

# Land: An Empowerment Asset for Africa

The Human Factor Perspective



Edited by  
**Claude G. Mararike**

**Land: An Empowerment Asset for Africa**  
The Human Factor Perspective

Edited by  
Claude G. Mararike



University of  
Zimbabwe

**UZE**  
Publications

© C. G. Mararike, 2014

ISBN 978-1-77920-110-2

First published in 2014 by  
University of Zimbabwe Publications  
P. O. Box MP 203  
Mount Pleasant  
Harare  
Zimbabwe

Typeset by D. Masala, University of Zimbabwe Publications

Printed by Printforce Productions

**Chapter Seven**

Land as the Nexus in Youth, Female Unemployment and  
Poverty Reduction ..... 96  
*Zororo Muranda, Rangarirai Frank and Fanny Saruchera*

**Chapter Eight**

Land as the Game-changer: Utilising Local Community Talent  
and Resources in Development Initiatives ..... 118  
*Mcdonald Matika*

**Chapter Nine**

Urban Land Development in Africa ..... 127  
*Innocent Chirisa, Elmond Bandauro and Godfrey Chikowore*

**Chapter Ten**

Were It Not for the Land Revolution: Cases of  
Empowerment in Marondera District ..... 150  
*Charity Manyeruke and Ashton Murwira*

**Part Three**

**Indigenous Knowledge and the Human Factor**

**Chapter Eleven**

Language, Indigenous Knowledge and Survival Strategies ..... 166  
*J. Mapara and N. Mpofu-Hamadziripi*

**Chapter Twelve**

Climate Change and Indigenous Knowledge in Zimbabwe:  
A Human Factor Approach ..... 182  
*Sandra Bhatasara and Enock. J.R. Mandizadza*

**Chapter Thirteen**

Land Reform Programme and Rural Tourism in Zimbabwe ..... 203  
*E. J. R. Mandizadza, S. Bhatasara and O. Nyamwanza*

**Chapter Fourteen**

Land and Indigenous Knowledge Systems: Some Salient Issues .... 223  
*Blessing Makunike*

**Part Four**

**Land, Wildlife and Environment**

**Chapter Fifteen**

Agro-forestry Resources Management, Transformation and  
Challenges in Southern Africa: The Case of Post-land  
Resettlement in Zimbabwe, 2000-2013 ..... 232  
*Godfrey Chikowore, Innocent Chirisa, Harold Annegarn, Tafadzwa Makonese,  
Chihiro Ito, Verengai Mabika and Sam Ruturi*

## Chapter Ten

# Were It Not for the Land Revolution: Cases of Empowerment in Marondera District

Charity Manyeruke and Ashton Murwira

---

### Introduction

This chapter analyses the reality of empowerment of the people after the implementation of Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in 2000. Marondera District is used as a case study to test the extent to which the livelihoods of the new farmers have been transformed. The chapter addresses the issues facing the farmers as they attempt to increase the quality and quantity of their yields. The challenges facing the beneficiaries of the land reform are discussed. These include lack of subsidies, funding and farming equipment. Attention is paid to the size of the farm, types of crops, animals reared, prices of the produce as well as market access by the new farmers. In addition, factors such as employment creation are assessed. Interviews with key informants, farmers or beneficiaries of the FTLRP were conducted.

The first section of the chapter defines key terms which include empowerment, development and land reform. The other sections highlight the background of the beneficiaries of the land reform and the FTLRP. Socio-economic indicators, which include access to health care, education, clean water, possession of assets, equipment, livestock and, to some extent, the number of employees at a farm are analysed. An increase of these indicators demonstrated that, indeed, land is a tool of empowerment. The reverse of such development nullified the hypothesis. The chapter also analyses whether the acquisition of land leads to empowerment or that there are other factors that can contribute to positive development. However, this study noted that the evidence for the success of the land reform as an effective livelihood strategy is inconclusive. Thus, this study set out to find out factors which contribute to this inconclusiveness.

## **Methodology**

A total of 28 beneficiaries from Marondera District were interviewed. This sample was randomly selected from the farmers who visited the District Administrator's Office, the Marondera Central and East Constituency Offices and the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs Office. Visits were made to some of the beneficiaries' farms in the district to assess progress, levels of productivity, capacity and utilisation of the farms. Females constituted 29 per cent of the sample interviewed, while the rest of the interviews were males. We also relied on secondary data.

## **Importance of the Study**

The study was important in that it sought to take stock of the reality of land as a tool for empowerment, focusing on the new farmers in Marondera District. Successes and failures of the farmers enabled the researchers to draw lessons and recommendations. There has been abundant literature on the criticism of the land reform process as explained later. What lacks however, in the literature is an objective account of the reality on the ground about the successes and challenges that farmers are facing. The findings of the study are of use to policy-makers, farmers, researchers and development partners.

## **Background to the Study**

Prior to the implementation of the FTLRP in 2000, many people experienced a lot of problems with regards to land access. Vast tracks of fertile land were owned by a few white farmers such as Ian Kay in Marondera, where people used to go and buy milk. An experience by people who went to his farm was that they were harassed and threatened by the farm owner. This ill treatment was also shared by the black farm workers who were paid low wages and did not get reasonable packages when they retired. Apart from this ill treatment, the majority of the workers and the people in Marondera District did not have access to fertile land and good pastures for their livestock. These humiliating problems led the Svosve people in Marondera to embark on farm invasions in 2000. This was done to restore their lost dignity and gains of the first and second Chimurengas which was the land. As such, had it not been for the land reform, the people's lives would still be in misery. Therefore, the study targeted Marondera District as a case because the land reform (Third Chimurenga) has its roots in the Svosve area. The thrust of the study was to review the experiences and perceptions of the beneficiaries of FTLRP after they acquired the land in 2000.

## Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Development can be defined as a multipronged issue encompassing the socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental facets. This study, however, is more inclined to the economic and social development that the beneficiaries of the FTLRP were experiencing.

Empowerment is concerned with improving the standards of living of both the marginalised and well-to-do social groups. In the Zimbabwean context, it seeks to redress the past imbalances where white farmers owned land at the expense of the black majority. Blacks who had the capacity to do commercial farming were denied an opportunity to do so since land “belonged” to the whites and only a few black elite owned land.

Land reform is generally understood as the ‘redistribution of property rights’ in agricultural land (Bernstein, 2007). Such a redistribution of property rights is *de facto* empowerment which implies that land can thus be regarded as a tool for empowerment. The idea that land can be an empowerment tool is also contained in Ahluwalia’s argument. For Ahluwalia (1985:69),

if the distribution of income remained constant, and there were no adverse terms-of-trade effects, then an increase in agricultural production should raise income levels for all sections of the rural population, thus pushing some individuals above the poverty line.

This argument presupposes that land is an invaluable asset which can be a vital source for household income. The argument envisages that poverty can be overcome through an increase in household incomes through the use of land for agriculture.

However, scholars are divided over the capability of land reforms to tackle poverty. Some scholars regard land redistribution as a necessary condition for poverty alleviation, especially in developing countries where the availability of vast arable land gives them comparative advantage. Usually, this group of scholars envisages a correlation between access to land and levels of poverty. Land is regarded as a means through which poverty can be overcome. It is in this sense that land can be regarded as a tool for empowerment as it enables the holders to participate in profitable farming. These scholars often consider that land-ownership offers the opportunity for agricultural production from which the owners can earn an income. Hence, land-ownership offers one of the possible rural exits from poverty (Prowse and Chimhowu, 2007).

Conversely, other scholars argue that agriculture is no longer central to poverty alleviation for two main reasons. First, there is the growing importance of non-farm rural economic activities in reducing poverty in most developing countries (Prowse and Chimhowu, 2007). Second, agriculture is no longer regarded as a guaranteed economic activity that can reduce poverty in most developing countries because of changing global market conditions. Global market trends have witnessed a steady decline in world prices for agricultural commodities over time (Dorward, 2011). Moreover, small farmers have to compete against the emerging global commodity chains. Besides, agro-food transnational corporations (TNCs) squeeze the profits in agriculture from small farmers on the output end (Weis, 2007).

Zimbabwe's FTLRP is based on the assumption that ownership of land is vital, both in its own right, and as a means to improved agricultural productivity, in order to make a significant contribution towards poverty reduction (Moyo, 2009). This assumption implies that land is a vital asset and a tool for empowerment, especially for the poor social groups. However, as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2003) argues that the economic empowerment of the rural poor will not happen simply as a result of land ownership.

The impact of land reform on incomes, quality of life and livelihoods may take some years to become apparent. It should be noted that, regardless of the political or historical milieu, ownership of land alone is not sufficient. It requires financial, material, technical and institutional support but, above all, people with the correct human factor content. In the absence of such support and capacity building, most A1 farmers in Marondera district run the risk of dismal failure. For development activities on acquired land to be sustainable and to impact positively on the livelihoods of the beneficiaries, it requires a broad, open and on-going interaction between those requiring and determining the support they require and those who provide such support (PLAAS 2006: 41). The next section discusses the nature and experiences of the farmers.

## **Background of the FTLRP and Composition of the Beneficiaries**

The formal allocation of the acquired land was done from year 2000. The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ), through the Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement, divided the farms into A1 and A2 models. The two models exist in Marondera District. The A1 model comprises farms which are six hectares in size and below, while the A2 farms have more than six hectares



of land. The A1 deals with smallholder production. It consists of village-unit arrangements or small, self-contained farms. The A2 is focused on commercial production on a slightly larger scale. The allocation of a farm on A1 or A2 model was based on whether one had capital and project plans for A2 or, if without any assets, one qualified for the A1 model. It is important to note that the distinction of the A1 and A2 models explains the criteria in which the government uses in giving subsidies to the beneficiaries of the FTLRP. To date, Marondera District has 4 257 A1 smallholder farmers, 950 A2 farmers, 31 indigenous farmers and 20 white commercial farmers (Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement: Marondera District Office, interviewed April 2014).

The beneficiaries of the land reform in Marondera came from Svosve communal area, Marondera urban, Chiota, Seke and Harare. The cluster of new farmers is composed of people such as the retired, retrenched, former farm workers, war veterans, women and the unemployed youth. Given this cluster, it follows that some of the new farmers had the knowledge of farming due to their experience where they worked, in particular former farm workers. Some had little knowledge; others had the capital and equipment to till the land and animals to rear or use as draught power. Others did not possess any of the above. Thus, the background of the farmers determines their capacity to effectively utilise land which validates that land can be a tool for empowerment. Table 1 shows some of the beneficiaries interviewed.

**Table 1: List of the interviewed beneficiaries from Marondera District**

Name	Age	Ward	Main Crops Grown	Source of Income	Farming Machinery
1. T. NHAU (M)	33	23	Tobacco, maize	Self, crop sales	Tractor
2. A. VARIKWAVO (F)	45	23	Maize, beans	Self	Does not have
3. C. DHAKE (M)	52	4	Maize, cattle	Salary	Tractor
4. O. SABILIKA (M)	57	22	Tobacco, maize	Salary, Bank loans	Tractor, trailer
5. FUSIRE	69	21	Tobacco, maize	Self	Animal-drawn
6. D. MADZARA (M)	36	7	Potatoes, beans, maize	Self	Hired
7. H. CHIPASHU (M)	37	2	Tobacco, maize, beans	Self	Hired
8. T. MUSUWO (F)	66	7	Maize, beans, cattle	Self	Animal-drawn

Table 1 (cont.)

Name	Age	Ward	Main Crops Grown	Source of Income	Farming Machinery
9. B. SAMUSHONGA (M)	51	21	Maize, vegetables	Self	Animal drawn
10. T. NHAMBURO (M)	33	23	Tobacco, maize	Self	Tractor
11. O. MUSAKWA (M)	57	5	Tobacco, maize	Salary, loans	Tractor, trailer
12. A. VAMBE (F)	48	8	Maize, beans	Self	Does not have
13. S. CHIKOTO (F)	52	4	Maize	Salary	Tractor
14. S. CHIHWAI (M)	36	22	Tobacco, cattle	Contract farming	Tractor
15. T. MADZARA (F)	39	7	Potatoes, beans, maize	Self	Hired

Key: M-male, F-female

## Land as an Asset and Tool For Empowerment: Cases of Empowerment in Marondera District

This section discusses the findings on how the beneficiaries of the land revolution in Marondera District perceived empowerment and the extent to which they have been empowered by the land revolution. Seventy per cent of the beneficiaries interviewed view ownership of land as economic empowerment. Despite the fact that 68 per cent of the interviewees have to rely on their own financial resources for farming, they still perceive they have been largely empowered by acquiring the land. It is still debatable to establish how they have been empowered given that nearly 30 per cent of the respondents are of the view that land cannot be a tool for empowerment without the necessary support package. However, the view that land ownership is *de facto* empowerment is held with such strong conviction amongst the beneficiaries. As such, economic empowerment should be viewed more broadly beyond ownership of not only land but also on the utility and productivity on the resettled farm. The latter thus transforms the socio-economic welfare of the people.

## Infrastructural Development since 2000

A general observation at the farms in Marondera District, in particular the A1 model, is that the government made strides in developing the areas to improve the wellbeing of the beneficiaries. Notably, there was the drilling of boreholes in some areas where people did not have access

to clean water. Road maintenance and construction was also done to ensure the smooth movement of people and taking their produce to nearby markets. At some farms, people are located at least six kilo meters away from the nearest health centre as well as a school. Efforts have been made to turn former white commercial farm houses and structures into schools, clinics and small retail outlets or business centres. Thus, one can say that such infrastructural development provided a springboard and platform for development of the beneficiaries of the land reform. However, a lot still needs to be done on infrastructural development. There is lack of maintenance of the roads; some farms are not easily accessible, with some bridges having been destroyed by rain, especially in the 2013 season. This has affected transportation of inputs and market access.

### **Market Access**

In terms of market access, responses from interviews were that most A1 farmers who ventured into horticulture sold their produce either at the farm or nearby market place. Some farmers who have such modes of transport as scotchcarts, sell their produce along the highways. From our observation, there is lack of proper structures such as sheds for the farmers to store their produce. This inevitably affects the quality of their produce. For example, tomatoes are affected due to direct exposure to the sun in some cases. Some A1 and A2 farmers who ventured into more commercial activities take their produce to Marondera town and, in some cases, to Mbare Musika in Harare, where they can be sold at reasonable prices. Though a lot still needed to be done, indications were that some farmers were happy because the resettlement made them settle closer to the markets compared to the remote rural areas where they lived before the land revolution.

In some cases, farmers have formed synergies and sell their produce in bulk. For example the A1 farmers settled at the Mitchel and Mitchel Farm, four kilometres from Marondera town who are into market gardening and export their produce. They grow crops such as peas, carrots and other vegetables. These farmers pool together their produce and export them to Europe and other neighbouring countries. The next section gives an account of the successes and challenges the farmers face.

### **Perceptions from the Beneficiaries and Stakeholders in the Agriculture Sector**

From the random survey, it is evident that there are no strong pro-poor support mechanisms to empower the beneficiaries, most of whom are

the rural poor. The evidence from Marondera District suggests that the support mechanisms to fully empower the beneficiaries of the land reform are missing. In short, the survey showed that what is in place by way of government support is outweighed by what is missing. This scenario has frustrated the goals of the FTLRP. Vast pieces of land remain idle and underutilised, a situation which is compromising the national food security. Most of the beneficiaries interviewed managed to produce just enough food to take them through the year. Very few respondents indicated that they were in a position to produce maize for sale. Other farmers have opted for cash crops such as tobacco due to the low grain prices. Prices are controlled mostly by foreign buyers or agencies who maybe working against the Zimbabwe land reform process.

Over 70 per cent of the beneficiaries interviewed bemoaned lack of government support to enhance productivity in agriculture and lack of a development strategy to cover and encourage pro-poor economic growth. Thus, lack of funds, slow technical, legal and official support has slowed down the empowerment journey. The beneficiaries of the FTLRP are under great pressure due to an inevitable new dependence on the market and its subsequent competitiveness (Bernstein, 2004). This could drive many into poverty if they cannot match productivity requirements. As Bernstein (2004) asserts, this pressure can be offset only by an increase in productivity. Some foresee a 'new African green revolution' based on the flourishing of smallholder agriculture (Johnson *et al.*, 2003). But, changing global market conditions, lack of sufficient capital and insecure property rights, threaten the viability of Zimbabwe's land revolution. The effectiveness of the FTLRP as an empowerment process has been significantly shaped by the following agrarian political economy considerations: Who got land? Who got which land? And, what are they doing with it? What they can do with the land crucially depends on the available support mechanisms from the government and other stakeholders as well as the quality of the land users.

The FTLRP changed the previous highly imbalanced bimodal agrarian structure and created a tri-modal agrarian structure comprising small, medium and large farms (Moyo *et al.*, 2009). A number of factors have strengthened the land revolution in recent years. The growing frustration with a deteriorating economy led many people to support the FTLRP as the only other alternative. According to most of the respondents, ownership of land provides them with some social security. Also, the FTLRP attracted diverse groups of people to search for new livelihood options (Scoones *et al.*, 2010).

Since agricultural land is owned by the state, and the beneficiaries of the land redistribution have no title deeds, they are insecure and can be evicted by the state or the elite (Moyo 2007). Non-issuance of title deeds is viewed by some beneficiaries as an impediment to real empowerment. In addition, it creates anxiety and insecurity, which has contributed to the lack of more permanent structures being put up on most of the farms. It is now common knowledge that competition between invading groups, traditional leaders, government official, and war veterans often resulted in disputes over control of particular farms especially those with good infrastructure (Scoones *et al.*, 2010). The beneficiaries feel that they cannot use their resources to develop that which does not belong to them. This feeling of uncertainty and insecurity due to the fear of untimely evictions, is perceived as disempowering. This lack of political commitment has been the key impediment to economic empowerment.

On the downside of the empowerment stories, there are no guarantees that beneficiaries will not be evicted. There is need for the government to support commitment to the land reform through the implementation of pro-reform policies. The Zimbabwe's agricultural sector is overwhelmed by many obstacles. The post-land reform transition has seen a significant decline in agricultural production. Unreliable rainfall, poorly developed markets, hyperinflation, crumbling infrastructure, lack of skills and low levels of capitalisation seriously constrain the viability of smallholder farming (Biti, 2009). Only a small fraction of the land is irrigated, hence most crop production is exposed to the vagaries of the weather. Lack of access to inputs, credit and agricultural markets make it difficult for small farmers to produce (World Bank, 2008). The World Bank (2008) also notes that a gap in information and skills reduces their technical efficiency.

According to Honourable S. Mudarikwa, the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs for Mashonaland East Province (2014), the land reform has failed to fully empower most of the beneficiaries mainly because of lack of capital. Most of the land remains largely underutilised and if such a scenario persists, the beneficiaries will be impoverished. Mudarikwa noted that our local banks such as the Agricultural Bank of Zimbabwe (Agribank), need to be capacitated in order for them to avail loans to farmers. The Agribank was placed under economic sanctions in 2004 and since that time, it has failed to lend financial support to beneficiaries of the land reform. Despite the above factors, some farmers are doing well in utilising the farms and increasing production.

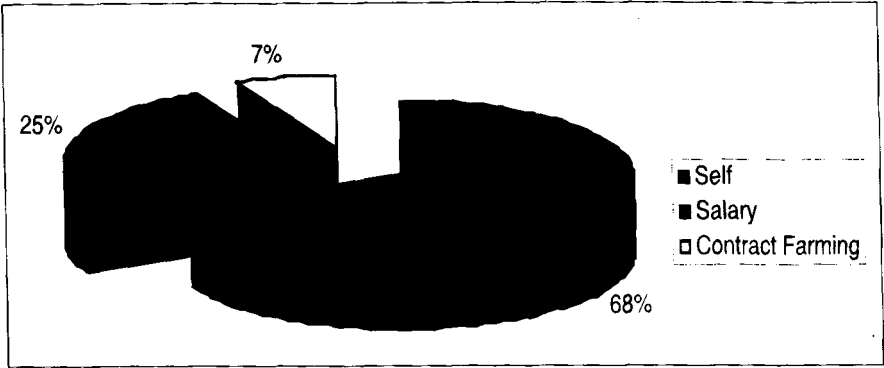
## Successes

In the wake of these challenges, the government has since 2000 made some strides in supporting the beneficiaries of the FTLRP. Government support for agriculture was offered under the Agricultural Sector Productivity Enhancement Facility (ASPEF), introduced in 2004 and through the Agribank, established in 2000 (Murerwa, 2004). Through ASPEF, the government attempted to offer continued support to farmers, including improved market-based access to inputs, farm mechanisation and support for extension services (Chinamasa, 2009). The bank was established to stimulate rural development and accelerate poverty reduction. Agribank was set up to provide loans to farmers and has more than 40 branches throughout the (Agribank, 2012). However, the results are disappointing. Agribank ignored the potential of the large number of resource-poor smallholder farmers and concentrated mainly on asset-rich farmers (IFAD, 2003). As Borras and McKinley (2006) note, the ultimate impact on development and poverty reduction largely depends on whether the institutional framework can adjust to the economic activities and social needs of the poor. In this context, as noted by IFAD (2003), it is not enough to establish institutions that are supposed to be supportive of the poor. Such organisations need to change their rules, norms and their approach to benefit the poor (IFAD, 2003).

A closer analysis of the evidence from Marondera District reveals that only a handful of the beneficiaries are doing well. The majority of the beneficiaries are either simply getting on but with potential or asset-poor or usually struggling to carry out any meaningful farming activities on the land. These different dynamics of household fortunes show the various struggles and social differentiation that take place in the absence of financial support from the government, cooperating partners (donors) or other lending institutions. The survey showed that nearly all of the new farmers rely on their own financial resources for farming. Only a few (depending on their political standing and influence) of the new farmers had access to financial assistance from either the government and donors or banks and other lending institutions. Figure 1 illustrates the main sources of the income for the beneficiaries who were interviewed.

It can be noted that with the right and adequate support, smallholder farmers can improve their livelihoods. For instance, in the 2012/13 season, smallholder farmers who were provided with pre-season tobacco input packages and some technical advice, increased their productive capacity. However, there are limited opportunities for all the beneficiaries to participate in contract farming. Besides, most of them express fear of

Figure 1: Source of Income for Farming.



Designed by the Authors

losing their assets to the financiers in the event that they do not do well and subsequently fail to repay the loans. For the few (about 7 per cent) of those interviewed, contract farming has helped to increase their productive capacity, thereby increasing their household income. Beneficiaries engaged as contract farmers are able to buy some property such as household items, vehicles and scotch-carts, farming inputs and implements. They are living decent lives and can afford to send their children to boarding schools. Besides these successes, a number of hurdles are being encountered by the farmers.

### Challenges Facing the Farmers

It is evident that post land reform support is essential if land redistribution is to improve the social security of the poor. Most beneficiaries rely on the labour of resident family members. They often have limited assets, little or no farming resources, no plans and lack farming knowledge and skills. These households produce very little or no crops and often struggle to feed their families throughout the year. They mainly rely on activities such as fishing, selling firewood, bee-keeping and piece works on neighbouring farms. The failure to invest in infrastructure and agricultural support services, such as irrigation systems, has left most beneficiaries in precarious conditions. They are unable to produce crops throughout the year. On the other hand, the few who have assets and capital can produce crops under irrigation. They are able to hire labour, invest on the farm as well as in other activities, such as poultry farming and horticulture. However, despite some of them benefiting from the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe's (RBZ's) farm mechanisation scheme, they have not

been able to fully utilise such machinery due to lack of inputs such as seed and fertilizers.

While the government has tried to support agriculture, both from the budget as well as from the RBZ facilities such as ASPEF (Chinamasa, 2009), the beneficiaries interviewed were frustrated at the way such support was availed. The farmers noted that nepotism, corruption and cronyism frustrated government's effort to capacitate farmers. Zimbabwe's agricultural productivity-enhancement support strategy was underpinned by the mechanisation of agriculture to stimulate the wider economy. However, while the government hopes for continued support to agriculture, official lending bank figures show a rather depressing picture. In 2013, there was virtually no credit support for smallholders from the banking sector.

To add to the financial woes, the land reform also coincided with a deteriorating economy, severe droughts, crises in food and politics crises. Zimbabwe became a net importer of food due to low agricultural productivity. The period of high inflation and severe budgetary deficit in the early-2000 saw poverty, hunger and unemployment levels rising to unprecedented levels. At a time when global inflation in developing countries was declining to single digit levels, Zimbabwe's inflation was rising at an alarming rate (Murerwa, 1999). The poor became poorer because their incomes were eroded by very high inflation levels. Against this backdrop, Zimbabwe found it difficult to work towards socio-economic transformation and sustainable growth. This adversely affected the beneficiaries of the land reform. Even the little financial resources they once owned, were quickly eroded, leaving most of them looking up to the government for financial and material support in order for them to engage in farming. It is against this background that some of the beneficiaries of the land reform felt that the government had not done enough to support them for effective land use.

In an interview with the Ministry of Local Government, Provincial Administrator for Mashonaland East Province, Mr C Ndarukwa, highlighted that land can only be an asset for empowerment if the necessary support is availed. He further noted that the challenges besetting the land reform programme include lack of appropriate farm equipment and appropriate technology. Mechanisation programmes implemented in the past did not adequately address this challenge. Mr Ndarukwa explained that lack of funding and underfunding seriously threatens the viability of farming as is evidenced by the underutilisation of the farms. Agricultural productivity is very low. Adequate funding is critical in addressing the challenges. Mr Ndarukwa was of the opinion that adequate funding was required in order



for the beneficiaries of the land revolution to be fully empowered. In addition, where funding is availed, there is need for proper use of it by the farmers. In some past cases, farmers embarked on non-agricultural businesses with the loans that they obtained.

### **Way Forward**

As a policy recommendation, Zimbabwe's overall development strategy should focus on the rehabilitation of the economy, underpinned by strong performance of the agriculture and mining sectors and sustainable growth to reduce poverty. The government input support and the farm mechanisation schemes, need to be more inclusive. Real empowerment is constrained by the on-going lack of financial support. Such a scenario compromises the national food security situation. Most of the beneficiaries are failing to access loans from the banks due to lack of collateral. As such, farmers felt that their land should be considered and accepted as collateral for them to access loans.

While the government tried to support the beneficiaries of the land reform through an agricultural productivity-enhancement support strategy underpinned by the mechanisation of agriculture, this was done to stimulate the economy and reduce poverty. However, most of the farmers in Marondera District still felt that government needed to do more for them to be fully empowered. Most of them have come to a realisation that land-ownership without the necessary accompanying support is not empowerment at all. It is clear that the farm mechanisation programme was also upset by corruption and failed to reach those who needed it most. In dotted cases, the affluent and political leaders have benefited from the farm mechanisation programme at the expense of the asset-poor beneficiaries. This and other factors undermine the ability of the land reform to empower the beneficiaries, thereby not reducing poverty. There is need to address the obstacles faced by the farmers and increase their opportunities in order for land to be considered an important tool for empowerment. As this study argues, there is need to put some mechanisms in place to help beneficiaries of the land revolution to increase their output.

Apart from government support, the established farmers, who have the requisite experience and knowledge, need to support other farmers who are facing challenges. This farmer to farmer support can be through best farming advice, marketing of produce and renting farm equipment at reasonable costs. It follows that such interactions and relationships form a strong base enabling the farmers to utilise the land effectively and becoming a positive livelihood strategy.

## Conclusion

One notes that though most beneficiaries have been empowered through land-ownership, there is still more to be done in terms of utilising the land to the maximum. Land access and ownership has, indeed, restored the lost dignity and pride of the people prior to the implementation of the FTLRP. Access to land has given the landless an opportunity of farming for their livelihood on fertile lands and greener pastures. It gives them the incentive to make investments. Access to land also gives them access to closer markets, thereby empowering them to participate in the mainstream economy. Such a situation, opportunity and experience was absent before the FTLRP in Marondera District. Thus, access to land has empowered people and changed their livelihoods.

In the spirit of progress and development, there is need for constant and increased government support to be channelled to the beneficiaries of the FTLRP. As such, capacity- building initiatives, skills training, mechanisation and more subsidies are vital ingredients that will result in land becoming a tool for empowerment in Zimbabwe. In line with this, effective land utilisation and a rise in the living standards of people can be realised. Factors such as lack of transparency and accountability, widespread food insecurity, droughts, volatile food prices and rising inequality have undermined the performance and integrity of the land reform. Addressing the above issues will result in sustainable land use and productivity.

## References

- Ahluwalia, M. (1985) "Rural Poverty, Agricultural Production and Prices: A Re-examination". In: Mellor, J. And Desai, G. (Eds.) (1985) *Agricultural Change and Rural Poverty: Variations on a Theme by DharmNarain*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Bernstein, H. (2004) "Changing before Our Very Eyes: Agrarian Questions and the Politics of Land in Capitalism Today". *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 4 (1 and 2), 190-225.
- Bhandari, R. And Linghorn, A. (2011) "The Four Pillars of Successful Land Reform: Can Revolutionary Nepal Stand Up?" *Himalayan Journal of Development and Democracy*, 6 (2), 1-20.
- Borras Jr, S. And McKinley, T. (2006) "The Unresolved Land Reform Debate: Beyond State-Led or Market-Led Models". [report] New York: UNDP Policy Research Brief No.2.
- Chinamasa, P. A. (2009) 2009 National Budget [Press release] 29 January 2009.
- Dorward, A. (2011) "Getting Real About Food Prices". *Development Policy Review*, Overseas Development Institute, 29 (6), 647-664.

- Moyo, S. (2007) "Land Policy, Poverty Reduction and Public Action in Zimbabwe". In Akram-Lodhi, A. (Eds.) (2007) *Land, Poverty and Livelihoods in an Era of Globalization: Perspectives from Developing and Transition Countries*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. London and New York: Routledge, 344-382.
- Moyo, S. (2009) *Fast Track Land Reform Baseline Survey in Zimbabwe: Trends and Tendencies, 2005/06*. Harare: African Institute for Agrarian Studies.
- Raftopoulos, B. And Mlambo, A. (eds). (2009) *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Scoones, I. et al. (2010) *Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Myths and Realities*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Scoones, I. (2010) *Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Myths and Realities*. Woodbridge, James Currey/Boydell & Brewer.
- Weis, T. (2007) "The temperate grain-livestock complex". In Weis, T. (Eds.) *The Global Food Economy. The Battle for the Future of Farming*, London: Zed Books, 44-88.

#### Internet Sources

- Agribank 2012 *Agricultural Development*. [online] Available at: <http://www.agribank.co.zw>, [Accessed on 12 March 2014].
- Biti, T. 2009 Statement on the 2009 Budget. [online] Available at: <http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw>, [Accessed on 12 March 2014].
- IFAD 2003 IFAD Annual Report 2003. [online] Available at: <http://www.ifad.org/pub/ar/2003/e/index.htm>, [Accessed on 2 April 2014].
- Murerwa, H. (1999) The Millennium Budget: Budget Statement 2000. [online] Available at: <http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw>, [Accessed 2 April 2014].
- Murerwa, H. (2004) *The 2005 National Budget Statement*. [online] Available at: <http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw>, [Accessed on 20 May 2014].
- Prowse, M. And Chimhowu, A. (2007) *Making Agriculture Work for the Poor*. [online] Overseas Development Institute, Natural Resource Perspectives 111. Available at: <http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/docs/584.pdf>, [Accessed on 20 May 2014].
- World Bank (2007) *WDRs – World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*. [online] Available at: <http://web.worldbank.org/html>, [Accessed on 20 May 2014].

#### Interviews

- Hon. S Mudarikwa. Minister of State for Provincial Affairs for Mashonaland East, Marondera, May 2014.
- Mr C Ndarukwa. Local Government Provincial Administrator, Marondera, April 2014.
- Mr Chiwara. Marondera District Administrator. Marondera, April 2014.
- Mr Motsi. Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement, Marondera District Office, April 2014.



This work is licensed under a  
Creative Commons  
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs  
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>