The many faces of Lack: an assessment of Model A2 farmers’ needs in Zibagwe Rural District Council in Midlands.

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Abstract

There is widespread agreement that the Land Reform Program was needed as a panacea to both rural and urban poverty as well as redressing historical imbalances in access to the most productive agricultural land. There are disagreements however, on which modalities would have worked best in implementing this program in light of the political, economic and legal environment that was prevailing in the country at the time of the onset of the FTLRP in particular. This dissertation assesses the needs of the A2 farmers in Zibagwe Rural District (ZRD), formerly a fully fledged large scale commercial farming area in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe. The assessment looked at how farmers raised capital, how they met their labour requirements, which other actors assisted them and what the farmers themselves saw as the policy blind spots in the structures of A2 farming in the FTLRP. The assessment took a continuous outlook/perspective, questioning farmers’ past and experiences and looked at what they proffered as suggestions to smoothen their farming in the future. These views were analyzed together with submissions from prior writings on the Land Reform in Zimbabwe as well as data from interviews of key informants who were involved in the Land Reform Administration in ZRD. The study’s findings indicated that the main challenges faced by farmers were their continued incapacitation by the absence of adequate land tenure structures, the legal documentation to cement their statuses as the occupants of the farms, their weak borrowing capacity and disturbances by both legal and illegal mineral prospectors, miners who run their mining activities parallel to the farmers’ agricultural activities on the same farms. The paper concludes by recommending the acceleration of finalization of tenure agreement by the government and improvements in LRAI’s capacity to administer the A2 schemes. There is need to depart from policies based on the anticipated ideals to new ones that are reflexively monitored by knowledge co-owned by the farmers, the government and the NGOs active in the area. The other recommendation is for the development of tailor-made loan schemes rooted in paradigms grounded in knowledge of farmers’ lived experiences.
## Acronyms

<table>
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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>A2 farm</td>
<td>- the self contained, market-oriented and peri-urban farming model of the FTLRP in which the land holdings are small, medium or large scale.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDT</td>
<td>- Farmers Development Trust</td>
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<td>FTLRP</td>
<td>- The Fast Track Land Reform Program</td>
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<td>GoZ</td>
<td>- The Government of Zimbabwe</td>
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<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>- The Key Informant Interview [KI: Key Informant]</td>
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<td>LRAIs</td>
<td>- Land Reform Institutions</td>
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<td>LRP</td>
<td>- The Land Reform Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCA</td>
<td>- Thematic Content Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGOs</td>
<td>- Non Governmental Organizations</td>
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<td>ZRDC</td>
<td>- Zibagwe Rural District Council</td>
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Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Watch Ruparanganda for the patient assistance in moulding my ideas into this complete thesis. I would also want to thank the personnel from the Zibagwe Rural District Extension Services department especially Mr Mutusva “Sekuru baba Eddie” and all respondents who took time to answer my questions. A big thank you goes to Ian “ka Banana” Bakala for helping me link up with the farmers.
Dedication

This work is dedicated to my big brother Denver Mususa for the endless faith in me. This one is for you. To Shuvai, my girlfriend, my mom, dad; for believing in me and urging me on, I say thank you.
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1.0 Introduction

This study explored the challenges faced by Model A2 farmers in Zibagwe Rural District Council in Zimbabwe’s Fast Track Land Reform Program (FTLRP). The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) has since the attainment of Independence in 1980, embarked on several phases of the land reform exercise such as Phase One and Phase Two. Each of these phases also had its own divisions marked by the manner of land acquisition and how people were resettled. These were punctuated by starts-and-stops due to the introduction of and departure from the several policy approaches meant to guide the program to address the chief goals of rectifying historical imbalances in access to land and increasing agricultural productivity across the country. Against the backdrop of the signing of input support agreements between GoZ and other countries and the rolling out of the mechanisation program, the persistence of the cumulative decline in national crop yield in Zimbabwe since the onset and subsequent ‘completion’ of the Land Reform exercise exists as the irrefutable evidence that somewhere in the delivery process, there are dysfunctional practices and omissions which made the laudable LRP to fail thus far, to lead to increased national crop yields.

Many research papers, articles and books have been written on what it is that really went wrong in the whole process of the LRP and the lessons to be learnt from the Zimbabwean land reform experience. These have scrutinised issues such as governmental inputs and technical support to the resettled farmers (Marongwe, 2004), the LRP’s goals (Munyuki-Hungwe, 2004), the legalities over how the land was acquired, the human rights debates surrounding the LRP (Cheater, 2000), the LRP in the context of SAPs (Moyo, 2000), its impacts on the Zimbabwean food security situation (FAO, 2001, Moyo, 2007). Others have looked at the LRP’s effects on the Zimbabwean economic and political structure (Sukume and Moyo, 2003; Mamdani, 2008) and farm labourers’ livelihoods post the Land Reform Program (Chambati, 2007). Others like Roth and Gonese et al, (2003) and Masiiwa (2004) have traced the LRP from pre-independence through to the Fast Track Land Reform (FTLR) era. These studies have broached several negative and positive issues that are to be looked at more closely during policy formulation and be built on in later Land and Agrarian reforms.

1.1 Background

The Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) started implementing the LRP in September 1980 under various policy frameworks with the two basic duals goals: to achieve racial parity in accessing land and to increase and spread agricultural productivity in the country (Masiiwa and Chipungu, 2004). In many respects, despite the slow pace of delivery of land to
beneficiaries and the lack of efficacy of Land Reform Administration Institutions (LRAIs), the LRP has managed to uplift the livelihoods of a significant number of ordinary Zimbabweans who did not previously have access to land for settlement or agriculture. However, it is this paper’s starting position that national agricultural production levels have dwindled compared to the pre-FTLRP era primarily due to the inattention paid to the threats to the viability of Model A2 farmers at the policy level. Inevitably, a plethora of reasons have been proffered as explanations for the national crop yield decline. Many have paired this decline with the poor planning of the LRP arguing that it has had more casualties than beneficiaries. Among these casualties are White commercial farmers, productivity on the farms and farm workers’ subsistence capacities post the LRP, both on and off the former commercial farms.

One theme reverberating in most analyses of the LRP is the absence of effective consultation of the farmers by the GoZ at the grassroots/local level, with the LRP standing accused of being heavily top-down in the information and material transmission. Many development interventions which are top-down in approach fail to achieve their goals because they are characterised by imposition on the local people, of administrative structures, implementing structures, accountability mechanisms and policies that are out of touch with their lived realities as the primary stakeholders of the Land and Agrarian Reform (Frimpong-Ansah, 1991; Maminine, in Roth and Gonese, 2003 and Dorsner, 2004). Such structures neglect needs which are locale-specific and are configured at the nexus of the multiple optic of differential access to resources, contested access to and control of scarce common property (Long, 1991) and differential social, geo-physical and economic costs that direct people’s choice to participate in development (Viswanathan and Srivastava, 2007).

Governments and the intermediary organisations / agencies of Development have been criticised of failing to factor in the views of the poor people, the targets of development interventions because their definitions of the poor are divorced from the realities of the poor people (Dorsner, 2004). Financial constraints make it a mammoth task for national policy-formulators to effectively unearth the subaltern economics, political and cultural imperatives that shape specific communities’ costs and rationales that shape people’s choices to or not to participate in mainstream development blueprints which are applied irrespective of local costs and barriers to involvement (Cleaver in Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Resultantly, mainstream development interventions frequently use macro-scale approaches to identify and solve rural farmers’ needs. It is through the use of such supposedly objective models that
whole communities are made to be recipients not active participants of development interventions. Their subjective views as the primary stakeholders of the Development are neglected (Cleaver, 2001). These are some of the issues that have blighted the LRP. Its various phases in Zimbabwe were rolled out under a concoction of Land Use and Tenure Policies which were spelt out, monitored and evaluated in a fragmented fashion (Munyuki-Hungwe, 2004). The LRP was implemented under several modus operandi largely determined by the government, supposedly building on and improving on the shortcomings of the structures and modalities of preceding phases.

The study sought to interrogate the current situation regarding Model A2 farmers’ viability with the view to unravel the problems which they have continuously faced throughout the changes in Zimbabwe’s LRP and suggest policy changes to increase their viability.

1.2 Objectives

1. To identify model A2 farmers’ needs.

2. To explain the persistence of these needs.

3. To offer policy recommendations for future Agrarian Reform in Zimbabwe

1.3 Problem Statement

Commercial farming is the backbone of national agricultural output and under the FTLRP in which the A2 model is the commercial farming model. This model still faces the same challenges that stifled production and farm viability in prior phases and models of the LRP such as poor access to credit due to lack of collateral in the form of transactable title deeds as well as the lack of institutional capacity to effectively implement the policies and action plans to meet the programme’s goals. These are issues that have gone unaddressed despite the introduction, modification, scraping and re-introduction of policy documents by the government, on how best to deliver increased and sustainable production on the farms. Despite the abundance of literature and reports by non-state actors on the aspects of the specific phases of the LRP needing attention, there is no corresponding return in terms of policy awareness to increase the model A2 farms’ viability. This study interrogated the farmers’ lived realities, explored the hindrances they met daily and seasonally, the threats to the model A2 farms’ viability.
2 Methodology

The study was designed under a qualitative paradigm, which viewed the individual farmers as the primary ontological units for data collection and analysis of the issues of model A2 farms’ viability. The study sought to identify farmers’ needs and what they experienced as threats to their viability in each agricultural season. To that end, the study triangulated Thematic Content Analysis, Key Informant Interviews and the Researcher-administered questionnaire. The researcher held the understanding that no single method was error-proof and could singularly adequately reveal causal factors explaining interrelationships between co-acting hence the use of multiple methods in. Multiple methods contribute to methodological rigor (Denzin, in Patton, 1987:61), increase strength and validity of the research findings (Bryman, 1989) and develops ‘converging lines of inquiry’ several sources of information to make conclusions (Yin, 2003: 98). The triangulation of these data collection tools was intended to help overcome the weaknesses of the triangulated methods if they were to be used singularly.

2.1 Study Setting
Zibagwe Rural District Council (ZRDC) is a district within the Midlands province. It is primarily a farming district encompassing large-scale commercial farms, A2, A1 small scale farms and communal farming areas. It is to the south of Kadoma and stretches to the east of Kwekwe, lying between Kwekwe and Kadoma along the Harare-Bulawayo road and stretching into the hinterland of both Kwekwe and Kadoma, touching the outskirts of the main built-up/main settlement areas of the two urban centres. The area used to be primarily, a commercial farming area where the large-scale farms co-existed with the communal areas. The farmers in this area pay their rates to the ZRDC which has its offices in Kwekwe.

2.2 Data collection tools
The study utilised the following data collection tools:

2.2.1 Thematic Content Analysis
A lot has been researched on the LRP in Zimbabwe hence, it is vital to analyse the findings from such works to find out the secondary data that is in existence. Thematic Content Analysis was therefore used to identify the themes on resettled farmers’ needs which run through studies preceding this current one. Scharaneveldt in Adams and Scharaneveldt (1985:308) defines Thematic Content Analysis (TCA) as a research technique whereby the
researcher pores over written communication to determine the key ideas and themes. The Encyclopedia of The Social Sciences (1986:371) defines Thematic Content Analysis as researching by going through recorded or written primary data to examine the patterns and interrelationships between the concepts under study and interpreting them.


However, the use of TCA as a research strategy was not without limitations, TCA required critical reading skills. Critical reading is an art that had to be tactfully employed since results of the study could be affected by the findings from TCA which framed the study’s research questions. Nevertheless, through TCA of literature from scholars of diverse ontological positions, theoretical viewpoints, it was aspired that the study would be able to identify the problems identified by these scholars and the patterns of analysis, similarities/divergence of proffered solutions to the recurrent themes/issues in past phases of the LRP.

2.2.2 Key Informant Interview (KII)

The use of Key Informant Interviews allowed the researcher to focus on the interviewees’ perceptions of the issue based on their experiences within the context (Robson, 1993:230). Primary data was obtained through the KII's of 2 Extension Officers. The KII's were used to diversify the sample and include respondents in key positions in the decision-making and policy implementation structure in the RDC. The first set of key informants, the personnel from the Extension Services were chosen because of their knowledgeability and strategic location in the issues of concern to the study. To these, a separate set of questions different
from the farm level questionnaire was administered. They were asked questions on the issues
to do with how they engaged the local farmers in decision-making processes, their own
assessments of how well-equipped to deliver their mandate they are, what challenges they
faced, their relationship with local level community leaders and other LRAIs involved in the
LRP and their views on threats to the Model A2 farms viability. The data generated from KII
was triangulated with the secondary data from TCA (Thematic Content Analysis) to serve as
a validity check on the data generated from the TCA. The use of Key Informant Interviews
however, did not come without limitations. It is difficult to prove the validity of findings
generated from key informant interviews since the questions are not standardised.

2.2.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered at the farm level on a randomly selected sample of
respondents. The questionnaire sought to elicit responses on a whole range of issues such as
how the farmers raised capital, how they accessed farming implements like seed and
machinery, how they sourced and managed labour, their relationship with extension services,
their evaluations of extension services and their views on the inclusivity / exclusivity of
critical decision-making processes. The main advantage of using the questionnaire was that it
enabled collection of responses to a diverse range of questions in a few minutes of each
respondent’s time (Alreck and Settle, 1985:7).

2.3 Theoretical Framework and Definition of Terms

2.3.1 Actor-Oriented Approach

Long and Long (1992:5) critique and reject Structuralist theories of Development as linear,
determinist and ‘simple’ empiricistic explanations which fail to factor-in local realities.
Dorsner (2004) sums this as an ‘aloof state’, which is out of touch with grassroots realities,
leading to misplaced focus and inapt interventions. Long (1992:7) declares “…the sociology
of development has, until very recently, been disdainful of actor approaches”. With this,
Long asserts the utility of actor-oriented approaches to the study of development. He declares
that there is need for interface analysis which seeks to give eminence to the multiple realities
and diverse social practices of the various actors involved in development interventions. The
Actor-oriented approach suggests that all the interpretations of actors in development, be they
the government, local communities or intermediary organisations, be accorded due
recognition in the formulation of development interventions because social change (targeted
by development interventions such as Land Reform) is shaped at the intersection/interface of
the different social worlds, struggles and conflict of interwoven, interpretive, meditative and
ongoing constructions of life experiences. Long argues that research and practice of Development can only adequately capture diverse realities in a community by looking at the interplay of the factors that are internal and external to the actors and the relationships between them. This study was informed by such a view that the GoZ, local farmers, government departments, community leaders and the LRAIs involved in the FLRP are actors with different lifeworlds, perceptions of the LRP and motivations of participating in it. These should be interrogated to identify threats to Model A2 farms’ viability

2.3.2 Giddens’ Structuration theory

Giddens (1984) asserts that human behaviour is explicable in terms of their exercise of agency in the context of the structures where they are situated. The political, economic and social systems which are active during the process of the implementing the LRP are examples of structures which simultaneously enable certain actions and restrict other actions. They are the framework in which farmers’ agency is exercised. Giddens’ Structuration theory was used to explore how the structural properties of social systems within the context of Zimbabwe’s LRP have restricted the redress of the threats to Model A2 farmers’ viability. To Giddens, reality can be explained by looking at how forms of social conduct/institutions (such as LRAI in Zimbabwe’s LRP) are reproduced chronically across time and space through routinized behaviour which stems from the repetitiveness of activities in specific contexts. Giddens brings attention to how the structured properties of social activity, through via the duality of structure, are constantly recreated out of the very resources which constitute them. To understand structural and institutional behaviour, Giddens (1984:11) suggests that research looks at the underlying shifting alliances and power struggles between agents in different social contexts. Structuration theory was thus used to explore these individual farmer-social structure interactions with a view of assessing the impact which each one had on the other in the context of the Model A2 farmers’ viability issues.

Land reform is accepted to mean restitution, redistribution and confirmation of rights in land to the benefit of the poor or dispossessed (De Villiers, 2003). It encompasses changing tenure structures to ascertain security of ownership to the occupants, the availing of infrastructure, farming and commercial support to the recipients of at land.

Mombeshora (1998:68) defines Land tenure as the social relations between a category of people in respect of the object of tenure which in this case is land. Thus, land tenure is a constructed framework guiding the use of land and prescribing access to the land and rights
over that land. Adams (2001:1) posits that Land Reform is generally accepted to mean restitution and or confirmation of rights in land to the benefit of the poor or the dispossessed.

3.0 Literature Review

At independence in 1980, there was 33 million hectares of arable farming land in Zimbabwe. Of this land, 6000 white commercial farmers owned 45% of it. The predominantly black small commercial farmers controlled 5% of the land in the drier regions. Close to 700,000 black families occupied 50% of the poorest unfertile land in the communal areas, the former reserves, from the colonial era. At Independence the government made a commitment to resettle 162,000 farmers by 1990 when the “willing buyer, willing seller” agreement expired. Land transfers during the first decade of independence were so minimal that they increased rather than appeased land hunger (Mamdani, 2008). Land use Policy and Planning in Zimbabwe has undergone various changes in which the planning and implementation institutions at the government and local levels have been subservient to the State’s ideology. The objectives and methods of the Planning process have varied according to the shifts in the State’s ideology (Mugabe, 1998). The new government of the independent Zimbabwe inherited a skewed land distribution set up where the majority of the population were crowded in unfertile communal areas (Adams and Howell, 2001). The government’s agricultural policies focused on developing a food security and improving the welfare of the marginalised rural populations. The government aimed at engendering land and labour productivity in agriculture, increasing employment and promoting local markets for local agricultural produce (Makamure et al., 2001).

The First Phase of the Land Reform and Resettlement Program focused on developing rural areas through the provision of infrastructure and other socio-economic services to ameliorate the plight of the people negatively affected during the war (Zuwarimwe, 1999). It was aimed at improving agricultural productivity among the resettled families. The targets of this phase were landless families, the unemployed and poor families with dependants between the age of 18 and 55 years and the returning refugees (Masiiwa, 2004: 2). However, land was vested in the hands of the government while the beneficiaries were only given permits to reside and work on the land (Masiiwa, 2004:7). This phase was punctuated by various legal frameworks such as The Communal Lands Act 1981 which changed Tribal Trust Lands to Communal Areas and changed authority over land from traditional leaders to District Councils. The government was given the first right to buy land from large scale commercial farmers for resettlement.
This phase had very limited impact on resettlement programme’s success such that the government had not reached half its target of resettled families by 1990. The “willing buyer, seller clause”, of the Constitution, lack of funds to buy the land and develop it for resettlement, corruption within government and general bureaucracy were some of the reasons for the government’s failure to meet this target (Logan and Tevera, 2001). The issue of land redistribution almost vanished from the national agenda during the mid 1980s due to this inactivity (Masiiwa, 2004). Very little action was taken with the specific aim of addressing the viability of these farmers. There was a quantitative focus on the issue of the numbers of resettled farmers. Despite this emphasis, the model A and B, adopted in the 1980s had failed to redress the land imbalance meaningfully due to the lack of adequate finances to buy land. There was limited infrastructure and access to water (Makamure et al, 2001:11).

The Land Acquisition Act was then passed in 1990 aimed at acquiring 5 million hectares of land for resettlement. The policy faced the same problems that had drawn back its predecessors like lack of finances and resistance from the commercial farmers. Very little action took place on the ground due to the shortage of finance to bankroll the program (Ministry of Agriculture, 1995; Blume, 1996). From July 1985 until late 1989 the Land Reform Program was dysfunctional due to the unavailability of land for resettlement, the international lobbying by the CFU and the British press for a slower land reform process, the economic recession in Zimbabwe in the early mid-80s, the drought, the rigidity of the resettlement scheme, the rivalry between ministries interested in the land which had overlapping authority on Land and lack of funds (Mushimbo, 2005: 89).

The government began the second phase of the Land Reform Program in 1989. This was also punctuated by several Acts such as The Expropriation Law of 1990 which was largely aimed at enabling the Government to acquire any land (including utilized land) for resettlement purposes. The government was to pay “fair” compensation “within a reasonable time” to the farmers. The Act freed the government from remitting compensation to farmers who were out of the country as required by Sections 5 and 6 of the Constitution (Mushimbo, 2005:96).

The other Act was the Land Acquisition Act which was passed on 16 March 1992 and stipulated that land, including utilized land, buildings and improvements to land were capable of being acquired for settlement, land reorganization, environmental conservation, and utilization of natural resources. It allowed for any property to be compulsorily acquired for any purpose that the State required and the Parliament was empowered to specify the principles on which the amount of compensation for acquisition of land was to be assessed.
(Mushimbo, 2005: 100). This Land Acquisition Act was aimed at increasing the pace of delivery of land to the beneficiaries of the Land Reform. Land Designation and Compulsory Acquisition allowed the government to acquire without compensation, land which was seen as unproductive or idle. Such land included that which farmers had not developed and was lying fallow, and owned by absentee or foreign landlords and land owned by farmers with more than one farm (Ministry of Agriculture, 1995). The government failed again to meet its targets such that by July 1997 only 3.5 million hectares had been acquired and 71,000 families out of the 162,000 targeted were resettled (Kinsey, 1999).

In 1997, the government published a list of 1,471 farms that had been designated for compulsory acquisition. These were to be redistributed to the majority of the landless peasants and the government was going to partially pay the owners of the designated farms (Mushimbo, 2005). In the year 2000 the government passed the Land Acquisition Act whose target was to acquire 12 million hectares of land for resettlement. The Act allowed the government to compulsorily acquire land from farmers without compensation for land. Compensation was to be for the infrastructure and capital improvements made on the farms. This was challenged by the commercial farmers in the courts and it led to donors cutting the little aid that was coming. There was growing land hunger among the locals who began to invade farms and seize white owned land at the beginning of 2000. They invaded about 1000 farms, beating and killing the white farmers they found on these farms (Logan and Tevera, 2001, Human Rights Watch, 2002). The government began implementing its fast track land resettlement program after the invasions began. The government said the objectives of the FTLR were to provide the landless peasants with opportunities to own land, access to favourable employment, to overturn the country’s poverty and to reduce the pressure on the land and the political tension related to access to the land (Government of Zimbabwe, 2001).

However, some argue that the government was only been driven by three interrelated needs of achieving social justice, generating capital and regime survival (Logan and Tevera, 2001: 103) hence the turn to the land issue as a tool for the government’s own survival more than out of heartfelt and intentionally targeted action to meet the other two goals. Dansereau (2003: 173) roundly asserts that The FTLR was “a useful simplification for a group trying to generate legitimacy for itself in the face of growing popular dissatisfaction”. Inevitably, issues like farmers’ viability were relegated to the GoZ’ political concerns.
4 **Presentation of findings**

In this section, the study’s findings are presented. In the first section are the findings from the Content Analysis of secondary data sources, in the second section are the findings from the farm level questionnaire, in the third section, findings from the Key informant interviews are presented.

4.1.1 **The Focus of the FTLRP**

After the funds promised at the 1998 Land Donors’ Conference did not come, the GoZ found itself unable to deliver land to the landless (Rugube et al, 2003). The landless blacks and war veterans began to invade farms and seize white owned land at the beginning of 2000. Due to this, the GoZ found itself under pressure to get land to give to these quarters of society. The FTLRP thus, was officially launched in July 2000 as part of the Second Phase of the LRP (Zikhali, 2008:5). Its primary goals were spelt out as:

1. To accelerate the identification of 5 million hectares of land for compulsory acquisition by the GoZ for resettlement.

2. To increase the pace of the settlement planning and demarcation of acquired land.

3. To provide limited basic infrastructure and farmer support services (GoZ, 2000).

4.1.2 **Evolution of the A2 Farm model under the TFLRR**

The Land Reform has basically had two broad phases: the first one stretching from 1980 to 1997 which was regulated by the “willing buyer-willing seller” clause of the Lancaster House Constitution (Zikhali, 2008). Under the FTLRP, there are two models:

1: Model A1 which in essence is a modified version of the old villagised Model A from the First Phase. This was aimed at the landless poor in the congested villages that were located adjacent to the commercial farms.

2: Model A2 which has Small scale commercial self-contained plots that have been returned to a resettlement model and renamed A2. The settlers practiced small scale, medium scale, large scale or peri-urban farming (Roth and Gonese, 2003:271).

The A2 model was set as the commercial farming model of the FTLRP, comprising small-to-medium and large scale commercial settlements and it was targeted at any Zimbabwean citizen who could prove farming experience and / or resource availability and is based on the concept of full cost recovery from the beneficiary (GoZ, 2000). The Model A2 was intended
to establish small to medium-sized commercial farms operated by black indigenous farmers. The aim was to support the smallholder farmers to move away from subsistence farming towards market-oriented farming (Rukuni 1992:21). To facilitate this, the government gave the commercial farmers 90 days to stop production and leave their farms (Rugube et al., 2003).

4.1.3 The inadvertent features of the FTLRP that threaten farmers’ viability

The FTLRP has heralded a sharp decline in agricultural productivity on farms taken for resettlement due to the disparity between policy design and implementation, governmental complacency, lethargy and lack of political will to see the program through (Masiiwa and Chipungu, in Masiiwa, 2004:v).

The FTLRP has progressed hand-in-glove with a contraction of the economy. Since the onset of the FTLRP in 2000, national agricultural production has nosedived by 30% (Richardson, 2004)

4.1.4 Loss of Land value

The policy of setting overtly spurning the legal rights of the previous landowners through the State’s arbitrary changes of the constitution heralded the departure from the market as the distribution mechanism for land, via the “willing buyer-willing seller” tenet and its replacement by the government, with compulsory land acquisition has had the indelible impact of reducing land value since the land has become untransactable. Such land is taken as national land which the resettled farmers hold under various tenure structures which allow them to use but not to dispose the land. The “owners” holders of the land cannot use it as collateral in credit applications from banks.

Investors are wary of making significant developments on the land which is not theirs and which is not of the resettled farmer either. An investor with capital is thus, dissuaded from bringing in machinery in partnerships with a farmer in share-cropping because of the fear of the replication of the farm takeovers, in ways reminiscent of the 2000 occupations (Richardson, 2005).

4.1.5 Farm Capitalization

The government required the people wishing to be considered for A2 farms to be in a position to mobilize resources (Government of Zimbabwe, 2001) to purchase inputs and machinery, to have qualifications in agriculture and to show that they had collateral. Many A2 farmers got
land after representing themselves as having the capacity to raise capital and requisite collateral for one to access credit from financial institutions (Mushunje, 2001). The success of the LRP in Zimbabwe is seriously hampered by the ambiguous criteria for the selection of settlers. There are no checks and balances to see if the farmers actually possess the competences and capital-raising capacities they said they had when they applied for the land (De Velliers, 2003:14). Most of the A2 farmers do not have the resource-mobilization capacities they purported to have when they applied for the land under the A2 model. Their viability is compromised by their weak borrowing capacity (Petrie, Roth and Mazvimayi 2003).

From the outset, the government had specified that A2 settlements were “self-contained” plots meaning that the onus of raising capital for implements was largely to be borne by the beneficiaries themselves, with the government helping out with infrastructural support. However, the government’s budgetary allocations to A2 farmers turned out to be far below their expectations (Mhishi, in Masiiwa, 2004). To this day, this capital deficit continues to threaten the viability of the A2 farmer. The primary source of capital for A2 farming should be the A2 farmers themselves and not government subsidies or government-initiated loan schemes. Where available, loans were provided by the FDT which inadvertently discriminates against food-crop cultivators in favour of tobacco growers. Who ostensibly, have a better repayment rate than food-crop cultivators (Kuwanda, 2003). Many would not try to borrow the loans from the commercial banks because of the high interest rates and the weight of owing some other banks through loans lent to them for their other businesses in town.

4.1.6 Failure to turn research into policy

Despite coming up after the First Phase, and ostensibly having the benefit of hindsight from the preceding reforms, the FTLRP is underlined by a failure to turn Research into Implemented Policy. Generally, there is a serious failure in Zimbabwean planning systems, to turn information from research into policy (Mamimine, 2007). Much research has been done on the areas of the LRP, but in the actual implementation, even findings from government-commissioned research like Moyo, Ncube, Gunby and Shivji’s (1998) “The National and Policy Framework Paper” despite being applauded as showing plausible policy options, were not taken up and included in the formulation of policies for the subsequent phases of the LRP.
4.1.7 Inappropriate Land Tenure Structures
The beneficiaries of the LRP in its entirety were only given permits to reside and work on the land whose ownership is vested in the hands of the government. This insecurity of tenure among resettled farmers grossly affected their commitment to long-term investment on these farms (Land Tenure Commission, 1994). The FTRLR beneficiaries have been issued with numerous types of temporary licenses which the government intends to convert later, to permanent leases. This has created a situation whereby the farmers are in perpetual uncertainty (Zikhali, 2008). Due to this, the farmers are hesitant to make permanent structures on land they are not sure for how long they will have. This together with the frequent replacement of different sets of laws, administrations and policies on multiple tenure systems has created grounds for conflicts that have impacted agricultural productivity adversely (Munyuki-Hungwe and Matondi, 2006).

4.1.8 Duality of informal and formal tenure systems
It is not a fated conclusion that the owner of the land is the one farming on that land. In many farms, the person on the official record of resettled farmers is not the one actually practicing on that land. There are informal transactions where land “changes hands” without any formal/legal records of the exchange such that on paper, the original recipient is there, but is not the de facto farmer (Petrie, Roth and Mazvimai, 2003). This makes it for land-use planning since hence policies made on the basis of the consultations of people who are not the actual landowners, are difficult to implement.

4.1.9 Land Reform Administration
During the LRP the LRA has been highly centralized, combined with bureaucratic top-down decision-making systems which tend to impose decisions on people at the grassroots level (Rukuni, 2003). Pervading the LRP is the presence of to many laws haggling over the same thing, conflicting over procedural and policy issues (Moyo, 2003:13). This is because there is no integrated official land policy that governs/sets guidelines on how to administer and manage land (Mamimine, 2003). There are too many pieces of legislation on the Land such as the Rural Land Act, Resettlement Act, Deeds Registry Act among a host of others, all claiming to have the official mandate on the same thing.

4.2.1 Farmers’ prior farming experience
a) Crops grown
Six respondents indicated that they were crop cultivators before getting the current A2 farms. They all produced more than one crop. 5 produced maize, 3 produced small greens like cabbage and carrots, 2 produced sorghum and 1 produced seed maize and 1 grew beetroot. 9 said they were not farmers before.

b) Animals reared

Four respondents were into animal husbandry. Of these, one respondent was into beef farming, another respondent reared goats while 2 others kept chickens

4.2.2 Farmers’ Education and Training in Agriculture

Six (6) respondents were degree holders. One respondent actually specified that he was a holder of an Honours degree in Crop Science from the University of Zimbabwe. 6 indicated that their highest level of formal education was a diploma. Of these, 2 specified indicated they had diplomas in Accounts and Bookkeeping. 2 indicated the Ordinary level as their highest level of formal education while 1 indicated form 2, another said they had a Master Farmer certificate and another said Standard 3 was their highest level of formal education.

Seven (7) respondents said they had not received any training in agriculture before getting the A2 farms while 8 said they had. Of these, 1 has a diploma in Agriculture, 3 have both a diploma and a degree in Agriculture, and 1 respondent has a Master Farmer certificate while another said they got trained by NGOs that periodically held training courses in another farming area where he used to stay. 2 respondents said they were trained at their family plots/farms as they were growing up.

On receiving training in farming after settling in ZRD, 5 respondents indicated that they did not get such training while 11 respondents said they had. Of these, 7 said they were trained by NGOs like Plan and Care that run some farmer training courses for free. 3 said they were trained by Extension workers while 4 indicated being recipients of training from both NGOs and Extension officers.

4.2.3 Capital and Inputs

All respondents indicated that they self-funded the operations on the farms. 4 respondents indicated contract farming as their second source of capital. Through contract farming the farmers entered into partnerships with NGOs like CADEC, PLAN, OXFAM, Heifer Project and AFRICARE and other private business entities who would give them inputs in return for them to plant crops chosen by the contractors and sell the crop to that contractor. Maize was
the crop frequently preferred by the contractors. None of the respondent indicated bank loans or credit as their source of capital or inputs. None of the respondents expressed awareness of or ever receiving seed from any seed companies.

When asked to indicate from a brief list of challenges they faced in past seasons, capital shortage topped the list, with all respondents saying they faced the problem of capital in every season. All respondents said the government input schemes were almost always late, coming at a time when farmers are halfway into the planting season. None of the respondents indicated getting loans from banks. Among those who had Offer Letters from the government, none managed to access credit from banks using the 99-year permit letters and pointed out to the slow processing of the loan applications by the banks.

4.2.4 Extension services

4 respondents said the nearest Extension services office was within 1 kilometre from their farm while 2 said the same Extension services office was within five kilometres from them. 9 respondents said the Extension office nearest to them which they had access to, was in Kwekwe while 1 respondent said they actually travelled to Kadoma to get to the nearest Extension services offices.

Rating the effectiveness of Extension Services in the area on a scale of 1 (extremely poor) to 5 (excellent) 3 respondents selected “1” and explained their choice saying the Extension Officers rarely visited their farms because of the long distance between their farms and the local Extension services office. One respondent explained this rating saying the Extension people are capable but lacked transport to frequently visit farms that were far from their office hence the concentration of their field visits to farms nearby their office. 4 respondents selected 2 (poor) and explained this rating saying sometimes the extension officers are not found at their office when farmers visit them needing information or that if one requested for them they had to go and actually fetch the extension officers because they did not have own vehicles. Another respondent said extension officers did not offer much new information, always had the same “...story of crop rotation when it is maize for NGOs that we want…”. One respondent said the field officers were young, recent graduates and inexperienced in practical agriculture hence rating them at 2/4.

Four (4) respondents selected “3” (Good) and one respondent said the Extension officers came with good ideas but the effectiveness of their advice was limited in that the farmer had the final say on whether or not to implement that advice, hence if the farmer chose not to
implement it, the advice was not effective. Three respondents explained their choice of the ‘3’ rating saying the frequency of visits by Extension officers had declined from what they used to be in the past but did not give a time/date to mark the exact time of when this “in the past” actually referred to. Two respondents gave the extension services a rating of 4/4 (excellent). One of these two said they got the advice they want like which maize seed varieties to plant since rainfall patterns are changing from the days of the cyclones [that is, the 2000 and 2001 seasons].

4.2.5 Farmer Unionization

The respondents pointed out the mandate of such organizations as helping the collective body of farmers in the area by negotiating for more favourable contracts with NGOs which they said took advantage of the farmers’ situations and brought contracts that were grossly exploitative but farmers had no choice since the were not many other avenues for them to secure input. Most respondents felt that farmers’ unions should be there to help farmers to secure inputs at cheaper prices from companies that were properly in the agro-business instead of the prevailing situation where farmers buy some implements from non-agricultural retail shops like Ok.

Most respondents believed that it was the duty of farmers’ unions to help in the marketing of produce so that farmers would get good prices. Another view was that such unions should help farmers secure their property from invaders and illegal miners while another respondent said farmers’ unions were there to promote the activities of farmers as a way of fulfilling the economic empowerment policy of the government. One respondent expressly pointed out that farmers’ unions should help farmers with financial support. None of the respondents said they were a member of a farmers’ union. The overarching sentiment was that these unions were not helping farmers anymore compared to the past.

4.2.6 Land Tenure/ Farm ownership

12 respondents stated that they owned the farms they were operating on while 3 said they did not. Of the 13 that said they owned the farms 9 said they had offer letters from the government, 2 respondents said they had 99-year leases which were being processed. Of the 3 who said they did not own the farm they were operating on, 2 indicated that they were share-cropping with the owner and 1 said he was renting form the owner who had an offer letter.

When asked of the importance of having Title deeds 10 respondents said these would help them to get loans from commercial banks, 4 said they need title deeds so that they could
legalize their statuses on the farms and be able to remove squatters and illegal miners who were disrupting operations. One respondent said title deeds would give them the security they needed to make improvements on the farms like drilling boreholes to irrigate their crops and increase their output. All the respondents said despite the abundance of very fertile land in their farms, they could not channel their scarce resources to clearing more arable land if they did not have title deeds. One respondent said she failed to get anything from the mechanization program because she did not have any papers then, to prove that she was not an illegal occupier of the land.

**Figure 1 Uncleared tracts land**
Vast expanses of arable and idle land could be seen in most farms. Respondents indicated that they could not clear a lot of land for cultivation until they were given lease agreements specifying the time they will have on the land. These leases could then give them the security of tenure and the confidence to clear more land and make long term plans.

### 4.2.7 Cropping Regimes

Underlying all the given responses was the theme that the primary determinant of crops to be planted in each season is the availability of inputs. One respondent said they always planted maize and vegetables before considering any offers by contractors. One said before considering offers from contractors, they always sought to plant maize, butternuts, groundnuts, peanuts and vegetables. 10 respondents said they planted to meet obligations in the contracts they entered into because contractors provided inputs on time and they would prefer certain crops especially maize if they were NGOs. 2 respondents said some contractors did not offer inputs but specified the crops they wanted and if the farmers agreed with the prices offered, they would plant the desired crops. 2 respondents said they grew crops to meet the demand of the shops and vegetable-market-stall operators in Kwekwe and Kadoma.

### 4.2.8 Labour

Most respondents said they could not afford to have permanent workers all-year round since agricultural work is seasonal, hence there are always times when there is little work needing
to be done on the farms. 4 respondents indicated that they had permanent workers. 6 respondents said they had ‘near-permanent’ workers whom they also called ‘Leading workers’ whom they hired in peak periods like planting and harvesting times and were released when there is no work. 2 respondents said they used ‘leading workers’ to recruit others in peak periods especially when the farmer has a contract enabling them to pay the increased number of workers.

When asked how they created good working conditions for the workers, the respondents showed that they used principles and methods in managing and paying the workers. 10 respondents said they used the ‘per-line’ method were workers for the specific work done as measured by the number of lines planted or weeded. The other method used was that of ‘leading workers’ where the farmer chooses from among the casual labourers, some workers and empowers them to act as supervisors of sorts to snowball among their acquaintances and recruit other workers and the farmer negotiates with the rest of the hired labourers through these leading workers. 1 respondent said he personally interacted and negotiated wages with the workers he hired.

4.2.9 Produce Marketing

None of the respondents has participated in collective commodity price negotiations. From the responses given to the question of whether the farmers have ever participated in price negotiations, there is no indication of the existence of a body that functions as a marketer of the farmers’ produce. The farmers individually market their produce primarily to contractors first and then to private buyers like vegetable shop operators and market-stall operators in Kwekwe and Kadoma. Four (4) respondents lamented the absence of farmers’ organizations that could help them to bargain for contracts that gave them good prices for their produce.

4.2.10 Farmer’s perceptions of the FTLRP’s Policy blind-spot

The farmers strongly felt that that government should quickly finalise the issue of ‘papers’, the 99-year lease agreements to enable farmers to operate at full capacity and to have collateral for use in bank loan applications. Farmers indicated that the government brings finality to the lease agreements which would empower the farmers to remove from their farms, illegal settlers and illegal miners.

Respondents also felt strongly that the government needs to prioritize land that has been allocated to someone for agriculture so that the recipient of that land can proceed with
farming without intrusion from legal mineral prospectors who say the government allows them (mineral prospectors) to supersede the operations of the farmers.

In the responses given, there is a strong feeling among the farmers that the government has not been objective in several issues; chief among these is the farm mechanization program which the respondents feel sidelined from. Another issue raised was the alleged corruption / unfairness of the inputs schemes for farmers in the area especially the distribution of subsidised diesel which some respondents felt was overtly biased.

They also indicated that the government has not paid adequate attention to the issue of farmers’ capital and that the government needs to institute policies to ensure that farmers can secure loans from commercial banks. Most respondents believed that Extension Services in the area were hampered by the transport problems which prevented the Extension Personnel from visiting farms far away from their local office as well as forcing them to reduce the frequency of their visits to farms.

### 4.3.1 Functions of the Extension Services department in ZRDC

When asked what the role of their institution was in ZRDC, they said it was staff establishment, staff deployment, asset management, budget management and they were involved in identifying properties for resettlement, resettlement planning and identifying and selecting settlers although this last function was later taken up by local authorities and later given to chiefs since the year 2004. They said their mandate was also included training providing regulatory services and liaising with farmers.

One key informant interviewee said that the department is government funded while the other said the department is supposed to be funded by the government due to the current situation, the current was finding it difficult to do that role and NGOs were helping a lot with transport.

When asked how their department operated/made contact with the farmers, they said they operated through individual farm visits done once weekly by Extension workers in the area. These are led by a supervisor who then reports to the main office. When asked if their operations were helping the farmers, they emphatically asserted that the farmers really needed what they (the Extension services) were giving them (farmers) since the farmers are from diverse farming and non-farming backgrounds. They said farmers kept sending requests for the Extension personnel whose limitation actually is their lack of capacity to meet the growing demand.
4.3.2 Finding out what the farmers need

One interviewee said the Extension services department did not really do research on farmers’ needs per se but utilised the supervisor of the Extension officers ‘on the ground’ in the wards who compiled reports on each zone and these are used in Program Planning for each zone. The other interviewee said they utilised Participatory research methodologies and baseline surveys to find out the best ways to use new information and added that this was an ongoing exercise.

4.3.3 On the effectiveness of Extension department in ZRDC

On a scale of 1(very poor) to 4(excellent), one interviewee rated the quality of Extension services at 2(Poor) and explained the rating saying the department was not delivering as much as it should because of several constraints such as the limited funds they were getting from the government. The other interviewee said the scale of 1-4 was not quite adequate as a measure of the effectiveness of the department’s contribution to farmers and said there were several factors impacting on the quality of extension service and gave a historical analogy and a projected trajectory of how governmental budgetary allocations to Extension Services, the increase in graduates from agricultural training colleges and the declining quality of Extension services were co-acting and intertwined factors. As put below:

Figure 3 the historical linkages and interactive factors affecting quality of Extension services. Diagram drawn by Extension Worker
The diagram was drawn by a key informant interviewee as part of his response explaining his conception of the historical linkages and interactive factors affecting quality of Extension services

The argument by the interviewee was that, the increase in graduates from agricultural training institutions had not been accompanied by a corresponding improvement in the quality of Extension Services primarily because of the gradual decline in allocation of funds to the department by the government hence the researcher’s 1 to 4 scale of “very poor to excellent” is inappropriate because it quantified, boxed-in and brought out an inaccurate finality to a continuous process involving diverse and interactive factors that were often largely beyond the Extension department’s immediate span of control. Another factor affecting the quality of Extension services, though not represented in the above diagrammatic presentation, was the issue of inadequate remuneration of extension personnel, their lack of motivation due to the transport shortages whereby even the female extension officers had to travel long distances on foot because the motorcycles and bicycles would be off the road, needing repairs.

4.3.4 Reasons for A2 farmers’ limited productivity

The interviewees gave a plethora of answers on the causes of the limited productivity of the A2 farmers in ZRDC. One of the main reasons proffered was that farmers were used to getting handouts such as GMB loans and this had killed resourcefulness among the farmers hence they struggled whenever inputs came late as was the case in the 2008 season when the farmers got seed just before christmas. The farmers lacked machinery and draught power hence they would get well into the season while still looking or labour. This was mainly because on applying for the A2 farms, the farmers made false cash flow claims and misrepresented themselves as capable of raising the capital requirements spelt out by the government yet they did not have the said capacity. Furthermore, the government did not ground-check the farmers’ claims of having that said capacity. The farmers had inertia towards embracing conservation farming and lacked the capacity to utilise available resources. The interviewees indicated that farmers had inclinations towards crops such as maize because of the perception that growing maize was easy compared to other crops.

The A2 farmers in the district struggled to access inputs so they usually planted whatever crops they secured first. There was pressure for land from some people who were previously offered land but had turned down the offers. This led to disruptive illegal settlements on the farms. This was despite the fact that many of the farmers had a lot of arable land but lacked the capacity to fully utilise these farms as evidenced by the vast heavy and arable soils which
were still uncleared. The farmers indicated that they needed assistance with tillage tractors because only few farmers had tractors.

The phenomenon of the ‘weekend farmer’ or the absentee farmer was another reason for the limited productivity. The actual landowners spent most of their time in town (Kwekwe or Kadoma) and mostly come to the farms on weekends.

Another reason given for the A2 farmers’ limited productivity was that there was growing mistrust between the government and NGOs which could be improved on if the two engaged each other in dialogues to create an understanding between them for the benefit of the farmers. The NGOs’ programs mostly focused on rural communities neglecting the A2 farmers and when they did have programs targeting A2 farmers, the NGOs tended to go to the farmers directly by-passing the Extension Services department and then seeking out their input mid-stream in their programs when they met challenges. This could be rectified if NGOs consulted the Extension Services department before going implementing their programmes.

4.3.5 On the FTLRP’s policy blind-spot in ZRDC

The government’s mechanization program was not done objectively. The equipment could have been given to groups/clusters of farmers so that the equipment could be spread out to more farmers.

Agribank which has been tasked to meet the financial needs of the farmers was overwhelmed by the capital needs of the farmers and it also required collateral from applicants which applicants did not have.

The legal documentation of the farmers was taking too long. The option of giving farmers some certificates to certify them as legal occupants is counterproductive since they would not be able to build any permanent structures on the farms based on certificates which could be rescinded by the government whose demonstrated affinity for dramatic policy changes had been proved before.

The Mining Act should not be allowed to supersede agricultural activity. The Act allows mineral prospectors to prospect and actually carry out mining operations on someone’s farm even in the fields because the occupant of the farm is in legal control of the land as it relates to agriculture and not in control of that same land as it relates to any mining concern or activity that may be conducted while he/she occupies the farm. This disturbs long term
planning and relegates farmers to seasonal planning since they will not be too sure of their fate if some minerals were discovered on that land. There is need therefore, for rationalization of the farmers’ legal status so as to protect their rights on their allocated land.

The selection of beneficiaries of the land was over politicised. Despite claims in policy and strategy documents, the land audits have not been done objectively. They were affected by ‘too much ‘chizivano’ corruption.

Government inputs schemes have to be timeously implemented. There has not been any consciousness on the need to reach farmers in time such that in late December, almost mid-season, one can find farmers still busy looking for inputs to start planting. The outlets of government inputs distribution need to be moved from Zhombe Rural District which is distant, to Kwekwe, a central place.

5 Discussion of findings

5.1 Selection of beneficiaries of A2 farms

Among the requirements set by the government for one to qualify for A2 farming was an ability to raise the capital and for this, one had to be gainfully employed or had to demonstrate ability to raise the capital since the A2 farms were designated as self-contained (Mushunje, 2001). However, from the responses to the farm-level questionnaire, it is evident that most of the beneficiaries did not meet this requirement in the first place. Responses from the KII are also reflective of this point. There is evidence of too much state-dependency on the farmers for inputs and capital as indicated by the (KIs) key informants. The state’s contribution to the A2 farmers’ capital is in the form of inputs loans through GMB and capital loans from Agribank primarily. If these two fail to meet demand most farmers get to the middle of the planting season while still looking for inputs. This reveals that most farmers got the A2 farms undeservedly or erroneously because of the absence of what De Velliers (2003) and one KI called checks and balances to monitor the validity of land applicants’ claims of having the competences and capital-raising capacities they said they had.

The quest to establish A2 farms presupposed individual farmers’ resourcefulness and a continuously sustained roll out of finances to meet the operational demands. Inevitably, the government can not do this season in season out seeing that the government’s intention was never to have extra burden on its coffers but to actually wean off the emerging farmer and to create smallholder farmers who would move away from subsistence farming and eventually find their feet in market-oriented farming (Rukuni 1992:21). The primary generator of capital
farmers themselves have to raise the finances for their own operations, hence a need to re-
look the capital-generation capacity of the current A2 farmers.

5.2 Research on farmers’ needs
The extension department says it does not do research on farmers’ needs but instead relies on
reports from their officers in the field/in contact with the farmer. This poses questions over
the inclusivity and accuracy of the reality represented in these reports given the transport
challenges which the same extension staff say they have, which they expressly admit, reduces
the frequency of their field visits and the submissions by farmers that they frequently have to
fetch the extension officers from the office using own transport because the latter’s
motorbikes and bicycles will be down in need of repairs.

5.3 Security of tenure
The FTLRP has not been adequate in as far as its implicit goal of transforming and securing
tenure rights is concerned. The government should speed up procedures for conferring
security of tenure to new farmers (FCTZ, 2005). This issue reverberates in farmers’ responses
and the KI. The resettled farmers’ security of tenure is almost non-existent. They need
credible land titling so they can use the land as their primary collateral in loan negotiations
and their confidence in the LRP can be built up so that they can erect permanent structures
which are critical to their operations. The farmers blankly put it across that without credible
titling of their land, operations will remain in infancy because they cannot plough resources
into borehole drilling, clearing more arable land and laying irrigation pipes among other
permanent structures.

As Adams (2001), De Villiers (2003) assert, land reform should seek to confirm rights in land
to the benefit of the poor or dispossessed. The FTLRP is not complete if it is solely focused
on delivering land to recipients without paying attention to the rival land uses and claimants
seeking access to the same land. As Adams (2001), De Villiers (2003) assert, land reform
should seek to confirm rights in land to the benefit of the poor or dispossessed. Thus, it is
logical that the legal aspects concerning A2 farmers’ occupation of the farms be finalized
overcome the drawbacks of conflicts over other natural resources found on the same land.

If one is only a recipient of usufruct rights but has no power to dispose off the land and to
legally block other people from accessing the same land and extracting value from it, the land
reform has not secured anything but actually ushered in conflict as some will wait for the
initial settlers to make in-roads regarding infrastructural development and then move onto the
same land while claiming to be doing a different economic activity and worse still, have legal
backing in the form of legislation which allows someone to prospect and mine on a piece of
land allocated to someone else for farming. A case in point is Lot 5 in ZRDC where some
prospectors have been disrupting the farmer there by prospecting and mining in his (the A2
farmer’s) fields. The farmer was told by the authorities that indeed, the Mining Act allowed
the miners to supersede his agricultural activities because as a beneficiary of the land reform,
he had usufruct rights for farming and no legal power to bar anyone from mining on his farm.

5.4 Farmer training

Most of the respondents in the study did not have prior experience in agriculture and had not
received any other formal /certifiable training in agriculture after they moved on to the A2
farms. This acutely contrasts the official selection criteria for A2 beneficiaries that one had to
have experience in agriculture. Much of the farmer training in the area used to be done by the
Extension Services department but this has changed due to the breakdown of the Extension
department’s transport system. NGOs have stepped into this role but as indicated by the KIs,
the NGOs have limited skill and information on the farmers’ needs and they basically go into
contact with the farmers without the proper knowledge and then turning to the Extension
Department halfway through their programs.

A paradoxical scenario exists on the issue of farmer training institutions which on one hand,
have been increasing in number and producing more graduates yet on the other hand, they
have progressively been getting reduced financial support from the government. As put by
the KIs this multivariate relationship is dynamic but what is evident is that the quality of
service delivered by the Extension department is on the decline. The farmers and Extension
personnel alike, blame this decline on the collapse of the Extension department’s transport
system. Five (5) of the farm-level respondents indicated that they did not get any training
after settling in ZRD while 11 respondents said they had. Of these, 7 said they were trained
by NGOs like Plan and Care that run some farmer training courses for free. 3 said they were
trained by Extension workers while 4 indicated being recipients of training from both NGOs
and Extension officers. The crux of the matter appears to be in the frequency of the training
and field visits by Extension officers which are reportedly and admitted by the Extension
officers themselves to be erratic. There is a need therefore, as put by the KIs for the
government and the NGOs operating in the area to find a common understanding and work
together as opposed to the prevailing mistrust between the two actors, to the betterment of the
farmers.
5.5 Farmers’ capitalization

Farmers attributed the existence of vast expanses of uncleared arable land in their farms to the delays by the government to issue them with legal documents to cement their occupation of the farms. Notwithstanding this fact, there is also the intractable fact form the KII that the farmers lack the financial capacity to clear and till larger tracts of the heavy soils. They lack the tractors and draught power for such expansion of operations. The institutions tasked with helping farmers meet their capital requirements are finding it too onerous to meet the demand from the farmers. The government must increase its budgetary allocations to FDT, Agribank and the other institutions which were set up to assist the A2 farmers’ capital requirements.

There is a need to scale up their capacity to loan the A2 farmers. Despite this, there will inevitably a limit to how much these institutions can spread the loans among the farmers season in and season out since the fiscus is not for agriculture alone but the national economy which has other sectors like manufacturing. The responsibility will then return again, to the farmers themselves to raise money to meet their own operational needs.

From the outset, there has never been a long term budgetary commitment from the government to fund A2 farmers yet these wait on the government before they start planning what they are going to plan/where they are going to source inputs. This is a recurrent threat to the A2 farm viability since it takes place season-in and season-out. This is further compounded by the fact that the A2 farmers simply do not have the resources which they said they had when they were applying for land. There is need for need-targeted credit facilities of small loans to farmers. The modalities and repayment options of such a facility should be ground in the knowledge of farmers’ production levels and how much repayment ability these production levels will translate to. This can only happen if NGOs, commercial banks and the government come together and institute a thorough scrutiny of the lived realities on the ground in the farms. Such research should have equal input from the three (NGOs, commercial banks and the government) share ownership of that research and agree in the reality presented in the resultant findings.

5.6 Markets

Contract farming is a strategy used by the farmers to secure inputs on time as well as being guaranteed of the price and market for the produce. However, these contracts are not negotiated from the starting point of two equal partners. It is evident that the farmers have a lot more to lose if they do not enter into the partnerships because the fact that government inputs frequently come halfway through the planting season is a reality experienced by
farmers in many seasons. The erratic nature of these schemes coupled with the farmers’ weak borrowing capacity means that they are openly malleable in commodity price negotiations with the contractors. An Interface analysis of this scenario shows that the contracts are drenched in power struggles with either parties acting to meet its own ends. It becomes visible that in commodity price negotiations with contractors, the farmers are leveraged by their lack of viable alternative sources of inputs.

The theme reverberating in most farmers’ responses is that they are not consulted in the formulation of commodity pricing structures or that they do not see price negotiations as inherent in contract negotiations. When asked how they choose which crops they plant in each season, most respondents indicated that this decision hinges on the availability of inputs and inevitably, on conditions set by contractors who are the chief providers of inputs.

There is no evidence of a consciousness at the policy level, of the seasonal shocks that farmers are exposed to. There is no evidence of any kind of planning for such realities as commodity price drops and how these can retard farmers’ march towards self-sufficiency. There is no structure to cushion farmers or simply, to deal with seasonal commodity price drops. This can be attributed to the attrition of the state marketing/buyers such as GMB in the market. GMB is accused by farmers of either being too slow in paying farmers for their produce or for offering uncompetitive prices, losing out to private players in the process. Had GMB and other state commodity brokers been strong competitors, the farmers could be better protected against the vagaries of market fluctuations.

5.7 Social Institutions

Traditional leadership and community structures were consulted at the foundational and planning stages of A2 farming. Traditional chiefs were involved in the selection of land to be acquired and in the selection of beneficiaries. However, it is not clear if they were also involved in the identification of beneficiaries in farm mechanization program and the distribution of the benefits of the program.

5.8 Monitoring and Evaluation (M and E) of government policies

The basic policy/administrative problem bedevilling the FTLRP is not the lack of knowledge of what is happening on the ground. Yes, farmers feel that the government is aloof, seated away from the realities in the farms and must “visit us” as one farmer put it across. The reality is that the problem the problem is the institutionalization of the inability to act on the information that is already there, what Mamimine (2007) calls a failure to turn research into
NGOs are better at the M and E of own projects than the government and they learn from mistakes and rectify them in the next projects. Evidence of this abounds one looks at the actual reality that the NGOS have taken up most of the government’s responsibilities and are doing them well as confirmed by:

i. Farmers’ preference of NGOs in contract farming as opposed to farmers’ reliance on marketing of their produce to GMB and reliance on input loans from the parastatal in previous years

ii. NGOs providing Extension personnel with transport, helping with logistics in accessing farmers

iii. NGOs providing farmers with assistance in food security programs, training, capital in small stock production and institutional strengthening.

One might argue that NGO coffers are sectoral, confined to specific thematic issues as compared to the government that draws funds from the same coffers to meet the needs of a whole nation. However, respondents point to the maladministration of resources, the corruption in inputs schemes and the government’s failure to act on these despite the availability of glaring evidence. The government therefore, must simply be objective in its M and E of operations so that an achievable thing like maintenance of vehicles for Extension workers is done and extension workers can continue rendering to farmers the much-needed services.

If the government strengthened its M and E, it would use the output and the vast knowledge of its own land audits, the Utete Report and NGO research to come up with policies based on the complete picture of the realities on the A2 farms.

5.9 Farm mechanization

In the same vein is the issue is the government’s farm mechanization program which many farmers in the area profess to having never seen its fruit. The KIIIs concur with the farmers that a more inclusive mechanization program should have been done so that tillage tractors among other machinery would have been more equitably spread among the farmers. The first phase of the farm mechanization program was affected by partisan decisions hence the need for a more objective mechanism in the distribution by the government, of equipment. From farmers’ responses and the KII, it comes out emphatically that a critical need of the farmers is
the implementation of policies that are not compromised by the intrusion of political influences and the use of clandestine selection criteria of beneficiaries.

5.10 LRAIs (Land Reform Administration Institutions) and Auxiliary Institutions (NGOs)

At inception, the government made it clear that A2 farmers would fall under the authority of Local councils and District administrative structures. However, there is no indication of the policies, infrastructure, and institutional arrangements which the government put in place to prepare especially the RDCs to handle this new task and the financial, manpower, and administrative onus accompanying this mandate. The government needs to make conscious effort to invest in infrastructure in the resettlement areas and to capacitate the local RDCs to work on the infrastructure in their areas.

NGOs have taken up the responsibility of capacitating the small-holder farmer in the wake of the RDCs and government’s failure to effectively carry this mandate. However, the NGOs tend to cluster around a certain area at the expense of other farmers’ needs.

Many authorities have pointed out the need for clarity of roles whether between government departments or non-state actors arguing that organizational mandate overlaps have increased bureaucratism (Mamimine, 2003) and proceduralism but not efficiency or speed of service delivery to the beneficiaries of land in Zimbabwe’s FTLRP. There is a tendency among non-state actors to be drawn to one thematic area or to a particular district and to be oblivious of the presence of other organizations doing the very same thing. It is evident that too many non-state actors are clustering around particular districts at the expense of others.

The clustering / role duplication syndrome is first noticeable in the number of organizations that are assisting A2 farmers in Sherwood Block in ZRDC with inputs, training and small stock production. From the farm-level responses and the KIIIs, one can see that up to eight NGOs are involved in ZDRC and most of them are helping with inputs for crop cultivation or inputs for small stock production and training. This is where the department of Extension services should be consulted to avoid clustering in one area at the expense of other areas. In ZDRC MASO and DAC as an example, are all into nutritional gardens while

5.11 Labour

There is an imperative need to move away from the habitual use of casual labour which the A2 farms are dependent on and whom they have to compete for with other farmers. The few permanent workers they employ are so skeletal, relative to the farms’ labour requirements. It
is difficult to plan planting using migrant labour, hence as put across by one KI, one must not be shocked to visit the farms in mid-December and hear them still looking for labour. The major reason for their reliance on casual labour is that there is very little activity on the farms for most of the year, there are peak periods such as planting or harvesting which need labour the most and it is in these times when getting labourers makes the most economic sense.

For the KIs, this said reason is not entirely true but a veneer of incapacity on the part of the farmers to fully utilize the land at their disposal due to capital constraints. When not planting, the farmers should be engrossed in other activities like planning, looking for markets, negotiating better packages with contractors, comparing what is being offered by contractors and searching for inputs for the next season. These are activities that should involve money and labour but the farmers do not see that much into the future or are just too lethargic to act. The A2 farmers should increase their productivity so that they can be able to permanently employ labourers. This will allow them to plan more realistically with the knowledge of how much money is needed for the wage bill and other recurrent overheads known to accompany each season so that they are not taken aback when payments for these are due. This will help them to prepare in advance based on probable approximations of their labour needs instead of depending on foot-loose casual labour which downs tools and moves on to the next farm at any moment if their salary requirements are not met.

6. **Policy recommendations and conclusion**

- An audit of individual A2 farmers’ resource mobilization capacities must be done to check if they have the capital mobilization capacity they claimed to have when they applied for land. This will rid the A2 schemes of people who are not capable of meeting the capital requirements of A2 farming.

- The government must intentionally set the record straight to A2 farmers that they should fund their own operations, government inputs are a plus, and cannot be the backbone of their funding.

- The government must be objective enough and act on the vast body of knowledge on the FTLRP, to rectify the identified shortcomings.

- The Department of Extension services needs to be recapitalized so they can get new vehicles, to repair old ones and be able to reach out to more farmers in each ward and zone so that the complete representative picture of farmers’ needs can be seen more clearly and the due policies made.
• Conscious efforts must be made to be objective in Farm mechanization. If found feasible, equipment can be given to clusters/group of six A2 farmers in the area to effect an equitable spread of machinery, for easier management and accountability.

• Increased pace in the finalization of lease agreements so that farmers can access loans from commercial banks and be certain of their own status and erect permanent structures on the farms.

• In the interim, there can be introduced flexible loan terms based on farmers’ demonstrated ability to repay not just land as collateral.

• Land allocated for agriculture should not be re-allocated to mining. The Mining Act should not be allowed to supersede agricultural activity. There is need for rationalization of property rights vis-à-vis land-use to protect farmers’ rights on the land allocated to the for agriculture

• The government must make deliberate efforts to find common ground with NGOs so that NGOs do not avoid the government and go to the farmers directly with limited information and then consulting the Department of Extension services midway through a program when they encounter obstacles.

• There should be developed a framework guiding NGO assistance to farmers to avoid NGO clustering in certain areas and neglecting others.

• A2 farmers in the area need to meet on their own and establish a union to act as their representative body in inputs negotiations, contract structuring and produce marketing.
Annex 1: Map showing the study setting: A2 farms in Sherwood Block in ZRDC

Map is indicative, it is not to scale.
Annex 2: Farm level Questionnaire: Researcher-administered

1. Age

2. Gender

3. Were you a farmer before getting an A2 farm in this area?
   *If yes*, for how many years
   
   Where

   What crop(s)/animals did you produce?

4. What is the highest level of formal education that you attained? [Tick appropriate]
   
   O Level [ ] 
   Diploma [ ] 
   Degree [ ] 
   Other: Specify

5. Had you received any farmer training before you got this farm? Yes [ ] No [ ]
   
   *If yes* specify

6. After settling in this area, have you received any training in agriculture?
   
   *If yes* specify

7. How do you raise capital for implements and inputs?

8. Are there any seed companies, organisations that help you with implements?

9. Is there any season in which you did not plant enough to sell…Yes [ ] No [ ]
   
   *If yes*, what was the cause?

10. Which of the following challenges have you faced in past seasons [tick period]
   
   i. Labour shortages [2002-6] [2006-9] [2009-10]
   ii. Input shortages [2002-6] [2006-9] [2009-10]
   iii. Water and electricity shortages [2002-6] [2006-9] [2009-10]
   iv. Soil infertility [2002-6] [2006-9] [2009-10]
   v. Capital shortages [2002-6] [2006-9] [2009-10]

11. How far is the nearest Extension Services Office/station in this area [tick appropriate]
   
   [] Less than 1km  [] 1km-5km  [] 5km-more  [] In Kwekwe  [] In Kadoma
12. Are Extension Services RDC effective? Rate them on the scale below [tick appropriate]


13. Explain your choice in question 12 above

14. What do you see as the duty of Farmers’ organisations?

15. Do you belong to any such Farmers’ Union?

Is it helping in any way?

16. Do you own this farm? No [ ] Yes [ ]

[ ] I rent this farm [ ] I Share–crop with the owner

[ ] I have an Offer Letter [ ] I have a 99 year lease

Other: Please specify

17. What is the importance of Title Deeds to your operations?

18. The Government recently announced that 99 year Permits can be used in place of Title deeds by farmers looking for credit from banks. Has this helped you?

19. Have you ever participated in commodity price negotiations?

20. What are your major markets /who are your main buyers for your produce

21. How do you choose which crops to plant in each season?

22. Where do you source labour?

23. What do you do to create good working conditions for your labour?

24. What issue affecting farmers do you think has been completely missed by the policies and structures in the implementation of the Land Reform?
Annex 3: Key Informant Interview Guide

1. Age of respondent

2. Gender

3. Position/Job Title

4. Can you give me a brief of the role played by your institution in this area?

5. Individually, you been involved in farming in Zibagwe for how many years, and in what capacity?

6. Are you aware of other organisations also operating in Zibagwe helping the A2 farmers? Which ones

7. How do you operate, how do you contact farmers

   [ ] Individual Farm Field visits    [ ] Area visits

   [ ] Seminars                       [ ] Send Publications

   Other: Specify

8. What are these time intervals between these field visits/seminars e.t.c

   [ ] Once in a month               [ ] Once in two months

   [ ] Once in three months          [ ] At the start of each new planting season

   Other: Specify

9. Is this helping the farmers, why?

10. How do you source funds for your operations

11. When was the last time your organisation did research on the challenges faced by A2 farmers in this area

12. How do you know what the farmers require in particular seasons?

13 (a) What you see as the cause for the limited productivity of A2 farms in this area?

   i. Poor quality of land
iv. They do not listen to advice from Extension workers

iii. They are too many farmers in a small area [too little land]

iv. They are interested in subsistence agriculture more than commercial farming

v. They lack the financial resources for Model A2 commercial farming

(b) Could you explain your answer?

14. How would you rate your organisation’s contribution to the farmers?


15. Is the government doing enough to make A2 farming viable?

16. What issue do you think has been completely missed by the policies and structures of the FTLR, specifically in ZRDC?

17. What do you personally see as the main problem persistently faced by these A2 farmers since the establishment of this scheme?

18. What can be done to improve this situation?

19. Can you give me your personal evaluation of A2 farmers’ preparations this season?
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