baseline datasets from the department of the surveyor general, as such there is a feeling that there should be a data custodian for the nation so that data can be readily available to the public at an affordable price through government. WWF has undertaken a national survey of commercial farms in Zimbabwe with an ecological characterisation on the basis of soils and eco-regions. GIS maps have been generated and these are held in their digital database.

**Table 3. Data Layers Produced at WWF-SARPO**

Data layer	Scale	Ref. system	Format	Date prod.	Data source
Cities	1:1million	tm/lat long	Digital	1998	ADS
Wetlands	1:1million	tm/lat long	Digital	-	ADS
Vegetation	1:500000,1:250000 1:50000,1:500000	tm/lat long	Digital	Varied 1996-98	Cunliffe & Timberlake, Flora Zambezia, Whites, WWF-USA, WWF-USA
Rainfall	1:2500000	Lat long	Digital	1996-98	DSG, Hussein (Agroclimatological analyst)
Protected areas	1:1,2,3,5mil	Lat long	Digital	-	ADS, Alcom (DNPWLM), DSG, UZ, Vet dept, WWF
Butterflies	1:1000000	Lat long/utm	Digital	1998	A Gardener & McKinnon
Amphibians	1:2000000	Lat long	Digital	1997-98	Meussian & Crowe
Rivers	1:1million, 1:25000,1:50000	Tm, Utm, Utm	Digital	1995-2000	DSG, ADS, MOE (Nam) AGRITEX, WWF and UZ
Soils	1:50000	Lat long	Digital	1996-98	Hunley & Walker, DR & SS, WWF, UNESCO, FAO, ILRAD, Vet dept.
Railways	1:1million, 1:250000	Lat long	Digital	1998	ADS
GMA's	1:3million 1:500000	Lat long	Digital	-	DSG, FAO, Alcom, Baison, WWF, FEWS
Powerlines	1:250000	Lat long	Digital	1998	ADS
Wards	1:250000	Lat long	Digital	1995-1997	DR & SS, Cunliffe and Timerlake, DSG, WWF, FEWS
Land tenure	1:1million	Lat long	Digital	1996-2000	Anderson, DSG, WWF, UZ, CSIR
Elevation	1:250000	Lat long	Digital	1995-1998	DSG, Vet, ADS, WWF, UZ
Catchment	1:1million	Lat long	Digital	1996-98	FAO, Alcom, DSG, WWF-USA, Whites

The Worldwide Fund for Nature obtains most of its baseline data from the Department of the Surveyor General, Central Statistics, Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management, Forestry Commission, and Geological Survey. The data is not collected on synchronised time periods and differs in terms of thematic focus. Organisations receiving data generated by WWF include Central Statistical Office, IUCN-ROSA, students the world over, CIRAD (a French research organisation working in rural livelihoods and management

of natural resources), Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC), and Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management.

WWF carries out surveys on an annual basis. Information generated from the foregoing is used to update data held in form of digital maps. This makes them one of the few organisations with data that is fairly current. The process of editing is responsive to the requirements of other sections of WWF. Requests are made to the GIS unit from respective user sections and the process of editing is done on that basis.

WWF has a policy guiding distribution and use of their data. This policy deems all information produced by WWF confidential. There are provisions for sharing and purchasing data from WWF that are clearly spelt out in the policy framework. Users of data are, among other things, required to acknowledge the source of data as WWF.

Symbols used on WWF maps are borrowed from the DSG. This makes it easy for collation of baseline data that WWF gets from DSG. Data produced by WWF is required to have an accuracy level not less than 90%. Management of data quality is a final responsibility of the head of the GIS unit.

The feeling within WWF on the value of information is that information should be shared freely. They advocate for a pricing system that facilitates payment of the GIS staff rather than cost recovery on the production of the data, since the data will have been paid for by the projects. Ultimately they want to help to foster a data-sharing culture in Zimbabwe and Southern Africa.

### **3.5. Agricultural Research and Extension**

The Department of Lands and Rural Resettlement falls within the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. The department has sections, which include those undertaking activities in mapping and planning. The planning section is responsible for allocating land to specific activities, while the mapping section captures the distribution of these on paper for visual analysis. Village and other forms of area plans are captured on maps as well. Their responsibility spans across all facets of rural land use planning. They mainly produce farm plans, ward plans and village plans, at representative fractions ranging from 1:12500 to 1:25000. They get most of their basic data from AREX, a sister organisation in the Ministry. Organisations getting data from them include DSG, Rural District Councils, Ministry of Local Government, Department of Water and Sanitation, Department of Natural Resources, NGOs, and community members.

Maps are done manually, and there is no digital processing. The department still goes through the painstaking process of manually updating maps as necessary. The map filing system used is manual as well. There is no felt need for improving the system. Employees in the Bulawayo office felt the system in place was adequate for the activities done in the department. This might go to suggest that the biggest benefit they get from GIS and computerised processing of data is improvement in quality of outputs and efficiency.

It was felt that information available from other organisations in the country is adequate for the operation of the planning section. They experience problems related to currency of data they obtain from the DSG. They also note that data from the Forestry Commission is produced at a resolution that is too coarse for detailed ward and village planning and analysis.

The Chief Agricultural Extension Officer in AREX handles requests for data produced by the planning section. This is the office that decides on release of information to the public and manages information distribution. The information sharing process is not very formalised, and copyright procedures are handled through provincial AREX heads.

Symbols used on hard copy maps produced in both the planning and mapping sections are borrowed from the DSG. There are variations in colour symbols but these do not distort information represented by signs by symbols. The department has some computers to run a GIS unit but mobility staff and training problems have kept this on hold for a long time.

The department is historically an agricultural extension unit. This has meant that its staff complement is largely in the technical fields of agricultural sciences. Qualification levels range from first degrees to Masters level. The department trains spatial data analysis and management to all its new staff members. This is part of the technical skills officers obtain upon getting into the department.

An assessment of the client base is necessary to focus activities and outputs of the department. Such a survey would tremendously improve the processes of planning. The department has never done a user-needs analysis and so does not fully know the extend of their clientele. They are central Government-dependant and so produce information on request from other government departments. They have had no need to do a user needs analysis because they are a monopoly in the provision plans for rural land use. Their client base is mainly composed of communal farmers who can barely make ends meets and so the department feels that their information should be subsidised to make it affordable for their clients.

### **3.6. Geological Survey**

The Geological Survey is under the Ministry of Mines. They are mandated to collect, store and maintain all data pertaining to the geological formations of Zimbabwe. The department has two sections that deal with spatial information; these are the cartographic section and the data management section. Most of the data they deal with is obtained from the Department of the Surveyor General, companies and other government departments. All the data at the Geological Survey is in digital format as well as analogue format. There is a metadata base, which is maintained in separate database software on the departmental server.

The data maintained at the Geological Survey is as shown in table5.

**Table 4: Data Layers Supplied at the Geological Survey**

Data layer	Scale	Ref. system	Format	Date of prod.	Data source
Geology	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Digital-SHP		
Regional geology	1:100000	Utm/lat long	Digital-DXF		
Rivers	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Digital-MIF		
Roads	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Digital-MIF		
Faults	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Digital-MIF		
Towns	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Shp,DXF,MIF		
Mines	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Shp,DXF,MIF		
Border	1:1000000	Utm/lat long	Shp,DXF,MIF		

The department supplies data to mining companies, educational institutes, government departments, military, police, United Nations organisations, geo-sciences organisations, local and international libraries, local authorities and individuals. Most of the data is at a scale of 1:1000000 but they can also deliver at any scale required by the client. Their data is in digital form and so it is easy to produce it in hard copy at any scale. The data include geological maps as well as exploration data.

The data that is produced by the department is mainly supplied by the Department of the Surveyor General (DSG), Department of Water, mining companies and primary sources such as surveys by Geologists. This data they obtain mainly in analogue format and convert into digital form.

Because they are mandated to keep up-to-date data on the geology of Zimbabwe, the department has a comprehensive updating process. The department queries the database for expired EPOs and also take note of new EPO applications so that these are plotted onto an updated EPO Geological map. To ensure accuracy all digitising maintains a maximum RMS error of 0.025. All members of staff involved in the collection, processing and presentation of geological data in the department are responsible for quality control. To ensure greater accuracy on the 1:100000 and 1:1000000 scale they work from a larger scale topographic map.

The department feels that the information system is adequate for the purpose. The metadata base is maintained within the spatial database and this database is resident on the departmental server.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Globalisation has seen the dawn of an era driven by technology and knowledge. These developments have called for necessary integration of existing information systems to take advantage of economies of scale and give broader choices to users. Development of GIS particularly in Zimbabwe is purpose-specific and affects lives of very few people. It is important that at this stage where everyone is moving towards integration of information

systems for effective management of resources that informed policy debates should take place. It is important to realise the full potential that GIS has and how this could be applied to benefit the population of the country in terms of cheaper access to data and more accurate data that is easily accessible.

Activities of the government departments sited in this chapter are far reaching in terms of sectors of the country's society that deal directly with them. Participants in all these sectors require a more efficient and reliable service sector. Introduction of fully-fledged GIS applications would benefit more people than is happening currently.

The public sector, which has a social mandate to provide baseline spatial information for public use, is highly de-fragmented. There are different government arms dealing with land and land information in Zimbabwe. To further complicate the situation these departments are housed in different ministries that have different objectives. This results in competition for clients and increases costs of generating data through duplication of activities.

The DSG is on an aggressive commercialisation drive. They are now starting to operate on a cost-recovery basis. Individuals interviewed expressed that information distributed should be at the production cost to offset inefficiencies created by lack of funding from the national fiscus. It was further suggested that the allocation of funds should consider the whole stream. For example the process of registration of a deed of transfer.

The Deeds Office, one of the largest revenue collectors for the country's treasury, obtains data from the DSG. For a deed of transfer to take place there is need for a document that accurately describes the land parcel being transacted. A deed of transfer that is submitted into the deeds office has to have a cadastral diagram produced by the DSG. Most interviewees felt that it is important for those involved in ensuring that a deed of transfer is registered with costs being shared proportionately by all departments involved. The DSG does most of the work in the registration of a deed. The Deeds Office collects all revenues related to that.

Funding is an important element to development of LIS from existing data layers. It is important to identify key result areas such as the survey and charting of land for registration and fund these separately. These should be the areas that increase efficiency in information management for purposes of land use planning. Not all users of digital data need subsidies to access it. Some users can pay for themselves and are actually paying to generate their own data. There needs to be an understanding of which sectors can afford and those that need public support.

Policy in the development of information systems should dwell on legal issues, financing, copyright, standards, data quality and cultural issues. Policy will determine the effectiveness of GIS/LIS applications in Zimbabwe. Development of the GIS policy framework should take into consideration acquisition of data, standards, and possible cost saving approaches in the public sector. The overall impact of wholesale application of GIS as a data management approach will streamline the institutional framework in spatial data handling in Zimbabwe.

This process will make some effort redundant due to its ability to update maps with faster speed and better precision. In the long run, the system should be able to absorb the initial costs involved in capital expenses on the outset. This is capital spent on acquisition of equipment and training of personnel. Benefit from a more efficient system will outweigh this cost in the longer term. It will be possible to reduce the number of people working in spatial data development. This might lead to reduction in government departments involved in this activity at the moment.

The application of copyright law continues to be highly theoretical. Data still moves around, in, and across many institutions. This is an economic reality. The nation does not have the financial resources to support organisational data requirements. This policy position needs to be revised accordingly in consultation with experts and organisations utilising data.

Appropriate technology, quality of data, its acquisition and distribution are guided by standards. According to the Land Survey Act, land surveys are deemed a correct representation of the dimensions of a land parcel if and only if they have been inspected and passed by the Surveyor General. In Zimbabwe, there are several operational spatial databases within organisations such as the Department of the Surveyor General (DSG), Geological Survey, Forestry Commission, civic organisations and the private sector. Production of Geo-spatial data in Zimbabwe is characterised by examples of problems that hinder integration of information systems for rural land use planning. These problems stem from inefficiencies due to incompatibility, lack of interoperability and portability, resulting from a lack of or use of existing standards.

It is important for GIS experts to agree on some level of tolerable error beyond which data is deemed unacceptable. This is most applicable to situations where organisations generate digital maps of their own through digitisation in a number of ways. There is need to satisfy the requirement of accuracy standards. This also goes with currency of data. All digital data generated by such secondary methods should indicate date of truthing.

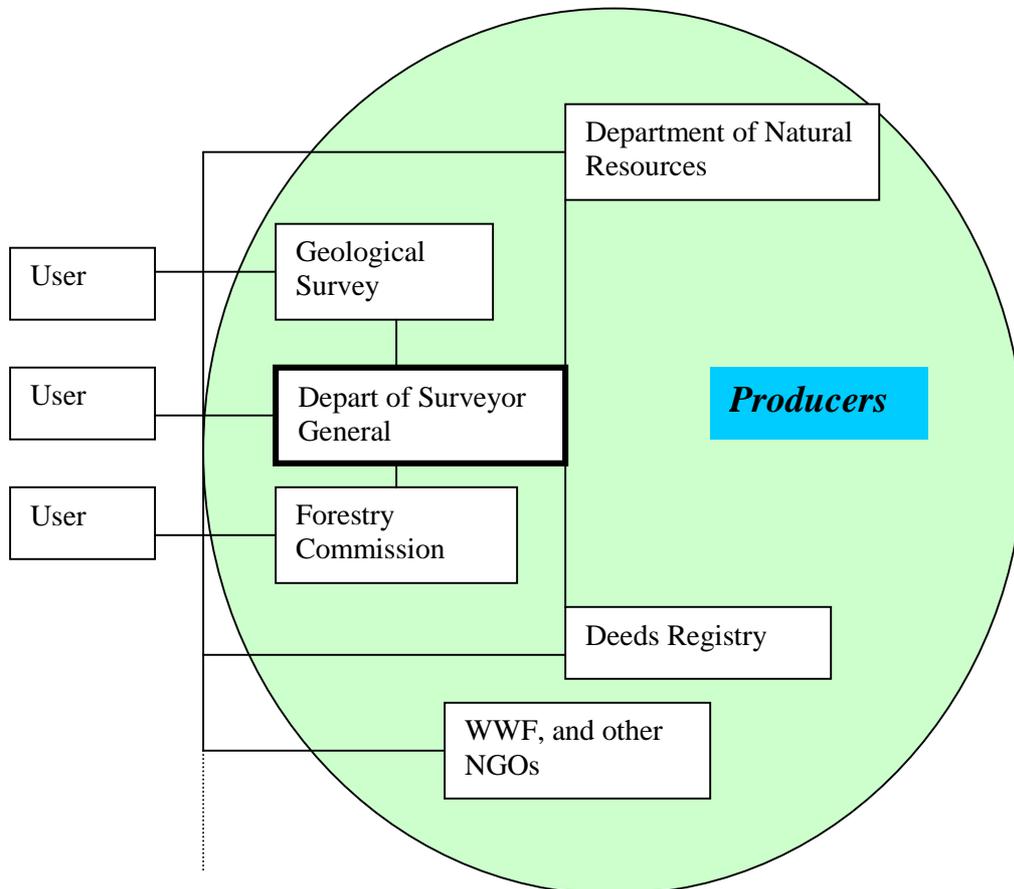
The scenario outlined above illustrates that standards, or the effective use of them, are a logical pre-requisite for development of LIS for rural land use planning in Zimbabwe. Researchers and policymakers should be exposed to the situation in other countries and how it came by in considering standards structure for Zimbabwe.

Information users in a small market like Zimbabwe are likely to benefit through centralised purchasing processes that buy in bulk and reduces cost. This is the case with remotely sensed satellite data. Costs in the market are quite high and it is the rich users that afford to purchase data. Public users like University departments cannot get data for student training because of this. This aspect of the process of acquiring data needs urgent attention.

As evidenced by the findings, the DSG is the most appropriate foundation upon which any LIS is developed. All the organisations that produce or use geo-spatial data use baselines from the DSG, see Figure 1 for current institutional arrangements. The figure shows that a user has to approach many departments in order to access data. There are many data sets that are located in various departments and organisations. It would be appropriate and user

friendly if a user (planner) could access all this data from any one of the organisations that becomes party to the LIS/GIS.

**Figure 1: Current GIS/LIS in Zimbabwe**



It was strongly suggested that Zimbabwe take the course of having distributed databases that are independent of each other but with no duplications. Supported with the evidence that all spatial data production is dependant on the DSG as well as by the law, the DSG is the most appropriate institution to maintain standards and therefore ensure that geo-spatial data produced in Zimbabwe meets the minimum standards requirements. It was obvious that datasets that have been reproduced by civic organisations could have been produced by the public sector. It could take up the role of co-ordinator and repository that keeps record of data availability in the country.

## REFERENCES

Mugabe, P. 1999. Construction of GIS model to predict changes in cropping patterns in Zimbabwe's communal agriculture. Texas A&M University.

# LAND ADMINISTRATION AND DECENTRALISATION

## DELIVERY OF EXTENSION SERVICES TO LAND REFORM BENEFICIARIES

**B.A. Mundeiri**

The fast track resettlement exercise has seen a large number of farmers going into new farming under the A1 and A2 model schemes. The A1 resettlement model is a villagised type of settlement. In this type of set up, the homesteads, the arable lands and the grazing areas are identified as distinct blocks of land in a particular area for communal use by the farmers in a particular village. Within the residential block, each household is allocated an area of 0.5 hectare for a homestead and a garden, and in the arable block each household is allocated 3 hectares of arable land. Grazing is communal and the amount of livestock units a family may keep is calculated given the veld condition of the grazing area. Consideration is also taken into account to ensure that the livestock units per family constitute a viable unit in terms of the adequate supply of draft power and herd continuity. Infrastructure such as water sources (e.g., boreholes and wells), roads and fencing are common property, as are any natural resources found within the confines of a particular village boundary.

The A<sub>2</sub> Resettlement model on the other hand is a self-contained unit whereby an individual farmer occupies a farm or plot. The farmer makes all decisions on the plot in terms of determining the various activities to be undertaken on the farm. He has to fund himself for any activities and infrastructural developments, unlike the A1 model where infrastructural development is assisted by government.

The resettled farmers were from a diverse background in respect to their educational background, farming experience, gender, age, sex and resource endowment. The main objective of the resettled farmers is to engage in agricultural production in an efficient and

profitable manner, thus contributing to the food security and the development of the national economy.

The department of AREX (Agricultural Research and Extension Services) provided the Land use Planning Services before and during farmer settlement and training in agricultural production technical issues after the farmers were on the new farms.

The main objective of AREX is to develop, provide and promote appropriate agricultural technologies, information, linkages, technical support and regulatory services through high quality research, extension, farmers training, co-ordination and liaison for the enhancement of an economically viable and sustainable agriculture.

**Box 1: Services offered by AREX to the new farmers**

- Farmer training
- Organising field days, shows, visits and, show visit and tours
- Provision and dissemination of technical data and information
- Production of farm plans and enterprise budgets
- Carrying out crop forecasts
- Carrying out commodity surveys
- Design and construct conservation structures
- Liaison with other stakeholders

In the land reform programme and the fast track resettlement exercise in particular, AREX played a crucial role as a member of the District, Provincial and National Land Resettlement Committee. The Department, as a member of this committee, sat in all the decision-making meetings and discussions and contributed technical advice pertaining to the relevant agricultural contribution requirements. AREX staff participated in the Land Reform Programme by carrying out Land Use Plans (LUP), demarcating the planned farms, participating in the beneficiary selection and the allocation process and later providing

**Box 2: Principle functions of land use planning**

- Awareness campaigns
- Field visits, (preliminary)
- Suitability assessment
- Farm plan production
- Pegging and demarcation
- Plot allocation
- Farmer training

enterprise alternatives on the farms through farm-level planning.

Land use planning was the most important activity, which preceded all other work on farmer placement on the farms. This was so because through land use planning it was then possible to ascertain the farm's potential in terms the number of settler families, the number of livestock, the number of boreholes required and the amounts of any other inputs (e.g., seeds, fertilisers, chemicals) to use, the crops and the tillage draft power requirements.

Land use planning for resettlement purposes is the systematic way of looking at the land resource, other resources found on that land and then coming up with specific activities that may be carried out on that piece of land as efficiently as possible on a sustainable basis. Special emphasis is focused on the environmental impact of the activities that will be carried out on the farm and the mitigating factors to ameliorate the situation if need be. These aspects are included in the farm plan.

The land reform programme started off with a very strong awareness campaign. This was done through the mass media of the state machinery and through meetings and rallies at district level. The message was 'land to the people now'. To organise the land resettlement programme at district level, a committee was set up, chaired by the District Administration and composed of other stakeholders, such as government departments, farmer organisations and other groups, such as the political parties, the war veterans, chiefs representatives, the district council and church representatives. It was the task of this committee to identify the land and to also identify the people to be settled.

The criteria for farms targeted for selection generally indicated land that was under-utilised and farms that were under multiple ownership. Once the farm had been identified for resettlement it was then the task of AREX to assess the number of families which could be settled on it. It is important to note that all decisions regarding the identified farms were to be the responsibility of the district land committee, and the rural district council took over. This was so until the settlers had been confirmed and selected their own development committees. A land register was produced that showed the list of the potential farms for settlement and a list of people asking to be resettled. The register was kept at the district administrations office. As a guide to settler farmer selection, central Government produced criteria for potential beneficiaries. This included those who were landless or had a small unsustainable piece of land. There was to be transparency in the selection of the beneficiaries to include such cases as female-headed house holds, war veterans, the disabled, orphans and also those unemployed.

Once a farm was identified, AREX officers moved in to carry out the planning. It was not uncommon to find that on some of the farms prospective settlers had already moved in and allocated themselves arable plots and residential areas. Under such circumstance it was not possible to plan without attracting the attention of the land occupiers.

The AREX Officers first made field visits to the farms. These were preliminary farm assessments to look at the existing situation on the farms in terms of the infrastructure and current developments. This has a bearing on the future activities on the farm. For example,

the existence of irrigation infrastructure would favour intensive cropping on a highly commercial basis, therefore implying the need for more competent settlers with some irrigation experience or the potential to be trained. The information was collected, recorded and a report made available to the district land committee.

The next step was to carry out a suitability assessment. Details on the resource base, arable land available, infrastructure and farm potential were examined. Infrastructure may include boreholes and their distribution, fences, farm buildings and their uses (e.g., sheds and homesteads), dip tanks, roads and bridges. This exercise is very important. In re-starting a farm's enterprise, existing infrastructure should be utilised in order to lower costs. The suitability assessment also looks at other factors that contribute to farm productivity, such as the soil and vegetation. Soil and vegetation maps are produced and documented. The soils and vegetation types determine the potential carrying capacity of a farm in terms of the number of animals to be kept, the types of crops to be grown and the number of settlers who can be supported by the livestock and crops. This is a technical exercise and has little settler participation.

The next stage is the production of farm level plans. There are two components to farm level plans. One is the production of a physical plan showing farms boundaries, proposed developments such as fencing of paddocks, watering points and reticulation, location of farm buildings, roads and other relevant structures. The second aspect is the production of an enterprise budget, which is the basis of decisions as to which activities to embark on, in relation to crop and livestock production.

The physical farm plan (the map) is attached to the farm budget and enterprise cash-flows. This document is submitted to the district land committee for discussion and approval. This is a crucial moment in land use planning: the type of enterprises chosen have a bearing on the number of beneficiaries who may be settled on a farm. An irrigation activity would take in almost double or treble the number of farmers than would be placed under dry-land cropping or ranching. At this stage the district committee was often involved in discussions with the potential beneficiaries, since certain decisions entailed the relocation of excess settlers resulting in confrontations. AREX advised the district committee to strictly stick to the technical recommendations in order to avoid placing too many people on a farm leading to environmental degradation and non-sustainability.

It became necessary to explain in detail what was involved in the cropping enterprises. This included the need for adequate crop inputs, such as seed, fertiliser, chemicals and transport. AREX staff had to inform the prospective settlers as to what type of input assistance was available and from where. Such programmes as the GMB (Grain Marketing Board) could offer assistance to farmers on seed, fertilisers, and chemicals. The LDT (Livestock Development Trust) could offer farmers heifers at affordable terms. In all these activities there was full participation of the stakeholders on farmer selection of the input scheme beneficiaries and the delivery of the inputs. As much as possible government institutions avoided influencing the outcome of the beneficiary selection lists.

The beneficiaries were informed of the importance of value addition to crop produce in order to realise increased income. This could be done by improving product presentation through shelling and milling of grain, packaging, processing and producing products such as peanut butter, and preserving fruit and vegetables in dried form and selling them during off-season. Farmers were taught how to market their produce and successfully negotiate contracts.

The settlers were and informed on the management of the various types of livestock. This included large stock (e.g., beef cattle, dairy cattle and donkeys) and small stock (goats, poultry and rabbits). Other livestock such as ostriches and bees were also dealt with. The idea was to present a wide range of alternatives so the settlers could choose what sort of activities to engage in.

After the production of the farm plan and approval by the district committee (with the participation of the stakeholders), the next stage was pegging and demarcation. This involved the interpretation of the farm map and physically locating points of the ground, which formed the boundaries of individual farm plots. Pegs were placed into the ground so that the settlers would easily identify their respective plots. The plots were the residential and arable plots under the A1 model and the whole plot boundary pegs under the A2 model. Although this exercise could have been done by the technical staff alone, in most cases all the beneficiaries were not only to be able to identify the plot boundaries but also to evaluate the potentials of the different plots so as to be at an advantage during the allocation process. In most cases the farmer selection exercise ran concurrently with the pegging and demarcation.

Plot allocation was done immediately after the demarcation exercise. Under the A1 model of resettlement, the homestead and arable plots were allocated randomly. Numbers equal to the farm plots were put in a container and mixed. The selected farmers then picked out the numbers without looking in. The number selected would determine the homestead and arable plot allocated to the individual. During the demarcation exercise all plots are assigned numbers for the purpose of identifying the plots.

The district committee was tasked with farmer selection. As much as possible lists were drawn up from the various categories as agreed by the district selection criteria. Newly resettled farmers were provided with training, relevant to the agricultural activities to be undertaken so as to improve their agricultural skills and knowledge. Training is carried out through mainly holding lessons and discussion groups at pre-arranged venues strategically located to be central to most farmers. Demonstrations were established at farmers fields in order to reinforce the lessons. Regular field visits were carried out in order to address individual farmer problems and offer remedial action on the spot. Farmers have also been recruited into the Master Farmer Training programme. It is a specially designed course to provide a farmer with a set standard of competence. The programme is structured such that farmers attend regular lessons and conduct practical exercises. The resultant farmers are people who are technically competent in farm production, able to assist other farmers nearby and engage in commercial agriculture. The farmers are assisted with technical information in the form of pamphlets, newsletters and through programmes over the radio and television.

With over 300 000 families settled onto new the farms under the A1 and A2 model resettlement schemes, many challenges and opportunities face the new farmer. The challenges may be situational and peculiar to a particular area, but on the whole the pattern is similar nation-wide. Due to the increase in distributional area, there is a diminished extension worker/farmer contact. This has also been worsened by the lack of adequate accommodation in the new area for extension personnel. Staff mobility has been curtailed by the unrealised fuel supplies, lack of vehicles and the high cost of running private vehicles, further worsening the issue of staff/farmer contact. The newly resettled farmers in some cases have been placed in an area with inadequate infrastructure nearby, such as clinics, schools and commercial retail outlets. This has resulted in some farmers not taking up or abandoning their plots. Some of the settlers seem keen not on cropping but just on having a place to reside, thus under-producing agriculturally. It is not easy for most farmers to change from subsistence type of farming into commercial farming due to the need to acquire skills and knowledge. Some of the farmers have very limited resources and have problems raising capital for inputs and infrastructure. The selection and allocation of settlers was often hijacked by influential groups or individuals resulting in some settlers being thrown off the plots and the resultant violent confrontations. There were also incidences of previous farm owners resisting the new farmers, which resulted in planning teams being hindered, damage, vandalism and the removal of movable infrastructure. This led to the interruption or cessation of production at the farms. The planning process has not taken into account the need to accommodate more people as the population grows. In some instances the land has been opened up and worked on without the necessary conservation precautions on soil and water being put in place. Natural resources such as trees and wildlife have been over-exploited for commercial gains by some individuals.

In spite of the above challenges, opportunities have been realised because of the land reform programme. There are instances where the former occupiers share resources for tillage, water, irrigation equipment and exchange knowledge and skills. The new farmers have got onto more valuable land and thus ventured into new enterprises realising high incomes. To most newly resettled farmers this has been an opportunity of a lifetime, where one has managed to own a piece of land without having to compete on the open market.

The way forward is ensure that the resettled areas maintain their prescribed carrying capacities and that the new farmers strive to excel in commercial production, on a sustainable basis. There is need to liaise with other stakeholders from the agro-industry, farmer organisations and NGOs for the development of the newly resettled farmers.

# **THE CHALLENGE OF BRINGING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAND AND LAND RIGHTS IN ZIMBABWE**

**Absolom Masendeke**

Intermediate Technology Development Group Southern Africa

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Attempts to develop appropriate institutional frameworks for land administration in post-independent Zimbabwe became an issue only at the height of the Land Reform Debate in 1999/2000. The debate led to the identification of key principles and values to guide the institutional framework for the land reform program. These principles and values were understood within the context of good governance and sound macro-economic principles for the country. However, a fast track approach was adopted in early 2001, which constituted a negation of these principles and values. The fast track approach established land committees comprising government and local government institutions to speed up the land delivery process. Other institutions such as political parties and war veterans were integrated into this process to ensure delivery of the programme. This development closed the space for other institutions to participate and contribute to the process. There is now a growing debate on the institutional mechanisms that have been employed in the fast track land reform process in Zimbabwe.

The search for an effective institutional framework for land administration is important for effective governance and sustainable economic development. Land administration should critically focus on the issue of land rights for beneficiaries. Hence, this paper focuses on the challenges of bringing effective governance to the administration of land and land rights in Zimbabwe. The issue of the administration of land rights has not been sufficiently discussed in the context of recent developments. Research attention has focused on future options, without addressing the challenges that surround the design of institutions for administration of land and land rights.

## **2. REVIEW OF CURRENT DEBATE AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Current debate and research results suggest that institutional reform has not been a major feature of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. This situation has resulted in a number of policy prescriptions that focus on the principle of devolution. Devolution of land administration is seen as a viable proposition in so far as it brings decision-making processes and structures within the reach of the landholders, thus giving them access to control of the land. Devolution is seen as a strategy for evading state control of land administration

processes and procedures, which often results in bureaucracy, corruption and inefficiency. The state is seen as a threat to the participation of other interested stakeholders owing to use of coercive measures, which disregards application of basic norms such as dialogue, consensus building, the rule of law, in particular property rights, and the role of markets. This state of affairs results in the erosion of trust and confidence among stakeholders and often creates unnecessary conflicts and tensions, which can derail land reform initiatives. The ability of civil society organisations to monitor and control the behaviour of the state is weak. The area of strengthening civil society organisations as part of the institutional reform process has not featured prominently in recent research. Yet, the behaviour of the state in Africa may be indicative of a weak civil society that is divided and polarised. States can thrive on this division to emerge as the dominant player. This is part of the crisis in Zimbabwe, where the only most visible and vocal civil society organisation opposing the land reform process has been the Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU).

While research results by the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) and the Land Tenure Center (LTC) appear to focus on devolution and removal of the state in administration of land and land rights, the search for new institutional frameworks should not detract from the salient point that land institutions operate better where there is a functioning and efficient central Government. The role of the state must be clearly defined and understood by all stakeholders. The state must uphold the rule of law. It must be bound by negotiated principles and values in pursuit of collective goals and interests such as poverty reduction and wealth creation. Space for local institutions to participate must be provided and mechanisms for strengthening their capacity to participate should be formulated.

### **3. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES AGREED AT INCEPTION OF THE LAND REFORM PROGRAMME IN ZIMBABWE**

The pronouncement of these principles and values raised much expectation from the land reform process in Zimbabwe. This in turn gave rise to a number of initiatives to test alternative models for land reform as a way of enhancing the land reform process. Non-governmental

#### **Principles and values agreed at inception of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe**

- Transparency and accountability consistent with the objectives of the Zimbabwe Program for economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST)
- Broadened and more flexible approaches to implementing land acquisition and resettlement
- Broadened and strengthened stakeholder consultations and partnerships
- Poverty reduction
- Addressing gender issues, including access to and control of land and proportionate representation on decision-making structures
- Integrating command and resettlement area re-organisation and development into Land Reform and Resettlement Programme 11
- Streamlining land policies such as taxation, land sub-division and tenure

Source: Inception Phase Framework Plan 1999/2000, p3

organisations (NGOs) converged under a Community Based Resettlement Approaches and Technology (CREATE) project to explore beneficiary driven models of land reform. However, the stakeholder-driven approach was abandoned by the Government immediately after the National Referendum of February 2001, preferring a fast tract approach to land reform. This approach resulted in a number of challenges for sustainable institutional development.

#### **4. CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE**

Institutions should be conceptualised broadly as stable patterns of practices, behaviour and norms that are clearly recognised and valued by society. Institutions are rules that are socially devised, recognised and generally followed by the community or citizens of a country. It is important for these rules to be predictable, stable and applicable in repeatable situations since trust, confidence and the rule of law must be safeguarded.

##### **Requirements for sound institutional frameworks**

- Inclusive participation
- Value local knowledge and institutions
- Trust and confidence of all stakeholders
- Transparency and accountability
- Rule of law
- Good co-operation and collaboration among various stakeholders
- Sustainable mechanisms for aligning competing interests such as those of Rural District Councils (RDCs) and traditional institutions
- Livelihood and environmental sustainability

##### **4.1. The Challenge of Inclusive Participation**

Local level institutions such as traditional structures have been severely weakened by colonial and post-colonial government policies and have become passive recipients of development by various actors, including governmental and non-governmental actors. Although smallholder farmers are the custodians of the natural resources, their voices in policy dialogue and formulation are marginal and weak. Communities are meant to be the main beneficiaries of the land reform process but they have not been involved in shaping the process and direction of the program. This condition casts doubt on the prospects of the programme to contribute towards poverty reduction and ending subsistence agriculture. The lack of mechanisms for empowering communities to participate meaningfully in the land reform process has raised questions on whether there is a political will to empower communities or is it a matter of keeping communities busy but poor and governable. There

are no clear mechanisms for communities and other interested stakeholders to question the direction of the programme, which is meant to impact their livelihoods. Inclusive participation requires communities and other institutions to have a voice as well as platforms and institutionally recognised mechanisms for dialogue, information sharing and public accountability.

#### **4.2. The Challenge of Valuing Local Knowledge, Institutions and Social Systems**

There is always an assumption that locally designed programmes are by nature locally sensitive in terms of their relevance to local knowledge, institutions and social systems. Communities who are targeted by the land reform programme are complex and heterogeneous entities comprised of different interest groups. The land reform programme in Zimbabwe appears to take for granted the need for building a baseline understanding of local conditions and realities of the resource poor. Bromley and Cerna (1989) argue that insufficient sociological analysis and consultation with local people during project preparation invariably leads to projects that are unrealistic and unsustainable. For a massive land reform initiative to succeed, it must be rooted in existing social norms and behaviour and recognise the reality of social differentiation within communities. This failure to take into account local realities explains why community response to the land reform programme in Zimbabwe is difficult to assess. The exact nature of the demand has not been explicitly established, making it difficult to develop sustainable institutional frameworks. For example, unconfirmed reports were made that many livestock communities in Matebeleland South preferred a programme for livestock resettlement instead of people.

Local knowledge cannot be assumed to have been incorporated into a programme of the magnitude of the land reform process in Zimbabwe. Critchley and Turner (1996) warn that 'designers of interventions in African natural resources management ignore indigenous knowledge and management systems at their peril'. It is very difficult for a sense of ownership and control to prevail where communities are subjected to a top-down process to the extent of being micromanaged by the centre. Communities are likely to be guided by their knowledge and management systems, even if they are placed in a new resettlement area. There is no vision on how the various traditional-knowledge farming systems can be transformed for the benefit of the nation. The issue is also not clear to the local institutions that facilitate the selection and emplacement of beneficiaries on farms. The role of indigenous institutions in the land reform process has been ambiguous. However, while it is important for local institutions to participate, this approach should be adopted with the realism it deserves, particularly with regard to the capacity of these institutions to implement these approaches in the given socio-economic and political conditions. Realistically, it would be more important to assess how traditional and modern scientific knowledge can be blended to arrive at a sustainable land reform vision.

### **4.3. The Challenge of Building Trust and Confidence among Stakeholders**

Trust and confidence in the land reform process in Zimbabwe has been eroded by political power contests and the deliberate politicisation of the land issue. Genuine debate on the key issues concerning the design and implementation of a comprehensive land reform programme was muzzled in the run up to both the Parliamentary and Presidential elections. Under such conditions, relationships, norms and practices that reflect a common good are difficult to prevail. Instead the conditions encouraged the emergence of ‘unorthodox’ institutional frameworks that are based on political patronage involving war veterans, party cadres and trusted organisations. This has created an institutional crisis for land reform in Zimbabwe, where some of the structures are not even accountable to the Rural District Councils. Internal trust and confidence is slowly eroded with catastrophic consequences for long-term sustainability of the programme.

### **4.4. The Challenge of Upholding the Rule of Law**

The fast track land reform process resulted in immediate breakdown of stable norms and practices that underpin the rule of law in any society. It became an instant revolution ‘spear-headed from above’, instilling fear, shock, and awe among communities and various stakeholders. Although legal channels were used to ‘legalise’ the process, justice was ‘not seen to be done’ in the circumstances. This situation led to the withdrawal of stakeholders from the process, leaving the state alone as the main actor embroiled in court battles with farm owners and conflicts on the farms. The rule of law is critical in ensuring functionality of institutions, markets and involvement of the private sector.

The main challenge arises from the violation of property rights through occupations and invasions that are taking place throughout the country. Even after the occupations, the question of land rights remains a very complex issue. Institutional frameworks must address the land rights issue for various groups.

### **4.5. The Challenge of Securing Livelihood and Environmental Sustainability**

The issue of farmer selection was not given adequate attention. No proper exercise was undertaken to determine who is worst affected by land scarcity or who depended most on the land for livelihoods. The land committees on the ground have often been accused of lack of transparency and accountability, resulting in the wrong target group moving onto the new land. The resource constraints of farmers in developing new land are also not fully understood, as the government cannot assist them. The private sector cannot provide services owing to the low purchasing power for services by communities. It is clear that to secure livelihood and environmental security, there is need to:

- balance short-term and long-term considerations
- establish clear and functional links with other socio-economic structures and processes
- institutionalise and respect an integrated approach to managing land reform initiatives.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The administration of land and land rights in Zimbabwe is a complex subject. There is need to recognise that land institutions are an essential element of good governance reform in Zimbabwe. A compelling vision involving all key actors is required to re-align views, positions, strategies and goals. Institutional prescriptions that are not informed by a deliberate dialogue and interaction process will not succeed in practice. Such a dialogue should draw lessons from the past as well as affirm principles that are required to move everyone forward. Focus on controversial issues may not be of benefit to the future of land reform in Zimbabwe. A focus on principles can provide a leverage point for the divergent actors to rise above petty differences to begin to see a larger picture. Clear mechanisms for involving communities must be devised to enable their voices to be heard. It is only when principles are agreed and voices are heard that conditions for sustainable institutional frameworks will emerge.

## **REFERENCES**

- Bromley, D.W. and M.M. Cerna. 1989. 'The Management of Common Property Natural Resources: Some Conceptual and Operational Fallacies'. World Bank Discussion Papers, No. 57, Washington DC, World Bank.
- Critchley, W. and S. Turner, editors. 1996. *Successful Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa*. Windhoek: Gramsberg Macmillan Publishers.

# **RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILS: NEED FOR DECENTRALISATION AND CAPACITY STRENGTHENING TO DEEPEN AGRARIAN REFORM**

**Fred Ndlovu**

Association of Rural District Councils

**Edmore Mufema**

Economic History Department, University of Zimbabwe

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The land and agrarian reforms taking place in Zimbabwe are, by and large, rural based. The key governing institutions of rural areas are Rural District Councils (RDCs). The Government of Zimbabwe established RDCs in 1993 and are the result of the amalgamation of Rural Councils and District Councils. There are fifty-seven RDCs. The RDCs were brought about in order to give meaning to local self-governance through community based administrative organs. The councils are political institutions whose councillors are elected on party political lines for a term of four years. In terms of Section 74 of the Rural District Councils Act, the developmental role of the of RDCs are to:

- promote the development of the council area
- formulate policies—both short and long term
- prepare annual development plans for the council area.

In addition, RDCs are mandated to develop and maintain infrastructure in council areas. In addition, councils have the authority to charge and collect revenue.

## **2. RDC INVOLVEMENT IN THE LAND REFORM PROCESS**

The Agrarian and Land Reform in Zimbabwe can be broken into two phases. The first phase refers to the period from 1980 to the mid 1990s and the second phase comprises the ‘fast track’ land reform period. The objective of the first phase was to decongest communal land and provide relief to the poor and landless peasants. Land was acquired by the State under the principle of willing-seller, willing-buyer. The role of the RDCs was to identify the poor and land hungry in communal areas. However, the criterion to determine who was poor was not set out in policy statement. The RDCs were, to all purposes and intents, not involved in the resettlement exercise of the 1980s. They were not involved in policy formulation and implementation because of the top-down developmental approach where the central Government controlled all aspects of the agrarian and land reform. The result of this process from an institutional point of view was that RDCs were denied opportunities for promoting

community-based land reform and rural development. From an economic perspective, the 1980s land reform programme had very little impact in decongesting the communal lands and alleviating the poverty of the resettled farmers. The programme led to environmental degradation in the resettled area. In short, the 1980s land reform programme was a failure.

The RDCs' involvement in the fast track land reform is not very clear. The RDCs are part of multiple institutions involved in the programme. It appears that there is no clearly defined policy, implementation procedure, roles and responsibilities, checks and balances within the framework of fast track. The RDCs are faced with a number of dilemmas. First, RDCs have responsibility over the land reform exercise but without the necessary corresponding authority. For example, RDCs have the mandate to select beneficiaries for the resettlement programme but have no authority to evict the self-selected settlers who have already settled on farms. Secondly, grinding poverty and runaway inflation have become the greatest problems afflicting rural development. The new farmers' demand for social services and developments of infrastructure such as roads, schools, and clinics among others outstrips all available resources in terms of manpower, finance or logistics. The institutional poverty of the RDCs mirror community level poverty. The members of the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU), The Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) and the Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union (ICFU) are not paying sufficient levies to the RDCs. In turn, the councils have no means to finance developmental projects. RDCs for now have neither the resources nor the capacity to address the demands and needs of the land and agrarian reform process.

### **3. STRATEGIES FOR MOVING FORWARD**

#### **3.1. Institutional Capacity Building**

Institutional reform is one of the key missing links in the land and agrarian reform in Zimbabwe. Central Government has assumed the dominant role in the process at the exclusion of other key players such as the RDCs, non-state actors and financial institutions. There is a need to bring back these players into the arena of land and agrarian reform. With specific reference to the RDCs, a number of measures are recommended:

1. enhancement and empowerment of democratic decision-making
2. development of practical goals and plans for securing rural livelihoods
3. continued support for training and human resources development
4. financial sustainability of the RDCs through revenue collection and meaningful central Government grants and loans
5. enhancement of accountability structures and checks and balances within the councils.

The extension of capacity building to key non-state actors such as ZFU, CFU, ICFU that have direct interest in the land and agrarian reform is of central importance. There is need for de-racialisation and de-politicisation of farmer representative groups. ZFU as a representative body of communal farmers and small-scale resettled farmers must be strengthened and

democratised. Further, the merger of CFU and ICFU is crucial in order to establish commonality of commercial farmer interests that cut across racial, ethnic, colour or political lines. These interests centre on issues of:

- security of property rights and tenure
- financing of farm production activities
- provision of farmer support services.

### **3.2. RDC: Development of Urban Infrastructure in Rural Areas**

Given the fact that land is a finite resource and that there is a limit to which it can be subdivided for economic use, there is need to develop beyond agricultural production in rural areas. The programme of rural industrialisation must be strengthened to add value to rural agricultural produce, create employment and wealth in the rural areas. The development of social services must also be speeded up.

#### **Remedial measures to create an enabling environment**

Restoration of confidence in the land reform exercise through:

- Re-establishment of property rights, their protection and the impartial application of rules on the land
- Provision of economic and social security facilities
- Support for farmers by rebuilding confidence in the money market and capitalisation of a Land Bank.

### **3.3. Creation of an Enabling Environment for Securing Rural Livelihoods**

In order to secure rural livelihoods there is need for underlying political will to create an enabling environment for economic and social activity. Trust has been undermined. The RDCs are part of political establishment and their institutional handicaps are mirror images of fundamental flaws within central Government. Remedial measures to necessary to redress the situation.

By creating a sound political and administrative machinery to manage the land reform exercise, it is possible for normalcy to return to economic and social production thereby enhancing the security of rural livelihood.

### **3.4. Dialogue and Interaction**

A key recommendation is continued dialogue and interaction between the following stakeholders:

- various government departments

- practitioners and researchers
- non-state players
- donor community.

One of the major problems associated with the land reform process has been the unilateral decision-making by central Government. The deadlock between the government and international community has negatively affected community relations with donor organisations. An impasse has been created and will only be bridged by interaction of players for the common good.

<b>Way forward for RDC's involvement in land reform</b>		
<b>Goals of land reform</b>	<b>Results of land reform</b>	<b>Way forward</b>
<b>Political:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ redress inequities of political history</li> </ul>	Mixed Impact	Re-establish confidence and security of tenure
<b>Social development:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ enhanced rural standard of living</li> </ul>	Poor in the short-term Uncertain long-term	Define policy and set achievable goals infrastructure and human development
<b>Economic goals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ food security</li> <li>▪ increased productivity</li> </ul>	Poor in the short-term Potential for growth	Intensify production and promote rural industrialisation
<b>Environmental goals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ environmental management</li> </ul>	Disastrous	Define policy and enhance institutional capacity

# **AGRARIAN REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: STRATEGIES FOR MOVING FORWARD**

**Edward Samuriwo**

Rural Resettlement, Ministry of Land, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement

I would like to comment on the chapters in this volume. I am concerned when statements and opinions are presented as fact when there is evidence to the contrary. For example, in the chapter by Derman and Gonese, one finds the statement that, 'Land has been acquired without compensation and distributed through a politicised set of social policies.' Nothing can be further from the truth. We can argue about the pace at which the resettlement programme is being implemented, but one cannot dispute the statistics we have of farmers who have been paid and the number of farms that have been inspected and ready for negotiation. This is fact and not opinion. Elsewhere in that chapter, one reads, 'Having given away land on political and social grounds, has government also given away its credibility to decide on Water Reform?' I do not understand the implications of this statement.

I would also like to refute claims concerning the war veterans being part of the settler selection process. War veterans are a pressure group. They are not part of the Provincial Land Selection Committees. The Department of War Veterans Affairs represents them and they are civil servants. Also, there are inappropriate terms being used. Several chapters refer to the 'Fast Track Scheme.' There is no such scheme. We either have Model A1 or Model A2 Resettlement Schemes. I am also concerned where land invasions are equated to the so-called 'fast track' resettlement programme. They are not synonymous.

I would like to discuss my perspective of the Agrarian Reform and strategies for moving forward. Agrarian Reform was inevitable, whatever government was in power. It was a time bomb waiting to happen. Farm invasions began in 1997, well before the Referendum. Those events had nothing to do with politics. It was a mere hunger for land. Agrarian Reform is a reality; there is no going back. Government would like to take what, in this volume, is often called a 'problem', as a 'challenge.' Granted, Agrarian Reform is a massive programme. It would be folly for anyone to think that we would not make mistakes in a programme of such magnitude, which was implemented in such a short space of time. However, we are ready to face the mistakes and move forward.

'Fast track'. What do we mean by 'fast track'? The intention of government was to speed up delivery of land to the people. We only intended to speed up those activities in the normal resettlement programme that could be speeded up. For example, we wanted to do away with land identification and speed up beneficiary selection and emplacement of people. However, it is obvious that infrastructure provision will take longer, so that cannot be fast tracked. The intention was to provide basic infrastructure to make resettlement areas habitable. However,

we have now reached the phase where we want to take stock of events on the ground. Where do we start from here? The starting point is a thorough Land Audit. The Land Audit conducted by Minister Buka was superficial. A Land Audit should reveal who is where on the land and what activities are being undertaken. Is the farmer being productive? The Land Audit should expose situations where single families are claiming two farms. Government is in the process of establishing a Land Information System that captures that information. We also want government to review bi-lateral agreements. In America, Americans come first. In Zimbabwe, Zimbabweans should come first especially in light of the demand for land. However, government should not employ double standards. Government should adhere to the policy of 'one man, one farm', but subject to maximum farm sizes. Why should one farmer have 1 000 hectares when another is living in mountains? Are we living in the same Zimbabwe?

Government and the private sector should enhance farm support services, such as irrigation development, inputs availability, and outgrower schemes. Government must, of course, provide the enabling environment, which allows the creation of markets and development of the transport sector. The export sector must also be promoted. Government is in need of foreign currency. Devolution of power to institutions lower down is desirable, yet this idea should be approached with extreme caution, given the capacity of our Rural District Councils.

In conclusion, Agrarian Reform should not be seen as a set of problems but rather as challenges.

**SECTION FIVE:**

**THE WAY FORWARD**



—Chapter 18—  
**Strategies for Agrarian Reform in Zimbabwe**

**Mutizwa Mukute**  
Participatory Ecological Land Use Management

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*A dream in the desert*

And she stood far off on the bank of a river. And she said, 'For what do I go to this far land which no one else has ever reached. Oh I am alone, utterly alone!'

And Reason, the old man, said to her, 'Silence! What do you hear?'

And she listened intently, and she said, 'I hear a sound of feet, a thousand times, ten thousand times and thousands of thousands, and they beat this way!'

He said, 'They are the feet of those that shall follow you! Lead on; make a track to the water's edge! Where you stand now, the ground will be beaten flat by ten thousand times ten thousand feet'.

And he said, 'Have you seen the locusts, how they cross a stream? First one comes to the water's edge, it is swept away, then another, and then another, and at last, with their bodies piled up, a bridge is built and the rest will pass over'.

She said, 'And those that come first, some are swept away, and are heard of no more; their bodies do not even build the bridge?'

'And what of that?' he said.

'Over that bridge which shall be built by our bodies, who will pass?'

He said, 'The entire human race'.

And the woman grasped her staff.

And I saw her turn down that path to the river.

And I dreamt a dream.

I dreamt I saw a land. And on the hills walked brave women and men, hand in hand. And they looked into each other's eyes, and they were not afraid.

And I saw the women also hold each other's hands.

And I said to him beside me, 'What is this place?'

And he said, 'This is heaven'.

And I said, 'Where is it?'

And he answered, 'On earth'.

And I said, 'When shall these things be?'

And he answered, 'IN THE FUTURE'.

(Hope and Timmel 1984, pp. 129-130.)

This dream summarises how I feel about the Agrarian Reform. It will succeed. To succeed, the new farmers will have to curve new paths, build new bridges, and craft solutions. For the reform to succeed, ordinary men and women farmers should be at the forefront, not the elite. Elitist agrarian reforms have failed elsewhere. In my opinion, the agrarian reform is an unusual opportunity for Zimbabwe small-scale farmers to be sustainable and to reduce dependence on big companies, to chart into unknown waters and to create paradise on earth—that is sustainability, peace, security and prosperity. I see agriculture as the basis for societal transformation and democratisation, food security, income generation, providing gainful employment, improving the quality of life and of the environment. Such a reform fits into the big dream of an African Renaissance.

This chapter has four parts: the 'introduction' communicates my beliefs; 'guiding principles' propose a compass for the reform; 'broad strategies' give the big picture; 'putting the small farmer first' concentrates on how resettled small scale farmers could meaningfully engage in the process.

## **2. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE WAY FORWARD**

Successful revolutions, reforms and evolutionary processes are guided by principles and values. These help align people's energies together towards a common goal. I propose that the agrarian reform should be built on a foundation of principles found below.

### **2.1. Integrated, Holistic, Co-ordinated and Synchronised Approach**

This means looking at the entire agricultural production and distribution chain, including the agro-based industries, fisheries and eco-tourism. The structures and systems, the policies, institutions and knowledge systems should pull towards the same end. It also means looking at the global and the local, men and women, youth and the aged. There is need for inter-sectoral linkages, development and livelihood diversification. This approach requires simultaneous consideration of social, ecological and economic matters.

### **2.2. A Process Orientation that Recognises that Quick Fixes Do Not Result in Lasting Progress**

Sequencing and keeping the hierarchy of important things right will offer a solid foundation for the agrarian reform. This principle suggests an evolutionary approach. It builds on the idea of thorough preparation, rigorous reflection and re-planning, learning from action. It means starting small and recognising and managing transitions. 'Land tenure reform must be

seen as a continuous, ongoing process and not just as a one-off or on-and-off activity,' (Land Tenure Commission 1994, p. 135).

### **2.3. A Long-term Orientation**

This means beginning with a defined vision in mind, and working step by step towards it, building a solid foundation in the process. One way of operationalising this principle is to develop a set of testing guidelines before an important decision is made. Zimbabwe's idea of having vision for 2020 was a good one, for it moves beyond the politics of the moment and cuts across unwarranted barriers.

### **2.4. Participation of Key Stakeholders**

All key stakeholders should participate in defining the processes, content and outcomes of the agrarian reform for collective ownership and synergies. Since the agrarian reform is a social construct and society is made up of different groups of people, it is important for all parties to be involved in the deconstruction and reconstruction of better futures. The major groups of stakeholders are Government, which is interested in policy, business, which is interested in making a profit, and civil society, which is interested in justice and culture (Perlas 2000).

### **2.5. Create Win-Win Situations for All Parties**

As far as possible, the agrarian reform should benefit all parties. It calls for a symbiotic, peaceful co-existence achieved through living values of equity, fairness, liberty, brotherhood and sisterhood. Win-win situations lead to synergy and abundance (Covey 1989).

### **2.6. Continuous Improvements of Relevant Knowledge, Skills and Technologies**

There is evidence that processes that are accompanied by focus, intensity and continuous improvement bear fruit. The Japanese have won international car markets through constant creativity and improvements. The reform should build on team and group learning at all levels of the reform process.

### **2.7. Farmer-led Research and Learning**

Emphasis should be on developing the potential of the farmers and their environments through creating conditions that foster such learning and experimentation. This principle, combined with others, would build the human and social capital for improved ecological and economic capital, thereby increasing the assets of the farmers.

### **2.8. Exercise Integrity at All Times**

The principles and values that guide the agrarian reform need to be lived by all, without selective application. As Shakespeare put it in Hamlet, 'To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man'.

## **2.9. Low and Selective Use of External Resources; Rely More on Local Resources**

The reform should be able to sustain itself. This is possible if it builds on internal strengths of the country and local capacities. There are three preconditions for sustainable land use management: resource-conserving technologies, enabling policies and support structures and sustainable local organisations (Whiteside 1998). This does not mean avoiding external assistance; it means growing from within.

## **2.10. Restore the Dignity of Tilling the Land**

This reform should bring enough food for everyone in the country, making it accessible. It should fuel economic development in other sectors, as it did in the United Kingdom. This way, the dignity of tilling the land will be restored and our children will be educated *into* agriculture, not out of it.

## **2.11. Empowerment of the Poor and Marginalized**

The agrarian reform should decisively decrease the dependency and vulnerability of poor people. This means that the poor farmers should move into a group capable of pressing for the fulfilment of its agenda, and warding off domestication and paternalism (Hope and Timmel 1984). Whether the current farmer groups are adequate or can be reformed is something that has to be determined as part of the reform process.

# **3. BROAD STRATEGIES FOR THE WAY FORWARD**

## **3.1. Establish a Land Commission that Carries out a Comprehensive Audit**

If everyone in a democracy voted exclusively in their self-interest, the poorest 49% of the voters would always lose out. The top 49% need only bribe the middle 2% to gain a majority. No group is ever so calculating, but there nevertheless is some evidence of a tendency for democracies to redistribute benefits to the middle income groups rather than the poor. (FAO 1998)

One of the priorities will be the setting up of a Land Commission. The main function of the Commission would be to determine how effective the process of allocating land was, as well as to see the extent to which demand for land has been met or exceeded. The Commission would also draw insights from the process with a view to improving future land redistribution processes and systems. The review process would involve all stakeholders, including new farmers, those who stayed behind, land allocation committees, the Rukuni Land Commission, old farm workers, white commercial farmers, the farmers unions, agro-based industries and development organisations. It would develop and implement criteria for further land redistribution in old commercial farms and in decongested communal areas.

### **3.1.1. Develop Lighthouses of Agrarian Reform**

To understand is to stand under, which is to look up to, which is a good way to understand. (Sister Corita qtd. in Hope and Timmel 1984)

Lighthouses of the agrarian reform will be those places that move ahead of others in setting examples, sowing the first crop of initiatives. NGOs and other interested and capable institutions can accompany some new farmers and youths in different agro-ecological regions and on different kinds of projects. The lighthouses would then be scaled out once other new farmers are pleased with the adequacy. The Government could use youth training centres for developing a new crop of farmers who can lift the level and quality of production and productivity.

### **3.1.2. Build the Capacity of New Farmers**

This should be a shared responsibility between Government, farmers, NGOs and the private sector. Reorientation of agricultural training, education and research should be a priority. The training should not just be on production but also on social skills, business management, marketing, and maintenance of equipment and soil and water conservation. Experiential learning at suitable old commercial farm and newly resettled areas should complement learning. The private sector could contribute to the learning by giving scholarships, machinery and equipment to training centres for both production and processing. Farmer exchange visits should form an integral part of this approach. Another important capacity-building dimension is building the social capital of farmers so that they can articulate their issues and challenge structures and policies that inhibit their empowerment. A third dimension would be to rejuvenate the capacity and interest of the farmers to experiment and innovate in their own environments and sometimes with the assistance of conventional scientists. A fourth way would be for Government and other institutions to give material support in the form of grants, soft loans and hardware.

### **3.1.3. Create an Environment of Peace, Security and Certainty about Access to both Land and Water**

If the agrarian reform is to hold and yield results, the Government should create and foster an atmosphere of peace, harmony, security and certainty. Therefore a high degree of lawfulness is essential. Security increases local and international investor confidence. People who get land (or get it back) should have a high level of certainty that no one will come tomorrow to take away land from them. This way, long-term planning and meaningful investments can be made. Such certainty will spill into the banking sector where the inclination and confidence to give loans should also become better. Those who want to invest in rural areas are more likely going to do this where the atmosphere is conducive.

### **3.1.4. Establish Incentives that Encourage Investment in the Reform**

Reinhard Gromping of German Development Service once quipped, 'Should one give the poor man a fish or teach him how to fish? It depends. If one teaches him how to fish and the existing redistribution mechanisms take away from him 150% of what has been gained (50%

for the boat owner, 20% for the licence, 20% tax, 30% bank interest and a further 20% to the extended family, and 10% for transport to town) then the poor man is obviously better off if he continues just to receive the fish'.

Agriculture is strategic because it can bring about food security and reduce the dependence of a country on others. It is therefore key to stimulate interest in it by providing necessary incentives. A critical element of agrarian reform is whether agriculture pays. Through prudent management of tax regimes, allocation of public funds, determination of interest rates for the agricultural and rural development sector, export incentives and inflation, the Government can signal to the people of Zimbabwe that agriculture is critical to the economy.

### **3.1.5. Build the Economy on Strong Social Relations**

If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together. (Lila Watson, Australian aboriginal educator and activist, qtd. in Gough 1998, p. 3)

The agrarian reform will impact on societal social relations among the new farmers as well as between the new farmers and the commercial farmers. There is need for a deliberate policy to harmonise relations after a phase of 'storm and rapid change' otherwise the suspicions can eat into the good things brought about by the agrarian reform. A trust-building process is imperative.

### **3.1.6. Set up Mechanisms that Ensure that Benefits from Agriculture Accrue to the Rural Areas**

The basic strategy here is to fuel the economy from below. This includes building access roads, fair markets and access to them, village food storage facilities, setting minimum prices, redistributing land and supporting the informal sector. In the current setting, which has failed, a lot of the benefits from agriculture accrue in places other than those where production occurs. The agrarian reform should establish structures and institutions in resettled areas that allow for the growth and development of those areas. The money generated in those areas should be ploughed back.

### **3.1.7. Include other Forms of Land Use in the Agrarian Reform such as Fisheries, Eco-tourism, Urban Agriculture and Game Hunting**

Although we are specifically talking about the agrarian reform, it would be most important to have a broader approach to land use so that other forms of land use are considered. This is so since the bulk of the land that may be available for resettlement is not suitable for agriculture. The idea of the CAMPFIRE programme, which is already working well in some parts of the country, should be looked at as part of the agrarian reform. Some of the new farmers should take this up as an individual or collective enterprise. Also some of the farms that have been resettled in areas such as Midlands and the Eastern Districts have wildlife and scenic attractions that should enrich the agrarian reform process even though separate institutions may be responsible for running these. In some resettled areas, there are good water resources,

endowed with fisheries. A more tolerant policy framework for urban agriculture needs to be developed, built from the examples of successful cases elsewhere.

### **3.1.8. Nurture and Co-ordinate the Support Institutions and Develop Infrastructure**

Institutional effectiveness is, 'the ability of an institution to offer to people what they ask for and acting as expected' (Kowerani Masasa, Malawi, qtd. in Narayan, et al 2000, p. 191).

Institutions should be encouraged to serve the agrarian reform process in a co-ordinated fashion, based on a shared vision so that they do not work in different and opposing directions. Funding communities, NGOs, CBOs, universities, Government institutions, private sector, banks and consumers, farmer unions and standards associations should be brought in at the right moments. These support structures should be responsive, trustworthy, accountable, respectful, caring, and fair. The facilitation and mobilisation of farmer groups and leaders by PELUM ahead of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which brought together some 300 farmers to form a solidarity movement, gives evidence that these challenges can be met (Mukute 2002).

Infrastructural development will mean developing good feeder roads, water and irrigation systems, rural service centres and agro-industry growth centres. The farmers themselves should participate in deciding on the location of these facilities. It also relates to agricultural and research support.

## **4. PUTTING THE SMALL-SCALE FARMER FIRST IN A PROCESS-ORIENTED REFORM**

The small-scale farmer who currently lives in communal areas, produces for consumption and for sale, uses family and occasionally hired labour, and has limited access to productive assets, should be central to the reform.

### **4.1. Preparatory Phase (2-3 years)**

The focus on the first phase is to develop a shared vision, select the right people for resettlement, and build their capacity to carry out the reform process. It would entail some undoing and re-organisation of people who have already resettled. Sponsorship of this phase should primarily come from the Government, donors and NGOs. Although the farmers will eventually benefit, the initial costs of the reform needs to be spread beyond the farmers because success for the reform will benefit the whole nation. Besides, we are speaking here of farmers who are poorly resourced.

#### **4.1.1. Develop and Implement a Shared Vision of the Agrarian Reform**

At the national level, through a consultative process, a shared vision of the agrarian reform should be developed. Then it should be communicated and critiqued. The dialogue and negotiation is essential for awareness building and clarity of direction. This means that the interests are aligned. The movie *Spartacus* illustrates the importance of a shared vision among the people who seek to empower and liberate themselves.

In about 71 BC, a Roman slave called Spartacus led an army of slaves that defeated the mighty Roman army twice before losing on the third battle after a long siege. In the movie, the Roman army general Crassus says to the surviving slaves, 'You have been slaves. You will be slaves again. But you will be spared your rightful punishment of crucifixion by the mercy of the Roman legions. All you need to do is turn over to me the slave Spartacus, because we do not know him by sight'. After a long pause Spartacus stands up and says, 'I am Spartacus'. Then the next man to him stands up and says, 'I am Spartacus'. The next man stands up and also says, 'No, I am Spartacus'. Within a minute all slaves were Spartacus (Senge 1992).

Each man, by standing up and saying he was Spartacus, showed loyalty, not to Spartacus the man but the shared and compelling vision he had inspired.

#### **4.1.2. Farmers Develop Criteria for Selection of the Right People for Resettlement**

Such an approach acknowledges that fact that not every small farmer will be willing and able to participate in the agrarian reform process. The criteria should include those people who have already been resettled. Resettled land should not be privatised as this could result in loss of land to banks and other such institutes. Leasing and collective ownership options should be pursued.

#### **4.1.3. Carry Out a Participatory, Gender-sensitive Needs-assessment of the Selected Family Farmers**

Identify farmers' current strengths and weaknesses in relation to the goals of the agrarian reform programme. Special efforts should be made to support women as producers, innovators and agro-entrepreneurs. Then develop a curriculum that is most suited to address their needs. The curriculum framework should be open and flexible, allowing for ideas that come from outside to enrich local processes.

#### **4.1.4. Identify and Select Potential Peasant Promoters from among the Communities and Train Them in Identified Areas**

The communities should identify these promoters/facilitators (FOS-Belgium 2002). This way, the promoters understand whom they report to, trust building is done and community control over the process is achieved. Nyahode Union Learning Centre and Chikukwa Ecological Land Use Trust (both in Chimanimani and both members of PELUM) have selected and developed their extension staff from the communities in which they live and operate, and this is paying off. The former has worked on watershed management that led to the building of the water table manifested in reappearance of springs and flowing streams.

#### **4.1.5. Carry Out Comprehensive, Multi-disciplinary Training on a Broad Range of Areas**

This should include community development, sustainable crop and animal production, natural resources management and entrepreneurship. The PELUM College in Zimbabwe offers an

excellent place for the training because the curriculum it implements is multi-disciplinary, learner-centred, sustainable, community empowering and context-specific. The principle behind the college is to draw on the institutions' diversity and strengths for synergy. It is based on three years of intensive work on the curriculum design, and multiple learning sites that draw on the experiences and expertise of different communities, community-based organisations, universities and Government department who implement it across the country in different ecological and social settings. Upon completion of the course, the promoters/development facilitators go back to the communities and train the selected farmers. It is interesting to note that the curriculum framework, which was developed in the mid-1990s, had input from Honourable Ministers Olivia Muchena, Aeneas Chigwedere and Stembiso Nyoni, among other people.

#### **4.1.6. Carry Out a Participatory Selection of Youth Who Want to be Farmers in Their Own Right and Train Them Away from Their Homes, at Youth Training Centres**

What I am proposing is the conversion of youth centres into lighthouses or seeds for the agrarian reform. These youths will be trained in identified competencies that are needed. While at the college, they should produce for their own consumption as well as for sale. The youth training centres should illustrate the kind of agrarian reform we are speaking about. The defunct Driefontein Training Centre and the active Mupfure Self-Help College have important insights and experience to learn from.

#### **4.1.7. Carry Out Participatory Training of the Selected Family Farmers at Home**

Essentially this means taking training to the people through the promoters. Their learning should be practically-oriented, experiential adult learning, based in the fields, and with a good amount of experimentation. Learning sites can be established in wards. Mwenezi Development Training Centre has used this principle effectively, so has the Africa Centre for Holistic Management, both PELUM members. The principle of obtaining the multiplier effect through promoters has successfully worked in PELUM, beyond Zimbabwe.

#### **4.1.8. Carry Out Participatory Resettlement Planning**

While the learning is going on at youth training centres and colleges (for promoters), the family farmers should visit areas of resettlement to collectively design the land. This will involve getting the piece of land, and working together to agree on where grazing lands, schools, religious sites, adult learning sites, clinics, feeder roads and market places should be established. The use of common resources should be deliberated on to avoid the 'tragedy of the commons'. This process should involve an interaction of people's interests and knowledge as well as that of 'experts', so that the proposals made by the new communities may be adjusted for good reasons. Technical solutions should consider social and political dimensions. Resolutions and their reasons need to be understood, and each farming household should have a vested interest to make it work. Regulations should mix enlightened self-interest and authority (Whiteside 1998). The Chiweshe Community Development

Scheme, which started in the 1984 and was supported by Government and the European Union, and co-ordinated by the Lutheran World Federation, should offer useful insights.

#### **4.1.9. Establish Farmer Needs in Relation to Resettlement after Their Visit to the Sites**

While planning resettlement, the family farmers should collectively define their vision of the new area, outlining the identity of the group, shared values and what they want to have achieved in the next 10-20 years, as well as a description of their ecological environment. The farmers can then propose and prioritise their needs in relation to their shared vision. This process should build solidarity and common values among the people, as well as direct the Government and other service providers as to what to focus on.

#### **4.1.10. Laying the Ground for the New Farmers to Move in**

When the plan is done and the priorities are identified, the service providers should then move in to put in the necessary infrastructure. This should be done before the farmers move in, and would be the responsibility of several Government departments, co-ordinated by a selected ministry. In some areas, NGOs with complementary strengths can come together to work in specific areas.

#### **4.1.11. Get the Resources for the Reform Process**

While the preparations are ongoing, Government should be lobbying for funding to support the agrarian reform from both those obliged and interested. Funding mechanisms should allow funds to go directly to local structures, as well.

### **4.2. The Pioneering Phase (3-5 years)**

The focus of the second phase is learning to be effective, a search for the right things—implementing a programme in the village setting with a high degree of fit with farmer needs. This phase will develop capacities to generate wealth and even better capacities in the future. Government, donors and NGOs should now be joined by the private sector in sponsoring the agrarian reform. Negotiating contracts and ethical and fair trade will arise as issues at this stage. It is also a phase of asset accumulation: knowledge, skills, tools, seeds, livestock, entitlements, cash, social capital and stored food.

#### **4.2.1. Resettle the Farmers in a Systematic and Enabling Fashion**

The farmers move into the resettlement areas at the end of an agricultural season so that they have enough time to prepare for the next. Government and NGOs should assist in the relocation. Family fields are tilled and livestock is managed in clearly defined areas, with farmers taking turns to herd livestock to serve labour and to ensure that grass is given enough time to rest and recover before another round of grazing. From the start, farmers should strive to build the soil, as their chief resource is land, the ecological capital. ‘Feed the soil, and the soil will feed the nation’, is a sound principle that veteran farmer and innovator Machobane developed in Lesotho.

#### **4.2.2. Set up Village Management and Development Committees with Clear Roles and Linkages**

Experiences in the Democratic Republic of Korea show that one of the critical factors of land reform was ‘thorough development and support to local village government to assume the land administration function’ (FAO 1998). Local structures and lower transactions costs form the basis of entitlements and obligations, including reciprocal exchange of labour, farming equipment and other resources and sharing tasks that are too large for family households (Whiteside 1998). Their functions include, ‘savings and credit, income earning activities, natural resources management, maintaining group or community solidarity, preparing proposals and negotiating with outside agencies.... They can mobilise countervailing power to meet and match the power of the hierarchies of NGOs and the state’, (Chambers, 1997, p. 219). Local structures can be subdivided to form committees of livestock management and disease control (including ethno-veterinary medicine), innovation and experimentation, marketing and transport, storage and processing, seed security, conflict resolution, disaster preparedness and control. Each member will belong to at least one committee. The committees should share and reflect together regularly.

#### **4.2.3. Foster and Enhance the Capacity of the Farmers to Learn and Develop**

This would be done through the setting up of study groups who learn together and meet regularly to listen to well-targeted and non-partisan radio programmes. In addition, basic adult education (in the local language) will be imperative to help farmers learn from as well as teach others. Manor House of Kenya mini-training centres are in the communities and worth learning from.

#### **4.2.4. Promote Pro-poor, Farmer-led Research**

In a PELUM-facilitated meeting of development facilitators and research scientists, the kind of agricultural research proposed would be suitable for resettled farmers: farmer-driven, directed by the needs of the poor, intimately linked to farmer-to-farmer learning, based on agro-ecology as a scientific basis, and traditional knowledge as a starting point, fully inclusive of women, indigenous and under-represented groups, based on participatory breeding methods (not privatised), embedded in a broad context of poverty alleviation, food security and wealth creation, guided by concerns of national food sovereignty, right to food and equity and access to genetic resources and based on priority setting that starts at the local level and is integrated upwards through partnerships in which SFOs and community-based organisations are key actors (Gavi 2001).

#### **4.2.5. Collectively Develop and Implement Appropriate Monitoring Mechanisms**

As the crops grow, all farmers should closely monitor the soil and the quality of the crops, pests and diseases and detect areas needing intervention before the danger spreads. This is a common approach in the FAO-promoted farmer field schools, which have worked well in Asia and in some parts of Zimbabwe (e.g., cotton growing in the Zambezi Valley). The same kind of monitoring should happen with livestock management, natural resources

management, and the social and economic environments. Farmers should arrange days for visiting each other's fields for comments.

#### **4.2.6. Set Up Seed and Food Banks**

Food banks should store strategic food reserves for the village. Each family should contribute a quantity collectively defined. This idea is an extension of the traditional *Zunde* concept in Zimbabwe, where the chief received and kept food for his community. Alongside the food banks, the communities should also save and store seed that is distributed and replenished annually. The seed varieties should reflect the diversity of seed types and balanced diets. Women, who have played a key role in seed selection and improvement over centuries, may be better placed to serve this function.

#### **4.2.7. Build a Farmer Movement**

The movement will focus on improving the political and policy environments in which the family farmer operates. The movement will link with other villages, negotiate fair prices, and carry out advance market analysis and suggest the most profitable and suitable cash crops to grow. It would fight for fair and ethical trade. The same movement would mobilise farmers to fight oppressive national and international policies. In this connection, PELUM is facilitating the development of small farmer movements interested in sustainability, fighting unjust structures and policies and improving the general livelihoods of farmers.

#### **4.2.8. Build a Financial System of Supporting One Another**

Farming will require funding. Some of this will come from outsiders, but, in the long run, it should come from within. This would ensure sustainability. Farmers would therefore need to generate some savings and contribute on a regular basis. In the very long run, a true farmers' bank—where farmers have decent shares—would need to be established. This has worked in Asia (Adams 1991). The idea of people forming groups to borrow reasonable amounts, and to use group and peer pressure to have the monies repaid, has worked in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. It is an old idea called *susu* in Ghana, *sanduk* in Sudan and *tontines* in Somalia (ibid).

#### **4.2.9. Build and Work with a Network of Support Structures and Systems**

The resettled farmers should develop direct linkages with NGOs that can support them in areas of need. They should also link up with research institutes, youth training centres, colleges behind the agrarian reform, and relevant Government agencies. During this pioneer phase, the promoters, with the help of senior development facilitators from outside the villages, will need to accompany and mentor the farmers.

#### **4.2.10. Carry Out a Comprehensive Evaluation Against the Stated Vision and Targets**

At the end of 3-5 years, the farmers should carry out a comprehensive participatory evaluation that draws on their continuous monitoring and that is judged against social, ecological and economic indicators. This evaluation will seek out useful insights, lessons,

technologies and strategies that work, and have them widely shared for scaling up to influence policy practice as well as for scaling out for adoption by other farmers.

### **4.3. Consolidation Phase (5-10 years)**

The focus of this phase is twofold: to become more efficient, that is to do the right things right, getting more with less, making continuous refinements to processes, technologies and outputs, to scale out the practices that have worked in other communities, 'to build the bridge over which other locusts will pass'. During this phase, farmers should be able to reap decent benefits from the reform programme.

#### **4.3.1. At the Beginning of the Phase, Scaling Out and Up of Successful Approaches to Resettlement within Zimbabwe**

This will heavily draw upon experiences of the second phase. The youth and college lighthouses, the NGO-facilitated processes, the Government-facilitated processes and the farmer-facilitated processes would serve as importance sources of lessons. These lessons should be distilled and spread for adapting and adoption as has been done in localised parts of Malawi with regards to the use of swamps for sustainable agriculture (Chuma and Chinkuntha 2002). This will involve schools and universities that should re-orient their curricula accordingly and prepare students to work in such rural settings. Scholarships and research themes that look into the agrarian reform with a view to generating insights should be encouraged. Meanwhile, the policies that have a bearing on the reform should be revised and improved. Scaling up and out has been shown to succeed under conditions where:

- local capabilities build on local dynamics, organisational development and capacity-building of the farmers in their interests,
- clearly defined intended results,
- there is policy support,
- institutional building and organisational development of farmer organisations,
- accountability of NGOs and other development agents to farmers,
- ownership of the process is vested in the farmers,
- economic and financial viability through market development and access. (IIRR 2000)

#### **4.3.2. Intensification of Sustainable Agriculture Practices**

It will take five to ten years to build the soil, depending on the soil, climate and availability of local organic matter and the crops that are grown. In Zambia 50,000 families are now using conservation farming that was introduced in 1995. On small plots, these farmers have been able to harvest 10-15 tonnes of maize per hectare, compared to an average of 2.7 tonnes under conventional agriculture. Similar progress has been made with farmer field schools (Lungu and Olusegun 2002). It will also take a good number of years to build healthy pest-predator relations. The same goes for good quality seed from the farmers themselves. So

during this phase, the farmers should be able to register decent progress towards sustainable agriculture. Their indicators should be able to tell them how far.

#### **4.3.3. Certification of Organic Produce for the Local and the International Markets**

During this phase, the high-rainfall areas that have relatively good quality soils could have been transformed into organic fields producing organic crops and supporting organic livestock production as well. These farmers should be able to access premium prices for the better health their crops bring and for the extra labour and certification costs they must incur. In this connection, PELUM has already initiated a process where farmers are documenting their stories in Organic Farming and Marketing. The same process prompted the Standards Association of Zimbabwe to set up a committee to look into standards for organic farming.

#### **4.3.4. Development of Agro-based Industries in Rural Areas**

Farming is a means to an end, not an end in itself. When the production increases and there are surpluses, the next step is to develop industries based on the crops and the natural resources of the area. Farmers should have a big stake in these industries, and this process should increase their control of the agricultural production and distribution chain. This would stimulate rural development, create employment and arrest the urban migration. It was surplus from agriculture that fuelled the industrial revolution of Britain. Now we can have pockets of industrial development in our rural areas. Yet the framework should discourage exploitative relations. As Paul Rice observed, 'Farmers may be producing a wonderful crop of corn and it is friendly for the land and the yields are great but if they are selling it at such a low price that development is impossible, then probably the farming practices are not sustainable in the long run' (IIRR 2000).

#### **4.3.5. Build a Strong Farmer Movement in the Country and Region**

In order to keep the spirit of the reform going, the farmers will need to build a movement that combines their strength in the country and the influences development in the region. The emerging East and Southern Small Farmers Forum, which PELUM helped create, would be an important body to work with, so that a truly African peasant movement at the level of Via Campesina comes into being. The ultimate purpose of this movement would be to fight unfair global structures and policies, build South-South Alliances, liberate the marginalized and exploited farming communities, and create sustainable communities.

#### **4.3.6. When the Zimbabwe Agrarian Reform Succeeds in the Next 10-15 years, It Will become the Beacon of Hope for Many Countries**

We want others to follow the path that we will define, and avoid the current rotten deals that we have received from solutions engineered far away from the people. When we do that, the entire human race will pass.

## REFERENCES

- Adams, P. 1991. *Odious Debts: Loose Lending, Corruption, and the Third World's Environmental Legacy*. London: Earthscan.
- Chambers, R. 1997. *Whose Reality Counts: Putting the First Last*. London: ITDG.
- Chuma, J.M. and G.J.C. Chinkhuntha. 2002. *Transforming Swamps and Gullies into Productive Land: The Case of Tikondwe Freedom Gardens of Malawi*. Harare: PELUM.
- Covey, S. 1989. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Fireside.
- Covey, S.R. 1994. *First Things First*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- FAO. 1998. 'Contemporary Thinking on Land Reforms'. Paper prepared by the staff of the Land Tenure Service in the Rural Development Division. Rome: FAO.
- FOS-Belgium. 2002. *Land Reform as an Opportunity for Conflict Management and Poverty Reduction in Zimbabwe: Support to Non-Governmental Initiatives of Participatory and Negotiated Resettlement*. Harare: FOS-Belgium.
- Gavi, C. 2001. Eastern and Southern African NGO-SFO Meeting on Agricultural Research and Development. Unpublished. Harare: PELUM.
- Gough, N. 1998. 'Decolonising Sustainability: Subverting and Appropriating Mythologies of Social Change'. *South African Journal for Environmental Education* 18: 3-13
- Hope A. and S. Timmel. 1984. *Training For Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers Book 1*.
- IIRR. 2000. *Going to Scale: Can We Bring More Benefits to More People More Quickly?* International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Y.C. James Yen Centre, Silang, Cavite, Philippines.
- Land Tenure Commission. 1994. 'Report on the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems'. Harare: Government of Zimbabwe.
- Lungu, O.I. and A.Y. Olusegun. 2002. *Agriculture Production Models: Agro-ecological and other Sustainable Alternatives to the Current Industrial Model Including Impacts on Food Security*. Unpublished. Harare: PELUM.
- Mukute, M. 2002. *Summary Report on the Small Farmer Convergence Process and Outcomes*. Harare: PELUM.
- Narayan, D. et al. 2000. *Voices of the Poor Crying out for Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Perlas, N. 2000. *Shaping Globalisation: Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding*. Quezon City, Philippines: CADI.
- Senge, P.M. 1990. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. London: Doubleday.
- Whiteside, M. 1998. *Living Farming Systems: Encouraging Sustainable Smallholders in Southern Africa*. London: Earthscan.



—*Chapter 19*—  
**Delivering Land and Securing  
Rural Livelihoods**  
**Synthesis and Way Forward?**

**Michael Roth**<sup>279</sup>

Land Tenure Center and Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics,  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

I first came to Zimbabwe in 1990 on a World Bank mission to participate in a land sub-sector study. There was virtual agreement even then among Zimbabweans and the international community that land reform needed to be accelerated to redress Zimbabwe's unequal and racially-biased land distribution. Yet, there was also the sense, from my point of view, that Government, in addition to enabling land reform, was also unwittingly obstructing it through excessive centralisation and monopolisation of land acquisition and resettlement (Roth 1993). It is not an issue of capacity and skills, for the land administration machinery within Zimbabwe has an abundance of both. Rather it is an issue of a patriarchal land administration that has asserted far more controls over land allocation, land use, land management and resettlement than it can satisfactorily deliver, while it avoids creating space for private market solutions that would help complement its own efforts (see also Chigumete, Masendeke).<sup>280</sup> This chapter aims to synthesise key findings of the research papers and perspectives in this volume, and from plenary discussions at the conference, and then proposes a strategic policy roadmap for re-engaging Government, donors, and civil society in land and agrarian reform in Zimbabwe.

## **2. INCOHERENCIES**

A number of contradictions in land policy have become evident that confound the coherency of Zimbabwe's land policy framework, most notably:

---

<sup>279</sup> The author gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the comments of Kudzai Chatiza, Charles Chavunduka, Renson Gasela, Francis Gonese, David Hasluck, Daniel Ncube, and Kizito Mazvimavi. However, all views and opinions expressed in this paper are solely those of the author unless otherwise cited.

<sup>280</sup> All citations refer to chapters or perspectives in this volume, with the exception of references included in the bibliography.

- Land reform has been completed according to some in Government, yet compulsory land acquisitions on the ground continue.
- Land access for the poor has been enhanced by ‘fast track’, but poor settlers live in a tenure void (absent secure property rights) and lack secure livelihoods.
- Deeds registration and survey confers secure rights, but the durability of these rights and the utility of the system have been cast in doubt by compulsory acquisition and fast track occupation.
- Fast track land reform, while providing land to new-found beneficiaries, has also led to the collapse of the private land market that until the late 1990s was successfully redistributing land to black emerging farmers, including women (Rugube et al; Petrie et al).<sup>281</sup>
- Results of fast track land reform, while applauded by some for helping to redress the land question in Zimbabwe, has also created economic regress, agricultural productivity decline, severe capital depreciation, disinvestment, and collapse of land values and agricultural markets for seed, fertiliser and credit.
- There continue to be subdivision restrictions that have denied the downsizing of farms from 400 to several thousand hectares in size based on grounds of economic threshold or viability (Sukume and Roth); yet, farm size limits have been waived under fast track resettlement resulting in rapid and sometimes ad hoc fragmentation of commercial farms into small parcels.
- Careful beneficiary selection or traits are needed to ensure good land husbandry on model A2 farms (Mukute; Gonese and Mukora), yet many beneficiaries under fast track, who have been self-selected, are poor and lack the farm management skills and wherewithal to do little more than engage in subsistence agriculture.<sup>282</sup>
- Land reform is intended to help equalise land and uplift those in poverty, yet farm workers who are among the most impoverished and vulnerable have suffered from displacement, destitution, lost employment and violence (Magaramombe).<sup>283</sup>

These multiple faces of land reform are polarising the land policy debate in Zimbabwe and creating confusion over intent, motives, and actions on the part of Government. Inconsistency, incoherency, and selective application of law erode confidence in

---

<sup>281</sup> Rugube et al documents the collapse of the land and financial bond markets beginning in the 1990s but accelerating after the onset of fast track. They also show the acceleration of the market for public leases as government has begun to unload properties acquired through the 1990s.

<sup>282</sup> According to Daniel Ncube (personal communications), the broad policy of decongesting communal lands for resettlement (outside A2 schemes) is administered on a first-come, first-served basis.

<sup>283</sup> Magaramombe notes that while it is not government policy to displace farm workers, the reality on the ground is contradictory. There is resurgence of the perception that farm workers are aliens and do not warrant equal rights or consideration. Unfortunately, despite lost employment, low levels of education make it difficult for them to secure other forms of employment, hence many have been driven into poverty.

Government's ability to govern and protect individual interests. The land policy framework is thus in need of reformulation, and the issues above are key starting points for considering change.

### 3. TRUST

Decline of trust and loss of confidence in the social and economic order are at the root of the economic malaise and agrarian decline in Zimbabwe. It is trust that underpins the foundations of property institutions and economic organisation. It is trust that confers tenure security and confidence that contractual arrangements will be upheld (see Hasluck; Mukute). Trust is hard earned and easily lost, and once lost is difficult to regain. It is on the basis of trust that financial institutions lend money on good faith statements of borrowers that money will be repaid, that land and property will have value, and that assets leined can be foreclosed upon to repay debt. It is trust that enables lessors and lessees in communal areas and on commercial farms to enter into land rental agreements, or to secure access to inputs or financial capital through informal credit mechanisms (Hasluck; Hungwe; Nyambara). It is trust that allows a commercial farmer or agroprocessor to engage in a contract with smallholders, where the farmer/processor is assured that produce will be delivered on time and in accordance with quality standards, and the tenant has assurance that s/he will receive fair and reasonable compensation for services rendered.

What has been revealed instead (based on a number of chapters in this volume and on plenary discussions) are numerous symptoms of a breakdown in law and order, in property institutions, and in the functioning of agrarian contracts, caused by or connected with loss in trust and the ethical foundations for market transactions. Furthermore, an institutional void has been created as rules governing landownership and business dealings are disregarded or selectively applied, thus undermining confidence in the economic order.

In the case of rural land transactions and sharecropping in Gokwe, for example, Nyambara found that land rental agreements are mainly oral, confined to transactions among kin, result in low output shares received by the tenant, and are short term in duration—all symptomatic of land tenure insecurity (on the part of the landholder) and lack of sufficient trust within the rural farming community. Lack of trust deprives the potential lessor of rental income from a land resource that is more efficiently farmed by another, and gives the lessor too little incentive to invest in the land or provide sufficient inputs to tenants. It also deprives the landless and poor of an affordable way to secure land access (beyond land purchase) that would otherwise increase access to wealth and secure improved livelihoods.<sup>284</sup>

---

<sup>284</sup> See Hasluck who submits that leasing and sharecropping can help improve the welfare of communal farmers, farm workers, tenants and new land reform beneficiaries. Yet, tenure insecurity constrains these land contracts among commercial farmers and settlers; in the former case by government policy shifts that continue to carve off successive pieces of farms for resettlement despite restraining orders, and in the latter case by boundary and ownership disputes among settlers. Nevertheless, leasing and sharecropping arrangements are still entered into, sometimes for mutual benefit (risk spreading, resource sharing, and co-responsibility for minimizing theft),

Concerns of tenure security reach beyond landownership to contract farming that theoretically provides smallholders access to higher incomes through delivery of produce to agroprocessors or commercial farmers. However, in the case of canneries in Mushandike (see Dzingirai), contracts are observed to be verbal, vague on terms of payment, and sometimes 'exploitative'.<sup>285</sup> In the case of the green tea-leaf collection system in Honde valley (see Mtisi), contracts are formal but are ambiguous in content, and are sometimes ignored or disregarded when it suits the interest of the agroprocessor.<sup>286</sup> Indeed, according to Hungwe (see his perspective), land tenure and contract farming is sometimes insecure, but canneries can also be exploitative because smallholders lack alternative market opportunities. Beyond a robust legal system through which injury can be addressed through court of law, factor and product markets must be broadened and better integrated to provide these opportunities.<sup>287</sup>

What is required is not strictly replacement of the large-scale commercial sector by smallholders on the basis of formal resettlement models that lock-in land sizes, but rather an agrarian structure that seeks to instil integration where farmers, large or small, can right-size farm holdings and resource imbalances through secure and flexible land transfers (sales, rentals and sharecropping) and marketing contracts.<sup>288</sup> However, at least according to one commentator, more secure land contracts, while important, should not become a mechanism that bolsters or preserves the monolithic structure and power of the large-scale and corporate farming sector of the past. Can agrarian contracts unlock economic opportunity in Zimbabwe? Certainly—if trust and rule of law are restored (with clear, equitable and enforceable contracts) and ethical standards of business are widely invoked. Yet, as pointed out by Dzingirai, Mtisi, Hasluck, Nyambara and Hughes in this volume, the challenges are formidable.

---

absentee settlers leasing land back to farmers, and sharecropping arrangements being entered into between farmers and farm workers to avoid marketing regulations that require grain delivery to the GMB on onerous terms.

<sup>285</sup> For example, when the agroprocessor introduces and inappropriate new bean variety, but the tenant is forced to bear all the risk of crop failure (Dzingirai).

<sup>286</sup> For example, tenants bear the loss of deterioration in leaf quality when the agroprocessor fails to meet the pick-up or delivery schedules, or delivery points are too few in number or too remote to adequately serve the needs of outgrowers (Mtisi).

<sup>287</sup> Hungwe mentions IDEAA as one example of a program where key factors and markets are mainstreamed to secure rural livelihoods.

<sup>288</sup> Interestingly, Chatora observes that the model C scheme implemented after 1980 fared better than models A (villagized resettlement) or B (cooperative model). The Model C scheme theoretically incorporates a commercial core estate (typically managed by ARDA), which provided essential services (mechanisation, transportation, inputs and crop processing and marketing), and the settlers as outgrowers. While not applicable in all situations, such a model (if involving private sector ownership or management, even by the former landowner) could provide an alternative development pathway by enabling the continued employment of farm workers (Magaramombe), maintaining an integrated agricultural sector, and retaining management expertise to overcome capacity constraints. Unfortunately, very few farms were made available to this model between 1980-89. A distant variant is the Farmer Development Trust established in 1994 as a joint public-private sector initiative, which provides smallholders guaranteed access to inputs and markets (i.e., tobacco) in Model A schemes.

The simple truth is that Government has focused so intensely on reversing the unequal distribution in physical land assets that it has neglected property rights in land, and, without adequate tenure security, land is devoid of meaning. Tenure security has been undermined, and markets for land and bond financing have collapsed as rules are disregarded or selectively applied (Chigumete). It is one of the ironies of fast track land reform that black commercial farmers and women in Zimbabwe have been disadvantaged by the collapse of land markets and loss of agricultural markets including mortgage financing (Rugube et al; Petrie et al) at the same time that Government has committed itself to their advancement.

With economic regression has come the cry for more Government controls on market prices and availability that in turn act to encourage 'black' markets, drive up prices, and curtail the supply of services to new land reform beneficiaries. Government's ability to provide services in turn is eroded by the shrinkage in tax revenues, limiting its ability to provide services or implement the regulations it has set for itself. Lack of confidence sets in—lack of confidence in law, legal recourse, Government's ability to manage the economy, and the economy's ability to provide employment and livelihoods. The outcome is a downward spiral: as the economy sinks deeper into recession, Government seeks more controls, and more controls inevitably lead to more corruption, rights abuse, and yet more measures to ensure compliance that in turn lead to economic regress.

According to land reform beneficiaries, and based on anecdotal evidence in plenary discussions, Government's delivery of land services has been guardedly poor (Odero and Marimira), compounded by economic regress. This is not because Government is unaware of the problem or is unwilling to provide assistance, but it is because resources are limited, the need is great, and it is therefore unable to deliver on 'hefty' promises and responsibilities (see Gonese and Mukora). These are symptoms of an administrative economy; an economy where Government is trying to substitute administrative allocation for market forces, and where too little space is provided for private sector solutions. While Government may advance on a few fronts, with a few notable achievements, the larger concern is that it is on pace to lose the larger war against poverty, food insecurity and broad-based development because of tight controls and its limited reach.

#### **4. TRANSITION?**

There is a sense in some circles that Zimbabwe is in a state of transition from old to new, and that the current problems and economic malaise afflicting the country are temporary phenomena that will somehow be corrected with time. Indeed, something drastic had to be done to accelerate land redistribution (after all, land acquisition and resettlement had stalled from the mid 1980s to the early 1990s). And, land reform is neither easy nor pretty; it is a messy and complex business involving decades to achieve full success. Kinsey's chapter describes a theoretical dip in livelihoods immediately following resettlement, followed by income growth and asset accumulation in subsequent years. Might then the current downward spiral reverse itself after two or three years with a rebound of economic growth and political stability? There is reason to be doubtful this will occur without fundamental policy change.

Even if the downward spiral is reversed or halted without these fundamental changes, it would take a long time in coming, far longer than many Zimbabweans hope or anticipate. There are two fundamental problems with the transition.

First, as long as Government is in the business of acquiring and redistributing land without committing to some reasonable assurance of private ownership, tenure insecurity is going to prevail, and as long as tenure insecurity prevails, there is going to be a long-term negative impact on economic growth and livelihood. Perhaps land reform is now complete, as stated by one participant at the conference! But another participant remarked that land is scarce and in short supply, and Kinsey observes that the benefits from resettlement hold for only a few decades until population pressures begin to reverse the benefits.<sup>289</sup> It is worthwhile examining the experiences of China and Ethiopia. For decades, these countries engaged in land redistribution programs, shuffling and reshuffling land (mainly from large landholders to the landless or the state) to accommodate the needs of population growth, migration, industrialisation and urban development. With each new generation there is again the need to redistribute land, and people who were beneficiaries one day become victims as their land is redistributed to others.

The effects can be profound—under-investment for fear that assets accumulated through savings or hard work might be lost, over-investment with shoddy and haphazard infrastructure to demonstrate land use and strengthen land claims, or fear that the inheritance of one's children is in jeopardy—all a result of tenure insecurity invoked by Government through land redistribution programs to ensure equity, or enforcement of conditions on land use. As reported in the press and elsewhere, a number of relatively well-to-do or influential people have obtained land through fast track land reform, either through cash purchase or a public lease or grant issued by Government. While these people may hold comfort in becoming beneficiaries today, they are at risk tomorrow of becoming victims, unless Government brings its programs of compulsory acquisition to closure and commits instead to securing land rights of all landholders, regardless of race, gender or political affiliation.

Second, it is not clear whether or not fast track settlers will stay on the land and become permanent landholders. In the peri-urban areas, Marongwe provides case study evidence that beneficiaries feel rooted and intend to stay.<sup>290</sup> But, one Government official at the conference deemed their tenure status to be doubtful based on prevailing land use plans. Government

---

<sup>289</sup> Chatora observes the same phenomenon on small-scale commercial farms; three decades after resettlement of the original master farmers, some farms have been subdivided into sub-economical units. In addition, early Model A and accelerated resettlement schemes suffered from invasion by squatters and subdivision of arable plots when the population increased.

<sup>290</sup> Marongwe's chapter seems to conclude that fast track settlers are there to stay, and however haphazard their settlement, there is need to upgrade their rights and begin the process of investing in physical infrastructure and development. As with Sukume and Roth, this chapter underscores the major incoherencies in land use planning in Zimbabwe today; i.e., that informal settlement spearheaded by the executive branch of Government has proceeded with abandon while administrative (municipal) departments maintain strict land controls on land use and development.

outside peri-urban ‘squatter’ settlements has assisted land reform beneficiaries with land occupation, but maintains the right to expropriate and reallocate the land to another if use or investment does not comply with conditions imposed.<sup>291</sup> There also are reported cases of absenteeism—beneficiaries after occupying land returning to the city or communal areas because they lack the means to put their new land to productive use.<sup>292</sup>

Returning then to the central themes of restoring trust and securing property rights, the above two problems raise rather enormous policy questions. Are the goals of ‘land equality’ and the enforcement of ‘land use conditions’ to be the twin pendulums hanging over the heads of all Zimbabwean landholders waiting to subdivide landholdings or change landholders as circumstances or changes in Government policy dictate? Or are land and property rights to be secured? And from the practical standpoint of securing rights of land reform beneficiaries under fast track, to whom are they to be assigned if they are absent or non-permanent—the state, absentee beneficiary, the tiller, or the former commercial farmer? It is not immediately clear that the beneficiary (even if s/he can be identified as residing on the land) is the rightful landowner in all situations, and that the former landowner is not. The concern is that Government policy, whether wilfully or involuntarily, is positioning Government to become the landholder of both first and last resort with yet more management oversight (for land allocations and land use) added to its already strained resource base and capabilities.

#### **Phase 1: Re-establish property rights and institutions**

- Government commits to stopping compulsory acquisitions
- Government robustly asserts the land rights of all Zimbabweans regardless of race, colour and creed
- Government demonstrates commitment to defending and assuring these rights
- Government takes the lead and initiative in building and re-establishing trust through a deliberate policy of reconciliation in pursuit of peace, justice, and economic security
- National dialogue is strengthened among Government and stakeholders

## **5. POLICY PATH FOR MOVING FORWARD?**

### **Phase 1**

If trust is the problem, Government must commit to stopping compulsory acquisitions, restoring ethical foundations for business, securing peace and restoring rule of law (Hasluck,

---

<sup>291</sup> According to Chatora, under the Commercial Farm Settlement Scheme (Tenant Scheme) persistent non-performers were evicted.

<sup>292</sup> According to Chigumete, the take-up or occupancy rate is reportedly low due to lack of beneficiary capacity to undertake commercial farming, lack of secure tenure, and absence of institutional/market support.

Masendeke, Mukute). Government in addition must openly and robustly assert the land rights of all Zimbabweans regardless of race, colour and creed. Government must demonstrate a proactive commitment to defending these rights without prejudice, both immediately and widespread. Simply decreeing law would not be sufficient; law (and restoration of trust) is given visible weight only through consistent and steadfast state assurance of rights, sustained initiative, and enforcement with legal recourse through a truly independent court of law. Finally, dialogue must be established or strengthened among stakeholders, from local to national levels; the seeds for such dialogue have been sown with signs of emergence (Rwafa, not included in this volume).<sup>293</sup> Land policy interventions will be doomed to either sporadic success, stagnation or outright failure until there is faith and trust that Government seeks to assure rights and protect institutions rather than acting to deprive them.

## Phase 2

As early as possible, a comprehensive and detailed land audit (Mukute; Samuriwo) should be initiated by parliament, with the assistance of farmer organisations, that identifies for each

pre-1998 commercial farm or farmholding the following:<sup>294</sup>  
295

### Phase 2: Land rights validation and restitution

- Donors begin to recommit funds as rule of law is restored
- Land restitution process is implemented to restore invalid expropriations with recourse to (land claims) court. Redress paid through return of land or compensation
- Land Compensation Fund is established by donors to compensate owners, black and white, for land lost
- Land audits used to confirm beneficiary populations and their entitlements to help formalise claims

- names of all land claimants including, as relevant, the former owner of the commercial farm, farmworkers, and new land reform beneficiaries (both resident and absent),

<sup>293</sup> Rwafa describes the Zimbabwe Joint Resettlement Initiative (ZJRI) comprised of the CFU, other farmers' unions and private sector organisations that in 2001 submitted to government a proposal to offer 1.2 million hectares of land, resettle 20,000 settlers, withdraw litigation, and give dialogue a chance. Sadly, the momentum took steam, then the dialogue became irregular, inconsistent and finally collapsed. Nevertheless, Rwafa stresses that the process of dialogue among all stakeholders regardless of race, color and political affiliation is capable of finding a home-grown solution to the land question. Had ZJRI been given a chance, the land redistribution program would have been more organized, focused and peaceful. Other similar initiatives are demonstrating constructive dialogue and mutual respect, including the National Economic Forum, the Tri-partite Negotiating Forum, and the newly reconstituted Agrarian Reform Task Force.

<sup>294</sup> According to Samuriwo, the new land audit should reveal who is where on the land, what activities are being undertaken, whether the farmer is productive, and whether a single family is claiming two or more farms. Such an audit, however, needs to be accompanied by a policy framework guaranteeing landownership—e.g., one-man, one-farm, but subject to maximum farm size limits.

<sup>295</sup> According to Gasela (personal communications), the land audit must also include whether the farm has been legally acquired. Once rule of law has been restored, the land should belong to the holder of title, and there will be need for a process of rationalisation to remove land that has been allocated but 'never set foot upon', and right-sizing landholdings of beneficiaries to adjust for housing and land quality differences.

- size and location of their respective landholdings,
- size and nature of physical assets owned or claimed.

Such an audit should seek to comprehensively identify all land and property claims, even if these claims are multiple and overlapping. It is unrealistic to expect this process to proceed quickly, but with the ample land administration machinery that exists in Zimbabwe and commitment, such task need not be extraordinarily lengthy, particularly if assisted by civil society.

Once the land audit is completed, a second process of adjudication would be required to systematically regularise landholdings and reconcile overlapping land claims. In most situations, it will not be possible, desirable or even politically feasible to return to the pre-1998 agrarian structure. A solution is required that balances the compelling needs of the landless (land reform beneficiaries) in Zimbabwe with the interests of landholders who wrongfully have lost land and property.<sup>296</sup> A priori, decision rules would need to be reached and decided upon for determining restitution. Then, based on facilitated negotiations (by civil society organisations) between former commercial land holders and new land reform beneficiaries, land reform proposals would need to be prepared that formally identify all landholders, demarcate their holdings, identify resettlement needs, and determine the level of financial restitution based on pre-1998 fair market value. One shoe need not fit all! Any number of variants are possible, for example:

- The former landowner may relinquish his or her remaining land in exchange for financial compensation, in cash or an annuity, for land willingly given up.
- The former landowner may continue to farm privately on a smaller commercial farm, or may convert the farming operation into a company or equity share scheme with the owner and farmworkers as shareholders.
- The former commercial farmer may seek to exit farming entirely, deciding to accept financial compensation for his or her remaining land for resettlement purposes.
- Land reform beneficiaries may receive only land, or, instead of, or in addition to, may be offered a state-funded beneficiary grant (size to be determined) that enables him or her to give up the land for life in the city, a return to the communal areas, or for investment on the farm.<sup>297</sup>

---

<sup>296</sup> The land question in Zimbabwe is rooted in the colonial era, where the ancestral lands of black Zimbabweans were enclosed and expropriated from without by the former colonial government. With this history comes a moral obligation of the international community to help redress this historical wrong through meaningful land reform, but also to restore the rights of commercial farmers, both black and white, most of whom bought their properties with cash and long-term mortgage financing.

<sup>297</sup> While an option, careful attention would need to be given to implementation to ensure that land equity objectives are not compromised. For example, according to one commentator, such a strategy might be manipulated by commercial farmers, the well-to-do, or the influential, to acquire the land (and consolidate landholdings) while the former beneficiaries end up as the unemployed in cities or as squatters on the same farms.

A Land (Acquisition) Compensation Fund ought to be established by donors to compensate farmers, both black and white, for land lost through fast track land reform since 1998.<sup>298</sup> It was unreasonable in 1998 for donors and multi-lateral organisations to place the burden of land acquisition solely or even predominantly upon Zimbabweans via income transfers or taxation.<sup>299</sup> During this phase, donors would begin to recommit funds for restitution and resettlement as rule of law is restored.

Why should parties be willing to work toward a negotiated solution? First, a three to five year window might be established, within which the former landowner would be eligible for legal recourse and restitution, and the land reform beneficiary would be eligible for secure land rights (via title); proposals not submitted within this window would lapse in priority. There are other policy options: 1) maintain ceilings on farm numbers or farm size; 2) impose a highly progressive tax structure to encourage subdivisions; or 3) provide tax deferments to farms that willingly give land to farmworkers or beneficiaries. However, the economic malaise of the recent past provides the most cogent evidence of the failure to overcome the present political crisis and achieve both meaningful land reform and return to political stability and peaceful coexistence. It is doubtful that this outcome could be achieved without strong Government endorsement and leadership.

### **Phase 3**

A number of practices raise the disturbing prospect of Government becoming the repository of land in Zimbabwe. It is not unusual for Government to be the owner of last resort (as in the case of crown land). However, in Zimbabwe, there is the emerging risk of Government becoming the owner and operator of first resort, acquiring or controlling land through compulsory acquisition (Rugube et al). The Government of Zimbabwe, despite 20 years of resettlement, has failed to provide beneficiaries with secure land rights by title, lease or otherwise. As land is acquired or leased, Government reserves the right to retake possession of the land, if the holder does not abide by the terms of the lease. As Government acquires land through compulsory acquisition, land is held in stock until it can be redistributed either through public lease or sale.<sup>300</sup> Government continues to maintain landownership through ARDA estates and in the maintenance of state land.

---

<sup>298</sup> Alternatively, financing might be obtained through long-term mortgages on concessionary terms.

<sup>299</sup> According to Rogier Van den Brink and John Bruce (personal communications), the World Bank has recently changed its policy and is now able to finance land purchases. The US Government also made provision for financing land purchases under the Zimbabwe Democracy Act. The UK has financed land purchases in Zimbabwe since the 1980s.

<sup>300</sup> As noted by Chigumete, current lease agreements are not a reasonable substitute for title deeds that encourage financial institutions to lend to farmers. Such is not possible, as land formerly locked in the commercial farming sector is now locked in the hands of the State on terms that disable beneficiaries from trading in land. Reforms are handled by the political establishment to the exclusion of the private sector. Financial institutions in turn have rolled back support, leaving government as the sole supplier of inputs and support to resettlement farmers.

Government should convert all contested state land into 99-year leases that are automatically renewable. If there is concern about land speculation, a three to five year moratorium on land use might be imposed to ensure that beneficiaries are intent on farming, and that once intent is demonstrated the land is sold to the lessee on a

comparable market value with funding from cash or banking institutions.<sup>301</sup> The lessee may be given a deed of transfer or a 99-year lease. What is important, however, is that the lease be transferable and automatically renewable; at the end of the lease period, it should be at the landholder's discretion how the land is disposed.

During this phase, the emphasis should be on liberalising the land market: substantially easing sub-division constraints that constrain the downsizing of farms (Sukume and Roth), converting public land into privately held leases or grants (based on fair market value) that are easily transferable at low cost (Rugube et al), injecting capital into the financial system, and designing special credit facilities (Lyne and Darroch) that help to broaden the poor's access to resources and markets. This phase might also include the development of a formal leasing law that protects the interests of both lessees and lessors. All these measures are intended to restore and strengthen trust in land and financial market transactions in Zimbabwe.<sup>302</sup>

#### Phase 4

The large volume of land units created under fast track has put severe strain on the capacity of land and agricultural institutions to provide land services that are key to unlocking the expansion of land markets (Chigumete).<sup>303</sup> According to Chigumete, a reengineering process

#### Phase 3: Re-vitalise land markets

- Government converts all uncontested state land into permanent leases:
  - 3-5 year moratorium to demonstrate land use
  - Land sold to lessee on comparable market value
  - Lessee given title or a 99-year lease
  - Leases transferable and automatically renewable
- Liberalise markets (subdivision, deeds and surveying transactions costs, special credit facilities)
- Formal leasing law to protect rights of lessors and lessees

---

<sup>301</sup> It is possible, even likely, that some new beneficiaries will lack credit worthiness, warranting the need for a special credit facility that engenders financial discipline and capacitates the poor.

<sup>302</sup> Mlalazi asserts that there is no proof that subdivision regulations discourage subdivision applications, constrain private land market transactions, or prevent the downsizing of farms. Rather, Zimbabwe is relatively well-planned by developing country standards because of land use controls such as subdivision regulations. After all, the major cry against fast track resettlement today is that occupation preceded planning and infrastructural development. Nevertheless, Mlalazi too questions the use of viability assessments for predicating subdivision decisions both because of the income norms used and 'business plans not worth the ink they are written with'.

<sup>303</sup> According to Chigumete, functions such as land identification, land planning and information, and land survey and registration are affected by severe capacity constraints. There is lack of qualified or experienced personnel, duplication of functions, and lack of coordination and autonomy. Institutions are housed in different ministries, operate disharmoniously, are fast losing capacity and institutional memory, and have too few

is needed that removes systemic institutional inertia and invokes a new atmosphere of higher quality, lower cost, and speedy delivery of land to stabilise land tenure. Is devolution the answer? There does not appear to be consensus on this issue. Jacobs and Chavunduka seem doubtful on the feasibility of devolving land administration in Zimbabwe, while Mamimine urges the need for it and Chatiza develops an organisational framework based on Botswana's Land Board model to implement it. Mamimine's chapter seems cautious about including chiefs in land administration, while Chatiza's chapter seems to want to formalise, even enhance, their role. Ndlovu and Mufema also see the need for decentralisation and capacity-strengthening to deepen agrarian reform, but it is the Rural District Councils (not Land Boards) that are the principle agents for change. Central Government however has not been inclined to devolve resources or decision-making power to the RDCs (Chatiza; Kuwanda; Mamimine), which casts doubt on whether it would be inclined to do so for Land Boards (and the new costs entailed in their administration) in the future.<sup>304 305</sup>

#### **Phase 4: Devolve land administration**

- Establish a Land Commission at the national level to co-ordinate land policy development comprised of both Government and civil-society interests
- Confer upon this Commission broad powers to identify pathways and mechanisms for devolving land administration through further consultation
- Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the land bureaucracy to identify inefficiencies, overlaps and gaps, and advise concrete changes for enhancing the efficiency of the public sector
- Decide upon appropriate organisational mechanisms for securing land rights in rural areas
- Avoid the temptation to devolve at the expense of coherency. Keep changes modest and gradual to minimise the risk of further worsening delivery of land services in the short run
- Devolve land functions if they are cost-reducing or affordable on the basis of tax levies in rural areas

In many instances, it remains unclear what is being devolved in terms of specific functions and responsibilities. It is interesting that the Deeds Registry and Land Survey offices, which appear so prominent in some chapters (Mugabe and Magaya; Rugube et al; Sukume and Roth), seem to fade away in the discourse about devolution. Whatever form devolution takes, it should not be seen as simply decentralisation of Government administrative functions to

---

resources to support land and agrarian reform. Tax revenues have declined as commercial farming and agrarian structures have withered.

<sup>304</sup> Kuwanda asserts there are problems of sustaining infrastructure because it is handed over to RDCs who can neither expand nor maintain it, and there is no meaningful financial transfer from central Government to assist with the work. Resettlement farmers appear to be unwilling or unable to pay levies to the Councils, with the result that infrastructure is poorly maintained.

<sup>305</sup> Mamimini in particular documents the inclination of civil servants in rural land administration to be upwardly accountable to their superiors to the neglect of their clientele: 'transparency is one major casualty of self-serving agents ... in central government'.

local areas. In addition, it should provide formal mechanisms for increasing stakeholder participation in decision-making at all levels. And despite the largesse of the current land administration bureaucracy in Zimbabwe, there are others who feel it is Zimbabwe's 'sacred-cow' that should be left to stroll along as is.

The central problem is that fast track land reform and resettlement has so radically shifted the terrain of agrarian structure and development needs in Zimbabwe, that the old bureaucracy at times seems outmoded given present day realities, while the mountains of new demands dictated by beneficiaries seem insurmountable. The current bureaucracy of land administration seems to be coping at best and overwhelmed at worst by the immensity of the present rural development challenge. While the present day realities are asking ever more of Government to deliver, Government's resources will remain tight both due to constrained tax revenues and tight global demand for donor funding. Indeed, far too many chapters in this volume are asking Government (and civil society) to do more, when the harsh reality is that resources are likely to be sufficient only for much less.

So what is the appropriate development path for land administration in Zimbabwe? In short, it's difficult to say! There is need for both downsizing (in areas related to state management of agricultural land or farms, subdivision policy, land market controls, and oversight and development of land use planning), upsizing (in areas related to beneficiary support services and infrastructural development), and economising (right-sizing Government supply of services commensurate with demand for land services and the new fiscal order). A number of options are worth considering. Establish a land commission under the National Economic Forum with responsibility for coordinating, managing or overseeing the land policy framework, land administration, Land Compensation Fund, Land Resettlement Fund, and donor funding. This Commission, in addition, would be responsible for a process of consultation that might identify pathways for devolution and appropriate organisational forms in rural areas, whether they be land boards, RDCs, or some combination of both. Changes in land administration should be made commensurate with adequate review of cost and effectiveness, and be kept modest, to ensure that coherency of land administration and present delivery is not compromised by the urge to devolve. Finally, consider instituting a joint Government, civil-society forum that over time works on reducing tensions and increases the effectiveness of partnership between the two groups based on principles of mutual respect, transparency and inclusivity. However, according to Masendeke, this focus on devolution should not detract us from the point that land institutions operate better when there is a functioning and efficient central Government, for it is the state that must uphold rule of law, assure rights, and spearhead good governance.

## **6. COMMUNITY-LED LAND DEVELOPMENT**

A private land market involving purchases and sales will generally not benefit the poor because they are capacitated through lack of assets to purchase land, or to mobilise resources

on terms that are competitive with the non-poor. There is a great need to overcome capacity constraints in the communal and resettlement sectors.<sup>306</sup> As advised by Mundeiri, Kuwanda<sup>307</sup>, and Mukute, among others, training and extension is needed on social skills, business and farm management, development and implementation of business plans, marketing, maintenance of equipment, and soil and water conservation via both experiential and formal learning. Development of social capital is needed to both help new settlers articulate demands, be cognisant of their rights, and empower them to action. But as noted by Dube, resettled farmers under the Zvishavane Water Project are making impressive progress with limited resources based on 'self-help and self-reliance'; it is this dynamic that can and should be mobilised and expanded upon through support and facilitation provided by Government and civil-society organisations.

As Government seem inclined to recommend in 1998, efforts should be undertaken to upgrade land entitlements of beneficiaries with leasehold title (GOZ 1998); these should be of sufficiently long-term duration and be automatically renewable and transferable to secure

#### **Community-led land development**

- Upgrade land rights (after moratorium) with 30-year leases, automatically renewable, and transferable
- Establish land acquisition and resettlement fund with donor funding
- Award contracts to NGOs or RDCs working on behalf of beneficiaries to invest in human, physical and social capital while emphasising beneficiary choice, not type of resettlement model
- Establish a joint Government CSO forum to determine mechanisms of sharing tasks and responsibilities to better assist beneficiaries
- Government would remain responsible for public infrastructure, agricultural extension and Government-assisted land resettlement

land rights. In addition to the Land (Acquisition) Compensation fund mentioned earlier, the Government might consider establishing a Land Resettlement Fund with donor funding based on principles of awarding contracts to RDC's and civil society organisations who are working with beneficiaries to upgrade land and infrastructure, guided by beneficiary choice, not type of resettlement model. The emphasis given to extension needs and services is warranted (Kuwanda; Mundeiri; Ndlovu and Mufema), but far too little attention has been given to

---

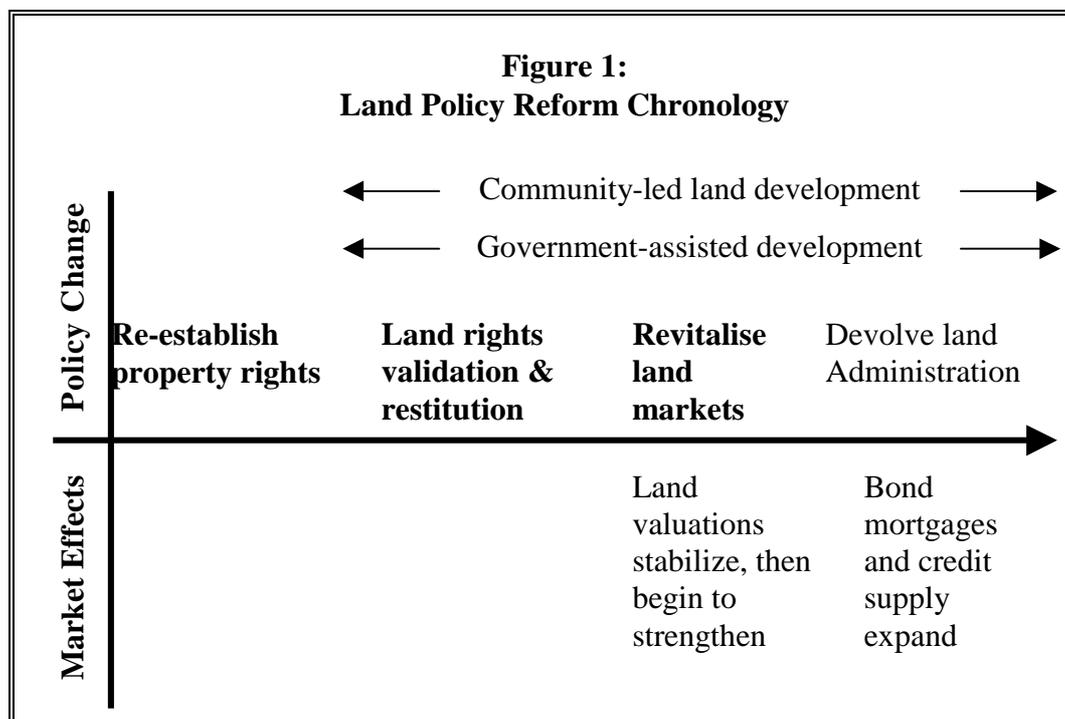
<sup>306</sup> These same constraints apply to the water sector where a weak and diffuse small- to medium-scale black farming sector is ill-equipped and inappropriately positioned to effectively assume its role in the country's new water policy because of capacity constraints and difficulties in devolving water rights, water planning and management (see Derman and Gonese).

<sup>307</sup> Past attempts at resettlement according to Kuwanda focused largely on material improvements (roads, water) at the expense of human capital and social capital development.

empowering beneficiaries and communities to assert their preferences outside the rubric of Government formal resettlement models (Masendeke; Mukute).

## 7. CHRONOLOGY

Throughout these phases, Government will remain responsible for public infrastructure and Government-assisted land resettlement and development. However, there is a need for a major policy change. The former phases identify chronological snapshots of policy priorities and recommendations. However, there also ought to be a certain chronology that ties these pieces together in a carefully constructed sequence. As noted earlier, the first phase requires re-establishing trust and rule of law, for these provide the necessary conditions for subsequent phases. In addition, donor funding is not likely to be forthcoming until rule of law is restored. Progress with initiating or advancing land policy and administration in subsequent stages is likely to hinge on how quickly and satisfactorily phase one is implemented.



Once, there is commitment to rebuild and strengthen institutions governing property rights, emphasis should probably be placed on land rights validation and restitution. Next there is need to revitalise land markets and finally devolve land administration. Caution is advised against making radical structural changes in land administration in the short-run to minimise the risk of collapse at the very time that the public sector focus on resolving macroeconomic imbalances and the agrarian decline are tantamount. Devolution, however, is advised once political and economic stability is regained and time and care have been given to the appropriate mechanisms.

If these measures are put in place, one ought to see the re-emergence of land valuations as land markets stabilise, which in turn will enable financial institutions once again to inject financial capital into rural areas. Views have been expressed elsewhere in this volume (see Murota for example) that Government parastatals will provide this role and have been and will continue to inject capital for rural development. However, Government cannot do this on a scale large enough to improve the livelihoods of people substantially. As in South Africa, private sector solutions can be designed whereby private sector and donor funding could enter with special credit facilities targeted to the poor that help smallholders minimise risk and defer payments to offset liquidity constraints until macroeconomic stability is restored (see Lyne and Darroch).

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter has in essence proposed the need for a simpler land bureaucracy in Zimbabwe that gives greater space to, and places greater reliance on, private sector solutions as principles for moving forward. There is no reason to believe that the ideas proposed here are the first-best policy path; critical comments provided by a number of commentators (Mlalazi; Samuriwo) suggest that it may not. However, even critics are in agreement that more dialogue, not less, is needed, and that such dialogue is possible despite big ideological differences. Nevertheless, it is advised that all involved again reconsider the three crosscutting constraints laid out earlier in order to reshape a land policy that is more effective in implementation: 1) incoherent policy; 2) lack of trust; and 3) transitional problems. Finding solutions that overcome these constraints will help to both accelerate the land reform program and begin to find a middle ground around which a land policy consensus can emerge.

## **REFERENCES**

- Roth, Michael. 1993. *A Critique of Zimbabwe's 1992 Land Act: Quasi-Market Versus Non-Market Options for Land Reform*. In *Beneath the Surface of Zimbabwe's Agricultural Revolution*, edited by M. Rukuni and C.K. Eicher. Harare: University of Zimbabwe's Publication Office.
- GOZ. 1998. *Land Reform and Resettlement Programme, Phase II: A Policy Framework*, June.