

LAND REFORM AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

IN

MASHONALAND EAST, ZIMBABWE

BLESSING MAKUNIKE

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Bloemfontein

Promoter: Professor Kwandiwe Kondlo

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The work presented in this thesis was carried out in Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe. The research was done during a period of serious political bickering and polarization amongst the main political parties in Zimbabwe and their various support bases, as well as the populace for whom land was one of the issues of concern. The period was also characterized by the economic down turn, with a rise in inflation, “black-marketing”, low production, fuel shortages, donor fatigue, and economic sanctions among other problems.

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DEDICATION

To my late father Collins, my mother Tracy, wife Sharon and children Collins Tafadzwa jnr.
and Jane Tatenda.

All of us must be good stewards of God's earth, which belongs to none of us but must be shared by all of us in a just and fair manner.

ABSTRACT

The study is an investigation into the linkage between, landownership and poverty alleviation in Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe. The focus is directed by the fact that in Zimbabwe, the poorest live in rural areas. The problem of rural poverty has been attributed, in part, to lack of access to land due to historical imbalances arising from colonialism. The objective of this study is to find out how the livelihoods of those who were resettled have been transformed. Despite heated debate among scholars on Zimbabwe's controversial land reform, a systematic investigation of the relationship between access to land and poverty alleviation in Zimbabwe is generally weak; consequently, there are gaps in the analysis of land occupation processes and what is required for sustainable agrarian livelihoods. Indeed, the programme of land reform is crucial to the resolution of rural poverty. It is, therefore, important that such a programme be implemented in a fair, just and sustainable manner in the interest of all the stakeholders within the ambit of the law and constitution of Zimbabwe.

The approach followed in the discussion can be described as moving from the macro to the micro in that the thesis covers broad but very important contextual issues about the political history of the land question in Zimbabwe and then narrows down to a discussion of land reform and poverty in Mashonaland East. The theoretical position of the study is that the land question in Zimbabwe is by and large, a political issue. The key argument is that distribution of society's scarce resources in Zimbabwe is primarily informed by political calculations rather than non-partisan concerns for alleviation of poverty at the grassroots of society. Land is finite and therefore a scarce resource and its redistribution has largely been informed by political calculations rather than consistent criteria to deal with the plight of the rural poor based on measured levels of need and poverty. The politicization of land reform in Zimbabwe has a lot to do with the reproduction of power of the ruling ZANU-PF political elites. Poverty in Zimbabwe emanates from lack of access by the poor majority to resources and other material means of life. The theoretical perspective is that government's decisions on who gets land leads to poverty as the vulnerable groups and less politically connected are not always prioritized for access to land.

The research paradigm used is the sustainable livelihoods approach, which is influenced by qualitative methodology. It emphasizes the complexity of rural class structures and the contingency of individual agency. This approach has, at its center, the individual or individual households, and tries to understand how each household derives its livelihood. The theory of justice is also partially used to inform the assessment of the social character of land reform beneficiaries, in relation to grievances, the procedure of the reform, the social organization of beneficiaries, and the intended impact of the reform.

Because of the economic and political environment in which the study was done, simple random sampling was used to select respondents for discussions and interviews. This approach was justified because it gave each unit an equal chance of being chosen. But the study is based, on the overall; on a case study method hence the findings may have limited generalization to contexts outside Mashonaland East.

The narrative of the Zimbabwean state is that the land reform programme met its targets. Resettlement benefited a broad set of people. However empirical evidence examined during the research shows that there was no significant reduction in rural poverty levels, beneficiary selection was not done in a just, fair and transparent manner and productivity was generally low.

The thesis argues that the land reform programme in Zimbabwe is in a crisis characterized by a lack of transparency and presided over by a state that is itself unclear about the redistribution strategy that it wants to pursue. There is an ambiguous implementation plan as well as inadequate capacity enhancing policy parameters that are vital to enable a fair and objective evaluation of the whole programme.

Key Terms

Land reform, historical imbalances, land redistribution, equity, poverty alleviation, beneficiaries selection, stakeholders, post-resettlement support.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADA	Agricultural Development Authority
AFC	Agricultural Finance Corporation
Agritex	Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
BSAC	British South Africa Company
CAMFIRE	Communal Areas Management for Indigenous Resources
CAs	Communal Areas
CFU	Commercial Farmers Union
CSO	Central Statistical Office
DDF	District Development Fund
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCT	Farm Community Trust
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GoZ	Government of Zimbabwe
ICFU	Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union
ICA	Intensive Conservation Area
LAA	Land Apportionment Act
LSCF	Large Scale Commercial Farms
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MLAWD	Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Water Development
MLGRUD	Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development
NGO	Non – Governmental Organization

NLHA	Native Land Husbandry Act
PDC	Provincial Development Committee
RDC	Rural District Council
RDCC	Rural District Development Committee
SSCF	Small Scale Commercial Farms (Formerly African Purchase Areas)
TTL	Tribal Trust Lands
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
WADCO	Ward Development Committee
WLLG	Women and Land Lobby Group
ZANU (PF)	Zimbabwe African People's Union (Patriotic Front)
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZFC	Zimbabwe Farmers' Union.
ZIMSTAT	Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency
ZNWLA	Zimbabwe National War Liberators Association

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Contextual Background

Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, bringing to an end what started as administration by the British South African Company (BSAC, 1890 – 1923), followed by self-government (1923- 1967) and the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI, 1965-1980) (Moyo, 1995). Various pieces of legislation, such as the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council 1898, the Land Appropriation Act 1930, the Native Husbandry Act No. 52 of 1951 and the Land Tenure Act No. 55 of 1969, divided land and apportioned it according to racial categories. The pieces of legislation forced the black peasants into marginal areas and reserved the best agricultural land for whites, such that at independence, 42% of the country was owned by 6,000 (white) commercial farmers (Bertus de Villiers, 2003:6). The colonial agrarian structure therefore consisted of two distinct sub-sectors: a commercial sector dominated by large-scale landholdings in the hands of whites: and a black peasant sector, comprising smallholdings and common grazing areas.

During the settlement negotiations held at Lancaster House (1979), concessions by the white administration, in Zimbabwe, were minimal. As noted by several authors (Moyo, 1995; Cusworth, 1992; Bertus de Villiers, 2003; Scoones et al, 2010), the Lancaster House Agreement set the terms for all land reform policy in the first decade of Zimbabwe's independence. Given the restrictions imposed by the Lancaster House Constitution (1979), much of the land reform of the first decade after the attainment of independence was aimed at resettlement for black families. The original, largely political objective of the programme placed great emphasis on welfare and poverty reduction (Kinsey, 1999).

The programme resettled more than 70,000 individual families into clustered villages and allocated each family a 0.4 residential plot, a uniform 5 hectares of arable land and the right to use a variable amount of grazing land on a communal basis (Kinsey, 1999:180). Scoones et al (2010) and Kinsey (1999) note that the criteria originally used to choose beneficiaries emphasized the selection of poor families, in the communal areas, returning war veterans and those displaced by the war.

Although Kinsey (1999) argues that the welfare of the families that moved into resettlement areas dramatically improved in relation to families that remained in the communal areas, Bertus de Villiers (2003) contends that very often beneficiaries, being individuals who had few assets of their own, found it difficult to get started in resettlement areas. Combined with the budgetary, administrative and logistical difficulties faced by the resettlement programme, a new narrative emerged, which suggested that the programme was merely a social welfare sideline only useful for political purposes. It is further argued that another aspect of the resettlement programme was that the acquired land was owned by the state and not by the farmers or community responsible for working on the land. In strictly legal terms, the state was, therefore, the main beneficiary of the land reform programme (Bertus de Villiers, 2003: 10). Although an occupancy permit was issued, it fell short of secure tenure in the form of a lease or freehold.

Kinsey (1999) brings an interesting dimension to the debate on the resettlement programme. The argument is that the resettlement programme was planned in the atmosphere of the *growth with equity* paradigm, then prominent in development thinking of the late 1970s and

early 1980s, and the declared objectives of the programme were couched in rhetoric matching this theme. This “growth with equity” debate, in development economics, at the time showed, however, that many economists question whether growth and equity are not antithetical, their premise being that a period of sharp inequity must be tolerated in order to allow accumulation of capital for investment (Kinsey, 1999; 180). This makes the choice of measures of the welfare gains from resettlement difficult, because of the need to factor in not only indicators that quantify dimensions of economic performance, but also those that tell us something about the distribution of growth.

On the part of the government, by the end of the first decade, it was felt that land redistribution, by way of the resettlement programme, had created sufficient political stability to warrant a shift in emphasis away from the landless towards those who had demonstrated a capacity to accumulate (Tshuma, 1997: 136; International Crisis Group, 2000). The government felt the need to place emphasis on economic returns. It promised a land tax to discourage speculative holdings and a commission to examine land tenure issues. It also made statements about reducing foreign and absentee land ownership and limiting the number of farms that an individual or company could own.

A new land policy agenda was developed for the post Lancaster House Constitution era. The Government legislated the introduction of its new policy in two phases: first, by amending the constitution and; second; by new legislation in terms of the constitution. Amendment of section 16 (Bill of Rights) of the Constitution, and the subsequent Land Acquisition Act 1992, allowed for expropriation of white-owned rural land (Moyo, 1995; Tshuma, 1997;

Bertus de Villiers, 2003). Broadly, the “willing-seller willing-buyer” principle was abandoned, in favour of compulsory acquisition with compensation, based on the original purchase price and value of permanent improvements.

Two important issues about this new land policy should be pointed out. First, with the rise of political opposition from the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), and the need to regain political ground in the rural areas, the land issue became a rallying point for the Government. Second, Government socialist rhetoric was slowly disappearing in favour of capitalist principles. Moyo (1995) argues that this saw the emergence of the black elite, which was eager to gain from the system, ahead of the landless peasants. The ruling elite also became part of a complex web of land grabbing, in which they were allocated land ahead of landless peasants (Cusworth, 1992). The Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) expanded its ranks to include approximately 300 new black farmers, of which at least 10 were cabinet ministers (Bertus de Villiers, 2003; 13). This, in turn, increased its influence and lobbying ability with government (i.e. behind the scenes commodity price setting and general land policy direction). The “scramble” for land, by the elites in government, and the corruption that accompanied the unchecked taking and allocation of land, meant that any notion of an orderly process of land reform was replaced with farm invasions and forced seizures (Bertus de Villiers; 17).

Scoones, et al (2010) observe that 1997 was a crucial year in Zimbabwe’s land policy, in a number of respects. A new opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), was formed out of a largely urban-based trade union movement, but with support from white

businessmen and white commercial farmers. The Government was also forced, in the same year, to make large, unbudgeted payouts, to war veterans who were demanding compensation for their role during the liberation war. The Zimbabwe National War Liberators Association (ZNWLA) was to become a key actor in subsequent events of farm take-overs. In the midst of a rapidly deteriorating economic situation, political confusion and intense debate generated by the constitutional referendum and the run-up to the delayed 2000 elections, land invasions started across the country. (Moyo, 2001; Bertus de Villiers, 2003; Scoones, et al.2010). The Government seemed to legitimize the chaos with an election manifesto dubbed “land is the economy, the economy is land”.

The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) introduced an accelerated resettlement programme named “Fast Track” in 2000. There seemed to be confusion regarding the exact definition and scope of the fast track resettlement programme among Zimbabweans. Bertus de Villiers (2003) also notes that Zimbabwe’s Parliament rushed through a number of items of legislation, to place Britain under an obligation to pay compensation for agricultural land compulsorily acquired for resettlement and legalizing expropriation, at short notice, in the hope that the land reform process could be faster, cheaper, uncomplicated and less legalistic.

Under the “fast-track” resettlement programme, about 80% of the former large-scale white commercial farms were re-distributed to a broad base of beneficiaries, including politicians, senior government officials, employed and unemployed urbanites and peasants. Two important arguments are worth noting. On the one hand, the government has maintained that the land reform programme was a success in so far as its evaluative focus has largely been on

the scale of land allocation. The Government has also insisted that the root cause of the poor performance in land-use today has been the external sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe since 2000, combined with three droughts (during the 2001 to 2003 period) and “sabotage” by various actors in the form of the remaining white commercial farmers, commercial banks, through their reluctance to fund farmers, and some input suppliers with an interest in profiteering.

On the other hand, the situation on the ground, as aptly illustrated by Scoones, et al (2010), was that as people settled on the land, the effects of the wider economic troubles began to have an impact. For example, in 2008, with the collapse of the exchange rate, and the devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar, and rising inflation, the formal economy was under stress. Desperate attempts, by the then Reserve Bank Governor, to effect price controls and regulations, which were implemented with the backing of the police and security services, were largely ineffectual. Government was bankrupt, shops were empty and agricultural commodity markets were driven underground and most businesses shut down. Those business-people who had earlier been eager to provide services in the resettlement areas: shops, transport, grinding mills etc., closed down and were unable to run their businesses. There were also highly contested parliamentary and presidential elections and widespread violence.

On 15th September 2008, a “Global Political Agreement” was signed by the three principal political parties in Zimbabwe (ZANU-PF, MDC-T, and MDC-M), paving the way for an inclusive government, which was established in February 2009. The land issue and rural

poverty remains part of the agenda of the inclusive government. However, Scoones, et al (2010) note that none of the political parties has a clear strategy. While a land audit is a plausible starting point, senior politically connected figures (allegedly, including the first family), continue to hold multiple farms in contravention of the law; land grabbing also continues sporadically. The issue of compensation, from Britain, remains a thorny issue. This has been so ever since the infamous 1997 letter from Clare Short (the then Minister responsible for International Development in the Labour Government in Britain) refusing to accept responsibility for compensation.

The emerging question is whether the dualistic pattern, bequeathed by colonialism, of two contrasting sectors, one involving a large number of poor small holdings and few large-scale land-holdings has disappeared, or is it re-emerging with new forms and a de-racialization of ownership patterns? The policy question is how the government hopes to fulfill the original broad objective, to return land to the indigenous majority and eradicate poverty, against the danger of perpetuating the same imbalance in favour of a few black elites. Zimbabwe's land question is also continuously changing in response to a shifting Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) land policy, which is inconsistently implemented, as well as hesitant stakeholder and donor consultancy and support. Against the above, the study seeks to investigate the role of land reform in the fight against poverty in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. Mashonaland East province was selected because it has prime farming land and also has a lot of farms that were taken by GoZ for redistribution.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

There is need for an empirical analysis of the relationship between land reform policy design and implementation, and its long-term effects on poverty alleviation. Moyo has interrogated the land question in Zimbabwe with sustained interest. However, the potential gains for poverty alleviation that arise from land reform have not been explicitly discussed. Most debates critique the short-term negative manifestations, such as land disputes, agricultural decline and the electoral (mis)fortunes of competing political parties. The tendency is to subordinate the land issue to “good governance” and procedural issues, without empirical analysis of the wider benefits that accrue from broad-based smallholder access to land. The new knowledge generated by the research is likely to contribute additional insights on the social and economic impacts of land reform in Zimbabwe.

1.3 Argument and Thesis Objective

The thesis argues that a properly designed and implemented land reform programme can lead to poverty alleviation and restoration of social justice. The focus of the development and poverty alleviation agenda should be on land reform. It is only a society that has achieved reform sufficiently radical and egalitarian, to eradicate conditions of social differentiation in the countryside that is able to alleviate poverty and relative deprivation.

In Zimbabwe, poverty is often referred to as “inability to afford”. The Poverty Assessment Sample Survey conducted in 1995 by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare defined poverty as “the inability to afford a defined basket of consumption items (food and non-food) which are necessary to sustain life” (Poverty Assessment Study, 1997:

xix). Traditionally, the sort of households that are considered to be poor, in rural areas, are measured in terms of low incomes.

The 1995 Poverty Assessment Study Survey, however, highlighted that poverty was not simply a matter of incomes. It is a symptom of embedded structural imbalances which manifest themselves in all domains of human existence. It is correlated with political, social and economic dimension of deprivation. Poverty in Zimbabwe is compounded by people's lack of access to land and other resources, which are needed to sustain livelihoods. The relationship between access to land and poverty is that as access to land decreases (through marginalization or exclusion), poverty increases.

In this regard, land reform is necessary to re-configure the dualistic and unequal structure that was inherited from the colonial regime and which was itself a structural cause of poverty. Broad-based land redistribution allows larger numbers of people to participate and benefit from the agricultural sector. In Zimbabwe, the majority of the rural poor depend primarily on agriculture for social reproduction. In such a context, access to land and land-based resources is important.

Moyo (1995) provides the most comprehensive treatment of the land question in Zimbabwe, employing a political economy methodological approach. Yet, various other writers (Palmer, 1977; Moyana, 1984; Gaidzanwa, 1988; Tshuma, 1997; Rukuni 1994) have contributed immensely to the subject from historical, class, gender and race perspectives. The major analytic gap is the relationship between rural poverty and land redistribution and ownership.

Moyo (2000) concurs that existing analysis of peasant land demands has been focused mainly on descriptions of peasant land use inefficiencies, based on comparatively lower yields in communal areas and land degradation *vis-à-vis* commercial farmers. Such analysis, using inconsistent comparative frameworks of output, does not identify the nature and causes of low productivity and also fails to adequately explain their productivity profiles.

The thesis acknowledges the work done by Scoones, et al (2010), which challenges the strong technocratic vision of the “viability” of agriculture, with the dominant model being one based on commercial farming. This vision is akin to what Hebinck, Derick and Kondlo (2011) refer to as “agricultural expert systems”, where technocrats play an important role in the design of land reform projects and their beneficiaries. The assumption is to combine claims to knowledge with a set of practices by which development of the agricultural sector should be directed. This knowledge is neither neutral nor objective (Hebinck, et al 2011: 223)

Associated with this vision, small farms, even if accepted as part of the mix, are expected to function like “small big farms”, rather than as enterprises which are part of a wider livelihood portfolio. Scoones et al (2010) point out that this is compounded by further biases introduced from standard economic analysis of farm production. Most economic assessments of production, inputs, labour, capital investments and output, are based on standard measures usually derived from large-scale commercial models. This misses the complexities found on most small scale farms, and artificially separates farm production from wide livelihoods.

In challenging myths about policy narratives on Zimbabwe's land reform, Scoones et al (2010: 9-10) identify four important scenarios. First, a focus on marketed output, through formal channels, misses the array of barter exchange and informal, sometimes illegal, transactions that go on. Second, focus on employed labour does not assess the different informal arrangements for acquiring labour, through family links, communal arrangements, exchanges and other informal systems. Third, focus on farm-based production of crops and livestock misses the array of non-farm harvesting of wild products and natural resources. Fourth, simple metrics and standard measures underestimate the value of total output and the livelihood implications of this for smallholder settings. The argument is that a large range of livelihoods options become open to beneficiaries of land reform.

It is the objective of the thesis to offer a theoretical and empirical assessment of the relationship between access to land (through the land reform programme) and the alleviation of poverty in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe.

Analysis of the findings of this study is guided by the theoretical assumption that the land question in Zimbabwe is a political question. The research problem under study exists because politics defines how society distributes scarce resources for the common good. The theoretical influence of Harold Lasswell is important because it defines politics as an arena of interests, where decisions are made on who gets what, when and how.

Land reform in Zimbabwe is about land redistribution, and so political decisions have to be made on who should get the land and how the process should be implemented. These

decisions on who should get land and how they should get it are related to the poverty alleviation debate since denial of access to land by some sections in society leads to poverty.

The generalization about the nature of good life is that equitable access to land can lead to poverty alleviation. Since land is a contentious issue in Zimbabwe, the process by which conflict concerning who should access land and the interests of different groups in society is settled politically. Therefore the theoretical basis for analyzing the findings of this study is that those who exercise power and influence, used government or the state to develop and implement a land reform programme that is favourable to certain groups but which leads to poverty among others.

1.4 Justification of the Study

Poverty has increasingly become an area of immediate concern for the GoZ, donor agencies and civil society, due to the failure of previous policies to bring about economic development and secure livelihoods. The traditional poverty reduction measures, such as the transfer of free poverty alleviation items (especially food and clothing), have not been effective and sustainable. Furthermore, there is a general consensus among theorists of agrarian reform that post-independence strategies put too much hope on rapid state-led development and economic growth. Yet, there is significant and growing empirical evidence that well-targeted land reform programmes have a direct and meaningful impact on poverty reduction. This study, therefore, seeks to contribute to the continuing process of policy dialogue and consensus building on programmes to alleviate poverty in rural Zimbabwe.

The study is justified and rationalized by the changing debate on poverty alleviation. Moyo (1995) observes that in the past, debate on Zimbabwe's formal poverty alleviation strategy was dominated by aggregate, econometric and statistical approaches, prescribed by market-led strategies. Until 2000, the discourses on poverty oriented land reform tended to be conceived within narrow terms of the value of incomes from commercial farming, rather than on the wider benefits that would accrue from broad-based smallholder access to land for improved farming and security of tenure. These debates tended to over-estimate the productive role of large scale farmers, through evidence of their dominant contribution to national agricultural markets and foreign currency earnings, within a macro-economic strategy, and underplayed the sometimes apparent underutilization of land by large-scale farmers and the increasing demands for land by peasants (Moyo, 2000). Contemporary debate acknowledges the local socio-economic processes of the land reform agenda. There is need to balance political, social, economic and technical considerations in order to improve access to land for the majority of the poor. The study therefore constitutes a contribution to the store of critical knowledge on land reform and poverty eradication and could also inform advocacy in the search for socio-economic development strategy for rural households in communal areas.

Poverty, in Zimbabwe, is primarily a rural phenomenon, although urban and peri-urban poverty has grown since the 1990s. The current thinking on poverty alleviation, as captured in the World Bank report (2000) emphasizes three important aspects: promoting opportunity, facilitating empowerment, and enhancing security by reducing the poor's vulnerability. Theoretically, this study suggests that there is wider scope for alleviating rural poverty,

through expanding opportunities for the poor to access and own assets such as land, develop their land-use skills and remove discrimination based on race and political affiliation.

In summary, the study is a contribution to the advancement of knowledge and growing literature on land ownership and its impact on poverty alleviation and sustainable development for the rural poor. It thus has both practical and theoretical relevance.

1.5 The Study Area

Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe was selected for the case study. The province was selected because it is characterized by high population density, which makes it a potential environmental stress area and a hive of political struggle related to land ownership and access. This presents a unique socio-economic and political context for a variety of processes, including in- and out- migration, seasonal labour movements, technology transfers, and land and resource conflicts. A detailed profile of the province is presented later.

1.6 Thesis Structure

The thesis consists of eight chapters. Chapter two provides information on how the research was carried out. Chapter three provides the salient features of the concepts of land reform and land tenure. It draws from literature to show that in order to achieve poverty alleviation and promote sustainable development, land reform must deliver equity, social justice and security of land rights in the rural areas.

The main research areas are covered in chapters four, five, six and seven. Chapter four gives a historical context of the land issues in Zimbabwe. Social injustice and imbalances in land ownership in colonial Zimbabwe, which are the source of structural poverty, are discussed. The chapter shows that expropriation of land for white settler agriculture produced land pressures within the communal areas, where indigenous peasants and black small-scale farmers had insufficient access to land and other natural resources, and little state support to sustain their livelihoods. It also shows that the legal framework defining land tenure is a product of colonialism, and that with the transition to independence, many injustices and inequalities that were characteristic of the colonial period were carried into the post-colonial setting.

Subsequent chapters look at the resettlement policy programme from 1980 to the present. Land reform policy in the 1980s, aimed at the restitution of past land alienation, (promoting equity in land rights in order to attain political stability, met with mixed success. By the end of the first decade of independence, the fiscal burden of providing agricultural support services and food subsidies resulted in a government financial deficit. Macro-economic reforms also had major effects on formal sector employment and agricultural prices.

Chapter five discusses post-independence land policy in Zimbabwe. It traces the scientific and ideological shifts in public policy formulation and implementation of land reforms and the impact on social justice and poverty alleviation. The strength and weaknesses of the government of Zimbabwe's land reform programme are presented. The chapter shows that after the first decade, the market-based land reform process floundered, failing to deliver

sufficient land, and delivering land of low agricultural potential. In the 1990s, the failures of the economic reform process, and of land reform, resulted in increasing poor relations between the GoZ and donors. The Government of Zimbabwe realized that continued pursuance of donor-assisted policies (which was slow) would undermine its support base. This resulted in the GoZ bowing to pressures for accelerated land reform and giving state support to a process of land occupation, which became the basis for a “fast track” process of land redistribution.

This chapter assesses and debates public policy performance since 2000 in the area of land and poverty alleviation. The controversial fast track resettlement programme, international perceptions of poor governance, the crisis of the balance of payments, and the emergence of the parallel economy, negatively affected livelihoods. The disparity between land reform policy design and implementation is also discussed.

Chapter six presents the profile of Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. The empirical outcome of land redistribution in Mashonaland East province: in terms of publicity, ownership patterns, productivity, and public and stakeholders’ perceptions are presented in chapter seven. This informs the wider debate about the legitimacy of the land reform process, including whether it was “pro-poor” and the nature and extent to which inequalities have been removed, retained or even re-created. The concluding chapter, chapter eight, suggests that far from promoting equity and social justice or a “win-win” scenario, the land reform programme in Zimbabwe has resulted in a process of accumulation of land that threatens the livelihoods of the poor. Increasingly, land and other common property resources were

allocated to the private sector, the ruling elite and other privileged and politically connected groups, such as war veterans. The proportion of the “poor” that gained access to land was limited and the communal areas were not de-congested. This coupled with the violation of landowners’ rights during the land takeovers, the neglect of the plight of farm-workers, the abuse of natural resources on resettled farms, and limited stakeholder participation, largely point to the politicization of the land reform process by the GoZ.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A synthesis of qualitative data collection methods was used to form part of an original interrogation of the linkage between land reform and poverty alleviation in Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe. The study employs qualitative research methodology because of the complexity of the actors involved in the investigation and the diverse institutional dynamics. The research is biased towards greater use of qualitative methods using a variety of techniques, such as a review of primary/administrative literature, a review of secondary data, personal interviews and rapid rural appraisals.

The holistic and inductive approach is justifiable because human beings, the subject of this study, live in a world which has meaning to them and because human behavior is intelligible in ways that non-human objects are not. Qualitative methodology helps in the understanding of the complex political, ecological, sociological and cultural situations that the study is dealing with. It provides an in-depth understanding of the perspectives, attitudes and behavior patterns of the target population, which would not have been fully captured by other modes of data gathering.

The literature review identifies the historical context of the land reform programme and tracks the ideological shifts in the post-independence GoZ land policy. It reveals the tension of balancing elite interests against the original objective of pro-poor redistribution for poverty alleviation. An important dimension is that the control of the state, through its key instruments of policy and force, shaped the allocation outcomes of the land reform programme after the first decade of independence. The review also exposes the various

debates on the legitimacy of the land reform programme and policy implementation, thereby also raising new questions on the appropriateness of present theoretical assumptions and policy rationalization.

2.1 Review of Primary Data

Institutional records studied include; Government Land Policy documents, National Development Policies, official statistics and Rural District Council minutes. (However, unlike secondary sources (i.e. library, archive etc.), I acknowledge that there are serious defects in official statistics which were available. They are a by-product of administration. Government development documents often lack reliable data on basic population statistics and indicators of development such as agricultural production or data on unpaid family labour and various occupational categories. Government statistical offices have developed slowly, and on a limited scale, according to what the government could afford to spend on information gathering. More basic economic needs have to be met first. The nature of social problems, with masses of people living in appalling social conditions, is more intractable than in the developed world, and creates major difficulties for social enquiry. Politics is more often the order of the day than accurate statistics.

Government files that were accessible were: results of the 1997 census of communal and irrigation schemes; agricultural production on small scale farms; and crop production in resettlement schemes. These files were accessed at the Central Statistical Office and the Department of Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services. Whilst I was able to discern

the overall broad picture in terms of the figures of agricultural output, some of the reports are old and are also very quantitative.

2.2 Review of Secondary Data/Desktop Research

Information on the broad view of land reform and poverty reduction was collected from the library and internet sources. Newspapers and the *New Farmer* magazine were accessed from the library. Internet sources used were: www.zim.gov.zw, www.africa.ufl.edu (online journal for African studies), www.fingaz.co.zw, www.hrforum.org, www.theherald.co.zw, www.thezimbabweindependent.co.zw. The common issues raised were that land reform was a success and that the beneficiaries, often referred to as the “new farmers,” had proved critics of the reform programme wrong, by being productive. Wide coverage was also given to new state intervention support to the agriculture sector, through the special Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement. These sources supported the argument that, in rural areas, the solution to poverty is land ownership. However, there was no reference to policy design and implementation. There was also little reference to new patterns of agricultural production and marketing patterns, new class relations, accumulation processes, and social relations of production.

Review of secondary data helped to identify and understand the research problem. It was also very useful, as an independent source of information and as a check on possible survey biases, to improve survey estimates and help draw conclusions that can be extrapolated.

2.3 Sample Survey Methods

The sample provided a flexible data collection method that was adapted to the study requirements. The population (entire set of relevant units of study) was defined as residents of Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. A detailed discussion of the study population is provided in chapter 6 (sections 6.7 to 6.11). The sampling frame was comprised of all rural households in the province. Since the concern is about poverty and to an extent equity, the basis for a frame of wider coverage is that “poverty in Zimbabwe is more prevalent in the rural areas with 75% of households with income per person below a level sufficient to provide basic needs” (Poverty Assessment Study, 1997: xix).

Field research was conducted between November 2008 and September 2009. A written request by the researcher to the then provincial Governor at the beginning of 2008 for official permission (often referred to as clearance) to do fieldwork was not granted. At the time of concluding fieldwork, the new Governor designate (appointed on 26th August 2008) had not yet taken office as the appointment of provincial Governors was one of the issues which were being contested in the negotiations for an all inclusive government between the three main political parties in Zimbabwe (ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC-N). Cash and fuel shortages which were experienced in the country during the time of the study also made it difficult to properly plan for regular field trips. Because of the presidential election campaigns (between March and June 2008) and the disputed election results, the environment was politically charged and an outsider was always viewed with skepticism in the countryside.

A number of respondents (outside government departments), large enough to permit generalization, (about 300), was selected as the sample. The sampling units were defined by the households or individuals who were interviewed and whose answers formed the data presented and analyzed in Chapter 7.

The sampling procedure involved random selection of respondents. The simple random sampling design was used to pick the sample units. All units had the same probability of being included in the sample (n/N). An interviewer-administered questionnaire was used. (See appendix “A”).

The actual data solicited by the interviews included: socio-economic and demographic features of the households, their investments on the land, their asset base, labour processes, agricultural production, financial and income data, livestock and draught power data, farm practices and available extension services data.

The survey was, therefore, an attempt to provide broad indications of the situation regarding land reform and poverty levels. This would help to fill the identified gap in our understanding of land problems and social reproduction among the rural poor.

The choice of the survey research design was to minimize costs and time. Data was collected about the same characteristics from multiple respondents, which provides a “snap-shot” of how things are at a specific time. It also enabled the researcher to examine the situation and

describe important factors associated with that situation. Data on the explored aspects of the situation was summarized to provide answers to the original research question.

However, the weakness is that all the respondents did not have the same understanding of the questions asked in the survey. The predetermined list of questions also, at times, tended to simplify the complex situation and often assume, sometimes wrongly, that respondents feel free to report their opinions, as well as having a certain level of communication skills and reliable memory recollection. Another limitation was the non-response, especially among the less educated. This was so especially on the legal aspects of implementation of land reform

To deal with the challenges faced, regular visits to the rural areas gave the opportunity to pursue a variety of informal interviews with officials and locals, and to attend public meetings in rural areas. These sources of information also helped to obtain a wide range of views and opinions on household data, and local practices to access land, while focusing on poverty alleviation. During the period of extended fieldwork between January and September 2009 interviews and discussions were done with government officials, as a way of also getting information from another sample of the population which was assumed to know most about the subject (see Bibliography). The researcher found this quite useful in this instance since no statistical inference was required.

In addition to household survey data, interviews and other secondary data sources utilized in this work, the study also benefited from media sources of information. Press cuttings on various events, speeches on problems associated with land distribution, conflict, acquisition,

resettlement, and other local problems, and opinions of experts and officials, were collected. These cuttings provide insights into official, local, parliamentary and scientific debates, grievances and strategies, adopted by various actors in response to the land issue and poverty problem in Mashonaland East province.

2.4 Research Ethics

Two issues arise: firstly, as noted by Mason (1996), because of the complexities of research ethics and because there is unlikely to be one clear ethical solution, a practical approach to ethics, which involved asking myself an “unfair” question, was appropriate. The unfair question was “what is the purpose of this research?” The answer includes not just the advancement of knowledge and understanding, or the advancement of the interests of a particular group which may be diverse or contested, but also includes factors to do with personal gain, such as the achievement of a higher degree. The researcher was thus aware of this wider context in which respondents could place or view the study. The researcher was also able to identify and strike a balance between the potentially complex range of interests which touched upon this work. All respondents were informed that the results of the survey were for academic purposes only.

Second, the researcher was aware that “the ethics of social science research is about creating a mutually respectful, “win-win” relationship, in which participants are pleased to respond candidly and valid results are obtained”(Brewer and Miller, 2003,95) Therefore, the ethical guidelines that informed this study were: voluntary consent, informed consent by way of

explaining the background to the study, and protecting the identity of participants, which was promised and done by not matching names with responses.

The researcher was careful to avoid deliberate falsification of data and to refrain from criticizing other research studies on the basis of personal bias. The researcher was sincere and responsible in their critiques in order to justify his views. Lastly and very important, the researcher made sure not to use other people's work without rightful or appropriate acknowledgement.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents and discusses the body of ideas which informed the approach used in the study to the question of land reform and poverty alleviation in Mashonaland East. The main theoretical argument being supported is that a lack of access to land and appropriate tenure systems among the poor are an obstacle to poverty alleviation. A widely acclaimed aim of land reform is to redress the unequal distribution of land ownership and rights of access to the land resource-base of the country, in order to redress past moral and political wrongs (Moyo, 1995). In addition to focusing on equity, the productive use of the land should be encouraged and supported.

The question on the extent to which land reform can be assumed to be a means by which poverty in Zimbabwe could be alleviated has many answers: answers which address direct and indirect links between land distribution, land ownership, and poverty; and which have implications for both macro-scale systems, such as national export earnings, and micro-scale systems, such as providing enhanced opportunities for individual or household subsistence, wealth creation, and food security (Bowyer-Bower, 2000:84). The assertion is that if land reform raises the productivity and incomes of smallholder agriculture in Zimbabwe, it will then be a direct route towards alleviating poverty, hunger, malnutrition and unemployment.

3.2 The Concept of Land Reform

Land reform usually involves three components: (a) land tenure reform, which is the establishment of secure and formalized property rights; (b) land redistribution, which entails the transfer of land from large- to small-scale farmers; and (c) restitution, which enables the forcibly displaced to return home or be compensated (Van den Brink, et al, 2006:1). Land reform, therefore, redistributes and redefines property rights, including agricultural land. Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman (2000) note that land reform so defined has an important bearing upon the livelihoods of the rural people, as it is used as a vehicle to address issues of equity and productivity.

According to Bassett and Crummy (1993: 22), a distinction is often made between agrarian reform and land reform. Land reform generally refers to a re-organization of tenure arrangements of land holdings that often assume two basic forms: the breaking up of large landholdings and their redistribution, and the consolidation of fragmented holdings into a single field. Agrarian reform often combines some type of land reform, with specific interventions designed to promote rural development such as expansion of extension services, agricultural credit and improved infrastructure.

It is further noted that, until recently, there has been little discussion in African agrarian literature, on the issues of access to, control over, and to a lesser extent, management of rural land (Bassett and Crummy, 1993: 3). The relative neglect of this subject is the result of two related approaches to the relationship between land tenure systems and agricultural productivity. The first is the view that in comparison to population-land densities in Latin

America and Asia, Africa is a relatively land abundant region. The second approach similarly minimizes the role tenure systems play as a constraint on increasing agricultural productivity, by arguing that “customary” or “indigenous” systems have generally accommodated the needs of the peasant farmers seeking access to land.

This has, however, come under a lot of criticism as the rural population growth rates have been higher than the expansion of the area under cultivation. Moyo (2008: 16) argues that “the perennial conceptual contest on the land issue is whether Africa has a land question...” however, that Africa has an agrarian question, one founded on exploitative labour relations and unequal trade, is generally agreed. In many parts of Africa, access to land is becoming more difficult for some groups, especially women and the poor households. Africa should no longer be perceived to be an exception to the trends in land demands and scarcity typical of other developing regions. The preoccupation of the debate on Africa’s land question should centre on the extensively unequal land redistribution and prevalence of poverty in the rural areas (Moyo 2008).

With regards to land redistribution, the unit of production is seen as the problem to be resolved, through expropriation from those with too much land and its transfer to those with little or without, and is therefore likely to involve land re-settlement as well. It is this aspect of land reform, land redistribution, and its link to poverty reduction, which this thesis focuses on. The point being made is that an ideal land reform programme must meet a range of needs, including the restoration of historical rights to land, the provision of additional land

for both residential and production purposes and the securing of land tenure rights for the inhabitants of both commercial farms and communal areas.

However, there is one crucial but often under-emphasized ingredient for success of any land reform programme, which is the affected parties' acceptance of the need for land reform and clarification of the modalities for implementation of the reform programme. Zinyama (1999:8) observes that these different stakeholders include: (i) the government, as the implementer of the reform, which should define targets, and allocate resources accordingly, (ii) the large landholders, who stand to lose some or all their land under the reforms; (iii) and the beneficiary small farmers or the landless, who should realize that they carry a large responsibility to maintain and improve productivity on their newly-acquired land.

It is acknowledged that different countries may have different objectives for land reform. While the objectives may be inter-related and complementary, sometimes achieving one objective retards or conflicts with another. The conflict usually lies between achieving social equity, while striving for economic and efficient utilization of land and other resources. Frequently, it has proved difficult for governments to marry these two objectives, creating unique dilemmas for individual households as well as the state. Dividing expropriated large farms, into numerous small plots, may result in decreased marketable surpluses and export earnings for the government. On the other hand, if a government does not implement land reform, it may fail to raise the standard of living of many of its people and may, in the long run, create political instability

Zinyama (1999:9) points out that the majority of land reform programmes around the world are governed by one or more of three frequently incompatible and contradictory motives: political, social and economic. The political motive is usually underplayed in government statements on land reform, but is, often a key factor, appealing to the landless peasantry or disempowering landowners perceived to be a threat to the ruling class. Government may use land reform, or the promise or threat of reform, to retain political power.

The social equity motive is often closely linked to the political motive, the government promises to give land to the landless peasants in return for political support. Even without political motivation, situations of acute landlessness can provide sufficient justification for land reform, arising from inequality, poverty and the resulting social and political tensions. The economic motive, on its own, rests on the premise that land reform will result in greater agricultural production, increased marketable surpluses for domestic consumption and/or export, and higher rural household incomes. The history of land reform in Zimbabwe provides a microcosm of the general struggle to balance and maintain the appropriate balance between the social, economic and political factors.

3.3 Perspectives on Agrarian Issues and Poverty Alleviation

Although there might have been many shifts in development advocacy through the decades, there is general consensus among development commentators that agrarian reform is essential to the development of rural economies globally. This is because the majority of the world's poor people live in rural areas. The International Land Coalition (2005) estimates that 75% of the world's poor live and work in rural areas where their current and future needs

depend on agriculture. With few, if any, assets they have little command over their livelihoods hence the search for solutions raised agrarian issues higher on the poverty alleviation agenda. For example, it is estimated that the Asian region today accounts for 505 million hungry people, or two-thirds of the 800 million severely undernourished people in the world. This is because the common feature of Asia's rural poor is landlessness or denial of access to productive land.

According to the International Land Coalition, the World Land Reform Conference convened by the Food and Agriculture organization (FAO) in 1966 was the first major United Nations meeting focused on "access to land" issues. Attention was drawn to the need for a more comprehensive approach to land tenure improvements, and provision of the necessary support services. The FAO Special Committee on Agrarian Reform was established in 1969. It broadened the concept of land tenure reform by using the more comprehensive term "agrarian reform" to embrace all aspects of tenure reform, productivity and support services. Politically, the term "agrarian reform" was a construct of the Cold War to counter "Communist" "land reforms" at the time (i.e., China Cuba). Its policy prescription urged governments to go beyond reform (redistribution), to include support through other rural development measures such as farm credit, cooperatives for farm inputs supply and marketing, and extension services to facilitate the productive use of the redistributed land.

The follow-up World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development convened by FAO in 1979 brought global recognition and consensus on the need for agrarian reform. Poverty was defined not in terms of scarcity but of the mal-distribution of resources. Quizon

(2005: 14) notes that “in 1960, the top 20% of the world’s population had incomes 30 times the poorest 20%. Today, the gap is 60 times. In a world of plenty, this is morally unacceptable”. It was noted that land reform was an essential element to development because land based agricultural occupations should provide livelihoods to the majority of the rural poor, and also because macro-economic growth in most contexts had failed to create improved prospects for the rural poor to acquire assets, gain employment, or improve their incomes and quality of life.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (2001) acknowledges that even during the height of European colonization in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which were generally accompanied by large-scale alienation of land by settlers, although land reforms were aimed at providing legal security for settlers, on some occasions the traditional land rights of indigenous people were taken into account. Hence upon gaining independence in the 1950s and 1960s, many developing countries endorsed land reform as an essential element of rural development. Ghimire (2001) asserts that revolutionary governments, such as China and Cuba implemented land reform policies. Yet the success of earlier land reforms in authoritarian regimes such as Japan, Taiwan and Korea also encouraged other countries worldwide to enact and implement land reform policies during the 1980s. Sadly, although the social status and income opportunities of the land reform beneficiaries increased, the unequal land distribution remained largely unchanged. In many cases, reforms failed because of inadequate implementation and lack of support services. Land reform also fell out of favour with donors since the early 1970s, following initial enthusiasm in the post-war period.

During the 1980s, some of the developing countries even experienced an increase in rural poverty and inequality.

According to the International Land Coalition (2005) some 12 United Nations Summit Conferences were convened in the 1990s, focused on varied themes such as the environment and sustainable development, women, hunger and food security, the rights of children, human rights, social development and habitat. Of importance to note is that each of these summits highlighted different dimensions of the “access to land “question. The World Food Summit (Rome 1996), convened by FAO, also called on governments to establish legal and other mechanisms, as are appropriate, that advance land reform, recognize and protect property, water and user rights, to enhance access by the poor and women to resources.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, there continues to exist inequality in landholding among major tenure classes in different regions. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (2001) noted that Latin America, for example, is dominated by bi-modal agrarian systems in which large tracks of fertile land are owned and controlled by the traditional *latifundistas* while a large number of landless or near landless peasants and rural labourers are obliged to seek employment on these farms. In much of South and Southeast Asia as well as North America and the Middle East, small cultivator systems are common. In Africa, due to the colonial legacy, bi-modal agrarian structures similar to those of Latin America prevail particularly in Southern Africa (for example, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia and parts of Malawi), as well as in some regions of Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal in North and West Africa. Rural poverty is rampant because the landless

or near landless population is significant in countries dominated by bi-modal agricultural systems. (Ghimire, 2001: 17).

Due to lack of access to land as well as inputs, a large number of rural people are not able to achieve the minimum food security and family welfare. However, because of the many potential gains of land reform, considerable prospects exist. The following are identifiable regional issues and trends:

- **Southeast Asia** (Cambodia, Indonesia, The Philippines and Thailand) – access to land by the landless, tenurial security of tenants, as well as improving the working and living conditions of rural workers are fundamental agrarian issues. In Cambodia, the 1992 Basic land Law introduced a shift from a centrally planned to a free market economy. However, many officials took advantage of the confusion in ownership to amass large tracks of land. The International Land Coalition (2005) notes that this created many land disputes. The National Land Dispute settlement Commission was set up in 1999 because government officials, military officials and businessmen took land by assertion of superior title, abuse of power, fraud and use of violence. Indonesia witnessed land consolidation in the past 30 years. The political turmoil in 1965 and the rise of the Suharto dictatorship (1967-1988) stopped agrarian reforms. Emphasis was put on large-scale exploitation of natural resources, privatization and de-regulation to stimulate private sector participation and growth. Various pieces of legislation protected access to land, mining and timber by large companies at the expense of peasants, small producers and indigenous peoples.

In Philippines, the ousting of the Marcos dictatorship and restoration of democracy in 1986, led to significant redistribution of land to the landless groups and farm workers under the “*land-to-the-tiller*” principle. However, resistance by landlords still exists in large plantations. On the other hand, the Thai government has slowed down on formalization of land titles to poor forest encroachers or improving living and working conditions for agricultural workers. Rather, the government is keen to open the agrarian sector for increased foreign investment and export.

- **South Asia** (Bangladesh, India and Nepal) – owing to the predominantly agricultural nature of the population and a considerable level of rural social deprivation, land reform as a mechanism to provide land and production support services to the landless and other land based marginalized groups is vital. Since land is sought by peasants for staple food production, any redistributive measures and increased tenurial security to poor cultivators have a great deal of potential in reducing rural hunger, malnutrition and pervasive poverty.

Although political contexts vary, land reform policies have had limited impact in South Asia. This is because there has been heavy influence of the landowning elite in state administration, as well as their ability to maintain strong patron-client relationships and local levels.

- **Near East and North Africa** (Egypt, Morocco and Yemen) – in this region, the lack of fertile land or suitable pasture and water, on the one hand, and their restrained access by many groups of rural poor, on the other, are two closely related problems. The agrarian question is seen to be linked with land reclamation for crop production

and provision of improved agricultural technology appropriate to arid and semi-arid soil and climatic conditions characteristic to the region.

- **Central America** (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua) –the situation varies from country to country in terms of concrete demands for land reform. However urban groups like the leftist and radical Christian groups, trade unions and university and other research centres – view the unequal patterns of land distribution, income and political power in the region as one of the root causes of poverty, social conflict and environmental degradation. Honduras for example, has a history of intense civil society activity. Peasants, with the help of supportive groups from urban and rural areas have occupied large estates or national, municipal common land formerly controlled by large landowners.
- **South America** (Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru) – in 1993, nearly 85% of productive land was in the hands of large landowning households in Bolivia. However, the 1996 land reform law allowing private titling and agrarian reform has been an issue of intense public debate and mobilization. In Ecuador, despite the 1994 land Law, sanctioning private property over traditional land as well as areas under cooperatives, liberalizing land markets and promoting agro-industry, rural landlessness and poverty are widespread. In Peru, although land reform measures introduced between 1969 -75 had positive impact in terms of increased access to land by the rural poor in many parts of the country, landholding patterns remain far from egalitarian. Throughout the 1980s, there was a tendency to break up previous land reform cooperatives due to insufficient government support and internal mismanagement. There has also been a

marked increase in conflicts of peasants, settlers and indigenous groups with mining, oil and lumber companies.

- **West and Central Africa** (Cameroon, Ghana and Senegal) – unlike in Asia and Latin America, the main issue in the West and Central African context has not been appropriation of land held by large landowners and its redistribution to poor farmers and tenants. Rather, the main element of agrarian reforms has involved the question of how to provide rural producers and communities with tenurial security under customary land tenure systems.
- **Southern Africa** (Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe) – Independence movements have articulated the popular demand and need for widespread redistribution of white-settler – held land to poor black peasants in order to alleviate poverty. The subsequent Marxist government in Mozambique sought to redistribute some of the confiscated land to peasants, while maintaining other large holdings in worker-operated cooperatives and state farms. In Zimbabwe, land reform has become a fundamental dimension of the agrarian question, and is contentious both economically and politically. The ruling ZANU-PF party constituencies and former freedom fighters and local peasant groups have actively supported government's sweeping land reform measures. Independent institutions (like the African Institute for Agrarian Studies) and University researchers have also contributed with information on land holding and poverty situations in various parts of the country. Yet, there are others (mostly financial and aid agencies) who consider that comprehensive land reform may be detrimental to maintaining an effective export oriented cash crop sector. In South Africa, opposition to forced regrouping of black

people in restrained “homelands” and colonial seizure of land has been a main feature of political resistance. Many groups in South Africa (University, civil, legal etc) see the necessity of implementing extensive land reform measures as a way to correct past injustice as well as achieve improved working and living conditions for poor black farmers. The Africa National Congress (ANC) government has also identified an effective land reform programme as a major mechanism for rural poverty alleviation and reconstruction, albeit realizing very disappointing results so far.¹

Research by the Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies indicate that in the first decade of democracy, only 4% of white owned agricultural land was transferred to black South Africans which was a far cry from the 30% target set by the government in 1994. The emergence of the Landless People’s Movement in recent years , along with criticism from a wide range of commentators about the pace and direction of land reform, suggests that current policy is not meeting the demand for land and is in need of fundamental review. Current policy has seen the gradual transfer of land to a select few, leaving the rural poor in deepening poverty and inequality. A revised land reform programme must meet a range of needs, including the restoration of historical rights to land, the provision of land for both residential and productive purposes, and securing of land tenure rights in communal areas and commercial farms. Ruth Hall, Edward Lahiff and Ben Cousins (2005) argue that a more ambitious land reform programme is needed to overcome the limitations of the market based

¹ Adapted from Ghimire, B. and Moore, B.H. (ed), 2001: 35-46, Civil Society Perspectives on Land Reform and Rural Poverty Reduction. “*Perspectives from Africa, Asia and Latin America*”, Rome and Geneva, Popular Coalition to eradicate Hunger and Poverty, and the United Nations Institute for Social Development. The main thrust is that land reform is about sustainable development, which is about who has the right to use which resources, in which ways and to what effect. In all regions, it is a process of political and economic empowerment, whereby the landless, near landless and other resource – poor people gain control over their livelihoods systems.

approach and make land available to the millions who need it as well as create an enabling environment for small scale agriculture to flourish. For such a programme to work 5 broad issues must be addressed: (a) land reform must be driven by a strategic vision for transformation with clear and achievable targets; (b) There must be a strategy to engage with landowners to secure the necessary supply of land. Aggressive purchasing on the open market can be one approach; a progressive land tax is another and where this fails, the government can expropriate; (c) There must be a systematic engagement with the landless who have been largely excluded from the highly bureaucratic and market oriented approach used to date. Landless groups often struggle to articulate their needs in ways that attract the attention of the state and resort to desperate strategies such as land invasions or informal settlements; (d) Government should create an economic environment favourable to small scale farmers. This requires not only direct support in terms of training, technical support and infrastructure, but also challenging the domination of large-scale (and largely white owned) agriculture and agri-business (itself a product of over a century of generous state support); (e) Appropriate approaches to reforming land tenure are also needed. It is acknowledged that land reform alone cannot provide a solution to the deep rooted problems of poverty in rural and urban South Africa. However, coupled with a wider restructuring of the agrarian economy that involves support for new farmers and a growing rural non-farm sector, the redistribution of productive assets can transform the dual economy and be a central ingredient in pro-poor growth in South Africa.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, it is evident that land reform remains pertinent in all regions as a way of tackling rural landlessness to achieve poverty alleviation. The state

remains the key institution in the land reform process, for legislative changes and technical assistance/ support.

3.4 Rationale for land Reform and Relationship to Poverty Alleviation

Sobhan (1993) suggests that one of the most potent forces generating pressure for land reform lies in the lack of access to land for a high proportion of the agricultural population. Zimbabwe is one of the countries in Southern Africa with highest proportion of the agricultural population. Hence landlessness is still a major issue in Zimbabwe and in the case of the latter; the concept of “landlessness” includes those land-poor households without enough land to ensure their subsistence. In the case of Zimbabwe, the persistence of landlessness in rural areas long after the land reforms were initiated after independence, indicates not just the inadequacy of the reforms, but also that the manner of the reforms was not such that pressure for land could be eased. Further, the persistence of poverty in the rural areas in Zimbabwe does indeed correlate with the land-hunger of the rural population which, over the years, is also increasing in numbers.

The failure of land reform, to release enough land to the growing numbers of the landless, is also indicative of demographic pressures (Sobhan,1993: 104) The pressure puts a limit on the capacity of the land and this in turn leads to growth of under- employment of the agricultural labour force. Under-employment arises when the available labour force cannot be absorbed to work full-time on land. In turn, the high levels of under-employment and landlessness is manifest in the stagnation of real wages in the rural economy. Moyo (2008; 25) concurs that access to land is fundamental in Africa, for the survival of the majority of households, in the

absence of alternative productive industry and infrastructures for employment in the services sector.

Sobhan (1993) further observes that for some time, the development of new high yielding varieties of seeds associated with the green revolution was widely recognized as a necessary ingredient in development. It created hope that increased labour absorption in agriculture lay in the diffusion of new technology. It was believed that this could arrest the falling real wages and the growth in under-employment and rural poverty. However, despite the high rates of growth in agricultural production associated with the green revolution, its full benefits have not been able to cascade through to the rural poor, on a sufficient scale, to arrest the increase in the numbers of the rural poor. For example, the rapid spread of new technology in Asia only marginally reduced the rate of growth of rural poverty. It is argued here that increased productivity alone, when achieved within a tenure structure of great inequality cannot be a substitute for land reform.

The limited impact made in the alleviation of rural poverty, through the diffusion of new technology and inadequate labour absorption capacity of the non-agricultural sector, means that poverty and landlessness are likely to remain permanent features of developing countries. This has led to a number of policy initiatives and resource commitments targeted at delivering resources to the poor. In Zimbabwe, in the early 1990s, these programmes included “food for work” programmes and other nutritional improvement programmes and skills enhancing programmes and direct service delivery programmes targeted at the poorest sections of the rural population. Such programmes may be incorporated into wide integrated

rural development programmes and are often underwritten by aid donors. However, the survey results from Mashonaland East showed that most of these programmes have been infiltrated and eventually captured by the rural elite. Very few programmes exist in the portfolios of rural development which have restricted benefits exclusively for the poor. The poor are still with us and the structural basis of poverty, which has been at the core of the debate on agrarian reforms, remains as intractable today as it was before.

Alternative sources of employment in the rural economy have failed to develop fast enough and market forces have worked to drain resources from the rural areas and have stifled the development of rural industry. Moyo (2008) notes that this lack of productivity and growth in Africa is underpinned by the agrarian technological backwardness and inappropriate land and agrarian policies which arise from perennially declining terms of agricultural commodity trade and the extractive role of monopoly capital. Moyo (2008) further notes that this suggests that inappropriate economic and land-use policies and diminished access to land and negative external integration are critical factors in explaining Africa's looming agrarian crisis.

The above makes a case for radical agrarian reforms which are more likely to realize growth in the agricultural sector, while arresting the increase of rural poverty. Agrarian reform should create the basis for a more equitable access to land, and through this access to land, to markets and other public resources. Thus, agrarian reform is rationalized by the need for equity in access to productive resources, and the elimination of socio economic and political differentiation within the peasantry.

World Bank reports comparing countries over time suggest that equity in land distribution is good for growth. For instance, the initial phase of China's high and sustained growth and poverty reduction spurt clearly was linked to its 1979 change from collective, large-scale farms to small family farms. When collective production was abandoned and key agricultural markets were liberalized, China's peasant sector initiated rapid economic growth, which dramatically reduced poverty. At the other end of the equity spectrum, one finds the countries that have not been successful in reducing rural poverty. These countries include, for example, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, and South Africa. Not surprisingly, these countries are characterized by high unequal landownership, with substantial public investments in large-scale farming. Van den Brink (ed) (2009: 9) points out that although these large-scale farms usually have become technically sophisticated, they make little use of labour and their mechanization leads to rapid out-migration of labour from the commercial agricultural sector, into rural areas or urban slums, thus creating more rural and urban poverty.

In Zimbabwe, a large body of literature also makes a case for land reform (Moyo, 1995; Tshuma, 1997; Kinsey 1999; Scoones 2010.). Settler colonial rule perpetuated the setting aside of most of the fertile land for whites and the adoption of discriminatory agricultural policies, oppression, marginalization and impoverishment of indigenous people. To a great extent, one of the grievances of the liberation war was the land issue. Not surprisingly, most commentators on Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political reforms see the resolution of the land issue as a benchmark for evaluating the performance, success and failures of the government (Tshuma, 1997)

Overall, land reform should have three major objectives: the first is to achieve political stability. This will ultimately be reached through land redistribution and creating greater access to land by all Zimbabweans. Secondly, sustainable rural livelihoods and rise in rural incomes, economic growth and development. Thirdly, land reform should lead to social integration and the realization of a peaceful and progressive non-racial society. The latter is an ideal which will be very difficult to realize especially if government and land owners don't close the gap and work closely together.

3.5 Land Reform and Social Justice

The term social justice is taken to embrace both “fairness and equity in the distribution of a wide range of attributes” Smith (1994:26). Justice, in general, is a very broad concept and it may take in all socially desirable objectives. The primary focus is on attributes which have an immediate bearing on people's well-being. Social justice derives its authority from the codes of morality prevailing in each culture. Moral philosophy is a necessary starting point for the elaboration of social justice. How people should be treated in particular circumstances, by other people or within institutions, is a specific aspect.

Rogier van den Brink et al (World Bank: 2006) point out that notions of fairness or equity, are pronounced when it comes to land: there often is a general; feeling that land should be equitably distributed to as many people as possible. The International Crisis Group reported, in 2000, that throughout Southern Africa, questions relating to the control, ownership and use of land have become increasingly embedded in the wider challenges of development,

livelihoods and governance. Countries across southern Africa are wrestling with a fundamental question of justice and fairness: how best to broaden patterns of land-use and ownership to include black majorities who were pushed to the margins during the colonial period. Throughout the region, the land question is commonly viewed through the lens of historic injustice. This is especially so in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, where white settlers, backed by the former colonial powers of Europe, were able to secure great economic privileges when they handed political power to black majority rule. The land question also invariably includes racial elements, which are also a powerful element in liberation discourse.

The most important reason to worry about equity and fairness is linked to the legacy of white settler rule. In Southern Africa, settlers appropriated for themselves the best pieces of land for both crop and livestock production. They then turned the indigenous black people into tenants or wage labourers. Post- independence governments therefore have to deal with this legacy. It is thus important also to look at the land issue as one of justice and one of redressing past wrongs.

The International Crisis Group (2000), however, points out that redressing old wrongs could be politically charged. It will involve difficult questions of economics, political representation and the relative value a society places on traditional systems of land tenure versus imported systems governing use, access and ownership. Issues of land reform often bring major commercial interests, public expectations, politics, the law and international concerns into direct and open conflict. At times, ruling political parties have not been shy

about invoking land policy for partisan advantage. The situation, in Zimbabwe, has intensified the debate across Southern Africa, by raising expectations of the landless and increasing the uncertainty among the remaining white commercial farmers. Zimbabwe has also demonstrated that disputes over land can quickly turn violent, particularly when they are manipulated for short-term political gains.

3.6 Land Tenure

Dale and McLaughlin (1988:19) observe that although the term “land ownership” is in common use, it is not possible, in a strict sense, to own land itself. It is the right to use the land that can be owned. Such rights may be held through custom or through the more formal processes of the law. The manner in which rights are held is known as land tenure. Moyo (2003:3) also adds that land tenure is a derivative of the concept of resource tenure, which in essence refers to the terms and conditions under which natural resources are held and used. It is a name given; particularly in common law systems, to the legal regime in which land is “owned” by an individual who is said to “hold” the land. The concept of “tenure” is thus a social construct, which defines the relationships between individuals and groups of individuals, by which rights and obligations, with respect to control and use of land are defined.

However, its immovable and everlasting qualities set land apart from other commodities and have tended to make its ownership much more complicated than the ownership of goods. The very nature of the ownership appears different. The owner of goods can remove or destroy them. The owner of land can neither move nor, in its legal sense, destroy it; his

power is limited to the enjoyment or disposition of rights in or over it. Because land is everlasting, it can be made the subject of future interests or even a series of future interests, and mortal man has never ceased to exercise his ingenuity in inventing means to ensure that “his” land will forever be used in accordance with his wishes. It is this capacity of land to carry future interests, combined with man’s desire to perpetuate his line or memory, which has led to many of the innovations in land law.

Moyo (2003:3) observes that it was because of this that European settlers in Africa enacted their own laws on land ownership which were mostly derived from the Roman Dutch law. The settlers created, for themselves, the legal regime of ownership that best protected them and gave them the largest bundle of rights possible under the imposed legal regimes. Such was the system of tenure based on freehold and leasehold. “Freehold” entailed the provision of absolute ownership rights, implying the rights to own, control, manage use and dispose of land. Freehold tenure is a traditionally western concept of individual property ownership and has mostly been identified with large-scale farming and elite land ownership regimes. However, such land rights, while being held in perpetuity, may be sequestered through state intervention, when land is targeted for expropriation for clearly public interest.

Indeed, as population increases and pressure on land grows, the state takes more and more powers to ensure that land, whoever owns it, is properly used. Even the right to sell, which might be thought an essential attribute of ownership, is often withheld or restricted, for public policy demands that land shall not be allowed to fall into the wrong hands (though what hands are wrong, of course, has widely differing interpretation). Moreover, the state

reserves the right of compulsory acquisition, the right of “eminent domain” as it is called, and this itself is a limitation to private ownership. It has always, in fact, long been realized and accepted that in practice there is really no such thing as absolute ownership of land, notwithstanding the use of that term in some enactments providing for registration of title. Nobody can be allowed to do just exactly what he likes with land, completely regardless of the public interest. The state itself always asserts special authority over land, for this is its basic asset (Simpson, 1976).

“Leasehold” lands, on the other hand, are based on the notion of rentals for long periods. Land belonging to one entity, either the state or an individual, is, by contractual agreement, leased to another entity (Moyo, 2003:4). In practice, the issuing of ninety nine-year leases in Zimbabwe is considered to be as secure as a freehold tenure system. The lease agreement is then registered against the title of the land, to create real land rights that are enforceable. “Title” is contextually defined as “the evidence of a person’s rights to land”. (Dale *et al*, 1988:257). Moyo (2003) further observes that statutory allocations were a particular form of state land where such land, by virtue of some statutory provision, was allocated for the use of some legally constituted body. Through the issuing of licenses, State Land could be put to private use through contractual arrangements with private individuals or institutions outside the framework of leasehold, subject to the conditions of lease. In some cases, there is State Land which has not been allocated to any individual and or has not been placed under the control and use of a statutory body. This category of land is generally referred to as “un-alienated” State land.

3.7 Indigenous African land Tenure

Most African farmers cultivate their holdings under indigenous tenure systems which are frequently referred to as “customary” or “traditional” (Bruce, 1993: 35). Migot-Adhola, and Bruce, (1993) note that the parlous state of agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa, during the past 2 decades, has rekindled debate over the suitability of customary land-use practices for more capital intensive agriculture. Bruce (1993) points out that colonial administrators, African elites and foreign aid donors have, historically, viewed indigenous landholding systems as obstacles to increasing agricultural output. The argument was that only private, freehold arrangements will provide the investment security necessary to make Africa agriculture more efficient and productive.

Stereotypes of indigenous tenure systems (which are often a distortion of reality), make them appear as “imperfect” by comparison with idealized western property institutions that are perceived to be efficient and compliant to market economics. Because customary tenure systems are deeply embedded in cultural and political systems and generally offer members of particular social groups overlapping multiple rights of land-use, they tend to exclude non-members of the group from transacting in land. Thus, they are said to distort factor markets and undermine full integration of rural economies into national markets, and, instead, contribute to fragmentation.

A major misconception about indigenous land tenure, in Africa, involves the terms “customary”, “traditional” or “communal,” often used to describe the social arrangements governing the allocation and use of land. These terms, according to Migot-Adhola, and

Bruce, (1993: 4), conjure up an image of an unchanging and immutable normative system and social egalitarianism. However, this presumed rigidity has come under examination. It is suggested that indigenous tenure arrangements are dynamic and have historically adapted to economic and technological changes. For example, African farmers responded to market incentives, in the early years of colonial rule, in the production of new crops such as wheat. In addition, over time, customary tenure systems experience spontaneous simplification and individualization of rights whereby households increasingly acquire broader rights of exclusion and transfer as population pressure and levels of commercialization increase. In fact, once shifting cultivation gives way to settled agriculture, a family usually farms a landholding to which it has had exclusive rights of cultivation for generations. (Bruce, 1993:35) The increased privatization of rights over specific parcels provides the necessary incentives for investment, which makes it not entirely inimical to capital intensive agriculture.

Migot-Adhola and Bruce (1993) point out that a review of the large and growing literature of Africa customary tenure arrangements indicates that they have been historically governed by several broad principles, relevant to pre-industrial economies relying on kinship as the primary organizing factor. Rules governing access and use of land were predicated primarily on one's membership and status in the social group controlling a particular territory. But this was true only in a highly generalized sense. In common practice, access to and use of land by individuals, was regulated by intricate customary traditions that vested control in minimal kinship.

Individual families enjoyed fairly clearly defined spatial and temporary rights of use over different parcels of cultivated land. Such family rights were transmitted to succeeding generations, in accordance with prevailing rules of succession, which ordinarily allowed divisible inheritance. Initial rights were established by first occupation and investment in labour for land clearing and cultivation. While land was relatively abundant and population density remained low, fallow periods were long, and boundaries were poorly defined and hardly contested. Families enjoyed more or less continuous use rights over specific parcels of land, provided the period of fallow was not so long as to suggest that the plots had been abandoned.

It is further noted that as population increased and the land frontier diminished, fallow periods became shorter and cultivation of plots relatively continuous and boundaries were more distinctly marked. So long as the land had crops, other members of the land controlling social groups were excluded from exercising their right of concurrent use. But all members of the community retained the right to graze livestock in the stubble, as on fallow and previously unclaimed land, and to use other common property resources: pasture, forests, and water. Where population pressure led to internal conflict over use of common resources, particularly pasture, members of land controlling groups often moved to establish new territory elsewhere, through either military conquest or by peaceful incorporation. Once continuous cultivation was established, transactions in land, limited to borrowing and seasonal or permanent exchanges, were restricted to members of the social group. Generally, however, land purchases did not emerge in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa until the late

19th century. Even then, such transactions remained confined to a small number of buyers within the same land controlling social group.

The emerging picture is that individual and family rights to land under indigenous tenure have historically become more exclusive, although they fall short of private property. As a strategy of control, colonial administrators often forged political alliances with local rural elites and sometimes designated local notables as “chiefs” even in societies where there was no tradition of chiefdoms. The notion of a clearly bounded socio-political unit identified with a definite territorial area governed by some customary ruler was often a contract conveniently created and sustained by those whose interest it served. Yet an important consequence was that it froze the regional migratory processes through which communities had previously adapted to land shortage, by extending resource use and settlement into unpopulated land frontiers or by incorporation into communities controlling “excess” or “surplus” land. Therefore, the lack of systematic legislative reform to change the conditions of access and use of land was an administrative convenience. The colonial state perpetuated a form of citizenship in which right depended on tribal membership, which was consistent with the dual economies of the colonial state. The formal sector would recruit labour from the tribal sector at less than subsistence wages and labour disbanded from the formal sector could always be incorporated back into the tribal economy and guaranteed rights of access to land and socio-economic welfare.

Overall, the earliest tenure transformation programmes, in sub-Saharan Africa, were not motivated by the desire to promote productivity among indigenous farmers, but rather to

provide land for European settlers. This was achieved largely through enactment of legislation which nullified customary claims over land deemed unoccupied and the subsequent issue of leasehold or freehold titles to the new occupants. Administration of land among indigenous Africans was relegated to the realm of customary law under tribal authorities.

Against this background land reforms and re-organization of tenure relations in post colonial Zimbabwe were intended to meet two objectives: to achieve social justice by removing undesirable inequalities in access to land and, to promote greater productivity with a view to reducing poverty.

3.8 Conclusion

Land reform encompasses redistribution of land to the poor, who either possess little or no land. This is important because for the poor, land is the primary means of generating a livelihood and a main vehicle for investing, accumulating wealth, and transferring it between generations. Access to land and land tenure relations are critical where communities depend on control of land to ensure food security. Food security is the capacity of households, communities and the state to mobilize sufficient food, through production, acquisition and distribution, on a sustainable basis. Food security thus depends on the land resources available to the household or community and their ability to mobilize resources for the production and/or distribution of food.

It has also been noted that any approach to land reform as a vehicle for poverty alleviation should embrace the conception of justice. The end game should be defined through the

general promotion of a more equitable system of land ownership as a vehicle for poverty alleviation. Land policy should be informed by the potential gains in poverty reduction, economic and social development that arise from land reform.

While historical grievances over land alienation are a given, these should be looked at together with the more generalized demand for the redistribution of land for productive uses. The key objective of the land reform policy in Zimbabwe should be to establish a more efficient and rational structure of land and natural resource utilization. Such a structure should not protect the interests of minority elite groups at the expense of optimal land utilization, increased productivity, employment growth, improved income distribution, and environmentally sustainable use of resources. This is what the research also tried to assess through an examination of land reform policies of the GoZ.

CHAPTER 4: LAND POLICIES AND THE MARGINALISATION OF THE AFRICAN PEASANTRY IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

4.1 Introduction

The chapter undertakes a historical analysis of the land policies in Zimbabwe. This is important and relevant to the debate on land tenure arrangements and farming systems in terms of equity, poverty alleviation, economic development, and environmental sustainability. The thesis argues that the land issue was of fundamental significance during the liberation struggle. Hence ZANU-PF government continued to emphasize ownership and access to land as a key measure of national liberation. As such, the post-independence land policies are intended to correct the colonial imbalance regarding land distribution and tenure, while ensuring equity and effective utilization of the land resource in the country.

The major aim of this chapter is to explore the historical link between poverty and the land question in Zimbabwe. Of course it is not clear how land, during the various phases of the evolution of the land question, contributed to poverty alleviation. Hence the thesis employs a case-study approach in order to unpack elements of the relationship between poverty and land reform.

The chapter employs a historically and sociologically grounded approach of critical social theory, which places social conflict and power relations at the center of the analysis of agrarian conflict and poverty in Zimbabwe. It gives an historical overview of the colonial origins of the agrarian question. It examines the colonial alienation and allocation of different

property rights and tenure systems on the basis of race. The chapter covers the period from 1888 to 1979.

The chapter relies heavily on Palmer (1977) and Moyana (1984), given their widely recognized and incisive historical interrogation of land issues in colonial Zimbabwe. The two authors provide a broader treatment of the land question in colonial Zimbabwe. There are few studies with a holistic perspective that analyze the root causes of poverty and social tensions within a framework that embraces the historical context of contestation over land and other natural resources associated with it. The few studies on poverty and conflict over land ignore the broader historical base and the diverse and complex dimensions of the poverty-land ownership nexus, in terms of the various actors and their strategies since the colonization of Zimbabwe. Indeed, land conflict in Zimbabwe has a long history spanning over a century both in the colonial and post-colonial periods.

4.2 Background to the Land Policy

The land question has always been and remains at the center of Zimbabwe's political, economic and social development. Indeed, now as in the past, it remains the root of the political tension within the country and with the former colonial power, Britain. The advent of European settler occupation of Rhodesia in September 1890 is the genesis of the dispossession of blacks of their land. The 1893 invasion of the Ndebele Kingdom, leading to the creation of the Gwaai and Shangani Reserves; the 1986-97 Shona and Ndebele first Chimurenga/Imfazwe (war of liberation), the nationalist struggle in the period before and after the Second World War, the second Chimurenga/Imfazwe, which gave birth to the

independent Zimbabwe in 1980, the contentious Lancaster House Constitutional negotiations and the agreement, in 1979, and the current internal political developments, all bear testimony to the centrality of the land issue in the country's history.

The systematic dispossession realized largely through violence, war and legislative enactments, by successive colonial Governments, led to the racially skewed land distribution and ownership pattern that, until recently, were characteristic of Zimbabwe. The argument, mostly shared among Eurocentric old-guard Marxists, is that the essential reasons behind the wholesale expropriation of land, in Africa, were to prevent the African peasant from becoming a competitor to the European farmer or plantation owner, and to impoverish the African peasantry, to such an extent, that the majority of adult males would be compelled to work for the Europeans, in the mines or on the farms. It is argued here that these two motives did become apparent in Rhodesia in later years, but they cannot be used to explain the initial alienation of land in the 1890s. For an explanation of this, we must turn to the commercial and speculative nature of the European occupation and to the African tradition of "war and territory" that will be referred to later.

Having regard to the political and related problems arising from the Boer controlled Witwatersrand gold field in the Transvaal, Cecil John Rhodes, then Prime Minister of the Cape, and through his British South Africa Company (BSAC), became fixated with the idea of developing a second Witwatersrand (Second Rand) to the north of the Limpopo river. The BSAC had been founded, in 1889, at Rhodes' insistence, expressly for the purpose of

exploiting the lands to the north of the Limpopo and also with a view to compensating Rhodes and his associates for their failure to strike riches on the rand.

Rhodes also anticipated that a rich Mashonaland would act as a counterweight to the Transvaal, and so reassert British political supremacy in South Africa (Palmer, 1977). The Company's attentions, therefore, were focused firmly on the rapid discovery and exploitation of mineral resources; all else, and especially "native policy", was of secondary consideration.

4.3 The Rudd Concession

According to Moyana (1984), Lobengula, King of the Matebeleland, in 1888, signed a document that came to be known as the Rudd Concession, which paved the way for the BSAC's occupation of the country. The Concession, fraudulently obtained from King Lobengula, became the vehicle through which colonialists obtained mineral rights in Mashonaland.

The Rudd Concession enabled Rhodes, under a Royal Charter granted by the British government, to occupy the country. The Royal Charter, obtained in 1889, among other things, granted the BSAC authority to administer and govern the region that encompasses the present day Zimbabwe; the duty to preserve peace and order in such ways and means as it should consider necessary; the power to pass Ordinances and to establish and maintain a police force; and the power to make land grants (Tshuma 1997:14) The Charter was granted notwithstanding King Lobengula's protestations that he had been deceived. Lobengula repudiated the Rudd Concession stating that he would "not recognize the paper, as it contains

neither my words nor the words of those who got it”. The response, by Queen Victoria, to King Lobengula’s protestation to this development was that it “would be unwise to exclude white men” (Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee, 2003:11).

Tshuma (1997) observes, further, that the Charter was predicated on two assumptions: that Lobengula, as sovereign, had ultimate title to land: and that he could delegate power to the Company to make land grants. The premises upon which the Charter was based were questionable for two reasons. First, the British assumed that Lobengula’s sovereignty was in the fashion of a sovereign nation state, which had emerged in Europe following the bourgeoisie revolutions. As such, he was deemed to have jurisdiction over a spatially demarcated and recognized territory, comprising Matebeleland and Mashonaland. Indeed, a number of Shona polities were not under Ndebele rule. Second, another assumption, deriving from English jurisprudence, was that Lobengula as sovereign had proprietary title in all the un-allotted land in his kingdom. As land was not a commodity among the pre-colonial people of Zimbabwe, Lobengula enjoyed neither ultimate nor proprietary title akin to that which had emerged during the transition from feudalism to capitalism in England.

The legal position was however of academic interest, as Company (BSAC) practice regarding land differed from the formal legal position. Once in possession of the Charter, the Company wasted no time in assembling an “invasion force” which set for Mashonaland and started subduing the Shona and establishing administrative structures.

The Rudd Concession was countered by the Lippert Concession of April 1889, which reflected competing European interests and German interests and aspirations, to acquire territory (Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee, 2003). This Concession was also deceitfully obtained from Lobengula. With the connivance of the British government, and without Lobengula's knowledge, the Lippert Concession was soon purchased by the BSAC.

In 1890, the BSAC established rule over Rhodesia and launched a period of Company rule, which lasted for about 25 years (Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems, 1994). The Pioneer Column arrived in the land they were to call Rhodesia. They numbered 196 Pioneers and 500 police. At this time there were approximately 700 000 Africans, mainly Shona and Ndebele speakers in the territory (Chitiyo, 2000:64).

Gold was the prime motive behind the occupation, and land was regarded very much as a consolation prize. As one of the Company's directors put it in 1891, "When cattle and gold were in competition for men's attention, nobody thought of cattle" (Palmer 1977: 26). Thus, while each of the 196 pioneers was promised, verbally, a free farm of 1,500 morgen (3,175 acres) and 15 reef claims of 400 by 500 feet, for political reasons, no undertakings on paper could be given. It was the gold claims, which were the more highly prized, and many pioneers sold their land rights to speculators.

Indeed, within a fortnight of the column being disbanded at the end of September 1890, there were estimated to be nearly 300 prospectors seeking their fortune in the area between Hartley and the Mazowe valley, and by February 1891, some 700 claims had been marked off. (Palmer, *ibid*: 26). But the gold, which the pioneers had hoped to find in large quantities in Mashonaland, had been disappointingly scarce (Moyana, 1984: 38). Not only did it rapidly become obvious that some mysterious “ancients” had long departed with the bulk of the dispersed gold deposits, but the rainy season of 1890-1 was exceptionally severe and protracted and many prospectors, inadequately equipped with clothing, food and medicine, contracted malaria and died.

The Company’s mineral rights, which ironically were to prove far less valuable than those acquired more casually in Northern Rhodesia, were based on the controversial Rudd Concession of 1888, and was upheld by the British government. The land rights proved more elusive. In July 1891, High Commissioner Loch attempted to assert some degree of imperial control by suggesting a land settlement in favour of the Crown, in order to protect African interests. The colonial office declined by suggesting that such interests were adequately protected under the Company’s Charter (Palmer, 1977). A quarter of a century later, the Crown entered a claim at the Privy Council, to the ownership of the un-alienated land of Rhodesia.

Meanwhile, in the absence of direct Crown intervention, Lobengula attempted to divide and rule. For some years, concession hunters of one kind and another, including Renny-Tailyour, the emissary of Edourd Lippert, had besieged him. Lippert was a German financier based in

Johannesburg. Lobengula decided to grant a land concession to Renny-Tailyour on the assumption, valid at the time, that Rhodes and Lippert were bitter rivals, and under the mistaken impression that Renny-Tailyour was a representative of the British agent in Switzerland. Lobengula hoped to create confusion in the European ranks, from which he thought he would profit. The Lippert concession was accordingly signed on 22 April 1891. The British High Commissioner and the Company were at first inclined to oppose this concession on various grounds, amongst others, on the grounds that its validity was doubtful. But after several communications and interviews of the Company's officials, with Mr. Lippert, it was decided that it would be better to come to terms with him and take over the concession, provided that ratification of it was obtained from Lobengula, as it would provide an assurance that the Concession was genuine and one on which the Company might safely proceed (Palmer,1977). With this object, Kenny-Tailyour, who was well known to Lobengula and who had his confidence, was promptly sent back to his kraal in Bulawayo.

Naturally, the British Government did not inform Lobengula of the agreement reached between Rhodes and Lippert, while the Resident Commissioner, Mr. J.S. Moffart, offered his cooperation with extreme reluctance, for he informed Rhodes that the whole plan was detestable, whether viewed in the light of policy or morality. He was subsequently sent back to Buchuanaland, on a reduced salary, but the Concession was ratified by Lobengula on 17 November 1891 and duly confirmed by the Colonial Secretary, Lord Knutsford, on 5 March 1892 (Palmer, 1977).

The defective and fraudulent Lippert Concession granted:

The sole and exclusive right, power and privilege for the full term of 100... years to lease out, grant, or lease... farms, townships, building plots and grazing areas; to impose and levy rents, licenses and taxes thereon, and to get in, collect and receive the same for his own benefit; to give and grant certificates... for the occupation of any farms, townships, buildings plots and grazing areas (Palmer, 1977: 27).

Lobengula, of course, had no right, in customary law, to make such a grant as far as the Ndebele homeland was concerned, for land was not a marketable commodity; still less did he have the right to sign away land over the whole country. But the legal fiction, that Lobengula controlled the whole of Rhodesia at least saved the Company the bother of tracking down the Shona Chiefs and “persuading” them to sign treaties as what was happening in neighboring northern Rhodesia.

Chitiyo (2000), observes that traditionally, land ownership among the Shona was a communal process, operating at different levels, that of family, clan and village. Chiefs were essentially functionaries who allocated land in the best interests of their constituency. Among the Ndebele, the King and his Chiefs had more direct power with respect to land allocation and intervention. Both peoples also believed that the real landowners were the ancestors and that particular lands were sacred.

Moyana, (1984), concurs that the traditional land tenure system also accepted that land rights were inalienable. Land belonged to the living and to the unborn as well as to the dead. No

member of a group could sell or transfer land to an outsider, as land was considered a natural endowment in the same category as rain, sunlight and the air we breathe. In traditional African economy, there could be no commodity more valuable than land and no circumstance in which it could be profitable to dispose of it. The belief, that to dispose of land was not allowed, was widely held. Individual ownership was inconceivable, as every individual was entitled to the natural endowment mentioned above.

Be that as it may, Palmer (1974) observes further that, although the Lippert Concession was declared “valueless” as a title deed by the Privy Council in 1918, Rhodes did not think so at the time, for he bought it from Lippert for 30,000 British South Africa Company shares at £1 each, 20,000 United Concessions Company shares at £1 each, and 500 cash, plus land grants of 32,000 acres in Mashonaland and 48,000 acres in Matebeleland, which was still under Lobengula’s control (Palmer, 1974:28). A similar occurrence took place in the Eastern districts of Rhodesia, where land was parceled out to Europeans before the Gungunyana Concession had received British approval. The end result of the whole exercise was that the Company was now “legally” entitled to issue titles to the many “provisional” grants of land, which it had already made to the settlers.

When the pioneer column occupied Mashonaland in 1890, it was careful to avoid a direct clash with the Ndebele State, which was well-known for its formidable military machine (Palmer: 1977). Thus, no coherent “native policy” evolved in Mashonaland in the years 1890-3. According to Moyo (1984:38), the other reason was because of article 14 of the charter, which read:

Careful regard shall always be to the custom and laws of the class or tribe or nation to which the parties respectively belong, especially with regard to the holding, possession, transfer and dispossession of lands and estate or intestate succession thereto.

However, it was unrealistic to expect several thousand Europeans to rush around digging for gold and pegging large farms in Mashonaland, without making any contacts with the Shona, especially as the demand for labour increased. In fact, the settlers frequently took the law into their own hands with disastrous consequences. The result was a number of conflicts including the Anglo-Ndebele war of 1893.

When the Mashonaland gold rush proved futile, much to the displeasure of the Company, Chartered shares began to fall alarmingly on the London stock market. Many pioneers trekked disconsolately back to South Africa as the Company's initial capital was nearly exhausted. There was also the constant threat of confrontation with the Ndebele, who were beginning to realize the full implications of the Company's presence in Mashonaland. In such circumstances, Rhodes turned his acquisitive eye towards Matebeleland, whose mineral resources, he hoped, would be greater than those of Mashonaland, and where the fertile, well-stocked high veld was an added inducement.

On August 14, 1893, Star Jameson, Rhodes' right hand man in Rhodesia, signed a secret agreement at Fort Victoria, for the invasion of Lobengula's Kingdom. Moyana (1984:38) observes that some of the clauses of this infamous document provided:

That each member (of the attacking force) will be entitled to mark out a farm of 3,000 morgen (6 000 acres) in any part of Matebeleland.... the government retains the right at any time to purchase farms from the members any member of the Victoria force is entitled to 15 claims on reef and 5 alluvial claims....

For Palmer (1977), the Company's victory was important politically and also psychologically, for it left the Europeans with a belief in their invincibility and a form of conviction that the natives were not a factor meriting serious consideration. As members of the Victorian forces seized farms wherever they wanted them, and when these were pegged out on top of each other, as they often were, they had to arrange matters as well as they could. Only after all this had been settled could any provision be made for the Matebeleland natives. The British government was not informed of the terms of the Victoria Agreement, but it would probably have ignored it, in any event.

In the face of such activities in Bulawayo, and the enormously increased prestige of the victorious Company, the British government made vain attempts to exercise some control over the post-war settlement. The colonial secretary urged that the Ndebele be allowed to settle down peacefully and be provided with "good and habitable land, water and cattle adequate to their subsistence", and that the imperial resident be stationed in Bulawayo to keep an eye on the Company (Palmer, 1977). Such intentions flew in the face of reality and infuriated Rhodes who pointed out that the Company had won the war and was entitled to dictate the peace. Had the British government insisted on taking a firm stand, they would have antagonized virtually the whole of the white South African opinion at a time, when they

were desperately seeking to retain the loyalty of the Afrikaners in the Cape. Not surprisingly, Rhodes had his way.

4.5 The Land Commission

To the extent that the Company dictated the post war settlement in Matebeleland, Rhodes made it clear that the Company had no intention of providing free land for Africans as their numbers increased (Palmer, 1977). The British government issued an Order-in-Council, on July 18, 1894, which announced the appointment of a Land Commission to “deal with all questions in relation to the settlement of Africans in Matebeleland” (Moyana, 1984:39). The Commission’s brief was to assign without delay, to the natives inhabiting Matebeleland, land sufficient for their occupation, and suitable for their agricultural and pastoral requirements, including in all cases a fair and equitable proportion of springs or permanent water.

The land Commission was appointed on 10 September 1894 and, with haste typical of the period, produced its reports on 29 October, assigning two large native reserves, Gwaai and Shangani estimated to be 3,000 and 3,500 square miles respectively (Palmer, 1977). Moyana (1984) points out that these lands were, however, badly watered, sandy and unfit for settlement. The soil type of the region was that of Kalahari sands, which are of very low natural fertility and which are known for their peculiar hydrological content. Shangani lay entirely within the tsetse fly area. Moreover, the two Reserves had a total acreage of “approximately 2 486 00 hectares, which represented a reduction of about 7.5 million acres from the 21 million which the Ndebele used to occupy” (Moyana: 39).

The inadequacy of these lands, for the Ndebele needs, was perhaps manifested by the Ndebele refusal to occupy them. The colonial office admitted that “the Ndebele regarded the two Reserves as cemeteries and not homes” (Palmer, 1977:22). However, the Ndebele who refused to move to the two Reserves, soon found themselves living on European farms, where they were subjected to high rental charges or eviction. Alternatively, they could pay for their residence on the European farms with their labour. Thus, Africans lost their rights to the ownership of land and the principle of land segregation had now been adopted as a necessary ingredient of native policy in Rhodesia.

It was the dispossession of the African of suitable lands for cultivation and for pasture that created the discontent that found expression in the first Chimurenga of 1896-1897. Chitiyo (2000) observes that although this war was partly against European seizure of land, it was also a protest against hut tax and the simultaneous environmental calamities of rinderpest, locusts and drought. The locals believed that the invaders were destroying the balance of nature. After a ferocious one-and-half year war, the Africans were defeated and the Europeans created a colonial state. In the process, they institutionalized the land problem that successive governments were to grapple with and fail to resolve.

4.6 Land under the Colonial State

It is acknowledged that the Europeans exacerbated, but did not invent Zimbabwe’s land problem. There had been numerous pre-colonial land wars amongst and between the Shona and the Ndebele. In 1898 the BSAC officially sanctioned the use of force to establish a racial solution to the land issue.

In 1898 another Southern Rhodesia Order in Council made it obligatory upon the Company administration to assign sufficient land for African-Land use. Moyana (1984:41) observes that under article 81 of the new Order-in-Council, the Company was required, from time to time, to “assign to the natives inhabiting Southern Rhodesia land sufficient for their occupation whether as tribes or as portions of tribes and suitable for their agricultural requirements”. It is argued, here, that sufficient land for Africans seems to have been interpreted by the settlers to mean areas into which an overflow of Africans, who could not be accommodated as laborers on European farms, could be settled. The term “reserve” clearly carries such a connotation.

The Native Reserves, which were created soon after, are known as the Communal Areas today (Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems, 1994). According to Moyana (1984), Native Commissioners were empowered to carve out land for the “collective use” of indigenous people. But it does not appear that any precise instructions were issued to the Native Commissioners, as to the principles to be followed in selecting areas for these Reserves, nor were they given any uniform basis upon which to calculate the amount of land necessary in proportion to the population it was intended to carry.

Moyana (1984), further notes that Native Reserves were usually far away from the railroad and from the plateau. Most plateau land had, by 1902, been parceled out to European farmers, who also chose the heavy red and black loam soils, which had been favored by the

indigenous people prior to 1890. It is argued, here, that while it is true that one or two Native Reserves possessed good soil, it is also true that an overwhelming number were unproductive and could not support the dense African population, which was meant to seek livelihood on them. Furthermore, geographically, the majority of the Reserves were in the middle of the Low-veld, where the rainfall was inadequate for the successful cultivation of crops. The policy of Native Reserves meant, in essence, that Africans had lost control over much of their land.

The Native Reserves were important precisely because they survived, with a good deal of amendment but recognizably in the same pattern, down to the present. This was certainly not foreseen, at the time by H.J. Taylor, the Chief Native Commissioner for Matebeleland, who, in 1904 expressed the view that Reserves “involve the negation of all progress, and should be regarded only as a temporary makeshift” (Palmer,1977:22).

The Reserves, therefore, were not initially designed to be the African’ share of the land; they were essentially ad hoc creations, intended to solve the post-war refugee problem, and to provide some place or other where the Natives could escape being required to pay rent. Indeed, the general expectation, shared by Company and imperial officials alike, was that as the country developed and Africans were sucked into the money economy, so the need for Reserves would disappear. The aim was to turn Africans into wage labourers, as rapidly as possible and integrate them into an economic structure based on class. Such was the “doctrine” which was generally accepted in the years before the serious development of

European farming and settler political power, which between them led to the espousal of a new doctrine based on segregation.

Ironically, discontent over the distribution of land came from the settlers and not from the Africans (Moyana, 1984). At this time Africans lacked both the leadership and means with which to challenge the European principles of justice and governance. The moment a European pegged his farm, he regarded the African villagers on it as his 'serfs' who would have to work for him. The chief means of mobilizing this pool of labour, in the first years was the "sjambok" or hippo-hide whip, and after 1908, labour agreements, which committed tenants to work several months, for the privilege of remaining on the white farms. It became common practice for the speculator to judge the value of land largely by the number of Africans living on it, from whom he could extort a handsome income by charging them rent fees. For these reasons it was economically unsound for the landowners to evict the African tenants from their lands. Palmer (1977) concurs that the Company therefore decided to attack absentee landlords in particular; the large land companies and syndicates, and it determined a policy of beneficial occupation or surrender. In doing so, however, it came into direct conflict with settler representatives in the new Legislative Council set up under the 1898 Order in Council.

4.7 African Land Purchase

According to Palmer (1977), the Southern Rhodesia Order in Council of 1898 proclaimed, as had the 1894 Matebeleland Order, the right of Africans to "acquire, hold, encumber, and dispose of land on the same conditions as a person who was not a native". Thus, while the

Native Reserves were set aside for “traditional” communal occupation, individual Africans with the necessary capital and expertise could buy freehold farms in exactly the same way as the white settlers.

However, debate in respect of the above, followed four lines of thought: first, that the principle of allowing Africans to buy land next to European farms was bad, since it would not enhance the value of surrounding farms because Europeans would tend to buy such land; second, that the interests of white farmers and Africans were best served by keeping the latter in separate areas, and that Africans would not improve any land which they bought; third, that Africans should not be granted equal footing with Europeans and; and fourth, that no Africans should ever be allowed to own land as there was no hurry for them to rise from their position of inferiority. (Palmer 1977: 62). Further, Europeans feared the dangers of stock thefts and diseases, trespass and molestation of white children. They also questioned why one would want contact between the two races over and above that brought about in various spheres of labour.

This led to a general policy, which was in total conflict with the terms of the Order in Council, and which persisted throughout the Company’s period of administration. On the one hand, it refused all African applications for land, though it could not prevent individual Europeans from selling to Africans. While on the other hand, it reflected all European demands for the law to be changed, arguing that there was little point in risking conflict with the British Government on an issue over which the Company was largely in control.

The argument contained in this thesis is that while the question of African land purchase was, at the time, a small and relatively insignificant one, since very few Africans indeed were in a position to compete for land in this way, it subsequently assumed a much wider importance and was in fact the direct precursor of the great segregation debate of the 1910s and 1920s, and the land Appointment Act of 1930.

Fortunately, the full implications did not become apparent for a number of years; indeed some Native Commissioners had no wish to disturb Africans by telling them that a division of the land had been done. The Chief Native Commissioner for Matabeleland thought it unwise to mention the matter as “it would inevitably lead to a good deal of discontent amongst the natives, as they were much too primitive to understand the portioning out of land”; while other Native Commissioners refrained from pointing out the reserve boundaries in order “not to worry the minds of the native prematurely” (Palmer, 1977:71).

However, such a fiction could only be maintained for a short period within the reserves, or alienated land, or in cases where European owners neither occupied their land nor charged Africans rent for living on it. It is argued, here, that as soon as landlords began to impose rent or labour agreements, Africans were only too aware that a land division had been made. According to Palmer (1977) this awareness was to spread rapidly after 1908, with the initiation of the Company’s agricultural policy.

4.8 White Farmers and Black Peasants

The research recognizes the notion that whereas in South Africa, it was the mineral revolution, which ultimately led to the impoverishment of the African peasantry, in Rhodesia, paradoxically, it was the absence of such a revolution, which had much the same effect. Palmer (1977) observes that in 1907 BSAC directors toured the country and decided that the time had come to put an end to the myth of the “second rand”. The myth had persisted for so long, partly because mineral exploitation had been severely hindered by the Risings of 1896-7 and by the South African war of 1899-1902, which had cut Rhodesia’s rail links to South Africa. A brief mining boom followed the end of the war, but this collapsed in the financial crisis of 1903-4. The Company concluded that it was essential to diversify the economy and that the best way of doing this was to encourage European farming, thereby promoting greater economic self- sufficiency, cutting the import bill, and raising the value of land and providing more traffic for the railway, both of which at the time were owned by the Company. This “white agricultural policy”, as it was called, which began in 1908, was ultimately to affect, radically, the position of Africans on the land.

In pursuance of this new policy, the Company launched an attack on the Native Reserves in the years 1908-14, with the intention of recovering all the best land and making it available for European settlement. Land distribution was as follows:

Table 1, Land Apportionment in Southern Rhodesia, 1911

<u>Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Country</u>
European area	19 032 320	20.7
Native Reserve	21 390 080	23.2
Unassigned	51 628 800	56.1
Total	92 051 200	100.0

(Source: Moyana, 1984:42)

However, because European agriculture was labour intensive rather than capital intensive, and the natives, particularly the Shona, opted out of the labour market by growing a sufficient surplus to meet their tax and other commitments, there was high demand for labour. Therefore European farmers came into competition with the mines which were also labour intensive, and which could generally afford to pay higher wages.

The white farmers needed large supplies of seasonal labour, at precisely the time when local Africans needed to tend to their crops. They thus found themselves in much the same position as white farmers elsewhere in Africa, heavily reliant on migrant labour from depressed areas and demanding a reduction of African-Land holdings and a tax on such holdings. This was not going to be easy, however, and the Company began to think in terms of a Reserve Commission.

Palmer (1977) observes that Commissions of enquiry generally fall into one of three categories: those which genuinely seek answers to complex questions and hence are manned by experts; those designed as a public relations exercise by governments which have already

made up their minds and hence are packed with nonentities, men who can be relied upon to produce the answers expected by government; and finally, those Commissions whose basic task is to remove a controversial issue from the heat of public debate quietly, and very slowly defuse it, which usually consisted of civil servants. In the case of the Rhodesian Native Reserves Commission, elements of the second and third categories were clearly apparent, for not only were the personnel and the terms of reference highly favorable to the BSAC, but something of a conspiracy of silence surrounded both the Commission and the subsequent debate on its work.

The colonial office agreed to the appointment of the Reserves Commission of 1914, on the understanding that the delimitation of the Reserves being contemplated would be final (Moyana, 1984:45). The colonial office urged the Company to nominate a senior officer of the Native Affairs Department, which was the watchdog for African interests. As things turned out, no Native Affairs Commissioner was allowed to serve on this Commission. The three men appointed were all either employees or ex-employees of the Company. Clearly, such a Commission could not have been expected to deal impartially with the issues they were to investigate.

Moyana (1984) further notes that, among others, the Commission was to pay special attention to the sufficiency of land suitable for the agricultural and pastoral requirements of the Africans. It was to take into consideration, not only the present, but also the future African population. The Commissioners were expected to consult both Europeans and Africans and to recommend means of inducing Africans to make use of Reserves.

Whereas the Colonial office had originally suggested an enquiry into the adequacy of each Reserve, the Company argued, successfully, that the Commission be empowered to regroup the Reserves, which were dotted about rather haphazardly, as this would allow new Reserves to be created, “thus getting free corresponding areas, which are now Native Reserves, for other purposes” (Palmer, 1977:107).

Palmer (1977) further observes that, in its report, the Commission admitted that the increase in European Settlement had stimulated the need for a more accurate definition of the Reserves, with the object of drawing a clear division between land available for Europeans and that set aside for Natives. It pointed out that land had been assigned to Natives, which was not suitable for their purposes, while land eminently fitted to carry a Native population had been left open. Unfortunately, at no point did the Commission state its criteria for assessing whether land was suitable for Africans or for Europeans.

The report adopted, almost word for word, the Company view, that Reserves were for those who could not immediately be assimilated into European conditions, and it therefore dismissed as absurd and extreme the notion that every unborn African had “an indefeasible right to land” (Palmer,1977:108), since in that case the whole country would eventually be needed as a Reserve. To them, as education broke down the tribal system, the need for Reserves would diminish. Indeed, the Commissioners assumed that the capacity of Africans to make good use of their land would keep pace with their rising population. Further, the Commissioners reported that they had not, as a rule, interviewed African Chiefs as “we

considered that we might do more harm than good by questioning the Natives upon a matter of which they were likely to misunderstand the real scope” (Moyana, 1984:48).

Palmer (1977) notes that the Commission believed that the existing Reserves were more than sufficient for present and future needs. With regard to areas which were being taken from the Reserves, the Commissioners suggested that Africans could either remain on the land or pay rent, or else they could move to another Reserve, which would be no hardship, provided the Reserves were sufficient and suitable. Finally, the Commission made a number of optimistic recommendations concerning the more efficient use of the Reserves. The Reserve boundaries would be clearly beacons and water supplies and adequate roads provided where necessary. It was premature to introduce agricultural schools, but Native Commissioners would encourage the use of better farming methods. Education was the greatest single factor in improving the use and occupation of land.

It is not surprising that so many of the Commission’s confident predictions for the future, which must certainly have influenced their recommendations, were to prove utterly unfounded. Africans did not, on the whole, adopt more intensive methods of farming, since they were in the process of being pushed away from easy access to markets; water supplies did not improve the carrying capacities of Reserves; the cattle market was shortly to collapse, and hence, propaganda directed at encouraging voluntary de-stocking was ignored; the population increased far beyond European expectations; and Africans did not lose their attachment to their ancestral lands, nor indeed their resentment of Europeans who had not

only usurped so much land, but were also in the process of pushing more and more Africans into the least desirable parts of the country.

The Native Reserves Commission thus cut down many of the Reserves within easy access of the main markets and therefore intensified the hardships on the African peasantry; while it also reduced some of the larger Reserves in the outlying districts, in what was clearly an attempt to curb “idleness” and overcome the reluctance of Rhodesian Africans to seek wage-labour within the country. The next decade witnessed increasing conflict between the races and consequent demands for segregation, for which the Commission had provided adequate basis.

4.9 Land Segregation in Colonial Rhodesia

During the decade 1915-25, a dilemma began to make itself apparent in Rhodesia, when administrators, for the first time, addressed themselves to the question of what was to be done with the Africans. However, the majority of Europeans declined to share in the general mood of introspection. The decade witnessed important political changes which were to sow the seeds of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence crisis of the 1960s. According to Palmer (1977), in 1922, the tiny and almost exclusively European electorate rejected the opportunity of becoming the fifth province of the Union of South Africa and voted instead for responsible government. Thus, the era of Company rule came to an end, and on 1 October 1923, Southern Rhodesia, with an estimated 35,900 Europeans and 890 000 Africans, became a “self-governing colony”. This meant that effective political power had passed into the hands of the settlers, who greatly enhanced their economic position, whilst

simultaneously achieving political control. They were able to mount a further and increasingly successful attack on the African peasantry in order to safeguard their position.

Early officials concentrated on instilling the “dignity of labour” to the extent that they frowned upon African commercial farming. But as a new skilled elite emerged and began to buy land, use ploughs, read newspapers, and even mount a slight challenge to the established order, by forming political associations, the question naturally arose of how to channel this advance, and in particular, how to channel it so that Africans would not come into social, economic, or political competition with Europeans. The solution, which occurred to most white officials, was that of segregation.

The basic driving force behind the movement to segregation, and it is worth emphasizing in view of the complexity of motivating factors, was the intense hatred displayed by the overwhelming majority of European farmers at the idea of Africans buying land in their midst (Palmer,1977). European farmers were opposed to the development of an African land owning class of commercial farmers for two basic reasons. In the first place, they objected to Africans as neighbours. As labourers, or rent paying tenants, they were of course welcome, for they were beholden to the European farmer and could be evicted by him at will. But as landowners, they would have to be treated (legally at any rate) as equals. Perhaps more important, if Africans “invaded” the European farming areas they would, by and large, be taking up the better soils and have equal access to markets, and hence be in a strong position to compete with European farmers.

Palmer (1977: 108) records various opinions: “The white farmers were afraid that as the African earning capacity increased, so more and more Africans would be in a position to buy land and they wanted the law changed before this could happen. The Native Department took the view that the desire for individual ownership was progressive while giving Africans a real interest in the country and government and practically ensuring their loyalty”; The missionary attitudes tended to follow closely the Native Department, of introducing tenure into the reserves; Overt African political activity was naturally preoccupied with the inadequacies of the Reserves and the problems bequeathed by the Native Reserves Commission. The BSAC’s traditional policy had always been to refuse both African applications for land and European requests to change the law; The Colonial office was not committed to a policy of segregation and preferred to await developments rather than take initiative.

For Palmer (1977), although the Native Department was much preoccupied with the segregation issue in the years 1915-25, the Report of the Native Reserves Commission, and the increasing number of Africans being evicted from European farms and forced to move into the reserves, caused the Department to rethink their whole attitude towards the land question. In the past they had tended to regard African settlement on European farms as something progressive and to be encouraged. But in the face of the prevailing attitudes of the white farmers, they gradually came to look upon the Reserves as havens of rest where Africans could live relatively free from European exactions, and where they could develop along their own lines. Chiefs were also in favour of movement into Reserves as the tribal system could be maintained more easily than when the people were scattered over farms.

It is against such a background of racial hostility that one needs to look at the impoverishment of the African peasantry in Rhodesia. The remarkable prosperity, by many Shona farmers in the early years of the century, was brought to an end by a combination of factors. Primarily, African farmers faced the full blast of competition from heavily subsidized European farmers, while simultaneously being pushed away from easy access to markets, a process greatly facilitated by the work of the Native Reserves Commission. In addition, Africans were confronted with the ever-increasing number of costly dues, taxes, rents, dipping and grazing fees, etc., at a time when their own appetite for consumer goods was on the increase. The end result was that when they were no longer able to sustain themselves and purchase their requirements from the sale of their agricultural produce, they would be forced to become wage labourers.

4.10 The Land Commission 1925

A Commission of three was appointed by His Majesty's Government to inquire into and report on the question of land segregation in the colony. The Chairman of the Commission was Sir Morris Carter, formerly Chief Justice of Uganda and Tanganyika. The other two members of the Commission were Sir Herbert Taylor, Chief Native Commissioner, and Mr. Atherson, Director of Lands, and formerly Surveyor General for the BSAC, who had served on the 1914 Reserves Commission (Moyana, 1984:61). The Commission started its work in 1925 and completed its work by the end of that year, and reported in favour of a policy of separate land purchase areas for Africans and Europeans (Palmer, 1977).

According to Moyana (1984), the Commission reported that the overwhelming majority of Africans also expressed a desire for land segregation. However; the Commissioners may not have clarified the issues of Africans. Many Africans were thus duped into accepting land segregation without knowing what amount and quality of land they would get and where it might be. Therefore, those who did accept the principle of land segregation did this on the assumption that their interests would at last be satisfied and protected, which the Commissioners persuaded them to believe. But as things turned out, by accepting the principle of segregation, the Africans condemned themselves to occupying remote and infertile areas, on the one hand, and on the other, inadvertently converted themselves into serfs of the landed class of European settlers. .

The Morris Carter Commission report was approved by the Rhodesian Legislature on June 20, 1927, but was not gazetted until 1928. The Land Apportionment Bill, which resulted from the Commission's report, became law in 1930 but did not take effect until 1931 (Moyana, 1984). Under the terms of the Act, the rights of the African to land ownership anywhere in the Colony were rescinded. As compensation for this loss, he was given the right of purchase in an exclusive area to be known as the Native Purchase Area. These areas were, as much as possible, placed adjacent to Native Reserves. To achieve this pattern, pieces of European-owned land were incorporated into the New Native Areas, while portions of the Reserves were chipped off and included in the European areas (Moyana, 1984:69).

The Native Purchase Area came under the jurisdiction of the Native Land Board, which subjected the owner of the land, in the Native Purchase Area, to inspection. He was also

expected to shoulder certain responsibilities, such as fencing or the paying of taxes and other impositions which could be levied upon his land. Another category of land created by the Land Apportionment Act was the unassigned area. The Governor in Council was empowered by the Act to assign portions of the unassigned area to the European or Native Area, depending on need and would become part of the category to which it was assigned.

The third category was the European area where no African could hold or occupy land. The fourth category was the Forest Area, which was exclusively reserved for forestry. Finally, there was the Undetermined Area, which could be allocated to either Europeans or Africans.

Table 2, Land Apportionment in Southern Rhodesia, 1930

<u>Category</u>	<u>Areas</u>	<u>% of Country</u>
European Area	49 149 174	51.0
Native Reserves	21 127 040	22.0
Unassigned Area	17 793 300	18.5
Native Area	7 464 566	7.8
Forest Area	590 500	0.6
Undetermined Area	88 540	0.1
Total	96 213 120	100.0
Total for African Use	28 591 606	29.8

(Source, Moyana, 1984: 70)

In essence, according to Moyana (1984), the Act sought to force into the Reserves all those Africans who had not acquired freeholds in the Native Purchase Area and did not wish to purchase 'squattening rights' with their labour. This provision hit hardest those who resided on European farms in the vicinity of which there were no African Reserves to move into. Further, the Act did not consider the simple fact that what counts in land is not only the quantity but also quality. In this case the African land lacked in terms of both adequacy and quality. The Prime Minister's officer, on the other hand, maintained that Africans living on European land should be evicted regardless of whether there was sufficient land for them in Reserves or not. This necessitated the revision of the Land Apportionment Act.

4.11 Land and Racial Domination

Palmer (1977) argues that the Land Apportionment Act turned out to be the most contentious piece of Legislation ever passed by the Rhodesian Government. From 1930, it occupied a prominent place in political debate, and indeed the promise to repeal it was largely responsible for the fall of the United Federal Party Government at the 1962 election. Moyana (1984) adds that in the years that followed, successive amendments to the Land Apportionment Act were made, each seeking to facilitate the eviction of Africans from the European area. The allocation of land, on an essentially racial basis, and with no clear indication of whether or how land distribution fitted in with demographics, soil quality and climate, showed that the State was essentially fulfilling a racial/political agenda with agro-economic sub-themes, rather than vice versa.

This chapter accepts Moyana (1984)'s argument that the Land Apportionment Act, together with subsequent amendments, was the "Magna Carta" of European policy with respect to the distribution of wealth in Rhodesia. It was not only the cornerstone of European economic security, but also the cornerstone of all racialism, in social, political and economic areas.

As a reaction to overpopulation with both people and livestock in the Native Reserves, the Native Land Husbandry Act was passed in 1951. It was designed to enforce private ownership of land, de-stocking and conservation practices on black smallholders (Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Appropriate Agricultural Land Tenure Systems, 1994). Once again the State found a politically convenient thesis to propound its mantra of de-stocking. The view was that African reluctance to sell or kill cattle either for the market or privately, and apparent African indifference to overgrazing, lay in African Culture and tradition. Africans, it was argued, held onto their animals for prestige and status, irrespective of the agro-economic environment (Chitiyo, 2000). In other words, it implied that Africans' societal norms overrode agro-environmental development.

The administration began using persuasion and force to ensure compliance with its policies. Chiefs and headman were rewarded with money, regalia and other tokens of State appreciation, if they persuaded their people to peacefully comply with the provisions of the various land acts (Chitiyo, 2000). The carrying capacity of each Native Reserve was laid down and Chiefs and headmen were given "culling quotas" that their villages had to meet. Failure to meet these quotas resulted in the chief and sometimes the entire village having to

pay fines. In other instances, police confiscated the “excess” cattle from the villagers without compensation.

In 1963, the hard-line settler conservative party, the Rhodesia Front, took office. Primarily supported by white farmers, the Rhodesia Front’s mandate was to pull Southern Rhodesia out of the Federation with Nyasaland, cut links with Britain, and entrench white minority rule. Thus, the Native Land Husbandry Act was suspended and replaced by the Tribal Trust Land Act in 1965. The Tribal Trust Land Act changed the name of Native Reserves to Communal Areas, and established Tribal Law Authorities to control Land policy in Communal Areas. The regulation and policy on Land in Rhodesia was now handed over to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which, in theory, recognized tribal law. The aim was to bind the chiefs even more closely to the State apparatus.

In reality, the Tribal Law Authorities proved helpless to enforce either farming methods or land allocation. The “freedom farming” of the 1950s continued and a new phenomenon arose, the “wanton destruction of trees”, both in Communal Areas and on Commercial farms (Chitiyo, 2000: 72) It is argued here that this form of resource poaching fulfilled a genuine need. Trees were used for the construction of huts, for firewood/fuel and fences, but it was also clearly a protest against State law.

There was also an increase in Land and boundary conflicts. The increased migrations of locals and foreigners into and out of kraals, villages, wards and districts and the ensuing confusion over land entitlements, added to the growing crisis in the Communal Areas.

Various levels of boundary disputes, for instance between individuals and between villages, were commonplace and chiefs were often ignored or overruled by bureaucrats. The issue of land tenure security and inheritance were also problematic (Chitiyo, 2000). More Africans were moving to towns in search of jobs, while others worked on farms. Both the farm and urban dwellers still owned or wished to have access to land in rural areas. The tradition of polygamy and large families also added to land pressures. Yet the total quantity of African land had not increased, with the amount of good land diminishing.

Against this background, the Land Tenure Act was passed in 1969. The effect of which was to replace the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and finally divide land 50% white and 50% black. This racial division of land was regardless of demographics. Whites made up no more than 5% of the total population of the county. The veterans of the two World Wars and any white settler were given prime farmland, whereas, despite their growing population, blacks were allocated low rainfall areas. This resulted in overcrowding, over-stocking, serious environmental damage, low agricultural productivity and poverty in the communal areas, since one race group was not allowed to occupy land in the area of the other race group. It was in this context that Africans began to organize for political action around poverty issues and the land question.

The African urban worker knew that he was underpaid because he did not have land to return to. Equally aware were the unemployed who saw themselves being denied existence by a policy that forced them out of the rural areas and yet offered them no alternative source of income in the urban centres. The African farm workers also had the same the land grievance.

Most of them preferred to enter into labour contracts with landowners in return for a plot of land on which they could pursue a precarious existence. The African middle class, although they had the means to purchase land or start a business, were not allowed to own property in the designated European areas, nor were they allowed to open up businesses in towns which were designated as European areas. Undoubtedly, arable land and franchise became the popular themes of nationalist resistance movements and dominated the last years of colonial rule.

4.12 Conclusion

The key issues emerging from the analysis in this chapter are the following:

- From a historical perspective, there is little doubt that most of Zimbabwe's land and poverty problems are rooted in the racial land allocation policy of the early colonial government. The policy was not only racially skewed but also impractical. Little consideration was given to demography, population movements, climate, and soil types (except that the Europeans took the best of everything).
- The implementation of the policy of land segregation in Rhodesia had serious repercussions on African agriculture, which visibly declined soon after the creation of reserves and further deteriorated after the enactment of the Land Apportionment Act. The low productivity of the land, due to adverse ecological conditions, and to the shortage of space for both cultivation and grazing, which resulted in over-crowding and overstocking, were all factors which contributed to diminishing agricultural returns and the pauperization of the Africans. To an African population to whom

land was traditionally the most important asset in its possession, the policy of land apportionment was clearly a source of hardship and much suffering.

- Furthermore, the failure to devise a successful and equitable land allocation policy compromised land utilization and set the scene for land conflicts among Africans and between Africans and Europeans. Africans were crowded into the Reserves, only to be gradually squeezed out of direct competition with Europeans. Their traditional methods of land utilization and animal husbandry were labeled as primitive and destructive. The State attempted to forcibly implement “correct” (European) agro-ecological measures, which resulted in passive resistance until the 1960s, followed by increasingly open and violent resistance.
- In 1965 traditional tenure was “restored” under the Tribal Trust Land Act. Tribal Land authorities were created, incorporating traditional leaders and operating under District Commissioners. The system operated until Independence in 1980. The conflicting dynamics between State and peasant, and the agrarian dysfunctions were essentially about racism, the struggle for power and land allocation and usage.
- The majority of African communities is still settled on poor, badly located pieces of land and need consistent state support to enable them to derive livelihoods from agriculture and farming.

CHAPTER 5: LAND POLICIES IN ZIMBABWE

5.1 Introduction

The chapter examines perspectives and approaches to the land policy in Zimbabwe, within the context of poverty alleviation. The issues examined in this chapter will find specific elaboration in chapter seven, which examines the impact of the land policy in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe

The chapter accepts as premise the argument by Moyo (1995), that there are three broad foundational issues about the nature of land reform in Zimbabwe: (1) addressing entitlement, (2) technical reorganization, and (3) the legal reform of land ownership. However, a crucial, but often under-emphasized ingredient for success of any land reform programme is the perceptions and feelings of the landless and land hungry majority of poor citizens. The role they play is often minimal, hence the importance of reviewing modalities for implementation of the land reform programme. Zinyama (1999:8) adds that there is need to recognize stakeholders: (i) the government, as the implementer of the reform, which should define its targets, and allocate resources accordingly, (ii) the large landholders, who stand to lose some or all of their lands under the reforms, and (iii) the beneficiary small farmers or the landless, who should realize that they carry a large responsibility to maintain and improve productivity on their newly-acquired land.

The chapter acknowledges that different countries may have different objectives for land reform. While the objectives may be different or sometimes inter-related and complementary, in order to achieve a certain objective, there could be conflicts in policy priority areas. The

conflict usually lies between achieving social equity, while striving for economic and efficient utilization of land and other resources. It has proven difficult for governments to balance the two objectives, creating a dilemma for individual households as well as the state.

In Zimbabwe, and indeed most of Sub-Saharan Africa, land policy is governed by one or more of three frequently incompatible and contradictory motives: political power, and social and economic inclusion. The political motive is usually underplayed in government pronouncements on land reform, but is often a key factor, appealing to the landless peasantry or disempowering landowners who, in many cases, are perceived to be a threat to the ruling political class. Governments, in Southern Africa, especially in Zimbabwe, seem to be using land reform to retain political power. However, the economic and social costs usually outstrip the perceived benefits of radical land redistribution, if land reform is pursued merely on the basis of political ideology and expediency,

The chapter shows that Zimbabwe's land reform programme has not been simple and has numerous weaknesses, but it has also not been an outright failure. What the Zimbabwean experience shows is the complexity of land reform, which involves the redressing of past injustices, dealing with legal constraints, limited resources for acquisition of land and post-settlement support to ensure productivity so as to deal with poverty and un-employment. The first decade progressed fairly well but then the land reform process was affected by political competition, the ruling party's struggle to retain power and the deterioration of international relations between Zimbabwe and Britain.

5.2 Land Reform Policies and Practices of the 1980s

The basic justification for the new land reform programme, in the 1980s in Zimbabwe, stems from the country's colonial past. Colonialism gave rise to the historical imbalance in land ownership between the races and this was inherited by the newly-independent Zimbabwe in 1980. Approximately one quarter of a million European settlers occupied 40% of the land of the country, with over four million Africans occupying another 42%, the remainder being allocated to game reserves and forest areas. What worsened the situation was that Europeans occupied 80% of the land suitable for intensive or productive agriculture (Zinyama 1999:14).

Immediately after the attainment of the independence in 1980, the new government launched the first phase of the land reform programme which was officially referred to as the Resettlement Programme (Moyo; 1995). This programme involved the physical movement of peasants from Communal Areas into formerly white farmlands acquired by the colonial state. In addition, this programme also focused on developing rural areas through the provision of infrastructure and other socio-economic services, so as to ameliorate the plight of the people who had been negatively affected by the war of the liberation (Masiwa et al, 2004). According to Moyo (1995), the State provided some credit, extension services and marketing facilities to both the resettled and Communal Area peasants. Thus, while the government did not have a programme formally referred to as "Agrarian Reform" or "Land Reform", its resettlement programme would fit in broad definitions of land reform.

Masiwa et al. (2004: 2) observe that "politically, it was seen as a vehicle that would enable the government to achieve peace and stability. Socially, it intended to address the issues of

equity in land distribution, with a long-term effect on poverty alleviation among the rural populace. Economically, it was designed to improve agricultural productivity among the resettled farmers.”

Cusworth (1992:90) concurs and notes the following broad objectives as set out in the Resettlement Policies and Procedures Document of 1985.

- “to alleviate population pressure in Communal Areas;
- to extend and improve the base for productive agriculture in the peasant farming sector through individuals and cooperatives;
- to improve the standard of living of the largest and poorest sector of the population of Zimbabwe;
- to ameliorate the plight of people who have been adversely affected by the war and to rehabilitate them;
- to provide, at the lower end of the scale, opportunities for people who have no land and who are without employment and may therefore be classified as destitute;
- to bring abandoned or underutilized land into full production as one facet of implementing an equitable policy of land redistribution;
- to expand or improve the infrastructure and services that are needed to promote the well-being of people and of economic production; and
- to achieve national stability and progress in a country that has only recently emerged from the turmoil of war,”

The “Policies and Procedures” document was drawn up to assist the various agencies involved with the resettlement programme, to identify their responsibilities. It also provided

guidelines and set out the methodology for planning the programme on an individual scheme basis. Each scheme was to be planned separately and appraised from the perspective of the settler household and the national economy.

Masiwa et al. (2004:2) observe that the need to achieve these objectives in turn dictated the criteria that were used to select beneficiaries and these included:

- “effectively landless people/families
- unemployed and poor families with dependents between the ages of 18 and 55 years, and prepared to forego all land rights in communal areas;
- returned Zimbabwean refugees;
- experienced communal farmers prepared to forego communal land rights and give up any paid employment.”

From the onset, government recognized resettlement as more than simply a means of land redistribution. The largely political objective of the programme placed great emphasis on welfare and poverty reduction aspects (Kinsey, 1999). However, it would appear that the objectives were ambitious for a single programme. They also had significant implications for the way resettlement was implemented and for its consequent performance.

As it were, between 1980 and 1983, four Resettlement Model Schemes were planned and implemented as follows: Model A, which provided for a nucleus village settlement bounded by individual arable holdings and communal grazing lands; Model B, which involved 50 to 200 members living in a village and using the farmland and infrastructure collectively;

Model C, which was based on individual settler plots averaging 10 hectares in sizes, surrounding a core estate owned by the state farm authority, Agriculture Development Authority (ADA), which provided research, training, credit, input supply and marketing services to settlers who produced a common crop with the core estate; and Model D, which was intended for Natural Farming Regions IV and V, to provide ranching land for use by communal area communities, with access to the land for each community being rotated every 3 to 4 years, while the communal area grazing lands were allowed to regenerate (Moyo, 1995:87-88).

According to the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, between 1980 and 1989, villagers in Mashonaland East were resettled under model A. This was the village type of resettlement, where beneficiaries were allocated residential stands in a 20 to 30 household village, depending on land characteristics and the natural farming region. Grazing, woodlots, water points and social services were communal. Tenure was in the form of permits.

5.3 The Impact of the First Phase

The first phase of the land reform programme had several significant impacts in terms of population distribution and settlement patterns, land use patterns, and the environment (Zinyama 1999). Firstly, the conversion of land to smallholder farming resulted in changes in the demographic structure of the resettled areas. Before their transfer, these areas were sparsely populated with each farm comprising the farm owner's homestead and associated buildings, plus a compound for a few hundred labourers and their families. After re -

settlement, much larger numbers of people came into these areas, including the settler families, local administrative staff and agricultural extension workers, health and education personnel. Thus population densities increased and resettlements changed from a dispersed pattern to one comprising “nucleated villages” and service centres.

On the other hand, whilst there may be no substantial evidence that settlers (i.e. resettled Africans or beneficiaries of land reform) felt particularly insecure under resettlement, there is evidence that settler households were reluctant to cut their ties completely with the communal areas from which they came, and in particular to relinquish their right to cultivate land there (Cusworth, 1992). This feature of settler attitudes frustrated one of the objectives of resettlement, which was to release land in overcrowded communal areas and also provide a disincentive for settlers to invest in the medium- and long- term future of their holdings. Again, if the objective was to reduce the uncertainty of settlers being able to match the output and productivity of former commercial farmer land, it would seem appropriate to provide an added incentive for settlers to better utilize the land by providing them with an increased stake in its long-term future.

Secondly, the reform programme led to considerable changes in rural land use patterns in the settlement schemes. Previously sparsely settled and utilized large farms now had a network of roads and footpaths. Lands, which the previous owners had left mainly under bush for commercial livestock grazing, were converted into large pockets of smallholder cultivation of both subsistence and cash crops.

However, one of the key factors in determining the success of any land reform programme, as an economically viable development initiative, is the extent to which land is utilized. For Cusworth (1992: 95), two main factors relate to the use of land: first, the degree to which land is being utilized at the planned level of intensity and second, the appropriate intensity of land use for the particular area. It would appear that there was no substantial under-utilization of arable land in resettled areas, in terms of aggregate land area cultivated. In most cases, the deficit on uncultivated land, by the minority of settlers, was more than compensated for by a substantial number of settlers cultivating considerably more than they were expected to. Furthermore, some settlers ran herds of cattle of much greater numbers than was permitted. This resulted in schemes being “overgrazed”, despite a large proportion of settlers remaining without cattle.

The result appears to be both under- and over- utilization of land in resettlement areas. Furthermore, as schemes matured, the problem of over-utilization became more intense, not necessarily because poorer settlers acquired more cattle and cultivated more land, but because richer settlers kept more than the permitted number of cattle and over-cultivated their plots.

The argument being made here is that there are certain internal dynamics of land reform programmes that almost always lead to an inequitable distribution of economic benefits amongst the beneficiaries and a varied pattern of land utilization.

The third and last issue, according to Zinyama (1999), concerns the impact of the reform programme on the natural resources in the resettlement areas. For the first decade after independence, government was required, by entrenched constitutional clauses, in the Bill of Rights, to adhere to the principle of “willing seller – willing buyer” in acquiring land for resettlement. Consequently, a large proportion of the land made available to the government for resettlement was located in marginal areas with low rainfall. This means that resource poor farmers, who were dependent on subsistence food production, moved to land that was inherently not suited for intensive crop cultivation for resettlement and cultivation. Further, because of the land reform beneficiary’s poverty, there was deforestation as trees were cut to clear land for cultivation, building, fencing and fuel.

5.4 Shortcomings of the First Phase

Although the first phase of the land reform programme was relatively well-planned and supported, it failed to achieve set targets. According to Scoones, et al (2000), this was despite the fact that a considerable amount of land was available through the willing seller – willing buyer arrangement. Some white commercial farmers made their farms readily available as they abandoned their land during the war and just after independence. Donors were also forthcoming with funding. In 1983 for instance, the British government gave about 40 million pounds sterling to the Zimbabwe government for the purpose of land redistribution (Masiwa and Chipungu, 2004). However, government failed to vigorously pursue the land redistribution plan in order to resolve the land imbalance that existed.

The thesis supports the view that there were also more fundamental causes to the failure of the first phase of the land redistribution programme. “Key among these is government complacency and lethargy, class interests as well as the lack of political will to implement agreed policies” (Masiwa and Chipungu, 2004:4) This is demonstrated by minimal budget allocated for the purpose of land redistribution during the period 1980 to 1993. While constitutional obligations imposed such a restrictive operational environment, the government’s rhetoric to resettle people was not backed by meaningful financial commitment as shown in the table below.

Table 3, Annual Land Acquisition and Expenditure (1980-1993)

YEAR	TOTAL NATIONAL BUDGET (MILLION Z\$)	RESETTLEMENT ALLOCATION AS A % OF NATIONAL BUDGET
1980-81	1426.9	N/A
1981-82	2013.5	N/A
1982-83	2790.8	1.3
1983-84	2708.4	0.6
1984-85	3389.2	0.2
1985-86	3644.6	0.2
1986-87	4573.8	0.4
1987-88	5173.6	0.4
1988-89	6052.2	0.3
1989-90	6937.7	0.5
1990-91	9017.1	0.2
1991-92	11169.1	0.4
1992-93	1468.5	0.3

(Source, Masiwa and Chipungu, 2004:4)

The government's naivety is reflected in its short-term crisis management fiscal policies that evolved around the annual budget. The systematic nature in which the programme was being implemented meant that financial support was required to provide the necessary infrastructure before the beneficiaries moved onto the land. Unfortunately, budget allocations were far below expectations and the situation could have been further aggravated by the non-availability of pledged donor funds.

Bertus de Villiers (2003) argues that although more land was available than could be acquired, this also signifies the high cost of acquiring land. Land prices had stabilized in the mid-1980s, but began to rise due to perceived political and economic stability. It became very much a seller's market – much to the detriment of Government, but also perversely to its land reform programme, as it meant that good quality land became even scarcer. Although enough land was available (on sale), the Government was not in a position to target certain areas and therefore had to be guided by land being offered to it and to purchase that land at market prices (Bertus de Villiers, 203: 13). In addition, the land that was made readily available was not necessarily spread out over the whole country, but was concentrated in certain areas where farming activities had been most disrupted by the war.

Masiwa and Chipungu, 2004: 4) further observe that towards the end of the first decade, the government's socialist rhetoric was thawing in favor of capitalist principles. This, in turn, saw the appearance of the black elite, which was eager to gain from the system ahead of the landless peasants. The ruling elite also became part of a complex web of land grabs in which they allocated themselves land ahead of the landless peasants. Bertus de Villiers (2003,13)

notes that the Commercial Farmers Union expanded its ranks to include approximately 300 new black farmers, of which at least 10 were cabinet ministers, which in turn increased its influence and lobbying ability with Government.

Masiwa and Chipungu, (2004: 5) add that there was lack of consultation and participation of non-government stakeholders. “The government sought to proceed without involving affected local communities and other stakeholders”. The key actors were central government and its various line ministries and the ruling party, ZANU (PF), through the land identification committees, and the national committee, chaired by ZANU (PF) national chairman. The process thus, was highly politicized, strong on rhetoric, but consequently lacking the balance necessary for the development of a holistic, transparent and accountable programme. There was also poor ministerial coordination. Too many ministries and government departments were involved without clear roles or mandates. There was lack of institutional clarity and division of labour between the central government and Rural District Councils (RDCs), as well as between the RDCs and the communities as represented by traditional authority. For example, land identification was ZANU (PF) driven, land acquisition was done by the Ministry of Lands and Agriculture (MLA); land use planning was done by the Department of Extension Services (Agritex); Beneficiary selection was done by the Ministry of Local government; settler placement was done by the Ministry of Rural Resources (Masiwa and Chipungu, 2004). This fragmentation created problems of synchronization and coordination. The institutions did not consult the intended beneficiaries who were the rural poor and the landless. As a result, a coherent vision of the programme

that would move the resettled farmers out of subsistence into commercial activities did not emerge as intended.

Cusworth (1992) and Bertus de Villiers (2003) observe that the institutions established to service the productive needs of the beneficiaries, that is, the cooperative unions, agricultural finance cooperation (AFC) and the marketing boards, found that the resettlement provided them with nothing but extra administrative work for no financial benefit. Institutions such as the AFC and the marketing boards had, until 1980, been orientated mainly towards dealing with relatively smaller numbers of primarily commercial farmers. They were quite suddenly required to re-orientate their operations towards several hundred thousand clients in communal and resettlement areas. It was not surprising that they experienced difficulties coping with such a dramatic change in organizational culture.

For Bertus de Villiers (2003) post-acquisition and resettlement support and continued poverty in rural areas remained a problem. This is because, in addition to Government Departments not being well organized or properly equipped to deal with practical matters arising, the infrastructural, technical, financial and educational support programmes required for new settlements were not adequately in place. It was compounded by a lack of off-farm employment opportunities. Due to bilateral agreements that required the Government to match donor funding, the Government of Zimbabwe could not sustain the acquisition programme in the face of other competing social and economic demands. As a result, unfortunately, much funding was spent on the acquisition of land rather than on settlement and post-settlement support.

Lastly, the first phase failed to address the issue of tenure among the resettled farmers. Land belonged to government while the beneficiaries were only given permits to reside and work on the land. Bertus de Villiers (2003; 10) argues that in strictly legal terms, the state was the main beneficiary of land reform. The occupancy permit that was issued to resettled farmers fell short of secure tenure in the form of a lease or freehold. The Land Tenure Commission of 1994 noted that the insecurity of tenure among the resettled farmers grossly affected their commitment and medium- to long-term investment. Consequently, most resettled farmers did not surrender their customary entitlements to land in the communal areas.

5.5 Land Reform Policies and Practices of the Second Phase

The second phase of land reform in Zimbabwe was ushered in, in 1990 with a new constitutional dispensation. On 18 April 1990, the ten year period of entrenchment of the Bill of Rights came to an end. Instead of the 100% majority required to amend the Bill of Rights in the first ten years, a two-thirds majority sufficed. As the ruling ZANU (PF) party commanded more than a two-thirds majority in Parliament, it now had the power to amend the constitutional provisions relating to land.

According to Madhuku (2004), on the political front, by the close of the first decade of independence, land had emerged as a key political issue. This was mainly due to growing peasant disillusionment with the feeble and almost negligible pace of land reform during the 1980 to 1990 period. The government blamed its failure, to deliver on land on the restrictive legal framework of the Lancaster House Constitution. It therefore promised a radical reform process.

The second phase also came into being at a time when the government was reeling under a number of negative developments. Among such developments was the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), whose impact on the economy and the general populace was negative (Masiwa and Chipungu, 2004). The situation was compounded by the emergence, in 1989, of a new and vibrant opposition political party, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM). ZUM contested the 1990 parliamentary and presidential elections and ZANU (PF) used the land issue as a rallying point for support (Madhuku, (2004). The efforts by ZUM and other opposition parties were supported by the rise of the private media and civil organizations that also helped to disseminate information to the general public. This forced government to seriously think about re-invigorating the resettlement programme, which had slowed down over the years.

Given the foregoing, it was inevitable that the Constitution had to be amended to accommodate the new direction of land reform. Section 16 of the Constitution was duly amended by the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (Number 11) Act 1990. The Act came into force in 1991 and was called the “Land Acquisition Act”. It demolished the Lancaster House framework through three main features. First, it subjected all land, and not just underutilized land, to the regime of compulsory acquisition. This meant that even productive farms were henceforth liable for acquisition if the state so wished. Secondly, it replaced the “prompt and adequate” measure of compensation with a “fair compensation” within a “reasonable time”. In general, “fair compensation” is less than the market value determined from a willing buyer–willing seller standpoint and is a more flexible yardstick. Thirdly, it prohibited the courts from calling into question the fairness or otherwise of any

compensation formula to be provided by law (Madhuku, 2004:133). Moyo (1995) adds that the amendment also gave the government the right of “first refusal” on all Land Sales, and established a Derelict Lands Board, which allowed government to acquire derelict lands without compensation.

Moyo (1995:245), further notes that the legal changes were backed by a land policy statement announced in 1990, in the form of specific non-connected actions to be undertaken over an unspecified time frame. The land policy focused on five issues:

- It set a target to acquire five million more hectares in land blocks, to resettle 110 000 more households.
- It intended to review the land tenure situation in Communal, Resettlement and Small Scale Commercial farming areas;
- The selection of settlers and land use models in resettlement areas were to be reviewed towards emphasizing economic rather than social or subsistence criteria;
- It intended to promote blacks in capitalist farming through training and agricultural support services.
- It intended to introduce a land tax.

Ancillary aspects of the policy included the increased supervision and regulation of land use, the reduction of foreign and absentee land ownership in agriculture, the reduction of multiple and company farm ownerships, the deregulation of farm sub-division, the retention of capital gains taxes by farmers selling land but reinvesting into agriculture, and the selling of maximum and minimum sub-sectors in relation to agro-ecological potentials (Moyo, 1995).

Moyo (1995: 245) correctly points out that the land policy statement attempted to provide a comprehensive or inclusive position on various land policy concerns and problems resulting from the first phase of land reform. It encompassed moral, normative, technical, economic, administrative, political and macro-economic objectives, through the various means, such as constitutional amendments, decentralization of land allocation, creating black, large-scale commercial farmers and financing resettlement. But the issues were not actually linked in terms of a coherent, rational and logical implementation sequence. The influences of land policy measures on various problems were only implied. Nor was there any national consultative process to determine public opinion on the policy.

This had to be followed by a new Act of Parliament implementing the principles set out in the Constitutional and policy framework. Thus, the Land Acquisition Act was enacted in 1992. It elaborately laid out the principles and procedures for acquiring land for redistribution (Moyo, 1995). The Act brought into being a new approach of “designating” land as a prelude to acquisition. Designation involved a piece of rural land being identified and earmarked for acquisition, within a period not exceeding ten years from the date of notice. Thus, designation was merely an act of communicating to the owner and the public, the intention of the state to acquire, in the future, the specified piece of rural land. Its main legal effect was to prohibit the sale, lease or disposal of land in question, without the prior written permission of the government. The justification was that it facilitated the acquisition of land in large blocs suitable for the implementation of the resettlement programme, and that it would facilitate planning for both the government and the farmers, since the land that the

government intended to acquire would be clearly identified and demarcated, such that prospective farmers would know where to invest (Madhuku, 2004).

Within a year of the enactment of the Land Acquisition Act, 1992, a second constitutional amendment affecting land was enacted. This was contained in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (Number 12), Act 1993. The main effect of the amendment, in relation to land, was that it amended section 18 and made the right to the “protection of the law” and, the “entitlement” to be afforded a fair hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial court” to be overridden by other provisions of the Constitution. This meant that provisions of the Land Acquisition Act, 1992 which were prohibiting the jurisdiction of the courts in matters of fair compensation for acquired land, could not be challenged on the basis of a breach of section 18 (Madhuku, 2004).

A third constitutional amendment followed before the end of 1993. This was the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Number 13) Act, 1993. This amendment was meant to make it clear that it was only in respect of land that the courts would not question the compensation payable. The right to approach the courts on any question relating to compensation was still available in respect of the compulsory acquisition of any other property.

The legal framework created by the new constitutional provisions and the land Acquisition Act, 1992, became the basis for the land reform process in this period. However, owing to fierce opposition of this legal framework, the next few years witnessed unending legal battles. On the one hand, the government sought to close any loopholes in the law, which

could have been used by white commercial farmers, to undermine the effectiveness of the new law. On the other hand, white commercial farmers resorted to challenging the constitutionality of the new laws in the courts.

In 1997, spurred by pressure from the powerful war veterans, the government employed the relevant section of the Land Acquisition Act, to designate 1,471 large-scale commercial farms for compulsory acquisition (Moyo and Matondi, 2001). The top down approach of the government, and the failure to consult widely with interested stakeholders, compromised the success of this initiative. The government then launched a broad-based consultation process, with a wide variety of non-state actors, in order to develop a national land policy and phase 2 of land redistribution and resettlement programme, which embraced the principles of transparency, accountability and participation. In its bid to raise funds for phase 2, government went on to organize a donors' conference in Harare in September 1998. By this time, however, international donors had grown suspicious of government's moves, particularly its passing of the Land Acquisition Act of 1992, which allowed the government to compulsorily acquire land (Tshuma, 1997). Despite such negative developments, the government introduced phase 2 of the land reform programme to the donors. During this phase, the government aimed to finalize a new policy which would introduce an agricultural land tax, streamline sub-division regulations, improve tenure arrangements and test a variety of approaches to land redistribution, with the key objective of learning by doing (Moyo and Matondi, 2001).

Masiwa and Chipungu (2004) observe that there was an environment of mistrust and financial commitments from international donors was disappointing. A number of issues were not clear to the donor community:

- (i) The European Union's stance was that it would not commit itself to the land reform and resettlement programme on the basis of a policy document. What they wanted were concrete proposals for projects on how the government was going to carry out the land reform in all areas it intended to resettle people;
- (ii) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) wanted government to employ a market-oriented approach that would involve taxation of underutilized land to induce subdivision of farms. This would, in turn, release more land on the market;
- (iii) Some donors also wanted the reform programme to be integrated within a broad macro-economic framework that had specific targets aimed at fostering economic growth.

Despite the financial dilemma which followed the donors' conference, the government went ahead to launch phase 2 of the land reform programme in 1999. In the absence of credit facilities, a land reform programme, wholly financed by the government, inevitably had negative effects, chief among them, inflation.

In the same year, 1999, a Constitutional Commission was formed by the government to consult on a draft Constitution. One of the aims of the draft Constitution was to insert provisions that would make it easier and cheaper for the government to acquire land for resettlement. In February 2000, a Constitutional referendum was held and the draft Constitution was rejected by the majority. The Africa All Party Parliamentary Group (2009:

35) observed that President Mugabe took the defeat as a personal rejection, and with his blessing, the party machine acted swiftly to put in place a radical land reform policy which formed the cornerstone of his re-election campaign.

Apparently angered and frustrated by the result of the referendum, war veterans and landless villagers started a wave of invasions of commercial farms, marking the beginning of a complex crisis in Zimbabwe. The commercial farmers were alleged to have campaigned for a “no” vote against the draft Constitution. Thus, violence directed towards white farmers and black farm workers became part of political campaigns for the June 2000 Parliamentary elections, and led to the freezing of whatever donor support had been half-heartedly offered.

Madhuku (2004) argues that these developments showed the ruling party’s waning support base, which was in contrast to the rapidly expanding urban support base for the opposition parties. In this context, ZANU (PF) had to devise a survival strategy and picked on the land issue as its strategic agenda. The use of the land issues had one significant difference from the previous periods. This time, the opposition and civic society had to be portrayed as opponents of land reform and that they were being sponsored by Britain and the western allies. ZANU (PF) was portrayed as the only movement that had a genuine commitment to land reform. This entailed an approach which was as radical as to fit the description of “revolutionary” and well-couched, to depict any critic, however moderate the criticism, as “counter revolutionary”. This is why this particular phase of land reform was described as the “Third Chimurenga”

Pursuant to this political strategy, the rejection of the Government's draft Constitution in the Referendum of February 2000, was characterized as a conspiracy against land reform and on 18th February 2000, the first forceful land occupation by war veterans took place. These occupations were to become the main feature of the post – 2000 land reform process.

After the rejection of the draft Constitution, Parliament went on to amend the Constitution in April 2000. This amendment came in the form of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 16) Act, 2000. The amendment was taken verbatim, from a clause of the draft Constitution that had been rejected in the referendum (Madhuku, 2004). The perceived political benefit accruing to ZANU (PF) in enacting, as law, a provision which had been part of a rejected proposal, was that ZANU (PF) would be seen as a party that rescued the people from the conspiracy against land reform, by those who opposed the draft Constitution. The Act empowered the Government to acquire commercial farms without an obligation to pay compensation for the land, but only for the farm improvements.

The amendment did not stop farm invasions as was expected. Instead, the invasions became more violent, as the June 2000 Parliamentary elections approached. Despite the ruling ZANU (PF) party winning the majority of seats, the invasions continued.

The failure of the inception phase and the rising pressure from people for land led the government to legitimize the violent farm invasions through an accelerated resettlement programme named "Fast Track". At first there seemed to be some confusion regarding the exact definition and scope of the fast track resettlement programme, among the majority of

Zimbabweans. On its part, the government sought to explain this issue at a summit held in New York in early September 2000. The impression given by the Government was that the fast track resettlement programme was an accelerated plan for land reform.

The fast track resettlement programme had two models, namely the A1 and A2 models. The A1 model was targeted at the rural landless, who would be resettled in villages or self-contained small farms of about 5 hectares, depending on the natural farming region. The A2 model was a commercial farming land-use model, meant to empower the black indigenous farmers.

Madhuku (2004) observes that the new Constitutional position led to amendments to the Land Acquisition Act of 1992. A substantial portion of amendments to the Act did not arise from the need to make the Act conform to the Constitution, but were designed to remove what the government press termed “bottlenecks” in the acquisition process. Essentially, this meant removing all procedural safeguards against abuse of state authority in the acquisition process. This also included making amendments as a response to the reaction of white commercial farmers. Because many amendments were a response to what government perceived as a concerted effort, by white commercial farmers, to frustrate land reform, the amendment process was ad hoc to the extent that the Act has been amended at least once every year since 2000.

The first amendments were enacted in 2000 under the Land Acquisition Amendment Act, 2000. These introduced several changes, the most significant of which were to incorporate

the new position of “no obligation to pay compensation” and to facilitate the fast track resettlement programme by repealing all provisions relating to designation of rural land. Whilst in the 1992 Act, a preliminary notice of intention to acquire land automatically lapsed after one year if there was no acquisition, this was considered as one of the “bottlenecks” and the 2000 amendments repealed this position and made a preliminary notice valid for an indefinite period, and could only be terminated either by withdrawal or acquisition of the land in question.

In 2001, further amendments were made via the Land Acquisition Amendment Act, 2001. These amendments were designed to condone Government’s failure to observe the time limits imposed by the Act. For example, it allowed government to re-issue preliminary notices in respect of the same land where they had lapsed. In response to a ruling by the Supreme Court that the indefinite period was unconstitutional, the 2001 amendments reduced the period of validity to two years.

In 2002, another set of amendments was enacted. The first was contained in the Land Acquisition Amendment (No.1) Act, 2002. The main provision of the first 2002 amendments, related to the eviction of owners of land, which had been compulsorily acquired. This was in response to landowners who were considered to be resisting the land reform process, by refusing to vacate their farms. In terms of the amendments, once an order of acquisition had been made, the making of the order itself was deemed to be a notice to the owner to cease to occupy, hold or use that land forty-five days after the date of service of the

order. The owner was allowed to remain in occupation of their living quarters on that farm for a period of no more than ninety days.

The second were contained in the Land Acquisition Amendment (No.2) Act, 2002 and were meant to reverse certain unfavourable decisions from the courts. Some farmers had started challenging acquisitions on the basis that the land was not suitable for settlement for agricultural purposes. A new provision was inserted into the Act providing that as long as the acquiring authority has stated that the acquisition was for settlement for agricultural purposes, then it shall be presumed that the land was indeed suitable settlement for agricultural purposes. The High Court had also ruled that failure to serve notice on bondholders invalidated an acquisition order. A new provision was inserted, to render the judgment ineffective, by allowing Government to serve subsequent orders in substitution of the invalid orders and thus still proceed with the acquisition.

While the above shows a spirited resort to the enactments of legal instruments as part of a new approach to land reform, this was merely half the story. The other half was that the Government condoned breaches of the existing law in furtherance of the political objectives driving the land reform programme.

The immediate response of white commercial farmers to land occupants was to resort to the courts, it having been clear under the existing law that the occupations were illegal. In March 2000, a month after the first farm occupations, the High Court issued an order that declared farm invasions “unlawful”. The state accepted that the occupations were

“unlawful”. However, the Commissioner of Police did not enforce the order and decided to go back to the court seeking to be excused from enforcing it. The application of the Commissioner of Police was the beginning of the arguments, which were to be used to disobey court orders. He cited lack of resources to enforce the order. More fundamentally, he raised a purely political argument that enforcing the order would lead to public disorder as the persons involved were prepared to resist the police in furtherance of their quest for land. In other words, the police were of the view that it was not politically correct to enforce the law.

The Commercial farmers, having won in the High Court, but continuing to lose out due to political pressures decided to approach the Supreme Court with an application based on the breach of the Constitution. In its judgment, the Supreme Court also criticized the “Fast Track Land Reform Programme,” saying it did not meet the Constitutional requirement of a “programme of land reform”. When it came to the remedy, the Supreme Court backtracked. It ordered the government to comply with the orders issued by the previous courts, but refused to give an immediate order restraining the government from continuing with land acquisition, it was thus succumbing to the political pressures that had built up around the land question.

The Supreme Court judgment gave government a major reprieve. Purporting to be restoring the rule of law, it enacted the Rural Land Occupiers (Protection from Eviction) Act, 2001. The purpose of this Act was to legalize all land occupations, which took place from 6th February 2000 to 1st March 2001. Any persons occupying rural land as at 1st March 2000

was given the status of a “protected occupier” and could not be evicted. In this way, the Government responded in a crude manner, to the pleas by the judiciary not to disobey its own laws, but to change them if it did not like them. In issuing the pleas, the courts seem to have been naïve, because in the period after 2000, the Government showed preparedness to pass, as law, any instrument, however objectionable, as long as it was in its political interests.

For a Government that had gone to great lengths in passing a Constitutional amendment in 2000 and enacting four Land Acquisition Amendment Acts within a space of three years, it was very aware of what it had to do if it wanted to legalize the land occupations. Defiance of its own laws, which it had power to change, was simply a political strategy. The Government of Zimbabwe wanted to buy favours with party members and supporters. It wanted to be seen to be fighting against certain forces opposed to progress in Zimbabwe. These forces were portrayed as the opposition and civic groups.

Madhuku (2004) notes that, armed with the new Act, the government itself went back to Supreme Court, which it had now reconstituted, seeking an order that stated that the rule of law had been restored. The matter was heard in September 2000 and presided over by the new Chief Justice Chidyausiku. In that case, *The Minister of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement and others v the Commercial Farmers Union*, by a majority of four judges against one, the Supreme Court ruled that the land acquisition programme was now lawful as government had restored the rule of law. It upheld the Rural Land Occupiers (Protection from Eviction) Act, 2001 as constitutional. It ruled that the Government now had a “land reform programme” in compliance with the Constitution.

This Supreme Court judgment brought to an end the numerous court applications challenging the land reform programme itself and gave Government unlimited scope in pursuing its land policies. However, the judgment did not silence critics who argued that the land reform process in the post 2000 period continued to be contrary to the rule of law.

In response to these critics, Government passed yet another Constitutional Amendment (No. 17) Act, 2002 on September 4. This piece of legislation changed the legal procedures in respect of the compulsory acquisition of agricultural land in that it effectively barred any legal challenges, which had become rampant among affected former white commercial farmers. The Constitutional amendment also provided for the nationalization of the land that had been identified for acquisition under the Land Acquisition Act, thereby repealing the Rural Land Occupiers (Protection from Eviction) Act.

Therefore, that the land question in Zimbabwe shows that law can be a very effective instrument of political expediency. Both the colonial and postcolonial states have used law to fashion land ownership in a manner most suitable for the vested political interests of the ruling elite. Whether or not the vested political interests were influenced by economic and other considerations becomes irrelevant

5.6 Critique of the Second Phase of Land Reform

Masiwa and Chipungu (2004) point out that the inception and subsequent implementation of the second phase of the land reform programme, opened a challenging chapter in the history

of Zimbabwe's land question. Indeed, land hunger had become more pronounced in the 1990s as witnessed by growing impoverishment of the rural people and the subsequent farm invasions by landless peasants. However, issues pertaining to governance and politicization also became pronounced in the unfolding events.

The polarization of positions between the Government, commercial farmers and donors, on how the land reform programme was to be implemented, became an issue of major concern. The lapse of the Lancaster House Constitution and its subsequent amendment by the Government, to allow for compulsory acquisition of land, opened a fresh debate about land reform and development in Zimbabwe. The issue was not only about compulsory acquisition, but also about the payment of compensation (Tshuma, 1997). President Mugabe had repeatedly said that the Government was not going to pay for African soil. Instead, compensation was to be paid for improvements only. His argument was that payment of compensation for farmers who lost their land through compulsory acquisition was the responsibility of the former colonial master, Britain. The British, on the other hand, argued that they had no obligation to fund the land reform on the basis of historical colonialism. Their commitment to the land reform programme was part of a moral obligation to alleviate poverty.

Although the Commonwealth meeting on Zimbabwe's land crisis held in Abuja (Nigeria) in 2001 confirmed that land reform was a central policy issue that Zimbabwe needed to address, the second phase was haphazard and chaotic. The following picture emerges from a survey of some of the glaring, contentious issues. First, the ruling party appears not to have

consulted the opposition, civil society and other stakeholders. The relationship between land rights and the rule of law was politicized, to reflect an incomplete decolonization of Zimbabwe with reference to property relations. Government tended to rationalize land acquisition and redistribution on the basis of historical grievances, at the expense of a valid economic rationale. When the Supreme Court made its first ruling on the land invasions, the response of President Mugabe was that this was a political issue and not a matter of law.

Farm occupations and the subsequent fast track resettlement arguably contributed to the development of intense confrontation at the local level. Local struggles were linked to: politically instigated violence on farms; displacement of farm workers; corruption and political victimization in de-listing of farms, “illegal” settlements on peri-urban farms, participation in local governance; availability of health and educational facilities; and loss of employment and neglect of vulnerable groups, including migrant workers, women, orphans and the elderly.

A second point of contention is the extent to which redistributed land was allocated to middle- class blacks, specifically the political elite. The research question, which was raised in chapter one, is whether the dualistic pattern bequeathed by colonialism, of two contrasting sectors, one involving a large number of poor small holdings and a few large-scale land-holdings has disappeared, or is it re-emerging with new forms and a de-racialization of ownership patterns. Suffice, at this point, to note that acquisition of land was political, and instead of undertaking a land reform programme that would benefit the landless masses,

substantial amount of land was distributed among the politically connected thereby perpetuating land ownership imbalances in favour of minority black elites.

Thirdly, land occupations and Fast Track Resettlement generally negatively affected the performance of many other sectors linked to agriculture. Violence on the farms and uncertainty over their future forced large-scale farmers to cut down agricultural production, whilst the beneficiaries of land reform were yet to make an impact given the limited amount of resources and support services. Seed sales for some crops dropped, large-scale farmers started de-stocking, stock theft increased, investor confidence declined and the financial sector reduced support to the agricultural sector.

The argument presented in chapter one is that a properly designed and implemented land reform programme can eradicate poverty. However, having presented, in this chapter, the post-independence land reform policies and practices, the thesis accepts the argument by other scholars like Kinsey (1999, and 2005) that the impact of land reform on poverty (or, incomes, quality of life and livelihoods) may take some years to become apparent. Kinsey has done extensive study of resettlement schemes in Zimbabwe in the 1980s and late 1990s. Although he did not specifically cover Mashonaland East province, his findings can be extrapolated and have informed the analysis presented in the thesis. Chamunorwa (2010: 8) also points out that the key lesson that can be drawn is that irrespective of the political or historical milieu, the transfer of land alone is not sufficient for eradicating poverty; it requires buttressing with post-resettlement support and capacity building.

5.7 Conclusion

The key issues emerging from the discussion in the chapter are the following:

- In the 1980s, the emphasis of land reform was on redressing past land ownership imbalances by promoting equal access to land for the majority of the indigenous people, with the hope of creating political stability in the new land dispensation. At the same time, land reform was also aimed at achieving economic growth and poverty alleviation. However, after an initial accelerated process of land reform in the 1980s, the pace slowed down, targets were not met and the problems of equity and racial bias remained.
- The differences over financing land transfers and the prescribed poverty alleviation approach vis-à-vis the “capable” beneficiaries, which was the paradigm of the 1990s, as prescribed by the British government, to the Zimbabwean government, contributed to the radicalization of the land reform strategy. Internal pressure, from landless villagers and war veterans, on the Government, had the effect of radicalizing the ZANU (PF) government. The changes to the Land Acquisition Act can be seen as signs of an attempt to find legal means for radical land reform.
- For Zimbabwe, where the land question remains unresolved and where a large proportion of the mainly rural population depends on the land and natural resources for their livelihood, it is crucial to recognize that addressing the land question in terms of equity, historical social justice and empowerment is important.

CHAPTER 6: THE CASE STUDY OF MASHONALAND EAST PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE: PROFILING THE PROVINCE

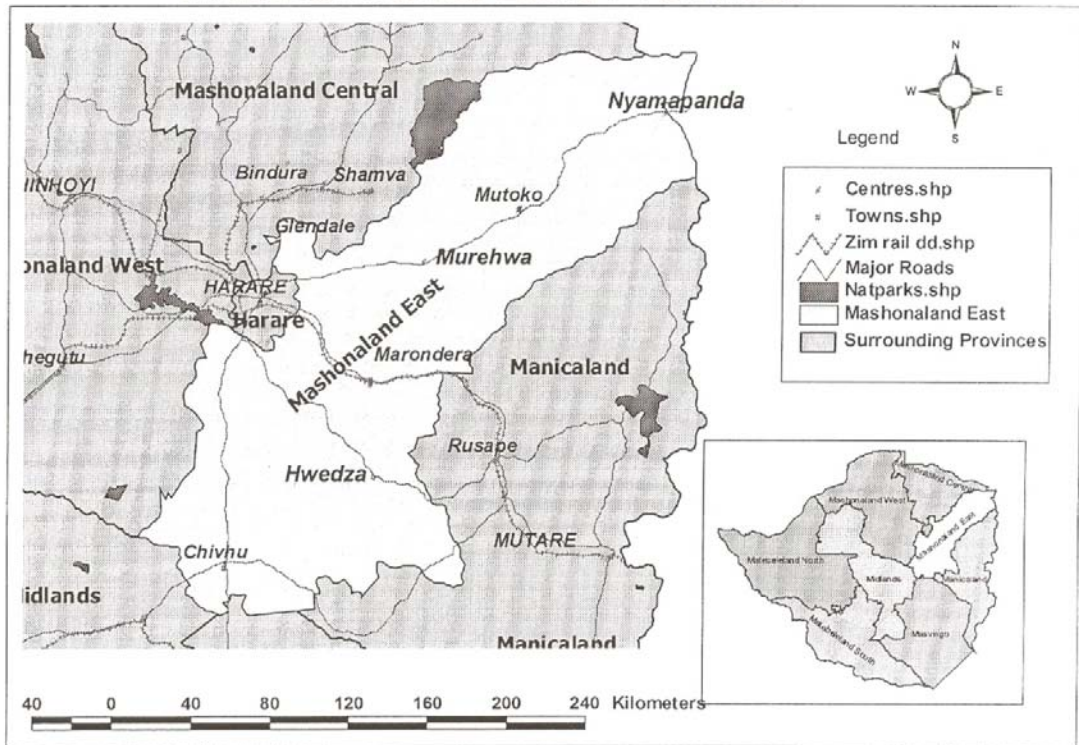
6.1 Introduction

This chapter profiles Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. In the absence of more recent reports, it is largely informed by the Population Census Report of 2002 and the Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee of 2003. It is acknowledged that whereas statistics change rapidly, Government departments take long to update their records. There is therefore no accessible, accurate record of all the people in need of land in Zimbabwe. Previous population censuses were not designed to reveal people's landlessness. However, academics and Government departments have, on the basis of analysis and deductions, given certain estimates and indications of landlessness. It is generally known that the land situation in the communal areas is bad because of historical imbalances.

6.2 Administrative Districts

Mashonaland East province is one of the 8 rural provinces in Zimbabwe and is situated in the North-eastern part of the country. It is elongated and runs North-easterly and South-westerly relative to Harare province. The province shares its North-eastern border with Mozambique. To the East lies Manicaland province and it shares its southern border with parts of Midlands and Masvingo provinces. Mashonaland Central is to the North and Harare and Mashonaland West provinces share its western boundary.

Mashonaland East Province



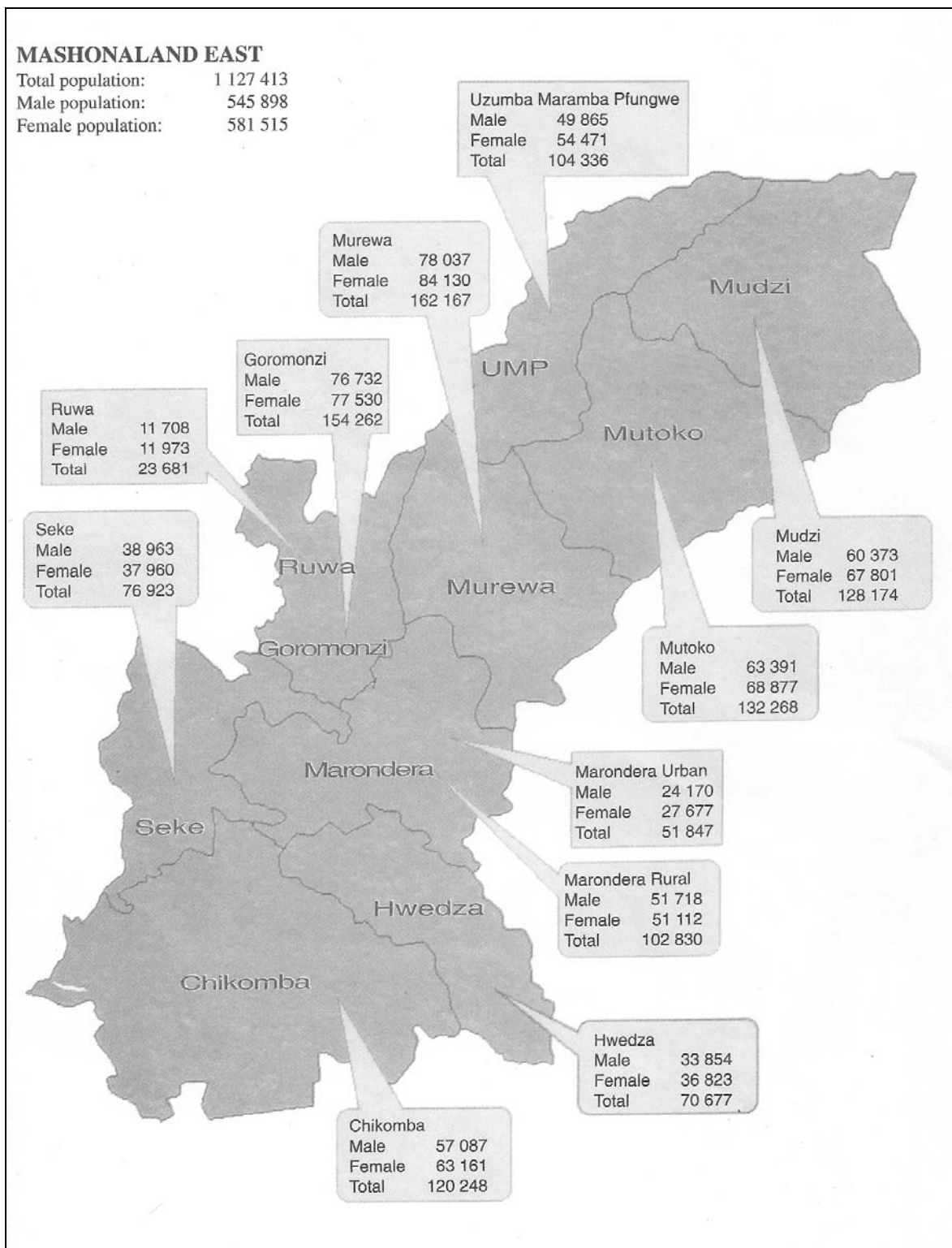
Source: Parliament of Zimbabwe, Informatics project, 2005

Administratively the province has 9 districts namely Marondera, Goromonzi, Murehwa, Mutoko, Seke, Mudzi, Hwedza, Chikomba and UzumbaMaramba-Pfungwe. It also has one major urban centre (Marondera Town), Ruwa Local Board, Acturus mining area and a smaller urban settlement of Chivhu town.

6.3 Socio Demographic Features

The total population of the province was 1 127 413 out of the population of Zimbabwe of 11 634 663 as at the last National Population Census of 2002. The proportion of males and females was 48 % and 52% respectively. This resulted in a sex ratio of almost 94. The sex

ratio is the average number of males per 100 females. Therefore, a sex ratio above 100 indicates an excess of males over females, while a ratio below 100 depicts the opposite.



Source: Census Report, 2002.

The population in the province was mostly rural, with only 24% of the total population to be found in urban areas. All districts in the province have an urban area.

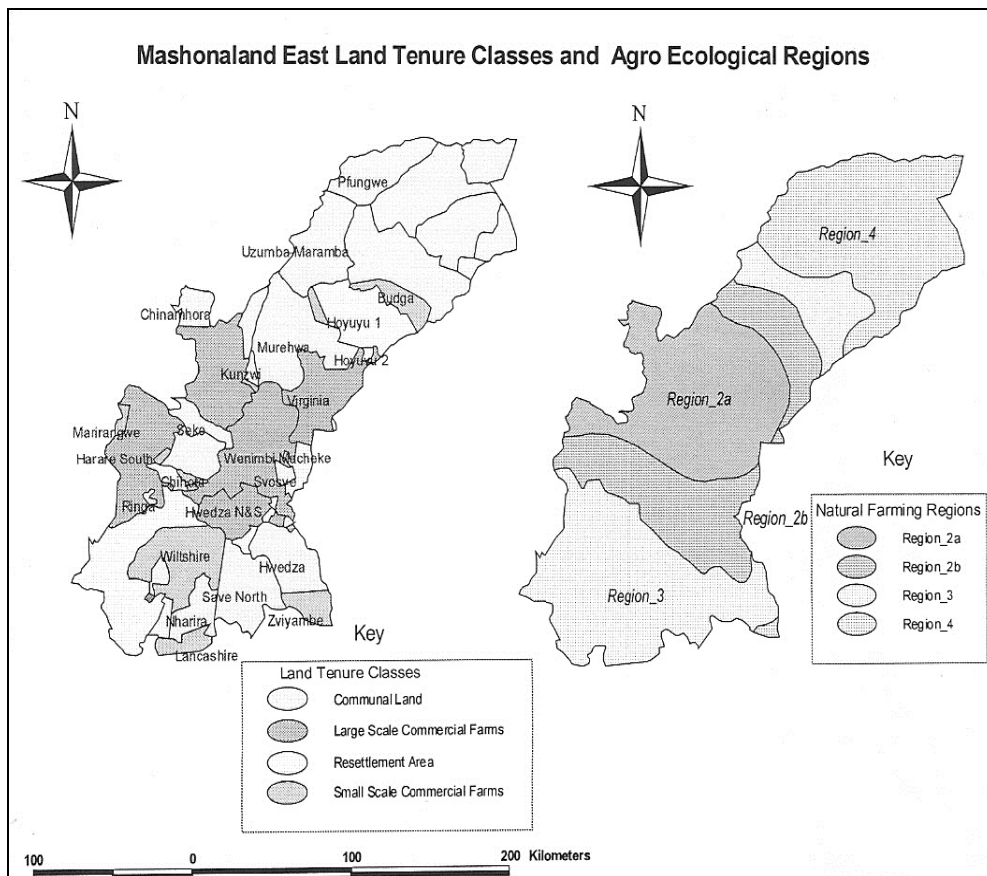
Almost the entire population in Mashonaland East province is of African origin. A negligible percent accounted for persons of European, Asiatic and Mixed origin. The age distribution of the population of African origin was the same as for the whole population. The proportion of the population aged 65 years and above was higher for persons of non- African origin than for those of African origin. About 99% of the population in the province was made up of Zimbabweans. Mozambicans and Malawians accounted for the remainder of the population.

6.4 Ecological Features

In Zimbabwe, land has been categorized into 5 agro-ecological regions, based on average rainfall, altitude and other climatic conditions. Rainfall patterns and crop production progressively deteriorate from region 1 to 5. Annual rainfall is highest in Natural Region 1, which covers approximately 2% of the total land area. It is a specialized and diversified farming region with plantation, forestry, fruit and intensive farming, livestock production, tea and coffee growing in frost-free areas.

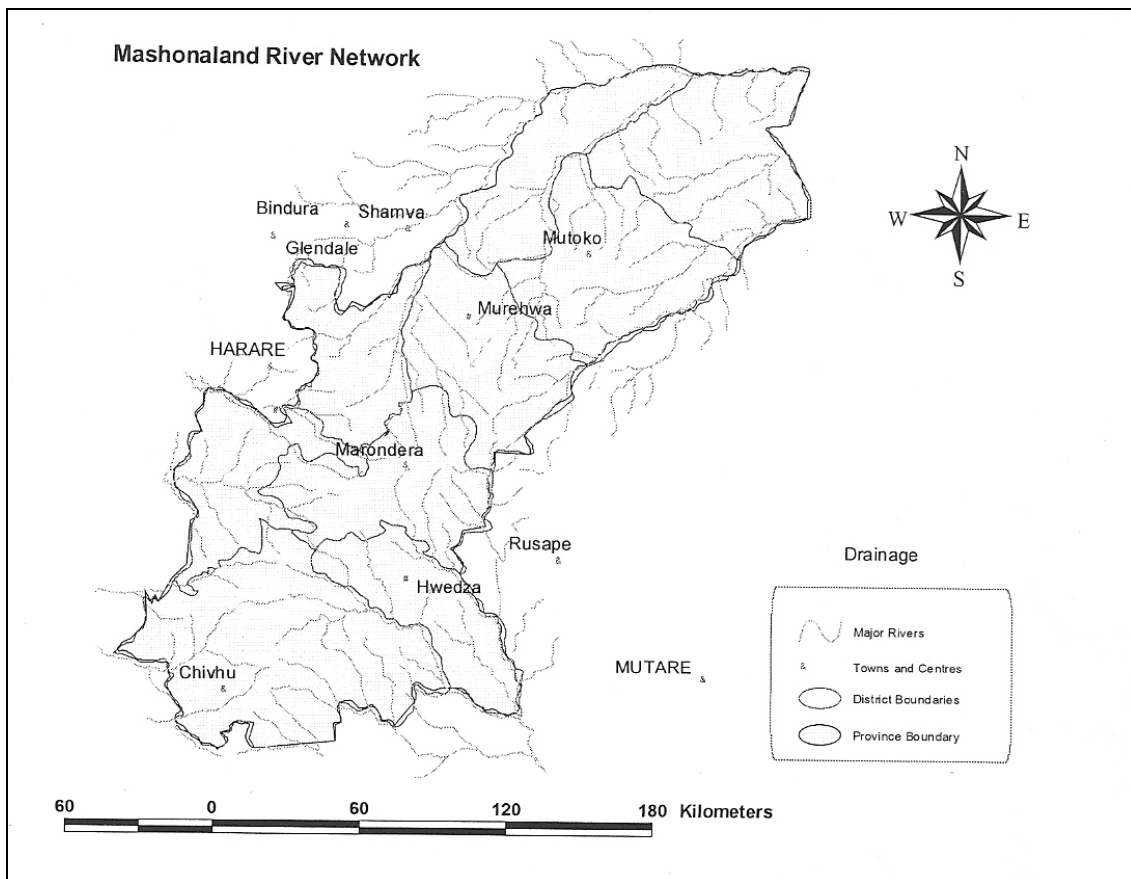
Natural Region 2, covering 15% of the land area, receives lower rainfall than region 1. Nevertheless, it is suitable for intensive farming (crops and livestock). It comprises mostly communal areas, occupied on a traditional pattern of land tenure and was formerly African Purchase Areas (Parliament of Zimbabwe, Informatics Project, 2005).

Natural Region 3 is a semi intensive farming region covering 19% of Zimbabwe. Although rainfall in this region is moderate, severe mid-season dry spells make it marginal for maize, tobacco and cotton. Natural Region 4 is a semi-extensive region covering about 30% of Zimbabwe. Rainfall is low and seasonal droughts and dry spells during the rainy season are common. Farming is based on livestock and drought resistant crops. Natural Region 5 is an extensive farming region covering about 27% of Zimbabwe. Rainfall in this region is too low and erratic for the reliable production of even drought resistant fodder and grain crops. Farming is based on grazing natural pasture (extensive cattle and game ranching). The Agro Ecological regions for Mashonaland East are shown on the map below.



Source: Parliament of Zimbabwe, Informatics project, 2005.

The altitude of the province ranges from 400m in the extreme North in Mudzi district to 1700m above sea level around Marondera. Some major rivers drain in a South- westerly direction, while others drain North-westerly across the province. The major rivers, including Nyadiri, Nyagui and Shavanhowe, drain northwards, while Ruzawi drains southwards. The province falls into 4 agro ecological zones, which are: Natural Regions 2a; 2b; 3; and 4. It is suitable for intensive crop and dairy farming, horticulture and the production of small grains. The mean annual rainfall in the province ranges from a maximum of about 1100mm in Goromonzi and Marondera areas to about 650mm on the Mozambique border.



Source: Parliament of Zimbabwe, Informatics project, 2005

Mashonaland East province has 2 distinct but complementary farming systems. On the one hand is commercial agriculture, which is mechanized and large-scale, on the other hand is subsistence agriculture. Both systems practice crop and livestock production. The commercial sector is found in the high rainfall areas of Goromonzi, Marondera, and Northern parts of Hwedza and in Regions 2a, 2b and 3. Subsistence farming is found mainly in the marginal areas of low rainfall in Regions 3 and 4, which include parts of Mudzi, Mutoko and UzumbaMaramba-Pfungwe. The geology of the province consists mainly of granite which gives rise to commercial extraction of black granite in the Mutoko area.

6.5 Land use Pattern

The land use pattern varies from one agricultural region to another. For instance, in Region 4, 94% falls under communal area, 3% is under resettlement and 3% is under small scale farming and nothing is under commercial farming (Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing). In Region 3, the communal area shrinks to 36%, while resettlement is 33%, small scale farming takes 24% and large scale farming accounts for 7%. See table below.

Table 4, Land use Pattern in Mashonaland East Province.

Region	Communal	Resettlement	Small Scale	Large Scale
4	94%	3%	3%	0%
3	36%	33%	24%	7%
2b	32%	20%	3%	44%
2a	37%	10%	1%	61%

Source: Ministry of Local Government Public Works and National Housing (2010)

The province has several business centres and growth points and is a gateway to foreign trade, as it borders with Mozambique. This gives the province a better position in the establishment of trade and export processing zone areas.

According to the Ministry of Local Government Public Works and National Housing, there are 765 gender development projects in Mashonaland East province, which were funded by Government, from 1996 to 2006. The projects span across various sectors, the major ones being retail, manufacturing and agriculture. The largest percentage of the projects is in manufacturing. This sector comprises furniture, brick moulding, fence and wire mesh making. These categories are male dominated. The sector also has female dominated categories such as peanut butter making, soap and candle making, sewing and poultry.

There are 197 health facilities in Mashonaland East province, of which 69 are national Government-owned, churches own 17; 91 are owned by Rural District Councils and 13 by private organizations. However, a lack of adequate staff and regular maintenance is the greatest challenge.

The number of police posts, schools, banks and post offices has to be increased significantly in order to serve the people.

6.6 Institutional Arrangements

6.6.1 Communal Areas

In Mashonaland East province, the intricate communal land tenure system is based on customary law, under which every individual has the basic “right to avail” to resources. This means the freedom to make formal use or take advantage of available natural resources. According to the Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee (2003), the “right to avail” comprises the right to: 1) cultivate land; 2) graze livestock; 3) fetch firewood as well as water, sand, stone, soil and timber for domestic and other uses; and 4) a residential site. No individual has the right to exclude any other individual from access and use of the communal resources.

The individual “rights of avail” are however distinct from each other and in particular the right to cultivate changes between seasons. The Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee (2003) observes that during the wet season, the individual has the “right of exclusion” and the right to protect his crop and it becomes a serious offence for any individual to graze his livestock in the field during that season. Most important is that there is no entity called a farm, similar to the European freehold and leasehold concepts. Except for the right to protect one’s crop and the right to a residence, all other forms of right to avail do not give any individual the right to bar any user from access to resources in communal areas. If one decided to invest and improve communal resources, there is no mechanism to stop any other member of the community from enjoying the resulting benefits.

The right to graze livestock is fundamental yet the most problematic, due to increasing human and livestock numbers. It consequently increases land pressures in communal areas. There is also no proper demarcation of grazing areas and boundaries between communities. There are no limits as to the number of cattle an individual can own and every stockholder tends to own as many as he or she can. In addition, the employed, both urban and rural, have rural ties and invariably hold land in absentia, irrespective of landlessness in the rural areas. Though they may be responsible for financing agricultural operations in communal areas, employed people also hold a substantial proportion of the communal livestock herd and assets.

Tenure problems confronting communal areas in Mashonaland East include the following:

1. Livestock owners lack the incentive to upgrade pastures and freeways because benefits accrue to the community rather than the individual;
2. The full cost of holding extra livestock above the carrying capacity of the land would permit is borne by the community at large rather than the individual and there is therefore the incentive, at the individual level, to keep as much livestock as possible, thereby benefiting individually, at the expense of the community. (For instance, the community ultimately suffers the consequences of degraded grazing resources);
3. Conversion of grazing / forests into residential and crop land and cutting down trees for fuel without replacement;
4. Cultivation of marginal lands, as well as settlement of hilly and fragile terrain as demand for living space and food increases; and

5. Fragmentation of land units and deteriorating per capita land holdings accompanied by land degradation and erosion (Report of the Presidential Land Review Committee, 2003: 96-97).

6.6.2 Resettlement Areas

Land, in resettlement areas, is held under a temporary permit system, which confers land rights to the permit holder. Each beneficiary is given three permits: one to graze livestock on a communal basis, one to reside on a given plot and one to cultivate on an arable plot.

The period over which the permits are valid is sometimes not specified and one has the right of use of land for as long as he does not violate the provisions of the permits. Most of the resettled farmers were however promised 99 year-long leases/ permits under the land reform programme. In effect, beneficiaries are not certain of their tenure and land rights, in the resettlement areas, and are sometimes reluctant to invest meaningfully by building brick houses and sinking boreholes. In the absence of a secure tenure, the inheritance procedures in the event of the death of the beneficiary are not clear to the widow or the children.

It is also common practice for some beneficiaries to maintain land rights in their former communal areas. This means that such individuals have continued to frustrate the objective of relieving population pressure in the communal areas. The mechanism for the resettled beneficiaries, to surrender their plots in the communal areas, may exist, but it has never been strictly enforced and there are differing views as to what should happen to the vacated plots.

6.6.3 Small-Scale Commercial Areas

The majority of Small-Scale Commercial Farms (SCCF) are held under Leasehold with an option to purchase. Declining productivity in the sector is an issue of concern and issues related to tenure might have a bearing on it.

Related to the issue of productivity of the SCCF is the problem of inheritance. Once the original lessee is too old or dies, under African customary law, the eldest son takes over. Problems arise when the heir also dies. Quite often, attempts are made to pass on the farm to the eldest son of the heir in complete disregard of the rights of the brothers and sisters of the deceased heir. The brothers would in turn argue that they are the rightful owners of the farm, which originally belonged to their father in the first place. The argument then will be that the children of the original lessee will claim to have more rights on the farm than a grandson to the original lessee. The inheritance rights of the wife of the original lessee have also never been made clear. In the end, the productivity of the farm is sacrificed because of uncertainty in the ownership structure.

6.6.4 Large-Scale Commercial Sector

The majority of these farms are held under freehold rights, with a considerable number leased by Government. Firstly, the issue of underutilization is problematic, particularly in relation to absentee farmers. Secondly, multiple farm ownership and a racially skewed land distribution pattern is a problem in Mashonaland East province. Government has been partly addressing this problem through the land reform programme. However, the problem of absentee landlords, who leave the farms unutilized and farmers who fail to utilize farms

effectively arises. In addition, freehold ownership creates free room for multiple farm ownership and speculation, which is discouraged under the national land policy.

6.7 Activity and labour Force

The term “labour force” in the context of the 2002 population census refers to the economically active persons. The definition is in line with that stipulated by the National Accounts and Balances. The analysis of activity and labour force of a population gives a picture of the manpower and a breakdown of the activities of the labour force. Information was collected from persons aged 10 years and above. The main reason why persons aged 10 – 14 years were interviewed on activity was to obtain information on working children.

The economically active population refers to the total number of persons available for the production of goods and services as realized in the national income statistics. These include paid employees and employers, unpaid family workers, own account workers and those unemployed. On the other hand, ‘homemaking’, studying, (being sick or too old) are examples of activities of the economically inactive population. It is important to note that most women tend to report that they are homemakers, even though they combine housework with other economically productive activities.

6.8 Economically Active Population

According to the 2002 Population Census Report, the “economically active population” refers to the number of persons available for production of goods and services. This group includes paid employees and employers, unpaid family workers, own account workers and

those unemployed. The report noted that most women tended to report that they are house makers even though they combine housework with other economically productive activities.

There were more females than males in the categories of unpaid family worker and own account worker. However, more males than females were in the categories of paid employee, employer and unemployed. Among the economically active, there were almost equal proportions of males and females.

The extent of participation of a population in the labor force can be measured by activity rates. The 2002 Census defined the activity rate as the number of economically active persons in a population per 100 persons in that particular population. The rate is calculated by dividing the population aged 15 years and above, who are economically active, by the total population in that age-group and then multiplying the result by 100 (2002 Census Report: 55). Activity rates for Mashonaland East province were higher for males than for females in all age-groups.

6.9 Employment and Unemployment

A situation where the supply of labour exceeds demand gives rise to unemployment. The unemployed are those who had done no work, were looking for work and were available for work.

The reference period used to determine the current unemployment rate is usually one week. Information on the unemployment situation was obtained using a time reference period of 12

months. Persons who indicated “paid employee”, “employer”, “own account worker”, “and unpaid family worker” as their main activity, during the reference period, were regarded as employed.

For persons aged 15 years and above, Mashonaland East province had a total of 565 713 employed persons and 419 270 persons who reported that they were unemployed. Within the unemployed category, there were more males (64%) than females (35%). Of all the economically active persons, 91% were employed while 9% were unemployed (2002 Census Report: 56).

6.10 Economically Inactive Population

The 2002 Census Report put the economically inactive population in 4 categories:

- a) Homemaker – defined as a person of either sex who was engaged in household chores in their own household and were not paid;
- b) Students, who attended any regular formal public or private educational institution;
- c) Retired/sick/too old;
- d) Others, which referred to those persons who were not working and did not fit into any of the above categories, for example prisoners.

Proportionately, more females were economically inactive than males in the province. 92% of all homemakers were females. The highest proportion of inactive males was students. These were however in the 15 – 19 age-grouping.

6.11 Occupation

According to the 2002 Census Report, the highest proportion of employed persons had their occupation in agriculture (68%). The majority of the people in predominantly rural districts were employed in agricultural occupations, except for the Mudzi and UzumbaMaramba–Pfungwe districts, where mining and construction occupations were the second largest. In the urban districts, the largest proportions were in the services sector. Overall, of the employed persons enumerated in Mashonaland East province, about 575 were communal farmers/communal farm workers, while those employed in other sectors were 43.

6.12 The Districts

6.12.1 Marondera

It comprises an urban area and a rural area. The urban area is Marondera Town, which covers all suburbs and plots close to the town centre. The population is relatively well educated and enlightened. The infrastructure is well-developed, although badly in need of maintenance and repair. Commercial farms surround Marondera and some of the residents find seasonal employment on the farms. The land reform programme was an opportunity for some of the residents to acquire land. Retired army generals and war veterans acquired most of the land.

The rural area covers Chihota, Chiredzi, Mahusekwa, Mureverwi, Chiwanzamarara and Chionana communal areas. Major business Centres include Mahusekwa, Chiwanzamarara and Manyaira. There are also a number of commercial farms in the area. In the rural area the population is generally poor with the majority being peasant farmers.

6.12.2 Goromonzi

The northern part comprises Chishawasha, Juno, Bosha, Arcturus, Chiparambe and Rutopo. Part of it is commercial farming area and the other is communal area. Most of the people are poor. Most households are engaged in subsistence farming.

The southern part of Goromonzi is composed of Ruwa, Parirewa, Domboshawa, Makumbe Mission, Melfort, Rusike and Bromley. The area is largely made up of farms and Ruwa is a satellite residential area of Harare. Typical of farming communities, social amenities such as schools are lacking and health centres are far from the people. The few schools that are found are mainly primary schools and there are a few secondary schools. Communities, in this area, find employment on the farms and in informal trade for those in Ruwa. Poverty levels are generally high on farms. Since the area is near Harare, some people however find employment in the city.

6.12.3 Murehwa

It comprises Chitate, Madamombe, Musami, Mushananga, Kadenge, Nyamahungu, Macheke, Nhowe and Dombwe. The people traditionally find employment in Harare. As a result they were able to build decent houses. Most of them rely on market gardening and sell their produce in Harare. This has provided constant income and their standards of living are better than most rural communities in Zimbabwe. Infrastructure is good and the main roads are tarred. There are also a number of schools in the area.

6.12.4 Mutoko

It comprises Charewa, Nyamuzuwe, Kanyanga, Nyamakopa, Kawere, All Souls Mission, Mushimbo, Kapondoro, Mudzonga, Makobva, Mutoko Centre and Huyuyu. The people survive on market gardening and harvesting of fruits, such as mangoes, when they are in season. The area has an influx of aid agencies that bring development projects and so the people are generally well-off. Good houses are found in this area, as most people sell their produce in Harare and have income almost all year round. Mission hospitals are found in this area and people have good health and educational facilities, as there are a number of primary and secondary schools. Black granite is mined in this area.

6.12.5 Seke

It is East of Chitungwiza Town and it comprises Beba, Mayambara, Murape, Marikopo, Muzangeza, Muswoka, Dzandura, Mbefura, Zhakata, Kudyarawanza, Dema, Beatrice, Chitsvedu and Sonasi. Hunyani River borders the district. It is near Harare, such that some residents work in the city. Residents are communal farmers. Roads are well-developed and there are many primary and secondary schools. Most war veterans were resettled in the Beatrice farming area.

6.12.6 Mudzi

It comprises Nyamurapa, Kondo, Dendera, Kotwa, Nyamapanda, Shanga, Suswe, Mudzi centre, Masarakufa, Chiunye, Katsande, Nyamatawa, Chikwizo, Gozi, and Makana. Nyamapanda is one of the borders with Mozambique. Cross border trade thrives, as people flock into Mozambique in search of food items such as cooking oil and rice. The people rely

on subsistence farming and vegetable gardening for livelihoods. The produce is sold in Harare. The district is under developed and traditional chiefs are very influential.

6.12.7 Hwedza

It comprises Rhodesclake, Chitangazuva, Waddilove, Musi, Mukute, Surrey and Dapi Estates, Garaba, Chemhanza, Hwedza centre, Matsine, Makanda, Mt St Mary's, St Anne's, Sabi Bridge, Mutiweshiri, Chigondo and Sangani. The population of the district is generally composed of migrant farm workers. Svosve communal lands are located here and these people were the first to resettle on a nearby farm in 1995. Farm invasions originated in this district and the people are loyal to ZANU PF.

Communities in Hwedza depend on subsistence farming. Commercial farms that surround Hwedza provide employment in all seasons. However, with the advent of the land reform programme, many of the farms have been under-utilized, thus employment has been sporadic.

6.12.8 Chikomba

The western part of Chikomba comprises the Range, Chivhu, Featherstone and Charamba. The greater part of the district is made up of commercial farms. Development has been slow in the area. Chivhu town is a hive of activity, as youth engage in foreign currency deals and vending, to earn a living. Cross border trucks that pass through the town have increased business for vendors and shops in the area. There are fewer schools in the district, as most

white commercial farmers did not encourage secondary education in order to have a pool of farm labourers

The central part of Chikomba comprises Masasa, St Francis Assisi, Daramombe, Zvamatobwe, Kwenda and Gandachibvura. The people are poor. Infrastructure development is also poor and most schools are built using pole and mud and qualified teachers are not willing to stay long after deployment. Clinics have also been affected by staff attrition and shortage of medicines.

The eastern part of the district is made up of Mupatsi and Sadza. The community is mainly rural. People rely on subsistence farming. Poverty levels in the area are high, as the area is semi-arid, and receives average levels of rainfall. Roads are dusty and poor and the area is isolated.

6.12.9 UzumbaMaramba – Pfungwe

It comprises Mutawatawa, Borera, Dindi, Kafura, Chitsungo, Utawatawa, Nakiwa, Uzumba, Muswe, Nyadiri and Karimbika. This is one of the districts that raised controversy in the Presidential Election of 2002, as it recorded high votes and people questioned where those votes came from given that the population is small. The district is a communal area that has poor peasant farmers who depend on subsistence farming. It is in the remotest parts of the country and development has been lagging in the area.

6.13 Conclusion

Mashonaland East province falls in Natural Region 2, 3 and 4. As a result, it contains some areas that receive good rainfall and have commercial farming and some that are arid and communal. The province is mainly rural and people derive their livelihoods from agriculture. Those people who live in the arid areas have resorted to planting drought resistant crops. In some areas, such as Mutoko and Murehwa, people practice market gardening and the produce is sold in Harare. Granite is mined in Mutoko, but the people in the area do not benefit from its mining.

After land reform, critical factors affecting livelihoods include, age, education, family labour force, marital status, family experience and skills and capital assets. Older beneficiaries tend to be successful, in addition, agriculture and economic performance has a strong positive correlation with the number of family members able to work. Farming experience and skills are also indicators of good performance.

CHAPTER 7: EMPIRICAL OUTCOMES OF LAND REDISTRIBUTION IN MASHONALAND EAST PROVINCE

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of field research on land redistribution, productivity and poverty alleviation in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. It examines the findings using the prism of poverty alleviation and equity. It was noted that most people (general public and other stakeholders) were aware of and supported the programme for land reform, although with reservations about the mode of implementation. The programme has achieved neither fairness nor productivity. Instead it reduced agricultural productivity and thus contributed to increased poverty rather than poverty alleviation. Hence, the land question has become part of Zimbabwe's wider political and economic crisis. The Government has exhausted the goodwill of donors and the international community, the remaining white commercial farmers, the land beneficiaries themselves, civic organizations and ordinary citizens.

Land reform, in Zimbabwe, was characterized by cases of violence, which bred fear among the people. As a result, most respondents were not comfortable to freely discuss issues about land. However, the media was awash with information on the land reform exercise, popularly dubbed as "hondo yeminda" or "chave chimurenga". The election manifesto for ZANU (PF) during the June 2002 Parliamentary and Presidential elections and the March 2008 Presidential and Parliamentary elections had a lot of land reform issues constantly phrased as "land is the economy and the economy is land". The ruling ZANU (PF) party used youth and

women's leagues as well as war veterans for political mobilization during and between elections. Their campaign messages were of "taking back our land" and "safe-guarding our sovereignty" The war veterans outfit had a military political culture and a paramilitary style of organization. This group was heavily involved in land occupations and silencing opposing voices.

Mashonaland East province recorded high levels of awareness of the land reform programme. This applies to all the nine districts and to respondents of randomly selected age-groups. The province is also a stronghold of the ruling ZANU (PF) party.

Land allocations were done under the separate A1 and A2 models. The survey showed that most big farms (A2 model) were allocated to the elite and people with political connections to the ruling party. By elite, this study is referring to the urban beneficiaries who were already employed elsewhere. The appointment of the Presidential Land Review Committee in 2003, the allegations of anomalies in the allocation of land in the ruling party circles and the call for the ruling party members, most of whom were multiple farm owners, to surrender additional farms, confirms that ordinary people were not the primary beneficiaries.

The A1 model of the land reform programme was meant to provide a solution to rural congestion. This research, however, shows that some households, having been allocated new cropping and grazing land, did not surrender entitlement to their original settlements. Instead, they either commuted between the two sites or simply annexed the new plots to the old ones. It was also found that where old settlements were abandoned, some traditional authorities

were re-allocating them to new settlers. Communal areas in Mashonaland East province remained fairly densely populated after land reform. The percent distribution of the population of the province *vis-à-vis* the whole country (national) by land use area was as follows:

Table 5, Distribution of Population in Mashonaland East Province by Land Use Sector.

Land-use Area	Mashonaland East Province	National
	%	%
Communal Areas	66.7	50.6
Small-Scale Commercial Farms	2.6	1.5
Large-Scale Commercial Farms	11.2	8.1
Resettlement Areas	8.8	8.1
Urban Council Areas	7.6	29.3
Administrative Centres	0.4	0.2
Growth Points	1.9	0.7
Other Urban Areas	0.8	1.5
Total	100	100

Adapted from: Poverty Income Consumption and Expenditure Survey 2011/12 Report.

ZIMSTAT, April 2013, p 17

A visit to the province, during the research, identified that the districts of Goromonzi, Marondera and Murehwa were visibly congested after implementation of the programme. Further, the majority of beneficiaries were aged forty years and above and were mostly male and the majority participated in the liberation struggle (war veterans).

According to the Presidential Land Review Committee (August 2003: 91), there were 1135 farms in Mashonaland East province. As at the end of July 2003, 912 farms were gazetted for acquisition, 701 farms were allocated for resettlement under the Fast Track Resettlement Programme. 17 942 demarcations were made under the A1 model on 382 farms, while 3 683 A2 allocations were made on the remaining 319 farms.

Table 6, Allocation Patterns

District	No. of Farms			Total Hectarage			No. Of Subdivisions		
	A1	A2	Total	A1	A2	Total	A1	A2	Total
Chikomba	87	22	109	11558	27687	39245	3429	300	3729
Goromonzi	50	96	146	34933	46736	81699	1827	851	2678
Marondera	83	82	165	71213	65244	136457	3894	945	4839
Murehwa	75	25	100	81858	31557	113415	4145	424	4669
Mutoko	1		1	644		644	43		43
Wedza	34	20	54	44876	20545	65421	2360	345	2705
Seke	52	74	126	57429	59161	116590	2287	718	3005
Totals	382	319	701	302511	250930	553411	17987	3683	21668

(Figures for Uzumba-Maramba Pfungwe and Mudzi were not available)

Source: Adapted from the Report of the Presidential Land Review Commission, August 2003

p.92

In the districts of Chikomba, Goromonzi and Seke, more land was allocated under the A2 model, while in Marondera, the allocation between A1 and A2 was almost 50/50. The proximity of these districts, to urban centres was said to be one of the factors influencing

such an allocation. The number of sub-divisions refers to the demarcations on the land by the Agricultural Research and Extension (AREX) teams.

Towards the end of the Presidential elections in March 2002, the state run newspaper, *The Herald*, published a series of adverts listing the names of those people who had been allocated land (6th March 2002–Supplement to the Herald). The authenticity of the lists was questionable, given that most people failed to get the land. It emerged later during the research, that the lists were for people who had qualified for land ownership. The Presidential Land Review Committee (August 2003) also noted that thousands of A2 model applicants were still to receive land. This was indicated one-and-a-half years after their names appeared in the press confirming that their applications had been successful.

Table 7, Take up levels

% Take up			Total Settlement	Gender Composition		Total Settlers
District	A1	A2	A1	Female	Male	A2
Chikomba	94	37	3238	1138	2100	111
Goromonzi	95	34	1784	264	1520	293
Marondera	97	75	3782	633	3149	740
Murehwa	98	39	4094	880	3214	202
Mutoko	100	-	43	8	35	-
Hwedza	90	63	2398	726	1672	219
Seke	73	11	1663	351	1312	81
Totals	93	45	16959	3992	12967	1646

(Figures for Uzumba-MarambaPfungwe were not available)

Source: Adapted from the Report of the Presidential Land Review Commission, August 2003

p.93

The occupation of farms differed according to each model. The take up levels in A1 and A2 models were 93% and 45% respectively (Presidential Land Review Committee, 2003: 93). Possible reasons for failure to occupy allocated land among others were: legal complexities regarding land acquisition, as some of the farm take-overs were being challenged in the courts, leaving prospective farmers reluctant to occupy and invest on the farms; some of the land allocated was not suitable for intended farming activities; some of the farms were de-listed because they were either Government institutions, conservancies, or owned under indigenous communal tenure; occupiers met resistance from the farmers and; some successful applicants did not collect their letters of offer and these were mostly urban dwellers for whom farming is a part-time occupation.

The official allocations and take-up figures were not without unofficial settlements, sometimes referred to as squatters.

Table 8, Unofficial Settlements (hectares)

District	Hectares	No. of families
Chikomba	3246.00	362
Goromonzi	628.68	1452
Marondera	1503.00	100
Murehwa	7869.20	425
Mutoko	105.00	7
Wedza	3836.70	263
Seke	15848.80	361
Total	33037.38	2970

(Figures for Uzumba-MarambaPfungwe and Mudzi were not available)

Source: Adapted from the Report of the Presidential land Review Commission
August 2003 p.93

There were 2 970 unofficially settled families in the province. Almost half of these (1 452) were in Goromonzi district, and were concentrated on two farms (Caledonia and Chishawasha B) along Arcturus road. These occupiers included families from urban areas and former farm workers. Some urban workers were commuting to work in Harare from these two farms.

Land occupiers were on a leasehold legal position and were awaiting 99-year lease agreements from Government. Those who did not benefit from the land reform programme and already owned pieces of land were under customary and freehold systems.

Below is the overall picture of Mashonaland East province after the Fast Track Resettlement Programme.

Table 9, Ownership Patterns after the Fast Track Resettlement Programme

Category	Number of Farms	Number of Owners	Hectarage
White owned (intact properties/subdivisions/BIPA)	174	174	130 329
Indigenous owned	189	141	60505
Company owned (including BIPA)	25	10	16488
Government Institution	7	7	3931
Parastatal owned	7	2	6582
Ungazetted but Settled	4	1	-
Church owned	4	4	878
Gazetted but not settled	25	-	-
A1	1382	17942	302511
A2	2319	3683	250930
Grand Total	1135	21964	772254

(BIPA refers to Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement. The hectarage figure is incomplete, as information on some farm sizes could not be obtained)

Source: Report of the Presidential land Review Committee, August 2003 p.94.

7.2 Productivity

One of the major criticisms of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe is its effect on productivity. The assumption of this chapter is that an increase in production may lead to a

decrease in poverty. There have been claims that the resettled farmers were not producing to full capacity on the resettled farms. This could be because there was a low delivery of tillage services due to the breakdown of state funded tractors and the non-availability of fuel. Also, the supply of inputs was erratic; there was a shortage of seed and fertilizer. This resulted in some farmers not producing anything. The uncertain land rights, especially under the A2 model, could also have affected production, where most of the resettled farmers did not have sufficient and secure tenure to access credit. Production was also affected by a lack of farming skills amongst the resettled farmers. This was exacerbated by the absence of adequate extension staff to assist resettled farmers. The lack of skills combined with the haphazard and chaotic manner in which land was acquired and distributed during the “fast track” land reform phase, was another factor. There was no screening of beneficiaries, and production and technical considerations were of less significance. This destroyed the prospects of successful land reform, which could lead to poverty alleviation.

As alluded to in chapter 5, earlier on, post-independence land reform in Zimbabwe resulted in impressive increases in agricultural output in both communal and resettlement areas, as well as growth in incomes for the poor. This was because the major focus of agricultural policy, then, was to achieve equity and efficiency through redistribution of land to smallholder producers, development of marketing infrastructure and provision of research and extension services to smallholder producers. Although statistics specific to Mashonaland East province are not available, ZIMSTAT, 2013:16 estimates that agricultural output for the whole country grew by about 4% per year through 1987, with much of the growth

attributable to smallholder farms. Since the early 1990s however, growth in agriculture stagnated as can be shown in the table below.

Table 10, Percent Agricultural Output. 1993 -2010

Type of output	1993- 1995	1996- 2000	2001	2010
Tobacco	32.5	34.5	26.7	19.2
Grain crops	12.8	9.5	23.9	19.1
Industrial crops	18.7	25.2	23.3	18.0
Dry beans, potatoes and vegetables	3.2	4.2	6.6	2.6
Seed	3.1	2.5	2.2	1.8
Fruit	1.2	1.3	0.9	0.5
Cattle	10.4	7.8	5.0	3.0
Dairy produce	3.6	2.9	3.1	1.5
Poultry	6.0	5.4	3.8	8.0
Other livestock	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.1

Adapted from: Poverty and Poverty Datum Line Analysis in Zimbabwe 2011/2012, April 2013, p 17.

The table shows a general decrease in percentage contribution of primary products since 2001 in Zimbabwe. The explanation is that from 2000, through to 2012, government support to agriculture services (research, extension, pest and animal disease control, etc) remained at low levels, while support was provided for loss making parastatals (for example, Air

Zimbabwe and National Railways of Zimbabwe) and short term drought relief measures to consumers (ZIMSTAT, 2013: 16). Mashonaland East province was no exception. Droughts and decline of the national economy during the same period made the situation worse.

However, it is a fact that agricultural production in Mashonaland East and, in the rest of the country, is influenced by rainfall. Most crops are planted in November/December at the beginning of the rainy season and are harvested between January and April. Although, the massive irrigation infrastructure, subsidized in the 1970s to achieve wheat self-sufficiency, was vandalized and most pumps and pipes sold by villagers. However, supplementary irrigation of tobacco, maize, cotton, soya-beans, groundnuts and coffee remains important, from May to October, to offset mid-season recurrent droughts.

The survey showed that commercial farmers in Mashonaland East province grow maize, wheat, sorghum, groundnuts, soya beans, cotton, coffee, tobacco and sunflower. Maize dominates the area planted by communal farmers, but cotton, groundnuts and vegetables are also still widely grown.

Zimbabwe's staple crop is maize. Although statistics specific to Mashonaland East province are not available, country-wide statistics show a steady decline in maize yield since the second phase of land reform as can be shown in the table below.

Table 11, Maize Yield in Tonnes per Hectare by Land Use Sector 1993-2011, Zimbabwe

Year	Communal Areas	Small Scale Commercial Farms	Large Scale Commercial Farms	Resettlement Areas	A1 Farms	A2 Farms	National
1993	1,069	1,565	5,003	2,084	-	-	1,653
1994	768	1,316	4,797	1,555	-	-	1,213
1995	239	570	3,383	785	-	-	595
1996	958	1,529	4,798	1,840	-	-	1,415
1997	689	1,430	4,354	1,622	-	-	1,104
1998	558	1,202	4,696	1,100	-	-	1,012
1999	702	1,483	4,926	900	-	-	1,087
2000	727	1,678	5,033	1,300	-	-	1,180
2001	908	1,500	4,785	1,000	-	-	1,231
2002	251	240	4,120	300	-	-	455
2003	687	752	4,000	595	-	-	783
2004	667	917	3,009	1,820	1,919	2,609	1,129
2005	310	402	2,448	983	800	1,735	529
2006	607	796	2,938	1,338	1,404	1,854	867
2007	508	714	2,799	1,303	833	1,868	803
2010	578	796	3,014	884	900	2,095	875
2011	428	553	2,016	761	812	1,629	657

Source: ZIMSTAT, 2012, p 19.

From the table, a substantial decline in national yields is noticeable. This decline was mainly due to lack of adequate resources available to new farmers. Zimbabwe ran down its strategic grain reserves in 2000 and has been importing maize mostly from Zambia.

The survey also showed that an important dimension of poverty in Mashonaland East can be traced from the activities and sources of income that the poor and households are engaged in. Although agriculture plays a vital role in rural livelihoods, the contribution of non-farm income sources, remittances and activities based on environmental resources was apparent. From the interviews, it was evident that remittance capacity for most of the urban-based workers had declined and there was increasing significance of remittance income from the Diaspora. In all the 9 districts of Mashonaland East province, a distinctive characteristic of rural households is that families attempt to secure their livelihoods from a mixture of

activities that range from crop and livestock production, natural resource based activities, casual labour, non–farm income generating activities and remittances from relatives working away from home. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 12, Household Main Sources of Income for Adults 18 years and above.

Source	Mashonaland East Province	National
	%	%
Salary and Wages	24.9	31.9
Gifts and transfers	11.2	7.3
Own Business	5.0	10.3
Sale of Own Agricultural Produce	53.6	48.4
Other	1.3	2.2
Total	100	100

Adapted from: Poverty Income Consumption and Expenditure Survey 2011/12 Report. ZIMSTAT, April 2013, p 76.

Rural households also generate income in cash, or in kind, which include food they produce for household consumption, and common natural property resources (such as fuel wood, wild fruits and edible insects, honey, tubers and roots)

By and large, much of rural agricultural production is highly labour intensive and often, labour demands are concentrated in specific periods of the year. The impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Mashonaland East province was such that when an individual was

sick, the household not only has to manage without his or her labour input but with loss of labour of the care-givers. Financial costs incurred during treatment also adversely affect disposable income that can be invested in farming. When they die, the household loses them together with their agricultural knowledge and experience and in some cases their remittances. Orphaned households of the younger age-groups faced the burden of poverty and lack of resources, which left them facing poor cropping seasons. However, although the impact of HIV/AIDS was noticeable during the survey, Government had not put in place a management plan to address the socio-economic effects among the resettled farmers. This is because health and agriculture, more often than not, receive separate research and policy attention in the land reform discourse in Zimbabwe.

Beneficiaries of the land reform programme were from a wide spectrum of socio-economic classes: civil servants, war veterans, business people, ruling party elites, urban dwellers, and to a lesser extent the rural landless. The heterogeneity of beneficiaries with different class status, gender and ages raises important questions with regard to some of the beneficiaries' commitment to long-term farming and productivity. The survey also revealed that other people who may not have been particularly passionate about farming joined the scramble to get a piece of land, seeing that there was nothing to lose, the land having been parceled out for free as opposed to the "willing-seller willing-buyer" basis. Against this background, in Mashonaland East province, no significant development projects were implemented by beneficiaries of the land reform programme on the farms allocated to them and most of the assets owned were either those which were left by the predominantly white owners or those received from the Government under the Central Bank sponsored farm mechanization

programme. There was no publicly known criterion of selection or list of beneficiaries of the farm mechanization programme. In fact, most beneficiaries of the farm mechanization programme were believed to be mostly senior ZANU-PF politicians and top civil servants. In all districts, new farmers also helped themselves to the produce abandoned by the “original” farmers at the inception of the “fast track” exercise. Thereafter, most of them were evidently struggling to match at most half of the previous production levels.

As alluded to earlier, the lack of developments and or investments on newly acquired farms can be linked to the question of access to finance. Historically, the large- scale commercial farmers were major beneficiaries of most of the formal agricultural credit facilities. Possession of “secure” tenure in the form of title deeds to land was the selection criteria. Newly resettled farmers on both A1 and A2 models did not have title deeds and so could not access formal credit facilities. A2 farmers were required to apply for 99-year leases from Government. These leases were, however, were not accepted as collateral by the banks.

On a national scale, the Poverty Income Consumption and Expenditure 2011/12 survey collected information on capital formation for households in the agricultural sector. The question was whether a household constructed any new buildings or works and improvements in the past 12 months. The form of capital formation engaged by households in agriculture includes expenses incurred on housing, tobacco barns, granaries, fencing, irrigation works, plantations or orchards, fish ponds, scotch carts, harrows, ploughs, tractors, hoes, etc used for agricultural purposes. Overall, it was noted that households residing in communal areas account for 66.2% of total capital formation for agricultural purposes,

followed by resettlement areas 11.1% and large-scale commercial farms 7.9%. For the whole country, the proportion of capital formation which is spent on irrigation works and land improvements for all land use sectors (communal areas, resettlement areas, small-scale commercial farms, large-scale commercial farms) is only 3 %. (ZIMSTAT, 2013: 90)

To compound the financial problems of the resettled farmers, after 2000, Zimbabwe saw the emergence of a parallel market (informal economy) for most tradable goods. This was worse in the agricultural sector as farmers had to secure inputs from the parallel market. Consumers also had to procure agricultural produce from the parallel market, and even capital (cash) had to be sought on the parallel market. With Government maintaining an over-valued exchange rate, the agricultural sector faced potential collapse as the manufacturing sector, closely linked to it, could not process goods using parallel market finances and yet be forced by the Government to sell goods at controlled prices. However, marketing and price controls applied to maize, tobacco and wheat, due to their strategic importance to the national economy.

The Zimbabwe dollar was devalued in August 2006 by 60%. Three zeros were removed from the currency and the new official exchange rate to the United States dollar was set at 250: 1. The parallel market exchange rate was US\$1 to Z\$ 1 500, and by December 2006 the annual inflation rate was 1,281%. With the collapse of the exchange rate, multiple devaluation of the Zimbabwean dollar, and ever-increasing inflation, the formal economy came under stress. Price controls and regulations which were implemented by force, with the backing of the military and police, emptied shops of goods and drove agricultural markets further down.

Many business people, who had earlier been eager to provide services in resettled areas (shops, bars, grinding mills, transport, and butcheries), closed as they could not run their businesses in the depressed economic conditions. In addition, Operation Murambatsvina (clean up) in 2005 displaced many informal businesses, especially in urban areas and as much in small towns and service centres.

The year 2008 saw the peak of the economic crisis combined with highly contested parliamentary and presidential elections. As the popularity of ZANU (PF) declined, violence was unleashed by the latter and came to a climax before the second presidential run-off. Mashonaland East province had the highest number of cases of violence recorded by independent observers. Cases of assaults, theft/looting, discrimination and harassment were the common violations in the province. The continued presence of both serving and retired members of the Zimbabwe National Army, in some rural areas in Chikomba and Marondera West, was also recorded during the survey.

Overall, productivity in resettlement areas was low. It is important to highlight that for the country as a whole, “most of the output comes from households residing in communal lands (61.4 %), followed by households in resettlement areas (14.9%), and large scale commercial farms (14.8%). (ZIMSTAT, 2013: 92). Most households also consume most of their output and leave nothing towards capital formation.

7.3 Public Perception

From the interviews conducted, public opinion was divided on the justification of the land reform exercise. On the one hand, some respondents felt that given the fact that the land reform programme started in earnest in the context of the rejection of the draft Constitution and the run-up to the Parliamentary elections in June 2000, the exercise was largely to gain votes and was meant to punish white farmers for their perceived support for the opposition. For this group of respondents, there was no separation of the land question and the electoral debate. This group comprised those individuals who had either not taken interest in the exercise or who were not allocated land.

On the positive side some respondents indicated that the land reform exercise was noble and indeed overdue. Among those interviewed, no one could say how the exercise should have proceeded. There was unanimity in this group that the exercise was the solution to redress colonial imbalances and to eradicate rural poverty and empower people. Their assumption was that the “end” of the fast track version of land reform, although violent and widely disruptive, would justify the “means.” This group of respondents felt that the white farmers were too arrogant and recalcitrant to be removed in any other way.

Most of the people who were interviewed were not conversant with the laws governing the land reform exercise. However, key respondents who were interviewed pointed out that parliament had passed a law empowering Government to take over land from the whites who stole land in the first place. This group also comprised the few people in urban centres who the researcher managed to interview. The commonly held position was that the land reform

exercise was legal and had the blessing of the President. Further, to them, it abided by the laws, as Government paid for the improvements made on the land and not for the land, which belonged to Zimbabweans as birthright.

However, criticism of the land reform process was that it led to the breakdown of the rule of law. The Government saw the rule of law as a Western concept, a hindrance to land redistribution and a concept, which senior judges (most of them white then) in collusion with Western imperialistic forces were manipulating in order to reverse the gains of independence and to compromise the national sovereignty of Zimbabwe.

It is important to indicate that on 10th November 2000, the Supreme Court issued an interdict barring the Government from proceeding with the land reform programme, until the rule of law was restored and until the Government had produced a land reform policy document in accordance with the constitution of Zimbabwe. The interdict was suspended for six months within which the bench was “indigenized”. New black judges, sympathetic to the ruling party, led by Justice Chidyausiku, were appointed. This resulted in the forced retirement of Chief Justice Gubbay and marked the climax in the breakdown of relations between the judiciary and the executive arm of Government.

The new bench held that Government had come up with a credible land reform programme and had restored the rule of law by enacting legislation, principally the Rural Land Occupiers (Protection from Eviction) Act No. 13 of 2001, which regularized the situation of beneficiaries on the farms. Any individual occupying land thereafter was given the status of a

“protected occupier” and could not be evicted through court orders. Madhuku (2003) points out that, in this way Government responded in a crude manner to calls from the judiciary for it not to disobey its own laws but to change them if it did not like them. Thus Government chose to “rule by law” instead of subjecting itself to the rule of law. This is the context which confused the reactions of informants during interviews. Hence, some respondents regarded the land reform as lawful.

Among those interviewed, no respondent agreed to make comments on the violent aspect of the land reform exercise. However, on 14 December 2000, while addressing the ZANU PF Congress, President Mugabe had this to say about white farmers “... we must continue to strike fear into the heart of the white man, our real enemy” (Independent, 15 December 2000). This was 2 days after white farmer, Henry Elsworth, was killed in an ambush near his farm south-west of Harare. He was the 7th white farmer to die violently in 2000. To the applause of delegates at the Congress, the president continued “The white man is not indigenous to Africa... the land is ours by birth, ours by right, also ours by struggle.....Zimbabwe is for Zimbabweans”²). The president also vowed to continue taking white-owned land for redistribution to landless blacks and said that the courts, which had twice declared the land grabs illegal, would not stop him. He made it clear that “the courts can do whatever they want, but no judicial decision will stand in our way... My own position is that we should not even be defending our position in the courts. This country is our country and this land is our land”³). The president is also on record for boasting of “having *many degrees in violence*” and one of his politburo (ZANU-PF highest decision making body)

²www.zimbabwesituation.com/dec15.html#link2

³www.zimbabwesituation.com/dec15.html#link2

member, Nathan Shamuyarira, stated that “The area of violence is an area where ZANU-PF has a very strong, long and successful history” (Meredith, 2002: 225). Given the positions articulated by leaders in government on violent land reform, it is not surprising that respondents were not willing to talk about the violent nature of land reform during the interviews.

In Mashonaland East province, many commercial farmers were verbally abused and physically assaulted, abducted, tortured or even killed⁴. The most gruesome murders are those of Martin Olds, Gloria Olds and David Stevens. On 15th April 2000, David Stevens was kidnapped at his farm in Murehwa; he was taken from the police station with the knowledge and cooperation of the police and was tortured before being shot dead.⁵ Amani Trust, Amnesty International and the Human Rights Forum documented serious acts of violence against farm owners and farm workers.⁶ Within the framework of the fast track land reform process, farm workers were treated as the accomplices of white farmers. Political violence targeted white farmers and farm workers believed to support opposition parties. The farm workers were dragged out of their homes forced to attend re-orientation and education sessions with forced singing of ZANU PF slogans and were severely tortured.⁷

Further, farm workers were vulnerable because they did not have sufficient financial and social capital to enable them to escape the invasions and seek alternative livelihoods elsewhere. The violence on the farms and the subsequent uptake of the farms by hostile new

⁴www.zimbabwesituation.com/mar05.htm

⁵www.zimbabwesituation.com/april18.htm

⁶www.hrforum.org

⁷www.hrw.org/report/htm

owners virtually displaced a large proportion of farm workers in Mashonaland East province. In this way, land reform pushed from above and supported by the ruling party and its sympathizers, started generating conditions of impoverishment for many and affluence for the few loyalists.

During the farm invasions, The ZANU-PF militia and war veterans gave as little as an hour's notice to the farm owner and workers to vacate the farm. Many farm workers, whose livelihoods were linked to the farms for generations, became displaced people with unpredictable and irregular access to food and water, as well as much less basic amenities such as schools, clinics and hospitals.

Most of the farm workers in Mashonaland East were of foreign origin, mostly second or third generation immigrants from neighboring countries such as Mozambique, Zambia and Malawi. Unfortunately, the invasions were carried out during a time when there was the enactment of the controversial Citizenship Act. This Act required all people of foreign descent to relinquish their foreign citizenship. Many farm workers were put in a difficult position because they did not have ties with their countries of origin and in this instance did not have enough information on how to proceed. Given the hurried nature of the land occupations, many farm workers did not receive adequate compensation. All these factors contributed to the pauperization and destitution of farm workers. Land reform resulted in massive unemployment as many farmers retrenched farm workers .During an interview, Farm Community Trust director estimated that in Mashonaland East province, around 400 000 farm workers and seasonal workers faced displacement, loss of employment and

destitution. The private sector did not play any role, considering the lack of proper policy guidelines from the Government and disrespect for the rule of law.

The eradication of rural poverty, through land reform, is based on two assumptions. Firstly, the poor must have access to the land; secondly the poor must be assisted with sufficient resources and an enabling institutional framework, for them to base their livelihoods on the land. In Mashonaland East, compelling evidence showed that generally, the poor did not have access to the land, and if they did, they did not receive adequate technical, financial and social services support to enable them to produce at full capacity and enable them to derive livelihoods from the land. The UNDP, in January 2002, reported that provision of support services was lagging behind beneficiary emplacement and the provision of essential infrastructure within a “reasonable” timeframe was impossible, given the Government’s track record and its current implementation capacity.

Although women provide most of the farming labour, in Mashonaland East, the land reform process mainly benefited men. The Presidential land Review Committee (2003: 40) reported that under A1 resettlement model, 76% of beneficiaries were male. Figures for the A2 model were not available. It has to be noted that the main problem was not merely on the land reform process, rather the institutional framework in which land reform was carried out, which was generally patriarchal. There are also cultural constraints on the ability of women to own land. Under African customs and culture in Zimbabwe, women have secondary access as their own parcels are allocated to them by their husbands.

In the districts of Marondera, Goromonzi and Seke, survey showed that the majority beneficiaries were men with a few exceptions of politically connected women. The possible explanation is the dominance of men in decision-making structures and that these districts are in close proximity to Harare, which made them highly sought after by the elite. Therefore, women should have been treated as a special group with different conditions from men. The non-existence of a gender sensitive Land Act and policy in the country compounded the precarious land ownership position of women in Mashonaland East province. By gender sensitivity one refers to deliberate attempts to strike a balance in the participation of men and women.

Respondents were also interviewed about the role and significance of the international community in Zimbabwe's land reform. Respondents generally felt that the support of the international community would not have made a difference. Informal discussions revealed a strong perception that problems in the implementation of the land reform programme were domestic and required local solutions.

However, the support of the international community has to be analyzed in the historical context of the land reform in Zimbabwe. The 1979 Lancaster House Constitution (1979) had provisions under which the British Government would finance land reform in the country. However, up to the 1990s, there was little progress in this regard. The "willing seller, willing buyer" principle appeared not to be working as was expected. As already explained in Chapter 5, the predominantly white farm owners were willing to sell land in the marginal areas and also demanding payment in hard currency, making expensive and difficult to effect

a systematic and well-managed land reform. The frustrations led to the holding of an international donor's conference on land reform in 1998. Among the resolutions of the conference was the call for the international community to assist in financing the land reform programme. Unfortunately, up to the year 2000, support from the international community was not forthcoming; hence the Government resorted to the radical and unilateral land seizures.

The international community realized the severity of the land problem and at the end of 2000 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) sent a team of experts to determine the feasibility of a more technically sound and sustainable land reform programme for the whole country. As Masiwa and Chipungu (2004: 18) point out, the UNDP team which was led by Mark Malloch Brown, noted with concern that the radical and unplanned land seizures were spawning massive unemployment and reducing agricultural production. It also recommended that the Government abandon this programme if it was to avoid international isolation and to get financial backing for the land reform programme. The Government, however, vowed to continue with the fast track resettlement programme.

Like any other development initiative, consultation was central to the success of land reform. Consultations with: the commercial farmers, traditional chiefs, prospective new farmers, financial institutions, farmer's unions and industry, would have led to broad consensus and hence less violence on acquired farms. Apart from that, consultations would have resulted in greater cooperation between the resettled farmers and the previous owners of the land. This could have brought obvious advantages in terms of production on the farms. It is argued that

the nature of land reform in Mashonaland East province was such that there was little consultation, and was done in harsh terms. Respondents were agreed that broader consultation would have resulted in less controversy.

The causes of food shortage, which contributes to poverty, in Zimbabwe are multi-faceted. The commonly cited reasons include erratic rainfall, limited availability of seeds and fertilizer and lack of adequate capital. However, it is more convincing to attribute the food shortages to the land reform programme, which, because of the way it was implemented, adversely affected agricultural production.

7.4 Stakeholders' Perspectives

At least one senior official from key organizations representing stakeholders in Zimbabwe's Land Reform programme was interviewed. The views expressed reflected the official views of their respective organizations regarding land reform in Zimbabwe.

7.4.1 The General Agricultural and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ)

GAPWUZ represents all farm workers in Zimbabwe. The respondent from this organization felt that there was a need for land reform in Zimbabwe, in order to address economic imbalances created by colonialism. A representative from GAPWUZ pointed out that the critical issue to be addressed, however, was the manner and process of executing the programme. The irregularities raised are:

- a) That the GAPWUZ, the official representative of farm workers, was sidelined in the consultation and implementation of the land reform programme. It was felt that the

programme was too important to be left to a few individuals and that Government should have involved all stakeholders.

- b) Farm workers were not considered in the resettlement programme. Most farm workers made their permanent homes on the farms, but were not given land on the farms. A case in point: in April 2004, the Government evicted more than 1,500 farm workers and their families as it took over the multi-million dollar Kondozi farm, a large export-processing agricultural operation in Eastern Zimbabwe. No measures were put in place to assist these displaced farm workers in finding livelihoods and shelter.
- c) The request is that Government should assist resettled farmers with resources to buy inputs. It was also necessary to train the farmers on good farming methods and environmental management.

7.4.2 The Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU)

The Zimbabwe Farmers Union was formed in 1991, to represent the interests of smallholder farmers in Zimbabwe and to promote the development of a viable agricultural industry. As an official from ZFU argues, smallholder agriculture is now an important player in the maize production sector, despite constraints on access to land, and limited finance. Small-scale agriculture also offers greater potential for employment generation than large-scale, mechanized agriculture. A secure tenure system was necessary to attract private sector investment.

It was also pointed out that ZFU supported the land reform programme and that the process was not an issue about races but was aimed at addressing the colonial imbalances. According to the ZFU official, there were two issues that were critical in resolving the land question in Zimbabwe. Firstly, there was a need to involve all stakeholders at the national level. Secondly, there was a need for a common vision and positive thinking among all Zimbabweans. The land reform issue was well over- due and could not be postponed. It is believed that the speedy conclusion of the land reform process was necessary politically, economically and socially and was integral to continued peace and stability in Zimbabwe.

The ZFU official noted that his organization emphasizes the ability of smallholder farmers to produce at levels comparable to the large-scale commercial sector. However, beneficiaries for resettlement, it was argued, should be based on competence rather than political motive, in order to maintain productivity. He also considered funding of the resettlement scheme to be important, along with secure tenure arrangements and selection of competent farmers. Communication and irrigation structures needed to be upgraded and investments increased, in the communal areas, in order to open markets and widen the income base and demand for goods and services. According to him, this will lead to poverty alleviation and economic growth.

7.4.3 The Governor's Office

The researcher could not interview the Governor of Mashonaland East province. There was a change of Governors subsequent to the power sharing agreement between the three main

political parties (ZANU-PF, MDC-T, and MDC-M) in September 2008, in Zimbabwe. The incoming Governor could also not be interviewed. However, an officer in the Governor's office noted that the equitable distribution of land was central to the Governor's office. The A1 model was the central aspect of the land reform process. Resettled farmers were given inputs such as seed, fertilizer packs and ploughing facilities, but this was inadequate. The technical committees, in the local government structures, were responsible for defining the parameters of the land reform programme. Dialogue was also important, and there was a need to develop a culture of consultation, in order to resolve the land issue in realistic terms, based on commonly identified issues. Solutions should come from the people affected by the land reform process.

7.4.4 Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union (ICFU)

The ICFU is the youngest farmers union in Zimbabwe. Indigenous farmers were the forebearers of economic emancipation through agriculture. The majority of the members bought land from white farmers after independence during the "willing buyer - willing seller" arrangements. However, between 1985 and 1988, the land prices increased beyond the reach of most black Zimbabweans. In 1989, ICFU was formed to safeguard the interests of black Zimbabweans and to lobby for more recognition and support. It was only registered in 1996 and was concerned about the unfair practice and protection that existed in Zimbabwe's large-scale commercial sector, which was predominantly white. Its formation was a response to what its members saw as unfair laws and circumstances, many of which first arose during the colonial period, posing unique problems, which they felt were not addressed by other

existing unions. The issue raised included lack of financial and technical skills, poor access to financial facilities and discriminatory regulations of financial institutions.

According to the director of ICFU, the main objective of the organization was to improve the productivity of member farmers, through the provision of support services and a framework for the attainment of an operating environment that was conducive to farming. It respects merit and equal opportunity in the practice of commercial farming in Zimbabwe and uses, among other lawful strategies, affirmative action concepts, to redress unfair practices currently militating against new entrants into commercial agriculture. It advises entry level indigenous commercial farmers on strategies to overcome constraints through, for example, skills training, preparation of business plans and advocacy.

It was argued, by the director of ICFU, that there was no economic setback when the landholdings were reduced to a level that will benefit the majority. There was no evidence to show that title deeds, *per se*, were the only form of land tenure system that ensures maximum economic use of the land. For the ICFU, production levels attained by white commercial farmers had no bearing on them being of a superior race but were a summation of over 70 years of their Government's assistance, private sector support and the enabling environment that ensured optimum production. The ICFU supported the land reform programme and argued that it had capacity to achieve high production standards which would lead to the creation of jobs and reduction in consumer prices to help eradicate poverty.

According to the director of ICFU, the land reform process should not be considered as an end in itself, but should be considered within the overall national vision of development. There was also a need for the necessary support services, for resettled farmers, based on the same principles, which were so successfully undertaken to support white commercial farmers. It was concerned with the lack of access to finance and the high interest rates.

7.4.5 Women and Land Lobby Group (WLLG)

WLLG was established, in 1998, to promote women's economic empowerment through access to, control and ownership of economic resources such as land, minerals and other natural resources. WLLG has a network of 25 non-governmental organizations, with an interest in women's land and property rights, with constituencies down to the grassroots level. The organization aims to review policies and laws that address the land rights of the poor and disadvantaged, with special emphasis on women.

It is the perspective of an official of WLLG that after independence, black women were marginalized, as their problems were not addressed at policy level. The notion that women in general are vital to social and economic development took a long time to become apparent to planners and policy makers. The breakthrough came during the liberation war, when women and men fought side-by-side and performed equal roles.

Land is considered the most fundamental resource to women's living conditions, economic empowerment and, to some extent, their struggle for equity and equality within a patriarchal society, in which customary law operates alongside statutory law. Without land rights,

women's economic and physical security is compromised. However, despite the importance of land to Zimbabweans, women only enjoy secondary rights through their male relatives. (e.g. husband, son, uncle or father) This is so because in some traditions, women are considered minors and, therefore, not able to own immovable property in their own right. This idea continues in some sections of Zimbabwean society, despite the existence of the Legal Age of Majority Act (1982), as amended, which gives equal status to anyone above the age of 18, and the country being party to the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Southern Africa Development Community Gender Declaration and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

It was pointed out that WLLG argues that the non-existence of a gender sensitive Land Act and policy, in the country, also compounds the precarious position of women with regards to their ownership and control of land. In rural areas, the Communal Land Act, among others, provides that communal land is to be accessed according to customary law and only by people who are part of the community that has traditionally occupied the land. This criterion excludes women, because the traditional interpretation of customary law is that land is allocated to male heads of households, and women, more often than not, are married outside the community that has traditionally occupied the land.

WLLG also argues that the Land Acquisition Act (2000) was gender insensitive and only concerned with the acquisition of land. It allowed the Government of Zimbabwe to compulsorily acquire land for resettlement. The gender insensitivity of the Act made it

difficult for women to claim a share of the land acquired by the State for resettlement. The organization is of the view that the position of women accessing and controlling land, under the land reform programme was far from being satisfactory. At most, women have “use” and not “ownership” rights. It was felt that despite Government commitment to address gender issues in the land reform programme, women have not benefited from the programme.

7.4.6 Farm Community Trust (FCT)

The director of the Farm Community Trust’s position was that the acquisition of large-scale, commercial farms, was a central component of the decolonization process. The recruitment of African farm workers and their working conditions were largely determined by that colonial paradigm. The legacy of that paradigm was that commercial farm workers, although the largest portion of Zimbabwe’s proletariat, form one of its poor segments, which has no access to land and housing rights. His organisation’s view is that the present and future of farm workers are, therefore, inextricably linked with how the land question is resolved.

Farm Community Trust’s position was that the extent of poverty, amongst farms workers in Mashonaland East province, is both more severe than in other land utilization areas. This was because their records indicated that large numbers of farm workers were displaced as a result of the land reform programme. The picture deteriorates further when access to drinking water, sanitation health facilities, and electricity are taken into account. The survey results showed that Marondera West and Mudzi districts do not have hospitals. Farm workers also live with pronounced insecurity about their future. By reason of their foreign origin, (most of them) they have little access to extended family “safety nets” and have no claim to land in

the communal areas. Before implementation of the land reform programme, they were dependent upon their employers to satisfy their needs, to an extent very much unlike any other group of employees in Zimbabwe.

Country-wide advocacy, on farm worker issues, has undergone several phases of implementation. The various strategies used by FCT vary from: advocating for improvements on living conditions, viewing the farm worker as a worker only concerned with issues of wages and compensation for loss of employment (because of land reform), and a transformative approach, which focuses on a rights-based approach for farm workers. These approaches are not mutually exclusive and tend to overlap, at times.

However, the Farm Community Trust was of the view that events from the past years have rendered all the above irrelevant. After the announcement of the results of the February 2000 Constitutional Referendum, a wave of farm invasions/occupations gripped the country. This was subsequently followed by the introduction of the “fast track” resettlement model. This had the net effect of negating all the gains that groups engaged in farm worker advocacy had made in terms of farm worker rights to land. Farm workers were no longer seen as a specific category to be considered for resettlement. The Government pursued a narrowly defined land reform and resettlement programme, as it seemed to be only concerned with de-congesting the communal areas and giving land to war veterans and ruling party loyalists, at the same time ignoring the issue of farm worker displacement.

Low levels of education make it difficult for farm workers to secure any other form of employment outside the farms. Some then resort to illegally settling on private property, or in prohibited areas, as a large number would have cut ties with relations in countries of origin or in communal areas, and therefore do not have anywhere else to go to. This was prevalent in areas to the north-eastern boarder of Mashonaland East province with Mozambique. The loss or reduction of income also affected farm workers' children who are deprived of the education that they would otherwise have benefited from, whilst residing at the farm.

Another group that was affected was seasonal workers who lost piece-job opportunities. The elderly were also affected, as not all had communal homes to go back to. Some farmers allowed their elderly workers to stay on the farms, doing lighter chores, or engaging in their own self-sustaining activities as a form of compensation. These elderly workers were displaced and made destitute. While it was inevitable that some farm workers would be displaced and retrenched as a result of the Land Reform Programme, especially the older and seasonal workers, the Farm Community Trust felt that it should be possible for the land reform programme to cater for the needs of all stakeholders.

7.4.7 Council of Chiefs

A representative of the Zimbabwe Council of Chiefs, who was interviewed, commended the President and Government for embarking on the fast track resettlement programme, which sought to empower the majority of the landless people. Generally, the A1 resettlement model was said to have been implemented satisfactorily. However, it was stated that some elements had played a disruptive role in the District Land Identification Committees, resulting in

confusion in the land allocation exercise. The view expressed was that Chiefs should have been allowed to play a central role in the identification of beneficiaries of the land for resettlement programme, on account of them being the “owners” or “custodians” of the land. It was further noted that some areas had not been de-congested. In some cases, people from the urban areas had been resettled on land that Chiefs would have preferred taken up by their subjects.

7.4.8 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

A senior official pointed out that UNDP acknowledges the need for a more equitable distribution of land in Zimbabwe and the enormous challenges faced by the country in addressing land ownership imbalances. Their position is that a solution to the land issue should lead to political, social and economic stability, as well as to poverty reduction and economic growth in a more equitable economic environment. There was recognition that the magnitude of land reform, as agreed at the 1998 Donor’s conference on land, was such, that international support was vital for a successful and sustainable programme of land reform.

It was further noted that UNDP believes that the land reform programme can be successfully implemented, based on dialogue and agreement among domestic stakeholders. A land reform programme that is based on broad consensus, and is carried out within the country’s legal framework, while aimed at alleviating poverty, has the potential to attract support from the international community. UNDP has been consulting with the Government of Zimbabwe, other national stakeholders and with the international community, on how the country can be assisted with its land reform programme. These consultations were ongoing.

7.5 Conclusion

From the interviews conducted, it appears that the level of awareness concerning the land reform programme was quite high in Mashonaland East province. However, it appears that not everyone was convinced by the reasons given for embarking on the land reform exercise. There were mixed feelings on whether it was a “vote winning strategy” or a “desire to revive the economy”. While many people were aware of the programme and some benefited from it, Government still has to convince people of the programme’s good intentions.

The key issues, emerging from the discussion, in the chapter on the relationship between land reform and poverty alleviation in Mashonaland East province are the following:

- The survey showed that the land reform programme corrected past colonial imbalances in land distribution. These imbalances were a source of poverty among the black Africans in the rural areas.
- The impact of land reform on de-congestion in Mashonaland East, and especially the districts of Mudzi, Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe, Mutoko and Goromonzi was negligible. This was mainly because beneficiaries did not surrender their communal land.
- The land reform programme was implemented during a period of poor performance and decline in the national economy. Productivity was negatively affected because provision

of inputs and support services was not satisfactory. Households, therefore, could not derive decent livelihoods from the newly-acquired pieces of land.

- The overall impact of land reform, in Mashonaland East province, was hindered by deficiencies in programme administration and management. Empirical evidence suggests that the land reform programme was not strictly for the rural poor, because it did not exclude those in wage employment in industry and from urban centres. The attainment of a truly transformed rural economy was elusive, because the elite urbanites (who maintained a firm foothold in the rural areas) and the politically connected benefited ahead of land hungry villagers. The lack of access to land remained a major cause of poverty among the majority of people in Mashonaland East province.
- Stakeholders, who were interviewed, welcomed the initiative to empower African people through land redistribution. They, however, pointed out that the policy thrust should have been to transform the lives of the rural folk, who constitute the majority of the poorest people in the country. This was frustrated by government's lack of broad consultation, transparency, post-settlement support. There was also a need to de-politicize the programme.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

The root cause of poverty in rural areas of Zimbabwe is the unequal access to, and use of land. The potential, of access to land, to break the cycle of poverty among the rural peasants, is what is argued in the thesis. Several studies by Moyo (1995) and Kinsey (1999) have showed that land reform, soon after independence, increased the number of families who are able to derive livelihoods from land, while at the same time also addressing the racial imbalance in the access to land in Zimbabwe.

There is a theoretical case linking land reform and poverty. The land reform programme was implemented as a means of reversing the legacy of colonialism, i.e. racial inequalities in access to land, and eliminating poverty by providing a resource to enable the poor, landless and aspirant farmers to derive livelihoods. It was expected that the programme would contribute to development through the provision of an asset base, to the poor, that could generate employment and income, as well as produce food.

A sustainable poverty reduction strategy needs to address two issues: first, how to provide productive assets to the poor, and second, how to make the poor more productive. To this end, evidence from Mashonaland East province indicated that access to land is not an end in itself. It needs to be complemented by other factors, to ensure that it is productively used.

Land reform, as a distinctive Programme, can be planned, implemented and evaluated against purposes which it intended to achieve. As observed by Hungwe and Pazvakavambwa (2009), evaluated on the basis of the extent to which land reform achieved redistribution targets –

12.3 million hectares of land was restored to 232 000 small-scale farmers and to 30 000 indigenous black commercial farmers, it was a laudable achievement.

The thesis has however exposed the major challenge in terms of the credibility and efficacy of the Government of Zimbabwe's approach and implementation of the second phase of land reform. The rationalisation of land acquisition and distribution, on the basis of historical grievances and political demands, which Moyo (2000) says are legitimate, is not in dispute. However, the technical, economic and equity considerations, which would have led to a significant reduction in poverty had they been prioritised during the implementation of land reform in Mashonaland East, were relegated to the periphery.

Although the land reform programme passed the evaluation test, on the extent of redistribution, lessons from the case-study of Mashonaland East show that the negative effects of the programme, which are inevitable in the short term, could have been minimised through careful planning and implementation. In Mashonaland East province, if land reform was simply a matter of land transfer between groups of people, with an equal capacity to use it, then the positive impact would have been obvious. Apparently, land reform involved the transfer of land between people with a fundamentally different approach to land-use and with different resource bases. Whereas the former white farmers deployed capital intensive and technically modernised farming methods, the resettled farmers came from a background of relatively little use of modern technology and subsistence farming. Not everybody who accessed the land was a competent farmer and neither did they have adequate resources. The Presidential Land Review Committee (2003:7) supports this argument by pointing out that

the “recurring theme was the need for timeous provision of adequate tillage services and inputs of all types”.

The effect of land reform, on poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods, cannot and must not depend solely on redistribution, but has everything to do with the manner of redistribution and post-redistribution support, by way of creating an enabling environment. The poor implementation of land reform in Mashonaland East province failed to eradicate poverty.

During the first decade after independence, the GoZ’s land reform programme had noble social and political focus. Three groups of people benefited: (a) refugees and those people displaced by the war; (b) the landless, who were residing in overcrowded communal areas; and (c) people who had insufficient land to sustain livelihoods. Livelihoods, for the groups, improved, compared to those who stayed out of the programme. However, the shift towards neo-liberal and market oriented land reform, in the 1990s, stalled land reform. Under the “willing-seller - willing buyer” principle, the quantity, quality, location, cost and pace of land redistribution was driven by landowners rather than the State. Empirical evidence showed that this pro-market led land reform programme could not transform the existing agrarian structure in a manner that could benefit the poor. The land which was available for sale was in marginal areas and the pace resettlement was very slow.

In Mashonaland East province, demarcations were done on old maps and some people were actually planting maize and other food crops on dairy farms. The fieldwork also revealed that

other would-be beneficiaries were still awaiting resettlement, as promised by their local leaders (chiefs). Yet others, applicants for the A2 model, had still not been informed as to the fate of their applications for land.

The research results also support the report of the Presidential Land Review Committee on the point that the “fast track” land reform was implemented with limited funding; hence the new farmers were poorly equipped. Representatives of farmers’ unions and other stakeholders, who were interviewed, noted that land reform was vital for economic development and poverty alleviation, but should have been done on a properly planned and adequately resourced basis. As it were, Government’s assumption, that new farmers had enough resources to develop their farms proved false; equipment and infrastructure (facilities for irrigation, tobacco curing, horticulture processing, water storage as well as tractors), were vandalized. The country’s lack of political and economic stability, as well as a lack of tenure security meant that beneficiaries could not engage in meaningful agricultural production. Banks were reluctant to give loans and the negative publicity affected markets and created uncertainty and despondency among some of the new farmers. One does not expect much in terms of poverty alleviation from a land reform programme implemented in this way.

The above distinguishes the thesis from other research conducted in the area. Research conducted by Scoones and others in Masvingo province, and from other areas of the country, by the African Institute for Agrarian Studies, present a complex picture, but dispute the assertion that land reform led to agricultural collapse and disinvestment. The fieldwork conducted in Mashonaland East province indicated that land reform under the A2

resettlement model was dominated by the elite grabbing land. Infrastructure was neglected due to perceptions of lack of order and poor tenure security. Land reform under the A1 model undoubtedly required investment and support (infrastructure, finance, inputs etc.) which the government was not able to provide.

The optimism towards government expressed by Sam Moyo, one of Zimbabwe's most outstanding researcher on the land question in Zimbabwe, seems misplaced. Land in Zimbabwe should be treated as a political issue and not just an economic or developmental one. Government of Zimbabwe's capacity and commitment towards land reform for poverty alleviation is over-rated.

Scoones, I. *et al*, (2010) and Hanlon, J. *et al*, (2013) have judged resettlement "success" by production. They attempted to address the question whether resettled farmers are producing more than the white farmers whom they displaced and more than the people left behind in the communal areas. It should be emphasized that the case of Mashonaland East province shows that this is a narrow view. The broader view is to question whether land reform led to poverty alleviation by way of benefiting the poorest. Sadly, land reform in Mashonaland East province did not hit the right balance between productivity and poverty reduction. War veterans, civil servants, urbanites and the politically connected who may be productive, got land ahead of the poor landless and near landless.

Poverty is not a static condition but a dynamic process. At a given time, some people are moving into poverty while others are moving out. Another key finding in Mashonaland East

province is that the fast track land reform which took 90% of white owned farms led to loss of jobs for a larger number of farm workers as well as a reduction in production of major food crops and livestock were also affected. The controversial selection of beneficiaries of land reform, international perceptions on poor governance, withdraw of donor support and general stagnation of the economy meant that the landless and near landless moved into poverty just as the political elite were moving out.

The extent to which land reform should include middle class and the political elite rather than the poor and landless remains critical. This was also a central issue to the failure of the 1998 Donor's Conference. Whereas the GoZ emphasized productivity, donors were divided but many stressed the need for poverty alleviation.

Another striking feature from this study is the inadequacy of institutional framework within which demands for land are articulated. Whereas the landless and near landless are meant to be the main beneficiaries of the land reform programme, their views in policy dialogue and formulation are weak. In Mashonaland East province, to the extent that they are at all represented at national level, it is through ZANU-PF constituency politics and the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU). However, ZFU represents the interests of a clique of black farming elite. There is even less commonality between the land hungry peasants and the elite black commercial farmers. Because of this challenge of inclusive participation, interests of the rural poor and landless are expressed through activities like illegal squatting and natural resources poaching.

The major challenge faced in the material used in the research is that it was impossible to get official figures on who got pieces of land, as well as the production levels of beneficiaries after implementation of the Land Reform Programme. There is a need for a land audit in Zimbabwe. Thereafter, a new land policy should stop the continued impoverishment of peasants in the context of “revolutionary” land reform.

A properly designed and implemented programme of land reform can lead to poverty alleviation. Other poverty related issues, such as the delay in demographic transition in Zimbabwe, the complex environmental questions, as well as land market issues that are evolving will require further research.

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APPENDIX A: RESEARCH GUIDE

This guide to the baseline survey sought to profile the case study with regards to the patterns of land allocations, land tenure, land use and productivity in Mashonaland East province of Zimbabwe. Its main focus was to understand the emerging agrarian structure and patterns of social reproduction in newly resettled areas and to provide some empirical evidence on whether land reform has led to poverty alleviation in Mashonaland East province.

A. RESEARCH THEMES

The following research themes define the study's broad framework and correspond to the organization of chapters five, six and seven.

1. Background to Mashonaland East province
 - Administrative districts
 - Population / Socio – demographic features
 - Farming region (Area of extent, % of total land area, annual rainfall)
 - Resource base
 - Types of agricultural land-use
 - Production features / Agricultural productivity
2. Statistical data on land reform / redistribution
 - Ownership patterns
3. Institutional / legal arrangements
 - Tenure arrangements
 - Access to productive land
 - Decongestion
4. Productivity
 - Crops and livestock production
 - Constraints
 - Environmental impact
 - Governance / conflicts

- Support services / access to extension
- Land-use patterns / local resource management practices

5. Land policy impact

- Public and stakeholder's perceptions
- Impact on livelihoods
- Empirical outcome

B. QUESTIONNAIRE

This was interviewer-administered to randomly selected respondents.

1. What do you know about the land reform programme?
2. Were you allocated land under the land reform programme?
- 3a) If the answer to the above is yes:
Are you occupying the land?
- b) If the answer to was no:
Do you already own a piece of land?
4. If you own a piece of land, what is the legal position of your ownership?
 - Freehold
 - Leasehold
 - Customary
 - Other
5. (a) What are you currently producing ?
(b) Of what value is land to you?
6. (a) What developments or investments have you done on the land ?
(b) What assets do you own?
7. In your opinion was the land reform programme justified?
8. What would you say were the Government's objectives in embarking on the land reform programme?
 - Votes' strategy
 - Redress colonial imbalance
 - Eradicate rural poverty

Revive the economy
Indigenize the economy
Punish white farmers

9. To what extent do you think that the land reform programme abided by the laws of Zimbabwe?
10. How far do you agree that there was violence against white commercial farmers during the implementation of the land reform programme?

Strongly agree
Agree
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Other

11. How far do you agree that there was violence against farm workers during the implementation of the land reform programme?
12. Do you agree that there was displacement of farm workers during the implementation of the land reform programme?

Yes
No
Other

13. If the answers to 9, 10 and 11 were affirmative: what is your comment?
14. How far do you agree that the land reform programme has led to the empowerment of the people?

Agree
Strongly agree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Other

15. How far do you agree that the land reform programme has addressed colonial imbalances in the distribution of resources?

Agree

- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

16. How far do you agree that the land reform programme has led to the eradication of rural poverty?

- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Other

17. Do you think the land reform programme was a success?

18. If the answer to the above is yes: Why do you say so:

19. If the answer to 15 is no: What do you think needed to be done for Zimbabwe to have a successful land reform programme?

20. It has been suggested that the land reform programme would have been more successful if government had enlisted the support of the international community. What would you say?

- It would have made a difference
- It would not have made a difference
- Other

21. Some people have argued that land reform programme only benefited top politicians and their cronies. What is your opinion?

- Benefited top cronies and politicians
- Benefited majority
- Don't know
- Other

22. How far do you agree that the land reform programme benefited men more than women?

- Agree
- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Other

23. What is your opinion on government provision of technical, financial and social services to resettled farmers?

- Government provide enough support
- Government did not provide enough support
- Don't know
- Other

24. It has been argued that the private sector in Zimbabwe failed to support the land reform programme. What is your opinion?

- Private Sector failed to provide support
- Private Sector provided support
- Don't know
- Other

25. Some people have suggested that the current food shortages in Zimbabwe are a result of the land reform programme; while others suggest that they are a result of drought. What is your opinion?

- Food shortages are a result of land reform programme
- Food shortages are not a result of land reform programme
- Both drought and land reform programme
- Don't know
- Other

C. INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interviews were held with key respondents in government and other stakeholders. The interviews sought to answer the following questions:

1. Which factors and social forces define and fuel the contemporary struggles for land?

2. Who are the major actors in the struggle for land?
3. What is the social benefit or the distributional outcome of the contemporary struggles for land in the context of social justice?
4. What are the changes in land-use, including new forms of production and land rights?